



**NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK**  
**NAIDOC WEEK**

# GUIDING ACTIVITY PACK



NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK 2025

**Bridging Now  
to *Next***

27 MAY – 3 JUNE | [#NRW2025](#) | [RECONCILIATION.ORG.AU](#)



**THE NEXT GENERATION:  
STRENGTH, VISION & LEGACY**  
6-13 JULY 2025

# INTRODUCTION



There are two separate weeks in Australia which provide an opportunity to spotlight and celebrate First Nations Australian's culture. Annually, there is:

- **National Reconciliation week – held from 27 May – 3 June**
- **NAIDOC week – held 6 – 13 July**

Both of these weeks have a different theme each year. For 2025, the theme of National Reconciliation Week (NRW) is ***Bridging Now to Next*** and for NAIDOC week the theme is ***The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy***.

National Reconciliation Week starts and ends with two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey, 27th May which was the day the successful 1967 referendum was held and 3rd June which was the day in 1992 the High Court of Australia delivered their ruling in the Mabo case. Reconciliation is a journey that ALL Australians need to take together to build respectful and meaningful relationships to mend, heal and close the gap which separates First Nations Australians within our society.

The theme for NRW ***Bridging Now to Next*** is a call to continue looking ahead and continue to push forward and learn from our past. Reconciliation in Australia is a journey which has become a lot less stable since the failed 2023 referendum and the continued loud divisive narrative which continues to devalue First Nations history, culture and people. Australia's history of reconciliation is not a linear one, but it does include great strides and disappointing setbacks. The theme also pays respects to the 25-year anniversary of 'Corroboree 2000' which included a walk across the Sydney Harbour Bridge by around 250,000 people.







**NAIDOC Week** generally runs from the first Sunday in July until the second. The acronym stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. It became a week-long event in 1975 after originally being a one-day event, first held in 1938. NAIDOC Week celebrates the history, culture, and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Australia. The week is observed not just by First Nation communities but also by government agencies, schools, local councils, and workplaces. This year's theme: ***The Next Generation: Strength, Vision & Legacy*** marks the 50th anniversary for the weeklong celebrations which aim to honor and elevate Indigenous voices, culture and resilience, acknowledging past achievements but generating positive outlook to the future to empower the strength of young leaders, the vision of communities and legacy of ancestors. The committee states "Together, we walk forward, honoring where we've come from and looking boldly to the next generation who will carry NAIDOC and their communities into the future".

Although there are not always local events held for Reconciliation week there is for NAIDOC week which are generally advertised on social media and we encourage you to attend if you are able to. Each year this also a march in Melbourne CBD during NAIDOC week which is a great show of community. It is important to be mindful that some events may be for mob only and it's important to respect this.

The Girl Guides Victoria Inclusion and Diversity Team have put together some different activities which you could utilise within your Units in honour of either of these two weeks or at any other time of the year when your Unit has chosen to focus on Australian First Nations culture. The activities will encourage understanding of Australia's First Nations culture, our nations true history and inspire healthy reconciliation for the future of Australia which is something both of these themes share.

It is important to note that reconciliation is not about blame. It is about acknowledgement and ensuring past atrocities do not occur again. Everyone comes to these conversations with a different level of understanding, unconscious and conscious bias, and worldview. Attempting to shame people is not helpful or conducive for healthy community growth.

This activity pack provides some examples of activities which can be run during regular Unit meetings but while it is not listed as an activity it is important to check in with the members of your Unit to establish their understanding about the shared history of Australia.

Do you all know the traditional custodians of the land on which your hall, or homes are? Having a yarn about this is a great place to start from.



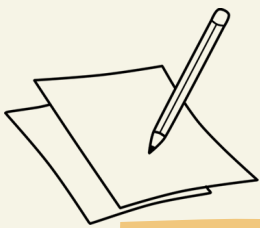


# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

## What is the difference between a Welcome to Country and an Acknowledgement of Country?

**A Welcome to Country** is a ceremony performed by a traditional custodian of the land on which the ceremony is taking place. It is a ceremony which has taken place for centuries despite mistruths which have been spread online in recent years. Quite often, the purpose of a welcome was to check the intentions of a visitor to ensure they did not mean any harm. First Nations people were very aware of the boundaries of their Country and they would often stop on a border and use different methods, such as smoke signals to let people know they were there and would wait until people came to 'welcome' them in, kind of like knocking on someone's door and waiting for the door to be opened rather than just walking in.

**An Acknowledgement of Country** can be done by anyone who is not a traditional custodian of the land on which they are on. It provides an opportunity to show respect for the traditional custodians and the continuing connection of First Nations peoples to their Country.



### ACTIVITIES

**With your Unit, brainstorm the different words and actions we use or do when we welcome someone in everyday life.**

**Try writing a Unit or Patrol Acknowledgement of Country.**



# SORRY DAY

Every year on 26 May, National Sorry Day remembers and acknowledges the mistreatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who were forcibly removed from their families and communities, which we now know as 'The Stolen Generations'.

National Sorry Day is a day to acknowledge the strength of Stolen Generations Survivors and reflect on how we can all play a part in the healing process for our people and nation. While this date carries great significance for the Stolen Generations and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, it is also commemorated by Australians around the country.

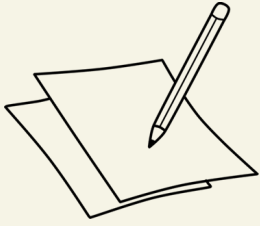
The **first National Sorry Day was held on 26 May 1998**, one year after the Bringing Them Home report was tabled in Federal Parliament. The Bringing Them Home report is a result of a Government Inquiry into the past policies which caused First Nations children to be removed from their families and communities in the 20th century.

Following this, in 2000, there was one issue that was high on the agenda at the Sydney Harbour Bridge walk for reconciliation – an apology to the Stolen Generations.

The five-petal Native Cotton, Desert Rose, or Native Hibiscus as we know it, was chosen by the Kimberley Stolen Generations Aboriginal Corporation (KSGAC) members to symbolise the scattering of the Stolen Generations and their resilience to the policies of Australia at the time that were designed to. Initially proposed by members of the Kimberley Stolen Generation Aboriginal Corporation, this was later endorsed by the National Sorry Day Committee. It is wholeheartedly supported by the National Stolen Generations Alliance. This flower was adopted because it is found widely across Australia, and it is a survivor. Its colour denotes compassion and spiritual healing.



# NATIVE HIBISCUS COMMEMORATIVE FLOWER



## Equipment needed:

- commemorative hibiscus
- white card stock or paper for printing
- glue stick
- scissors
- pencil
- safety pin if wearing the flower as a brooch

## Decorative materials could include:

- crepe or tissue paper
- water colour paint
- pastels
- crayon



## Instructions:

1. Print the hibiscus template onto white card
2. Decorate using your preferred materials and allow to dry if using paint or glue
3. Cut around the outline of the hibiscus
4. Using a pencil, curl the petals at the tip to give the flower a more lifelike effect
5. Add your completed flower to a display, use it as a decoration or wear it as a brooch for National Sorry Day.



# Native Hibiscus

Commemorative Flower for The Stolen Generations



## COOKING

Traditionally Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people lived entirely from things which came from the land, waterways and air around them, as had others from around the world. They also traded with surrounding Nations. Some Nations did not have access to things such as greenstone which were used to make weapons so those Nations would trade items such as food resources to gain access. Indigenous Australians had a lot of experience living on and from the land, there was an understanding when things would be in supply and how to ensure it would continue to come back, season after season.

Native ingredients like bush tomatoes, kangaroo, cassava, and wattle seed are staples. Each ingredient has a purpose and ties directly to its surroundings. For example, wattle seed is nutrient-rich and versatile, often ground into flour and used in baked goods. Saltbush, with its salty flavor, thrives in arid regions and adds seasoning to meats and bread. Kakadu plums, rich in vitamin C, were often eaten fresh or dried. These foods are both practical and packed with flavor, reflecting the harmony between people and nature.

The preparation of these ingredients involved careful methods. Cooking meat in earth ovens, for example, locked in moisture and flavor while requiring minimal resources. Seeds and grains were ground into fine flour using stone tools, creating versatile bases for breads and cakes. These techniques not only made food tasty but preserved it for future use. Today, these ancient methods still inspire modern chefs, reminding us of the ingenuity and sustainability embedded in Indigenous knowledge.



Did you know, it is now also believed that Indigenous Australians were the first to bake bread?

However, traditional practices suffered as the pastoral industry encroached on Aboriginal lands. As the British wanted to establish more farms Aboriginal people were seen as problematic and, in the way, and could no longer be ignored so they were moved on to missions. They were not allowed to continue their traditional hunting and food gathering on the missions and were expected to live entirely on the rations provided of white flour, white sugar, tea and meat. However, people would often mix the traditional with the new and create some great combinations (and I'm sure some not so great ones), the inclusion of traditional herbs and spices is still very common today.



Two yummy examples are:

- **Wattleseed & Thyme Damper**

<https://www.sbs.com.au/food/recipe/wattleseed-and-thyme-damper/9y9escos7>

- **Chocolate & Wattleseed self-saucing pudding**

<https://www.sbs.com.au/food/recipe/chocolate-and-wattleseed-self-saucing-pudding/k9dih7qn4>



# STORY TELLING



## Storytelling through Dance, Song and Art

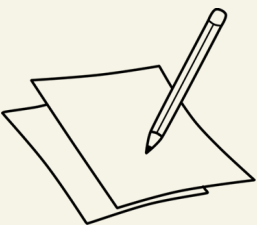
Aboriginal people pass down stories and cultural knowledge from generation to generation orally and through dance, song and art. Traditionally, art was used as a form of communication and often, symbols were painted or drawn on rock surfaces to convey cultural information.

