



An important
message from

Mr Beaky

CASSIE LEATHAM & SUE LAWSON

TEACHER NOTES



Specifications

Authors:	Mr Beaky, Cassie Leatham & Sue Lawson
Illustrator:	Cassie Leatham
ISBN:	9781742036533
Format:	230x 230mm
Extent:	32pp self-ended+
Binding:	Hardback
Reading Level:	5+
Interest Level:	3+
Category:	Non-fiction

Blurb

Meet Mr Beaky!
He has an important message about what it means to be an Aboriginal person in Australia.

Writing style

An Important Message from Mr Beaky is written for younger children and emerging readers. The style is conversational and direct, as though Mr Beaky is having a conversation with the reader. The text, which includes Taungurung words, introduces young readers to language as well as First Nations' concepts and culture.

Illustration style

An Important Message from Mr Beaky features both illustrations by Cassie Leatham and photos of Mr Beaky. The bright colours as well as the engaging photographs combine with Cassie's artwork to create a multi-levelled illustration experience.

Australian Curriculum Outcomes

FOUNDATION TO YEAR 3 CURRICULUM LINKS

- English • Literacy • Literature • Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Culture • Humanities and Social Sciences • History

ENGLISH – LANGUAGE

- ACELA1426 • ACELA1443
- ACELA1460 • ACELA1475
- ACELA1476

ENGLISH – LITERATURE

- ACELT1575 • ACELT1581
- ACELT1582 • ACELT 1586
- ACELT 1587 • ACELT 1589
- ACELT1592 • ACELT 1593
- ACELT1596 • ACELT 1783
- ACELA1488 • ACELA1496
- ACELA1504 • ACELT1613
- ACELT1614

ENGLISH – LITERACY

- ACELY1646 • ACELY1650
- ACELY1655 • ACELY1656
- ACELY1658 • ACELY 1559
- ACELY1666 • ACELY1789
- ACELY1670 • ACELY1675
- ACELY1677 • ACELY1678
- ACELY1682

ABORIGINAL & TORRES STRAIT ISLAND HISTORIES & CULTURES

Country/Place

- 01.1 • 01.2 • 01.3

Culture

- 01.4 • 01.5 • 01.6

People

- 01.7 • 01.8 • 01.9

SCIENCE ELABORATIONS FOR ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITY

- ACSSU002 • ACSHE013
- ACSSU005 • ACSSU017
- ACSSU018 • ACSHE021
- ACSIS029 • ACSSU031
- ACSSU032 • ACSHE034
- ACSHE035 • ACSSU044
- ACSSU044 • ACSHE051
- ACSIS060 • ACSSU073
- ACSSU074

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCE

Inquiry and Skills

- ACHASSI001 • ACHASSI005
- ACHASSI007 • ACHASSI008
- ACHASSI009 • ACHASSI018
- ACHASSI022 • ACHASSI023
- ACHASSI024 • ACHASSI026
- ACHASSI034 • ACHASSI042
- ACHASSI052 • ACHASSI056
- ACHASSI058 • ACHASSI059
- ACHASSI061 • ACHASSI073
- ACHASSI080 • ACHASSI082

Knowledge and Understanding

- ACHASSK015 • ACHASSK016
- ACHASSK017 • ACHASSK031
- ACHASSK032 • ACHASSK045
- ACHASSK049 • ACHASSK062
- ACHASSK063 • ACHASSK066
- ACHASSK083 • ACHASSK088
- ACHASSK089

Themes

- AUSTRALIA'S FIRST NATIONS PEOPLE • FIRST NATIONS CULTURE
- CEREMONY
- RESPONSIBILITIES
- BELONGING • COUNTRY
- LISTENING
- TRUTH-TELLING
- RECONCILIATION
- ELDERS • COMMUNITY

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATOR



AUTHOR: Mr Beaky

Mr Beaky shares special stories of caring for Country and his walkabout journeys with children. Cassie didn't choose Mr Beaky. Mr Beaky chose her. Mr Beaky is a blue budgerigar whose favourite perch is the arm of Cassie's glasses. He speaks three languages – Budgie, Taungurung, and English – and can even sing the Carlton theme song. Mr Beaky has over 150 different phrases and loves to visit schools and share his identity story and knowledge of First Nations language. Mr Beaky lives in Gippsland with his mob; Cassie, Kevin and Ryley.



AUTHOR: Sue Lawson

Sue has long been a bird lover. From August until early November, Sue Lawson can be found streaming the '367 Falcons' livestream. 'Obsessed' might be the word for her interest.

