



TEACHERS' RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower and upper primary
(ages 6–10)

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** English, History, Geography, Visual Arts

THEMES

- Australian history
- Australian identity
- Evolving technology

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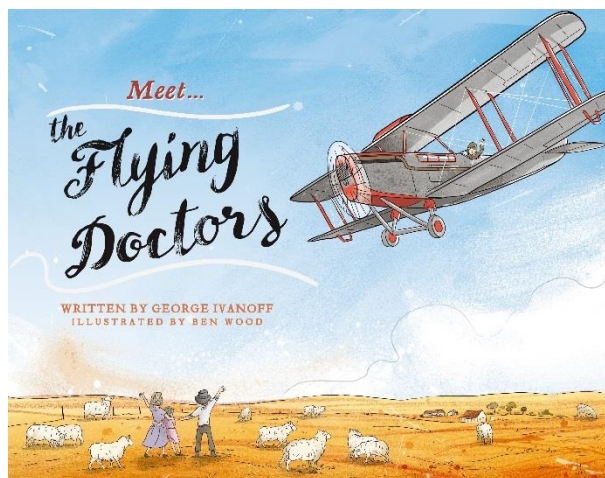
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Meet... the Flying Doctors

Written by George Ivanoff

Illustrated by Ben Wood

PLOT SUMMARY

In the early 20th century, Reverend John Flynn saw the potential for aeroplanes to bring urgent medical care to people in outback Australia. He campaigned for more than ten years to make his big idea a reality. That big idea became the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Technological advancements and increased resources have seen the RFDS grow to fill Reverend John Flynn's vision. Today the RFDS is a not-for-profit organisation that provides emergency and primary health care across Australia.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

George Ivanoff is an author and stay-at-home dad residing in Melbourne. He has written more than 90 books for kids and teens, including the RFDS adventures, the You Choose series and the Gamers trilogy. As a kid, George loved reading interactive books, where he got to make decisions about the direction of the story. He has had more fun plotting and writing the You Choose books than pretty much anything else. And writing the RFDS adventures has opened his eyes to the amazing working done by the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

He is thrilled that *You Choose: The Treasure of Deadman's Cove* won the 2015 YABBA for Fiction for Younger Readers.

George drinks too much coffee, eats too much chocolate and watches too much *Doctor Who*. He has one wife, two children and two cats.

INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR

How did you become an author? Do you write full-time or do other kinds of work too?

I started out writing as a hobby, being published in mostly amateur publications, while I worked in administration. Then I started to sell my writing professionally, and writing became my occasionally paying hobby, while I worked in web development. Eventually, I was selling enough for writing to become my career, which I combined with being a stay-at-home dad. Now that both my kids are in school, I spend most of my time writing and speaking about writing in schools and libraries and at festivals.

Can you tell us a little about the research for this project and the resources you used?

The research for this project came out of another project – a series of children's adventure novels about the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Mostly I relied on information from the RFDS itself – its main website (www.flyingdoctor.org.au), its educational website for kids (flyingdoctor4education.org.au) and its newsletters. This gave me a solid history of the RFDS and how it operates. This was enough to do a rough draft of the book. Then, I went off to do further research, both online and in the library, to fill in the gaps and allow me to finish the book. This included researching more about the life of Reverend John Flynn, the de Havilland biplane used

by the first Flying Doctors and the introduction of pedal powered radios.

I also used Google Maps (<http://maps.google.com.au>) to get a sense of location and where places were in relation to each other.

Did your opinion of John Flynn or the RFDS change as you researched and wrote the book? Can you think of an example of something you learned that took you by surprise?

Yes my opinion changed. I now have a greater appreciation of the effort Flynn had to go through in order to see his dream become a reality, and I have an even greater respect for the work done by the RFDS.

Things that took me by surprise:

- The length of time it took Flynn to establish the Flying Doctors.
- The fact that the RFDS are so dependent on fundraising and donations.
- Pedal-powered radios. I had no idea these things even existed!

What was the most difficult part of this project?

