

## CYCLONES AND SHADOWS: STORIES FROM UP NORTH

LAURA DUDGEON, SABRINA DUDGEON,  
PAT DUDGEON AND DARLENE OXENHAM

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YEAR LEVEL: Y1–5

CROSS-CURRICULUM PRIORITIES: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures; Sustainability

### ABOUT THE BOOK

This collection draws together four tales for younger readers from the Waarda series of Indigenous stories, first edited by acclaimed author Sally Morgan.

Two stories feature Lilli and her magical companion, Shadow. Living in Nan's mango tree, Shadow is just the friend Lilli needs when adjusting to a new life in a new town. And, when Shadow finds himself the host of an unwanted visitor, Lilli becomes just the friend he needs too. The next two stories are about Annie, who learns how important ingenuity and strong family ties are when living in the remote community of Useless Loop. Annie helps her dad build an amazing beach sports car from a pile of junk before she and her family battle a cyclone.

Drawing on the authors' own experiences, these charming tales are illustrated with black-and-white line drawings, and are a great way to introduce young readers to the world of contemporary Indigenous storytelling.

### ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Laura Dudgeon was born in Darwin in 1993. She is descended from the Beniol Bardi people from north of Broome. 'Lilli and her Shadow' is based on her own experience of moving from Darwin to Perth.

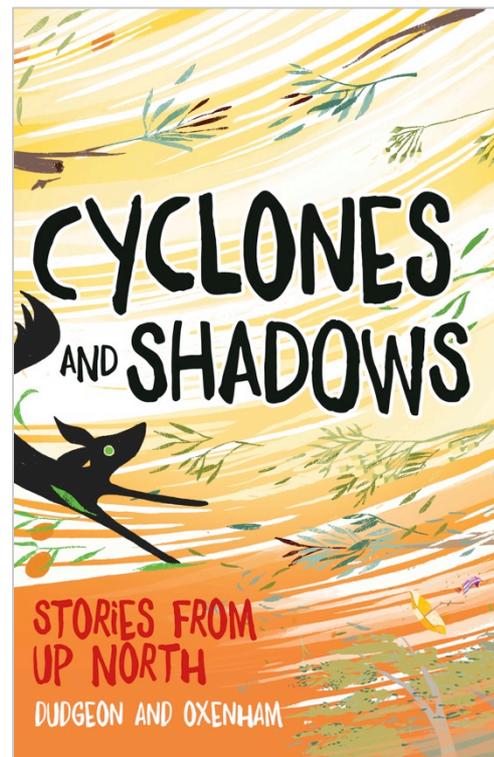
Sabrina Dudgeon is descended from the Bardi people from north of Broome, and the Giga people in the East Kimberley. 'Lilly and Shadow in Trouble' was inspired by her Nana and the stories she shared.

Pat Dudgeon was born in Darwin in 1959 and is descended from the Beniol Bardi people from north of Broome. Pat came to Perth to study psychology and, after graduation, joined the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin University as a lecturer. She later became the head of the centre in 1990. She was also an Associate Professor and research fellow at the School of Indigenous Studies at the University of Western Australia.

Darlene Oxenham is a Malgana woman from Shark Bay on the coast of Western Australia. 'Beach Sports Car' and 'A Cyclone is Coming!' were inspired by her time growing up in Useless Loop. Darlene has worked in Higher Education for over twenty years and has been a Professor at the School of Indigenous Studies at the University of Western Australia.

### THEMES

- Family
- Home
- Cooperation
- Adventure
- The environment



## AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM OUTCOMES

- Y1–5 English
- Y1–5 Humanities and Social Sciences
- Y1–5 Biological Sciences

## USEFUL WEBSITES

- *Lilli and her Shadow* by Pat Dudgeon and Laura Dudgeon:  
[www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-lilli-and-her-shadow](http://www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-lilli-and-her-shadow)
- *Lilli and Shadow in Trouble* by Laura Dudgeon and Sabrina Dudgeon:  
[www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-lilli-and-shadow-in-trouble](http://www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-lilli-and-shadow-in-trouble)
- *Beach Sports Car* by Darlene Oxenham:  
[www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-beach-sports-car](http://www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-beach-sports-car)
- *A Cyclone is Coming!* by Darlene Oxenham:  
[www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-a-cyclone-is-coming](http://www.fremantlepress.com.au/products/waarda-series-for-young-readers-a-cyclone-is-coming)
- Resources for exploring Aboriginal perspectives across the curriculum:  
[www.det.wa.edu.au/education/abled/apac/lessons/index.html](http://www.det.wa.edu.au/education/abled/apac/lessons/index.html)

