

We introduced a book called Sharing. It was produced as part of the Our Place, welcome children to our culture series, authored by Auntie Fay Muir and Sue Lawson, and beautifully illustrated by Leanne Mulgo Watson.

This book uses First Nations symbols when representing an idea or item using many circular symbols. It started with sharing food and a reminder not to use it excessively or wasting it. It continued exhibiting vortex symbols in the water and showing a young girl enjoying the tactile experience of floating in water.



Maxwell said, "Ich hab auch mal im Wasser geschwommen."

Anton: "Ich kann das im Wasser machen."

Jamie: "Kick my legs."

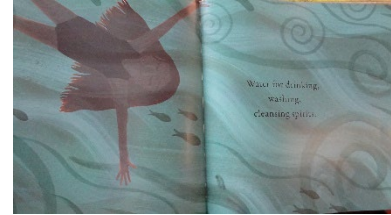
The next page portrayed a fire using a round symbol with 4 U shaped symbols on the outside of the circles.

Simone asked what this symbol could mean and what fire feels like?

Lotti: "Das Feuer koennte auf dich gehen."

Karl: "Feueralarm."

Anton: "Nicht dahin gehen?"



Karl: "Wenn ich brennende Aeste in den Baum werfe, dann brennt der."

Felix: "Das Feuer ist heiss."

The next 2 pages depicted trees and tall grass from which tools were created. A Boomerang from wood, baskets and nets for catching fish.

Joshua: "Nets are also for traps."

Felix: "Ich wuerde so ein grosses Netz nehmen, das so gross ist wie die Preschool."

We spoke about overfishing and that this book was about that nature is sharing and we should only take what we need.

Simone asked, "What happens if we take too much?"

Anton (in relation to overfishing): "Wenn der Babyfisch gross ist dann findet er den anderen nicht."

Maxwell: "Ich habe schon mal ein Fisch mit Beinen gesehen."

The next page was about ochre and that it is used in ceremonies.

Karl: "Ich hatte schon Spidermann facepaint."

Anton: "Ich war schon mal geschminkt wie ein Pirat."

As the pages continued many more round symbols were represented. The children spotted an emu and underneath it lay 3 round objects.

Ivy: "Ich seh ein Emu."

Felix: "Emu Eier sind das."

Simone asked, "What do we see that is round as well,?"

Otto: "Sonne."

The next page illustrated a Koala sitting in a tree and a branch being drawn, It read; 'Give back what you can'.

Lotti said: "Give plants."

Anton: "Das ist lieb."

We spoke about sustainability and that if we cut off the tree for wood to cook or to keep warm, we should plant a new one so Koala and his family or other animals have a new home in the future, ensuring that we will have trees in the future.

Take only what you need, not more and not less.



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We looked more closely at the symbol of fire and built a fireplace.

At first, we used a red lid as a symbol for fire and placed some stones around it. Simone asked, "Why do we place stones around the fire?"

Some children knew the answer and said, so that the surrounding area does not burn. Many children helped to place some wooden pieces onto the fire.



Once the fire was finished, we studied the symbol again and looked at the 4 U shapes.

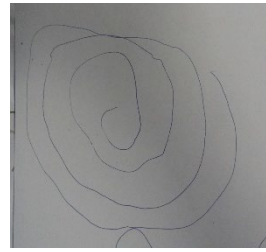
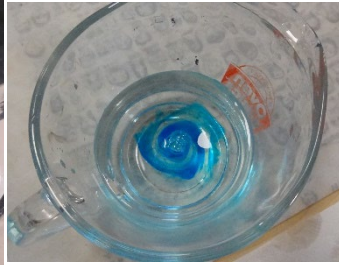
We chose 4 children, Otto, Maxwell, Joshua and Sebastian to warm themselves at the fire placing their feet towards it.

Simone showed the children how to make an 'U' shape on the floor by drawing with chalk around Maxwell. Felix drew around Otto, Anton around Sebastian and Avielle around Joshua. When they had finished, we looked at the final picture from the top and finished off by drawing a circle around the fire, recreating the symbol by enacting what it stands for. This way the children were enabled to experience the correlation of a particular symbol and activity, connecting ritual or practice to symbolism in visual expression.



