

Early Education Notes

Series 346: Rain, Hail or Shine.

Background

The Play School forecast is so changeable these days! Join us as we help Kiya and Jemima prepare for any kind of weather, as they set out on an adventure around Australia. They are particularly excited about visiting Kiya's Noongar Country in Western Australia.

Episode 1

Kiya & Jemima are off to a cooler climate in Tasmania! Join Emma & Matt as they all go bird watching on Cradle Mountain, make art with ice and dress up as Tassie Devils! Through The Windows we cool down in the snow.

Let's talk maps.

Young children find maps interesting and challenging. Whether maps are viewed digitally or on paper, children recognise that maps are purposeful and often lead to exciting places and new discoveries! Exploring how maps work will build the early numeracy concept of directionality. Making meaning through viewing and creating maps is a complex process that only develops through hands on engagement, problem solving and practice.

While observing a map of Australia, point out the land surrounded by the ocean, explain that Australia consists of two islands - the mainland, and Tasmania. Then, off to the sandpit to build an island! Time for some teamwork. Encourage children to create a large sand mound, make a moat around the mound by adding water. A great place to discuss islands and Australia and Tasmania both being islands.

Tip: Line the moat surrounding your island with plastic bags to ensure the water is visible for discussion.

Discuss and extend

- What animals live on land? In water?
- Using native land animal and sea creature figurines, play a game classifying land and ocean animals. What characteristics do land animals and sea creatures have? Check out ABC Education Digibook '[Skin and scales, feathers and fur](#)' for more information (suitable for all ages).



Will Matt the weather reporter predict Rain, Hail or Shine on Play School today?

- Discuss the term endangered and relate to the Flame Robin being endangered in Tasmania.
- The takayna/Tarkine region of Tasmania's North West was mentioned in this episode. Educators can learn more via the [North West Tasmania](#) website. There are some beautiful images for children to view and fascinating facts to explore. This is an opportunity to find out (or recall) the name of the Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Country on which your early learning setting is located.

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.5.



An icy art experiment to show how frozen things change and as the climate heats up.

Icy art making

Try the chilly art experience demonstrated by Emma and Matt.

Use the time-lapse record feature on your device to capture the process from start to finish. Watch later to revisit the experience, or to share with families via your digital documentation.

Extend with a science experiment to investigate cause and effect when adding paint to different surfaces. Using brushes and paint (water-soluble poster paint will work well) go on a hunt to find some different surfaces in the playground. This would be a fun experiment to try on a rainy day.

Surface suggestions

- Ice blocks
- Large stone
- Brick paving
- Cardboard
- Concrete
- Leaves

Discussion

- Does the paint melt? Why? Encourage children to reflect on surface temperature and how this may affect the result.
- Does the paint change colour? Why?
- Does the paint disappear? Why? How?

If you have a colour wheel, discuss favourite colours. The wheel will help children to discover what colours compliment their favourite shade. Use complimentary colour combinations in follow up easel painting projects.

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.3, 5.5.

Episode 2

Kiya & Jemima travel to Beechworth, Victoria. They join Zindzi & Nicholas to visit farmer Maurice's farm during the drought and later make clay creations to dry in the sun. Through The Windows we head out into the sunshine!



Nick and Zindzi bake their creative clay creatures in the hot sun.

Exploring camouflage

Why do lizards like to sunbathe on rocks that match the colour of their backs? Why is it helpful for some lizards (like chameleons) to change colour? Ask children to guess, then research more details together.

The [National Geographic Kids](https://www.nationalgeographic.com.au/kids) website has beautiful images of chameleons, along with plenty of fun facts. Investigate Australian lizards that change colour, like a gecko! Use your device to search online or borrow library books to explore different Australian lizards such as Dragon Lizard, Blue Tongue Lizard and Goanna.

Extend by creating an imaginary small world 'lizard habitat' in your sandpit. Include different coloured rocks. Invite children to draw lizards on the rocks, choosing colours that match with the rock surface. Try paint, oil pastel, charcoal, or chalk.

