

Queensland **Ballet**

Kombumerri Dreaming

Teachers' Resource Kit



Queensland Ballet acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we train and perform. Long before we arrived on this land, it played host to the dance expression of our First Nations Peoples. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging, and acknowledge the valuable contribution they have made and continue to make to the cultural landscape of this Country.

The Project

The *Kombumerri Dreaming* project is a collaborative initiative between **Dr Beth Tailby**, a Kamilaroi woman and Languages teacher, Kombumerri Traditional Custodian **Uncle Max Dillon**, and **Queensland Ballet**.

Rooted in First Nations storytelling, movement, and cultural exploration of the project, the kit began as part of Toogoolawah State School's 2024 NAIDOC Week celebrations and has since expanded to deliver workshops across Queensland, reaching hundreds of students. With Uncle **Max's** explicit permission, his Dreaming stories and language form the strong foundation for these workshops designed to promote cultural pride, empathy, and creative expression in alignment with the Australian Curriculum.

Delivered by Queensland Ballet Teaching Artists trained in cultural protocols, the workshops provide students and teachers meaningful engagement with First Nations culture. This Teacher Resource Kit is the culmination of many yarns and drafts. Beth, Uncle Max, and Queensland Ballet's Community and Education Team met and worked on Wakka Wakka Land in Toogoolawah, and Yaggera Land in Esk. It has been developed to empower educators with tools co-created by First-Nations Australians to support implementing diverse content and perspectives in their classrooms in a safe, fun, and positive way.

Cover: Queensland Ballet Kombumerri Dreaming Project immersion on Yaggera Country, 2025. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

Table of Contents

The Project.....	1
Lesson Overviews and Curriculum Connection.....	3
How To Use This Kit	5
Exploring Protocol.....	7
Applying the 8 Ways Framework.....	12
Kombumerri Dreaming Story.....	14
Learning Experiences.....	16
Learning Objectives.....	16
Introductory Tasks.....	16
Kombumerri Country-Inspired Warm-Up Prompts.....	17
Listening, Learning, Making and Doing Tasks.....	19
Prep – Grade 02.....	21
Movement and Extension Tasks.....	22
Grade 03 – 06.....	25
Scaffolded Improvisation and Extension Tasks	25
Lesson Close and Exit Tickets.....	30
Special Thanks.....	32
References.....	33
Appendix.....	34
Video Resource Transcript: Uncle Max Dillon Introduction	34

Lesson Overviews and Curriculum Connection

Inspired by **Uncle Max Dillon's** Kombumerri Dreaming story *Biladi Billan*, the learning experiences in the Kit are carefully crafted to align with the Australian Curriculum, Version 9 (ACARA) Dance content descriptors and elaborations. They provide scaffolded activities for Prep to Grade 2, and Grade 3 to 6, focusing on movement, storytelling, and cultural exploration. Each task invites students to engage with cultural narratives, enhance their creative expression, and develop their understanding of movement and dance as a form of communication and connection.

Cross-Curricular Connections

The learning experiences provide opportunities for cross-curricular integration, particularly within the English curriculum. Students can explore themes such as bravery, transformation, and individuality through narrative writing tasks, and unpacking story elements like characterisation and motifs. Activities may include reading or listening to a reading of the Dreaming story transcript (or using the digital resource), creating illustrations, and making predictions about the narrative. These tasks can be extended to include age-appropriate PLD (phonics, literacy, or dictation) exercises, fostering comprehension, vocabulary development, and critical thinking. By linking storytelling with visual and written responses, these activities support ACARA: The Arts General Capabilities of Critical and Creative Thinking, Literacy, and Personal and Social Capability.



Image: Queensland Ballet Kombumerri Dreaming In-School Workshop at Toogoolawah State School. Photography by Queensland Ballet.

Prep – Grade 02 Learning Experiences

These tasks introduce students to Kombumerri Country through movement and dance, beginning with an Acknowledgement of Country.

Key activities include:

- **Exploration of Storytelling:** Using dramatic play and improvisation to retell the story of *Biladi Billan*, students explore the characters, theme, and narrative structure.
- **Movement Creation:** Students devise and perform dance sequences inspired by the bravery of the doves, contrasting their movements with those of the fearful crows and magpies.

Connection to Curriculum

Students will:

- Learn about First Nations storytelling as an important medium for sharing knowledge about culture, people, and Country.
- Explore cultural protocols
- Create movement phrases inspired by the story that reflect characters and express their emotions.
- Perform and reflect on their work, using feedback to refine ideas.

Grade 03 – 06 Learning Experiences

These tasks deepen cultural and creative engagement by focusing on transformation, individuality, and celebration. Activities build students' understanding of movement and dance as a medium to explore and express stories.

Key activities include:

- **Cultural Exploration:** Students explore First Nations protocols and storytelling's cultural importance. They discuss the transformation of the birds and its symbolism.
- **Movement Development:** Through improvisation, students respond to the story by creating contrasting movement sequences (e.g., the plain vs. colourful states of the birds), exploring dynamics, movement qualities, and structure.
- **Performance Creation:** Students devise and refine a narrative dance sequence, showcasing their interpretation of the story's themes and celebrating diversity.

Connection to Curriculum

Students will:

- Explore how First Nations stories and the use of resources co-created by First Nations Australians convey connections to Country, culture, and people.
- Explore protocols for respecting Indigenous Cultural and Intellectual Property rights
- Apply elements of dance (such as contrast, repetition, and dynamics) to explore character and mood, developing and structuring narrative movement sequences that reflect each section of the story.
- Perform as individuals and groups, demonstrating the transformation of the birds.

Through these learning experiences, students will engage with storytelling, movement, and creative exploration to enhance their understanding of cultural narratives and movement as a powerful form of self-expression.

How To Use This Kit

Get the most out of the *Kombumerri Dreaming Teacher Resource Kit* with expert tips from **Dr Tailby** and Queensland Ballet's Education Manager **Kath Cadd** to confidently incorporate movement, storytelling, and First Nations perspectives in your classroom.

- **No Expertise Needed:** You don't have to be a First Nations person or a Dance teacher to use this Kit. It's about movement, storytelling, and having fun for you and your students.
- **Highly Scaffolded Tasks:** Ready to go – the learning experiences align with **ACARA V9 (The Arts – Dance)** and support cross-curricular connections and transferable teaching practices.
- **Collaborate and Enrich:** Leverage this resource to build or strengthen relationships with Arts teachers, First Nations officers, Cultural Advisors, or local Elders. Share lesson ideas and explore integrating local stories into the learning template where appropriate. Always obtain permission to share stories and ensure cultural contributions are acknowledged and compensated.
- **Adapt to Your Context:** Once familiar with the Kit, tweak it to suit your location, students, and learning goals – whether it's part of a unit of work or tied to a specific time of year.
- **Play and Experiment:** Don't be afraid to try something new. Mistakes are part of the process, and it's better to do something than nothing.
- **Connect with Country:** Take the warm-up activities outside. Find a safe, shady spot, remove shoes, and let students connect with the land beneath their feet.
- **Share and Grow:** We'd love to hear about your successes, learnings, tweaks, and ideas for extending the Kit. Your feedback helps this resource evolve!
- **Link to English and Beyond:** Explore connections with literature by unpacking books, using images, and analysing narrative structures, characterisation, and motifs.
- **Use Tasks for Assessment:** Extend tasks to create performances for informal audiences. Take note and observe during the learning sequences and performances. Observe and record students:



Image: Dr Beth Tailby and Queensland Ballet Education Manager Kath Cadd on Yaggera Country. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

Prep

- Sharing their own unique choreography with familiar/informal audiences.
- Describing their experiences, observations, ideas, and feelings about:
 - The Country they live on/come from.
 - The Kombumerri Dreaming story's characters, themes, and the morals.
 - How they use movement to communicate an idea.
- Using play, their imagination, knowledge, and skills to create and share:
 - Different moves in the warm-up phase of the workshop.
 - How story characters move using on the spot/non-locomotor (gestures, facial expressions) or travel/locomotor movement (whole body).
 - Ideas about the story.
 - Ideas about how to use movement to communicate an idea.

