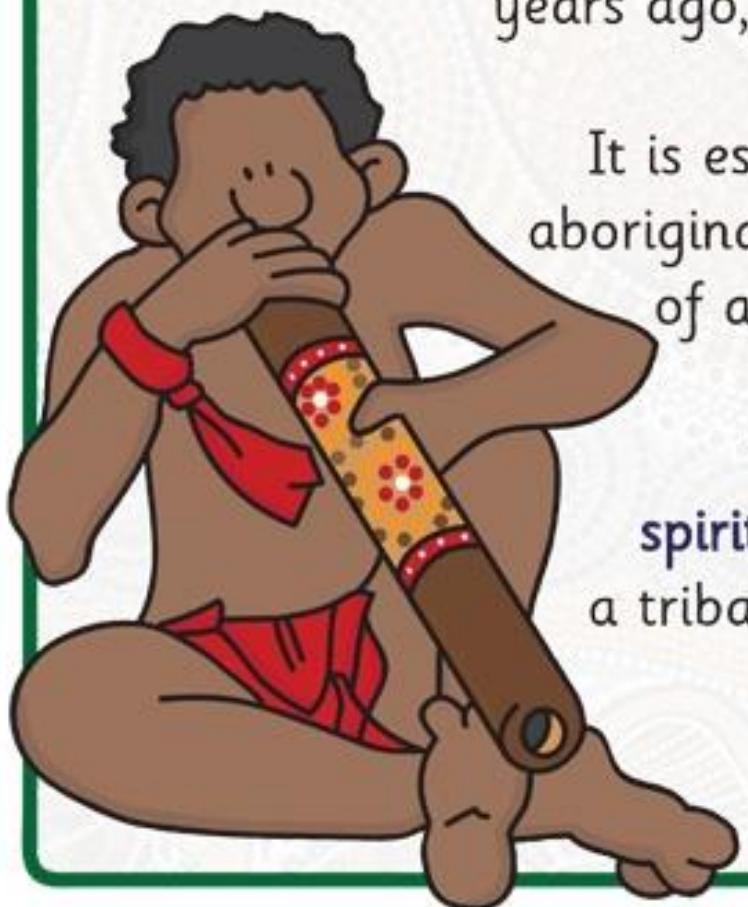


ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Aborigines are Australia's **indigenous** people. Aboriginal people arrived in Australia many years ago, most likely from somewhere in Asia.



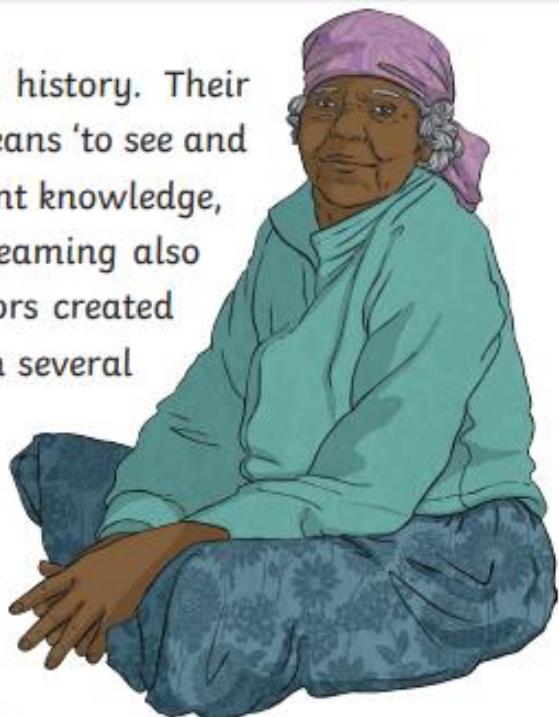
It is estimated that there are over 400,000 aboriginal people living in **Australia**, made up of around 600 distinct groups of people.

They are well known for their strong **spiritual** beliefs that tie them to the land; a tribal culture of **storytelling** and art; and, like other indigenous populations, a difficult **colonial** history.



What Is the Dreaming?

Australian Aborigines have the longest surviving cultural history. Their history dates back 50,000 to 60,000 years. The Dreaming means 'to see and understand the law'. It is the way the Aborigines tell important knowledge, cultural values and belief systems to their children. The Dreaming also means the Creation period, during which Aboriginal ancestors created the land and animals. The telling of the Dreaming is done in several ways, such as song, dance, painting and storytelling. Telling the Dreaming stories allows the Aborigines to maintain links between the Dreaming from ancient times and today. This maintains a rich and cultural heritage.



The Relationship between People, Land and Animals

In many stories of the Dreaming, the ancestors' spirits returned to earth in human form. They moved throughout the land and created all living things and landforms. The relationships between Aborigines and the land, the animals and other people were also created by the ancestral beings. After the ancestor spirits created the world, they turned into trees, stars, rocks, watering holes and other objects of the land or sky. These are sacred places of Aboriginal culture. The ancestors stayed at these sacred sites at the end of the Dreaming, which means it is never-ending and will always link the past and the present, the people and the land.

