



WONDER CARDS

Provocations to ignite curiosity and investigation in early education.



THE WONDER GANG



Wes



Willow



Quest



Quinton



Qidget



Whyla

BACKGROUND

The *Wonder Gang* introduces pre-schoolers to the powerful art of finding facts through inquiry, observation and experimentation. With the help of their quokka pals, the *Wonder Gang* kids (Willow, Whyla & Wes) model curiosity, cooperation, investigation and an infectious enthusiasm for

learning! They are confident and involved learners as they problem-solve together to find answers to interesting questions... while discovering fascinating facts about Australian animals and nature along the way!

EARLY EDUCATION CURRICULUM LINKS

Young children love to ask questions! It's one of the ways in which they make sense of the world and their place in it. The *Wonder Cards* can be used by early childhood educators as provocations for young children's learning through inquiry, discovery and creativity. It aligns with:

- [The Early Years Learning Framework \(EYLF\)](#)
 - **Learning Outcome 2:** Children are connected with and contribute to their world
 - **Learning Outcome 4:** Children are confident and involved learners
 - **Learning Outcome 5:** Children are effective communicators
- [The National Quality Standard \(NQS\)](#)
 - **Quality Area 1:** Educational program and practice
 - **Quality Area 3:** Physical environment

Thirty-five *Wonder Cards* provide ideas for ways teachers can implement inquiry processes to help children develop important dispositions for learning such as wonder, curiosity and imagination (EYLF Learning Outcome 4.1). Follow-up learning



experiences provide opportunities for children to revisit ideas and develop a range of skills and processes such as problem solving, experimentation, hypothesising, researching and investigating (EYLF, Learning Outcome 4.2).

We encourage early childhood educators to print and laminate the set of ABC Kids 'Wonder Cards' to use together with young children, both in early childhood settings and the home environment.

‘Wonder some more’

The *Wonder Cards* focus on flora, fauna and the natural environment by exploring the interdependence of living things. Each card includes six *‘Wonder some more’* questions as a powerful tool to help educators expand children’s thinking and extend their understandings about environmental concepts such as sustainability, conservation and connectedness to nature.

One question can certainly lead to many more and a question can also have more than one correct answer! The *Wonder Cards* encourage early childhood educators to dig a little deeper to promote discovery through co-construction of knowledge together with young children.

Using these questions as part of a curriculum decision-making process provides inspiration for planning ***“experiences for children that actively promote or initiate the investigation of ideas, complex concepts and thinking, reasoning, and hypothesising”*** (NQS Element 1.1.1).



The questions explored may also vary, depending of course on children’s changing ideas, interests and responses. All *Wonder Cards* concentrate on exploration and learning about nature and science... the wonders of our wonderful world!

‘Time to explore’ follow-up learning experiences

Early childhood educators have a responsibility to provide ***“responsive teaching and scaffolding”*** (NQS Element 1.2.2). The follow-up *‘Time to explore’* learning experience ideas are cross-curriculum and encourage educators to be intentional in their teaching by ***“using strategies (such as modelling and demonstrating, open-ended questioning, speculating, explaining and engaging in sustained shared conversations) to extend children’s thinking and learning”*** (NQS Element 1.2.1).

Teaching and learning emerging from the *‘Time to explore’* suggestions promote hands-on learning through play in the areas of STEM, visual arts, language, literacy and imaginative play. We’ve included a wide range of open-ended experiences to provide opportunities for children to learn through play as they discover, create, improvise and imagine (EYLF).

The **NQS Element 3.2.1** requires educators to organise spaces that provide opportunities for children to engage in a variety of rich, meaningful, inquiry-based experiences. Using materials that encourage children to become flexible thinkers and investigators as they engage in play-based learning is also essential. Implementation of the *Wonder Card* inquiry projects will enable teachers to organise inspiring learning



experiences in both the indoor and outdoor physical environments. A mixture of commercial, natural, recycled and homemade materials is suggested to support learning (**NQS Element 3.2.2**).

Many of the *‘Time to explore’* ideas will also support services in helping children develop an understanding and respect for the natural environment, including sustainable practices (**NQS Element 3.2.3**).



'Read and wonder' picture book suggestions

We've carefully selected a range of quality picture books suitable to support young children's learning, centred around the topic of investigation for each *Wonder Card*. Picture books can further enhance children's understandings about the world and introduce new vocabulary and concepts

Using children's literature as part of extended inquiry-based learning projects can encourage children to pose their own questions and investigate the answers, thereby exercising their sense of agency and harnessing a spirit of investigation.¹



1. Early Childhood Australia (ECA). (2012). *National Quality Standard Professional Learning Program, Inquiry-based Learning*. E-newsletter No.45



Watch and explore each 10min episode of **The Wonder Gang** anytime via

[ABC iView](#) or the [ABC Kids app](#).



Share the ways you have engaged with *The Wonder Gang: Wonder Cards* at your early childhood setting! We would love to share your photos and learning stories in the [ABC Kids Early Education Reflective Journal](#).

Email us at earlyeducation@abc.net.au.



WONDER CARD 1

The Kangaroo Question

Why does a kangaroo have a pouch?

In this episode, we discover that a kangaroo's pouch provides a warm, safe place for joeys to grow.

Wonder some more ...

1. What is a group of kangaroos called?
2. What is a marsupial?
3. Which other Australian marsupials carry their babies in a pouch?
4. What size are newborn joeys?
5. What do kangaroos eat?
6. Can kangaroos swim?



WONDER CARD 3

The Emu Question

Why can't emus fly?

In this episode, we discover facts about Australia's biggest, flightless bird – the emu. We learn that emus have heavy bones and small wing muscles, so they can't flap hard enough to get off the ground.

Wonder some more ...

1. What do emus eat?
2. Where do emus live?
3. How heavy is a fully grown emu?
4. How tall do emus grow?
5. Why are emus good at running?
6. What other birds can't fly?



WONDER CARD 2

The Crocodile Question

Why do crocodiles sunbake?

In this episode, we discover that crocodiles sit in the sun to warm their bodies because they are reptiles... and reptiles are cold-blooded.

Wonder some more ...

1. Do all reptiles have backbones?
2. Why do crocodiles have sharp teeth and powerful jaws?
3. Why do crocodiles hunt at night?
4. What type of skin covering does a crocodile have?
5. Where do baby crocodiles hatch from?
6. What other animals are in the reptile family?



WONDER CARD 4

The Salty Sea Question

Why is the sea salty?

In this episode we discover that salt in the sea comes from different places - rain, rivers and secret undersea vents. This has been happening for millions of years, building up lots of salt in sea water!

Wonder some more ...

1. Can we drink salty seawater?
2. How many oceans are in the world?
3. Where does rain go when it falls?
4. Where does a river meet the sea?
5. Do fish live in estuaries?
6. What kinds of animals live in the ocean?



WONDER CARD 3: The Emu Question

Time to explore...

- **DRAW:** Encourage children to observe and discuss features of an emu using images from picture books and photos. Invite children to create a shared drawing or painting of an emu – children work together, adding different features to complete the artwork.
- **INVESTIGATE:** Check out x-ray images of flightless birds online. Compare x-rays to those of expert flyers like an eagle or a seagull, then show bones in the human body. Talk about the similarities and differences children observe.