Grade 01 – 02

- Using movements and the elements of dance when they are improvising and creating their own movement in response to moments in the story.
- Discussing their ideas in response to the themes, characters and moments of the story, **the movements they've chosen to portray** and when answering Exit Tickets.
- Working safely in the dance space – being spatially aware, using fundamental movement skills, following instructions, respecting others, taking drink breaks etc.
- Sharing their performance and choreography in class or for performance.

Grade 03 – 04

- Experimenting with working safely in the dance space – being spatially aware, using their movement skills, following instructions, participating in warm-up/cool down phases etc.
- Using their response to the stimulus and the elements of dance to choreograph dance that communicates ideas, perspectives and/or meaning as well as the characters and story respectfully.
- Participating in discussion about how themes from within the Kombumerri Dreaming story **explore the people's connection to their Country**.
- Sharing their responses, ideas and reflections on movement in class.
- Interacting with a map of Indigenous Australia to locate different Countries/Nations and describing features of the locations discussed.

Grade 05 – 06

- Completing an Exit Ticket, explaining how themes from the Dreaming story help to share learning and continue to revitalise culture.
- Demonstrating safe practices in the dance space: spatial awareness, safe technique, following instructions, and participating in warm-up/cool-down.
- Experimenting with dance elements and choreographic devices, applying movement prompts to structure dance sequences.
- Creating a dance that communicates ideas explored in the story, such as individuality, change, and diversity.
- Sharing ideas, reflections, and responses on movement in class.
- Engaging with a map of Indigenous Australia, identifying Countries/Nations and describing key features of the locations discussed.

This Kit is your tool for creative exploration – take it, make it your own, and watch the magic of movement and storytelling come to life! **Don't forget to** share your successes or get in touch to ask questions at education@queenslandballet.com.au.

Exploring Protocol

The team involved in the *Kombumerri Dreaming* project is committed to ensuring that cultural protocols are respected continuously throughout the collaboration. Our journey to understand and follow the appropriate protocol was led by the First Nations educator and Traditional Custodian, guided by mutual respect, our commitment to ongoing relationships, and a dedication to following the right steps.

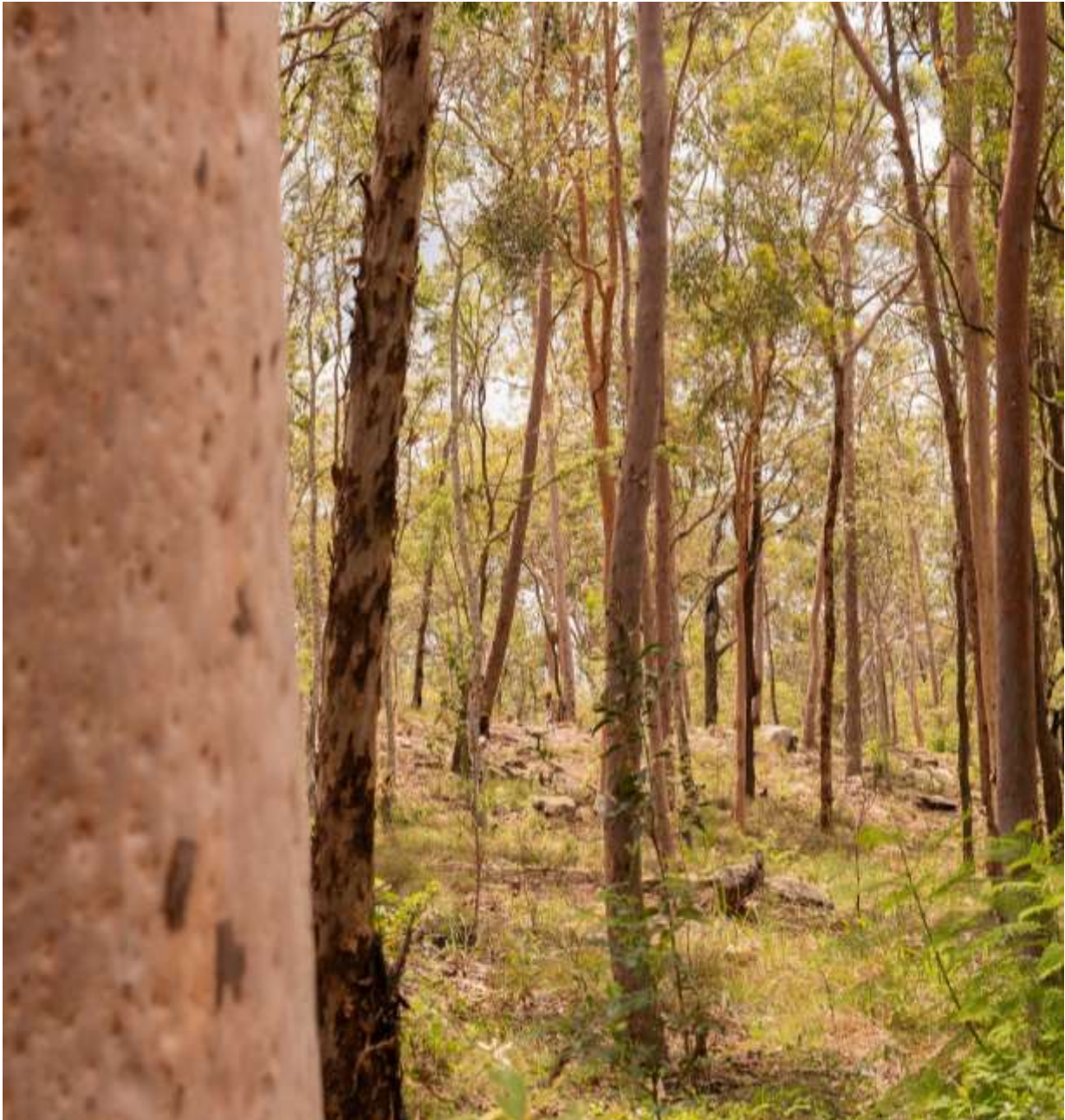


Image: Yaggera Country, 2025. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

Our Process

01 Establishing Relationships

The journey began with **Beth Tailby** reaching out to **Max Dillon**, a Kombumerri Custodian, about collaborating on this project. Beth and Max have established a strong relationship since 2017, when **Beth connected with Max's father, an Elder affiliated with Griffith University**, for a Welcome to Country. **Unfortunately, Max's father was unwell, so Max stepped in on his behalf while on his journey to Elder-ship.** Their ongoing connection strengthened through mutual respect and shared projects, including past school-based work. Beth introduced Kath to Max, which led to a new relationship founded on trust and open communication. This experience underscored the critical importance of prioritising interpersonal connection before work. This strong rapport is essential in shaping our approach to projects.

