Exhibition Guide

Curated by Books Illustrated, this child friendly exhibition is based upon the award-winning picture book, Are we there yet? written and illustrated by Alison Lester.

It features original illustrations, travel diaries, sketches and dummy books. Ignite your student’s love of reading with this heartfelt story inspired by a real life journey, from Wave Rock to Roebuck Bay and beyond, undertaken by Alison Lester and her family.

This guide aims to help you navigate the exhibition and engage with the artwork from the story. Like every journey, you will bring your own life experiences to the art works. Your own responses, interpretations and forks in the road may vary from others.

We wish you an enjoyable experience.

Pre visit

- As a class, read the story, section by section. Identify places visited on a map of Australia and talk about the different landscapes.
- Ask students to share their own favourite travel story. Encourage them to bring photos or souvenirs to support and add interest to their story.
- Initiate a conversation about whether students would enjoy a car trip around Australia and why/not. Make a list of pros and cons of extended family trips.
- Out of all the places visited in the book, which one would students like to visit the most? Why?

In the exhibition space

- Introduce the exhibition and explain to students what they are about to see and what you hope they will gain from the experience. Outline your expectations of appropriate behaviours and remind students that they will be interacting with the public.
- Divide into small groups.
- Ask each parent helper to find a space for their group and read Are we there yet? together (these are provided).
- Follow the trail and reflect on and discuss the questions provided.
- Ask students to look closely at each artwork and discuss their responses with their peers or parent helper. Examples of discussion points include: feelings evoked and why, whether the images are reflections of reality or something else, and the use of symbols, colours and shapes.
- Each group may wish to complete the engagement activity that forms part of the exhibition experience.
Reflecting on the exhibition

- Find a quiet spot to sit and reflect on the exhibition, in groups or as a whole class.

Suggested questions:
- What is your response to the exhibition?
- Which of the artworks was your favourite and why?
- What did you learn about the process of illustrating this book?

Post visit

- Ask students to choose an area of Western Australia of interest to them. Using the book as a guide, or separate research, students:
  - write a series of journal entries imagining what it would be like to visit that area. Include drawings, or cut and paste images from a travel magazine, or the internet;
  - print a map of the State and highlight the tourist hot spots in their chosen area;
  - design a tourism brochure/poster /presentation to encourage people to visit their area.
- Students choose a place they would love to visit and write a persuasive text to their teacher arguing for his/her permission to take a term off school and travel to their chosen location.
- Students design the perfect caravan for a trip around Australia. Make a prototype using recycled materials.
- List the geographical features encountered in the story. Research how they were formed.
- What native Australian animals did the characters see on their journey? What other animals would the family have seen that were not included in the book?
- Students design an activity book to keep them occupied on a long car ride. Fill it with travel related activities. Link it to places visited in the book.

Recommended reading:

Recommended websites:
- www.alisonlester.com
- State Library of WA www.slwa.wa.gov.au
- Tourism WA www.tourism.wa.gov.au
- Rottnest Island Authority www.ria.gov.au

Curriculum links:
English:
Language- text structure and organisation; purpose, audience and structures of different types of text.
Literature – responding to literature.
Literacy – texts in context; interacting with others; interpreting, analysing, evaluating texts.
The Arts (Visual Arts):
Exploring ideas and improvising with ways to represent ideas. Responding to and interpreting the arts.