Getting some of the details correct. There was not much information about the early days when Flynn communicated with Lieutenant Clifford Peel about the idea of using aeroplanes to deliver medical services to remote areas. In fact, there was some ambiguous information out there on the internet, and I got myself a bit muddled initially.

I learned that writing a historical picture book is more difficult than I expected it to be. Just because there are not many words doesn't mean there is any less research than what goes into any other longer non-fiction book. In fact, after getting all the information, condensing it down into understandable bite-sized pieces is really quite difficult.

What was the most rewarding part?

Simply finding out more about the RFDS and the incredible work they do.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Sydney illustrator Ben Wood has been illustrating children's books and products for over a decade. He has worked with many Australian publishers and authors, including the likes of Margaret Wild, and loves the challenge of interpreting an author's words into images. Growing up in country Victoria has



influenced Ben in his work, as animals and nature are some of his favourite things to draw. When he isn't in his home studio, Ben visits schools to teach students about illustrating stories.

INTERVIEW WITH THE ILLUSTRATOR

How did you become an illustrator? Do you illustrate full-time or do other kinds of work too?

I've always loved drawing and painting, and was lucky to have some very encouraging art and design teachers in primary and secondary school. I studied Graphic Design at university and passed with first-class honours (majoring in Children's Illustration). I was awarded the May Gibbs mentorship program for an emerging illustrator, and met a lot of authors, illustrators and publishers. I then worked for a year to build up my illustration style and folio and sent examples of my work to many publishers before getting my first 'bite'.

I work full time as an illustrator and also work in a bookstore one day a week. I also visit schools to run workshops, looking at visual stories and character design. (You can find out more about my workshops over at www.bookedout.com.au)

My website (www.benwoodillustrations.com) shows a lot of the different illustration work I am hired for, from books and iPad games, to character design.

Can you tell us a little about the research for this project and the resources you used?

I didn't know much about the RFDS before I began this project, and found the subject matter rich with personal stories of struggles and adventures.

I collected many old RFDS publications. Second-hand bookstores are a great treasure trove for out of print books. Even if the written words are outdated, the photos are not.

I searched through photos and books to compare types of planes and how they were used and made. I had a great research team at Random House and at the RFDS, who also found many interesting facts and images for me to look at.

The RFDS website was also a great resource. They have a lot of information on there that is simply explained and shown. It is a great resource for teachers and students.

What did you learn while working on the book?

While researching and working on the book I quickly discovered just how much of an impact the Flying Doctors have had on not just technology and health aid in this country, but also the impact they've had on families. Hundreds and thousands of lives have been saved by their services. So many people have personal stories to share about someone in their family or life that has been helped by the RFDS at some point. Their reach of care has been amazing to discover.

I was very surprised to also discover that my own family history is intertwined with the Flying Doctors. I'm related to Sister Myra Blanch (who I drew a picture of in this book – a very odd experience), and Reverend John Flynn's wife, Jean Baird. For this reason I have dedicated the book to my Blanch family.

What was the most difficult part of this project?

The two things I kept thinking about while working on the illustrations were:

1. There was SO MUCH information to read and look over. I was swamped! I didn't want people reading the book to feel like that when they looked at the pictures. I wanted the illustrations to be very accessible for all readers.
2. Even though the illustration style is stylised and simple in detail, I wanted to make sure everything I drew was as accurate as possible. Deciding what to keep in or out was very hard.

What was the most rewarding part?

Seeing the final illustrations come together was very rewarding. Each page took a lot of planning and research, and I'm really happy with how they've turned out.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. What does the front cover of *Meet... the Flying Doctors* tell you about the book?

- Who or what is the subject of the book?
- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?
- What clues are there about where the story is set?

2. Does the back cover give you more clues about the book?

- Does the blurb explain who the Flying Doctors are and why they're important?