Tiddalick the Frog



The following story is based on
a traditional Aboriginal Dreamtime Story
about a frog called Tiddalick.



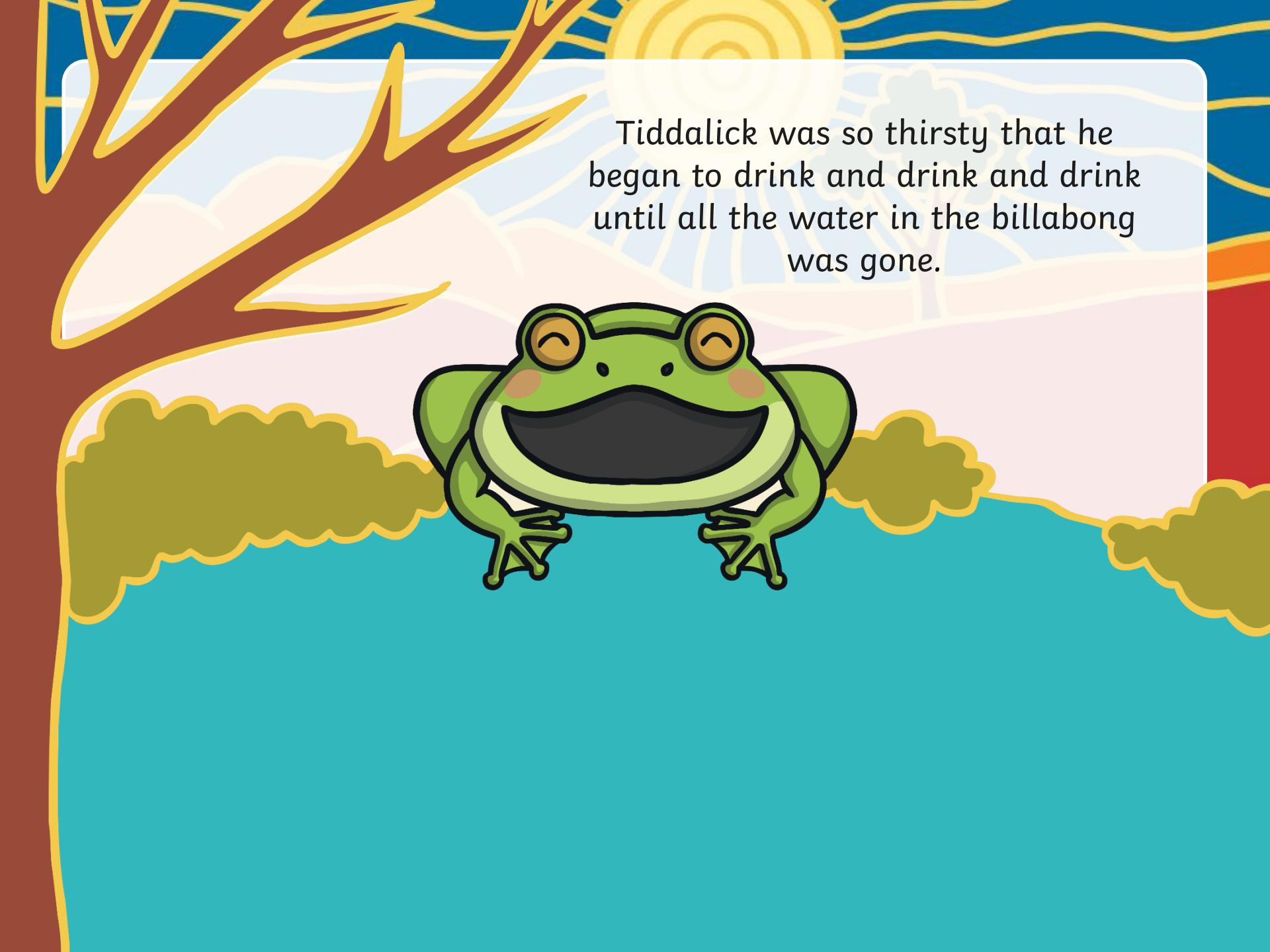
Once upon a time in the Dreaming, there lived a frog called Tiddalick. Tiddalick lived in the Wollombi Valley in the Creation era. He was a greedy frog. He wanted to be the biggest frog in all the land.





