



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas



## A is for Australia & A is for Australian Animals

By Frané Lessac  
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\*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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### Outlines:

#### A is for Australia

What is the Fremantle Doctor? Where is Qui Qui? And why are some islands named after days of the week? You'll uncover these exciting facts when you explore the A to Z of Australia – from Bondi to Kakadu and all the way to Taronga Zoo. Discover why Australia is one of the most amazing countries in the world!

#### A is for Australian Animals

Australia is full of the most amazing animals on the planet! What animal has six thumbs? What animal produces square poo? What animal is made up of 95 per cent water and is highly venomous? Discover the answers to these questions and more in this factastic tour of Australian animals.

### Author/Illustrator Information:

Frané Lessac is an author and illustrator of international renown, having over forty children's books published throughout the world. She was born in the USA and lived on the Caribbean island of Montserrat and London before moving to Australia. Frané has contributed her distinctive paintings to many critically acclaimed children's picture books, including *My Little Island*, a Reading Rainbow feature book. Also, *On the Same Day in March* was named a Top Ten Science Books by ALA Booklist. Frané's contribution to Amnesty International's *We Are All Born Free*, celebrating the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, has been translated into more than 30 languages and was a USBBY Outstanding International Book.

### How to Use These Notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

<p><b>These notes are for:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary years F-2</li> <li>• Ages 5+</li> </ul>	<p><b>Key Learning Areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• Art</li> <li>• Geography</li> <li>• Science</li> </ul>	<p><b>Example of:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-fiction</li> <li>• Picture book</li> </ul>	<p><b>Themes/Ideas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Australia</li> <li>• Travel</li> <li>• Animals</li> </ul>
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National Curriculum Focus:*							
<b>English</b>	Year 1	Year 2	<b>Geography</b>	Year 1	<b>Science</b>	Year 2	<b>Visual Arts</b>
Foundation	ACELA1447	ACELA1462	Foundation	ACHGK005	Foundation	ACSSU030	F-2
ACELA1430	ACELT1581	ACELA1463	ACHGK001	ACHGK007	ACSSU004	ACSSU032	ACAVAM106
ACELA1786	ACELT1582	ACELT1587	ACHGK002	ACHGS007	ACSIS233	ACSHE034	ACAVAM107
ACELA1440	ACELT1583	ACELT1589	ACHGK003	ACHGS008		ACSHE035	ACAVAM108
ACELT1575	ACELT1586	ACELT1590	ACHGK004	ACHGS009	Year 1	ACSIS037	ACAVAR109
ACELT1577	ACELY1655	ACELT1591	ACHGS001	ACHGS011	ACSSU017	ACSSU041	
ACELT1578	ACELY1657	ACELY1665	ACHGS003		ACSSU211		
ACELY1645	ACELY1658	ACELY1667		Year 2	ACSSU019		
ACELY1646	ACELY1661	ACELY1668		ACHGK010	ACSHE021		
ACELY1647		ACELY1671		ACHGK011	ACSHE022		
ACELY1648				ACHGK013	ACSSU024		
ACELY1651				ACHGS013			
				ACHGS014			
				ACHGS017			

\*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas

## Discussion Questions and Activities:

### English

#### Preliminary Questions

Before reading *A is for Australia* or *A is for Australian Animals*, view the cover and title of the book. Identify the following:

- Title
- Author/illustrator
- Publisher
- Blurb

Based on the cover, what do you think this book is about? Do you think it is fiction (imaginative) or nonfiction (informative)? What clues are there to support what you think?

#### Discussion Questions

Are *A is for Australia* and *A is for Australian Animals* imaginative, informative or persuasive texts? Are they a combination of more than one of these types of texts? How can you tell? Who do you think the book was created for?

Imagine you went on a holiday to one of the locations in *A is for Australia* or you saw one of the animals in *A is for Australian Animals*. Write a journal about what you saw, heard and thought. Design and write a postcard to a classmate about your experience.

Ask students who have visited any of the locations mentioned in the *A is for Australia* or seen any of the animals in *A is for Australian Animals* to stand up and share their impressions with the class. What other facts might they have included on the page based on their experience?

Write a poem about any of the locations or animals mentioned in these books. You could write a haiku, acrostic or free verse poem using the words and illustrations in the book for inspiration. Illustrate your poems and bind them together to create a unique book of Australian poetry.

*A is for Australia* and *A is for Australian Animals* are non-fiction picture books. Write an imaginative fiction story about yourself or a character who visits or lives in one of the locations or sees one of the animals featured in the books. Use the interesting facts about that location or animal as a story starter.

Write a letter to Frané Lessac giving your thoughts on these books. What did you like about them? What did they teach you? Edit your letter then send it to Walker Books Australia (Locked Bag 22, Newtown NSW 2042) to pass on to Frané!

