

GURRUMUL

Watch the following music clips together in class and answer the questions. You can watch the video several times. Make sure to take notes on your ideas and observations!



- a) You hereby may either focus on **one** of the questions and then share the ideas in class,
- b) or you can work on all the questions **with a partner** and then share your findings in class.

Here you can find more information on the musician Gurrumul:

<http://www.allmusic.com/artist/geoffrey-gurrumul-yunupingu-mn000999409/biography>

Gurrumul & Blue King Brown. Gathu Mawula Revisited:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bdpoWcma4HE&spfreload=10>

- What does the male singer look like? What cultural background does he have? What do you know about his cultural background?
- What is the effect of the dancers? What do they look like? How do you interpret their facial expressions?
- In a short sequence, Natalie Pa'apa'a of Blue King Brown sings in English. What is the message of her words?
- What colours are used in the video? What cuts are made and which camera movements and angles are used? What is the overall effect of the visual content; how does the video make you feel (in connection with its audio content)?
- What instruments are used by the musicians? How would you describe the overall musical

Geoffrey Gurrumul Yunupingul. Bapa:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MKG-Jd7KN64&spfreload=10>

- How would you describe the overall visual style of the video? Especially, how are transitions made? What is the significance of the transitions?
- What animals appear in the video? What can the animals stand for? Also, compare the roles of the animals in the video with what they signify in our own culture.
- Compare this music video with the first you saw today. What are similarities and differences in visual and auditory content? Which video do you like better?

DREAMTIME LEGENDS MIN-NA-WEE

Read the following story and answer the questions on the following worksheet.



As the last rays of the beautiful red-pink sun set on the small camp and the sweeping coastal plain, all the little girls played, enjoying themselves. All the young boys were with their fathers, learning the ways of manhood. The mothers were preparing for the evening meal. There was fresh fish cooking on the coals, with freshly-caught mud crabs and mussels. Everyone in the group was contented, the season had been good for them. Plenty of fresh food. Everyone except little Min-na-wee was happy.

Min-na-wee was different. From a little girl, Min-na-wee liked to cause trouble amongst the other little girls. Min-na-wee's face was so hard and scaly-looking, it mostly revealed her hatred. The old people knew of Min-na-wee's efforts to start trouble, which led to fights. Not only among the little girls, but also their mothers. The old people warned Min-na-wee's mother that if she did not stop Min-na-wee making humbug, then something terrible would happen to her.

Years passed and Min-na-wee grew into a young woman, but she still liked to cause trouble. One day all the young women, including Min-na-wee, had to prepare to be selected as brides. Min-na-wee stood in a line with all the other girls. The old people pointed out which men were to marry which women. By the end of the ceremony, Min-na-wee was left standing alone. She had not been chosen to become a wife. Min-na-wee's hatred grew stronger and stronger. She caused more and more trouble in the camp. Fights were breaking out every day amongst the tribe. Min-na-wee sat back in her little humpy and watched. She was pleased with herself.

The Elders of the tribe agreed that Min-na-wee must be punished for what she had done. Min-na-wee had little knowledge of the tribe's decision. As she approached the women to cause another fight, she was grabbed by the men and rolled around and around in the dirt. She managed to escape and run in to the edge of the sea where she called on the evil spirits to change her into a vicious animal so she could stage a revenge attack on her tribe. Min-na-wee was changed into a large crocodile and slid into the muddy waters, awaiting her prey.

The tribespeople thought no more of Min-na-wee and carried out their daily events. As they wandered along the banks, hunting for mud crabs, Min-na-wee lay waiting. One of the men who had taken part in Min-na-wee's punishment jumped into the water. Min-na-wee crept up behind and grabbed him. She told him she would roll him around and around, as he had done to her. Over and over, she continued to roll him in the water, until she was satisfied he was punished enough. To this day, Min-na-wee's spirit still remains with the crocodiles and that is why every time that a crocodile catches its prey, it always will roll around and around in the water.

SUMMARY

- How would you describe Min-na-wee's life in the village at the beginning of the story? How does she treat people? How do the others treat her?
- What happens to Min-na-wee after she is not selected as a bride?
- How does Min-na-wee stage a revenge attack on the tribesmen?
- What becomes of Min-na-wee after the final attack?



ANALYSIS

- How would you describe the logic of the story? What does the narrator set out to explain?
- Compare this logic to a form of narrative you know from European culture: **the fable**. Can you name similarities and differences? Try to look at content as well as form of the stories.



ABOUT THE DREAMTIME LEGENDS

We dream at night, when we sleep, and often we do not remember what we have dreamt about. Dreams seem transitory – that is for the Western world’s viewpoint. It seems rather difficult to assign a certain value to dreaming. However, in other cultures, dreaming is much more than sleeping. The Australian Aborigines’ beliefs have been called Dreamtime, and their concept of Dreaming is a religious one. Australian Aboriginal cultures are one of the oldest cultures in the world; their “oral tradition and spiritual values are based on reverence for the land and a belief in the Dreamtime“ (Poroch 2012, 383/4).



