

# CREATIVE LEARNING RESOURCE

# NOONGAR STORYTELLING FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS

## A NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR KYLIE BRACKNELL [KAARLJILBA KAARDN] ...

*It was important to me, as director of these films, that boodjar (the land and/or landscape) be a primary focus in the framing of these stories. That is why they are so deliberately and beautifully set in these locations. Country keeps us grounded, and these stories are grounded in Country.*

## NOONGAR LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

**GENERAL TERMS** These are to help students understand some of the important terms in Aboriginal culture and give a wider context for the films.

**NOONGAR** A person from the South West of Western Australia (also spelled Nyungar)

**ELDERS** Highly important and respected people, chosen by their communities to be the keepers of knowledge and pass that on to the young people of their community.

**KAADIDJINY** Understandings, including those passed down through the generations and carried forward into the future.

**COUNTRY** Aboriginal people use the term 'Country' with a capital letter to refer to the land, waters, skies and everything in them, including their extended family. They have a spiritual and physical connection to this land.

**NYIDINY** In the Noongar language, nyidiny is the cold times of creation. In English, this is roughly translated as 'dreamtime' or 'the dreaming' and generally refers to Aboriginal creation stories which continue to give meaning to all things. Aboriginal groups in different parts of Australia talk about these kinds of stories in different ways. Across the Noongar region, giant snake ancestors known as waagkal and maadjit are associated with the creation and maintenance of waterways and landscapes.

**SHORT GLOSSARY** Throughout the videos, the storytellers use Noongar language. Some of it is translated, other words will become clear through the stories being told.

Here are some of the words that are introduced in these videos.

<b>Balga</b>	Grass Tree	<b>Karda</b>	Racehorse Goanna
<b>Bibdjool</b>	Gecko (Lizard)	<b>Kaya</b>	Hello / Yes
<b>Boodjar</b>	Land / Ground / Earth	<b>Koolbardi</b>	Magpie
<b>Boordawan</b>	Later	<b>Koort</b>	Heart
<b>Booyi</b>	Tortoise / Turtle	<b>Maara</b>	Hands
<b>Doonart</b>	Parrot	<b>Meeka</b>	Moon
<b>Djena</b>	Feet	<b>Moolern</b>	Back
<b>Djidi Djidi</b>	Willy Wagtail	<b>Nyidiny</b>	Cold, creation times
<b>Djinda</b>	Stars	<b>Wardong</b>	Crow
<b>Djooditj</b>	Native cat	<b>Wetj</b>	Emu
<b>Djoorabiny</b>	Happy	<b>Worl</b>	Sky
<b>Dwert</b>	Dingo	<b>Yongka</b>	Kangaroo

# 'THIS PLACE, NOONGAR BOODJAR HOLDS AND NESTLES OUR ANCESTORS, OUR CREATION THEMES, OUR CONNECTION TO OUR VERY EXISTENCE.'

*Kylie Bracknell [Kaarlijilba Kaardn]*

## PLACES AND COUNTRY

These videos were filmed in the following locations:

### Connie Yarran – Kellerberrin Hill

The name Kellerberrin is derived from the name of a nearby hill. The hill was first recorded as 'Killaburing Hill' by an explorer in 1861, but in 1864 the explorer C C Hunt recorded it as Kellerberrin Hill. One source claims that Kellerberrin is the name for the fierce ants that are found in the area, while another gives it as meaning 'camping place near where rainbow birds are found' – 'kalla' means camping place or place of, and 'berrin berrin' is the rainbow bird.

### Derek Nannup – Yanchep National Park

Yanchep got its name from the Noongar terms Yandjet or Yanget, which are the local bulrush reeds that line the fringes of these wetlands.

### Kylie Bracknell [Kaarlijilba Kaardn] – Ngurgenboro

A Noongar name for Herdsman Lake is 'Ngurgenboro' (alternative spelling 'Ngurngoro') and Wembley is known as 'Wandarraguttgurra' which is thought to mean 'high land overlooking big lake.' The area is recorded in early Gazettes as the 'headquarters' of Yellagonga, leader of the local Mooro people.

### Olman Walley – Kaarta Gar-up

The lower land in Kings Park was an important ceremonial and dreaming area for Noongar men, known to them as Goonininup. Mount Eliza, the highest point of the Park was a meeting place for Aboriginal people for thousands of years, known to them as Moora Katta or Kaarta Gar-up, spider hill.

### Peter Farmer - Balga

Balga is the Noongar word for the grass tree or Xanthorrhoea, and the suburb was given that name in 1954.

### Annie Dabb - Frenchman's Peak

The Noongar name for the peak is Mandooboornup. It is situated in Cape Le Grand National Park, east of Esperance, Kepa Kurl.

