



Walker Books Classroom Ideas



Our Stories: Australian Writers of Influence

Author: Bernadette Kelly
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

Our knowledge and ideas about the world are shaped by writers – poets, novelists, playwrights and journalists. The 1800s were a time of turbulence and change in the Australian colonies with droughts, strikes, bushrangers and long periods of mass unemployment. The freethinking writers of the time were often called radical but they were the voice for change in this new country – and their influence is still evident today.

Author/Illustrator Information:

Bernadette Kelly has written a number of fiction and non-fiction titles for both the trade and educational market. She lives in country Victoria and is a keen horsewoman.

How to use these notes:

The information in this book works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Primary years 5 & 6
- Ages 8+

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- History

Example of:

- Non-fiction picture book

Themes/Ideas:

- Australian history
 - Culture
 - Activism
 - Feminism
 - Literature

National Curriculum Focus:*

| English | Year 6 | History | Year 6 |
|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|
| Year 5 | Year 6 | Year 5 | Year 6 |
| ACELA1504 | ACELA1515 | ACHHK094 | ACHHK113 |
| ACELY1699 | ACELA1518 | ACHHK095 | ACHHK114 |
| ACELY1796 | ACELT1616 | ACHHK096 | ACHHK116 |
| ACELY1701 | ACELY1711 | ACHHK097 | ACHHS120 |
| ACELY1702 | ACELY1712 | ACHHS098 | ACHHS121 |
| ACELY1704 | ACELY1713 | | ACHHS122 |
| | ACELY1801 | | |

*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



Walker Books Classroom Ideas

Discussion Questions and Activities

English

View the cover and title. Identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author
- The publisher

Discuss the following: What is the role of the author?
What is the role of the publisher?

From the front and back cover what information can you learn about the book? What do you think this book is about? What information do you think will be covered in this book? What type of book is this and where would you expect to find it in your library?

How does the layout of this book affect the readability of the text? Consider the large illustrations and photos, small blocks of text, and bold and coloured sections of text.

Find the following sections in *Australian Writers of Influence* and explain their purpose. In what kind of books might you find these sections?

- Contents
- Glossary
- Index

In what order is a glossary set out? How does this help when using it?

What is the purpose of an index? In what sort of books would you find one?

Who is the audience for this book? What makes you think that? Who do you think might enjoy this book other than the intended audience?

What is your favourite section in this book? Why did you pick this section? What did you learn from it?

Several pages throughout the book have information on life in Australia during a particular year. Why do you think the author has chosen to present information this way? How would the reader interpret the information differently if the “Life in ...” section wasn’t included?

Many of the writers featured in this book used persuasive writing to influence their readers. Choose one writer from the book and discuss what issue they were most passionate about and how they used persuasive writing to further their cause.

History

Have a class discussion on how you would go about seeking further information on each writer. Discuss the places information can be found and the reliability of the information based on the author. Also discuss the difference between primary and secondary sources.

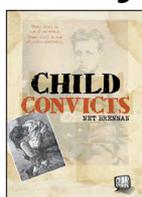
Compare what life was like for a woman in colonial times and modern times. Which writers featured in *Australian Writers of Influence* used their writing in an attempt to change conditions for women? How did they influence public opinion?

Choose one writer from the book and create a report on their life and what aspects of modern day Australia they influenced. How did their influence affect these aspects? Find other sources of information about this writer and compare it to the information in *Australian Writers of Influence*. What else can you find out about this writer that is not featured in this book?

During Colonial times and post-Federation, the only ways for the people featured in this book to have their words read were to contribute to newspapers or publications, or write a book. What different options are available to writers today to have their words read by the public? Do you think it is easier or more difficult for writers to have their words read in modern times than for writers in Colonial/post-Federation times?

Find the poetry of one of the writers featured in the book by visiting your school library, a local public library or researching online. Choose a poem that you like and read it to the class, explaining what message you think the writer was trying to convey when writing that poem.

Other great titles in the Our Stories series



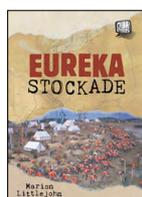
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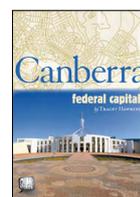
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