

Flapper, VC

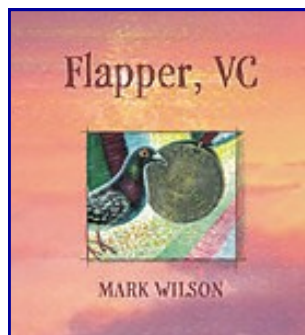
By Mark Wilson

Publisher: Lothian/Hachette

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\$24.99

FLAPPER, VC is based on the true story of an Australian carrier pigeon during World War II. Raised and trained in Australia, Flapper is sent off to war in the Pacific. While on patrol deep in the jungle, Flapper's unit find themselves surrounded by enemy troops. With no other means of communication, the men's only hope of survival is Flapper, who has to evade enemy snipers and machine guns to get a message through to save the patrol. Flapper was awarded the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross for his actions that day, and his medal is proudly displayed at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra. This memorable tale, illustrated with Mark Wilson's beautifully crafted and evocative artwork, is a moving story of animals in war.



Teacher Notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Bravery
- Heroism
- Survival
- Hope

Discussion Questions & Activities:

Carrier Pigeons and Other Animals and Birds in War

- Research carrier pigeons and how they have been involved in war.
- Invite students to research the part that other animals or birds have played in war.
- Discuss the ethics of using animals in war, and how they are treated after they return from the field of conflict.

Values

- Discuss the values conveyed in this text.
- What is heroism? Can the term be applied to birds as well as to people?

The text of this book might be studied in relation to the following aspects:

- This is a creative narrative which imagines a carrier pigeon in a real historical situation. The author uses this story to convey to the reader something of the feelings experienced by birds in war time and to pay tribute to what he regards as heroism. How do you think the story would be different if it was written as a non fiction book?
- Write an acrostic poem, about FLAPPER.
- Write a letter, as if it is from a soldier to his family, about how Flapper saved their men.
- Test your students' comprehension by asking them questions about the written text (see also Blackline Master 2 attached).

Visual Literacy

- The colours are moody pastels in tones of mauve, peach, turquoise, and rich purples and greens. How do colours convey feelings in this text?

There are many creative activities suggested by this text. Students might:

- Create a classroom mural which tells Flapper's story in a series of frames designed and executed by students. (Blackline Master 1 attached)
- Write, direct and act a play scene based on any incident in this book.
- Design a Book Trailer based on this book. Visit sites such as: 'Book Trailers' Insideadog <<http://www.insideadog.com.au/teachers/book-trailers>> for advice.