



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower and upper primary

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** History, English, Literacy

THEMES

- Australian history
- Art history
- Australian identity

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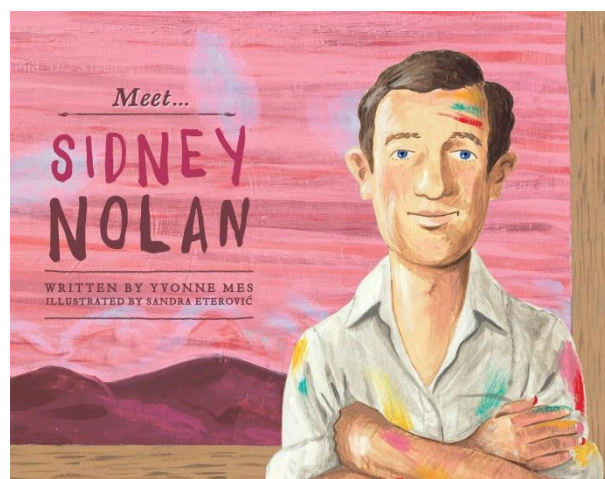
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Meet... Sidney Nolan

Written by Yvonne Mes

Illustrated by Sandra Eterović

PLOT SUMMARY

Sidney Nolan was born in Melbourne in 1917. His grandfather told him stories of his time as a police officer trying to catch the bushranger Ned Kelly – stories that made a lasting impression on young Sidney.

Nolan left school at 14 to study art, and from 16 he worked in the art department of a hat factory. Bored with the work, he again began studying art. Although he was not conscientious at college, he read widely at the public library. He was captivated by the modernist movement, loved philosophy and literature, and considered becoming a poet.

Modernism was slow to gain momentum in Australia, and Nolan was desperate to travel to Europe to continue learning and developing his own art. He attempted to raise the funds to travel, and approached the art patron John Reed for help. Reed refused to Nolan's request for money money, but he and his wife Sunday saw potential in Nolan's art folio. They invited him to dinner at their home, Heide, in outer Melbourne.

At Heide, Nolan was relieved and delighted to meet likeminded people but his happy days were numbered. WWII had broken out and Nolan was conscripted to serve in the local army, guarding food supplies around Dimboola, in country Victoria. Although he disliked being in the army, he loved the landscape and painted whenever he could. Nolan's

hand was injured while in service, and at an army hospital he met returned soldiers. He was horrified by their stories of fighting in the war and anxious that he too could be sent to fight. He tried to be discharged from the army. When his attempt failed, he went absent without leave (AWOL) and assumed the name Robin Murray. Although they were unhappy with the deception, the Reeds helped Nolan hide out at Heide and in a studio in Parkville, Melbourne.

Between 1945–1947, Nolan painted 27 works at Heide featuring an abstracted Ned Kelly form, as well as scenes from Kelly's life. The work was painted in a faux-naïve style and combined a stark, modern rendering of the Australian landscape, and Ned Kelly as a persecuted outsider. Nolan left the Kelly series with the Reeds at Heide, and began travelling around Australia, painting the landscape.

In 1948, the Reeds showed the Kelly series in Melbourne, to mixed success. The Reeds arranged to show the series in Paris, where Nolan's work was received more enthusiastically. The following year, art historian Sir Kenneth Clark offered to support Nolan if he moved to London. In 1950, Nolan finally reached Europe, and began to find wide recognition for his work.

FURTHER BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR TEACHERS

Modernism was a loose movement with many offshoots. Modernism emerged in response to a variety of social changes and events: the rise of industrialisation, the growth of modern cities, and widespread moves away from traditional rural industries; political revolution, such as in France; and later the violence and destruction of WWI. If society had changed so much because of these events, modernists questioned whether society's old rules, assumptions and even religions were still relevant. Modernists were willing to challenge and reject conventional (or accepted) forms of art and thinking and try to find new ways to communicate ideas and images.

