

TEACHERS' NOTES

Lucy's Dawn

by Juliet Blair



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Recommended Year Levels: Years 5–8

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Australian Curriculum Content

- Learning Area(s)
 - History
 - Civics and Citizenship
 - English
 - Science
- General Capabilities
 - Personal and Social Capability
 - Critical and Creative thinking
 - Ethical Understanding
- Digital Classroom
 - Digital Classroom Year 6 ‘Fanny Durack’ <https://www.nla.gov.au/digital-classroom/year-6/themes/fanny-durack>
 - Digital Classroom Year 6 ‘A National Identity’—Waltzing Matilda manuscript <https://www.nla.gov.au/digital-classroom/year-6/themes/a-national-identity>
 - Digital Classroom Year 6 ‘The Poet of Australia’—Henry Lawson <https://www.nla.gov.au/digital-classroom/year-6/themes/the-poet-of-australia>

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 based.

- Look at the cover of the book with the class. What do you think this book will be about? What makes you say that?
- Discuss broad themes of the book, such as:

Equal rights (for women, workers); fair working conditions; womanhood suffrage; family; love, true and illusory; advertising and commercial success; automation and resulting changes to industry; literature and its value to the individual.

HISTORY

Year 5

Content description: Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present (ACHASSI099)

Elaboration

- analysing photographs to identify inferred messages (for example, how workers on a colonial banana plantation are positioned, dressed, posed and/or are absent, to reflect the status of different groups such as English managers, Chinese, Aboriginal and South Sea Islander workers, women and children)

Activity



image by William Thomas Smedley (1858–1920)

Lucy hates the idea of domestic service, not because she hates housework as such, but because of the status of servants in private homes; the social gulf between ‘upstairs’ (the family) and ‘downstairs’ (the servants), and the resulting lack of power that servants have over their own lives. Lucy’s good friend Susie’s situation is an example of this.

Have students look at this picture of a mistress speaking to her maid (image by William Thomas Smedley, 1858–1920). There is a wide gulf between them in wealth, power and social status. What in the image shows you this?

(Suggested answers might include: clothing (gleaming pink silk / uniform and apron; expensive marble/gold/ornate upholstery fabric, the furniture being grouped closely round the figure of the mistress to indicate possession, whereas the maid’s only function is to keep these items clean (see the two dusters she is holding); relative position (seated, standing); items being held (book = leisure, duster = work; facial expressions—the mistress is alert and confident, the maid is impassive, with lowered eyelids.)

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- Ask students to read the entries for Wednesday 27 November and Thursday 28 November 1889 (pp.89–91), in which the girls who made Lady Carrington’s dress talk about the conditions under which it was made. What can you infer from this about the usual conditions of work in the garment industry?

A sweatshop is a shop employing workers at low wages, for long hours and under poor conditions.

- Look at the photo of a sweatshop in the garment industry in the 1890s. What do think the conditions were like in this sweatshop? (Note neatly dressed male supervisors.)



- Have students find one or more photographs of sweatshops in today’s garment industry. (It is unlikely to be in Australia, but the clothes being made in such places are sold all over the world.) As a class or in small groups, have students:
 - compare and contrast the sweatshop from the 1890s with factories on the garment industries today.
 - discuss whether we should wear clothes that are, in Abbie’s words, ‘dyed with [the workers’] blood’ (see p.90). What is being done to improve conditions for machinists all over the world? What more could be done?

Content description: The impact of a significant development or event on an Australian colony (ACHASSK108)

Elaborations

- investigating an event or development and explaining its economic, social and political impact on a colony (for example, the consequences of frontier conflict events such as the Myall Creek Massacre, the Pinjarra Massacre; the impact of South Sea Islanders on sugar farming and the timber industry; the impact of the Eureka Stockade on the development of democracy; the impact of internal exploration and the advent of rail on the expansion of farming)
- creating 'what if' scenarios by constructing different outcomes for a key event (for example, 'What if Peter Lalor had encouraged gold miners to pay rather than resist licence fees?')

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- Have students read the entries in *Lucy's Dawn* for Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 January 1890 (pages 115–118).

Discuss as a class:

What do these entries tell you about the prejudice against the Chinese that existed in the community? What fears led to the passing of the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (the White Australia policy)? Was this policy popular at the time?

- In small groups, have students discuss:

What if the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* had not been passed? Do you think the fears of the predominantly British population of Australia of 'being overrun' by Asian settlers would have come to pass? Why or why not?