Traditional art in Victoria often used symbols to tell a story. One of the major purposes of traditional Aboriginal dancing was to tell stories, with the dance “moves” being passed down through generations. These stories would be about the land, animals, dreamtime, and Aboriginal people. It is quite common for Aboriginal dance to incorporate imitations of certain animals, to assist in the storytelling and bring the dreamtime to life. These dances often depicted a difference between women's business and men's business.

An example of a woman's dance can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hu9c84ZvtA>

We cannot learn and grow from our history if we do not know and understand our history and the passing down of histories and stories provides us with knowledge.



### ACTIVITY

**As a Unit or a Patrol, you can tell a story. The group can either agree on an existing story or develop their own story first and then “tell” this story through dance or art.**

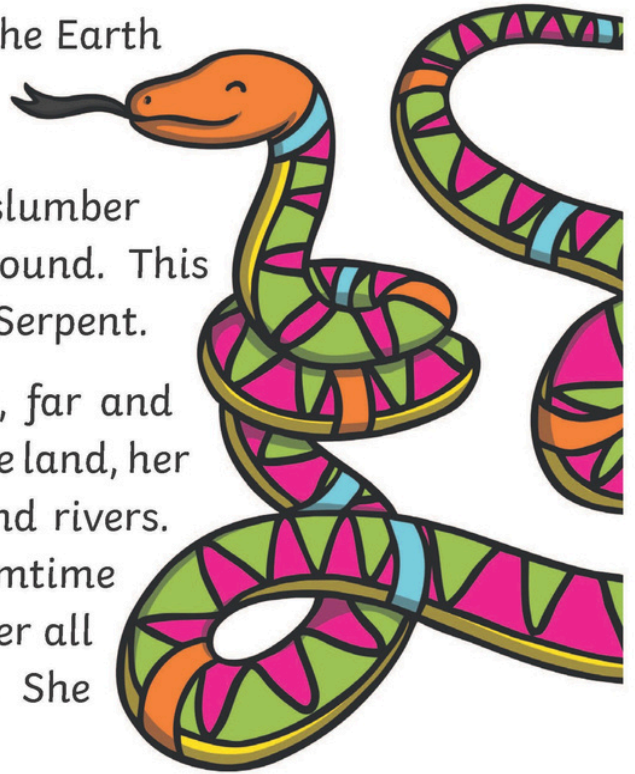


# The Rainbow Serpent

The following story is based on a traditional Aboriginal Dreamtime story, involving the Rainbow Serpent.

Long, long ago in the Dreamtime, the Earth lay flat and still. Nothing moved and nothing grew. One day, a beautiful snake awoke from her slumber and came out from under the ground. This snake was known as the Rainbow Serpent.

She travelled for a very long time, far and wide. As she made her way across the land, her body formed mountains, valleys and rivers. The Rainbow Serpent was the Dreamtime creature who shaped the Earth. After all of her travelling, she grew tired. She curled up and went to sleep.



After some rest, she returned to the place that she had first appeared and called out to the frogs, "Come out! The frogs woke up very slowly because they had so much water in their bellies. The Rainbow Serpent tickled their stomachs, and the water began to fill the tracks that the Rainbow Serpent had left. This is how the lakes and rivers were formed.

After this, water, grass and trees began to grow. All the other animals that lived in rocks, on the plains,

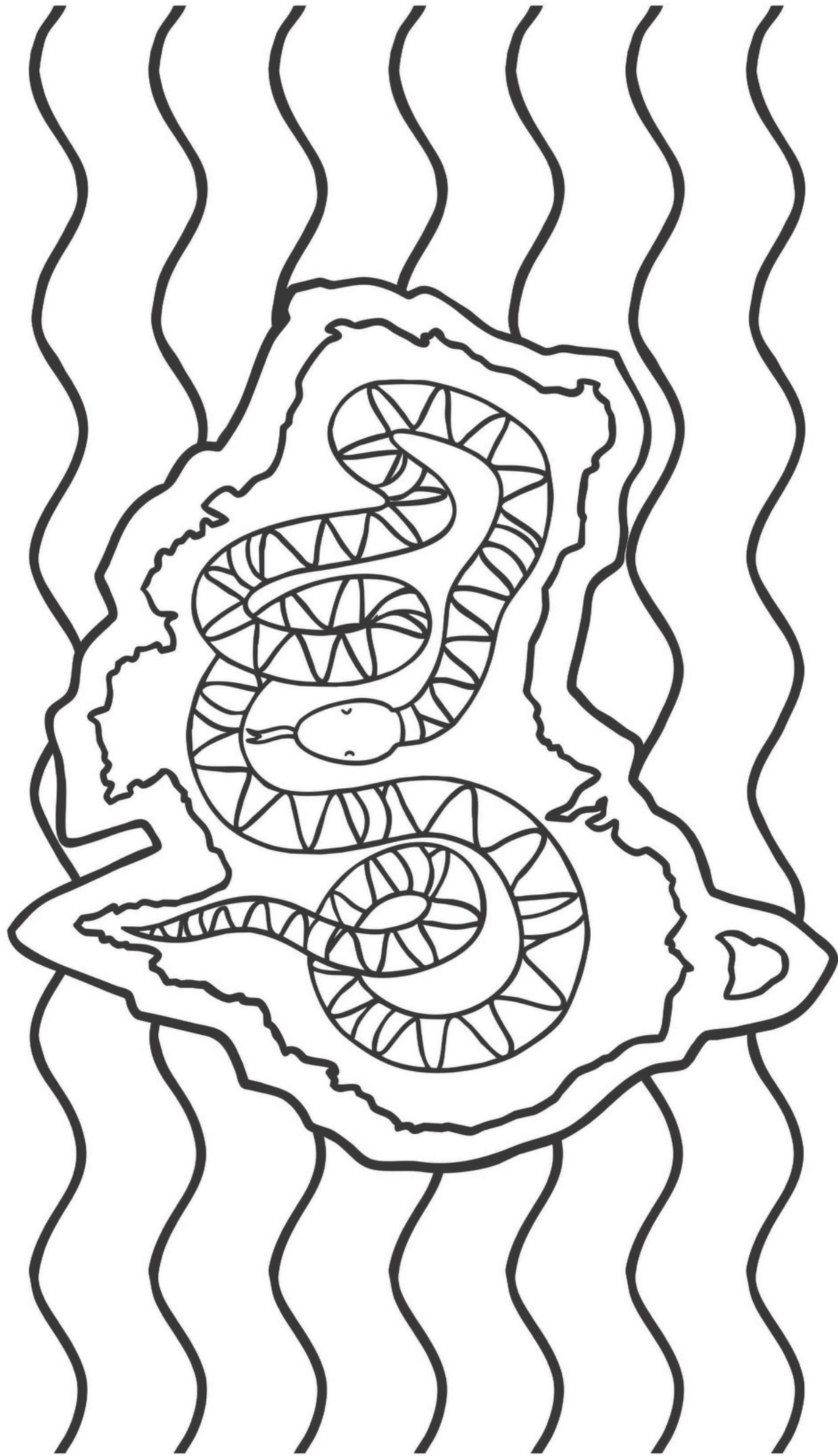


in the trees and the air began to wake up and follow the Rainbow Serpent. They were all happy with the Earth.

The Rainbow Serpent made laws that they all had to obey. Some did not like this and began to cause trouble. The Rainbow Serpent said, "Those who obey will be rewarded; I shall give them human form. But, for those who don't, they will be punished and turned to stone."

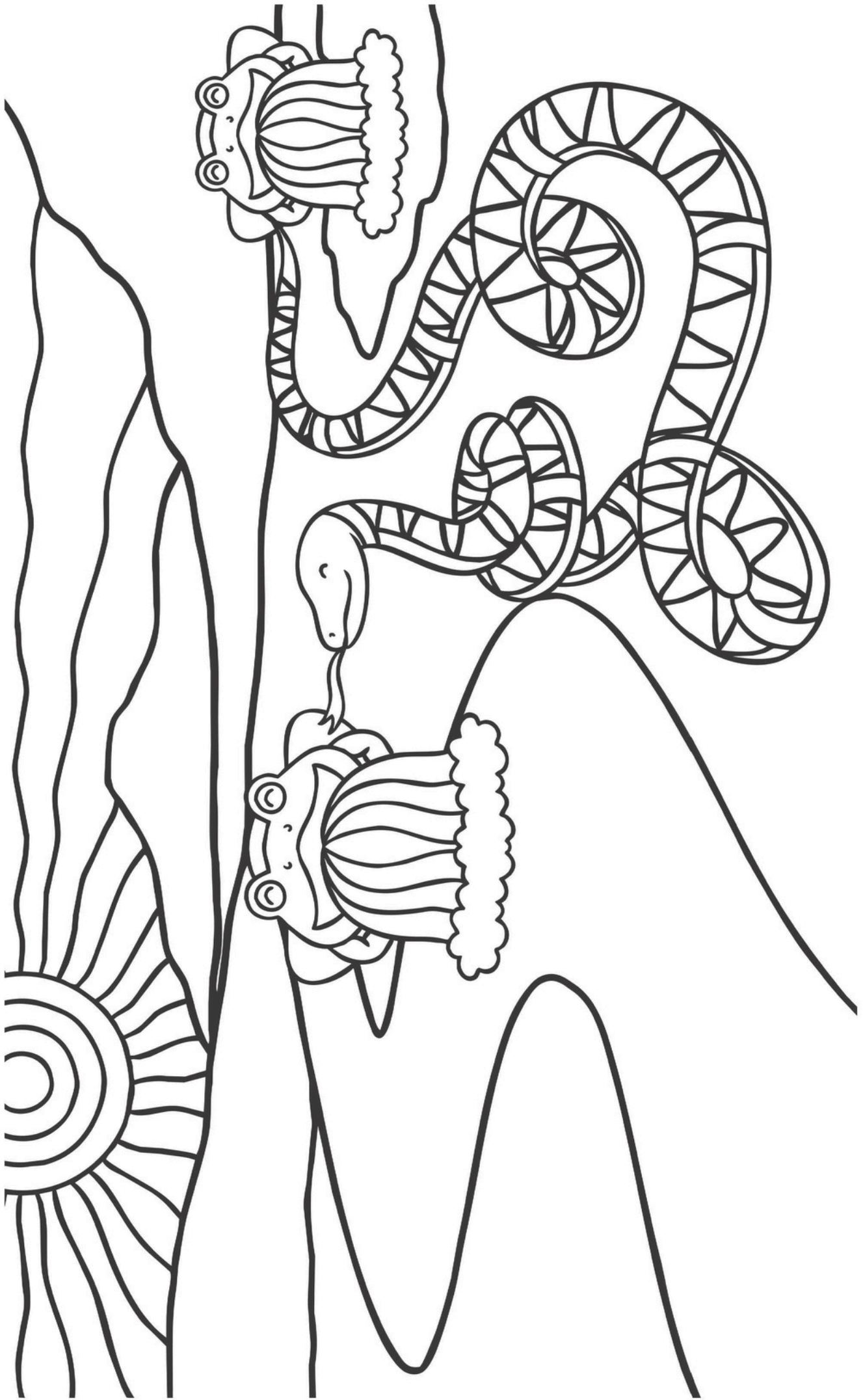
The tribes of people lived together on the land given to them by the Rainbow Serpent. They knew that the land would always be theirs, as long as they took care of it. They believed that no one should ever take it away from them.























