

# Crow Feathers

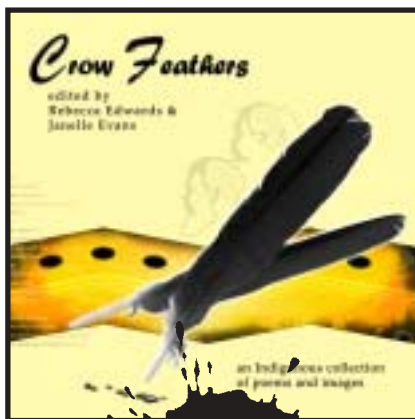
*an Indigenous collection of poems and images.*

## **Ideas for using the book in your school:**

- ⊙ Created almost entirely by Indigenous people, this book is equally appropriate for Indigenous and non-Indigenous readers.
- ⊙ Give a copy away as a reward for excellence, effort or cooperation or as a gift to a visitor.
- ⊙ Read a poem each week in assembly, pastoral care, or an English, Social Science or Art class.
- ⊙ Invite a local poet, writer or artist to come in and read their own work and talk about their writing - perhaps it could be one of these artists. Black Ink Press can give you a list of contact details.
- ⊙ Read through the book to see how many different topics and different viewpoints are represented.
- ⊙ Talk about the meaning of *Crow Feathers* as a title, (see the Introduction) and discuss the cover design of the book. What does it communicate?
- ⊙ Reading from a class set, take a poem or an image as a basis for discussion, or compare two poems for language, rhythm, tone and theme.
- ⊙ Explore themes such as incarceration, healing wounds, finding paths in life, exploring identity, valuing the environment, fear of ghosts, secrecy, history, abuse and stereotyping.

- ⊙ The artworks and poems in this book were made independently of each other. Try creating an illustration for one of the poems, or writing a poem about one of the images.
- ⊙ Take a poem or an image as a model for the students' own work, pointing out strong features. Or write a poem as a response to one of these poems.
- ⊙ As a group project, create your own anthology or collection. Create a line drawing for each poem, by the writer or by a different person. Don't use clip art. Allocate these tasks amongst the group: thinking of a title, design of the cover, layout and design of the book, order of the poems, creating a table-of-contents, typing and editing of the poems, writing an introduction and cover blurb, writing mini biographies of the contributors, proof-reading the lot before printing or photo-copying. That's enough variety to keep a class going for a while!
- ⊙ Perhaps a local professional writer, editor or graphic designer would accept an invitation to give some advice on your "publication".

**Jeanie Adams (Project Coordinator)**



**Black  
Ink**

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## **The Cliche: Poetry Enemy Number One.**

A cliché is an expression or idea that's been used so many times, by so many people, that it doesn't belong to anyone anymore. It's ragged. It's flat and dull. People think they hear it, but they don't really listen anymore. It's easy. Unfortunately for poets, a word, line, or rhythm can't afford to be easy. We use clichés in speech all the time, but they don't belong in your poem.

In your poem, you are going beyond conversation, you are reflecting, searching for a way to say something that no-one has ever said before. Whether it's an original thought that no-one's ever had, or put into words; or a new way of looking at something that a lot of people have expressed or written about; in your poem you are saying it **FOR THE FIRST TIME**.

Poetry is about renewing the idea, however small or big it is, so that people can remember to hear it and feel it for themselves.

**Rebecca Edwards**



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## BLACK INK PRESS

*To the Principal, Librarian and Counsellors,*

Are you looking for books that are both accessible and thought-provoking for your students? A book your Indigenous students will read? Our first publication, **Crow Feathers**, warmly endorsed by well-known writer Boori Pryor, is lively, challenging and moving.

Enclosed is information about how you can order it.

If you live in some regional areas of Queensland, you may be lucky enough to have some of the book's contributors living nearby. Or you could invite your own local writers to read poetry and give talks and interviews. Please email us for names.

As a new Indigenous Publishing venture, we have a number of other projects in the pipeline. For example, dictionaries of local Indigenous languages, an autobiography, a bush tucker book and several picture story books. We also have in development an interactive CD-Rom for language-learning.

If you are interested in receiving information about these titles, please contact us at the above address.

Yours sincerely,

Jeanie Adams, Project Coordinator.

PS – We have enclosed some teaching ideas – PTO.