

Teacher's Notes: The 'Oo' in Uluru.

Important Facts: (Reference: www.redcentre.com.au)

- Uluru is one of earth's great **natural wonders**. It is the world's **largest monolith** and a **sacred site** for the Aboriginal tribes. It has great spiritual meaning with **over 40 sacred aboriginal sites** and **eleven Tjurkurpa or Dreaming trails** present in the area.
- **The animals and birds in the story are indigenous to the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park**
- Aborigines believe a **giant snake** lives underneath the rock.
- The caves in the rock have been decorated with **Aboriginal paintings** and **prehistoric art**, some of which indicate such things as the whereabouts of **water** and other vital information about nature, others were painted for religious purposes and as a means of both **storytelling** and for a culture with no written language to teach and record its history.
- It consists of mineral rich **sandstone**, Uluru measures **2.4km** (1.5 miles) **long** and **1.6km** (1 mile) **wide** and rises up to 867 metres above sea level.
- Each feature of the rock has a meaning in 'Tjukurpa' or Dreamtime, the traditional Anangu law explains how the world was created. **The Anangu people** belong to the oldest culture known to man dating back 60,000 years.
- The **Anangu people** believe that their culture has always existed in Central Australia and that this landscape was created at the beginning of time by the travels of great **ancestral beings**.

Phonemic Awareness:

- Elicit: What is a long vowel sound? Distinguish between short and long vowel 'Oo' sound. Identify the pronunciation of both short and long 'Oo' sounds.
- Ask learners to think about words that sound like the 'Oo' sound. Draw a mind map on the whiteboard or smartboard. (See worksheet with different spelling patterns for this sound attached)
- Identify the different spelling patterns in the various words in the book e.g. blue, you, shoe, do, to, too, truth, Uluru etc. before reading the story.
- Pre-teach vocabulary especially, the challenging words like querulous.
- Ask learners to write down as many words they can think of with the different spelling patterns in groups of four.
- Encourage learners to manipulate the words and spelling patterns by writing one funny sentence each.
- Instruct learners to use each sentence to make an acrostic poem, a haiku or for more advanced students a cinquain.

Before the reading:

- Introduce the book with an (overhead) close up picture of Uluru and tell the children some **fun facts** about Uluru (see teacher's notes).
- Questions: Have you ever been to Uluru? What do you know about Uluru?
- Explain: The name for a huge rock is called a **monolith** – the largest rock in the world. It's a sacred aboriginal site and

thousands of tourists visit it each year. (It takes about half a day to walk around the rock).

- Aborigines believe a **giant snake** lives underneath the rock.
- Questions: Where is Uluru? In the heart of Australia (previously known as Ayers Rock). It is commonly referred to as the **Red Centre**, because it's located in Central Australia.
- **The animals and birds** in the story are **indigenous to Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park**, some are almost extinct.

During the reading:

Encourage the children to comment on the illustrations and/or wildlife, especially hidden animals and long vowel sounds. Talk about challenging words eg. endangered species, extinction and challenging vocabulary in the story. Provide feedback.

- Identify the wildlife indigenous to the **Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park**.

After the reading:

Review the wildlife indigenous to the **Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park**. Use **comprehension questions** to review the elements of the story.

- **Project:** Divide students into groups and distribute story stones to each student (stones are found in hardware stores). Ask learners to paint different parts (characters, animals, birds etc) which are represented in the story in a logical sequence.
- **Presentation:** When the story stones are painted, ask each learner in the groups to re-tell parts of the story with their story stones in a short presentation.

