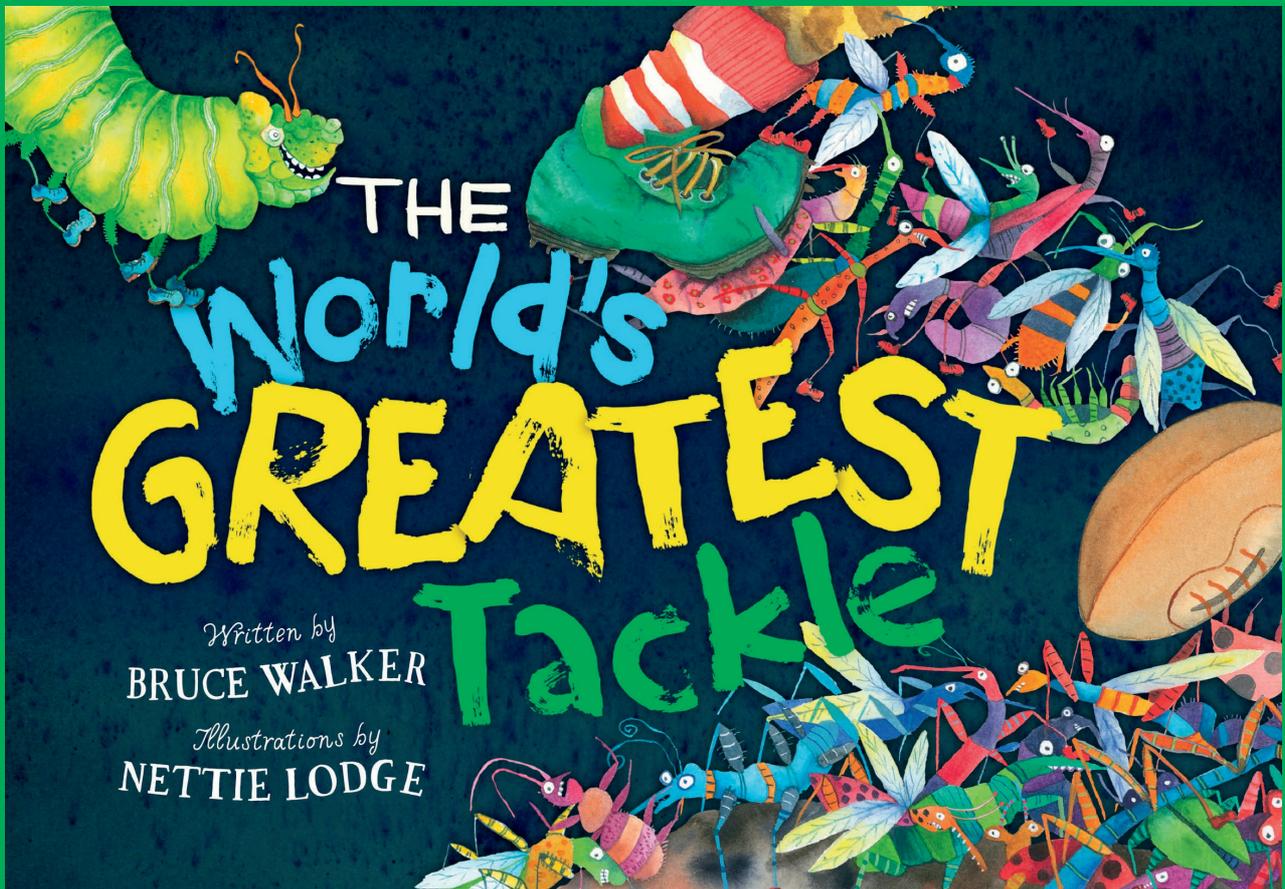


The World's Greatest Tackle

TEACHING NOTES



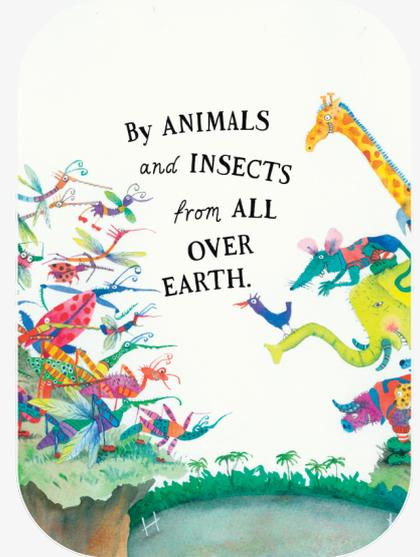
BEFORE READING

Display the cover and ask students to use the illustrations, title, and back cover blurb to predict what the story will be about.



DURING READING

- Ask students to predict who will win the game, and to give reasons for their answers. If anyone suggests that the Insects will win, ask them to predict how they might do that against the sheer strength of the Animals.
- What does the term 'footy' refer to?



Footy means **football**, which may refer to several popular codes played in Australia. Rugby league is referred to as league, footy, football, league football or rugby. Rugby union is referred to as union, rugby football, football, footy or rugby. The full name for soccer is Association Football. It is known as soccer in the United States and Canada, people in South Africa and Ireland use both or either one of these terms and, recently, national associations in Australia and New Zealand decided to start using football as soccer's formal name.

- What does the author mean when he says the game is 'played with spirit and mirth'?
- What does he mean when he writes 'each insect threw off their shackle'?
- Is anyone familiar with the terms, 'ruck' and 'maul.' (These are terms used in rugby union. In a ruck, the ball is on the ground and at least one player from each side must be in contact over the ball. In a maul the ball is held off the ground and at least one team-mate is bound to at least one opponent.)

- What does the term 'lineout' mean? (In rugby union, a minimum of two players line up parallel with each other, one metre apart between the five-metre and 15-metre lines. Usually, the hooker of the team in possession throws the ball in while their opposite number may stand in between the touchline and the five-metre line. All players not involved in the lineout, except the receiver, must retire 10 metres. The ball must be thrown in straight down the middle of the lineout and the hooker must not cross into the field of play while throwing in.)