Willow

Read and wonder...

- *'Emu'* (2015) by Clare Saxby and Graham Byrne
- *'Eagle, Crow and Emu'* (2016) by Gladys Milroy & Jill Milroy
- *'Karana: The story of the father emu'* (2014) by Uncle Joe Kirk & Sandi Harrold
- *'Whose Bones?'* (2020) by Chihiro Takeuchi

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.3, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.5.



WONDER CARD 1: The Kangaroo Question

Time to explore...

- **INVESTIGATE:** Investigate how long other marsupials (e.g. wallabies, sugar gliders, koalas, wombats and Tasmanian devils) stay in their mother's pouch to grow. Together, create a picture graph to visually represent and compare the lengths of time different animals remain in the pouch – from shortest to longest amounts of time.
- **MAKE:** Look at photos/videos of Australian marsupials and explore their features - they have a backbone, are warm-blooded and have fur or hair. Encourage children to create a cardboard box diorama by constructing 3D animal models using a range of recycled and natural materials. Support children in developing early engineering skills by scaffolding conversations around symmetry and balance as they build.



Whyla

Read and wonder...

- *'Does a Kangaroo Have a Mother too?'* (2005) by Eric Carle
- *'Malu Kangaroo'* (2018) by Judith Morecroft & Bronwyn Bancroft
- *'The Box Boy'* (2011) by Mal Webster

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4 and 5.3.



WONDER CARD 4: The Salty Sea Question

Time to explore...

- **ENGINEER:** Model and support children to create mini river systems in the sandpit using water, buckets, spades, rocks, sticks and recycled pipes. Investigate the workings of natural water flow and collection through trial and error with these open-ended materials.
- **MAKE:** Cook playdough together by following a simple recipe and encourage children to use their senses as they explore the 'salt' ingredient. Provide opportunities for children to mould playdough replicas of river systems in your local area, together with other natural materials and aquatic animal figurines.



Wes

Read and wonder...

- *'Commotion in the Ocean'* (1999) by Giles Andreae & David Wojtowycz
- *'What Colour is the Sea?'* (2020) by Katie Stewart
- *'Water World'* (2021) by Ben Rothery

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 4.2 and 4.4.



WONDER CARD 2: The Crocodile Question

Time to explore...

- **CREATE:** Look at photographs of crocodiles in books/magazines and encourage children to identify the repeated pattern of a crocodile's scaly skin and thick bony back plates. Provide open-ended collage experiences using paper and other materials with repeated patterns (spots, zigzags, spirals, tessellations) to support children's early mathematical understandings.
- **CONSTRUCT:** Use picture books to help explain the life cycle of a crocodile to young children. Together, create a mini 'crocodile habitat' sensory play area using - natural materials, adult & baby sized crocodile figurines and wooden eggs. Encourage children to represent the sequence of a crocodile's life cycle through this small world imaginative play.



Quinton

Read and wonder...

- *'Really Remarkable Reptiles'* (2018) by Jake Williams
- *'No Way Yirrikipayi!'* (2020) by Alison Lester
- *'Shoo You Crocodile'* (2020) by Katrina Germein and Tom Jellet

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 4.3, 5.3 and 5.4.





WONDER CARD 5

The Koala Question

Why are koalas sleepy?

In this episode we discover that koalas are sleepy because the eucalyptus leaves they eat don't give them much energy.

Wonder some more ...

1. How much time do koalas spend sleeping?
2. What other animals are nocturnal?
3. Are koalas a type of bear or marsupial?
4. Where do koalas live?
5. What helps koalas grip tree branches so well?
6. What is a baby koala called?



WONDER CARD 7

The Great Barrier Reef Question

Can you see the Great Barrier Reef from space?

In this episode we discover that the Great Barrier Reef is made up of lots of small coral reefs that grow next to each other. Together, these coral reefs are so enormous that they can be seen all the way from space!

Wonder some more ...

1. Where is the Great Barrier Reef?
2. Why is the water a turquoise colour?
3. How are coral reefs made?
4. What types of sea creatures live there?
5. Is the reef home to any poisonous animals?
6. What can we do to help the reef stay beautiful and healthy?



WONDER CARD 6

The Shark Question

Do sharks lose their teeth?

In this episode we discover that most species of shark have lots of teeth that can fall out easily when biting food. Luckily they have plenty of extra teeth to replace any they lose!

Wonder some more ...

1. How many rows of teeth can sharks have?
2. What do sharks eat?
3. Are all sharks carnivores?
4. What is the biggest shark in the world?
5. Do sharks have a good sense of smell?
6. Do sharks build homes in the water?



WONDER CARD 8

The Bat Question

How do bats fly in the dark?

In this episode we discover that bats are nocturnal and fly out at night to look for food. We learn that Microbats have big ears to listen for sounds as they fly, while Megabats (Fruit Bats) have big eyes that can see amazingly well in the dark!

Wonder some more ...

1. How do Microbats hear noises so they don't bump into things in the dark?
2. What do Megabats and Microbats eat?
3. What is a group of bats called?
4. Why do bats sleep upside down?
5. What are bat wings made of?
6. What other animals can see in the dark?



WONDER CARD 7: The Great Barrier Reef Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE & PRETEND:** Look at maps and satellite images of the Great Barrier Reef together online. Make astronaut helmets using cardboard boxes and other recycled craft materials. Encourage children to pretend to be an astronaut in space and take 'birds-eye' view photos of A3 printed reef images using a digital camera or tablet.
- **TALK & SCUPLT:** Model inquiry processes by touching, observing and comparing features of sea animal figurines. Use detailed language to talk about the differences. Invite children to create with clay and sculpt creatures living in the Great Barrier Reef (e.g. seahorses, turtles or fish) to further develop their understandings.



Willow

Read and wonder...

- *'Somewhere in the Reef'* (2018) by Marcello Pennacchio & Danny Snell
- *'One Remarkable Reef'* (2020) by Kellie Byrnes & Rachel Tribout
- *'Good Night Great Barrier Reef'* (2020) by Adam Gamble & Mark Jasper



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 5.3 and 5.5.

WONDER CARD 5: The Koala Question

Time to explore...

- **CONNECT WITH NATURE:** Look at eucalyptus trees outdoors and encourage children to feel and smell the leaves. Promote children's learning about the natural environment by talking about the relationships between living things... how koalas depend on eucalyptus trees to survive. Collect fallen leaves, sticks and gumnuts to create a nature collage.
- **INVESTIGATE:** Check out different kinds of animal feet/forepaws and their footprints in picture books. Use questions to promote inquiry - How many toes are there? Does the foot have nails, hooves or claws? What does the bottom surface of the foot look like? Compare sizes and shapes of animal, human and even dinosaur foot/handprints using printmaking techniques with sponges and paint!



Whyla

Read and wonder...

- *'Koala'* (2019) by Claire Saxby & Julie Vivas
- *'Little Koala Lost'* (2016) by Blaze Kwaymullina & Jess Racklyeft
- *'Tippy and Jellybean'* (2020) by Sophie Cunningham & Anil Tortop & Balarinji



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 4.4, 5.3 and 5.4.

