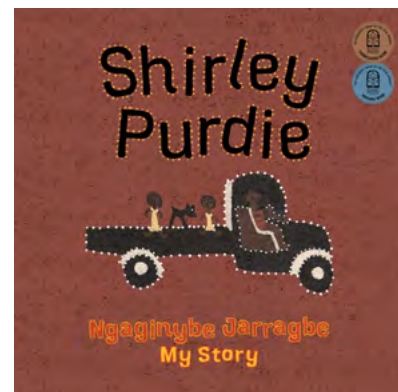


Ngaginybe Jarragbe, My Story

Written & illustrated by Birrmarriya, Shirley Purdie

These notes were made to support Aboriginal Teacher's Assistants. They can be used to help teach Gija (LOTE) lessons in schools with Gija students. They align with the Purnululu Aboriginal Independent Community School's Gija Curriculum. Gija language is in **orange**. First are ideas for using the book to teach more about some of the knowledge Shirley shares. After that are ideas for using the book to teach some Gija language with the help of Elders. We have talked about page numbers starting with 1, which is the picture of the dancing at the start of the story.



1. KNOWLEDGE

NGARRANGGARNI

Shirley talks about the **Dayiwool Ngarranggarni** - Barramundi Dreaming Story.

- Ask an Elder to come to school and tell a **Ngarranggarni** story. Or go to the art centre and ask an artist to tell one of the stories for their paintings.
- Ask the Elder to take you on a bush trip to the places in the story you've been told.
- Discuss why **Ngarranggarni** stories are important. How do we look after these stories and places?
- Discuss these questions: How should you act in a Dreaming place? Who can talk for different places? How do you welcome people?

JOONBA, MOONGA MOONGA, WANGGA

Shirley talks about when the old women would dance, and the old men sing and how this still happens.

- Ask which Gija dances students know. What different things do boys and girls wear and carry for dancing? What are these things called in Gija language? Maybe make a poster.
- Ask an Elder how **joonba, wangga and moonga moonga** are different.
- Ask an Elder to come and tell the story of an important **joonba** and explain how people find them.
- Discuss these questions: When and where does dancing happen now? What do you need to do to get ready? Who sings and who dances?

STATION DAYS

Shirley talks about her life, living and working on Mabel Downs Station.

- Ask an Elder to talk about what life was like on the station. What work did women do? What work did men do?
- What shelter did they live in? What was it made of? What did they wear and what sort of tools and objects did they own? What sort of food did they eat?
- Shirley talks about staying home with her animals while her parents worked. What did people do for fun in those days? What did they do during the different seasons?
- Discuss how life is the same or different now (work, fun, ceremony, food etc.)
- You could watch Shirley's video on the Warmun Art Centre website: <https://warmunart.com.au/education/videos/>

FAMILY & SKIN NAMES

Shirley talks about her family and kinship relationships at different times in the book.

- Find out whether students know their skin names. Make headbands with their skin names on them and talk about what the kids call each other.
- Talk about whose names they are not allowed to call and why.
- Ask Elders about skin names for animals and plants.
- Make posters about how skin names relate to each other and draw the 'cycles'. There's a good picture of this in the 'Garnkiny - Constellations of Meaning' book at the art centre or in the school library.
- Make a set of cards with each skin name on them and make a game to learn who calls who brother and sister, husband and wife, mum, grandmother and great-grandmother etc.

BUSH FOOD

Shirley talks about the food she used to get from the bush with her old people.

- Talk about the bush food students still get with their families and where they go.
- Ask an Elder about some foods Gija people don't get much anymore and why this might be.
- Talk about what time of year different foods are ready and how to collect them. You could go on a bush trip to get some.
- Shirley talks about how boys can't say the name **joogoorrool**. Ask an Elder about other names for animals or plants that not everyone can say or other foods not everyone can eat for example pregnant women, young boys, people with the same skin as an animal.
- What food did women used to get? What food did men get? What happens now?
- How did Gija people use to catch fish? How do you do it now?
- You could have a look at the bush food videos on the jarraggirrem website: <https://www.jarraggirrem.org/watch>

2. LANGUAGE

FAMILY, DREAMING & COUNTRY (PG. 1-6)

At the start of the book, Shirley introduces herself and tells us about her birthplace, her country and her Dreamings.

