

# BLAK BOOK OF THE MONTH

## YEAR 3 & 4

'**Blak Book of the Month**' is an initiative to support the inclusion of First Nations children's books regularly throughout the year in all Australian classrooms. This initiative can be lead by individual teachers or taken up across the whole school by downloading the other 'Blak Book of the Month' resources for:

- [Early Childhood and Foundation](#)
- [Year 1 and 2](#)
- [Year 5 and 6](#)

The following books have been carefully selected to cover a range of First Nations themes/content such as the Stolen Generations, Country, language, storytelling, art, music and activism; as well as link to all subject areas in the [Australian Curriculum](#). Books have also been carefully chosen for particular months to align with significant dates within each month, e.g. the book *Charlie's Swim* was chosen for the month of November to coincide with Remembrance Day (11 November).



You can purchase the following books from [Riley Callie Resources](#), an Aboriginal owned and run educational online shop/business. Books can be purchased individually or Riley Callie Resources and I have partnered to create a '**Blak Book of the Month - Year 3 and 4 Book Pack**' for your convenience. To purchase the book pack head on over to the Riley Callie website [here](#). Use the discount code NGANGAANHA for 5% off!



Several of the books listed are also read online by First Nations storytellers in the [Story Box Library](#) (SBL) website and app. If you have a subscription to SBL, click on the SBL icon next to each book to take you there.

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## JANUARY

### DAY BREAK

**Amy McQuire & Matt Chun**

Australia Day (26 January) is not generally embraced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and is instead recognised as a Day of Mourning, Survival Day or Invasion Day. *Day Break* is a crucial story that will open up a conversation on truth-telling for the next generation. The story refocuses the narratives around 'Australia Day' to First Nations survival and resistance, and in doing so honours the past while looking to the future. Any lessons about Australia Day should always include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, and this book is a great place to start!

## FEBRUARY

### SORRY DAY

**Coral Vass & Dub Leffler**

*Sorry Day* is a powerful book that entwines two stories in a captivating retelling of the momentous day (13th of February 2008) when the then Prime Minister of Australia, Kevin Rudd, acknowledged the sorrows of the past and said 'Sorry' to the generations of children who were taken from their homes. This is the perfect book to read on the anniversary of Kevin Rudd's apology to the Stolen Generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



# BLAK BOOK OF THE MONTH

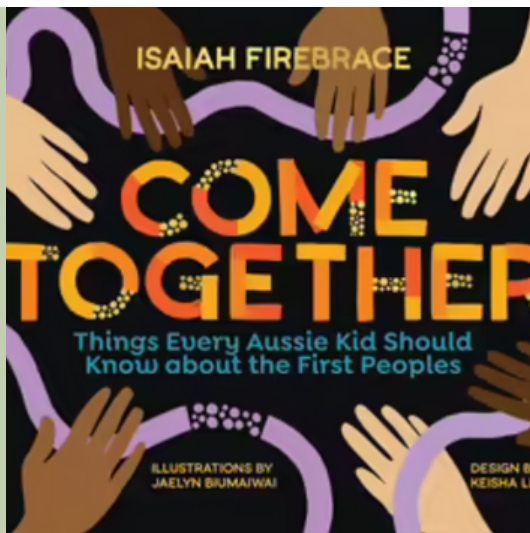
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### MARCH

#### COME TOGETHER

**Isaiah Firebrace, Jaelyn Biumaiwai & Keisha Leon**

*Come Together* is a heart-warming, debut picture book written by pop artist Isaiah Firebrace. This essential book establishes a foundation of First Nations knowledge with 20 key topics, such as [Acknowledgement of Country](#), identity, ceremony, caring for [Country](#), traditional languages and [the Dreaming](#). This is a great book to read early in the year as it explains a lot of key Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander terminology and concepts that will inevitably appear in many other First Nations books. You can also use pages 4-5 as a starting point to create your own unique and meaningful class [Acknowledgement of Country](#).



