

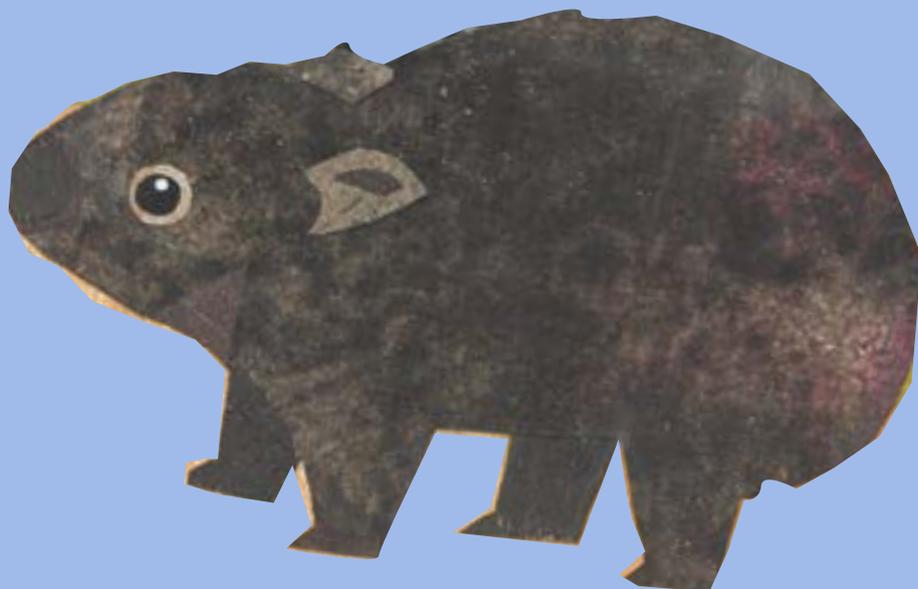


## TEACHING NOTES

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# THE O IN THE SNOW

By Judith Barker,  
Illustrated by  
Janie Frith



# ABOUT THE AUTHOR



## **AWARD-WINNING CHILDREN'S AUTHOR JUDITH**

**BARKER** attributes Dr Seuss' fantastical tales about faraway places to her love of writing children's books. She is a teacher, author, and education consultant. After teaching phonics and phonemic awareness to children in Europe, the Middle East, India and China, Judith saw a growing need to support literacy in schools. Her desire to lend a helping hand to those involved in the art of teaching basic reading skills has resulted in this wonderful series of beautifully illustrated, Australian phoneme-themed stories. Apart from developing reading skills, the books foster imagination, language, and sound-spelling recognition.

# OUTLINE

Inspired by Banjo Paterson's 'The Man from Snowy River', this adventure-filled, phoneme-themed story has young readers reliving the chase and the thrill of the brumby's run to the land of the Ngarigo. Join the stockmen and their muster on a galloping romp through the high country and discover the long vowel o in different words along the way.

