



TEACHING NOTES



THE I IN THE ISLAND

Written by Judith Barker,
Illustrated by
Janie Frith.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN'S AUTHOR JUDITH BARKER

attributes Dr Seuss' fantastical tales about faraway places to her love of writing children's books. She is a teacher, author, and education consultant. After teaching phonics and phonemic awareness to children in Europe, the Middle East, India and China, Judith saw a growing need to support literacy in schools. Her desire to lend a helping hand to those involved in the art of teaching early reading skills has resulted in this wonderful series of beautifully illustrated, Australian phoneme-themed stories. Apart from developing reading skills, the books foster imagination, language, and sound-spelling recognition.

OUTLINE

THIS IS THE STORY OF THE I.

A young dancer performs a Brolga Dance at a spring festival in Centennial Parklands. She is recognised by a Butchulla elder and is mystically carried back to K'gari, her island home. This is a mythical Australian story that teaches young readers about the long vowel i and where they can find it in different words.

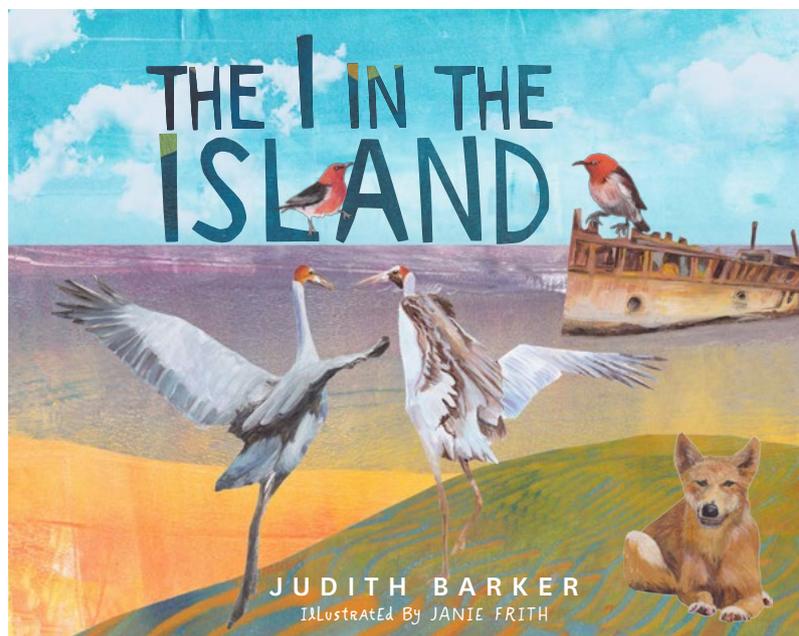


AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

THE JOY IN THIS UNIT OF WORK IS ITS FOCUS ON THE NATIONAL AND INDIGENOUS HERITAGE, NATURE AND WILDLIFE OF THE MAGNIFICENT CENTENNIAL PARKLANDS AND UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE-LISTED K’GARI ISLAND (FRASER ISLAND). It can be taught over

a week or four-week period and supports cross-curricular teaching and learning in language arts, balanced literacy, phonemic awareness, phonics, Indigenous studies, cultural and language connections, humanities, social science, geography, and creative arts.

Topics include National Heritage Parklands and UNESCO World Heritage Sites; K’gari Island; Aboriginal Dreamtime Stories; Aboriginal History, Language and Heritage; Reconciliation; Language, Culture and Connections with People and Places; Habitats; Threats to Birds; Environment, Nature, Wildlife and Responsible Practices; Conservation and Water Management.



