

# LEARNING TIME

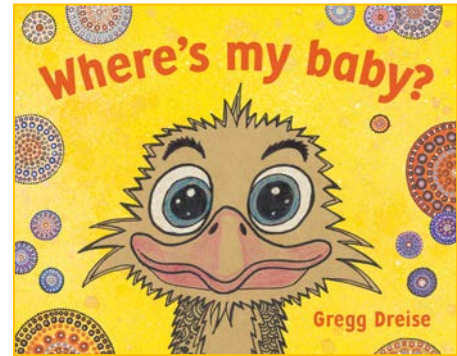
## Where's my baby?

by Gregg Dreise

Published by Magabala Books

*Where's my baby?* by Gregg Dreise is a board book that encourages young readers to learn new adjectives in English and the names of iconic Australian animals in the First Nations language, Gamilaraay, in an enjoyable way.

This book includes Gamilaraay language.



Themes: Babies, Australian animals, Aboriginal

**Rare and interesting words/concepts:** spikey, scaly, feathery, fluffy, hard, soft, bump, thump, wriggling, ouch, smile.

### Key Message for Parents | The First Five Years Last a Lifetime

- Learning about language happens through books, songs, conversations that introduce words in meaningful ways.
- Sharing books and stories builds a strong literacy foundation right from the start.
- Holding and handling books develops fine motor skills, concentration, and independent learning.
- The best learning occurs in nurturing, safe, connected experiences with caregivers.

### Australian Early Years Learning Framework | Outcome 1: Children develop their emerging autonomy, interdependence, resilience, and sense of agency.

Educators can support children's learning to be open to new challenges and discoveries through:

- providing a safe, predictable, and welcoming environment where the child is supported
- encouraging new experiences within the child's own level of comfort, acknowledging fears and concerns, and offering emotional support with positive language and encouragement.
- demonstrating serve and return interactions, to guide caregivers in picking up on early communication.
- Sing and say words clearly, repeating and demonstrating to connect concepts to language.

## Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

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.

### Good Morning

*Good morning to you  
Good morning to you  
Good morning everybody  
and welcome to you!*



## Song

### Native Animal Song



*I can be a kangaroo  
Can you, can you?  
I can be a kangaroo, can you be one too?  
Jump kangaroo jump.*

*I can be an emu  
Can you, can you?  
I can be an emu, can you be one too?  
Run emu run.*



*I can be a snake  
Can you, Can you?  
I can be a snake, can you be one too?  
Slide snake slide.*

## 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 families to sit where they can see the pictures, as you will need them to watch closely!

## During Reading

- Introduce the name of the book, author, and illustrator.
- Ask the families to join in as you find things in the book, naming the animals.
- Be intrigued and model engagement with the text, through looking interested in what they discover and check the children are following along.

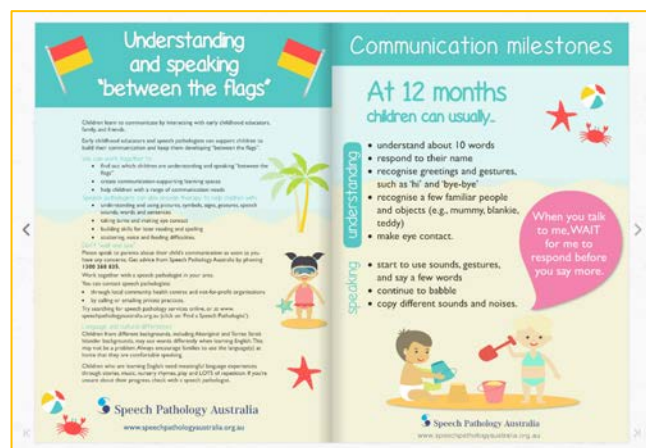
## After Reading

- Reflect on the story. *TIP: there are lots of descriptive words, encourage the caregivers to use lots of descriptive words in their day-to-day interactions with baby.*
- Allow time for the families to talk to their children. Suggest talking about how things feel, naming things like soft skin, hard chair,
- All communication from baby is important and should be responded to.

## Communication Milestones

At 12 months  
children can usually...

- understand about 10 words
- respond to their name
- recognise greetings and gestures, such as 'hi' and 'bye-bye'
- recognise a few familiar people and objects (e.g., mummy, blankie, teddy)
- make eye contact.
- start to use sounds, gestures, and say a few words
- continue to babble
- copy different sounds and noises.