3. What did you already know about the Flying Doctors? Start a list of facts and add to it as you read the book.

KEY STUDY TOPICS

English

1. The story of *Meet... the Flying Doctors* switches from telling the story of James Darcy to narrating the history of the Royal Flying Doctor Service. How do you know when the author moves from James Darcy's story to the history? What changes in the text?
2. Much of *Meet... the Flying Doctors* is set in the past. List some of the words in the text, and the objects in the illustrations that give you a clue that the book is set in the past (e.g. clothes, technology, modes of transport). Are any of these still used today? What are the modern equivalents?
3. There is a timeline at the back of the book with facts about the Royal Flying Doctor Service. Is reading the timeline the same as reading the story in the first part of the book? How is it different?

Activity: Think about all the things you've done today. Write a timeline version of today that presents the simple facts. Then try writing a creative and entertaining story about today.

4. The text in *Meet... the Flying Doctors* is organised into simple sentences and short paragraphs. Does this style suit the story? Why? Discuss how the text works in conjunction with the illustrations and why it is effective to have only short paragraphs on each page.
5. *Meet... the Flying Doctors* is told from the point of view of a young boy, rather than the founder of the RFDS. Why do you think the author chose to do this? How do you think the story would have been different if the story hadn't included the boy?

Activity: Take the story of your day from the previous activity, or research a historical event. Now, rewrite the story from the perspective of someone else. How does this change the story?

6. There is no dialogue used in *Meet... the Flying Doctors*. Why do you think the author chose to do this? How do you think the story would have changed if dialogue had been included?

Activity: Choose a scene from the text and rewrite it, adding dialogue and more description.

History

1. Before telephones were invented, Morse code was an important tool for communication.

Activity: *Worksheet 1* shows the alphabet in Morse code. Write out a message to a classmate and transcribe it. How long did it take? Give your message to your classmate and let them decode it. Was it quicker to write the message, or to receive and decode it? Have any of the letters become familiar?

2. Do close family members or friends of your family know any stories about the Flying Doctors? How are the stories different from the RFDS today?
3. Technology has changed a lot since the postmaster received his coded instructions. Can you name some of the different types of technology that appear in the story?

Activity: *Worksheet 2* includes examples of the technology used by the RFDS since it was founded. Can you put them in order and plot them on the timeline?

Activity: Ask your parents or grandparents about the technology available when they were young. What did they do for fun? What differences are there? What is still the same? See *Worksheet 3*.

4. The RFDS was heavily affected by both WWI and WWII – first, by the use of planes, and second, by a shortage of manpower and aircraft, as pilots, doctors and nurses went to war, and planes were requisitioned. What do you know about these wars?
5. Consider why particular people are remembered in history. Why do you think Reverend John Flynn is so admired today?
6. Reverend John Flynn is featured on the Australian \$20 note. Can you name other important people who feature on our banknotes? (You can find more information on our banknotes at the Reserve Bank of Australia's website: <http://banknotes.rba.gov.au/australias-banknotes/banknotes-in-circulation/>)



Art and Visual Literacy

1. How does the story of *Meet... the Flying Doctors* change if you read the text only? Or look at the pictures only? How do the text and illustrations work together to tell the story? See *Worksheet 4*.
2. Have your teacher choose a spread from the book and cover up the words. Look at the picture, and write your own text to accompany it. Reverse the exercise by reading only the words and drawing your own illustrations.
3. Look at the colours the illustrator has used throughout the book. Are certain colours used repeatedly – how and where? Do these colours suggest specific things?

Activity: Look at p. 23 of *Meet... the Flying Doctors*. How has the illustrator shown the difference between the present and the past? Can you see similar differences throughout the rest of the book?

4. *Worksheet 5* invites you to analyse pp 8–9 of *Meet... the Flying Doctors*.
5. What details in the illustrations hint at the rural Australian setting?
6. Do you think the style of the illustrations suggests that the story is set in the past? How so? If the book were set in the future, do you think the illustrator might have approached the illustrations differently? Describe or draw how.

Activity: Using *Worksheet 6*, choose three examples of old technology shown in *Meet... the Flying Doctors*. Draw this technology as it was in the past, as it looks today, and how it might be in the future.

