



*Australian Book Traveller*

My Homeschool

Australian Book Traveller — The Guide Book

© Michelle Morrow

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## For The Parents

*“Children and books go together in a special way. I can’t imagine any pleasure greater than bringing to the uncluttered, supple mind of a child the delight of knowing the many rich things God has given us to enjoy. Parents have this wonderful privilege, and books are their keenest tools. Children don’t stumble onto good books by themselves; they must be introduced to the wonder of words put together in such a way that they spin out pure joy and magic.” Gladys Hunt – Honey for a Child’s Heart © 1969*

**Australian Book Traveller** is a unit study that will help you guide your children\* towards a love of good books. Snuggled up, reading together on the couch you begin your Australian tour. You are the travel guide. The books are the transport. The children are the tourists. The journey is ahead. With each unit study you will open their eyes to different aspects of Australia as you cover Social Studies (Human Society and its Environment), Science and Art. Witness with delight, as their knowledge of Australia’s culture and heritage blossoms in a very natural way.

Eight Australian picture books have been chosen as the core **Travel Books**. These books are the starting point of the unit studies. Each varies in its flavour, art and location. The books were chosen for their educational, literary and artistic merit. There are true tales, legends, fiction and factual stories. Every story has something special to share with your child that will enrich their experience of Australia.

This resource is part of the My Homeschool Curriculum for Year 1 but it is suitable for teaching one child or multiple children. The core travel books are aimed at children aged 6 - 8. Younger children will also enjoy listening to the read-alouds and may like to participate in some of the activities.

With this program you will have covered your Social Studies, Science and Art for the week.

Australian Book Traveller can be a whistle-stop tour over 8 weeks or a thorough exploration spread over the year.

# Travel Tips—How to Make the Most of Your Journey

## Collect your travel books.

Each book is a separate unit study in its own right. The eight core travel books work their way around Australia and each one focuses on a different geographical location. If possible, study *Are We there Yet?* first. We have given an order for study but we understand that you might not be able to follow that order precisely. If you need to change the order it won't matter.

## Books Used As Our Travel Guides Around Australia

- **Tourist Trip around Australia /Canberra** —*Are We There Yet?* by Alison Lester
- **Northern Territory**—*Nardika Learns To Make a Spear* by Chris Fry
- **Queensland**—*Best Beak in Boonaroo Bay* by Narelle Oliver
- **New South Wales (Sydney)** —*Alexander's Outing* by Pamela Allen
- **Victoria**—*A Year on Our Farm* by Penny Matthews
- **Tasmania**—*A Tiger's Tale* by Steve & Marion Isham
- **South Australia**—*You and Me Murrawee* by Kerri Hashmi
- **Western Australia**—*Grandad Marches on Anzac Day* by Catriona Hoy

## Accessing books

If you want to buy all the books it will become very expensive. So, I recommend that you try to find suggested books at a library. Links to the books can also be found in the **Picture Books Links** in your Year 2 virtual cupboard.

Think ahead and gather the books you are going to study in advance so they are there when you want them. At the time of writing this resource all of the books are in print but some of the optional books are not.

## Navigation—Australia Traveller's Map

To navigate your reading travels you will need the **Australian Traveller's Map**. (Look in your Year 1 Virtual cupboard). This map will be invaluable to your study. While book travelling through each location children will become familiar with the geography of Australia. They will learn about states, territories and Australia's famous landmarks.

Distances from place to place will be easier to see as they chart their reading travels. If you are marking your journey on your map remember that dots are far easier to apply than a continuous line, which no matter how hard you try never stays within the boundary lines.

A general atlas, *Google Maps* and *Google Earth* can really help your children get a perspective of Australia. After seeing the Google Earth image of Australia you will understand the term 'Red Centre'. I have found this resource really helps our family visualise where we are going.

## Map Markers

Map Marker are found in your virtual cupboard and are to printed off and added to your map during the lessons. We have included a stamp, flag and book cover for each unit study. Discuss the significance of these map markers with your children before you place them on the map. Don't do all the map markers at once; do them with the relevant **Travel Book**.

