

# WIRADJURI LAND, THEN AND NOW



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## *Creative Catchment Kids*

Creative Catchment Kids is an initiative of Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre. It aims to improve engagement between our funding partners and school students by providing opportunities for positive and authentic ventures that encourage students to develop creative solutions to agriculture and natural resource management issues.

**[www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/](http://www.wirraminna.org/creative-catchment-kids/)**

## *Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre*

The Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre is located in Burrumbuttock, north of Albury in southern NSW. Since 1995, the centre, which is adjacent to Burrumbuttock Public School, has provided opportunities for discovery and learning about the natural environment, the ecology of the local woodlands and the beauty of native plants.

**[www.wirraminna.org](http://www.wirraminna.org)**

## *Enviro-Stories*

Enviro-Stories is an innovative literacy education program that inspires learning about natural resource and catchment management issues. Developed by PeeKdesigns, this program provides students with an opportunity to publish their own stories that have been written for other kids to support learning about their local area.

**[www.envirostories.com.au](http://www.envirostories.com.au)**

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**School:** Griffith North Public School

## *Our Culture*

In 2016, students involved in the Creative Catchment Kids program researched and wrote stories about Aboriginal culture in their local communities. The program was generously funded by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet through the Indigenous Advancement Strategy.

Creative Catchment Kids is part of Enviro-Stories, a Peekdesigns education program.

### **Acknowledgement**

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of this land and thank them for sharing their knowledge and culture with us.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain images and/or names of people who have since passed away.





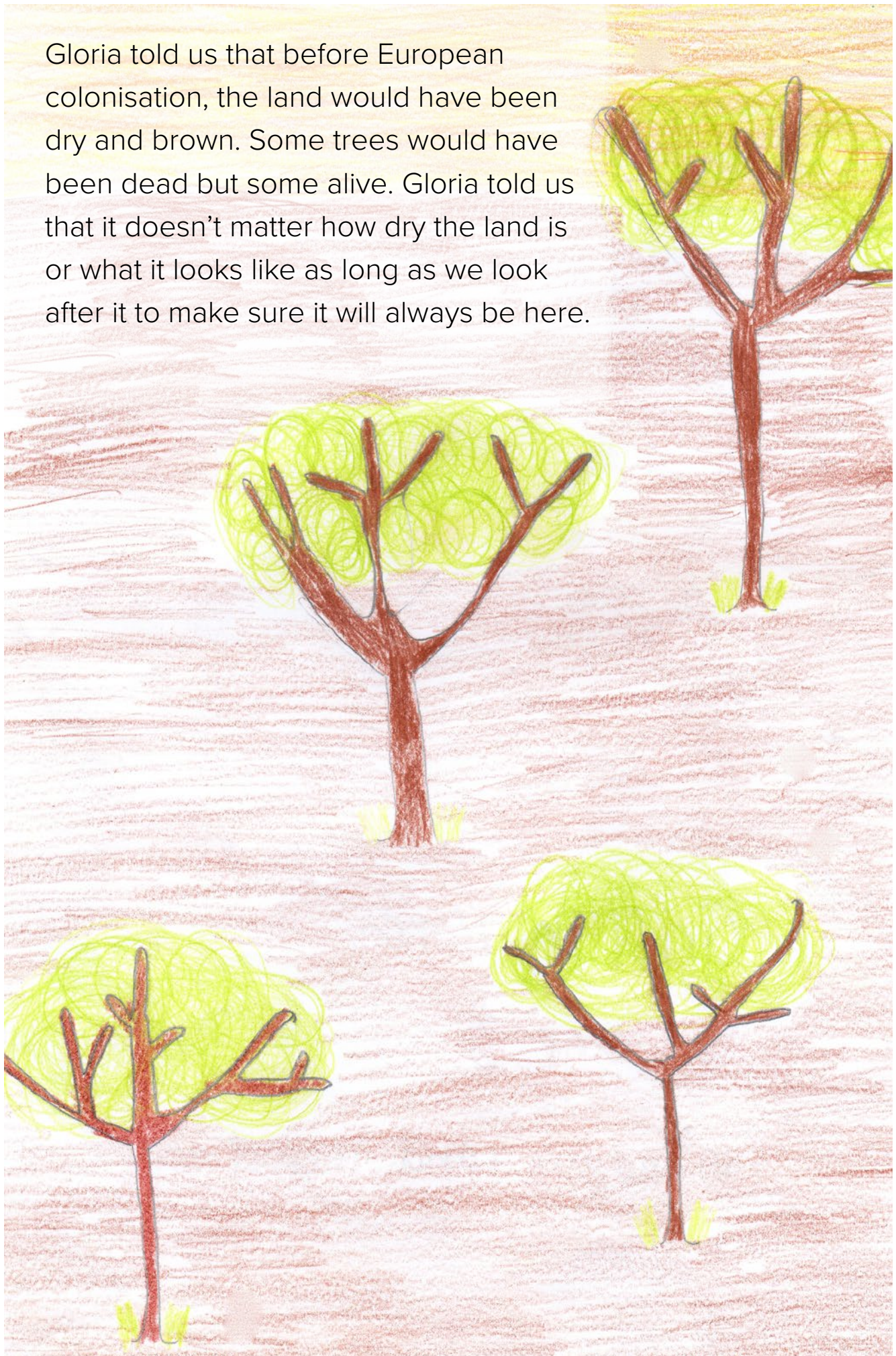
Our city of Griffith resides on Wiradjuri country. The Wiradjuri people's land covered approximately 60,000 square kilometres.

