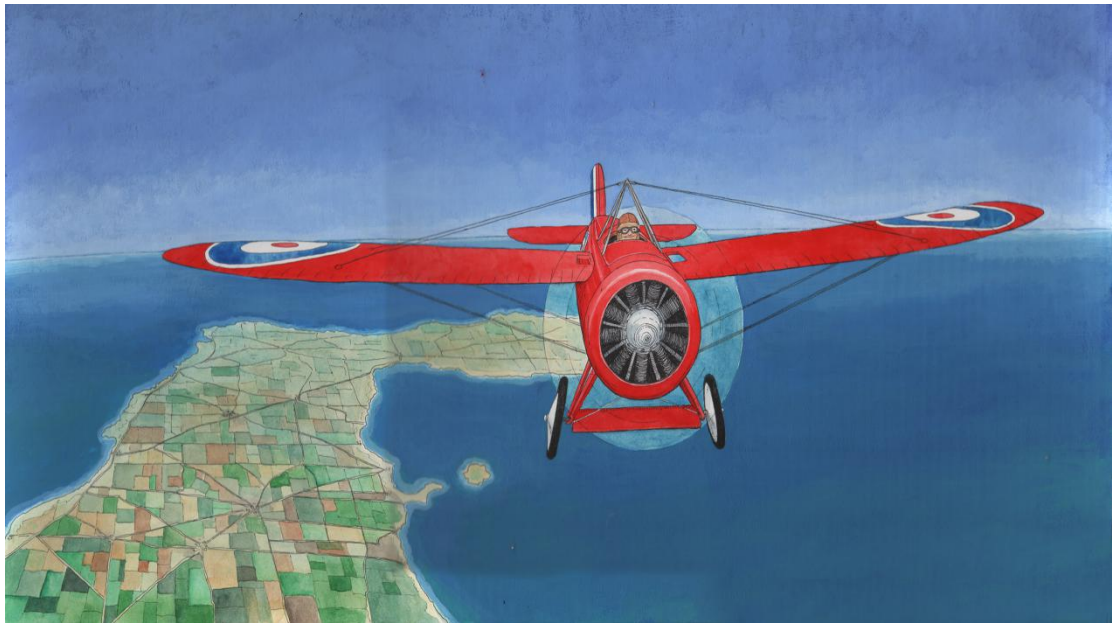


BORN TO FLY

Written by Beverley McWilliams & Illustrated by Timothy Ide



‘Anything is possible if you follow your dreams’

Teacher’s Notes & Classroom Resources

Born to Fly

ISBN: 9781 9252 275 67

MidnightSun Publishing

www.midnightsunpublishing.com



Outline

Born to Fly is the true story of Australian pioneer aviator Captain Harry Butler.

Harry is born and raised on a farm in rural South Australia, but he doesn't want to be a farmer. Fascinated by the exploits of early aviators, Harry's dream is to fly. Even though he leaves school at thirteen to work full-time on the farm, he never gives up his dream. Harry devotes his spare time to building and fixing machines, studying aviation and experimenting with flight. When an opportunity arises, Harry travels to England where he joins the Royal Flying Corps. He qualifies as a pilot and serves in World War I.

Harry returns to Australia and completes the first Australian airmail run over water. He flies across the Gulf St Vincent to his local town and performs a daring display of aerobatics to thousands of spectators.

Harry becomes a local celebrity and draws crowds wherever he goes. He performs at aviation days and other celebrations throughout South Australia. He flies over the Children's Hospital and Minda Home and even drops Santa onto the roof of a department store.

Harry's story is a wonderful example of determination and perseverance. Despite many obstacles, Harry never gave up his dream to fly. He accomplished many aviation feats and found his place in history. Harry demonstrated that anything is possible if you believe in yourself and follow your dreams.

Further Information

A time line at the back of the book lists the significant events in Captain Harry Butler's life. An author's note also summarises Harry's impact on early aviation and provides details of where further information can be found.

He jetty-skipped



Key Study Topics and Classroom Ideas

The below activities aim to provide a cross-curriculum approach to the text. Teachers may tailor these activities to meet the specific areas of the curriculum for the required age group and abilities.

Humanities and Social Science (HASS)

HISTORY

The story was set a century ago, and shows examples of how life has changed over the past hundred years.

Activity: Without reading the text, how can you tell from the illustrations that this story was set in the past? Make a list of differences you notice between life then and now.

Harry Butler attended a local one-teacher primary school, and he did not receive any secondary education. At that time, it was not unusual for children, particularly in rural areas, to leave school at a young age and work full-time.

Discuss: At what age do children in Australia leave school nowadays? Compare Australian society with other countries where children may still be expected to work from a young age.

Activity: Education and schooling has changed significantly over the last hundred years. Research Australian schools in the early 1900's. Compare them to your school (consider subjects, methods of discipline, classrooms etc). Think about how schools may change over the next hundred years.

In the back of the book the author has included a time line. A time line is a list of important events arranged in *chronological* order. Time lines are often used in biographies as they help illustrate the significant events in a person's life starting with their birth and moving forward through time.

Activity: Prepare a time line for your life. Key events could include the birth of a sibling, starting school or moving house.

GEOGRAPHY

In 1916 Harry travelled to England by mail ship to serve as a pilot in World War I. Harry left Melbourne on 6 April 1916 and arrived in England 23 May 1916.

Activity: Look at a map of the world and suggest a possible route Harry's ship may have taken.

Activity: Compare how long it takes to travel places today with how long it took in the past.

