

# G'day, Koala!



The activities in this Programme link to the Squirrel Smile Awards helping the Squirrels learn about the world!

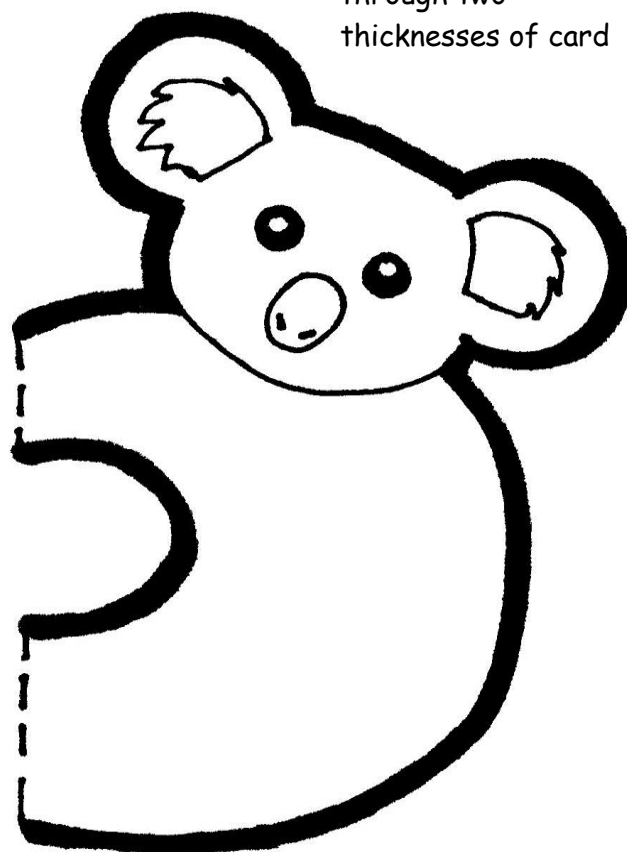
An introductory activity can be used as the Squirrels arrive at the meeting place – colouring or simple puzzles can keep children occupied until all the Drey arrives or use a 'joining-in' style game, such as 'The farmer wants a wife' or 'Duck, duck, goose' or a circle format ball game. Add snack time where necessary!

