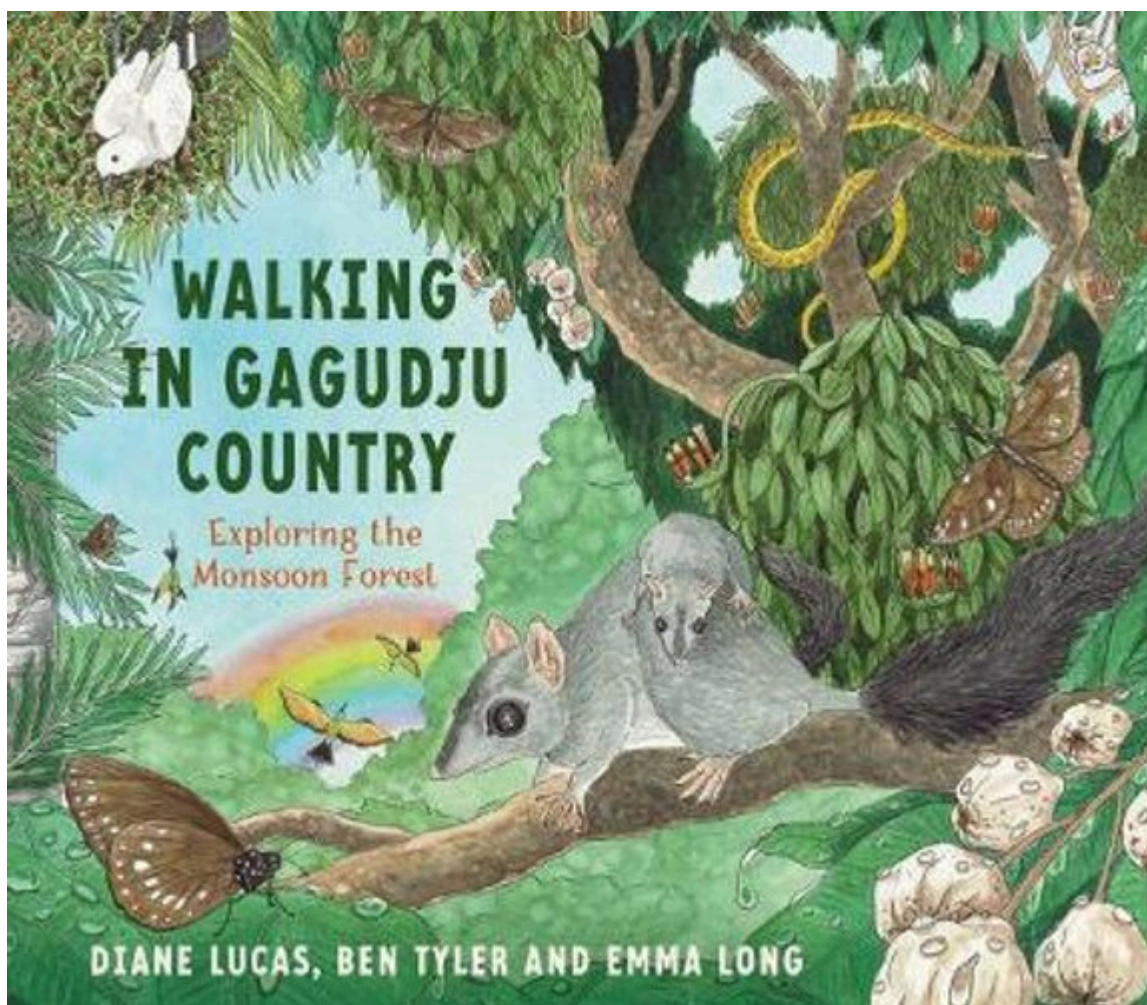


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Walking in Gagudju Country: Exploring the Monsoon Forest

Exploring the 2022 CBCA Short List: Information Books



Parts in this unit of work

- [Reading, listening to and appreciating the book](#)
- [Using the book for speaking, writing and creating](#)

- [Relevant resources and links](#)

The content description links on this page have been updated in line with Version 9.0 of the Australian Curriculum. [Use this guide](#) to compare codes across versions.

Author: [Diane Lucas](#) & [Ben Tyler](#)

Illustrator: [Emma Long](#)

Publisher: [Allen & Unwin](#)

Unit writer: [Karen Rogers](#)

Synopsis (from the CBCA judge's comments): Walk with us through one of the Top End's magnificent monsoon forests, in Kakadu National Park, learning about the plants, animals and Kundjeyhmi culture along the way. Diane Lucas, Ben Tyler and Emma Long share their knowledge and love of the Top End in this enchanting and accessible book about one of Australia's most ancient and beautiful ecosystems.

