

SALTIE MUMMA



Windy Hollow Books
www.windyhollowbooks.com.au

Teachers' notes

Inspiration Behind the Story

I live in Darwin in the Northern Territory and around 300 saltwater crocodiles a year are captured by rangers in our harbour and relocated. 'Croc awareness' is a part of daily life. The saltwater crocodile is the most important totemic animal for the Larrakia traditional owners, in addition to being a tourist icon for Australia's north. People travel from all over the world to see our crocodiles!

Saltwater crocodiles are fascinating animals, they are apex predators and living dinosaurs, and much has been written about how ferocious and

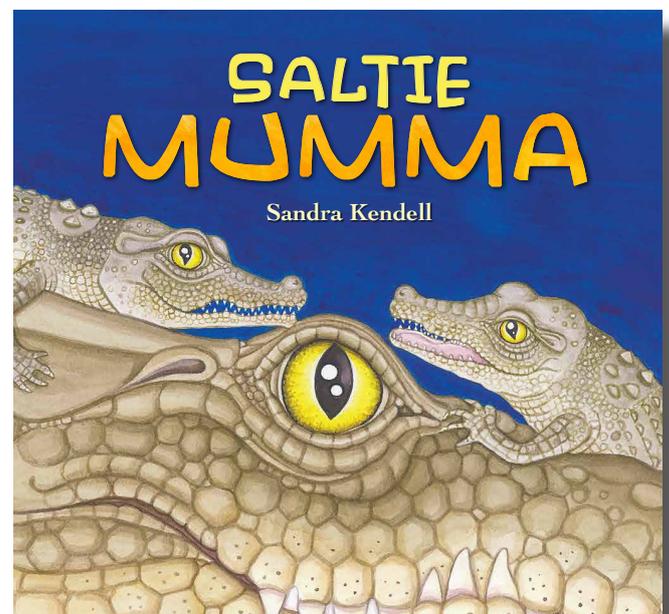
Activities

Before Reading

- What do you know about saltwater crocodiles?
- Looking at the cover of the book, how do the illustrations make you feel? Do the crocodiles look friendly? Dangerous? Excited?

By Sandra Kendell
Published by Windy Hollow Books

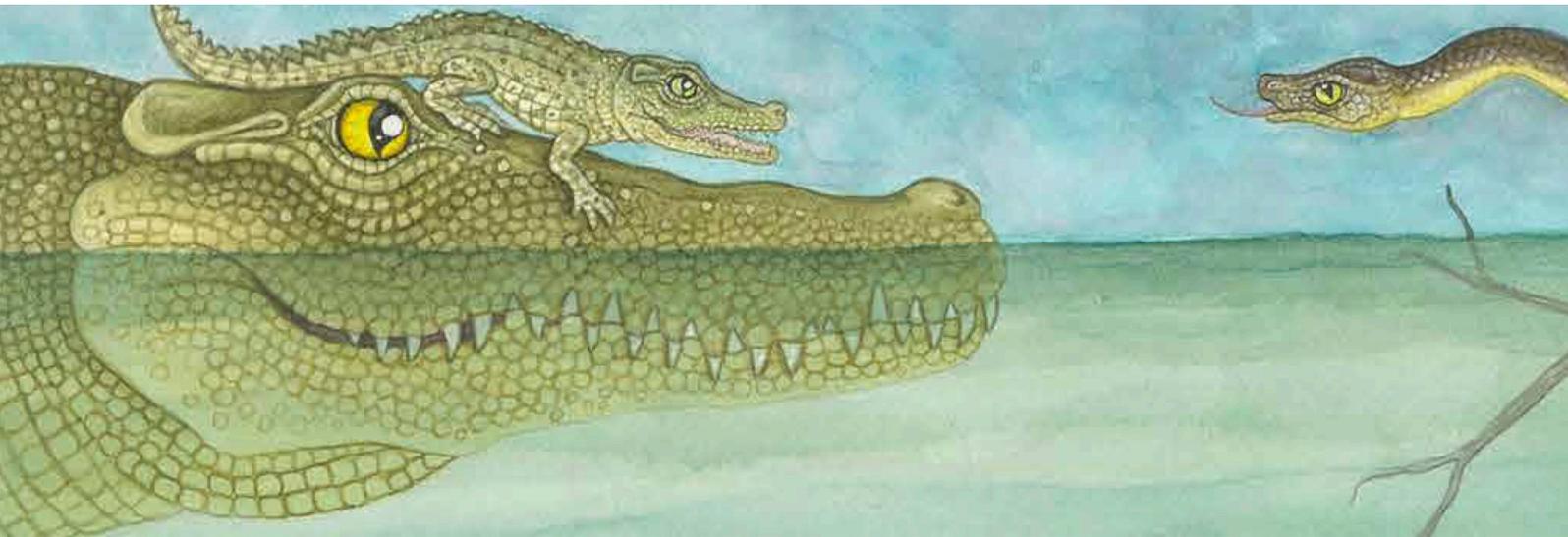
fearsome they are, but I wanted to show a less obvious side of the "Saltie" and focus on the maternal care she displays towards her offspring. The thought of a Mumma Saltie gently carrying her babies to the water in her mouth intrigues me as it seemed so incongruous compared to the general perception of these powerful reptiles. I like to encourage young readers to delve deeper into their understanding of native animals and also think about how their behaviour and biology relate to ecosystems.





After Reading

- What are some new things you have learnt about saltwater crocodiles?
- Were there any unusual facts that you learnt?
- Can you map where saltwater crocodiles are found in Australia?
- What more can you discover about saltwater crocodiles?
- What can you find out about the lifecycle of a saltwater crocodile?



Writing

- Using the author's language in bold, such as HUNGRY, CRANKY, LAZY etc, can you make charts that explain that behaviour.
- What are some other adjectives that the author may have been able to use to describe saltwater crocodile behaviours?
- Saltwater crocodiles are apex predators. What other animals are apex predators?
- Can you come up with a list of adjectives to describe your chosen apex predator?
- Using the author's style of narrative can you write a story about your chosen apex predator?
- Many of Sandra Kendell's books are set in the Top End of Australia. Can you find out more about the flora and fauna of this area? How does it differ to where you live?
- In the Top End you have to be careful where you swim because of the threat of saltwater crocodiles. What are some other threats to humans that can be found in different swimming areas in Australia?
- Sandra has used an illustration of the official sign warning people not to swim because of saltwater crocodiles. Can you design a new sign, either for saltwater crocodiles or another danger of your choice?