

Moli det bigibigi

Bringing First Nations storytelling
into the classroom.

OVERVIEW

2022 marks the beginning of UNESCO's Decade of Indigenous Languages. In celebration of the importance and value of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' First Languages, this teacher guide encourages students to learn about First Nations storytelling and language through story creation, imagination, and prior knowledge or experiences. This story is written by Binjari author and artist Karen Manbulloo and is illustrated by the Binjari Buk Mob, a group of Aboriginal women from Binjari, near Katherine in the Northern Territory.

Adjust the activities in this guide to suit the capabilities, interests, and preferred learning styles of students in Stages 1, 2 and 3. Extension opportunities, supplementary activities, and opportunities for community engagement are included.

Use this teacher guide alongside the *Moli det bigibigi* book and animated video with Kriol and English subtitles. The video can be found here:

- Link to *Moli det bigibigi* video: [Kriol and English translation](#)

Kriol is a First Nations language, and is the most widely-spoken First Nations language in Australia today. Teachers can use these resources developed by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF) to support non Kriol speaking students to understand the language.

- [Teachers' Notes for *Moli det bigibigi*](#) (printable PDF)
- [About the Kriol language and the Binjari Buk project](#) (printable PDF)
- [Indigenous Literacy Day: Celebrating Stories and Language](#) (Video - 23 minutes)
- [Did you know?](#) (Video - 2 minutes)
- [The Value of First Languages](#) (Video - 3 minutes)

We recommend beginning the lesson with an Acknowledgement of Country to respectfully recognise the Country/Place you are on and the traditional custodians of the land, sea, waterways and sky in your area. More information on how to deliver an Acknowledgement of Country can be found [here](#).

Teachers may also like to use the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [Indigenous Map of Australia](#) to help students visualise the many distinct First Nations cultural and language groups across Australia.

DID YOU KNOW:

The United Nations General Assembly has declared 2022 - 2032 the Decade of Indigenous Languages?

ASSESSMENT

- Peer or class discussion.
- Final outcome of storyboard and alternative ending.

CURRICULUM LINKS

Early Stage 1 - Stage 1

English

Language

Understand that spoken, visual and written forms of language are different modes of communication with different features and their use varies according to the audience, purpose, context and cultural background (ACELA1460)

Literature

Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (ACELT1587)

Innovate on familiar texts by experimenting with character, setting or plot (ACELT1833)

HASS

Geography

The ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples maintain special connections to particular Country/Place (ACHASSK049)

Stage 2

English

Language

Understand that Standard Australian English is one of many social dialects used in Australia, and that while it originated in England it has been influenced by many other languages (ACELA1487)

Literature

Make connections between the ways different authors may represent similar storylines, ideas and relationships (ACELT1602)

Create literary texts that explore students' own experiences and imagining (ACELT1607)

Create literary texts by developing storylines, characters and settings (ACELT1794)

HASS

Civics and Citizenship

The different cultural, religious and/or social groups to which they and others in the community belong (ACHASSK093)

Stage 3

English

Language

Understand that different social and geographical dialects or accents are used in Australia in addition to Standard Australian English (ACELA1515)

Literature

Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways (ACELT1618)

HASS

Geography

The world's cultural diversity, including that of its Indigenous peoples (ACHASSK140)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will:

- Engage with and explore First Nations storytelling and culture.
- Be introduced to and learn about First Nations languages.
- Consider First Nations peoples' connections to Country.
- Use their imaginations, prior knowledge and experiences to construct and tell stories.
- Use different methods and skills to create and tell stories.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Moli det bigibigi (Molly the pig) is a story written by Binjari author and artist, Karen Manbulloo. The story is written in both Kriol and English, and follows the journey of *Moli det bigibigi* as she is rescued from the bush, discovers a love of cereal, and becomes a beloved member of the community. It is based on a true story, with Karen Manbulloo telling of a past experience, when her brother found a pig in bushland and adopted it.

Moli det bigibigi was Karen's debut piece of writing, and its popularity resulted in her being named as a Child Ambassador for the 2019 Australian Reading Hour. The Indigenous Literacy Foundation also selected the story to be published and sold via mainstream distribution outlets. Purchase your own version of the storybook [here](#).

DIFFERENTIATION

Support

Discuss each step in advance and provide guided support throughout the entire lesson. Consider breaking the story down in a simplified way; focusing on knowledge, comprehension, and application.

Additionally, the core activity could be conducted as a class project, or perhaps in selected groups with designated support.

Extension

Encourage the use of different software programs and technologies for the core activity.

Research different storytelling skills, and apply these to their stories.

