

Educator Resource Pack



**First Nations
Collaboration Project**

Butler Diaries and Anne Leon - Nhuralama

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Referenced in this Resource

This resource is designed around Butler Diaries resources and the Collaboration Project between Butler Diaries and Anne Leon - Nhuralama. It contains documentation support and references the Weekly Programming and Reflection Diary and Our Culturally Responsive Year Wall Calendar.



Weekly Programming and Reflection Diaries

Our Culturally Responsive Year Wall Calendar



Project Overview

This resource has been created as part of the First Nations Collaboration Project for the 2026 Butler Diaries. This project brings together early childhood education practice with First Nations perspectives through a collaboration with Aboriginal artist Anne Leon. Her artwork, *Journey of Learning*, is featured on selected Diary covers and represents connection, learning, and relationships.

The intention of this collaboration is not simply to include artwork, but to support educators to:

- Engage with meaningful conversations
- Reflect on practice
- Embed cultural perspectives into everyday experiences

About the Artist

This artwork was created by Anne Leon – Nhuralama, a proud Wakkaya, Wombaya, and Waanyi woman with strong connections to the Northern Territory and Gulf of Carpentaria.

Her work reflects:

- Storytelling through symbols
- Connection to Country
- The importance of relationships and shared knowledge



This resource respects that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are diverse. The meanings explored here relate to this artwork and are shared to support understanding in an early learning context.

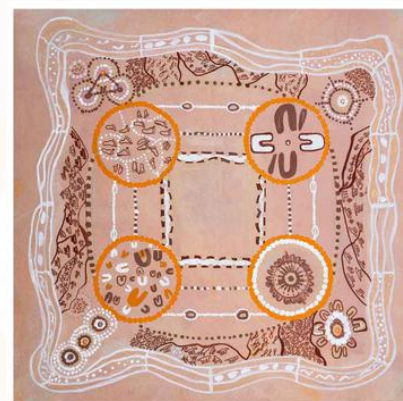
Understanding the Artwork: Journey of Learning

The artwork represents learning as something that is:

- Shared
- Ongoing
- Connected to people and place

It reflects:

- Coming together as a community
- Learning from each other
- Moving through experiences over time
- Building knowledge through relationships



Rather than a single story, the artwork invites many interpretations – including those of children.

How to Use This Resource

This pack is designed to support you in bringing the artwork into your daily practice in a way that is:

- Simple
- Meaningful
- Embedded into what you are already doing

You might use it to:

- Start conversations with children
- Extend learning through play and storytelling
- Reflect on relationships and community
- Support intentional teaching without adding extra workload

You may choose to plan programmed experiences to explore some of these and use it in small moments across the day.

A Note on Practice

Engaging with First Nations perspectives is not about having all the answers.

It is about:

- Being respectful
- Being open to learning
- Creating space for children's ideas and questions

It is also about recognising that:

- Culture is lived and ongoing
- Learning happens through relationships
- Small, consistent actions are meaningful

Why This Matters in Early Childhood Education and Care

Embedding First Nations perspectives supports children to:

- Develop a sense of belonging
- Build respect for diversity
- Understand relationships with people, place, and community

This aligns with the Early Years Learning Framework, particularly:

- Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity
- Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

What Comes Next

In the following sections, you will find:

- Simple explanations of the symbols used in the artwork
- Child-friendly ways to talk about meaning
- Games and experience ideas
- Links to programming and documentation

This artwork is not something to “teach once and move on from.” It is something to return to – noticing new ideas, new conversations, and new connections over time.

[Read more about this Collaboration Project](#)

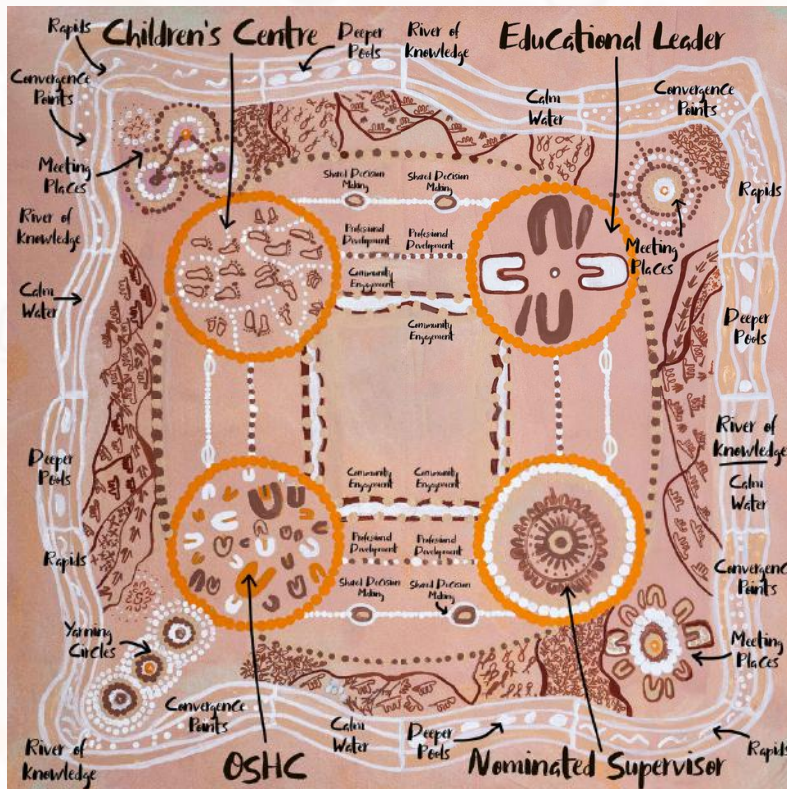


Understanding the Story Behind the Artwork

This section supports educators to to:

- Understand the story and structure of the artwork
- Confidently explain key ideas in ways children can engage with
- Recognise how symbols connect to practice, roles, and relationships
- Use the artwork as a living reference point, not a one-off experience

You are not expected to teach every element at once. This artwork can be revisited over time, with different ideas explored as children's understanding grows.