02 Permission and Respect

After Beth and Kath connected with Max, he approached his family to seek permission to share these stories. This process highlighted the importance of consulting the community and obtaining consent **before proceeding. Max's willingness to share his family's stories** was a pivotal moment in our journey. We also established a clear understanding of how the stories could be used, their intended purpose, and the ways they could be shared in workshops delivered by non-First Nations Teaching Artists and educators.

03 Using Local Stories

Through this partnership, we have come to understand that stories are not only sacred but also personal to the families who hold them. **Max's stories offer just one approach** to storytelling, and we believe that any opportunity to work with local First Nations people should be rooted in respect for their Culture and stories. We encourage educators to use the resources available, acknowledging the Country the stories come from and contribute to the reciprocal nature of the project by sharing how they have used the learning tasks in their own classrooms.



Image: Kombumerri Traditional Custodian Uncle Max Dillon and Kamilaroi woman and Languages teacher Dr Beth Tailby on Yaggera Country. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

04 Underpinning the 8 Ways Framework

Our learning experiences are shaped by the *8 Ways Framework*, which reflects the *8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning*. Kath reached out to the **NSW Department of Education** and **8 Ways** to seek permission to share how we interpreted and applied this Framework for the learning experiences and associated activities as a Kamilaroi educator (Beth) and a non-First Nations educator (Kath). The Framework has been instrumental in ensuring the lessons are culturally respectful, educational, and meaningful.

05 Acknowledging Ownership of Stories

We openly acknowledge **Max Dillon** and his Kombumerri family as the Custodians of these stories and recognise their rightful ownership. The Queensland Ballet Teaching Artists who deliver the *Kombumerri Dreaming Gwondo* and *Morro Garrara* In-School Workshops are fully informed of the protocols we have followed. They understand the permissions granted by Max and his family and are transparent in how they model and discuss these protocols when delivering the workshops.

06 Compensating Time and Resources

Throughout the process, Kath and Queensland Ballet worked to ensure that parties involved in the project were appropriately compensated for their time, knowledge, and resources. Kath sought funding specifically to support aspects of the project, ensuring that all contributions were recognised and valued. In addition to financial compensation, we negotiated in-kind support for other elements of the project, balancing both monetary and non-monetary contributions to reflect the full value of individual contributions and the cultural significance of the story.

Our journey has been one of building relationships, listening and learning, seeking permission, ensuring appropriate compensation, and continuously working to improve our knowledge and practice. We are grateful for the trust that Max and his family have placed in us and are committed to respecting and honouring the cultural significance of the stories we are sharing.

To help you get started, Beth and Kath have shared some key ideas and suggestions for how you can approach using this Kit with your students and community. We hope these guidelines will support you in creating meaningful, respectful, and adaptable experiences.

MUSTS:

- Develop solid, authentic, and reciprocal relationships:
 - Prioritise meeting and building community before seeking assistance or resources. Take the time to understand **those you're working with**.
 - Share your own culture to create a balanced, two-way exchange.
 - Introduce yourself and learn the names of the people you are working with.
 - Invite the Community into your school for events (e.g., arts shows, sports days, morning teas) and acknowledge their connection to the land.
 - If students are showcasing or presenting First Nations-inspired work, show respect by acknowledging the source of inspiration.
 - Provide opportunities for local organisations to support the school by setting up booths or marquees promoting education, care for Country, and care for People.
- Use this kit as a starting point and build upon it. Adapt the tasks to suit your teaching style, students, and location.
- Make mistakes, learn from them, and adjust your approach as needed. Enjoy the process!
- Understand that this is a living document—your delivery of activities should evolve over time.
- Engage with local Community members to explore local stories and seek permission before sharing them. Always inquire about how wide the stories can be shared, and who has given permission.
 - If given permission to use stories, always acknowledge the Country, the people, and the original storytellers. Respect the boundaries of permission regarding sharing.
- Use the **Australian Curriculum V9** for **guidance**. We've done some initial heavy lifting for you by aligning resources with the curriculum, providing assessment opportunities, and supporting you through this process.

WHAT'S NEGOTIABLE:

- The Stories: **Focus on learning what's** local and available to you. Build relationships first and confirm permissions before sharing.
- We understand that not everyone has established relationships yet – use this kit as a starting point to build those connections.
- Resources are Flexible: Feel free to adapt tasks to suit your setting, students, and community.
- Localisation: Be inspired by Kombumerri Country for the warm-up or collaborate with students to create your own warm-up inspired by the features of your local Country.



Applying the 8 Ways Framework

AS A BASE FOR LESSON CONSTRUCTION/LEARNING EXPERIENCES

Beth and Kath used the *8 Ways Framework* as a scaffold to build learning experiences. You can explore more about the Framework at [8ways.online](https://www.8ways.online). Observing the protocol of the 8 Ways website, we sought permission from NSW DET's Bangamalanha Centre to share how we applied the Framework to this resource.

Beth encourages teachers to use the website, its overview, and examples of Best Practice as inspiration. **However, it's important to remember that the *8 Ways Framework* is not a graphic organiser – it is a pedagogical framework that can be adapted to your students, collaborators, and the context of your story.** It provides a starting point for building authentic, respectful relationships.

The following page showcases a mind map that illustrates how we have interpreted the *8 Ways Framework* to scaffold learning experiences and assessment suggestions as a Kamilaroi educator and a non-First Nations educator working on *Jagera* and *Turrbal* Land. This interpretation is grounded in our shared experiences and respect for the unique cultural contexts we work within.

Image (page 13): 8 Ways Aboriginal Pedagogy Framework. Original design available from [8ways.online](https://www.8ways.online)

Story Sharing

Beth says:

Not only do we have permission to share the story itself, but we will also share the student/teacher's conversations about, and reactions to, the story. We get to know the reactions from Community - we know how they feel about having their story shared. Students can share through assessment and you through your assessing, producing and marking.

Kath says:

We acknowledge the owner of the stories, the permission granted to learn with them and the long history and cultural important of storytelling. We listen to and engage with the Dreaming stories and students share their own interpretation and communicate their version through movement.

Learning Maps

Beth says:

The lesson plans in front of you, given to you, are learning maps. We use a story that was given to us. We learn through the story's process and acknowledge that the story and its process is a gift. We encourage acknowledging and recording mistakes, learning pathways and what could be done differently next time. Reflecting is learning, starts the cycle again or shifts it as it is underway.

Kath says:

We map the process of the story, and scaffold pathways for students to interpret ideas, represent them through movement and present them to an audience. We use a physical map to connect with Lands and Countries around our area.

Non-verbal

Beth says:

Dancing, moving, laughing and smiling. The movement communicates the place and people. The use of props helps to convey ideas, mood and characters. The actions of the warmup (eg squeezing the toes in the river bed) conveys a location and feeling. Symbols impact the interpretation of the story.

Kath says:

The tasks involve using body actions and gestures to acknowledge and connect with Country and tell the story without using words. Students convey different relationships, moods and feelings through movement, use of space and dynamics.

