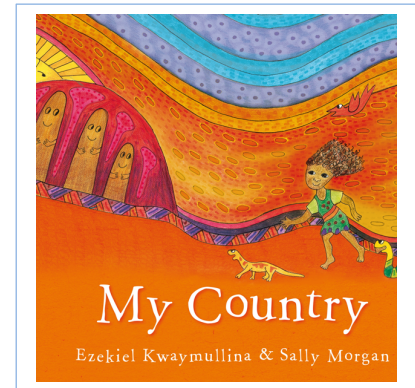


LEARNING TIME

My Country By Ezekiel Kwaymullina and Sally Morgan

Embrace all the wonders of the natural world with the picture book, *My Country*. Discover many native animals, including the kangaroo, lizard, frog, emu, and birds.

Themes: Aboriginal, Environment, Australian animals



Rare and interesting words: whispering wind, ghost gums, moonlight, red desert dust.

Action words(verbs): chase, fly, dream, sleep, love, dance, swim, splash, slide, ride, sing, play.

Key Message for Parents | Children's learn through being engaged and doing.

Children learn best when they have exposure to rich language, hands on experiences and the chance of repeat activities.

Play is critical to young children's social, emotional, and intellectual development.

Provide opportunities to explore in non-structured ways as often as possible to allow children to lead the play.

Play provides for language rich conversation and diverse problem solving, collaboration and imaginative skills.

Australian Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Educators can support children's learning by

- Sharing information about the natural environment utilising library collections whereby children can learn about plant types and how to grow plants.
- Providing multi-sensory child led play-based experiences.
- Scaffolding concepts by explaining new words and providing opportunities to use new words in meaningful ways
- Provide outdoor experiences to explore their natural environment
- Explain new vocabulary and reinforce learning with hands on experiences

Welcome

Ask carers to write nametags for themselves and their children.

Welcome everyone, introduce yourself, remind adults to turn their mobile phones off and that there will be time for adults to chat after the story and songs.

Welcome Song (or your preferred song)

Have the words available as a handout or written on a board or butcher's paper for the adults to read and join in.

Good Morning

Good morning to you

Good morning to you

Good morning everybody

and welcome to you!



You may like to introduce the book at this stage or use a song to help prepare your group and introduce the upcoming story and activities.

Song

Everybody Do This

Create your own words to make the book in this very popular and well-known song.

Everybody do this, do this, do this

Everybody do this just like me!

Everybody stomping, stomping, stomping (big steps or high step walking or stomp your feet)

Everybody stomping - just like me!

Everybody digging, digging, digging (make a digging action with hand)

Everybody digging – just like me!

Everybody planting, planting, planting (make hands in cup shape and gesture up and down)

Everybody looking – just like me!

Everybody watering, watering, watering (gesture holding a hose or watering can and watering)

Everybody watering– just like me!

Before Reading

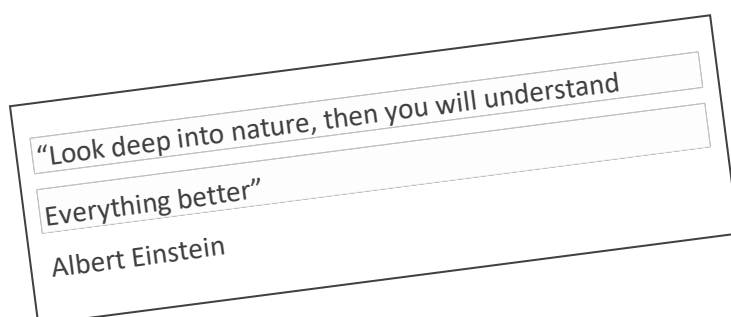
- Greet families and children warmly, ask them how they are, awaiting their responses and acknowledging them.
- Explain the format of the session, including the book you are reading, songs and activities. You may want to use a visual board to support diverse language and learning needs.
- Ask the children to sit where they can see the pictures, as you will need them to watch closely!

During Reading

- Introduce the name of the book, the author, and the illustrator.
- Be intrigued and model engagement with the text, through looking interested in what they discover and check the children are following along. You can observe the new environments on each page together – *I see the star, and the moon. There are lots of bush animals, let's try to count them. Can you help me to name them?*
- This book allows opportunities for the audience to identify aspects of their world - moon, stars and sun, nature – trees, birds, dirt, and weather - wind, thunder, and sunshine.