The Learning Journey Across Roles

The artwork represents Early Childhood Education and Care as a connected system, not separate roles working in isolation.

Key Spaces and Roles in the Artwork

Each area represents an important part of children's learning environments:

- Children's Centre → The foundation where early learning begins
- Outside School Hours Care (OSHC) → A space where learning continues through relationships, play, and support
- Nominated Supervisor → A guiding role that supports direction, decisions, and leadership
- Educational Leader → A mentoring role that supports educators to grow, reflect, and strengthen practice

What Connects Them

Pathways between these spaces represent:

- Communication between educators
- Shared decision-making
- Community involvement
- Ongoing professional development

Child-Friendly Explanation

“This artwork shows lots of places where children learn and the people who help them. They are all connected and work together.”

Educator Use in Practice

You might use this when:

- Talking about who helps us learn
- Exploring teamwork and roles
- Supporting children to understand belonging and community

Children's
Centre Diary



OSHC Diary

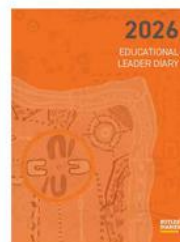


First Nations Artwork Collaboration Project



"Journey of Learning" by Anne Leon - NHURALAMA

Educational
Leader Diary



Nominated
Supervisor Diary



FDC Compliance
Checklist Diary



The River of Knowledge

Flowing through the artwork is the River of Knowledge, showing that learning is always moving and changing.

What the River Represents

- Calm stretches → Time to think, plan, and reflect
- Convergence points → When people come together to share ideas
- Rapids → Times when things are busy, changing, or challenging
- Deeper pools → Strong knowledge, experience, and expertise

Child-Friendly Explanation

“This river shows how learning moves. Sometimes it is calm, sometimes it moves fast, and sometimes we stop and think.”

Educator Use in Practice

Use this to:

- Support children to understand change and emotions
- Reflect on learning over time
- Talk about problem-solving and growth



Cultural Elements of Learning

The artwork includes important cultural elements that show how learning happens through relationships, culture, and shared experiences.

Key Elements

- Meeting Places → Spaces where people come together
- Campfire Learning → Learning through stories, guidance, and shared knowledge
- Dancing → Expression, storytelling, and cultural identity
- Traditional Practices → Connection to land, food, and ways of living

Child-Friendly Explanation

“These parts show people learning together – by talking, sharing stories, and doing things together.”

Educator Use in Practice

You might connect this to:

- Group discussions
- Storytelling experiences
- Shared learning moments
- Cultural awareness conversations



Symbols Within the Artwork

The artwork includes a range of symbols that represent different parts of learning, life, and community.

How to Approach Symbols with Children

Rather than teaching symbols as fixed meanings:

- Use them as conversation starters
- Invite children’s interpretations
- Connect them to real experiences

Child-Friendly Framing

“These symbols are like pictures that help tell a story. They show learning, people, and how everything is connected.”

Educator Note (Important for Practice)

These symbols come from First Nations perspectives and carry cultural meaning. In practice:

- Focus on respect and curiosity
- Avoid presenting meanings as universal across all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
- Use language such as:
 - “In this artwork...”
 - “In this way, the symbol shows...”

Yams

Meaning:

Represents knowledge that nourishes mind, body, and spirit.

Child-friendly explanation:

“These show food that helps us grow strong and learn.”

Prompt questions:

- What helps your body grow?
- What helps your brain learn?

Use in practice:

- Healthy eating conversations
- Linking physical wellbeing and learning

Honey Ants

Meaning:

Represents the sharing of knowledge and the value of learning together.

Child-friendly explanation:

“These show sharing something special and learning together.”

Prompt questions:

- What have you shared with a friend?
- What has someone shared with you?

Use in practice:

- Peer learning
- Group work
- Turn-taking and collaboration

Group of Trees

Meaning:

Represents interconnectedness – how people, roles, and knowledge are linked.

Child-friendly explanation:

“These trees grow together. They are all connected.”

Prompt questions:

- Who is connected to you?
- How do we work together?

Use in practice:

- Teamwork
- Belonging
- Community discussions

Bush Leaves

Meaning:

Represents growth, renewal, and connection to the land.

Child-friendly explanation:

“These leaves show things growing and being part of nature.”

Prompt questions:

- What grows around us?
- How do we look after plants and nature?

Use in practice:

- Outdoor learning
- Sustainability discussions
- Nature exploration

Ants

Meaning:

Represents small but important contributions that build something bigger.

Child-friendly explanation:

“Ants are small, but they work together to do big things.”

Prompt questions:

- What small things do you do to help?
- How do we work together as a group?

Use in practice:

- Responsibility and everyday routines
- Group contributions

Campfire

Meaning:

Represents knowledge-sharing, storytelling, reflection, and connection.

Child-friendly explanation:

“This is a place where people sit together and share stories and ideas.”

Prompt questions:

- What stories do you like to share?
- What did you learn from someone else?

Use in practice:

- Group time and storytelling
- Reflection discussions

Meeting Places

Meaning:

Represents spaces for connection, discussion, and shared learning.

Child-friendly explanation:

“This is a place where people come together to talk and learn.”

Prompt questions:

- Where do we come together?
- What do we do when we are together?

Use in practice:

- Group discussions
- Collaborative play
- Mealtimes

People

Meaning:

Represents individuals and their role within a community.

Child-friendly explanation:

“These shapes show people. Everyone is important.”

Prompt questions:

- Who is part of our group?
- What makes each person special?

Use in practice:

- Identity
- Belonging
- Social development

Spear

Meaning:

Represents strength, leadership, direction, and guidance.