Heide was a base for an informal group of artists, known as the Heide Circle. Nolan's Heide contemporaries included Albert Tucker and Joy Hester, Arthur Boyd, John Perceval and poet and publisher Max Harris. Nolan married Elizabeth Paterson but, shortly after the birth of their daughter, the couple separated and Nolan moved in

to Heide in 1941. Sunday Reed and Sidney Nolan had a love affair that last many years, which John Reed reluctantly tolerated.

With WWII raging in Europe and the Pacific, many Australian men were conscripted into local military service. At the time, conscripts could only be made to serve locally; only volunteers could be sent to fight on overseas service. However, after WWI New Guinea had been classed an Australian territory, which meant conscripted soldiers could be sent to New Guinea. This became necessary as Japanese forces invaded many areas of the Pacific, including New Guinea. Japanese planes bombed Darwin in 1942 and a Japanese submarine entered Sydney Harbour the same year – Australians had never before felt that a world war was so close to them.

While still serving in the army, Nolan had continued his contact with Sunday Reed and the Heide Circle. He was involved in Max Harris's modernist group and journal, both named *Angry Penguins*. In 1944, two poets, James McAuley and Harold Stewart, concocted a tale of a modernist poet, 'Ern Malley', who had died young and whose writing had been discovered by his sister. In one day, they wrote a series of 'nonsense' poems intended to mock the style of modernist poetry. The poems were sent to Max Harris, who admired the 'fake' poems and published them in an edition of *Angry Penguins*. Nolan's artwork featured on the edition's cover. When the hoax was revealed, the *Angry Penguins* were ridiculed and even charged with publishing 'obscene' material.

In the midst of the Ern Malley hoax, Nolan's anxiety about deserting the army, and his affair with Sunday Reed, Nolan's childhood fascination with Ned Kelly re-emerged. In later life Nolan dropped hints that the Kelly series was a metaphor for his own experiences, but he would not say any more.

Nolan's affair with Sunday ended unhappily and he severed the friendship with the Reeds in 1947, leaving the Kelly pictures at Heide. In 1948 Nolan married John Reed's sister, Cynthia, and adopted her daughter, Jinx. Together the family travelled throughout Australia as Nolan sought new subjects to paint. Some of Nolan's works were inspired by flights over central Australia, which allowed him to paint aerial perspectives of the landscape.

By the 1950s and 1960s, Australian viewers were more receptive to modernism and proud of Nolan's international success. The Ned Kelly paintings



resonated with many Australians due to the changing politics and self-image of the country in the twentieth century. Post-WWII, Australians increasingly looked beyond white Australia's traditional ties with the British Empire. Australia's self-image was as a young, modern, independent country. Changes in technology and increasingly diverse immigration also allowed Australians to experience a wider range of cultural influences. The real Ned Kelly had been an Irish-Australian outlaw at odds with the more powerful and wealthy British-Australian establishment. As a symbol, Ned Kelly was relevant to many people who viewed Australia as breaking away from old politics and class systems.

At the same time, Sidney Nolan's rapid, self-taught style of painting, his simplified forms and moodily or boldly coloured landscapes contrasted with previous eras of Australian landscape art. The first European and British artists to paint Australia's flora and fauna sometimes struggled not to make their subjects look like the very different landscapes and animals of their homelands. The early 19th century fashion for Romanticism, in which the natural environment was often made to look 'heroic' according to the era's tastes, also influenced the disparity between the reality of Australia and the European-style representations: the colours were muted, the light soft, the plants looked like European ones and the marsupials sometimes resembled European animals such as badgers, cats, stoats, mice and rabbits. In the late 19th and early 20th century, the Heidelberg School of artists such as Arthur Streeton, Frederick McCubbin, Tom Roberts, Walter Withers and Charles Conder had applied the new Impressionist style to Australian landscape painting. Their work was considered innovative and distinctly Australian, yet compared to the work of the mid-twentieth century Australian modernists such as Nolan, Arthur Boyd and Albert Tucker, the Heidelberg School's paintings looked softer, more idealised and traditionally European.

