

Should Kalayla forgive Arly?

Today we have a story to share with you. We'll be doing lots of thinking in question time, and we'll be hearing from other children, too.

Are you comfortable? Let's get started with a story about a family of emus – Father Emu, Kalayla and her brothers.

Father Emu is enjoying a walk with his young family while they chat about what they will do that day, when suddenly, he stops talking and spreads out his wings. He scoops Kalayla and her brothers under his wings. Kalayla doesn't know why, but she gets the feeling that something is very wrong, so she stays very still.



After a while, her father sits down on the ground and opens his wings again.

'Why did you do that, Father?' Kalayla asks.

'I saw an eagle flying overhead. He was looking for food, so I hid you to keep you safe', he explains. Then he adds, 'But the eagle will come back to try again. That is why, until you are bigger, you must always stay close to me. That's a rule – it's the most important rule of all.'

Kalayla and her brothers nod. They know the rule is important.

And they make sure to stay close to their father all the time, until the day that Kalayla sees the beautiful stone. At first, she didn't know what it was. She just noticed something on the edge of the creek that was shining and glinting and sparkling in the sunlight.

She wanted to get a closer look, so she took a few steps towards it and then another few steps, until before she knew it, she was on the edge of the creek, standing next to the most beautiful stone she had ever seen. It was grey, with little bits of silver, and when she nudged it with her beak, the silver bits sparkled.

She used her beak to pick it up. 'I'll take it back to show the others', she thought. And then she looked up into the sky. What do you think she saw?

It was an eagle - and it was swooping towards her. She threw herself into the nearest bush and sat very still, with the stone still in her beak. She sat there for a long time, until at last, she heard her father calling.

'It's safe now Kalayla', Father said. She scrambled free of the bush and saw that her brothers were crying. 'You were very lucky, Kalayla', Father Emu said, very sternly.

'I'm sorry, I'm sorry Father', Kalayla said. She was crying too. 'I didn't realise I'd walked so far - I didn't mean to do it.'

And when they were back at the nest, Kalayla showed them her stone. 'It's my lucky stone', Kalayla said. 'I'll keep it forever.'



Kalayla says sorry to her father. What is she sorry for?

Let's hear what some other children are thinking.



Freya: She's sorry for breaking the rule – the most important rule of all.

Seamus: And she's sorry for scaring her father.

Olive: She should say sorry to her brothers, because she scared them too.



Okay, should she still say sorry, even if she didn't mean to scare anyone?



James: Yes, because it was still her fault that they were scared, even if it was an accident.



Do you think that it was important that Kalayla say she was sorry?



Freya: Yes, it's important to say sorry when you have done something wrong – that shows that you know it was wrong.

Seamus: It's important to say sorry, but not if you are saying it because someone tells you that you have to say it.

James: Yeah, because you can say 'sorry', but not really be sorry.

Olive: And sometimes you can be sorry, but not actually say it – you just make it up to the person by being really nice to them.

Okay, let's see what happens next.

Kalayla decides to keep her stone in the nest. She thinks that will be a really safe place. And every day, Kalayla sees her stone glinting in the sunlight and that makes her feel very happy. But that was before the terrible thing happened.

That day, Father Emu had taken them looking for quandong fruit. It was a long walk to the quandong trees and by the time they got back to the nest, the sun had almost set. Kalayla looked towards the nest as she always did, hoping to see her stone sparkling in the last rays of the sun. But there was nothing to see. Where was the stone?

'Oh no!' she cried out. 'My stone - it's gone!' And just then she saw another emu. He was bigger than she was, but still not grown up, and he was running down the hill.

'Hey!' Kalayla called, 'Wait! Stop!' The emu turned his head to look at her, and as he did, Kalayla saw her lucky stone fall from his beak and tumble down the hill.

'That emu', she said, 'he stole my stone! I loved that stone, and now it's lost forever.' And she started to cry.

Later the next day, Kalayla was still feeling sad. And she was very angry with the emu-thief. 'Why would he do such a horrible thing?' she thought.

And then she saw the stone. It wasn't her stone - it wasn't glinting and sparkling. This stone was the colour of the sky. It was sitting in the nest, exactly where her lucky stone had been.

'Who could have put it there?' she wondered. Then she heard a twig snap and looked up. There was the other emu!

'Who are you?' Kalayla asked in an angry voice. And Father Emu asked, more gently. 'Where is your father - and your brothers and sisters?'

'My name is Arly', the emu said. 'And I don't know what's happened to my family'. He started to cry. 'There were dingoes – they chased us and we ran and ran. I was so frightened I just kept on running. That was days ago. And now I can't find my father or my brothers or sisters.'

'You must stay with us', Father Emu said. 'I will call the other emu families. They might know something.'

'Thank you', Arly said, in a small voice. He was looking down at the ground.

Then Kalayla spoke again. 'But why did you take my lucky stone?' she asked. This time her voice wasn't so angry.

'I just saw it glinting', Arly said. 'I wanted to see what it was - I didn't mean to keep it ... but I heard you coming, and I was scared ... and I ran away. I didn't know it was your lucky stone. I'm sorry ...'

Kalayla didn't know what to say. And then Arly picked up the blue stone in his beak and held it out to Kalayla.

'I know it's not the same' he said, 'but you can have my lucky stone.' Kalayla looked at the stone again. It was beautiful. 'We can share it' she said.



*Do you think Arly's really sorry for taking and losing Kalayla's stone?
Or is he just saying it?*



Seamus: Well, he said he was sorry, and he gave her his special stone to try and make up for taking and losing her stone. So, I think he really was sorry.

Olive: Sometimes people say they're sorry but don't always mean it – they just say sorry so they don't get into trouble. And maybe Arly had lots of stones like the blue one, so he didn't mind giving one away.



At the beginning, when Kalayla finds out that Arly has taken her stone, she is really angry with him. Do you think that she's still angry with him at the end of the story?



Freya: She's not angry anymore, because Arly said he was sorry and said that she could have his new stone.

James: And then she says that they can share the blue stone, so it sounds like she is not angry with him anymore.

Olive I don't think she was still angry because he explained how it happened – he didn't mean to do it.

Seamus: And when she found out that he's lost his family – she probably felt a bit sorry for him.



Do you think Kalayla should forgive Arly?



Freya: Yes, because he said he was sorry. And he'd probably be upset if she didn't forgive him.

Seamus: Well...she shouldn't forgive him just because he said sorry. You should only forgive people if you believe they really are sorry...and that they've learned a lesson and won't do it again.

Olive I don't think she should forgive him. He stole her stone – and he's sorry now because she caught him, but the stone was in a nest – he must have known it belonged to someone.

James: Yeah, maybe. Forgiving him would be like saying 'That's okay. Don't worry. We'll just pretend it never happened.'

Freya: But if Kalayla thinks Arly really is sorry, and she doesn't forgive him, it is sort of like she wants him to stay upset. It's sort of mean not to forgive someone.

We heard some really interesting ideas today! Thank you for joining us. You might like to keep thinking about whether it's important to say sorry when you have done something wrong and if so, why it's important. And, you might also think about how you decide whether to forgive someone who's said sorry to you. Have a talk to your family and friends about what they think, too.

Photo credit: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Immature_emu_-_profile.JPG by Peripitus This file is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported license. The photo has been modified by the addition of a stone in the emu's beak.

Thank you to our wonderful actors Freya, James, Olive and Seamus who helped us to hear different points of view. While sometimes these points of view might have reflected their own opinions, at other times they were asked to express an opposing view in order to help us think more deeply about the topic.