

Dujuan Hoosan • Margaret Anderson • Carol Turner
Based on the award-winning film

IN MY BLOOD IT RUNS



**History
Learning
Love
Resistance**

Illustrated by **Blak Douglas**

TEACHERS' NOTES

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This guide was developed by Keren Schlezinger with support from Nina Ross from Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education team

We pay respects to the Arrernte and Garawa peoples of Mparntwe and Borroloola where this book has been made, and also to the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the Lands on which this film is being screened and/or studied. These Lands always have been, and always will be, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lands.

This book is the story of Djujan Hoosan, a 10-year-old Arrernte and Garawa boy. A wise, funny, cheeky boy. A healer.

Based on the award-winning 2019 documentary film, this book was adapted by Djujan and his two nannas Margaret Anderson and Carol Turner and illustrated by Blak Douglas, winner of the Archibald Prize 2022.

How do I use this education resource?

This resource is targeted towards those who educate or read with young people aged 8–14.

It has been designed as a series of prompts to guide discussion as you read. These prompts can support young people's understanding of the text by helping them to explore and unpack meanings (*connection to text*) and build empathy with the character's experiences (*connection to self*). It is important for readers to find ways to connect with Djujan and his experiences even if their experiences are different. Reconciliation happens when we connect our similarities and celebrate our differences.

Additional teacher resources on *In My Blood It Runs*

For more comprehensive teacher resources, including activities to build students' contextual understanding of the themes in the book and film, a rich selection of secondary sources, and Australian Curriculum mapping, visit the [Education page on the In My Blood It Runs website](#).

Narragunnawali Professional Learning for Teachers

As a project partner for *In My Blood It Runs*, the Reconciliation Australia's Narragunnawali: Reconciliation in Education team have co-developed a specific professional learning resource shaped around the film that can support teachers to bring the film into their classrooms. Visit [Narragunnawali - In My Blood It Runs](#) for free resources.

Creating a safe environment for studying the film

It is important that all students feel safe and respected when studying the themes of *In My Blood It Runs*.

If you have First Nations students in your class, consider checking in with them and their families before the lesson so that both they and you can best prepare for the lesson, with a focus on socio-emotional and cultural safety. Explain that they are not obliged to share information but are more than welcome to speak up if they want to contribute or give feedback on the lesson.

The strategies below can also help students and teachers support positive learning while studying the film:

- Remember that Djuwan is a real person. Be respectful when discussing him and his family.
- Appreciate privacy – each participant has the right not to share.
- Demonstrate an active respect for the personal and cultural needs and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, staff and/or visitors in the room.
- Step up and step back. Know when to let others share who may not always speak up first so that diverse voices and perspectives can be considered.

For further guidance on building a culturally responsive educational space, see [Narragunnawali - Cultural Responsiveness for Students and Children](#).

READING ACTIVITIES: DISCUSSION, REFLECTION AND CREATION

1. Look carefully at the image on the cover and the text, 'History', 'Learning', 'Love' and 'Resistance'.

Connection to text: What do you think the relationship might be between the boy and the man? What do you notice about the setting, or where they are? What do you think the words 'History', 'Learning', 'Love' and 'Resistance' might have to do with story?

Further activities and resources

- Visit the website of the illustrator, Blak Douglas: blakdouglas.com.au. What similar themes, ideas or values do you notice in Blak Douglas's paintings, and the illustrations in *In My Blood It Runs*?
- 2. ***'It made the water run really really deep and that became the waterholes, the creeks and the rivers around Mparntwe (Alice Springs).'*** (p.1)

Connection to text: There will be a combination of Arrernte and English words in this book. Why do you think the Arrernte (pronounced *arrunda*) name 'Mparntwe' (pronounced *M-ban tua*) is first and the name 'Alice Springs' is in brackets? Why do you think Djuwan is telling his story in this way?

Further activities and resources

- Invite readers to learn about what Country they are living and learning on – start by using the [AIATSIS map](#). Are there any places local to you that have dual names?
- Narragunnawali Languages Map Activity ([Primary](#)) and ([Secondary](#))
- [Narragunnawali Languages Subject Guide](#)
- 3. ***'That's where I'm from on my mum's side, and Borroloola on my dad's side: Arrernte and Garawa Country.'*** (p.2)

Connection to self: Do you know where you're from, on different sides of your family? How has this shaped who you are?

