

LEARNING TIME

My First Baby Australian Animals

by Fiona Bowden

Introduce Australian animals to your baby with this easy to hold and enjoy black and white board book.

Baby and parent names are introduced one at a time, allowing time to observe and reflect on the bold image and animal characteristics.

Revise the names again at the end of the book, building strong connections to the concepts, sounds and names of the animals.



Children learn language by listening to it and using it.

- Early interactions between adults and babies have a long-lasting impact on brain development.
- Babies learn to talk by listening to people talk, and from people speaking with them.
- Choose books with large, bright pictures, or high contrast images such as in this picture book, and give baby time to explore the images.

Australian Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

We can help babies become confident learners by:

- Allowing time in your day for play, songs, and stories. Have fun with babies while you read, smile, make eye contact, make silly voices, make animals noises.
- Families are a baby's first teacher. We can be active role models for families by inspiring them and giving them ideas for play activities that they can enjoy at home.
- Providing opportunities for baby to explore, experiment and be hands on with books. Ensure books are accessible for babies to play with, have them on the floor or in easy to access places such as in baskets or on bottom shelves.
- Ensure books are clear and easy for them to see the pictures, bright and bold or black and white books are easier for newborn babies to focus on as their eyes are developing.
- Build strong brain connections by naming and explaining things in their world, not once but many times, and in many ways.

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Welcome

Ask caregivers 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.

Encourage parents to sing facing their baby so that baby can watch their mouth move as they sing and talk – this helps babies learn to speak themselves.

Welcome song - Come Along

Come along and sing with me, sing with me

Come along and sing with me, it's time for story time!

Repeat and replace 'sing' with bounce, rock, clap etc.

Come along and bounce with me, bounce with me, bounce with me

Come along and bounce with me, it's time for story time!

Song

Five Little Ducks

A classic song suitable for all young children. For younger babies, start with three little ducks and add more as your baby grows and can be focused for longer.

Five Little Ducks went out one day, over the hills and far away.
Mother Duck said, "Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack," but only four little ducks came back.

(Repeat counting down to "but no little ducks came back.")

So, mother duck went out one day, over the hills and far away
Mother Duck said, "Quack, Quack, Quack, Quack," and five little ducks came back.



Before Reading

Encourage the group to sit comfortably in a place where they can see the book. If you have multiple copies of the same book this is a simple way to encourage families to join along with you.

You might like to model how to explore the front cover of a book. Draw attention to the animals on the front cover say, "Look at my book, I see Australian animals, this animal is called a Platypus. Let's look for more animals".

During Reading

Each animal has the child and parent species name. How much you explain each page may depend on the engagement of the group and ages of the babies. It might be helpful to focus on one thing like the name only with very young babies, but if you have toddlers or older children you can include some facts for the animals, they are most interested in. It's not essential to read all the pages in the book either.

Draw the readers' attention to the animals on each page. Name the animals and comment on what the animal is doing. This models strong language use by linking words with actions. *"I can see two animals, one is grown up and the other is a baby. The animal is, The baby is called a and the grown up is called"*

After Reading

Encourage conversation about the animals, repeating their names and showing baby face to face how to say those words. Have a quiet time together resting and reflecting.

Read

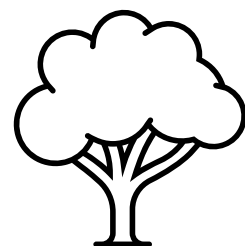
Adults can be encouraged to borrow books to read in full to their child at home. Explain to caregivers that children are often able to concentrate for longer periods in a comfortable one on one situation. The adult reader is also to go at a pace that suits the child and gently redirect their attention.

Books do not have to be read in one sitting. It might be that you read a few pages together and come back to it later. Let parents know that books can 'grow with the child'. Re-read the same books to the children as they grow older. As they grow toddlers and preschoolers will also enjoy and notice additional details.

Sing

Song: Kookaburra Sits In The Old Gum Tree

*Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Merry, merry king of the bush is he
Laugh, Kookaburra Laugh
Kookaburra gay your life must be*



More songs about Australian Animals: Australian Animal Songs Album by Don Spencer

Explore songs on Spotify or Youtube

Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. The Little Big Book Club suggests the following books to support learning in this area. 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:

- **In the bush I See** by *Kiara Honeychurch*
- **Animals In My Garden** by *Bronwyn Houston*
- **Aussie Water Babies** by *Julia Murray*

An Activity Time for this book is available to download for FREE from our website. 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 preferred choice.

Goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye (use a waving action)

Say goodbye, say goodbye

This is the way we say goodbye

To all our library friends (or) (to our friend.....)!

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