

# PUTUPARRI

*and the Rainmakers*



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A **STUDY GUIDE** BY EMILY DAWSON



AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS OF MEDIA

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SPIDER AT KURTAL, 2002

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## OVERVIEW

*Putuparri and the Rainmakers* delivers to our screens a documentary about the power of people, place and spirit in the face of physical alienation from their country. Set in the remote north-west of Australia, Tom 'Putuparri' Lawford, a Wangkajunga man living in Fitzroy Crossing shares his personal journey to becoming a cultural leader of his people.

*Putuparri and the Rainmakers* is a story about why connection to their country of birth is so important to Aboriginal people. Students will hopefully realise the complex diversity of Aboriginal groups, cultures, languages and custodianships of country through experiencing Wangkajunga song, dance and law, specific to the Kimberley region. So often the idea of Indigenous culture is a frozen one that is denied the freedom to evolve dynamically as all living cultures do. Putuparri lives within this contested space of a two-way life, where at the beginning of the film he is torn between the traditional and contemporary lifestyles of his people.

Since the point of colonisation in 1788, Aboriginal people have moved from country for a myriad of reasons, that should be discussed as a class. Putuparri's grandparents, Spider and Dolly, initially moved out of the desert because it was a hard life and they heard about life on the cattle stations that offered meat, flour, sugar and tea in exchange for working the cattle or helping out in the homestead. Years later when equal pay was introduced following the successful 1967 referendum Spider, Dolly and many other Aboriginal workers were forcibly shifted off the cattle stations into Fitzroy Crossing as the station owners didn't want to pay the award rate.

Putuparri's grandfathers shared with him the rainmaking



**DIRECTOR**  
**NICOLE MA**

ceremonies that they performed in the desert to bring rain at the end of the dry season. The ceremony is performed at a special soak in the desert that they believe to be inhabited by a snake spirit. The soak and the snake are both called Kurtal. The film documents four journeys to this waterhole, depicting how Aboriginal people have cared for and maintained country in a reciprocal relationship for thousands of years.

*Putuparri and the Rainmakers* contests the negative depictions of Aboriginal communities that plague the media by inspiring, educating and forcing us to open our eyes to what has always been. Its underlying narrative of a displaced people allows viewers to understand the repercussions of being removed from country in the face of opposing lifestyle pressures.

*'I saw things that were outside my urban life experience. I didn't understand what was going on and I was curious' (MIFF 2015).*

This quote from director Nicole Ma during a recent MIFF interview reflects on being invited for the first time to Spider, Dolly and Tom Lawford's country, Kurtal (2015). By viewing and analysing *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*, students will experience similar processes of questioning their prior knowledge and being inspired to explore alternative ways of understanding the world. Therefore, *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* is best suited to Senior Secondary students and curricula.

Source: <http://mira.canningstockrouteproject.com/content/kurtal-story>

Crucially, students will come to understand the concept of 'Country.' Aboriginal People have a connection to land that is inherently different to the European concept of ownership, control and borders. While these groups may not have had fences, they had clearly defined communities, each with their own languages, dialects, songs and law. Students will come to understand that people cannot easily be transferred or removed from country and *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* illustrates the consequences of such dislocation.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION: THE FILMMAKERS

Adapted from: *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* Press Kit

**WRITER/DIRECTOR: NICOLE MA:** Nicole Ma, an award-winning director/producer, began her filmmaking career in New York producing music videos for prominent pop, rock and punk bands. *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* is her first feature-length documentary after collating and editing over ten years worth of film from living and working around Fitzroy Crossing with Putuparri, Spider and Dolly.

**TOM 'PUTUPARRI' LAWFORD:** Putuparri is a Wangkajunga man living in Fitzroy Crossing working as a cultural advisor, translator, workshop facilitator and artist. Esteemed by his grandfathers to become a cultural leader, *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* documents his journey through learning spiritual and ceremonial traditions in order to keep his community's culture alive.

**NYIRLPIRR 'SPIDER' SNELL:** Putuparri's grandfather and traditional custodian of Kurtal waterhole, Spider is a Wangkajunga ceremonial leader, dancer and visual artist. Spider was born at Yurramarl, an important permanent waterhole on the southeastern side of the Canning Stock Route in the Great Sandy Desert. Putuparri knows that his grandfather is one of the 'last man teacher' and endeavours to learn the life-giving ceremonies necessary for the survival of his country's spirit.