Suggested resources

- For further worksheets focusing on Sidney Nolan's art, google 'NSW art gallery Nolan Art Trail' or go to http://archive.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/_data/page/10135/nolan_kids_trail.pdf
- Information on Australian collections of Nolan's art:

http://www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/collection/works/?artist_id=nolan-sidney&page=1 and

- <http://nga.gov.au/COLLECTIONS/AUSTRALIA/GALLERY.cfm?DisplayGal=13>
- Information about Heide, which is now a modern art gallery, and Nolan's art produced at Heide: <http://www.heide.com.au/> and <http://www.heide.com.au/assets/files/Education/UnmaskedSidney-Nolan-and-Ned-Kelly-19501.pdf>

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Yvonne Mes is a children's author and illustrator. She writes short stories, picture books and junior novels. Yvonne has a Bachelor of Children's Services, a Certificate in Professional Children's Writing, and a Certificate IV in Visual Arts and Crafts.

Yvonne coordinates Write Links, the Brisbane children's writers and illustrators group, and is vice president of Book Links QLD (Inc.) She writes reviews for *Buzz Words* magazine and is a member of SCBWI, CBCA, Book Links and the ASA.

Yvonne grew up in Amsterdam but has made her home in Australia. She has two decades experience working with children of all ages, abilities, many cultures and in various settings.

INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR

1. Can you tell us a little bit about your research for this project and the resources you used?

I visited the library many times and read every book I could find on Sidney Nolan. Of course, I used the internet as well. Google and Trove were my favourite websites. I had to make sure the books and information came from reliable resources. I also read biographies about other people who were important to Sidney around the time he created the Ned Kelly paintings. I was lucky enough to visit an exhibition about Sidney Nolan in Brisbane a few years ago which gave me a feel of what his paintings looked like in person. I loved seeing the texture of the paint as he had brushed it on.

2. Did your opinion of Sidney Nolan change or deepen as you wrote the book?

Though I had seen his paintings, and liked them a lot, and knew of the importance of the Ned Kelly paintings to Australia, I did not know much about



Sidney himself or why he became a painter. I was interested to find out that he was almost completely self-taught as an artist but also that he was very athletic, and that he had a big interest in poetry - so much so, he almost became a poet instead of a painter! He was diverse as an artist and as a person; he designed sets for ballet and theatre and illustrated books. I also learned he could be quite cheeky and was very determined to achieve his goals.

3. Why did you choose to tell this particular part of Sidney's story?

The Ned Kelly paintings were Sidney's first major series of paintings that brought him to the attention of the world. The paintings were created at a time where Australia was recovering from WWII and Australia's identity was still closely tied to England and Europe. Sidney was able to paint the Australian landscape from a different perspective and at the same time created a uniquely Australian identity through the connection and symbolism of Ned Kelly.

4. What was the most challenging part of the project?

Not getting side-tracked with all the wonderful anecdotes and relationships with the people around him. Some of the decisions he made in his life around the time of the first Ned Kelly paintings and some of his personal experiences that inspired him were a little controversial, even scandalous. Sidney said the Ned Kelly paintings were secretly about himself and his own emotions but he wasn't going to tell anything else about them. I was really curious to know what these secrets were!

5. What was the most rewarding part of the project?

Seeing Sandra's beautiful illustrations was most rewarding. I was really interested to see who would illustrate this story and in what style, as I imagined it would be quite a challenge to create the artwork for a story about a famous artist. I was amazed at the result. It was also rewarding to learn more about an exciting time in Australian art. I loved working with the team at Random House Australia and seeing the hard work and dedication each person brings to create one book.

6. What do you think is Sidney's greatest legacy?

Sidney developed a unique way to paint the Australian landscape while using the symbol of Ned Kelly to tell a story about Australia and so having a part in creating Australia's identity. He went on to

tell many more stories, many about Australia and its identity by looking at subjects such as Australia's explorers, convicts, ANZAC and drought.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Sandra Eterović studied art history at university but ended up working as a designer in the fashion industry for fifteen years. These days she works as a freelance illustrator and takes on portrait commissions. She also exhibits regularly and makes a variety of paper goods and homewares based on her artwork.