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



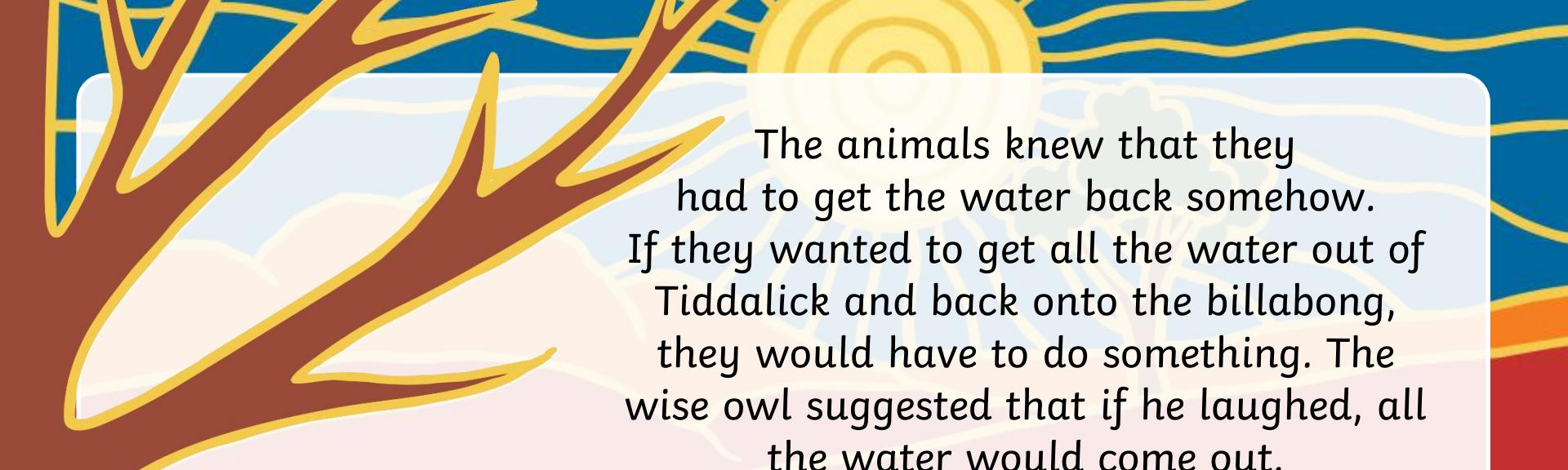


Tiddalick was so thirsty that he began to drink and drink and drink until all the water in the billabong was gone.



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, Tiddalick, 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 Tiddalick and back onto the billabong, they would have to do something. The wise owl suggested that if he laughed, all the water would come out.





