

Australia Play C3 2008-09

I Love a Sunburnt Country

~ Intro

Song – Australia is a Continent

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From Australia – by D.H. Lawrence

Song – Kookurra

Song - Tie Me Down Kangaroo

The Kangaroo – by Douglas Florian

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~Outback

song – Waltzing Matilda

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Introduction

Welcome! We are pleased to present "A Dreamtime Adventure" written by Mrs. Kernkamp, Ms. Beecher, and Ms. Scott.

The music includes Australian folk songs and songs composed by Joseph Seserko, our music teacher.

Poems are both traditional and modern. And the facts are things we learned while studying about the continent of Australia. Also, sprinkled throughout the play are myths and legends of the Aboriginal people.

We thank you for coming and hope you enjoy the performance

~ students are sleeping / begin waking / looking about ~

Hey, wake up. Where are we? What's going on?

Take a look up in the sky! That is not the Big Dipper!

No, it's the Southern Cross!

You know what that means - WE'RE IN AUSTRALIA!

♪: AUSTRALIA- Song

That's right, when we look into the night sky, we see the Big Dipper. In Australia, they see the Southern Cross.

The aboriginals, who were the first people to live in Australia, call it Mirrabooka.

Yes! Legend has it that there once lived a kind and wise man. In his old age, the good spirit placed him in the night sky to help the good spirit watch over the tribes.

Tribes? Are they the same as our Native American tribes?

Well, sort of. They too were the first people to live on the land. The term Aboriginal comes from Latin and means "from the beginning."

Each tribe has unique customs and languages just like the Indian tribes of North America.

Aren't the seasons opposite here in the Southern Hemisphere?

Yes, they are! When it is winter in Washington and the Northern Hemisphere, it is summer in Australia.

Cool, but if it is summer in December, wouldn't Santa get too hot in his red fuzzy suit?

No, 'cause he changes into a t-shirt and shorts!

Shorts and a t-shirt, awesome!

In class we learned that Australia is surrounded by water, making it the only island continent.

If you go wading on Australia's eastern seacoast, you'll be in the South Pacific Ocean.

And if you go swimming on Australia's west coast, you'll be splashing in the Indian Ocean.

Wow, that is cool!

My Australia by Mick Leigh

I love the dingo, it's a noble dog
and I love the Wallaby too.
I love the Possums large and small
and I love the Kangaroo.
The Wedge-Tailed Eagle that flies so high
and the magpie that wakes me with a song.

I love the sound of the didgeridoo
and the singing of ancient song.
The whispers of the Silky Oak
and the sigh of the Casuarina.
The Mountain Ash so straight and tall
and the big red sun when the day is done.
These are the things I dearly love
this is my Australia.

There are a lot of interesting animals that live in Australia.

Let's play a game, I will tell you some animal facts and you have to guess the animal.

OK!

This animal lays eggs, has a beaver tail, otter feet, and it's venomous. Do you know what it is?

I know, it's a platypus!

Right!

Old Man Platypus by: A.B. Paterson

Far from the trouble and toil of town,
Where the reed beds sweep and shiver,
Look at a fragment of velvet brown,
Drifting along the river.

And he plays and dives in the river bends
In a style that is most elusive,
With few relations and fewer friends,
For Old Man Platypus descends
From a family most exclusive.

He shares his burrow beneath the bank
With his wife and his son and daughter
At the roots of the reeds and the grasses rank,
And the bubbles show where our hero sank
To its entrance under water

Safe in their burrow below the falls
They live in a world of wonder,
Where no one visits and no one calls,
They sleep like little brown billiard balls
With their beaks tucked neatly under.

And he talks in a deep unfriendly growl
As he goes on his journey lonely,
For he's no relation to fish nor fowl,
Nor to bird nor beast, nor to horned owl,
In fact, he's the one and only!

Did you know that there is an Aboriginal myth about the platypus?

Really?

Yes, it says that once the platypus were little men called dindi and they traveled from place to place catching and eating water snakes. When they reached a lagoon the water snakes overpowered them and turned them into the first platypus.

That's cool!

Okay here's another clue. This animal lives in eucalyptus trees, eats eucalyptus leaves, is a marsupial, and only lives in Australia.

Oh, I know, it's a Koala Bear!

Close, but it's not a bear. The early Europeans who arrived in Australia saw the Koala and thought it looked a lot like a teddy bear. It isn't a bear but the name has stuck for all these years.

Here's another Aboriginal legend; it says that the laughter of the Kookaburra in the morning is a signal to the sky people to light the great fire that illuminates and warms the earth by day.

