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The tree of life

The coconut is actually the seed of a coconut palm tree. It was given its name by Spanish sailors who likened the three dents on the shell's base to a smiling monkey and named it 'coco' meaning monkey face.

A large part of the world's population depends on the coconut. The stringy tough brown husk (coir) can be woven into ropes and yarns for household goods. Jewellery and musical instruments can be created from the hardened shell. After it's dried, the tasty coconut meat is called copra. This copra produces oil which is used for cooking and beauty products, soap and animal feed. People also use coconut oil for its health benefits. The clear coconut water from fresh green coconuts is a delicious sweet drink.



An interview with Andy Griffiths



Andy Griffiths is well known as a writer of children's books. Here are some interesting things you might not know about him!

What do you like to do besides write?

I go for long runs and bike rides beside the beach. An hour of exercise after a long day of writing helps me recharge. Then I'm ready to write some more.

Do you write using a computer or by hand?

I write the first drafts of stories by hand, and then I transfer my drafts onto a computer. I like to write by hand when I travel. I find it very easy to lose myself in my journal when I am away from my usual distractions.

What super power would you like to have?

X-ray vision as long as I could turn it off sometimes.

What is your favourite food?

I'm never happier than when I'm drinking banana and blueberry milkshakes. And I love fish. But I don't like drinking fish milkshakes — they are just disgusting!

What is your favourite book?

Alice in Wonderland. It has so many surprises and such silliness in it.

Do you write for adults too?

Only if I really have to. I much prefer the freedom and fun of writing for children.

What do you say to kids who say, "Why should I read?"

I quote the words of Dr Seuss: "The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go."

I've found this to be true in my own life.

ANDY GRIFFITHS



Kaiya goes hunting

Kaiya woke early. The wet breath of night still clung to everything. What a gathering it had been! The drone of the didgeridoo, the rhythm of the clap sticks and the singing and dancing by the firelight had been mesmerising. Now his uncles, aunties and cousins were curled around the embers of the campfire. Silently Kaiya took his spear, the one with two barbs that he was named after, and headed towards the billabong.

“Where are you going?” a small voice whispered.

He turned and saw Goolara rubbing sleep from her eyes.

“Go to sleep,” he hissed.

“I’m coming,” she said.

Kaiya sighed. It was useless arguing with his little sister. Besides, that might wake everyone up. He started running and, just as he had hoped, her footsteps faded. He stopped just long enough to see her walking back home. He could now focus on the wallabies that grazed on the sweet grass by the billabong. This was his chance to spear one and return to the camp a hero.

Kaiya slowed as he neared the billabong. In the distance he saw the dark outline of a wallaby scratching itself. His excitement grew as he crept closer, hiding behind the trees.

Suddenly, the long grass exploded with action. Kaiya edged backwards. It was Baru, the crocodile! He was hunting wallaby too.

Fishing from the rocks

'Think I'll drop in a line.
Tide's out. Weather's mild.'
Then the flurry: the hopeful basket, the rod, the hook, the line and sinker.
'Guess you can come with me, but stay away from the edge.'

We're all following him
Across soft sand, past paddocks of cows, around the headland
To the threatening rocks, the swelling ocean.
To the promise of success, the flailing fish on the quivering line.

Three of us to the forbidden side of the beach.
And the long-eared dog, all excited at the daring.
'Never go further than the edge of the beach.
Stay in the safe sandy zone.'

Time begins. Fishing time extending hope.
The kids and the dog staying away from the ocean.
Watching the waves swell over the ledge
Swirling over the jagged rocks.

And in shallow pools, at least for the dog,
Something's in there, a matching goal.
'Where's the fish, Roxy, where's the fish?'
Dad and dog search the water in vain.

by Mia Gregson



Duyfken

replica sailing ship



Many people think James Cook was the first European to set foot on Australian soil, but Dutch explorers had already visited Australia many times before he did.

The first Dutch ship to arrive was the *Duyfken* in 1606, more than 150 years earlier than Cook's *Endeavour*. The Dutch sailors landed on the west coast of Cape York and were the first Europeans to have contact with the Aboriginal people of the area. The captain of the *Duyfken* made the first known map of a section of the Australian coastline.

To commemorate such an important event in Australia's maritime history, the *Duyfken* 1606 Replica Foundation was set up in 1993. The Foundation raised \$3.7 million to build a full-size replica of the *Duyfken* with money coming from private donors as well as the governments of the Netherlands, Australia, Western Australia and Queensland. Constructed using materials and building methods similar to the original, the replica took six years to complete. Enthusiastic volunteers donated their time and skills.

On its maiden voyage, the *Duyfken* replica left Fremantle and re-enacted a part of the voyage of the original ship, sailing to the Gulf of Carpentaria in northern Australia. Twelve months after this trip, it sailed from Australia to the Netherlands.

In 2006, on the 400th anniversary of the *Duyfken's* voyage to Australia, the replica sailed around Australia, visiting many ports along the way. After that voyage, the boat was berthed at the Queensland Maritime Museum and then at the Australian National Maritime Museum in Sydney. Many people have been on board to inspect the ship and have since learnt the true story of Australia's maritime past.



City of the Ancients

City of the Ancients

Reviewed by James Lee

Director: Rosie Tan

Writer: Sam Pirelli

Rated: G

Rosie Tan's latest movie, *City of the Ancients*, follows the adventures of Ali Randall (acted by Marco Reed) and his three schoolfriends as they search for the lost city of Atlantis. In his dad's shed Ali has found an old map that shows the location of Atlantis near a remote island. We see the children looking at the map, followed by their arrival on the island with no explanation of how they got there. This is not the only scene where it is difficult to follow what is happening in the film.

There are many twists and turns that the audience will find exciting and the cast of young actors does an excellent job. Overall though, the story is quite unbelievable, especially when one of the children is captured by a giant seagull!

City of the Ancients is aimed at seven-to-twelve-year-olds. However, children under the age of nine may find some scenes a bit frightening. Older children will be disappointed with the outdated special effects and predictable ending.

As there are many entertaining kids' movies to choose from during these school holidays, I suggest you put *City of the Ancients* at the bottom of your list!

Overall rating: ★★☆☆☆

Sara's early morning

On Saturday morning, Sara got up early to play football.

She put on her football shirt and black shorts. Then, she pulled on some long socks. Next, she carried her football boots to the door and put them on.

'I thought you played football on Sunday, not Saturday!' said Sara's dad.

'Oh, yeah!' said Sara, and she went back to bed.



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Tree of life

Image © Ocean/Corbis

Cover

Image © Corbis Australia

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