# How the Birds Got Their Colours

twinkl

Long, long ago in the Dreaming, when all of the land and animals were being created, all the birds were black in colour. They did not have any bright or fancy colours on their feathers. They were all just one colour.



twinkl



Until one day, a little bird flew around looking for food. The little bird flew closer to the ground to catch a big, juicy and delicious-looking grub. When the bird flew close to a tree, he landed on a big, sharp branch. It cut deep into his foot and made him very, very sick.



For days and days, the little bird was in so much pain. He just stayed on the branch with a big, swollen foot. It kept getting more swollen and more painful. He was dying! Soon after this, all of his friends came to see if they could help.





They all gathered around the sick little bird, wondering what they could do to save him. All except for one bird...the crow. The crow just wandered back and forth, not doing anything to help.



Then suddenly, a parrot rushed forward towards the sick little bird. With her very sharp and pointy beak, the parrot burst the little bird's swollen foot. Many different colours rushed out and splashed all over the parrot. There were reds, greens, blues, yellows and all the other colours of the rainbow. All of the wonderful bright colours ran down her chest, wings and tail.





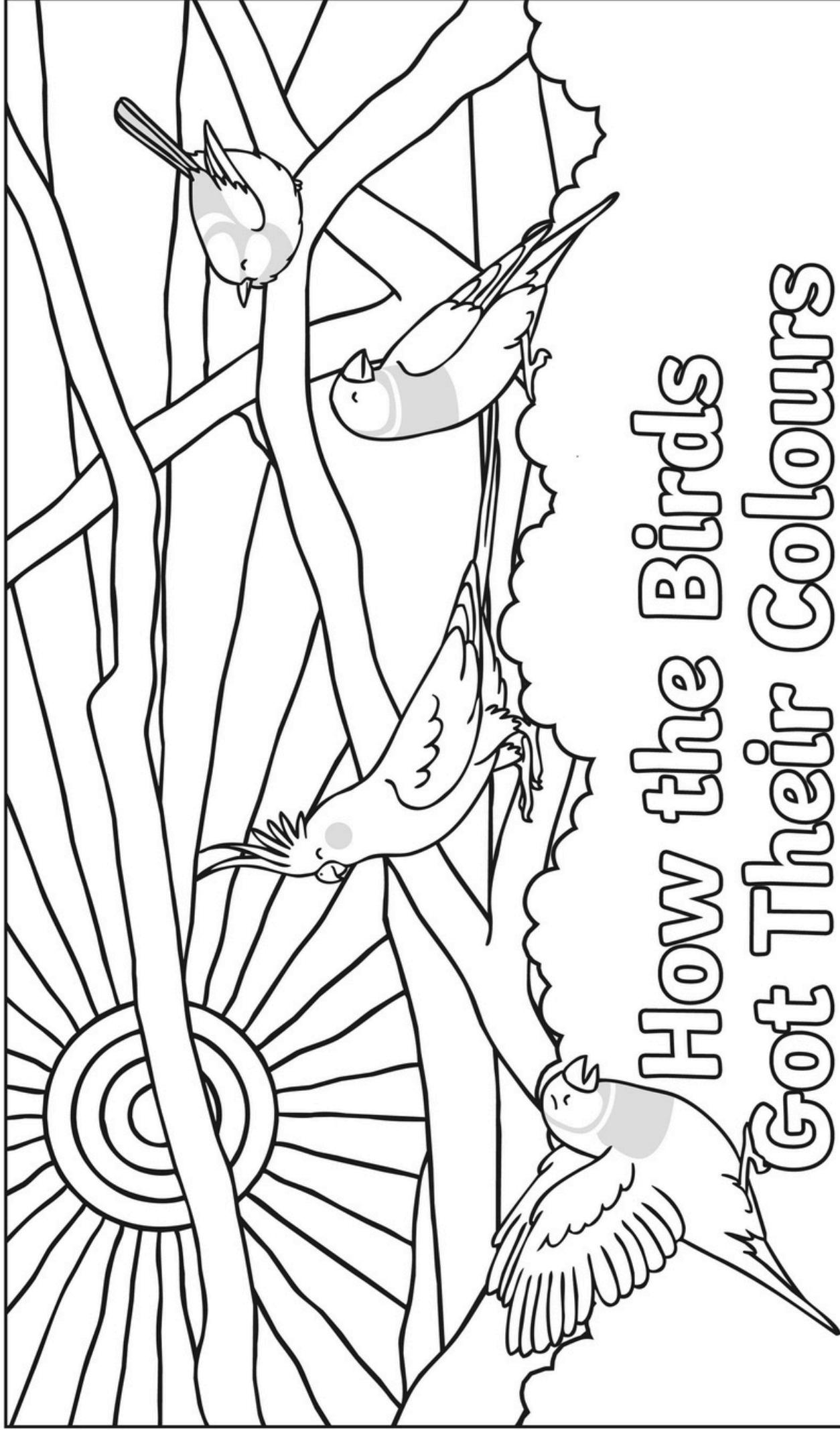
The colours also splashed out onto the other birds. Some were red, some were blue, some were brown and some were yellow. Some birds were lucky and even got spots and stripes too!



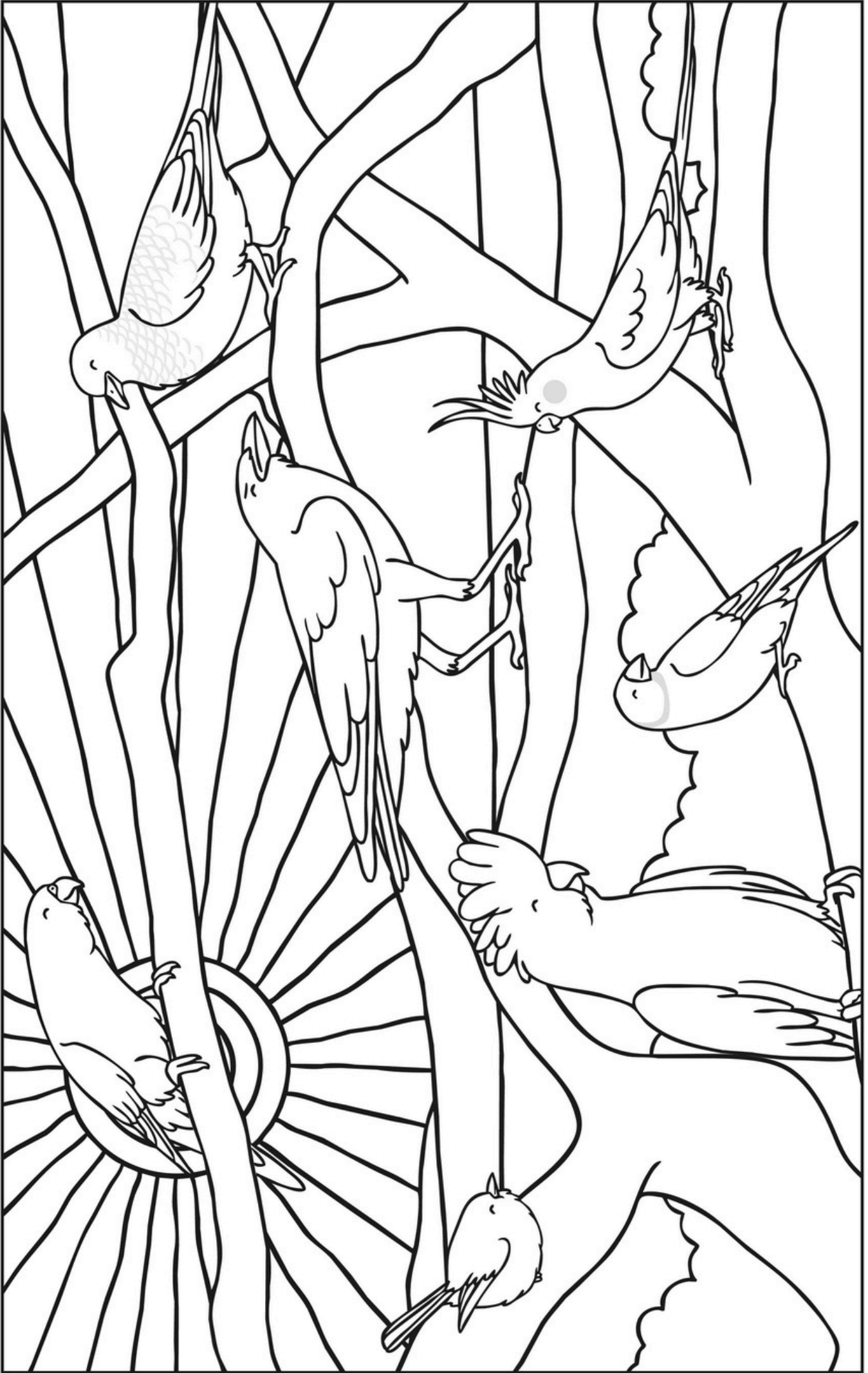
All the animals looked around to see how lovely and colourful they all looked. All of the birds were happy and excited, except for crow, who was standing far away from them all. Crow didn't get any colours at all. The sick little bird soon became better. He thanked the parrot for helping him with his swollen foot and then flew away. And that's how the birds got their colours!