INTERVIEW WITH THE ILLUSTRATOR

1. You do illustration for lots of different mediums. What are the main differences between illustrating picture books and your other illustration work?

Most of the work that I do is commercial work for various branding or advertising agencies. These jobs are often very creatively restricted to meet the client's needs, and not always for a product or subject I feel emotionally invested in. This is in great part due to the fact that I'm not always the demographic of the product I'm working on. While illustrating picture books obviously still comes with a brief behind it, there's far more freedom on the illustrator's side. I'm often left to choose the content, composition, style and colours going onto each page. This, along with a story that truly connects with me on a personal level, makes illustrating for books a far more interesting and fun project to be involved with. And even if I might not be a 6-year-old schoolboy, everyone loves a good story . . .

2. You create artwork in different media and for different uses. What are the main differences between illustrating picture books and your other illustration work?

I usually work on single illustrations with a tight turnaround. They generally need to communicate one idea simply and quickly. *Meet Sidney Nolan* was an opportunity to delve deeply into research and development of a character and his world. This felt completely different and almost luxurious!



3. This is a historical book, based on real people and their stories. Did you have to do a lot of research to get the historical details right, such as how people looked and what they wore?

I read numerous chapters on Sidney Nolan in art books, the first part of a Nolan biography, a couple of publications about Heide and even Ned Kelly's Jerilderie letter. Google Image Search makes it incredibly easy to find visual references for everything from the burning Glenrowan to the interior of the Fayrefield Hat Factory. The only challenge I had was finding a good cross-section of a 1930s cruise ship. I also listened to music from the 1930s while I worked.

4. What media did you use to create the art? Can you explain a little bit about your process?

I use acrylic on wood. Painting on wood gives the work texture, and it also means that it can be layered and even sanded back if necessary. This is not possible when working on paper. I did thumbnails sketches first. After they were approved I expanded them into more detailed versions, which were also approved. Sometimes I made changes in Photoshop, and sometimes the editor made changes. The sketches were printed out at 120% of the size that they would appear in the book, and then traced onto the wood using graphite paper. The backgrounds were painted first.

5. What was the most challenging part of the project?

The biggest challenge was convincing myself that my illustration skills were up to the task, as I had never worked on such a big project before. Secondly, drawing and painting things that I don't usually draw was a challenge, for example, horses.

6. What was the most rewarding part of the project?

This was a huge learning curve for me, and working with the wonderful women of Random House was incredibly rewarding. I will always be grateful for their wisdom, encouragement and positivity. On another level, I challenged myself to make each double page spread as different to the last as possible, while retaining a convincing flow at the same time. I hope that kids find that variation fun and rewarding to explore.

7. Did you know much about Sidney Nolan before the project? Did your opinion of him grow or change through the course of the project? How?

I was mainly familiar with Nolan through his Kelly series, which I admired on a visit to Canberra about ten years ago. Other than that, I admit to sometimes getting him confused with other modernist Australian artists of that era. I really enjoyed learning about Nolan, particularly as a fellow creative person. Like me, he was born in Carlton and lived in St Kilda as a kid, and worked as a graphic designer before becoming an artist. I look forward to learning even more about Nolan.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. What does the front cover of *Meet Sidney Nolan* tell you about the book?

- Who is the subject of the book?
- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What clues are there about the story told in the book?

2. Does the back cover give you more clues about the book?

- Does the blurb explain who Sidney Nolan is and what he is famous for?
- Do you know who Ned Kelly was and why he is still well known today?

3. What do you already know about Sidney Nolan or other Australian artists of the twentieth century? Start a list and add to it as you read the book.

