

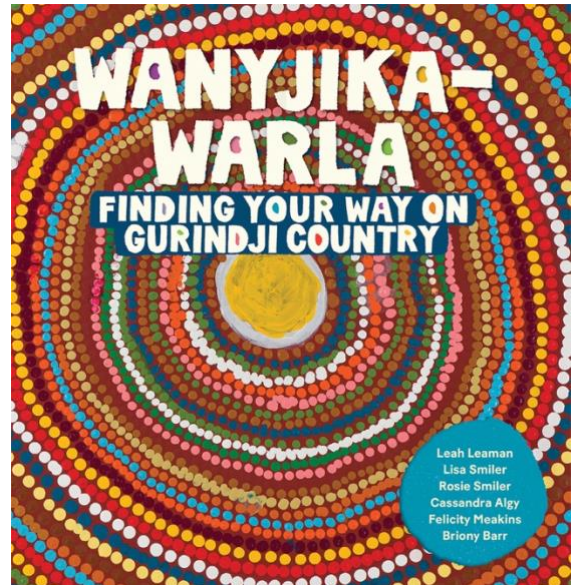
## Teacher notes

# *Wanyjika-warla*

Co-authors Leah Leaman, Lisa Smiler, Rosie Smiler, Cassandra Algy, Felicity Meakins and Briony Barr

Teacher notes by Jordyn Green (Wiradjuri, Ngemba and Paakantji woman)

Recommended for ages 7–12, with strongest curriculum links in Years 4 and 5.



## SYNOPSIS

From the authors of the award-winning *Tamarra*, *Wanyjika-warla* is inspired by the complexity of Gurindji navigational language, deep connections to Country and the incredible ability of some Gurindji People to sense the Earth's magnetic field. The book incorporates ideas and experience from Gurindji everyday life as well as Western science.

The book is illustrated by 35 Gurindji artists, and is written in Gurindji, Gurindji Kriol and English. The narrative embeds the language of navigation and magneto-reception within a story of grandmother, grandchild and their family going fishing together, and highlights the importance of paying attention and making use of all our human senses to understand our place in the world.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Wanyjika-warla* is a collaboration between over 35 Gurindji artists and co-authors Leah Leaman, Lisa Smiler, Rosie Smiler, Cassandra Algy, Felicity Meakins and Briony Barr.

A full breakdown of the contributors is below:

### WORDS

Leah Leaman  
Lisa Smiler  
Rosie Smiler  
Cassandra Algy  
Felicity Meakins  
Briony Barr

### ARTWORK AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Topsy Dodd Ngarnjal  
Rosemary Johnson  
Leah Leaman  
Pauline Ryan  
Magdalene Winbye

Margaret Winbye  
Mary Smiler  
Rosie Smiler  
Joanne Stevens  
Sandra Patterson  
Annemaree Reynolds  
Glenda Edwards  
Pamela Morris  
Trisha Morris  
Narelle Morris  
Dylena Miller  
Kyliah Herbert  
Caroline Jimmy  
Joyce Anderson  
Cassandra Algy

Merrilyn Frith  
Amanda Newry  
Cazaria Vincent  
Rosemary Bernard  
Tiannah Bernard  
Brenda L Croft  
Nikita Smiler  
Kirsty Smiler  
Cynthia Law  
Samaiya Frith  
Briony Barr  
Nicole Zicchino  
Kalkaringi School students

## ABOUT THE BOOK

- The second book following *Tamarra: A Story of Termites on Gurindji Country*, *Wanyjika-warla: Finding Your Way on Gurindji Country* continues to share Gurindji knowledge, language and Country through a rich, place-based story.
- *Wanyjika-warla* entwines Western and Gurindji knowledge of navigation, directions, the Earth's magnetic field, and food and medicine in Country through the retelling of an everyday activity in Gurindji community life: going fishing at the river. It will leave readers saying 'Wow! I didn't know that!'.
- The story is spread across five chapters: Rangkarr (Sunrise); Wuyurrunkarra (Fishing); Mikilyi (Brain); Yawu (Fish) and Ngurra (Home).
- Each page of the story contains 3–4 sentences in both English and Gurindji. Gurindji Kriol is used for English words that don't exist in Gurindji.
- Every page of the story is also accompanied by a 'Did You Know?' bubble containing cultural and scientific information behind the story.
- At the beginning of the book, readers are introduced to the languages used throughout the story, including Gurindji, Gurindji Kriol and English. This section includes a glossary of Gurindji words, phonetic spellings to support pronunciation, and a QR code so readers can listen to the story in Gurindji and Gurindji Kriol.
- The back section of the book features further information including the history of Gurindji Country and Gurindji Language (and how it has evolved over time), and the collaborative process behind the making of the book.
- Each page of the story features an artwork painted by Gurindji artists, alongside photographs that help bring the story, Country, language and knowledge to life.

## KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

**Learning areas:** English; Mathematics; Humanities and Social Sciences (History and Geography); Science; The Arts (Visual Art); Technology (Design and Technology); Health and Physical Education

**Cross-curriculum priority area:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultures and Histories

**General capabilities:** Intercultural Understanding; Critical and Creative Thinking; Literacy; Personal and Social Capability; Numeracy

## THEMES

### Theme 1: Language shapes how Gurindji people understand, describe and move through Country

- *Wanyjika-warla* includes Gurindji, Gurindji Kriol and English words on most pages, showing how languages can carry different ways of seeing and understanding the world (specific examples of this are on pp. 7, 17, 31, 49, 70 and 71).
- Gurindji language uses compass points instead of 'left' and 'right', with many words used to describe position and direction (explained on pp. 7, 17 and 71).
- Gurindji Kriol shows how language has changed and developed over time while still maintaining connections to Country, culture and community (pp. 18 and 69).

### Theme 2: Gurindji people use directions, mapping and observation to navigate Country

- Sun position, shadows and close observation of the environment help people understand where they are facing and how to move through Country (pp. 10, 34, 48, 49, 58, 62 and 66).
- The book also explores the Earth's magnetic field and the possibility that humans can sense direction in the same way a compass can (pp. 37–42 and 71–75).
- Gurindji art often shows Country from above, like an aerial map, and can represent places, pathways, water sources and important features of Country (pp. 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 22, 24–25, 35, 47, 48, 55, 56, 60 and 64).

### Theme 3: Gurindji life is shaped by strong relationships with Country, family, kinship and culture

- The story follows a family journey to the river: Grandmother makes damper, the family picks up Mother, they gather medicinal plants to help her illness, catch a swordfish, cook it on the coals and return home (pp. 10–37, 46–66).
- The names for family members as well as skin names show the importance of family and kinship structures in Gurindji community life (pp. 14, 17, 21, 31 and 65).
- Country provides food and medicine, and Gurindji people continue to care for, learn from and remain connected to Country (pp. 24, 27, 31, 46, 50, 53, 54, 61, 62 and 70).
- The book shares both traditional and contemporary Gurindji art practices, including rock art (pp. 50 and 70) and colourful acrylic paintings on canvas (all the included art).

### GUIDANCE FOR TEACHERS

- Use the following websites to understand the difference between an Aboriginal traditional language, Kriol and Aboriginal English:
  - Language: <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/languages-alive>
  - Kriol: <https://www.ilf.org.au/news/mela-langguj-our-language-kriol>
  - Aboriginal English: <https://researchimpact.uwa.edu.au/research-impact-stories/its-all-in-the-yarning/>
- Scan the QR code on page 3 to listen to the story in Gurindji and Gurindji Kriol. This will help with your pronunciation as you read the book.

### COMPREHENSION

#### Before reading

- Where is Gurindji Country on the [AIATSIS Map of Australia](#)?
- How do you usually give directions? What words do you use?
- Why might knowing directions be important when travelling across Country?

#### During reading

- What do you notice about the artworks on pages 12 and 15? What do you think the artwork on page 12 depicts?
- What do you think the artwork on page 22 shows?
- Why do you think the leftover sawfish was wrapped in paperbark on page 58?

#### After reading

- Why do you think the book is titled *Wanyjika-warla* (which translates to *which way*)?
- What was the most interesting thing you learnt from this book and why?
- How did the artwork, photographs and text work together to help tell the story?
- How did this book change or grow your understanding of navigation, mapping or direction?
- Why is it important for First Nations knowledge and Western science knowledge to work together?

### WRITING ACTIVITIES

- **Create a language wall using Gurindji words from the book.** Allocate Gurindji words to pairs or small groups of students. Each pair or group creates a glossary card that includes the Gurindji word, phonetic spelling, English translation and a picture. Students can take turns pronouncing and explaining their word before adding it to a classroom language wall.
- **Write a short story using compass directions.** Students write a short story where characters use 'north', 'south', 'east' and 'west' instead of 'left' and 'right' to give directions or move through a place. Older students can also include more precise directions such as 'north-west', 'south-east', 'north-east' and 'south-west'.
- **Turn your story into a script for a play.** Students use the story they wrote in the previous task and rewrite it as a simple script. They should include character names, dialogue, actions

and stage directions. Encourage students to keep using directional language in the dialogue, such as 'Walk north towards the river' or 'The track turns west near the big tree'.

- **Create an information report about Kunpulu.** Students research Kunpulu, also known as sawfish, and write an information report using headings such as 'appearance', 'habitat', 'diet', 'life cycle', 'threats' and 'interesting facts'. Students can also include a labelled diagram or fact box.
- **Write a recipe for damper.** Students write a clear procedural text explaining how to make damper. They should include a title, ingredients, equipment, method and serving suggestion. This could also be linked to the beginning of the story, where Grandmother makes damper before the family travels to the river.
- **Create a presentation about navigation, Earth or animal senses.** Students research one related topic, such as Earth's magnetic field, the layers of the Earth, animal navigation or animals that can sense Earth's magnetic field. They present their learning to the class using a poster, slideshow, speech or model.
- **Create a 'Wow! I didn't know that!' fact page.** Students choose 3–5 new things they learned from *Wanyjika-warla* and turn them into a mini fact page, poster or booklet. Each fact should include a short explanation and a picture, diagram or symbol to help show the idea.

## CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- **Make damper together as a class.** After students write their damper recipe, follow one recipe together as a class or use a simple shared recipe. Students can compare the written procedure with the hands-on process and reflect on whether the instructions were clear, accurate and easy to follow. Connect this back to the beginning of the story, where Grandmother makes damper before the family travels to the river.
- **Create an aerial map of your school.** Students view the school from above using memory, observation or an online satellite map. They draw an aerial map showing important places such as classrooms, playgrounds, pathways, trees, gardens, gates and gathering areas.
- **Turn your aerial map into an artwork.** Students use their own unique style to turn their school map into an artwork. This activity should focus on representing place, pathways and important features from above, without copying Aboriginal art styles, symbols or techniques.
- **Use a compass to explore direction.** Students use a class set of compasses to walk around the school grounds and identify 'north', 'south', 'east' and 'west'. Compare the compass directions with the position of the sun at that time of day and discuss how both can help people understand direction.
- **Observe how shadows change throughout the day.** Students observe the shadows of trees, poles, outdoor benches or other fixed objects at different times of the day. They can draw, measure or photograph the shadows and discuss how the sun's position changes what they see.

## RELATED READING

*Tamarra: A Story of Termites on Gurindji Country*

Violet Wadrill, Topsy Dodd Ngarnjal, Leah Leaman, Cecelia Edwards, Cassandra Algy, Felicity Meakins, Briony Barr and Gregory Crocetti

*Freedom Day: Vincent Lingiari and the Story of the Wave Hill Walk-Off*

Rosie Smiler, Thomas Mayo and Samantha Campbell

*The First Scientists*  
Corey Tutt and Blak Douglas

*Ask Aunty: Bush Survival Skills*  
Aunty Munya Andrews and Charmaine Ledden-Lewis

*Ask Aunty: Seasons*  
Aunty Munya Andrews and Charmaine Ledden-Lewis

*The Trees*  
Victor Steffensen and Sandra Steffensen

*Muttonfish Magic*  
Aunty Ruth Simms, Lucy Robertson and Jasmine Seymour

## CURRICULUM LINKS

This book has the strongest curriculum links to the [Australian Curriculum V9](#) for:

### Year 3

|             |            |                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HASS        | AC9HS3K04  | The ways First Nations Australians in different parts of Australia are interconnected with Country/Place.                                 |
| Mathematics | AC9M3SP02  | Interpret and create two-dimensional representations of familiar environments, locating key landmarks and objects relative to each other. |
| Visual Arts | AC9AVA4E02 | Explore how First Nations Australians use visual arts to communicate their connection to and responsibility for Country/Place.            |

### Year 4

|             |            |                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HASS        | AC9HS4K01  | The diversity of First Nations Australians, their social organisation and their continuous connection to Country/Place.                                           |
| HASS        | AC9HS4K05  | The importance of environments, including natural vegetation and water sources, to people and animals in Australia and on another continent.                      |
| Mathematics | AC9M4SP02  | Create and interpret grid reference systems using grid references and directions to locate and describe positions and pathways.                                   |
| Science     | AC9S4U03   | Identify how forces can be exerted by one object on another and investigate the effect of frictional, gravitational and magnetic forces on the motion of objects. |
| The Arts    | AC9AVA4E02 | Explore how First Nations Australians use visual arts to communicate their connection to and responsibility for Country/Place.                                    |

### Year 5

|      |           |                                                                                                                                                              |
|------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| HASS | AC9HS5K05 | The management of Australian environments, including managing severe weather events such as bushfires, floods, droughts or cyclones, and their consequences. |
|------|-----------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

|             |            |                                                                                                                                                                          |
|-------------|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Mathematics | AC9M5SP02  | Construct a grid coordinate system that uses coordinates to locate positions within a space; use coordinates and directional language to describe position and movement. |
| Science     | AC9S5U03   | Identify sources of light, recognise that light travels in a straight path and describe how shadows are formed and light can be reflected and refracted.                 |
| Science     | AC9S5I01   | Pose investigable questions to identify patterns and test relationships and make reasoned predictions.                                                                   |
| The Arts    | AC9AVA6E02 | Explore ways that First Nations Australians use visual arts to continue and revitalise cultures.                                                                         |

#### Year 6

|          |            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|----------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Science  | AC9S6U02   | Describe the movement of Earth and other planets relative to the sun and model how Earth's tilt, rotation on its axis and revolution around the sun relate to cyclic observable phenomena, including variable day and night length. |
| The Arts | AC9AVA6E02 | Explore ways that First Nations Australians use visual arts to continue and revitalise cultures.                                                                                                                                    |