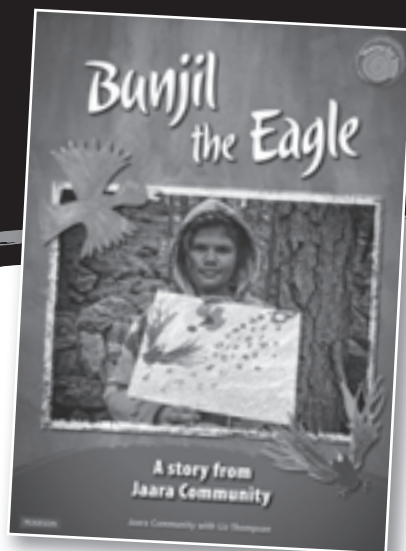


Bunjil the Eagle



Synopsis of the story

In the Dreamtime, Aboriginal people lived in the forests which covered the land. Bunjil the Eagle and Waa the Crow (who was white then) ruled over the mountain together, but Eagle was greedy and sent Crow far away. One day, when lightning struck a tree, Crow fell into the fire and was turned black. He also learnt how to make fire, and came back to Eagle's nest, setting it alight. The rocks on the mountain got hot. Eagle and Crow fought, throwing hot rocks at each other. These became the volcanic mountains at Bendigo and Castlemaine. Eagle banished Crow to the lowlands, and they had a competition to see who could throw hot rocks the furthest, which Eagle won.

Today, Eagle lives in the mountains and the forests while Crow stays in the lowlands. Eagle, Crow and Bat are the totems of the Jaara people.

The community

The Jaara community is part of the Kulin nation of central western Victoria. Following European settlement, Aboriginal people were forced off their land and Aboriginal children were removed from their families, even up to the 1970s. Today, many people are searching for lost family; some are unaware of their Aboriginal ancestry.

Brien Nelson is the Jaara elder who tells this story. He believes it is important that the Jaara children hear this story because it tells them exactly how their Country was created, and its significance.

The Jaara community is working on an accurate translation of this story in Dja Dja Wurrang. There is no Language section in this book as it was not possible to provide a translation of the story at this time.



If you would like to watch a short film from the Jaara Community, go to www.pearsonplaces.com.au.

Our community pages 2–3

Read and discuss

- Bendigo is a large regional city. Why is there a photo of it here?
- Why couldn't Jaara people maintain their traditional way of life after European settlement?
- What do you know about your ancestry? How do you know? How can you find out more?
- How would you feel if you were taken from your family, as many Aboriginal children were?
- European settlement of the Kulin nation's lands began almost 200 years ago. How do you think things might have been different if the first contact between Europeans and Aboriginals happened now?

Make and do

- Look at records of people's lives that are available on the Internet. You could start with the Victorian Public Record Office and the National Archives of Australia.
- Research the community profiles and histories of local shires that now encompass the lands of the Jaara people: the City of Greater Bendigo, Hepburn Shire (which includes Daylesford) and Mount Alexander Shire (which includes Castlemaine).
- Compare the information available on each city or shire website, and create a written or verbal report about what you found—or couldn't find. You could also compare with the profile of your own local council or shire.
- Find out about the Koorie Heritage Trust's Koorie Family History Service.

Sharing our story pages 4–5

Read and discuss

- Do you agree with Brien Nelson that hearing their own stories is more meaningful to the community than general reading about Aboriginal culture and history?
- Discuss how we learn from stories, compared to how we learn from information books. Is one way of learning better than the other?
- Review the glossary words on these first four pages. Are there other words that you would like explanations of? Discuss how a writer might decide which words to include in a glossary.
- Discuss the concept of dichotomous moieties. In what other ways can people (in families, groups, communities, nations) be divided into two groups? For example, males and females, adults and children. Which divisions are useful or helpful to the people involved? Which divisions are arbitrary?

Make and do

- Why do you think that Crow is called Waa? Is Waa a crow-like sound? Look in bird books (especially field guides) for descriptions of bird calls. Are the descriptions in different books similar? Can you make a recognisable bird call based on the written description? You can also find sound recordings of bird calls on the Internet. Do the written descriptions accurately reflect the calls?
- Find out more about possum skin cloaks on the Internet.

The Possum Skin Cloak project involved the making of 37 cloaks and their being worn during the opening ceremony of the Melbourne 2006 Commonwealth Games.

Various artists and Melbourne Museum curators re-created two historic cloaks held by the Melbourne Museum; their story was told in the book and exhibition *Wrapped in a Possum Skin Cloak*.