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

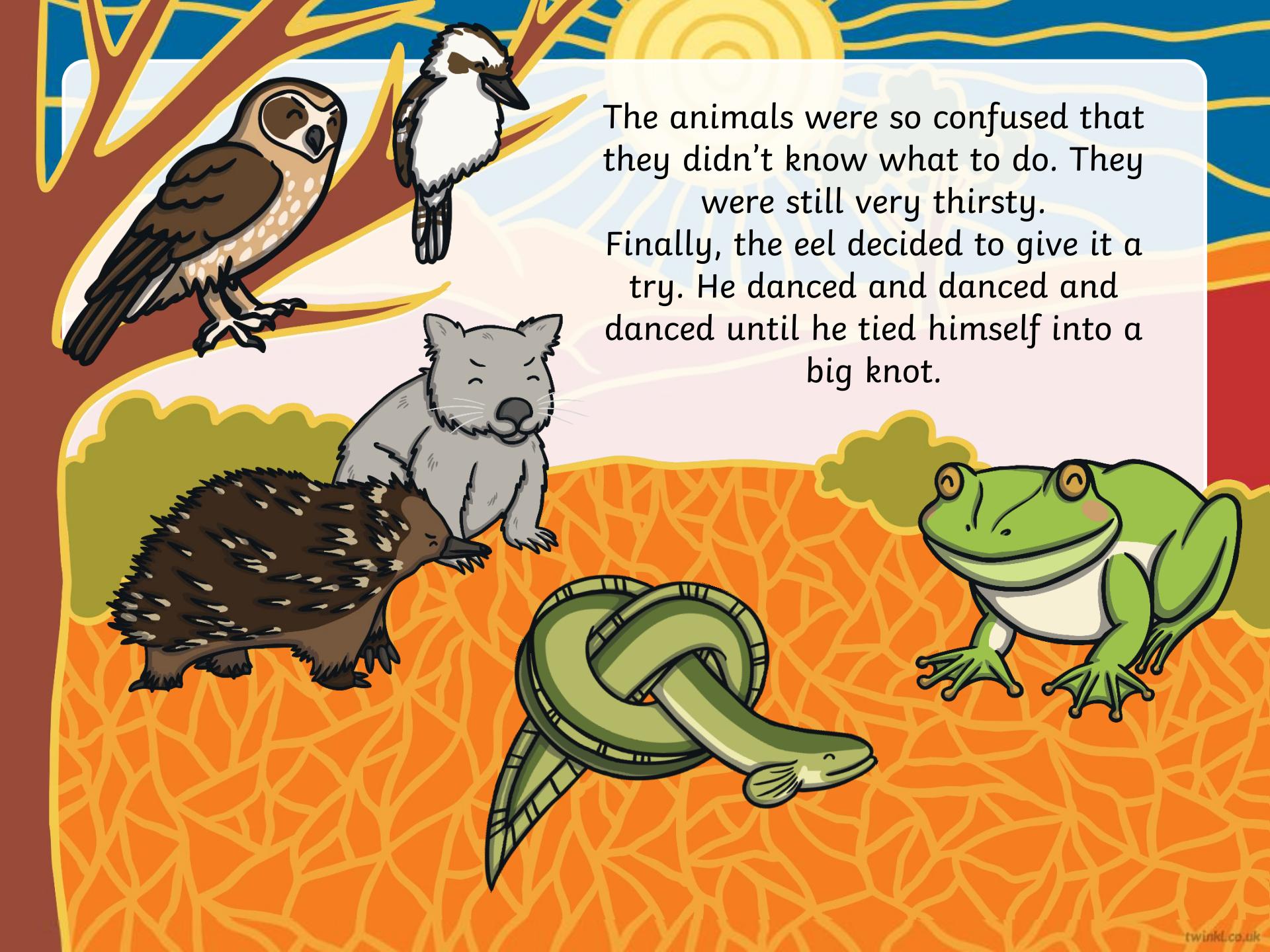


Next, the kookaburra, who was perched high up in the gum tree, pretended to fall out. Tiddalick still didn't laugh.