For classes with students who speak Kriol, or where Kriol words and phrases are included in the classroom vernacular, provide an opportunity to examine how the language is used within a story context, as opposed to everyday speech. Encourage Kriol speakers to share their own family stories, with non-speakers listening carefully to identify words from *Moli det bigibigi* in their stories. Ensure the conversations are inclusive and that students feel comfortable sharing. Students who speak Kriol could then use technologies such as Adobe Spark or PuppetPals to record their own stories verbally before transcribing them. Where possible, and with the student and parent permission, these stories may be shared online via the school's website, or perhaps even the local council, art gallery or culture centre.

INTRODUCTION

Inform students that they will be reading a storybook, or watching a video of a storybook, titled *Moli det bigibigi*, which translates to Molly the pig in Standard Australian English. Explain to students that the book's author is Karen Manbulloo, from the Binjari Community in the Northern Territory. It is written in Kriol, which is the most widely spoken First Nations language in Australia, with about 20,000 First Nations people throughout Northern Australia speaking Kriol.

Using an [Indigenous Map of Australia](#), identify where the Binjari Community is located, and the areas where Kriol is widely spoken in the Top End; the northern part of Queensland, Northern Territory and Western Australia. Use this opportunity to locate the Country/Place on which your students live, learn and play, discussing the richness and diversity of First Nations Australia.

If short on time, consider showing the first 3.12 minutes of this [video](#), developed by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

CORE ACTIVITY

Students create a storyboard depicting their own story of *Moli det bigibigi*

1. As a class, read the story of *Moli det bigibigi* in English, or watch the video (2 minutes) of *Moli det bigibigi* being read by Karen Manbulloo in Kriol. Inform students that while they may not understand Kriol at first, there will be some language cues if they read or listen carefully. They may recognise some words that sound similar to English, but with some differences. Encourage students to look closely at the images in the story too, as these will help them understand Moli's journey.

2. Read or watch *Moli det bigibigi* as often as needed, pausing and repeating parts of the story to support students' learning and understanding of the plot and Kriol language. Throughout the story, encourage students to point out any Kriol words they think are similar to English. Write these words on the whiteboard (using the book or video to check spelling), then as a class, work through the list and write the English translation. Talk about the differences and similarities between Kriol and English.

3. Move the discussion towards the concept of First Nations storytelling. Talk to students about what First Nations storytelling usually involves. This may include:

- Telling stories of past experiences.
- Using images of people, animals, landscape, the sea and the sky to tell a story.
- Morals and values are important in the story.
- Animals are often used.
- Stories relate to a specific place or region, language or culture.

4. Help students to identify some of the elements of First Nations storytelling evident in *Moli det bigibigi*. Write these elements in different bubbles on the whiteboard, then as a class, brainstorm how the author used them to tell her story. For example, 'telling stories of past experiences', Karen told a true story about the time her brother rescued a pig and adopted it.

This also provides the opportunity for students to discuss what they believe the moral or meaning of the story is.

5. Inform students that they are going to create their own short story about *Moli det bigibigi*.

- Students create a storyboard to tell their own version of *Moli det bigibigi*. Encourage students to draw on prior experiences, their imagination, and their knowledge of First Nations storytelling.
- Students may introduce their own characters, animals, places, etc. However, remind them that *Moli det bigibigi* should remain as the main focus of the story. Encourage the inclusion of some simple words in Kriol, such as the word for pig (bigibigi) or brother (braja). Refer to the Kriol information pack.
- **Storyboards** can be handwritten and drawn, or completed using programs such as PowerPoint, Google Jamboard, Canva, etc. Storyboards should contain both images and a written storyline. For students who wish to take their story to the next level, encourage them to voice record their dialogue.

6. Once complete, share the stories of *Moli det bigibigi* with the class. Guide the discussion, prompting students to go into detail about the plot of their story, the meaning behind it, and the images, characters, and animals they used.

7. Watch the video animation (2 minutes) of *Moli det bigibigi* with Karen Manbulloo reading the story only in Kriol. Inform students there will be no English translation, so they will need to listen and watch very carefully. Once the video finishes playing, lead a class discussion with the following suggested questions:

- Without the English translation, how were you able to tell what the story was about?
- Talk about how the images in the story helped you visualise Moli's journey.
- What are some of the words you heard that sounded familiar?
- How do you think Karen (the author), showed a special connection to her Country/Place through her storytelling?

EXTENSION FOR LOWER PRIMARY

Students create an alternate ending to *Moli det bigibigi*

1. Introduce students to the concept of a 'Yarning circle', which is a term used in many First Nations communities. Use a yarning circle mat or any outdoor yarning circle to increase students' knowledge of First Nations ways of learning. Using an object for individual students to hold (e.g. a toy pig), go around the circle one at a time and verbalise a timeline for the story *Moli det bigibigi*. Remind students that the person holding the object should be the only person speaking. When you come to the end of the story, encourage students to think about how *Moli det bigibigi* might continue her journey after she chases the dogs away. Prompt students with questions such as:

- Where does she go next?
- What does she see?
- What does she do?
- Are new characters/animals introduced?
- Does she eat anything other than cereal?