4. The book blurb mentions the bushranger Ned Kelly. Teachers might like to lead a class discussion or class research to cover some basic details about Ned Kelly before reading *Meet Sidney Nolan*. The class could read *Meet Ned Kelly*, or look up Ned Kelly's biography online. Some links include:

- *Meet Ned Kelly* by Janeen Brian and Matt Adams: <http://www.randomhouse.com.au/books/janeen-brian/meet-ned-kelly-9781742757193.aspx>
- ABC *Behind the News* story on Ned Kelly and archaeological dig at site of Glenrowan siege: <http://www.abc.net.au/btn/story/s2262225.htm>
- Australian Dictionary of Biography: <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/kelly-edward-ned-3933>



KEY STUDY TOPICS

English

1. Create a simple story map of the key elements in the narrative e.g. the setting; characters; beginning, middle and end. See **Worksheet 1**.
2. The book begins by saying that Sidney Nolan's grandfather was a police officer involved in trying to capture the bushranger Ned Kelly. Ned Kelly has become part of Australian folklore. Do you think Nolan's grandfather's stories (or perhaps Nolan's version of them) must have been true?

Worksheet 2: Folklore or family tales. Do the older people in your family tell you stories about when they were young, or about things that happened in the family long ago? Do you find any of their stories especially interesting or exciting or strange? Try writing down a family story in your own words.

Extension discussion: Folklore is the traditional stories that people tell one another about their country, their history, their family and so on. Sometimes folklore is completely true, or based on something true, or is fictional but relevant to people's lives. Why do you think people pass down stories as folklore? Do you think the stories in folklore and the history you find in textbooks are the same thing? How are they different? Can folklore be important or useful even if the stories aren't entirely true?

3. Sidney Nolan was a famous artist, but he loved reading and was inspired by writers. What do you think writing might have in common with visual art, such as painting? What skills might writers and visual artists share? What practices could they have in common?

Activity: Teachers divide the class into small groups. Give one student in each group a simple everyday object, without letting the rest of the group see it. Ask the students with the objects to describe their object as well as they can in 30 seconds, without naming it. Ask the other students to listen to the full description, and then draw an object based on the description. Then ask the students to compare their drawings and the unseen object. Did everyone draw the same thing? Which parts of

the description were most helpful when trying to draw? Which parts didn't help?

4. As you read the book, note down any words you're unsure of. **Worksheet 3** asks you to look up and record definitions for some vocabulary in the book, and leaves space for you to add other words you are unsure of.
5. There is a timeline at the back of the book with facts about Sidney Nolan's life and career. How is the language in this section different from the rest of the book? Why do you think that is?
6. **Extension question:** Sidney Nolan used Ned Kelly as a metaphorical figure in his artworks. The paintings were not just telling the story of Ned Kelly's life – they let Ned stand in for the troubles Nolan experienced himself. Even the viewer can imagine themselves and their life in Ned's place. What is a '**metaphor**'? Can you think of other well-known stories that use a character as a metaphorical figure?

History

1. Sidney Nolan is shown trying to stow away on a ship travelling to London, England. How many kilometres away from Melbourne is London? How would people have travelled that journey in the 1930s? How long would it have taken?
2. Sidney Nolan was an art student in the 1930s. What do you know about this era? In particular, think about access to news and information. How would you look for information on an artist or art style? How do you think Nolan would have heard about new artists and artworks from Australia or from other parts of the world?

Discussion: Consider questions 1 and 2 above, and what you read in the early pages of the book. Do you think Australia would have been a very different place to live in the 1930s? Do you think Australia would have been a more isolated place? (That is, more cut off from other places.)

3. Which war does the book refer to? Do you know where in the world this war was fought? What does the word 'conscripted' mean?

Often when people think of WWII, they think of Germany and other countries in Europe. There were also invasions and fighting in the Pacific region, much closer to Australia. During WWII,



Japan was considered an enemy nation by Australia and the Allies. Japanese forces landed in New Guinea, north of Australia. Many Australians were afraid that Australia might also be invaded. Australian and Allied soldiers served in New Guinea and other places in the Pacific – men died in battle, and Australians and Allies were taken as prisoners-of-war, which caused more to die. There was a real chance that Sidney Nolan could be sent to fight in New Guinea.