WONDER CARD 8: The Bat Question

Time to explore...

- **EXPERIMENT:** Conduct science experiments together to explore how bats fly. Provide open-ended materials (straws, tape, scissors, ribbon) and small cardboard bat cut-outs. Encourage children to find a way to make the bat 'fly' using these materials. Scaffold problem-solving and support children as they learn through trial and error.
- **PAINT:** Invite children to create an open-ended mixed media collage of the night sky using UV glow paint, textured paper, recycled loose parts and bat/star shapes. Support children's development of important dispositions for learning including creativity and imagination.



Wes

Read and wonder...

- *'Bat Loves the Night'* (2015) by Sarah Fox-Davies & Nicola Davies
- *'Life Upside Down'* (2020) by Australian Geographic
- *'Bat vs Poss'* (2019) by Alexa Moses & Antil Tortop
- *'Bats at the Beach'* (2016) by Lies Brian



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.1, 4.2 and 5.3.

WONDER CARD 6: The Shark Question

Time to explore...

- **OBSERVE & EXPERIMENT:** Share photos/illustrations of animals with different sorts of teeth. A Tyrannosaurus Rex had sixty serrated teeth! Look at a model of human teeth and discuss why they are important and how to care for them. Conduct a science experiment using boiled eggs dipped in soft drink to investigate 'plaque' and how brushing removes it.
- **MAKE:** Use a large cardboard box with a 'mouth' hole cut in the middle to create a 3D shark collage picture together. Encourage children to count laminated pictures of smaller animals, as they 'feed' them to the 'box shark'. Engage children in conversations about different foods shark species eat as they play e.g. hammer-head sharks eat stingrays, tiger sharks eat sea turtles and white sharks eat seals & dolphins.



Qidget

Read and wonder...

- *'Shark Lady'* (2017) by Jess Keating & Marta Alvarez Miguens
- *'My Teeth'* (2019) by Danny Snell
- *'Australia's Amazing Sharks'* (2020) by Australian Geographic



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 3.2, 4.1, 4.2 and 5.1.



WONDER CARD 9

The Red Earth Question

Why does Australia look red from the moon?

In this episode we discover that Australia's surface looks red from the moon because of a process called 'oxidation', which rusts iron in rocks and colours the sand & soil red. Australia is such a big country full of so much dry land, so there's lots of red sand and soil to see!

Wonder some more ...

1. What other metals rust?
2. Where are some deserts found in Australia?
3. Why is Australia such a hot, dry country?
4. Does it rain in the desert?
5. What is a sand dune?
6. What is soil made of?



WONDER CARD 11

The Snow Question

Does it snow in Australia?

In this episode we discover that it only snows in places where it is very cold... like the Australian Alps and Tasmanian Highlands.

Wonder some more ...

1. How are snowflakes made?
2. Are snowflakes different shapes?
3. What is a blizzard?
4. Where is Australia's highest mountain?
5. What are winter snow sports?
6. Does it snow anywhere else in the world?



WONDER CARD 10

The Echidna Question

Are echidnas born with spikes?

In this episode we discover that baby echidnas are called Puggles. They start to grow spikes about six weeks after hatching from an egg.

Wonder some more ...

1. How many eggs does an echidna lay at a time?
2. Where does a Puggle live after it hatches?
3. Do Puggles have fur when they are born?
4. Do echidnas have teeth?
5. What do echidnas eat?
6. Where do echidnas live?



WONDER CARD 12

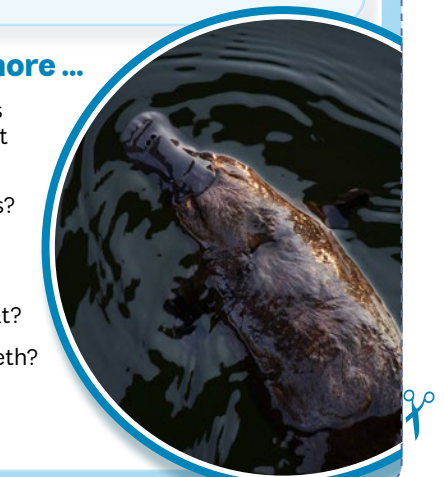
The Platypus Question

Why does a platypus have a duckbill?

In this episode we discover that a platypus' large duckbill moves from side to side in the water to detect electric signals from other creatures... which helps it find food. They're water ninjas!

Wonder some more ...

1. Why does a platypus close its eyes when it swims?
2. Do platypus lay eggs?
3. Where do platypus live?
4. What do platypus eat?
5. Do platypus have teeth?
6. What is a group of platypus called?



WONDER CARD 11: The Snow Question

Time to explore...

- **PAINT:** Model and invite children to create snowflake shapes by positioning craft tape onto canvas tiles or thick watercolour paper. Children can use different shades of blue watercolour paint media and brushes to cover the surface and tape snowflake, then peel off the tape to reveal their snowflakes!
- **MAKE & PLAY:** Follow a simple, visual recipe together and make 'fake snow' using cornflour, baking soda and water. Place the snow in a large tray together with star shaped cookie cutters, different sized containers, pine cones and other loose parts. Encourage children to build snowmen, mould mountains, make snowflake shapes, explore concepts of capacity and use verbal language to describe their sensory play.



Willow

Read and wonder...

- *'The Snow Wombat'* (2017) by Susannah Chambers & Mark Jackson
- *'Dear Earth'* (2020) by Isabel Otter & Clara Anganuzzi
- *'The Man From Snowy River'* (2020) by A.B Paterson & Freya Blackwood



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 4.4, 5.1 and 5.3.

WONDER CARD 9: The Red Earth Question

Time to explore...

- **EXPERIMENT:** Make a simple 'rain gauge' using a recycled plastic soft drink bottle or cylindrical container. Together, mark lines at regular intervals and write the measurements in centimetres. Support children's learning about measuring, number recognition, capacity and weather as they check the levels of rain received each day.
- **PAINT:** Invite children to mix sand with warm paint colours (red, orange, yellow and brown) and create a textured 3D effect painting. Help children experiment and express their ideas as they make meaning through this painting technique.



Whya

Read and wonder...

- *'Why I Love Australia'* (2016) by Bronwyn Bancroft
- *'Australia Illustrated'* (2018) by Tania McCartney
- *'On the Way to Nana's'* (2018) by Frances Haji-Ali, Lindsay Haji-Ali & David Hardy
- *'Mrs White and the Red Desert'* (2017) by Josie Wowolla Boyle & Maggie Prewett



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.2 and 5.3.

WONDER CARD 12: The Platypus Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE & PRETEND:** Create platypus dress up props (e.g. duckbill mask, furry tail, webbed feet) together using different textured fabrics and art/craft materials. Wearing masks, encourage children to pretend to swim in the 'river' like a platypus and find 'food' (plastic worms) using their senses of hearing and touch only. Develop young children's environmental awareness of the impact of human activity on the platypus' river habitat and explore other endangered species.
- **TALK & CREATE:** Talk about how platypus have a bill like a duck, a flat tail like a beaver and webbed feet like an otter! Create other strange looking 'mixed-up' animals by cutting and pasting magazine photos of different native Australian animal body parts together e.g. echidna nose on a possum.