- What does the term 'maul' mean? (When a ball carrier is held up, without being tackled, by both an opposing player and a player from his own team, a maul is then considered formed. The offside line becomes the last foot of the last man on each side of the maul. Players can join in only from behind that teammate. Anyone who comes in from the sides will be penalised by the referee. Hands are allowed to be used in the maul. If either team deliberately collapses the maul, then that side will be penalised by the referee.)
- When reading this story aloud, emphasise the rhyme and rhythm of the text. Ask students if the way the text is written reminds them of other texts they have read or studied, eg rhyming narratives and Australian bush ballads.
- Draw students' attention to the illustrations and text. How have the illustrator, author and book designer worked together to make readers feel they are at the actual game? Why are the illustrations so effective? How has the book designer made the author's text come alive?



AFTER READING

LANGUAGE



- Explore the text in the context of this story being a literary Australian bush ballad (see background information below). Encourage students to research the origins of Australian bush ballads and share with them the following elements of an Australian bush ballad:

- tells a story, with a beginning, middle and ending
- has a subject or theme, eg the outback, mates, or sport
- is written in stanzas, usually of four, six or eight lines
- often uses distinctly Australian language
- may contain dialogue
- has a clear pattern of rhyming. For example, the first and third, second and fourth lines may rhyme, and sometimes the first and second, and third and fourth lines may rhyme. Other combinations are also possible.
- has a clear rhythm, particularly evident when read aloud.

- Share other traditional bush ballads, such as ***The Man from Snowy River*** and ***The Wild Colonial Boy*** and reread ***The World's Greatest Tackle***. Ask students to compare the traditional ballads with ***The World's Greatest Tackle***, identifying some or all the elements above.
- Have students write out the first stanza from each ballad to help them identify the rhythm and rhyming pattern used in each.