Research the author/illustrator. What other books has she written/illustrated? Which of these books can you find in your school library? Choose your favourite and present it to the class using persuasive language to encourage others to read it. Read more about Frané Lessac at [www.franelessac.com](http://www.franelessac.com).

Discuss the layout and design of the books. Why are some locations/animals on a single page while others are on a double-page spread?

What colours are particularly emphasised on each page? Why do you think Frané Lessac chose to make that colour prominent?

Design a tourism poster or flyer that uses persuasive techniques to encourage people from overseas to visit Australia. Use facts and locations from the books to help you come up with some persuasive elements to include in your poster or flyer.

In small groups, find other books about Australia in your school library. Compare these books with *A is for Australia* and *A is for Australian Animals* and discuss what is similar and what is different about the books. Give a short presentation to the class on how the authors/illustrators deal with the subject of Australia differently.

Write a book review on *A is for Australia* or *A is for Australian Animals*. Write what you liked about the book and if you think the author/illustrator did a good job of conveying information in an interesting way. Mention any books that are similar to *A is for Australia* and *A is for Australian Animals* and make a recommendation as to who you think will like this book.

There are several spreads featuring people swimming at the beach. Have a class discussion about the rules for keeping safe when at the beach, including:

- Sun safety
- Where to swim when in the water
- Wildlife to look out for
- Geography

The Great Barrier Reef faces a number of environmental and man-made threats to its ongoing existence. Why do you think the Great Barrier Reef is important to Australians? Why is it important to preserve the reef? What are some steps you could take to help look after the reef?



# Walker Books Classroom Ideas

Each of the locations and animals featured in these books has distinctive features that make them a unique and special part of Australia. Choose three of the locations or animals and make a list of their distinctive features.

Choose a location or animals mentioned in these books and compile a list of questions that you could ask to find out more about it. Where do you think you could find this information? Use this list of questions to research the location and present your findings in a PowerPoint presentation or a poster. Show where you can find this location or animals on a map of Australia and include images and text that give the reader more information than they can find in the book.

What do you think someone who has never visited Australia would think it looks like? Interview any students, staff members or family member who were not born in Australia. What do you think they would find surprising in this book? Why?

Create a spread in similar style to the book about your school or an Australian location or animal of your choice. Illustrate the page to show the most interesting features of the location. Include lots of interesting facts about your location around the spread. Display it in your classroom.

Several spreads mention the traditional owners of the land. Research the other locations to find their traditional owners. Who are the traditional owners of the area your school is in?

Make a list of animals featured in these books. Make a note of their location and if they can be found in other locations in Australia and the rest of the world.

Choose several of the animals in these books and discuss why you think they live in that location. How does that location provide food and shelter for that animal? Could they survive in a different location? For example, would the Lake Eyre Dragon survive in Fremantle?

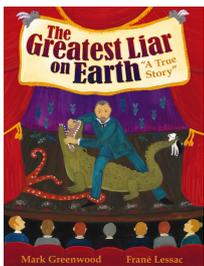
Choose two locations from *A is for Australia* and compare their landscapes. How are they similar and how are they different? Why do you think they are different?

## The Arts

Many of the locations in these books have similar features such as water, though Frané Lessac has used different colours to represent water in many of the illustrations. Why do you think that is? Also take note of the colours she has used in the sky. Keep a journal for a week where you take note of the colours you can see in the sky several times a day. Do your findings surprise you? Why?

The artist's images are created in gouache. Discuss the artist's choice of mediums with students and encourage them to create a picture in the same style and an illustration using a different medium.

## Other Books by Frané Lessac:



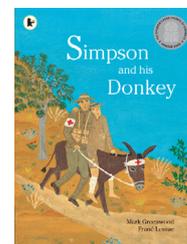
**The Greatest Liar on Earth**  
Author: Mark Greenwood  
Illustrator: Frané Lessac  
HB 9781921529856

Classroom ideas available



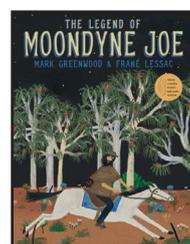
**Midnight**  
Author: Mark Greenwood  
Illustrator: Frané Lessac  
HB 9781921977718

Classroom ideas available



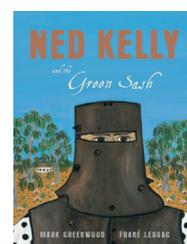
**Simpson and his Donkey**  
Author: Mark Greenwood  
Illustrator: Frané Lessac  
HB 9781921150180  
PB 9781921529542

Classroom ideas available



**The Legend of Moondyne Joe**  
Author: Mark Greenwood  
Illustrator: Frané Lessac  
PB 9781921720123

Classroom ideas available



**Ned Kelly and the Green Sash**  
Author: Mark Greenwood  
Illustrator: Frané Lessac  
PB 9781922244598

Classroom ideas available