These Communication Milestones handouts can be downloaded to share with families.

Source: **Speech Pathology Australia Communication Milestones**  
<https://tinyurl.com/38r996jw>



### Read

- Visit the Raising Literacy Australia website and find more book recommendations under Featured Stories. You can search by age – books for babies.
- Borrow board books from the other libraries.
- 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.
- Take a book with you everywhere. Books are language tools, like a toy is a tool for play.

### Sing

- Singing slows down language so enables sounds in words 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.
- Nursery Rhymes are essential pre-literacy tools for building understanding of rhyme, a foundation literacy skill.

### Talk

- Baby brains are wired for oral communication.
- Vocabulary knowledge is the biggest predictor of future literacy success.
- Talk about different kinds of textures, rough, smooth, spikey, hard, soft.
- Demonstrate the serve and return model of communication, where baby is acknowledged in back and forth interactions, with smiles and sounds to match theirs.

### Play

- Use colored scarves, tissues, or material to play with and play Peek a boo.
- Have sensory experiences available for touching.
- When we play, we talk, when we talk, we learn words. Describe everything you and baby are doing to build functional language – the words we use every day.



## Goodbye

Conclude the session with some suggestions of books that parents might want to share with their children. Raising Literacy Australia 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:

- **Look Baby** by Janeen Brian and Renee Trembl
- **My First Australian Baby Animals** by Fiona Bowden
- **Aussie Water Babies** by Julia Murray
- **That's Not My Kangaroo** by Fiona Watt

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

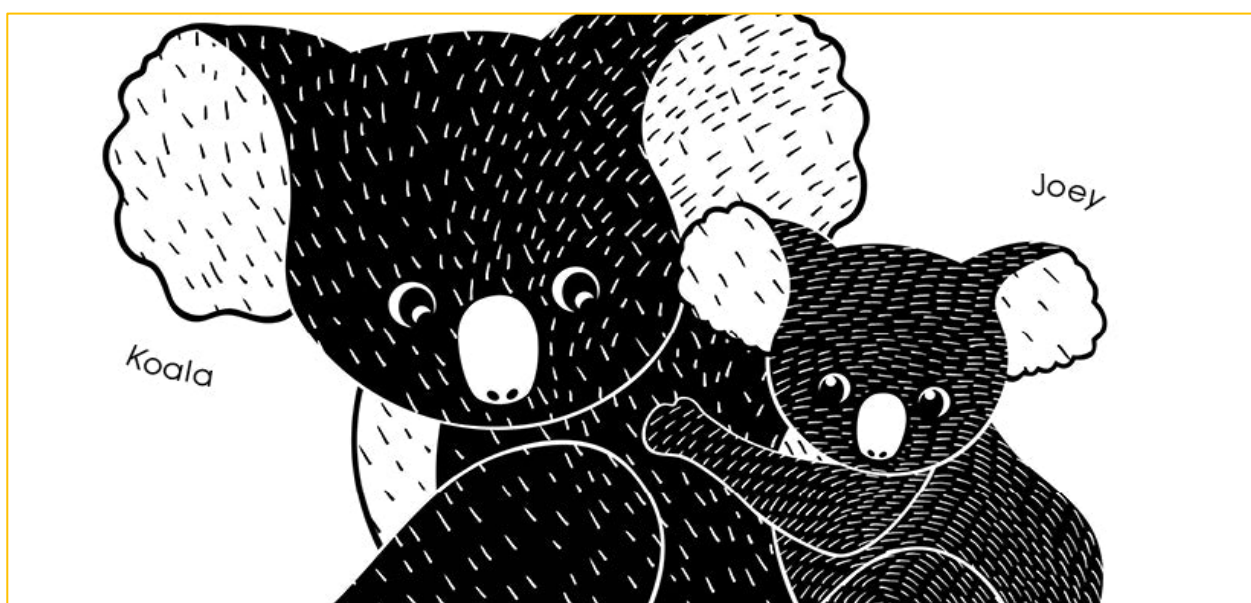
Depending on the size of your group, you may wish to insert each child's name in the place of 'you' as it develops a more personal relationship between yourself, the child, and the family.

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



*My First Australian Baby Animals by Fiona Bowden*