### APRIL

#### OUR FLAG, OUR STORY

**Bernard Namok Jnr, Thomas Mayo & Tori-Jay Mordey**

*Our Flag, Our Story* is an engaging, personal story that invites young readers to learn about the [Torres Strait Islander Flag](#) as a symbol of unity, shared identity and pride for Torres Strait Islander people. *Our Flag, Our Story* is the perfect book to read with students in preparation for the anniversary of when the flag was officially recognised and presented to the people of Torres Strait (29 May 1992) at the sixth "Torres Strait Cultural Festival". If you don't do so already, ensure that all three flags of Australia are displayed in your classroom; the Australian flag, the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag.



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### MAY

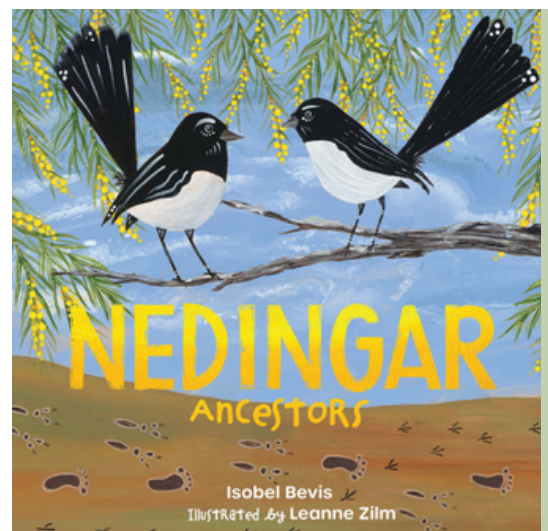
#### **SAY YES: A STORY OF FRIENDSHIP, FAIRNESS AND A VOTE FOR HOPE** **Jennifer Castles & Paul Seden**

May is a very full month of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander significant dates. National Sorry Day is on the 26th, the beginning of National Reconciliation Week is on the 27th and the anniversary of the Torres Strait Islander flag is on the 29th! *Say Yes* is the perfect book to read for the 27th of May which is also the anniversary of the 1967 Referendum - another significant date in May! *Say Yes* is a story about the two women who came together to change the law... and how the Australian people said YES to make positive change in our society.

### JUNE

#### **NEDINGAR: ANCESTORS** **Isobel Bevis & Leanne Zilm**

*Nedingar: Ancestors* is a lyrical, picture book that celebrates the beauty of Country, family and Noongar language. Watch Isobel Bevis read the story in Noongar [here](#). Ancestors are spoken about frequently in First Nations stories, and can be a difficult concept to explain to young children. This is a great book to explore Aboriginal beliefs about ancestors and where we believe the spirit of our ancestors are (e.g. in animals, within ourselves, in the sky or in the Country around us). This is a beautiful book!

