



Community Reflections:

Making a Six Noongar Seasons Mural at Neerigen Brook Primary School



“It’s important to have the mural on display in the community because it shows that we value Noongar culture and want to learn more about Aboriginal history and ways. It promotes discussion, shows creativity and a sense of pride and belonging.”

Principal: Lesley Barrett



“My little girl has been telling me about learning the Noongar seasons and seeing it is really great. Having the mural on display in our community tells us more about Noongar culture and the people of the land. It brings stories. The mural brings the community together.”

Parent: Mercy



“The mural shares knowledge about the environment and land. It also shows the environmental awareness the Indigenous people hold.”

Parent: Charles



“The seasons are very important to the Noongar people. Two seasons are hot, two are very wet and two are when the flowers come.”

Student: Jayrelle



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“Through making the mural I have learned about the Noongar culture. I have also learnt that there is no wrong way in art, you learn from your mistakes and we are all different.”

Student: Darshini



“I’m really proud of the students. They’ve demonstrated a lot of team work to create them. It’s very important to see the mural on display so that community can come together.”

Grandparent: Christine



“The mural is all about learning. Art is very important because you can express your feelings and it can be very relaxing and helps to get rid of stress. Aboriginal art tells a story.”

Elder: Anna McCormack

“I enjoyed working together and agreeing on choices while we painted. It takes a while to make such a large painting. Seeing it finished made me so happy and relieved because it makes you feel you have accomplished something.”

Student: Cassandra



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“ I enjoyed painting and contributing my ideas and seeing them come to life. It made me feel proud and happy after all the effort we put into it. I feel really happy seeing how it all came together.”

Student: Nidhi



“ I learned that that everyone is different and you can always learn more.”

Student: Chance



“ I didn't know the seasons had different names. I like the paintings because they make me feel happy. The seasons look so real and I feel like I'm actually in it. I think the community will love to see our mural. They will feel happy and it will make their day great.”

Student: Hannah



“ I learned about the weather in the different Noongar seasons and how this affects what Noongar people traditionally did at different times of the year. I feel more connected to my school and my community because I'm learning about the community and I'm leaving something I learnt at school because they've done so much for me.”

Student: Bridget



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“ Every week there was something new to add to the design. These community projects are very important and a really positive experience.

Community means connection - it's who is your mob. You want to teach the community, the parents, outer community about our culture and give them some understanding. Its learning... it's all the knowledge of the Noongar people.

Having the mural on display in the community provides a sense of belonging for the kids. They've created something. I hope the community feel proud of their kids. I'm so happy seeing the mural. It's a job well done!”

Teaching Artist: Yolande Yarran-Ward



“ A community arts project is a way to bring people together, with a common goal and experience and shared outcome. It's a way to find out our commonalities and differences. It's a way to celebrate what we value, who we are, where we live and what we think is important.

Art and creativity are a central part of being human no matter where in the world you are from or whatever time in history. Art promotes creativity, new ways of thinking and problem solving, which make artists an important part of society.

The mural is also a step towards reconciliation. The mural is an important message to all that Noongar culture is alive and strong and underpins the local environment we live in.”

Teaching Artist: Olivia Samec



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Olivia explains the process

Together we collected special local native leaves, drew them, rearranging them into mandala patterns and eco-dying with them. All these art activities gave us a peaceful way to awaken a greater awareness and appreciation of nature and Noongar culture. We learnt to respect Noongar culture and its role in understanding where we live.

We also learnt to be flexible and go with the flow when presented with unexpected challenges and disappointments.

We learnt that it takes a lot of planning, preparation and teamwork even before we could start painting the murals. This included measuring, sanding, painting undercoats, colour selecting testing and mixing, building our skills, research about Noongar culture, group discussions and protecting the area with tarps. We even created maquettes, which are small scale plans to scale, so we even had to use maths in the planning!

We learnt that Noongar people have lived in our local area for over 60 000 years.





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Yolande Yarran-Ward

My name is Yolande. I was born in Quairading, two hours East of Perth. I am a Teaching Artist for The Song Room. I make dolls, eco dye and paint. When I was young I did a did a lot of singing with my parents. I am a singer songwriter as well.

What does art mean to you?

Everyone has their own story, their own connection to land, connection to family and community.

My family inspires me. My elders, my parents, my autistic nephew, they bring me happiness. I feel nurtured.

Country

Boodja is our land our earth which we walk on. When I take my shoes off I feel at peace with the earth, connected, blessed with the land we have.

Yolande's advice to students

My advice to students is to go with their own ideas and creations.

Be creative and don't have the same art as someone else.



Olivia Samec

From early on I knew I wanted be an artist. I live on Whadjuk Noongar boodja. My work is largely inspired by the awe of nature. My art is usually driven by something I feel strongly about and feel compelled to express; it's a way of making meaning of the world and my place in it.

What does art mean to you?

Art and creativity are a central part of being human no matter where in the world you are from or whatever time in history. Art promotes creativity, new ways of thinking and problem solving, which make artists an important part of society.

Art and creating are important for so, so many reasons; because they give our life meaning, give us a way of expressing things. It connects and unites people.

Olivia's advice to students

Be free, without worry or judgement about your work, just do it. Enjoy every step, be in the moment and give your art your 100% focus when you do it. There is no such thing as right or wrong in art, it's just about giving it your 100%.