4. What did you know about Sidney Nolan or Ned Kelly before reading and discussing this book? Why do you think Ned Kelly is still remembered today? Why do you think Sidney Nolan's artwork is considered important today?
5. The end of the book says Sidney Nolan's art 'helped Australia build a new identity after the struggles of two world wars.' What did you think this sentence meant when you first read the book? Read the information below, and reconsider the quote above. You could discuss what it means as a class, or in small groups.

Australia has been inhabited for tens of thousands of years. It was colonised by Britain in the 18th century, and the different British colonies federated (came together to form a single country) in 1901. Even after Federation, Australia had strong political and military ties to Britain. If Britain went to war, many Australians felt that it was right to support Britain. This was true in WWI and WWII. However, during WWII, Australian politicians and military leaders didn't just work with Britain; Australia began to work with the USA and other countries in the Pacific region. Australia also received immigrants from many more countries than just Britain. Developments in technology, such as radios and faster international travel by plane (rather than ship), also allowed more Australians to experience culture from all around the world. Many Australians saw their country as a young, independent nation with its own identity separate from the British Empire.

Art and Visual Literacy

Questions

1. How is Sidney Nolan first shown inside the book? Do you think the image is meant to be taken **literally** (that is, you are meant to believe that what is shown is something that really happened)? Why do you think the illustrator chose to create this image?
2. Compare the pages showing Sidney Nolan working for the hat company and the next two pages, showing Sidney learning about the artists, writers and philosophers that interested him. How has the illustrator shown Sidney's attitudes to working versus learning? (**Hint:** Don't just look at Sidney's face. You could consider body language, use of colour, the layout of the different spreads, the number and type of objects, how realistically or literally each page is depicted and so on.)
3. A) Artists often use recurring **motifs**: objects, shapes, colours, ideas and so on that appear repeatedly in the same artwork or in different artworks. What motif is Sidney Nolan best known for? Can you find it in the book's illustrations?

B) What other motifs can you find in the book's illustrations? Think of colours, shapes, different perspectives (points of view), mirror imaging, and so on. Do you associate any of these motifs with specific moods or aspects of Sidney's story?
4. Consider how the illustrations work in conjunction with the text. Do they add more information than the text supplies? What do you get from the illustrations that you don't get from the text, and vice versa?
5. Can you tell that the story is set in the past just by looking at the illustrations? How has the illustrator created an impression of the 1930s-1940s?
6. The book features illustrations of real places and people. Sometimes artists will refer to live models or go to a specific place and paint what they see in front of them. When this isn't possible, artists can refer to photographs, other artworks and their own imaginations. Look at these two photographs from the National Library of Australia: <http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an23287542> and <http://nla.gov.au/nla.pic-an23287580>. Now look at p. 17 of the book. Do



you see any resemblance between the photos and the illustration?

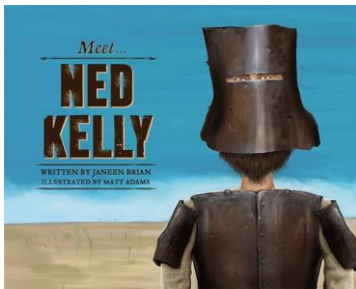
7. **Extension question:** The illustrations show Ned Kelly in Sidney's imagination as a child, and versions of the way Nolan depicted Ned Kelly in his artwork as an adult. Can you find which is which in the illustrations? How could you recognise Ned Kelly in the two very different versions? Depicting something in a way that strips away lots of familiar detail, yet still leaves the subject recognisable is called **abstraction**. Have you ever heard of 'abstract art'? Can you think of any well-known abstract artists or artworks?

