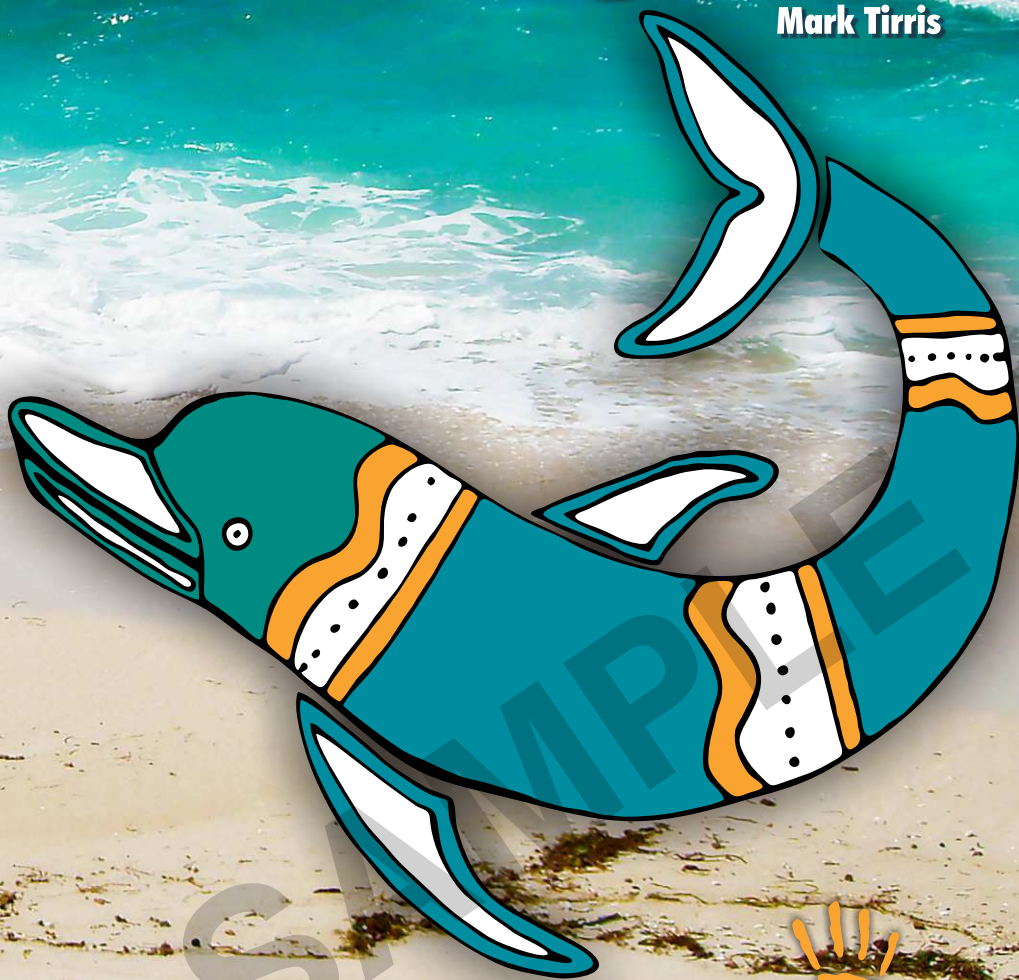


# Surfing Life

Mark Tirris



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I grew up near the beach in Northern New South Wales. There is plenty of bushland, high mountains and big rivers here. This land sits within the Bundjalung Nation. I am a visitor on this country as my family is from the Wiradjuri Nation. The Wiradjuri people are from South West New South Wales.





Even though my Aboriginal ancestors lived inland from the coast, that has not stopped me loving the water. I feel like the ocean is very important. The Wiradjuri Nation is not on the coastline, but it contains many rivers and lakes. Maybe that's why I like the water so much.





Growing up, I had many friends who lived near me. We all lived close to the beach and we could easily ride there with our bikes and skateboards. We carried our surfboards under our arm. My dog often came to the beach with us.

SAMPLE





## Word bank

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Northern	becoming
mountains	decided
Bundjalung	dolphins
Nation	connected
visitor	creator
Wiradjuri	wonderful
Aboriginal	hometown
ancestors	grateful
important	mussels
coastline	ocean
skateboards	otherwise
surfboards	poisoned
definitely	cousins
favourite	nephews
temperature	nieces
breaking	relaxing
paddled	

**Reading Recovery Level:** 22

**Word count:** 599

**Content:** Non-fiction recount.

**ACARA F-10 references:**

**Learning Areas:** English; Science; Humanities and Social Sciences; The Arts; Languages.

**General Capabilities:** Literacy; Critical and Creative Thinking; Personal and Social Capability; Intercultural Understanding.

**Cross Curriculum Priorities:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures; Sustainability.

**Teacher Notes:**

Surfing Life is a non-fiction recount of the author's childhood, growing up close to the beach in Northern NSW. Mark shares his fond memories of surfing with his friends as well as the time he spent living off the land by fishing, hunting and finding bush tucker. His story also explains the importance of family, community, place and culture, both from his original Wiradjuri Nation, and his more recent years as a visitor in the Bundjalung Nation.

**Discussion points for consideration:**

1. Talk about how Mark's childhood is the same and different to children growing up in today's society.
2. Share some examples of Mark's connection to the land.
3. Find examples in the story of where Mark lived sustainably off the land.

**Difficult words to be introduced and practised before reading this book:**

Northern, mountains, Bundjalung, Nation, visitor, Wiradjuri, Aboriginal, ancestors, important, coastline, skateboards, surfboards, definitely, favourite, temperature, breaking, paddled, becoming, decided, dolphins, connected, creator, wonderful, hometown, grateful, mussels, ocean, otherwise, poisoned, cousins, nephews, nieces, relaxing.

**Acknowledgement of the First Nations' People:** We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of country throughout Australia and recognise their continuing connection to land, waters and culture. We pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

**Sensitivity Notice:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are **warned** that the following series may contain images - photographs and illustrations and text about deceased persons.



## Surfing Life

*Surfing Life* is a non-fiction recount of the author's childhood, growing up close to the beach in Northern NSW. Mark shares his fond memories of surfing with his friends as well as the time he spent living off the land by fishing, hunting and finding bush tucker. His story also explains the importance of family, community, place and culture, both from his original Wiradjuri Nation, and his more recent years as a visitor in the Bundjalung Nation.

### Author's Bio:

Mark Tirris is a proud descendant of the Wiradjuri Peoples of South West NSW and has always been active in his local Aboriginal community in Northern NSW. He successfully completed a Master's degree in Indigenous Studies (Wellbeing) through Southern Cross University. His professional experience includes five years working in several Aboriginal organisations and managing his own Indigenous consultancy business.



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