Ask students to explain, in their own words, the story each ballad is telling.

You might ask:

- What types of people are mentioned in each ballad?
- What events take place in each ballad?

Challenge students to write a serious, sad, funny, or ridiculous Australian bush ballad of their own, based on one of the following themes:

- Sport
- Family
- Farming
- School
- City life
- Country life
- Environment
- A current event
- A famous Australian.



Each ballad should:

- tell a story about Australian life today
- have a minimum of four stanzas
- employ a rhyming pattern
- have clear rhythm
- include an example of simile, metaphor, or personification
- include an example of onomatopoeia or alliteration.
- include some dialogue
- use some quintessentially Australian language



To begin, ask students to make rough notes about the story they want to tell. Then:

- have them write an outline of their ballad, showing what information will go in each stanza. At this stage they should write no more than three or four words for each stanza.
- using their outline as a guide, they can expand each stanza until they have a first draft for their ballad. At this stage, they shouldn't worry if they don't have their rhyming and rhythm correct. Stress with students that they may need to write two or three drafts of their ballad as they work through each step.
- ask students to look back over their ballad with a view to identifying where they could include a simile, metaphor, or example of personification.
- ask students to look back again, this time to identify where they could include an example of onomatopoeia or alliteration.
- now have students work on their draft to perfect their rhyming pattern. If anyone is having trouble with rhyming a word, as a class make a list of all the words you can think of that rhyme with their word.
- ask students to check their rhythm. When you read it aloud, is it forming a clear pattern? If not, try rewriting any lines with problems. This might mean changing a word or rewriting a whole line. Have students check the number of syllables they have used. Show them how the number of syllables helps define the rhythm. For example, if you want a rhythm of six beats or stresses to the line, you will need about 12 or 13 syllables.
- once students are satisfied with their ballad, ask them to do final spelling and punctuation checks before submitting their final copy.