8 Aboriginal Ways of Learning

Community Links

Kath says:

The tasks, inspired by Uncle Max Dillon's story and family, connect students to the land, people, and narrative through Biladi Billaan-themed discussions and movement tasks. The flexible resource kit encourages local, community-based learning and can be adapted for use anywhere by anyone. Creating this resource has built a new community between Beth T, Max D, Queensland Ballet and the teachers and students who will interact with it.

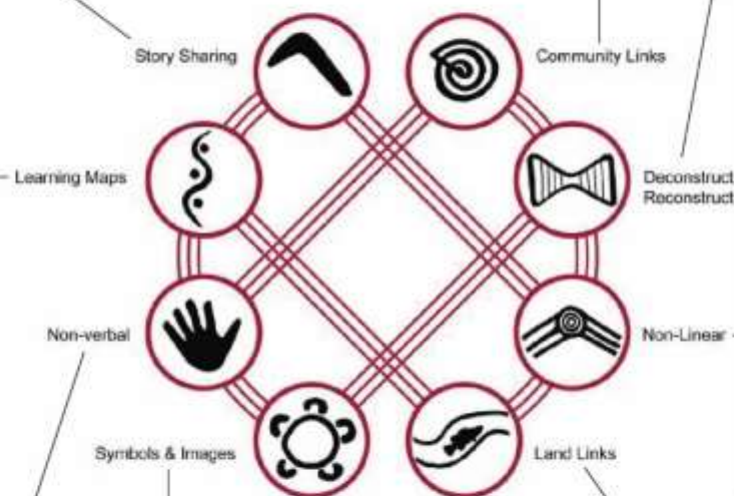
Deconstruct Reconstruct

Beth says:

The warmup connects you to land. Pushes off 'white knowledge' to help you become one with the story around, helps students to be open to a new way of learning. To reconstruct, the tasks show the story, use the movement from the warmup to connect with where the story is from, and puts the story together in a different way using movement. It's broken down into parts and then built back up.

Kath says:

The entire story is first told by Max Dillon, teachers then facilitate breaking it down into ideas, meaning, purpose, themes and characters for students to explore individually and separately. Students are encouraged to put the story back together through main ideas and motifs, building and demonstrating their understanding through both observation and participation.



Non-Linear

Beth says:

The story can change, the 'negotiables' can change. This kit is a 'living document', with learning experiences that can be remoulded and changed at any stage. Same document can be used in so many different ways. Nothing stays the same as the earth moves.

Kath says:

Students are introduced to the Country, people, and story, and are encouraged to reflect on the themes, ideas, and purpose within the narrative in separate phases. These ideas are then explored through movement tasks that convey the feelings, intentions, and key concepts of the story. The duration of these tasks is flexible, allowing for both quick activities and deeper explorations. The story itself is timeless and transcends time, allowing a universal connection to its messages.

Symbols and Images

Beth says:

As we move and dance, we are drawing the land and drafting where we are. Symbols change as our land/experiences changes.

Kath says:

Students will create motifs to represent key take-aways from the stories. They will use shapes, gestures and actions to share knowledge and interpret the same in the work of others to understand other perspectives.

Land Links

Beth says:

Students move as the rivers, imagine the movement of trees and of the rainbow lorikeet. The Kit acknowledges the connection to the land you're on, and the story and where it came from. The lesson plan can be used as a guide for tasks to be remade with local person or story.

Kath says:

The activities begin by acknowledging Kombumerri Country and its Traditional Owners, using the region's natural features—like rainforests, beaches, and mountains—to inspire warm-up movements. Teachers and students are encouraged to consider the same about the Land they are working on. The Dreaming story connects us to Kombumerri Country and students explore nature and place through warmup and movement tasks.

Kombumerri Dreaming Story

How the Rainbow Lorikeet Got its Colours

(told by Uncle Max Dillon)

This story gets its origins from Emerald Brewer. She's a Kombumerri woman living on the Gold Coast, on our Country, and when she was a little girl, around 6 or 7, this Dreaming story came to her, and it's been her own story for a long time and it has continuity with other Dreaming stories about how the birds got their colours.



Image: Yaggera Country, 2025. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

“Before the First People came to be, there were animals of the land, and the animals were very plain looking. They were mainly just black and white. And all the birds, and the crows, the waagan, that’s what we call the crow, waagan, and the little white birds, little mambia mambia, that’s the dove, and the little black and white birds, the magpies. One day, the birds resting peacefully, spotted a beautiful spectacle in the sky. There was a rainbow, jalaani, rainbow, the first one to ever to be. “Waaajani, come here, waaajani!” Cried the crow. “There’s something you all gotta see!” He said. “That is the most beautiful creation that I’ve ever seen,” said the dove. “We shouldn’t go anywhere near it, you don’t know what kind of bunyip or waajum created this. It could be a trick!” Cried the crow. “How could a bunyip or waajum create something so beautiful? He only creates bad. That is why we are going to fly through it. All of us. Only good can happen from this” the dove said softly. “If you go, we will never fly with you again! You will never pick up the gumbal (the teredo worms) from the ground. You will never be like us ever again. You’ll be our enemy” said the magpies and the crows. The doves ignored the crows and the magpies and flew straight up in the sky, without stopping. Each white bird went into the mist of the coloured rainbow. The crows and the magpies stared up at what was happening and were very angry (bunni bunni = angry).

One of the birds flew down from the sky and took rest upon the ground. They were no longer white anymore. Flying through the rainbow created a beautiful variety of coloured birds. Some were red, some were brown mixed with blue. There were even birds who were tailored and draped with all sorts of colours. But the first dove who flew through the rainbow was not just one or two colours, but he had all the colours of the rainbow, and he was the most beautiful out of all the birds because of the colours he had on his feathers. “From now on, I’ll be known as the rainbow lorikeet, ‘biladi billan’, and I’ll sing songs for the rest of the days, songs about how happy I am, songs about my colours.” The other birds decided to name themselves another name too! Some became the lyrebird, due to their beautiful spotted tail. Others became the king parrot. The smaller one became the kingfisher. Sometimes you can catch a magpie or a crow staring out of the trees keeping watch for the other birds because of their anger. The rest of the birds, including the rainbow lorikeet, they like to fly around the forest and sit perched in people’s yards to show off their beauty. The story of how the rainbow lorikeet got its colours.”

Learning Experiences

Kombumerri Dreaming – *Biladi Billan*

Learning Objectives

- Listen to the Kombumerri Dreaming story and identify themes and characters
- Use your body to represent characters and themes from a story
- Create short dance to show the beginning, middle and end of a story.

Note: Use the prompts written in italics as a script to help guide your students through the lesson.

<p>You Need:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open area, free of debris and obstacles • Device to play music • Access to a map of Indigenous Australia • Black and white scarves/props and/or simple costumes • Rainbow-coloured scarves/props and/or simple costumes • Projector to display digital resources • Speaker for digital resources and music • Access to the digital resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ <u>Introduction to Uncle Max Dillon and Kombumerri Country</u> ◦ <u>Kombumerri Dreaming story – <i>Biladi Bilan</i></u> 	<p>Preparation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before you teach this workshop, please know <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The name of the Country/Traditional Owners of the Land you are teaching on and where it is on a map of Indigenous Australia. ◦ Where Kombumerri Country is on a map of Indigenous Australia.
--	---

Introductory Tasks

Position students in a circle in the middle of the learning space. Project an image of a map of Indigenous Australia and be ready to point out where you are, and where Kombumerri Country is.