BACKGROUND INFORMATION



Centennial Parklands

- Centennial Parklands is the name given to a group of three urban parklands located on Gadigal land in the eastern suburbs of Eora country in Sydney.
- Comprising approximately 360 hectares (890 acres), the lands encompass Centennial Park, Moore Park and Queen's Park.
- The parks are contained within the local government areas of the City of Randwick, Waverley Municipal Council, and City of Sydney.
- The Parklands are listed on the NSW State Heritage Register as having various components of national, state or local heritage significance.
- Centennial Parklands has eleven ornamental ponds, covering an area of around 26 hectares. They provide important habitats for water birds and aquatic life and form the upper catchment of the Botany wetlands, the largest freshwater wetland system in inner-metropolitan Sydney.
- These ponds play an important role in flood mitigation for the wider catchment area. They act as a detention basin, capturing stormwater runoff from surrounding suburbs such as Paddington, Woollahra, Bondi, Waverley and Randwick.
- First Nations people belonged to small groups (territorial clans) through which they were spiritually related to specific tracts of land. These clans included the Gadigal, Wanngal, Gamaragal, Wallumedegal and Boromedegal. The suffix 'gal' denotes 'people of', eg the Gadigal were the people of Gadi (also spelled Cadigal and Cadi respectively).
- The district of Gadi was reported to have stretched from South Head west to 'the cove adjoining this settlement' (Darling Harbour) – an area that would have included Centennial, Moore, and Queen's Parks.
- Watkin Tench referred to the Gadigal as 'those who reside in the bay of Cadi'. The 'bay of Cadi' is probably Kutti, the Aboriginal place name recorded for present-day Watsons Bay, and the present name of a small beach in the bay.
- The Centennial Parklands Conservation Management Plan contains a report that provides in-depth detail of the pre-colonial history of the lands that are present-day Centennial Parklands.



Brolga Gate, Centennial Park

- This beautiful little gate is easily missed but has a significant past, particularly for the many bird lovers who enjoy the park.
- Brolga Gate stands at the entrance to the bird sanctuary in the centre of Centennial Park. It was opened in 1939 by the Gould League of bird lovers in memory of their long-time secretary Harold W. Hamilton who had been secretary for 17 years before passing away in 1933.
- The Gould League is an independent Australian organisation promoting environmental education, originally founded in Victoria in 1909 and named after the English ornithologist John Gould. Largely autonomous branches were subsequently established in other Australian states. Members would take a pledge to protect Australian birdlife and not to collect their eggs. The League has had considerable success, particularly in publishing educational materials.
- The brolga was the first bird described in 1810, as seen at Botany Bay.

K'gari Island

- Fraser Island (also known as K'gari and Gari) is a World Heritage-listed island along the south-eastern coast in the Wide Bay Burnett region of Queensland. The name K'gari is the Indigenous name used in the Butchulla language, while the name Gari is the Indigenous name used in the Badtjala language.
- The island is approximately 250 kilometres north of Brisbane and is within the Fraser Coast Region local government area. The World Heritage listing includes the island, its surrounding waters and parts of the nearby mainland.
- Fraser Island, and some satellite islands off the southern west coast, and thus in the Great Sandy Strait, form the County of Fraser, which is subdivided into six parishes. Among the islands are Slain Island, Tooth Island, Roundbush Island, Moonboom Island, Gardner Island, Dream Island, Stewart Island, and the Reef Islands, all part of the southernmost parish of Talboor.
- The island is about 123 kilometres long and 22 kilometres wide. It was inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 1992.
- K'gari is the largest sand island in the world at 1,840 square kilometres. It is also Queensland's largest island, Australia's sixth largest island, and the largest island on the east coast of Australia.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



CONTINUED

- Explorer James Cook sailed by the island in May 1770. Matthew Flinders landed near the most northern point of the island in 1802. And for a short period, the island was known as Great Sandy Island.
- In 1836 a ship hit a reef north of Brisbane and British castaway, Eliza Fraser, was rescued by the Butchulla women from nearby island K'gari. When Eliza returned to England, she claimed to have been entrapped by savage Butchulla people. Her story became a global media sensation, and the island was renamed Fraser Island.