Wes

Read and wonder...

- *'Little Platypus'* (2000) by Nette Hilton & Nina Rycroft
- *'Platypus'* (2017) by Sue Whiting & Mark Jackson
- *'Wilam: A Birrarung Story'* (2019) by Aunty Joy Murphy & Andrew Kelly



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.

WONDER CARD 10: The Echidna Question

Time to explore...

- **CREATE:** Further investigate the body coverings on echidnas by inviting children to use clay and other recycled resources (e.g. pop sticks and fur-like materials) to sculpt detailed echidna models. Encourage children to use natural materials and loose parts to construct a 'home' for these echidna creations, similar to their natural habitat – among rocks and hollow logs.
- **TALK:** Share traditional Aboriginal Dreamtime story books about how the echidna and other Australian native animals got their distinctive features. Create storytelling 'Wooden Spoon Animal Puppets' together using collage craft materials. Encourage children to retell stories to support emerging literacy skills and consideration of diverse cultural perspectives.



Quest

Read and wonder...

- *'Eric the Postie'* (2017) by Matt Shanks
- *'The Coloured Echidna'* (2020) by Eunice Day
- *'Scaly-Tailed Possum and Echidna'* (2010) by Cathy Goonack



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.2, 5.2 and 5.3.



WONDER CARD 13

The Blue Heeler Dog Question

Why do Blue Heeler dogs look blue?

In this episode we discover that Blue Heelers (or Australian Cattle Dogs) have black and white hairs covering their body. We learn how our eyes mix these two colours together to make the colour 'blue' when we look at the fur from a distance.

Wonder some more ...

1. Why does their fur coat have two layers?
2. What colour are Blue Heeler puppies when they're born?
3. Why does the Red Heeler dog look red?
4. What important job do these cattle dogs have?
5. Are there different types of dog breeds?
6. What other animals make good pets?



WONDER CARD 15

The Sand Question

What is sand made of?

In this episode we discover that sand can be made up of rocks, soil, minerals, gemstones, shells or coral. Water, wind and rain break these materials down into tiny sand grains. It takes a long time!

Wonder some more ...

1. Where is sand found across Australia?
2. What colour/s is sand?
3. Does beach sand feel different to desert sand?
4. What is the sand made of at your local beach or river?
5. What animals live in sand?
6. What things are made using sand?



WONDER CARD 14

The Rainforest Question

Why are there so many insects in rainforests?

In this episode we discover that insects are attracted to the many different types of plants in warm, tropical rainforests for their food and shelter... and to warm up their bodies.

Wonder some more ...

1. Where is the largest rainforest in Australia?
2. What types of plants grow in rainforests?
3. What insects live in rainforests?
4. How many legs do insects have?
5. How do insects use plants to survive?
6. What birds and animals live in the Daintree Rainforest?



WONDER CARD 16

The Big Lizard Question

What is the biggest lizard in Australia?

In this episode we discover that the biggest living lizard in Australia is a type of goanna called a Perentie. We learn that an even bigger, giant goanna called a Megalania lived thousands of years ago... but it's now extinct.

Wonder some more ...

1. How long can a Perentie lizard grow?
2. Where do goannas lay their eggs?
3. What other types of lizards live in Australia?
4. What do lizards eat?
5. Are lizards part of the reptile family?
6. What is the world's largest reptile?



WONDER CARD 15: The Sand Question

Time to explore...

- **EXAMINE & TALK:** Invite children to use their senses to explore a variety of natural objects that can make up sand - rocks, gemstones, shells and soil. Use magnifying glasses to closely study any repeated patterns e.g. spiral patterns on shells or striped patterns on rocks. Facilitate sustained shared conversations about their characteristics.
- **EXPERIMENT:** Hypothesise and investigate together which materials (sand, salt & uncooked rice) will be able to pass through the holes of a sifter. Ask children to separate the ingredients into three small bowls first and then observe/record which materials remain and which pass through the sifter.



Willow

Read and wonder...

- *'A Trip to the Beach'* (2019) by Gwyn Perkins
- *'Magic Beach'* (2004) by Alison Lester
- *'To the Beach!'* (2005) by Linda Ashman & Nadine Bernard Westcott

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 5.1 and 5.4.



WONDER CARD 13: The Blue Heeler Dog Question

Time to explore...

- **EXPERIMENT:** Provide resources (empty juice bottles, water, food colouring, measuring jugs and funnels) for children to experiment with colour-mixing. Model mathematical and scientific language while encouraging children to predict & experiment with making primary colours. Scaffold problem solving skills and develop understandings by visually recording their research findings.
- **INVESTIGATE:** Invite children to use a microscope to investigate and observe how different objects (e.g. coins, sugar, leaves or insects) look magnified compared to the naked eye. Using paper/pencil and clipboards, encourage children to draw what they see and develop essential literacy skills.



Whyla

Read and wonder...

- *'Blue the Builder's Dog'* (2017) by Jen Storer & Andrew Joyner
- *'Banjo and Ruby Red'* (2013) by Libby Gleeson & Freya Blackwood
- *'When Billy was a Dog'* (2019) by Kirsty Murray & Karen Blair

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 5.1, 5.2, 5.4 and 5.5.



WONDER CARD 16: The Big Lizard Question

Time to explore...

- **MEASURE:** Together, use non-standard measurement tools (e.g. blocks or pop sticks) to compare and measure lengths of different types of lizards on laminated photo cards. Next, ask children to position the lizard photos in order of size... from shortest to longest. Model measurement vocabulary and develop children's mathematical understandings.
- **BUILD:** Provide open-ended resources e.g. wooden blocks, lizard figurines, tree branches, grass, rocks, small boxes, masking tape. Encourage children to use these materials to construct lizard habitats by expressing their ideas and making meanings about these reptiles.



Wes

Read and wonder...

- *'Is your Grandmother a Goanna?'* (2009) by Pamela Allen
- *'The Great Lizard Trek'* (2018) by Felicity Bradshaw & Norma MacDonald
- *'Anna the Goanna and Other Poems'* (2008) by Jill McDougall & Jenny Taylor

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 5.1.



WONDER CARD 14: The Rainforest Question

Time to explore...

- **ENGINEER:** Use loose parts, small cardboard cartons and natural objects to help children design and construct a home for an insect e.g. termite nest or spider web. Encourage children to research details about their chosen insect first and then draw technical plans for their 'home' before building.
- **RESEARCH:** Intentionally introduce the concept of 'biodiversity' (the rich variety of living things) in the Daintree Rainforest, by exploring relationships between living things. Research facts about insects online and investigate their role in a rainforest ecosystem. For example, look at photos/videos of Australian native bees & discuss how they collect pollen from flowers to transfer seeds and make honey... yum!



Quinton

Read and wonder...

- *'Where the Forest Meets the Sea'* (1990) by Jeannie Baker
- *'Step Gently Out'* (2018) by Helen Frost & Rick Lieder
- *'We Build Our Homes: Small stories of incredible animal architects'* (2018) by Laura Knowles & Chris Madden

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.2, 4.4, 5.2 and 5.5.





WONDER CARD 17

The Ice Question

Why does ice melt?

