



Webquest

Poetry of A.B. Banjo Paterson

ENTER

The Poetry of A. B. Paterson

A Web Quest for 8th Grade Language Arts by [Daniel A. Myers](#)

Introduction:

Most eighth grade students have studied American poets like Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, and Emily Dickinson or may have gone so far as to read the English poets like William Shakespeare, William Wordsworth, and Percy Shelley. But how many eighth graders have studied Banjo Paterson or even know that he is Australian? This web quest will ask students to investigate the poetry of Andrew Barton Paterson known to his friends as Banjo in order to answer the main question of the quest.

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The Main Question:

How does the poetry of Banjo Paterson reflect the life in the bush country of the late 1800's Australia?

More Questions:

How does the life of the typical Australian bushman compare to that of the American cowboy of the same period?

Are there any differences?

Task Requirements Process Evaluation Grading Credit

The Task

Use [Hambone's web site](#) as the main resource. Navigate through the pages of Hambone's web site and check out the [biography of Banjo Paterson](#) to see what a colorful character he was.

Then follow the links to the [A.B. Banjo Paterson Index Page](#) to view Poems by Title. An A to Z listing allows the student to navigate to Paterson's poems. Look at several poems and scan them for content. Find poems that you think are typical of the life of a late 1800's Australian bushman.

Requirements



The Requirements

1. Students will be asked to read at least six poems by Paterson. Every student will read “Waltzing Matilda” and “The Man from Snowy River.”
2. Keep a record of the poems read on the [Poetry Log Form](#).
3. Answer the [Poetry Questionnaire](#) for each poem that is read.
4. From the information gathered in the questionnaire, students will write:
 - [Three friendly letters](#)
 - [One news story, feature story, or editorial](#)
 - [One original poem in the style of Banjo Paterson.](#)

All logs, questionnaires, poems, letters, news stories, and original poetry will be organized into a notebook to be submitted for a grade. See the [rubric](#) for a description of the grading requirements.

The Process

The Process

1. Begin your research by reading at least six poems by [Banjo Paterson](#). Everyone must read “[Waltzing Matilda](#)” and “[The Man from Snowy River](#).”
2. Continue your research by completing the [Poetry Log](#) and [Questionnaire](#) for each poem.
3. Using the information from the questionnaire, write [three friendly letters](#) in the voice of either a:
 - a. Squatter
 - b. Bushman
 - c. A character from one of the poems
 - d. An imaginary youngster from the time period
4. Write [a news story](#), [a feature story](#), or [editorial](#) that would have been written in the late 1800’s in the bush country of Australia. An editorial cartoon can be drawn from extra credit.
5. Write [an original poem in the style of Banjo Paterson](#) that reflects some aspect of Australian bush life.

Place all items into a folder for submission.

To Self Evaluation

Print this form by selecting File> Print. Print from page 6 to page 6.

Poetry Questionnaire

1. Who is the main character of the poem?
2. Where in Australia does the poem take place?
3. What is the general setting of the poem?
4. What is the plot of the poem?
5. What is the main conflict of the poem?
6. How is the conflict of the poem resolved?
7. What kind of literary devices does Paterson use?

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Poetry Log

Here is a list of the poems I read.

“Waltzing Matilda”

“The Man from Snowy River”

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Write three letters

1. In your first letter, write a cousin and describe the station. Include specific details and interesting information that your reader will be able to visualize.
2. In your second letter, write a friend and tell about your family. Include information about the activities of the station, social life, perils of the bush, and the standard of living.
3. In the third letter, write a letter to a relative in America and describe what you see in the bush, the country side, people you meet, and what is going on around you (unions, strikes, sheep stealing, rangers).

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Newspaper Writing

Choose **ONE** of the following:

1. Write a news story about an incident that occurred in the bush. Include a headline. The first sentence should be a lead that includes the Who? What? Where? When? and Why?
2. Write a feature story about some human interest story that has happened in the bush or at a station. Be sure to write the feature story using the three-point five paragraph format.
3. Write an editorial about some incident that happened in the bush or about a policy of the union or a station owner.

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Write an Original Poem

Write an original narrative poem in the style of Banjo Paterson.

- Make up a character around which the poem will focus
- Use the Australian bush as the setting of the poem
- Include some colorful Aussie vocabulary
- Make sure the poem has a beginning, a middle, and an end
- As always make sure the content is appropriate for the classroom
- Place the poem in its finished form inside your folder

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Self Evaluation Rubric

Did you write three letters?

Did you write a news story, feature story, or editorial?

Is your original poem written in the style of Banjo Paterson?

Does each piece of writing focus on the subjects described in the task?

Does your writing accurately describe the facts of life of the late 1800's Australia?

Has each piece of writing been written following the writing process of brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, revision, proofreading, editing, and publication?

Is your presentation of your folder neat and professional?

On To Grading Rubric

Grading Rubric

Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Excellent
requirements not met	3 letters, news story, poem	3 letters, news story, poem, editorial cartoon
pieces fall short of describing life in 1800's Australia	each piece adequately describes life in 1800's Australia	pieces accurately describes life in 1800's Australia
pieces display lack of writing process	pieces display adequate use of writing process	pieces display effective use of the writing process
notebook lacks neatness	notebook has adequate neatness and organization	notebook has neat and professional appearance and organization
letters, news stories and poem do not follow conventions	letters, news stories, poem adequately follow conventions	letters, news stories, poem show excellent use of conventions

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The Author

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Dan's interests include computers, wood carving, furniture building, and fishing.

He is married and has two adult children.

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Credits

Thanks to Warren L. Ham (Hambone) for his work on A. B. Paterson and the wonderful job he did indexing the poet's works.

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