

The Winds of Waa (Nerra: Deep Time Traveller #2)

AUTHOR

TASMA WALTON

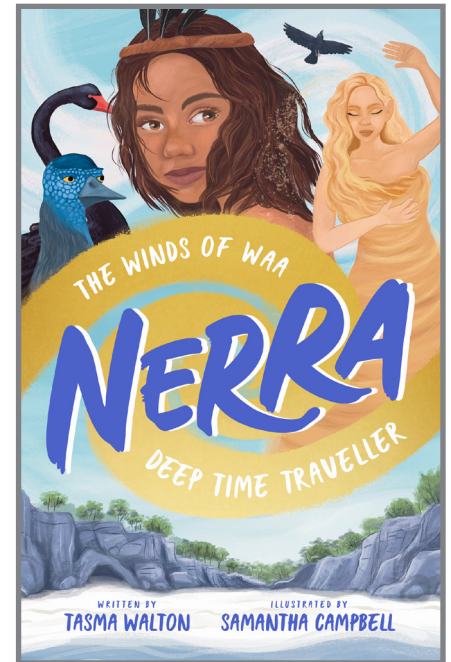
ILLUSTRATOR

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SYNOPSIS

After discovering that she has the power to travel into the Dreaming, Nerra is curious when her great-grandmother's box of artefacts opens for a second time. Inside, a feathered headband beckons Nerra. As she tries it on, she is whisked into the Dreaming to help the Creation Beings fight against the evil Devour'ena.

With the help of her new friends, can Nerra rescue Bunjil the Eagle and Waa the Raven, and bring Creation back into balance? Or will the Devour'ena harness the power of the mighty winds of Waa?

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, look closely at the cover and title, and discuss. Some things to include in your discussion might be:
 - What can you learn about the characters and events in the story from the book cover?
 - Who do you think the cover of this story is showing, and what do you think they are doing?
 - Who in the class has read the first book in this series about Nerra and her adventures as a Deep Time Traveller? What can you remember about what happened to her in the first book?
- Where do Nerra and her family live?
- What are some of the special places on Country near Nerra's farmhouse home?
- Both Ravens and Eagles are special to Nerra's family and ancestors, and she sees them flying near her home regularly. What are some of the native birds that are common near where you live, that are special to people there?

- Make a feather-pattern themed artwork that you feel reflects some elements of the story. You might want to go for a walk around your schoolyard or local area and see if you can find any discarded feathers on the ground, or you could look at photographs and images of some of the birds local to your area, concentrating on the patterns in the feathers, before using this information to help inspire you to create your artwork.
- Nerra's family are looking after a little joey whose mother was killed in a car accident. As a class, research online, or in the library, and find out what you should do if you come across injured wildlife. You might want to ask someone from your local WIRES office, or other wildlife rehabilitation and rescue organisations to come talk to you about how to help our wildlife recover from accidents and injury, and how best to care for orphaned wildlife. Some questions you might try to find the answers to could be:
 - What are the types of native animals that are most likely to need help and care after an accident, near where you live?
 - How should these animals best be looked after?
 - What should you do if you come across an injured animal?
 - Who should you call to ask for help if you find an injured or sick animal?
 - Why is it so important that we care for our wildlife to the best of our ability?
- Nerra meets Koonwarra the black swan at the Emerald Hill wetlands, and travels with her across the Koo Wee Rup swamps. Nerra is delighted by the sight of so much of the land teeming with life. Even today, with so much of the land covered by city, houses and roads, wetlands are still a special place and vital to the health of the birds and animals. Visit a local wetland area near where you live, and go for a walk around it. What animals, birds, insects and plants can you see at your wetlands?
 - Choose at least one plant, and one bird or animal that you see there, and sketch them in as much detail as you can, observing them closely. You might also like to take some photographs of the birds, plants and animals while you are there to help you remember what they look like. When you return to class, write a description of the wetlands, and of the creatures that you chose to sketch, then use your sketches to help you create a painting or other artwork sharing the feel of the wetlands during your discovery walk.
- What is the most nerve wracking and tense moment in this story? As a class, or in small groups, discuss the different moments of danger and tension, and share with each other which incidents you found to be the most intensely stressful. Which incident do you think that Nerra found to be the scariest, and is it the same as the one you chose or is it different?
- What part of the story do you find to be the most exciting, and why?
- Which of the characters in the book would you most like to meet? What would you like to say to them, and what would you like to learn from or about them the most?
- Can you see the shapes of Bunjil and Mon'mon'diik in the star patterns? As a class, look at a map of the night sky, and locate Bunjil (Altair) and Mon'mon'diik (the Pleiades). Work out which way is north, and where you would have to be looking to be able to see these stars at night. On a clear night, go outside with your sky map after dark, and try to locate these heroes, from the story, amongst the stars of Sky Country.
- Create an illustration showing one of the heroes as they appear in a battle scene in the story, and caption it with a description of what is happening in your illustration. Before creating your artwork, carefully re-read the scene of the battle, paying close attention to the description of the colour and shape of the hero's skin, hair, beak, etc. Be sure to include as many details, from the description in the story, in your artwork as you can.
- What do you think Nerra's next adventure in Deep Time could be? In small groups, talk about what it must be like for her to travel through Deep Time, and whether she is more likely to be scared or excited at the prospect of future adventures, or if she might even feel a mixture of different emotions about it all. Write a short description of how you think she felt during the events of this story, and illustrate your description with a picture of her helping during the battle against the Devour'ena.
- Draw a map of all the different places that Nerra travels to over the course of her Deep Time adventure. Mark on the map the important events that happen in each place, and note the Creation Beings she meets there, and what they do together.