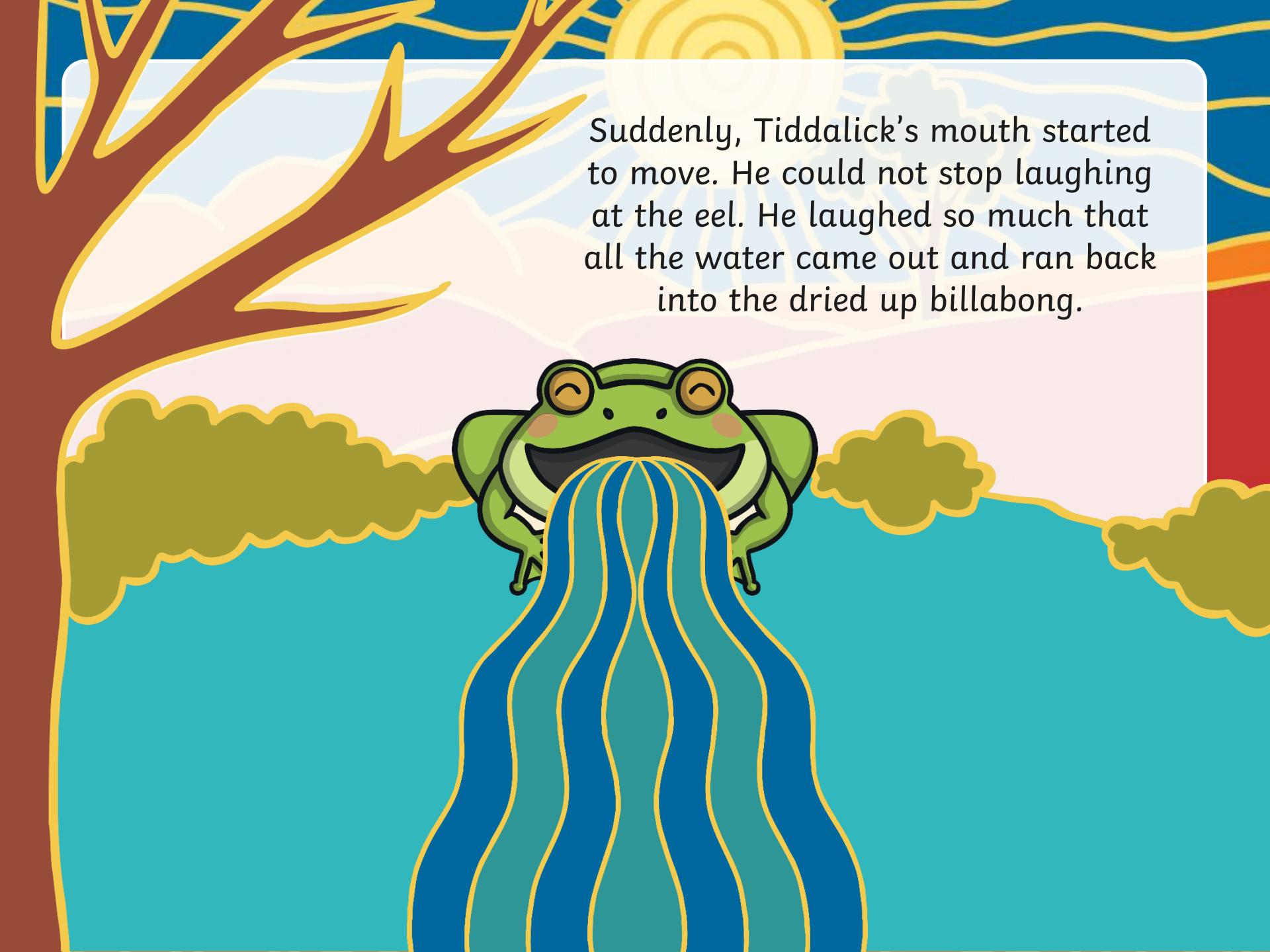


After that, the wombat started dancing some very funny moves. Still, Tiddalick didn't laugh.

The scene features a variety of Australian animals. In the upper left, a brown owl with white spots on its wings sits on a red branch. Next to it is a white and brown kookaburra. Below them is a grey bilby. To the right is a green tree frog. In the center foreground, a green eel is tied in a large knot. The background includes stylized yellow and blue clouds and a sun with rays.

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.

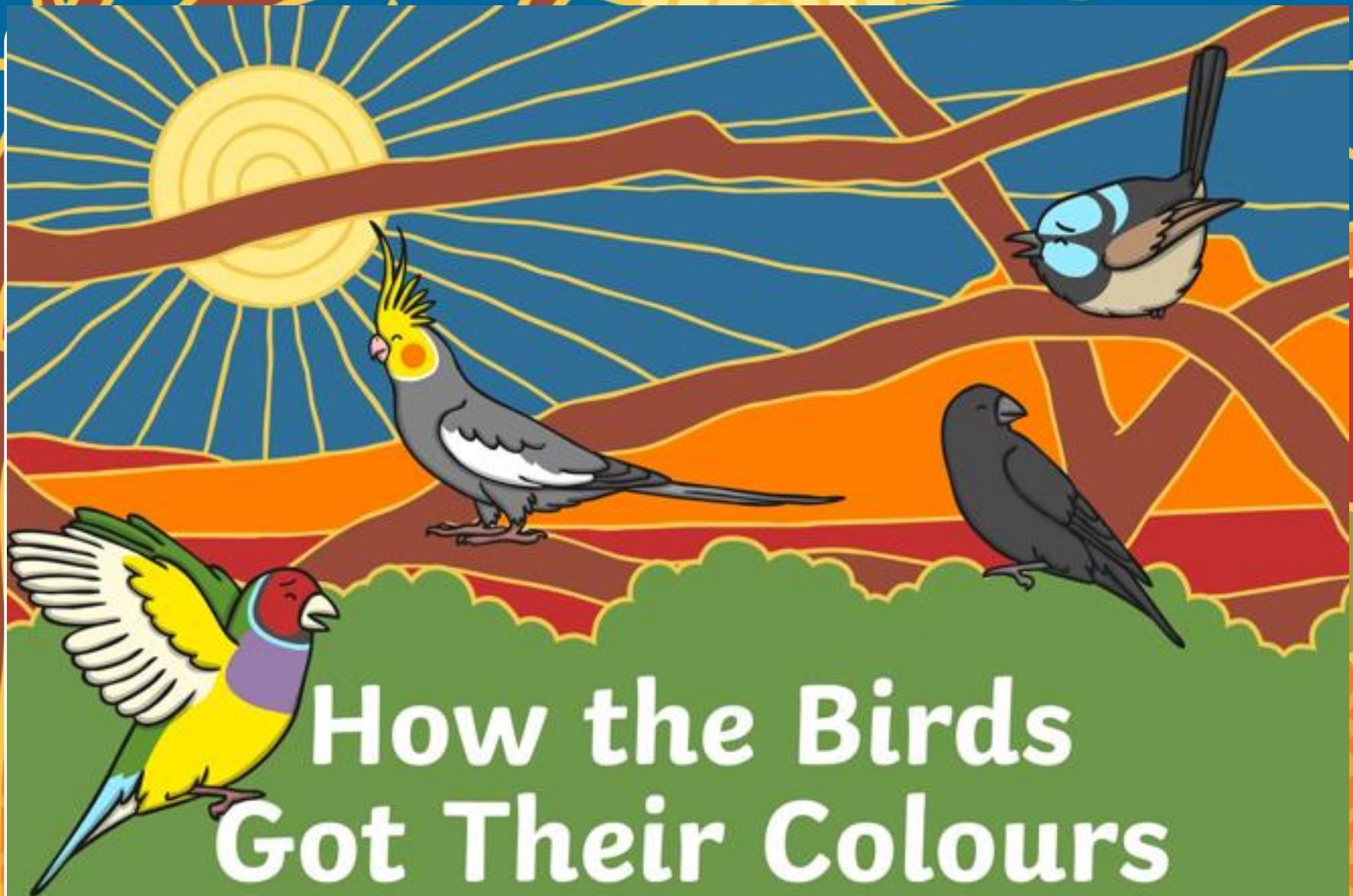


Suddenly, Tiddalick's mouth started to move. He could not stop laughing at the eel. He laughed so much that all the water came out and ran back into the dried up billabong.