## MAPS OF PLACE NAMES AND LANGUAGE:

To learn more about Noongar place names, and to see an interactive map of Noongar language groups, visit this website: [boodjar.sis.uwa.edu.au/clickable-regions-map](http://boodjar.sis.uwa.edu.au/clickable-regions-map)

You can learn more about Noongar place names in the Perth CBD through the Gnarla Boodja Mili Mili (Our Country On Paper) map. [gnarlaboodjamap.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/#/home](http://gnarlaboodjamap.dlgsc.wa.gov.au/#/home)

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

## Connie Yarran

Connie Yarran is a proud Ballardong yok from the Wheatbelt area of the South West of Western Australia where her love of the arts first began.

Inspired by her grandmother, Kathy Yarran, Connie is passionate about working with young people to share art, language and culture. She is an established community leader and a qualified dance teacher. Connie has conducted a variety of dance programs for youth throughout Noongar country and has directed dance performances for festivals and special events in celebration of bringing community together. She currently works as a health promotion officer for the Wheatbelt Aboriginal Health Service.

## Derek Nannup

Derek Nannup is a street and circus performer, actor, musician and comedian. He is one of only a handful of skilled Indigenous circus performers in Australia, having fostered his skills with the Reg Bolton Circus Troupe. By the age of sixteen Derek had established Clowning Around, a Perth based company, which continued to be his focus for six years.

In 1993, Derek started facilitating the workshop program for Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company, where he delivered hundreds of interactive workshops – promoting the richness and diversity of Aboriginal culture – to students and community groups all over Western Australia.

Derek has acting and directing credits, with Yirra Yaakin including *King Hit*, *No Excuse*, *Booyi Koora Koora* and *Djildjit*, *Muttacar Sorry Business* and the 2005 & 2006 Welcome to Country for the Perth International Arts Festival. Derek's own show *Djitty Djitty Flies North* has toured internationally to Canada and Britain.

In addition to theatre, Derek runs his own business, Creative Pathways which runs cultural workshops throughout WA, and provides consultation on cultural issues, and is an accomplished didjeridoo player and Traditional dancer. Derek also runs Cultural Tours at Yanchep National Park and works at Princess Margaret Hospital as the Clown Doctor, Dr Munjong!

Derek hopes to continue to be an inspirational role model to hundreds of Indigenous youth through his dedication and hard work.

## Kylie Bracknell [Kaarlijilba Kaardn]

Kylie Bracknell is an accomplished theatre maker, performer, writer, producer and director from the South West of Western Australia – the Noongar nation.

As an actress, Kylie has appeared in television programs such as *The Gods of Wheat Street* (ABC) and *Redfern Now* (ABC), films including *I Met A Girl*, *Ace of Spades*, *Stone Bros*, and *Sa Black Thing*, and theatre productions such as *Black is the New White*, *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *The White Divers of Broome*, and *The Sapphires*.

Her voice is featured on *Fist of Fury Noongar Daa* (2021), the animated series *Little J and Big Cuz* (NITV/ABC) in both English and Noongar versions, the feature film *Mystery Road* (2013), and various radio and television commercials. Kylie hosts the children's television program *Waabiny Time* (NITV) and is a past presenter of the *Marngrook Footy Show* (NITV). She delivered a TEDx talk in Manly (2014) to raise awareness of Indigenous languages in Australia and was a guest panellist on ABC's Q&A 'Shakespeare special' (2016).

Passionate about keeping Noongar language alive, Kylie reimagined Shakespeare's *Macbeth* for Yirra Yaakin Theatre Company & Bell Shakespeare with a full-length Noongar language adaptation titled Hecate. Hecate premiered at Perth Festival 2020 to a sold-out season. Kylie has also translated two episodes of the award-winning animation series *Little J & Big Cuz* into the Noongar language for Ned Lander Media.

## Olman Walley

Olman Walley is traditional owner of the Whadjuk Noongar region who has dedicated his career to sharing and promoting Noongar culture locally and internationally through performance, tourism and education. As a small business owner, educator and performing artist, Olman is passionate about improving the awareness, revival and maintenance of Noongar culture here in the South West.

## Peter Farmer

Peter was born in Gnowangerup in 1971 and lived a semi-traditional early life on a reserve until his family moved into a house in the late 1970's. Peter enrolled in a Contemporary Aboriginal Arts Degree later completing a Bachelor of Visual/Fine Arts in 2001. Since graduating Peter has been part of numerous group exhibitions such as Encounters Exhibition - BRITISH Museum 2016; CHOGM - Office of Premier Cabinet WA & Nomad 2 Worlds 2011; 'About this Place' Holmes A Court Gallery, VASSE FELIX 2013; 3 Noongar Painters - Goddard de Fiddes 2009. He held his first solo exhibition in 2009 at Goddard de Fiddes Gallery, this exhibition was an exploration of his family totems the 'Blue Wren' and 'Fire', continuing to find ways of representing the many Dreaming stories of both his parents' ancestral lands.