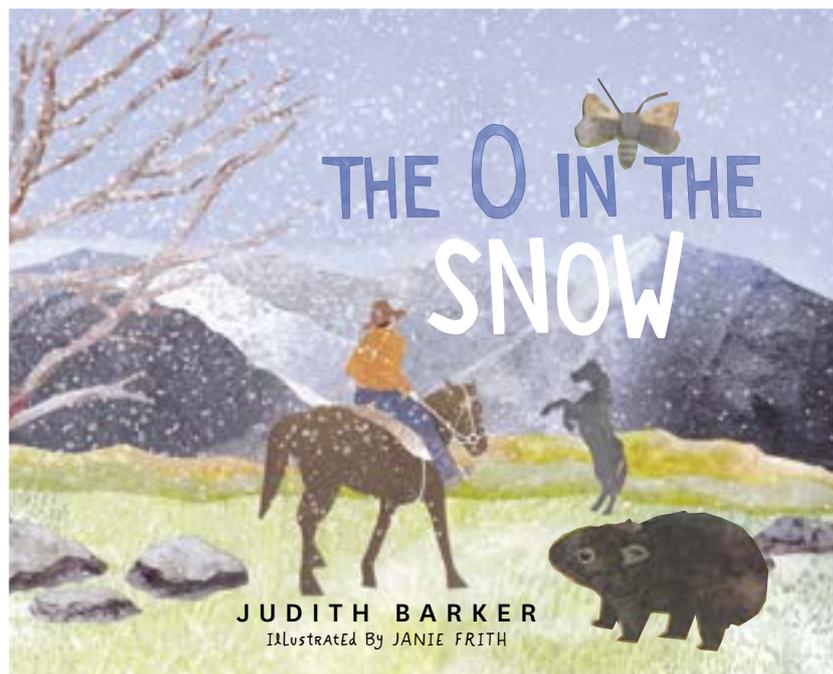


# AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

**THE JOY IN THIS UNIT OF WORK IS ITS FOCUS ON THE ADAPTATION OF BANJO PATERSON'S ICONIC POEM**

**'THE MAN FROM SNOWY RIVER'**, the drovers, the stockmen, the nature and wildlife, and the heritage of the cattlemen and cattlemen of the high country. It can be taught over a week or four-week period, and supports teaching and learning in language arts, balanced literacy, phonemic awareness, phonics, cultural connections, humanities and social science, and geography across the primary school curriculum.

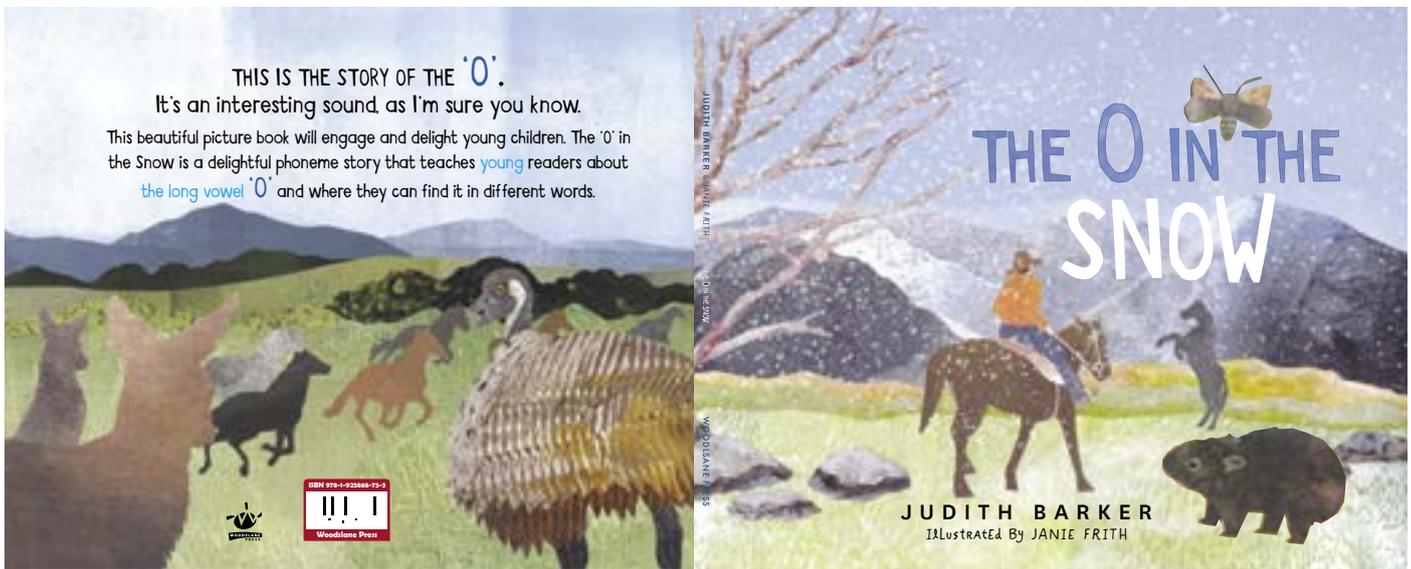
Topics include Indigenous Heritage of the Alpine High Country, Journey of the Bogong Moth, Snowy-Hydro Scheme, Renewable Energy, Aboriginal Language and Heritage, Alpine National Park, World Heritage Sites, the Rehoming of the Brumbies from the High Plains, Plants, Threats to the High Country, and Responsible Practices. Creative arts can also be incorporated across the unit..





# BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- **The Alpine National Park** is in the central highlands and alpine regions of Victoria. The 646,000-hectare national park is located north-east of Melbourne. It is the largest national park in Victoria, covering much of the higher areas of the Great Dividing Range, including Mount Bogong and the associated sub-alpine woodland and grasslands of the Bogong high plains. The park's north-eastern boundary borders New South Wales where it abuts the Kosciuszko National Park.
- **'The Man from Snowy River'** is a poem by the Australian, Andrew Barton 'Banjo' Paterson. It was first published on 26 April 1890 in the magazine *The Bulletin*.
- **The poem** is about a runaway racehorse who meets up with mountain brumbies (wild horses), and the men trying to recapture it.
- **The Snowy Mountains** are overall the tallest mountain range in Australia.
- **While a large system in themselves**, they are grouped together as part of the Great Dividing Range.
- **The king of these mountains** is Australia's highest peak, Mount Kosciuszko, measuring 2,228 metres high (relatively low compared to the highest mountains in other countries, and a reflection of Australia's relatively flat terrain).
- **Mount Kosciuszko** is pronounced ko-shoos-ko as opposed to the common mispronunciation of ko-zi-oss-ko.
- **'The Man from Snowy River'** is printed on the Australian \$10 note, in microprint for security purposes.
- **Two movies** have been made based on the poem, 'The Man from Snowy River' and 'The Return of Snowy River,' also known as 'The Man from Snowy River 2'.



# BEFORE READING

- **Listen** to the theme song from the movie 'The Man from Snowy River' at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyRb2\\_g7gQw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyRb2_g7gQw)
- **View** the cover and title of the book, identifying the title, the author and illustrator, the publisher, the blurb, and the long vowel o.
- **Ask:**
  - What do you think the book might be about?
  - What do you think the title means?
  - What do you know about the long vowel o from the title?
  - Can you think of other words with the long o sound?
  - How many spelling patterns do you know with the long o phoneme?
  - What do you know about the Australian movie, 'The Man from Snowy River'?
  - What is the Indigenous name for the Snowy Mountains? (Ngarigo)
  - What birds and wildlife are found in the Snowy Mountains?
  - What do you know about the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme?

