

Educator Notes – Tiwi

Episodes

Ampiji - Rainbow and Rainbow Serpent

Tingata - Beach

Pakitiringa - Rain

Overview

Rudi and the kids go on a journey with Malcolm to the Tiwi Islands. The two main islands are quite close to the mainland, just a couple of hours by boat north of Darwin in the Northern Territory – these episodes take us to the beautiful Top End of Australia!

Malcolm shares some words with us in Tiwi language. You can learn them too! Consider how Malcolm's episodes of *Little Yarns* can extend children's knowledge of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander language and culture. How can provocations from Tiwi language learning enrich your program for children and families?

Extension ideas

Where are the Tiwi Islands? Check out the [Gambay First Languages Map](#) to find out more.

In [Play School's Acknowledgement of Country](#) special episode, first aired in 2019, presenter Miranda Tapsell talks about being from the Tiwi Islands and her strong connection to Country. Check out the episode and access [Educator Notes](#) for more follow-up suggestions.

Enrich your conversations and strengthen follow-up learning experiences inspired by Malcolm's episodes. The [Tiwi Land Council](#) is a valuable resource for educators looking to extend their knowledge of Tiwi Country and culture. Build your awareness of the unique [climate and seasons](#) and the wonderfully diverse [plant](#) and [animal](#) life of the Tiwi Islands.

Family, tradition and belonging

Malcolm tells the kids that his family *"has been here forever"*. Ask your group what they think Mal means by this comment, then encourage children to reflect on the long history and connection the Tiwi people have to their Islands and their ancestors – this history goes back many thousands of years. We encourage educators to reflect on this [Timeline: Dreamtime to 1978](#).

After listening to Malcolm's Little Yarns, talk with your group about how living on a small island would be different from living on the much larger mainland – challenge children to think about how language and customs/traditions may develop differently and reflect on the importance of passing knowledge from one generation to the next.

Malcolm tells us about his family totem, **ampiji** (rainbow serpent). He explains that a family totem 'shows you your place in the community, how you are connected and how you can look



after each other.'

Ask children to share their thoughts and experiences about family and belonging:

- Think of something a family member (parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or older family friend) has taught you, or, recall a special family story they have shared with you.
- How do you like to spend time with your family?
- Think of a time when someone in your family helped you to solve a problem.

To document with symbolic reference to this episode of Little Yarns, children can use water colours to paint a mural of an **ampiji** on large sheets of butcher's paper. Within each coloured curve, use a marker to document children's responses to the provocations listed above. Display in your room for families to view and for children to revisit and discuss.

Link these experience to EYLF outcomes including; 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 4.3 and 5.1.

Being with nature

We hear about Malcolm's experiences in nature when he was young - swimming, playing at the **tingata** (beach) and telling stories around a **yikwani** (fire) while camping. Malcolm shares his understandings about the unique weather patterns of the Tiwi Islands and we learn the word **pakitringa** (rain). Going on adventures and having plenty of fun in nature, together with family and friends, helped Mal to develop a deep respect and understanding of Country.

Depending on your early learning context, there are varied ways to engage with children in nature. How significant is the role of nature play in your early learning context? Are there new ways you can facilitate being out in natural environments regularly? How do you communicate the value of being in nature and what do you feel are benefits to children and colleagues? There are many interesting references in this space for EC educators. Here are just a few:

- [Nature Play QLD](#)
- [Kids in Nature Network](#)
- [Community Early Learning Australia \(CELA\)](#)



Country: Tiwi Islands

Language: Tiwi

Focus Word	Meaning
Ampiji	Rainbow / rainbow serpent
Tingata	Beach
Yikwani	Fire
Pakitiringa	Rain

Additional	Meaning
Awana	Hello
Jamutakari	Wet season
Kumunupunari	Dry season
Tiyari	Hot and humid season
Pumwanyingari	Thunder season

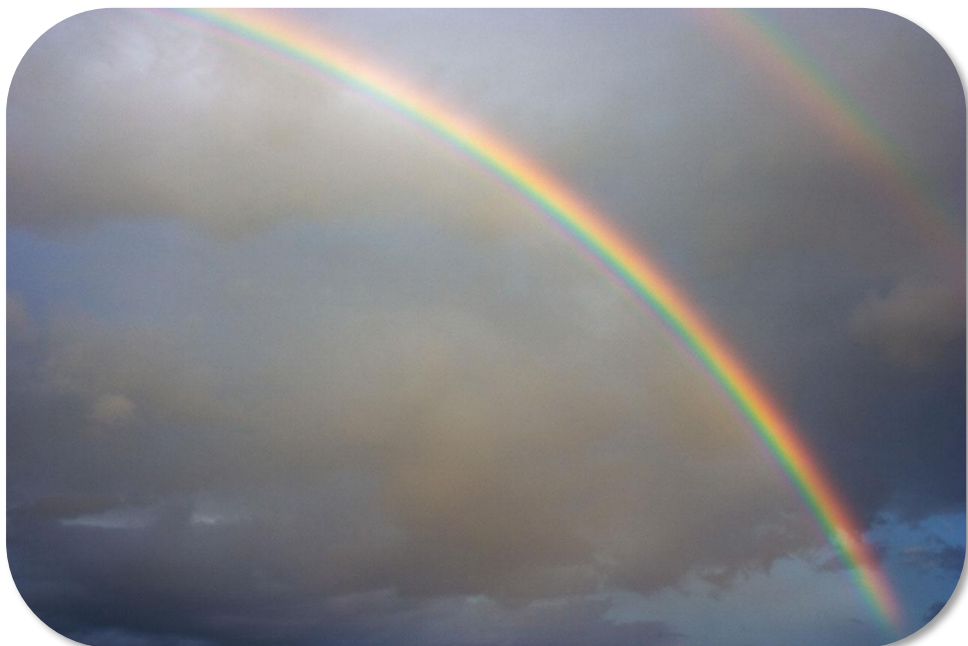


Image: Ampiji (rainbow)
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