Natural Environment & Water Management

- K'gari Island offers an outstanding example of ongoing biological, hydrological, and geomorphological processes. The development of rainforest vegetation on coastal dune systems at the scale found on K'gari is unique, plus the island boasts the world's largest unconfined aquifer on a sand island.
- The property has exceptional natural beauty with over 250 kilometres of clear sandy beaches with long, uninterrupted sweeps of ocean beach, strikingly coloured sand cliffs, and spectacular blowouts. Inland from the beach are majestic remnants of tall rainforest growing on sandy dunes, and half of the world's perched freshwater dune lakes.
- Over the past two million years, ocean currents and waves have swept sand north from the continental shelf of NSW and southern Queensland. Sand accumulates and covers the bedrock to form dunes parallel to the coast, leaving only peaks uncovered — today's headlands.
- Strong onshore winds blow loose sand inland into high parabolic (hairpin-shaped) dunes, which spread to engulf everything in their paths and form a sequence of overlapping dunes.
- K'gari and Cooloola are remnants of old sandmasses that once stretched 30 kilometres east. Major dune-building continued in episodes as sea levels rose and fell, forming a sequence of at least eight overlapping dune systems of different ages. Some are more than 700,000 years old — the world's oldest recorded sequence. These processes continue to shape the sandmasses.
- **See:** <https://parks.des.qld.gov.au/management/managed-areas/world-heritage-areas/current/kgari-fraser>



BEFORE READING

Share the Aboriginal Dreamtime story of K'gari. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lZy0thfmFnk>.

Ask students to make predictions about what life was like when Eliza Fraser landed on K'gari Island and to share their predictions in pairs or small groups, before sharing with the class.

Have students individually make predictions about what life was like when Captain Cook landed in Botany Bay. Ask students to share their predictions in pairs or small groups, before sharing with the class.

Discuss with students how as individuals we all have different perspectives that inform our knowledge and how we see the world.

DURING & AFTER READING

Vocabulary

Pre-teach any unknown or challenging vocabulary. After an initial reading of the book go through each page and highlight specific words and sounds used in the text.

Words of interest may include skyline, kaleidoscope, awakening, squabble, nectar, hive, symphony, cacophony, cicadas, evoking, Kauri pines, conjuring, vibrant, visions, Butchulla tribe, sacred land, horizon, glides, wispy, bridegroom, bride, binds, tides, rusty, shipwrecks, lie, wade, jetty, strides, nestled, waddle, scrubbed, tranquil, beneath.

Visual Literacy

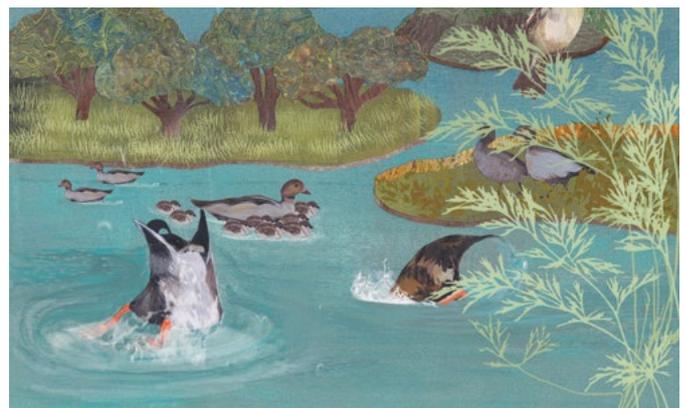
Draw attention to the illustrations and ask students why they think the illustrator may have chosen particular images or colours to tell the story, and what feelings this imagery evokes in them. How does the illustrator use silhouettes to change the mood in the story?

General Comprehension

Ask:

- Where are the Centennial Parklands?
- What is the Indigenous name for Fraser Island?
- Where is the bird sanctuary in Centennial Park?
- Why does a brolga guard the gate to the bird sanctuary?
- How did the brolga disappear from the bronze gate which guarded the bird sanctuary?
- What is a brolga?
- Who recognised that one of the dancers belonged to another tribe?