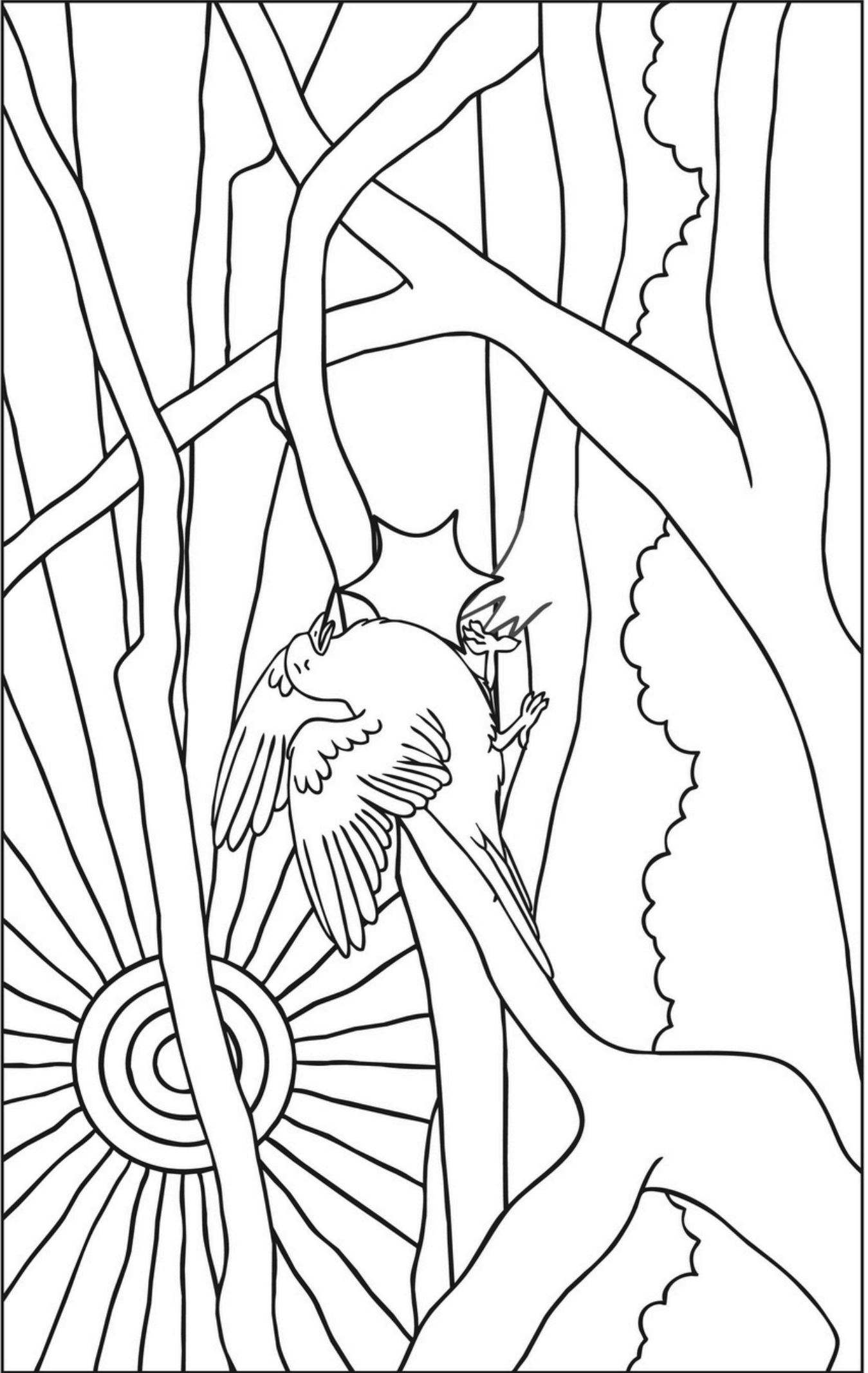




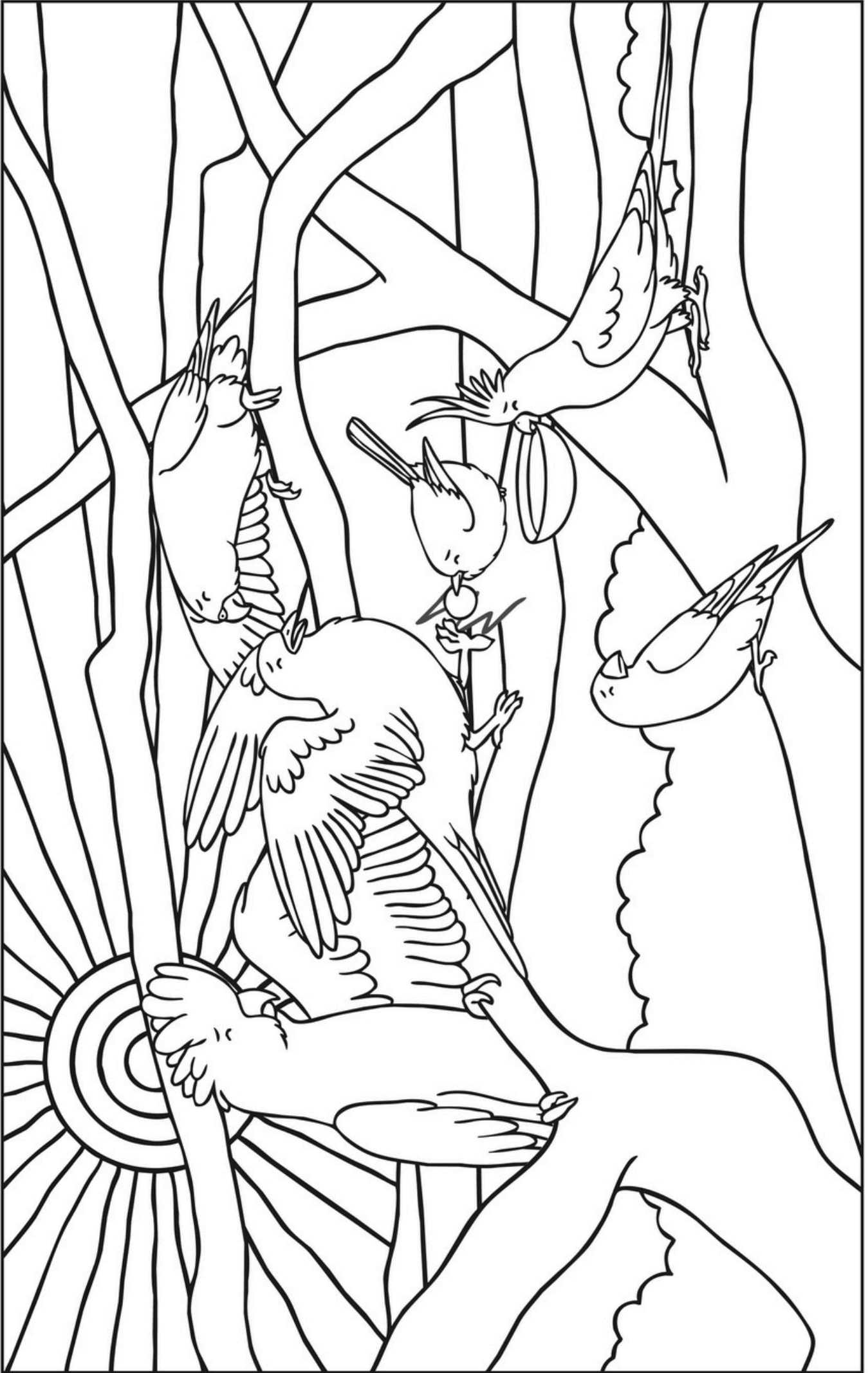


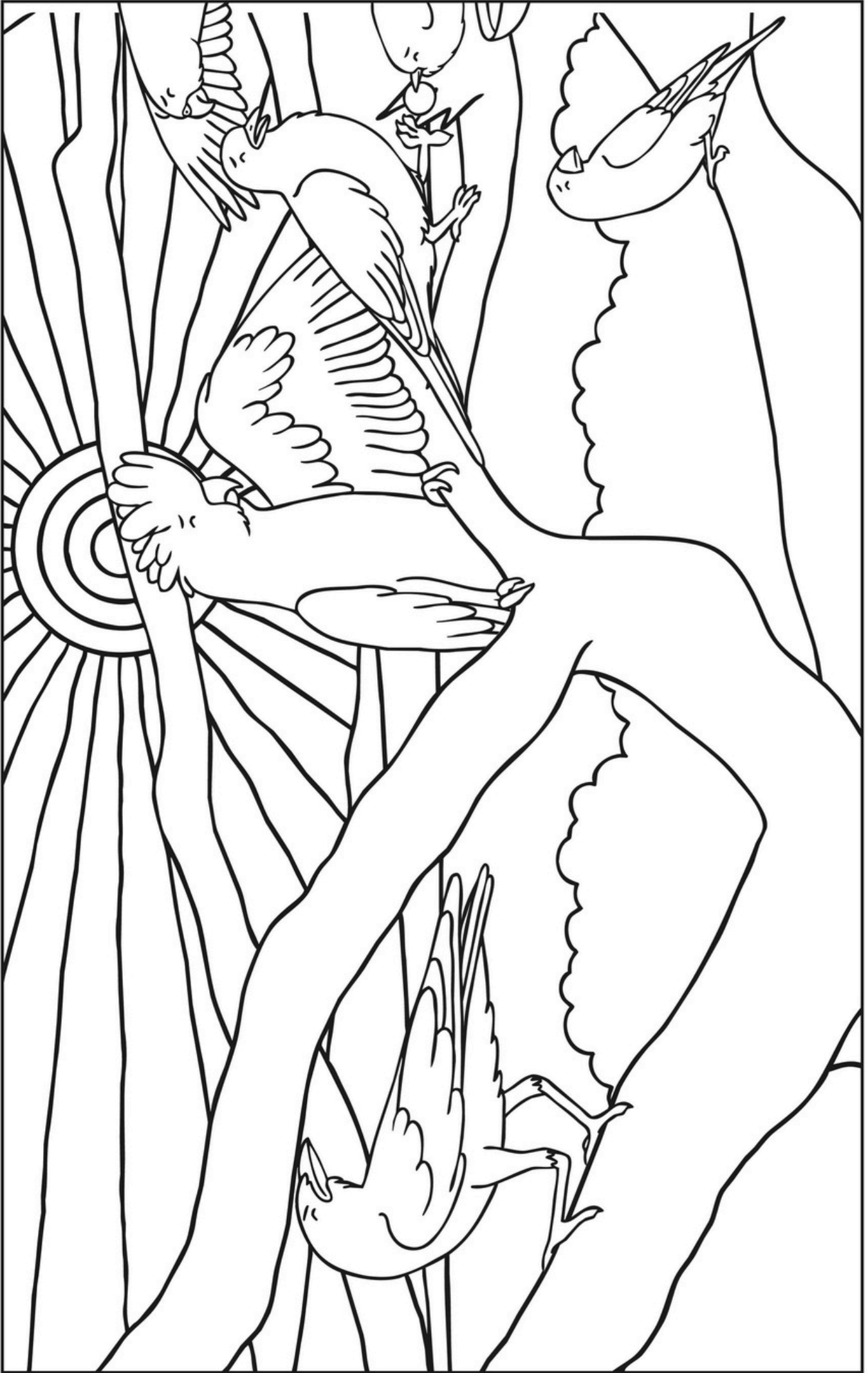
# How the Birds Got Their Colours







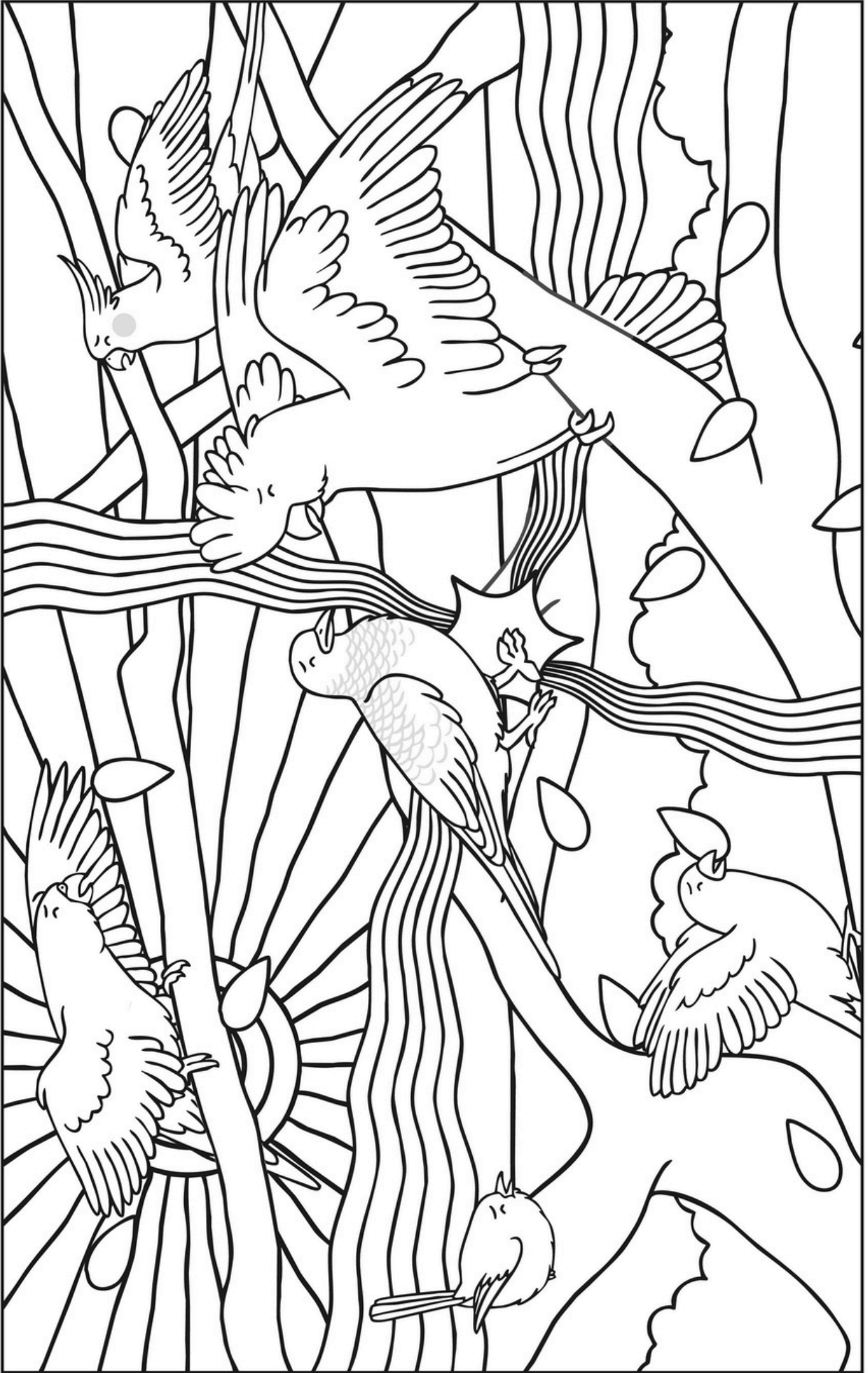
















# Tiddalik the Frog

The following story is based on a traditional Dreaming story about a frog called Tiddalik.



twinkl

Long, long ago in the Dreaming, there lived a frog called Tiddalik. Tiddalik lived in the Wollombi Valley in the Creation era. He was a greedy frog. He wanted to be the biggest frog in all the land.



twinkl

One very hot day, Tiddalik became very thirsty. He wandered down to the billabong where there was plenty of water.



Tiddalik was so thirsty that he began to drink and drink and drink until all the water in the billabong was gone.





When all the other animals came to the billabong for a drink, they discovered that there wasn't any water left. They were hot and thirsty too. They knew that it was the greedy frog, Tiddalik, who had drunk all the water. They became very angry at him.



The animals knew that they had to get the water back somehow. If they wanted to get all the water out of Tiddalik and back onto the billabong, they would have to do something. The wise owl suggested that if they made Tiddalik laugh, then all the water would come out of his mouth.





First, the echidna tried to make him laugh. The echidna rolled down the hill into the dried up billabong. Tiddalik didn't laugh.



twinkl

Next, the kookaburra, who was perched high up in the gum tree, pretended to fall out. Tiddalik still didn't laugh.



twinkl

After that, the wombat started dancing some very funny moves.  
Still, Tiddalik didn't laugh.



The animals were so confused that they didn't know what to do.  
They were still very thirsty. Finally, the eel decided to give it a try.  
He danced and danced and danced until he tied himself into a big knot.





Suddenly, Tiddalik's mouth started to move. He could not stop laughing at the eel. He laughed so much that all the water came out and ran back into the dried up billabong.



From that day, Tiddalik was never greedy again and he only drank what he needed.







