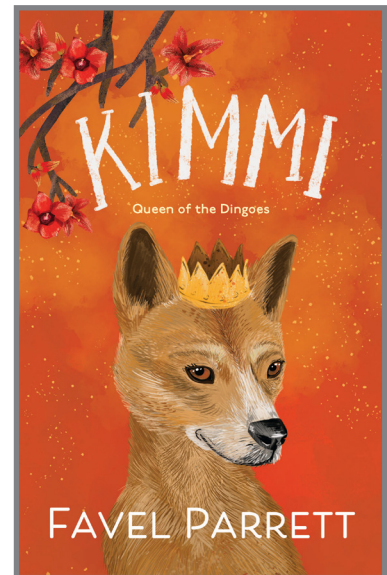


Kimmi: Queen of the Dingoes

AUTHOR

FAVEL PARRETT



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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid Primary

SYNOPSIS

On the night of a full moon, a small tropical dingo cub is born. And it is her destiny to travel far from home to change things for her kind.

Kimmi sleeps with her mama at her back, her aunty at her front and her three brothers squeezed in beside her. They are a family. But when the farmer who took her father returns to threaten the rest of them, Kimmi is separated from her mama.

In an incredible act of determination, Kimmi's mama runs over mountain tops and dusty red earth to spend one last day with her cub and share with her the knowledge that will one day make her a queen.

This is Kimmi's story, the story of how she became Queen of the Dingoes in a sanctuary that saves them from extinction. It is her mama's story, too. But mostly it is a story that goes back thousands of years, and follows the long line of female dingoes they belong to.

An inspiring true story of survival and courage from one of Australia's best-loved writers.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In 2011, Favel Parrett's career was launched with her critically acclaimed debut *Past the Shallows*. A heart-breaking novel, it was sold internationally, shortlisted in the prestigious Miles Franklin Literary Award and won the Dobbie Literary Award. Favel herself won the ABIA Newcomer of the Year Award in 2012. Her next novel, *When the Night Comes*, was also critically acclaimed and further consolidated Favel's reputation with booksellers and readers. Favel's short stories have been published in various journals including *Island*, *Griffith Review* and *Wet Ink*. *There Was Still Love* was Favel's eagerly awaited third novel. *Wandi* was her first novel for children.

For more information, visit favelparrett.com.au or twitter.com/favelparrett.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR OF THE NOTES

Dr Robyn Sheahan-Bright operates justified text writing and publishing consultancy services, and is widely published on children's literature, publishing history and Australian fiction. In 2011 she was the recipient of the CBCA (Qld Branch) Dame Annabelle Rankin Award for Distinguished Services to Children's Literature in Queensland, and in 2012 the CBCA

(National) Nan Chauncy Award for Distinguished Services to Children’s Literature in Australia, and in 2014, the QWC’s Johnno Award. In 2021 she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia.

STUDY NOTES

SCIENCE

- This novel reveals many facts about dingoes. Research further facts about dingoes.
- Kimmi learns from her mother Ding how to swim and to value her female strengths. What else does she learn from her mother?
- Did you know that dingoes can climb? This is referred to in the novel on p 93. What other unusual facts about these animals have you discovered?
- Dingoes are not popular in some parts of rural Australia where they are considered pests and where eradication is recommended. Why and how should we protect them? Should there be an education program to teach people about the role dingoes play in our ecosystem?
- Kimmi’s mother answers her question: “‘Why did the other Human want to kill us?’” Her mama sighed. “There are good Humans and bad Humans. There are Humans who hate us and Humans who understand us.” (p 23) Discuss how this quote relates to the action in this novel. Research the treatment of dingoes by humans. Dingoes receive poor current media coverage due to the incidence of attacks on humans in places such as K’gari (formerly Fraser Island) in Queensland. Research human attitudes to dingoes.
- Protection of dingoes from human destruction often means separating members of a family. In this novel, the kind female human has been able to find sanctuary for Ding’s family but only in different facilities: Is it kind to separate dingo families, even when they are to be better cared for?
- Ding demonstrates the incredible instincts of a dingo. What did you learn about the instincts of dingoes in reading this novel?
- At the end of the book, there is a special information section ‘Tropical Dingoes—Australia’s Climbing Canids’ by Kevin D Newman sanctuary supervisor, and Kimmi’s favourite climbing frame, at the Dingo Discovery Sanctuary and Research Centre (p 133). Discuss the information contained in this section and encourage students to research these topics further.
- Students can meet Kimmi, Wandi, Aussie and other rescued dingoes at the The Dingo Discovery Sanctuary and Research Centre and on their website here: <<https://dingofoundation.org/our-dingoes/>>
- “‘You must leave, daughter, so that you survive. So that your cubs survive,’” her mama explained. “You come from a long line of strong females. A long line of queens. We are the most intelligent female dingoes in the land. We are strong, and special. And our line must go on. Do you understand?” She nodded. Deep down, she did understand. Somehow, she could sense her female ancestors, feel their power inside her.’ (p 69) What did Ding imply about female power in this quote?