Child-friendly explanation:

“This shows being strong and helping guide others.”

Prompt questions:

- Who helps guide you?
- How can you help others?

Use in practice:

- Leadership moments and role modelling
- Helping behaviours

Mountains

Meaning:

Represents strength, stability, and enduring knowledge.

Child-friendly explanation:

“These show something strong that stands tall for a long time.”

Prompt questions:

- What makes you strong?
- What helps you keep going when things are hard?

Use in practice:

- Resilience
- Confidence
- Emotional development

Dancing People

Meaning:

Represents cultural expression, storytelling, and celebration.

Child-friendly explanation:

“These people are dancing and celebrating together.”

Prompt questions:

- How do you celebrate?
- How can we show stories through movement?

Use in practice:

- Movement experiences
- Music and dance
- Cultural expression

Exploring Artwork Through Play

These experiences are designed to be:

- Flexible (use with different ages)
- Embedded into your day
- Easy to revisit using the same resources

Record children's learning in the:

- Weekly Programming and Reflection Diaries and/or
- Our Culturally Responsive Year Wall Calendar

Symbol Dice

Relevant templates:

- Template A: Symbol Dice
- Template B: Chance Tally Sheet

1) *Roll and Talk it Out*

How it works:

- Children roll the dice
- Identify the symbol
- Use prompts to guide discussion

Extend it:

- Act it out
- Draw it
- Link it to something in their day

Example:

Child rolls Ants → talk about helping → link to pack-up time

2) *Story Builder Game*

How it works:

- Roll 2–3 symbols
- Create a story including all symbols

Example:

Campfire + Kangaroo Tracks + Mountains
→ A journey story about learning and sharing

You don't need to run these as structured "activities."

They can be used during:

- Group time and reflection moments
- Routines and transitions
- Indoor/outdoor play

3) *A Game of Chance*

How it works:

- Children roll the dice
- Add a tally under the symbol
- Discuss chance and probability

Example:

Children roll 10 times → talk about where the dice landed → link to chance and probability

4) *Roll and Move*

How it works:

- Children roll the dice
- Children move to represent the symbol or meaning

Example:

Kangaroo Tracks → Bouncing like a kangaroo

5) *Roll and Draw*

How it works:

- Children roll the dice
- Children draw the symbol

Symbol Cards

Relevant templates:

- Template C: Symbol Cards

1) *Match the Meaning*

How it works:

- Match symbol to meaning
- Discuss why they go together

Adaptations:

- Younger children → visual matching
- Older children → discussion and reasoning

2) *Memory*

How it works:

- Turn over 2 cards at a time
- Try to match the same cards
- Discuss the meaning of the cards once paired

3) *Journey Pathway*

Set up:

- Create a pathway outdoors or indoors
- Place symbols along the path

How it works:

- Children move through the path
- Stop at each symbol and respond

Example prompts:

- Kangaroo Tracks → jump forward
- Mountains → stand strong
- Ants → work together

4) *Find and Seek*

Set up:

- Hide symbol cards around the environment

How it works:

- Children find a symbol
- Bring it back and discuss

Extend it:

- Link symbol to real environment
- (e.g. Bush Leaves → actual plants)

Creative Experiences

1) *Create your own Symbol*

How it works:

- Children design their own symbol
- Explain what it means

Prompt:

“If you made a symbol about your learning, what would it look like?”

2) *Group Meeting Place Artwork*

How it works:

- Create a shared artwork
- Each child adds their part

Link to:

- Meeting Places
- People
- Community

3) *Dancing People*

How it works:

- Children use movement to tell a story
- Link to symbols

Example:

- Mountains → strong pose
- River → flowing movement
- Ants → small group movement

4) *Paint a Story*

How it works:

- Children paint a story using symbols
- Educator labels

Embedded Practice

1) *Symbol of the Day*

How it works:

- Choose one symbol each day
- Refer to it naturally

Example:

- “Today we’re focusing on Ants – how can we help each other?”

2) *Transition Prompts*

Use symbols during transitions:

- Packing up → Ants
- Group time → Meeting Place
- Reflection → Campfire

3) *Linking in Real Moments*

When something happens:

- A child helps → Ants
- A group discussion → Meeting Place
- A challenge → Rapids (River of Knowledge)

Documentation Support

This section supports you to:

- Confidently link the artwork and experiences to EYLF/MTOP
- Know exactly where it fits in your program
- Capture evidence in a way that is simple, meaningful, and not time-consuming

Where This Fits in Your Program

You do not need a separate program for this. These experiences fit naturally into your existing weekly planning in your Weekly Programming and Reflection Diaries.

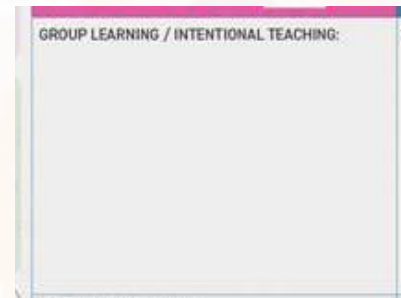
Group Learning / Intentional Teaching

Use when you are:

- Introducing a symbol
- Playing a structured game (e.g. dice, storytelling)
- Leading a discussion

Example:

- “Exploring ‘Ants’ symbol through group discussion and pack-up routines”



Environment / Cultural

Use when you are:

- Displaying symbols
- Creating shared artwork
- Embedding visuals into the space

Example:

- “Symbol cards displayed to support understanding of connection and community”



Creative / Cognitive / Language

Use when children are:

- Drawing symbols
- Creating stories
- Engaging in matching or storytelling games

Example:

- “Children created their own symbols and shared meaning with peers”



Outdoor Experiences

Use when:

- Linking symbols to the environment
- Running movement-based games

Example:

- “Bush Leaves symbol explored through outdoor nature walk”

