

Ceremony: Welcome to our Country

AUTHORS

ADAM GOODES AND ELLIE LAING

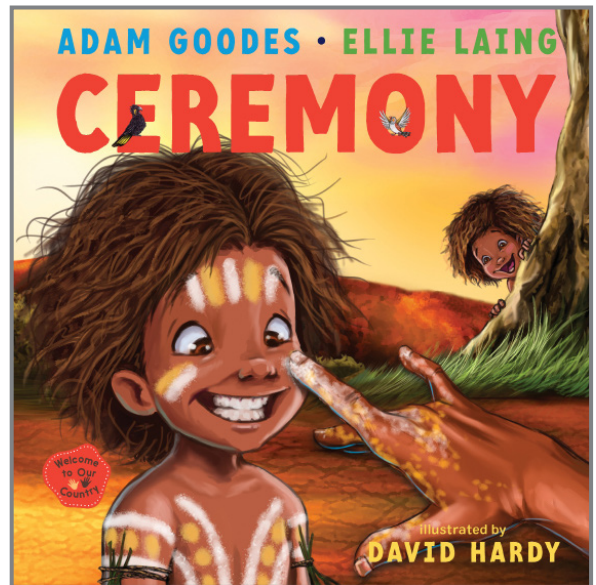
ILLUSTRATOR

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Welcome, children!

Nangga! Nangga! Yakarti!

Tonight will be our Ceremony.

Our family gathers as the fire burns.

The smoke rises up as we take it in turns . . .

Then clapsticks tap – one, two, three –

but a stick is missing! Where could it be?

Joyful and full of fun, Ceremony invites you to celebrate the rich traditions of dance, family, community and caring for Country from the world's oldest continuous culture.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Adam Goodes is an Adnyamathanha and Narungga man and community leader. He is a former Australian Rules Footballer, having achieved the greatest heights in the game, and was named Australian of the Year in 2014 for his public work in the fight against racism and his advocacy in First Nations affairs. Together with his cousin Michael O'Loughlin, Adam founded the GO Foundation, which supports and inspires the next generation of First Nations leaders. With a diploma in Aboriginal Studies and his own daughter approaching preschool age, Adam was motivated to publish a series of books for young children and families about Australia's First Nations history.

Ellie Laing (nee Southwood) is a communications professional, and former political advisor and journalist, who lives on the lands of the Gammeraygal people on the northern beaches of Sydney with her husband and two sons. When Ellie's eldest son Harvey came home from preschool reciting Acknowledgements of Country and singing Aboriginal lullabies, she was inspired to collaborate with Adam Goodes on a series of books aimed at helping families with young children to talk about Australia's First Nations history. She is currently completing studies in Traditional Aboriginal Cultures.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

David Hardy is a Barkindji man, author and artist with more than eight years of animation experience with Walt Disney Animation Studios. Married with two children, he is currently a Senior Gaming Illustrator/Animation Manager for Lightning Box Games. David has worked on twelve animated feature films, including *The Little Mermaid: Ariel's Beginning*, *The Lion King 3: Hakuna Matata* and *Return to Neverland*. His books for children include *Alfie's Search for Destiny* and *Alfie's Big Wish*, *On the Way to Nana's*, *The Proud Foots 1: Shaka Shaka Hawaii* and *Aussie Kids: Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo*.

A NOTE ABOUT THE BOOK

Nangga! Nangga! Yakarti! Welcome, children!

In Australia there are over 350 First Nations groups with different languages and customs. This book features a traditional ceremony from Adam's country, the Adnyamathanha people of the Flinders Ranges in South Australia.

Adnyamathanha society is divided into two parts, called moieties. These moieties are Mathari and Ararru. Every person in Adnyamathanha society has a moiety. The moiety is passed down from mother to child, so you'd be in the same moiety as your mother, and her mother. Your father, by law, would be the opposite moiety to your mother—and thus opposite to you.

A person's moiety determines all important aspects of their lives, including who they can marry, the knowledge they can possess and how they interact with others in society. Adnyamathanha moiety and kinship also includes ancestors and people who have passed away.

There are several Adnyamathanha words in this book. If you are new to this language, there is a visual glossary with the English meanings on the endpapers.

To listen to a reading of this story and the glossary, scan the QR code [located opposite the book's title page.]

It is important to first consider any Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children reading this book and how the perspectives and themes could impact them. The significant impacts of past and current policies influence Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's journey and their knowledge and experiences differ with every child. It is also important to consider the experiences of any person reading this book, who could be impacted by the removal from their homelands, family, kinship and country.

STUDY NOTES

- Find out what your students already know about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures by asking questions such as:
 - Who were the first peoples to live on the land we now call Australia?
 - What do you know about how Aboriginal people lived? [Encourage a broad discussion, including music, art, food, history, language, culture.] **Please note that it is important to stress to students that Aboriginal culture is a living culture. Many Aboriginal people today continue to live as their ancestors did because their culture has passed from generation to generation over thousands of years.**
- It's now time to show your class the *Ceremony* front cover and ask students to respond to it by asking:
 - Who might these kids be?
 - Where do you think they might live?
 - What is on the boy's face and body?
 - Do the children look happy? Why do you think they are happy?
 - The book's title is *Ceremony*. What do you think this story is going to be about?
 - Can you name the two birds sitting in the word 'Ceremony' on the cover? [Hint: find out on the endpapers.]
- Now turn to the endpapers—and listen to the Adnyamathanha words via the QR code, while pointing at each image.

- Listen to the story being read aloud via the QR code and after finishing ask students to answer the following True or False questions:
 - You have to be an adult to go to the Ceremony. T or F?
 - Women and men do things separately at the Ceremony because each has business the other can't see. T or F?
 - Painting dots and lines on your face and body is a way of dressing up for the Ceremony. T or F?
 - Clapsticks make music (udi) at the Ceremony. T or F?
 - Dancing is never allowed at the Ceremony. T or F?
 - Elders tell stories or yarns at the Ceremony. T or F?
 - People never eat food (mai) at the Ceremony. T or F?
 - The Ceremony goes late into the night. T or F?
 - Sharing is an important part of the Ceremony. T or F?
 - The stories told at the Ceremony will be told by the children to their children one day. T or F?
- The authors use a device called repetition to tell their story. This is when the same word, phrase or sentence occurs again and again in a text. It is a very important device because it can help stress a key point and establish a rhythm or tone. What sentences and key words are repeated in *Ceremony* and why do you think the authors have chosen them specifically?
- In a whole class discussion invite students to talk about the ceremonies celebrated in their families. Explain that everybody, whatever their background, loves to gather with family and friends to do many of the things we saw in *Ceremony*, such as cook, eat, talk, play music and dance. Encourage them to describe similar things in their own cultures to what is seen in *Ceremony*. Can they find things that are very different here to their own experience?
- Incorporate an Acknowledgement of Country to the beginning of your class. Invite older students to take turns leading the Acknowledgement of Country.
- Invite a local traditional Elder or Custodian to deliver a Welcome to Country to your school and talk about the land that your school is on. Consider making this event outside of school hours and inviting parents and carers to attend. This creates an opportunity for greater community understanding and in-depth discussions in the home.