

Teachers' Notes

by **Ananda Braxton-Smith**

Sonam and the Silence

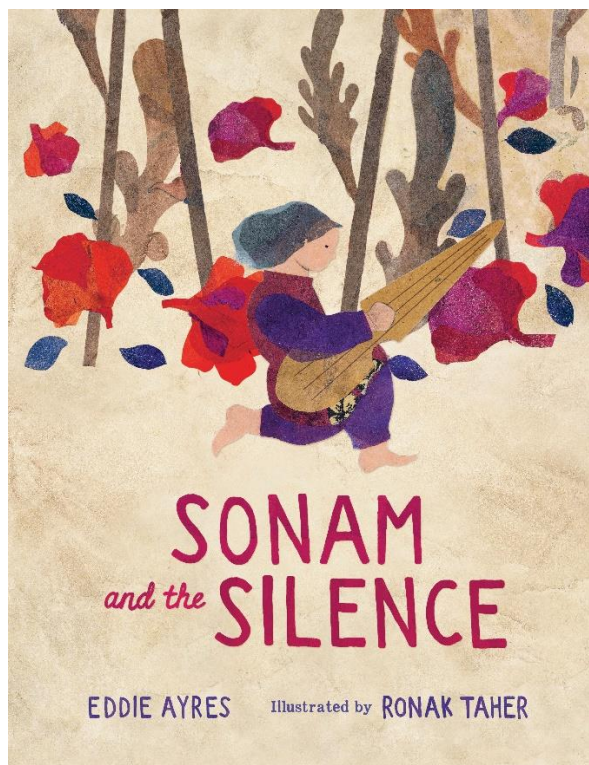
by
Eddie Ayres and Ronak Taher

ISBN 9781760293666

Recommended for ages 6 - 9 yrs

These notes may be reproduced free of charge for use and study within schools but they may not be reproduced (either in whole or in part) and offered for commercial sale.

Introduction	2
Plot summary	2
Note on cultural diversity.....	2
Textual features	2
Curriculum alignment	3
Activities	5
English – Years 2, 3 & 4.....	5
HASS – Years 2 & 3.....	15
Music – Years 2 & 3.....	18
Visual Arts – Years 2, 3 & 4.....	19
Resources	22
Related books.....	26
About the creators	30



83 Alexander Street
Crows Nest, Sydney
NSW 2065
Australia

PO Box 8500
St Leonards
NSW 1590
Australia

ph: (61 2) 8425 0100
fax: (61 2) 9906 2218

info@allenandunwin.com
www.allenandunwin.com

Allen & Unwin PTY LTD
ABN 79 003 994 278

INTRODUCTION

PLOT SUMMARY

In the city of Kabul in the country of Afghanistan music is forbidden. Listening is forbidden. Playing is forbidden. In this faraway place a girl called Sonam turns seven-years-old. It is time for her to grow up, to put on the veil and to go to work. In the clamour of the city, among the noises of the marketplace, Sonam hears a sound she has never heard. It is a sound that seems to come from both outside and inside her body. She follows the sound to a garden where an old man is sitting under his pomegranate tree. He is playing music, playing alone on his rubab, playing the forbidden sounds. Sonam is entranced. Every day she sneaks away to the garden and learns to play the lovely tunes on the old instrument. In time the old man gives her his rubab to take home.

The music enters Sonam's body and mind and she cannot help humming. She hums in the loud city as she works. She hums as the guns fire, echoing faraway in the mountains. The humming makes her feel better. Her brother is troubled by Sonam's music. He discovers the rubab and he takes it from her, reminding her that music is forbidden. Slowly, the music fades out of the world. There is only the clamour of the city and then come the rushing planes, the booming guns and roaring rockets. Slowly the music fades out of Sonam. She returns to the garden but the old man is gone; only his pomegranate tree remains. Sonam picks the last fruit and takes the seeds home. As she digs a hole to plant the seeds, Sonam discovers her rubab buried in the earth where her brother has hidden it.

As she plays her rubab in the garden of the old man Sonam begins to realise that music cannot be taken from her. The music is in the breeze. It is in her heart. It is even in the silence.

A note on encountering both similarity and difference in the cultures of other people

Seven-year-old Sonam lives in a very different culture to that of Australia. In addition, she lives in a country at war, under attack from inside by fundamentalist extremist idealism that would ban even traditional music, and from outside by foreign powers of varying intentions. She is a girl living inside an unreconstructed patriarchal social system, and a child living in a culture that requires her to behave as an adult from the age of seven.

However, Sonam is also recognisable as any child anywhere. She delights in nature, she lives in an inexplicable adult world, she loves her family, and she loves music. Like most children her love is greater than her fear; she hums when she shouldn't, learns to play the rubab when it's forbidden, and cannot help returning to the garden even after getting into trouble.

Sonam and the Silence speaks to some fundamental similarities in human beings across cultures, as well as clearly delineating differences that exist between cultures. In this it provides a portal to discussions of *what a human being is* and *what a culture is*, the ways in which it is the nature of people to live inside cultures, and what happens when cultures fail human beings. It is a text, both verbally and visually, that encourages an encounter with this similarity and difference, thereby providing students with the opportunity to practice respect for difference as well as develop empathy through recognition of similarity.

TEXTUAL FEATURES

- Picture Book: artwork informed by both traditional practice (Persian/Islamic) and modern (abstraction/collage)
- Genre: Fable-like contemporary children's story; cross-cultural connection
- Poetic language/synaesthesia and soundscape
- Re-visioning notions of the *treasure* in fable and fairy tale
- Themes: Children in war zones, social effects of war, purpose and reception of music, tradition in music practice, joy of music
- Introduction to recognising differences in belief and practice both *between* and *inside* cultures

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

ENGLISH

Sonam and the Silence was written in response to the experience of the author Eddie Ayres teaching music to children in Kabul, Afghanistan, in 2015-16. Consideration of Ayres' motivation for this work provides an opportunity for beginning to understand literature in its *contexts of creation*. Such a study affords insights into the possibilities and purposes of writing in general, and such considerations deepen engagement with students' own stories in particular.

Sonam's poetic language, including the use of metaphor and soundscape, can be illuminating for beginning studies in *language affect*, particularly when followed by practical explorations writing short, themed poems.

Sonam and the Silence supports such literary activities as learning to:

- *listen* closely and respectfully
- *read* for particular language elements
- develop awareness of *personal response*
- participate in discussions of *reader response*
- *express* feelings and convictions in controlled, accessible ways

Finally, the text suggests pertinent areas of research for cross-curriculum group projects into music and art, cultural tradition, and Australia's diverse communities. Such projects can be personal or informative in nature, providing experience in both persuasive and data-rich writing.

MUSIC

Sonam and the Silence suggests that music is a peculiarly powerful human capacity, an activity which expresses something about human life that is inexpressible in words. It also suggests that music operates transcendentally as a de-stressor and emotional comfort in hard times. As well as leading naturally into discussions of these and other *purposes of music*, the text supports activities in listening to music and finding a language in which to *discuss response*. The book's contribution to primary musical education and activity can include:

- Cross-curriculum activities (with English) in listening and responding creatively, describing and developing a verbal language for music
- Year 2: The text serves as a portal into studies of traditional, or folk, music in general. Students may look into their own musical traditions and share their experience, learning, and their practice with the class
- Years 3 & 4: Building on studies into personal musical traditions above, students may extend their studies into the larger Australian community, in particular the Afghan community and its musical traditions.

Studies of the Afghan community and their musical traditions can create links across the curriculum into studies in History, through both Year 2's focus on *Past and present connections to places and people* and Year 3 & 4's focus on *Diverse communities and places and the contributions people make to them*. [see HASS below]

HASS (HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES)

Australia is largely comprised of an immigrant population. *Sonam and the Silence* has applications in considering in particular its refugee populations. As a child protagonist caught in the machinations of the adult world, Sonam finds the war in Afghanistan inexplicable and frightening. What the wars (both from within and without) are all about she has no means of understanding. What the text presents is her moment-to-moment experience as she grows and learns. The text's consideration of the small, particular life of Sonam provides a singularity through which to enter

beginning studies of the effects of armed conflicts and, especially pertinent to Australia, the displacement of many populations.

These displacements are expected to increase in both frequency and numbers in coming years. Studies that afford opportunities for students to develop understanding of the causes of migration, and to grow in empathy and intercultural respect, are a central thrust of Australia's curriculum. *Sonam and the Silence* provides material for inclusive historical and social learning, including:

- Research into the Afghan cameleers that accompanied early European explorers (and the fossil remnant of that contribution to Australia such as that iconic train, the Ghan)
- Studies of the modern history of Australia's involvement with Afghanistan and our refugee populations
- Studies in *Australia's Family Tree*: Personal projects that ask: What is your story? Where does your family come from? Are you an immigrant? If so, who in your family migrated to Australia, when and why? Are you indigenous? What do you know of your family history?
- Cross-curriculum studies (Music/English) in explorations of historical instruments, starting with the origin of the rubab; comparing the rubab with historical European instruments of the same time
- Cross curriculum studies (Visual Art) in studies of historical art practice of Afghanistan

VISUAL ART

Sonam and the Silence contains illustrations by Ronak Taher, an artist whose original art training was completed in Iran. Among the influences informing *Sonam and the Silence's* illustrations there are Persian traditions of architecture and miniature painting, which Taher says she absorbed 'unconsciously' while growing up, and traditions of Afghan cloth patterning. The visual text offers an introduction to traditions of art other than the European practice, including opportunities for research and play-based exploration, and more formal ideas-based practice for years 3 & 4.

