

Sea Country

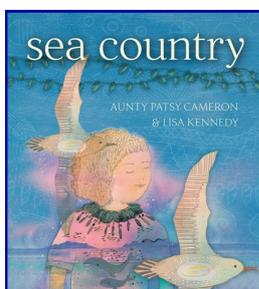
By Auntie Patsy Cameron & Illustrated by Lisa Kennedy

Publisher: Magabala Books

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\$24.99

Summer is the season for ripening wild cherries, tatas, wild currants, canyongong. The canyongong fruits taste like salty strawberries. In this delightful children's picture book, Auntie Patsy Cameron generously shares the stories and traditions from her family's seasonal island life in Tasmania. With evocative text and stunning illustrations, *Sea Country* lets the reader know when to pick ripe wild cherries, when the moon (mutton) birds fly home and how the nautilus shells smell like the deepest oceans. Auntie Patsy Cameron, who is a descendant of the Pairebeenne Trawlwoolway clan in Tasmania, weaves a cultural homage to life on Flinders Island, with stories of collecting shells, fishing in wooden dinghies with long oars, and watching clouds snake their way down Mt Munro. Alongside this tender story, Lisa Kennedy reveals the love and connection to sea and Country through her intricate collages and delicate illustrations that sing country alive.



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

Themes:

- Aboriginal Culture; Stories, Country, Artwork
- Aboriginal Seasons and Weather
- Sea
- Flinders Island
- Family

Discussion Questions and Activities:

- Before reading, examine the cover, end papers and title of the book. Make predictions about the story, giving reasons for your ideas. What clues do we have that this text includes Aboriginal culture?
- After reading *Sea Country*, discuss how the end papers of the book include many of the elements shared in the text.
- Using both the illustrations and the written text on the first page opening, discuss the characters and setting of *Sea Country*. What is happening in this page opening? What does it mean to be a 'proud, strong people'? How do the illustrations share what *Sea Country* is like?
- What role do ancestors and elders play in sharing the stories of Country with younger generations? Where in the text is there evidence of this taking place?
- On a map of Australia, locate Flinders Island. (<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>). Where is it in relation to your home? How is *Sea Country* different from your country?
- What does the author mean when she says 'there was freedom there'? How does the setting in *Sea Country* give the children the opportunity to learn about and practise their culture? What do they learn?
- What role do the Aunties and Uncles play in *Sea Country*?
- Create a table with labelled diagrams of the different types of shells found in *Sea Country*.
- Why is the line 'rice shells, toothies, black crows, penguins, mairreeners, oat shells, gull shells' formatted in a wavy line? How does this reflect the setting of the text and the necklaces that are made? Create your own necklaces using beads, seed pods or other items.
- The children in the book tell us that they are 'free to hear Country speaking to us'. How does Country do this? What are they told by Country?
- Create a poster that shares the signs that Country gives about the weather and seasonal changes. How do you know when rain or bad weather is coming in your local area? What can you learn from local indigenous people about weather and seasons in your area?
- Share what you know about Summer on Flinders Island. What fruits are plentiful? What are the fruits you enjoy in your local area during Summer?
- Create your own collage to reflect the ideas and images found in *Sea Country*.