Content description: The role that a significant individual or group played in shaping a colony (ACHASSK110)

Elaborations

- investigating the contribution or significance of an individual or group to the shaping of a colony in the 1800s (for example, explorers, farmers, pastoralists, miners, inventors, writers, artists, humanitarians, religious and spiritual leaders, political activists, including women, children, and people of diverse cultures)
- exploring the motivations and actions of an individual or group that shaped a colony

Activity

On pp.29–31 of *Lucy's Dawn*, Louisa Lawson introduces Lucy to the idea of womanhood suffrage and, on p.67, she gives a speech at a Dawn Club meeting. On p.202, the Historical Note mentions the importance of Louisa Lawson in her role in the Womanhood Suffrage Movement.

With the push for votes for women came the equally important parliamentary representation for women. Both were granted simultaneously in 1902. It was not long until women were running for parliament in Australia, though it was some time before any of them were successful.

Research the life and contribution of a woman who was elected, or who was a candidate, in the early years post-suffrage. What were her aims and achievements?

(Suggestions: Catherine Spence, Vida Goldstein, Edith Cowan, Enid Lyons)

Year 6

Content description: Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present (ACHASSI127)

Elaborations

- discussing issues where there are, or were, a range of views and proposing reasons for different perspectives (for example, different opinions about the deportation of South Sea Islanders from 1901, the vote for women, how to manage an environment more sustainably)
- exploring historic sources to identify the views of a range of stakeholders affected by Federation and citizenship rights (for example, women, children, men without property, or South Sea Islanders)

Activities

- Have students research and list some arguments for and against woman suffrage from the point of view of a society in which this was not taken for granted, like that of the late Victorian era, in which *Lucy's Dawn* is set.

Examples of anti-suffragist feelings expressed in *Lucy's Dawn* are on pp.28, 30–31.

Examples of pro-suffragist arguments are on pp.29–31, 67.

- Have students role-play a discussion between exponents of the differing views expressed in the following posters.



- Have students role-play a discussion between exponents of differing views on women working in printeries, taking their arguments from *Lucy's Dawn*?

Content description: Experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, migrants, women and children (ACHASSK135)

Elaborations

- investigating the stories of individuals or groups who advocated or fought for rights in twentieth-century Australia (for example, Jack Patten or the Aborigines Progressive Association)
- investigating the experiences of democracy and citizenship of women (for example, the suffragette movement, the bar on married women working, equal pay, the Sex Discrimination Act 1984)

Activities

- Read the following diary entries in *Lucy's Dawn* for 1890: Monday 17 February, Monday 24 February, Tuesday 25 February and Friday 28 February (pages 127–129).
 - Imagine that you are Annie Hill and that you have been invited to put your case informally to a gathering of senior members of the Typographical Association prior to the meeting at which your application is to be considered. What will you say?
- Read the diary entries in *Lucy's Dawn* for Wednesday 6 and Monday 11 August 1890 (pp.168–169). Then look up *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 August 1890, p.4 at nla.gov.au/nla.news-page1381591 and read the three letters about female composers.
 - Now, in pairs, imagine that you are members of the Typographical Association. Annie Hill has left and you discuss whether she should be admitted to the union. Debate this, with one person taking the role of Mr Fitzgerald and another taking the role of either Mr Colebrook or Mr Watson.

CIVICS AND CITIZENSHIP

Year 5

Content description: The key values that underpin Australia's democracy (ACHASSK115)

Elaboration

- discussing the meaning and importance of the key values of Australian democracy (for example, freedom of election and being elected; freedom of assembly and political participation; freedom of speech, expression and religious belief; rule of law; other basic human rights)

Discussion/Inquiry Question

Have students read the diary entry in *Lucy's Dawn* for Sunday 4 August 1889 (p.37). Then think about the rights that a young girl like Susie might reasonably expect as a member of a democratic society. Which of those rights are not available to her? What are the most important changes in the situation of a 14–15-year-old girl that have occurred between 1889 and today?

Content description: How people with shared beliefs and values work together to achieve a civic goal (ACHASSK118)

Elaboration

- discussing ways people resolve differences (for example, through negotiation and Reconciliation)

Discussion/Inquiry Question

As a class, discuss how Louisa Lawson (representing women's right to work as compositors) and the Typographical Association could have resolved their differences? Was there—or could there have been—any common ground? Any middle course? How could the threat of the linotype machine have affected the chances of reconciliation between the two opposing groups?