SONAM & THE GENERAL CAPABILITIES

The text will support learning in the following capabilities: Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, and Intercultural Understanding.

SONAM & THE CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

The text contains material consistent with the National Curriculum's focus on Australia's engagement with Asia, more particularly South Asia. Set during a time of the Taliban dominance of Afghanistan and of the military response of internal and external anti-Taliban forces, the text provides contexts for learning in the areas of civil war, and of the movements of people around the world. In its central theme of love of music, it encourages the exploration of both similarity and difference in human culture. In addition, its illustrations are rich in possibilities for appreciating and understanding the art practice of other cultures.

SPECIFIC AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM REFERENCES FOUND IN THESE NOTES

English	Year 2	ACELA1469, ACELA1470, ACELT1587
	Year 3	ACELA1483, ACELT1599, ACELY1675
	Year 4	ACELA1489, ACELA1498, ACELY1694, ACELY1695, ACELY1697, ACAMUR083; ACELT1603, ACELT1604; ACELY1689
Humanities & Social Sciences HISTORY	Year 2	ACHASSK050- 034, 035, 036, 037
	Year 3	ACHASSK063, ACHASSI052-053, 054, 055

Music	Year 2 & 3	ACAMURA083, ACAMURA087
Visual Arts	Year 2	ACAVAM106-107,108,109
	Year 3 & 4	ACAVAM110-111, 112
Mathematics	In the list of Resources there is a link to an Islamic Art lesson plan from TES and the British Council. The activities teach geometry and mathematics as well as art and culture.	

ACTIVITIES FOR THE CLASSROOM

Note: When referring to page numbers, start counting at the half-title page i.e. the first right-hand-side page after the endpapers. Thus, after the full title page, the story begins on the p.4–p.5 spread.

ENGLISH

Year 2

1. Language: reading words & pictures *ACELA1469*

Pictures and words are different types of language, imparting information in different modes. Word texts are a more mediated form of communication than picture texts and require more cognitive steps to decipher. Because of this, word text is more time-consuming to decipher than visual text. When words and pictures are used together, however, they can enrich the story in different ways.

Images comprise a large part of the contemporary delivery of information. Learning to move easily between words and pictures, to fluently receive information from both modes, is an important skill for navigating the internet, for example.

Activity A: words only

READ ALOUD the text on page 17. (In this Sonam is working and humming in the marketplace among the sounds of far-off gunfire.) Do not show the pictures.

ASK the class:

- What do the words say Sonam is doing now?
- Do you know why Sonam is humming?
- Do the words say how Sonam is feeling? How do you think she is feeling? Do you know or are you guessing, using your imagination?

After talking about the text, REREAD the page with access to the accompanying illustration. LOOK CLOSELY at the picture on pages 16 & 17 as you reread the text. What does the picture show about Sonam and the world she inhabits, that the words do not?

- Talk about colours. Contrast the colours used to picture the town and the cars, and the colours used to picture Sonam. What feelings attach to the colours? What do the colours 'say'?
- Talk about imagery. Consider the way in which Sonam is wrapped in the red pomegranate boughs. What does this image 'say' about how music makes Sonam feel?

Find other images in *Sonam and the Silence* that **DEEPEN THE MEANING OF THE TEXT**.

Consider the following:

- Pages 18 & 19. Sonam's brother has taken her rubab and forbidden her to hum or sing. In the illustration she is inside a closed circle picturing the town in blacks and greys, while right next door is the garden of the old man pictured in blues and greens. What do the colours mean to you? What do the two circles 'say' about Sonam's life after her brother forbids her music? Note that there is a path connecting the two circles – but Sonam is forbidden to take it. Sonam and her brother are both pictured in red. What meanings does the colour red carry?

Activity B: pictures only

LOOK CLOSELY at the illustration on pages 8 & 9. Before reading the text, NOTE details of the image such as:

- what colours are used? i.e. the town and the cars, Sonam's dress, the trees, the air
- where is Sonam in the picture? What is she doing?

ASK:

- how do I feel when I look at the picture? What do the colours 'say' to me? What do they feel like?
- how is Sonam feeling? Why has the artist drawn her upside-down? Have you ever felt like your world has been turned upside-down?
- What do you think is happening in the picture?

Now READ the text together. What do the words tell you is happening to Sonam? Do the words match your 'reading' of the pictures?

CONSIDER TOGETHER. What do the pictures show about Sonam that the words do not? Is it possible to understand a story by reading the pictures? What do the words give you that the pictures do not?

2. Language: the right words **ACELA1470**

The most effective texts, creative or informative, use words that suit the subject and/or theme—the right words for the task. These words are not always technical or objective; in lyric, poetry and fiction they are often words of feeling and symbol. Eddie Ayres uses such poetic language to write Sonam's encounter with the power of music: Metaphor, synonym, fragmentation, internal rhythm and the language of emotion invoke the world of sound in which she lives. Practice in finding the right words to describe feeling not only allows a deeper engagement with art and music but it supports personal expression and therefore a more manageable social experience.

Activity A: Sonam's musical wordplay

Music and poetry arise from similar impulses.

READ ALOUD Sonam's first encounter with music, below. This encounter happens spontaneously. Sonam has never heard music before and so has no words to describe what she is hearing. The author has given his words an internal rhythm, a repetition and even a little coda. Can you hear the music in the words?

CONSIDER the following section:

*And as she runs, Sonam hears a sound
that seems to come from the trees, from the
earth, from her heart. A whisper. [page 10]*

- DISCUSS the sound that 'seems' to be both outside and inside Sonam, rising both from the earth and from her heart. The device of likening one thing to another, more accessible thing, is a poetic convention that is very useful for talking about the unknown, the

inexpressible, or about deep feeling. What does this synonym tell us about Sonam's first encounter with music?

- NOTE the effects of wordplay. 'Heart' and 'earth' are anagrams of each other, using the same letters in a different arrangement – just as notes are used in musical composition
- FOCUS on the rhythms created by use of phrasal fragments and the repeated use of the word 'from'. Consider the role of fragments and repetition in music

READ ALOUD poems and other texts that use musical elements and DISCUSS how they work. NOTE rhythm, repeating sounds, internal rhymes and onomatopoeia.

Activity B: make music with words

PRACTICE finding the right words to describe a musical effect.

SIT QUIETLY with a pen and paper at hand. Close your eyes. LISTEN carefully to different pieces of music. (*Think about including as varied a mix of music as possible: these could include large orchestral pieces, solo instrumentals, choral, lone voice, traditional instruments of different kinds, dance music of different kinds, Tibetan throat singing and even whale song.*) As each piece of music ends NOTE two or three words that describe your experience of the music.

CONSIDER:

- How did the music make you feel in your body? Did you have emotions? What were they? Did you want to dance, lie down, sing, turn it off?
- Did the music make pictures come into your mind? What were they?
- Did the music remind you of anything? Was it 'like' something? If you had to try and say what the music was like, what would that be? Birds? A storm? The sea? There are so many possibilities

SHARE the right words you have found to describe the music. LISTEN when others speak. COMPARE people's varying responses.

3. Literature: context of creation **ACELT1587**

All stories are informed by the contexts of their creation. The period of time in which a story is written is one rich seam for context of creation studies. Any period's concerns and aspirations will be somehow reflected in its stories. Even a story set in other times and places will reflect the assumptions of its time of creation. However, strong stories are firstly authentic stories. Such stories are fictions but they are genuine in reflecting the experiences and preoccupations of their writers.

Author Eddie Ayres is an experienced and well-travelled musician, and a person with the conviction that music creates connections across barriers of culture and language. From 1996 to 2001 the ruling Taliban banned music throughout the country of Afghanistan. After invasion by the USA and their allies, the Taliban lost central control and Afghanistan's musicians began to play again.

However, the musical recovery of Afghanistan did not go unopposed. In 2014 Ayres applied for a position teaching cello at the re-opened Afghanistan Institute of Music in Kabul. He applied to the Institute after the following experience:

... on the news I saw a bomb had gone off during the performance of a play at the French Cultural Centre in Kabul. The man who had refounded the music school in Kabul, Dr Sarmast, had been badly injured and at least five people were killed. Sarmast only survived because he had bent down to pick up his phone at the exact moment the bomb had gone off. It was a suicide bomber, a 16-year-old ...

[<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2017/sep/24/> accessed 3/4/2018]

Sonam and the Silence has been written out of Ayres' experience with the orphans and street children of post-war Afghanistan—in particular, his experience teaching them to reclaim their musical heritage. The story grew from his emotional response to the children, his admiration for them and his belief in the power of music to help heal.

I wrote this book for the young musicians in Afghanistan. They are holding a music thread that has been alive for thousands of years. Some people tried to cut that thread, but the kids stopped them by studying music and bringing it back to life. I knew a young musician in Kabul called Sonam. She was saved from selling gum on the streets by being able to come to the music school and learn viola.

Activity A: who is Sonam?

