

The Broken Rainbow (Nerra: Deep Time Traveller #1)

AUTHOR

TASMA WALTON

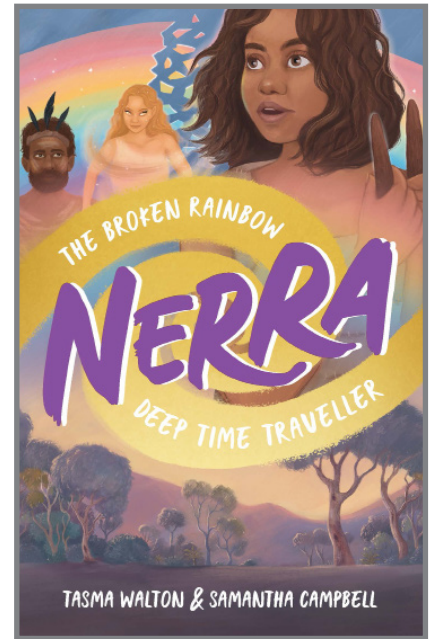
ILLUSTRATOR

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Mid Primary



SYNOPSIS

'Nerra, you are the next Deep Time Traveller, as your great-grandmother was before you.'

When Nerra's great-grandmother passes away, she leaves a box of artefacts to Nerra. Nerra is drawn to the clapsticks which glow red hot, and when she picks them up, she is transported back in time. Dreaming is out of balance and a hero needs to help. Bineal and Pirnbial, husband and wife of the rainbow, have been split apart and captured by the evil Devour'ena. With the help of the Keeper of Clean Sand and Clear Water and the cleverman, Bobbinary, can Nerra reunite the rainbow and bring Dreaming back into balance?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tasma Walton is a proud Boonwurrung woman from the saltwater Country of Melbourne and surrounding coastlines. As an award-winning actress, she has appeared in numerous television productions, films and theatre. As a writer, Tasma's first novel *Heartless* was nominated for an ABIA Award for General Fiction. As a mum, she is most excited about sharing some deadly stories featuring strong Aboriginal heroines and their adventures with Boonwurrung Creation Beings.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Samantha Campbell grew up in the Northern Territory and lives in Alice Springs. She is descended from the Dagoman people from Katherine and grew up in remote communities across the Top End. Her first book, *Alfred's War*, written by Rachel Bin Salleh, was shortlisted for the New South Wales Premier's Literary Awards and the Speech Pathology Australia's Book of the Year Awards.

STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, as a class, discuss the book cover and title. Some things to include in your discussion could be:
 - What do you think is happening in the cover artwork?
 - Based on the title, what genre do you think this book is likely to be?
 - Who do you think the main character of this novel is? What can you tell about them from the cover alone?
 - Where and when do you think this book is likely to be set? Look carefully at the cover artwork and discuss your answers to this question as a class before reading the back cover.
 - Share your hypotheses as to what is likely to happen in this novel with the rest of your class.
- After reading the first chapter, discuss what you have learnt about the setting and characters in the novel.

- In small groups, make a list of everything that you now know about where and when the story is set:
 - who the main character is
 - what their daily life is like
 - what some of their personal characteristics are.
- As you read the story, compile a vocabulary list of different Boonwurrung words that you encounter. Next to each word, write what you think the meaning of it is based on the context and explanations within the story. Once you have finished the novel, compare your list to the glossary at the end of the book. How accurate were your translations? If you made any errors, why do you think you did so? How many of these words would you know the meaning for now if you read them out of context? As a class, discuss whether reading new vocabulary in a novel is a good way of learning it.
- Nerra's special box has a flowerlike carving in the lid, that at the end of the story she realises symbolises both the circular nature of time, and the long line of Deep Time travellers that she is a part of. If you were gifted a special box to store treasures in, what design would you expect to see on the lid? Think about what might be kept in the box, and the relevance of the treasures to you and your personal history.
 - On a piece of blank A4 paper create a design for a relief carving that would be suitable for the lid of a wooden box, and would have meaning and relevance for you.
- Nerra has been learning how to make 'bilang bilang', or dilly bags. How hard do you think it is to weave this type of bag? What different skills would someone need to have in order to make one?
- When Nerra first travels in Deep Time, one of the first things she notices is the cries and calls of all the different birds. What birds are there in your local area, and what do they sound like? Research online or in the library, and find out more about one of the native birds that you see and hear in your local area. If you can, either record its calls and cries, or locate a recording of it online to share with the rest of your class. Present your research findings verbally to the rest of your class, incorporating pictures and audio recordings to support your presentation.
- What do you think is the scariest part of Nerra's story, and why do you think this?
- What would you like to see happen to Nerra in the future—do you think she will have more adventures travelling in Deep Time? If so, what do you think her future adventures might include?
- When Kurrburra the Koala offers to be her guide, Nerra accepts joyfully. Which animal would you most like to be your guide if you were on an adventure like Nerra's, and why would you choose them over all the others?
 - If you could travel into Deep Time like Nerra does, what would you most like to do there, or who would you most like to meet, and why?
- When she stands at the bottom of the ocean and breathes underwater, Nerra realises fully that the rules were different in this Deep Time universe. What other rules did you notice in the novel that are different in Deep Time than in Nerra's (and your) regular time universe?
- Nerra learns from Karr'karook that Bineal is Keeper of the first four colours of the rainbow while Pirnbial is the Keeper of the other three. Create a rainbow themed artwork featuring Bineal in shades of red, orange, yellow and green, and Pirnbial in shades of blue, indigo and violet. You can paint or colour their figures as realistic, or as abstract free-flowing shapes. Make sure that the background of your picture is also harmonious and reflects aspects of Country.
- When Nerra is trying to work out what best to do, she sits and quietly practices Dadirri—the art of deep listening to Country. As a class, go for a walk in a local nature reserve, bushland, or other natural area, and see what you can hear if you concentrate in a similar way to how Nerra did. Find a comfortable place to sit, then close your eyes and pay as much attention as you can to all the different sounds you can hear for five minutes. When you open your eyes, look around you and try to spot the sources of the different sounds you heard. When you return to your classroom, write a list of everything that you can remember hearing, describe the sounds as accurately as you can and comment on what the sounds told you about the world around you. Use your list, descriptions and your memory to help you create an artwork that reflects your experience. Caption your artwork with one of your descriptions of the sounds around you.

AUTHOR OF NOTES

RAE CARLYLE