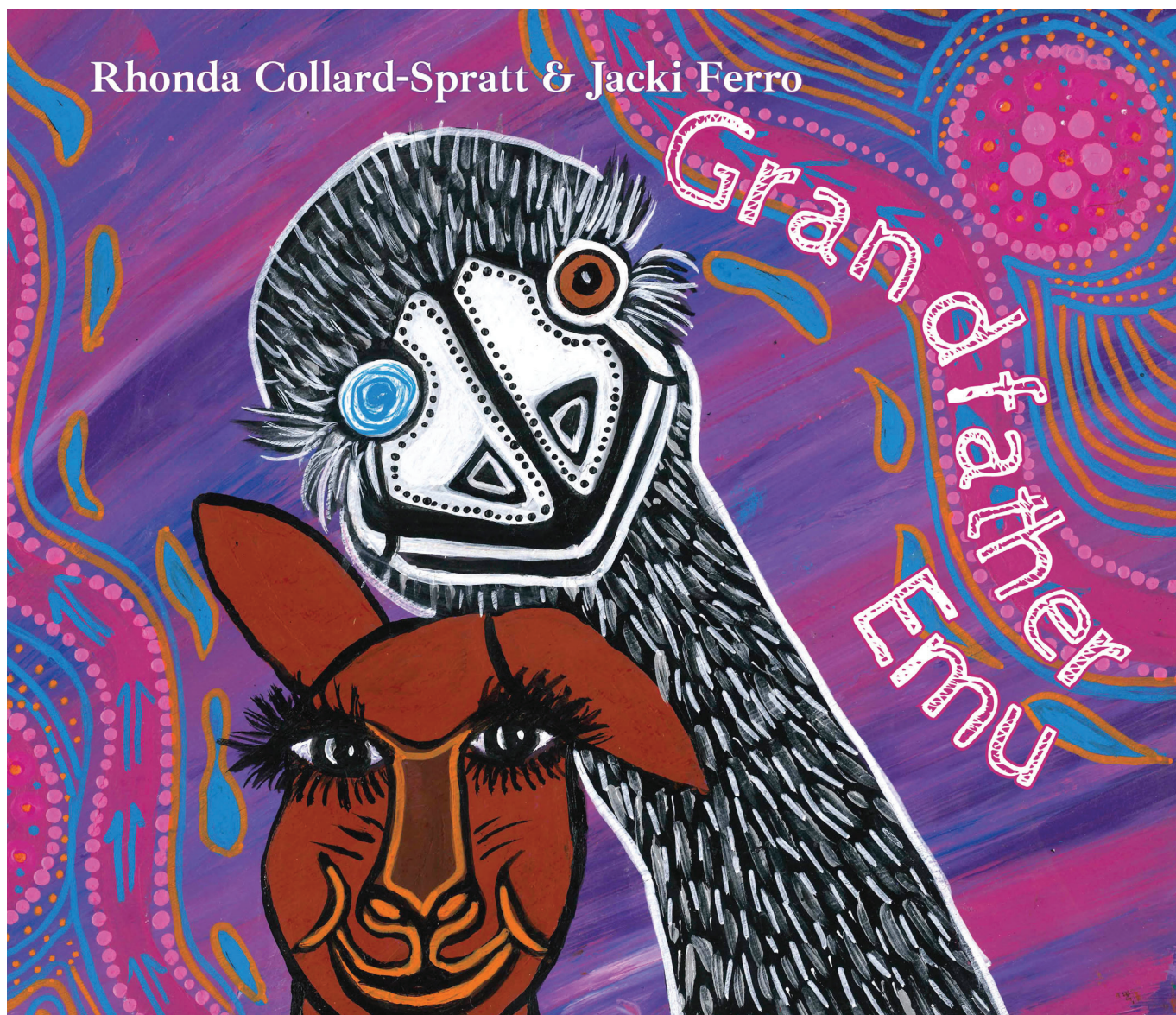


Rhonda Collard-Spratt & Jacki Ferro



Teacher Notes

prepared by Jacki Ferro



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Overview

Poor old Grandfather Emu can hardly walk or see. Of all the bush animals, who will lead old Weitj to the creek for food and water? In this fun Aboriginal Dreaming story, children learn how Mother Yonga Kangaroo got her pouch, and the importance of taking the time to help.

