



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower and middle primary
(ages 6–8; years 1 to 3)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English
- **General capabilities:** Literacy, personal and social capability, critical and creative thinking, intercultural understanding

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK

- Develop independent reading
- Help foster understanding and empathy
- Encourage discussion around family and belonging
- Encourage and understanding of place and the Australian Landscape

THEMES

- Family/home/belonging
- Bravery
- Friendship
- Intercultural diversity
- Australia/lifestyle

SERIES TITLES

Aussie Kids: Meet Taj at the Lighthouse
Aussie Kids: Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo
Aussie Kids: Meet Eve in the Outback
Aussie Kids: Meet Katie at the Beach
Aussie Kids: Meet Sam at the Mangrove Creek
Aussie Kids: Meet Mia by the Jetty
Aussie Kids: Meet Dooley on the Farm
Aussie Kids: Meet Matilda at the Festival
(Print and e-pubs available)

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Visit penguin.com.au/teachers to find out how our fantastic Penguin Random House Australia books can be used in the classroom, sign up to the teachers' newsletter and follow us on [@penguinteachers](https://twitter.com/penguinteachers).

PREPARED BY

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Aussie Kids



Aussie Kids is an exciting new series for emerging readers aged 6-8 years.

From a NSW Zoo to a Victorian lighthouse, or an outback sheep farm in WA to a beach in QLD, this junior fiction series celebrates stories about children living in unique places in every state and territory in Australia.

Written by some of Australia's most beloved storytellers, we will showcase some of the existing author and illustrator talent across the Penguin Random House list as well as new talent from around the country.

Aussie Kids features a diverse profile of creators and stories.

8 characters, 8 stories, 8 authors and illustrators from all 8 states and territories!

Each book contains:

- Engaging characters and stories
- Maps, fun facts and other additional material to support and extend the reading experience
- Two-colour illustrations
- Short sentences and chapters
- Simple vocabulary.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS AND ILLUSTRATORS

The **Aussie Kids** stories have been created by diverse author and illustrator teams from all around Australia. The creators are:

Victoria: Maxine Beneba Clarke & Nicki Greenberg

New South Wales: Belinda Murrell & David Hardy

Western Australia: Raewyn Caisley & Karen Blair

Queensland: Rebecca Johnson & Lucia Masciullo

Northern Territory: Paul Seden & Brenton McKenna

South Australia: Janeen Brian & Danny Snell

Tasmania: Sally Odgers & Christina Booth

ACT: Jacqueline de Rose-Ahern & Tania McCartney

PRE-READING QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

- Where in Australia do you live?
- What are the things that make your part of Australia unique?
- How does where we live affect our lifestyle? Can you give examples?
- How might the temperature affect our lifestyle?
- In what ways do city people live differently from country people? Can you give examples?
- How do we live differently near the beach from the way we live inland?
- Imagine that you are going on a trip around Australia to meet each of the **Aussie Kids** characters. Have a map of Australia on the wall. Research where you plan to go, just like a real traveller would. Find out some facts about the area like:
 - Temperature
 - Landmarks
 - Description
 - Things to do
 - State emblem.

Mark each of the story locations on a map of Australia and add these details.

- How many different states and territories have you visited?
- What might you expect to find in each story based on its location and your research?
 - Consider geographical features

- Plant and animal population and activity
- Population – size, make up etc.

Activities

- Think about some Fun Facts you'd include in a book about where you live. Write your own Fun Facts page for your neighbourhood, suburb or town.
- Design a tour of the town or place where you live – what are some of the highlights of your town or home that you'd include?

POST-READING QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

- Write a description of the location of your chosen **Aussie Kids** story.
- Draw a picture of that location.
- Find a picture of that location on Google. Explain why you think your picture is accurate. What is in it that was in the story?
- Complete a Y chart of what you can see, hear and smell in that location.
- How is the location in the story you've just read different from where you live? Give a few examples.
- Complete a Venn diagram comparing where you live and where any one of the characters from the series lives.
- Imagine that you are making a film of one of the **Aussie Kids** books. Find pictures of the location and characters to help the director capture it correctly.
- Which of these locations was your favourite? Why?
- What other areas in Australia haven't been represented in these books? Eg big cities, rainforests, snowfields etc.

WRITING STYLE/STRUCTURE

Questions

1. Each book in the **Aussie Kids** series is broken up into chapters – how many are there?
2. Stories have a beginning, a middle and an end. We call this the story arc. A problem is usually introduced for the main character at the start of the story. Can you identify the main problem in the story that you read? How is the problem resolved?



