

By the Billabong

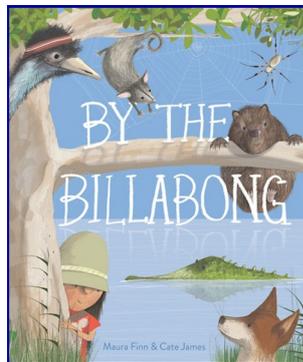
By Maura Finn & Illustrated by Cate James

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\$24.99

A wisdom of wombats, A passel of possums, A cluster of spiders knitting socks... Who else might you meet on a trip to the billabong? From an exciting new picture-book partnership comes this delightful romp through a much-loved Australian landscape. But wait - is that a croc?!



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Exploration and observation
- Australiana
- Independence
- Storytelling techniques

Discussion Questions:

- Before you begin reading, look at the cover of the book. Read out the title, the names of the author and illustrator, and the blurb. What do you think the book will be about? What might you see in the illustrations? Do you think you will like the book? After you've read the book, discuss if your first impressions were right or wrong.
- *By the Billabong* is filled with lots of Australian animals. Which of them is your favourite?
- The author uses funny words to refer to groups of animals, like 'a passel of possums' or 'a bask of crocodiles'. These are called collective nouns. Write a list of collective nouns, and ask students to guess which animal each refers to.
- Do you like going on adventures? Where is the last place you really explored, and what did you see there?
- The character in this book spends a lot of time watching what the animals are doing, and only engages when they follow them home. How do you think you should behave around animals you meet out in the wild?
- *By the Billabong* is set in Australia. Does it look familiar to you, like the part of Australia you live in? Have you ever been to a billabong? What is a billabong? How is a billabong different to a lake?
- The character in *By the Billabong* goes off to explore all on their own. Do you like doing things on your own? Do you get bored? Do you feel lonely? Do you get scared? How do you entertain yourself when there is no-one else around?
- Do you prefer reading books that rhyme, or books that don't rhyme? Why?

Activities:

- Go outside and have a look around the yard or playground. What kind of animals can you see? What are they doing? Observe them quietly, then use your imagination to come up with a description of something they could do. Make sure it involves repeating sounds, just like it does in *By the Billabong*. Instead of 'a passel of possums drinking tea', you might see a bug blowing bubbles or a dog doing a dance. Don't forget to illustrate your idea!
- While you're outside, collect some nature for yourself! Twigs, leaves, bark, flowers – anything that has fallen to the ground. Use these, as well as any other craft materials, to re-create your favourite place to explore outdoors.