- Who recognised the young girl was from the Butchulla?
- What is the Dance of the Brolgas?
See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ogYzwhpalR4>
- What happened to the male brolga?
- How did the male and female brolga return to K'gari Island? (They returned as bridegroom and bride.)
- What are the natural features of K'gari Island?
- How many ponds are in Centennial Parklands?
- What three parks comprise Centennial Parklands?
- Why are the parks important for our national heritage?
- Who was Eliza Fraser and what happened to her?
- What birdlife, natural habitats and animals are found in Centennial Parklands and on K'gari?
- How have Indigenous Australians traditionally cared for K'gari?
- What are some of the threats and dangers to Australia's national parklands and K'gari?



DURING & AFTER READING CONTINUED

ACTIVITIES

General

(Re)connect your students to nature. These days, kids are spending more time than ever inside and especially in front of screens. Bush School at Centennial Parklands is designed to inspire a love for the natural world in children through outdoor games, bushcraft activities, myths, and storytelling. See: <https://www.centennialparklands.com.au/stories>

Explore things to do at Centennial Park. See: <https://www.centennialparklands.com.au/> You may be able to adapt activities to a park nearer to you.

Looking for inspiration for your lessons? The curriculum and subject experts from Centennial Park have prepared curriculum-linked science, history and geography units that include engaging material and fun online and off-screen activities. See: <https://www.centennialparklands.com.au/learn/school-programs/classroom-resources/primary-classroom-resources> and <https://www.centennialparklands.com.au/visit/history-and-heritage/history-of-the-parklands>

Creative Arts

Exploring the Illustrations

Develop a connection with Country by acknowledging and illustrating the land of the Gadigal people of the Eora nation on whose land the events in this book first take place. Illustrate the first custodians of K'gari country, the Butchulla people, in Dreamtime-like stories using different

styles of Aboriginal art:

- bark paintings
- Aboriginal rock art
- ochre paintings
- fibre art
- wood carvings and sculpture
- paintings on canvas, linen, or board
- works on paper.

Look at the inside back cover and ask:

- What techniques have been used in the artwork and the illustrations?
- What is multimedia? How is multimedia used here?
- What techniques have been used to create a Dreamtime mood? (coloured silhouettes)

Create an ecology or nature scrapbook about bush animals, habitats, and birdlife, including:

- shelter, building a humpi
- animal tracking
- lakes, ponds, rockpools and rivers
- brolgas, turtles, bats, dragonflies, bees, wood ducks, swans, cicadas, moor hen chicks, sandpipers, pelicans, cormorants, little penguins, dingoes, fire, and cooking.

Talk, if possible, with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff, families and/or local community members about K'gari, and hold a school event exploring Dreamtime stories and incorporating Indigenous art and language in the form of Aboriginal paintings, murals, myths, stories, and poems.

DURING & AFTER READING CONTINUED

Language Arts & Humanities

The Long I, Spelling and Vocabulary

Encourage students to write a poem, employing the long vowel i, prompted by sights they see outside their classroom window.

Make a wordsearch with the different spelling patterns of the long vowel i.

Review the long vowel digraph i and display the different spelling patterns: i_e, ie, igh, _y, _ind, _ild

Write a humorous song or poem using the different spelling patterns.

Play card games with unknown words from the book and identify their meanings.

Practise the different words and spelling patterns in a cinquain from the story.

Draw a storyboard with the long i spelling pattern and words from the book.

Have students create five- to eight-line poems with the different spelling patterns of the long i vowel, using the modelled vocabulary in the story as a guide.

Literacy & Drama

- Divide the class into groups. Each group is to practise reading aloud one verse from the story about K'gari. Remind students to refer to the poems and illustrations. Have them focus on volume, pace, pitch, intonation, enunciation, and body language.
- On the 21st of May 1836, a ship named the *Stirling Castle* struck a reef off the north coast of Australia, and some of the crew, including Eliza and her husband Captain James Fraser, ended up on the shores of K'gari. Discuss the correction to the original story of Eliza Fraser claiming to have been entrapped by savage Butchulla people as told by SBS

journalist, Miranda Otto. See: <https://www.sbs.com.au/nitv/article/2017/09/26/miranda-otto-kgari-and-correcting-eliza-frasers-remarkably-silly-story> (In order to create a safe space and to help develop mutual respect and understanding between the members of your classroom community, before viewing set classroom ground rules due to the potentially sensitive nature of some of the content.)