As well as obsessing over falcons, Sue also writes picture books, junior fiction and nonfiction, and young adult novels. She particularly enjoys collaborating with other writers. Her previous books have won the Australian Family Therapists' Award for Children's Literature and been short-listed for the Prime Minister's Literary Awards and Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards.



AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR: CASSIE LEATHAM

Cassie is from the Taungurung people of the Kulin Nation. She is an artist, master weaver, traditional dancer, bushstukka woman and educator. Cassie is passionate about giving people opportunities to learn and understand Aboriginal culture.

Before Reading

Examine the cover.

- Help students identify the title of the book, authors' names, illustrator, and publisher.
- Discuss each person's role in creating a book.
- Discuss what clues the cover gives about the book.

- What genre might it be?
- Is this a picture book or a nonfiction book?

Ask students to share their reasoning.

Read the blurb.

- Does the blurb change students' ideas about the book or confirm them?
- Ask students if they know Mr Beaky's breed.
- Ask what they know about:
 - budgerigars
 - Aboriginal people
 - the type of message Mr Beaky might have.
- Examine the end papers.
 - What might they represent?

After Reading

Discuss students' reactions to the story

- What did they like?
- What did they already know?
- What would they like to learn more about?
Discuss ways they could answer these questions.

Audience

- Ask students who they think the intended audience might be and why.
- People who meet Mr Beaky describe him as being full of personality.

- What do you think they mean?
- Ask students to give examples from the book.
- Discuss the cover after reading the story.
- Introduce the saying 'You can't judge a book by its cover'
 - Is it a good cover?
 - Does it prepare readers for the book?
 - What would students prefer?
 - Would they change the cover? How?
- Cassie Leatham is a Taungurung woman. Taungurung is part of Victoria's Kulin nation.
 - Visit <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia> and find Taungurung Country on the map.
 - Discuss how each Country may be similar to, and different from, the other.
 - Ask students if they know whose Country their school is on.
 - Find the Country where your school is located on the map.

Make a list of the Taungurung words used in the text and create a word cloud.

- <https://www.wordclouds.com/>
- Ask students to share other First Nations words or terms they may know.

Budgie Character

- Draw the outline of a budgie on a large piece of paper.
- Using the text and illustrations as a guide, list adjectives that describe Mr Beaky's personality.
- Place words about his personality inside the outline and words about his looks outside the drawing.

Ngun
Godjin



Incursion

- Invite a local Elder to speak to the class.
 - Before the visit, work with students to prepare questions. Encourage students to word questions in a way that gain detailed information from your guest.
 - Discuss with students the importance of deep listening in First Nation culture and what this might look like when listening to a guest.
 - After the visit, have children write a short report for the school newsletter or for display in class.

Re-read *Budgie Business* at the end of the story.

- Discuss budgerigars with the students.
- What do students know?
- What would they like to know?
- In pairs or groups of three, students research budgerigars and create a presentation for the class. Encourage students to investigate either domesticated budgerigars or wild budgies.
- Points to include in the presentation:
 - where are budgies found?
 - habitat
 - diet
 - behaviours
 - predators/threats
 - is it endangered?
 - appearance
 - does it have any special adaptations or behaviours that help it survive?

Venn Diagram

- After the presentations, students create a Budgie Venn diagram, either alone or as a class activity.

Writing

Imaginative/Narrative

Visit Mr Beaky's Instagram page @mrbeaky and select photos to show students how Mr Beaky lives. (He has a cage but is only caged at night or when he is going on Country. Cassie has built all kinds of perching sites out for him.)

- Students write diary entries from Mr Beaky's point of view.
- Students write a conversation between Mr Beaky and a wild budgerigar.
- Cassie often takes Mr Beaky on Country and to schools, where she works with students.
- Ask students to imagine how Mr Beaky may feel on Country or in the classroom.
- Remind them of Mr Beaky's character as discussed.
- Students write a piece from Mr Beaky's point of view.
- Persuasive
- Discuss with students the pros and cons of having a pet bird.
- Consider:
 - freedom of movement
 - dangers faced by wild birds
 - diet
- Ask students to write a persuasive piece entitled 'All birds should be free.'

Art

- Create a classroom mural of scenes from Mr Beaky's life.
- Make a budgie using one or more of these bird craft ideas.
- Display the budgies in the classroom.

Online

- https://artsycraftsymom.com/20-easy-spring-bird-crafts-for-kids/#3_Recycled_Plastic_Egg_Spring_Bird_Craft_for_kids
- <https://iheartcraftythings.com/11-awesome-bird-crafts.html>
- <https://artcraftandfun.com/easy-bird-craft-for-kids-of-all-ages/>



Budgies in
the Wild



Budgies in
Captivity



VENN DIAGRAM

Budgies in the Wild vs Budgies in Captivity