**JUKUJA 'DOLLY' SNELL:** Dolly is a Wangkajunga singer and visual artist and was born at Kurtal around 1933. She spent her early life travelling and working with her mother at various stations throughout the Great Sandy Desert before marrying her childhood sweetheart Spider Snell. She is a leader of Wangkajunga women's ceremonial law.



**PRODUCER**  
**JOHN MOORE**



## CURRICULUM LINKS AND LEARNING AREAS

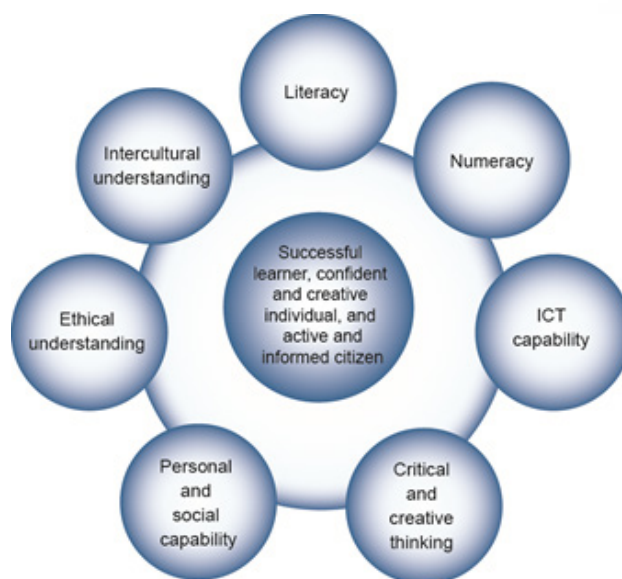
*Putuparri and the Rainmakers* is a superior film for Senior Secondary teachers to encourage their students to think critically and to develop appreciation of the significance of Indigenous ways of knowing. As Associate Professor Zane Ma Rhea argues, currently 'national curricula frameworks reflect the lifeways of the majority' which requires 'learners to know more about the geography, history and culture of the colonising people which tends to be regarded as 'better' than local-focused knowledge and the knowledge arising from their traditional lifeways (2004, p. 6; p. 12).

Therefore, teachers should be encouraged to explore the rich histories and cultures on a local level, prior to a global level, with their students by acknowledging appropriate areas within the curriculum to do so. As the following study guide later outlines, the senior secondary Geography, Earth and Environmental Science, Modern History and Literature learning areas each have relevant learning outcomes that would benefit greatly from incorporating a deep analysis of *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* in class.

While the film is appropriate to show lower secondary levels, Senior Secondary students are at the perfect age to step outside of the western epistemology they may be used to and begin to analyse alternative points of view. Teachers and students will meet the aims of the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians by encouraging students to 'understand and acknowledge the value of Indigenous cultures and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians' and in doing so, become active and informed citizens (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 8). Further, the Australian Curriculum's cross-curriculum priorities of *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures* and *Sustainability* both provide avenues through which teachers can use *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* to achieve learning outcomes for various subject areas as outlined in this study guide.



## GENERAL CAPABILITIES STUDENT ACTIVITIES



Source: <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/generalcapabilities/overview/general-capabilities-in-the-australian-curriculum>

The Australian Curriculum states that 'general capabilities encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that, together with curriculum content in each learning area and the cross-curriculum priorities, will assist all students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century' (ACARA 2015). *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* should be utilised to complement these key learning outcomes for all students, especially in their aim for young people to 'have a strong sense of identity and wellbeing' and 'are connected with and contribute to their world' (ACARA 2015).

### Literacy

1. Discuss the different forms of literacy used throughout the film. Which were accepted as evidence in court?
2. Compare primary and secondary sources on the history and culture of the Kimberley region. Critically analyse their usages.
3. Explain the vital importance of singing country and dancing country as illustrated in *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*.

### Information and Communication Technology capability

1. How has information and communication technology [ICT] enabled the creation of *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*. Consider those used throughout the film, the filmmaking process and those necessary to fund the production.