- Eliza Fraser has been found! Ask students to recount the original story of Eliza Fraser and to interpret the correction presented by Miranda Otto. Have them imagine they are a journalist who has been sent as part of the rescue mission to uncover the fateful tale of the shipwreck. On the boat journey home, Eliza recounts her experiences with the Butchulla people and the loss of her husband. In pairs, have one student play the role of Eliza being interviewed, and the other student the journalist searching for the truth for their breaking newspaper article.
- Produce a play with the new interpretation of the story about Eliza Fraser as a school performance.



DURING & AFTER READING CONTINUED

Indigenous Heritage, Culture & Language

- Discuss how language captures the thinking of a people, contains their history, and resonates with the mind, body, and spirit of a people.
- When Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet landed, first in Botany Bay and then in Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour), in January 1788, they were met by people who had lived on this land for many thousands of years. At that time, at least 1,500 people lived in the area between Botany Bay and Broken Bay and the intermediate coast.
- Explain that there were then two main languages spoken in the Sydney region – Darug and Tharawal. The Darug language had two main dialects – one spoken along the coast and the other in the hinterland (west of present-day Parramatta). Tharawal was spoken to the south of Botany Bay and as far west as the Georges River and possibly Camden.
- My Grandmother's Lingo is a voice-activated interactive animation that tells the story of a young Aboriginal woman who is fighting to save her Indigenous language. It combines gaming elements with narration in Marra, an Indigenous language now spoken by only three people in Ngukurr. See: <https://www.sbs.com.au/mygrandmotherslingo>

Language and Reconciliation

- Research the language map and track the Indigenous languages of the Gadigal and Butchulla people. See: <https://www.narragunnawali.org.au/curriculum-resource/94/languages-map-activity-secondary>

- Using a storyboard, students could research and discuss the story of Eliza Fraser and how it changed the British people's perception of Indigenous people from K'gari in the early 19th century. https://www.sbs.com.au/sites/sbs.com.au/home/files/3973_kgari_storyboard_final.pdf
- Identify the key steps for developing a RAP (Reconciliation Action Plan) for schools and early learning services. <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation-action-plans/start-your-rap/>

Science & Technology

Use mapping skills to identify a legend of the different features of Centennial Park from the story. https://www.centennialparklands.com.au/getmedia/bd923fac-bb40-4446-8e3c-45c2bd374a40/Cent_MapGuideJan2016_WEB.pdf.aspx and <https://www.centennialparklands.com.au/visit/maps#/>

Use visuals to provide a background to Centennial Park and identify the role of ponds, lakes, and water in Centennial Parklands and on K'gari.

Research and illustrate the ecology and habitat of a pond and determine the life cycles of the insects and animals who rely on ponds to survive.

Make a simulated pond at home, or at school, observing and recording the sightings of animals, birds and insects that make it their habitat.

SUPPORTING READERS WITH PHONEMIC AWARENESS

Distinguish between the short and long vowel i sounds.

Revise the long vowel digraph i and display the different spelling patterns: i_e, ie, igh, _y, _ind, _ild

Practise the pronunciation of both short and long i vowel sounds in different words.

Recall the various spelling patterns of the long vowel i phoneme.

Make word clouds of the long vowel i spelling patterns in the book, using the free online word generator: <https://classic.wordclouds.com/>

Create wordsearch games from words that contain the long i vowel.

Invent board games or card games with the long vowel i spelling patterns.

Use dictation to reinforce the teaching and learning of correct spelling patterns.



