

# Beyond the Shore

AUTHOR

**KIRLI SAUNDERS**

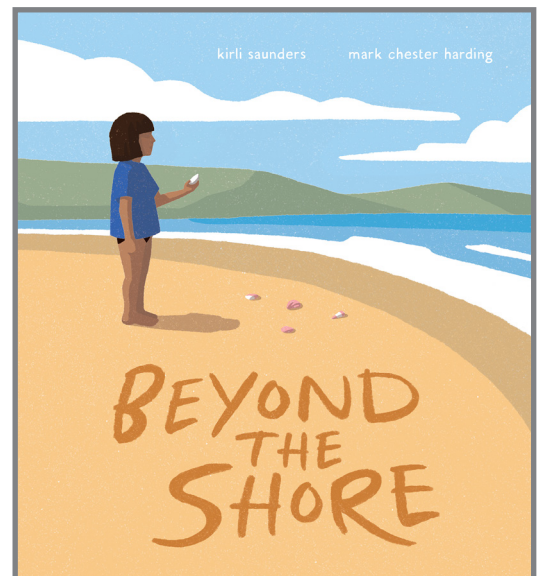
ILLUSTRATOR

**MARK CHESTER HARDING**

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**RECOMMENDED FOR:** Lower Primary



## SYNOPSIS

It's safer on the edge, where we can walk with our feet on the floor . . . but beyond the shore is a world that inspires awe. Will you dive in?

Written by award-winning Gunai author Kirli Saunders (OAM), with art by debut picture book illustrator Mark Chester Harding, *Beyond the Shore* gently encourages young ones to step beyond fear into curiosity.

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kirli Saunders OAM is a proud Gunai Woman and award-winning multidisciplinary creator and consultant. An experienced speaker and facilitator advocating for the environment, gender and racial equality and LGBTIQA+ rights, Kirli was named the NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year in 2020, and received an Order of Australia Medal in 2022.

## ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Mark Chester Harding is an illustrator and musician based in Sydney. He loves illustrating moments in time, particularly stories from the Australian bush. *Beyond the Shore* is his first picture book.

## STUDY NOTES

- Before reading the story, discuss what you can learn about the book from the cover artwork and text. Some things to consider might be:
  - Where do you think that the action of this story takes place?
  - What does the word 'Beyond' mean? What do you think that it means in the context of the title *Beyond the Shore*?
  - What can you see happening on the cover of this book?
  - Who do you think might be the main character? Why do you think this?
  - What can you tell about the characters shown in the cover artwork? Look for clues in the artwork that tell us important information about them?
  - Where do you think the beach in the cover artwork is likely to be located? Why do you think this?
  - What do you think the child on the cover is holding?
  - What do you think the child on the cover is looking at?
  - What time of year do you think it is in the story?
  - What do you predict is likely to happen in this book? Why do you think this?

- What do you think it means to ‘walk feet on the floor of the world—grounded’? Have you ever felt that your feet aren’t walking on the floor of the world? If so, when, and what did you do?
- What are the different animals mentioned in the story? As a class, re-read the book, and try to spot each of the different sea creatures mentioned in the illustrations. Are there any creatures that you can spot in the illustrations that weren’t mentioned in the text?
- Choose one of the sea creatures mentioned in the story, or pictured in the illustrations, and write a short poem about it. You might want to research your chosen creature online or in the library first, to give you an idea of how it behaves, so you can include these details in your poem. Illustrate your poem with a picture of your featured sea creature.
- As a class, visit a beach. If you live inland, you might like to visit a river, creek, lake or other natural waterway instead. Some things you might like to do while you are there could be:
  - Walk barefoot along the shore or the riverbank. Concentrate on the feeling of being grounded with your ‘feet on the floor of the world’.
  - Look for shells. Take photos of the shells to help you remember them. Put your shells back on the beach when you have finished admiring them.
  - Let the tiny waves or ripples at the edge of the water splash over your feet. Can you feel your ‘toes bob’?
  - Look out to sea, or towards the middle of the waterway. What can you see in the distance? What colour is the water near the shore, and what colour is it further out?
  - What sea creatures or river, lake, or wetland creatures do you think might live near where you are? Try to spot evidence of different lifeforms.
  - Visit any rock pools, and try to spot as many different creatures and aquatic plants as you can.
  - When you return to class, create an illustrated reflection piece sharing some of your experience.
- What do you think is the magic that lives beyond the shore? Create an ocean themed artwork using acrylic paints that shares your feelings about the magic beyond the shore described in the story. Look carefully at the illustrations to help inspire you. You might also want to look online or in the library for other images of underwater ocean scenes and life. Mount your finished artwork on a piece of black card, and display it in the hallway or on the classroom wall.
- What can you see happening on the last page of the book? What do you think the small child is doing, and why? What is the adult doing? Why do you think the adult is there with the child?
  - As a class, talk about how it feels when you want to do something, but you find it a little bit scary. What are some things that the people in your life have done to help you when this happens?
  - As a class, or in small groups create posters sharing your ideas on how to help yourself and others overcome your fears and do some of the things that scare you.
- What is the shore, and how is it different from the ocean, and from the land? As a class, discuss what, the shore is and where it starts and ends.
- Create a collage using torn strips of coloured paper, glitter, glue and sand, that shows a beach where hills meet the ocean.
- Is a whale shark a whale, or a shark? Why is it named this?
- Watch a nature documentary that features the ocean and aquatic plants and animals.
- What is your favourite sea creature? Why is it your favourite? Draw a picture of your favourite creature, and caption it with a sentence describing why it is your favourite.
- Create an ocean themed diorama using the following instructions.
  - Paint the inside of an old shoebox in dark blues and greens.
  - Cut thin strips of seaweed from coloured paper and glue them to the back of your shoebox. Create more seaweed from coloured paper. Cut the strands out and glue them to pieces of stiff card.
  - Glue sand to the ocean ‘floor’.
  - After the glue for the sand has dried, stick your seaweed to the floor of the ocean, standing up so it looks like it is growing towards the surface of the water.
  - Draw brightly coloured fish and sea creatures, and hang them on thin pieces of dark thread from the top of your diorama, so they look as if they are swimming in the water.
  - Once you have arranged your ocean scene to your liking, close in your diorama by sticking a piece of pale blue

cellophane over the front, creating an illusion of watery blue depths within.

- You might also like to cut a small hole in the top of your diorama, and shine a torch through the hole to light your scene up.

AUTHOR OF NOTES  
**RAE CARLYLE**