

Knowledge area:



Food Gathering

TEACHING NOTES





My Home in Kakadu (Video)

Text type: narrative, written, online, multimodal

VISUAL STIMULUS FOCUS

My Home in Kakadu is a contemporary cultural story from a traditional owner of the Kakadu region that takes you on a journey through the amazing landscapes of Kakadu National Park. Learn about weather seasons, bush foods and hunting skills still alive in modern Australia.

PRIOR TO VIEWING

-  Introduce the *My Home in Kakadu* video to the students.
-  Start the video on the website.
-  To engage your students, pause the story after the first 15 seconds on the cover of the book.
-  Ask the students:
 - What type of landscape or setting is on the front cover?
 - What makes you think this?
 - What clues does the front cover give you about what type of story it is?

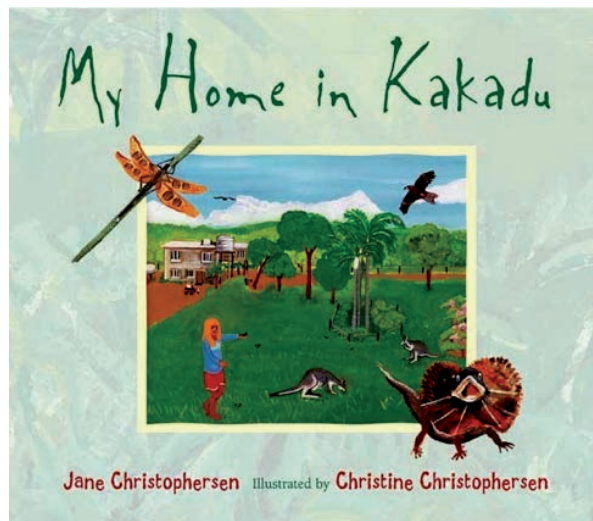
Background

- Discuss the commonly known four seasons with the students. Explain that the four main weather seasons (spring, summer, autumn and winter) originated from Europe, where the seasons are more distinct, so four seasons are appropriate there.
- Discuss why Aboriginal people of Kakadu recognise six seasons instead of four. Explain that Australia is a vast country and is very different to Europe — our weather is not the same all over the country.
- Aboriginal people had descriptions of the seasons — for example, a season when they hunted different types of food because the food sources were more specific and available; and the seasons that had straight down or knock 'em down rains, or mist and fogs.

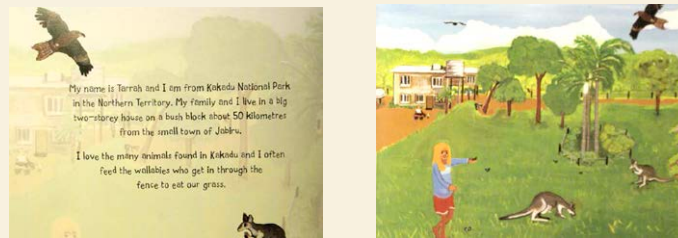
SHARED VIEWING

My Home in Kakadu is a narrative told in the first person. It is written by respected Bunitj Elder Jane Christophersen through the eyes of her granddaughter, and is illustrated by Christine Christophersen. In the story, Tarrah goes out with her family gathering bush tucker, fishing and hunting. The story is read by Torres Strait Islander man Mr Charlie Jia (*Jie-a*).

Watch the video with the students. Pause the story at the indicated times for discussion with the students before continuing. Note the times of particular events in the story for later discussion.

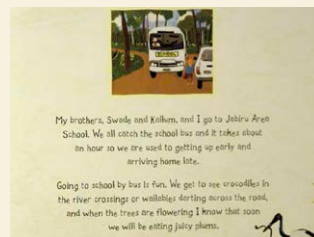


23 SEC



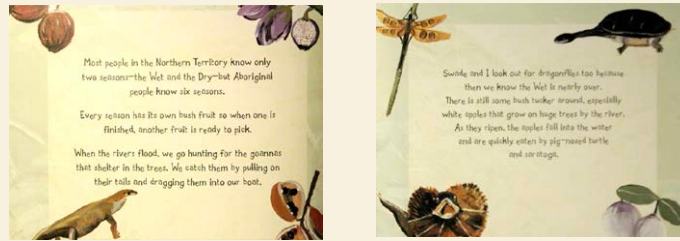
We are introduced to Tarrah (the storyteller), and the geographic location of the story.

41 SEC



Tarrah tells us where she lives and highlights the first weather indicator of flowering trees in the story. These tell her that the plums are ripe to eat.