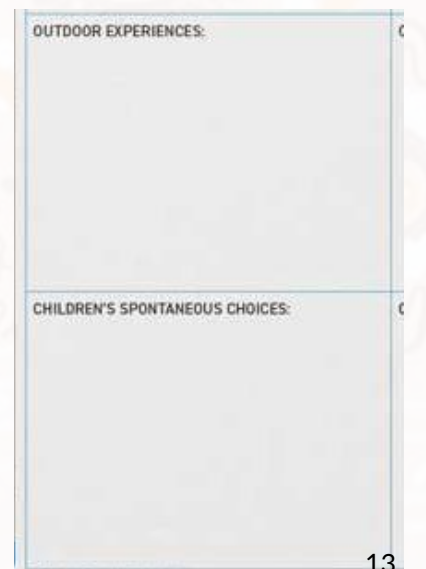
Children’s Spontaneous Learning

Use when children:

- Reference symbols independently
- Make connections without prompting

Example:

- “Child linked helping behaviour to ‘Ants’ symbol during pack-up”



Extension Experiences

Use when:

- Building on prior discussions
- Deepening understanding

Example:

- “Extended storytelling using multiple symbols from artwork”

Our Culturally Responsive Year Wall Calendar

In the Our Culturally Responsive Year Wall Calendar, these experiences can be recorded under the month you are exploring them. It captures your embedded practice to show how cultural responsiveness is embedded not bolted on to your program.

You can use your Weekly Programming and Reflection Diary to plan and record the experiences and capture evidence of them and reflect in your Our Culturally Responsive Year Wall Calendar.

Linking to EYLF/MTOP

You do not need to link every outcome every time. Focus on what is actually happening in the experience.

Outcome 1: Children have a strong sense of identity

- Belonging to group (Meeting Places, People, Trees)
- Confidence in contributing

Looks like:

- Children sharing ideas
- Participating in group discussions

Outcome 2: Children are connected with and contribute to their world

- Understanding community and relationships
- Respect for culture and shared spaces

Looks like:

- Talking about roles and connections
- Engaging with cultural concepts through play

Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

- Movement and active play (Journey, Dancing, Pathways)
- Emotional understanding through change (River of Knowledge)

Outcome 4: Children are confident and involved learners

- Problem-solving
- Making connections
- Exploring meaning

Looks like:

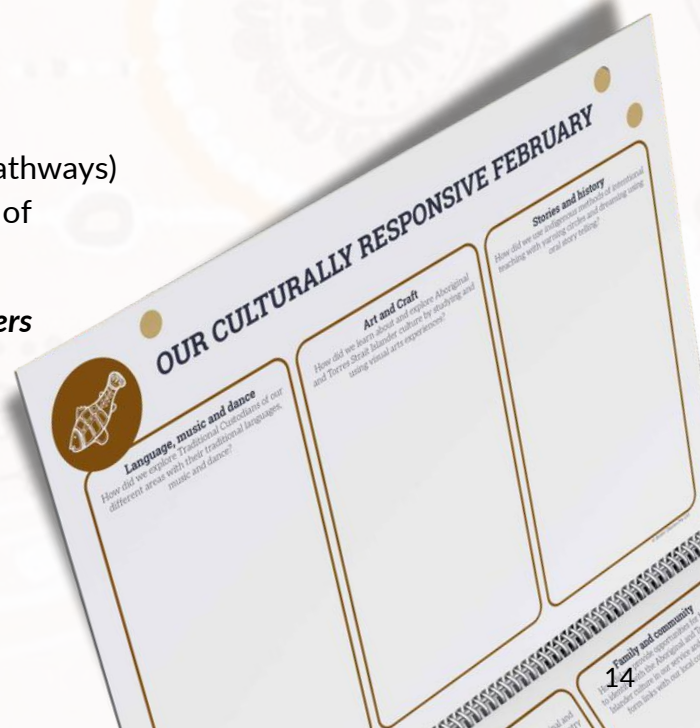
- Matching symbols
- Creating stories
- Asking questions

Outcome 5: Children are effective communicators

- Storytelling
- Expressing ideas
- Using symbols to represent meaning

Looks like:

- Verbal storytelling
- Drawing and explaining symbols



What Counts as Evidence of Learning

You do not need large amounts of documentation. Focus on quality over quantity. Strong evidence can be a:

- Short reflection or group discussion summary
- Child's quote or quick observation
- Drawing with explanation

Example:

“Children engaged in discussion about the ‘Ants’ symbol, linking it to helping behaviours during pack-up. Several children independently began assisting peers.”

Other Evidence Options:

- Story created by children
- Photo (only if intentional and necessary)
- Learning note linked to symbol

Reflection

Use your reflection space to capture:

- What connections children made
- What surprised you
- What could be extended

Example Reflection Prompts:

- Which symbols did children connect with most?
- How did children express their understanding?
- What opportunities are there to revisit or extend this?

Example Reflection Entry:

“Children showed strong understanding of ‘Meeting Places’ through group discussions and began initiating their own conversations during play. Opportunity to extend into collaborative storytelling.”

Keeping It Sustainable

To avoid overload don't over document every experience, rotate symbols across the week, and capture one strong example rather than many small ones.

