

History of the First Australians 60

# Wandjina's Country The Kimberleys

R. T. Watts

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The Kimberleys is a special place. The Kimberleys is in the Top End of Western Australia. The First Nations' People who live there have over 30 languages. The First Peoples have been in this area for over 40,000 years.

SAMPLE



The First People saw sailing ships a long time before the British arrived. We know this because they depicted them in their rock art. Who were these sailors? The ships were like the Portugese or Spanish ships. These ships could have come from Asia. The First People also painted men with pipes. The people with the pipes may have been Dutch explorers. The explorers were coming from Asia, and also Europe. The Macassan people came from Indonesia to Australia to find the trepang, or sea slug. The trepang were used as food by Chinese people.



The Kimberleys today has many things to see and do. Cattle are raised across the Kimberleys. Cattle are able to put up with the heat and dry times. Sheep were not able to survive in these tough areas. The cattle breeds are from Asia and are called Brahmans. The Brahman cattle can put up with the flies, ticks, heat, and dry times. The cattle are sent on boats to Asian countries. Australian beef is a very important food for people of some Asian countries.





## Word bank

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special	explorers
Australia	trepang
languages	Chinese
Europe	beliefs
Macassans	religions
Indonesia	countries
Brahman	important
Argyle	diamonds
Gwion Gwion	believed
Wandjina	controlling
Kalumburu	Indonesia
headdresses	Brahman
ochre	Argyle
Christian	jewellery
Portugese	

**.Reading Recovery Level:** 26

**Word count:** 532

**Content:** Creation Story.

**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:** The Kimberleys is one of the great wilderness areas of the world. First Nations' People have been here for over 40,000 years. The Gwion Gwion rock art is everywhere and extends from very ancient times to the current period. Wandjina is the spirit of the Kimberleys and is represented across the region.

**Discussion points for consideration:**

1. What are the special things which make the Kimberleys different to other areas?
2. Find more information on one of the many items raised in this reader - diamonds, pearls and others.
3. Who were the early explorers of the Kimberleys? Look on a map and work out where these explorers sailed from to get to the Kimberleys. Why were they in the Kimberleys?

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

arrived, sailors, Portugese, explorers, trepang, Chinese, beliefs, religions, countries, important, diamonds, believed, controlling, animals, anything, Kimberleys, special, Australia, languages, Europe, Macassans, Indonesia, Brahman, Argyle, industry, Gwion Gwion, Wandjina, Kalumburu.

**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.

## Wandjina's Country

The Kimberleys is one of the great wilderness areas of the world. First Nations' People have been here for over 40,000 years. The Gwion Gwion rock art is everywhere and extends from very ancient times to the current period. Wandjina is the spirit of the Kimberleys and is represented across the Kimberleys. The combination of amazing scenery, special industries like diamonds and pearls, and the cultures of the First Peoples is a magnet for people across the world.

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