# DURING READING

## Vocabulary

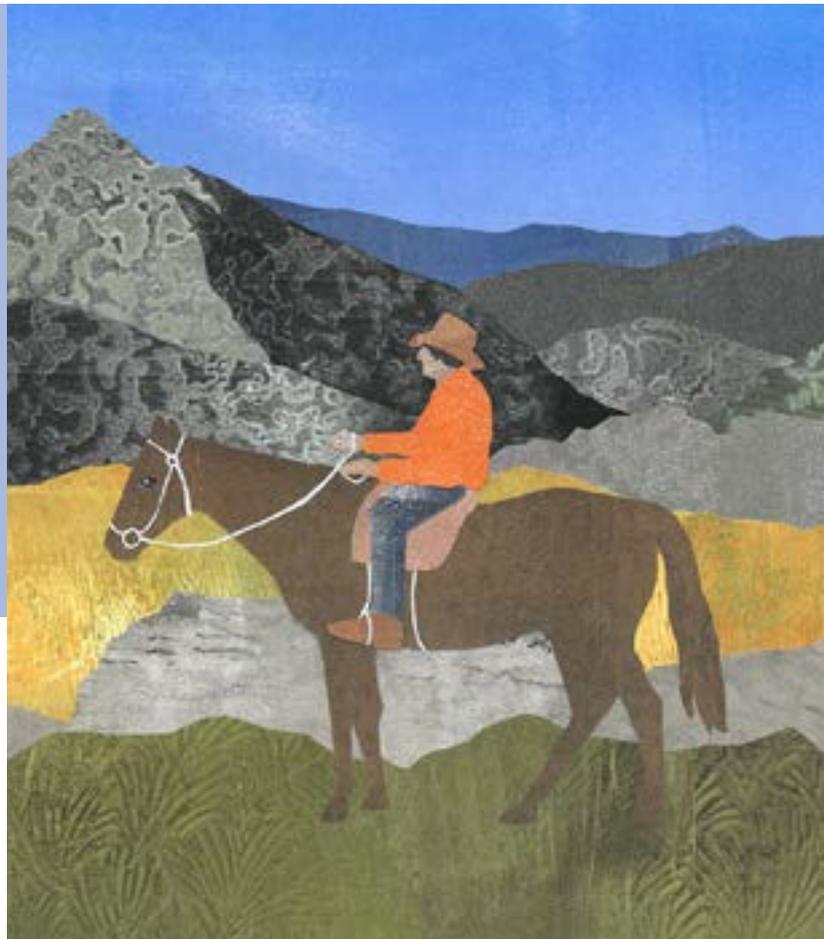
- **Pre-teach** any difficult vocabulary. After an initial reading of the book go through each page and highlight some of the specific words and sounds used in the text.
- **Words of interest** may include brumby, drover, stockmen, chase, stockwhip, ruckus, stampede, head, thrill, probes, shoulder, hails, muster.

## General Comprehension

- **Ask:**
  - What is a brumby?
  - What is a stockman?
  - How did stockmen avoid getting lost in the high country?
  - Where is the high country in New South Wales and Victoria?
  - What is the chase about in the story?
  - From the book, are you able to tell what animals are found in the different parts of the high country?
  - Who is the stallion referred to in the book?
  - What is the relationship between the stallion and the colt in Banjo Paterson's poem?

## Visual Literacy

**Draw attention to the illustrations and ask students why they think the illustrator may have chosen particular images or colours to tell the story, and what feelings this evokes in them**





# AFTER READING

- **This story has several layers to explore:**

- Where is Mount Bogong and where are the Snowy Mountains?
- What is a brumby and where are brumbies found in Australia?
- How did Aboriginal people traditionally navigate their way across the high plains of New South Wales and Victoria?
- What animals and birdlife are found in these high country regions?
- What is a muster?
- How have cattlemen and cattlegwomen

- traditionally used the high country in the past?
- Where is the Snowy Monaro region?
- How have Indigenous Australians traditionally cared for these high country and alpine regions?
- Why is the bogong moth an important insect for Indigenous people? Research the journey of the bogong moth to the Victorian high country.
- What are some of the threats and dangers to the high country in relation to flora and fauna?



# ACTIVITIES

brumbies, brumby, echidna, wombat, tiger quoll, spotted tree frog, rabbits, bandicoot, broad-toothed rat, horses, wallabies, pygmy possum, fox, platypus, stallion, bogong moths, currawongs.

- **Create** a wall mural about 'The Man from Snowy River'.
- **Explore** Dreamtime stories and highlight Indigenous art and language in the form of posters, murals, and poems.

