

Our Dreaming

AUTHOR

KIRLI SAUNDERS

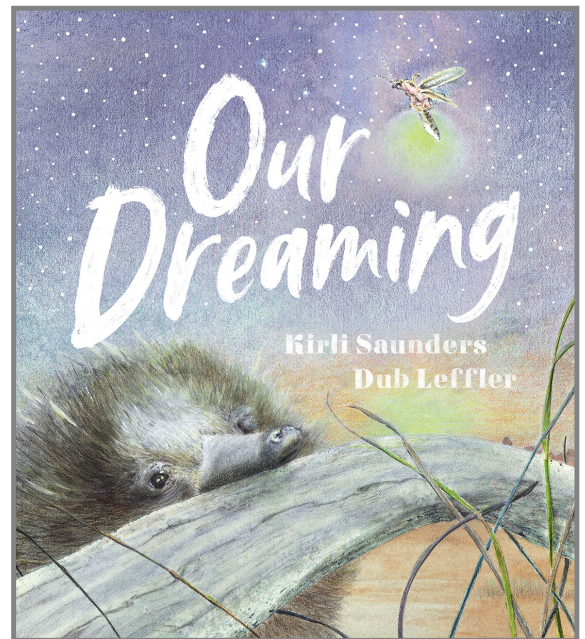
ILLUSTRATOR

DUB LEFFLER

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RECOMMENDED FOR: Lower Primary



SYNOPSIS

Goodjagah, little one, walk with me ... I want to tell you our Dreaming as the Elders told it to me.

Award-winning storytellers, Gunai woman Kirli Saunders and Bigambul man Dub Leffler, explore a deep love and respect for Country and all her spirits ... past, present and beyond.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kirli Saunders 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 LGBTIQ+ rights, Kirli was named the NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year in 2020.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Dub Leffler is a descendent from the Bigambul people of South-West Queensland. He is one of Australia's most awarded and in-demand illustrators of children's literature.

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 can you see happening on the cover of this book?
 - Where do you think this book might be set and why?
 - What time of day is it in the cover artwork? How can you tell?
 - How does looking at the cover artwork make you feel?
 - What is The Dreaming?
 - What do you think the title *Our Dreaming* might refer to?
 - What do you think could happen in this story?
- As you read the story, talk about the different Gundungurra words that you encounter. As a class, discuss what you think each word might mean, and what in the text and pictures can give you a clue to its meaning. After reading the book, look at the word list inside the back cover where there is a pronunciation and meaning guide for each Gundungurra word. How many of the words have meanings that are similar to what you thought they might be? Reread the story, and this time refer to the word-list in the back every time you come across a Gundungurra word

whose meaning or pronunciation you can't remember. As a class, discuss whether or not your guesses were accurate and why you think this might be the case.

- Which indigenous people are the traditional custodians of your local area? Do you know the words that would be used for such things as mountain, river, earth or gumtree in your local language? If you do not live in Gundungurra Country, as a class, research your local language, and learn the local words for the places, acts and ideas that are explained in the wordlist in the back of the book. If you do live in Gundungurra Country, make a list of some other important words that you would like to learn in Gundungurra, and find out how to say them.
- Invite someone from the local indigenous community to share with your class some of the knowledge and learning that they have about their Language, Country and The Dreaming.
- As a class look carefully at all the bright bush colours that are used to create the artwork in the end pages of the story and discuss what you see. Do you think that you could create a patterned multi-coloured artwork in this style? What types of art materials do you think you would need to create an artwork similar to this one? In pairs or small groups experiment with creating different effects using coloured pencils, watercolour pencils and watercolour paints. When you have created several different effects that you like, individually use your new skills and techniques to create a full-page artwork inspired by the end pages of the book. Mount your artwork on black card and display it on the wall for everyone to appreciate.
- What do you think is the most important message in *Our Dreaming*?
- How does reading *Our Dreaming* make you feel? Create an artwork that you feel shows your emotional response to the story as a whole. Once finished, share your artwork with the class, telling the story of what you chose to create, how you created it and why you made the choices that you did.
- Go for a bush walk in your local area. What native plants and animals can you see? Do you see any plants or animals that also appear in the story? Choose one of the creatures that appears in the book, and find out more about them. Research where they live, what they eat and how they behave. If you find any stories featuring your chosen animal from *The Dreaming*, share them with the class.
- Look carefully at the different patterns that appear in the illustrations of the book. For example, the pattern made by the beetle crawling through the sand, the patterns in the beehive, and the patterns in the birds' plumage, as well as the pattern that the shadows of the leaves lay upon the land, and the patterns within the layers of soil beneath the feet of the echidnas as they walk. Go for a walk through some local bushland, and try to spot as many different patterns in nature as you can. When you return to class, create an artwork that uses some of these patterns and share with the class both what your original inspiration was, how you spotted it, and why you chose this pattern to share.
- What did you learn from *Our Dreaming*? As a class, discuss all the things that you personally learnt from the story, as well as the things that other people reading it in other places might have learnt. Choose one of these things and write a brief description of what it is, and why you think it is an important thing to learn and teach. Illustrate your description with a picture inspired by the artwork within the book.