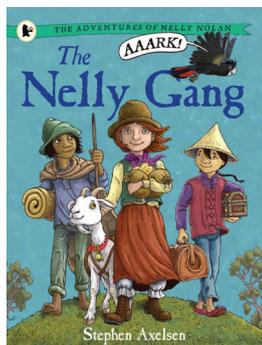


Walker Books Classroom Ideas



The Adventures of Nelly Nolan Book 1: The Nelly Gang

Stephen Axelsen
ISBN: 9781921977916
ARRP: \$19.95
NZRRP: \$24.99
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*Notes may be downloaded and printed for regular classroom use only.

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Outline:

Christmastown, 1860. Everyone on the goldfields wants to get rich. But when Nelly and her pa, Paddy, finally strike gold, bushrangers are ready to pounce. Will Nelly and her gang be able to rescue Paddy from their evil clutches?

Author/Illustrator Information:

Stephen Axelsen was born in Sydney, Australia. He grew a lot of hair and went to university where he drew cartoons on folder dividers and earned a degree in Social Sciences. After university he fell into books and publishing more or less by accident. His first book was published in 1975 and he has worked in children's book publishing ever since. He lives with his wife Jennifer, Waldo the dog, and Pippi the budgie. He used to have babies but they grew into great big people and went away. Stephen mostly writes and illustrates humour because he is a moderately funny person, in a serious sort of way.

How to use these notes:

This story works on many levels. The suggested activities are therefore for a wide age and ability range. Please select accordingly.

These notes are for:

- Primary years 1-5
- Ages 6+

Key Learning Areas:

- English
- History
- Art

Example of:

- Fiction
- Graphic novel

Themes/ Ideas:

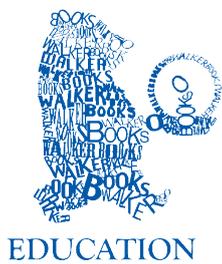
- Australian History
- Gold rush
- Action/ Adventure

National Curriculum Focus:*

English content descriptions include:

English	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	History
Year 1					Year 5
ACELA1444	ACELA1463	ACELT1594	ACELA1487	ACELA1504	ACHHK093
ACELA1447	ACELA1465	ACELT1598	ACELA1490	ACELT1608	ACHHK094
ACELA1453	ACELA1466	ACELT1601	ACELT1602	ACELT1609	ACHHK095
ACELA1454	ACELT1587	ACELY1678	ACELT1603	ACELT1610	ACHHK096
ACELT1581	ACELT1589		ACELT1605	ACELT1798	ACHHS098
ACELT1582	ACELT1590		ACELT1607		ACHHS099
ACELT1584	ACELY1665		ACELT1794		ACHHS100
ACELT1586	ACELY1668				ACHHS101
ACELY1655					ACHHS104
					ACHHS105

*Key content descriptions have been identified from the Australian National Curriculum. However, this is not an exhaustive list of National Curriculum content able to be addressed through studying this text.



Walker Books Classroom Ideas

Discussion Questions and Activities

View the cover and title. Identify the following:

- The title of the book
- The author
- The illustrator
- The publisher

Discuss the following: What is the role of the author/illustrator? What is the role of the publisher? Who else is involved in the making of a book? What age do you think the intended audience for this book is?

From the front and back cover what information can you learn about the book? What do you think this book is about? How do you think the book will begin/end?

What is gold? What is it used for? Why did the prospect of finding gold bring so many people from all over the world to Australia?

Christmastown is located in Indigo Valley, Victoria. Find all the locations listed on the map (after the title page) on a map of Victoria.

What is Miss Pinchnose holding behind her back when Nelly first enters the school? What is it used for? Do teachers still use these today?

Nelly greets a lot of gold-diggers as she is running away from school. The diggers have come from all over the world to Victoria. Can you tell where each digger has come from based on how they say hello in their language, their name or their clothing? Make a list of the diggers from this scene and their country of origin.

Look at the Aboriginal camp that Nelly and Jin find in the bush. What materials do you think the owner used to build it?

Why do you think Jin was reluctant to go into the Aboriginal camp and eat the possum meat?

Why do you think Captain Moonshine's crew of bushrangers are wearing women's clothing and jewellery when they are singing in the temple?

Why does Captain Moonshine bite the gold nugget that Nelly gives him in exchange for her father?

What does Nelly's joke "Well ... we are Lilliput coppers." mean?

Look at the double page spread that begins with the text "Christmastown. Her Majesty's Colony of Victoria". Pick one of the characters that is in the town and write a page about them. What do they do? Where did they come from? Are they rich or poor?

What weapon does Miro use to fight the gang when rescuing Nelly and Jin? What is it traditionally used for?

What does the constable mean when he says, "[Pinchnose] will be a guest at Her Majesty's pleasure for a long, long time."?

A glossary is a collection of words from the book that lists their definitions. Turn to the end of the book to view the glossary for *The Nelly Gang*. Are there any extra words in the book that aren't in the glossary that you don't know the meaning of? List these words then research their meaning or ask the class if anyone knows.

In what order is a glossary set out? How does this help when using it?

Read *Our Stories: Life on the Goldfields* by Doug Bradby (9781742032139, Black Dog Books). Compare *The Nelly Gang* with *Life on the Goldfields*. Both books discuss the same period in Australia's history, but handle the topics very differently. Answer the following questions about each book:

- Who is the intended audience?
- Is this book fiction or non-fiction?
- Would it be appropriate to use this book as a reference when studying the history of the Victorian goldfields?

The song the bushrangers sing is "The Song of Australia". Find a recording of this song on the internet and listen to it as a class. Also read the lyrics of the song (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Song_of_Australia). What is the purpose of this song? What feelings does it inspire when listening to it or reading the lyrics?

Rewrite the scene where Nelly, Miro and Jin scare the bushrangers out of the cave from the bushranger's perspective. You could do this in graphic novel format or text only.

Most of the cell borders have straight edges, though some are rounded or have wavy edges. Why has Stephen Axelsen decided to make some cell borders different?

Write a review of *The Nelly Gang*. Did the book match your initial expectations? What was similar or different?

If you were to create a movie of *The Nelly Gang*, what music would you choose to accompany it?

Using *The Nelly Gang* as a storyboard, have groups of students film a segment of the story.