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



How the Birds Got Their Colours

twinkl



Long, long ago in the Dreamtime 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.



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 lay 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.

Why the Koala Has a Stumpy Tail

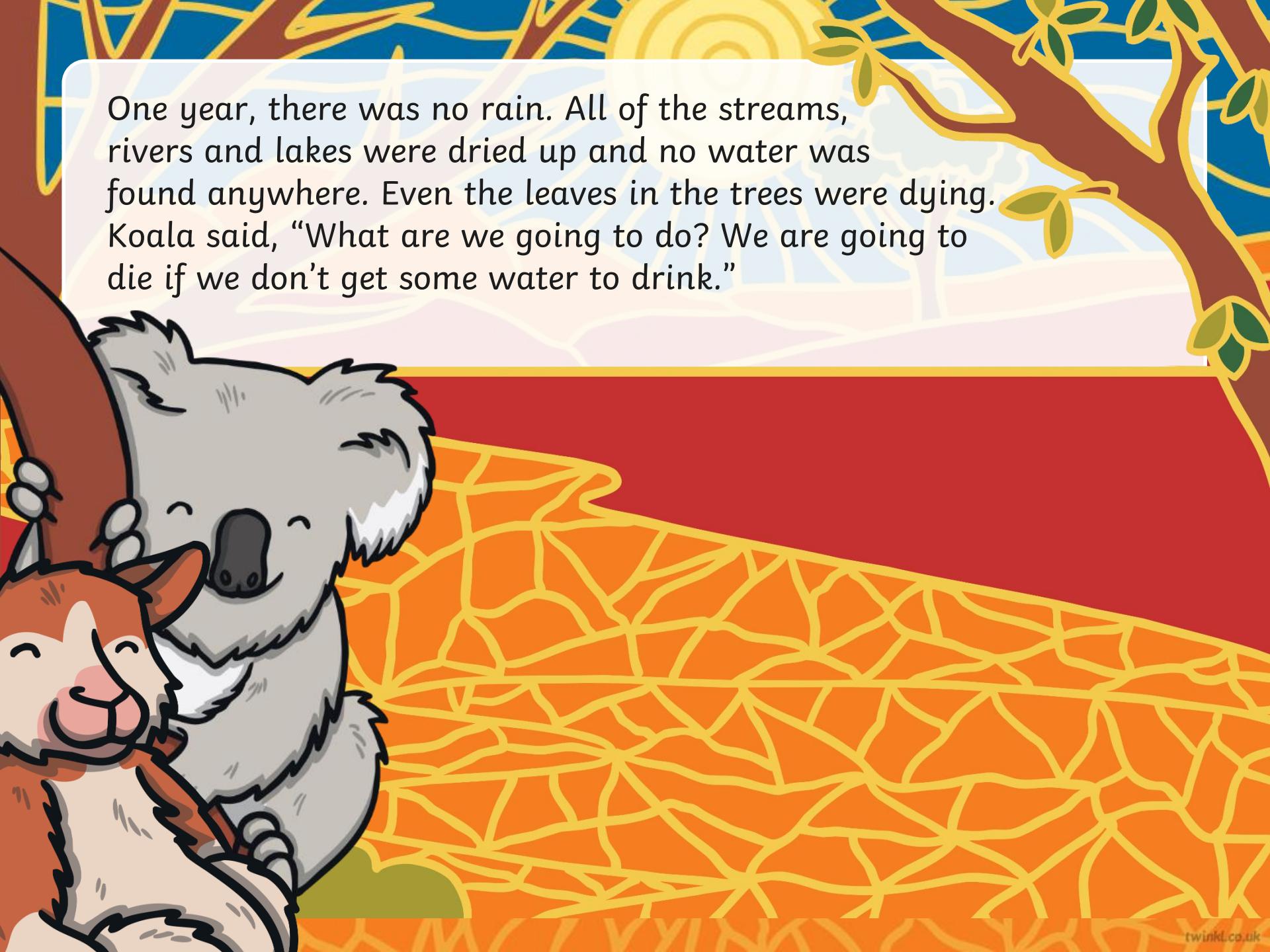




The following story is based on a traditional Aboriginal Dreamtime Story about how the koala came to have a short, stumpy tail.

Long, long ago in the Dreamtime, there lived Koala and Tree Kangaroo. They were the very best of friends. Back then, Koala had a very long, furry tail just like his friend, Tree Kangaroo.