From Australia By: D.H. Lawrence

All day the kookaburra is laughing
From the phantoms of trees,
From the satire of nature.
It is not tragedy nor comedy,

It is the echo of beasts,
the bitter chorus of thorns,
and flowers that have names
that aren't easily remembered.

The kookaburra laughs from the trees,
From the branches of ghosts,
But the sky remains blue
And the eyes glow green in the night.

♫: **KOOKABURRA- Song**

Okay, time for another animal clue. This animal is also a marsupial, it has four legs but only hops on its big back legs. Its baby is called a joey, and it carries it in a pouch on its stomach.

That is too easy, it's a kangaroo!

Correct!

Song - Tie Me Down Kangaroo

The Kangaroo By: Douglas Florian

The kangaroo loves to leap.
Into the air it zooms,
While baby's fast asleep
Inside its kangaroom.

What about this one. This animal has short legs and a very short tail, it lives in the mountains and forests, and it is a marsupial with a backwards pouch to help with digging.

Oh, that's a wombat.

Right you are mate!

A Nip In Time By: Mick Leigh

The Wombat said to the Kangaroo
"Goodday my friend, and how are you?"
"I'm glad you asked" said the Kangaroo
"I'm sitting here wondering what to do".
"I've lost me jump and got the hump,
So I can't be a Kangaroo
Boo Hoo".

"That's true" said Willy the Wombat,
"A kangaroo's got to have jump,
But if you can wait, I've got a good mate,
And I'm sure he'll know what to do.
Yes, I'm sure he'll know what to do".

So Willy found Billy the Bull Ant,
And told him of Rodney Roo's plight.
Then Billy the Bull Ant bit Rodney,
Who jumped clear out of sight.

"Strike me Blue!" said Rodney Roo,
"That was a heckava bite,
But thanks to you and Willy too,
I've got me jumpin' right!

Unlike the Europeans, the Aborigines didn't have a need for fences or boundaries. Their spiritual connections to the land separate the tribes.

In fact, the Aborigines were gatherers and hunters who lived off the land, while the English became sheepherders and cattle drovers.

During the 1880's the world's longest fence was built and it's still standing. It is 6 feet tall and goes 1 foot underground. It is an amazing 3,306 miles long fence!

It was first built to keep out rabbits, but later became known as the Wild Dog or Dingo Fence. Its job is to protect the sheep now in Southern Queensland.

Weary Will By: A.B. Paterson

The strongest creature for his size
But least equipped for combat
That dwells beneath Australian skies
Is Weary Will the Wombat.

He digs his homestead underground,
He's neither shrewd nor clever,
For kangaroos can leap and bound
But wombats dig for ever.

The boundary rider's netting fence
Excites his irritation,
It is to his untutored sense
His pet abomination.

And when to pass it he desired,
Upon his task he'll centre
And dig a hole beneath the wires
Through which the dingoes enter.

And when to block the hole they strain
With logs and stones and rubble,
Bill Wombat digs it out again
Without the slightest trouble.

The boundary rider bows to fate,
Admits he's made a blunder,
And rigs a little swinging gate
To let Bill Wombat under.

So most contentedly he goes
Between his haunt and burrow,
He does the only thing he knows,
And does it very thorough.

I had a lot of fun learning about Australian animals.

Yah, they're very unique!

I'm getting tired.

Yeah, me too. Couldn't we lie down for just a little bit?

~ students sleep once again / wake up / stretching yawning~

Uh oh! It's happened again! Where are we now?

I don't know, but I'm sure hot. Me too!

We must be in the outback. The outback?

You remember, it's the vast area in the middle of the continent.
The Australians call it the "outback"

Oh yah! It's mostly desert. Dry, hot, and there aren't many
trees.

Are there any large cities in the outback?

No, and very few people live here and those that do have a
really different way of speaking.

♪: WALTZING MATILDA-Song

There isn't very much water in the outback. A lot of the rivers
and lakes are dry most of the year. There is underground water,
but it is too salty for people to drink.

Yes, but cattle and sheep can drink the salty water, and they
graze on the grasses and shrubs.

There's a frog in Australia that will store water during a
drought and bury itself in the sand until the rains come.

The Aboriginals know about this clever frog, and they will dig
it up and drink the water from it. They let the frog go without
hurting it.

♪: THE TOAD AND THE KANGAROO-Song

Did you know that the toads are not native to Australia?

Really!

Growers brought them from Hawaii to help stop the beetle from
eating their sugar cane crop. Well, it didn't work but, no one
thought about collecting the toads and returning them to Hawaii.