Simple Weekly Approach:

- 1–2 symbols explored intentionally
- 1 spontaneous moment captured
- 1 reflection note

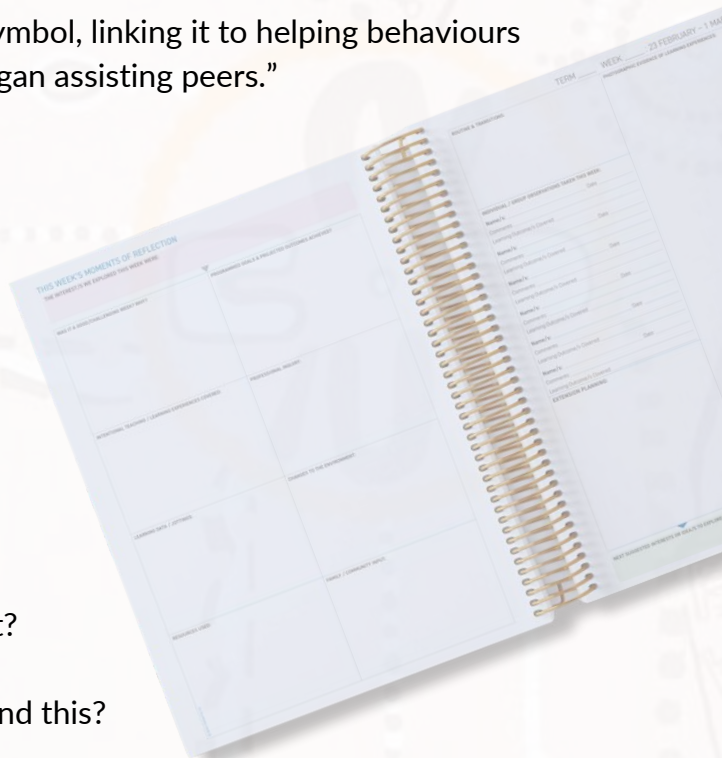
That's enough to demonstrate intentional teaching, child engagement, and ongoing learning.

Quiet Alignment to Practice and Assessment

This approach naturally supports:

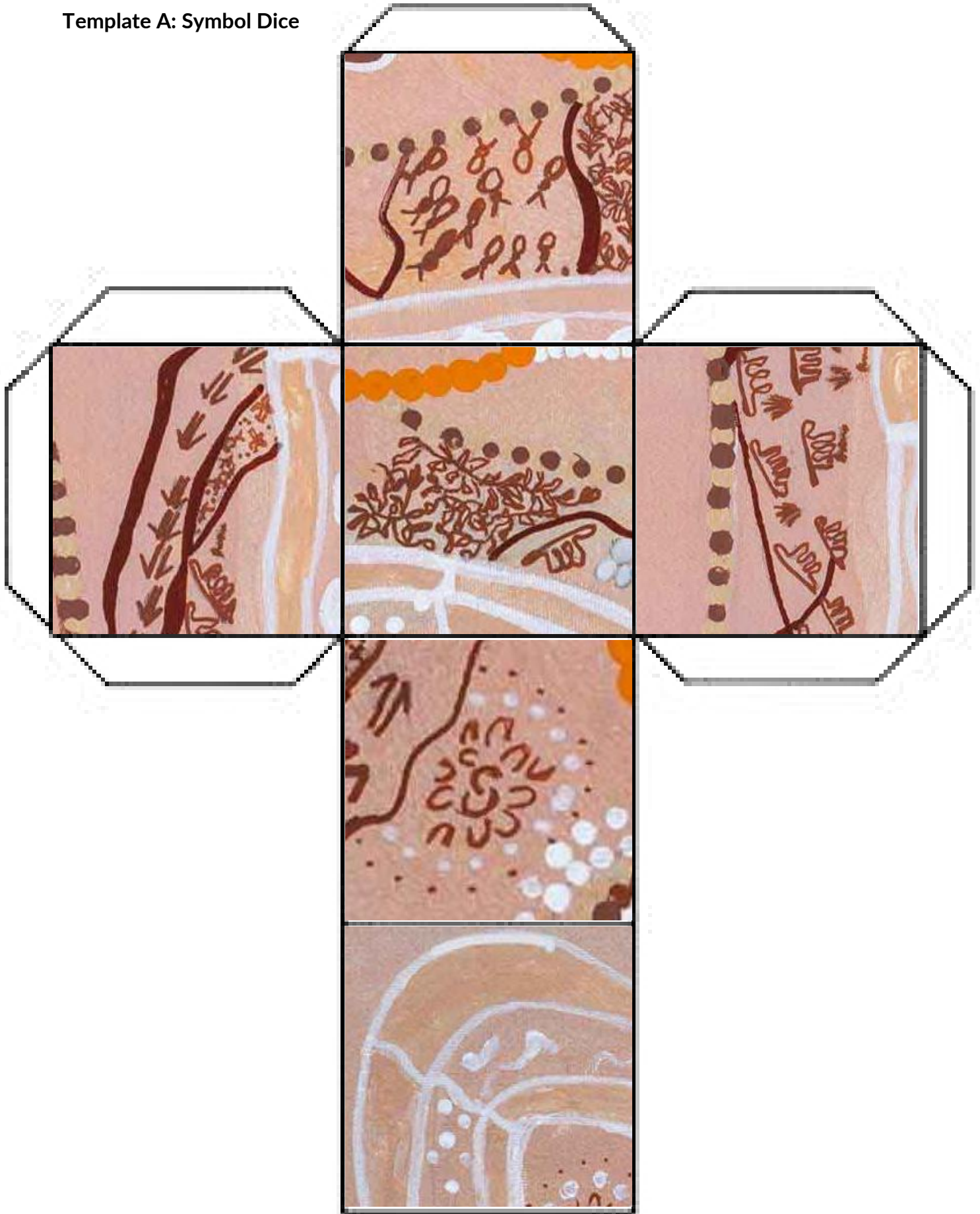
- Intentional teaching (QA1)
- Cultural responsiveness (QA1, QA6)
- Relationships and community (QA5, QA6)
- Reflective practice (QA7)