READ the above excerpts from interviews with Eddie Ayres. NOTE that his character 'Sonam' is named for an actual student in Kabul but as a character in a book, she has become more than that. She has been created out of multiple people and experiences.

DISCUSS as a class the following statements about 'Sonam':

- Sonam stands for the all children in Kabul (in her desire for freedom)
- Sonam stands for bravery and hope (in her defiance of her older brother)
- Sonam stands for all the children in war zones (in her powerlessness)

Activity B: what's your story?

Writing a story is hard work. Genuine engagement with the subject is closely related to satisfaction in writing stories. Learning to choose subjects that have personal meaning—and thereby learning to recognise and resist mimicry—is a task that requires practice, but it is a task that will greatly increase enjoyment in writing.

It is useful to have ways of sparking stories.

CONSIDER the following list of story starters:

- a time you felt something was unjust
- a time when someone was in trouble but you couldn't help
- a time you laughed until you cried
- a time you really admired someone
- a news story you couldn't stop thinking about
- a time when you were able to help somebody
- a time you were surprised by something a person close to you did. Mum? Dad? A close friend?
- a time you were scared

When you have decided on your subject, THINK about the event for five minutes. NOTE any details that stand out (colour, sound, words) in your memory.

WRITE A PARAGRAPH using your story starter. Give the real people in the story different names. Leave out the bits of the story that don't matter to you and exaggerate the bits that do matter. If you could, how would you change the person or events in the story? Go ahead and make any changes you think improve your story.

SWAP your story with a friend.

READ your friend's story carefully. Can you tell from the story what the writer is feeling? Can you tell what part they care about most? TELL the writer what you think the story is about and ASK the writer to tell you what made them write their story. LISTEN carefully to each other and let the other person finish their sentences.

Year 3

1. Language: words tell & pictures show **ACELA1483**

Picture books combine words and pictures to tell stories. Fundamentally, in such books the pictures illustrate the actions of characters but they can also add to the words. They do this through illustrators' choices in *what* pictures show and *how* they are shown. Pictures can direct attention and magnify effect through use of visual elements such as size, colour and angle. Learning to recognise such visual usage both enriches the act of reading and is useful for interpreting the image-saturated internet.

The word text of *Sonam and the Silence* tells us many things about Sonam: for instance, where she lives and with whom, how old she is, her encounter with music and what happens next. The visual text illustrates these things but also adds information about Sonam that is not explicit in the words. A closer look at the ways in which Sonam is shown in the pictures reveals a world of implicit feeling and personal experience.

Activity: Sonam in the world

The illustrations in *Sonam and the Silence* show a girl with big feelings but little agency. The pictures show Sonam powerless in the world, blown about like a leaf on the wind, a small person in thrall to powerful conventions and persons, protected only by her relationship to the natural world. Music is represented as a part of that natural world.

Reading pictures requires a practice of CLOSE LOOKING (visual analysis) and ASKING QUESTIONS (interrogation). For the following activities the class focuses on the following elements of the visual text:

- layout (where elements are within the picture)
- angle (orientation of the elements within the picture)
- size (relative size of elements within the picture)

Using the above criteria, look at the following pictures. Consider them as texts that are adding something extra to the words of *Sonam and the Silence*. Use the first analysis as a guide but follow the classes' direction and interest.

Pages 8 & 9. LOOK CLOSELY at the picture. The words tell us that Sonam's older brother has told her she must put on the veil and go to work. The pictures show us something more than the words; they show something of her emotional response to this demand.

NOTE the visual elements concerning the representation of Sonam. There are many visual clues to Sonam's state of being in this picture, including:

- Sonam is running away from the city into the trees
- Sonam is upside-down
- Sonam is unveiled and her hair is hanging down

Display these visual elements so that the class can consider them together.

CATEGORISE each visual element. Is it an element of layout, size or angle?

ASK questions about the picture. Start with the following:

- Why Is Sonam running? Is she running away? What is she running away from? Is it only her brother, or also what he has said? What has he said she must do? What might this mean to Sonam?
- Why might she run away from the city and into the trees? What is it like in a forest? How do you feel there? Alone in the trees, can anyone tell you what to do? Alone in the trees, does it matter what you wear?
- The picture shows Sonam running upside-down. No-one can run upside-down in real life. What does it feel like to be upside-down? Is the world suddenly different? Are you dizzy? Does the blood pound in your head?

- Sonam’s hair hangs down and moves freely as she runs. It is thick and black. She has not veiled herself as she was ordered. Why? How does it feel to run with the wind on your face and in your hair?

Here are some further pictures to analyse that add to the story being told in words. FOCUS on visual representations of Sonam, NOTE where she is in the picture, her size in relation to other elements, and her orientation.

- Page 5. Meeting Sonam. First impressions
- Pages 16 & 17. Sonam in the city. Sonam’s joy in music
- Pages 18 & 19. Sonam alone. Sonam loses her joy

Extension:

COMPARE multiple illustrations. For instance, LOOK CLOSELY at all the illustrations in *Sonam and the Silence*. FOCUS on representations of Sonam. NOTE how many pictures show Sonam floating, flying, or at odd angles to the ground. NOTE how she is sometimes shown encompassed by birds or leaves, at others entangled in vines or strings.

ASK QUESTIONS about these images and symbols. What do they ‘say’ about how Sonam is feeling?

2. Literature: words setting the scene **ACELT1599**

Stories need a place and time, a fictional world, in which to happen. This fictional world is called the setting. Creating a strong setting helps create a story, they are interlinked. Creating a setting can be the most enjoyable part of writing fiction, and often the setting comes before the story. This is because settings have feelings attached to them; they have different moods that suggest action, and a series of actions become a story.

Eddie Ayres’ story about Sonam is set in a real place—the city of Kabul in the country of Afghanistan —and a real time—during the years of Taliban rule—but the various settings for Sonam’s particular story are fictional. The city, the marketplace, the old man’s garden; they are not real. They are all made of mood-creating words.

Activity A: locating the setting

The moods of *Sonam and the Silence* are created through appeals to the senses, in particular Sonam’s sense of hearing and the feelings in her body. The noise of the city and the music in the garden set two very different moods. Note that the mood can be set in very few words.

READ together the following sections. LOCATE the sense-words. Some appeal to the sense of hearing and some to sensations in the body. What mood do the words set? How does Sonam respond to the sounds and sensations?

- Page 8. the marketplace
- Page 10. the garden
- Pages 22 & 23. the war

Activity B: setting a scene

Having a strong sense of place in which a story will happen helps the process of writing stories. Once there is a fictional world that appeals to the mind, stories arise naturally. Making a world in words strengthens the linguistic, creative and organisational capacities.

CONTEMPLATE the following simple settings:

- A beach
- A jungle
- An empty old house

CHOOSE the setting that appeals to you. SIT QUIETLY for a few minutes and IMAGINE its details.

ASK yourself questions about your setting:

- Is the beach cold? Windy? Still? Hot? Is it deserted? Crowded? Are there birds? What colour? Are there dunes? Are they big or small? Are there trees behind the dunes? Or houses? Are there whales in the sea? Waves? How big? Or is the sea flat? What colour is it?
- Is the jungle full of sounds? Or very quiet? Is it raining? How tall are the trees? Do they have vines? How many types of flower can you see? Are there people living in the jungle somewhere? How do you know? What insects can you see or hear? Is the jungle beautiful? Or frightening? Or both? If it's frightening, why? What is frightening about it? What can you smell? What colour are the leaves, the shadows, the sky between the trees?
- Is the old house completely empty? Is there furniture? Curtains? Leftover books? Does it have stairs? If it has stairs, where do they lead? Does the house have broken windows? Is it night or day? Are there shadows? Is it silent? What does it smell like? How did you get in?

LIST these details as you imagine the place.

WRITE a paragraph about your imaginary place. Write the paragraph in the FIRST PERSON. Use the language of the senses to describe its details. DESCRIBE what you see, hear, feel, taste and smell.

Extension:

Use the setting you have written to start a story.

3. Literacy: other people's perspectives ACELY1675

Stories are told from the perspectives of characters. These perspectives are called points of view. Sometimes the point of view shifts between characters to give different perspectives on the action. Reading stories requires the ability to recognise points of view, and to understand that actions and events may seem different to different characters. Practice in recognising points of view is not only necessary for a fluent engagement with fiction, but is also useful for understanding real people.

Activity: different views

Sonam and the Silence is a third-person narrative, but it is focused through Sonam's point of view. Through her we experience the shock of being told to grow up, the clamour of the city, the fear of the gunfire, the mystery of the old man and music, the comfort of humming, the loss of her rubab and the joy of redemption. However, these events would be told differently by other characters in the story.

CONSIDER different characters' points of view of the story's events. DISCUSS how different characters might view certain events.

WRITE the following events through different points of view:

- the old man in the garden tells of Sonam first coming to his house
- a driver in a car tells of a humming Sonam selling him some gum
- Sonam's older brother tells of hearing her humming in the marketplace

Extension:

In fiction, not only people but animals and objects can have points of view. CONSIDER these perspectives. IMAGINE the following points of view and WRITE a paragraph from their perspective:

- the pomegranate tree
- the rubab

Year 4

1. Language: fact or feeling *ACELA1489, ACELA1498, ACELY1694, ACELY1695, ACELY1697, ACAMUR083*

In a recent study out of Stanford University, 80% of its school- and college-student subjects couldn't tell the difference between an ad and an article on the same web page.