## Notebook

To make a record of your learning adventure I suggest starting a notebook. *It can be as simple as you like, or as grand as you can imagine.* Many homeschooling families report that notebooking is a great encouragement for them. When they look back on previous notebooks they are proud of what they have done. I know my own children especially enjoy reviewing past notebooks and showing them to relatives.

*Notebooking has such potential for individuality and versatility. It is not limited to the textbook or worksheet, but to what has captured the child's interest or what the child knows. As they create their notebooking pages they learn. As they record their information they discover and make a reference for the future. Notebooking is a skill and an art which gives a sense of accomplishment, with a stamp of originality. It offers a vehicle for collecting a range of ideas and subjects melding them into a treasured testimony of their learning journey.*

Your children's notebook can be in the form of a clear sleeved folder or display folder. After studying a topic they can make an entry into their notebook about some fact they have learned (you might have to be the scribe for the younger ones). They can paste in pictures or add their own artwork. Encourage them to label the pictures or refer to them in their writings. The pages could include a picture of the book cover, narrations, state maps, field trip accounts, poems, songs, recipes, newspaper articles, fashions, photos, a timeline and personal reflections.

## How To Use Your Travel Guides

For each travel book I have provided you with some *Travel Guide* notes for discussion and further study. There are more ideas given than you can do in a week. You don't need to cover everything suggested. They are meant to be flexible and used as an inspiration, so that you can follow the child's interests. If you can think of any other activities or field trips that might complement the book you are reading (and you want to do them) plan them into your schedule.

After each reading (and sometimes during), try to introduce the topics in a natural conversational way. You can listen to the children's interest and see what sparks their imagination. With a few questions you can usually guide children towards the planned study topic. Ask open-ended questions and try to get them thinking and talking.

Unit studies weave a web of connections and don't always fall into neatly packaged subjects. I have tried to compartmentalise to help you structure your lesson, but you will find the topics overlap at times, or lead you towards another subject. This is all part of the learning journey. At other times a travel book clearly illustrates a theme or topic that doesn't fit into our subject areas but I put it in anyway; it was too good an opportunity to miss.

Picture books are often the first steps into reading for our children. As we read stories our children 'read' the pictures. The illustrations in many good books are an essential part of the story. With each travel book we examine the pictures, illustrator's style and try out some art techniques and mediums that the illustrator used.

Social studies, science, nature or technology are covered in each unit study. For this age group we do not need to get too technical with details. Ask questions and see what they know and what has captured their interest. You might know enough about a particular topic to just discuss it with your child. That's great! Sometimes in my enthusiasm I lose my children's interest because I myself become thirsty for knowledge. Try not to make my mistake. At other times you might want to do a little extra research or read from another book. You, as the parent, can guide them in this.

## Further Exploration

With each *Travel Guide* there are some **suggested reading** books. These are related to the *Travel Guide* because of the location or topic.



## Suggested Itinerary

Prior to the first reading with your children, I recommend you read through the unit study and make a plan. Read to your children from the selected book at the commencement of each lesson. For the short books you can usually read the whole book every time. The benefit of this is accumulative. Repeated readings encourage a deeper understanding of the story, appreciation of the art and give revision from the previous day's lesson. With your guidance children will begin to think critically and appreciate many facets of the book.

## Optional Extension

To complement the *Travel Guides* we have given some extension readers and optional activities. These books are longer than the travel books and can be used as a read-alone text. They do not always fit the travel book perfectly, but they are linked to the unit study in some way. They are not compulsory and are there for the child who is looking for more information related to the unit study.

There are no extra *Travel Guide* notes for the optional extension readers.