After Reading

- Reflect on the story.
- Can the participants remember any animals from the story?
- Are there any special things they do, see or places they go that make them happy?
- Provide time for children to express their experiences and thoughts. Communication skills include turn taking, eye contact, voice and expression, respectful responses, timing, explaining, and listening. These all need time to be practised.



Song

I Can Sing A Rainbow

Red and yellow and pink and green
Purple and orange and blue
I can sing a rainbow
Sing a rainbow
Sing a rainbow too

Listen with your eyes
Listen with your ears
And sing everything you see
I can sing a rainbow
Sing a rainbow
Sing along with me

Red and yellow and pink and
green
Purple and orange and blue
I can sing a rainbow
Sing a rainbow
Sing a rainbow too



Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: Arthur Hamilton

Sing A Rainbow lyrics © Warner Chappell Music, Inc

Extension Ideas

Read

- Borrow books about nature, birds or plants from the library, use non-fiction books to gather lots of facts. Many books are also freely available via Library subscriptions such as Libby and StoryBox Library for read aloud – making books accessible from home or when you are out and about. Ask your local library.
- Visit a nature park like the Botanic Gardens or go on a hiking trail. Use online information or pamphlets on the area to build concepts around those environments.
- Read Dreamtime stories. Take time to acknowledge the traditional custodians of these stories, where they are from and their importance to Aboriginal culture.

Sing

- Sing, sing, and sing some more! Singing slows down language so enables sounds to be heard more easily. Phonemic Awareness knowledge (sounds) is a foundation to literacy competency.
- Spotify and YouTube have a huge variety of songs. We have a Spotify Playlist 'Raising Literacy Australia' – Featured Stories
- Adapt your own from well-known tunes and your own made-up words.
- Learn a song in Kurna or another indigenous language – try this one <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-oewPAYbdPY>

Talk

- Talk about when the moon comes out, what are stars, what makes a rainbow (sun & rain).
- Discuss the difference between night and day. Use the words sun/moon, light/dark, dawn/dusk.
- Talk about being in nature, things you can see and do.
- Name the colours in the book, try using some different colour descriptions like aqua, mauve or indigo. Point to all the colours as you name them together.
- Identify unique aspects of Aboriginal arts, such as the line and dot painting and earthly colours, where possible connect Aboriginal artists or Elders to share meaning with your group.
- Visit an art gallery and explore Aboriginal art.

Play

- Play in a sandpit, on the beach or with kinetic sand, making patterns and enjoying the sensations.
- Have a picnic and enjoy connecting with nature, play in the dirt, using toes to make patterns.
- Play a game of eye spy in the garden, on a walk or in a park.
- Try a game of Simon Says, actions are in the book, eg: fly, dance, splash, chase.

Visit

Sing a Rainbow song <https://kids.niehs.nih.gov/games/songs/childrens/sing-a-rainbow/index.htm>
Living Kurna Cultural Centre <https://www.facebook.com/LivingKurnaCulturalCentre/>
Understanding Country <https://youtu.be/GqnXuzny--o>

STEM Focus. Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics.

Create a rock painting using sandstone

1. Locate two suitable rocks, sandstone is good for this purpose.
2. Rub the rocks together and make dust.
3. Use a small dab of water to wet the surface and create paint with the dust.
4. Paint on the cement, bark or paper.

Science: Predict what will occur, drawing or conversation.

Observe the stone, and how friction creates small particles (dust), then how the water creates a muddy paint texture and finally what happens when the paint dries.

Maths: finding matching rocks, shapes, colours, types. .

Technology: document with photos, create a video.

Photo credit: The Craft Train.



Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. If your library has copies, make them available for families to borrow or include them in your story time session.

For more stories to share, we recommend the following titles:

- **Warna Manda Baby Earth Walk** by Susan Betts and Mandy Foot.
- **Beneath the Stars** by Ezekiel Kwaymullina and Sally Morgan
- **Baby Business** by Jasmine Seymour

An Activity Time for this book is available to download for FREE from our website. The Activity Time will extend the language found in the book and create hands on learning. This is a great resource to share with families, you are welcome to print and distribute as necessary.

Goodbye Song

Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child and the family.

Sung to the tune of *(Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush)* or your choice.

Goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye (wave) say goodbye, say goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye to all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!



Warna Manda Baby Earth Walk by Susan Betts and Mandy Foot