L-R: DOLLY SNELL, JAPETH RANGI,  
SPIDER SNELL, TOM 'PUTUPARRI'  
LAWFORD, DIRECTOR NICOLE MA

2. Write a business/production proposal for a film production of your choosing. What ICT is required? Why? How will they be used? What is the cost involved?

## Critical and Creative Thinking

1. Develop eight (8) questions for director Nicole Ma, Putuparri or Spider critically analyse the complex issues and abstract ideas explored in the film.
2. Evaluate the evidence throughout the film of the issue of alcohol abuse and domestic violence. How might you synthesise this complex information in order to inform a course of action?
3. Analyse the reasoning behind Native Title decisions. How do you think you might be able to find and apply solutions for satisfaction for all parties? Is this possible in land claims?
4. What lessons have you learned from the film? How might you transfer this new knowledge to new contexts?

## Personal and Social Capability

1. 'We walk behind our old people, following in their footsteps' Discuss.
2. A culture workshop with Spider and the old people to pass on knowledge 'kept boys out of trouble with police'. How do you think reconnecting with country and culture could deter social problems and criminal behaviour within communities?
3. As Putuparri was handed more responsibility, he felt he was being "pulled this way and that [as] the pressure was mounting up". Describe in your own words the different responsibilities and pressures Putuparri was experiencing. Write recommendations on how you think Putuparri could best deal with these demands.

## Ethical Understanding

1. Invite students to discuss why it took director Nicole Ma many years of working with the community to establish the long-term relationships that enabled the film to develop.
2. Explore director Nicole Ma's quote, how 'one of the principles of Aboriginal culture is you can't visit someone's country without permission and this applies to their songs, dances and stories' (MIFF 2015). Why would this be important? Do the students believe this is respected?
3. Examine the court process throughout which Putuparri, Spider and others fought for the rights back to their land. Do you think that this was an ethical, fair, just and timely process? Were those involved fully aware of the process, its outcomes and implications?

## Intercultural Understanding

By the end of Year 10 students should have investigated culture and cultural identity, explored and compared cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices and developed a sound respect for cultural diversity (ACARA 2015c).

1. Draw a table and list elements of your day-to-day life that are important to you, (such as school, family, relationships, friendships, home life, location, etc.). Research communities within the Kimberley region and compare how these elements are different or similar to your experience.
2. Using the table above, now research an Indigenous community that is located in your region. How are their day-to-day experiences different or similar to those in the Kimberley region and your own?
3. How do you think Spider and Dolly 'keep their family alive by painting'?



## SECONDARY CLASS AND STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### Class activity: Alternative ways of knowing

No matter the subject being studied, students should always be encouraged to critically examine different viewpoints in order to gain a deeper understanding. Indigenous voices are often unheard or disregarded, yet *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* provides a platform for teachers to emphasise the importance of being aware of the storyteller's perspective. This is a complex skill that many adults find difficult to grasp throughout their lives. Students can only benefit from a proficiency in this form of critical thinking in order to become active and informed citizens.

1. Divide students into small groups for discussion
2. Ask each group to pick one subject area that they are studying at school
3. Groups to critically discuss:
  - a. How did we come to know information about that subject?
  - b. Whose perspective did we learn through?
  - c. Is the information about the subject from a western scientific point of view only?
  - d. If so, why do we think this is? If not, what other views were taught?
  - e. What are the alternative points of view on the subject we could explore?
  - f. How can we as learners make sure we are learning about all sides of the story?

### Individual student activity: Responsibility

*As town life takes precedence over traditional life for the young people of Putuparri's community, the passing away of the old people further undermines the transmission of their culture. For his culture to survive, Putuparri must learn to take care of 'country' and pass this knowledge on to the next generation.*

1. Putuparri's grandfathers "trusted and believed in [him] to carry on this responsibility". Why is it so important for Putuparri to carry on the responsibility of caring for country?

*"These last years have been like a rollercoaster ride for me. Sometimes I was on top the world. Sometimes I find myself in places that I'd rather forget." – Putuparri.*



2. What obstacles stand in the way of Putuparri fulfilling his new responsibilities?
3. In 200–400 words, describe a time when you have been torn between different responsibilities or lifestyles. How did you resolve the dilemma you found yourself in?