Themes: Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander culture & histories, connection, place, Country, biodiversity, nature, ecosystems

Year levels: Australian Curriculum: English, Year 4; HASS (History & Geography), Year 4; Science, Year 4; Arts (Music, Drama, Visual Arts, Media Arts), Years 3 & 4

Why use this book? This book provides a unique tour of the magnificent Gagudju forest with insights in the form of commentary from the authors, who each have a special connection to the forest. Aside from exploring the importance of the land for the local Bininj people, the text also features the Kundjeyhmi names for the flora and fauna that the authors observe on their walk. The book provides an opportunity to appreciate Indigenous culture and language. In addition, the unique text structure and language features allow for an exploration of creative ways to share information. The rich visuals, with scientific elements, act as a model for interpreting as well as creating informative visual texts and they also inspire connections to the Arts, with links to Drama, Visual Arts, Music and Media Arts.

Focus passages: The following pages have been selected for closer analysis throughout the teaching unit:

- Pages 2-5 – point of view, verb tense, image layout
- Pages 6-7 – language of fact vs language of opinion
- Pages 8-9 – visual elements
- Pages 12-13 – text structure

Unit writer: [Karen Rogers](#)

Reading and appreciating the book

Book introduction (big picture)

- *About the author & illustrator.* Build an understanding of the authors and their purpose for writing this book. You may like to explore these resources in small groups using the strategies of [The Jigsaw Classroom](#), which supports collaboration and engagement. Report back to the class and summarise the main findings about the authors and the illustrator. How does an understanding of their backgrounds and interests help us to understand their motivation for creating the text?
 - o Read the 'Acknowledgements' page at the beginning of the text
 - o Read 'About the authors and illustrator' on pg. 32 of the text
 - o Watch this video of [Diane Lucas and Ben Tyler as they discuss *Walking in Gagudju Country*](#)
 - o Explore the website of [Diane Lucas, one of the authors.](#) [AC9E4LE01](#)
- *Text organisation.* The text has a unique structure in that it uses first person voice to narrate the experiences of the authors as they go on their journey through the monsoon forest. Notice the small illustrations that are interspersed with the text on each page. Some of the small illustrations represent 'avatars' of the authors and their friends, while others show the flora and fauna that they encounter. Point out these features to students and discuss why they have been included as well as how they will help the reader to make meaning from the text. The avatars are symbols to show who is narrating, while the living things allow for connection between the English and the Kundjeyhmi name. [AC9E4LE01](#), [AC9E4LE03](#), [AC9E4LA03](#)
- *Engaging with the text.* The text uses the Kundjeyhmi language of the Bininj people to name many of the things that are seen during the walk. To hear the words pronounced correctly watch this [video of Ben Tyler sharing the text](#) (created for an early childhood audience) and listen to [Diane Lucas and Ben Tyler reading the text aloud](#). As you watch and listen find the correlating Kundjeyhmi word in the text. You may like to create a visual word wall with an illustration of the plant or animal, the Kundjeyhmi name and the English name. [AC9E4LA11](#), [AC9E4LY04](#)

Close reading

For this unit, links between receptive and productive modes have been made. For each teaching idea in **Close reading** you will find a corresponding teaching idea in **Using the book for listening, speaking, writing & creating**.

- *Point of view:* Read pp. 2-3 together and discuss whose voice is being heard. Who is narrating the story? Find and underline the words that show the point of view (we). How could you change the point of view? Discuss the terms first, second and third person. Try substituting other pronouns for 'we' and notice how the perspective changes. Discuss why the authors have chosen to write the book from a first-person perspective. What effect does it have on the reader? [AC9E4LA02](#), [AC9E4LE03](#), [AC9E4LA01](#)

