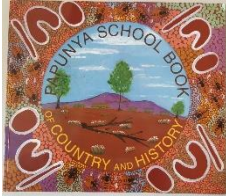


Indigenous Australian picture books and resources

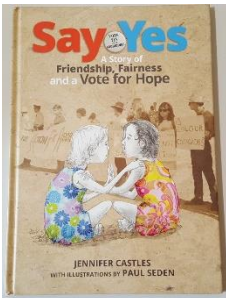
A selection of picture books and resources for celebrating the culture of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

From my collection:

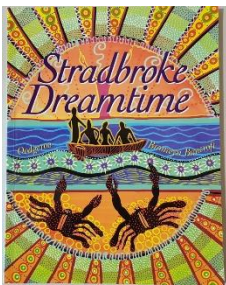


The Papunya School Book of Country and History, produced by staff and students at the Papunya School.

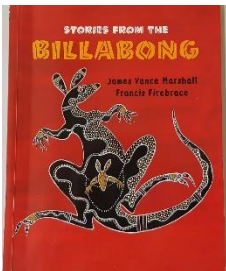
Beautifully illustrated and explained, the book helps to develop understanding of Australia's history and the people who lived, and live, in it. These understandings help build connections that strengthen reconciliation.



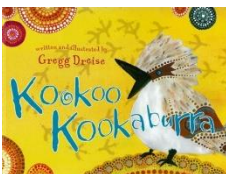
Say Yes, A Story of Friendship, Fairness and a Vote for Hope by Jennifer Castles tells of two young girls whose friendship is strong despite the attempts of segregation to keep them apart; and of the 1967 referendum in which Australian people voted overwhelming for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to be recognised *as people* in the Constitution. It is a beautiful picture book with much to discuss.



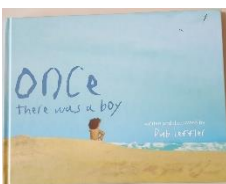
Stradbroke Dreamtime is a collection of stories by Indigenous author, poet, and political activist Oodgeroo. The stories, beautifully illustrated by Bronwyn Bancroft, tell of Stradbroke Island and of the Old and New Dreamtime. Some stories are from Oodgeroo's own life, and others from those of her ancestors.



Stories from the Billabong are ten traditional stories of the Yorta-Yorta people retold by James Vance Marshall and illustrated by Francis Firebrace. In addition to the Dreamtime stories, the book includes information about Aboriginal Australians, a glossary, and a guide to Aboriginal symbols and their meanings. Children will enjoy hearing stories of creation, including *How the Kangaroo got her Pouch* and *Why the Platypus is such a special creature*.

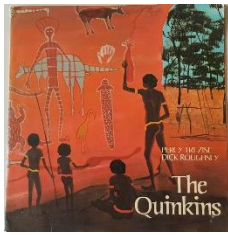


Kookoo Kookaburra, written and illustrated by Gregg Dreise, inspired by the stories of his people, is a modern story of kindness, respect and friendship.

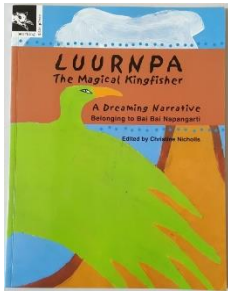


Once there was a boy, written and illustrated by Dub Leffler, is a beautiful book about a boy living alone on an island until, one day, a girl comes. When the boy leaves to gather food, he tells the girl to not look under his bed. Should he trust her? Can she overcome her curiosity to honour his request? This book about friendship, trust, temptation, and reconciliation has many themes to discuss.

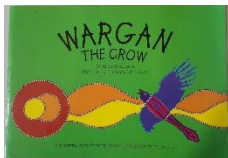
Many books retell stories from the dreamtime, for example:



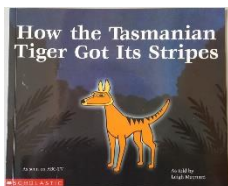
The Quinkins, by Percy Trezise and Dick Roughsey, is a story about mythical dreamtime creatures, the friendly Timaras and the evil Imjims.



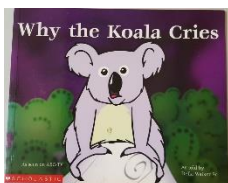
Luurnpa The Magical Kingfisher, told by Bai Bai Napangarti, is a dreamtime story of the Kukatja people of Western Australia.



Wargan the Crow, retold by Cindy Laws, is a dreamtime story of the Boorooberongal/Darlingjung people of New South Wales.



How the Tasmanian Tiger Got Its Stripes, told by Leigh Maynard, is a dreamtime story of the Nuenonne people of Bruny Island off the coast of Tasmania.

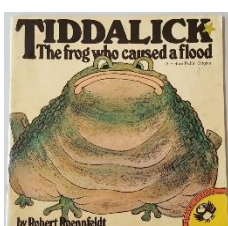


Why the Koala Cries, told by Della Walker Sr, is a dreamtime story of the Yaegl people of New South Wales.

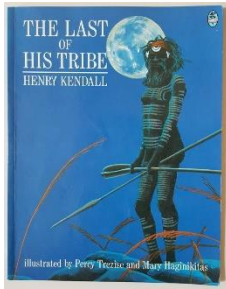
A popular series of Aboriginal dreamtime stories retold by Pamela Lofts include:



When the snake bites the sun
How the birds got their colours
The echidna and the shade tree
Dunbi the owl



Tiddalick The frog who caused a flood, by Robert Roennfeldt is a retelling of an Aboriginal dreamtime story.



The Last of His Tribe, a poem written by Henry Kendall in 1864 and republished with illustrations by Percy Trezise and Mary Haginikitas, is a sad but beautiful reflection on a history of loss and loneliness.

Check out your school and local library for these and other titles. Ask the librarians for their recommendations.

Other useful resources include:

[Magabala Books](#) (accessed 1 July 2017), an Indigenous publishing house based in Broome W.A. “committed to publishing quality, culturally significant literature”, is a great place to source stories by Indigenous authors and illustrators. Their website includes classroom resources that support many of their publications. Some Magabala publications are on my list.

[Little J and Big Cuz](#) (accessed 1 July 2017), an animated series for early years children (K – 2). The series is about Little J, who’s five, and Big Cuz, who’s nine. They live with their Nanna and Old Dog and, with the help of Nanna and their teacher, learn about culture, community and country. Each episode is supported by numerous teaching suggestions and resources for both classroom and home. While the resources, developed by [ACER](#) (Australian Council for Educational Research) and Indigenous Educational Consultants, were written with Indigenous Australian children in mind, the stories will have wide appeal.

The website [Creative Spirits](#) (accessed 1 July 2017), holds a wealth of information about Australian Indigenous culture, including many free resources for teachers and students. The website is curated by Jens Korff, an Australian-born German who, faced with the lack of readily available authentic information about Indigenous culture, decided the situation needed to change. Jens says, “My decision for Creative Spirits was to write quality articles, fully referenced, and give voice to Aboriginal people as much as I can.”

An internet search of “Youtube Aboriginal Legends” will produce a list of many videos. Be sure to preview them for suitability before showing to children.

*“Here in Australia we’re fortunate enough to have **one of the richest and oldest continuing cultures in the world.** This is something we should all be proud of and celebrate.”*

Dr Tom Calma AO, Co-Chair Reconciliation Australia