2. Create an alternative ending to *Moli det bigibigi*, extending from where the story finished. Write or draw a different ending to the story, encouraging input from all students. Once complete, group students and allow time for them to plan, practice and act out their ending. Guide students through this process, supervising groups as they designate roles and dialogue to ensure it is a fair and positive experience.

EXTENSION FOR UPPER PRIMARY

Students become 'Language Investigators'

Visit your school or local library, and search online to find other books written in Kriol or other First Nations dialects.

Examples include:

Tudei en longtaim (bilingual English and Kriol) by Stella Raymond

The Naked Boy and the Crocodile (English with some words in Kriol) by Andy Griffiths

Karrkin (My Body) Written by Maureen Yanawana, illustrated by children from La Grange Remote Community School

Japarrika book series (Japarrika, Japarrika Rises, Ngiya Yintanga Japarrika) Written by senior students

of Tiwi College in collaboration with David Lawrence & Shelley Ware

Activities:

1. Students select a book written in Kriol or another First Nations language.
 - Using the [language investigators template](#), ask students to identify 5 words in their chosen story that are similar to English. Students then identify the subtle differences between their selected words and the English translations. For example, the first three letters are the same.
 - Students then identify 5 words that they don't recognise, and that are noticeably different to English. Invite students to search online to translate their selected words and write the English translation next to it, along with the source.
2. Encourage students to research the history of the emergence of Kriol. As a class or in groups, create a timeline to show how the Kriol language emerged and evolved in Australia. As events are added to the timeline, discuss students' thoughts on the experiences, status and rights of First Nations peoples.
3. For fast finishers, students may work on the *Moli det bigibigi* [bilingual word search](#).

PLENARY

1. After students have had the opportunity to learn about the Kriol language, and the story of *Moli det bigibigi*, invite them to sit in a sharing circle to discuss their new knowledge and understanding of First Nations storytelling and language. Talk about their creative stories, as well as the original story written by Karen Manbulloo.
2. Give each student the opportunity to share their thoughts on the story, and one thing they have learnt about First Nations storytelling and languages. This may be related to how the story was illustrated, or perhaps a new word they have learnt.
3. Display students' storyboards around the classroom, and encourage parents, teachers and other students to engage with your class about the story of *Moli det bigibigi* and what they have learnt about the Kriol language. With students' permission, schools may also wish to share the storyboards within the community.

SUPPLEMENTARY ACTIVITIES

Stories from First Nations authors

Find examples [here](#) at the Indigenous Literacy Foundation website.

Exploring Kriol

- Identify and discuss examples of First Nations storytelling.
- Discuss the ways First Nations Peoples' connection to Country is revealed in the story.
- Make a list of all the animals, landmarks or special places you come across, with a translation of their names in the language the book is written in.
- Discuss words that sound similar and/or different to English.

A personal pet story

Brainstorm the ways we care for our pets then write a story featuring a pet as the central character, and the student as responsible for its wellbeing.

Place Names and connections

Students select 2-3 towns, cities or places in Australia. Research the Traditional Place names and ask them to present back on any interesting facts they discovered.

EXTENDING INTO THE COMMUNITY

1. As a way of extending learning opportunities, it would be beneficial for schools to build their relationship with local Community Elders and invite them to school for a morning tea to learn more about the Land on which they go to school (if they haven't done so already).

Be sure guests feel welcome and that the school is culturally safe. Ways to promote culturally safe learning environments are:

- Include local Aboriginal art around the school.
- Consider creating a personalised Acknowledgement

of Country that is displayed in the school foyer or at the school entry. The Acknowledgment could incorporate the school motto and values and be co-created with First Nations students and communities.

- Acknowledge Country at school events.
- Be aware of and be respectful of local protocols.
- Connect with your local First Nations organisations, Elders and leaders.
- Understand that community engagement can take time to establish.
- Ensure your Aboriginal community feel valued and that their experience and knowledge is valued. It may be appropriate to invite them for morning tea when asking them to share knowledge and experience. Always engage with local protocols.
- Support and attend community events where possible.
- Be mindful of the history and that attending the school may be hard for families and communities.
- Engage in professional learning to increase teacher knowledge.

2. If possible, teachers could consider organising incursions or excursions to build upon their students' knowledge and understanding of First Nations communities, places, events and practices in their local area. Ensure community Elders or leaders are contacted and are included in the decision making.

3. As a class project, teachers and students could work closely with their local council, art gallery, or cultural centre to organise a storytelling night at the school involving members of the First Nations community. Holding an event of this nature also presents the opportunity for fundraising to support organisations like the Indigenous Literacy Foundation.

4. Consider building relationships by inviting First Nations parents and family members in to the school to share a story or read the book to students.

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