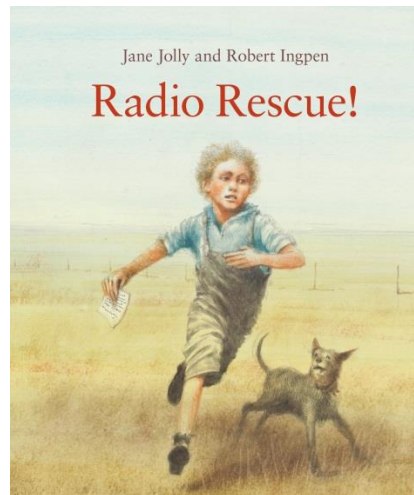


TEACHERS' NOTES

Radio Rescue

written by Jane Jolly and illustrated by Robert Ingpen



Author: Jane Jolly www.janejolly.com and [Jane at NLA Publishing](#)

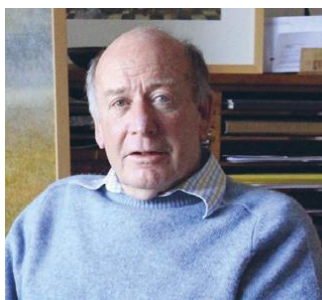
Jane has had five picture books published, each earning a Notable Award from the Children's Book Council of Australia.



She is a primary school teacher of 35 years' experience. She has taught in Aboriginal schools, area schools and primary schools. In 1983, she worked as a governess on Commonwealth Hill Station. She now works part-time as a teacher-librarian at Eastern Fleurieu School in South Australia, teaching creative writing and literature appreciation.

Her interests include organic gardening, cooking and the plight of refugees.

Illustrator: Robert Ingpen www.melaleuca.com.au/ingpen/ and [Robert at NLA Publishing](#)



Robert was born in Geelong, Victoria. He has a Diploma of Graphic Art from RMIT and became a freelance designer, illustrator and author. Robert has written and/or illustrated more than 100 books, including children's picture books and fictional stories for all ages. His nonfiction books mostly relate to issues of history, conservation, environment and health.

In 1968, Robert became the only Australian to be awarded the Hans Christian Andersen Medal for his international contribution to book illustration. In 1989, Robert was awarded the Dromkeen Medal for his significant contribution to children's literature and, in 2007, he was awarded an Order of Australia for service to literature.

GEOGRAPHY

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM LINKS (version 7.5)

Geographical Inquiry and Skills

- YEAR 1 Observing, questioning and planning [ACHGS007](#)
Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing [ACHGS009](#)
- YEAR 2 Observing, questioning and planning [ACHGS013](#)
Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing [ACHGS014](#) and [ACHGS015](#)
- YEAR 3 Geographical Knowledge and Understanding [ACHGK022](#)
- YEAR 4 Reflecting and responding [ACHGS032](#)
- YEAR 5 Geographical Knowledge and Understanding [ACHGK028](#) and [ACHGK029](#)
- YEAR 6 Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing [ACHGS041](#)

Setting

The story is set on a sheep station in the Australian outback in the 1930s. Australia has many sheep and cattle stations, which range in size from 4,000 km² to 23,000 km². They are very isolated—often hundreds of kilometres away from their nearest neighbour.

Stations are often in areas of very low rainfall and can go through times of drought that can last for years.

1. Look at the list of the largest stations in Australia at:
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_the_largest_stations_in_Australia
2. Choose two stations and compare the climate, topography and vegetation.
3. Work out the distance from the station to:
 - (a) the nearest station
 - (b) the nearest town
 - (c) the nearest capital city
4. Make a list of the positive and negative aspects of living in such an isolated community.
5. Compare the number of people living and working on the two stations.
6. Make a list of the positive and negative aspects of living in such a small community.
7. How would these people's lives be shaped by where they live?

8. What impacts have sheep and cattle had on the environment?
9. What other countries in the world have sparsely populated areas like Australia?
10. Draw a bird's-eye view of your house and yard.