August 2019 marks the hundred year anniversary of Harry's historic flight over the Gulf St Vincent. This was the first air mail flight over water in Australia. At this time, many people had never seen a plane and very few had experienced flight. Nowadays, aeroplanes are part of everyday life. They have changed the way people travel, work and communicate. Air travel is particularly significant for Australia due to the size of the country and population distribution. In 2018, over 60 million passengers travelled on domestic flights in Australia.

Discuss: What were the most common modes of transport a hundred years ago? How has this changed, and what impact has this had on the world and people's lives?

Activity: Look at a map of Australia. Choose two cities from different states. Find out the distance between these cities. How long would it take to travel by plane between them? How long would it take to travel over land?

Activity: Apart from carrying passengers, think of other areas where the aeroplane fulfils a vital role, particularly for isolated communities of Australia.

AUSTRALIAN HEROES

Although not as well known as many Australian icons, Harry Butler was very much an Australian hero. Harry did not let his rural background or lack of formal education prevent him from achieving his ambition to fly, and he went on to play a leading role in the development of early aviation in Australia. But it was not just his aviation feats which made him a hero. Harry Butler was respected and admired wherever he went. Not only did he perform displays to tremendous crowds, but he flew his plane over rural settlements, performed stunts over the children's hospital and dropped special cards for the children at Minda Home. Harry wanted to give everyone a chance to share in the wonder of the aeroplane.

Activity: Think of someone you see as a hero. This could be someone you know from your family, school or local community or it may be a celebrity or someone from the past. Think about why you have selected this person as your hero. What are the qualities and achievements which you believe makes them a hero?

English

READING

Born to Fly is a *non-fiction biography*. Non-fiction means it is an *informative* text based on real facts as opposed to an *imaginative* story. A biography is a book which tells the story of a person's life.

Activity: Look through a selection of picture books in your classroom or library.

- Decide which ones are fiction and which ones are non-fiction. How can you tell the difference between them?
- Non-fiction picture books often include additional information such as a time line, author's note, maps or photographs. Have a look at the additional information in the non-fiction picture books you have discovered. Why do you think the author has included this information, and what does it add to the story?
- Biographies are just one type of non-fiction. What other styles of non-fiction picture books did you discover?

In a picture book the words and illustrations work closely together to tell the story. For example, in the text we are told that Harry '*milked cows. He furrowed fields. He harnessed horses.*' However, in the illustrations we see that Harry was not very successful with his farm work.

Activity: Find some other examples in the story where the illustrations provide vital information or details not obvious from the text.

WRITING

The designer's inventive use of font helps enhance the effect of the text. Look at the presentation of the words '*clattered along the bumpy tracks*' (page 1) and *tossed their hats* (page 22). On a number of occasions, the layout of the text takes the shape of a plane. Shape poems (also known as concrete poems) use this approach. The poem forms the shape of the object they are describing.

Activity: Look at some examples of shape poems and try to write your own.

Design and Technology

From a young age, Harry was interested in mechanics and engineering. He weighed the farm chickens, measured their wing span and observed their flight to gain an understanding of aerodynamics. Harry used this knowledge to help him design and build model aeroplanes and gliders. Even today, when designing aeroplanes, engineers will build small-scale models of their designs. This enables them to test their ideas and make improvements.

Activity: Design and make a paper aeroplane. Test your plane. Can you modify the design to improve its flight?

Activity: Label the attached diagram to show the main parts of an aeroplane. Research the functions of these different parts.

Early aeroplanes were constructed utilising mainly wood and fabric.

Discuss: What properties of these materials make them suitable for aeroplane construction? What materials are used on modern day aeroplanes? Why might these materials be superior?

Visual Arts

Timothy Ide used pen and ink with watercolour as his main *medium* (material used to create his art). He also used acrylic paint for the solid tone skies.

Activity: Create a painting using watercolours. Replicate your picture but instead use acrylic paint. Notice the different effects of these styles. Discuss other types of painting styles which an illustrator may use. Suggest reasons why an illustrator might choose a particular type of paint.

Activity: Look at picture books in which the illustrator has used different *mediums* such as coloured pencils, charcoal, collage and lino-prints. Discuss the different effects of these illustrative styles. Create your own piece of art using one of these mediums.



About the Author/ Illustrator

Author

Beverley McWilliams has worked in law, corporate tax and has managed her own consultancy business, but she much prefers life as a writer. Beverley publishes work in children's magazines and particularly enjoys writing historical non-fiction. *Born to Fly* is Beverley's debut picture book.



www.beverleymcwilliams.com

Author's Inspiration

On a trip to the Yorke Peninsula, Beverley visited the Memorial Hanger which displays Harry Butler's original monoplane. Beverley was fascinated to learn about the life of Captain Harry Butler, and his inspiring story of determination and courage. As 2019 marked the hundredth anniversary of Harry's historic flight, Beverley decided that it was a perfect time to write a book to celebrate the achievements of this local Australian hero.

Illustrator

Timothy Ide has illustrated a number of children's books including Fiona McIntosh's *Fantastica: Shapeshifter series* and Kristin Weidenbach's *Tom the Outback Mailman* and *King of the Outback*. He is also known for his court sketching work for the Adelaide TV news networks.



<https://www.theartoftimide.com.au>

Attachment 1:

Parts of an Aeroplane

Complete the spaces with the following parts:-

Wing, Cockpit, Aileron, Propeller, Engine, Rudder, Wheels, Elevator

