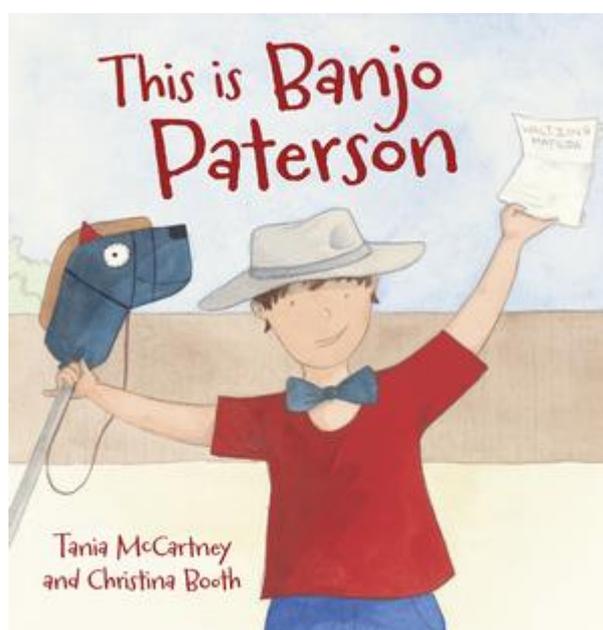


TEACHERS' NOTES

This is Banjo Paterson

written by Tania McCartney and illustrated by Christina Booth



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Recommended Year Levels: Foundation to Year 3

Author: Tania McCartney taniamccartney.blogspot.com.au/2012/11/quick-facts-fags.html
and [Tania at NLA Publishing](#)



Tania simply adores books and words and pictures. If she could, she would live inside a book and, as an author, illustrator and editor—she kind of already does. As an ambassador for the National Year of Reading, an ambassador for the Chief Minister's Reading Challenge and the Founder of Kids' Book Review, she is mad about juvenile literacy. She's also mad about illustration and that's why she founded the 52-Week Illustration Challenge. Tania's books have won awards and shortlistings and, in November 2016, her 22nd (and first self-illustrated) book, *Australia Illustrated*, was released. Tania lives in New South Wales, with a very nice husband, two marvellous kids and a mountain of books.

Illustrator: Christina Booth www.christinabooth.com and [Christina at NLA Publishing](#)



Christina Booth is a writer, illustrator and landscape artist. She illustrates her own books, as well as books for other authors, such as Colin Thiele, Max Fatchen and Christobel Mattingley. A number of her books have won awards, including *Kip*, which won an Honour Book Award in the 2010 Children's Book Council of Australia Book of the Year Awards, and *Welcome Home*, which won the 2014 Environment Award for Children's Literature. Christina lives on a bush property in Tasmania with her family, chickens, fish, a cat and a dog. When she's not drawing or writing, Christina enjoys reading, gardening, cooking, fishing, talking to her chooks and watching *Dr Who*.

This is Banjo: Australian Curriculum Content

- Learning Areas
 - English
 - History
- General capabilities
 - Personal and Social Capability
 - Critical and Creative Thinking
- Digital Classroom
 - 'A National Identity'—*Waltzing Matilda* Manuscript
nla.gov.au/digital-classroom/year-6/themes/a-national-identity

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

These are activities to do before reading to prepare students for the concepts/themes explored in the book. They are not necessarily curriculum-linked.

1. Explore the poetry of Banjo Paterson or excerpts of his works, such as the well-known *Waltzing Matilda*, *The Man from Snowy River*, *Clancy of the Overflow*, or lesser-known works such as *Santa Claus*.
2. Read poems, such as *Old Man Platypus*, *Fur and Feathers* and *Frogs in Chorus*, from Banjo's children's book *The Animals That Noah Forgot* (1933).
3. Play a recording of *Waltzing Matilda* and discuss how the song came to be written. Banjo wrote the lyrics in early 1895 at Dagworth Station in Queensland. Friend Christina Macpherson wrote the music, inspired by an old Scottish song. Older children can learn about Banjo's possible inspiration for the song, from tragic news events in Queensland at the time. See waltzingmatilda.com.au for more.
4. Discuss how Banjo got his nickname. His real name was Andrew Barton Paterson (Barton was his mother's maiden name). When Andrew began writing for newspapers, he wrote under a pseudonym—The Banjo—after a beloved racehorse his family once owned. The nickname stuck fast and he was soon known as Banjo Paterson.

Discuss the concept of nicknames (nicknames can be a short or familiar e.g. Mel for Melissa, Annie for Anne, or a name that is nothing like the person's actual name, e.g. Possum, or is rhyming, e.g. Clare Bear). Why are people given nicknames? Do you have a nickname? Who else has a nickname?

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT: HISTORY

Foundation

How the stories of families and the past can be communicated, for example, through photographs, artefacts, books, oral histories, digital media and museums ([ACHASSK013](#)).

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

1. Have children bring in old and new family photos, and identify each person, if possible. Photos from Banjo's time (the 1860s to the 1940s) would be ideal. Create family trees using photocopies of the photos.
2. Compare the old photos with the newer ones. Discuss how they are different. How is life for families different now? (shopping, washing, communication, transport, housing, schools, playing) What might Banjo's early childhood have been like?