LEARNERS IN GRADES 1 TO 3 read texts that contain varied sentence structures, some unfamiliar vocabulary, and a significant number of high-frequency sight words. They recognise a wide variety of letter–sound relationships, and self-correct using knowledge of phonics, syntax, punctuation, semantics, and context. They listen for particular purposes and manipulate sound combinations and rhythmic sound patterns.

Grade 1 Language

- Use short vowels, common long vowels, consonant digraphs and consonant blends when writing, and blend these to read single syllable words (ACELA1458).
- Understand that a letter can represent more than one sound and that a syllable must contain a vowel sound (ACELA1459).
- Understand how to spell one- and two-syllable words with common letter patterns.
- Segment consonant blends or clusters into separate phonemes at the beginnings and ends of one syllable words (ACELA1822).

Grade 2 Language

- Understand how texts are made cohesive through language features, including word associations, synonyms, and antonyms (ACELA1464).
- Understand the use of vocabulary about familiar and new topics and experiment with and begin to make conscious choices of vocabulary to suit audience and purpose (ACELA1470).
- Orally manipulate more complex sounds in spoken words through knowledge of blending and segmenting sounds, phoneme deletion and substitution in combination with use of letters in reading and writing (ACELA1474).
- Understand how to use knowledge of digraphs, long vowels, blends and silent letters to spell one and two syllable words including some compound words (ACELA1471).
- Use most letter-sound matches including vowel digraphs, less common long vowel patterns, letter clusters and silent letters when reading and writing words of one or more syllable (ACELA1824).
- Understand that a sound can be represented by various letter combinations (ACELA1825).
- Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures (ACELY1670).

Grade 3 Language

- Understand that languages have different written and visual communication systems, different oral traditions, and different ways of constructing meaning (ACELA1475).
- Understand how to use letter–sound relationships and less common letter patterns to spell words (ACELA1485).

DECODING AS A PATHWAY



IN ORDER TO BECOME

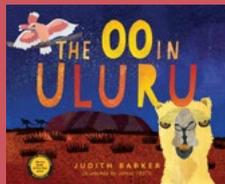
READERS, children learn the systematic relationship between code (letters) and sounds, including knowledge of letter and spelling patterns to correctly pronounce written words. In coming to understand these relationships, children are given the ability to recognise familiar words quickly and to figure out words they haven't seen before. With 44 sounds in the English language and hundreds of ways to spell them, the mind boggles! This series of phoneme-themed stories will help to reinforce the teaching and learning of phonemic awareness with the different and various spelling patterns of the long vowels (digraphs) in a fun and meaningful way.

TEN TIPS FOR READING SUCCESS

Some strategies for supporting beginning readers are:

- 1** Use context and pictures to monitor sound, letter and word recognition.
- 2** Sound out letters, identify high-frequency words (common, or sight words) in stories.
- 3** Use repetition often to consolidate the teaching and learning of sounds and letters.
- 4** Support the teaching of spelling by helping children to understand that sounds create different letter combinations.
- 5** Help children to sound out unfamiliar words and encourage self-correction.
- 6** Support children to make predictions, to identify the main idea in paragraphs, and to practise summarising.
- 7** Teach children the separate sounds in a name, eg Sam has three sounds S-a-m.
- 8** Ask children to clap with you as you sound out the syllables in words, eg wonderful has three syllables won-der-ful.
- 9** Take turns to come up with words that rhyme or sound the same. Play sound and word games, such as I Spy with sounds and letters.
- 10** Provide opportunities for reading a variety of texts, to obtain meaning from sounds, letters, and words.

BOOKS IN THIS SERIES



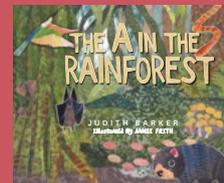
The OO in Uluru



The O in the Snow



The EE in the Deep, Blue Sea



The A in the Rainforest



The I in the Island



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For further information on purchasing copies of these books or to have a message forwarded to the author, please contact (02) 8445 2300 or info@woodslane.com.au