Activities

Have students, in pairs, carry out these role-plays.

- A woman supporting the issue of votes for women is door-knocking, collecting signatures for a petition to parliament. She knocks on Alice Coombes' (Lucy's mother's) door. Role-play their conversation.
- This time the woman who answers the door is middle-class rather than working class (for example, Florrie's mother). Role-play their conversation.

As a class, discuss the differences between the two conversations.

Year 6

Content description: Where ideas for new laws can come from and how they become law (ACHASSK146)

Elaboration

- investigating where ideas for new laws come from (for example, from party policy, perhaps announced during an election campaign; from suggestions by members and senators; from interest groups in the community)

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

On pp.29–31 of *Lucy's Dawn*, Louisa Lawson introduces Lucy to the idea of womanhood suffrage and, on p.67, she gives a speech at a Dawn Club meeting. On p.202, the Historical Note mentions the importance of Louisa Lawson in her role in the Womanhood Suffrage Movement.

- Find out the dates of the introduction of universal manhood suffrage, womanhood suffrage and full franchise for Indigenous people.
- The laws that brought these about were formulated in response to community opinion. How were these opinions expressed and conveyed to lawmakers in a way that led to legislative reform?

Year 7

Content description: How values, including freedom, respect, inclusion, civility, responsibility, compassion, equality and a 'fair go', can promote cohesion within Australian society (ACHCK052)

Elaborations

- identifying values shared by Australians and deciding which ones could also be considered universal values
- identifying how human rights values are consistent with Australian values

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

Have students read Lucy's diary entries for Monday 6 and Tuesday 7 January 1890 (pp.115–118).

- How do the events in these entries show the triumph and/or defeat of the Australian values of equality and a fair go for all, when applied to people of another race?
- Read *The Man from Snowy River* by A.B. Paterson. How does this poem illustrate and justify the traditional Australian value of 'a fair go'?
- Read *Clancy of the Overflow* by A.B. Paterson. Consider how this poem is grounded in the traditional Australian value of equality between different classes of society.
- Read *To an Old Mate* by Henry Lawson. What does it say about the traditional Australian value of mateship? H

Year 8

Content description: How national identity can shape a sense of belonging in Australia's multicultural society (ACHCK067)

Elaborations

- examining personal stories to explore how individuals relate to national identity and how it impacts on their sense of belonging in the Australian community
- exploring the extent of ethnic diversity in Australia

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

Read the sections of *Lucy's Dawn* in which Mr Quong Tart appears (Monday 23 September 1889, pp.64–65; Monday 28 October 1889, pp.75–76; Monday 22 November 1889, pp.86–88; Saturday 30 November 1889, ten past one, p.92).

Though the word 'multicultural' did not exist until the 1940s, Quong Tart lived a life that exemplified the bringing into harmony of different cultures—in his case, Chinese, Australian, and Scottish.

Have students research the following:

- How did Scottish culture become an influence in this young Chinese man's life?
- Quong Tart lived in Australia from the age of nine, but his Chinese identity was important to him. How did this work out in his life?
- What did Quong Tart do to promote harmony between his birth culture (Chinese) and his adopted culture (Australian)?

ENGLISH

Year 5

Content description: Understand how texts vary in purpose, structure and topic as well as the degree of formality (ACELA1504)

Elaboration

- becoming familiar with the typical stages and language features of such text types as: narrative, procedure, exposition, explanation, discussion and informative text and how they can be composed and presented in written, digital and multimedia forms

Discussion/Inquiry Question

Lucy's Dawn contains a number of the following literary forms:

- Diary entries: The main text
- Factual report: The historical notes at the end of the book
- Editorial: Read and consider the editorial 'Fair Fighting' from *The Dawn* mentioned in the text on p.35. You can read the editorial in *The Dawn*, 3 August 1889, p.12 at nla.gov.au/nla.news-article76422753.
- Letters to the Editor: Read the diary entries in *Lucy's Dawn* for Wednesday 6 and Monday 11 August 1890 (pp.168–169). Then look up *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 9 August 1890, p.4 at nla.gov.au/nla.news-page1381591 and read the three letters about female composers.
- Poems: The following poems are mentioned in *Lucy's Dawn*. Have students read one or two of them in full. Have students discuss why poetry was an appropriate form of expression for the poet's thoughts.