Acknowledgement of Country

- “Here is the land, here is the sky. Here are my friends and here am I” or use your own or your school’s Acknowledgement of Country to connect to the place you are teaching and learning on.
- Ask students to point to where you are on the map of Indigenous Australia. Can they name the Country or Traditional Owners of the Country you’re on today? Invite them to contribute their own acknowledgement. Ask: “What do you love about living here on [insert name of] Country?”

*Dr Tailby says:
By saying the traditional name of the Country you live and work on, you are acknowledging your Country. Saying the name of the Country is your own acknowledgement*



Introduction

- Indicate where Kombumerri Country is on the map of Indigenous Australia.

“In this workshop, we’ll get to know Kombumerri Country, warm-up our bodies and hear a Dreaming story from Kombumerri Country about the transformation of birds who encounter a magical rainbow. We’ll then work together to tell the story through movement – becoming characters from the story and telling the beginning, middle and of the story through movement.”



Describe Your Country: Warm-Up

- Consider taking your warm-up outside, or substituting the Kombumerri features for the features of the land you are teaching on.
- Suggested warm-up track: *Lioness Eye* (Xavier Rudd)
- **Connect back to the students’ Acknowledgement of Country** contribution from earlier. Reiterate the features they love and then introduce the Kombumerri Country and the warm-up.
 - *“Today’s warm-up movement is inspired by beautiful Kombumerri Country, which is around the Gold Coast. On Kombumerri Country, you’ll find rainforest and bush, sandy beaches, cool salty water, high mountains, and deep valleys.”*

Uncle Max Dillon shared that the Kombumerri word for feet is “jinang”. He said we listen with our “binang” (ears) and “jinang” (feet), paying attention to the Land.



Image: Dr Beth Tailby and Queensland Ballet Education Manager Kath Cadd on Yaggera Country. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

Kombumerri Country-Inspired Warm-Up Prompts

- *“Stand tall and strong like trees in the rainforest.”*
 - Position your feet slightly apart and stretch your arms upwards as high as you can, reaching toward the sky.
- *“Prepare your body to move on Country by brushing away any worries and waking up your arms and legs.”*
 - Use a sweeping motion to brush your arms, torso, legs, and across the soles of your feet, as if removing any dust or tired feelings.
- *“Sway like the gentle sea breeze.”*
 - Shift your weight from side to side. As you do, add a gentle side stretch, as if the wind is gently pushing you from one side to the other.
- *“Twist like the strong wind.”*
 - Extend your arms out straight and twist your torso, wrapping your arms across your body in one direction, then the other
- *“Climb the hills of the valley.”*
 - In a plank position, alternate lifting your knees toward your belly button as if running horizontally, like climbing a steep hill.
- *“Swim through the rivers and seas.”*
 - Make large circles with your arms, first forward then backward, mimicking the movements of freestyle and backstroke swimming.
- *“Signal to the animals with vibrations of your hands and feet”.*
 - Flick your hands across your body as if splashing water. Add fast running movements and small jumps, as if rippling the water.
- *“Walk and run through the wet sand.”*
 - Lift your knees as high as you can, as if wading through soft, wet sand.
- *“Squeeze your toes in the riverbed.”*
 - Stand firmly on the ground and scrunch your toes inside your shoes, as if gathering sand beneath your feet.
- *“Lie in the shade, listening to the birds and the wind through the trees. Feel or imagine the warmth of the sun – or the coolness of the shade – on your face.”*
 - Lie down on your back, close your eyes, and take deep, calming breaths in and out.

Beth suggests this is a kind of preparation ceremony and mimics the action of cleansing and preparing the bare feet to walk on Country. If possible, have small branches to use when ‘brushing’ down the body.

Listening, Learning, Making and Doing Tasks



Listen to the story: *Biladi Billan*

Know the Country, introduce Uncle Max Dillon and Kombumerri Country and watch/listen to/read the Dreaming story.

Invite students to sit together.

- Return to a map of Indigenous Australia.
 - Re-locate the Country you are on.
 - Ask students if anyone comes from another Country within Australia. Ask them to find it on the map.
 - Re-locate Kombumerri Country on the map.
- Introduce **Uncle Max Dillon**
 - *“We are going to meet Uncle Max Dillon, a Kombumerri Traditional Custodian. He’s going to introduce himself and tell us about Kombumerri Country.”*



Play **Uncle Max’s introduction to Kombumerri Country**

- *“We are going to hear a Kombumerri Dreaming story, told by Uncle Max. He asked his family if he could share it with us and they gave him permission. We’re so lucky.”*

Story Overview and Provocation

Prep – Grade 02


*A long time ago, before people came, all the animals were plain, just black and white. One day, the doves saw a beautiful rainbow in the sky and decided to fly through it. When they did, they changed into all kinds of bright, colourful birds! The rainbow lorikeet became the most colourful of all. The other birds were **angry because they didn’t fly through the rainbow, but the colourful birds were happy and proud of their new beautiful feathers.***

While you’re listening Uncle Max Dillon tell the story of Biladi Billan, listen out for who flies through the rainbow and who doesn’t.

Grade 03 – 06

A long time ago, the birds were plain and mostly black or white until the doves bravely flew through the first rainbow and transformed into colourful birds. The rainbow lorikeet, the most vibrant of them all, celebrated its new colours by singing songs of happiness. While the other birds followed suit, the magpies and crows watched in envy.

While you’re listening Uncle Max Dillon tell the story of Biladi Billan, listen out for how the rainbow changes the birds and what happens to them after they fly through it. Also, pay close attention to the different birds’ reactions to the rainbow, especially the contrast between the doves and the magpies and crows.

 Play the *Biladi Billan* audio story

Invite reflection:

Prep – Grade 02

- *What happens to the birds when they fly through the Rainbow?*
 - Cue: *“Remember when the doves saw the Rainbow in the sky?”*
 - An answer: *“The doves flew through the Rainbow, and they changed into colourful birds. Some became red, brown, blue, and even had all the colours of the rainbow, like the rainbow lorikeet.”*
 - **Extension:** This story shows how sometimes things can change in surprising and wonderful ways.
- *How do the crows and magpies feel about the doves flying through the Rainbow?*
 - Cue: *“What did the crows and magpies say when the doves decided to fly through the Rainbow?”*
 - An answer: *“The crows and magpies were angry because they didn’t fly through the Rainbow. They said the doves would never be the same again and would be their enemies.”*
 - **Extension:** This part of the story teaches us about how some people might feel upset when things change, but it’s okay to be different and embrace new things.
- *Why do you think this story is shared?*
 - Cue: *“Think about what happened to the doves and how they became special. What do you think the story is teaching us?”*
 - An answer: *“This story is shared to show us that change can be beautiful and that it’s okay to be different. It also teaches us to embrace new things, even if others don’t understand.”*

Grade 03 – 06

- *How did the Rainbow change the birds?*
 - Cue: *“Think about the birds before and after they flew through the Rainbow. What did the rainbow do to them, and why do you think it had that effect?”*
- *Why do you think the crows and magpies were angry about the Rainbow?*
 - Cue: *“What do you think the crows and magpies were afraid of, and why did they react the way they did when the doves decided to fly through the Rainbow?”*
- *What do you think the rainbow lorikeet felt when it became the most colourful bird?*
 - Cue: *“Imagine how the rainbow lorikeet felt when it was the only bird with all the colours of the Rainbow. How do you think it felt about its new look, and what do you think it wanted to share with others?”*

Additional Activity: Phonics, Literacy and Diction (PLD) Tasks

- Invite students to draw the doves, the crows/magpies and the rainbow lorikeet.
- Invite students to write down as many descriptive words relating to the different birds as possible.
- Invite students to write a script of the story.