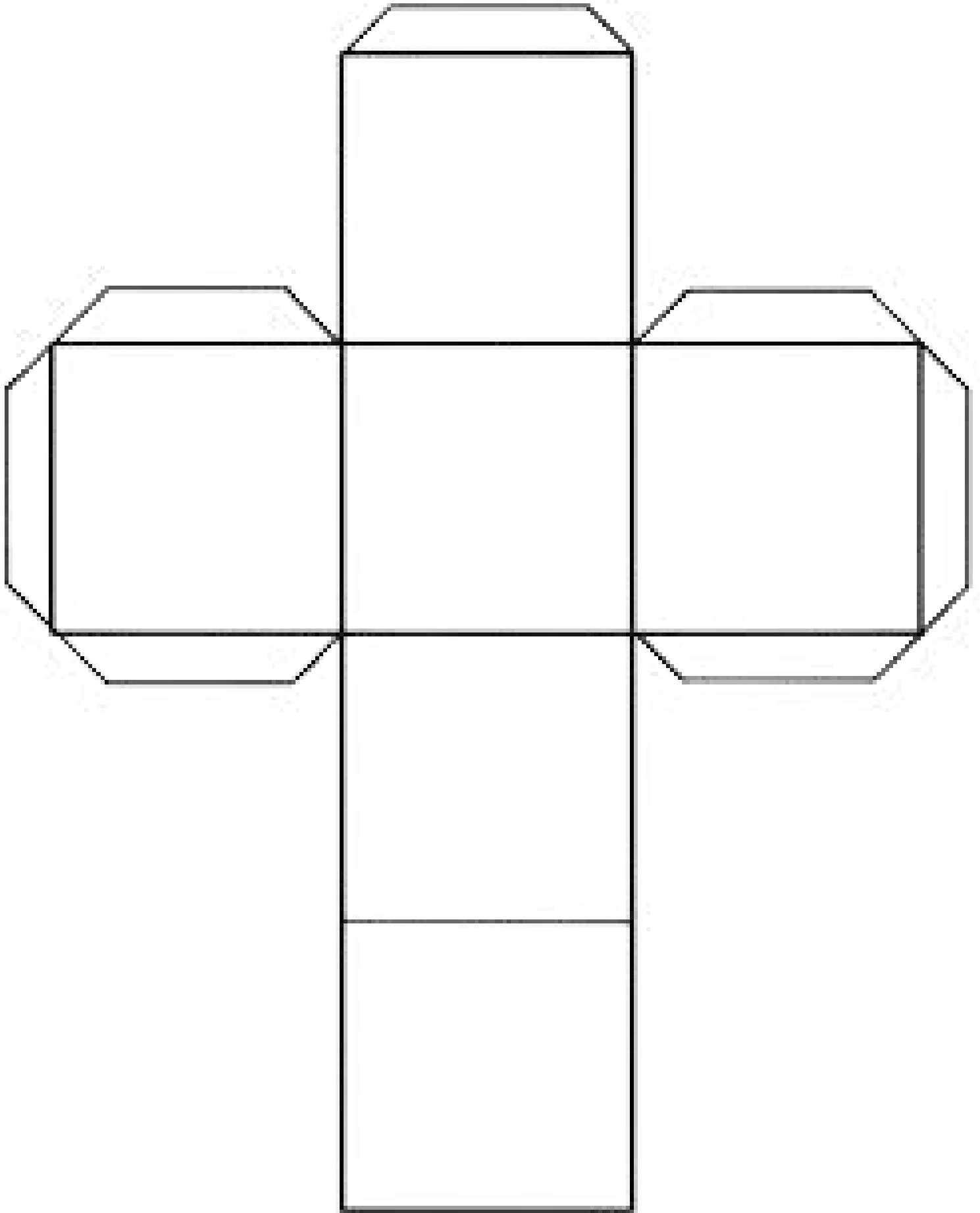
Without adding additional workload.






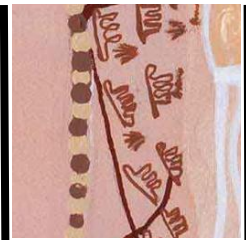
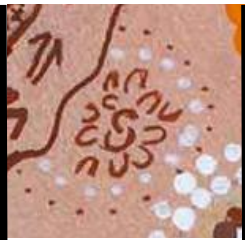
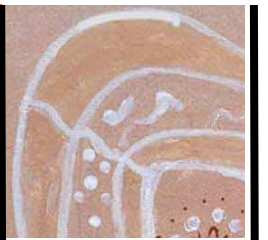
Resources and Templates

Template A: Symbol Dice

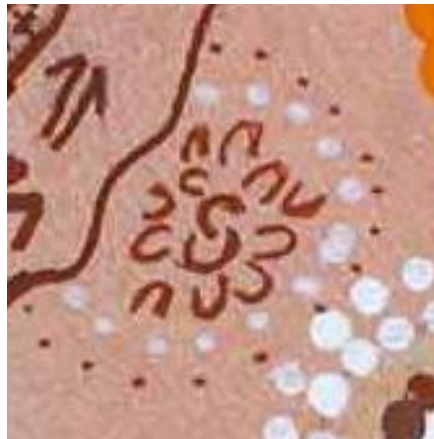
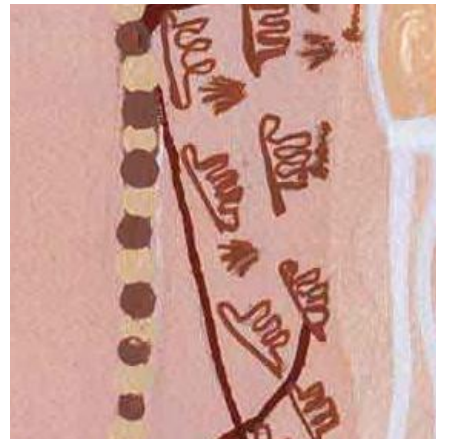
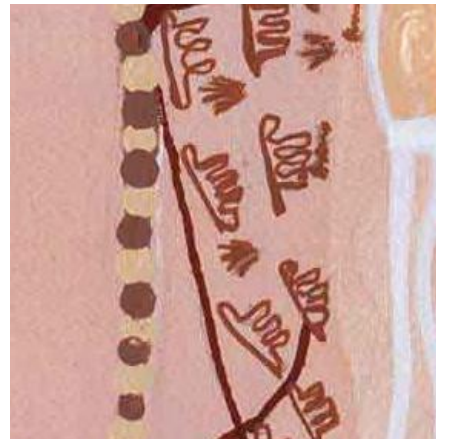