Activities

- Write a story in the same style as the **Aussie Kids** series, showing where you live and your way of life.
- Make a list of the things you would do in a typical day and compare them to the things your character does. Note the similarities and differences.
- Imagine that you went to visit each (or one) of the characters in the **Aussie Kids** series. Write a postcard to a friend telling them what you did and saw and how you felt about your visit.

KEY STUDY TOPICS

Family

Questions

1. Most of the **Aussie Kids** stories are centred on one or two characters in a family. Some of them include 'extended' family. What do we mean by this?
2. Does your extended family live nearby? Do you consider some people in your life to be 'family' even if they are not related to you?

Activities

- Draw a family tree – include the people who live in your home. Then, if you have room, add your grandparent, cousins, aunts and uncles. You could also add your friends!
- Look at one of the **Aussie Kids** books and draw a family tree for that book's character.
- Draw your own map of Australia using the one at the front of the book as a guide. Mark on the map where you live. Then mark where the rest of your family lives. Write down how many different states of Australia your family lives in. (Or even different countries if some of them live overseas!)
- Do you have friends in the community who you consider to be an extension of your family? Someone who you might call grandma or aunty/uncle even though they're not officially related to you? (See *Meet Taj at the Lighthouse* page 8.) Make a list of your extended family and tell us why they are important to you.

Home/belonging

Questions

1. Describe the house or place that one of the character's lives in?

2. Would you like to live where this character lives? Why?
3. What would your life be like if you lived in one of the locations in the books? Could you live the same life as you do now?
4. Have you ever lived somewhere different from where you live now? In what ways was your life there different?

Activities

- In a group, pretend you have just started at a new school. Act out what your first morning at the new school might be like.
- Write a list of all the things that make you feel at home or like you belong. It might include things like your mum and dad, your siblings or a special toy or piece of music.
- In *Meet Mia by the Jetty*, Mia is keen to show Jim around her neighbourhood. Have you ever helped a new student on their first day at school? Draw a map of your school and mark all the places you think a new student would need to know about.

Diversity

Questions

1. How many different nationalities from around the world are represented in your classroom?

Activities

- Describe or illustrate examples of cultural diversity at your school.
- Organise a class morning tea or lunch. Can you see foods that you haven't tried before? Make a list of the new foods you try and where they are from.
- Create a word cloud to represent the different aspects of your neighbourhood or community.

Common Themes

Each story has some key common themes such as pets or animals, family, school, friends and community.

Questions

1. After reading your **Aussie Kids** story, can you tell us about the importance of a pet, family, friends or the community as part of the story arc?

Activities

- Choose one of these common themes – pets, family, friends and community – and describe how it is an important part of your life.



- Make a list of all the things you do in your family/town/region/community that have helped you get to know other people or make new friends.
- Make a list of the things the community does to be 'inclusive' of new people or people who have been living there for a long time?

KEY QUOTES

Activities

- Choose a quote from one of the books in the **Aussie Kids** series and create an A4 sized poster with this quote on it.
- Explain to the class why you chose it and what you believe it to mean.
- As a class, create a WALL OF QUOTES from the **Aussie Kids** series. It could sit next to a big map of Australia with all the locations of where the stories are set on it.

Here are some examples of quotes from the **Aussie Kids** books:

'Let's go where life takes us,' Mama agreed. 'Whatever will be, will be.' (Meet Taj at the Lighthouse, page 11)

Sometimes life takes us in directions we didn't expect to go in and it can be difficult. But these are the things that can help to make 'change' easier:

- Family
- Community – school, neighbours etc
- Our attitude.

'Is there anywhere else in the world you'd rather live?' Will asked with a sigh. Eve gave her cousin a happy, sleepy smile. 'Next to nowhere, Will,' she whispered. (Meet Eve in the Outback, page 48)

Love where you live and don't take for granted what you have:

- Shelter
- Family
- Surrounding landscape.

'The work we do at the zoo is important. We protect lots of species, so they don't become extinct.' (Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo, page 47)

It's important to care for the environment and all the different aspects of your community including the animals, flora, fauna etc.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Questions