## Language Arts & Humanities Poetry

- **Give** each student an extract from 'The Man from Snowy River'.
- **Explain** that it is a narrative poem about a valuable horse (colt/stallion) that escaped, and of the princely sum offered by the owner for its safe return. The money offered encouraged all the best riders to race along to capture the horse, including Clancy of the Overflow.
- **Ask** students to brainstorm the following questions in small group before discussing as a class:
  - What do music, poetry and rhyme have in common?
  - Do you think music and songs are poetry? Why?
- **For more ideas** see: <http://classroomliteracyideas.weebly.com/the-man-from-snowy-river-by-banjo-patterson.html>
- **Watch** and listen to a reading by Jack Thompson. Discuss how his voice adds additional resonance to the poem:
  - What do different voices bring to the poem? (Students could compare a female's voice with that of Jack Thompson.)
  - Does a male Australian voice add impact to the reading? Why?
  - How does a reading by an accomplished actor bring the story to life?

## Creative Arts

- **As a class**, listen to a composition from the Australian film 'The Man from Snowy River' at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yiAH18cR7u4>
- **Alternatively**, listen to Jessica's theme at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PMR7oHJoXTA>
- **Explain** that music, like poetry, can be a window to our minds and a wonderful form of self-expression.
- **Invite** students to share their thoughts, feelings and impressions of each piece of music and why they did/didn't like it.
- **Develop** a connection with Country by acknowledging and illustrating the land of the Ngarigo.
- **Identify** the native birds and wildlife from the story: crow, fallow, kangaroos, emus, bush

## Colloquial Language and Slang

- **What words** do we know that are typically Australian?
- **What are some** Australian slang terms?
- **Discuss and brainstorm** a class a list of words from 'The Man from Snowy River' and other texts that are typically Australian, eg billy, damper, mate, cobber, tucker, station, cracks.
- **Create a class** dictionary incorporating any words brainstormed, as well additional words. Divide the words among class groups of three to four students, and ask each group to write definitions for each word based on the knowledge they have between them, ie their schema.

## The Long O, Spelling and Vocabulary

- **Encourage** students to write a poem prompted by sights they see outside their classroom window, employing the long vowel o.

- **Have students create** eight-line poems with the different spelling patterns of the long o vowel, using the modelled vocabulary in the story as a guide. Their poems should have an Australian theme and incorporate some of the words from the class dictionary of Australian terms.
- **Create** a word search with the different spelling patterns of the long vowel o.
- **Review** the long vowel digraph o and display the different spelling patterns -o -oe, -oa -ow, -old, -ost.
- **Play card games** with unknown words from the book and identify the meanings.

## Drama

- **Divide** the class into groups. Each group is to practise reading aloud one verse from 'The Man from Snowy River' to be presented to the class. Remind students to refer to their notes about Jack Thompson's reading to help improve their performances. Have them focus on volume, pace, pitch, intonation, enunciation, and body language.



## Multiculturalism

- **The Snowy Mountains** Hydro-Electric Scheme is often presented as the beginnings of, and a triumph for, multiculturalism in Australia.
- **Research** the diverse backgrounds of the immigrants from Europe who fled WWII for Australia (Bonegilla Migrant Experience – Wodonga).
- **Create** a storyboard, a classroom mural, or a dramatic performance about the journey of a migrant worker from their home country to Bonegilla, and the jobs they worked on for the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme.
- **Write** a poem or story based on a group of diverse immigrants, telling of their experiences as they journey from their home country to Bonegilla and the Snowy Mountains.
- **Focusing** on specific case studies, students investigate how former enemies (immigrants) were able to overcome tensions, even hatreds, to work together successfully in a new community.