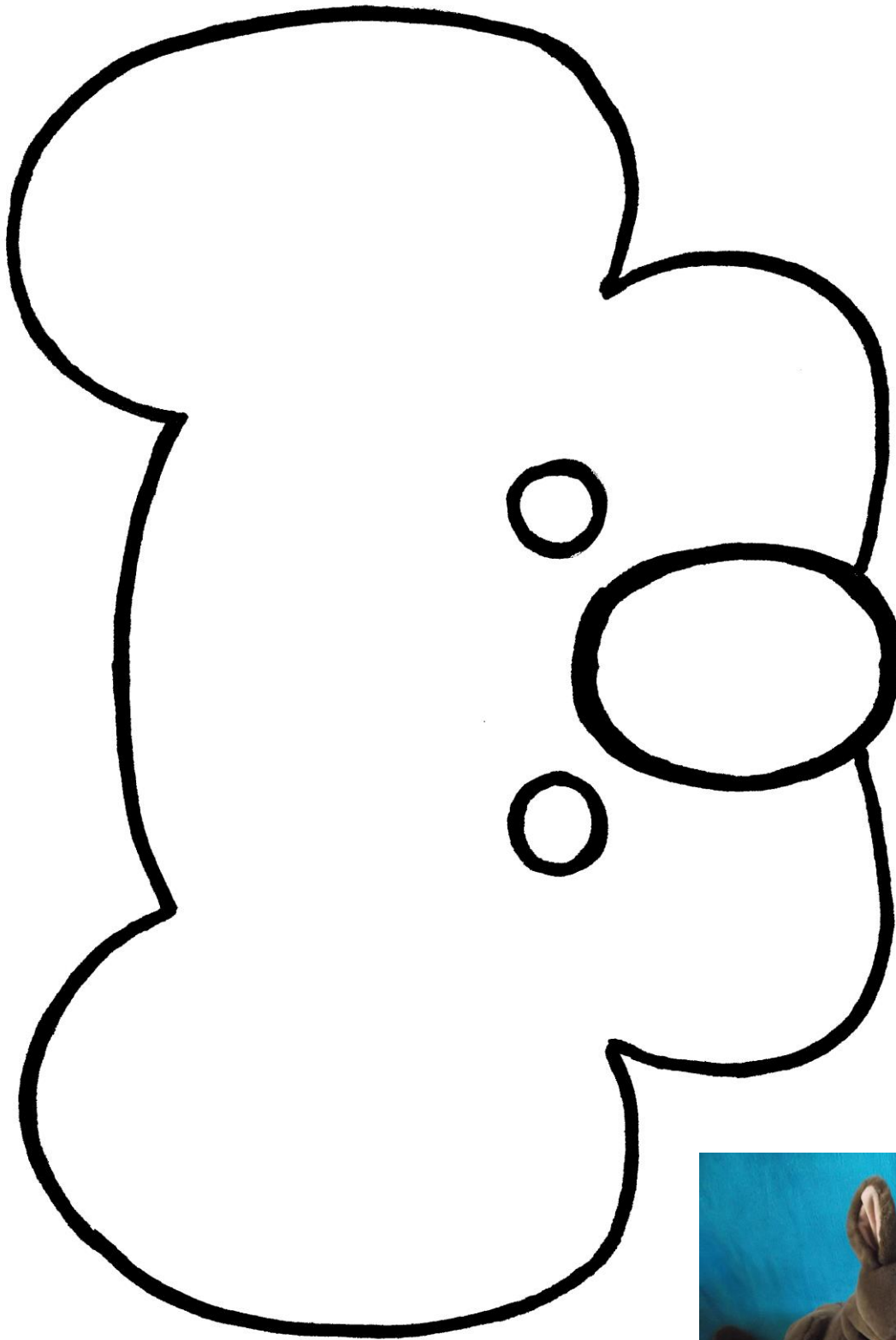
TIME (mins)	ACTIVITY	EQUIPMENT
5	Welcome, Register, Opening Ceremony, Introduction to Programme	
5	<b>GAME: Mer Kai</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Have fun with a traditional Australian game, played many years ago with a ball made from kangaroo or possum skin! A blown-up balloon can be substituted for the ball!!</i></li> <li>○ <i>The aim is to keep a balloon in the air for as long as possible</i></li> <li>○ <i>Divide into small groups with a balloon for each group</i></li> <li>○ <i>Watch out for bumps as Squirrels tend to keep their eye on the balloon and not each other!</i></li> </ul>	Inflated balloons
10	<b>STORY:</b> Special stories have come from a time called 'The Dreaming'; passed down through generations of native people by re-telling, singing and dancing. Read 'Strong Magic' from Usborne Stories from Around the World or use the version below, 'Up the Tree'.	Story
10	<b>ACTIVITY: Krafty Koala</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Enjoy making a koala themed craft to take home!</li> <li>○ Give each child a koala template to colour with crayons</li> <li>○ Secure a drinking straw to inside of folded paws and glue the two sides of the koala together - a koala 'up the tree'!</li> </ul> <b>OR</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Give each child a koala mask template to colour</li> <li>○ Why not add some cotton wool or fluffy pet bedding to make the furry parts of the koala's ears! Add large size googly eyes!</li> <li>○ Attach a wooden lolly stick to make a masquerade style mask or attach to a card headband!</li> </ul>	Koala templates Coloured drinking straws Crayons Selotape/Glue <b>OR</b> Koala mask templates Crayons, art materials Glue/sticky fixers Googly eyes Large wooden lolly sticks or strips of card for headbands
10	<b>GAME: Aussie Animals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>Mime the actions of some of Australia's special animals!</i></li> <li>○ <i>The Leader tells the Squirrels a bit about some of the unusual animals and how they move</i></li> <li>○ <i>The Squirrels can try to hop like a kangaroo, slither like a snake, walk slowly like a wombat, run very fast like a numbat, curl up in a ball like an echidna, pretend to climb up a tree like a koala!</i></li> </ul>	Pictures of Australian animals – make up actions for the pictures available

10	<p><b>GAME: Skippyroo Kangaroo!</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>The Drey sits in a circle on the floor</i></li> <li>○ <i>Choose one Squirrel to be 'Skippyroo', who sits in the centre of the circle with their eyes closed or blindfolded!</i></li> <li>○ <i>The Drey chant together, 'Skippyroo, kangaroo! Dozing in the sun.'</i></li> <li>○ <i>The Leader choses a Squirrel to touch 'Skippyroo' and say, 'Guess who's caught you, just for fun!'</i></li> <li>○ <i>Skippyroo has to guess which Squirrel touch them and said the rhyme!</i></li> <li>○ <i>Make sure everyone gets a turn to be 'Skippyroo'!</i></li> </ul>	None
5	<p><b>GAME: Kai</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <i>This is a version of 'Keepy Uppy', originally played with the dark red oval shaped fruit from the Kai Tree</i></li> <li>○ <i>The Squirrels could stand in a circle and throw the ball to each other while the Leader counts. Stop counting when the ball is dropped.</i></li> <li>○ <i>Try again and see if the ball can be thrown for longer without being dropped!</i></li> </ul>	Soft football or soft rugby ball
5	Closing, Home	