The Dreamtime describes how the world came into existence and how the laws in the world were created. It is said to be the ‘time before time’ or ‘the time of creation’. The Dreamtime therefore can be seen as a mythological period of time which “had a beginning but no foreseeable end, during which the natural environment was shaped and humanized by the actions of mythic beings“ (Web: The Dreaming [Encyclopedia Britannica]). Since the Dreamtime has no end, it does not only refer to the ancient past of creation but also “the present day reality of dreaming“ (Poroch 2012. 384) The term Dreamtime has, however, been established by the White settlers.

The stories on Dreamtime prominently feature animals that are part human, part animal. These ‘totemic’ animals shaped the environment and set up the law. The Aboriginal people believe that they share the nature with these mythic beings (Clarke 2007, 142). Being part human in their shape, the ancestral creatures also incorporated human character-traits. Often, they lacked strict morals and therefore resembled both good and bad. All parts of Australia are affected. The legends of the Dreamtime are strongly connected to the physical place of their occurrence. “Each series of stories, therefore, define a path across the countryside that connects localities and the mythic episodes associated with them“ (Web: Songlines in Aboriginal culture). Songlines can be shared by different tribes. They are like a network throughout the country. The purpose of the Songlines is, however, not solely spiritual; many of the Songlines are used as mapping devices. The Indigenous Peoples were thereby able to find water or hunting grounds (Web: The Songlines [Video]).

YOUR EXPECTATIONS ON...

This is a warm-up task. The class is standing in a circle, the teacher, acting as instructor, stands outside.

If possible, this exercise should be done in a theatre classroom or outside. The students bodies are turned to the outside of the circle.

The instructor gives the following clue words; the students are to turn around immediately (now facing the other students and looking inside the circle) and to act out the words or what they feel about the word spontaneously in a freeze image.

- ocean
- fear
- best friend
- drugs
- home
- nature
- fight
- father
- suicide

After each word, you can do short observations: How were the words and feelings depicted? Where there many similarities or differences?

FIRST STEPS

Watch the feature film **Yolngu Boy** (2001) until minute 00:08:47.

In these first scenes, almost all the mayor characters appear.

Describe them in one or two words, and interlink the character's names in the chart below to indicate their relation at the beginning of the film.



Lorrpu

Milika

Botj

Matjala

Dawu

A CHANGE?

Watch the film until the following time: 00:15:40.
The boys have just broken into the small store; a fight has broken out.

Show the boys' relation to each other in a freeze image. You have 10 minutes to discuss and practice the image in groups of three. Then, show your image to the rest of the class; comment on whether the relationship has been depicted correctly in your point of view. You may also talk about similarities and differences between the freeze images created.



THE TRIP TO DARWIN

Lorrpu manages to convince his friends to go on a trip to Darwin (00:24:50-01:06:23).

Watch the whole trip and try to find out what is asked below ...



a) What is the purpose of the trip for Lorrpu?

b) During the trip to Darwin, Aboriginal culture frequently clashes with Western culture. Take notes on the scenes in which this happens. Also take notes on the audio-visual realisation of these clashes. Add the information to the table below.

SYMBOLS ... AND REPRESENTATION OF ABORIGINAL CULTURE	SYMBOLS ... AND REPRESENTATION OF WESTERN CULTURE	AUDIO-VISUAL REALISATION OF THE CLASH

THE INFLUENCE OF THE TRIP



Discuss the following questions first with a partner and then share your ideas in class. Do not forget to take some notes.

c) What do the clashes between the cultures do to the main characters?

d) How do Lorrpu, Milika and Botj change during the trip? Does Lorrpu reach his goal?

e) After having seen the trip, discuss in class whether you think it is possible for the boys (especially Botj) to find reconciliation in Darwin. Are Western and Aboriginal culture compatible?

*Which scene did you find most impressive during the trip?
Draw a picture of it here ...*

IS THIS THE END?

You have seen the boys' trip to Darwin, and you have witnessed quite a drastic change in Botj, and also Milika and Lorrpu. In a way, they have come closer to their Aboriginal culture again. In class, you have also discussed whether you think it is possible for the boys to reconcile themselves, to find a future in Australian society.



Now close to the end of the feature film, imagine two scenes:

- a) Botj, Milika and Lorrpu are talking to Dawu. What will the elder say? How will he react to the boys' disappearance?
- b) After the conversation with Dawu, another scene – the 'aftermath' and ending of the film – takes place.

Work together in groups of three to four students. Discuss and take notes on what may happen in these two scenes. Practice the scenes you drafted together. You do not have to write a full dialogue in order to act out the scenes; 'planned' improvisation is key!

Act out the scenes in class. Please observe what the other groups were able to create.

OPTION 1

You can add the option of a scene STOP when a student in class gives you a sign. The person addressed by this then has to hold a short monologue on his or her inner thoughts and feelings.

OPTION 2

You can use your mobile phones to record the scenes. Here you can pay close attention to the camera angle you use. If you are very sophisticated with film-making, you may also edit the material, add cuts and music. Please make sure everyone on tape is OK with you filming!