## Things You Need Before You Start

- Australia Traveller's Map
- Student Notebook. A Botany Book 48 pages works well.
- Coloured pencils or felt markers, glue and scissors
- General Atlas (for Lesson 1)
- Internet access or general facts book on Australia

# Travel Guide 1—Are We There Yet?

## *A Journey Around Australia*

### **About the Travel Book**

Author and Illustrator: Alison Lester

### **Awards:**

- Books I Love Best Yearly (BILBY)—Early Readers—Short-listed 2007
- Kids Own Australia Literature Award (KOALA)—Picture Book. Winner 2006
- Young Australia Best Book Award (YABBA)—Picture Book. Winner 2006
- CBC Book of the Year—Picture Book Winner 2005
- Nielsen Book Data Booksellers Choice Award Short-listed 2004

**Book Summary:** A family sets off on a three-month trip around Australia. They see all the sites you would expect them to see. The story is told by Grace, one of the children on the trip.

### **Simple Lesson Ideas**

The first reading may take longer than expected—it has lots of little gems hidden in the pages.

### *Social Studies*

Australia is located in the Southern Hemisphere. It is often labelled as being a part of the Oceania region. It is the biggest island in the world but the smallest continent. It shares no land borders with any other country.

Australia's closest neighbours are Papua New Guinea, New Zealand, South Pacific Islands, and New Zealand.

It is the sixth largest nation but has a relatively small population of around 23 000 000

(the USA state of California has a population of approximately 38 000 000).

This book is a quick overview of Australian geography via the tourist route.

### **Map Work**

- Briefly orientate them to the *Australia Traveller's Map*.
- Find where you live (if you don't live in Australia use a world map for this).
- See if the children can locate any places they might know on the map.
- Discuss Canberra as the Capital of Australia.
- Trace with your finger the family's travel route.

You could look at a map of another country in an atlas e.g., England or New Zealand, and show why it takes so long to work your way around Australia.

*Place the map markers onto your map.*

- Australia Flag
- Stamp with floral emblem for Australia—The Golden Wattle.
- ACT Flag

### **Caravan Map**

On the first page there is a layout of the caravan. The children can draw a simple layout of their bedroom or of their house. This does not need to be done to scale unless the child is particularly interested.

### **Personal and Family Stories**

We read about how this family has a story to tell about their trip. Talk about some personal family stories of holidays. How is this family different to yours?

### **Tourism**

Money comes into Australia when tourists from other countries come to visit. The trip that this family does is a popular trip done by Australian and international visitors. Many

tourists thinking of coming to Australia want to see everything in a small amount of time. Why is this so hard for them to do? If you only had 10 days for a holiday, what would you like to see?

### **Place Names**

Why do you think these places were given the following names?

- The Great Australian Bight—was it a really a giant's bite?
- Snowy Mountains
- The Blue Mountains (The Three Sisters)
- Wave Rock
- Pinnacles
- The Great Ocean Road
- Surfers Paradise
- The Valley of Winds
- Squeaky Beach
- Cradle Mountain.

### *Art*

**Art Medium:** Watercolour and ink

### **Rock Paintings and Uluru**

How do you think the paintings were put on the rocks many years ago?

Uluru is known for appearing to change colour as the different light strikes it at different times of the day and year, with sunset a particularly remarkable sight. The rock is made of sandstone infused with minerals that reflect the red light of sunrise and sunset, making it appear to glow.

Experiment with watercolours and see how the artist uses different colours to show different times of day.

## **The Sea**

Look at the sea pictures in *Are We There Yet?* Make your own sea picture.

## *Science*

### **Climate, Weather and Season**

There are different climates in Australia from the tropical rainforests top end, to the heat of the desert, to the Alpine regions of the Snowy Mountains and Tasmania. Nearly 70% of Australia's land is desert or semi-arid.

Australia's interior has one of the lowest rainfalls in the world and it's the driest inhabited continent. Drought, floods, bushfires and cyclones, are all natural hazards which occur throughout the country.

- Discuss the equator and the tropics—why “the further north we travelled the hotter it became”?
- Why is the desert hot during the day and cold at night?
- Ocean currents—what are they?

### **Migration of Whales**

- Why might they see whales at this time of year?

### **Sun safety**

- What do they need in order to slip, slop, slap ? Why?

### **Environmental factors**

- Windmills and Silos—Your children could research wind power.
- How do water, wind and sand shape Wave Rock or the Twelve Apostles?
- Why do the trees grow sideways at Geraldton?