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES (HASS)

First Nations Cultural Beliefs

- How do First Nations peoples regard the dingo? Do they have particular beliefs about the role which a dingo plays in the landscape?
- Dingo Culture <<https://www.dingoculture.com/about>> is an organisation founded ‘to provide the First Nations’ voice specifically to the Dingo debate in Australia and create change in legislation to protect culturally significant native fauna and flora.’ Study their work.

Friendship

- Kimmi is told by her mother that the humans call her Ding and her sister (and her Aunty) Toto. The mother and child become their friends and later Kimmi finds a friend in Lyn at the Sanctuary. Read more about the importance of the relationship between dingoes and humans.
- Kimmi becomes friends with Aussie and Rio at the sanctuary. What attracts her to either character?

Family

- Ding faces a moral dilemma when Toto is injured and their journey home to the babies is halted: How would you

have felt if faced with a similar dilemma?

- What does Kimmi's family represent to her?

English Language & Literacy

- This novel is written in third person, past tense. Re-write a section as if written by Kimmi.
- Invite students to write an expository text about a dingo. There are different types of expository writing, eg. descriptive, sequential, cause/effect, etc.
- Test your students' comprehension by asking them questions about the written text.

Comprehension

- **What's the difference between alpine and tropical dingoes?** (Answer: 'Alpine dingoes (like Wandji) have big, thick, fluffy coats in winter to help them survive the cold environments where they live—sometimes even snow! Tropical dingoes such as Kimmi don't need these big thick coats; instead, they have a much thinner and rougher coat.' [p 134])
- **Why do tropical dingoes love to climb?** (Answer: 'Tropical dingoes love climbing, as this means they can chase food much more easily!' [p 135])
- **What role do dingoes play in the environment?** (Answer: 'Part of their role in our environment is to make sure there aren't too many grasseaters, or herbivores. Dingoes may also help control invasive species like feral cats or foxes.' [p 136])
- **In what ways can farmers protect livestock without killing or endangering dingoes?** (Answer: 'Guardian animals, predator-proof fencing and stable dingo families are all different ways pastoralists could help reduce their stock loss while still protecting the dingoes!' [p 139])
- **What type of dingo is Kimmi?** (Answer: A tropical dingo.)
- **How do dingoes communicate?** (Answer: Via wolf-like howls.)
- **How often do dingoes breed?** (Answer: Once a year.)
- **When did dingoes arrive in Australia and the Oceania region?** (Answer: Evidence suggests that they arrived in Oceania at least 8,300 years ago.)
- **How long can dingoes live in the wild?** (Answer: Up to ten years.)
- **Are dingoes polygamous or monogamous?** (Answer: Monogamous.)
- Write a lyrical poem about a dingo using models written by published poets.
- Invite students to write a simple cumulative text as the basis for a picture book about Kimmi and Aussie, using repetition, rhyme and rhythm.
- Write an acrostic poem using the letters in WARRIGAL KIMMI.

Visual Literacy

- The cover of the book depicts a portrait of Kimmi wearing a crown. Design an alternative cover and make a classroom display of all the images.
- Create a storyboard for illustrating the picture book text you wrote under English Language & Literacy above.
- Several black and white drawings enhance this text. Invite students to create their own drawings of Kimmi.
- Create a Dingo Scrapbook to take note of fun facts about and responses to dingoes. Paste into the notebook any stories you unearth about dingoes in the newspaper. Write down any reviews of books you read about dingoes. Include any drawings of dingoes that you do while studying this novel.

AUTHOR OF NOTES

DR ROBYN SHEAHAN-BRIGHT