7. *Worksheet 7* shows the RFDS logo. Do you recognise it? Considering the purpose of the service and the technology it uses, design a new logo.
8. Without planes, the RFDS would never have been able to provide such a high level of medical care to Australia's remote places.

Activity: Team up with your classmates and fold different styles of paper planes. Did some fly better than others? Which flew the furthest?

Geography

1. When James Darcy was injured, it took him 12 hours to travel from Ruby Plains to Halls Creek. It then took the doctor thirteen days to travel by boat from Perth to Derby, and then by car, and horse and buggy, to Halls Creek. These days, it takes only a few hours for the RFDS to cover the same distance.

Activity: Plot Ruby Plains, Halls Creek, Derby and Perth on the map in *Worksheet 8*, then trace the routes that James Darcy and the doctor had to travel.

Extension Activity: Cloncurry was the first RFDS base in Australia. Look up some of the others and add them to your map.

2. The world can look very different from above. *Worksheet 9* shows an illustration of an aerial view from the book. Discuss the differences between aerial and ground perspectives, and draw your own aerial view.
3. On p. 9, the illustrator has shown James Darcy's journey through outback Australia by highlighting features of the environment. What key plants, animals, or landmarks would you include in a depiction of the environment around you?
4. Outback Australia can be a harsh environment. Are there any illnesses or injuries you think might be more likely to occur in this landscape?

Activity: Research the kinds of emergencies the RFDS responds to. How many of these do you think are a direct result of the outback environment? Do you think there would be as many people living in outback Australia if the RFDS didn't exist? See

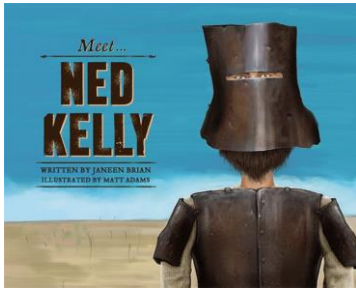
<https://www.flyingdoctor.org.au/about-the-rfds/stories/>

Additional Resources

The RFDS has a number of online resources available for students, including activities, which can be found at www.flyingdoctor4education.org.au



THE MEET SERIES



Meet... Ned Kelly
Janeen Brian & Matt Adams
Australia's most famous bushranger



Meet... Mary MacKillop
Sally Murphy & Sonia Martinez
Australia's first saint



Meet... Captain Cook
Rae Murdie & Chris Nixon
Exploration and discovery



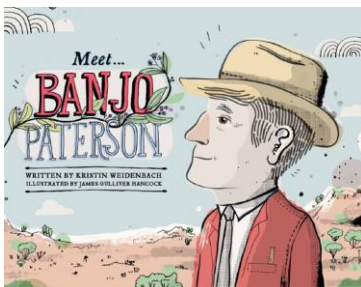
Meet... the Anzacs
Claire Saxby & Max Berry
How the Anzac legend began



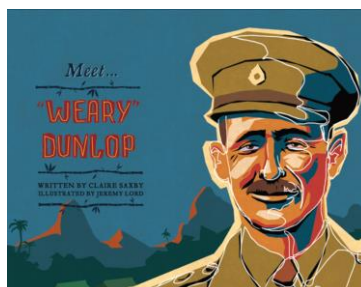
Meet... Douglas Mawson
Mike Dumbleton & Snip Green
Antarctic exploration and survival



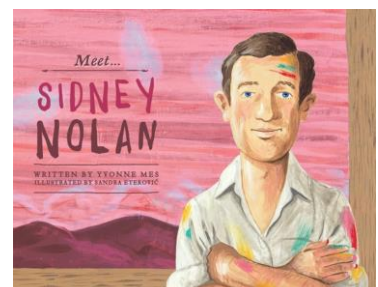
Meet... Nancy Bird Walton
Grace Atwood & Harry Slaghekke
A pioneer in the golden age of aviation



Meet... Banjo Paterson
Kristin Weidenbach & James Gulliver Hancock
Australia's most beloved poet