WORDS BETWEEN DAWU AND MATJALA

Get together in groups of six students. At the beginning, try to take short notes to characterise Dawu and Matjala. What are the two Aborigines like? What are their objectives? How is their relationship to the boys?



Dawu:

Matjala:

Imagine Dawu and Matjala were discussing the events that led to Botj's death.

- How do they feel?
- Would they have been able to save Botj if they had done something different?
- Botj's death is not the only death to be mourned by the Aboriginal community in Australia. What could Matjala and Dawu do in order to help Aboriginal teenagers like Botj? Or is the matter completely out of their hands?
- Try to refer to the events in the feature film, e.g. the portrayal of the settlement where Botj sees his father.

Write a dialogue between the two. Do not forget to edit it and practice before you present it in class.

As an observer during the presentations, take a closer look at these assessment questions:

- Are Dawu and Matjala presented as you imagined they would be?
- Do they stay 'in character' during the dialogue?
- Are the feelings of the two presented well?
- Are the ideas of Dawu and Matjala fitting?

OPTIONAL: You can act out the dialogue without actually speaking the words out aloud! Now you have to focus and rely on posture, gestures, and your facial expression.

CHANGING EXPECTATIONS...?

The pre-viewing exercise is repeated here in order to see whether the perception of the students concerning some of the key themes of the feature film have changed:

The class is standing in a circle, the teacher, acting as instructor, stands outside. If possible, this exercise should be done in a theatre classroom or outside. The students bodies are turned to the outside of the circle.

The instructor gives the following clue words; the students are to turn around immediately (now facing the other students and looking inside the circle) and to act out the words or what they feel about the word spontaneously in a freeze image.

- ocean
- fear
- best friend
- drugs
- home
- nature
- fight
- father
- suicide

In class, consider the question of change:

- Can the students observe differences in how the words and feelings are depicted in comparison to before the feature film has been watched?
- How can these differences (or, possibly, similarities) be explained?

SOUND AND MUSIC

Watch the beginning scenes of the feature film again (until minute 00:05:56).

Make observations concerning sound and music in these scenes! On the scale below, rate whether you find the music to be more traditional or rather modern.



Which central sound and music patterns or themes were you able to identify? How do they relate to the content of the scenes?

Can you compare the music of Yolngu Boy with the two music videos seen prior to the feature film?

SCENE	SCALE & DESCRIPTION	
Blank & Title Screen (until 00:00:57)	<i>Native Aboriginal</i>	<i>Western</i>
	<i>What sound and music do you hear?</i>	
Impressions of Arnhem Land (00:00:58-00:01:24)	<i>Native Aboriginal</i>	<i>Western</i>
	<i>What sound and music do you hear?</i>	
Introduction by Lorrpu (00:01:25-00:03:27)	<i>Native Aboriginal</i>	<i>Western</i>
	<i>What sound and music do you hear?</i>	
Botj returns and sees the game (00:03:28-00:05:56)	<i>Native Aboriginal</i>	<i>Western</i>
	<i>What sound and music do you hear?</i>	

FIRE AND GASOLINE

Watch the scenes of the boys' break-in and Botj's petrol sniffing trip again (00:13:22 - 00:20:22).

While viewing, take a close look at the camera movement and cuts. Try to describe them here shortly:



FOCUS ON BOTJ

In class, try to create a freeze-image of Botj. Focus not only on his posture but also on his facial expression! Work in groups of three to four students.



- Show the freeze-image in class.
- The spectators can now move freely around the freeze-image and try different perspectives. Try to look from below, top, and level positions. Also try to recreate camera movements you have seen in the feature film.
- How does the camera movement (in connection with the cuts) influence your perception as a viewer?

Tip: You can use your mobile phones to make photos from the different perspectives or even make short videos to recreate the camera movements.

Please make sure everyone on tape is OK with you filming!

You can post your favourite perspective here; either print a picture taken in class, or draw the perspective yourself!

A large empty rectangular box with an orange border, intended for students to post their favorite perspective or draw it.

BARU

Baru is quite different to the crocodile-woman Min-na-wee you got to know before watching **Yolngu Boy**. How would you describe his role in the feature film?



Now you have time to **write your own Aboriginal dreamtime legend** about Baru! You may focus on the events of the film; however, you can also develop a completely different story line. The following points will help you to take some notes and an outline before you dive into your narrative. Of course, you do not have to answer each of the questions in the given sequence and in detail; you are free to develop your thoughts also while writing.

1. What should be the main message of my story? What ideas do I want to convey; what do I want my reader to think about?

2. Who are the main characters? What are their main character traits? Are they round (develops during the story) or flat (no development) characters?

1.

2.

3.

What are the main events of my story? Do they get more thrilling during the course of my story? Is the sequence of events logical?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

In which person and perspective do I want to write? What should the role of the narrator be?

Stylistically, what atmosphere do I want to convey? Which register do I have to use? Which stylistic devices may be appropriate?