Activities

1. Choose one spread from the book to analyse. Make two columns. In one column write down everything the text tells you about the story on that page. In the other column, write down everything the illustration tells you about the story on that page. Does the illustration tell you extra things that are not in the text? See **Worksheet 4**.
2. Drawing from a model versus drawing from memory. **Teachers:** Give students paper and colour pencils. Show them an object for 30 seconds and instruct them to look at it carefully, then hide the object. Then give students 3–5 minutes to draw the object as accurately as they can. Ask students to turn over that sheet of paper and take a fresh one. Now display the same object and give students 3–5 minutes to draw the object again. How different are the students' two drawings?
3. **Discussion or written task:** Can you name any other famous artists or artworks? Any Australian ones? Do you have a favourite? What do you think about when you look at your favourite artwork? Do you think art has to be beautiful or can ugly art be interesting too?
4. Compare three Australian artworks from different eras. See **Worksheet 5**.
5. Sidney Nolan and the Heide Circle were interested in modernism. Modernism was a loose movement with many offshoots. Modernism emerged in response to a variety of social changes and events: the rise of industrialisation, the growth of modern cities, and widespread moves away from traditional rural industries; political revolution, such as in France; and later the violence and destruction of WWI. If society had changed so much because of these events, modernists questioned whether society's old rules, assumptions and even religions were still relevant. Modernists were willing to challenge and reject conventional (or accepted) forms of art and thinking and try to find new ways to communicate ideas and images.



THE MEET SERIES



Meet... Ned Kelly
Janeen Brian & Matt Adams
Australia's most famous bushranger



Meet... Mary MacKillop
Sally Murphy & Sonia Martinez
Australia's first saint



Meet... Captain Cook
Rae Murdie & Chris Nixon
Exploration and discovery



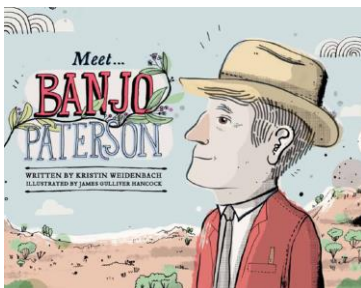
Meet... the Anzacs
Claire Saxby & Max Berry
How the Anzac legend began



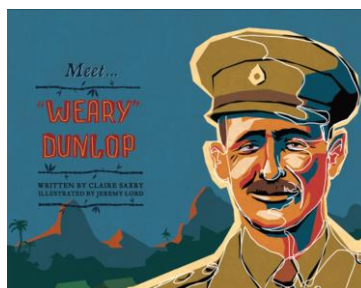
Meet... Douglas Mawson
Mike Dumbleton & Snip Green
Antarctic exploration and survival



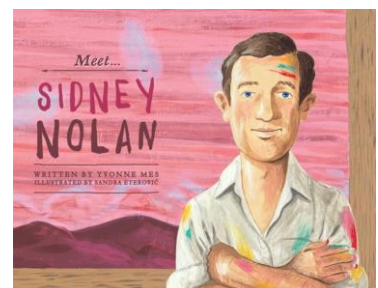
Meet... Nancy Bird Walton
Grace Atwood & Harry Slaghekke
A pioneer in the golden age of aviation



Meet... Banjo Paterson
Kristin Weidenbach & James Gulliver Hancock
Australia's most beloved poet



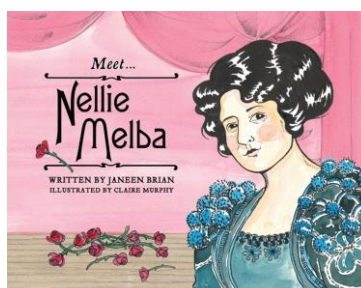
Meet... Weary Dunlop
Claire Saxby & Jeremy Lord
Wartime bravery and compassion



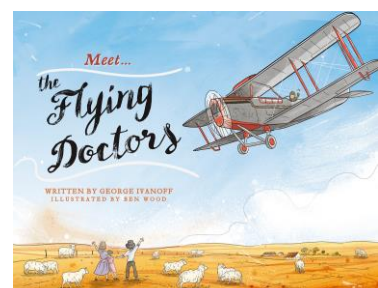
Meet... Sidney Nolan
Yvonne Mes & Sandra Eterović
A trailblazing artist