Year 1

Differences in family structures and roles today, and how these have changed or remained the same over time ([ACHASSK028](#)).

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

1. Have children draw two pictures—one of them and their siblings/friends engaged in an activity, and one of Banjo and his siblings engaged in an activity. Before the children do this, talk about how the pictures would be different and how they would be the same.
2. Have children talk to older family members about how children were once expected to behave, and the expected roles and behaviour of men and women (e.g. children being quiet, women not speaking up and men not crying). Compare this to today.

Year 2

The history of a significant person, building, site and/or part of the natural environment in the local community and what it reveals about the past ([ACHASSK044](#))

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

1. Look up a building online from Banjo's time (between the 1860s and the 1940s).
 - What does this building tell us about the past?
 - Why was it designed this way?
 - How was this building important in daily life?
 - What happened there?
 - Is it still used?
2. Discuss the legacy left behind by famous people such as Banjo Paterson. What sites, buildings, schools and universities have been named after Banjo (or after other important people)? Why do you think it is important to remember these people in this way?

Year 3

How the community has changed and remained the same over time and the role that people of diverse backgrounds have played in the development and character of the local community ([ACHASSK063](#)).

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

1. Banjo's father was a Scottish grazier and his mother was Australian-born. All Australians, other than Indigenous Australians, are a blend of races and cultures from all over the world and have brought many of their traditions, foods and cultures to Australia. Have children explore their own ethnic backgrounds and bring objects or stories to school reflecting this cultural diversity. This could be for Show and Tell or be written into a story.
2. Look at photos of the Australian bush from Banjo Paterson's time and compare them to photos of today. How much has the landscape changed, if at all? What has caused these changes? What does it tell us about our world?
3. Have children research some of Australia's largest farming families. Who helped them on the farms and what sorts of jobs did they have?

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM CONTENT: ENGLISH

Foundation

- Respond to texts, identifying favourite stories, authors and illustrators ([ACELT1577](#)).
- Share feelings and thoughts about the events and characters in texts ([ACELT1783](#)).
- Identify some differences between imaginative and informative texts ([ACELY1648](#)).

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

1. In *This Is Banjo Paterson*, Banjo's life is told through backyard play of some neighbourhood kids. In this way, the book blends informative, biographical narrative with a modern day setting involving children at play. Discuss this with children and identify which parts are imaginative (the images) and which are factual (the text). Discuss how the children in this book are playing the 'role' of real life characters. Have them identify these characters.
2. Have children role-play the characters from the book.

Year 1

- Discuss characters and events in a range of literary texts and share personal responses to these texts, making connections with students' own experiences ([ACELT1582](#)).
- Discuss features of plot, character and setting in different types of literature and explore some features of characters in different texts ([ACELT1584](#)).

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

Banjo Paterson was a multi-talented man, who achieved much in his life, and travelled extensively. He had many roles in his working life, ranging from poet and author to horse vet, solicitor and jockey. Discuss his various roles. Which roles do the children relate to—are there similar roles being filled by the adults in their lives or are they roles that the children might one day like to fill? Which career roles would children like to explore and why?

Year 2

- Create events and characters using different media that develop key events and characters from literary texts ([ACELT1593](#)).
- Listen for specific purposes and information, including instructions, and extend students' own and others' ideas in discussions ([ACELY1666](#)).
- Use interaction skills including initiating topics, making positive statements and voicing disagreement in an appropriate manner, speaking clearly and varying tone, volume and pace appropriately ([ACELY1789](#)).
- Rehearse and deliver short presentations on familiar and new topics ([ACELY1667](#)).

Discussion/Inquiry Question

- Have children design their own short presentation or have them role-play one or two scenes from *This Is Banjo Paterson*.
- Now choose another historical scene, e.g. Captain Cook's arrival in Australia, Bradman scoring 100.

Year 3

- Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others ([ACELT1596](#)).
- Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts demonstrating increasing control over text structures and language features and selecting print and multimodal elements appropriate to the audience and purpose ([ACELY1682](#)).

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

1. Note the speech and thought bubbles used throughout *This Is Banjo Paterson*. They add extra childlike language to the storyline, and also celebrate Banjo's lifelong love of, and dedication to, poetry and rhyme. What other book genre uses speech and thought bubbles? What is the purpose of these bubbles?
2. Have children illustrate a short story from history or from their imagination and add character speech bubbles to enhance the meaning of the narrative.

Further Reading

- *The Animals Noah Forgot*, Banjo Paterson, 1933.
- *The Man from Snowy River and Other Verses*, 1895.
- *Meet Banjo Paterson* by Kristin Weidenbach and James Gulliver Hancock, 2015.
- *Aussie Notables Banjo Patterson* by Allan Drummond, 2015.
- *Waltzing Matilda*, illustrated by Desmond Digby, 2011.
- *A Bush Christening*, illustrated by Quentin Hole, 1991.
- *The Man from Snowy River*, illustrated by Freya Blackwood, 2004.