

# [Maybe tomorrow essay sample](https://assignbuster.com/maybe-tomorrow-essay-sample/)

Storytelling is an integral part of life for Indigenous Australians. From an early age, storytelling plays a vital role in educating children. The book MAYBE TOMORROW narrated by Boori Pryor with Meme McDonald was out March 1998. It is an intimate, provocative and deeply moving autobiography of one Aboriginal man’s life, which is author’s life, his successes and failures, triumphs and tragedies, told in a compelling, honest and uplifting way. Boori is an engaging performer and a terrific public speaker. He performs regularly for school children. Everyone he meets is touched by his message of reconciliation, respect and tolerance.

Boori Pryor is an educator and travels around Australia, performing and talking to school and community groups about his life experiences and Aboriginal way. Why he is doing this, is the basis of this autobiography.

Boori’s people are from north-east Queensland and he comes from a large family of seven sisters and three brothers. Two brothers and one sister have committed suicide and his thirteen-year-old nephew was killed in a car crash.

These tragedies would be enough to embitter a lesser person, however Boori, who had his own promising career as a DJ in Melbourne, gave it up to carry on the work of his passionate brother, Paul. He says that from school he ‘ learnt the tools to survive in a white world’. And from his family, he ‘ learnt the tools to survive in the black world’. In his present career, he uses the tools from both worlds to ‘ shape my inner self and then to communicate this to other people.

By taking on this role, Boori seeks to connect himself with his land and his people. We realise reconciliation is taking place on may fronts: Boori is coming to terms with his personal losses; reclaiming his Aboriginality; and dedicating his life to reconciliation, because he believes that this is the key to a harmonious future.

Boori’s experiences in schools are interwoven into his story. He draws in stories about his family and offers some practical suggestions for facilitating reconciliation. His language is standard English yet there are turns of phrase and expression and a looseness about the telling that make it distinctly Aboriginal.

Pryor wins audience confidence in the power of his storytelling through his experiences with the kite hawks. He had been dancing the Kite-Hawk dance at a school and on his way home a pair of kite hawks followed him and hovered over his car for several minutes. To him their cries were saying, “ Don’t forget. Don’t forget. Don’t forget us” to aboriginal people it is a message from the old people saying “ keep going”.

Relating the response of kids to his stories is another effective technique he uses to achieve his purpose in Maybe tomorrow. For example when one girl was crying and she asked “ How come u dun hate us white people?” Boori answered the lil girl question in a very calm way “ well, it’s not ur fault all that happened. But it will be ur fault if u dun listen & learn from the past. Anger and hate will destroy you.” Another girl put up her hand and said “ how can we help?” Boori said “ well u are helping by listening” the girl put her head down and cried.

Effective storytelling is a skilled form of communication. Pryor uses the conventions of his own culture in which storytelling is an oral tradition. He paints his body for the performance, dances and plays instruments like the didgeridoo while telling his stories to children. In a sense he deals with two audiences, the readers of his book and the children to whom he tells stories. For both audiences he relates true incidents using first person narrative, concrete sensory details, analogies, colloquial language and dialogue.

By painting his body Pryor dramatically re-creates the way Aborigines tell stories in their community so that audiences discover what life is like for his people. For instance, the story of Paul dancing in the city…use of traditional instruments…and the story of the kookaburra dance demonstrate about the Aboriginal people and their affinity to the native fauna.

Concrete sensory details bring Pryor’s story alive and help the audience visualise events and issues important to his theme…for example the description of his Uncle Peter and Aunty Milda’s shelter in Happy Valley…and Uncle Henry’s description of his youth as a stolen child and the photos help the reading audience to visualise the people he talks about.

Pryor often uses analogies to make his audience better understand certain aboriginal issues. He adapts his analogy by relation it to the experience of his audience. For instance, the analogy about the Aborigines who dared to speak out against the government and the analogy Pryor use to explain how aboriginal people are misrepresented.

Much of the message is conveyed through anecdotes relating stories of his meetings and interactions with teenagers throughout Australia when he has performed tribal dances for them.

Part of the charm of Pryor’s storytelling is the use of colloquial language and dialogue. Through this convention he emphasises the importance of preserving their culture. Also on such occasions he abandons the conventions and speaks directly about the difficulties Aboriginals have had to keep their culture in the face of hostile and even violent opposition. The technique of speaking directly to his audience works and the students join him in the dance on the floor.

Although it is his first book, Boori Pryor is a successful wordsmith. With his melodious voice, he narrates his own story. Boori isn’t a bitter or angry man. Instead he appeals to the heart, for understanding and for true communication between all races. His strong values are evident throughout the book as he explains the forces which have moulded and shaped his life including traditional Aboriginal beliefs.

Overall, Boori Pryor uses the conventions of narration very well to achieve his purpose. He describes himself as a “ grain of sand in this land we call Australia”. The effectiveness of his work is summed up in the quotation on the cover of the book “ I can see right there in front of me the face of a nation changing”.