### Class activity: Geography of Kimberley Country

Country and place are crucial underpinnings of Aboriginal culture, therefore it is important for students to understand the geography and physicality of the region in which *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* is set.

In pairs, research the area of Australia where the story of *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* is set and complete the following tasks:

1. Kurtal is approximately 10 kilometres north of Helena Spring, which is 80 kilometres east of Well 41 on the Canning Stock Route. Using this information, try to locate Kurtal on a map of Australia.

- On the same map, label Fitzroy Crossing, the Canning Stock Route and other major towns and landmarks (especially those important to the local Aboriginal people).
- What is a 'wet season'? When is the wet season at Fitzroy Crossing? Why is there desert in an area that has so much rain?
- Describe the process through which Putuparri's grandfathers and uncles make rain as depicted in the film.
- How would you describe the yearly pattern of rainfall and temperature? Use statistics to draw a fully labelled climate graph.
- How does the climate of Fitzroy Crossing affect the lives of the people who live there?

## Individual student activity: Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Cultural Centre

Adapted from: <http://www.kalacc.org.au>

Just like the film, the Kimberley Aboriginal Law and Culture Centre [KALACC] is based in Fitzroy Crossing in the Great Sandy Desert, Western Australia. The Centre was incorporated in 1985 and has a proud history of advocating for culturally based self-determination by keeping culture strong. The KALACC has strong organisation links with the Kimberley Land Council as well as the Kimberley Language Resource Centre. Discovering local community organisations and understanding what they offer the community is a valuable life skill for young people to develop.

- Research:** What roles do the Kimberley Land Council and Kimberley Language Resource Centre each play? Find out the names of at least five (5) of the thirty (30) languages of the Kimberley area.
- What other community organisations can you find in this area? What is their role?
- Define:** self-determination.
- Understand:** what do you think it means to keep culture strong?
- Synthesise:** Develop a program for your community that would keep your culture strong. List the benefits to the community your program would bring.



## Legal Studies class activity: Native title claims

Native title is governed by the *Native Title Act 1993 (Cth)* which recognises that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have rights and interests to land and waters that continued to exist despite settlement. *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* shows how the Ngurrara Canvas painted by the old people was used as legal document in their 1997 Native Title claim. Fifty people from four different language groups all painted the land together to be used as evidence of their continuous and unbroken connection to their country since colonisation, which in Western Australia was 1829.

- Using your knowledge from viewing *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*, prepare a flow diagram showing how Putuparri and his community followed the necessary steps (as below) to make a claim for native title:
  - Application of a person or group who claim to hold native title is submitted to the Federal Court.
  - The Federal Court refers the application to the National Native Title Tribunal to assess the application against the registration test
  - If the application passes the test, the Applicant (person or persons claiming to hold native title) are then allowed certain rights to comment and negotiate about mining.
  - The application is publicly advertised and people with an interest in the area can apply to become a party to the application or claim and can be involved in the process.
  - The Federal Court begins the mediation process between the parties. Mediation is the preferred way to resolve native title and involves all parties agreeing by consent to a determination, this is often done at an on-country sitting of the court and is called a consent determination.
  - If the parties cannot reach an outcome, the claim could go to trial and the Federal Court could make a decision about whether the Applicant has native title rights or interests or not.
- Students and teachers should visit the *National Native Title Tribunal* website for further information and discussion about the lengthy process.



# SENIOR SECONDARY – SPECIFIC INDIVIDUAL STUDENT TASKS

In this section you will find specific questions and activities for students to use *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* in the following senior secondary subject areas:

- i. Humanities and Social Sciences: Modern History
- ii. Humanities and Social Sciences: Geography
- iii. Science: Earth and Environmental Science
- iv. English: Literature

## Humanities and Social Sciences: Modern History

Retrieved from: <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/seniorsecondary/humanities-and-social-sciences/modern-history/curriculum/seniorsecondary#page=1>

### Unit 1: Understanding the Modern World

While the Australian Curriculum does not offer a specific Unit 1, 2, 3 or 4 unit for Senior Secondary students on Aboriginal histories and current cultures, Unit 1 does allow flexibility for teachers to include 'An alternative significant development' within the 'Historical knowledge and understanding' content description of Modern History (ACARA 2015b).