A Song of the Republic, Andy's Gone with Cattle, The Ghost, Faces in the Street, The Roaring Days by Henry Lawson

My Nettie by Louisa Lawson (see four lines of the poem on p.59)

A Man's a Man for a' That, Auld Lang Syne by Robert Burns

She Dwelt among the Untrodden Ways by William Wordsworth (see four lines of the poem on p.96)

Content description: Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses (ACELT1610)

Elaborations

- identifying the narrative voice (the person or entity through whom the audience experiences the story) in a literary work, discussing the impact of first person narration on empathy and engagement
- examining texts written from different narrative points of view and discussing what information the audience can access, how this impacts on the audience's sympathies, and why an author might choose a particular narrative point of view

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- One disadvantage of first person narration is that the reader can only witness directly a scene at which the narrator was present. Is there any scene that Lucy can only recount briefly from her limited knowledge that might have been interesting for the reader to witness directly?
- Write a diary entry for Mary Cameron written just after she has left her lodgings at 26 Jamison Street (the Lawson home and printery). Include her personal feelings about and impressions of Louisa, Henry and Lucy, and what life was like in the place she was probably happy to leave.

Year 6

Content description: Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1613)

Elaboration

- recognising the influence our different historical, social and cultural experiences may have on the meaning we make from the text and the attitudes we may develop towards characters, actions and events

Activities

- Have students imagine that they have won a prize in a contest—a trip in a time machine to Sydney in 1890, during which they visited a number of the homes, workplaces, shops, etc known to Lucy in *Lucy's Dawn*. Now they have just returned and are being interviewed on TV about what they thought of the world of the past that they visited. As young people of today, how would they react to this unfamiliar society? Write out (or act out) the interview.
- Students imagine they have spent a day at the workplace of a member of their family as a means of experiencing the workplace at first hand. It has also been arranged (using the aforementioned time machine) that Lucy can come to today's Sydney and spend a

day at the same workplace. Have students write a diary entry concerning this experience. Now write a similar diary entry for Lucy on her return to 1890s Sydney.

Year 7

Content description: Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1619)

Elaboration

- identifying and explaining differences between points of view in texts, for example contrasting the city and the bush or different perspectives based on culture, gender or age

Activity

The following short article appeared in the *Australian Town and Country Journal*, 2 June 1888, p.14 (see nla.gov.au/nla.news-article71098333).

THE DAWN

This is the name of a new monthly periodical published in Sydney, and purporting to be written by women for women. In other words it is, according to the prefatory notice, 'The Australian Woman's journal and mouthpiece.' Dora Falconer is the editor, and Louisa Lawson the publisher. The paper is well and clearly printed, and contains a good deal of miscellaneous information and original articles which ought to recommend it to the favourable notice of its fair readers.

(Note: Dora Falconer was one of the pen names of Louisa Lawson.)

This article reflects a society that has little respect for women or their interests, activities or enterprises. What is its tone? Do you think it was written by a male or a female journalist? Find out the meaning of 'to damn with faint praise.'

Rewrite the article in order to give the new magazine the level of respect it would probably be given today.

The feminism posters and activity previously given would also fit in here.

Content description: Create literary texts that adapt stylistic features encountered in other texts, for example, narrative viewpoint, structure of stanzas, contrast and juxtaposition (ACELT1625)

Elaborations

- using aspects of texts in imaginative recreations such as re-situating a character from a text in a new situation
- imagining a character's life events (for example misadventures organised retrospectively to be presented as a series of flashbacks in scripted monologue supported by single images), making a sequel or prequel or rewriting an ending
- creating chapters for an autobiography, short story or diary

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- Archie Venables is in the tearoom with Julia, telling her about the incident in the Lawson printery from his point of view. Write his account.
- (This task is based on historical fact.) Mr Quong Tart has met the love of his life at the age of 32. She is Margaret Scarlett, a schoolteacher of English/Irish background, aged 19, and she feels the same way about him. But first he must ask her father's permission. This was the custom, and also, in this case, necessary, as marriage before age 21 required parental permission. Though her father, George, was a friend of Mr Tart's, he refused permission or the marriage.

Write Margaret's diary entry for this fateful day. (It wasn't too fateful in the end. They married the day after Margaret's 21st birthday.)