In this episode we discover that ice is water frozen into a solid form. We learn that when the temperature gets warmer than zero degrees Celsius, it makes ice melt. The hotter the temperature, the faster the ice will melt!

Wonder some more ...

1. At what temperature can water freeze into ice?
2. What is a big river of ice called?
3. What is an Ice Age?
4. What are some different types of ice found in nature?
5. How are icicles formed?
6. How is snow made?



WONDER CARD 19

The Jellyfish Question

Are jellyfish really fish?

In this episode we discover that unlike fish, jellyfish breathe through their skin and bob through the water to get around. Jellyfish don't have skeletons, gills, fins or brains like fish... so they're definitely not fish!

Wonder some more ...

1. Do jellyfish have skeletons?
2. Does a jellyfish have a brain, heart or eyes?
3. What is a jellyfish mostly made up of?
4. What colour/s are jellyfish?
5. Can jellyfish tentacles sting?
6. What helps fish swim?



WONDER CARD 18

The Kookaburra Question

Why do kookaburras laugh?

In this episode we discover that kookaburras make a loud laughing call to protect their families and their nests. Families of kookaburras often make their laughing call together, especially at sunrise and sunset.

Wonder some more ...

1. Are kookaburras an Australian bird?
2. Do kookaburras have a bill or a beak?
3. What do kookaburras eat?
4. Where do kookaburras nest?
5. Do kookaburras lay eggs?
6. What are baby kookaburras called?



WONDER CARD 20

The Gold Question

Where does gold come from?

In this episode we discover that gold is made when two neutron stars smash into each other in space. Gold can travel through space in asteroids and was scattered around the world billions of years ago when many asteroids bumped into earth!

Wonder some more ...

1. What is gold?
2. What is gold used to make?
3. What is a neutron star?
4. What is an asteroid?
5. Where is gold found?
6. How is gold mined from the earth?



WONDER CARD 19: The Jellyfish Question

Time to explore...

- **RESEARCH & MAKE:** Look at x-ray images of fish and jellyfish online and compare the features of these vertebrate and invertebrate species. Provide the opportunity for children to observe and touch a real fish skeleton. Encourage children to create 3D fish skeleton artworks by arranging and pasting toothpicks (bones) onto black paper.



- **CREATE:** Provide open-ended craft materials (cellophane, tissue paper, ribbon) to enable children to express their understandings about invertebrates, by creating a jellyfish suncatcher. Encourage children to cut, paste and collage coloured cellophane and/or tissue paper onto black jellyfish shapes and add 'ribbon' tentacles.



Read and wonder...

Willow

- *'The Big Book of the Blue'* (2018) by Yuval Zommer
- *'Heads and Tails Underwater'* (2019) by John Canty
- *'Deep Dive into Deep Sea'* (2020) by Tim Flannery & Sam Caldwell

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.3, 5.1 and 5.3.



WONDER CARD 17: The Ice Question

Time to explore...

- **EXPERIMENT:** Conduct an 'ice make and melt' science experiment together with young children. Place water in ice cube trays and explore its solid frozen state by picking up the cubes with tongs. Next, swirl the ice around and watch as it melts back to liquid form. Using a stopwatch, measure and record how long it takes for the ice to melt.



- **INVESTIGATE:** Create frozen dinosaur eggs together using balloons, mini dinosaurs and water. Place the ice eggs in a shallow container and encourage children to squirt warm water through eye droppers to speed up the melting process. Engage in conversations about the differences between solids and liquids. Use a thermometer to measure the temperature of warm water used to melt the ice.



Read and wonder...

Whyla

- *'Flip Flap Frozen'* (2019) by Axel Scheffler
- *'The Snail and the Whale'* (2017) by Julia Donaldson & Axel Scheffler

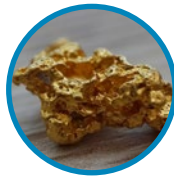
Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 4.2 and 5.1.



WONDER CARD 20: The Gold Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE & PLAY:** Cook batches of different coloured marbled playdough together. Create a 'playdough planet' sensory play area by adding picture books about space and loose parts (recycled metallic rounded metal off-cuts, nuts & bolts, plastic silver star shapes, astronaut figurines, grey/white rocks). Discuss how gold travelled through space while engaging in exploratory play with these open-ended materials.
- **PROBLEM SOLVE:** Make a 'map coding' game to help pirates find the treasure. Use A2 black cardboard (mark with large square grid), small laminated arrow icons, rocks, plastic trees, chest of gold coins, pirate and shark figurines. Help children work together to position the different arrows across the grid... and find a safe path for the pirate to follow to the 'gold treasure'.



Read and wonder...

Wes

- *'Gold!'* (2020) by Jackie Kerin & Annie White
- *'Henry's Map'* (2013) by David Elliot
- *'The Night Pirates'* (20025) by Peter Harris & Deborah Allwright & Balarinji

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.



WONDER CARD 18: The Kookaburra Question

Time to explore...

- **SEQUENCE:** Use printed images for children to cut/paste and order events throughout the day e.g. sunrise, wake up, breakfast, playtime, lunch, playtime, dinner, sunset, bed. Engage children in discussions about 'telling time from sunrise to sunset'. Help develop their symbol system recognition skills by including images of clocks showing times for different parts of the day.
- **LISTEN:** Use technology to research online about other animals that live in family groups to help each other survive e.g. elephants, dolphins and lions. Investigate and listen to audio recordings of different sounds other animals make to protect their families, by alerting them to any dangers e.g. dolphins make whistling and clicking sounds.



Read and wonder...

- *'Kookaburra'* (2020) by Claire Saxby & Tanya Harricks
- *'I See a Kookaburra!'* (2016) by Steve Jenkins & Robin Page
- *'Kookaburra, Kookaburra'* (2018) by Bridget Farmer

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 5.4 and 5.5.





WONDER CARD 21

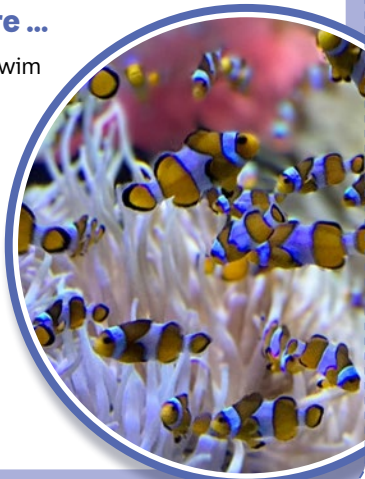
The Fish School Question

Why do fish swim in 'schools'?

In this episode we discover that when lots of fish swim close together in a group, it's called a 'school'. We learn that fish swim in schools so they can work as a team to find food and use less energy for swimming.

Wonder some more ...

1. Why do schools of fish swim in the same direction?
2. What different kinds of fish live in the Great Barrier Reef?
3. What are fish covered in?
4. How do fish breathe underwater?
5. How do fish sleep?
6. Do fish lay eggs?



WONDER CARD 23

The Insect Question

How do insects walk up walls?

In this episode we discover that many insects' footpads have special mini climbing tools like stiff hairs, tiny hooks, small claws and foot glue to help them grip and walk up walls.

Wonder some more ...