Prep – Grade 02



Movement Task: Beginning, Middle and End

- Whole class activity
- Track suggestion: *Katling* (Live) by Wadhom

This task helps students explore the structure of a story (beginning, middle, and end) through movement and creative expression. It encourages them to identify key elements of the narrative and use their bodies to reflect these parts. By focusing on the colours of the rainbow and the emotions of the birds, students will learn how movement can represent different parts of a story. The activity also allows them to engage with themes like bravery and fear through physical movement, helping them connect emotionally with the story.

TASK

Begin by explaining to the students that they will explore the story using movement to represent the three main parts: beginning, middle, and end.

Guide students through each part to help them connect the narrative with their movements.

1. Start with the beginning. **Cue students to think of bird shapes that represent the ‘plain birds’ at the start of the story.**
 - a. Ask the students to stand in non-locomotor (stationary) positions that show the plain, black-and-white birds in the story. Have them mimic a "bird shape" with their arms and bodies, using symmetrical and still poses. Encourage them to imagine that they are simple, plain birds with no colour yet, keeping their movements slow and calm.
2. **Move along to the ‘middle’ of the story, to where the rainbow, or ‘*jalaant*’ comes in.** Cue students to start thinking of movements that show different colours of the rainbow and the size of their placement in the order of rainbow colours. You may wish to select three (red, green and violet) to show the simple contrasts.
 - a. Explain that the rainbow has seven colours, and each colour will have its own movement. Each student should start with a larger movement for red and gradually make their movements smaller as the colours progress from red to violet.
 - **Red:** Start with the biggest movement. Have students extend their arms wide, move across the floor with sweeping gestures, and stretch their whole body to show the size and boldness of red.
 - **Orange:** Slightly smaller movement, but still big and strong.
 - **Yellow:** Continue decreasing the movement, keeping it energetic but not as large.

- **Green:** A medium-sized movement, showing a transition between large and small.
 - **Blue:** Smaller movement, softer but still fluid.
 - **Indigo:** Even smaller, with more gentle movements.
 - **Violet:** The smallest and most delicate movements, perhaps just fingertip gestures or soft steps.
3. **Wrap up the story with the 'end'** – showing the difference between crows/magpies and the doves
 - a. Divide the students into two groups: one group will represent the crows and magpies, and the other will represent the doves.
 - b. **The 'crows/magpies' group will create movements that show fear and hesitation.** Encourage this through small, uncertain movements. They should make quick, twitchy gestures, maybe looking over their shoulder or standing with arms crossed. Their movements should be small and hesitant, like they are unsure about the rainbow or its changes.
 - c. **The 'doves' group will create movement that shows bravery and confidence.** They can stand tall, spread their arms wide as if embracing the beauty of the rainbow, walking with purpose, and using their entire body to express their joy in the change.
 - i. Provide the doves with a colourful scarf or fabric to enhance the feeling of happiness and transformation. The scarf can be used to symbolise their colourful feathers, and the doves can twirl or wave it to express their pride in their new appearance.
 4. Rehearse the three sections in order.
 - a. Encourage students to think about how to transition the three sections together so they can be performed as one complete story-dance.
 5. Perform the story-dance for an informal audience.
 - Responding/reflection opportunity: Ask audience members to look out for:
 - *What movements showed the plain birds in the beginning? What movements helped show that the birds are all black-and-white and haven't been changed by the rainbow yet?*
 - e.g. Calm, stationery, symmetrical poses
 - *How do the movements change in the middle? Do you see the different colours of the rainbow?*
 - e.g. large, sweeping, slow movements for red, small, tiny, fast movements for violet
 - *Can you tell which birds are feeling scared and which are feeling brave? Which movements show you the difference?*
 - e.g. small, twitchy gestures show fear, and the tall, big movements show bravery

Alternatives/Extensions

- **Brainstorm/improvise movements as a group to make a 'class dance'.** Teacher can select movements to use in each section.
- **Divide the class into three groups and allocate one group to the 'beginning', one to the 'middle' and one to the 'end'.** With some scaffolding, each group could represent the moment/characters in their allocated section.
- For older years, this activity could work well in small groups rather than as a whole class.



Extension/Improvisation Task: The Story in Four Parts

- Whole class activity.
- Music suggestions: *Kombumerri Sunrise* (Jefferson Joe) and *Bird Tribe Remastered* (Ash Dargen).

As an extension/alternative to the first task, teachers might like to guide students through an improvisational activity that explores more of the themes and additional moments of the story.

Break down the story into four sections:

1. The discovery of the Rainbow
2. The decision to fly (or not to fly) through it
3. Flying through the Rainbow
4. **The doves' transformation.**

Below are guided prompts to encourage some improvisation, exploration around the characters, themes and moments of the story. Students could choose their own characters (doves, magpies, crows), consider costuming and music. Select props and transitions between sections.

1. The Discovery of the Rainbow

- **Set the Scene:** Gather all the students together as if they are birds resting on the ground.
- **Cue Music:** Play soft music to set the mood for the beginning.
- **Movement Prompt:** As the music plays, ask the students to look up slowly, imagining they see a rainbow in the sky. Encourage them to express wonder and curiosity through their movements by reaching up, pointing, or tilting their heads in amazement.

2. The Decision to Fly (Or Not to Fly) Through It

- **Divide the Group:** Split students into two groups – the "Crows and Magpies" and the "Doves."
- **Crow and Magpie Movement:** Have the crows/magpies show their fear and hesitation through small, grounded, and cautious movements. They can add gestures like shaking their heads or crossing their arms to show disapproval.
- **Doves' Movement:** Guide the 'doves' to stand tall and move with confidence, showing their bravery through strong, intentional movements as they decide to fly through the Rainbow.

3. Flying Through the Rainbow

- **Props:** Give each 'dove' a colourful scarf or ribbon to represent their transformation.
- **Movement Prompt:** As the music builds, have the 'doves' move freely around the space, pretending to fly up into the sky and through the rainbow. Encourage the 'doves' to explore big, sweeping gestures with their scarves, showing how they feel brave and free as they soar.
- **Contrast:** Encourage the 'magpies/crows' to think of movements that are heavy and low to the ground, to show the contrast between their location, feelings and bravery.

4. The Doves' Transformation

- **New Identity:** After flying through the Rainbow, the 'doves' can use their scarves to show their transformation into colourful birds.
- **Individual Movements:** Ask each 'dove' to create a short, unique dance phrase to express their new, colourful identity. This is their chance to be creative and show off their individuality through vibrant and expressive movements.