- Lucy finally saves up enough to buy an ice-chest. It's being delivered on Saturday afternoon—a surprise gift for her mother. Susie is there with her boyfriend, complete with a block of ice, to help them set it up. But it turns out the surprise wasn't a good idea. Mum (Alice) is appalled. 'Newfangled rubbish.' 'Wicked waste.' 'Where will we put it?' The others have to persuade her that this will be a benefit to the whole family. Write this as a scene in a play. Include cast list and description of the set.

Year 8

Content description: Recognise and explain differing viewpoints about the world, cultures, individual people and concerns represented in texts (ACELT1807)

Elaboration

- analysing arguments for and against a particular issue in current community debates and justifying a personal stance

Discussion/Inquiry Questions

- Louisa Lawson and her fellow activists represented the first wave of feminism. The third wave is still continuing. What do you think still requires attention in order to achieve true equality?
- Trade unions in Australia, seen by many in the late nineteenth century as the chief hope of justice for the working person, have been in decline since the 1970s. Why has this happened? Should we be trying to reverse this decline, and if so, how?
- In 1890, Australia was anticipating Federation, but it would be more than a decade before it became reality. At that time, there were only two levels of government, state and local. Now that there are three (federal, state and local), many people, including former Prime Minister Bob Hawke, believe that we are over-governed, that the system as it stands is wasteful and cumbersome, and that we should have government at federal and local levels only. What are the arguments for and against this view?

SCIENCE

Year 6

Content description: Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions (ACSHE100)

Elaboration

- considering how electricity and electrical appliances have changed the way some people live

Activity

- Find out how the following were done before electricity was available: washing clothes, washing dishes, cooking, bathing, ironing, keeping food cool, cleaning floor rugs, heating the house.
- Estimate the extra hours that would be added to domestic workloads compared to today. This explains why the largest and most readily available number of jobs for young women were in the area of domestic service in the nineteenth and early twentieth century. Research the different kinds of domestic service jobs that were offered in 1890, and the work conditions for these young women.

- Read Lucy's diary entry of Wednesday 1 January 1890 on pp.113–114. Lucy imagines a future world transformed by electric light. In what way did electric light change people's lives?

FURTHER READING

BOOKS

If you enjoyed *Lucy's Dawn* you might enjoy these books:

Historical Fiction for Young Readers

Plagues and Federation: The Diary of Kitty Barnes, the Rocks, Sydney by Vashti Farrer (Lindfield, NSW: Scholastic Press, 2006) (You might also enjoy other books in the My Australian Story series, e.g. *The Hunt for Ned Kelly* by Sophie Masson, which has a young photography expert as its heroine.)

Playing Beatie Bow by Ruth Park (Australia: Penguin Group Australia, 2010) (Time travel to The Rocks, 1873)

If Blood Should Stain the Wattle by Jackie French (Sydney South: HarperCollins, 2017) and other books in the Matilda Saga e.g. *The Girl from Snowy River* (2012). Also by Jackie French: *The Night they Stormed Eureka*

Seven Little Australians and its two sequels, *The Family at Misrule* and *Little Mother Meg* by Ethel Turner

Our Australian Girl series for younger readers 8–12

The Ratcatcher's Daughter by Pamela Rushby (Sydney South: HarperCollins 2014) (Located in Brisbane 1900).

Non-Fiction for Young Readers

Edith Cowan: Quiet Woman of Note by Hazel Edwards (Frenchs Forest, NSW: New Frontier Publishing, 2014) (Biography for young readers of Australia's first woman member of Parliament)

WEBSITES

adb.anu.edu.au/

Australian Dictionary of Biography. Contains entries on Louisa Lawson, Henry Lawson, Mei Quong Tart and Mary Gilmore (Mary Jean Cameron)

home.dictionaryofsydney.org/

Huge collection of documents on the history and geography of Sydney. Some interesting photographs in the section 'The Rocks'

www.australia.gov.au/about/australia/australian-story/austn-women-in-politics

The Dawn

The first issue is at nla.gov.au/nla.news-page7560838

From there you can find other issues.

blogs.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au/cook/quong-tarts-famous-tearooms/

www.neram.com.au/pdf_files/mop/printing_in_australia.pdf

A basic timeline of the early days of printing in Australia

www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-suffragettes

[www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-women-in-politics\]](http://www.australia.gov.au/about-australia/australian-story/austn-women-in-politics)