



# I Saw, We Saw

Author/Illustrator:  
Yolnu students at  
Nhulunbuy Primary School,  
with Ann James and Ann Haddon

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## Synopsis

Life for the Yolnu students who live near or around Nhulunbuy, a small town in north-east Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory, revolves around the sea, whether it be hunting, fishing or playing. There's always something to see and do and this has been the inspiration for this stunningly illustrated book. The spreads follow the theme of 'I saw ... We saw...' but there's plenty more to see on each page as readers will discover.

## Author Bio

Over a series of workshops sponsored by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation, indigenous students from Nhulunbuy Primary School wrote the story with the help of Ann James and Ann Haddon.

The students also worked on a story with some elders of their community, a story that is written entirely in Dhangu, a Yolngu Matha language. Ann James is an ILF ambassador and award-winning illustrator of many books, including *The Midnight Feast*, *The Way I Love You*, *Shutting the Chooks In* and *Lucy Goosey*. Ann Haddon is a former teacher librarian and is actively involved in children's literature.

Ann James and Ann Haddon established Books Illustrated in 1988 to showcase and promote the work of Australian illustrators.

## Curriculum Links

English Foundation - Year 2

Visual Arts – Foundation – Year 2

HASS Geography Foundation

## Themes

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures
- Language
- Indigenous Language

## Pre Reading

- Look at the front cover of the book.
- Read the title together.
- Look at the other names on the book. What are they there for.
- Identify the author and the illustrator. This book is interesting because it was written by Primary School students.
  
- What do you think the story will be about?
- Read the blurb at the back of the book. What do you feel about it? What kind of things are you now expecting to see inside the book? What questions do you have?
- Just inside the cover, before the title pages and the start of the story, are some illustrated pages. These are called 'endpapers'. What do the endpapers in the front of the book show you?
- After you have read through the story once, read about the Indigenous Literacy Foundation at the back of the book.

*This book is produced in conjunction with the Indigenous Literacy Foundation*

*Find out more about what they do here:*

<https://www.indigenouliteracyfoundation.org.au/>

## Maps - Nhulunbuy

Find Nhulunbuy on a map of Australia.

(Not all maps will be detailed enough to show Nhulunbuy, so find it on a smaller map and show where it is on a larger map)

If you use Google Maps, you can zoom right in to the town and look at it closely. You can compare it to the hand drawn map of the town on the endpapers of the book.

### Nhulunbuy -Google Maps

Yolŋu Matha, meaning the "Yolŋu tongue", is a linguistic family that includes the languages of the Yolŋu (Yolŋu, Yuulngu), the indigenous people of northeast Arnhem Land in northern Australia. The "ŋ" in Yolŋu is pronounced as the "ng" in "singing".

Dhanu is a sub language of Yolnu Matha, and we can see Dhanu words throughout this story.

There are lots of different indigenous languages spoken around Australia.

Find a map that shows the different language, social or nation groups of the Indigenous people of Australia.

Find where you live on the map, and see what language and groups are from your area and surrounding areas.

<https://mgns.org.au/sector/aboriginal/aboriginal-language-map/>

## Dhanu

The names of the animals are only written in Dhanu, so we need to figure out what the animal is from rest of the sentence and the illustration.

Write down what you think the animal is on each page. When you get to the back of the book, you will see all of the animals listed with their illustrations.

*Family*  
*Dog*  
*Eagle*  
*Water*  
*Turtle Eggs*  
*Stingray*  
*Seagull*  
*Crocodile*

*Mullet/Little Fish*  
*Whale*  
*Bird/Kingfisher*  
*Sun*  
*Caterpillars*  
*Bats*  
*Chickens*  
*Mumma*

## World Map

On a map of the world, find the different countries where the children in the class come from, or their families (parents/grandparent come from) or which area of Australia if it's an indigenous language.

What languages are spoken in these countries?

Regardless of how many nationalities are represented in your class try and choose a wide variety of countries and languages

Allocate a different country to each child, and then allocate an animal to each child. (these can be pre-selected and drawn out of a hat)

Read the book again and see what each page tells us, it repeats a pattern throughout the text

I saw a ???? Followed by something (an action) that the animal was doing.

Each child can write a sentence about their animal using the different languages for the animal word.

## Art - Visual Arts

Crayon and water colour  
Water Colour resist

Look at the illustrations in the book.

Talk about the techniques used.

Parts of the illustration look like they are made with textas.

Some parts look like they have used crayons and paint.

Demonstrate to the class the water colour resist technique.

Draw a picture using wax crayons, you can even draw the whole picture using a white crayon

Then paint over the crayons with water colour paints and see how the paint repels the paint away.

Each child has the name of an animal they selected earlier. Now they are going to create a water colour resist painting.

In the book they use a lot of blues and greens because there is a lot of water in the pictures. Talk about what colours you might use if your animal was from the desert/jungle/farm/outback.



***When finished, all of the images can be displayed with their accompanying text, or scanned, and you can produce your own animal book celebrating languages from all over the world.***