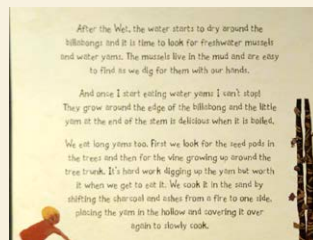
1 MIN 10 SEC



The story explains that Aboriginal people who live in Kakadu recognise and follow six different weather seasons, not the four seasons most people in Australia follow.

(Explain to the students that Aboriginal people look to the native bush fruit plants to alert them when a different season is coming. Ask the students how they can tell the weather is changing. Give them the examples of flowers coming out in spring or ants coming into the house when it is about to rain.) *Note: Saratoga is a native freshwater fish.*

2 MIN 10 SEC



Tarrah mentions the Wet (heavy rain season).

(Ask the students what they think Tarrah means when she says 'the Wet'.)

2 MIN 32 SEC



Tarrah talks about some of her favourite bush foods, including yams. Yams are similar to potatoes, and Aboriginal people have been eating them for thousands of years.

3 MIN

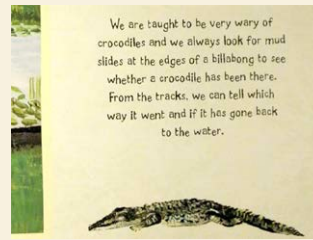
My two grandmothers are traditional owners of Kakadu and they are elders of their clans. Nana Jane is from the Bunitj clan and Nana Violet is from the Murrumburr clan. She speaks Gundjehmi and teaches us the language names for the plants and animals.

Nana Violet and Nana Jane are important teachers and they show us the different tracks made by buffaloes, pigs, horses, dingoes, goannas and snakes. They also teach us to recognise the sounds of the bush, like the eerie howling of a dingo at night.

Tarrah introduces us to both of her grandmothers, who are traditional owners of the Kakadu area. Traditional owners are Aboriginal people who have continuously lived on a particular section of land for thousands of years. They are the keepers of the stories, sacred sites, songs and language.

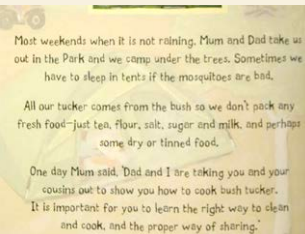
Nana Jane is from the Bunitj (*Bun-itch*) clan and Nana Violet is from the Murrumburr (*Maa-rum-berr*) clan. A clan is a different kinship group within a tribal group.

3 MIN 41 SEC



We learn that Tarrah and her brothers have many teachers — her nanas (as we heard earlier) and also her dad. Tarrah's dad tries to show his children the dangers that are in the bush and to teach them to be aware of them, especially signs that crocodiles might be lurking about.

4 MIN 27 SEC



Tarrah is excited because her mum and dad are taking her and her cousins out to find and eat bush tucker.

(Ask your students if they know what bush tucker is. Explain that bush tucker is a general term used to describe foods gathered or hunted from where they grow or live naturally — usually in the bush.)

5 MIN 19 SEC

Finally we reached Red Lily and pulled up at the edge of the billabong. Us girls went straight down to poke in the mud with our digging sticks. Soon my cousin Charlotte called out, 'I've got one,' as she dug in the mud and pulled out a long-necked turtle.

Louisa, my other cousin, caught three file snakes. We use crowbars to prod for the snakes in the water, under the

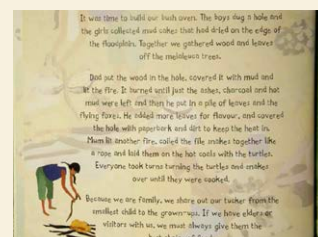
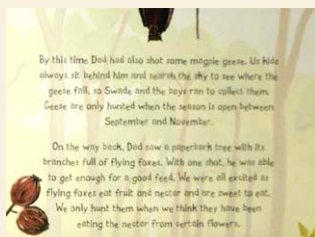
We hear the term 'billabong' mentioned. A billabong is a stagnant pool of water attached to a waterway. Billabongs are usually formed when the path of a creek or river changes, leaving the former branch with a dead end. The word is derived from two Aboriginal words from the Wiradjuri (*Weir-rad-jury*) people of central west New South Wales: *billa* meaning 'creek' and *bong* meaning 'dead'. The word billabong has become part of the Australian language.

5 MIN 35 SEC



Tarrah and her brothers learn that file snakes are not venomous, and are just one of the reptiles, animals and plants that are delicious bush tucker for Tarrah and her family.