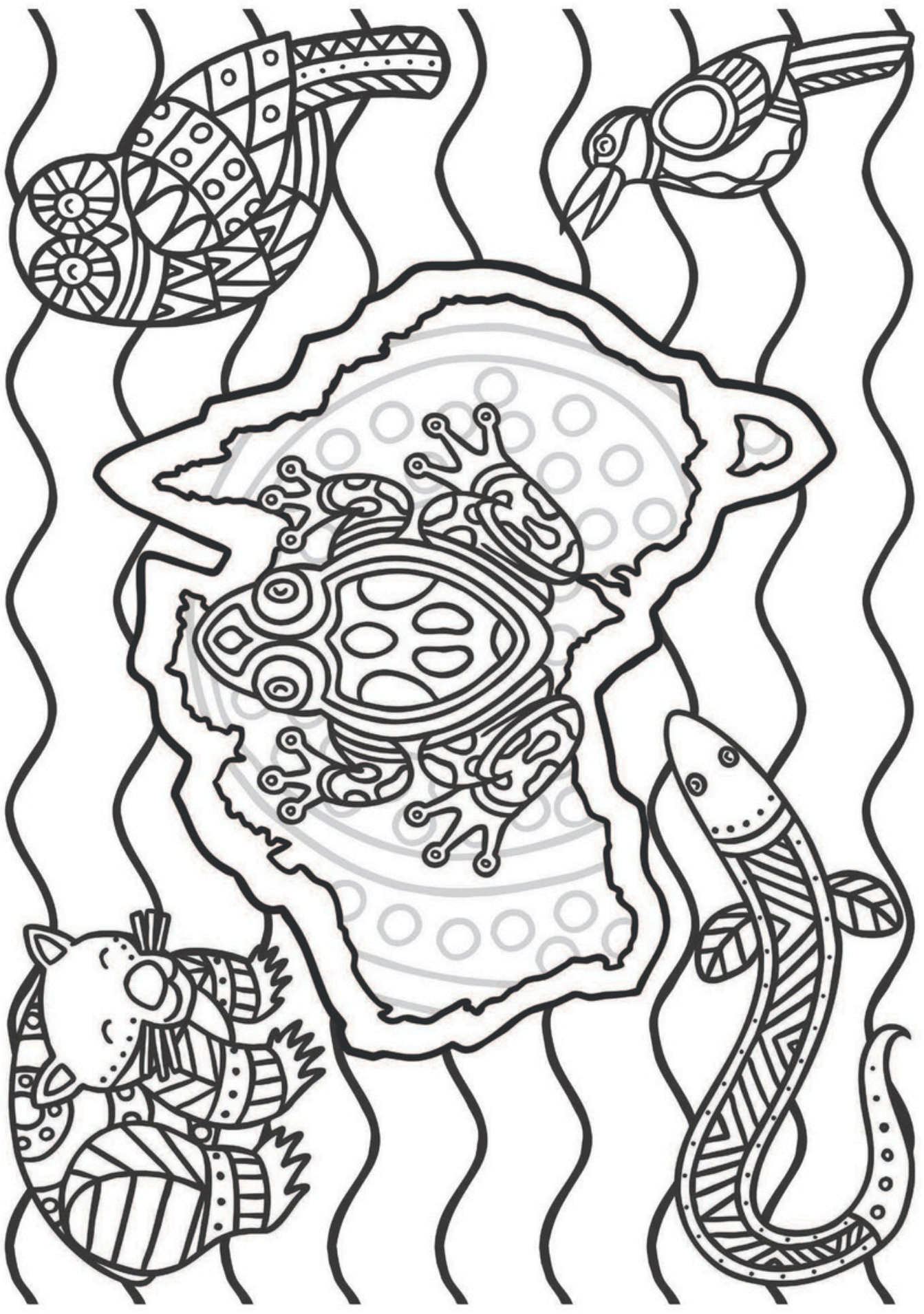














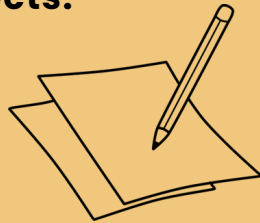
# CRAFT ACTIVITIES

## ACTIVITIES

**There are various art and craft activities that have been included in this pack.**

**Use these activities as they are or adapt as appropriate.**

**Guides can use the symbols from the Art Symbols page to develop their own projects.**



# Aboriginal Australian Art Symbols

Generations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples were able to pass down important cultural stories by using symbols and icons portrayed in artwork.

Each symbol communicates and shares the meaning of their life on earth, important rituals, food and customs.

These symbols form an important part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples art and can vary from region to region but are generally understood. Aboriginal art has been used for thousands of years to convey stories and messages that are extremely important to their cultures. Aboriginal artists create their works based on how the land was created, basing their subject matter mainly on patterns and animals.

The iconography used when applied to any surface then converts it to having religious or time-honoured meaning.



boomerang



bush berry



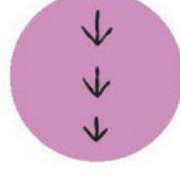
bush tucker



campfire



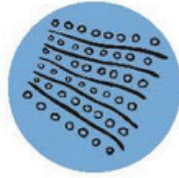
digging sticks



emu tracks



goanna tracks



heavy rain



human tracks



hunting boomerang



kangaroo tracks



man sitting



meeting place



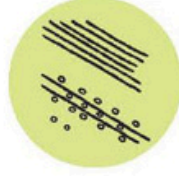
moving kangaroo tracks



people sitting



possum tracks



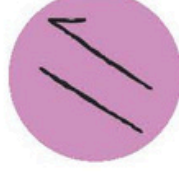
rain



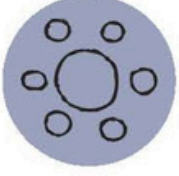
sandhill or cloud



snake



spear



sun or star



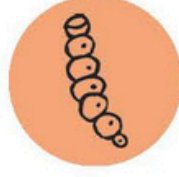
travelling resting place



water



water holes



witchetty grub



woman



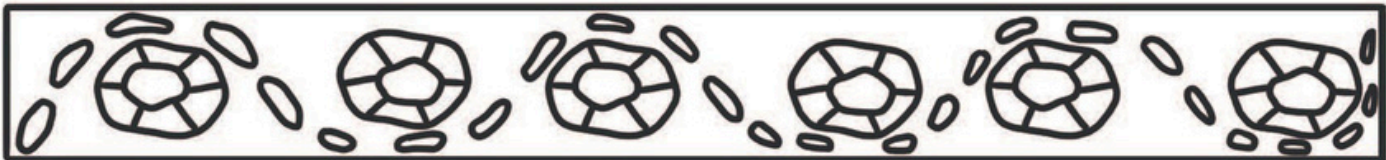
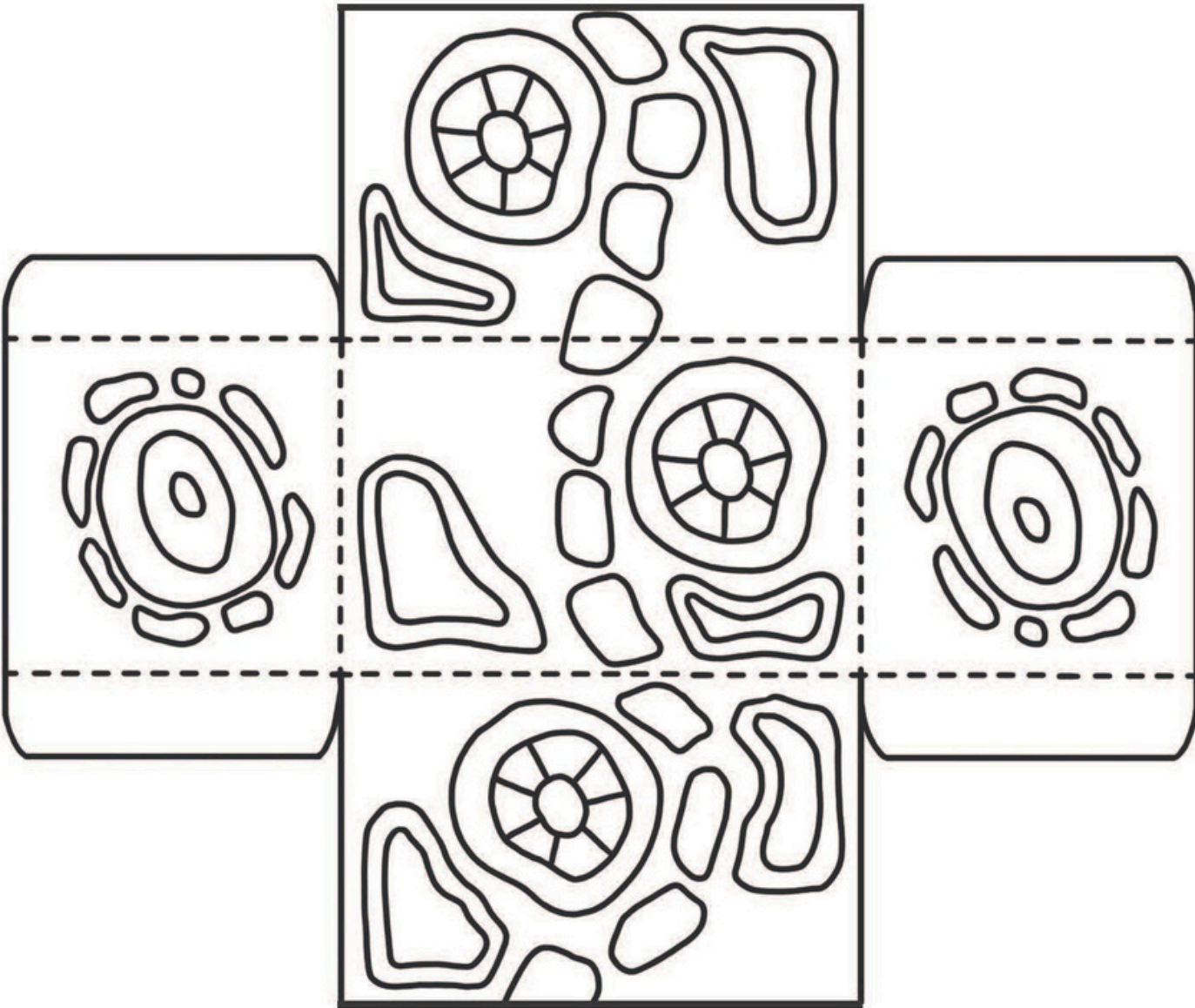
women sitting