One year, there was no rain. All of the streams, rivers and lakes were dried up and no water was found anywhere. Even the leaves in the trees were dying. Koala said, "What are we going to do? We are going to die if we don't get some water to drink."



Just then, Tree Kangaroo had a plan. He remembered back to the last dry season when his mother dug a hole in a dry stream bed. "She dug for hours until water began to fill the bottom of the dry hole," said Tree Kangaroo. "Let's try that!" said Koala.



So Tree Kangaroo and Koala walked until they came to a dry stream bed. It was as dry as the desert.



Koala said, "I am so thirsty and tired. Before I can start digging, I need to have a rest." So Koala climbed up the closest tree, and left Tree Kangaroo to start digging for the water.



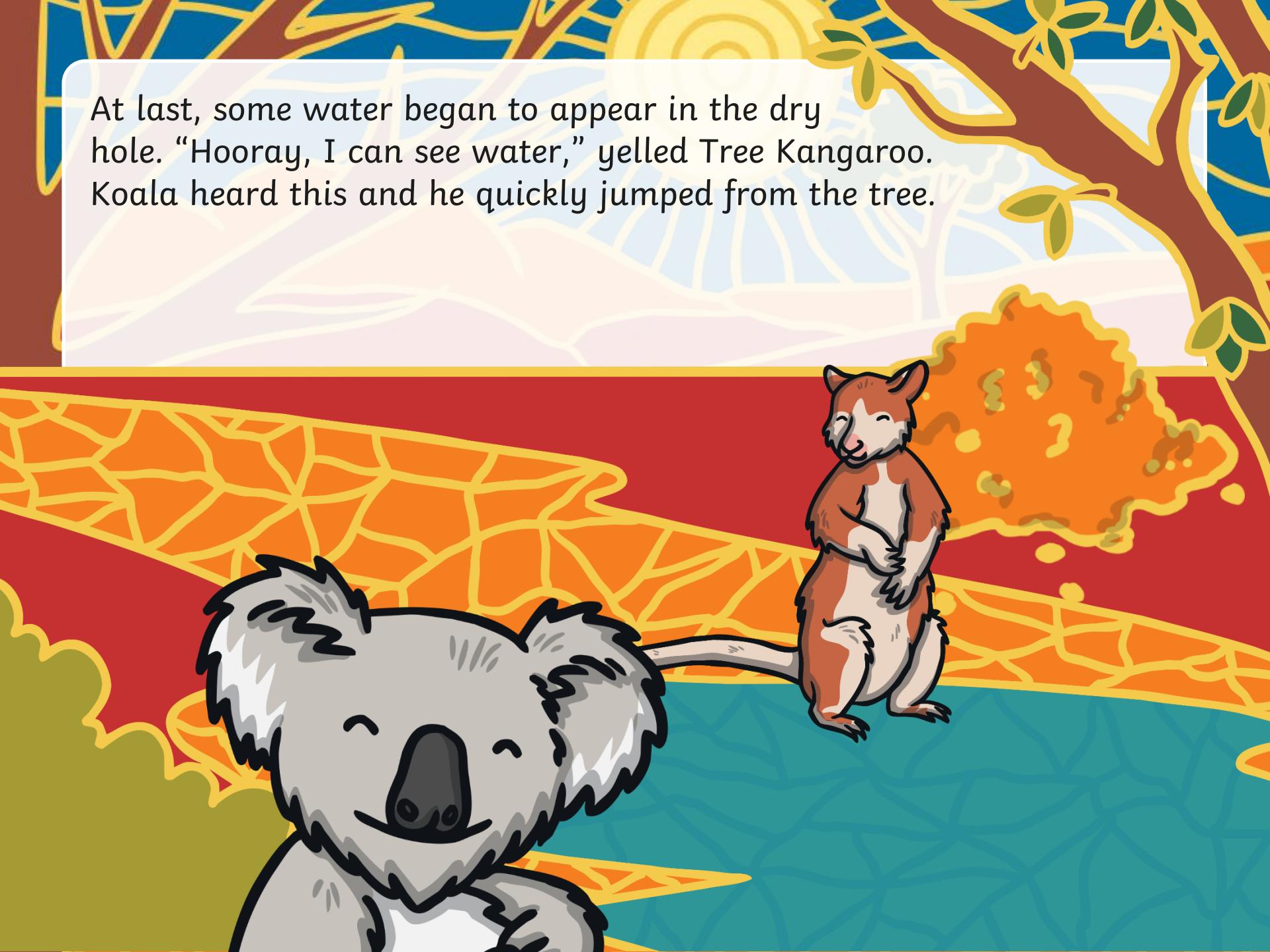
After lots of digging, Tree Kangaroo called out to Koala, "Hey Koala, come and help me dig!" Koala began to climb down from the tree until he let out a big, "Ouch!"

Koala had got a thorn in his foot. He couldn't possibly dig with a sore foot, so Tree Kangaroo kept on digging and let Koala rest.