So, today the toad has become a pest in Australia because they
are toxic. The toads don't have any predators and will eat just
about anything they can swallow.

If You Go Softly By: Jennifer Kelly

If you go softly out to the gum trees
At night, after the darkness falls,

If you go softly and call
Tch, Tch, Tch,
Tch, Tch, Tch,
They'll come
The possums!

If you take bread that you've saved
They'll come close up, and stand
And eat right from your hand
Softly,
Snatching,
Nervous
The possums!

And if you are still, and move slowly,
You can, very softly, pat
Their thick fur, gently, like that
It's true!
You can!
Really touch them
The possums!

You can do that all
If you go softly,
At night,
To the gum trees,
If you go softly and call.

Hey, the kookaburra was in the gum tree too!

That's right! The gum tree is found all over the Australian outback and is home to many of its animals. The Aboriginals chewed the roots of the tree for water, and used the leaves as a remedy for fevers.

Another name for the gum tree is the Eucalyptus.

Look! What's that? (*point into the distance*)

Wow, it's so beautiful. It's huge!

It's Uluru, the largest rock in the world.

Did you know that it's known as an "island mountain?"

A what?"

An island mountain, it's what is left after a mountain has slowly eroded.

Wow, it looks like it's glowing red!

That's because the gray sandstone rock is covered by red iron oxide. At sunset, Uluru looks like a big red ball of fire. The Australians call this area "Red Center."

Oh, I can see why!

The Aboriginals think of Uluru as the most sacred of places. This is where many song lines and Dreaming tracks are found.

Uluru By: Mick Leigh

Heart of the land,
your deep buried spirit will rise again,
to reclaim the long lost vanished creatures hidden
within you.

Gondwana you are the living heart,
the dreaming giant,
temple of dance,
where the spirits sleep.
Fountains of song,
where the desert wind sings.
Remember the past.
Home of the starmaker,
you bask in the sun,
drink from the clouds,
count the passing of stars.
Blood red heart beats each thousand years.

Timeless mountain,
shelter of spirits,
gave birth to the Rainbow Serpent,
and life to the land.

Watching in silence,
you will always remain,
the sacred spirit which will return.
For I am, I am, lore of the land
I am Uluru.

I'm glad they changed the name back to the Aboriginal name Uluru instead of the British name Ayers Rock.

I agree.

It's so hot here that I am getting sleepy. Yeah, me too.

Can't we just lie down for a minute?

~ students sleep / wake up / stretch and yawn~

Uh oh! Not again! Now, where are we?

I don't know, but thank goodness it feels way cooler!

We must be on the coast.

Hey, look it's the Great Barrier Reef!

So then this is the northeastern coast and the Coral Sea. That would put us in the southwestern Pacific Ocean.

The water is so wonderfully clear.

The reef is the largest coral formation in the world. It is an underwater home to millions of glittering fish and other animals.

Little Fish by D.H. Lawrence

The tiny fish enjoy themselves in the sea.
Quick little splinters of life,
Their little lives are fun to them in the sea.

See if you can guess these animals...

Whalesong by Judith Nicholls

I am
ocean voyager
sky-leaper,
maker of waves
I harm no man.
I know
only the slow tune
of turning tide,
of full sea meeting land
the heave and sigh
at dusk and dawn,
the sad whale song,
I harm no man.

That's a whale!

A Jelly-Fish by: Marianne Moore

Visible, invisible,
A fluctuation charm
An amber tintured amethyst
Inhabits it, your arm
Approaches and it opens
And it closes, you had meant
To catch it and it quivers,
You abandon your intent.

Oh, it's a jelly-fish!

Hey, what's that coming at us! Oh no!

The Shark by E.J. Pratt

He seemed to know the harbour,
So leisurely he swam;
His fin,
Like a piece of sheet-iron,
Three-cornered,
And with knife-edge,
Stirred not a bubble
As it moved with its base-line on the water

His body was tubular
And tapered and smoke-blue,
As he passed the wharf
He turned, and snapped at a flat-fish
That was dead and floating.
And I saw the flash of a white throat,
And a double row of white teeth,
And eyes of metallic grey,
Hard and narrow and slit.

Then out of the harbour,
With that three-cornered fin,
Shearing without a bubble the water
Lithely,
Leisurely,
He swam -
That strange fish,
Tubular, tapered, smoke-blue,
Part vulture, part wolf,
Part neither - for his blood was cold.