[<https://www.wsj.com/articles/most-students-dont-know-when-news-is-fake-stanford-study-finds-1479752576?reflink=e2twsc>]

The information age produces myriad texts of all kinds every day, texts created by writers with various levels of expertise and integrity and with various aims. More problematic than not recognising an ad is not recognising a persuasive text masquerading as an informative text. Becoming fluent in the characteristics of each mode is important for all facets of contemporary life.

Words create response in readers through various means. One of these means is the choice of objective or subjective language, the language of fact or the language of feeling. Practice in manipulating language to either express information or to express experience will help students discriminate between fact and feeling in the texts of others.

Activity A: feeling things - a response

WATCH and LISTEN to some traditional Afghan musicians playing the rubab. [see Resources below] As you listen, FOCUS on the feelings in your body and on the images in your mind. CONSIDER WORDS that describe the movement of the music, or how it makes you feel emotionally. NOTE these down as you listen.

WRITE a response to the music. For this you do not need any data, any research or technical knowledge. WRITE one paragraph telling how the music affected you.

Activity B: knowing things – a report

This is a longer project-style activity, which requires the finding and presenting of facts – information we can trust from reliable sources. It takes longer to know things than to feel things. Feeling requires attention. Knowing requires research.

As in activity A, WATCH and LISTEN to some traditional Afghan musicians [see Resources below] playing the rubab and other traditional instruments.

FOCUS on one aspect of the music; this will be your SUBJECT.

FIND FACTS about your subject. [see Resources below to start]

ASK QUESTIONS about your subject and answer them through research. Note the SOURCES of your information so that you can include them in the final copy of your report. LOOK UP any words you do not understand using a dictionary and keep a list of them for a GLOSSARY. DOWNLOAD PICTURES that illustrate your subject.

Subjects for a report can include:

- what is a rubab? How is it made? How is it played?
- history of the rubab. Where did it come from? Where did it used to be played?
- Some famous musicians of the rubab. Old masters? New players? Who were/are they?
- short history of music in Afghanistan. Traditional? Contemporary?
- Afghan music under the Taliban and now
- other traditional Afghan instruments. Names and origins? How are they played? Illustrations?

PLAN your report, considering the following:

- relevance – what is the most important information?

- irrelevance – is there information that doesn't fit the subject?
- openings – how will you start the report?
- endings – how will you end the report?
- inclusions – how many pictures will you include, and where will you place them?
- structure – will you use subheadings to separate your information into sections? Can you use bullet lists anywhere to fit in more information and save space?

Make a **FIRST DRAFT** of your report using the **FACTS** you found. **WRITE** three paragraphs of information. Do not include **OPINION** or **FEELING**. Include a first draft of a **GLOSSARY**, listing the new or difficult words you found in your research.

SHARE your draft with your neighbour. **ASK** them to tell you what they liked and what they thought could be better. **LISTEN** to their response. **NOTE** what they tell you and **THINK** about their suggestions. If you agree with their feedback make the **CHANGE**.

HELP your neighbour in the same way with their report.

WRITE the final draft of your report. **CHOOSE** your font carefully and **DECIDE** if and where to use **Bold**, **Italic** or **Underlined** text for emphases or separation of information. Using the Word programme's **Tools** or **Review** facility **EDIT** the draft online for spelling and punctuation. **IMPORT** and carefully place any pictures. Make your **GLOSSARY**.

On the final page list the **SOURCES** of your information and pictures.

2. Literature: talking about reading *ACELT1603/ACELT1604*

Word Stop!

Metalinguage: *noun*. Any language or symbolic system used to discuss, describe, or analyse another language or symbolic system.

[Dictionary.com Unabridged. Based on the Random House Dictionary, © Random House, Inc. 2018]

When talking about literature there is a shared language, called *metalinguage*, in which to express thoughts about elements of text. A shared language greatly increases confidence and enjoyment in such discussions. In addition, becoming familiar with the shared language can suggest novel ways in which we may look at text. For instance, a broadening understanding of literary symbolism as a notion can deepen understanding of how actual symbols work in texts. This in turn can lead to a more meaningful engagement with metaphors (and other literary deployment of symbols) as they are encountered in reading. The more a shared language is practiced the more meaningful it becomes. In this way literature and its metalinguage feed into one another with increasing benefits.

Activity: talking about Sonam

Form **SMALL GROUPS**. **READ** and **DISCUSS** *Sonam and the Silence*. **TAKE TURNS** to speak and **LISTEN** to each person. **HELP** each other use the right words to name textual elements. Use the list of metalinguistic terms below to say exactly what you mean! You can use the discussion starters below to guide your discussion.

- Metalinguage
- character
- point of view
- setting
- metaphor
- theme

Discussion starters

- From whose point of view is the story being told? How do you know that? Find parts of the text that show the Point of View.
- What is Sonam's personality? Is she brave or cowardly? How do you know? Is she scared or untroubled? How do you know? Is she gentle or fierce? How do you know? Find parts of the text that show her character.
- Find parts of the story that talk about music. The author writes about music using the metaphor of a living thing. Find words and phrases that describe music in this way. What effect does this metaphor have on you?
- What does the text make you feel, think about? Does the story connect to anything in the real world?
- What do you think you would have done in Sonam's place? Would you have gone into the old man's garden? Would you have hummed in public? Would you have gone back to the garden?
- Does Sonam's story remind you of anything?
- What is your favourite thing about the story or the way it's told? Why?
- Is there anything about the story or way it's told that you didn't like? Why?
- What do you think the author wants you to think about?

You can talk about all the questions in every group, or take one question per group, or make up your own questions. When the discussions are finished REGROUP as a class and SHARE responses, encouraging and affirming use of appropriate metalanguage.

3. Literacy: response or report *ACELY1689*

Activity: response or report

PRESENT your response and your report from Language activities A and B.

PREPARE your presentation. REREAD each of the activities to re-familiarise yourself with their content. READ CLOSELY to ensure there is no feeling- or opinion-based language in the report.

THINK about how the response and the report could be improved for the purpose of an oral presentation. How could you make the presentation more colourful, more interesting to listen to or more entertaining? Maybe you could show more pictures, and/or enlarge them. Maybe you could play examples of the music you are talking about, or short videos of musicians. It is a good idea to PRACTICE your presentation so that you can look up at times while you are talking. When you have finished these tasks you are ready to PRESENT your work to the class.

PRESENT your response first.

Then PRESENT your report. At the end show a copy of your SOURCES so that people can see where you found your facts.

While people are presenting their work, LISTEN CLOSELY.

Here are some QUESTIONS for the audience to consider:

- What are the differences between the response and the report?
- How is the language different? Can you point out words or phrases in the response that would be a problem if they were included in a report? Vice versa?
- Which did you enjoy the most? Why? Did the response communicate its feelings well? Which words or phrases affected you most strongly? Was the report clear and interesting to you? Why? What did you like about the way it was presented – was there something you found helpful to your understanding? Did you trust the information in the report?

After each presentation DISCUSS in the light of the above questions.

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES

Year 2

History: the stories of us *ACHASSK050/034/035/036/037*

Australia is an increasingly diverse nation. Unless you are an indigenous Australian you have immigration in your history. If you are an indigenous person you will still probably have a story of resettlement out of your traditional Country.

British-Australian histories include redcoats and convicts shipped in forced transports, pioneers making odysseys in creaking tall ships, or labourers making their journeys into indentured labour in crowded holds. There were English children separated from their poverty-stricken parents and sent away on ships, and the migrations of post-WWII 'ten-pound poms'.

A large post-war migration also brought Euro-Australians including Displaced Persons fleeing Communism in Eastern Europe, Italians and Greeks from destroyed homes, and Jews escaping the horrors and memories of WWII. Chinese-Australian histories include difficult and expensive journeys to the gold rushes of the mid 1800s, and the escapes to asylum after the 1989 student massacre in Tiananmen Square. The many histories of Asian-Australians often involve remarkable and frightening journeys.

Everybody has a story. What is yours?

Activity: who are we?

INVESTIGATE the histories in your class, including your teacher's, and make a STORY TREE.

RESEARCH your own history. INTERVIEW your parents, and/or your grandparents, uncles and aunts. You can record the interview or take written notes of the important information such as names, relationships, dates and places. ASK them to tell you the family stories.

Here is a list of questions to start the conversation:

- names of their parents and grandparents, great- and great-great-grandparents?
- what was the family origin, either in Australia or outside of Australia?
- who came from where? Did different relatives come from different places?
- when did they move?
- why did they move?
- are there any pictures, letters, papers from the time?
- are there family stories attached to the move or migration?
- are there extended family still living in the place of origin?

DRAW a large leaf on an A4 piece of paper. WRITE in CAPITAL LETTERS the names of your parents and grandparents inside the leaf. You can include all the relatives about whom you have collected information—PRACTICE fitting all the names on the leaf by experimenting first. Try making your writing bigger or smaller, or writing the words at different angles. When you are happy with your layout MAKE your final copy on a clean leaf. WRITE in LOWERCASE LETTERS under their names where the relative came from and when. If you know why your family member moved off Country or migrated to Australia, include this information in one or two descriptive words. When you are finished CUT OUT the leaf.