Meet... Don Bradman
Coral Vass & Brad Howe
A sporting legend and source of pride during hard times



Meet... Nellie Melba
Janeen Brian & Claire Murphy
Australia's first classical music star



Meet... the Flying Doctors
George Ivanoff & Ben Wood
Australia's outback medical service

Teachers' notes for each book are available from penguin.com.au/teachers



WORKSHEET 1: STORY MAP

Book title: _____

Author: _____

Illustrator: _____

Characters: _____

Setting: _____

Beginning
Middle
End



WORKSHEET 2: FOLK LORE AND FAMILY TALES

Sidney Nolan said his grandfather had told him stories about being a country police officer chasing the famous bushranger Ned Kelly. Ned Kelly has become part of Australian folklore. Families often have their family lore, or tales that are told about the family's past. Write down in your own words a story that you hear told in your family.

Hint: If you can't remember one, think of what you've been told about where your parent, grandparents or great-grandparents were born or lived, or how they met. Do you ever tell the same story told different ways? If you don't have one, think about your family now, and what you might want to tell your grandchildren or nephews and nieces one day...

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins or other markings on the paper.

WORKSHEET 3: VOCABULARY

Write down the meaning of the words below. Use a dictionary if you don't know! Use the empty spots in the left-hand column to write down any other words you found in the book and didn't understand.

Word	Meaning
stark	
conscripted	
magnificent	
philosopher	
renowned	
exhibited	
vivid	
striding	
iconic	
uninspiring	
forged	
bestowed	



WORKSHEET 4: VISUAL LITERACY

Choose one spread from the book to analyse. Make two columns. In one column write down everything the text tells you about the story on that page. In the other column, write down everything the illustration tells you about the story on that page. Does the illustration tell you extra things that are not in the text and vice versa? Here is an example to get you started.

<u>What the illustration tells me</u>	<u>What the text tells me</u>
<p>Sidney Nolan is in an army uniform, riding a horse. His hat flies off but he's not stopping to get it back.</p> <p>The sky is a pink colour that doesn't often occur in reality – but does appear in other illustrations in the book when Sidney Nolan is feeling inspired or is painting.</p> <p>On the edge of the illustration, a strange black silhouetted figure is also riding a horse. The figure is in front of Nolan.</p>	<p>Sidney ran and he hid.</p> <p>Sidney painted even though he was in hiding, and his family and friends were worried.</p> <p>He remembered the stories from his childhood, of another outlaw on the run.</p>

<u>What the illustration tells me</u>	<u>What the text tells me</u>



WORKSHEET 5: COMPARING AUSTRALIAN ART

Teachers: choose three artworks from different eras that show the Australian landscape or local fauna. Three examples are listed below, or you could choose your own favourites. As a class or in groups, ask students to consider the following:

- Order the paintings from oldest to most recent and explain why you think so.
- What does each painting show? Do you think each painting is meant to serve a purpose, or do a 'job'? (You could prompt the students. Using the three examples listed below: if one painting is to show people a new animal, one is to show how people adapt to life in a new country, and one is to capture the spirit of a well-known folk story – which painting is which?)
- How do you think each artist felt about their subject? Were they familiar with the subject? Were they showing something they had caught/seen/done/felt themselves?

Example trio:

- John Lewin, *A newly discovered animal of the Derwent*, c. 1809:
<http://www.utas.edu.au/library/exhibitions/thylacine/images/linlewin2.jpg>
- Frederick McCubbin of the Heidelberg School, *The Pioneer*, 1904:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frederick_McCubbin#/media/File:Frederick_McCubbin_-_The_pioneer_-_Google_Art_Project.jpg
- Sidney Nolan, *Ned Kelly*, 1946:
<http://artsearch.nga.gov.au/Detail.cfm?IRN=28926>



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