

Historias de arena

Un ejercicio práctico al hilo de la obra de Nancy D. Munn. (1973): *Walbiri iconography: graphic representation and cultural symbolism in a central Australian society*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

Elaborar una historia de arena. Conviene familiarizarse con el vocabulario y el significado de los diseños, elaborar a partir de ellos un guion y practicarlo previamente. Será necesario realizar la tarea por grupos.

Se adjunta un compendio del vocabulario que Nancy D. Munn ofrece para las historias de arena. Es conveniente revisar el capítulo 2, donde lo desarrolla, para familiarizarse con la práctica.

Durante la sesión práctica reflexionaremos sobre las diferentes dimensiones de lo que está en juego en este ejercicio: la comunicación, la relación el suelo y el entorno, la corporalidad, el tacto...



Imagen de un ritual warlpiri, del libro de Barbara Glowczewski, *Totemic Becomings* (Foto de Barbara Glowczewski), EN
<https://journals.openedition.org/anthrovision/2291>.

Vocabulario Walbiri

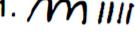
Figure 1. Sand story vocabulary

<i>Element</i>	<i>Range of meanings</i>	<i>Category description</i>
1.	Spear Fighting stick, when not upright in ground Digging stick Human actor lying down Animal, e.g., dog or kangaroo lying stretched out Fires when flanking each side of shade	Elongate, nonmobile objects, or actors in prone position (<i>ngunami</i> , lying down)
2.	Actor in motion—walking, running, dancing Spearing	Straight (nonwinding' or zigzag) movement of actors, or trajectory of object (spear)
3.	Actor(s) dancing	A high-stepping (<i>binyi</i> , men's dancing) or shuffling (<i>windi</i> , women's dancing) movement of actors in dancing
4.	Actor walking Actor dancing (one instance only)	The separate footprints of the actor as he or she moves along
5.	Actor lying down on side, as in sleep	Prone actor, body slightly curved, rather than straight as in 1
6.	Boomerangs	Curved implements (boomerangs). Occurs in plural form only
7.	Bough shade or shelter Line or grove of trees (see also 8)	Curved place markers partly surrounding or defining area within or near which actors can sit or lie

1–2. In the wider system the action line (2) and a line for elongate items tend to blend together. See Fig. 13, nos. 2, 3.

2–4. Arrows indicate motion. Footprints (4) are made by "walking" the fingertips along the sand. I have no record of this use of dot series to depict footprints in Walbiri ancestral designs, but they do appear in designs in other parts of central Australia. See Spencer and Gillen 1938:149; Roheim 1945:242–243.

Figure 1 (continued)

Element	Range of meanings	Category description
8.		Grove of trees
		Place marker used for trees only, usually for depicting shade in which a kangaroo is lying
9.		Hut
10.		Actor sitting Actor sitting
		Actor in static position, i.e., in contrast to 2, 3, 4, but not prone (in contrast with 1)
11.		Creek bed Blanket or "bed"
		A striated or somewhat crumpled space on which actor may rest
12.		Food or water scoop Baby carrier Shield Spear thrower Oval "bed" (<i>ngura</i>), hollow in ground for sleeping
		Oval, hollow containers, and related forms

5, 7, 9. Arcs vary considerably in deepness, but the tendency is for 9 to be a deep arc, and for 7 to be comparatively shallow, although there are instances in which 7 is fairly deep and overlaps visually with 9. In the wider system it is more difficult to make a distinction between these two "place" markers, and unfortunately I do not have explicit contrasts by informants to resolve this problem.

10. The preferred form of the U shape is a deep arc with a slightly pointed end (see Plate 5), but the shape may vary away from this expressed preference in the flow of narration. When a number of individuals sitting in a line are shown, slurring often takes place, and the U elements are joined together yielding a shape rather like that of no. 3. The more usual meaning for this element is "sitting," but it is also used to depict standing persons. In both cases the ends of the U shape are the legs. Occasionally, a shift from sitting to standing position is expressed by a sort of U mark in which the hand simulates the act of getting up from the sand.

11. The element is drawn with the fingers spread out, and either parallel or zigzag type marks may emerge, although the latter is more usual for the "blanket." The string figure that women regard as representing a bed also shows a zigzag type of configuration.

Figure 1 (continued)

<i>Element</i>	<i>Range of meanings</i>	<i>Category description</i>
13. 	Nest Hole Water hole Fruits and yams Tree Hill Prepared food Fire Upright fighting stick Painting material Billy can Egg Dog, when curled up in camp Circling (as, e.g., dancing around), or any encircling object	Closed, roundish items, or encircling, nondirectional movement

12, 13. An oval form is also used to represent a large water hole or rock hole, and as an alternate for a nest or hill, when these are supposed to be large and elongate. A "nest" can take a slightly rectangular form; a "hut" can also vary in this way—curved to angular—without any semantic change. It seems likely that there is no significant contrast between angle and curve in the system, although the curved form is the more usual: the angular shape appears as an occasional variant of the circle, or oval.