Rehearse the Full Performance

- Bring the whole group together for a short performance.
- **Begin with the 'crows/magpies' showing their fear, followed by the 'doves' bravely flying through the Rainbow. End with each 'dove' performing their unique dance phrase, showing how they've transformed into beautiful, colourful birds.**
- Perform the story-dance for an informal audience.
 - Responding/reflection opportunity: Ask audience members to look out for:
 - *How the different bird groups move when they were deciding whether to fly through the Rainbow? How did each group show their feelings?*
 - *How did they doves show their bravery when they flew through the Rainbow?*
 - *What differences did you see in how the doves moved before and after flying through the Rainbow?*

Grade 03 – 06

Scaffolded Improvisation Task: Before and After

- Whole class activity
- Track suggestion: *Katling* (Live) by Wadhom

This task helps students understand and express the contrast between two opposing states or themes using a binary choreographic form. Students will use dance concepts and skills to contrast themes, emotions, feelings and perspectives, reflecting on themes of transformation, individuality, and the excitement of change.

Begin by explaining to the students that they will explore how the birds in the story change from plain and uniform to colourful and unique. This task could be completed individually (within the larger class group), in pairs or small groups. You wish to display the ‘intentions’ of each section for clarity and to prompt students visually.



Image: Queensland Ballet Regional Tour at Roma State College. Photography by Chelsea Clark.

TASK ONE

Section A: BEFORE THE RAINBOW

Improvise to represent the state of the birds before they flew through the rainbow – uniform, plain, and hesitant.

- **Intention:** Uniformity, lack of individuality, routine, fear of change
- **Instructions:**
 1. Cue students to think of movements that reflect the above intentions and are:
 - **Simple, small, and uniform**, reflecting the idea of the birds looking the same and feeling unremarkable.
 - **Repetitive** to show the lack of change or excitement.
 - **Close to the ground**, showing hesitation or carefulness, as if the birds are reluctant to embrace change.
 2. During this phase, students should **not interact with each other** – the birds are alone in their uniformity, representing isolation and a lack of connection to their full potential.
 3. Share improvisations within the group. While watching others' ideas, prompt students to consider:
 - *Which movements reflect the idea of plainness or routine?*
 - *How does it feel to move in a repetitive, unchanging way?*

Section B: AFTER THE RAINBOW:

Improvise to represent the transformation and **the birds' experience after they fly through the rainbow—** becoming colourful, unique, and full of life.

- **Intention:** Transformation, individuality, joy, uniqueness
- **Instructions:**
 1. Cue students to think of movement that reflects the above intentions and:
 - Are **big and expansive** to show the excitement and possibilities of the rainbow. *Imagine the feeling of flying through the rainbow, with wide movements that suggest openness and excitement.*
 - **Expresses and celebrates their individuality** by using movements that are bright, varied, and unique to them. **This shows how the birds' identities become more distinct** after their transformation.
 - Uses **flowing, expanding** actions to illustrate how the birds change from being plain and uniform to colourful and beautiful. *This could be represented by gradually opening out from a small, closed shape to a larger, more open and large position.*
 2. In this phase, encourage students to begin interacting with one another to show how the birds now celebrate their differences. These interactions can be joyful and celebratory, with students connecting (physically or in other ways) through movement as they embrace their uniqueness.
 3. Share improvisations within the group. While watching others' ideas, prompt students to consider:
 - *Which movements reflect the idea of plainness or routine?*

- *How did it feel to move in a more expressive and open way? What makes each movement feel different from before?*
- *How did you see joy and pride communicated through movement?*

Extension: Consider adding (or invite students to consider adding) props to the task to further enhance the contrasting intentions. For example, plain black or white scarves/ribbons in **Section A** and colourful scarves in **Section B**. You could extend this by asking students to utilise simple costume items to convey and enhance the contrast.

TASK TWO

Instruct the students to form small groups. If they haven't shared the movement already, have them share their **Section A** and **Section B** choreography. In their new groups, they should consider which parts of the phrases mostly clearly show the intentions of the different sections.

- Invite students to link their **Section A** and **B**. They should consider a transition, so the two phrases together create a complete sequence.
- Rehearse the new sequence, paying attention to the movements that clearly show the intentions of each contrasting section.
- Encourage students to create an opening and closing entrance/formation so their sequences are arranged to convey the contrasting themes in a polished and structured way.
- Share their complete sequences. Audiences could look out for:
 - *The contrast between the before and after – what changes in movement did you see that signalled the transition from **Section A** and **B**?*
 - *How **Section B** showed more individuality and uniqueness. How did you see individuality represented in the dancers' movements in the second section?*
 - *How would you describe the difference in the energy and levels between the two sections?*



Extension/Less-Scaffolded Improvisation Task: The Story in Four Parts

- Music suggestions: *Kombumerri Sunrise* (Jefferson Joe) and *Bird Tribe Remastered* (Ash Dargen).

As an extension/alternative to the above task, teachers might like to invite students to consider how they could tell this story through their own movements. This task allows older children to delve deeper into the concept of transformation and identity, interpret ideas and mood and use dance concepts and skills to express how experiences shape who they are and how they can embrace and celebrate their unique qualities.

We might break the story down into 4 sections – **the beginning (The Grey Before)**, **the 'encounter' (The Rainbow Moment)**, **the 'transformation' (Becoming Colourful)** and **'group identity' (A Celebration of Diversity)**. Below are guided prompts to encourage some improvisation, exploration around the characters, themes and moments of the story and consideration of use of production elements to enhance the meaning of the story.

1. The Beginning: The Grey Before

- **Costume & Setting:** Cue students to consider what they can wear/hold/interact with to symbolise the plainness and uniformity? (eg. black-and-white costumes or scarves)
- **Movement Improvisation:** Play some soft beginning music. Ask students to move around the space, expressing how they feel "plain," unnoticed, or stuck in a routine. The movements should be **small, repetitive, and close to the ground**, reflecting their lack of individuality.
- **Interaction:** Encourage the students **not to interact** with each other. Their movements should stay isolated and careful as they begin to explore this "black-and-white" state.

2. The Encounter: The Rainbow Moment

- **Imagining the Encounter:** Invite students to imagine encountering something magical—such as a rainbow or moment of inspiration. This moment is when they begin to sense the possibility of transformation.
- **Movement Transition:** Guide them to gradually change their movements as they become more curious and open. The students should explore the space with **increased energy** and **freedom**, as if discovering new possibilities.
- **Rainbow Discovery:** At a key moment in the music, have each student "find" a colourful costume piece or scarf, symbolising their transformation. Their movements should reflect a sense of discovery and surprise as they change.

3. Transformation: Becoming Colourful

- **Transformation Phase:** As the students put on or hold their colourful items, their movements should shift to reflect their newfound identity. Encourage them to explore how their bodies now feel different, more expressive, and unique. Students should have time to create a short movement phrase that represents their transformation from black-and-white to colourful. These movements should be **bigger, expansive**, and filled with joy, reflecting freedom and individuality.
- **Individual Performance:** Encourage students to perform their dance phrase individually, showcasing how their identity has transformed and highlighting their personal expression.