MAKE a cardboard story tree approximately 1 ½ metres tall. It should be tall and wide enough to hold the classes' leaves. DRAW the tree with plenty of branches but no leaves. CUT OUT the tree. ATTACH it securely to the wall.

SHOW the class your leaf and TELL them what you have found out about your family history. ATTACH the leaf to the tree.

- What does your story tree show about your class?
- Are you surprised by what your tree shows about your class?
- Would you like to know more about these stories?

Year 3

History: stories of refuge *ACHASSK063//ACHASSI052/053/054/055*

Word Stop!

Refugee: *noun.* A person who has fled his or her country of origin in fear of being persecuted because of race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership of a particular social group.

[<https://museums victoria.com.au/origins/glossary.aspx?gid=32>]

Sonam's war

Sonam lives in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan.

In 1995 and 1996 Kabul was overtaken by students from Islamic schools. These students were called the Taliban, an Arabic word meaning 'students'. The Taliban established a strict form of Islamic law, called Shar'ia Law.

In 2001 terrorists from a group called Al Qaeda flew two planes into the World Trade Centre towers in New York city, killing themselves and 3000 others. The USA accused the Taliban of providing protection to Al Qaeda. A US- and UK-led Coalition force responded to the attack on October 7 2001 by invading Afghanistan in order to destroy the Taliban and its supporters. Australia was part of the Coalition.

Taliban rule initially collapsed however they had regrouped by 2002 and since then have been carrying out attacks in Kabul and throughout Afghanistan. The Coalition have been attempting to defeat them. Civilians, particularly children, have been caught in the middle of this war. Tens of thousands have been killed or injured. Homes and workplaces have been destroyed. Many Afghan people have fled in search of refuge. These people are called refugees.

Refugees now

There are more refugees in the world now than at any previous time—22.5 million people, of whom 2.5 million are from Afghanistan. Over half are under eighteen.

Australia has given refuge to many refugees over 170 years, beginning with a group of Lutherans fleeing persecution in Prussia in 1839. Australia provided refuge to Jews and Eastern Europeans fleeing Nazism and the work camps during and after WWII as well as to Asians expelled from Uganda in 1972, Chileans escaping a vicious coup in 1973, Cypriots running from Turkey's 1974 invasion, and East Timorese fleeing war in 1975. One hundred thousand Vietnamese people were given refuge in Australia following the 1975 fall of Saigon and its consequences.

Each of these communities have a story. Each have made unique contributions to Australia. Each community is an Australian community.

Activity: who are we (2)

INVESTIGATE Australia's refugee communities and prepare a report to SHARE. The communities tend to have settled particular areas at first, and then spread out into the wider population.

CHOOSE one community from the following list:

- Sudanese communities
- Jewish communities
- East Timorese communities
- Tibetan communities
- Chilean communities
- Vietnamese communities

- Cambodian communities
- Afghan communities

RESEARCH and COLLECT both data and personal accounts. [see Resources below]

Include:

- a small history of the country from which the community has fled
- a summary of the conflict that drove people to flee the country
- details of the journey of one or two people to Australia
- what people first thought of Australia when they arrived/what they felt
- resettlement experience/homesickness/making friends
- how the community are faring now/how many people/areas of settlement
- unique contributions to Australia in music and dance, food and festivals, literature, faith, art, sport or business

NOTE your SOURCES as you go. DOWNLOAD pictures or maps to help tell the story.

WRITE a first draft of your report using word processing software. EXPERIMENT with a mix of factual material and personal stories. CHOOSE one font for facts and another font for personal stories. IMPORT any maps and/or pictures. LIST your SOURCES on the last page,

When you have finished experimenting, EDIT the report for spelling and punctuation.



Afghan musician Fazila Zamir plays the rubab [image accessed You Tube 30/4/2018]

MUSIC

Year 2 & 3

Sonam's sanctuary *ACAMURA083//ACAMURA087*

Under their strict interpretation of Islamic law, the Taliban enacted a ban on music. Girls were forbidden to attend school after the age of ten. The Taliban militias policed the bans with extreme violence. This is the world Sonam inhabits.

Sonam's love for her music is physically dangerous. It is a source of conflict with her brother. But it is also her comfort and her sanctuary.

Music is a source of comfort to people but traditional, or folk, music holds a special sort of comfort. Much music is global: pop, rock, jazz, classical and opera have enthusiasts worldwide. It has become universal. Traditional music arises from a specific place and the people of that place. It is played on unique and specific instruments, and it carries particular meanings. Like the song-lines of Indigenous Australia, it sings of relationship to place and to community.

There are many musical traditions in Australia now. Firstly, there is Indigenous music from all over the country. There is specific music that arrived with the first waves of settlement, such as British convicts and Chinese gold prospectors. There is specific music that came to Australia with the Jewish diaspora and Greek post-war migrants. This is only a handful of examples. Recent arrivals are adding to Australia's musical diversity: Chilean cueca, Sudanese Zar and Afghan Mohali are just a few.

Activity: thank you for the music

EXPLORE the world of traditional music in Australia, online and at home. LISTEN to and RECORD a collection of traditional music to SHARE. [See Resources below] CHOOSE music of diverse origin, of differing forms and purposes, from among the communities in Australia. There are many communities to explore. The following is a small sample:

- **Indigenous communities:** At settlement Australia's Indigenous peoples populated every part of the continent, speaking diverse languages and carrying thousands of years of story and music particular to their group
- **Sudanese communities:** Between 2001 and 2011, due to violent and protracted civil wars, more than 22000 refugees from Sudan and South Sudan were resettled in towns and cities across Australia [www.theguardian.com Oct 15 2015]
- **Chilean communities:** large numbers of Chileans fled Chile during and after the military coup of Augustus Pinochet overthrew their government on 11th September 1973 [<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/LifeinAustralia/Documents/MulticulturalAffairs/chile.pdf>]
- **Jewish communities:** there were 14+ Jewish convicts in the First Fleet but most arrived later. Tens of thousands of Jewish people came to Australia in the early twentieth century to escape anti-Semitism and the rise of Nazism. [<http://jewishhistoryaustralia.net/jha/timeline.htm#haven>]
- **Irish communities:** The Irish were a major group among the first settlers and their music has provided a basis for what is called Australian folk music
- **Indian communities:** Indians are one of Australia's most numerous immigrant groups, making up almost 2% of the population. In the 2016 census Victoria's 'typical' migrant came from India. [<https://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/hindi/en/article/2017/06/28/census-shows-indian-population-and-languages-have-exponentially-grown-australia>] In addition, in 2018 70,000 Indian students call Australia home [<https://www.sbs.com.au/yourlanguage/hindi/en/article/2018/02/16/number-indian-students-studying-australia-seven-year-high>]

LISTEN to your collection of music one item at a time. At first just listen to the music without accompanying video. DISCUSS responses to musical elements including rhythm, vocal rendering

and instrumentation. What feelings does the music elicit? Does it make you want to dance? Does it make you daydream? Does it make you sad, or does it make you laugh? What is your favourite? Why?

Now enjoy any videos of dance or performance that accompany the music.

Extension:

HOST a MINI FOLK FESTIVAL in your class. INVITE students and their families to attend and to SHARE their own musical traditions. SING and PLAY separately and together. Is there a song from your own tradition you can sing?

VISUAL ARTS

Year 2

***Not just any old man* ACAVAM106/107/108/109**

I googled "old man afghan face" and tried to reflect it in my drawing.

—Ronak Taher [In communication with ABS 12/3/2018]

Ronak Taher is the illustrator of *Sonam and the Silence*. In this book there are a number of characters, each of whom is a particular person – Sonam is not any girl but a *particular* girl, her brother is her *particular* brother, and the old man is not any old man but Sonam's *particular* old man.

Artists develop strategies to help their imagination create the characters and objects in picture books. One strategy is to collect many pictures of the type of subject—and spend time contemplating them. These collections provide unexpected visual information for a subject, that can add detail to sketches and depth to ideas. These pictures can be found in books but often a quick internet Image search provides multiple images at a single view.

To draw Sonam's old man in his garden, Taher performed a general search for images of old Afghan men. From impressions of this group of *old men*, she then drew her *particular old man*. And it's not just the people who are particular. Even the mulberry tree in the old man's garden is a particular tree.

Activity: the tree

DRAW 'a tree' on paper with black pencil. Put this image to one side.

SEARCH ONLINE for images of a tree. CHOOSE a particular tree such as a gumtree or a lemon tree. LOOK CLOSELY at many pictures. Some will be photos, some will be artworks. NOTE characteristics of the tree, including:

- leaf shapes and colours
- how the main branches grow from the trunk
- how smaller branches spread from the main branches
- where branches start above the ground
- roots that be seen above the ground
- lines, swirls, cracks in the wood
- differences between young trees and old trees

COPY sections of any tree that interest you by making quick, small sketches (*studies*) all on one large piece of paper. PAY ATTENTION to the tiny details and DRAW them carefully. Draw them more than once if you want.

EXPERIMENT on a large clean piece of paper. Make a number of small pictures of the tree using different elements of your study sketches. CHOOSE the one you like best.

