

ADOPT A BUSHLAND



NAME

DATE

STUDENT ACTIVITY – YEARS FOUR TO SEVEN

WANDJU, WANDJU, NIDJA NYUNGAR BOODJA – WELCOME TO NYUNGAR COUNTRY



“Our Spirits are in the trees and the hills and the rocks and the animals. When you’re born you come from the land and when you die your spirit goes back to the land. The Spirit Ancestors from the Dreaming gave us this Law. This is our heritage. It doesn’t change.”

Ralph Winmar, 1996, *“Walwalinj: The hill that cries”*

The City of Joondalup is found in Mooro country. The Nyungar people have been here for more than 40,000 years. One of the main Indigenous groups Oor-dal-kalla was led by a Tribal Elder called Yellagonga. Many names around Joondalup come from the language used by Yellagonga and his tribe. Doondalup is the Indigenous word for Joondalup, it means ‘the lake that glistens’. Indigenous Australians have a very strong connection to the land or “Country” as they refer to it. Yellagonga and his tribe’s “Country” was based in Joondalup and the surrounding areas.

The Dreaming is not only the spiritual beliefs of Indigenous Australians but also a survival manual (where to find food or water), their law and social organisation, astronomical and geographical knowledge. Indigenous Australians believe that land is not property and that it cannot be owned. They believe they are custodians of the land, responsible for protecting places that are spiritually important. Yellagonga and his family were responsible for his “Country” and so his Dreaming was all about the Mooro Country. This responsibility now belongs to his descendants.

The Dreaming is passed on through stories, dance and art. It is only recently that these stories and language have been written down. The Elders of the tribe would teach the children through songs and stories, so they could pass on the information to their children. Some very special dances could only be performed at ceremonies called Corroborees. Some songs were only passed on to the women in the tribe. You may have heard the expression “secret women’s business” – only the women were allowed to talk about these songs. Men had their own songs and dances as well.

Yellagonga and his tribe were semi-nomadic. This means they moved around a large area that included the Joondalup lake system and the coastline from the Swan River to Yanchep and further north. They moved according to the seasons and food availability. Yellagonga and his tribe would never take more food than what they needed. When they collected bird eggs they would always leave some in the nest. Only the older kangaroos or emus were hunted so the young could grow and have babies of their own. By doing this they made sure there would be food available in the future.



Word: Ancestor	Word: Nyungar
Definition:	Definition:
Write a Sentence Using The Word:	Write a Sentence Using The Word:
Word: Dreaming	Word: Indigenous
Definition:	Definition:
Write a Sentence Using The Word:	Write a Sentence Using The Word:
Word: Responsible	Word: Custodian
Definition:	Definition:
Write a Sentence Using The Word:	Write a Sentence Using The Word:
Word: Corroboree	Word: Semi-nomadic
Definition:	Definition:
Write a Sentence Using The Word:	Write a Sentence Using The Word:
Word: Descendant	
Definition:	
Write a Sentence Using The Word:	

Questions:

1. How long have the Nyungar people lived in Mooro country? _____

2. What is the name of the main Indigenous group of the Mooro country? _____

3. Who was the Tribal Elder of this group? _____

4. What do you think Indigenous people mean when they used the word "Country"? _____

5. Yellagonga and his family were the custodians of the Mooro country. What were they responsible for?

6. How is the Dreaming passed onto children? _____

7. Why do you think the Dreaming has only recently been written down? _____

8. How did Yellagonga and his tribe make sure there was always enough food to eat? _____

9. Did Yellagonga and his tribe stay in one place? If not, why did they move? _____



Bibulmun Yorga Statue, Neil Hawkins Park, Joondalup