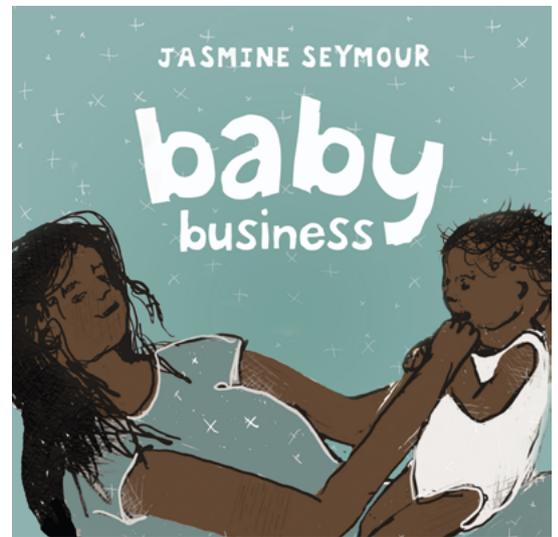


# Magabala Books Teacher Notes

## Baby Business

written and illustrated by Jasmine Seymour

Teacher Notes prepared by Christina Wheeler



### OVERVIEW

*Baby Business* tells the story of the baby smoking ceremony that welcomes baby to country. The smoke is a blessing – it will protect the baby and remind them that they belong. This beautiful ritual is recounted in a way young children will completely relate to.

- A warm and loving story to share with young children
- An ancient First Nations ritual brought in to present-day context
- Perfect gift for a new baby
- Great for tourist market
- Well suited to the Australian curriculum for primary readers
- Teacher Notes linked to the Australian curriculum

### THEMES

- Aboriginal Australians - Social Life and Customs
- Totems
- Country
- Kin
- Ceremonies
- Law
- Community

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND ILLUSTRATOR

**Jasmine Seymour** is a Darug woman and a descendant of Maria Lock, daughter of Yarramundi, the Boorooberongal elder who had met Governor Phillip on the banks of the Hawkesbury in 1791. Maria was the first Aboriginal woman to be educated by the Blacktown Native Institute. She was married to carpenter and convict, Robert Lock and their union resulted in thousands of descendants who can all trace their Darug heritage back past Yarramundi.

It is Jasmine's wish that through her books, everyone will know that the Darug mob are still here, still strong. Jasmine is a primary school teacher in the Hawkesbury area of NSW.

### AUDIENCE AND WRITING STYLE

*Baby Business* shares the customs associated with the way in which babies are received into Aboriginal communities. Incorporating the Darug language, readers are invited to a smoking ceremony that welcomes and protects the new infant. Beautiful artwork perfectly illustrates the importance of country, law, totems and kin to the indigenous way of life. *Baby Business* is suited to early childhood audiences, as well as middle primary students exploring Aboriginal culture.

### LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

This book and the classroom activities provided are primarily relevant to the following areas of the Australian Curriculum:

Learning area	Year level
English	F-4
HASS	F; 2-4



## CLASSROOM IDEAS

- Before reading, discuss the title and cover of the book. To what might the term ‘baby business’ be referring? After reading, discuss your thoughts about the text. How did it reflect or differ from your initial ideas?
- Create a list of any new or unfamiliar words which you encounter in the text, particularly those from the Darug language. What do these words mean? Create a class word wall to help make your learning visible.
- What is a smoking ceremony? What place do smoking ceremonies have in Aboriginal culture? How does the warm smoke from the fire help teach and protect the baby? For more information, visit the following website: <https://aboriginalincursions.com.au/the-dreaming>
- What role do women such as grandmothers and aunties play in Aboriginal culture? How do texts such as *Baby Business* help share this?
- Why are only women and children in attendance at the smoking ceremony?
- What do we learn about Aboriginal laws and customs by reading *Baby Business*?
- What plants and other ingredients are used for the smoking ceremony? Why are these items specifically chosen?
- Find out more about bush medicine by using books such as the Living With the Land series by Pearson Library, or from websites such as: <https://www.australiangeographic.com.au/topics/history-culture/2011/02/top-10-aboriginal-bush-medicines/>
- The baby is introduced to the importance of Country. What role does Country play in Aboriginal culture? How do Aboriginal people connect with and care for Country? How does *Baby Business* share this with readers?
- Write a letter for the baby to read later in life explaining the many lessons and laws being shared in *Baby Business*.
- What role does family play in Aboriginal culture? What do we learn about this from *Baby Business*?
- Why is it important that ‘our language’ is kept on the baby’s tongue? Why do special ancestral words need to be preserved?
- After reading about the baby’s totem – the bee – watch the following clip to better understand the role of totems in Aboriginal culture: <http://sydney.edu.au/kinship-module/learning/4-totems.shtml>. After watching, explain this to a friend in your own words.
- Imagine you are one of the Aunties in *Baby Business*. Write a recount of the smoking ceremony. Alternatively, retell this story through a dramatisation.
- Rewrite this story from the point of view of the black bird on the first page opening.
- Talk with your parents about the way in which you were welcomed into your family. Using photos from your family’s collection, create a photo diary to share your story.
- Using a graphic organiser to show your thinking, compare *Baby Business* with *Welcome to Country* by Auntie Joy Murphy and Lisa Kennedy or *Why I Love Australia* by Bronwyn Bancroft.

## APPENDIX – LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Year	Curriculum Area
F	<b>English Literature</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (<a href="#">ACELT1578</a>)</li></ul>
	<b>Hass Geography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Country/Place on which the school is located and why Country/Place is important to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (<a href="#">ACHASSK016 - Scootle</a>)</li></ul>



Year	Curriculum Area
1	<b>English Literature</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences (<a href="#">ACELT1582</a>)</li></ul>
2	<b>English Literature</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (<a href="#">ACELT1587</a>)</li><li>Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (<a href="#">ACELT1591</a>)</li></ul> <b>Hass Geography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples maintain special connections to particular Country/Place (<a href="#">ACHASSK049 - Scootle</a>)</li></ul>
3	<b>English Literature</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others (<a href="#">ACELT1596 - Scootle</a>)</li><li>Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative (<a href="#">ACELT1599 - Scootle</a>)</li></ul> <b>Hass History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The importance of Country/Place to Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Peoples who belong to a local area (<a href="#">ACHASSK062 - Scootle</a>)</li></ul>
4	<b>English Literature</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Make connections between the ways different authors may represent similar storylines, ideas and relationships (<a href="#">ACELT1602 - Scootle</a>)</li><li>Create literary texts that explore students' own experiences and imagining (<a href="#">ACELT1607 - Scootle</a>)</li></ul> <b>Hass History</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The diversity of Australia's first peoples and the long and continuous connection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples to Country/Place (land, sea, waterways and skies) (<a href="#">ACHASSK083 - Scootle</a>)</li></ul> <b>Geography</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The custodial responsibility Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples have for Country/Place, and how this influences views about sustainability (<a href="#">ACHASSK089 - Scootle</a>)</li></ul> <b>Civics and Citizenship</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The differences between 'rules' and 'laws', why laws are important and how they affect the lives of people, including experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples (<a href="#">ACHASSK092</a>)</li></ul>