Strands & Sub-strands: Land - Connection, Family - Skin Names & Kinship

Text type: Autobiography

Language focus: Introducing & talking about yourself – pronouns, names, words for country

Level: Middle Primary

Read page 1-6 to the class. Ask an Elder to come into class and interview them. Ask them what their bush name is, where they were born, where their mother and father's country is and if they have a Dreaming. ATAs help to write this information down. If the Elder doesn't mind, students take a photo of them and also draw some pictures that go with each answer. The whole class or small groups then make an ebook or paper book about the Elder in English and Gija. You could use these parts of Shirley's story:

Ngayindi **Birrmariyan**-nga.

I am **Shirley Purdie**.

Ngayindi bedalg ngenewardge **Gilban**.

I was born at **Mabel Downs**.

Ngaginybe goonim **gernanyjel doo marnem**.

My dreaming is **echidna and fire dreaming**.

Ngaginyel gooral-ngooyoo daam **Baloowa**.

My mother's country is **Baluwah (Violet Valley)**.



Use the language patterns from the book, filling in the Gija language your Elder gave you.

Ngayindi n-nga. _____ . I am _____ .

Ngayindi bedalg ngenewardge _____ -n. I was born at _____ .

Ngaginybe goonim _____ . My dreaming is _____ .

Ngaginyel gooral-ngooyoo daam _____ . My mother's country is _____ .

Ngaginyji ngaboony-noo daam _____ . My father's country is _____ .

Using the same language patterns, students could then make a book about themselves in Gija. They could ask their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents for the information they need about their:

- bush name or skin name
- birthplace (this might be a hospital in a town, but they might know the Aboriginal name for the place e.g. Goonoonoorrang for Kununurra)
- personal dreaming if they have one
- mother and father's country

Bush Trip: Ask an Elder to take the class to their birthplace and to have a look at the station where they lived as kids. Talk about what they did when they were little and how it was different to now.

Other ideas: Ask Elders to help the class make a map of Gija country with the names of different places in language. Maybe each kid could make one of their own country for their family.

BUSH FOOD (PG. 7-18)

Shirley talks about the bush food she used to get when she was with her old people walking around on their country.

Strands & Sub-strands: Land - Food & Medicine, Sky & Seasons

Genre: Description and Recount

Language focus: Introducing and naming things, language about having and doing (coverbs)

Level: Middle Primary

Read this part together as a class. Talk about the foods that Shirley remembers collecting. Ask if the kids have gone collecting these foods with their families or maybe hunting for meat. Talk about what Gija season it is right now and what bush food is ready to eat. Read page 7 closely where Shirley tells us that the flowers let us know when goonjal is ready to eat.

Ngaginyel gooral jirriji ngenamanya deg-girrem gibingarnam-boorroo mayim. Jmoonim jmoonin. Ngelela goonjal thawalam goorndoorl-ba waniydja-ngarri. Wayiniyana jarrij yirrarn.

My mother shows me how to find bushtucker. When the time is right this tree is yellow with flowers. That's when we dig.

Ngelela goonjal thawala-bal. This kapok has flowers

Wayiniyana jarrij yirrarn. That's when we dig.

Ask an Elder to come and explain when we know when to collect different foods and how to do it properly like minyjaarrany (bush plum), maberany/biriyalji (konkerberry), joomoolony (boab). Change the sentences from the book from goonjal to another kind of tucker. Students make posters with pictures of the new plants with fruit or flowers. Then they can add new sentences from Elders for example something like this:

Nginyjinya minyjaarrany mayi-bany. This bush plum has tucker.

Wayiniyana barniny yirrarn. That's when we pick them.

Ngelela joogoorool mayi-bal. This bush orange has tucker.

Wayiniyana barniny yirrarn. That's when we pick them.



Bush Trip Idea: Find out what bush food is in season and ask an Elder to take the class to get it. You might like to do this lesson or other language about the trip when you get back.

Other ideas: Talk about the other parts of these plants that are used by Gija people. For example, joomooloony (boab) roots and seeds are also eaten. The bark from joomooloony and goonjal were both used to make straps for coolamons. Sticks of goonjal were used to poke up into hollow wood to get sugarbag out. You could make posters of the plants labelling the parts that are used for different things. You can watch and use videos on the Gija website like the video of Shirley called ‘Goonja – Kapok Yam’ at <https://www.jarraggirrem.org/watch>.

TALKING ABOUT TIME (PG. 21–22)

Shirley talks about when she was young, working hard from morning until night in the homestead. She also talks about her life in the past and now.