In this area there were many family groups who lived on the land and around the rivers nearby.



To learn more about local Wiradjuri culture, we went to visit Aunt Gloria Goolagong to ask her some questions about her life and knowledge of Wiradjuri history. She has been in this area about 60 years and has three children who also live in Griffith.

Gloria told us that before European colonisation, the land would have been dry and brown. Some trees would have been dead but some alive. Gloria told us that it doesn't matter how dry the land is or what it looks like as long as we look after it to make sure it will always be here.





We think that the Aboriginal people used this land as their home. They would have used the river for bathing and drinking. For food they killed animals and ate berries and seeds. Gloria told us that in her time, when she was young, the land was used for cattle farming and maybe other livestock practices.





Gloria showed us the park across the road from her home in Griffith. It is a meeting place. On the ground is the shape of a giant goanna. You can see it best from a plane. When family and friends come to visit they often sit around on the goanna's belly (where the meeting place is formed) to have a yarn (talk) and sing songs together.

The goanna is a totem (or symbol) for the Wiradjuri people.





After visiting Aunt Gloria, we visited Scenic Hill Lookout to look across our land. We saw a wide landscape filled with houses and farms. We could see that there were many different types of farms including; rice, canola and wheat farms, fruit farms and farms with animals.

We took time to think about and imagine what this country looked like before Europeans came to live here.

Rice is produced in large amounts in the Griffith area, on Wiradjuri country. Farmers also grow wheat, sunflower, canola and cotton crops near here. All of these products are used to make clothes and food for people in Australia and overseas.

For thousands of years, Indigenous people lived off the water from the Murrumbidgee River. Today, the farming in the Griffith area has been made possible by the channels that are fed from the Murrumbidgee River, from which we all benefit.





With lots of local wineries, Griffith is one of the largest regions for making wine. One of the first people to begin making wine here was John James McWilliam. Over 100 years later, their winery is still operating. They produce much of their wine here and sell it worldwide!

Gloria told us how her family from other towns would come to Griffith and benefit by getting seasonal work. They would work to help harvest the grapes for making the wine.





In our area we have a great deal of orange orchards. They are used to grow oranges which are sold to supermarkets for people to eat and enjoy. The oranges are also squeezed to make delicious fresh sweet orange juice.

Every October, Griffith celebrates its citrus industry within its Festival of Gardens. Wonderful citrus sculptures line the main street for two weeks, bringing lots of visitors to the city.



On the farms around Griffith there is livestock being grown. For example: sheep, cattle and chickens. When the animals are fat enough they are sold for meat. The meat goes to the butchers and supermarkets in Australia and across the world to feed people. The chicken farms also provide eggs to the shops to help people get the protein they need.



We would like to thank Gloria for sharing information about Wiradjuri history and culture.

We would also like to thank Griffith City council for providing us with some of the images for our book.

Thanks to Mrs. Adams for her help with creating this book.





Ellie Bradshaw, Thomas Sloane and Hayley Charles

2016 Year 3/4, Griffith North Public School

## Congratulations!

Wirraminna Environmental Education Centre and  
the Creative Catchment Kids Program won the  
National 2016 Yates Junior Landcare Team Award.