- The insides of possum skin cloaks are decorated with stories. Think about stories that are important to you and your family, your school or your community. Use **BLM 1**, *Possum skin cloak*, to create your own cloak. Draw your stories, in whole or in part, on some of the individual furs. Then add decorative designs on other pieces that also reflect you (for example, the stars of the Southern Cross, rows of crops ready to harvest, a railway junction, the local shopping centre). Choose a favourite element—narrative or decorative—to enlarge and add to a class cloak, perhaps on cloth.

Bunjil the Eagle

Track 1 on the CD and pages 6–17

Listening to the story

- Ensure that students are comfortable and will not be easily distracted.
- Note that the track is 5 minutes 15 seconds long, with approximately 25 seconds of music and natural sounds before the storytelling begins, and with 25 seconds after the story ends.
- Briefly introduce the story, and the community, if you have not already done so, and then play CD track 1. Leave the book closed, at least for a first hearing.
- Depending on your students, you might like to ask them for their reactions after the first hearing, or play the track again without opening the book, or have the book open for a second hearing.
- When you do introduce the written and illustrated version, allow students time to look at the illustrations as well as following and/or reading the text.
- After reading the first page, you might like to review the glossary support feature.

Read and discuss

The story itself:

- Do you think that Bunjil the Eagle is more powerful than Waa the Crow?
- What part did each of the birds play in the volcanoes exploding?
- Why is the bat sacred to the Jaara people as well as the eagle and the crow?

The telling of the story:

- Did you enjoy listening to this story?
- Which retelling did you like best: the spoken version, the written text or the illustrations? Why?
- Did the oral storytelling help you to read some of the unfamiliar words?

Make and do

- Find out more about eagles and crows, especially their habitats, their sources of food and their behaviour. Add information about these birds' calls that you found earlier. (See 'Sharing our story' section on page 11.)
- Work in groups to retell this story without the illustrations. Different groups could tell different parts of the story, or tell it from different points of view. You could use **BLM 2**, *Characters, setting and plot*, as a starting point.
- Work in groups to create a dance (with or without music) of either the two birds' competition or the volcanoes exploding. Perform your work to another class, perhaps in combination with a rehearsed reading or retelling of the story.

Our children's voices pages 18–19

Read and discuss

- Did the Jaara children's comments help you to understand the book?
- What have the Jaara children learnt from the story?
- What stories are especially important to you?
- Do you think you are more like Eagle or Crow?
- Do you agree with Enya O'Callaghan that you can make illustrations 'whatever colour you want'?

Make and do

- Look at various picture books, focusing on the use of colour. Which ones use realistic colours? Which colour groups do you like best? Illustrate a story of your own, using a much wider range of colours than you usually do, or colouring everything in a different colour from how it really looks.
- Invite a parent or friend into your classroom to read or tell a special story from their culture.
- Discuss: 'It's important to look after the stories and pass them on'.

Our elders' voices pages 20–23

Read and discuss

- Discuss Trish Vines' use of visual imagery to explain the loss of identity ('like a ship on the sea without a captain'), and regaining it ('it's like walking ... into a beautiful room').
- In what ways is Lynne Warren's history different from Trish Vines'? In what ways are they similar?
- Do you think that stories like *Bunjil the Eagle* can have a strong impact on adults as well as children? Are stories important to adults in our society today? Are some stories more meaningful or powerful to adults than others?

- Who are the elders in your community? You could think about the school community, your suburb or locality or town, a sporting community or a service club.

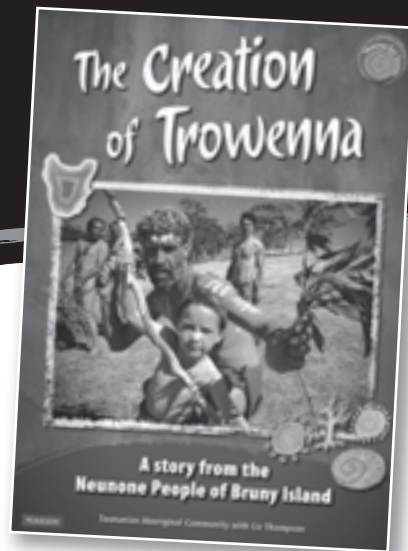
Make and do

- Listen to or read a transcript of Prime Minister Kevin Rudd's 'Apology to the stolen generations' speech in Parliament on 13 February 2008. Discuss the sentence: 'We today take this first step by acknowledging the past and laying claim to a future that embraces all Australians.' Use it as a starting point for reflecting on the speech and its importance, and then complete **BLM 3**, *The prime minister's apology*.
- Reread Trish Vines' image of walking into a beautiful room after being in the dark. Illustrate her image, or create a piece of music or a dance sequence that reflects her feelings.
- Find out more about Trish Vines' people, the Wiradjuri from central New South Wales. Prepare an oral or written report on your findings.
- Write one question that you would like to ask each of the elders. Discuss your questions in a group or with the whole class.
- Interview an elder in your community. Use **BLM 4**, *Interview with an elder*, as a starting point, or discuss and use your own set of questions.