Strands & Sub-strands: Land – Sky & Seasons

Text Type: Recount

Language focus: words for times of the day and time passing

Level: Upper Primary – High School

Warrgam ngenani Gilban. Berdij ngenayinde **rangarrwayan** warrgam ngelamande wayiniya **mendoowoony**. Ngoowan ngarrij ngenaniyin warrgam ngelemande loogoorr noonemangge jaboogoom girrij. **Dirrandem merewam**.

I worked as a maid on Mabel Downs Station. I wake up at dawn and work all day. I work hard and can't stop until I have washed up all the dishes after dinner. The days are long.

Life was very different for old people when they were young on the stations. Read this page from Shirley's book with the class. Talk about what a normal day is like for kids now. When do they get up? What do they do on the weekdays and on the weekends? When do they go to bed? Write this down from the start of the day to the end.

Get an Elder to come in to help with saying this in Gija, and Eileen or ATAs help write it down as the story of a day in the kid's life. You could use the words Shirley does for times:

rangarrwayan at dawn

mendoowoony night time

dirrandem days

Have a look at the start of the book, when Shirley talks about ‘a long time ago’. Tell students which word means this. Later she talks about her life now. Tell kids which word means ‘now’. Get them to write these meanings down. Then have a look in the Gija dictionary for other words for time. Write the Gija next to the English.

afternoon	dark	evening	long ago	tomorrow
already	daytime	forever	midday	wet season
always	dream time	hot season	soon	when?
cold season	early morning	later	today	yesterday

Bush Trip idea: Ask Shirley to take the class to Mabel Downs or another Elder to Springvale, Texas Downs, Bow River, Alice Downs or Lissadell. Elders could show the kids where they worked and slept and tell them what life was like.

Other ideas: Make a timeline of a day and add the Gija names for the times of day along it. Make a calendar with the Gija season on it and what food is ready at different times. Use the **Jadagen**, **Warnkan**, **Barnden** book from the art centre and look at the Miriwoong calendar here: <http://www.mirima.org.au/calendar/> Talk about gardiya seasons and why they're different to the Gija or Aboriginal seasons.

TALKING ABOUT FRIENDS AND FAMILY (PG. 1–4, 17–18 & 23–25)

Through the book, Shirley talks about her family, her old people and even the animals that were her mates when her parents went off working on the station!

Strands & Sub-strands: Family - Skin Names & Kinship

Text type: Autobiography

Language focus: Talking about yourself and relations – pronouns, names, kin terms

Level: Upper Primary & High School



Warna-warnarram **ngaginyel gooral** warrg nyanini-berrab yagengerram ngalingalim Gilban.

A long time ago, **my mother** danced with the women at Mabel Downs.

Ngagenyji ngaboony deg nginini marnen gedba nyaniydji dal gernanyjel.

My father looked into the fire and saw an echidna.

Birriyama **ngagenybe jarlijim**.

They are **my mates**.

Warna-warnarram **ngagenyji nyaganyji Yalarrji** wanema-ngirri 'Gool gala biyilij nyoon-nyoon-girrem, menkawoon-anyji-ngoo'.

A long time ago, **my uncle Jack Britten** said to me, 'Why don't you try yourself for painting, you might be alright.'

Look at the sections here and how Shirley talks about her relations:

ngaginyel gooral	my mother	ngagenybe jarlijim	my friends
ngagenyji ngaboony	my dad	ngagenyji nyaganyji Yalarrji	my uncle Jack Britten

Invite an Elder in and ask them how to say other things like my: sister, brother, daughter, son, granny etc. Practice saying these new phrases with the Elders there. ATAs help write the Gija down or record some sound clips on an iPad. Students could then take photos of some of their own family members – maybe you could see the old people at the art centre or visit parents at home or at their work if that's ok with them! Then make a paper book with the writing under the pictures, for example a photo of your mum and the words '**ngaginyel gooral**'. Or they could make an ebook with the photo and a recording of the kids saying the language over the photo. You could add their English or bush-name like **ngaginyel ganngal Birrmarriyal** – 'my granny Shirley'.

Other ideas: You could look at how the end of the word **ngaginy-** changes. If the person is a girl or woman, it ends in **-l**. If they are a boy or man, it ends in **-ji** and if there are more than one it ends in **-be**. Get a Gija Elder or speaker to talk about why this is. The Elders might want to talk about how Gija talks about plants, animals and other things. For example, how do you say, 'my dog', 'my car' or 'my house' etc?

