

Play is the most powerful way young children learn.

- Every time you play, sing or read with young children they are learning about language.
- The following activities have been designed for early childhood professionals to use as a starting point for developing children's early literacy skills through play.
- Please feel free to adapt them for the home and with children of different ages.
- Don't forget to record your own ideas, activities that worked really well, relevant songs and rhymes in the Notes section opposite.
- Visit our website www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au for more fun printable activities based on this book.

Engaging with Language and Literacy

Always watch where you are going. Otherwise, you may step on a piece of the Forest that was left out by mistake.

Winnie the Pooh

- Introduce the book to the children by showing them the front cover and reading the title and author.
- Steve Parish is a well-known Australian author; do the children know any other books he has written?
- The book features several activities for young children, some of which require may require adult help. You may like to pick one or several of the activities to do with the children. The front index has a list of the activities and the time needed for each.
- As with any outdoor activities you may like to focus on some of the safety aspects first such as SLIP, SLOP, SLAP, SEEK and SLIDE. The following website offers some excellent information.

<http://www.cancer.org.au/cancersmartlifestyle/SunSmart/SunSmartschools.htm>

- Make a collection of books featuring Australian animals and environments for the children to look at in the book corner.

Being Creative Through Play

Animal Bingo

- Make your own Australian Animal Bingo. Take photos of plastic figurines of Australian animals or find pictures using Clip Art or Google Images
- Print two copies of each picture, one for the board and one for the children to choose.
- If you are able to laminate the boards and pictures they will last longer, otherwise stick them to cardboard to make them stronger.



Nature Watch – Outdoor Activities

Steve Parish

Notes

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Australian Animals

- Make a collection of toy or plastic Australian animals for the children to use with the blocks, in the water trough, sand tray or with play dough.

Inside Camping

Think of the fun pretending to camp in the bush right in the home corner. You could include props such as:

- Hats (with corks)
- Billy Cans
- Tents
- Sleeping Bags
- Toy Australian Animals
- Gum tree branches

Exploring Our World

Many of the activities in the book can be used in or adapted to a childcare setting.

Animal Scratches

- If you cannot find a tree with animal scratches in the yard or nearby children can still use the rubbing technique.
- Find trees with smooth and rough bark. Do a rubbing of each, what differences can the children see?

Leaf rubbings

- Take the children outside for a leaf hunt. Encourage the children (and staff) to bring in leaves from home.
- When doing leaf rubbings crayons, charcoal or craypas work best.
- Alternatively use paint to do some leaf printing with the children

Bird Spotting

- Take photos of the birds that visit the centre.
- Make the Bird Feeder on page 16 to encourage more birds to visit.
- The children might like to make their own binoculars out of cardboard cylinders to help them with their bird spotting. Don't forget clipboards or notebooks for the children to record their own observations.
- Do the children know the names of the birds?
- How can they find out what type of bird it is?
- Collate the photos into a book and the children can add their own drawings of birds and help write some simple text eg *Here is a magpie. Magpies are black and white.*
- If possible organise an excursion to a bush setting such as a sanctuary, national park or wildlife park.

The following website lists Wildlife Parks and Sanctuaries both South Australia and Australia wide:

<http://www.ozanimals.com/nature-travel-tourist-attractions/South-Australia/zoo/na.html>

Other books in the Nature Watch series include:

Mammals

Reptiles

Birds

Insects

Animal Homes

Dangerous Animals

Fish

Baby Animals

Things To Make and Do

Useful Websites and Links:

www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au

www.steveparish.com.au

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For more book suggestions, information and activity sheets visit www.thelittlebigbookclub.com.au

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Enjoying Dramatic and Musical Play

Role-play not only stimulates children’s imagination but also helps with social development.

Australian Animal Costumes

- The children may like to make their own costumes using coloured card and crepe paper.
- Large brown paper shopping bags make a great base for a costume.
- Paper plates are great for masks.
- What will they be a koala, a parrot or a kangaroo?

Sing songs about Australian animals such as:

- *Cuddly Koalas*
 - *Kookaburra Sits In The Old Gum Tree*
- Or you may like to sing other songs like
- *Waltzing Matilda*
 - *We Are Australian*

- At rest or relaxation time play music featuring the sounds of nature or the bush.
 - What sounds did the children hear?
 - Could they hear any animals?

Don’t forget Australia Day on the January 26th. All the above activities could be used in conjunction with Australia Day.

Songs and Rhymes

Kookaburra Sits In The Old Gum Tree

Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree
Merry merry king of the bush is he
Laugh kookaburra
Laugh kookaburra
Gay your life must be!

We Are Australian

Judith Durham

I came from the dreamtime from the dusty red soil plains
I am the ancient heart, the keeper of the flame
I stood upon the rocky shore
I watched the tall ships come
For forty thousand years I'd been the first Australian.

[chorus]

We are one, but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We share a dream and sing with one voice:
I am, you are, we are Australian.

I came upon the prison ship bowed down by iron chains.
I cleared the land, endured the lash and waited for the rains.
I'm a settler.

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Steve Parish

I'm a farmer's wife on a dry and barren run
A convict then a free man I became Australian.

[chorus]
We are one, but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We share a dream and sing with one voice:
I am, you are, we are Australian.
I'm the daughter of a digger who sought the mother lode
The girl became a woman on the long and dusty road
I'm a child of the depression
I saw the good times come
I'm a bushy, I'm a battler
I am Australian

[chorus]
We are one, but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We share a dream and sing with one voice:
I am, you are, we are Australian.

I'm a teller of stories
I'm a singer of songs
I am Albert Namatjira
I paint the ghostly gums
I am Clancy on his horse
I'm Ned Kelly on the run
I'm the one who waltzed Matilda
I am Australian

[chorus]
We are one, but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We share a dream and sing with one voice:
I am, you are, we are Australian.

I'm the hot wind from the desert
I'm the black soil of the plains
I'm the mountains and the valleys
I'm the drought and flooding rains
I am the rock, I am the sky
The rivers when they run
The spirit of this great land
I am Australian

(chorus)
We are one, but we are many
And from all the lands on earth we come
We share a dream and sing with one voice:
I am, you are, we are Australian
I am, you are, we are Australian.

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Cuddly Koalas

(sung to the tune of Ferres Jacques)

Cuddly Koalas
Cuddly Koalas
Possums too
Possums too
Wallabies and Wombats
Wallabies and Wombats
Kangaroos
Kangaroos

Waltzing Matilda

Once a jolly swagman camped by a billabong,
Under the shade of a coolibah tree,
And he sang as he watched and waited 'til his billy boiled.
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me
And he sang as he stowed that jumbuck in his tucker bag,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

Down came a jumbuck to drink at the billabong,
Up jumped the swagman and grabbed him with glee,
And he sang as he stowed that jumbuck in his tucker bag,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.
And he sang as he stowed that jumbuck in his tucker bag,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

Up rode the squatter, mounted on his thoroughbred,
Up rode the troopers, one, two, three,
Where's that jolly jumbuck you've got in your tucker bag
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.
Whose is the jolly jumbuck you've got in your tucker bag
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

Up jumped the swagman, and sprang into the billabong,
You'll never take me alive said he,
And his ghost may be heard as you're passing by that billabong,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

Waltzing Matilda, Waltzing Matilda,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.
And his ghost may be heard as you're passing by that billabong,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me,
You'll come a-Waltzing Matilda, with me.

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