5 MIN 49 SEC



By taking Tarrah, her brother and her cousins out to show them how to hunt, catch and cook bush tucker, Tarrah's mum and dad are handing down the traditional knowledge they have been given to ensure it will go on forever.

7 MIN 10 SEC



Tarrah talks about how food is shared between all members of the group. In Aboriginal culture, food sharing is practised with strict protocols and rationed out according to the rules of the group. For example, the Elders would receive first portion of the choicest cuts. An Elder is an older member of an Aboriginal group who shares their knowledge and experience with the younger generations.

7 MIN 46 SEC



We are told about the seasonal calendar of Kakadu, including each of the season's indicators and language names.

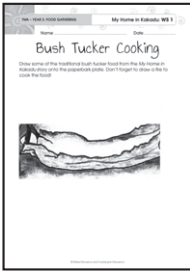
AFTER VIEWING DISCUSSION

- Discuss the location and setting of the story — is it urban, outback, remote, country, seaside or desert? Where is Kakadu?
 - Ask the students:
 - What are some of the animals you see on the way to school?
 - Would you enjoy travelling two hours on a bus each day like Tarrah and her brothers?
 - Why do you think the Aboriginal people in the story ate things like goannas, snakes and turtles? (Answer: This was all there was to eat for thousands of years.
- So the local Aboriginal people became excellent at hunting and preparing these types of foods.)
- The bush tucker eaten in the story is not unusual to Tarrah and her family. What is the most unusual food you have ever eaten?
 - Do you think that the food Tarrah and her family ate was nutritious and healthy? (Answer: Aboriginal people were one of the healthiest groups on Earth before colonisation. Their diet was made up of two-thirds roots and vegetables and the rest was meat.)

- Tarrah’s dad used a gun to hunt some of the animals. What do you think he would have used before guns were around? (Answer: Tarrah’s dad would have traditionally used a spear, boomerang or nets made from vines.)
- The author of *My Home in Kakadu*, Jane Christophersen, is a respected Elder of the Bunitj group of the Kakadu region. Explain

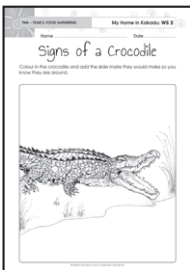
to the students that an Elder is an older member of an Aboriginal group who shares their knowledge and experience with the younger generations. Use the ‘Welcome to Country’ resource to discuss the importance of ‘Welcome to Country’ and how Elders are involved in these protocols. (See the *Additional Resources* section.)

SUPPORTING WORKSHEETS



Worksheet 1: Bush Tucker Cooking

A drawing activity where students draw some bush tucker from the *My Home in Kakadu* story onto the paperbark plate.



Worksheet 2: Signs of a Crocodile

A colour-in and drawing activity where students colour in the crocodile and draw the signs to show a crocodile is lurking about.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE



Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Protocols: Welcome to Country

<http://www.crackerjackeducation.com.au/resources/aboriginal-and-tsi-protocols-welcome-to-country/>

CURRICULUM

HISTORY	
Content description	Elaboration
The importance of Country/Place to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples who belong to a local area (ACHASSK062)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> liasing with Community to identify original language groups of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples who belong to the local area and exploring the relationship between language, Country/Place and spirituality. (This is intended to be a local area study with a focus on one language group; however, if information or sources are not readily available, another representative area may be studied.) listening to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Elders, grandparents and older community members tell stories associated with the local language groups and the land they belong to discussing when to use 'Acknowledgement of Country' and 'Welcome to Country' at ceremonies and events to respectfully recognise the Country/Place and traditional custodians of the land, sea, waterways and sky
SCIENCE	
Content description	Elaboration
Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions (ACSHE051)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> researching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's knowledge of the local natural environment, such as the characteristics of plants and animals

KNOWLEDGE AREAS AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

History

My Home in Kakadu is written by respected Bunitj Elder Jane Christophersen through the eyes of her granddaughter, and is illustrated by Christine Christophersen. In the story, Tarrah goes out with her family gathering bush tucker, fishing and hunting. (ACHASSK062)

Science

Aboriginal people who live in Kakadu recognise six different weather seasons (not the four common European seasons recognised in Australia). Aboriginal people look to the native bush fruit plants to tell them when a different season is coming. Tarrah tells us where she lives and highlights the first weather indicator in the story of flowering trees that tell her that the plums are ripe to eat. (ACSHE051)