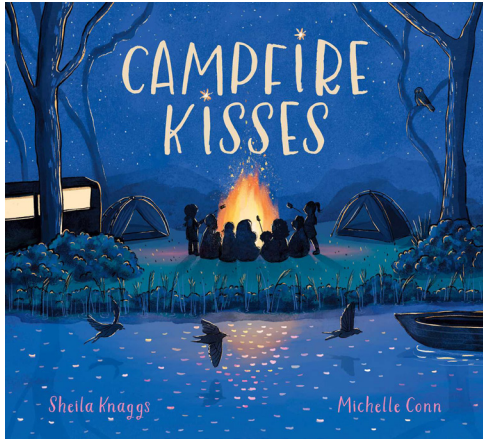




Teacher Notes

Campfire Kisses

Written by Sheila Knaggs, Illustrated by Michelle Conn

Teacher notes prepared by Bec Kavanagh

Publication details

Publisher: Affirm Press
ISBN: 9781923135116
Size/format: 32 pages, HB
RRP: \$24.99
Pub Date: 24 February 2026
Reader ages: 4-8 years

Themes

- Camping
- Family
- Australian outback
- Environment
- Animals

About the Book

*There's nothing more delightful
than to sleep beneath the stars
and wake up in the morning
to the screech of the galahs.*

Come toast a marshmallow and celebrate the universal magic of camping in this heartfelt and joyous ode to holidays in the Great Australian Bush.

About the Author

Sheila Knaggs was born in Liverpool, England, and spent her childhood years on the Isla of Man. She emigrated to Melbourne, Australia when she was fifteen,

and after finishing school, spent time living and working in Alice Springs. Sheila worked in primary schools as an Education Support Officer for thirteen years, before becoming a children's author. She has written a number of picture books, including Fairy Forest, and Fairy Beach.

About the Illustrator

Michelle Conn is an author and illustrator living on Wadawurrung Country in the coastal town of Torquay Victoria with her husband, two children and Border Collie Maggie. After years of working as a graphic designer and primary school teacher, Michelle's love of books and storytelling won over and she spends most of her spare time drawing, writing and wandering around the house in a 'thinking fog'. If Michelle's not writing or illustrating delightful worlds for children to enjoy, you'll find her along the wild and woolly cliffs of Jan Juc or sitting by a fire knitting and dreaming about living in a lighthouse.

Before Reading

- Have you ever been on a camping trip? Share your experiences with the group.
- Explore the cover of the book and read the blurb aloud. Who do you think this story is about?
- What animals might you expect to find on a camping trip in the Australian outback? Make a list and check off those you find as you read.

Comprehension questions

- What clues can you find in the first two pages that tell you this family is going on a camping trip?
- What kind of place are the family looking for to set up their campsite?
- What sound do the campers wake up to?
- What activities do people do while they're camping?
- What should you do when 'the clouds begin to grumble and the trees begin to sway'?
- What signals that the rain is finished and it's time to play again?
- Where do the campers cook their dinner?
- How would you describe the ending of the book?

Literacy

RHYME

The author uses an ABCB rhyme scheme, where the end of the second line rhymes with the end of the fourth line, but the first and third lines don't rhyme.

Choose one of the verses from the book and underline the end rhymes to help you get a sense of this kind of rhyme.

- Have you encountered this kind of rhyme in stories or songs before?
- What other rhyme schemes can you think of?

DESCRIBING MOVEMENT

This story is about camping, but it's also about a journey that this family takes together, travelling from their home to the campsite. Words that describe movement or action (like driving or rolling) are called VERBS.

- Make a list of the verbs in the book.
- What other verbs can you think of that might be useful for a road trip or camping story?

SETTING: OUTBACK AUSTRALIA

The setting of a story is where it happens. Writers bring the setting to life using sensory descriptions (taste, touch, sound, smell, sight) and specific details (specific animals or plants, the weather etc). Setting is also often connected to what happens in the book (the plot) and the way the characters feel.

The setting for this book is 'the Great Australian Book'. The author describes the 'soft breeze' and if you look closely at the illustrations you can see native animals and birds such as galahs and kangaroos.

- What other details can you find in the book that create the setting?
- Consider how the setting connects to the action (when it rains, the characters go into their tents and caravans, or put on gumboots). How else does the setting connect to the action of the story?
- What kind of feelings does this setting evoke?

When reading a book set in the Australian outback, there is an opportunity to reflect on the traditional owners and First Nations stories of place.

- o Who are the traditional owners in your area? (you can find out using this map <https://aiatsis.gov.au/whose-country>)
- o What does it mean to care for and connect with Country as a First Nations person?

The following titles can be read as companion books to support this discussion:

- My Country by Ezekiel Kwaymullina & Sally Morgan
- Wilam by Aunty Joy Murphy, Andrew Kelly & Lisa Kennedy
- Caring for Country by Bruce Pascoe & Bill Gammage
- Bush Tukka Guide for Kids by Samantha Martin

descriptions, and think about using the details to evoke a particular feeling or emotion for the reader.

- Using the ABCB rhyme scheme from the book, write your own verse about the Australian outback. Bonus points for including some verbs describing action or movement!

Final reflections

- How did this story make you feel? Could you relate to what was happening?
- What else would you recommend to someone who enjoyed this book?
- Does this story make you want to go camping? Why/why not?

Creative Activities

- Plan your own camping trip. Camping is a great way to discover new places, spend time with friends and family, and take a break from work or school. Even if you've been camping before, plan a camping trip for your family. You'll need to consider:
 - Where you'll go and how you'll get there
 - Where you'll stay (a tent, a caravan, out under the stars?)
 - What you'll take to eat, remembering that you won't be able to use gas or electricity to cook your food!
 - What you'll need to pack
 - What activities you'll do while you're there
- Where would you set your camping story? Draw a picture of your ideal campsite, making sure that you include specific trees and animals – the more details the better!
- Write a short scene to accompany your drawing. In the scene, bring the setting to life using sensory