Glossary page 24

- Review the words and make sure students understand them.
- Discuss the capitalisation of some words.
- Act out one of the glossary words for others to guess.
- Use one or more of the glossary words in a short poem.
- Use the glossary words and their meanings to create your own crossword or word search. You could add other words from the story, such as names of characters or places.
- Choose one glossary word to illustrate. Collect the illustrated pages to form a class book of important Indigenous words and phrases.

The Creation of Trowenna



Synopsis of the story

In the beginning, Trowenna—what we now call Tasmania—was merely a small sandbank in the southern seas.

Punywin, the sun, and his wife Venna, the moon, travelled across the sky shining their light over the world. When their two sons were born, their parents placed them high in the sky as stars.

Then, Punywin and Venna dropped seeds on the little sandbank. These were seeds of the Tasmanian blue gum and all the other plants that grow on Trowenna. Then rain fell, the seeds started to sprout, and shellfish of all types appeared around Trowenna.

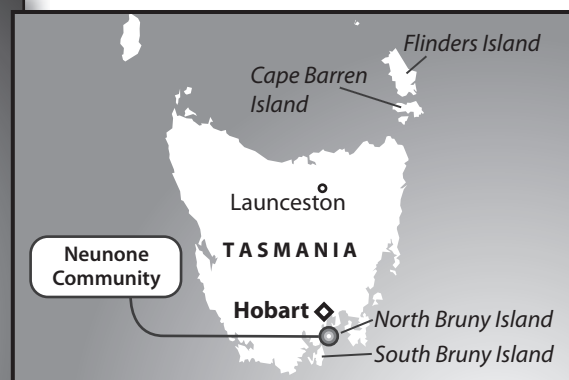
All through the Dreamtime, the trees grew and dropped their leaves and mixed with the sand and became the soil. The dead shellfish became the rocks that form the mountains of Trowenna. Today, you can see all these things that are Trowenna.

The community

European settlement led to loss of Country and hunting grounds for the several different Aboriginal tribes living in Tasmania. Many were killed in an ongoing war with the settlers.

From the 1830s through to the 1950s, the remaining Tasmanian Aborigines were resettled in missions and reserves on the islands around Tasmania. Most of today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community are descendants of the Aboriginal women who married sealers on Flinders Island.

The Tasmanian languages have largely been lost and so there is no Language section in this book.



If you would like to watch a short film from the Neunone People, go to www.pearsonplaces.com.au

Our community pages 2–3

Read and discuss

- What feelings does the photo evoke? Does this change after you have read the text? (You might want to come back to it once you have read the rest of the book.)
- After reading the first page, review the glossary support feature.
- Have you heard of any of the places mentioned? Discuss where you could look them up.
- What did you know about the history of Tasmania's Aborigines before reading this account?
- How might you, as a class, reflect on and commemorate the events described here?

Make and do

- Aborigines were resettled on 'the Tasmanian mainland' in the 1950s. Use atlases and Internet mapping tools to find out more about the many islands that form the state of Tasmania.
- Use the same tools to label as many places as you can on **BLM 5**, *Islands in the Southern Ocean*.
- Find out more about George Augustus Robinson; you could start with the *Australian Dictionary of Biography Online*.
- Discuss or debate: 'It's good to live on an island.'

Sharing our story pages 4–5

Read and discuss

- After reading the first page, review the glossary support feature.
- Explain George Augustus Robinson's part in saving this story.
- Leigh Maynard said: 'If you look after the land, the land will look after you.' Do you agree? What does this statement mean to you?
- What sorts of stories give you confidence in yourself? Are there other cultural events, artefacts or institutions that give you confidence, courage or strength?

Make and do

- Build a list of words that describe the Tasmanian Aboriginal community. You could start with 'resilient', 'strong', 'increasingly confident'. Continue to add to your list as you read the whole book.
- Make a timeline that shows the sequence of events leading to Leigh Maynard telling this story.
- Ask a relative or friend to tell you a favourite story, possibly about a place that is meaningful to them. Illustrate their story and offer the illustration to the storyteller as a record and a thank you.
- Invite one or more storytellers into the class to tell stories.