## Science and Technology

- **Use visuals** to provide a historical background to the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme.
- **Discuss** how the region played an innovative role in how Australia is powered and irrigated. Reference: <https://snowymountains.com.au/exploring-the-history-of-the-snowy-mountains/>
- **Trace the steps** of migrants in 1959 in a wall mural. The Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme was an engineering masterpiece that carried on over 25 years and changed the face of civil engineering on an international scale. On completion, The Scheme consisted of seven power stations, 16 major dams, 80 kilometres of aqueducts, and 145 kilometres of interconnected tunnels. It's also credited with helping build a more diverse and accepting Australia thanks to the migrants from 30 countries who worked on the project. Find out more by visiting the Snowy Hydro Discovery Centre in Cooma and the Snowy Scheme Museum in Adaminaby.
- **Explain** what renewable energy is and how significant the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme is to renewable energy in Australia. Refer to <https://www.snowyhydro.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Water-of-the-Snowy-Scheme- Water Lesson-plan-stage-4 NOV20.pdf> and [https://www.snowyhydro.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Science-of-the-Snowy-Competition\\_Renewable-energy-knowledge-quiz-1.pdf](https://www.snowyhydro.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Science-of-the-Snowy-Competition_Renewable-energy-knowledge-quiz-1.pdf)

# CULTURAL CONNECTIONS



- **Discuss** how language captures the thinking of a people, contains the history of a people, and resonates with the mind, body and spirit of a people.
- **Explain** that 20,000 years ago the Ngarigo and Walgal people were the more permanent Snowy Mountains residents, while many other tribes travelled from the sea to the peaks every summer to feast on bogong moths and to connect through corroborees, marriages and trade.
- **Discover** more about the area's most ancient past by visiting the Bundian Gallery in Delegate, where Aboriginal art from local and regional artists is featured. Or head to Yarrangobilly Caves, a labyrinth of limestone caves formed 440 million years ago, once home to the Walgalu people. Here you can take part in the Wiradjuri Aboriginal Cultural Tour to learn how Indigenous communities thrived by working with the land around them.
- **Explore** three declared Aboriginal places in the Snowy Monaro local government area, gazetted under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974. These include Coolamatong (Lambie Gorge) in Cooma, Curiosity Rocks in Jindabyne, and the Delegate Aboriginal Reserve. Aboriginal places protect areas of land which have recognised significance to Aboriginal people. A place can have spiritual, natural resource, historical, social, educational or other types of significance. Refer to <https://www.snowymonaro.nsw.gov.au/763/Aboriginal-Communities>
- **Find out** about The Bundian Way, an Eden Local Aboriginal Land Council project that is developing the ancient walking track from the coast to the mountains—a pathway of peace. The Bundian Way begins on the highest peak of the Australian continent at 2,228 metres and runs some 330 kilometres before it reaches the coast at Bilgalera, on Twofold Bay. This walking track is older than the silk roads and has been cared for and used by Aboriginal people for trading, ceremonies and family gatherings for thousands of years. The Bundian Way illustrates how, in the early days of European settlement, Aboriginal elders showed the settlers the best places for their stations as well as routes through the wild country, following the pathways they had been using for thousands of years.
- **Explain** the significance of the revival of Ngarigo language as a key component of the overall Ngarigo Nation Tribal Revival Plan. Ngarigo people were decimated in the first half of the 19th century and suffered ongoing abuse through insensitive government policy over the next 160 years, resulting in Ngarigo people being dispersed across Australia, more particularly in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland. This has resulted in Ngarigo country having most of its traditional owners living off country, with significant populations in the Gippsland, Yuin coastal, and Tumbarumba areas. Refer to <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/607fd682cc2b3d1c6038accd/t/60af1404d163646306ff3ce1/1622086661316/NGARIGO+NATION+LANGUAGE+PLAN.pdf>

# SUPPORTING READERS WITH PHONEMIC AWARENESS

- **Distinguish** between short and long vowel o sounds.
- **Identify** the pronunciation of both short and long o sounds.
- **Recall** the various spelling patterns of the long vowel o phoneme.
- **Draw** a mind map with the long vowel o spelling patterns from the book.
- **Make** board and card games with the long vowel o spelling patterns.
- **Use** dictation to reinforce the learning of correct spelling patterns.



**LEARNERS IN GRADES 1 TO 3** read texts that contain varied sentence structures, some unfamiliar vocabulary, and a significant number of high-frequency sight words. They recognise a wide variety of letter–sound relationships, and self-correct using knowledge of phonics, syntax, punctuation, semantics and context. They listen for particular purposes and manipulate sound combinations and rhythmic sound patterns.

