



EARLY CHILDHOOD

EPISODE 9: HONEY ANTS



Synopsis: Little J fears Levi is not his best friend anymore - until he finds out how warumpi (honey ants) work together.

This episode follows Nanna, Big Cuz, Little J and Levi as they head out bush to visit the Aunties. The episode is centred on Little J's feelings of jealousy when his best friend Levi is spending time playing with Monti at school. Little J excludes himself from the others because of his jealousy, rather than working as a team. He ends up learning from warumpi (honey ants) that it's good and important to work together.

There are opportunities to use this episode and activities to educate young children about Indigenous Knowledges, respect, and working together in alignment with the Cross Curriculum Priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures (*Version 8.4*).

In this Teacher Pack, there is an overview of how this episode can be utilised for key Learning Outcomes, including ***prompting questions***, with an outline of some activities based on the principles and practices outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF).

Along with best practice pedagogical approaches, and AITSL Standards relating to Indigenous content, we encourage all teachers to find ways to link the content of each episode to the local community in which they teach.

**If you're planning on utilising additional resources (such as videos, websites, books etc) touching on themes that are covered in this episode, we recommend you use the 'AIATSIS Guide to selecting and evaluating educational resources' to ensure you're representing Indigenous perspectives accurately.*

Links to the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF):

Learning Outcomes

- Children are connected with and contribute to their world.
- Children are confident and involved learners.
- Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.
- Children are effective communicators.
- Children have a strong sense of identity.
- Children are active and informed members of the community.

EARLY CHILDHOOD PROMPTING QUESTIONS

These activities incorporate the key elements of the EYLF, such as play-based learning, cultural responsiveness, and holistic approaches to child development, while also fostering an appreciation for teamwork, and listening to and learning from adults. They also leverage the content from this episode to enhance children's screen literacy and engagement.

This episode explores feelings of jealousy and self-exclusion, and the importance of working together. You may choose to utilise the following **prompting questions** to initiate conversations about the episode, checking for comprehension.

- *“Why did Old Dog eat Monti's sandwich?”*
 - (Answer: Old Dog ate Monti's sandwich because dropped it when he tripped).
- *“How did Levi help Monti when Old Dog ate his sandwich?”*
 - (Answer: Levi gave Monti his apple, and Monti loves green apples).
- *“Why did Little J feel jealous when Levi gave Monti the apple?”*
 - (Answer: Little J felt jealous because he also loves green apples and wondered if Monti was now Levi's new best friend).
- *“What did Little J think when he heard Levi tell Monti that he was funny?”*
 - (Answer: Little J thought that Levi must be Monti's new best friend because Levi used to say Little J was funny).
- *“Why did Little J feel scared and excluded when Levi and Monti climbed the school equipment?”*
 - (Answer: Little J felt scared because he is afraid of heights and felt left out when Levi and Monti were high up and having fun).
- *“Who did Big Cuz invite over to her house on the weekend?”*
 - (Answer: She invited Sissy).
- *“What did Big Cuz and Sissy say they were going to make on the weekend?”*
 - (Answer: They said they were going to make honeycomb toffee)
- *“Why did Big Cuz have to uninvite Sissy?”*
 - (Answer: Big Cuz had to uninvite Sissy because Nanna already had plans - they were all going to drive out bush to see the Aunties, and there wouldn't be enough room in the car for everyone and the groceries).
- *“How did Little J react when Levi arrived at Nanna's house?”*
 - (Answer: Little J ignored Levi because he was still experiencing feelings of jealousy).
- *“Why did Nanna ask Little J to share his sandwich with Levi?”*
 - (Answer: Because Levi's sandwich was covered in ants so he couldn't eat it anymore)
- *“Why did Little J not want to share his sandwiches with Levi?”*
 - (Answer: Little J didn't want to share because he was still having big feelings of jealousy about Levi and Monti being friends.
- *“What reason does Little J give to Nanna about why he wouldn't share his sandwiches with Levi?”*
 - (Answer: He said thought they might be stuck out there forever and needed all his sandwiches).



- *“Do you think that it’s okay to make up excuses? Or should Little J just share his sandwiches anyway?”*
 - (Answer: The best thing to do is to share, to make sure everyone gets to eat).

- *“What did Little J learn from watching the ants?”*
 - (Answer: Little J learned about teamwork because ants work together to carry food back to their colony).
- *“How did Little J’s feelings change after learning about teamwork from the ants?”*
 - (Answer: Little J decided to ask Levi to dig together with him, showing he wanted to work as a team).
- *“What did Nanna say about finding warumpi (bush ants)?”*
 - (Answer: Nanna said that they never know how long it will take to find warumpi, and that’s part of the fun).
- *“How did Little J feel about sharing the honey ants after trying them?”*
 - (Answer: Little J felt good about sharing the honey ants and let Levi have the first taste).
- *“When Big Cuz did her presentation at school all about honey ants, what did Sissy say about joining next time?”*
 - (Answer: Sissy asked if she could come along next time and said that honey ants sounded even yummiier than honeycomb toffee).

“Have you ever felt jealous of some of your friends making friends with each other? Would you like to share what happened? How did you get over those feelings of jealousy?”

We encourage you to invite children into intentional conversations to explore the key learning experiences or interests arising from the viewing of this episode. Some of these conversations may be extended to become inquiry projects.

For this episode discussions could also be based around:

- What kind of ants or bugs are edible
- Making sure you only do these kinds of digging activities with an adult’s guidance, because you could easily destroy the ants’ nest/home.
- Different kinds of yum treats the kids might make at home (like honeycomb toffee etc).
- Different times when teamwork has been necessary to get a job done (it could be good to recall a time where your class has worked together - like tidying up after an activity - and compare that to ants).

The Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia, titled "Belonging, Being & Becoming," aims to support early childhood educators in extending and enriching children’s learning from birth to five years and through the transition to school.

Based on the principles and practices outlined in the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) for Australia, here are some suggested ways in which you can connect children to their local context, that align with the document and can teach children about the world around them, encouraging collaboration, and building a sense of belonging.



Connect to the local context:

Because this episode features the word warumpi, it's important to research whether or not these ants exist in the ecosystems in the Country you teach on. Similarly, 'warumpi' is a Luritja word, a language which may not belong to the Country you're teaching on. This is an opportunity to find words from the local language(s) for different kinds of ants, which you may be able to teach the children if you have sought permission from local community members. Be sure never to make the assumption that every First Nations person knows their language, as the impacts of colonisation mean many languages are in their reawakening phase, and therefore not every person will have this knowledge. Language is a very sensitive topic, due to the violence inherent in settler colonialism, so be sure to tread gently when seeking this information.

You might also like to consult with the local First Nations community to have a deeper understanding of ants and cultural significance, and how these have changed, or remained the same in response to colonisation. As well as this, it's important to teach young children about responsibilities to care for these creatures, so you might find partnerships between local community, National Parks and other environmental protection organisations to model to the children how ants and other parts of these ecosystems are being protected (in alignment with the Cross Curriculum Priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures *Version 8.4*).