## CLASSROOM IDEAS

### Discussion questions

1. Lilli and Annie both have several different generations of family in their lives – we read about their parents, grandparents, siblings, cousins, aunts and uncles. What role does family play in these stories? Give examples from the text.
2. Lilli's family moves from the country to the city. How do you think it would feel to move a long way from the place you've always known? What might feel difficult and what might feel nice?
3. Discuss the term 'conflict' as a class.
  - a. What are some examples of conflict? Describe specific situations that can cause conflict at school, at home, within families and between nations.
  - b. What is the source of conflict? Why is it that different people can experience a situation differently? Is it possible for two sides to be right at the same time? Give examples.
  - c. Discuss possible ways to approach conflict, based on the examples mentioned in class so far. What responses will lead towards resolution? What responses will make the conflict escalate?
  - d. Is the same response always the best one, or does it depend on the situation? Explore examples of when another approach may be more effective.
4. Now consider the conflict in 'Lilli and Shadow in Trouble'.
  - a. Why did Shadow keep his problem to himself?
  - b. How did Nan and Lilli get him to share his problem?
  - c. What was Nan's reaction to Shadow's problem? What was Lilli's? Why were they different?
  - d. When Glog is first confronted, how does he behave? Why?
  - e. How does Nan respond to Glog's anger? Then, how does she respond to his crying? What steps does she take to find a solution?
  - f. What does Lilli do while Nan is thinking? How is this important?
  - g. Who else helps resolve the conflict?
5. Annie's family lives in a caravan in Useless Loop. What about you – do you live in a house, an apartment, a caravan, a boat? Do you share a room or have your own? What might it be like to live in a different kind of place? If you could live anywhere, where would it be and why?

### Creative writing

1. Lilli has a special relationship with her grandmother. Do you have grandparents? Why are grandparents different to parents? Have your grandparents taught you anything special? What are your favourite activities with them? Write a story about one of your grandparents or another adult in your family.
2. Write a story where your main character moves from one place to another. How is their new home different? What is school like? Who will be their new friends?
3. Write a story where your main character encounters conflict and successfully resolves it. What is the problem they face? How will they solve it? Who will help them?

4. Imagine you own a special car. What does it look like? What special features does it have? What do you call it? Where will you take it? Write a story about an adventure in your car. You may wish to illustrate the story.
5. 'A Cyclone is Coming!' includes many descriptions of the weather. Like Pop and Dad, Annie observes her environment and comments on the way it looks, feels, sounds and smells (e.g. *In the sky I can see dark clouds gathering to block out the sun. It smells of rain.* p. 26; *Outside the sky is darker and the rain is heavier. The wind has started to really blow. I can hear the annexe whipping backwards and forwards as the wind gusts push it in and out. The rain beats down hard on the caravan. Thud, thud, thud, thud, thud.* p. 28; *The first thing I notice when we walk outside is all the broken branches and leaves. They are everywhere. There is no wind or rain but the ground is very muddy.* pp. 36–37). As a class, visit a park or natural bush area near your school, or sit outdoors somewhere comfortable on the school grounds. Observe the weather and environment you are in, and write descriptions in your notebook, using your sense of sight, smell, hearing and touch. Try to give specific descriptions, such as the shape, texture and particular colour shade of the things you observe.

## Research and report writing

1. Annie's mum and dad run through a checklist of all the items they will need when the cyclone arrives. Choose one of the following situations and make an appropriate checklist, in pairs or groups:
  - a. Organising a surprise birthday party for a friend.
  - b. Planning a camping trip.
  - c. Preparing for the first day of the school year.
  - d. Preparing for a flood, bushfire or another natural disaster that is relevant to your area.
  - e. Another situation of your choice.
2. Research the natural phenomenon of cyclones, individually or in groups, and submit your findings in the form of a 3–4 page written report. The report would answer such questions as:
  - a. What are cyclones and how do they form?
  - b. What is a cyclone's 'eye'?
  - c. How often do cyclones occur?
  - d. How is their severity measured and categorised?
  - e. How are they named?
  - f. What are some notable examples of cyclones in Australia's history

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