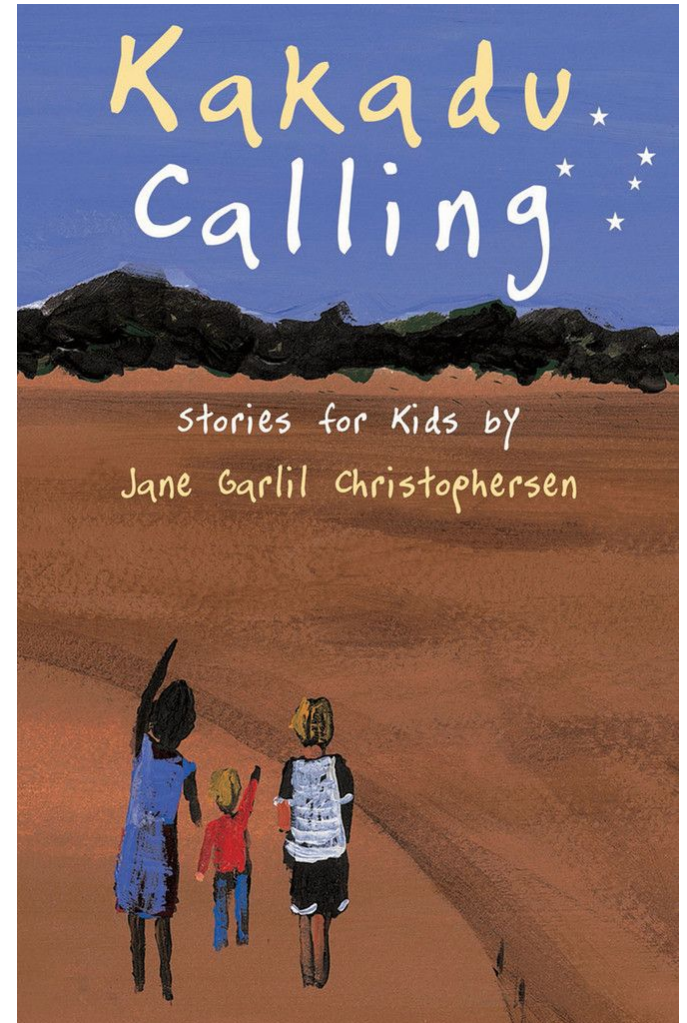


NAIDOC WEEK 2020

Celebrating Aboriginal cultures and histories through a reading of *Finding My Way Home*, a story of connections to Land, traditions, spiritual beliefs and values



About the Author: Jane Garlil Christophersen

Jane Garlil Christophersen is a respected elder of the Bunitj people of Kakadu National Park, Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, Australia. She was raised in Kakadu during her early years, living off the land.

Through her stories she reveals the wonders of daily life in the bush and includes messages about caring for the environment and retaining culture.

Jane includes moral points and addresses issues such as independence, identity, remoteness and cultural connection, that resonate with young people today.



Location of Kakadu in Northern Territory



Kakadu National Park

Kakadu is one of four Australian sites included on the World Heritage List for both cultural and natural outstanding universal values. The floodplains of Kakadu illustrate the ecological effects of sea-level change in northern Australia. The park features great natural beauty and sweeping landscapes, as well as internationally important wetlands.

Kakadu was one of 15 World Heritage places included in the National Heritage List under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 on 21 May 2007.



Kakadu National Park

The region is extremely important to Aboriginal people, and many communities still live in the region.

The Indigenous art sites of Kakadu are a unique artistic achievement providing an outstanding record of human interaction with the environment over thousands of years.

These and the region's other Indigenous sites also illustrate globally significant example of the hunter-gatherer way of life, including its spiritual aspects and sites of great antiquity.



Attribution: [Sardaka](#) at [en.wikipedia](#)

Kakadu languages

Studies show that there were about 200 Aboriginal languages in Australia at the time Europeans arrived.

These distinct languages have extensive vocabularies and complex grammars. Today about 100 languages are still spoken to some extent while 50 have a significant number of speakers.

Sometimes places are named for the presence of a spirit from the creation era. Namarrgon Djadjam is the name of the place where the lightning man, Namarrgon resides.

The Gagudji People Today

Besides the ancient Gagudju people, younger generations of the Bininj and Mungguy people also live in Kakadu, keeping their ancestor's traditions and beliefs alive. These nations have a deep spiritual connection to the Kakadu National Park, with ancient beliefs, the Dreamtime stories, and the spiritual traditions all being tied into the terrain of the land.

<https://kakadunationalparktours.com.au/blog/what-is-the-meaning-of-kakadu/>

Activating Background Knowledge

What do you already know about Aboriginal peoples’

- Relationship to the Land / Country?
- Survival skills on the Land?
- Culture and traditions?



Burrki's resources to undertake his trip

Message stone



Message Circle



Pandanus Tree



Pandanus dilly bag



Determining Importance

Burrki could see lightning flashing and then came the rumbling of thunder. He was very scared and said to himself “Did I do something wrong?”

When he looked up towards the roof of the cave he saw paintings of the lightning man on the rock walls.

“I’m sorry I came into this cave without telling you first. My name is Burrki and I’m going to look for my father and mother. I’m truly, truly sorry.”

Burrki was very frightened and he wondered if the lightning was his punishment for running away and not telling his grandparents. He decided to sleep in the cave. When he woke the next morning he ate some meat and set off on his journey. As a mark of respect he called out to the lightning man that he was leaving and he thanked him for looking after him.

How can you tell from the story that the lightning was going to have a special meaning for Burrki?



Bookbook Owl



Dingo



Bandicoot



Porcupine (echidna)



Python

Water Buffalo



Burrki created a fire



Burrki caught a catfish



Corroboree



Traditional Indigenous Games

Burrki would play traditional games with his friends for fun and fitness.

What else would he gain from learning how to play these games?

Gorri - bowling-ball or disc games were played by Aboriginal boys and men in all parts of Australia.

A piece of rounded bark (disc) was rolled by one of the players for the other boys to use as a target for short spears.

A version of this activity is still played in the Kimberley area and Northern Territory using flattened tin lids as targets and stones or other missiles.



Traditional Indigenous Games

Kalq was a spear game played by some Aboriginal groups on Cape York Peninsula in north Queensland.

The men used a throwing stick (woomera) to project a big killing spear (kalq) towards the next player. The spear would travel around the circle of men, who were armed only with their woomera, which they then used to deflect (steer away) the spear to the next player. When small boys played they used spears with blunted ends.



Traditional Indigenous Games

Walbiri is a memory-testing game was played by the Walbiri children of central Australia.

Players were required to recall sand-drawing maps of the locality after watching for a short time. This was a game that helped the children remember and identify the surrounding topography (landscape).



Traditional Indigenous Games

Weme: The Walbiri people of central Australia played a stone-bowling game.

One player rolled a stone, which was used as a target by the second player.

In the traditional game players alternated turns, with each one aiming at the other's stone.



Traditional Indigenous Games

Bondi The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had many water and diving games which were played in any convenient creek or waterhole or at the beach.

In various parts of Australia, contests in diving, floating, remaining beneath the water, and many other aquatic activities, were undertaken. The people also used recognisable swimming strokes, such as single overarm sidestroke, which was first observed in a lagoon at Bondi in Sydney in the 1800s and developed into an international stroke that was popular up to and including the 1896 Olympic Games.