## Krafty Koalas

Print on lightweight card. Fold card along dotted line and cut round black outline through two thicknesses of card





## Up the Tree

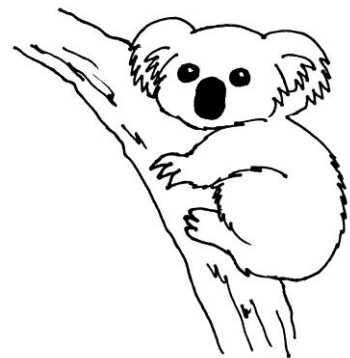
Once upon a time; long, long ago there was a little boy who had no-one to look after him. He lived in a village in the wild Australian bush. He had no home or family and because he had no-one to look after him he had to eat the scraps of food left over by the villagers and he slept curled up under a tree wrapped up in an old threadbare blanket.

The little boy was often naughty and played tricks on the villagers. This made them cross with him and he often hid high up in a eucalyptus or gum tree. He would climb up the tree and sit on a branch with his arms wrapped around the funny papery trunk.

The villagers often went hunting in the bush - it was thirsty work in the hot sun. The villagers took it in turn to fill wooden pots with water and leave them ready for their return. The pots were always out of reach of the little boy just in case he got up to his tricks! One day, the villager who filled the water pots left them on the ground by mistake. When the little boy saw the pots he thought that he would play a trick on the villagers and hide their water pots. He would also have plenty to drink and he wouldn't need to walk all the way to the stream or chew gum leaves to quench his thirst! One by one he carried the water pots up high into the tree and then he hid among the branches with his arms wrapped around the tree trunk.

When the villagers returned they were tired and thirsty - they looked for their water pots but couldn't find them anywhere! Suddenly they looked up and saw the naughty little boy high up in the tree with all their water pots! They were very angry and shouted at him to come down.

The little boy was frightened because they were very cross; he was scared to climb down so he stayed up the tree for weeks and weeks. It was very hot and he drank all the water, he was so thirsty he had to eat the leaves of the eucalyptus tree. After a while soft grey fur began to grow on his skin and gradually he began to turn into a little koala! He only crept down from the tree at night when the villagers were asleep and no-one ever saw him!



## What is a koala?

Koalas are often called bears because they look a little like teddy bears, but they are actually marsupials; this means that the mummy koalas carry their babies in a pouch or fold of skin on their tummy.

The koala gets its name from an ancient native word meaning 'no drink' because it gets nearly all the moisture it needs from the Eucalyptus or gum leaves it eats. It only drinks when ill or if there is a drought and the leaves are dried up.

Their fur is thick and usually ash grey with a tinge of brown in places.

Koalas live in eucalyptus or gum trees and they only eat the leaves of certain types of these trees. They are very particular about the leaves they eat! Sometimes they climb down to the ground and eat a little bit of soil; this helps their stomach digest the eucalyptus leaves!

Koala Babies are called Joeys; they are about the size of a large jellybean when they are born!

## What is a kangaroo?

Kangaroos are also marsupials and carry their babies, Joeys, in their pouch. They hop on very strong hind legs and its great big tail helps it to balance!

## What is a wombat?

Wombats are marsupials too! They have very strong front legs and claws for digging burrows.

They hide in the burrows from their enemies during the day and come out at night to eat grass and leaves.

## What is a numbat?

Numbats are small stripey marsupials. They are very busy during the day feeding on termites (a kind of insect like an ant). They lick up the termites with their long sticky tongues!

## What is a platypus?

The platypus is probably Australia's most unusual animal. It has fur, webbed feet and a bill! It lives in rivers and creeks and eats worms!

## What is an echidna?

The echidna is covered with long spines, if it is frightened it rolls into a round spiky ball! It eats ants and termites and licks them up with its long sticky tongue!

Australia is home to all sorts of unusual birds, snakes, insects and bats.