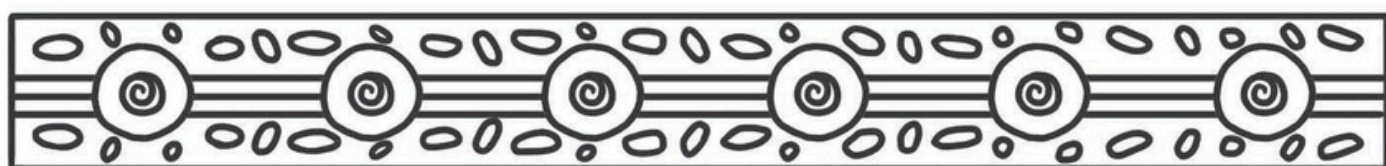
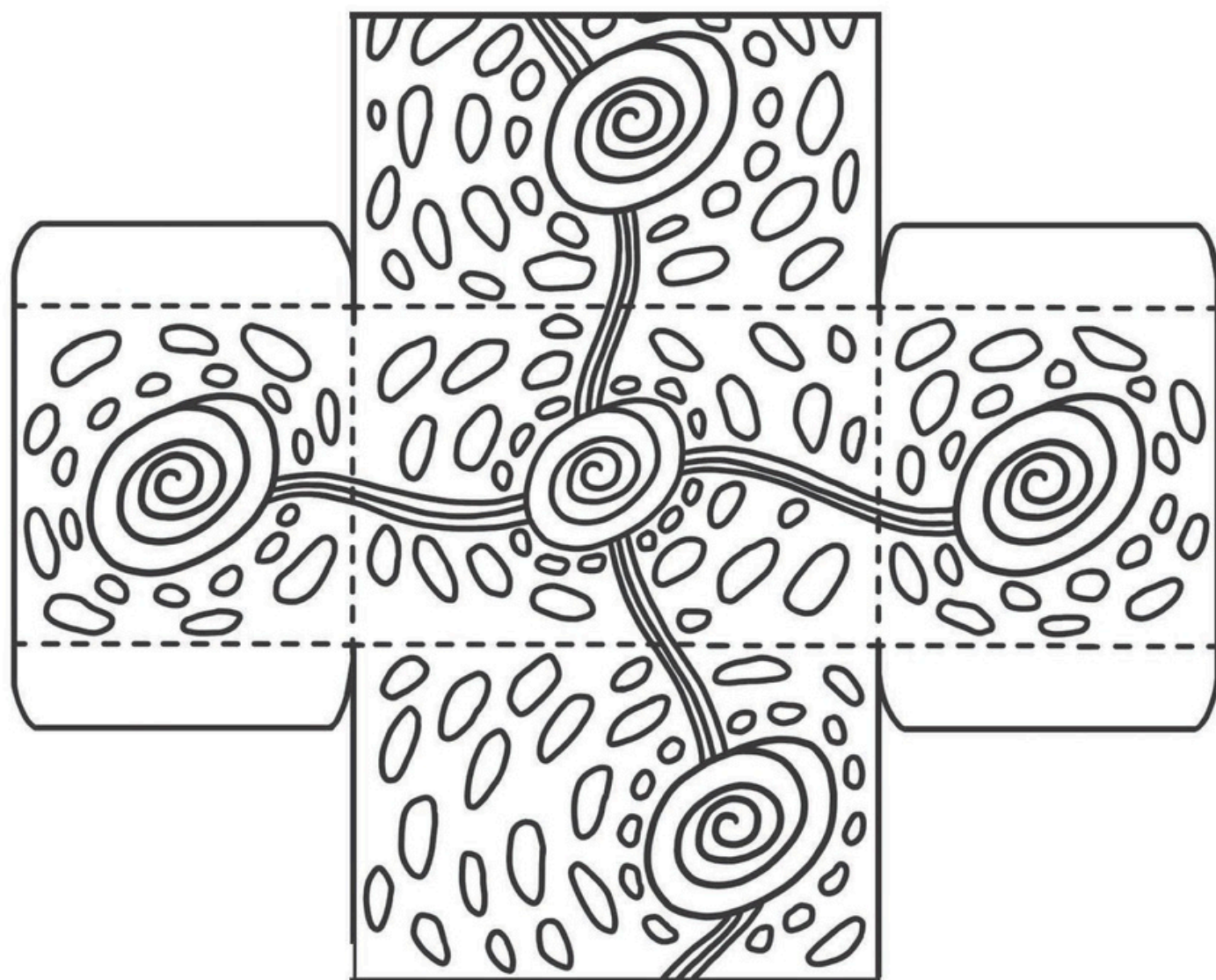
4 women sitting