Template B: Chance Tally Sheet

Template C: Symbol Cards



Template C: Symbol Cards



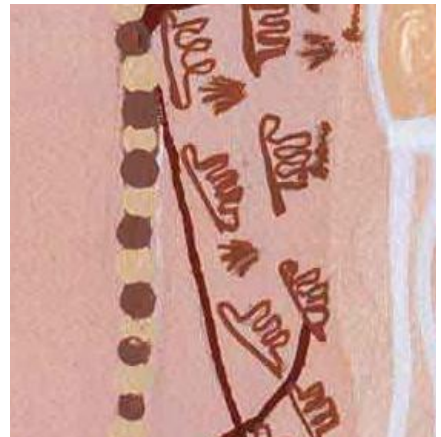
Kangaroo Tracks

Symbolising agility, survival, and ongoing life journeys



Bush Leaves

Representing growth and the abundance of the land



Witchetty Grabs

Bush tucker delicacy to fuel growing minds and bodies



Honey Ants

The sweetness of shared knowledge, small yet important contributions that form a greater whole



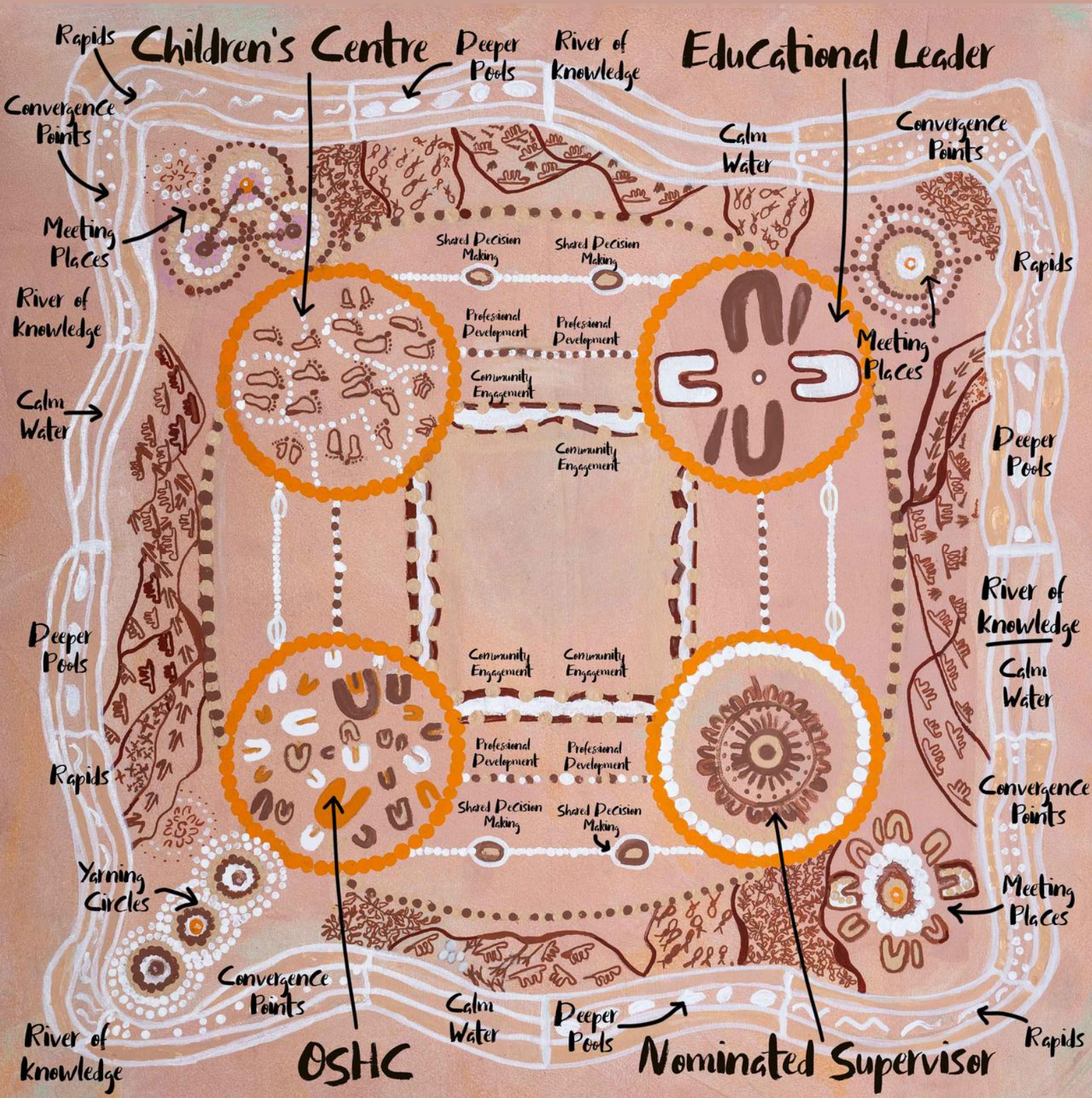
Dancing People

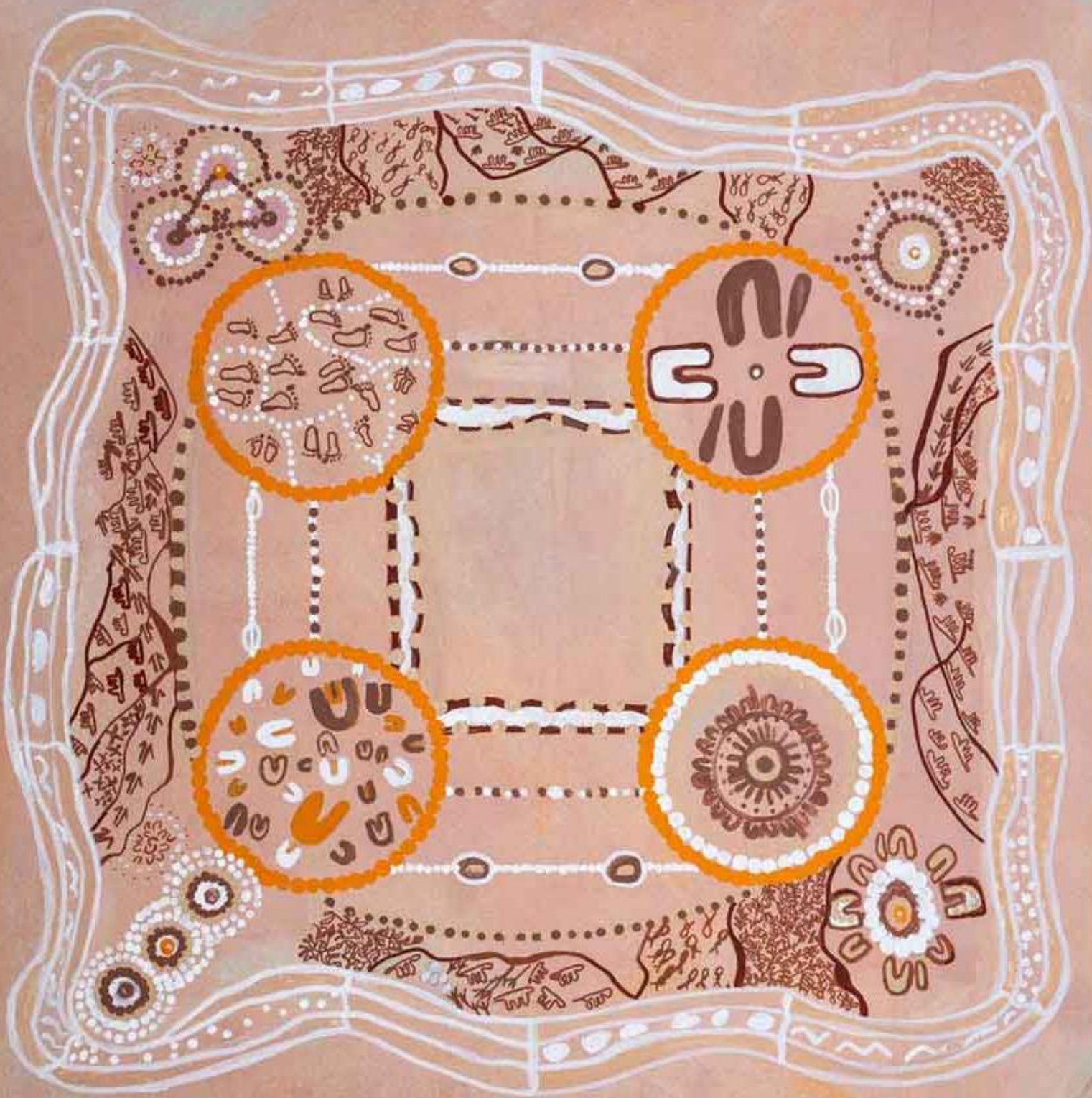