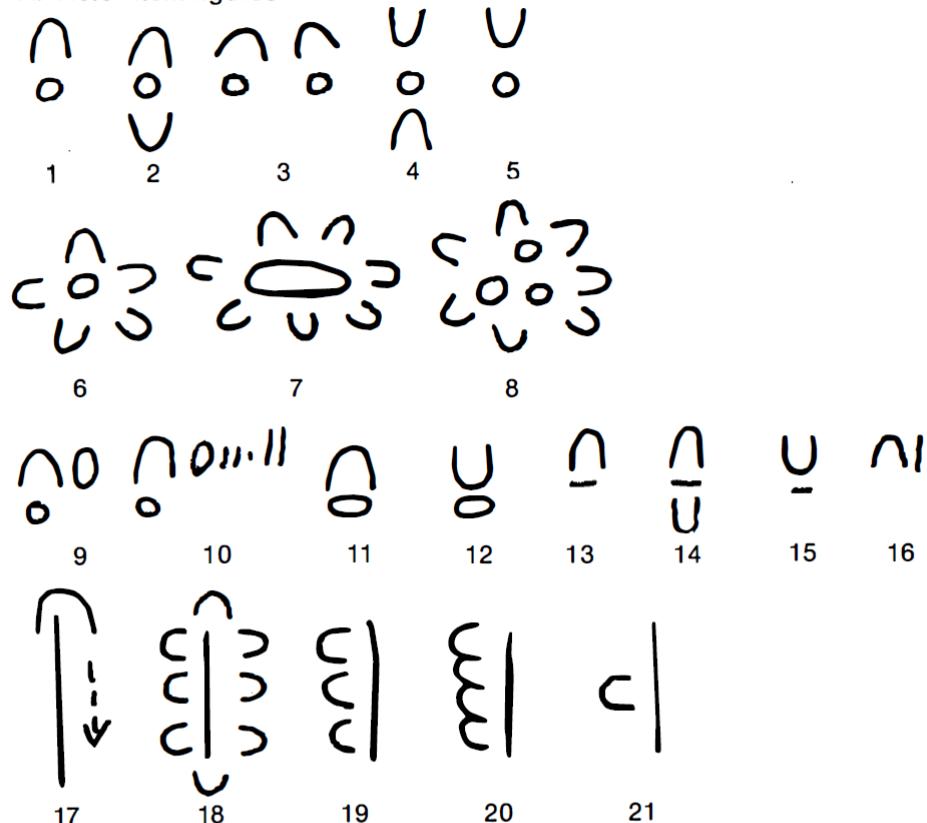
13. The circle is usually plain—i.e., not spiral or concentric—but spiral forms occur occasionally, especially, according to my observations, for trees or fire. When concentric circles occur in the sand story they constitute a construction of circles nesting inside each other, each with a separate meaning: for example, a line of women dancing around an upright fighting stick.

Yams. An alternate form for a yam is a circle with wavy strings attached to it—the yam "strings." This little figure specifies a yam and does not have a wide application as does the circle alone.

Fire. A common alternate for the circle in representing fire is a small mound of sand brushed into place by the middle and index fingers. An *earth oven* may also be simulated by digging a hole; a gesture then indicates the placement of meat in the hole; finally, sand is placed over this and a small mound is created.

Figure 3. Actor-item and enclosure figure types in the sand story

A. Actor-item figures



1. A man or woman sitting at a water hole; a woman sitting digging for yams, etc. 2, 3. A man and woman sitting at fires; two women digging for yams, etc. 4, 5. Actors sitting with backs to the "item."

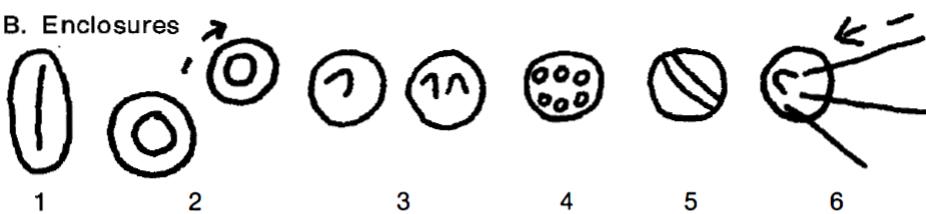
6. A number of actors—for example, women dancing around a fighting stick or people sitting at a fire. 7. Actors sitting around large rock hole (elliptical form of the circle). 8. Women plucking fruit—circles in a group are not likely to be water holes.

9. A woman sitting with water carrier at her side and water hole in front of her, digging for water; a man with his shield, etc. 10. A set of weapons at the side indicates the actor is male. 11. A shield or receptacle in front of the actor. 12. A shield or receptacle at back. 13–16. A stick or spear shown in different positions relative to the actor.

17. An action line: for example, a man throwing a spear. 18–21. Different arrangements of actors around or beside another actor lying down, or, less commonly, around some elongate object (e.g., a large fighting stick). 18. A common way of depicting dancers and singers grouped around an actor (the sleeper) in a dream. 20. Slurring of U element is common when a line of persons is shown.

