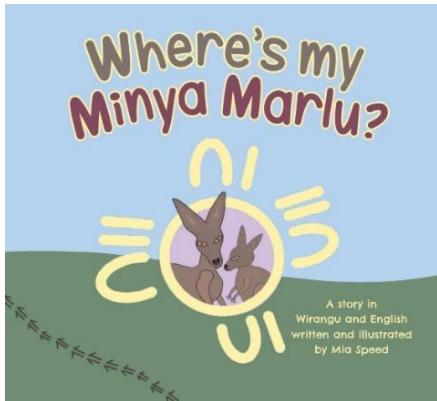


# MEDIA RELEASE

20 November 2024

**Student Mia Speed writes children's book in her Wirangu language that hops into our hearts!**



On 22 October, talented 18-year-old student Mia Speed returned to her former Lincoln Gardens Primary School in Port Lincoln, South Australia to launch her first children's book written in her Wirangu language.

Inspired by her nieces and nephews who wanted to learn more about their language and culture, the book was created when she was 16 as part of a school research project, with a goal of providing a Wirangu language resource for kids in her Community.

## Author and illustrator Mia Speed said:

*"Writing a book in my traditional Aboriginal language holds significant meaning for several reasons including cultural preservation to help my Community and younger children to preserve part of their language; as an educational resource to be used in schools to teach both the Wirangu language itself and the cultural context; and promoting bilingual education that values Indigenous knowledge."*

***Where's my Minya Marlu?*** is the story about a mother marlu (kangaroo), who is looking for her minya marlu (little kangaroo/joey). Published by the Indigenous Literacy Foundation (ILF), the book was launched with ILF Ambassador Shelley Ware, teachers, students and Community members.

## Lincoln Gardens Principal Sandra Spencer said:

*"We could see at a young age that Mia had the potential to achieve whatever she set out to do."*

*"Mia could have stopped at her research project, but she was determined to have her book published – that takes a lot of courage and determination."*

*"It's amazing what she has achieved. Mia wanted to produce a book in her language that she could read to her nieces and nephews and now she is able to pass that on to the next generation of young readers."*

*please see over...*

Available online now [shop.ilf.org.au](https://shop.ilf.org.au) and where all good books are sold  
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*“Mia is an inspiring young woman that other young people can relate to. She has opened their eyes to what is possible.”*

**ILF Ambassador and proud Yankunyatjara and Wirangu woman Shelley Ware said:**

*“Congratulations Mia Speed on sharing our beautiful culture and Wirangu language in this stunning children's book. Super proud of you.*

*“Hearing Mia share Wirangu language as she read her book and watching all of the children hanging off every word was extra special. Every adult in the room was bursting with pride, tears flowed with every Wirangu word spoken aloud.”*

The Wirangu language is traditionally spoken by the Wirangu people, living on the west coast of South Australia. This is the first book to emerge from the ILF's partnership with the Far West Language Centre. Mia hopes this book will help to revitalise language for the next generation and said language was part of her Aboriginal identity. She hopes to create more books and is currently studying at University in Adelaide.

***Where's my Minya Marlu?* by Mia Speed. Board Book, rrp: \$14.99, 16 pages, Picture storybook ages 1-4. Language: Wirangu and English**



**Above:** Jennifer Schlesak holding the new book while her author Auntie Mia reads for the younger students.

**Left:** Lincoln Gardens School Principal Sandra Spencer with Mia Speed, showing the cover of the new book, *Where's my Minya Marlu?*

**Images: ILF Supplied**

[The Indigenous Literacy Foundation \(ILF\)](https://www.ilf.org.au) is a national charity working with remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities across Australia. They are Community-led, responding to requests from remote Communities for culturally relevant books, including early learning board books, resources, and programs to support Communities to create and publish their stories in languages of their choice.

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