1. How many legs do insects have?
2. How do insects use their antennae?
3. How many parts does an insect body have?
4. What is an exoskeleton?
5. Are insects warm or cold-blooded?
6. What types of insects live in Australia?



WONDER CARD 22

The Snakeskin Question

Why do snakes shed their skin?

In this episode we discover that a snake's skin stays the same size, so snakes shed their skin when it gets too tight for their growing body.

Wonder some more ...

1. Why are snakes' bodies covered with scales?
2. Do snakes have legs?
3. Are snakes lizards or reptiles?
4. What sound do snakes make?
5. What do snakes eat?
6. Which Australian snakes are venomous?



WONDER CARD 24

The Penguin Question

Are penguins waterproof?

In this episode we discover that penguins are covered in three layers to keep warm. The top layer of short feathers is coated in oil that water can't get through... which means that penguins ARE waterproof!

Wonder some more ...

1. Can penguins fly?
2. How do penguins move on land?
3. Why are penguins such good swimmers?
4. Where do penguins live?
5. What do penguins eat?
6. How do penguins keep their eggs safe?



WONDER CARD 23: The Insect Question

Time to explore...

- **MOVE:** Provide dress-ups (scarves, masks, wings, antennae headbands) and encourage children to physically move like different insects while listening to classical music e.g. crawl like a caterpillar or flutter like a butterfly. Place photos of different insects in the sides of a large foam, refillable dice for children to take turns in rolling for the next movement.



- **EXAMINE:** Be an entomologist! Study features of insects close-up through a microscope. Extend learning by asking children to use verbal language to identify and describe insect body parts. Engage children in deeper exploration by investigating insect life cycles e.g. caterpillars, darkling beetle or ladybug.



Willow

Read and wonder...

- *'Bug Detective: Amazing facts, myths and quirks of nature'* (2014) by Maggie Li
- *'Busy Little Creatures'* (2018) by Fiona Bowden
- *'Hotel for Bees'* (2020) by Alison McLennan and Erin Dunne



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4 and 5.1.

WONDER CARD 21: The Fish School Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE & PLAY:** Make fishing rods using sticks, string and magnets. Play a *'fishing game'* by encouraging children to use their memory to find and 'fish' for matching pairs of tropical fish picture cards (paperclip attached). Introduce new vocabulary by describing different fish features and species.
- **CREATE:** Invite children to make a 'school' of fish using recycled cardboard cartons (cut into different fish shapes and sizes). Encourage children to create by threading coloured beads onto thick wool, then wrapping the wool around the cardboard fish shapes. Hang them in your early childhood setting!



Whyla

Read and wonder...

- *'Papa's Mechanical Fish'* (2013) by Candice Fleming & Boris Kulikov
- *'Swimmy'* (2017) by Leo Lionni
- *'Ten Scared Fish'* (2012) by Ros Moriarty & Balarinji



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.4, 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.

WONDER CARD 24: The Penguin Question

Time to explore...

- **EXPERIMENT:** Conduct a science experiment together to explore how penguins stay dry in water by exploring how their oil-producing glands make feathers waxy. Invite children to cover paper penguin shapes using white wax crayons and then spray on blue coloured water. Observe as the water repels off the penguins!
- **MEASURE:** Draw a life size Emperor Penguin (115cm tall) and Gentoo Penguin (70cm) on large sheets of paper. Invite children to collage onto the shapes by tearing and pasting black/white tissue paper. Give each child an opportunity to compare their height to that of each penguin, by measuring how tall they are in centimetres. Model mathematical language and encourage children to describe if they are 'taller' or 'shorter' than penguin species.



Wes

Read and wonder...

- *'How Big is a Million?'* (2007) by Anna Milbourne & Serena Riglietti
- *'The Second Sky'* (2017) by Patrick Guest & Jonathan Bentley
- *'Different? Same!'* (2017) by Heather Tekavec & Pippa Curnick



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 5.1, 5.3 and 5.4.

WONDER CARD 22: The Snakeskin Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE & PLAY:** Create 'snake puppets' by stuffing old socks or stockings with newspaper. Invite children to decorate their puppet using goggle eyes, felt tongues and patterned fabric 'scales'. Encourage children to use the puppets as symbols of culture to re-enact and re-tell traditional Aboriginal Dreamtime stories about snakes.
- **RESEARCH & DESIGN:** Use technology (laptop, iPad or interactive whiteboard) together to explore the role snakes play with other animals in the environment. Together, design a simple *'food chain story'* pictorial diagram by importing photos of animals as consumers - flower (producer) → caterpillar → frog → snake → owl.



Quest

Read and wonder...

- *'Australia's Most Dangerous Snakes'* (2014) by Australian Geographic
- *'Wunambi The Water Snake'* (2005) by May L.O'Brien & Sue Wyatt
- *'There's a Snake in my School!'* (2016) by David Walliams & Tony Ross



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5.



WONDER CARD 25

The Desert Planet Question

How do plants grow in the desert?

In this episode we discover the things plants need to grow – air, sunlight, food and water. Desert plants have different ways to find and save water because it hardly rains.

Wonder some more ...

1. What is a desert?
2. Where is the Great Sandy Desert?
3. How do desert plants store water?
4. How do plants use sunlight to make food?
5. Where can plants get water from?
6. Why do plants have roots?



WONDER CARD 27

The Octopus Question

Why does an octopus have 8 arms?

In this episode we discover that octopus need their eight arms (tentacles) to help them walk, swim, taste and look for food. They also use their arms like a special net to catch food.

Wonder some more ...

1. Where do octopus live?
2. Does an octopus have a skeleton?
3. Why do octopus change colour?
4. Are octopus slimy?
5. How many hearts does an octopus have?
6. What other creatures have 8 arms or legs?



WONDER CARD 26

The Coral Question

What is coral?

In this episode we discover that even though coral looks like super-colourful plants... it is actually an animal!

Wonder some more ...

1. What are coral polyps?
2. Where does coral usually grow?
3. What is the world's largest coral reef?
4. What colour/s is coral?
5. Does coral have a mouth?
6. What does coral eat?



WONDER CARD 28

The Bouncing Kangaroo Question

How do kangaroos bounce?

In this episode we discover that kangaroos have powerful back legs, long strong tails and long feet that all work together to help them jump. Kangaroos are basically springy, bouncing machines!

Wonder some more ...

1. What are Macropod animals?
2. How high can a kangaroo jump?
3. How does a kangaroo's tail help them bounce?
4. How tall can a kangaroo grow?
5. What colour/s is kangaroo fur?
6. Can kangaroos walk backwards?



WONDER CARD 27: The Octopus Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE & EXPERIMENT:** Make child-safe slime together using cornflour and dishwashing liquid. Model and encourage children to handle the slime and compare it to the body of a slimy octopus – with no bone structure. Experiment to see if their 'slime octopus' can squeeze through a hole in a jar. Explain how an octopus can move in-between very small places in the ocean (e.g. coral & rocks).
- **CREATE:** Make small 3D octopus models using different coloured balloons filled with rice or seeds. Attach two eyes and eight coloured pipe cleaner tentacles. Ask children to 'camouflage' their octopus by placing it near an object of the same colour in the room. Other children can try to 'find' the hidden octopuses.



Willow

Read and wonder...