### **Grade 1 Language**

- Use short vowels, common long vowels, consonant digraphs and consonant blends when writing, and blend these to read single syllable words (ACELA1458).
- Understand that a letter can represent more than one sound and that a syllable must contain a vowel sound (ACELA1459).
- Understand how to spell one and two syllable words with common letter patterns.
- Segment consonant blends or clusters into separate phonemes at the beginnings and ends of one syllable words (ACELA1822).

### **Grade 2 Language**

- Understand how texts are made cohesive through language features, including word associations, synonyms, and antonyms (ACELA1464).
- Understand the use of vocabulary about familiar and new topics and experiment with and begin to make conscious choices of vocabulary to suit audience and purpose (ACELA1470).
- Orally manipulate more complex sounds in spoken words through knowledge of blending and segmenting sounds, phoneme deletion and substitution in combination with use of letters in reading and writing (ACELA1474).
- Understand how to use knowledge of digraphs, long vowels, blends and silent letters to spell one and two syllable words including some compound words (ACELA1471).
- Use most letter–sound matches including vowel digraphs, less common long vowel patterns, letter clusters and silent letters when reading and writing words of one or more syllable (ACELA1824).
- Understand that a sound can be represented by various letter combinations (ACELA1825).
- Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to analyse texts by drawing on growing knowledge of context, language and visual features and print and multimodal text structures (ACELY1670).

### **Grade 3 Language**

- Understand that languages have different written and visual communication systems, different oral traditions and different ways of constructing meaning (ACELA1475).
- Understand how to use letter-sound relationships and less common letter patterns to spell words (ACELA1485).

# DECODING AS A PATHWAY

## IN ORDER TO BECOME

**READERS**, children learn the systematic relationship between code (letters) and sounds, including knowledge of letter and spelling patterns to correctly pronounce written words. In coming to understand these relationships, children are given the ability to recognise familiar words quickly and to figure out words they haven't seen before. With 44 sounds in the English language and hundreds of ways to spell them, the mind boggles! This series of phoneme-themed stories will help to reinforce the teaching and learning of phonic awareness with the different and various spelling patterns of the long vowels (digraphs) in a fun and meaningful way.

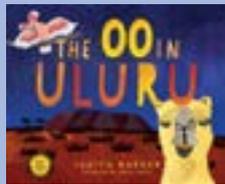


## TEN TIPS FOR READING SUCCESS

Some strategies for supporting beginning readers are:

- 1** Use context and pictures to monitor sound, letter and word recognition.
- 2** Sound out letters, identify high-frequency words (common, or sight words) in stories.
- 3** Use repetition often to consolidate the teaching and learning of sounds and letters.
- 4** Support the teaching of spelling by helping children to understand that sounds create different letter combinations.
- 5** Help children to sound out unfamiliar words and encourage self-correction.
- 6** Support children to make predictions, to identify the main idea in paragraphs, and to practise summarising.
- 7** Teach children the separate sounds in a name, eg Sam has three sounds S-a-m.
- 8** Ask your child to clap with you as you sound out the syllables in words, eg wonderful has three syllables won-der-ful.
- 9** Take turns to come up with words that rhyme or sound the same. Play sound and word games, such as I Spy with sounds and letters.
- 10** Provide opportunities for reading a variety of texts, to obtain meaning from sounds, letters, and words.

## BOOKS IN THIS SERIES



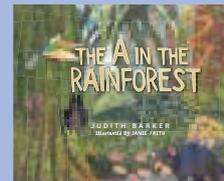
The OO in Uluru



The O in the Snow



The EE in the Deep, Blue Sea



The A in the Rainforest (coming  
February 2022)

The I in Island (in progress)  
The AU in Dinosaur (in progress)

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