Cultural expression, storytelling, celebration



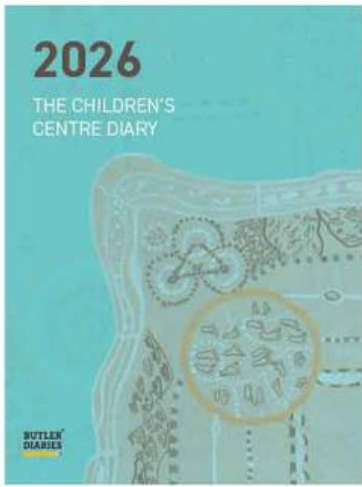
River of Knowledge

Represents different phases of learning and engagement, calm stretches, convergent points, rapids, and deeper pools

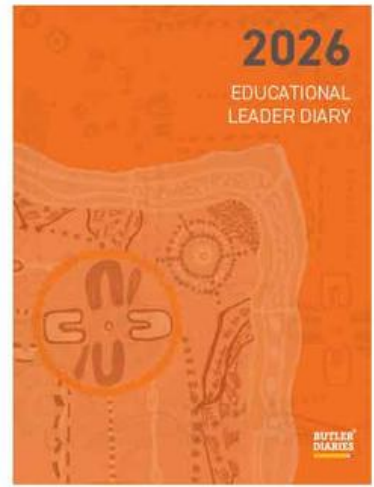




Children's Centre Diary.



Educational Leader Diary.



First Nations Artwork Collaboration Project

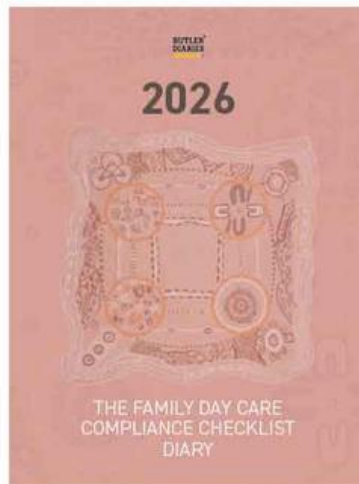


"Journey of Learning" by Anne Leon - NHURALAMA

Nominated Supervisor Diary.



OSHC Diary.



FDC Compliance Checklist Diary.