DOLLY SNELL AT  
AGED HOSTEL,  
FITZROY CROSSING



SPIDER AT KURTAL, 2014

*As long as the development:*

- is within the period 1750–1918
- affected large numbers of people
- had a profound effect on people's lives at the time
- had longer-term consequences
- has relevance for contemporary concerns, ideas, beliefs, values and motivations.

### Student Activities using *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*:

1. Investigate the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal populations within the Kimberley area between 1750–1918.
2. What significant factors led to the removal of Aboriginal people from their country?
3. Research the Canning Stock Route, write a report explaining the cause and effects of the track on the area during this time. Who was involved? Why was it 'necessary'? What are the implications and long-term consequences evident today and demonstrated in *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*?
4. Examine different resources (primary, secondary, alternative viewpoints). Explain why you think certain resources hold primacy over others.

### Links to Relevant Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

- Identify links between events to understand the nature and significance of causation, change and continuity over time (ACHMH001)
- Formulate, test and modify propositions to investigate historical issues (ACHMH003)
- Identify, locate and organise relevant information from a range of primary and secondary sources (ACHMH005)
- Practise ethical scholarship when conducting research (ACHMH006)
- Identify the origin, purpose and context of historical sources (ACHMH007)
- Evaluate the reliability, usefulness and contestable





nature of sources to develop informed judgements that support a historical argument (ACHMH009)

- Analyse and account for the different perspectives of individuals and groups in the past (ACHMH010)
- Evaluate contested views about the past to understand the provisional nature of historical knowledge and to arrive at reasoned and supported conclusions (ACHMH012)

Source: <http://www.canningstockroute.net.au/traditional-owners-of-the-canning-stock-route.aspx>

## Unit 2: Recognition and rights of Indigenous peoples

In Unit 2, students are required to study Australian society and one other relevant 20th century society.

### Student Activities using *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*:

1. Explore the nature of the relationship of Spider and Putuparri's people with their land and their response to perceptions of, and feelings about, the arrival of the colonisers (ACHMH070).

### Links to Relevant Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

- The basis on which the colonists claimed sovereignty and imposed control, including conquest, treaty and the doctrine of 'terra nullius' within the Kimberley area;

and the consequences for the legal status and land rights of Indigenous peoples (ACHMH071)

- The nature of government policies and their impact on indigenous peoples, for example protection, assimilation (including the Stolen Generations), and self-determination (ACHMH072)
- The role of individuals and groups who supported the movement for indigenous recognition and rights, including the methods they used and the resistance they encountered (ACHMH073)
- The economic, political and social challenges and opportunities indigenous peoples have faced, including the role of cultural activity in developing awareness in society (ACHMH074)
- The achievements of indigenous peoples at the end of the 20th century, including the right to vote, land rights/native title, and attempt at reconciliation (ACHMH075)
- The continued efforts to achieve greater recognition, reconciliation, civil rights, and improvements in education and health (ACHMH076)

## Unit 3: Modern Nations in the 20th century

Teachers can also use *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* as a valuable complimentary resource for this final year unit of work should they be motivated to design a module around Australia in the 20th century. Unfortunately for Australian students, this is not a popular option. However a module could easily be developed using the Australian Curriculum content descriptions listed below.



SPIDER AT KURTAL,  
FIRST TRIP, 1994

### Student Activities using *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*:

1. Use *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* as a primary resource to complete the study outlined above on Australian society in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Addressing these content descriptions, how were people affected by colonialism in the Kimberley area?