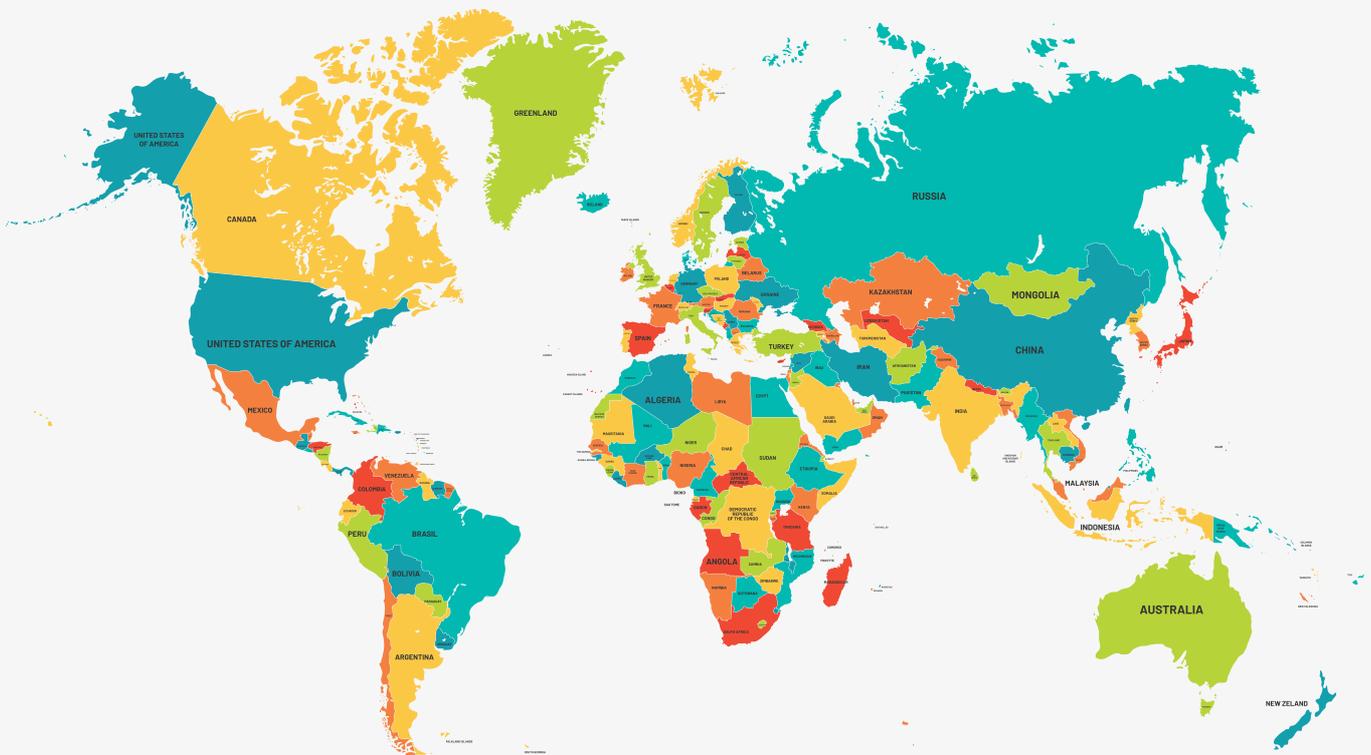


PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- Team up students who know little about footy with those who know a lot. Ask them to together create a glossary of terms and write out the rules for a football code of their choice.
- Alternatively, have students each choose any sport that interests them and to create a glossary of terms and a set of rules for that sport.

GEOGRAPHY

- The World's Greatest Tackle incorporates animals from all over Earth. As a class, create a large world map for classroom display. Ask students to then each choose one animal from the book to research, illustrate and add to the class world map.



- World Cup football matches are a great introduction to studying cultures around the world while also tapping into student and community enthusiasm around football. In 2023, the Rugby World Cup is scheduled to take place in France from Friday, 8 September to Saturday, 28 October.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Bush ballads are an Australian construct and were mainly written between 1880 and 1915, during a period where Australia's national identity was much talked about and considered. Australians at this time were very patriotic because of Federation in 1901 that united the Australian colonies to form the Commonwealth of Australia.

Ballads are often about experiences of outback Australia, exploring themes of mateship and hardship. In the main, they focus on drovers, stockmen, and the conflicts between these people and the rich (usually squatters). They often tell the story of outcasts, such as bushrangers.

Bush ballads especially look at Australian identity, even though they may not actually represent what Australia was really like then. We can be forgiven for thinking, for example, that Australia was populated at the turn of the 20th century by people living in the bush, but really most of the population lived in cities along the coastline. Bush ballads helped to create a myth about most Australian people living in the bush. Likewise, bush ballads say little to nothing about Indigenous Australians and largely ignore the role of women in the bush. So, bush ballads only show us a representation of Australia at that time.

Bush ballads are narrative poems in that they tell us a story. They often use distinctly Australian language, such as 'mate'. Ballads often have people talking in them, identified when lines have quotation marks. In their day, they were used to entertain and as a means of distributing information at a time when newspapers were not always readily available.

There are two types of bush ballads, literary and traditional. Traditional ballads were passed on by word of mouth and therefore didn't have any one author. They developed over a period of time and were a way of passing information throughout the community. Traditional ballads often have more than one version and are often songs, eg The Wild Colonial Boy. Literary ballads have a known author and are written as poetry rather than as songs. They are meant to be read, not sung, eg The Man from Snowy River.

The sound of the crowd rose in one **MIGHTY** roar,
As out of the melee emerged the wild boar.
With a *flick* of his head he sent the **BALL WIDE**
Out to the elephant who was now in **FULL S**



The End



The World's Greatest Tackle

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