- *'Billie the Octopus'* (2019) by Lotus Kay & Chey Diehl
- *'Gentle Giant Octopus'* (2002) by Mike Bostock
- *'If I had an Octopus'* (2021) by Gabby Dawnay & Alex Barrow



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 5.1 and 5.3.

WONDER CARD 25: The Desert Plant Question

Time to explore...

- **EXPERIMENT:** Investigate 'photosynthesis' through a hands-on STEM experiment by planting seeds and observing conditions that promote plant growth – water, sunlight, food & air. Fill small cardboard pots with planting soil and 2 bean seeds. Place one pot outside in the sunlight and water daily. Place another pot inside, in an unlit area and do not water. Together record, measure and compare plant growth.
- **CONNECT WITH NATURE:** Invite children on a 'photosynthesis scavenger hunt' by finding green plants outdoors. Use a plant species app to help children identify and name each of the green leaves they find. Facilitate sustained, shared conversations about 'chlorophyll' and how plants use it to make their own food from sunlight.



Whyla

Read and wonder...

- *'An Amazing Australian Road Trip'* (2021) by Jackie Hosking & Lesley Vamos
- *'Scribbly Gum Secrets'* (2020) by Dannika Patterson & Megan Forward



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.2, 5.1, 5.4 and 5.5.

WONDER CARD 28: The Bouncing Kangaroo Question

Time to explore...

- **MOVE:** Play a 'jumping animals' movement game. Tape large photographs of jumping animals (kangaroo, rabbit, frog) onto the floor. Model how each animal would jump – long, high jumps for the kangaroo; short, quick jumps for the rabbit; low jumps on all fours for the frog. Organise teams and encourage children to take turns jumping like different animals in a relay style.
- **RESEARCH & MAKE:** Look at photographs of different kangaroo species in factual picture books and identify their features – pointy ears, long snout, clawed hands, furry coat, large long legs, long feet, pouch (females), long tail. Invite children to make 'paper bag kangaroo puppets' using material scraps & other collage materials.



Wes

Read and wonder...

- *'Big Red Kangaroo'* (2016) by Claire Saxby & Graham Byrne
- *'Colouroos'* (2019) by Anna McGregor
- *'Kangaroos Hop'* (2012) by Ros Moriarty, John Bradley & Balarinji Designs Studio
- *'A is for Australian Animals'* (2017) by Frane Lessac



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.1, 3.2, 4.1 and 5.3.

WONDER CARD 26: The Coral Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE & PLAY:** Create a 'coral reef sensory tub' together by choosing and positioning materials for exploratory play (blue tinted warm water, man-made coral, shells, plastic fish and other marine animals, rocks, sand). Invite children to use their senses to develop understandings about coral reef ecosystems.
- **CREATE:** Discuss the importance of a coral reef ecosystem by creating a large 3D collage 'coral reef habitat' artwork together. Use watercolours to paint an ocean backdrop and then populate the area by pasting magazine pictures/ printed photos of reef fish and other marine life. Use coloured cellophane and tissue paper to form coral shapes. Foster high-level thinking skills about coral reef conservation by adding manmade objects to the collage (e.g. rubbish, netting).



Quinton

Read and wonder...

- *'The Coral Kingdom'* (2018) by Laura Knowles & Jennine Webber
- *'Art in Country'* (2020) by Bronwyn Bancroft
- *'Over in the Ocean: In a Coral Reef'* (2004) by Marianne Berkes & Jeanette Canyon



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4 and 5.3.



WONDER CARD 29

The Wombat Question

Why do wombats dig?

In this episode we discover that wombats are an Australian native marsupial animal that lives underground. They have powerful legs and sharp claws for digging burrows. We learn that wombats stay safe and comfy in these tunnels when it is very hot or cold above the ground.

Wonder some more ...

1. What is a marsupial?
2. Where do wombats sleep?
3. Are wombats nocturnal?
4. What do wombats eat?
5. What is a group of wombats called?
6. Can wombats climb trees?



WONDER CARD 31

The Cicada Question

Why do cicadas have shells?

In this episode we discover that baby cicadas have shells to protect their soft bodies and delicate wings as they grow underground. The shell also covers their claws which makes it easier for these insects to dig tunnels and find food.

Wonder some more ...

1. How many years do Cicadas stay underground?
2. During which season do Cicadas hatch from their shell?
3. What is a Cicada shell called?
4. What colours are different Cicada species?
5. Where do Cicadas lay eggs?
6. How do Cicadas make their loud 'calling song' sounds?



WONDER CARD 30

The Blue-Tongue Lizard Question

Why do Blue-Tongue Lizards have blue tongues?

In this episode we discover that these lizards quickly 'flick' out their blue tongue when a bird or animal gets too close. Other animals see a sudden bright flash of colour which scares them and gives the lizard time to hide from danger. It's their secret superpower!

Wonder some more ...

1. What are a Blue-Tongue Lizard's predators?
2. What else do Blue-Tongue Lizards do to protect themselves from danger?
3. Why do Blue-Tongue Lizards have a "third eye"?
4. What do they eat?
5. Where do they live?
6. How many different species of Blue-Tongue Lizards live in Australia?



WONDER CARD 32

The Sea Turtle Question

Why do sea turtles lay eggs on the beach?

In this episode we discover that sea turtles are reptiles, but they still need air to breathe. Adult sea turtles lay their eggs on the beach so that the babies inside get the air they need to breathe, until they're ready to hatch.

Wonder some more ...

1. Where do sea turtles live?
2. How long can sea turtles hold their breath underwater?
3. Why can sea turtles swim so fast?
4. Why do sea turtles bury their eggs in the sand?
5. Why do sea turtles have a shell?
6. What do sea turtles eat?



WONDER CARD 31: The Cicada Question

Time to explore...

- **DRAW:** Together, collect Cicada shells from tree trunks and notice which trees they prefer. Provide opportunities for children to sort the shells by size. Invite children to use a magnifying glass to observe its exoskeleton and identify body parts (wide eyes, antennae, legs, claws, mouth, body). Encourage children to draw a Cicada and scaffold literacy learning by 'scribing/labelling' their drawings.
- **INVESTIGATE:** Watch nature videos of Cicadas emerging from underground during late spring/ early summer in Australia. Talk about different seasons and how Cicadas live underground during the cooler months. Look at factual picture books together and discuss insect life cycles and the metamorphosis of a Cicada (eggs → 'nymph' → molt shell → adult).



Read and wonder...

- *'Searching for Cicadas'* (2019) by Lesley Gibbs & Judy Watson
- *'Cicada's Song'* (2021) by Ariane O'pry Trammell
- *'Sing me the Summer'* (2020) by Jane Godwin & Alison Lester



Willow



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4 and 5.2.

WONDER CARD 29: The Wombat Question

Time to explore...

- **RESEARCH & ENGINEER:** Watch short videos of wombats, cicadas and ants building elaborate tunnels underground. Then invite children to design and construct a home for a wombat using open-ended materials - clay, pop sticks, dirt, straw and recycled pipes. Encourage children to connect tunnels and make sleeping burrows.
- **CREATE:** After reading 'Wombat Stew', encourage children to create and draw their own 'stew' recipe using materials collected from nature e.g fallen bark, leaves, sticks, feathers and gumnuts. Invite children to collage the materials onto a cauldron shape and talk about how they would 'cook' their stew.