### Links to Relevant Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

- Identify links between events to understand the nature and significance of causation, change and continuity over time (ACHMH098)
- Formulate, test and modify propositions to investigate historical issues (ACHMH100)
- Frame questions to guide inquiry and develop a coherent research plan for inquiry (ACHMH101)
- Identify, locate and organise relevant information from a range of primary and secondary sources (ACHMH102)
- Practise ethical scholarship when conducting research (ACHMH103)
- Identify the origin, purpose and context of historical sources (ACHMH104)
- Analyse, interpret and synthesise evidence from different types of sources to develop and sustain a historical argument (ACHMH105)
- Evaluate the reliability, usefulness and contestable nature of sources to develop informed judgments that

support a historical argument (ACHMH106)

- Analyse and account for the different perspectives of individuals and groups in the past (ACHMH107)
- Evaluate critically different historical interpretations of the past, how they evolved, and how they are shaped by the historian's perspective (ACHMH108)
- Evaluate contested views about the past to understand the provisional nature of historical knowledge and to arrive at reasoned and supported conclusions (ACHMH109)
- Develop texts that integrate appropriate evidence from a range of sources to explain the past and to support and refute arguments (ACHMH110)
- Communicate historical understanding by selecting and using text forms appropriate to the purpose and audience (ACHMH111)
- Apply appropriate referencing techniques accurately and consistently (ACHMH112)

Australia, 1918-1949 (End of WWI – Election of Menzies)

### Student Activities using *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*:

1. Investigate the effects of colonisation on Aboriginal populations within the Kimberley area between 1918-1949.
2. Following on from your research up until 1918 in Unit





## Humanities and Social Sciences: Geography

Retrieved from: <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/seniorsecondary/humanities-and-social-sciences/geography/curriculum/seniorsecondary#page=1>

### Unit 1: Natural and ecological hazards

Natural and ecological hazards have only relatively recently been considered a potential harm to non-Indigenous 'human life, health, income and property' (ACARA 2015). However, non-Indigenous pastoral, mining, agricultural and fishing interests have vastly impacted Aboriginal lives and access to country. *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* explicitly demonstrates the impacts pastoral interests have had on the local land, people and culture. Interestingly, Unit 4 of the Senior Secondary geography curriculum requires students to: 'understand and apply key geographical concepts – including place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale and change – as part of a geographical inquiry' (ACARA 2015). The film should be used to demonstrate all of these aspects and provides an opportunity for students to form inquiries into the vast damaging changes Australia has experienced geographically over the centuries.

#### Student Activities using *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*:

1. Identify the short and long term effects of the establishment of vast cattle stations in the Kimberley region as

- 1, research the Canning Stock Route, write a report explaining the cause and effects of the track on the area during this time. Who was involved? Why was it 'necessary'? What are the implications and long-term consequences evident today and demonstrated in *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*?
3. Examine different resources (primary, secondary, alternative viewpoints). Explain why you think certain resources hold primacy over others.
4. Putuparri stated that in "1992 things began to happen". Why?
5. Reflecting on this period, what has since changed and what continuity is there in regards to the relationship between Indigenous peoples and outsiders with agricultural or mining interests?
6. What progress or decline has Australia made in regards to the land rights of Aboriginal people since this era?
7. Write a dialogue between two contested perspectives during this time (for instance, a Traditional Owner and a cattle station master). Empathy for the circumstances they faced, the motivations, values and attitudes behind the actions of each should be evident.

#### Links to Relevant Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

- An overview of Australia in 1918 as background information for more intensive study of the period (ACHMH120)
- The adjustment of national priorities in the 1920s, including the tensions between urbanisation, industrialisation and rural development; the difficulties of soldier settlement; the exclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples; and the changing role of women (ACHMH121)
- The key features of post-war reconstruction, including industrialisation, immigration, the provision of social welfare, and attitudes and policies towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and women (ACHMH125)





L-R PAUL ELLIOTT, TOM  
'PUTUPARRI' LAWFORD,  
NICOLE MA, JOHN MOORE,  
STEVE ROBINSON

demonstrated in the film.

2. How does the present-day mining boom endanger Putuparri's family's sacred desert water?
3. Define what 'Country' means for Aboriginal people. How was Country cared for and respected in the film? Why is this so important?
4. Putuparri believes that 'young people gotta look after that country and the culture'. Why do you think country and culture are so intertwined? What are the responsibilities of young people within your community to protect country and culture?
5. Describe Spider and the old peoples' relationship to Kurtal. How did they communicate with Kurtal? Why? Was it successful? How?
6. Who is Daniel Vachon in the film? What is his role?