Story suggestion

'The Lizard Gang' (2006) by Kirra Somerville and Grace Fielding; about the adventures of a gang of competitive monitor lizards living deep in the Australian bush.

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.2, 5.1, 5.3, 5.5.



After the fire

Discuss what happens during and after a bushfire in a reassuring manner. Include implications for the natural and built environment (and people too). Consider the suitability of this experience based on how your local community was affected by the extreme weather and fire events of 2019 -2020. Some children and families may wish to recall, and others may not. For more information to help guide your practice, visit the [ABC Kids Early Education video](https://www.abc.net.au/earlyeducation/education-video) with child psychologist Nicola Palfrey.

Possible questions

- How do you know if a bushfire is close by? Relate this discussion to children's senses - what would you hear, see, smell?
- How might a bushfire start / be prevented?
- How can you feel prepared if a bushfire is close? If unsure, watch Play School: [How to prepare for emergencies](https://www.abc.net.au/earlyeducation/education-video).
- Do you know what some animals might do to stay safe in a bushfire?

Children may wish to paint a picture of fire and describe how it makes them feel (use your knowledge of children's lived experience of bushfire before suggesting this one).

Set up a large outdoor mural and invite children to paint things they like most about their local community e.g. trees, parks, houses, animals, friends. This experience encourages children to feel a sense of gratitude. Gratitude (or thankfulness) is a mindfulness practice that evokes positive thoughts.

Reassure children that when rain comes after a bushfire, trees grow again, flowers grow, and animals find new homes.

Set up a science experiment to show the results of water on seeds. Use two plates of absorbent paper and wheat seeds, show one plate without water and other with regular water - the watered wheat seeds will grow tall and green!

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 1.1, 1.2, 2.1, 3.1, 3.2, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.3, 5.5.

Episode 3

Kiya & Jemima head to tropical Queensland! Join Emma & Teo as they see Wallaman Falls, make a fruit salad with finger limes and go on Dan's boat for a Fact-Finding Adventure Tour. Through The Windows we watch the rain.



Emma, Teo and the toys visit the beautiful Wallaman Falls.

After watching the Through the Windows film 'Rain', create thunderstorm symphony using DIY percussion instruments. Set up an inspiring area outdoors ready for the big music composition.

Possible inclusions

- Kitchen pots and pans
- Rocks in a metal bowl
- Small saucepan lids
- Metal garbage bin lids

Encourage each child to choose an object and make gentle tapping rain sounds, then build to make a loud thunderstorm soundscape.

Include conversation about the following elements of music as children play:

- Tempo (fast/ slow)
- Pitch (loud/soft)
- Crescendo / decrescendo sounds (slowly getting louder or softer)

Create a told story about a storm with small group. Ask child to think about what they might see and hear? How did they know there was a storm? What did the animals do in the storm? What did you do in the storm?

To watch the 'Rain' film again, visit [ABC Kids Early Education: Sustainability and Nature](#).

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1.



Exploring Australian Rainforests

Use a large map to point out a rainforest areas e.g. Daintree, Kuranda, Lamington and Springbrook National Parks, Nightcap, Mt Warning.

Investigate the characteristics of rainforest. Undergrowth vegetation, trees, water, small and large animals (cassowary, tree kangaroo, crocodile, Ulysses butterfly). Find pictures in reference books or online. Create a rainforest artwork inspired by [Play School Art Time](#).

Explore the contrast between desert and rainforest environments. Use craft materials to assemble two different tabletop environments highlighting different weather conditions, vegetation and animals.

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.4, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1.

Episode 4

Kiya & Jemima board a train at Tennant Creek in the Northern Territory! Join Michelle & Teo as we spot some native animals in the Simpson Desert, South Australia, and eat some bush jam! Through The Windows we visit the desert.



Travellers Kiya and Jemima are off on their next adventure to the Northern Territory.

Exploring transport

Discuss the different ways children have travelled, then create a transport snap game (pictures drawn by children). Provide blank pre-cut cards and encourage children to draw their favourite mode of transport. Photocopy, cut, play!

