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Down Under (Vanishing Cultures Series)



Synopsis

Amprenula, a young Tiwi girl from an island off the Australian coast, gathers food with her mother. Amprenula lives closely with the land, just as her people have done for thousands of years, taking only what they need from the forest and the ocean around them. For the Tiwi and other Aborigines, the land is sacred. It connects them with their ancestors and the beginning of creation. As Amprenula combs through the forests and mangrove swamps, she is proud to travel along the same paths, sharing the same land, as her ancestors from centuries ago.

Book Information

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Age Range: 5 - 11 years

Grade Level: 4 - 6

Customer Reviews

Grade 3-6-- Reynolds focuses her attention and her camera on a few individuals to relate information about daily life among the Tiwi, who live off the coast of northern Australia. After an introduction that briefly examines the concepts of walkabout and Dreamtime, readers meet a young girl who asks her mother to tell her a story about their tribe. Through this story and other details, readers learn about Tiwi art, food gathering, and customs. The author concludes with a two-page addendum about her experiences living with this group. Some of the full-color photographs have postcard beauty, while others are almost surrealistic; all are outstanding. Captions are used sparingly to explain ideas introduced in the text. Down Under will be successful as curriculum

support , in conjunction with Browne's *An Aboriginal Family* (Lerner, 1985), which looks at another Northern Territory tribe, or Cobb's *This Place Is Lonely* (Walker, 1991) , and as supplementary reading for children interested in learning more about Australia's native peoples. A world map on the endpapers pinpoints the Tiwis' home. --Jeanette Larson, Texas State Library, Austin Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

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This is a very short, nicely illustrated story that gives a glimpse into the aboriginal culture. Nicely done.

The *Vanishing Culture* series is one of the best teacher resources I have found in a very long time. Beautifully illustrated and crafted stories immediately engage the students as they get to know a family in the vanishing culture. I have used the books to explore fundamental needs and to inspire critical thinking by comparing cultures. Participants also engaged in problem solving as we discussed what we could learn about sustainability from these ancient cultures. They have also been a wonderful resource for both physical and political geography since cultures are represented in varied continents and biomes and inspire contrasts such as the mountains of Nepal to the arid country of outback Australia. There is no better way to bring a culture to life than stories about real people. Each of these books has two - a story of a family beginning with earlier generations and the story of the author's journey into the focus culture. I have been teaching an Australian studies course for some time. *Down Under* is a wonderful resource to introduce students to a very rich and very ancient culture.

Economic development, technological growth, and environmental degradation have affected the lives of all people on this planet. Yet modernization has changed the way of life more slowly across generations for some people. In this outstanding book series, Jan Reynolds offers readers a fascinating glimpse into several such societies and describes how families meet their subsistence needs, practice their beliefs, interact in their communities, and live in the elements. To effectively communicate some fairly sophisticated lessons to younger children, the clear narratives each focus on a particular family, and the vivid photographs capture a wealth of interesting information about their activities, clothes, food, and surroundings. Seeing a young aborigine boy pulling an enormous carpet snake out of a log and reading about how the Inuit people survived on a diet consisting only of caribou meat and fat are just a few of the unique experiences that reading this book series will entail. The series has seven books. This book, *Down Under*, visits the Tiwi, aborigine people who live on Bathurst Island in Australia.

This is an excellent picture book about Aboriginal life in modern day Australia. Actually this follows the Tiwi tribe of Aboriginal peoples who live on a small island off the coast of Australia. High quality photographs accompany the text. The format is "a day in the life of a child", and we follow a tribe who is doing their walkabout. The Tiwi tribe is nomadic and they take journeys called walkabouts, the same journey on foot that their ancestors walked. We see photos of, and text explains, such things as a mother telling a story to her daughter before bedtime near the fire, hunting for snakes and bandicoot. We see how children are equally responsible for hunting and gathering as their parents and grandparents. As the book progresses we learn of certain animals and reptiles that live in the area. We share in a ceremony to honor the dead and see the adults playing with the children at the beach. The author learned this information by personally traveling with this tribe on their walkabout. The introduction and an afterward explain more details about that to the adults who are reading this book. This is a wonderful book and it rounded out our studies of Australia. It is not easy to find great books about Aboriginal people for this age range-this is a great one! This is one of a series of books about "vanishing cultures" by this author.

This is a picture book about the Tiwi tribe that lives on a small island off the coast of Australia. This book tells the story of a young girl named Ampenula. We follow the young girl and her mother as they cling to the ways of their ancestors before them. This book tells us about how they find food, how they celebrate and make their own houses. I would recommend this book for young kids that are interested in the world around them. Most of us will never get the chance to travel to Australia but

this book gives us a great idea of how the people there live! Great photos!

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