

Marngrook: Magabala April Release

A long ago story of Aussie Rules Football

A children's story based on the sometimes controversial theory of how Australian Rules Football developed from 'marngrook', a ball game played by Aboriginal people in north-west Victoria more than 150 years ago.

This fictionalised story of Marngrook takes place at the foot of Duwul, the highest mountain in the spectacular Grampians region of north-west Victoria, the traditional country of people from the Djab-Wurrung and Jardwadjali clans.

When Wawi, a clan Elder, notices that his son, Jaara, and the other children only have old toys to play with, he goes for a walk to see what he can find. Wawi kills a banya (ring-tailed possum), skins it and sews up the skin with a tendon from a kangaroo tail. Wawi stuffs the skin with emu feathers and moulds it into the shape of an emu egg. Jaara and the children play with the marngrook every day and spend hours practising their kicks.

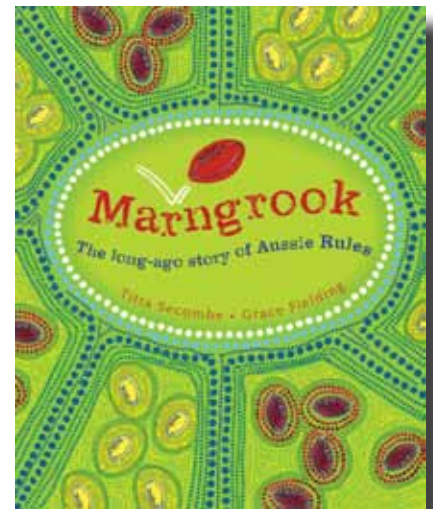
One day, when Jaara kicks the marngrook far into the bush, he finds himself lost and has to bear the consequences of not listening to his Elders.

The author **Titta Secombe** is descended from the the Djab-Wurrung and Jardwadjali clans of the Grampians region of north-west Victoria. She has worked for many years in education and sports programmes to develop the talents of young Indigenous Australian Rules Football players. Titta grew up hearing her Elders tell the story of marngrook, the ball game played by her ancestors. Marngrook is her interpretation of this story.

The illustrator **Grace Fielding** grew up on the Wandering Mission near Perth in Western Australia. She has illustrated several children's books and is celebrated for her traditional and contemporary art styles. In 1991, Grace won the National Crichton Award for Illustration in 1991. A Home for Bilby, written by Joanne Crawford, won the Children's Award at the Western Australian Premier's Book Awards in 2005.

Marngrook will be available from April 2012 in Australian bookshops and online from Magabala Books (www.magabala.com) for \$16.95.

Launched in 1987, Magabala Books is a not-for-profit Indigenous publishing house based in Broome, that aims to promote, preserve and publish Indigenous Australian culture.



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