### Links to Relevant Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

#### Geographical Inquiry and Skills

- *evaluate the reliability, validity and usefulness of geographical sources and information (ACHGE005)*
- *analyse geographical information and data from a range of primary and secondary sources and a variety of perspectives to draw reasoned conclusions and make generalisations (ACHGE006)*
- *propose individual and collective action, taking into account environmental, social and economic factors; and predicts the outcomes of the proposed action (ACHGE011)*

#### Geographical Natural Hazard Inquiry into rain/drought

- *the physical and human factors that explain why some places are more vulnerable than others (ACHGE019)*
- *the environmental, economic and social impacts of the hazard in a developed country such as Australia compared with at least one developing country or region (ACHGE020)*

#### Depth study of an ecological hazard

A depth study, using fieldwork and/or secondary sources, to investigate one ecological hazard, and how the risks associated with the hazard are being managed. The scale of study is determined by the nature of the ecological hazard selected.

Students select ONE ecological hazard to investigate:  
Drought in the Great Sandy Desert:

- *the nature and causes of the selected hazard and how the activities of people can intensify its impacts (ACHGE022)*
- *the physical and human factors that explain why some places are more vulnerable than others (ACHGE025)*
- *the environmental, economic and social impacts of the hazard in a developed country such as Australia compared with at least one developing country or region (ACHGE026)*
- *the sustainable risk management policies, procedures and practices designed to reduce the impacts of the hazard through preparedness, mitigation, prevention and adaptation. (ACHGE027)*



## Earth and Environmental Science

Retrieved from: <http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/seniorsecondary/science/earth-and-environmental-science/curriculum/seniorsecondary#page=1>

Science itself was seen as a set of objective knowledge existing independently of people, just as traditional knowledge such as herbal medicine and Indigenous land management practices were considered questionable and inefficient. The knowledge of many cultural groups and Indigenous peoples were dismissed as unreliable and unscientific despite the fact they had been proven to be socially and environmentally sustainable over thousands of years. *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* provides quite extraordinary evidence of these practices for students to analyse and a platform for teachers to encourage the exploration of scientific understandings outside of and beyond the western paradigm. Therefore, rather than explicit questions, the following activities are designed to promote students' critical and heightened metacognition when exploring issues within the science discipline.

### Student Activities using *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*:

1. **Acknowledge:** When exploring scientific processes claims and conclusions, encourage students to always investigate alternative viewpoints outside of the realm of western science.
2. **Understand:** that *all* knowledge should be questioned and understood within and outside of the context in which it was constructed.
3. **Describe:** the sequence of events that took place during when Spider and the other elders sang to country at Kurtal.

### Links to Relevant Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

Science as a Human Endeavour (Units 1 & 2)

- *Development of complex models and/or theories often requires a wide range of evidence from multiple individuals and across disciplines (ACSES038)*
- *The use of scientific knowledge is influenced by social, economic, cultural and ethical considerations (ACSES040)*

Science Inquiry Skills (Earth and Environmental Science Unit 2)

- *Interpret a range of scientific and media texts and evaluate processes, claims and conclusions by considering the quality of available evidence; use reasoning to construct scientific arguments (ACSES034)*
- *Select, construct and use appropriate representations, including maps and other spatial representations, diagrams and flow charts, to communicate conceptual understanding, solve problems and make predictions*

(ACSES035)

Science as a Human Endeavour (Units 3 & 4)

- *The acceptance of scientific knowledge can be influenced by the social, economic and cultural context in which it is considered (ACSES066)*
- *Science can be limited in its ability to provide definitive answers to public debate; there may be insufficient reliable data available, or interpretation of the data may be open to question (ACSES068)*
- *Models and theories are contested and refined or replaced when new evidence challenges them, or when a new model or theory has greater explanatory power (ACSES092)*

## English: Literature

Retrieved from:

<http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/seniorsecondary/english/literature/curriculum/seniorsecondary#page=1>

*Putuparri and the Rainmakers* demonstrates to students the many modes of literature that not only exist in our day-to-day interactions, but are also upheld as valid evidence in the court of law. Students are able to analyse how the filmmakers' choices affects the viewer's responses – be it empathetic or even critical. Different perspectives and narrative choices, including a discussion of alternative narrative choices would also be a valuable class discussion at a senior secondary level.

