

## Story Grounds 2

Talk about: Country. What's important about our country/any country.

Country where we were born.

Totems – Your spirit is in these totems, you protect them

Aboriginal Law (totems) is how we see the country

Write about the aspect of country. Could be about the animals, or a person that helped you connect to the country

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### **Snake**

Walking through the bush, hearing the crunch of eucalyptus leaves, a snake slithers alongside my ankles.

We are taught to be cautious of these animals, that they would strike before you had a chance to engage, but we are not so different from these creatures.

Our outwards appearance was one to be feared. People wanted to contain or kill us so they didn't face the dangers our otherness possessed.

Much like a snake, we shed our skin when we grow, letting our fresh scales experience the new direction of the wind, but no amount of shedding would be able to remove the scar from our flesh, each layer of skin would bare this mark as time goes on, a physical reminder of our shared past.

A snake only attacks when its threatened, when it no longer feels safe on its land. It curls around the trees and branches holding tight and wishing not to be ripped off its trunk.

When men took the fangs from its mouth, they believed they had changed the snake. Taking away what it knows, and hoping that will change who they are. But a snake is still a snake with fangs or not.

As I continue walking I find myself envious of the snake, for it slinks through the ground, feeling the dirt and leaves and sticks that make this land home, and despite the harsh judgements it faces, it still slithers.

Words by Riley Margosis