

I shared my middle grade book *I Am Jack*, with the older girls. They read the book aloud and I was amazed that they enjoyed a story that was so different to their lives. When I asked them about school, they said that:

***they loved school, because they could learn.  
But they loved community more than school.***

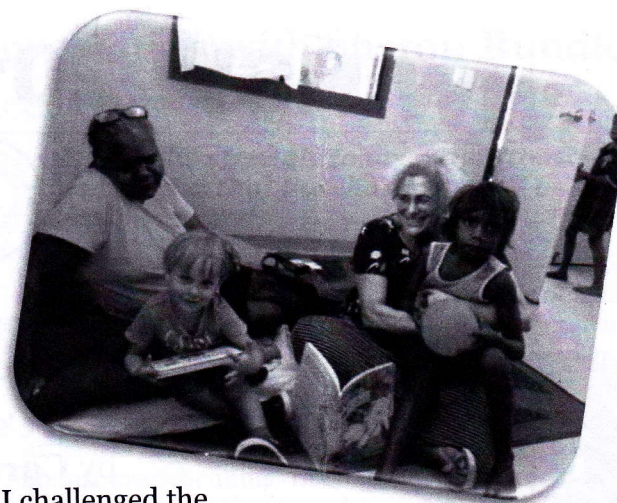
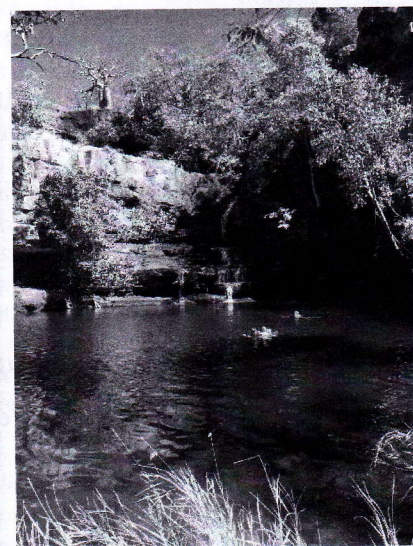
Eleven year old Metaya told me, her favourite things were, 'Going bush and down to the creek. We catch crocodiles there. It's really good.' She meant to eat. Her girlfriend Tremaine agreed, but she liked it even more when all the family and extended family, went hunting. Kangaroo tails and goanna's legs were everyone's favourite. All the girls agreed that visiting town was boring, as there's nothing to do there, unlike in community. It gave me a new perspective. They didn't want me to leave, and I didn't want to leave either.

### **My accommodation was a donga.**

I got the best one, because it just fitted a double bed. The other dongas were singles. It's a container dumped in the middle of The Kimberley with a door and window punched through it. Showers and toilets are in another donga block and the kitchen is a lean-to with limited power. We had vegemite, so it was like being home. There was great camaraderie sharing our experiences as the sun set and we ate some very basic pasta. We all pitched in to cook it.



I swam in a water hole, where the spirit of Wandjina the supreme creator was painted at the dawn of creation, on the rock face [see front cover]. Chased a bush turkey unsuccessfully through the bush. Watched Kim, the Indiana Jones, develop the respect of the elders. Stood in awe, at the enormous skies with their myriad of colours. Visited *Books in Homes* My Mob playgroups as well, where children and mothers were incredibly excited as the books arrived for the children to take home.



I challenged the year 7 to 10 students at St Mary's Secondary College in Broome to become agents of change. When they support *Books in Homes*, it brings books to indigenous children, and they create positive change for the children, themselves and Australia.

I had hoped to break a leg, so I'd be saved in an RFD heroic flight to the local hospital in Derby or Darwin. No such luck.

As I waved good-bye to Indiana Jones and flew over the vast outback home to Sydney, I was different. The land and our first Australians had become embedded inside me.

**Sharing story with the children and opening another pathway for them to tell their own stories, was moving and filled with hope.**

Susanne Gervay  
[www.sgervay.com](http://www.sgervay.com)

World Vision Australia -

<https://www.worldvision.com.au>

Books in Homes Australia -

<http://www.booksinhomesaustralia.com.au/>