

Brother Moon

Written by Maree McCarthy Yoelu

Illustrated by Samantha Fry

Teacher Notes prepared by Christina Wheeler

OVERVIEW

Brother Moon is a powerful story lovingly told by a great-grandfather to his great-grandson.

Beneath the dark sky of the Wadjigany Country, Hippy-Boy is captivated when Great-Grandpa Liman tells him the mysterious story of his brother and how it guides his connection to Country.

Great-Grandpa is a masterful storyteller and, as the tale unfolds, his brother is revealed as the moon — a wonder of the universe. Hippy-Boy learns how his great-grandfather uses the phases of the moon when he goes hunting and fishing, and why it is important for us all to have an understanding of the natural world. Liman (Harry Morgan), the author's grandfather, was a respected Wadjigany man — a leader amongst his people and the community.

Liman was born at Manjimamany in the Northern Territory in 1916. He was a canoe maker, hunter, community mediator, and a family man who lived off the land and travelled the seas. Liman spoke Batjamalh, his first language, and other languages from the Daly River area.

- A story of suspense and of the natural world
- Indigenous knowledge of the night sky
- Children will love the mystery of the story and how the moon is revealed
- Shows how the wisdom of our Elders can shape young people's lives
- Liman is a masterful storyteller
- Well-suited to the curriculum
- Publicity will be sought in all relevant magazines, journals and newspapers

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maree McCarthy Yoelu is a Wadjigany woman, from the western Wagait region in the NT. She grew up in Daly River and now lives in Darwin where she works in radio. Liman is Maree's grandfather. She writes to keep his stories and the Batjamalh language alive.



ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Samantha Fry is descended from the Dagiman people of the Katherine region in the NT. As a child she lived in communities across the Top End. Samantha is an accomplished artist and designer living in Darwin. She is the illustrator of the celebrated children's book *Alfred's War* (Magabala Books 2018).

THEMES

- Aboriginal Australians - Social Life and Customs
- Kin
- Nature
- Stories
- Sustainability
- Moon
- Relationships
- Great grandparents

AUDIENCE AND WRITING STYLE

Brother Moon shares the importance of story and cross-generational relationships as Great-Grandpa Liman explains the moon plays in his daily life. This shows respect for and partnership with nature, as well as the sustainability of traditional ways of life. It also highlights the wisdom and sharing that passes between Hippy-boy and his great-grandfather, and the learning that comes from special times together. Sublime illustrations complement the written text beautifully. *Brother Moon* is suited to early childhood audiences.



LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

This book and the classroom activities provided are primarily relevant to the following areas of the Australian Curriculum:

Learning area	Year level
English	F-3
HASS	2
Science	1; 3

The appendix highlights relevant content descriptions, cross-curriculum priorities and general capabilities that relate to the text and classroom ideas provided.

CLASSROOM IDEAS

- Before reading, discuss the title, cover and blurb of the book, making predictions about the story.
- Great-Grandpa Liman tells Hippy-boy that his 'brother is wise'. What does it mean to be wise? In what ways is the moon in the text wise?
- What clues does Great-Grandpa Liman give Hippy-boy about his brother's identity? Create a table to list these clues.
- Why does Great-Grandpa Liman regard the moon as his brother? What human qualities does the moon have?
- Are you afraid of the dark? How could you use the ideas in *Brother Moon* to help you with these fears?
- Great-Grandpa Liman says 'the ocean is my shop'. He also finds food in the mangroves and hunts for his 'tucker'. Discuss the sustainability of the traditional way of life, including the fact that Great-Grandpa Liman relies on light from the moon rather than electricity. What can we learn from this?
- Use *Brother Moon* to stimulate an inquiry into the phases of the moon and changes that occur in the sky.
- What type of sibling are you? What can you learn from *Brother Moon* to help you be a wise and helpful sibling? What makes the perfect sibling? Discuss Great-Grandpa Liman's sentiment that his brother's 'glow is always brightest in the dark'. What does he mean? How can you use this idea to become a better sibling and friend?
- With what other parts of nature might Great-Grandpa Liman have a close connection? In small groups, brainstorm ideas and create your own story to share your ideas.
- Read the information at the back of the text about the author and her motivation for writing this story. How are stories used to share important aspects of culture?
- How does *Brother Moon* show the importance of stories between generations? What stories have you been told by your grandparents and great-grandparents? Why do they share such stories with you?
- Create your own illustrated page-opening with a short text that explains the relationship you have with the moon.
- What do we learn about the importance of Aboriginal connection with nature through *Brother Moon*?
- In the role of Hippy-boy, write a journal about your visit with Great-Grandpa Liman.
- What is your favourite thing about the seaside? How is the seaside different at night? How do the illustrations in *Brother Moon* show this?
- Create an Y-Chart and using your senses, brainstorm what you would see, hear and feel at Great-Grandpa Liman's beach. Use these ideas to write a piece of description of this setting.
- Retell the events of *Brother Moon* in your own words.
- Share a story that your grandparents or great-grandparents have told you.
- *Brother Moon* is a gentle story. How has the author managed to tell this story in this way?



APPENDIX – LINKS TO THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

Year	Curriculum Area
F	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify some features of texts including events and characters and retell events from a text (ACELT1578)
1	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences (ACELT1582) Science Earth and Space Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">Observable changes occur in the sky and landscape (ACSSU019)
2	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">Discuss how depictions of characters in print, sound and images reflect the contexts in which they were created (ACELT1587)Discuss the characters and settings of different texts and explore how language is used to present these features in different ways (ACELT1591) Hass Geography <ul style="list-style-type: none">The ways in which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples maintain special connections to particular Country/Place (ACHASSK049)
3	English Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others (ACELT1596)Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative (ACELT1599) Science Earth and Space Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">Earth's rotation on its axis causes regular changes, including night and day (ACSSU048)