Figure 3 (continued)

B. Enclosures



1. Sleeper lying in an oval depression such as characterizes traditional sleeping arrangements, sometimes called "bed" in English. The enclosing line may also be a blanket.

2. Water running around a hill: inner O=hill; outer O=water. The enclosing circle may also be a motion line, for example, paths of actors dancing around a pole.

3. Birds sitting in a nest, or people sitting on a hill, etc.

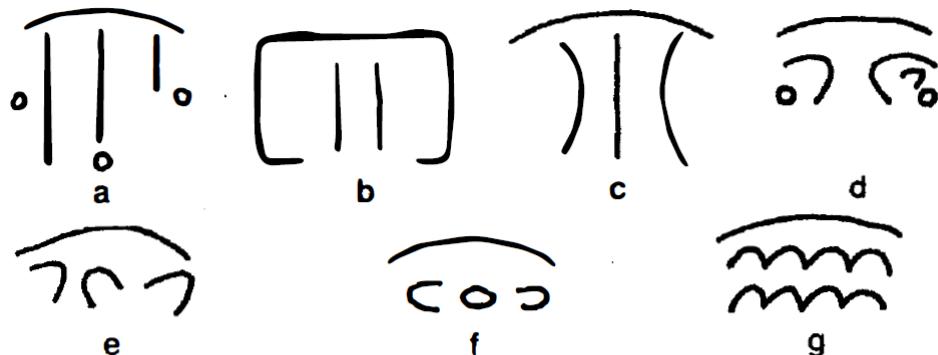
4. Eggs in a nest.

5. Characteristic way of depicting a dead person laid in a tree (tree burial), but may also have other meanings.

6. An enclosure of the type occurring in finale scenes. See above Fig. 2, no. 4d. A dead man in a hole with actors converging on the hole, and "going in." The hole-path figure that results has analogues in other parts of the graphic system.

Figure 2. Sand story scenes—types of scenes and sample graphic settings

1. Camp



a. Man, woman, and child sleeping in front of a bough shade. The woman is always beside the child (small line). O=fire. b. A hut with two persons sleeping in it. The rectangular form is illustrated. c. A man and two women (one on each side of him) sleeping in camp. This is a standard way of representing a man and two wives. d. A man and woman sitting in camp are often shown facing in different directions. (The arc=bough shade.) A baby (small U shape) sits on the woman's lap. O=fire or food. e. Three people sitting in camp. f. Two people—e.g., man and wife—sitting in front of fire, eating. g. Large number of persons sitting in men's or women's camps.

1A. Ceremonial camp



a. Women dancing with a line or grove of trees behind them. b. Women dancing around a fighting stick with a grove of trees in the background. c. Same as b; line of trees is shown by small circles. d. *Bulaba* ceremonial scene. The men are shown dancing in the foreground; singers—men and women—sit facing them.

2. Juncture, and movement to and from scenes with settings

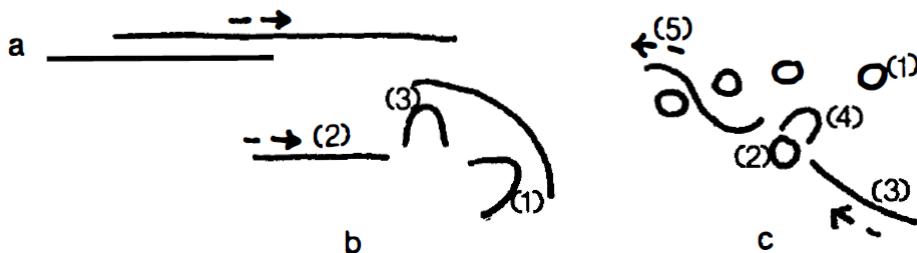
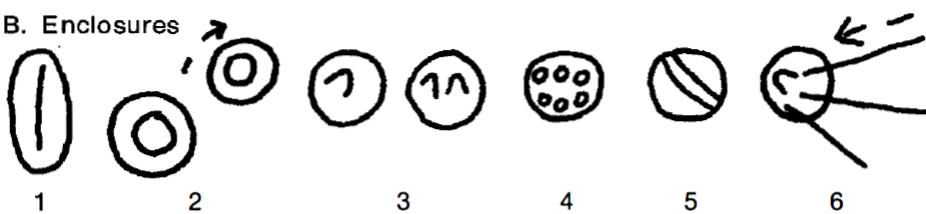


Figure 3 (continued)

B. Enclosures



1. Sleeper lying in an oval depression such as characterizes traditional sleeping arrangements, sometimes called "bed" in English. The enclosing line may also be a blanket.

2. Water running around a hill: inner O=hill; outer O=water. The enclosing circle may also be a motion line, for example, paths of actors dancing around a pole.

3. Birds sitting in a nest, or people sitting on a hill, etc.

4. Eggs in a nest.

5. Characteristic way of depicting a dead person laid in a tree (tree burial), but may also have other meanings.

6. An enclosure of the type occurring in finale scenes. See above Fig. 2, no. 4d. A dead man in a hole with actors converging on the hole, and "going in." The hole-path figure that results has analogues in other parts of the graphic system.