HISTORY

Aboriginal Perspective

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM LINKS (version 7.5)

Historical Knowledge and Understanding

YEAR 3 Community and remembrance [ACHHK060](#) and [ACHHK061](#)

YEAR 4 First contacts [ACHHK077](#) and [ACHHK080](#)

YEAR 5 The Australian colonies [ACHHK094](#) and [ACHHK095](#)

Aboriginal people inhabited Australia for tens of thousands of years before white Europeans settled. To see the number, names and languages of Aboriginal groups living across Australia, look at the map on the website at

www.abc.net.au/indigenous/map/

1. What would first contact with Europeans have been like for these people?
2. What were the Aboriginal people's lives like and how did this change with the coming of Europeans?
3. Many Aboriginal men and women were employed on the stations. What sort of work were they given? What were their wages and living conditions like?
4. In 1946, hundreds of Aboriginal pastoral workers went on strike for better pay and conditions. Read more about this at:
www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/politics/1946-pilbara-strike-australias-longest-strike#axzz3bnFUkSfi
5. To find out more about station life and to see images, go to the State Library New South Wales website at:
www2.sl.nsw.gov.au/archive/discover_collections/history_nation/agriculture/life/station_life/index.html
6. What forms of communication were used by pastoralists before the pedal radio?
7. Compare life on a station in the 1930s with life on a station in the twenty-first century. How have things changed? Have all changes been for the better?

8. The Royal Flying Doctor Service was developed soon after the pedal radio. Read about the history of the Royal Flying Doctor Service at:
www.flyingdoctor.org.au/about-the-rfds/history/

For lessons and classroom resources on the RFDS go to:
www.flyingdoctor4education.org.au/

What other services could be supplied by plane to isolated people in Australia?

The Pedal Radio

For a quick history of the pedal radio (which includes great photos), go to:

samhs.org.au/Virtual%20Museum/hospital-andother-orgs/rfds-wireless/flying-doctor-radio.htm

1. Use the Morse code chart in *Radio Rescue* to practise writing your name. Then write an emergency message to the Flying Doctor using Morse code.
2. Make a list of topics that the outback women would have talked about during the 'galah' sessions. Remember that they rarely saw each other in person.
3. 'The pedal radio saved our lives.' How? Brainstorm all the ways it could have helped to save lives.

LITERATURE

AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM LINKS (version 7.5)

Literature

YEAR 5 Literature and context [ACELT1608](#)

Examining literature [ACELT1611](#)

Creating texts [ACELY1704](#)

YEAR 6 Literature and context [ACELT1613](#)

Examining literature [ACELT1610](#)

Texts in context [ACELY1708](#)

1. How does the author set the scene at the beginning of the story?
2. How does the use of repetition improve the story?
3. What is a **simile**? Similes make the biggest impact when they are not clichés (used too much). 'As white as a ghost' is a cliché. Identify the similes in the story. Make up some similes that are original and not clichés.

4. What if the main character was a girl? Would the story be different? If so, how?
5. Imagine that you are Jim and that you are keeping a diary. Write his diary for the week leading up to the story, for the events in the story and for the week after. Or imagine that you are Jim's mother or father and write her/his diary entries for the same time.
6. After reading about how to operate a pedal radio write a set of instructions for someone who has never used one before.
7. 'All children should be able to attend a school'. Choose either the negative or affirmative argument for this statement and write a persuasive text.
8. Write a shopping list for a month's supply of food and groceries for a family of four.

ILLUSTRATIONS

Robert Ingpen's style has been described as authentic, detailed, evocative and rich. He uses a variety of media including watercolour, pencil and pastel.

Storyboards

For *Radio Rescue*, he began with a **storyboard**.

1. What are storyboards? Why are they useful?
2. Design your own storyboard for a story you have written or one you have heard.
3. Think about close-up, middle-distance and distance illustrations. Match the text with the illustrations.

Pencil sketching

1. Try some pencil sketching, starting with simple subjects. For example, a vase, a piece of fruit, a face.
2. Try some pencil sketching but use only one colour. Then try a different colour to do another sketch. (Sketches using only one colour are 'monochromatic'.)
3. Try different-coloured paper. For example, use a white pencil on black paper or a yellow pencil on red paper.

Realism

Robert's style is called **realism**. This is where the artist attempts to represent the subject matter truthfully.

1. What other artists and illustrators are realists?
2. Would the book have worked as well if he had used a different style? What other styles might have worked?

Research

A lot of research was involved to get the images correct. Because the subject is real, it is important to get the illustrations as close to reality as possible. Robert worked from photographic images of the train and of the environment. Clothing on the characters is true to the period that the story is set in.

1. Make a list of what Robert might have researched to get the illustrations correct.
2. Use the National Library of Australia's website, catalogue.nla.gov.au/, to do a search on the 'pedal radio'. Look at the images from your search. Compare them with the images in the book. How are they similar? How are they different?
3. Use the National Library of Australia's website, trove.nla.gov.au/, and look at a newspaper from the 1930s. What is the news on the front page? How does the newspaper compare with newspapers of the twenty-first century?