Read and wonder...

- *'We Build Our Homes: Small stories of incredible animal architects'* (2018) by Laura Knowles and Chris Madden
- *'The Fire Wombat'* (2020) by Jackie French & Danny Snell
- *'Wombat Stew'* (2014) by Marcia Vaughan & Pamela Lofts



Whyla



Early Education

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.2, 4.3, 5.1 and 5.3.

WONDER CARD 32: The Sea Turtle Question

Time to explore...

- **MAKE:** Provide craft materials (newspaper, homemade flour glue) for children to create a 'paper mache sea turtle', using a cardboard bowl for the base. Make the head using part of an egg carton and use cardboard shapes for the fins. Encourage children to paint their 3D sea turtle model.
- **PLAY:** Create a 'beach sensory imaginative play' resource using shallow plastic tubs. Fill one tub with sand, sea turtle figurines (large and small sizes), small plastic eggs, shells, buckets and spades. Fill a second tub with water. Allow children to develop their understandings about how sea turtles grow and live through imaginative play. Encourage children to use extended language to explain their thinking.



Wes



Early Education

Read and wonder...

- *'Is This Your Egg?'* (2020) by Ella Kris & Emma Cracknell
- *'Mister Seahorse'* (2011) by Eric Carle
- *'Who Saw Turtle?'* (2017) by Ros Moriarty & Balarinji

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 5.1 and 5.3.

WONDER CARD 30: The Blue-Tongue Lizard Question

Time to explore...

- **RESEARCH & CREATE:** Look at photographs of Australian Blue-Tongue Lizard species and help children name and identify the different colours of their overlapping scales. Invite children to create a 'lizard scales collage' using textured materials representing species colours (silvery-grey, dark brown, black, pink, cream, yellow).
- **TALK:** Use models of predators (kookaburras, large snakes, cats and dogs), rocks and small plants as props to facilitate a discussion about ways to help keep Blue-Tongue Lizards safe in suburban backyards. Ask open-ended questions to stimulate children's thinking and develop their sense of agency about the active role they can play in protecting animals in the natural environment.



Quidget



Early Education

Read and wonder...

- *'Backyard'* (2018) by Ananda Braxton-Smyth & Lizzy Newcomb
- *'Pink Tongue, Blue Tongue'* (2005) by Mark Gagiero & Kelvin Hucker
- *'The Lizard Gang'* (2006) by Kirra Liscia Somerville & Grace Fielding

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 1.2, 2.4, 4.2, 5.1 and 5.3.



WONDER CARD 33

The Frog Question

Why are frogs slimy?

In this episode we discover that the slime on frogs' bodies is a special coating of slippery, waxy mucous. It keeps frogs from drying out when they're on land and helps them breathe through their skin to survive.

Wonder some more ...

1. What is an amphibian?
2. Are Australian native frogs different colours?
3. What 'calling' sound do frogs make?
4. How do frogs catch food?
5. Where do frogs lay eggs?
6. What is a tadpole?



WONDER CARD 35

The Quokka Question

Are quokkas and kangaroos cousins?

In this episode we discover that quokkas and kangaroos ARE like cousins because they're both plant-eating marsupials... and they share an ancient Macropod ancestor.

Wonder some more ...

1. What is an ancestor?
2. What is a cousin?
3. What are Australian Macropod animals?
4. Are quokkas the same size as kangaroos?
5. Do kangaroos and quokkas have the same colour fur?
6. Are wallabies and kangaroos cousins?



WONDER CARD 34

The Rainbow Lorikeet Question

Why are Rainbow Lorikeets so colourful?

In this episode we discover that Rainbow Lorikeets have green feathers on their backs and wings to camouflage among trees. All Rainbow Lorikeets have blue heads and a bright red beak. Different types of Rainbow Lorikeets have matching colourful patterns on their body feathers – red, orange and yellow!

Wonder some more ...

1. What colour is a baby lorikeet's beak?
2. What noises do Rainbow Lorikeets make?
3. Why do Rainbow Lorikeets have a hairy tongue?
4. What do they eat?
5. Where do they lay eggs?
6. What colour are their eggs?



WONDER CARD 35: The Quokka Question

Time to explore...

- **RESEARCH:** Check out photos online of Australian Macropods – kangaroos, wallabies, tree-kangaroos, pademelons and quokkas. Talk about the similarities and differences children observe in the physical features of these animals. Model new vocabulary and encourage children to demonstrate understandings by describing their research findings.
- **DRAW:** Using a simple 'family tree' template, invite children to draw a face (with prominent features e.g. hair/eye colour) of each family member in the spaces provided – parents, siblings and grandparents. Encourage children to also name and describe other extended family members including cousins, aunts & uncles.



Willow

Read and wonder...

- 'Garden Stew' (2018) by Carrie Gallasch & Zoe Ingram
- 'Quietest Quokka' (2016) by Susannah McFarlane & Lachlan Creagh
- 'Clancy the Quokka' (2019) by Lili Wilkinson & Alison Mutton

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.3 and 5.5.



WONDER CARD 33: The Frog Question

Time to explore...

- **READ & CREATE:** Share 'The Little Corroboree Frog' picture book with preschoolers and introduce this endangered species. Talk with children about environmental issues raised in the book including climate change and human impact on their habitat (leaving rubbish around). Create a large collage together using - recycled rubbish, tadpole & frog pictures, tissue paper for a pond/creek. Engage children in conversations about the importance of care and respect for the natural environment.
- **MOULD:** Place simple pictures of a frog's life cycle on laminated cards (eggs → tadpole → tadpole with hind legs → froglet → frog → eggs). Model and encourage children to mould shapes (using green, black & white coloured playdough) of frogs as they grow, to develop their understandings about these amphibians.



Whyla

Read and wonder...

- 'The Little Corroboree Frog' (2013) by Tracey Holton-Ramirez & Angela Ramirez
- 'Growing Frogs' (2003) by Vivian French & Alison Bartlett
- 'Green Tree Frogs' (2016) by Sandra Kendell

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.2, 4.3 and 5.2.



WONDER CARD 34: The Rainbow Lorikeet Question

Time to explore...

- **ENGINEER:** Scaffold creativity and problem-solving skills by encouraging children to construct a 'nest' for a Rainbow Lorikeet using fallen bark, leaves and small cardboard cartons. Encourage children to design their 'nest' similar to the hollow limb of a eucalypt tree... where these birds often lay their eggs in the wild.
- **TALK:** Share traditional Aboriginal Dreamtime picture books about how the Rainbow Lorikeet became a beautifully 'rainbow' coloured bird. Invite children to make 'paper pop-stick finger puppets' by drawing or painting characters from these books. Encourage children to retell stories to support emerging literacy skills and consideration of diverse cultural perspectives.



Quinton

Read and wonder...

- 'Backyard Birds' (2020) by Helen Milroy
- 'Rainbow Bird: An Aboriginal Folktale from Northern Australia' (1993) by Eric Madern & Adrienne Kennaway

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.2, 4.4, 5.1 and 5.2.