♪: NEVER MINCE WORDS WITH A SHARK!-Song

There is a story that the Aboriginals tell about the shark and how it got its dorsal fin. It seems that during a disagreement with the Oyster brothers a boomerang was tossed. Well, the boomerang struck the shark and can still be seen today sticking out of the shark's back.

Octopus by Valerie Worth

Marvel at the
Awful many-armed
Sea-god Octopus,
And the coiled
Elbows of his eager
Eightfold embrace;

Yet also at his
Tapered tender
Fingertips, ferrying
Their great brow
Along the sea floor
In solitary grace.

Get ready, here are the clues. This animal is a bottom dweller, diamond shaped and flat.

It's a ray.

Could be, but this one is a skate.

Skate by Alan Brownjohn

Flitting the sea bed, wide and flat,
I am a fish to wonder at:
A kind-of, soft thick square,
Like a slow plane in watery air,

With a tough white spine from tail to lips
And straight bones out to my side-wing-tips
No other interests interest me,
Being this is my whole activity.

The Great Barrier Reef is so large it can be seen from the moon. Incredibly, the reef is the largest living structure and to think it's made by marine animals.

Wow! That's awesome!

Gee, exploring the Great Barrier Reef has worn me out. Yea.

Seal Lullaby By: Rudyard Kipling

Oh! Hush thee, my baby, the night is behind us,
And black are the waters that sparkled so green.
The noon, o'er the combers, looks downward to find us
At rest in the hollows that rustle between.
Where billow meets billow, there soft by thy pillow,
Ah, weary wee flippering, curl at thy ease!
The storm shall not wake thee, nor sharks overtake thee,
Asleep in the arms of the slow swimming seas.

~student sleep / wake up / stretch and yawn~

Wow, look at all these people!

Most of the people in Australia live on the east coast because of the cool weather and great beaches.

This place is really different from the Outback!

Yes, but it is just as beautiful.

That's what Captain Cook and the British Navy thought when they landed here back in 1770.

Not long after that the British government started sending minor criminals to Australia. It was a program called Transportation.

The program lasted 80 years, transporting about 165,000 people a distance of almost 15,000 miles.

♪: **BOTANY BAY-Song**

Look, what is that? It looks like a bunch of gigantic white sails.

That is the Sydney Opera House. It's one of the most famous performing arts centers in the world.
It is home to more than 3000 performances every year.
That's about 10 performances every day.

Hey look there's the Coathanger! Did you know that the Sydney Harbor Bridge stands 439 feet tall at its highest point.
Wow that is one massive bridge.

Look, what is that in the bay?

I don't see anything.

Oh, I can see it! It looks like something swimming.

It's a dolphin!

Dolphins By: Zoe Bailey

The dolphins play in the sea like children,
Diving, leaping ahead of the long ship,
Rising out of the sparkling waves,
 Their jaws smile,
 `Friends`, they seem to say
 `We are friends, play with us.`

The water sprays from their curving backs
And in the bubbles of their shinning wake.
 Small fish watch the game
 Round eyed and
 Open mouthed

However fast the ship, the dolphins are faster,
Sliding joyfully through the emerald sea.
At last descending into the deepest water,
They swim away from the ship and the bright sky.

Dolphins have always been very special to the Gold Coast and to the Aborigines. Dolphins look after humans by driving fish into the fishing nets set out by people. In return the Aborigines never cause them harm.

Wow, this has been a great adventure.

It has been a lot of fun traveling around Australia.

I've Seen by: Marc Glasby

I've seen the desert bloom with colour
I've seen the red land turn to green
I've seen the sunset's wild abandon
The wide brown land is where I've been
I've seen the mountains cloaked in thunder
I've seen the mighty Fitzroy flow
I've seen the land they call 'Down Under'
I've seen the whales that breach and blow
I've seen a land of open spaces

I've seen a sea of cobalt blue
I've seen a sea of smiling faces
I've felt the thing they call 'true blue'
I've walked a mile upon the footsteps
pioneers trod once before

I've packed my swag in lonely places
I've pitched a tent upon the shore
I've walked the rim of Wolfe Creek Crater
I've rode the mighty Murray down
I've seen the ore they ship by freighter
I've seen the bridge in Sydney town

I've been away to foreign places
I've seen the world in other parts
but nothing there I've seen replaces
the wide brown land within my heart

Well, I think it's time to call it a night get some sleep.

~ student sleep / wake up / stretch and yawn~

Where are we? We're back home. Ah, what an awesome adventure!

Boy, I can sure see why people who visit and live in Australia
feel a strong connection to this unique and beautiful island!