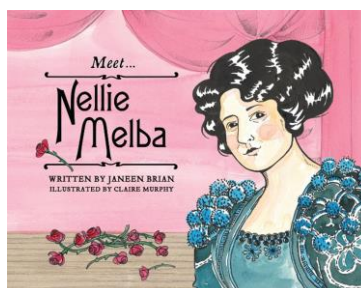
Meet... Weary Dunlop
Claire Saxby & Jeremy Lord
Wartime bravery and compassion



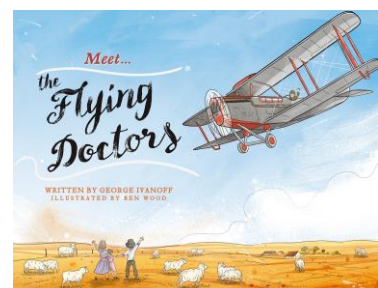
Meet... Sidney Nolan
Yvonne Mes & Sandra Eterović
A trailblazing artist



Meet... Don Bradman
Coral Vass & Brad Howe
A sporting legend and source of pride during hard times



Meet... Nellie Melba
Janeen Brian & Claire Murphy
Australia's first classical music star



Meet... the Flying Doctors
George Ivanoff & Ben Wood
Australia's outback medical service

Teachers' notes for each book are available from penguin.com.au/teachers



WORKSHEET 1: MORSE CODE

A	• —	H	• • • •	O	— — —	V	• • • —
B	— • • •	I	• •	P	• — — •	W	• — —
C	— • — •	J	• — — —	Q	— — • —	X	— • • —
D	— • •	K	— • —	R	• — •	Y	— • — —
E	•	L	• — • •	S	• • •	Z	— — • •
F	• • — •	M	— —	T	—	Full Stop	• — • — • —
G	— — •	N	— •	U	• • —	Question Mark	• • — — • •

Use the Morse code alphabet above to write out a message to a classmate, using one slash (/) to separate each letter, and two (//) to separate each word. For example, the sentence 'Good morning.' would look like this:

— — • / — — — / — — — / — • • // — — / — — — / • — • / — • / • • / — • / — — • // • — • — • — //

Now swap messages with your classmate and decode what they've written.



WORKSHEET 2: IMPROVING TECHNOLOGY

The technology the Royal Flying Doctor Service uses to carry out its missions has changed a lot since 1928. Take a look at the three lists below, and number the technologies in each group from oldest to newest. Refer back to the book if you need to.

Transport

Horse and buggy
Jet aircraft
Biplane
Car

Communication

Voice radio
Telegraph
Satellite phone
Pedal-powered radio

Navigation

Compass
Landmarks
Radar
Satellite navigation

Extension Activity

Use the story and the timeline at the back of the book to plot each technological advancement employed by the RFDS on the chart below.

Jet aircraft

Biplane

Pedal-powered
radio

School of the air

Voice radio

1928

Today



WORKSHEET 3: THEN AND NOW

Ask your parents or grandparents about the technology available when they were young. What did they do for fun? What differences are there? What is still the same? Is there anything you use now that didn't exist in the past? Use the prompts below, and come up with some questions of your own.

	Then	Now
What would you do for fun after school?		
How would you call or message your friends and family?		
How would you listen to music?		
How did you travel long distances?		
How did you travel to everyday places?		



WORKSHEET 4: COMPARING TEXT AND ILLUSTRATION

Choose one spread from the book to analyse. In the left column write down everything the text tells you about the story. In the right column, write down everything the illustration tells you about the story. Does the illustration tell you extra things that are not in the text?

The text tells me...	The illustration tells me...



WORKSHEET 5: ANALYSING AN ILLUSTRATION



Take a look at this illustration from pp 8–9.

- What seems to be happening? How can you tell?

- What clues are there as to the setting?

- When do you think this scene is set – the future, the present or the past?

- Do you get the sense that this was a long journey? Why?

- How do the illustration and text match each other?

WORKSHEET 6: DRAWING TECHNOLOGY

In the left column, draw three old-fashioned objects you noticed in the illustrations. In the middle column, draw the modern version of each object. How do you imagine this object might change in the future? Draw a futuristic version in the right column.