Using this picture as a guide, DRAW your final tree so that it covers your whole piece of paper. Put in as much detail as you can.

LOOK AT your first drawing of a tree. This is your *idea* of the tree. LOOK AT your final drawing. This is *the tree itself*.

Take it in turns to SHARE your two pictures of trees. COMPARE your first drawing with your final drawing. Which picture looks most real? Can people tell what kind of tree you've drawn? Which one do you like best? Why?

Years 3 & 4

Patterns from Persia *ACAVAM110/111/112*

I've spent most of my life in Iran. I believe most of the [elements of Persian art in my work] come unconsciously from Persian architectures, paintings, rugs, art, and are things I grew up with. Things I was surrounded by.

—Ronak Taher [In communication with ABS 12/3/2018]

Ronak Taher was born in Iran and graduated from the University of Tehran. Her illustrations for *Sonam and the Silence* reflect some traditional visual conventions of Persian and/or Islamic art, architecture and textile. Influences include:

- Persian miniatures
- Afghan textiles
- Persian art of the book

One reflection of the Persian/Islamic influence is Taher's use of repeated objects to make patterns. Generally, in Persian art the objects are natural—flowers, nuts, fruit, leaves, tendrils—and stylised to make loose patterns. You can see the pleasure the artists took in the natural world. Islamic patterning tended to be made of interlocking geometric patterns. Many Muslims hold a belief that it is a sin to publicly depict human or animal forms. Many, however, kept art in their homes that depicted people and animals. Persian traditions often used their decorative patterns to frame figures and text in books.

Taher's repeating objects in *Sonam and the Silence* are part of this general tradition. For instance, pomegranates scatter throughout the text, the flower and tendril embroidery of Sonam's mother spreads around the text and into the following page, and a small flock of stylised birds makes a regular appearance.

Afghan rug makers traditionally employed this patterning in their carpets, depicting the familiar objects that flourished around them. But the convention is not rigid. After the Russian invasion of 1975, rugmakers evolved a new tradition of stylised tanks, guns, missiles and grenades. [See Image in Resources below] Taher also employs this convention of *repeated object* in a modern context, making patterns from stylised cars belching smoke or bombs falling.

Traditional conventions can serve modern subject matter.

Activity:

Perform an IMAGE SEARCH to EXPLORE some of the traditional art mentioned above. [See Resources] LOOK CLOSELY at the repetition of objects in the art- and craftworks. What details have been left out of the object? Are the objects fitted together like a jigsaw or are they loosely arranged? What colours are used most? Do you see any human or animal figures?

NOTE origins of the work if you can.

MAKE your own Persian page, patterned with natural objects and using the colours the Persian artists favoured.

DECIDE what you will use as a repeated object for your Persian-Australian page. A gum leaf? A gumnut? An Australian flower? A fruit? A fern leaf? On scrap paper draw the object many times.

EXPERIMENT with removing details each time you draw it, so that it becomes a simpler object. CHOOSE the best drawing to use as a guide.

You can make your page in different ways. Use an image from your search upon which to base your page design or TRY one of the following:

- Draw a full border around the page and fill it in with your repeating object. You can make the border as thin or thick as you like
- Draw a circle in the middle of the page, giving it a heavy outline. Fill in all the space around it with your repeating object
- Draw a sun or a cloud in the middle of your page and use your repeating object to fill in the rest of the page

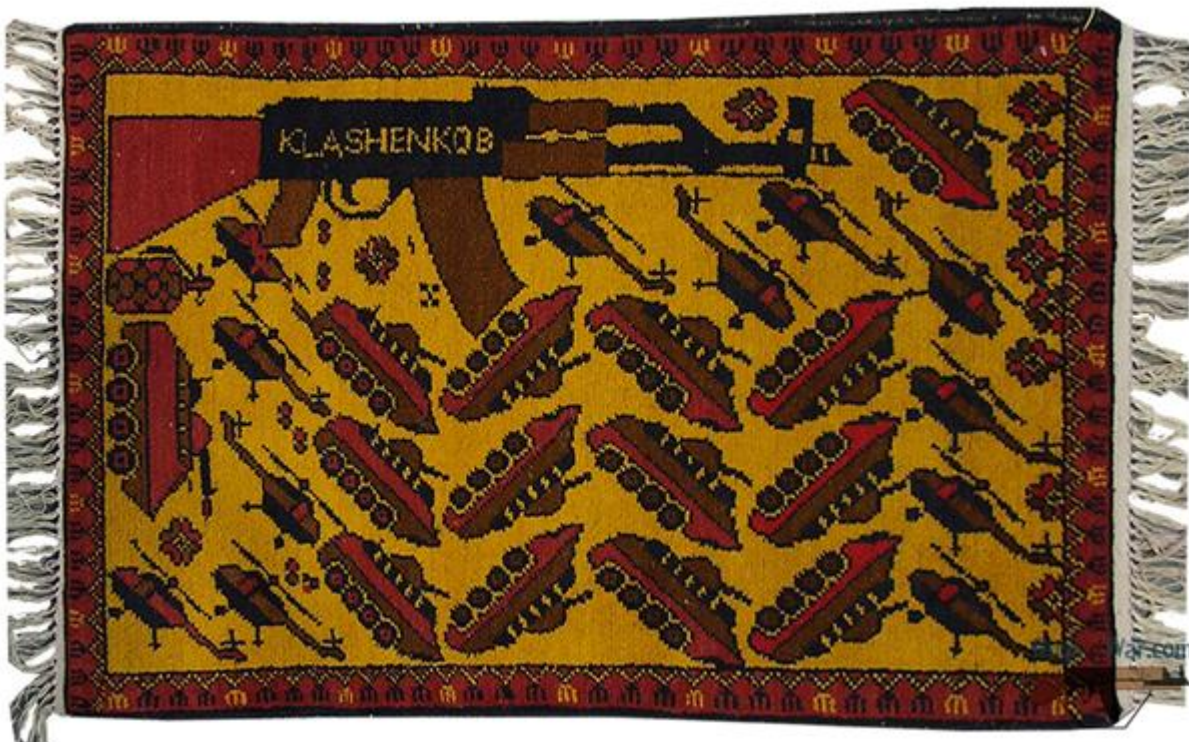
COLOUR the page, remembering to make the repeating objects as like each other as possible.

If you have made a border of repeated objects, ADD a text to the central panel. You could use a short poem or prayer, or a text honouring someone you admire.

SHOW your page and EXPLAIN what you have done.

Extension:

CHOOSE a non-natural object to stylise and use in a page as above. You could use the ball from your favourite sport, or a car. You could use a tool from your favourite hobby, or a toy. Shoes, electronic devices, musical instruments: They can all be stylised to make interesting patterns.



RESOURCES

Definition of 'Taliban' in English plus short description of that group
<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/taliban>

ENGLISH

Afghan music

Listen: Radio program with transcript from the organisation Spotlight: Listen & Read on the recovery and revival of traditional music in Afghanistan
<https://spotlightenglish.com/listen/traditional-music-in-afghanistan>

Listen & watch: Old man playing the rubab and singing
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=znPVgydTzXA>

Listen: Rubab music with still pictures of Afghanistan
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jHd_NYWzKq0

Listen & watch: Afghan and German musicians playing *safar* music. Safar means 'journey'.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2vZQ5yFiu3A>

History of the rubab, including a list of other traditional instruments to research
<http://www.voicesofafghanistan.com/instruments-musical-history/>

Listen & watch: Young Afghan Traditional Ensemble 2014 Kabul
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qsFfUzErXqw>

Overview of the music world in Afghanistan before the Taliban and the inauguration of the Afghan National Institute of Music
<https://www.anim-music.org/the-pathway-to-anim/>

A short documentary about the Afghan National Institute of Music and its work with children
<https://rtd.rt.com/films/dangerous-music/>

HASS - HISTORY

Refugee & immigrant communities information

The Immigration Museums in most states are a good place to start. They also have archives of photos.

