

# Magabala Books • Teacher Notes

## Little Bird's Day

Written by Sally Morgan

Illustrated by Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr

Teacher Notes prepared by Christina Wheeler

### OVERVIEW

*Little Bird's Day* is a simple, universal story of a day in the life of Little Bird as she sings the world alive, flies with Cloud, travels with Wind, nestles with Moon and dreams of flying among the stars. Sally Morgan's gentle, poetic text and Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr's sensitive artwork combine to make this a beautiful and distinctive publication. Bringing to life Little Bird's journey, Johnny infuses his illustrations with his fine-art aesthetic, traditional motifs and a quirky sense of humour.

*Little Bird's Day* is the exquisite first outcome of Magabala's Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award. Funded by the Kestin Family Foundation, the aim of the award is to mentor Indigenous artists or emerging illustrators in the production of children's picture books.

- Original book, illustrated by a Yolŋu artist
- Well-known and respected author of children's books
- High production value

### THEMES

- Nature
- Birds
- Art, Aboriginal

### AUDIENCE AND WRITING STYLE

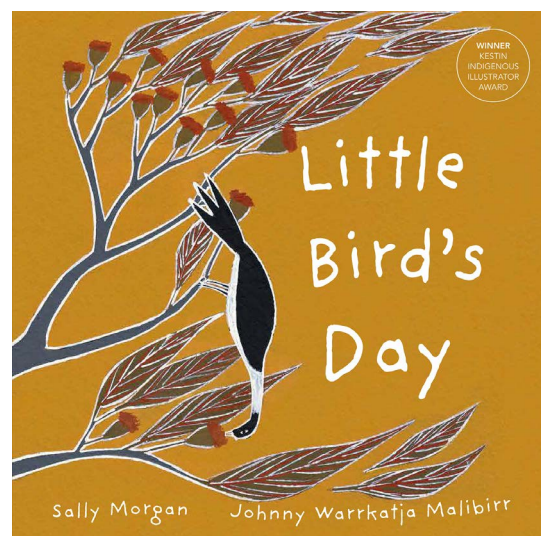
*Little Bird's Day* is a beautifully written text that explores the rich connection between a little bird and her daily interactions with the elements. The sublime illustrations depict the close-knit interplay between Little Bird and Sun, Wind, Cloud, Rain and Moon. Allowing for retelling, dramatization and artwork, this text is perfectly suited to pre-readers and early childhood audiences.

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR



**Sally Morgan** is one of Australia's best-known Aboriginal artists and writers. She belongs to the Palyku people from the eastern Pilbara region of Western Australia. Her widely-acclaimed first book, *My Place*, has sold over half a million copies and is one of Australia's most celebrated works. Sally loves writing stories for children and is excited to have such a talented artist as Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr bring her story to life.

**Johnny Warrkatja Malibirr** is a Yolŋu man from the Ganalbingu clan and is known for his paintings of Ganalbingu song lines as well as his mother's Wägilak clan stories. Along with other members of his clan, Johnny keeps culture strong through painting, song, dance, and ceremony. Johnny lives in the remote East Arnhem Land community of Gapuwiyak, where he is Chair of the Gapuwiyak Culture and Arts Aboriginal Corporation. In 2017, he was the winner of Magabala's inaugural Kestin Indigenous Illustrator Award.



## LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

This book and the classroom activities provided are primarily relevant to the following areas of the Australian Curriculum:

Learning area	Year level
English	F-2
The Arts	F-2
Science	1

The appendix highlights relevant content descriptions, cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities that relate to the text and classroom ideas provided.

