

## Dreamtime

*This is a creation story about how the world began. It is a story told by Aborigines in Australia.*

**A**t the beginning of the world, in Dreamtime, it was dark. Nothing grew. Nothing moved. Everything was still and quiet. All the birds, animals and reptiles were still asleep under the ground.

Then one day, the Rainbow Serpent woke up and came to the surface. She began to have a look around. She was so huge that wherever she crawled she left behind a winding track. Wherever she stopped to sleep she left a deep hollow in the ground.

After a while the Rainbow Serpent got lonely. She wanted some company. She wanted someone to talk to. She decided to wake up all the other creatures.

The big-bellied frogs were the first to wake up. Their stomachs were full of water they had stored. They were so fat they could hardly hop. They looked so funny it made the Rainbow Serpent laugh to see them.

The world was a dry and barren place at this time. There were no rivers or lakes so no plants or trees could grow. As the Rainbow Serpent looked at the frogs she had an idea. She tickled the frogs' fat bellies with her forked tongue. At first it had no effect and then they began to smile. And then they began to giggle. And then they began to snigger. And then they began to howl with laughter. They laughed and laughed so much that the water inside them started to gush out everywhere. It began to fill the tracks and hollows left by the Rainbow Serpent. And still the water kept gushing out until all the rivers, lakes and seas in the world were formed.

Gradually plants and trees began to shoot up and grow where nothing had grown before. Instead of just brown rocks and sand the world became full of colour. One by one the creatures woke up and came sleepily up from under the ground.

At first the animals all got on well together. The world was a happy place. Everyone lived together in peace and harmony. But then things started to go wrong and they began to argue and fight and fall out with each other.

*A traditional Australian story*