Peter has been awarded many large Public Art Works Commissions throughout his professional journey and received the West Australian Landscape Architectural Award in 2008 for his first sculpture. He has produced a myriad of large installations across Australia including Fiona Stanley Hospital - 13 meter Eel; New Midland Hospital - Shade Canopies; Inaugural Indigenous Guernsey for the West Coast Eagles; Yaburgurt Sculpture Mandurah; the New Optus Stadium - Chevron Park; Woodside Energy; Melbourne Central Tower GPT (City of Melbourne) and a couture shoe for Professor Jimmy Choo (WA Museum).

Peter believes that art is an incredible tool that helps him break down barriers & builds understanding and an appreciation of his language and cultural belief systems. He works extensively throughout educational systems to help the wider communities understand the deep connectedness his people have to the environment and the flora and fauna that reside in it. He believes, as his ancestors did, that all life is to be valued and sustained in way that is beneficial to the continued survival of humans on this planet.

## Annie Dabb

Annie is a well-known respected Elder of Kepa Kurl (Esperance). She is a local Nyungar woman and one of the last of the Aboriginal children who was born and lived in the bush. Annie is one of the last seven Elders of the Dabb family, a local Nyungar moort (family) in Kepa Kurl (Esperance).

Since the inception of the NAIDOC awards in Esperance, Annie has won Elder of the Year twice, which is well deserved as she does a lot for her community.

Annie is a torch bearer of Kepa Kurl Nyungar Language and bringing language back into our lives along with her daughters.

Annie and her family have now started their own business which encompasses all of Annie's knowledge which has been handed down to her from her Father, Grandfather, and Elders. Her and her daughters pass on the Traditional Cultural wisdom to educate the community keeping the aspirations of the Esperance Nyungar people strong and empowered in keeping culture alive.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND LINKS FOR TEACHERS:



### Videos:

ABC 'Learn some of the Noongar Language':

[education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2307474/noongar-language](https://education.abc.net.au/home#!/media/2307474/noongar-language)

Here are a collection of songs and Noongar language webisodes:

[mayakeniny.com](https://www.mayakeniny.com)



### Books:

Suggested Reading Books for NAIDOC Week:

[education.abc.net.au/newsandarticles/blog/-/b/2564527/6-books-for-naidoc-week](https://education.abc.net.au/newsandarticles/blog/-/b/2564527/6-books-for-naidoc-week)



### Websites:

Noongar Culture and Knowledge:

[noongarculture.org.au](https://noongarculture.org.au)



### Food, Tools and Seasons

[noongarculture.org.au/food/](https://noongarculture.org.au/food/)



### Noongar Pronunciation guide

[noongarboodjar.com.au/spelling-and-pronunciation/](https://noongarboodjar.com.au/spelling-and-pronunciation/)

# 'IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE SHARE OUR ORAL STORYTELLING EXPERIENCES WITH YOU. WE TELL THESE STORIES SO WE CAN KEEP OUR LANGUAGE AND OUR STORIES ALIVE FOR OUR NEXT GENERATION'

Kylie Bracknell [Kaarljilba Kaardn]

## CREDITS

The videos in this series were filmed on Noongar boodjar.

Perth Festival acknowledges the Noongar people who continue to practise their values, language, beliefs and knowledge on their kwobidak boodjar. They remain the spiritual and cultural birdiyangara of this place and we honour and respect their caretakers and custodians and the vital role Noongar people play for our community and our Festival to flourish.

## STORIES

*Bibdjool and the Stars*, Kylie Bracknell [Kaarljilba Kaardn] – Herdsman Lake, Herdsman

*How Booyi Got Its Shape and Shell & How Meeka Lost Its Tail*, Derek Nannup – Yanchep National Park, Yanchep

*How the Birds Got Their Names*, Peter Farmer II – Bina Parkland, Balga

*How Yongka Got Its Colour*, Olman Walley – Kings Park, Perth

*Koolbardi and Wardong*, Connie Yarran – Kellerberrin Hill, Kellerberrin

*Mandooboornup and the Waalitj*, Annie Dabb – Cape Le Grand National Park, Esperance

## DIRECTED BY

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## SHOT BY

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## EDITED BY

Fionn Mulholland

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