## CLASSROOM IDEAS

### English

- Before reading, share with a friend how you spend a typical day. Using the front cover of the book, predict what might happen in *Little Bird's Day*.
- As you read *Little Bird's Day*, take note of the elements of nature that are such an important part of her day. How do these same elements affect your daily routines?
- Sun wakes Bird and encourages her to wake up others. What wakes you each morning? Take time to listen carefully in the morning to the bird calls near your home or school. Using your imagination, write a script of what the birds are saying to one another and to you. Use the following clip of a sunrise in Australia to help generate ideas: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1o0jss9Dn3A>
- Write the 'lyrics' to the song that Little Bird sings each morning to 'sing the world alive' and 'wake the lazy sleepers'.
- Create a word wall with new vocabulary from *Little Bird's Day*. Below are some examples:
  - world, alive, warble, lazy, gusting, feast, crimson, blossoms, huffing, puffing, feathery, bathe, sparkle, freshness, fuzzy, gliding, roost, journey, welcoming, glowing, whispering
- Discuss the use of figurative language in *Little Bird's Day* and how this contributes to the text. Examples include:
  - feast in the flowers
  - huffing and puffing
  - chase my feathery friends
  - sparkle with freshness
  - I flutter with the rain to wash my fuzzy feathers
- Imagine you are Little Bird. Write about nestling with Moon and dreaming you're 'flying among the stars'.
- Retell this story through an app such as *Explain Everything*, a voice recording or a written piece.
- Rewrite this story from the point of view of one of the elements such as Sun, Wind, Rain or Moon.
- Examine the end covers carefully. What do you notice? Why is Little Bird's outline visible in the night sky? What does this tell us about the connection she has with nature? How does this reflect Aboriginal beliefs and customs?
- Using the same structure as *Little Bird's Day*, write a story about a typical day of yours.
- Compare *Little Bird's Day* with Mem Fox's *Time for Bed*.

### The Arts

- In small groups, perform *Little Bird's Day* through a dramatic performance.
- Examine the page opening below. Choose one of the animals and find out more about their daily life, including their habits and diet. In the role of this creature, imagine you have just woken up. What conversation would you have with other creatures on this page opening? Present as a short drama.
- How do the illustrations in *Little Bird's Day* share Aboriginal culture with readers?





### Science

- Take note of the changes that occur in the sky throughout *Little Bird's Day*. How does this affect the pattern of the day?
- How does Wind help the cycle of life? How does it help seeds to spread? Why is this necessary?
- How do birds fly? Find out more about the anatomy of birds and how their bodies are suited to flying. The following clip may help: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L-e5RzF8tcg>



## APPENDIX - LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Year	Curriculum Area
<b>F</b>	<p><b>English</b></p> <p>Language</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore the different contribution of words and images to meaning in stories and informative texts (<a href="#">ACELA1786</a>)</li> </ul> <p>Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a <a href="#">text</a> (<a href="#">ACELT1578</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p><b>English</b></p> <p>Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss how authors <a href="#">create</a> characters using language and images (<a href="#">ACELT1581</a>)</li> <li>Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences (<a href="#">ACELT1582</a>)</li> <li>Innovate on familiar texts by using similar characters, repetitive patterns or vocabulary (<a href="#">ACELT1832</a>)</li> <li>Recreate texts imaginatively using drawing, writing, performance and digital forms of communication (<a href="#">ACELT1586</a>)</li> </ul> <p><b>Science</b></p> <p>Earth and space sciences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observable changes occur in the sky and landscape (<a href="#">ACSSU019</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p><b>English</b></p> <p>Literature</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (<a href="#">ACELT1587</a>)</li> <li>Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (<a href="#">ACELT1591</a>)</li> <li>Innovate on familiar texts by experimenting with character, setting or plot (<a href="#">ACELT1833</a>)</li> </ul>
<b>F-2</b>	<p><b>The Arts</b></p> <p>Visual Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respond to visual artworks and consider where and why people make visual artworks, starting with visual artworks from Australia, including visual artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (<a href="#">ACAVAR109</a>)</li> <li>Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination to create visual artworks and design, including considering ideas in artworks by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander <a href="#">artists</a> (<a href="#">ACAVAM106</a>)</li> </ul> <p>Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore role and dramatic action in dramatic play, improvisation and process drama (<a href="#">ACADRM027</a>)</li> <li>Use voice, facial expression, movement and space to imagine and establish role and situation (<a href="#">ACADRM028</a>)</li> <li>Present drama that communicates ideas, including stories from their community, to an audience (<a href="#">ACADRM029</a>)</li> </ul>