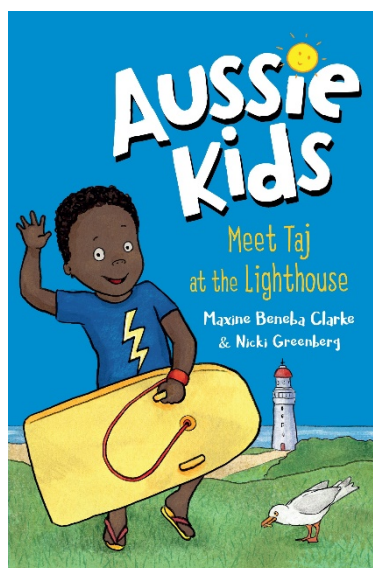
1. How do you think the illustrations add to each of the stories?
2. Do the illustrations help you to imagine the home and region of where each **Aussie Kids** story is set?
3. Look at the covers of as many **Aussie Kids** books as you can. How can you tell these books are in a series? What visual elements has the designer used to make the books look connected?
4. How has the use of colour added to the location of each story? What colour would you use if you wrote a story about your home?
5. How would you describe the illustration style of *Meet Sam at the Mangrove Creek* compared to *Meet Dooley on the Farm*? Or how about *Meet Matilda at the Festival* compared to *Meet Eve in the Outback*?
6. Look at a few of the **Aussie Kids** books. Choose two. Eg *Meet Mia by the Jetty* (illustrated by Danny Snell) and *Meet Matilda at the Festival* (illustrated by Tania McCartney). Do you think *Meet Mia by the Jetty* would feel like a different book if Tania had drawn the pictures? Do you think *Meet Matilda at the Festival* would feel different if Danny had created the illustrations?
7. Different artists have different styles and approaches to their work. Do you think this is a good thing?

Activities

- Choose one of the books in the **Aussie Kids** series. Pick out three illustrations from the story that you feel most closely represents how you feel about your home. Choose something in one of those illustrations to write a short story about (it could be something in the background like an animal or a toy or another person). Illustrate your story using different shades of just the one colour.
- Choose one of the **Aussie Kids** books and look carefully at the illustrations. How has the artist illustrated the different emotions of the main character? Make a list of all the emotions the character feels through the story and find an illustration to match each emotion.



FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA



Aussie Kids: Meet Taj at the Lighthouse
by Maxine Beneba Clarke
and Nicki Greenberg

Hi! I'm Taj.

This is my favourite T-shirt.

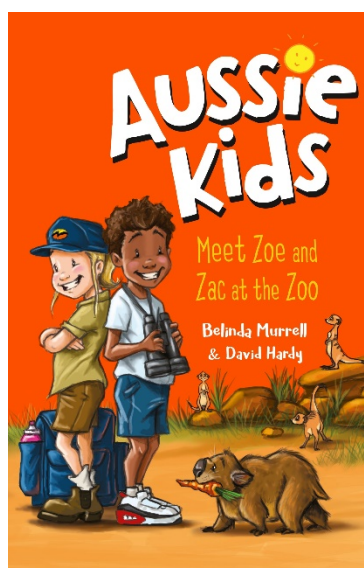
I brought it to Australia from my old home.

My family came here after a long journey.

It was hard at first, but now I love my new home!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Taj from Victoria.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



Aussie Kids: Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo
by Belinda Murrell
and David Hardy

Hi! I'm Zoe and this is Zac.

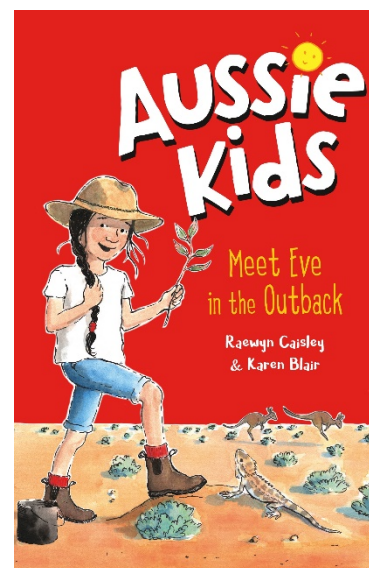
We're so lucky we live at the zoo!

As a birthday treat, we're helping out with the animals.

We can't wait!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Zoe and Zac from New South Wales.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



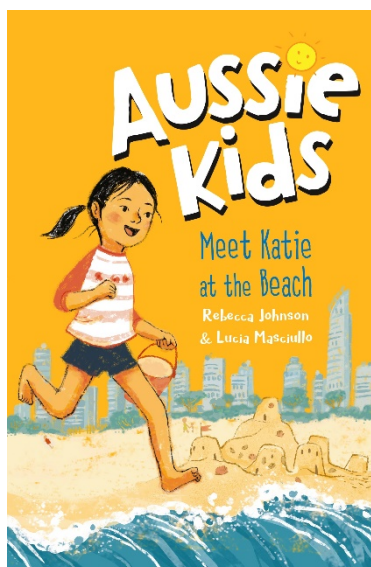
Aussie Kids: Meet Eve in the Outback
by Raewyn Caisley
and Karen Blair

Hi! I'm Eve.

I live at a roadhouse in the Nullarbor. We don't get many visitors. But today my cousin Will is coming. We'll have so much fun!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Eve from Western Australia.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



Aussie Kids: Meet Katie at the Beach
by Rebecca Johnson and Lucia Masciullo

Hi! I'm Katie.