### Unit 1 - interpreting different literary texts

### Student Activities using *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*:

1. Interestingly, the likeable protagonist of *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* committed appalling crimes. How was this explored in the film? How did the director's choice of this inclusion affect your opinion on the protagonist?
2. Was the film successful in illustrating the varying, conflicting factors that influence violence and substance abuse in communities?
3. 50 people from 4 different language groups painted country to be used as evidence for their Native Title claim. Putuparri explains that this process of mapping a birds-eye view of their country is important for the old people because many cannot read, write or speak English.
  - i. Research the Ngurrara Canvas. What important factors are included in the painting?
  - ii. Explain why you think the Ngurrara Canvas so accurately depicts the region.
  - iii. How do you think non-Indigenous people would be able to interpret the painting?

4. Director, Nicole Ma, stated she thinks “it’s important to show the positive side of Aboriginal culture because we see so many negative depictions of Aboriginals and remote communities and despite all the Stolen Generation and being displaced from their country and being isolated and not having jobs and being dependent on government funding, despite all those issues the culture is still being practiced and it’s still strong and I think that’s something that most of the audience don’t know”  
(video from <http://www.pozible.com/project/14717>).
- Prior to viewing *Putuparri and the Rainmakers*, what did you know about Aboriginal culture in your area or in other regions of Australia?
  - How did you come to know that information?
  - How do you think the film was successful in depicting positive aspects of Aboriginal cultures?

## Links to Relevant Australian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

- the degree to which individual points of view, experiences and contexts shape responses to texts (ACELR001)
- the differences between initial personal responses and more studied and complex responses (ACELR003)
- how responses of readers and viewers can range from empathetic to critical. (ACELR004)
- different points of view represented in texts, for example, those of characters, narrators and the implied author (ACELR006)
- different narrative approaches, for example, eye-witness accounts, multiple narrators, the unreliable narrator and the omniscient narrator (ACELR008)

## REFERENCES

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Crowd-funding campaign: <http://www.pozible.com/project/14717>

Ma Rhea, Z. 2004. The preservation and maintenance of

the knowledge of Indigenous peoples and local communities: the role of education. *Journal of Australian Indigenous Issues*. 7(1), pp. 3-18.

Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians, December 2008, Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs, Melbourne.

MIFF 2015, *Putuparri and the Rainmakers* Q&A, retrieved from: <http://miffindustry.com/assets/2015/PF/PUTUPARRI%20AND%20THE%20RAINMAKERS%20Q&A.pdf>

## Useful websites

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2007-11-09/ngurrara-native-title-claim-to-be-passed/720864>  
<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-08-07/jukuja-dolly-snell-wins-national-indigenous-art-award/6681376>  
<http://www.archaeologychannel.org/events-guide/international-film-and-video-festival/168-archived-festival-pages/tac-fest-2004-pages/841-kurtal-snake-spirit>  
<http://www.canningstockrouteproject.com/>  
<http://www.kalacc.org.au>  
<http://www.klc.org.au/native-title/native-title-map>  
<http://www.mangkaja.com/content/kurtal-bush-trip>  
<http://mira.canningstockrouteproject.com/content/kurtal-story>  
[http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/ngurrara\\_the\\_great\\_sandy\\_desert\\_canvas/\\_home](http://www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/ngurrara_the_great_sandy_desert_canvas/_home)  
<http://sensiblefilms.com/portfolio/putuparri-and-the-rainmakers/>  
<http://www.smh.com.au/entertainment/art-and-design/eighty-two-year-old-artist-jukuja-dolly-snell-wins-the-olympics-of-indigenous-art-20150807-git26f.html>  
<http://www.smh.com.au/news/National/Ngurrara-people-win-native-title-claim/2007/11/09/1194329486711.html>  
<http://www.yanunijarra.com/>





***Putuparri* is available on DVD and for streaming from Ronin Films**

PO Box 680 Mitchell ACT 2911 AUSTRALIA

**Phone:** 02 6248 0851 **Fax:** 02 6249 1640 **Email:** [orders@roninfilms.com.au](mailto:orders@roninfilms.com.au)



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