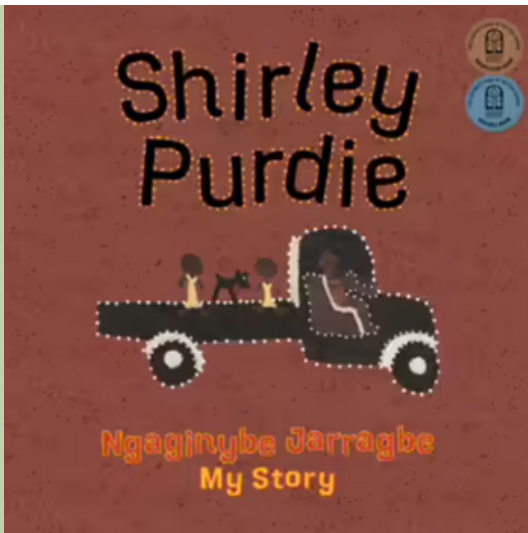


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### JULY

#### NGAGINYBE JARRAGBE, MY STORY Shirley Purdie

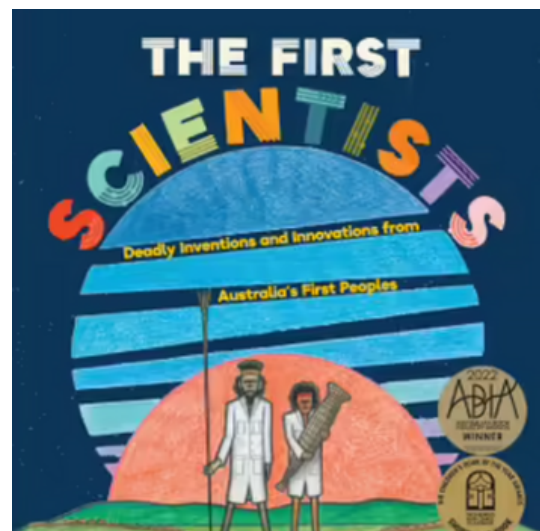


*Ngaginybe Jarragbe, My Story* is the self-told life story of Aboriginal artist Shirley Purdie in both English and Gija language. Shirley Purdie shares vignettes of her life growing up on Mabel Downs station, and her Gija culture, [Country](#) and [Dreaming](#). She shares the story of her working life, as a maid in the homestead and now as an artist. Use this book as a focus in Visual Art lessons. Explore the life of Shirley Purdie as an Aboriginal woman and artist. Use the [planning flowchart](#) from the Art Gallery of South Australia to engage students in an appropriate art activity (that does not involve copying her work).

### AUGUST

#### THE FIRST SCIENTISTS Corey Tutt & Blak Douglas

This is a great text to read for National Science Week this month! *The First Scientists* is an illustrated science book from Corey Tutt of [Deadly Science](#). This book will nourish readers' love of science and develop their respect for First Nations knowledge at the same time. It covers a range of topics such as astronomy, tools and weapons, bush medicine, land management and some short profiles about inspirational First Nations people such as David Unaipon, Professor Lisa Jackson Pulver AM and Auntie Rosie McGrady.



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## SEPTEMBER

### MARNGROOK

**Titta Secombe & Grace Fielding**



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have excelled in many different sports - but especially in footy! Most of the AFL and NRL finals are played in September. *Marngrook* is based on the sometimes controversial theory of how the AFL developed from 'marngrook'; a ball game played by Aboriginal people in north west Victoria more than 150 years ago. The story takes place at the foot of Duwul, the highest mountain in the Grampians region of north west Victoria and the traditional Country of the Djab-Wurrung and Jardwadjali clans. Follow the instructions of how to play [Marngrook](#) in the [Yulunga](#) traditional Indigenous games resource and have a game with your class!

## OCTOBER

### BROTHER MOON

**Maree McCarthy Yoelu & Samantha Fry**

*Brother Moon* is a powerful story lovingly told by a great-grandfather to his great-grandson. Great-Grandpa is a masterful storyteller and beneath the dark sky of the Northern Territory, he tells a mysterious story about his brother and how his brother guides his connection to [Country](#). As the tale unfolds, it is finally revealed that his brother is the moon and Great-Grandpa describes how he uses the phases of the moon to guide him when he goes hunting and fishing. This is a great text to demonstrate how First Nations people passed on information orally in stories for thousands and thousands of years.



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## NOVEMBER

### CHARLIE'S SWIM

**Edith Wright & Charmaine Ledden-Lewis**

*Charlie's Swim* is the story of a brave Aboriginal man, Charlie, who saved a woman and child from drowning during the Japanese attack on Broome in WWII in 1942. Read this book for [Remembrance Day](#) (11 November) to commemorate servicemen and women, as well as civilians like Charlie, who sacrificed their lives to save others. Students may be unaware that Australia was [attacked](#) in WWII!

## DECEMBER

### STORY DOCTORS

**Boori Monty Pryor & Rita Sinclair**

*Story Doctors* is an empowering story for all Australians, acknowledging our true history, embracing inclusivity, and celebrating the healing powers of nature and culture. Finish the year with this beautiful book that celebrates the power of stories to unite us, how nature connects us, and the revelation that the medicine needed for healing lies within us all. Boori Monty Pryor takes readers through 80,000+ years of strength, sickness, and immense possibility. Follow the journey, and be part of the healing.