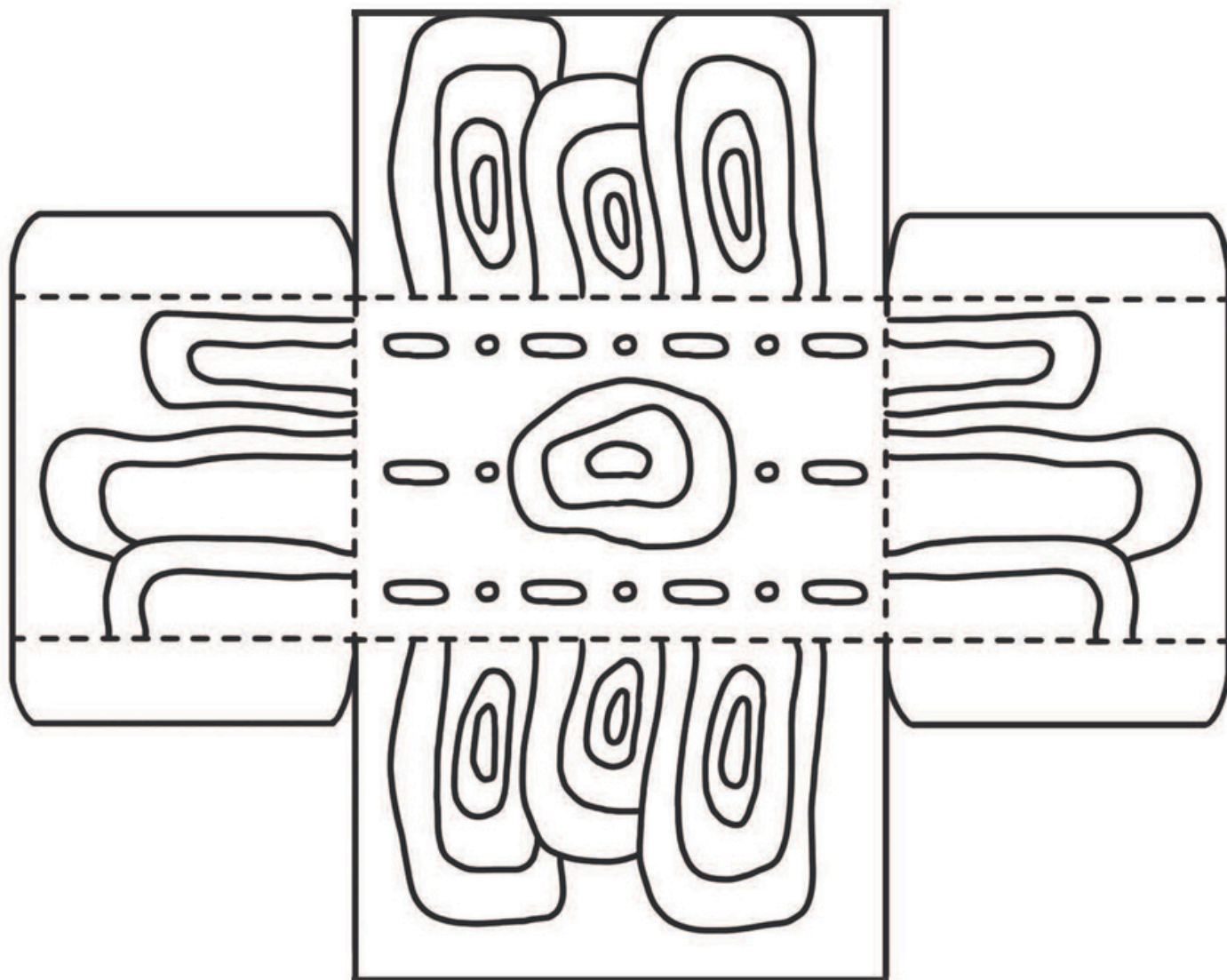


# Australian Indigenous Easter Basket

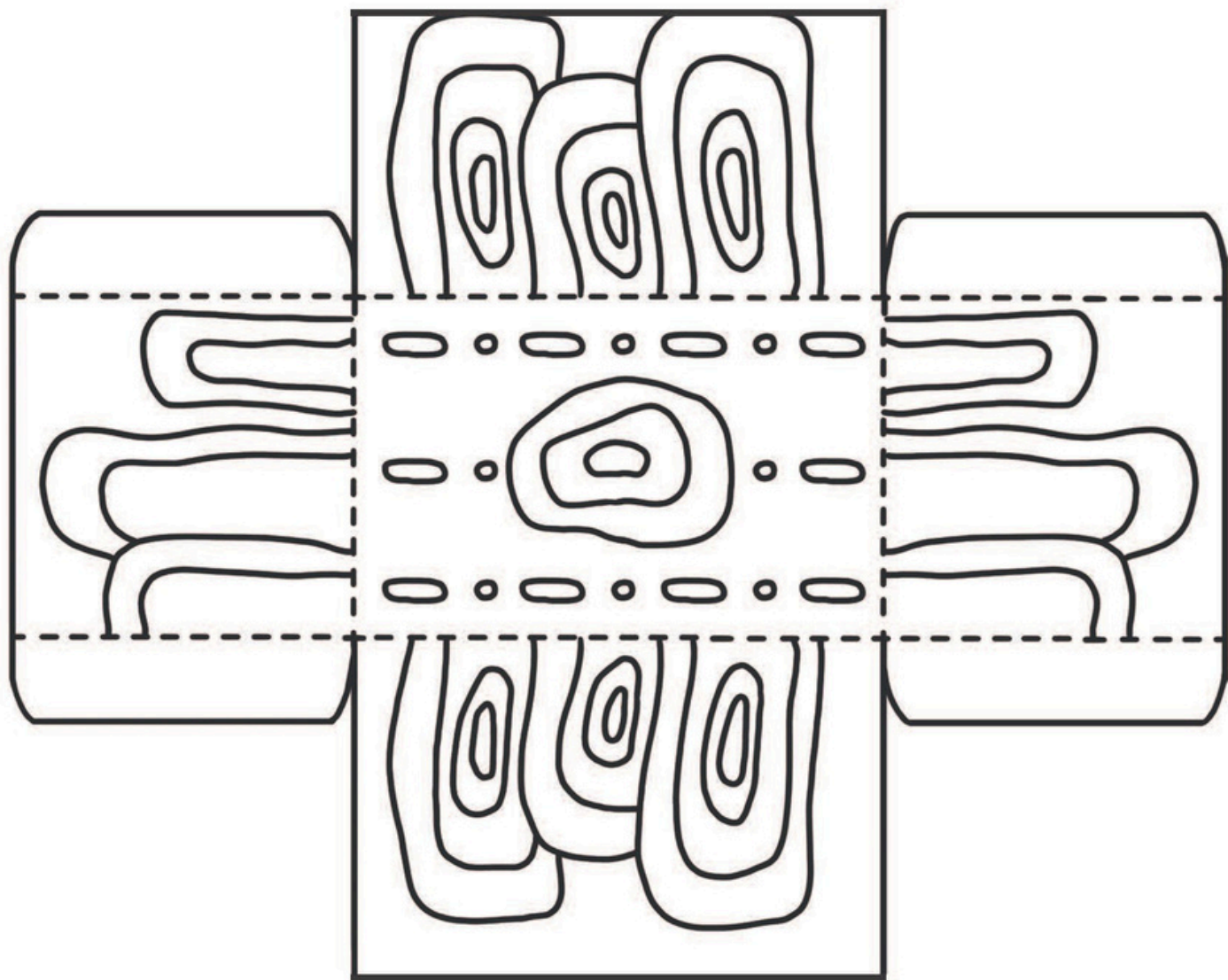


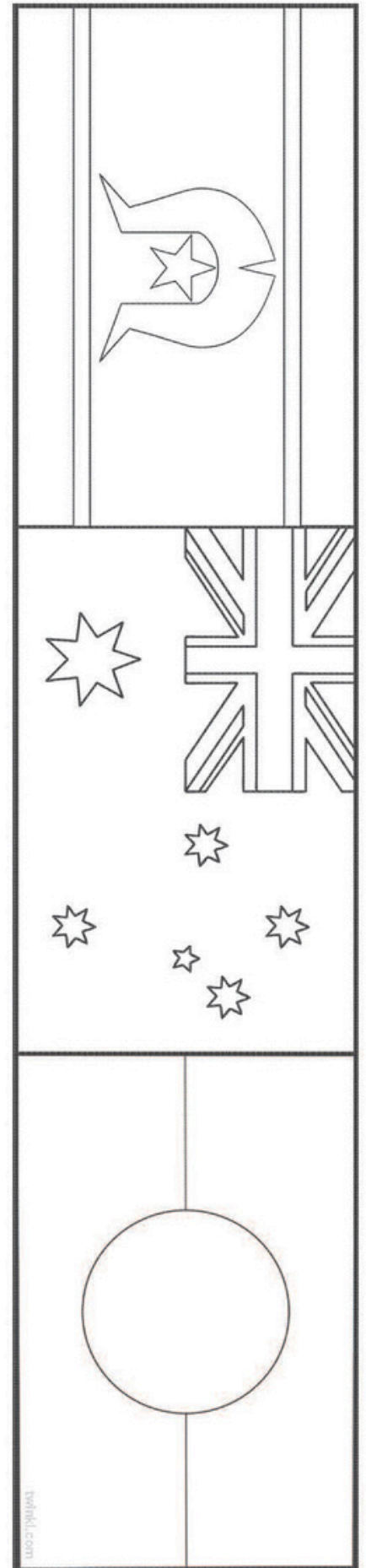
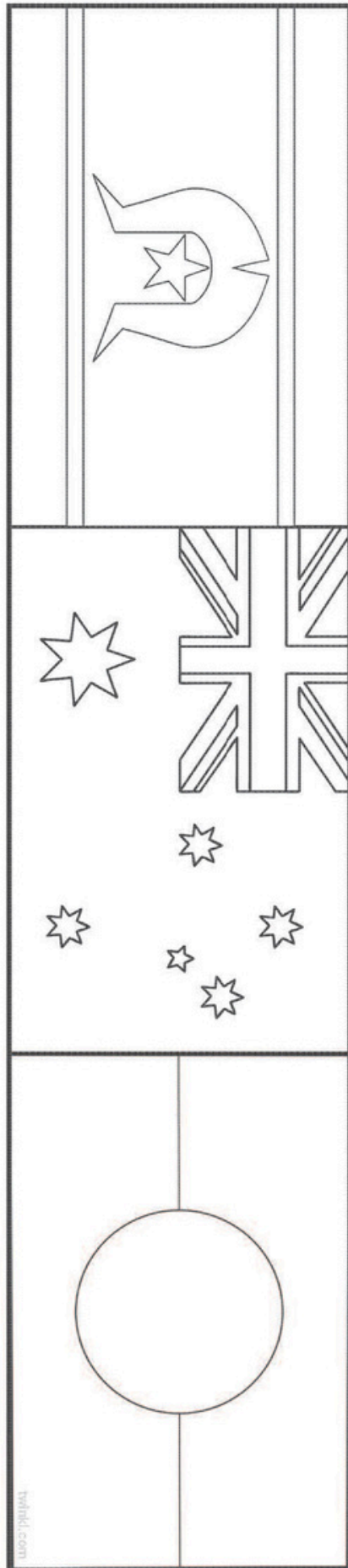
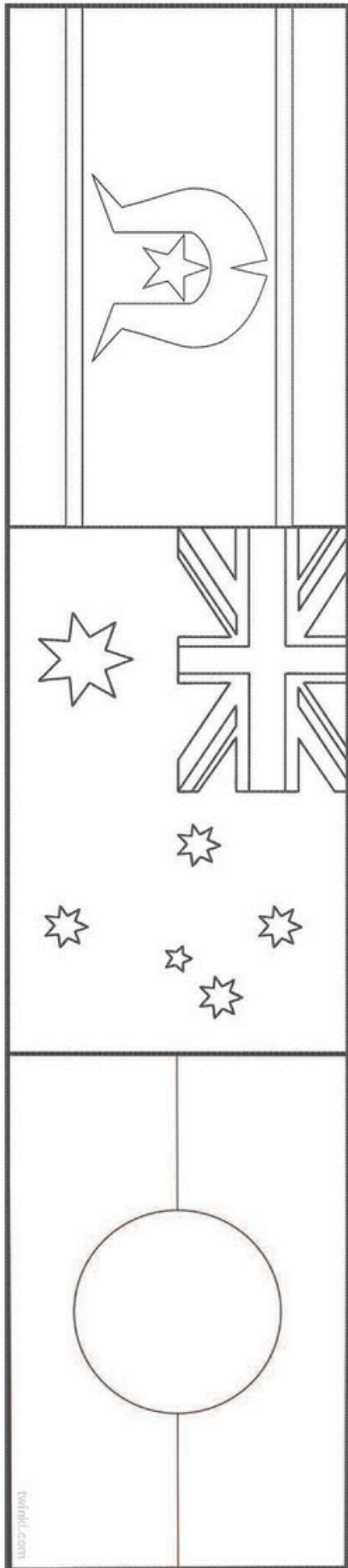








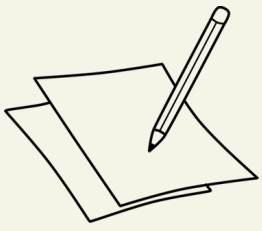




**Disclaimer:** To ensure the safety of the children in your setting, it is your responsibility to assess whether adult supervision or other appropriate safety measures are required when using scissors.



# NATURE BRACELETS



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women make beautiful traditional bush jewelry from natural materials such as seeds, nuts, shells and flowers. They gather these materials themselves from the bush and the land around them. In this activity, you will create your own bracelet from the natural materials you find when exploring your area.

## Resources:

- Wide masking tape
- Natural materials found in a local area near you

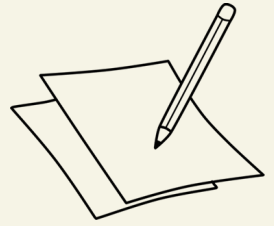
## Instructions:

1. Measure around your wrist with a piece of masking tape and cut it so that it is long enough to fit over your hand. Join the ends together, making a bracelet. Make sure the tape is sticky side out.
2. Go for a wander! Look for feathers, leaves, flowers, seedpods, shells... anything that you think would be a nice addition to your bracelet. Stick it on to your bracelet as you go.

When your masking tape is full of beautiful natural materials, you have finished!



# INDIGENOUS AUSTRALIAN PAINTED LEAF WREATH



## You will need:

- Eucalyptus leaves or leaf templates printed onto card
- Acrylic paint
- Painting instrument e.g. wooden clay sculpting tool or cotton bud
- Wreath ring template printed onto card
- Indigenous Australian Art Symbol Sheet
- Glue
- Scissors
- Markers or pencils

## Instructions

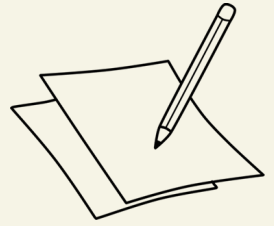
- 1.If using the leaf templates, carefully cut out the leaves.
- 2.Decorate the leaves or leaf templates with symbols to tell a story around the wreath.
- 3.Cut around the outside of the wreath ring template and then cut out the centre.
- 4.Arrange the leaves around the wreath ring template in a wreath shape.
- 5.Glue the leaves onto the ring.
- 6.Leave to dry.







# PAINTING RESILIENCE ROCKS



## You Will Need:

- Rocks
- Assorted coloured paint
- Permanent markers

## Instructions

1. Go for a walk outside to collect a rock to use as the base for this activity.
2. Bring the rocks to where you will be completing the activity and paint the rocks using eco-friendly paint if possible (spray paint is most effective, or 2-3 coats of acrylic).
3. Design the rocks with either a message of resilience or support for Indigenous communities.







This Activity Pack has been developed by Girl Guides Victoria as a resource guide for Guide Leaders and Guide Units.

The activities in this pack have been sourced from various authors and platforms including Twinkl.com, Twinkl.com.au and Twinkl.co.uk. We respect the original creators of these materials and acknowledge their contributions.

**May 2025**