Past	Present	Future



WORKSHEET 7: DESIGNING A LOGO



Royal Flying Doctor Service

The image above shows different logos the Royal Flying Doctor Service has used. What features do you recognise in each logo? Considering the purpose of the service and the technology it uses, design a new logo in the space below.

WORKSHEET 8: JAMES DARCY'S JOURNEY

Use an atlas to look up Ruby Plains and Halls Creek, and plot them on the map below. Then trace the route James Darcy had to take to reach medical aid. Then look up Perth and Derby and add those to your map. When the doctor came to help James Darcy, he travelled from Perth to Derby by boat, and then across the land to Halls Creek. Trace that journey now.

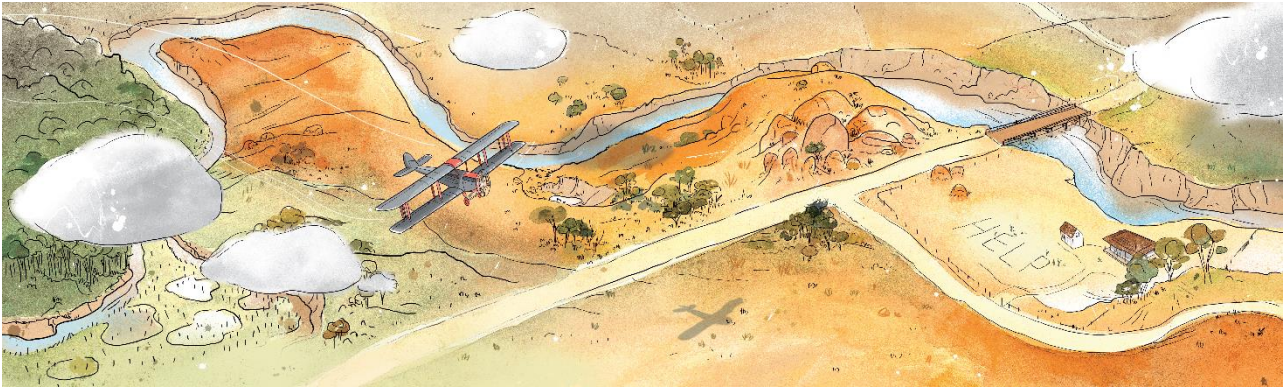


Extension Activity

Cloncurry was the first RFDS base in Australia. Plot it on the map. Look up some of the other RFDS base locations and add them to the map as well.



WORKSHEET 9: AERIAL VIEWS



Things look very different from up in the sky. Take a look at the illustration above, then picture your favourite place. This could be your backyard, a holiday destination, or even your school grounds. Imagine what this place would look like from above, and draw an aerial view of the area in the space below.

ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QTY	PRICE
<i>Meet... the Flying Doctors</i>	George Ivanoff	9780143780687	K-4	\$24.99		
<i>Meet... the Anzacs</i>	Claire Saxby	9780857981936	K-4	\$16.99		
<i>Meet... Banjo Paterson</i>	Kristin Weidenbach	9780857980090	K-4	\$16.99		
<i>Meet... Captain Cook</i>	Rae Murdie	9780857980182	K-4	\$16.99		
<i>Meet... Don Bradman</i>	Coral Vass	9781925324891	K-4	\$24.99		
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<i>Meet... Mary MacKillop</i>	Sally Murphy	9781742757216	K-4	\$16.99		
<i>Meet... Nancy Bird Walton</i>	Grace Atwood	9780857983879	K-4	\$16.99		
<i>Meet... Ned Kelly</i>	Janeen Brian	9781742757193	K-4	\$16.99		
<i>Meet... Nellie Melba</i>	Janeen Brian	9780143780298	K-4	\$24.99		
<i>Meet... Sidney Nolan</i>	Yvonne Mes	9780857985903	K-4	\$16.99		
<i>Meet... Weary Dunlop</i>	Claire Saxby	9780857985361	K-4	\$24.99		
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