



Play  
School

# Story Time

PlayWorld

## Ideas for Educators

In this episode of Play School Story Time, Miah Madden shares 'Sharing' by Aunty Fay Muir, Sue Lawson & Leanne Mulgo.



### Pedagogical characteristics

Selecting a story for the *Conceptual PlayWorld*

#### Story: Sharing

Written by Aunty Fay Muir & Sue Lawson and illustrated by Leanne Mulgo Watson

Publisher: Magabala Books, 2021

### Pedagogical practices

- Select a story that is enjoyable for children and adults.
- Build drama for the characters in the story.
- Build empathy for the characters in the story.
- Choose a plot that lends itself to introducing a problem situation.
- Be clear about the concept(s) and its relation to the story and play plot to be developed.
- Choose adventures or journeys that spring from the plot.

### Conceptual PlayWorld in action

- **Story summary:** This powerful story shows many different dimensions of sharing through art, environment, ceremony and stories. The story is used to explore Aboriginal culture in the context of caring for Country and brings forward the concept of cultural burning (ecology).
- Develop empathy with Country.
- **Problem situation:** The Australian animals need the children's help.
- **Possible plot extension:** Introduce other Australian animals and go on an adventure on Country, by making and identifying animal tracks. What animal tracks can you follow?
- **Concept:** Cultural burning as an Indigenous practice to protect the environment.
- Children can learn about the practices of First Nations land owners, cultural burning, fire as a tool to protect the land, and caring for Country to protect the habitats of Australian animals.

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### Pedagogical characteristics

Designing a *Conceptual PlayWorld* space

### Pedagogical practices

- Find a space in the classroom or outdoor area suitable for an imaginary *Conceptual PlayWorld* of the story.
- Design opportunities for child-initiated play in ways that develop the play plot further or explore concepts and make them more meaningful.
- Plan ways for children to represent their ideas and express their understandings.

### Conceptual PlayWorld in action

- Turn an area of the garden into a 'Fire Management Headquarters'. What would the cultural burning crew team be doing in the headquarters?
- Create and play in an imaginary natural Australian habitat using the illustrations from the story as inspiration. What native animals are there in your local area? Use open ended natural resource props to represent Country (and animals) in your local area.
- Pretend to meet experts from the book. Boonwurrung scientist and Elder Fay could visit the children and invite them to prepare an ecological map of their environment. Explore the Aboriginal Country and map illustrations in the book. Discuss the interdependence between people, plants and animals in the environment.
- Invite children to design a 'Caring for Country' e-newsletter or poster to share with the community.

Entering and exiting the *Conceptual PlayWorld* space

- Plan a routine for the whole group to enter and exit the *Conceptual PlayWorld* of the story where all the children are in the same imaginary situation.
- Children choose characters as they enter into the imaginary situation.
- Educator is always a character in the story.

- To signify entering the imaginary situation you could say an [Acknowledgement of Country](#).
- Children and teachers choose to be new characters for example echidna, dingo, gang-gang cockatoo living on Country.
- Pretend to meet a scientist who observes and records the effects of the regrowth from the cultural burn.

Planning the play inquiry or problem scenario

- Problem scenario is not scripted, but a general idea of the problem is planned.
- Problem scenario is dramatic and engaging.
- The problem invites children to investigate solutions to help the play in the *Conceptual PlayWorld*.

- Receive a news bulletin on the radio from the Australian animals such as "Children ... it's the beginning of dry season ... we're scared of the fire. What do you know about this fire? Please come and help us."
- Children can learn about cultural burning, for example, the difference between a hot burn and cool burn, and cultural burning as a process to protect the environment. Developing knowledge about trees, animals and bushfood as part of fire



### Pedagogical characteristics

Planning the play inquiry or problem scenario  
(continued)

Planning educator interactions to build conceptual learning in role

### Pedagogical practices

- Be clear about the concepts that will be learned from solving the problem situation, through children's play.

- Educators are not always the same character. Roles are not scripted.
- Plan who will have more knowledge and who will be present with the children to model solving the problem. Educators can take on different roles for the *Conceptual PlayWorld*. Plan your role to be either **equally present** with the children, or to **model practices** in a role, or to be **needing help** from the children. Your role can also be **together with** the child leading, where educators support children to act out the role or solution together.

### Conceptual PlayWorld in action

management. For instance, different ecosystems burn differently. This is important knowledge for healthy Country.

- Pretend to meet an Indigenous fire practitioner or a cultural burn crew member. Will the vegetation return? Will the animals return? How is the land reseeded? You could collaborate with the local rural fire service to learn about fuel loads or hazard reduction burning. How does it help the ecosystem?
- Suggested resource: <https://australian.museum/learn/teachers/classroom-activities/cultural-burning/>

- Plan for your role in the *PlayWorld* by choosing one of the following:

1. **Be equally present with older children** - e.g. "Let's learn the difference between a cool and hot burn together".
2. **Model practices in a role** - e.g. "I'm pretending to do a cool burn so I'm going to stand by and monitor".
3. **Seek help from the children** - e.g. "Can you tell me how cultural burning can help Country?".
4. **Act out the role together with the child leading** - e.g. "Let's pretend to be kangaroos living on Country together".

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