Further activities and resources

- Track the journey from Mparntwe (Alice Springs) to Borrooloola on Google Maps. What do you notice about the landscape or natural features?
 - Complete a connections tree which explores kinship structures and significant people in students' lives. This can include drawing a tree or using an existing template. Alternatives can be a conversation about children's community as a discussion or using post-it notes or other materials to show the relationship structures.
- 4. *'Everyone is welcome in everyone else's house here. We don't live with just our one mum and dad [...] Aboriginal people share everything.'* (p.4)**

Connection to self: Do you have special people that you visit or stay with? What types of things do you share with people close to you?

- 5. *'...I have a memory, a memory about us Aboriginal people. Before the cars were made, before houses were made, before the whole everything around the world was made, it was just Aboriginal people on Australia.'* (p.4)**

Connection to text: What do you think Australia was like before non-Indigenous people arrived? How do you think Djuwan could remember this if it was before he was born?

Connection to self: What is your earliest memory? How clear is your memory of this moment?

Further activities and resources

- Sketch an artwork that shows your earliest memory of the place you live. Are there cars and houses in your memory?
- 6. *'Great-Nana MK is a teacher in law, and she listens to me.'* (p.8)**

Connection to self: How does it make you feel when an adult in your community really listens to you?

- 7. *'I wish I could know the mouth of our old people. But I only learn English at school. Nana Carol wants me to learn both ways so I can stand up for myself and protect our land like the old people.'* (p.8)**

Connection to text: Why might knowing Arrernte help Djuwan 'stand up' for himself and 'protect our land'?

Connection to self: Do you know another language, or does anyone speak another language in your home? How might it feel to only learn a different language at school, like Djujan only learning English?

8. *'I don't know when Ngangkere (pronounced nung-ka-ra) came to my great-grandpa, but when he died, it came to me.'* (p.10)

Connection to self: Has anything been passed down to you from your ancestors? How does it feel to have something that once belonged to people who came before you, like your grandparents or great-grandparents?

9. *'My school report card says that I am a failure [...] I feel like I am the problem.'* (p.14)

Connection to text: Compare how Djujan feels in the classroom in Alice Springs (p.14) to how Djujan feels in the classroom in Borroloola (p.43).

Connection to self: What would you say to Djujan to give him advice and support his feelings?

10. *'If you go out bush every week, then you learn how to control your anger and you learn how to control your life.'* (p.28)

Connection to self: What helps you control yourself, or feel calm again, when you feel angry? Do you have a place that helps you feel calm?

11. *'I'm only ten, I shouldn't be put in a cage.'* (p.33)

Connection to text: What do you think Djujan means by, 'I shouldn't be put in a cage.'?

Further activities and resources

- Write or draw a brainstorm of all the things ten-year-olds should be able to do, rather than be 'put in a cage'.

12. *'Nana Margie says I'm a Traditional Owner of this Country and I have to learn what I can do and what I can't. She wants me to learn the Aboriginal way so I can look after our land, and white way so I can understand how to work in the white man's rules.'* (p.46)

Connection to text: In Australia, First Nations people lived and sustained Country for thousands of years before non-Indigenous people arrived. What might it mean to 'work in the white man's rules'? Why does Nana Margie want Djujan to learn both the Aboriginal and 'white man's' ways?

13. 'All this story runs straight into all Aboriginal people. It travels all the way through my blood pipes all the way to my brain. In my blood it runs.' (p.50)

Connection to text: How might it feel for Djujan to have all these stories running through his 'blood'? How do you think it creates a sense of identity for Djujan?

Connection to self: What runs through your 'blood' and makes your identity?

TREASURE HUNT

- Find examples in the book of Djujan **learning**. Who does he learn from?
- Find examples in the book of Djujan's **strengths**. This could mean more than physical strength. What other types of strengths can people have?
- Find examples in the book of Djujan's **connection to his family and Elders**. Are these connections written down in a family album or story? What different types of connections can you find?
- Find examples in the book of Djujan's **connection to his history and Country**.