- *Language – tense*: The text is written in timeless present tense. Look at the text on pg. 4. For each sentence on this page identify and highlight the Process (verb) that tells the reader what the main Participant is doing, e.g., “We **scramble** through the vines and **find** some anboyberre on the ground. They **are** soft and a little sour but juicy and delicious”. When combined with the first-person perspective, what is the effect of timeless present tense on the reader? Discuss the way that these two features combine to make the reader feel as though they are going on the journey in real time with the authors. Why do you think they made this choice? How do these features help to create a connection between the authors and the reader? [AC9E4LA02](#), [AC9E4LE02](#), [AC9E4LE03](#)
- *Language - factual vs feeling/opinion*: The text on pg. 7 is ideal for demonstrating the difference in language that provides factual information and language that expresses feelings or opinions. Look at each sentence on the page in turn and discuss whether it represents **facts** or **opinions and feelings** of the author. Find some examples of the words that function to represent facts (straight, strong) and compare to those that represent feelings or opinions (beautiful, gentle, good). Notice that all these words can be classified as adjectives. Discuss the idea that the factual adjectives are overt (or obvious) and non-subjective while the feelings and opinions adjectives are covert (or less obvious) and subjective. [AC9E4LA02](#), [AC9E4LE02](#)
- *Vocabulary*. On pg. 4 notice the way that the authors have used the Kundjeyhmi name for the flora and fauna that they encounter on their walk. Point out that these terms are highlighted with the use of different coloured fonts. These fonts correlate with the ‘key’ in the text that shows a small picture and the English name. Discuss the way that authors have used scientific and Indigenous names in order to establish a sense of expert authority – a key feature of informative texts.
- *Text structure*: The text structure is unique as it is based on the ad hoc observations and conversations of the authors. It describes the walk as they experience it and is organised according to the order of their observations and conversations. Use the text on pp. 12-13 to look closely at this feature. In the first paragraph the walk participants notice a ‘tall an-djenjdjok’ or ‘milkwood tree’. The second paragraph shows Ben sharing an anecdote about the tree species. In the third paragraph Diane connects to Ben’s story to share one of her own anecdotes. In the final paragraph Ben makes a further connection to Diane’s story to share more of his own knowledge about the tree. To support students to see the conversational structure of the text, role play these two pages, with students playing the role of Ben, Diane and the others on the walk as they pretend to stop and look at a tree. Choose another page from the text for students to role play in small groups. You may also like to discuss the importance of oral storytelling within Indigenous culture. [AC9E4LA01](#), [AC9E4LA03](#), [AC9E4LA04](#), [AC9E4LE01](#), [AC9E4LY03](#), [AC9HS4K01](#), [AC9HS4K06](#)
- *Text comparison*: Explore the ‘Walks’ page of the [Kakadu National Park website](#). Notice the way that information is organised according to topic as well as the use of ‘written-like’ language. Compare this to the organisation and more ‘spoken-like’ features of *Walking in*

Gagudju Country. Use a T-chart to compare the features of both texts. Ask students to decide which text they prefer and use the observed differences to explain and justify their opinion. [AC9E4LA01](#), [AC9E4LA03](#), [AC9E4LA05](#), [AC9E4LE02](#)

- *Comprehension*: Explore the way that connections can be made across the text as well as between texts in order to strengthen understanding. On pg. 3 notice the patches of rainbow hidden in the bushes that represent the story of the Rainbow Serpent. Notice the other representations of the Rainbow Serpent throughout the book and discuss the way that this feature highlights the Gagudju people's connection to Country. Next explore the [Wildlife factsheet](#) from Kakadu National Park. Find connections between the information in both texts. Discuss which type of text is easier to make meaning from? Why? [AC9E4LE02](#), [AC9E4LE01](#), [AC9E4LY05](#)
- *Multimodal reading*: Use a recording of the sounds of Kakadu such as the sample found [here](#) to support students to imagine what it would be like to be on the walk through Gagudju. As you play the recording slowly turn the pages of the text. Alternatively, choose one image to look at closely while the recording is played. Discuss the way that the soundscape provides a different type of understanding than the written text. [AC9E4LE02](#), [AC9E4LE01](#), [AC9AMU4E02](#), [AC9AMU4E01](#)
- *Visual literacy*: Look at the illustrations on pp. 8-9. Draw student attention to the 'zoom-in' images of the bush bee and the djurungh-djurungh (mistletoe bird). Discuss why the illustrator has used this technique. How does it help the reader to see the whole landscape as well as the finer details when they are not there to 'look closer' in person? How does it support understanding? You may also like to point out other examples in the text where the difference between night and day is shown using the same technique (e.g., the yerinj or rufous owl on pg. 18). [AC9E4LA10](#), [AC9E4LY03](#), [AC9E4LY05](#), [AC9S4U01](#), [AC9HS4S03](#), [AC9AVA4E01](#), [AC9AVA4E02](#)
- *Page layout*: Examine the layout of the images on pp. 4-5. Notice the use of framing and white space to compartmentalise the ideas. Compare this to the image on pp. 2-3. How do frames help the organisation of ideas? How does the lack of framing help the viewer to see the full view? Why do you think the illustrator has chosen to use frames in this way? Also on pp. 4-5 notice the visual point of view in each image. The water scene uses a cut-through perspective to show all the layers of the habitat, while the tree is shown from the perspective of someone standing on the ground looking up at the tree. What is the impact of each of these perspectives and why do you think the illustrator has used them? [AC9E4LA10](#), [AC9E4LY05](#), [AC9HS4S03](#), [AC9HS4K05](#), [AC9AVA4E01](#), [AC9AVA4E02](#)
- *Making meaning*: The conversational style of the text can make it difficult to share as a read-aloud text in the classroom, so consider other ways of involving students in the exploration of the text. You may like to read the text as a role play using Reader's Theatre techniques, or students may create a puppet show for a selected page of the text. Draw the authors as well as the flora and fauna and use as puppets to role play the journey through

