



Teaching Notes: Early Education

Use #LibraryStorytime to share your National Simultaneous Storytime (NSS) events and follow readers across the country.



About the Book

I am a collector. Always looking, finding... and keeping! This picture book stars a beautiful Satin Bowerbird on the search for blue! It's a moving story of longing and connection, that unfolds as the bowerbird's search sends him soaring across the sea, sky and city. He swoops and snatches vibrant treasures for his collection, and soon his 'bower' attracts something greater and more fulfilling than he could ever have imagined.



Early Childhood Education Curriculum Links

By reading the book aloud together and implementing follow-up play experiences, educators can help children think critically and creatively about the story to develop fundamental language & literacy skills. *Bowerbird Blues* can extend learning about concepts including STEM, natural & constructed environments, rhyme, pollution, sustainability, bird habitats & behaviours, love, friendship, belonging and persistence. These planning ideas support principles, practices and learning outcomes of [The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia V2.0](#).

Available to
borrow from your
local library!

Collector's Column Graph

EYLF Learning Outcomes 4.2, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2 and 5.4

- Promote the development of numeracy skills by using the book's [end pages](#), where children can find and count sets of objects collected by the story's bowerbird character.
- Extend learning by printing this [template](#) and [illustrations](#) and attach velcro dots to create a simple, pictorial column graph. Model mathematical language and support children to sort, categorise, order and compare data. Ask preschoolers to bring in their own collections of both natural and processed materials from home; or draw pictures to create other 2D graphs.



DIY 'Bower' Building Project

EYLF Learning Outcomes 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4

- The Satin Bowerbird is an amazing artist and architect who [builds](#) and [decorates](#) his 'bower'. Use the story as a provocation for investigations into how this bird cleverly engineers this beautiful structure to attract a female mate.
- Research facts about 'bowers' with this [ABC Kids listen podcast](#) and [author video](#). Invite children to draw a plan for their own model, facilitating discussions about design and stability. Then provide open-ended materials such as paper plates, pop sticks, fallen twigs, leaves, twine, blue loose parts, clay, and wood whittling tools. Scaffold STEM learning, problem-solving and creativity as children construct their 'bower'.

Storytelling Suitcase

EYLF Learning Outcomes 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2 and 5.4

- Make a set of character 'story spoon/stick' puppets using these [downloadable illustrations](#) and arrange in a suitcase or basket together with props representing special moments from the book. Include blue objects collected by the bowerbird (e.g. peg, lego piece, straw, shell, pencil, button); together with items to symbolise different story settings (e.g. planes in the sky, cars/roads in the city, and water in the sea).
- Engage children in song and conversations about story structure (beginning, middle and end) as they use props to retell the sequence of events; encouraging them to repeat the sound patterns of rhyme and alliteration e.g. 'peeping, peering' and 'prancing, dancing'.

Fun facts: The male Satin Bowerbird has a loud 'wee-oo' call & often mimics the calls of other bird species.



Tune: 'Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star'

Little bird, little bird, fly around,

Up to the sky, down to the ground.

Little bird, little bird, flap your wings.

Open your beak and sweetly sing.

Little bird, little bird, fly to your nest.

Now it is time to take a rest.



Upcycled Printmaking Artwork

EYLF Learning Outcomes 2.4, 4.1, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3 and 5.4

- Turn trash into treasure just like the bowerbird in the story by re-using loose parts for printmaking! Dip recyclable items (e.g. bottle tops, cotton reels, lids) into coloured paint to print different shapes and patterns on paper. Extend children's understandings about sustainability concepts, such as recycling and upcycling, by discussing the impact of waste on the natural environment.
- Build children's emotional literacy by asking how the different paint colours they use makes them feel. Ask 'How do you think the bowerbird was feeling?' on the blue, grey and pink illustrated pages of the book. Explore themes of sadness, persistence, happiness, friendship and love.

Balloon Birds Science Experiment

EYLF Learning Outcomes 4.1, 4.2, 4.4 and 5.1

- Investigate the question *How do bowerbirds fly?* together by conducting a simple experiment to explore the scientific concepts of 'lift' and 'thrust'. First, blow up a blue balloon and clip closed with a peg. Then draw a face on your 'bird balloon' and tape two feathers on each side for wings. Next, unclip the balloon and toss it upwards in the air. Ask, *Will the bowerbird fly without feathers?* and test it out!

Facts: *The escaping air from the balloon puts a downward force on the outside air, pushing it upwards. As the balloon rises from the downward 'thrust' of the air, some fast air moves across the feather wings of the balloon giving it even more 'lift'.*



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