Food and hunting
Indigenous Australians were traditionally hunter-gatherers. This means that they moved around the country either on foot or in canoes to search for food. They knew how to track their environment and read the different signs that told them about nature. When they found food, they communicated with other groups using a bullroarer. This is a flat piece of wood on a string, which makes a whirring noise when it is spun. The noise can be heard over long distances.

Men used weapons such as woomera (spears) and boomerangs when hunting for food.

Young people
As soon as children can walk, they learn to track their mother’s and siblings’ footprints. They also learn to recognise animal tracks.

Bushtucker
In Australia, food that is found in the wild is called bushtucker. Some Indigenous Australians still track and gather their food from the bush. Insects, snakes, lizards, honey ants and witchetty grubs (see photo) are all healthy foods. The people from nations who live near the coast eat shellfish, lobster, crab and mussels.

Tasty witchetty grubs are found in the roots of the witchetty bush.

Did you know?
The names of some native Australian animals have come from Indigenous Australian languages. Koala, kangaroo, wombat, wallaby, barramundi, budgerigar and kookaburra are all indigenous words that have entered the English language.

word bank
- canoe: light, narrow boat. Paddles are used to move it through the water.
- native: usually an animal or plant that lives or grows naturally in a certain country
- track: follow the trail of an animal, usually to catch it for food