



EARLY CHILDHOOD

EPISODE 10: PARTY PLANS



Synopsis: Big Cuz blames Little J when her party plans go wrong - but maybe it can still be a happy birthday - for everyone.

This episode is about birthdays. It's Big Cuz's birthday coming up, and Little J spontaneously announces to the class that there is going to be a birthday party on the weekend, and everyone is invited. Big Cuz seems uncomfortable about it at the start but ends up being into the idea. Later, Little J is helping Big Cuz with the decorations and the invitations. Big Cuz tells Little J to copy exactly what she wrote on the first invitation, but unfortunately, she writes the wrong start time. Little J does what he's told and copies all the invites exactly. Because of the mistake, no one comes at midday and Big Cuz thinks everyone has forgotten about her party. Initially she is angry at Little J, but then takes responsibility for her mistake.

During this episode, the kids also find out that Nanna doesn't know her exact birthday but goes on to explain that Country tells her when it's her birthday - it's when the river water is warming up, when the baby finches are leaving their nests, and when the wattle is blooming. At Big Cuz's birthday party by the river, Big Cuz realises Country is telling her it's also Nanna's birthday at that time too!

There are opportunities to use this episode and activities to educate young children about Indigenous Knowledges, seasonal changes, reading/listening to and learning from Country, 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 prompting questions incorporate the key elements of the EYLF, such as cultural responsiveness, and holistic approaches to child development, while also fostering an appreciation for teamwork, owning up to mistakes, working as a team when planning a party, and listening to and learning from Country. They also leverage the content from this episode to enhance children's screen literacy and engagement.

You may choose to utilise the following **prompting questions** to initiate conversations about the episode, checking for comprehension. These questions will help young children understand the episode and connect its themes to their own experiences, fostering empathy and practical understanding.

Comprehension Questions

- *“What special event is happening in this episode?”*
 - (Answer: Big Cuz’s birthday party is happening).
- *“Why does Big Cuz feel uncomfortable about the party at first?”*
 - (Answer: Big Cuz feels uncomfortable because she doesn’t like everyone looking at her and is worried about the party).
- *“What mistake does Little J make on the invitations?”*
 - (Answer: Little J copies the wrong time for the party because Big Cuz accidentally wrote '1' instead of '12').
- *“How does Big Cuz react when no one arrives at the party on time?”*
 - (Answer: Big Cuz thinks no one is coming and feels upset at first).
- *“What does Nanna say about why she doesn’t know her exact birthday?”*
 - (Answer: Nanna says she waits for Country to tell her when it’s her birthday, based on natural signs like the river water warming up and the baby finches leaving their nests).
- *“What does Big Cuz realise about the timing of her birthday and Nanna’s birthday?”*
 - (Answer: Big Cuz realises that her birthday is the same day as Nanna’s birthday).
- *“How does Little J help with the party planning?”*
 - (Answer: Little J helps with decorations, making invitations, and suggesting ideas for the party).
- *“What does Nanna say is more important than having a perfect party?”*
 - (Answer: Nanna says that it’s more important to have friends and family celebrate together, and the party is special because of the people, not because it’s perfect).
- *“What does Levi bring to the party, and why is it a mistake?”*
 - (Answer: Levi brings a plate without any food because he didn’t understand that "bring a plate" means to bring something to share with everyone).
- *“How do the kids find out it’s also Nanna’s birthday?”*
 - (Answer: Big Cuz explains to the kids that the river water is warming, the baby finches are flying, and the wattle is blooming, which are signs that it’s also Nanna’s birthday).

Questions Tying Themes to Children's Experiences

“Have you ever planned a party for someone? What did you do to get ready?”

“How do you feel when there’s a mistake in something you’re excited about? What do you do to fix it?”

“Can you think of a time when you felt uncomfortable about something, like Big Cuz did with the party? What did you do?”

“What are some ways you can tell when something special is happening, like Nanna using signs from nature to know her birthday?”

EYLF

Episode 10: Party Plans

Resources developed by Dakota Jericho Smith with special thanks to Priscilla Reid-Loynes, whose contributions to this and previous seasons have been integral to this work.

For show credits and more info, [click here](#)

For teachers' resources from previous seasons, [click here](#)



“Why is it important to share with others at a party? Have you ever shared something at a party? What did you share?”

“How can you help someone feel better if they’re upset about a mistake or something not going as planned?”

“What makes a birthday or special event memorable for you? Is it the decorations, the food, or the people?”

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:

- Their favourite party games
- Their favourite party foods
- Whether or not they’re aware of what Country is doing/saying on their birthdays
- You may like to utilise a seasonal calendar if one has been designed with the local community, and place children’s birthdays on the calendar. This will help children begin to understand Country more deeply if they can understand what Country is doing/saying when their birthday comes around.

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:

As mentioned above, you’re encouraged to research if there has been a seasonal calendar developed for the Country you’re teaching on/with. There are many resources available online, including ones developed in collaboration with First Nations peoples, which highlight the differences of seasons across different Countries (as opposed to the four seasons in the Eurocentric model introduced through colonisation, which doesn’t reflect the realities of the diversity of seasons across this continent).

You might also like to consult with the local First Nations community to have a deeper understanding of changes in Country and any potential cultural significance associated with seasons. Some people may be able to comment on how these have changed, or remained the same in response to colonisation. As well as this, it’s important to teach young children about the world directly around them, rather than an introduced model of understanding seasons (in alignment with the Cross Curriculum Priorities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures *Version 8.4*).

