



Walker Books Classroom Ideas



The Lost Girl

Author: Ambelin Kwaymullina
 Illustrator: Leanne Tobin
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

The girl had lost her way. She had wandered away from the Mothers, the Aunties and the Grandmothers, from the Fathers and the Uncles and the Grandfathers. Who will show her the way home?

Author/Illustrator Information:

Ambelin Kwaymullina loves reading sci-fi and fantasy books, and has wanted to write a novel since she was six years old. She comes from the Palyku people of the Pilbara region of Western Australia. When not writing or reading she works in cultural heritage, illustrates picture books and hangs out with her dogs. She has previously written a number of children's books, both alone and with other members of her family. Her first novel, *The Tribe Book 1: The Interrogation of Ashala Wolf*, was short-listed in both the Science Fiction and Young Adult Fiction categories of the 2012 Aurealis Awards.

Leanne Tobin has worked as an artist for more than three decades. She is of Dharug descent, the traditional Aboriginal people of Greater Western Sydney. Leanne is a primary teacher but works as an educator within the community and runs creative workshops with a range of Indigenous and non-Indigenous organisations, teaching local Dharug histories, stories and landcare to the public. Her artwork acknowledges her mixed ancestry (Irish, English and Aboriginal), and she uses a combination of western and traditional techniques infused with Aboriginal symbolism and stories. She has won many awards and in 2011 won the NSW Parliament Indigenous Art Prize. *The Lost Girl* is her first picture book.

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primary years F-2 • Ages 5+ 	Key Learning Areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English • Geography • History • Technologies • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Histories and Cultures 	Example of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picture book 	Themes/ Ideas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nature • Family • Relationships 			
National Curriculum Focus:*						
English Foundation ACELA1430 ACELA1786 ACELT1575 ACELT1783 ACELT1578 ACELT1580 ACELY1784 ACELY1647	Year 1 ACELA1444 ACELA1787 ACELT1581 ACELT1584 ACELY1655 ACELY1788 ACELY1661	Year 2 ACELA1463 ACELT1587 ACELT1589 ACELY1665 ACELY1789 ACELY1667 ACELY1671	Geography Foundation ACHGK002 ACHGK003 ACHGK004 Year 1 ACHGK005 ACHGK007 Year 2 ACHGK011	History Foundation ACHHK002 Year 1 ACHHK028 Year 2 ACHHK044	Technologies Foundation - 2 ACTDEK001 ACTDEK003	*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



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Discussion Questions and Activities

English

Before reading

What do you think the story might be about from the title of the book only? Where do you think it is set? Do your ideas change after seeing the cover?

What is the first thing you look at on the cover of the book? Why is your eye drawn to this object?

Compare your response with your classmates. Are their salient objects the same as yours?

What are the main colours used on the cover of the book? Why do you think the illustrator has chosen these colours? What feelings do you associate with each of them?

After reading

Listen to the story being read aloud without looking at the illustrations. Then read the story while viewing the illustrations. Do the illustrations change your understanding of the story in any way? How?

The crow's call of "Caw! Caw! Caw!" is written in a different font than the rest of the text. How does this affect the way you read the text? Write a short story about something noisy (an animal, machine, musical instrument, etc.) and describe the sound it makes in a similar style.

What does the girl mean when she tells her little brother "I was with my mother"?

Choose three spreads from the book and discuss what emotions you think the girl is feeling at that time based on her facial expressions and body language. Play a game where the teacher describes a scene from the book (the girl is lost, the girl is hungry, the girl finds her way home, etc.) and the students act out the emotions the girl may have been feeling at that point.

Geography

Where do you think this book is set? How can you tell from the illustrations?

The illustrations feature many Australian plants and animals. See if you can find the following:

- eucalyptus
- quandong
- gecko
- Sturt's desert pea
- waratah
- acacia
- brown snake
- Australian kapok

If you are unfamiliar with these plants and animals you

can find images of them in your school library or online to help you identify them in the book. What other plants and animals can you identify?

The Lost Girl takes place in the Australian bush and involves animals, plants and features of the landscape. If possible, go for a walk in a national park or some bushland near the school. What different creatures do you observe? What are they doing? What can you hear, smell and feel? Use your observations as the inspiration for a short story. Illustrate your story with appropriate pictures, then as a class, create an anthology for the school library featuring the stories you have written. Read your story to the class. Think carefully about how you can use volume, expression, pace, posture and gesture to bring your story to life. Alternatively, you may like to record or film your story.

The bush setting is where the girl and her family group live. How does this family's country/place provide them with their basic needs? Why do you think it is important to them?

Aboriginal Peoples have a special connection with their country/place, including the land, sea and animals. How is that special connection shown in *The Lost Girl*? Visit your school library and see if you can find other books that demonstrate this special connection.

History

The girl lives with a large family group in a camp in the bush. How is this similar or different to where you live? Take a survey of your class to find out how many people live in each home and whether it is a house, apartment, camp, etc. Have a class discussion on how each family has a different living situation.

Do you know the name of the Aboriginal people whose traditional land your school is on? If you don't know, can you find out?

How did Aboriginal people traditionally live in your area? Where would they have had access to fresh water, food and shelter? What food sources might have been available to them?

Technologies

The girl eats some bush food when she gets hungry. What other bush food do you know about? Research bush food in your school library or online and make a list with illustrations. What are the dangers of eating bush food that you don't know about?