Word recognition, phonic knowledge and spelling

- *Morphology - prefix*: Find the words **revealed** and **regrow** on pg. 13. Investigate the **re-** prefix. Find other words in the classroom and in other texts that use this prefix. Make a list of the found words and discuss the way that the prefix alters the meaning of the base (which is usually a verb). As a fun activity, try to find base verbs that can not have the re-suffix attached (it's trickier than you may think!) [AC9E4LY10](#)
- *Morphology - suffixes*: Look at the text on pg. 16 and find example of words that have one or more suffixes attached (**cheerful**, **melodious**, **sleeping**, **awakens**, **darkness**). Choose one or more of these words to investigate using word building equations, i.e. cheerful = cheer + ful; darkness = dark + ness. Discuss the way that the meaning of the base is altered by the addition of the suffix. What other words can you find that use the same suffix? Find out what the suffix means. [AC9E4LY10](#)
- *Phonology*: On pp. 8-10 find words that begin with the 'dj' grapheme (*djang*, *djilidjilih*, *djurungh-djurungh*, *djawok*). Listen to [Diane Lucas and Ben Tyler reading the text aloud](#) if you are unsure of the sound that the grapheme makes in these words. Can you find any English words that use the same grapheme/ phoneme combination? Do any of the words have the 'dj' in the initial (beginning) part of the word? Discuss the way that recognising that a word originates from a language other than English helps us to decode accurately. [AC9E4LY09](#)
- *Etymology*: Use [Etymonline - Online Etymology Dictionary](#) or a word origin search to investigate the Indigenous language origins of words such as *billabong*, *kangaroo*, *witchetty grub*, *didjeridoo*. Discuss the way that Europeans adapted words for unfamiliar Australian flora, fauna and places from the terms that the local Indigenous groups used. Find some examples of words in your local area that have Indigenous origins and investigate the reasons behind their name. [AC9E4LY10](#)

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Using the book for listening, speaking, writing and creating

For this unit, links between receptive and productive modes have been made. For each teaching idea in **Using the book for listening, speaking, writing & creating** you will find a corresponding teaching idea in **Close Reading**.

- *Point of view*: With a partner students can create and record an oral narration of a journey to a special part of the school. Focus on the use of first-person pronouns to create a sense of connection with the listener. This oral narration can be transcribed into a written text with supporting photos or illustrations added. [AC9E4LA02](#), [AC9E4LE05](#)
- *Language – tense*: When creating the oral narration above support students to use timeless present tense verbs. After transcribing the oral narration ask students to edit their written text by underlining the Process (verb) in each sentence. Is it in the timeless present tense form? [AC9E4LE05](#)
- *Language – factual vs feeling/ opinion*: Select an object or area of the school that students may have differing feelings or opinions about (e.g., books, football, library, art room). Ask students to divide a page into two columns. On one side make a list of factual words to describe the object or place. On the other side make a list of words that describe the students' opinions or feelings about the object or place. As an additional writing task, students might like to use these words to create a descriptive poem about the object or place. [AC9E4LA02](#), [AC9E4LE04](#), [AC9E4LE05](#), [AC9E4LY06](#)

