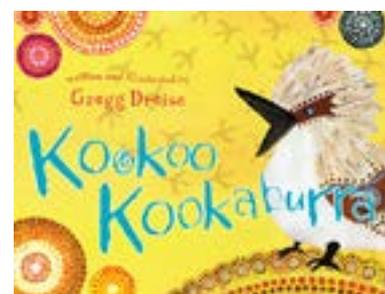


Magabala Books • Teacher Notes

Kookoo Kookaburra

Written and illustrated by Gregg Dreise



Teacher Notes prepared by Christina Wheeler

OVERVIEW

Kookoo is well-known and liked for his ability to tell funny stories about his friends without being unkind. But when no one does anything silly for a while, Kookoo starts teasing them instead. In a story about friendship, humility and forgiveness, Kookoo eventually learns that kindness is like a boomerang – if you throw it often, it comes back often.

THEMES

- Friendship
- Loneliness
- Kindness
- Forgiveness
- Aboriginal culture

AUDIENCE AND WRITING STYLE

Kookoo Kookaburra is suitable for early childhood and younger readers. With its discussion of important values such as kindness, friendship and forgiveness, it is a valuable teaching tool, being easily accessible and sharing a clear message.

LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

This book and the classroom activities provided are primarily relevant to English and Visual Arts at year levels F-2. The appendix highlights relevant content descriptions, general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities.

CULTURAL NOTES

Kookoo Kookaburra is relevant to discussions about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures. It adopts the format of a traditional creation story and emphasises the importance of storytelling and elders. It incorporates some Gamilaraay and Yuwaalaraay language words, and illustrations which are rich with Indigenous iconography.

For information about teaching Australian Indigenous content see [Teaching Indigenous content with Magabala Books](#).



ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

Gregg Dreise is a descendent of the Kamilaroi and Yuwalayaay people from south-west Queensland and north-west New South Wales. He was born and raised in St George, Queensland. Gregg is well known as a performer and storyteller and is currently a teacher. His first children's book *Silly Birds* was published in 2014 by Magabala Books.



CLASSROOM IDEAS

- Kookoo has a way of turning someone's silliness into a funny story without being unkind. Discuss this skill. Why is it important not to be nasty about other people's mistakes?
- Why does Kookoo's teasing cause the other animals to 'sink'? Have you ever felt like this because someone teased you? Write a reflection of a time that you felt like sinking.
- The illustrations in *Kookoo Kookaburra* show more of the storyline than the written text alone. Examine the illustrations carefully and discuss how they add to the narrative.
- Investigate Aboriginal art, including dot painting and the way in which the pictures tell a story. Experiment with this artistic style by creating your own pictures suitable for inclusion in *Kookoo Kookaburra*.
- The author uses figurative language in *Kookoo Kookaburra*, for example, 'Creatures who had once gathered like twinkling stars now looked as if the clouds had dragged their sorrows over the sky.' Discuss the way in which language like this adds to the text.
- Why doesn't Kookoo listen to his uncle's advice at first?
- Discuss Uncle Googaguga's advice: 'You have two eyes, you have two ears, you only have one mouth. Look and listen twice as much as you speak.' How can you apply this philosophy to your own life?
- What is the difference between 'laughing at' and 'laughing with' someone? Use Kookoo as an example to help with this discussion.
- Why does Kookoo show off? What could he do instead?
- How important are elders in Aboriginal culture? What role does Uncle Googaguga play in Kookoo's life? Who is someone you listen to and respect? Discuss.
- Share an example of a time that you saw kindness 'return like a boomerang'.
- Create a poster or play to promote the main theme of the story: Kindness is like a boomerang - if you throw it often, it comes back often.
- Kookoo is a good storyteller. Try telling your own stories, sharing with a friend. What makes a good story? What helps make the telling of a story more interesting?
- Why did the author choose a kookaburra as the animal for this story?
- As a class, dramatise *Kookoo Kookaburra*. Perform to another class.
- View footage of kookaburras on YouTube. Find out more about them by reading non-fiction texts. Create an information report sharing your knowledge.
- Create your own story about how the kookaburra got its laugh. View footage of a Kookaburra laughing. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S0ZbykXlg6Q>
- Research boomerangs and the role they play for some Aboriginal cultural groups. Make and decorate your own boomerangs.



APPENDIX - LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM F-10 (VERSION 8.1)

Year	English	Visual Arts
F	<p>Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts (ACELA1786)</p> <p>Recognise that texts are created by authors who tell stories and share experiences that may be similar or different to students' own experiences (ACELT1575)</p> <p>Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts (ACELT1783)</p> <p>Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (ACELT1578)</p> <p>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)</p> <p>Retell familiar literary texts through performance, use of illustrations and images (ACELT1580)</p> <p>Use comprehension strategies to understand and discuss texts listened to, viewed or read independently (ACELY1650)</p>	<p>Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists (ACAVAM106)</p> <p>Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACAVAR109)</p>
1	<p>Compare different kinds of images in narrative and informative texts and discuss how they contribute to meaning (ACELA1453)</p> <p>Discuss how authors create characters using language and images (ACELT1581)</p> <p>Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences (ACELT1582)</p> <p>Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts (ACELT1584)</p> <p>Recreate texts imaginatively using drawing, writing, performance and digital forms of communication (ACELT1586)</p> <p>Respond to texts drawn from a range of cultures and experiences (ACELY1655)</p>	<p>Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists (ACAVAM106)</p> <p>Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACAVAR109)</p>



<p>2</p>	<p>Understand that different types of texts have identifiable text structures and language features that help the text serve its purpose (ACELA1463)</p> <p>Identify visual representations of characters' actions, reactions, speech and thought processes in narratives, and consider how these images add to or contradict or multiply the meaning of accompanying words (ACELA1469)</p> <p>Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (ACELT1587)</p> <p>Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (ACELT1591)</p> <p>Create events and characters using different media that develop key events and characters from literary texts (ACELT1593)</p>	<p>Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists (ACAVAM106)</p> <p>Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (ACAVAR109)</p>
<p>Cross curriculum priorities Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures</p>		
<p>General capabilities Literacy, Personal and social capability, Intercultural understanding</p>		

