



Teacher Notes

My Lost Mob

Written and illustrated by Venetia Tyson

Teacher Notes prepared by Christina Wheeler

OVERVIEW

When an emu loses his mob, he embarks on a journey to find them. With the help of tracks as well as some other Australian animals, he is finally reunited with the other emus. This simple yet colourful story blends beautiful artwork with aspects of Aboriginal culture and the importance of a sense of belonging.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR

Venetia Tyson is a Quandamooka woman from the North Stradbroke Island area of Queensland. She has been involved in various community groups, complete a large mural, performed drama, played in a band and is now studying at university. *My Lost Mob* is Venetia's first book.

THEMES

Australian Animals

- The text includes many Australian animals including emus, kangaroos, lizards and cassowaries.

Aboriginal Culture

- Aspects of Aboriginal culture such as the importance of belonging, mobs, dancing and tracking are included in the text.

Lost and Found

- The simple tale of being lost but then found underpins the narrative.

WRITING STYLE

My Lost Mob is targeted at an early childhood audience. Its beautiful artwork combines seamlessly with the text to create a simple and fun story. Newly independent readers would easily be able to access this text.

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

These notes have been written in context with the Australian Curriculum. The appendix highlights a selection of relevant cross-curriculum priorities, general capabilities and content descriptors across a range of year levels that the following activities address.

CULTURAL NOTES

An effective way to include Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander information is to regionalise it within your curriculum. Educating your students about their own local history, bringing to life the Indigenous past of your region and using local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages (wherever possible) within the school and classroom context is a wonderful way to start.

In addition, consider the following ways in which to incorporate indigenous perspectives into the teaching of this resource:

- Learn more about the Aboriginal skill of tracking at the following website <http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/aboriginal-trackers>
- Use this website to learn more about the importance of dance to Aboriginal culture <http://www.abc.net.au/messageclub/duknow/stories/s1183165.htm>
- Visit the ABC's Message Club website for information about Indigenous culture, as well as interactive activities <http://www.abc.net.au/messageclub/>.
- Use the following website to find out about the symbols used in Aboriginal artwork, particularly animal tracks. http://www.aboriginal-dreamtime.net2go.info/Aboriginal/Aboriginal_Symbole.htm

CLASSROOM IDEAS

- Before reading, examine the cover carefully. What clues do we get from the cover about the story? How does the blurb prepare us for reading the text?
- Discuss the illustrations and the way in which they contribute to the story. How do they tell us more than the words alone? Why is it important that the audience 'reads the pictures' as well as the words?
- Have you ever been lost? Write a recount of this time. How did it feel when you were 'found' again?
- Discuss Venetia Tyson's use of colour in her illustrations. What do the different colours represent?
- What is a mob? Why is the emu so worried about finding its mob? How important is mob to Aboriginal culture? Discuss.
- Create a simple map or diagram to show where the emu travelled to find his mob. Use a key to show the different landscapes that the emu visited.
- Use the text to teach basic direct speech conventions, such as inverted commas.
- Learn more about the importance of dancing to Aboriginal culture. Consider inviting an indigenous group to share this practice with your class.
- Find out more about emus. Create a brochure, poster or infographic about these creatures, including their habitat, diet, behaviour and life cycle.
- Which is your favourite animal from *My Lost Mob*? Explain to a friend what you like about that animal. Visit the library and borrow a non-fiction book about that animal to find out more about it. You may also find information online. Have a class sharing session where students speak about that animal for a minute or two.
- Recreate some of the artwork in *My Lost Mob* and use as a classroom display.
- In small groups, perform this story to your class. Use actions to show what's happening in the text.
- Use the text to explore parts of sentences as well as the use of capital letters, commas and full stops.
- Using *My Lost Mob* as stimulus, choose another native Australian animal that might also get lost from its mob. What would their tracks look like? Create your own picture book about this animal getting lost.

- If using iPads, use an app such as *Explain Everything* to retell this story in your own words.
- Write a version of *My Lost Mob* as a poem or song.
- Learn more about the Aboriginal skill of tracking.
<http://australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/aboriginal-trackers>
- Use the vocabulary in *My Lost Mob* to examine syllables and sounds in spoken texts.
- Retell this story in your own words. Add in some extra 'pages' if you wish.
- Write simple sentences to explain what is happening on each page opening.
- Play the emu game on the ABC's Message Club website.
http://www.abc.net.au/messageclub/just_fun/games/emu.htm#game
- Use the following website to examine symbols that represent human and animal tracks in Aboriginal artwork. Find out more about the stories that are told through these artworks. Use these symbols to create your own Aboriginal-style artwork that retells the story of *My Lost Mob*. http://www.aboriginal-dreamtime.net2go.info/Aboriginal/Aboriginal_Symbole.htm
- Create your own piece of art that tells a different story using the above website.

Appendix – Links to the Australian Curriculum

Year Level	English - Language	English - Literature	English - Literacy
Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that punctuation is a feature of written text different from letters; recognise how capital letters are used for names, and that capital letters and full stops signal the beginning and end of sentences (ACELA1432) • Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts (ACELA1786) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (ACELT1578) • Recognise some different types of literary texts and identify some characteristic features of literary texts, for example beginnings and endings of traditional texts and rhyme in poetry (ACELT1785) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver short oral presentations to peers (ACELY1647)
Yr 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the parts of a simple sentence that represent 'What's happening?', 'What state is being described?', 'Who or what is involved?' and the surrounding circumstances (ACELA1451) • Explore differences in words that represent people, places and things (nouns, including pronouns), happenings and states (verbs), qualities (adjectives) and details such as when, where and how (adverbs) (ACELA1452) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to, recite and perform poems, chants, rhymes and songs, imitating and inventing sound patterns including alliteration and rhyme (ACELT1585) • Recreate texts imaginatively using drawing, writing, performance and digital forms of communication (ACELT1586) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to texts drawn from a range of cultures and experiences (ACELY1655) • Read supportive texts using developing phrasing, fluency, contextual, semantic, grammatical and phonics knowledge and emerging text processing strategies, for example prediction, monitoring meaning and rereading (ACELY1659)