4. Group Identity: A Celebration of Diversity

- **Group Expression:** Bring the group together to create a final dance sequence where they celebrate their unique identities. You could ask each student to contribute one movement from their own improvisation – learn each movement together and transition/link them into one unison phrase.
- **Individual to Group:** Prepare the final piece. Start by dancing individually with each student performing three movements from their 'Becoming Colourful' improvisation. Then come together in small groups to form **patterns** or **formations** that emphasise the diversity of colours and movements.
- **Unity in Diversity:** End the sequence with the group coming together to form a **group formation** that expresses unity in their diversity, such as creating a **rainbow shape** or a **pattern** on the floor, symbolising the beauty of everyone coming together to form something greater. Perform the group phrase in unison now. Decide on one final position to conclude the performance.

Rehearse the Full Performance

- Bring the whole group together for a short performance.
- Rehearse the **entire sequence from start to finish. Begin with the 'The Grey Before' phase, then transition through 'The Rainbow Moment, and end with the celebration of colourful identities.**
- Focus: Encourage the children to focus on how their movements tell the story of their transformation and how each of their unique identities contributes to the overall performance of the group.
- Perform the story-dance for an informal audience.
 - Responding/reflection opportunity: Ask audience members to look out for:
 - *How do movements change as the characters discovered their new identities?*
 - *How did the use of costumes or props in each section of the story reflect the transformation from plainness to individuality and unity?*



Image: Yaggera Country, 2025. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

Lesson Close and Exit Tickets



Lesson Close/Physical Cool Down

Music suggestion: *Voyage* (NikMartken)

Repeat slower movements from Kombumerri-inspired warm-up:

- *Stand tall and strong like trees in the rainforest. (Position your feet slightly apart and stretch your arms upwards as high as you can, reaching toward the sky).*
- *Sway like the gentle sea breeze. (Shift your weight from side to side. As you do, add a gentle side stretch, as if the wind is gently pushing you from one side to the other).*
- *Twist like the strong wind. (Extend your arms out straight and twist your torso, wrapping your arms across your body in one direction, then the other).*
- *Squeeze your toes in the riverbed. (Stand firmly on the ground and scrunch your toes inside your shoes, as if gathering sand beneath your feet).*
- *Lie in the shade, listening to the birds and the wind through the trees. Feel or imagine the warmth of the sun—or the coolness of the shade—on your face. (Lie down on your back, close your eyes, and take deep, calming breaths in and out).*



Image: Yaggera Country, 2025. Photography by Angharad Gladding.



Exit Tickets

Once the learning phases are complete, you might wish to share these Exit Tickets to gauge engagement, understanding and application of learning and ideas.

Prep – Grade 02	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What movement or feeling from today's story-dance do you think will stick with you the most? Why do you think it's so special to you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example Response: "I liked moving like a rainbow lorikeet because it made me feel bright and brave." • How did it feel to pretend to be a crow/magpie or a dove? How did you show different feelings in your movements? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example Response: "Being a crow/magpie felt small and shy, but when I was a dove, I felt bold and open." • If you were going to tell this story to someone else, what part would you talk about the most? How would you describe the movements from that part of the story? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Example Response: "I'd tell them about flying through the rainbow. I'd describe the big, sweeping arm movements that made me feel like I was soaring!"
Grade 03 – 06	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was the most exciting part of transforming from the plain birds to the colourful ones? Can you describe the difference in how your body felt when you moved as the plain bird and as the colourful bird? How did your movement change between the two phases? • How did it feel to move in a way that represented your own uniqueness after becoming colourful? Did you notice anything about your classmates' movements that made their dances special? How did your movements in the second phase (after the rainbow) reflect your individuality? • How do you think First Nations storytelling helps to share learning, continue traditions, and keep culture alive? Can you give an example from today's workshop or another story you've heard?

Special Thanks

Dr Beth Tailby – We are deeply grateful to Dr Tailby for her willingness to collaborate and co-create this resource. Her expertise and unwavering commitment to connecting teachers and students with First Nations learning frameworks and content is truly inspiring. She has taught our team so much throughout this process, and we look forward to many more cups of tea, meaningful conversations, journeys, and collaborative projects.

Uncle Max Dillon – We are profoundly humbled by Uncle Max’s generosity in spending time with us, sharing his Dreaming stories, and imparting aspects of his Kombumerri language, culture, and wisdom. These stories have been the heart and inspiration behind the learning experiences in this kit and the *Kombumerri Dreaming In-School Workshops*. Uncle Max’s calm, inquisitive, and kind nature has profoundly influenced much of the content.

Kayla Lee – We extend our sincere gratitude for your invaluable expertise, contributions, and support.

Toogoolawah State School & Principal Gary Hutchinson – Thank you for supporting and facilitating the collaboration between Dr Tailby, Uncle Max, and the Queensland Ballet Community and Education team. We have cherished our time at your school and look forward to continuing to share the joy of dance with your students.



Image (from left to right): Kamilaroi woman and Languages teacher Dr Beth Tailby, Kombumerri Traditional Custodian Uncle Max Dillon, and Queensland Ballet Education Manager Kath Cadd.. Photography by Angharad Gladding.

References

Tailby, E. (2024). *Verbal Conversations*. Various dates throughout 2024.

Dillon, M. (2024). *Verbal Conversations*. Various dates throughout 2024.

8 Ways Online. (n.d.). *8 Ways Aboriginal pedagogy framework*. Retrieved (most recently) December 10, 2024, from <https://www.8ways.online>

Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority. (n.d.). *Dance – P-10 curriculum, version 9*. Retrieved December 10, 2024, from <https://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/p-10/aciq/version-9/learning-areas/p-10-the-arts/dance>

Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (n.d.). *Dance: Foundation to Year 10 curriculum*. Retrieved December 10, 2024, from https://v9.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/learning-areas/dance/foundation-year_year-1_year-2_year-3_year-4_year-5_year-6_year-7_year-8_year-9_year-10?view=quick&detailed-content-descriptions=0&hide-ccp=0&hide-gc=0&side-by-side=1&strands-start-index=0&subjects-start-index=ARTDANFY%2CARTDANY12%2CARTDANY34

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). (n.d.). *Map of Indigenous Australia*. Retrieved (most recently) November 6, 2024, from <https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>

Appendix

Video Resource Transcript: Uncle Max Dillon Introduction

Kaiala. That's good wishes. That's our word for saying hello. My name is Kupae Girramun Galeen Kombumerri Nunukul. Those are my tribal names given. My legal fiction, that's my white fella name, is Maxwell Dylan. That's how I sign, that's on my birth certificates, but my tribal name, my original name, that's Kupae. That's a little native bee.

My people are from the Gold Coast. My grandfather's country. From the Coomera River down to the Tweed River, all along the foothills of the hinterland, including Springbrook, Numinbah, right up along the coastline to the east. Some of the little islands we pick up within our tribal boundary. Our neighbour's North Stradbroke, that's the Quandamooka people, Goenpul Nunukul, my grandmother's people.

We've got some lovely Dreamtime stories. They're like parables, where you learn the stories, there would be metaphors and all different things that were lessons, life lessons where you would learn things.

Sometimes it would relate to clan, totems, rivalry, jealousy, love, stolen love, unrequited love, all these things that we deal with as humans but they're Dreamtime stories, they come from the bush. They'd come from the source of creation, of nature, saltwater and freshwater and birds of the air and animals on the ground, the terrestrial animals. And the origin of creation, how it all came to be, and that's how our Dreaming stories came to life.

They were instructions, almost blueprints that were given to us. And the first Dreaming stories that we have, they're very potent. They deal with how we're to understand the mechanics of working with nature.