- *Vocabulary*: If possible connect with your school's local Indigenous Elders and seek their support in exploring the first language of the area. As an alternative explore the 50 words website which is a collation of some of the Indigenous languages of Australia. You may also like to connect with the home languages of students in your class and create a multilingual picture dictionary for familiar and everyday terms.
- *Text structure*: Model rewriting pp. 12-13 of the text as a third-person recount. Discuss the importance of stating the Participant (who or what the sentence is about) as well as the Process (what has happened) using the past tense form. These will be the two main changes that will need to be made so ensure that students understand how to use them. You will also need to punctuate examples of direct speech, which will be a good opportunity to model these conventions. Working in pairs, allocate a page from the text for students to rewrite as a third-person recount. [AC9E4LA03](#), [AC9E4LA12](#), [AC9E4LA07](#), [AC9E4LA06](#), [AC9E4LY06](#)
- *Text comparison*: When students are beginning to compose narratives, they often use more spoken-like language as seen in *Walking in Gagudju Country*, with events described in a first person, 'as it happens' style. Ask students to review some of their own written texts and compare them to both *Walking in Gagudju Country* and the collaborative third-person text created in the activity above. Discuss the difference between more spoken-like vs more written-like texts and when each is more effective. Which text is theirs most like and how effective is their text at meeting their purpose? , [AC9E4LE05](#), [AC9E4LE03](#)
- *Comprehension*: Create an informative text on a topic of students' choice. Decide on a format and structure that best supports the reader to understand the information being shared. Texts might be visual diagrams, informative recounts, documentary style videos, podcasts etc. [AC9E4LY06](#), [AC9E4LE05](#)
- *Multimodal creation*: In small groups ask students to select one of the images from the text to create a complementary soundscape. Use the clues in the illustrations as well as the written description to think about the sounds that would be heard. Use available sound-making devices such as musical instruments, voices, body percussion or digital technologies to create a soundscape for the page. You may like to record the soundscapes and compile them as an aural accompaniment for the images in the text. [AC9E4LY06](#), [AC9E4LE05](#), [AC9AMU4C01](#), [AC9AMU4P01](#), [AC9AMA4P01](#), [AC9AMA4C01](#)
- *Visual literacy*: Use the visual 'zoom in' feature as shown in the text to create an image of a favourite part of the schoolground or classroom. Begin by illustrating the whole scene and then choose one feature to highlight. Illustrate a close-up image of this feature on a separate page and then cut it out and glue it on the larger scene. You may like to add this image to a Writer's Notebook as a 'seed' for a future writing project. [AC9AVA4P01](#), [AC9AVA4C01](#), [AC9AVA4D01](#)
- *Page layout*: Use photos of the school ground or classroom to create an informative visual text. Use digital tools such as PowerPoint, Google Slides, Pic Collage or other available App to create a series of images. Discuss the visual choices to be made - border or no border;

one image or more per page; how will the flow of images be managed to help create the intended message and flow of the text? [AC9E4LA10](#), [AC9E4LY06](#), [AC9AMA4P01](#), [AC9AMA4C01](#), [AC9AMA4E01](#)

- *Making meaning*: Illustrate and cut out a character or avatar to act as a tour guide of the schoolgrounds or classroom. Use Augmented Reality Apps such as [AR Makr](#) to place the 'tour guide' in different parts of the school yard or classroom and use the voiceover recording function to narrate the tour. See the Resources section for ways to use AR in the literacy classroom. [AC9E4LA10](#), [AC9E4LY06](#), [AC9AMA4P01](#), [AC9AMA4C01](#), [AC9AMA4E01](#)

Relevant resources and links

- ***Indigenous seasons in Kakadu***: The CSIRO has created an [Indigenous Seasons Calendar](#) for the Kakadu area.
- ***Augmented Reality*** can be useful for exploring visual literacy and multimodal text creation. The PETAA publication [Between Worlds](#), PETAA Paper [PP220](#) and PETAA [webinar with Lynde Tan](#) are all valuable resources for learning more about AR.
- ***Related PETAA teaching units***:
 - o [Dry to Dry: The Seasons of Kakadu](#) by Pamela Freeman and Liz Anelli includes parallel texts of narrative and factual information about Kakadu National Park.
 - o [Welcome to Country](#) by Aunty Joy Murphy and Lisa Kennedy explores the importance of Country to First Nations people.
 - o [Wilam: A Birrarung Story](#) by Aunty Joy Murphy and Lisa Kennedy tells the story of a day in the life of Birrarung (Yarra River).
 - o [Black Cockatoo](#) by Carl Merrison and Hakea Hustler follows Mia, a young Aboriginal girl as she explores the fragile connections of family and culture.
 - o [The art of belonging – I belong in a place](#) is an upper primary unit that aims to encourage an understanding of the value of Indigenous Australian language, culture and connection to country.

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