Tree Kangaroo was getting really tired after all of his digging. "Koala!" he yelled, "I am so tired and I need a break. It is your turn to come and dig." Koala began to climb down the tree until he called out, "I am so dizzy. I need to rest longer." Tree Kangaroo was starting to get very angry, but he kept on digging.



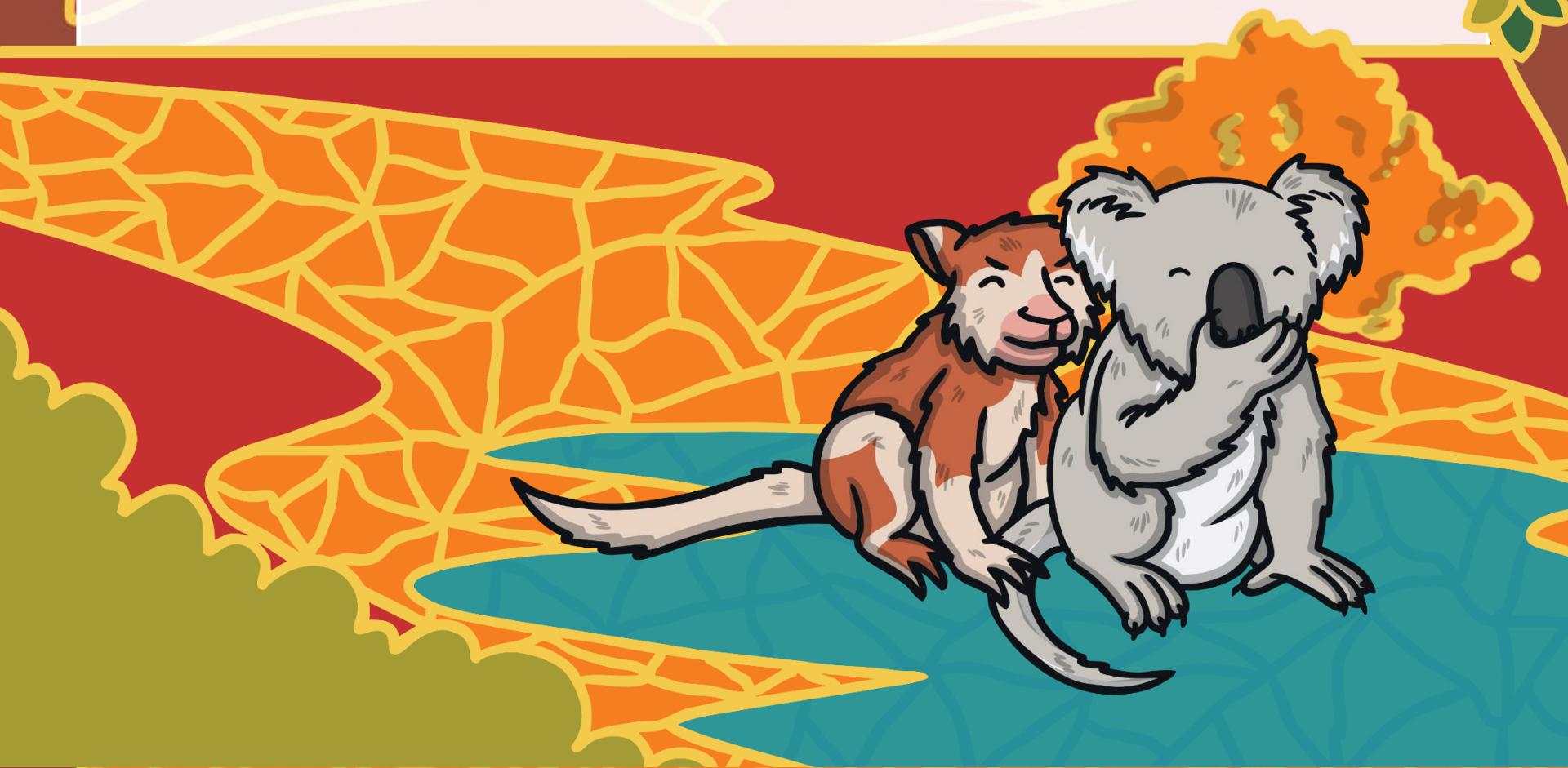


At last, some water began to appear in the dry hole. "Hooray, I can see water," yelled Tree Kangaroo. Koala heard this and he quickly jumped from the tree.



He pushed Tree Kangaroo out of the way, stuck his head down the hole and began drinking all of the water. Tree Kangaroo was furious! "Save some for me," he said, but Koala just kept on drinking.

Tree Kangaroo grabbed Koala's tail to pull him out of the hole. He pulled and pulled until ...





Koala's tail broke off. This is why the koala has a short and stumpy tail.

