



KS2 English. Poetry

Mulga Bill's Cycling Journey

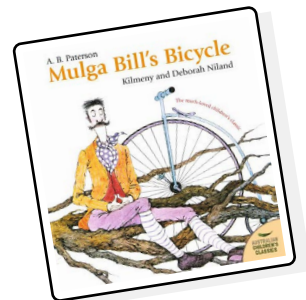
Using poetry to develop reading, comprehension, speaking & listening skills

READY CURRICULUM LINKS & SESSION OUTCOMES

English: Develop and maintain positive attitudes, listening to and discussing poetry. Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination. Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader

This learning resource supports pupils to:

- Explore an exciting and stimulating poem about cycling
- Discuss thoughts and feelings generated by the poem
- Develop anticipation, excitement, intrigue and curiosity through poetry.

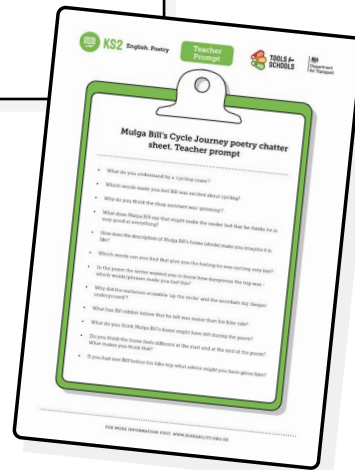


SET WHAT YOU WILL NEED

- PowerPoint slide with poem and /or hard copies of the poem for pupils
- **Poetry chatter sheet. Teacher prompt**

PEDAL WHAT TO DO

- Read the poem with the class/group (Use the slide or hard copies)
- Use the poem and **Poetry chatter sheet. Teacher prompt** to generate conversation about the poem



TO MAKE THIS LEARNING ACTIVE



Pupils can **act out** the poem as it is read out, agreeing certain actions for certain key words i.e each time Mulga Bill is mentioned, they stretch up tall and pretend to climb on their bicycle.

DID YOU KNOW?



An adult who cycles regularly will typically have a level of fitness the same as someone 10 years younger. Incredible!



Mulga Bill's Cycle Journey

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that caught the cycling craze;
He turned away the good old horse that served him many days;
He dressed himself in cycling clothes, resplendent to be seen;
He hurried off to town and bought a shining new machine;
And as he wheeled it through the door, with air of lordly pride,
The grinning shop assistant said, "Excuse me, can you ride?"
"See here, young man," said Mulga Bill, "from Walgett to the sea,
From Conroy's Gap to Castlereagh, there's none can ride like me.
I'm good all round at everything, as everybody knows,
Although I'm not the one to talk - I hate a man that blows.

"But riding is my special gift, my chiefest, sole delight;
Just ask a wild duck can it swim, a wild cat can it fight.
There's nothing clothed in hair or hide, or built of flesh or steel,
There's nothing walks or jumps, or runs, on axle, hoof or wheel,
But what I'll sit, while hide will hold and girths and straps are tight;
I'll ride this here two-wheeled concern right straight away at sight."

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that sought his own abode,
That perched above the Dead Man's Creek, beside the mountain road.
He turned the cycle down the hill and mounted for the fray,
But ere he'd gone a dozen yards it bolted clean away.
It left the track, and through the trees, just like a silver streak,
It whistled down the awful slope towards the Dead Man's Creek.

It shaved a stump by half an inch, it dodged a big white-box:
The very wallaroos in fright went scrambling up the rocks,
The wombats hiding in their caves dug deeper underground,
But Mulga Bill, as white as chalk, clung tight to every bound.
It struck a stone and gave a spring that cleared a fallen tree,
It raced beside a precipice as close as close could be;
And then, as Mulga Bill let out one last despairing shriek,
It made a leap of twenty feet into the Dead Man's Creek.

'Twas Mulga Bill, from Eaglehawk, that slowly swam ashore:
He said, "I've had some narrer shaves and lively rides before;
I've rode a wild bull round a yard to win a five-pound bet,
But that was sure the derndest ride that I've encountered yet.
I'll give that two-wheeled outlaw best; it's shaken all my nerve
To feel it whistle through the air and plunge and buck and swerve.
It's safe at rest in Dead Man's Creek - we'll leave it lying still;
A horse's back is good enough henceforth for Mulga Bill.

By Banjo Paterson, 1896



Mulga Bill's Cycle Journey poetry chatter sheet. Teacher prompt

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- What do you understand by a 'cycling craze'?
 - Which words made you feel Bill was excited about cycling?
 - Why do you think the shop assistant was 'grinning'?
 - What does Mulga Bill say that might make the reader feel that he thinks he is very good at everything?
 - How does the description of Mulga Bill's home (abode) make you imagine it is like?
 - Which words can you find that give you the feeling he was cycling very fast?
 - In the poem the writer wanted you to know how dangerous the trip was - which words/phrases made you feel this?
 - Why did the wallaroos scramble 'up the rocks' and the wombats dig 'deeper underground'?
 - What has Bill ridden before that he felt was easier than his bike ride?
 - What do you think Mulga Bill's horse might have felt during the poem?
 - Do you think the horse feels different at the start and at the end of the poem? What makes you think that?
 - If you had met Bill before his bike trip what advice might you have given him?