A heartfelt and spiritual story that includes terms from the Noongar language of Western Australia, *Grandfather Emu and How the Kangaroo got her Pouch* combines simple prose with lively illustrations that capture the shape and feel of Australia's landscape and animals. The result is an authentic Aboriginal story that honours our First Nations people and their lore, and presents new Dreamings for future generations.

- Beautifully presented, simple prose for children to easily read and understand; ideal for reluctant readers
- Rich and colourful Aboriginal artwork teaches children unique characteristics and habits of Australian bush animals
- Terms from the Noongar language of Western Australia keep this language alive
- The Spirit of the Dreaming — creator of all things of the earth, sea and sky — is a key character
- A bonus song summarises the storyline and major themes

Themes

- Respect your elders
- Take the time to help
- Australian bush animals, their unique characteristics and habits
- Ancient Aboriginal teachings, culture, and language

Audience and Writing Style

Grandfather Emu and How the Kangaroo got her Pouch was written by Aunty Rhonda Collard-Spratt and Jacki Ferro, and illustrated by Aunty Rhonda, during the 2020 pandemic. The Dreaming story is narrated around the campfire by big Yonga Koomba Kangaroo, in third person, past tense. To test the bush animals, the Great Spirit of the Dreaming turns into a poor old Grandfather Emu, named Weitj (say 'way-ch'). In turn, Weitj asks the numbat, the crow, and the goanna to help him to the creek for food and water. Each character is too busy, too selfish, or too lazy to help the old emu. Finally, Mother Yonga Kangaroo hops up and takes old Weitj to the creek. This book is suitable to read to an early childhood audience, but best suits readers aged 6-10 years. *Grandfather Emu and How the Kangaroo got her Pouch* provides a gateway to discuss with pride Aboriginal culture and the Dreamtime and Aboriginal languages, and to learn more about native bush animals. It can foster children's writing, and encourage them to perform their own stories, songs, and plays. In art, they can paint native animals, and scenes from the Australian bush.

About the Co-Authors and Illustrator

Yamatji-Noongar storyteller, poet, performer, and artist **Aunty Rhonda Collard-Spratt** is a respected representative of the Stolen Generations. Born in Carnarvon, Western Australia, Aunty Rhonda is proud to showcase the animals and landscape of her home Country in her artwork, and to pass on this new Dreaming story, which is based on ancient teachings.



Brisbane-based writer and editor **Jacki Ferro** has helped many people publish their life stories through her business, Raw Memoirs. Jacki and Aunty Rhonda first teamed up to co-write Rhonda's best-selling life story, *Alice's Daughter: Lost Mission Child* (Aboriginal Studies Press, 2017). Jacki is qualified in public relations, community development, and writing, editing and publishing.

Aunty Rhonda and Jacki want to provide an example of Reconciliation in action, and hope that, through primary schools, *Grandfather Emu and How the Kangaroo got her Pouch* becomes an important tool in further uniting black and white Australia.

For resources, forthcoming titles in the Spirit of the Dreaming series, and to buy the read-along *Grandfather Emu – The Audiobook*, narrated by Aunty Rhonda Collard-Spratt, visit www.spiritofthedreaming.com.



Links to the Australian Curriculum

Grandfather Emu and How the Kangaroo got her Pouch and suggested classroom activities are primarily relevant to the following areas of the Australian Curriculum:

Learning area

English

Science

The Arts

Year level

Years F-5

Years 1-5

Years F-5

Cross-Curriculum Priorities

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

Years F-5

General Capabilities

Intercultural understanding

Literacy

Personal and social capability

Supporting Educational Frameworks

Reconciliation Action Plans

Years F-5

Classroom Ideas

English

- The authors open the story with all the main animal characters at sunset. Follow the timeline of the story, and note how, as big Yonga Koomba Kangaroo tells the story around the campfire, it becomes set a long time ago, and then follows a timeline through a day, sunset, night, morning, and the final day. How does this timeline, through both words and pictures, make you want to keep reading? What do we learn about the bush animals at different times of day? Examples include:
 - ◆ Sunset: This is the kookaburras' job — to call the sun up every morning, and to call it back down every night-time, sitting in their favourite tree.
 - ◆ Night: The Yonga kangaroo family shared stories by the fire.
 - ◆ Going back in time: Koora Koora, a long time ago...
 - ◆ Sunset: 'I must get my little ones back to the hollow log for the night.' The numbat family walked off into the horizon.
 - ◆ Night: Grandfather Weitj slept through the night.
 - ◆ Morning: Kaarda Goanna hissed. 'I think I'll camp on this log and rest a while, warming up in the sun.'
- Map the plot of *Grandfather Emu*. Use a story map to identify the main components of the narrative, such as the setting, characters, complications, and resolution.
- With a friend, write your own story about an Australian bush animal. Plan, write, and illustrate this story together, or act it out for the class, bringing the sounds of the Australian bush and its animals to life.
- Think up a new Aboriginal Dreaming story about how a bush animal came to be, such as 'How the Echidna got its Spikes', or 'How the Lizard got its Blue Tongue'.
- Re-write the ending of this story; for example, if the Dingo Dwert caught Grandfather Emu.
- How would you describe the different personalities of the numbat, the crow, and the goanna? What advice would you give to Mother Numbat, Mister Wardong the crow, and Kaarda Goanna about helping others?
- How would you describe Mother Yonga Kangaroo? What do you think of the wish she made at the end?
- How do the illustrations help tell the story of *Grandfather Emu*? Which painting is your favourite and why?
- Examine how the different sounds made by the characters enhance the story. Write a piece summarising your research.
- How can you tell that this story is written and illustrated from an Aboriginal person's perspective? Write a paragraph that explains your thoughts.

The Arts

- Examine the artistic style of Aunty Rhonda Collard-Spratt's paintings in *Grandfather Emu*. How would you describe her style? How are her paintings effective in displaying the different animal characters and the scenery?
- Paint an Australian bush animal in its natural habitat, doing something that is unique to that animal.
- Similar to the opening painting in *Grandfather Emu*, paint an Australian landscape at sunrise or sunset, with the animals that would live there, painted in black in the foreground.
- Create illustrations to accompany your own Aboriginal Dreaming story (see above) about an Australian bush animal, or create animal masks or hand puppets, and act out the story for your class.
- In pairs, write a new song based on *Grandfather Emu*. Try making up your own tune.

Science

- Research the unique characteristics, behaviours, and habitats of one or more of the animals featured in *Grandfather Emu*: emu, kangaroo, kookaburra, numbat, crow, goanna, and dingo. Present a poster or report on these animals. Include information about their appearance, diet, behaviour, habitat, and life cycle.

Cross-Curriculum Priorities and Supporting Educational Frameworks

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures and Reconciliation Action Plans (RAP) in Schools

- Connect with your local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, and invite an Elder to read *Grandfather Emu and How the Kangaroo got her Pouch* to your class. Ask the Elder to provide their thoughts on the story and bush animals, and to share words from their own people's language, in place of the Noongar terms.
- Invite your entire school class to together act out a scene or two from *Grandfather Emu*, either using costumes or face masks, or by creating hand puppets of the native bush animals. Perhaps, invite a local Elder to present a Welcome to Country, and a didgeridoo player to play and set the scene for the performance, for the wider community to enjoy.

Links to the Australian Curriculum

Year	Curriculum Area
F	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts (ACELT1783)• Retell familiar literary texts through performance, use of illustrations and images (ACELT1580)
1	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts (ACELT1584)
1	Science Biological Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Living things have a variety of external features (ACSSU017)
2	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (ACELT1587)
3	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create imaginative texts based on characters, settings and events from students' own and other cultures using visual features, for example, perspective, distance and angle (ACELT1601)

Year	Curriculum Area
4	<p>English</p> <p>Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example, character development and plot tension (ACELT1605) • Make connections between the ways different authors may represent similar storylines, ideas and relationships (ACELT1602) • Create literary texts that explore students' own experiences and imagining (ACELT1607)
4	<p>Biological Science</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living things have life cycles (ACSSU072)
5	<p>English</p> <p>Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways (ACELT1618) • Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY17014)
F-2	<p>The Arts</p> <p>Visual Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use and experiment with different materials, techniques, technologies and processes to make artworks (ACAVAM107) • Create and display artworks to communicate ideas to an audience (ACAVAM108)
3-4	<p>The Arts</p> <p>Visual Art</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ideas and artworks from different cultures and times, including artwork by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to use as inspiration for their own representations (ACAVAM110)