Get The Facts page all about refugees from the Refugee Council
https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/get-facts/?qclid=EAiaIQobChMIis663NvU2gIVTz5gCh1QGgoREAAAYiAAEqImAfd_BwE

The story of Muslim cameleers from Afghanistan in Australia in the mid-1800s
<https://muslimvillage.com/2011/04/20/9841/afghan-cameleers-the-forgotten-muslim-heroes-of-australia/>

A Wikipedia page about Ben Barba, a football player of mixed Aboriginal and Afghanistan descent
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ben_Barba

A Scholastic page of basic information about Afghanistan

http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/afghanistan_kids/about/index.asp?article=grolier

Scholastic Teachers Activity Guide: Kids in Afghanistan

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/scholasticnews/indepth/afghanistan/index.htm>

History of Australia's refugee program

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/getfacts/seekingsafety/refugee-humanitarian-program/history-australias-refugee-program/>

Overview of Australia's immigration 1945—1965 including pictures

<http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/objectsthroughtime-history/1945-1965/index.html>

Some general refugee stories

<https://www.dss.gov.au/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/refugee-stories>

Specific refugee and immigrant communities

Vietnamese communities

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/origins/history.aspx?pid=97&cat=none&cid=0>

and

<http://waves.anmm.gov.au/Immigration-Stories/Stories-from-our-collection/The-Lu-family>

Jewish communities

<http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/australian-jewish-community-and-culture>

and

<http://www.naa.gov.au/collection/fact-sheets/fs217.aspx>

Sudanese communities

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/origins/history.aspx?pid=224>

and

<http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/sudanestories/sudanese-stories-intro/index.html>

Chilean communities

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/origins/history.aspx?pid=8>

and

<https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/LifeinAustralia/Documents/MulticulturalAffairs/chile.pdf>

and

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/chilean-culture/chileans-in-australia>

Afghan communities

<https://www.dss.gov.au/our-responsibilities/settlement-and-multicultural-affairs/programs-policy/a-multicultural-australia/programs-and-publications/community-information-summaries/the-afghanistan-born-community>

and

<https://museumsvictoria.com.au/origins/history.aspx?pid=1>

and

<https://muslimvillage.com/2011/04/20/9841/afghan-cameleers-the-forgotten-muslim-heroes-of-australia/>

Cambodian communities

<https://culturalatlas.sbs.com.au/cambodian-culture/family-e9224d16-17e5-48c1-82b3-b270dca7632e#family-e9224d16-17e5-48c1-82b3-b270dca7632e>

and

<http://www.migrationheritage.nsw.gov.au/exhibition/leavingcambodia/sydneys-pol-pot-survivors/index.html>

East Timorese communities

<https://museums victoria.com.au/origins/history.aspx?pid=14>

and

https://www.homeaffairs.gov.au/LifeinAustralia/Documents/MulticulturalAffairs/timor_leste.pdf

MUSIC

Links to some traditional music in Australia

Traditional Afghan music

Hazaragi dance at a festival in Adelaide 2013

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F-0uZT4tRj8>

Traditional Irish music

'Ceilidh' band playing Irish jig for dancers at National Celtic Festival, Victoria 2012

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5sqMitduIA>

Celia Pavey sings Irish ballad 'Scarborough Fair' on the 2nd season of The Voice

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lUbiDYhGpHQ>

Traditional Indian music

Melbourne based Sitarist, Shakhuchi player and Tabla player

Raag Kaunsi Kanada

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u2III2J60Ek>

Indigenous Australian music

Nunggubuyu Aboriginal men sing and play the didjeridu in Numbulwar, eastern Arnhem Land, Northern Territory of Australia

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHHMeh8s_DE

South American traditional music

Chilean folk music to accompany traditional dance 'Huasos'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjJu9Q4yVJ8>

Bolivian Pan Pipes in Bourke St mall

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K2u6Gk1jCIM>

Sudanese traditional music

Students of the South Sudanese Nuer community perform at a high school in Brisbane

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9T32BzyG4OA>

Jewish traditional music

'Bohemian Nights' band playing at the Klezmer Gypsy Dance, on August 2nd 2013 at the Northcote Hall in Melbourne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SIYI4yiKw9U>

Music archives

General archives of international traditional and folk music, including some information on origins and instrumentation:

<http://folkcloud.com>

and

<https://www.worldmusic.net/guide>

VISUAL ARTS

Information

A historical overview of Persia and its arts including links to information and examples of specific arts and crafts

<http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/ancient-art/persian.htm>

Online PDF of Teachers Resource Book from the Uni of Chicago on Islam and Islamic Art

<https://cmes.uchicago.edu/sites/cmes.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/National%20Gallery%20of%20Art%20Islamic%20Art%20and%20Culture%20-%20A%20Resource%20for%20Teachers.pdf>

Islamic art overview

http://www.bbc.co.uk/religion/religions/islam/art/art_1.shtml

A full Islamic Art lesson plan from TES and the British Council, including slide show, info and activity sheets and templates for a lesson in Islamic Art. The activities teach geometry and mathematics as well as art and culture. Free download.

<https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/shapes-and-patterns-in-islamic-art-6344748>

Images

A collection of Persian natural motifs to use in experimentation

<https://www.bing.com/images/search?q=Persian+Motifs&FORM=IRIBIP&ajf=70>

An overview of Afghanistan's art of the rug, leading into a consideration of the war rugs

<https://conflictfood.com/en/war-rugs/>

A large collection of Persian miniatures for sale at Christie's of London

<https://www.christies.com/features/Collecting-Guide-Persian-Miniature-Paintings-8609-1.aspx>

Twenty digitised images of Persian manuscript art at the British Library website

<http://blogs.bl.uk/asian-and-african/2014/10/twenty-more-persian-manuscript-treasures-now-online.html>

Examples of the geometric patterning used in Islamic art and architecture

<https://www.pinterest.com.au/pin/3166662209902317/>

RELATED BOOKS

Allen & Unwin acknowledges the extremely useful resource, *The Source*, available through the website of *Magpies magazine*. Many school libraries subscribe to this database. Most of the books below and the descriptions of them are from *The Source*.

<https://www.magpies.net.au/>

AFGHANISTAN

Picture book

Ziba Came on a Boat by Liz Lofthouse, illustrated by Robert Ingpen. 2007 Camberwell, Vic by Penguin Group (Australia)

A young girl sails with other refugees from Afghanistan. (4-11 yrs)

Novels

Parvana by Deborah Ellis. 2002 Crows Nest, Allen & Unwin

Under the Taliban, Parvana must dress as a boy to support herself and her father, then begin the journey to a refugee camp in Pakistan to be reunited with her mother and siblings. (10-13 yrs)

Parvana: A Graphic Novel by Deborah Ellis. 2018 Crows Nest, Allen & Unwin

Re-told as a graphic novel. (9-13 yrs)

See also: ***Parvana's Journey*** (2002 A&U) and ***Parvana's Promise*** (2012 A&U).

Parvana's story continues from Pakistani refugee camp, back to school in 'liberated' Afghanistan and interrogation by US armed forces. The final book may not be suitable for mid-primary

Shauzia by Deborah Ellis. 2002 Crows Nest, Allen & Unwin

The separate refugee story of Parvana's friend, Shauzia. (10-14 yrs)

Naveed by John Heffernan. 2014 Crows Nest, NSW by Allen & Unwin. From the *Through My Eyes* series edited by Lyn White.

A boy living during the time of the Coalition forces' control of Afghanistan. (11-14 yrs)

Mahtab's Story by Libby Gleeson. 2008 Crows Nest, NSW by Allen & Unwin.

A young girl flees Afghanistan with her family and journeys to Australia. Inspired by a true story. (9-13 yrs)

Boy Overboard by Morris Gleitzman. 2002 Camberwell, Vic by Penguin Books Australia

Jamal, his younger sister Bibi, and his parents have to flee Afghanistan when their small homebased school for boys and girls is discovered. (10-15 yrs)

One Half from the East by Nadia Hashimi. 2016 New York, USA by HarperCollins, US.

When her father can no longer support the family, Obayda must become Obayd, a *bacha posh* - a girl dressed and behaving as a boy. She and her friend 'Rahim' enjoy the freedom of their new lives as boys, until they discover that 13-year-old Rahima must marry the local war lord. (12-14 yrs)

Soraya the Storyteller by Rosanne Hawke. 2004 South Melbourne, Vic by Lothian Books

Referencing *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*, this is the story of a young refugee girl in Australia, looking back and gradually revealing the tragedies that brought her here from Afghanistan. (10-14 yrs)

Jameela by Rukhsana Khan. 2010 Crows Nest, Allen & Unwin

Based on a true story, explores the life of one girl in post-Taliban Afghanistan, struggling to overcome the effects of war. (11-18 yrs)

MUSIC

Picture books

Caruso's Song to the Moon by Adele Jaunn. 2004 South Melbourne, Vic by Thomas C. Lothian Pty Ltd

Introduces the notes in the tonic scale. Story of a cat who loves singing - but not everyone likes to listen. (3-7 yrs)

Potato Music by Christina Booth, ill. by Peter Groves. 2010 Malvern, SA by Omnibus Books
The music that is so much part of life in a young girl's home revolves around the piano. When war comes and starvation begins the piano is sold for food. The girl finds that music is not just in the piano, it is in the hearts of her Mama and Pa. (4-8 yrs)

The Flying Orchestra by Clare McFadden. 2010 St Lucia, Qld by University of Queensland Press
Fantasy. A moving book about the magic and music in daily life. (4-9 yrs)

Mango Makes Music by Bani McSpedden, illustrated by Chris Gilvan-Cartwright. 2002 Surry Hills, NSW by Little Hare Books

Mango is an ape who makes friends through music. (3-8 yrs)

The Music Tree by Catriona Hoy, illustrated by Adele Jaunn. 2006 South Melbourne, Vic by Hachette Children's Books Australia

Liam goes from making a noise to making music. (5-7 yrs)

Mr Big by Ed Vere. 2008 London by The Penguin Group

Mr Big (a really big gorilla) is a gentle soul but everyone is afraid of him. All alone, he can only play his piano sadly. But his music brings him friends and happiness, after all. (4-8 yrs)

Steve Goes to Carnival by Joshua Button and Robyn Wells. 2016 Broome, WA by Magabala Books

Steve the gorilla breaks out of the zoo in Rio de Janeiro and joins in the famous Carnival. (4-10 yrs)

Gus and Me by Keith Richards, ill. by Theodora Richards. 2014 London by Orion Books.

