



The Singing Snake— A Story from Australia

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Math

- What geometrical shape is a didgeridoo? List items in your room that are that shape.
- After making Walpiri paintings (see Art), estimate the number of dots on each one. Count and compare actual to your estimate.
- Didgeridoos are usually 4'-6' long. How many didgeridoos would fit around the outside edge of your room? Use didgeridoo lengths to measure other things, too.

Reading

- Read books by famous Australian author Mem Fox.
- Visit www.nsc.ru/folk/australia/australia.htm to read other Australian folktales. These have been retold and illustrated by Australian children!

Writing

- Learn to write using Australian words: "Aussie" means Australian, "bloke" means person, "g'day" means hello, "mate" means friend, "tucker" means food, "nipper" means young child, "bonza" means good/terrific, "dinki-di" means the real thing. Use some of these words in a story of your own!
- Retell and illustrate a folktale you know.
- Australia is the Latin word for "southern land." Write about why you think this island has that name.

Science

- Visit <http://australian-animals.net/> to study the animals unique to Australia
- Australian people are very active. They participate in a variety of sports and enjoy a good "bushwalk" (hike). Take a bushwalk of your own. What do you see that is not visible in Australia?
- How big would Snake have had to be to keep Lark in the back of his throat? Research to see if this would have been possible.

Geography

- Compare Australia's position on Earth to yours. How is the difference reflected in the seasons? What season is it there now? At Christmastime? In mid-July?
- Study Australian Aboriginies and immigrants. Where have today's Aussies come from?
- Study "Table Rock" and its makeup.

Music

- Play a homemade didgeridoo, or listen to a recording of didgeridoo music.
- Listen to "Waltzing Matilda" by A.B. Paterson. There is a book by the same name, illustrated by Desmond Digby. Read it and then sing the song.



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Art

- Make a didgeridoo with a wrapping paper tube or rolled brown paper. Draw colorful creatures on it and dot with a cotton swab dipped in light-colored paint.
- Make "bark paintings." Aboriginies have painted on dried eucalyptus bark for centuries. Tear a piece of "bark" from a paper bag. Paint it with red and yellow (made from ochre found in Australian dirt), white (made from chalk), or black (made from charcoal). When it's dry, crumple it a bit to make it look authentic.
- Study Walpiri Aboriginies' paintings: bright dots, zigzags and circles that tell a story and are painted collaboratively. In small groups, paint your own!

Culture

- Visit www.library.thinkquest.org/289994/ to find information about Australia
- Study the Australian flag and anthem found at www.dltk-kids.com/world/Australia/index.html.
- Play "Bounce Eye," a marble game. 3 or 4 players with 3 marbles each place two of their marbles inside a chalk circle on the ground. They take turns dropping the third marble from eye level. Each marble they knock out of the circle becomes theirs. Find directions at www.kulturekids.org/fun/games/index.html
- Cook "Outback Damper," "Lamingtons," "Anzacs," or "Fairy Bread."

Treasure Bearer

- Talk about what it means to be "dinkum" (honest/genuine). Can you trust a dinkum mate? Why or why not?
- Share a treat with the class, specifying how many each will get. Secretly give more to some, and later talk about how they handled this opportunity to be honest.
- Roleplay situations in which honesty is challenged. Have characters respond both honestly and dishonestly. Talk together about which quality students would want to exhibit or wish their friends would practice.