Symbolism in Aboriginal art encompasses intricate patterns and motifs that convey ancestral stories, spiritual beliefs, and cultural identity. Through intricate designs, Aboriginal art preserves and communicates the rich heritage and wisdom of Indigenous peoples. By making our own fire and sitting around it, we made the symbol visual, giving the children representation that communicates meaning or ideas through images.

We then recreated a vortex using food colouring and water. It took many attempts to finally see a good one. Finally, we managed it, and the children were able to copy it onto their paper.



We read about the girl swimming in the water and examined the swirl/vortex water symbol.

Anton saw the swirl for a short moment before the water turned blue and copied it into his paper.



Aria, A., Paulin and Karl also successfully drew their swirls, using the circular motion which they observed. Paulin: "Es sieht aus wie eine Schlange."

A.: "Die Schlange geht hoch und dann wieder runter."

This morning, we continued with the exploration and Maxwell, Jamie, Otto and Felix showed interest. A. and Paulin revisited the experience and remembered what we did yesterday. We experimented with the watercolour and the motions. We spoke about 3 steps. 1st step, add water to the glass, 2nd step, swirl the water in one direction and the 3rd step, add a few drops of colour.

Jamie said: "Ganz viele Wasser in there."

Initially the children added too much colour and could not see the vortex.

Felix then said: "Weil das nicht so gut war, hol ich nochmal."

They then started a new round.

Maxwell: "Das war rundherum."

Jamie: "Spin."

Felix sparked a deeper inquiry: "Ich will wissen, wenn es voller ist ob es anders ist? Ob es dann explodiert, oder ueberlauft, oder nicht oder ein Tornado?"





The children drew what they had observed, and this way again were able to experience the correlation of a particular symbol representing a concept which they had experimented with.



We used many visual, experimental methods to look at how vortices affect liquid flow.

This morning Jamie, Maxwell, Eliana, Paulin A. and Joshua experimented with interconnected bottles that are filled with liquid. When one bottle is rotated, creating a vortex, the liquid moves from one bottle to the other through a connecting tube. This demonstrates the transfer of momentum and fluid dynamics, showcasing the vortex's influence on fluid flow.



Paulin: "Es sieht aus wie eine Schlange."

Amalia: "Die Schlange geht hoch und dann wieder runter."

Eliana: "I know there is a little hole."

Joshua: "It looks like a tornado."

**ELYF**

**Principles - page 18**

Recognising that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have looked after Country for the past 60,000 years, educators and children learn about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and rich sustainable practices.

Educators provide opportunities for children to learn about all the interconnected dimensions of sustainability, understanding that sustainability goes beyond learning in nature and being involved in nature conservation.

**OUTCOME 5: CHILDREN ARE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATORS**

Children express ideas and make meaning using a range of media

This is evident when children, for example:

- share the stories and symbols of their own culture and re-enact well-known stories
- use materials to create art works (e.g. drawing, painting, sculpture, drama, dance, movement, music and storytelling) to express ideas and make meaning



Educators promote this learning for all children when they, for example:

- critically reflect on how they are embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and voices into every part of their planning and their setting
- provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children opportunities to communicate how they are feeling through writing, the Arts, and construction.

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This project combines Aboriginal art and culture with STEM, linking visual expression to natural phenomena in very tangible, hands-on ways.

While the children were exploring the symbolism of the art works displayed in the illustrations of the book, they also applied research methodology which is promoted as part of our STEM approaches as a little Scientists house.

The children asked questions about the symbols, collected ideas and hypothesised about their meaning, explored ideas and concepts through exploration which led to further investigations and new questions. The children's discoveries were documented within their own works of art and shared with the group as part of the project.



## The research cycle

Information for learning coaches

The research cycle is a process that describes the way scientists think and work. It is possible to join this cycle at different entry points.



Based on a concept developed by Prof. Brunhilde Marquardt-Mau, University of Bremen

### PYP themes:

- **Who we are**
- **How the world works**
- **How we express ourselves**
- **Sharing the planet**

Inquiry based learning is promoted within the PYP (Primary years program) which aims to provide a holistic and transdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning. Teachers act as facilitators of learning, helping learners make connections across a variety of topics and subjects. Central to this is the notion of lifelong learners.