The Creation of Trowenna

Track 2 on the CD and pages 6–17

Listening to the story

- Ensure that students are comfortable and will not be easily distracted.
- Note that the track is 5 minutes and 19 seconds long, with approximately 10 seconds of music and sound effects before the English storytelling begins, and with 15 seconds after the story ends.
- Briefly introduce the story, and the community, if you have not already done so, and then play CD track 2. Leave the book closed, at least for a first hearing.
- Depending on your students, you might like to ask them for their reactions after the first hearing, or play the track again without opening the book, or have the book open for a second hearing.
- When you do introduce the written and illustrated version, allow students time to look at the illustrations as well as following and/or reading the text.
- After reading the story, you might like to review the glossary words in bold.

Read and discuss

The story itself:

- In what order did Punywin and Venna create life on and around Trowenna?
- Compare this story to other creation stories.
- How did trees come to be growing on the sandbank?
- Discuss: 'This story tells us how a complete ecosystem was developed'.
- Look at the various ways the illustrators have conveyed the sun and the moon. Which is your favourite? Why?

The telling of the story:

- Did you enjoy listening to this story?
- Which retelling did you like best: the spoken version, the written text or the illustrations? Why?
- Did the oral storytelling help you to read some of the unfamiliar words?

Make and do

- Are there icebergs around Tasmania today? Find out more about the ice ages that have had a significant impact on Tasmania's coastline. Create a written, multimedia or oral report.
- Use atlases, road maps and mapping websites to look at the terrain, and especially the rocky coastline, of Tasmania today.
- Use websites such as Geoscience Australia to compare Tasmania with the other states of Australia. Create a class book of 'Fascinating Facts about Tasmania'.
- Complete **BLM 5**, *Islands in the Southern Ocean*, here if you have not already done so.
- Complete **BLM 6**, *So much coastline*, here or as a summary activity.
- Research: When did Trowenna become Tasmania? Where does the name Tasmania come from? Compare your findings with a friend's.

- The story is told from the third person. Retell it from the point of view of Punywin or Venna. Use the illustrations in your retelling, or rewrite the story first, then tell it in a darkened space, with lights to represent Punywin and Venna. You could also add sound effects.
- Can you find Canopus in the night sky, either the real sky, or the virtual one on the Internet?

Our children's voices pages 18–19

Read and discuss

- Did the Neunone children's comments help you to understand the book?
- What have the Neunone children learnt from the story?
- What stories are especially important to you?
- Discuss the symbolism of the heart (Trowenna as a 'heart-shaped island') in relation to what Kartanya Maynard says about the power of love.

Make and do

- Use online resources such as the Australian Women's Register and the *Australian Dictionary of Biography Online*, as well as library books, to find out more about Truganini. Do different sources agree about the details of her life?
- Reread what Kartanya Maynard says about her part as a 'thread in the fabric' of Aboriginal history. What are the threads in your own history? Choose a piece of fabric or a garment that you could decorate with aspects of your history. Create a class gallery of 'Our Histories'.
- Find out more about the protests that Kaninna Langford's grandmother might have been involved in, for example the Aboriginal Tent Embassy in Canberra, the Wave Hill 'walk off', the Mabo land rights case.

Our elders' voices pages 20–23**Read and discuss**

- Why are this story and this big book important for Pat Green and Beulah Maynard?
- In what ways are Pat Green and Beulah Maynard optimistic about the future?
- Discuss the connection between her people and her Country that Ruth Langford talks about. Do you feel that closely connected to one particular place?

Make and do

- Find out more about mutton-birds, also known as short-tailed shearwaters. How far do they migrate every year, and why? Why do you think they are called mutton-birds?
- Find examples of shell necklaces on the Internet, and read about the art of shell stringing.
- Work in groups to develop a dance or tableau that reflects the change in attitudes between Pat Green's childhood and now. Think in particular about how body language can express feelings, emotions and attitudes.
- Find out more about Bruny Island, Cape Barren Island and other places mentioned in the book. Complete **BLM 6**, *So much coastline*, if you have not already done so.
- In groups, discuss the concept of strength: the strength of the Tasmanian Aboriginal community, their elders, and their ancestors, as well as the strength of the island itself as it was pounded by icebergs, cold climate, and other hardships. Then create an acrostic poem using STRENGTH as the central word, incorporating some of your discussion.
- Interview an elder in your community. Use **BLM 4**, *Interview with an elder*, as a starting point, or discuss and use your own set of questions.

Glossary page 24

- Review the words and make sure the students understand them.
- Discuss the capitalisation of some words.
- Work with a partner to have a conversation where you use two or three glossary words as often as you can within a short time.
- Use as many glossary words as you can in one meaningful sentence.
- Play charades using one of the glossary words.
- Most of the glossary words are nouns. Why do you think this is? Change one or more into adjectives or verbs.