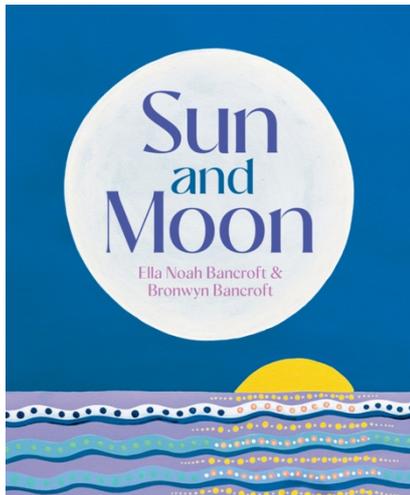


Teacher's Notes



Sun and Moon

Written by Ella Noah Bancroft

Illustrated by Bronwyn Bancroft

Teacher's Notes by Bec Kavanagh

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LEARNING OUTCOMES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Grades 1-2

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- Learning areas: English
- General capabilities:
 - Intercultural understanding
 - ACELA1460
 - ACELT1587

THEMES

- Siblings
- Cooperation
- Celebrating difference
- Bundjalung culture
- Aboriginal cultures
- Art
- Transformation
- Acceptance

SYNOPSIS

Baribun and Buhwi Bira are brother and sister, but they are total opposites. Baribun is a dreamer – she likes to move slowly across the land, planting seeds and taking in nature. Buhwi Bira is a warrior who burns bright with energy.

One day, sick of waiting for his sister to catch up, Buhwi Bira suggests a game of hide-and-seek. But when they start to play, Baribun moves so slowly it's no fun, and brother and sister get into a huge fight with each other. Buhwi starts running in furious circles, not noticing as his sister slowly sinks into the earth beneath him. When Baribun wakes up she is trapped beneath a ring of fire. To save his sister Buhwi must find a way to be still, and to control his energy.

Sun and Moon is a book about family and learning how to live together.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ ILLUSTRATOR

Bronwyn Bancroft is a proud Bundjalung woman and artist. She has been exhibiting nationally and internationally for over three decades.

Bronwyn has a diverse artistic practice including public art commissions and imagery design for private commissions. Bronwyn has illustrated and/or written 43 children's books.

Bronwyn received the Dromkeen Medal for her contribution to Australian Literature and in 2016 was the Australian Finalist for the Hans Christian Andersen Award (illustrator).

Bronwyn has been a director of her own company, Designer Aboriginals Pty Ltd, since 1985. She is also a director of the Australian Indigenous Mentoring Experience (AIME) and an advisor on the Commonwealth Bank's Indigenous Advisory Council. Bronwyn has been a volunteer senior strategist at Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative since 2009.

Bronwyn has a Diploma of Visual Arts from Canberra School of Art and two Masters degrees, one in Studio Practice and the other in Visual Art, from the University of Sydney. She was awarded her Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in 2018.

Sun and Moon is written by Bronwyn's daughter, Ella Noah Bancroft.

THEMES

This is a complex but easy-to-read story with a lot of thematic elements for discussion. Readers might like to consider the way the following themes are explored both in the images and the pictures.

- Aboriginal culture – which elements of Aboriginal culture are familiar to you in the book, and which are new? What parts of the story or the illustrations are unique to Aboriginal culture? Why is it important that we continue to share and create stories like this?
- Sibling rivalry – do you have a brother or a sister? Do the arguments between Baribun and Buhwi remind you of you and your family? In what ways are you similar and different?
- Difference – the book encourages us to explore our differences and to work out when our behaviour is hurting other people, and when we can celebrate unique aspects of our personality

WRITING STYLE

Sun and Moon is a story about family and creation, which clearly draws inspiration from the writer's Aboriginal heritage. It is a reasonably complex narrative for a picture book, which will be well-suited to confident readers, but includes a lot of dialogue, so is also an ideal text to be read aloud. Teachers could discuss encountering new language and new words, and ways that we can learn and practice words that are unfamiliar. This would also be a good text to use alongside classroom conversations about Aboriginal cultures and Dreaming stories. Students might like to share stories from their own cultures and families about where things come from, or their connection with specific parts of the world.



COMPREHENSION

- What are some of the differences between Baribun and Buhwi Bira?
- How does Buhwi Bira move through the forest?
- Why does Baribun like to be still?
- What solution does Buhwi Bira come up with so that they can play together?
- What goes wrong with the game?
- What happens to the environment when Buhwi Bira becomes still?
- Have you ever been frustrated by someone's differences? How did you work it out? How do Buhwi Bira and Baribun work it out?

WRITING EXERCISE

In this story, the writer brings elements of the sun and moon to life in her characters. In a way, this **personifies** the sun and the moon. What does personification mean? Why do writers use this technique in their stories? Use personification techniques to either turn the following words into people, or to give them human characteristics:

- Rain
- Fire
- Wind
- Trees

ILLUSTRATION STYLE

Bronwyn Bancroft is known for her striking, often political, artwork. Her work displays deep connection with her Aboriginal heritage and Bundjalung people, and she shows meaning through her use of bright colours and intricate patterns.

In *Sun and Moon*, Bancroft uses yellow and blue to show the differences between Baribun and Buhwi. Baribun is striking in yellow, outlined with a deep burnt orange. These colours demonstrate his connection to the sun and also capture his hot-headed energy. Buhwi is often drawn in movement – curving or streaking across the page. Students might like to discuss the way artists use colour and shape to capture elements of character.

In contrast, Baribun's blue ties her to the colours Bancroft has used for the land and the sky, reflecting her groundedness and sense of connection with the earth. She is often seen standing, or cross legged, and drawn as much smaller than her brother. What does this tell you about their relationship?



CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

- In Bundjalung, Baribun means 'dream', and Buhwi Bira means 'breathe' (<https://planetcorroboree.com.au/blogs/culture-country/bundjalung-words>). How do you see these words reflected in these two characters? Why do you think the writer has chosen these words as their names? Do some research to find out where your name comes from and what it means. Does it suit you?
- Discuss the positives and negatives of Baribun's character and of Buhwi Bira's. Imagine that Baribun is telling someone about Buhwi for the first time. How do you think she'd describe him? What would Buhwi say about Baribun?
- Using Tromaramix (<https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/tromaramix/>), or another free stop-motion animation app, create a short stop-motion film of one of the scenes from the book. Try to capture the movement of Buhwi Bira and the stillness of Baribun. You might photocopy and cut out the illustrations from the book, or you might like to draw your own. Be creative!
- In the style of Bronwyn Bancroft's illustrations, draw a portrait of your family. Think about the way she uses colour to show elements of their personality, and how she captures movement in the images. What kind of story would you write about your family?

RELATED READING

- Colours of Australia – Bronwyn Bancroft
- The Art in Country – Bronwyn Bancroft
- Remembering Lionsville – Bronwyn Bancroft