I have a wobbly tooth that won't come out! But it's not going to spoil my trip to the beach. We're going to eat mangoes and play beach cricket!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Katie from Queensland.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



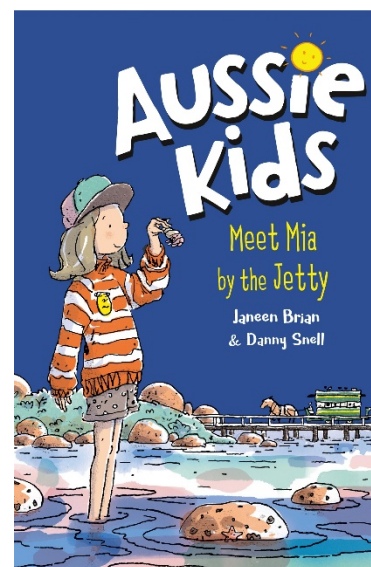
Aussie Kids: Meet Sam at the Mangrove Creek
by Paul Seden and Brenton McKenna

Hi! I'm Sam.

I have a new throw net. My cuz, Peter, and I can't wait to try it out. We want to catch a BIG barra!

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Sam from the Northern Territory.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



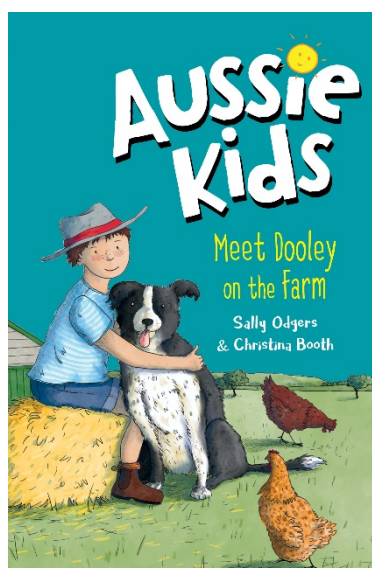
Aussie Kids: Meet Mia by the Jetty
by Janeen Brian and Danny Snell

Hi! I'm Mia.

Jim is coming to stay with us soon. I want to show him the jetty, beach and island. But I don't want my bossy sister Alice to take over. So I have a plan . . .

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Mia from South Australia.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



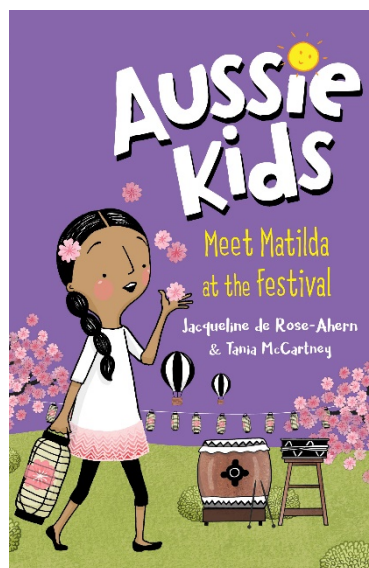
Aussie Kids: Meet Dooley on the Farm
by Sally Odgers and Christina Booth

Hi! I'm Dooley.

*My cousin is visiting our farm.
We swim in the river, feed the calves and collect berries.
But best of all, we're going to have a sleepout in the barn!*

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Dooley from Tasmania.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)



Aussie Kids: Meet Matilda at the Festival
by Jacqueline de Rose-Ahern and Tania McCartney

Hi! I'm Matilda.

*Today there's a festival at the Japanese Embassy.
That's where my friend Hansuke lives. We'll have lots of fun.
But Hansuke is going back to Japan soon.
How will I say goodbye?*

Come on an adventure with Aussie Kids and meet Matilda from the ACT.

[Teachers' resources available.](#)

ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	TOTAL
Aussie Kids: Meet Taj at the Lighthouse	Maxine Beneba Clarke & Nicki Greenberg	9781760894528	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Zoe and Zac at the Zoo	Belinda Murrell & David Hardy	9781760893651	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Eve in the Outback	Raewyn Caisley & Karen Blair	9781760894108	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Katie at the Beach	Rebecca Johnson & Lucia Masciullo	9781760893675	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Sam at the Mangrove Creek	Paul Seden & Brenton McKenna	9781760894122	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Mia by the Jetty	Janeen Brian & Danny Snell	9781760893668	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Dooley on the Farm	Sally Odgers & Christina Booth	9781760893682	1-3	\$12.99		
Aussie Kids: Meet Matilda at the Festival	Jacqueline de Rose-Ahern & Tania McCartney	9781760894511	1-3	\$12.99		
TOTAL						

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