

# POPPY, THE PUNK TURTLE

BY ALEESAH DARLISON

## TEACHING NOTES



## POPPY, the PUNK Turtle



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

*Aleesah Darlison*

Aleesah Darlison is an award-winning author of over 50 books for children. She has won or been shortlisted for numerous awards including the Environment Award for Children's Literature, the CBCA Eve Pownall Award, and the Speech Pathology Book of the Year Awards. Many of Aleesah's books champion the cause of animals, the environment, and child self-empowerment.



### A PICTURE BOOK FOR AGES 4 - 8 YEARS

#### BOOK SYNOPSIS

Poppy is one groovy turtle!

Join Poppy the Mary River turtle on an adventure to find a new waterhole to call home. Plip! Plop! Parp!

Part of the Endangered Animal Tales Series written by Aleesah Darlison, illustrated by Mel Matthews and published by Penguin Random House Australia.

- Easy to read text for young readers.
- Bright, engaging illustrations.
- Strong characterisation.
- Includes fact boxes.

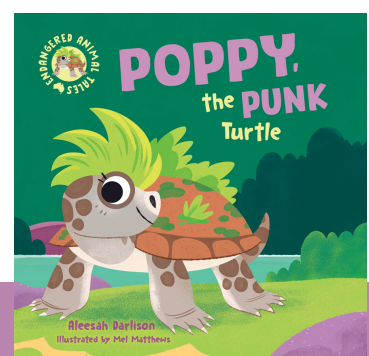
#### INCLUSIONS

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#### BUY THE BOOK

Purchase the book at  
[www.penguin.com.au](http://www.penguin.com.au).

Find more Teaching Notes at  
[www.aleesahdarlison.com](http://www.aleesahdarlison.com).





### **Fun Fact!**

**Mary River turtles can breathe through their bottoms!**

## **MARY RIVER TURTLE FACT SHEET**

- Mary River turtles are called 'punk turtles' because of the fleshy spikes under their chins and the green algae that grows on their heads, which resembles a mohawk haircut.
- They are one of Australia's most ancient and most threatened species of freshwater turtle.
- Mary River turtles are the largest freshwater turtles. Males grow up to 50 cm long.
- The tail of a male Mary River turtle is super long and hooks at the end. No other turtle's tail hooks, so this makes them unique.
- Their carapace can be plain or patterned. Their colour varies from rusty red to almost black.
- Mary River turtles normally take 2 to 6 weeks to digest food due to their slow metabolism.
- Turtles don't have an external ear opening, instead they have an eardrum that is covered with skin.
- For many decades, baby Mary River turtles were taken and sold as 'penny turtles' in pet stores. They weren't identified as a species until 1994, although they had roamed the Mary River for millions of years.
- Mary River turtles are listed as endangered.







## LANGUAGE

Look at the text and illustrations on Pages 18 and 19. Discuss the words used to describe the animals looking to eat the turtle eggs. How does the author use words and the illustrator use colour to indicate a change in mood?



Discuss the author's word choice throughout the story. Are there any words you're not familiar with? Write down the meaning of 'groovy', 'trundle', 'plucky', and 'scuttle'. You may wish to use a dictionary if necessary.

The words 'PLIP', 'PLOP', 'PARP' are onomatopoeia (sound words). They are also alliterative because they start with the same letter. Write down 10 other sound words. Write 5 words that start with the same letter as TURTLE.







## LITERATURE

Find other picture books about turtles. Write down the titles, their authors, and illustrators. Read each book and make a list of things you like about each one.

Choose a species of turtle and write a story about it. Don't forget to give your character a problem to face. Draw picture(s) to accompany your story.



Mary River turtles can stay underwater for three days before they need to breathe through their mouths again.

Why do you think Poppy stops the protect the eggs?







# SCIENCE

## Biology

Create an information poster about Mary River turtles. Draw a picture of a Mary River turtle. Colour it in. Label its external features. Add some key facts.

Make a list of reptiles and amphibians. How are they the same? How are they different? Is Poppy a reptile or an amphibian?

## Nature & the Environment

Research the Mary River. Draw a map of Queensland and show where the Mary River flows.

Make a list of other fish, birds, and animals that live in or near the Mary River. Are any of them endangered?



# Create Your Own Punk Turtle Character



Character Name:

Personality:

Favourite Colour:

Favourite Food:

