

The Heartbeat of the Land

AUTHOR

CATHY FREEMAN AND CORAL VASS

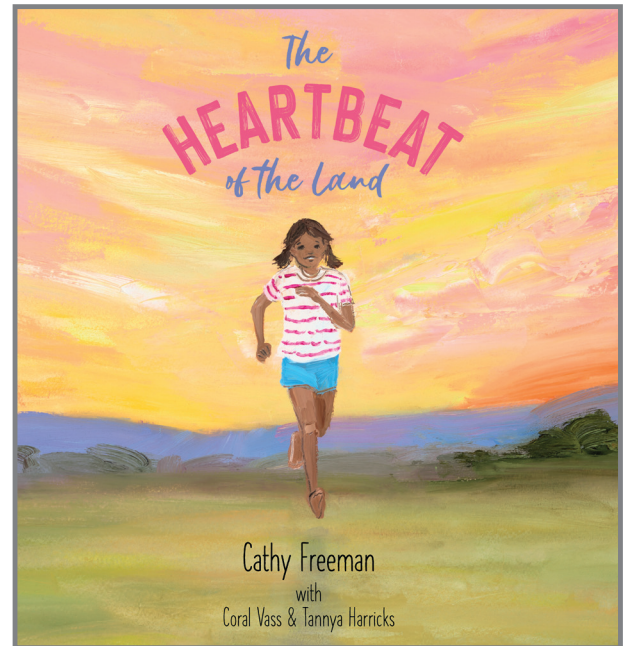
ILLUSTRATOR

TANNYA HARRICKS

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Cathy ran barefoot every day across the great ancient land, as her people had done for sixty thousand years before. And when she ran she could hear the heartbeat of the land. Then one day, Cathy hears a cry. She answers this cry and with one small step at a time, the seeds of change are planted.

Cathy Freeman has always been an inspiration to young people. Here, she does it again through storytelling—just as her people have done, for sixty thousand years before...Listen, and you too, will hear the Heartbeat of the Land.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Cathy Freeman is a proud Kuku Yalanji woman. She is also an Australian Indigenous Olympic champion. She ran her first race when she was five and realised that she loved the way racing made her feel.

Cathy Freeman was a member of the gold medal-winning 4x100m relay team at the 1990 Auckland Commonwealth Games, and in so doing became the first female Australian Aboriginal to win a gold medal at an International athletics event. She was awarded Young Australian of the Year in 1991 and Australian of the Year in 1998. She was also crowned World Champion in the 400m in both 1997 and 1999.

Cathy's most notable achievement, however, came in 2000 at the Olympic Games in Sydney. Her image was beamed into millions of homes around the world when she became the first competing athlete to be invited to light the Olympic flame at the opening ceremony. She then went on to win the gold medal in the 400m, realising a life-long dream.

Coral Vass is an award-winning Australian children's author. She has always loved telling stories and has been writing books for more than a decade. Coral is an ambassador for Reading Out of Poverty and is passionate about giving all children an equal opportunity to read.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Tannya Harricks is an award-winning illustrator and artist who has previously illustrated several picture books about Australian animals and the vast Australian landscape. Tannya lives in Sydney near a National Park which provides endless inspiration for her illustrations and oil paintings.

THEMES

- First Nations

- Cathy Freeman
- Storytelling
- Connection to Country
- Indigenous Perspectives
- The Environment
- Language
- Australian Wildlife
- Famous Sports Personalities

STUDY NOTES

- What do you think this story might be about?
- Ask students to put up their hand when they notice any of the following:
 - rhyming words
 - alliteration.
 - Can they think of any other rhyming words?
 - Ask students to come up with their own sentences using the alliteration they found.
- After reading the story, as a class, discuss the following questions:
 - What do you think will happen next?
 - Do you think Cathy will be able to help the land recover?
 - Have you ever gone for a run or a walk and noticed the animals and the environment?
 - Have you or someone in your family ever tried to change something in your environment?
 - What do you know about Cathy Freeman?
- Create your own animal profile using either a cockatoo, kangaroo, emu or penguin. Include the following in your profile:
 - A sketch of your animal
 - An interesting fact about your chosen animal.
- Find a word you don't know the definition of in the story and write an acrostic poem using a word or sentence for each letter.
- Cathy Freeman's spiritual totem is the White Cockatoo. If you had a spiritual totem, which animal would it be and why?