Use the cards to sort and classify. Which cards have wheels? Which cards have wings? Which cards have two wheels, four wheels? Which cards might go on roads? Water? In the air?

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1.



Create a desert environment

In this episode we look at the Simpson Desert. Discuss the characteristics of a desert environment; rainfall, waterholes, adaptation of animals to desert conditions. Refer to map of Australia to show desert areas. Make a small world desert in a large sand trough. Add water hole.

Talk about some of the native plants found in Australian deserts such as Sturt Desert Pea, Kakadu Plum, spinifex grass and ghost gums.

Explore some of the animals living in the Simpson desert: red kangaroo, emu, budgie, bandicoot, spinifex hopping mouse, southern hairy nosed wombat. Encourage children to make plants and animals using playdough or clay e.g. a spinifex mouse hiding in a sand burrow.

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1.

Put on a Play set in the desert

Discuss aspects of putting on a play (characters, music, story, scenery). Invite children to make a desert landscape using large pieces of fabric. Children can choose what animal they might be. The narrator (child or adult) can choose each animal to come to the water hole. Provide percussion instrument for sound effects!



All aboard the Gahn

The Ghan train travels a very long, long way. Create a train line inside using masking tape to show tracks. Make a large engine out of boxes. Connect all the carriages together with masking tape and pipe cleaners. When your train is ready to go, provide a whistle and blocks of wood wrapped with sandpaper for train sounds. Refer to a map to show the Gahn track or relate train travel to the area you live.

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.3

Episode 5

Kiya & Jemima visit Noongar Country in Western Australia! Join Rachael & Hunter with Teresa Moore, as they go on a numbat adventure and bake delicious chocolate river mint brownies. Through The Windows we learn about the wind.



In the final episode, Kiya and Jemima finally reach Noongar Country! Kiya has come home to her Country in Western Australia, south of Perth. She's had an amazing trip around Australia with Jemima. From Tasmania, to Victoria, through NSW, up to Queensland, across to Northern territory, down to South Australia and over to Western Australia.

After becoming familiar with the 'Welcome Song' performed in this episode, try learning the lyrics:

'Welcome Song'

Written by Gina Williams

<i>Wanjoo, wanjoo</i>	<i>Welcome welcome</i>
<i>Kwobodak koorda</i>	<i>Beautiful friends</i>
<i>Wanjoo, wanjoo</i>	<i>Welcome welcome</i>
<i>Moorditj koorda</i>	<i>Strong friends</i>
<i>Ngalak djerabin</i>	<i>We are happy</i>
<i>Noonook djinaniny</i>	<i>to see you</i>
<i>Ngalak warangka</i>	<i>We sing</i>
<i>Wanjoo</i>	<i>Welcome</i>

<i>Djiraly-ak (wanjoo)</i>	<i>From the north</i>
<i>Koongal-ak (wanjoo)</i>	<i>From the south</i>
<i>Boyal-ak (wanjoo)</i>	<i>From the east</i>
<i>Marawar-ak (wanjoo)</i>	<i>From the west</i>
<i>Ngalak djerabin</i>	<i>We are happy</i>
<i>Noonook djinaniny</i>	<i>to see you</i>
<i>Ngalak warangka</i>	<i>We sing</i>
<i>Wanjoo</i>	<i>Welcome</i>

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Kiya and Jemima finally reach Noongar Country.

Care for Country

In this episode Kiya and Jemima planted Jarrah sapling and Native River Mint. These plants grow very easily in the Noongar environment. Discuss what trees and plants grow in your area. Go on a community walk and point out vegetation along the way. Talk about how Australian native plants are best suited to our environment.

Ask children why they think it is important to for us to look after the land where we live. For more ideas on how to encourage children to Care for Country, check out the Early Education Notes for [Play School: Acknowledgement of Country](#). Watch the special episode on [ABC iview](#).

Link to EYLF Learning Outcomes including 2.2, 2.4, 4.1, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1. 5.3.

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