Keith Richards, guitarist with 'The Rolling Stones', tells the story of his musical grandfather and their special bond. (8-12 yrs)

Handel, Who Knew What He Liked by M. T. Anderson, ill. by Kevin Hawkes. 2001 London by Walker Books.

Beautifully illustrated and lively biography. (7-12 yrs)

Blow Kid Blow! by Matt Zurbo, ill. by Jeff Raglus. 1996 Ringwood, Vic by Penguin Books Australia

Fantasy. Johnny's family can't afford a holiday but his dad does get him a trumpet. When Johnny plays, the music transports him to other places and situations. (5-10 yrs)

Ballroom Bonanza by Nina Rycroft. 2009 Kingswood, SA by Working Title Press

Using animals and the alphabet, introduces children to the names of musical instruments and dances. (5-10 yrs)

Herman and Rosie by Gus Gordon. 2012 Camberwell, Vic by Penguin Group (Australia).

Two lonely people (an alligator and a deer) crisscross the city, almost meeting, until the sound of music brings them together. (4-9 yrs)

Broome Songwriters by Jimmy Chi, ill. by various photographers. 1985 Richmond, Vic by Hodja. From Hodja's Australian Stories for Kids.

Two Aboriginal children from Broome, Becky and Matthew, want to be musicians but their dad

just yells at them for making so much noise. Their friend Gary gives them some good advice and a song comes to them when out fishing for the day. (8-12 yrs)

The Toymaker and the Bird by Pamela Allen. 2009 Camberwell, Vic by Penguin Group (Australia)

Fable about the perils of trying to catch and trap the singing of a bird. (4-9 yrs)

Stephen's Music by Sofie Laguna, ill. by Anna Pignataro. 2007 Sydney by Hachette Livre Australia

Celebrates the joy of music in pictures and story. (4-9 yrs)

Poetry, Song, Chants, CDs and great read-alouds

Leunig's Carnival of the Animals by Michael Leunig. 2000 Sydney by Pan Macmillan Australia. Fifteen verses about Australian animals written by Michael Leunig to accompany Camille Saint-Saëns' 'Carnaval des animaux'. Available with CD narrated by Peter Garrett and accompanied by the Australian Chamber Orchestra. (4-18 yrs)

Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy by Susan Whiting, ill. by Sarah Davis. 2009 Frenchs Forest, NSW by New Frontier Publishing. In the Music Box series.

Reinterpreted illustrated tale. A CD with the story read by Antonia Kidman as well as Tchaikovsky's well-known piece from the ballet, *The Nutcracker*, is set in the front cover. (5-10 yrs)

Flight of the Bumblebee by Hazel Edwards, ill. by Mini Goss. 2009 Frenchs Forest, NSW by New Frontier Publishing. In the Music Box series.

Animal fantasy. Songs and chants. Uses story, illustration and music to introduce children to classical music. A CD, with the story read by Antonia Kidman as well as Rimsky-Korsakov's well-known orchestral piece, is set in the front cover. (4-10 yrs)

Stanley's Playing the Trumpet! by John Field, ill. by Tull Suwannakit. 2017 Lindfield, NSW by Scholastic Australia Pty Limited

Illustrated song lyrics, with CD in cover. Stanley the rhinoceros loves music but needs to find the right instrument! (4-9 yrs)

I Can Swim A Rainbow by Kim Michelle Toft. 2015 Ballina, NSW by Silkim Books.

Song book, adapted from 'I Can Sing A Rainbow', this is an ode to the colours of the sea. Contains photocopyable colouring page, key to animals in story, information about rainbows and a two-page musical score. *Magpies* calls this 'An outstanding book for home or the classroom from preschool to mid primary.' (4-10 yrs)

Little Piggy's Got No Moves by Phillip Gwynne and Eliza McCann, ill. by Tom Jellett. 2013 Richmond, Vic by Hardie Grant Egmont

Little Piggy watches the other animals dancing at the disco: 'Zebra can do zumba, Llama does the locomotion', but 'Us piggies, we've got no moves'. Great read-aloud book. *Magpies* says, 'Perfect as a book to use for a dramatic reading with several voices.' (3-7 yrs)

Emily and the Big Bad Bunyip by Jackie French, ill. by Bruce Whatley. 2008 Pymble, NSW by Harper Collins Publishers Australia. In the Shaggy Gully series.

Bunyip gets a tuba. *Magpies* says, 'Suitable for a Christmas choral reading'. (5-9 yrs)

Mulga's Magical Musical Creatures by Mulga. 2016 Sydney by Hachette Australia Pty Ltd
A rhyming animal fantasy which brings to life the music dreamt by a sleeping man. Great for chanting and making lots of loud music! (4-10 yrs)

The Very Noisy Bear by Nick Bland. 2015 Lindfield, NSW by Scholastic Australia Pty Limited
Rhyming introduction to instruments and their sounds. (3-7 yrs)

Little Red Rocking Hood: a rock opera by Jeffrey Leask, ill. by Gavin Bishop. 1992 Auckland NZ by Scholastic
Lyric. Retells the story of Red Riding Hood as a rock 'n' roll song lyric. (6-14 yrs)

Beginner readers

The Magic Violin by Victor Kelleher, ill. by Stephen Michael King. 2006 Camberwell, Vic by Penguin Group (Australia). An Aussie Nibbles title.
Fun silly nonsense story. (5-8 yrs)

Rock-and-Roll Ducks! by Janeen Brian, ill. by Chantal Stewart. 2005 Camberwell, Vic by Penguin Group (Australia). An Aussie Nibbles title. (5-8 yrs)
Tammy learns about music and, inspired by some ducks, invents duck rock 'n roll.

Rock Starfish by Steve Wide, ill. by Michelle Mackintosh. 2002 South Melbourne, Vic by Thomas C. Lothian Pty Ltd. From the Start-ups series.
Humorous tale (visual and word jokes) about a starfish who desperately wants to be a rock star. (4-8 yrs)

A Strange Little Monster by Susan Whiting, ill. by Stephen Michael King. 2010 Camberwell, Vic by Penguin Group (Australia). An Aussie Nibbles title.
Sasha disconcerts her monster family by preferring her beautiful flute music to the roars they expect. But, of course, her music saves her sisters, showing that being different can be a good thing. (5-8 yrs)

ABOUT THE CREATORS

EDDIE AYRES

Eadric (Eddie) Ayres is named after Eadric the Wild, a resistance fighter in England after 1066. Eadric grew up in England, studied music and has adventured throughout the world as a viola and cello player. After working in an orchestra in Hong Kong, he decided to cycle from England back to Hong Kong (that's 16,000 km), took a little violin with him, and played to Greek shepherds, Iranian police and Chinese truck drivers along the way. Eddie says of that time:

I met so many kids on the way, and they all loved music so much. They loved hearing me play and they stood so close I couldn't move my bow. This happens in every country. Music joins us together.

After working in radio in Australia, I decided to go back to teaching and moved to Kabul to teach music to kids there. They are street kids, orphans, very, very poor, often with lots of brothers and sisters to help look after. Some live in orphanages, some live in camps, but all of them are very brave to learn music, as it is not approved of by many people. And all of them live in a war zone with daily threats of bombs. It's for them that I wrote Sonam. And I write lying down! I'm very lazy.

Eadric's big desire in life is to introduce classical music to as many different people as possible, so for ten years he worked as a broadcaster with the ABC, ultimately presenting the popular breakfast programme. Eventually Eadric's adventurous spirit demanded more, and he moved to Kabul to teach music to kids there. About this experience and how it produced *Sonam and the Silence*, Eddie says:

They are street kids, orphans, very, very poor, often with lots of brothers and sisters to help look after. Some live in orphanages, some live in camps, but all of them are very brave to learn music, as it is not approved of by many people. And all of them live in a war zone with daily threats of bombs. It's for them that I wrote Sonam. And I write lying down! I'm very lazy.

RONAK TAHER

Ronak Taher is an Iranian-Australian filmmaker and visual artist based in Melbourne, Australia. In 2007, she obtained a Bachelor Degree in Visual Art (Graphic Design) from Tehran University of Art, Iran where she started discovering her mission and vision as contemporary storyteller who uses different mediums. In 2011 she completed the Masters in Illustration and Animation at Tehran Azad University.

In 2013, Ronak was celebrated as one of the three hundred upcoming world talents in film industry at the "Berlinale Film Festival", Germany. Her films are screened in Sydney film Festival, Montreal World Film Festival, Chicago World Film Festival, Shnit Worldwide Short Film Festival, Florida International Film Festival to name a few.

Ronak's paintings are installed in Melbourne suburbs as light boxes and wall murals. Her illustrative books are published in Iran, Australia and France.

ANANDA BRAXTON-SMITH

Ananda is a community journalist and author. She has written four books for young adult readers. These include a history of the bubonic plague from 1347 - 1900 entitled *The Death: the horror of the plague* (2009), and the novels of the Secrets of Carrick series: *Merrow* (2010), *Tantony* (2011) and *Ghostheart* (2013). *Merrow* was a CBCA 2010 Notable Book, and was also shortlisted for a 2010 Aurealis award. She has also published a novel for younger readers, *Plenty* (2014). With her husband she sings in a bluegrass band called the HillWilliams, and lives in Victoria's Dandenong Ranges with him and two young adult sons.