



RECOMMENDED FOR

Lower and upper primary

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KEY CURRICULUM AREAS

- **Learning areas:** History, English, Literacy

THEMES

- Australian History
- Exploration
- Antarctica

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Meet Douglas Mawson

Written by Mike Dumbleton

Illustrated by Snip Green

PLOT SUMMARY

The year 2014 marks the 100th anniversary of the first Australian Antarctic Expedition (1911–14), led by Douglas Mawson.

In this book, we follow Mawson and his team on their journey to Antarctica, as well as on their dangerous and challenging trek across the frozen continent as they attempt to gather scientific and geological information.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mike Dumbleton is a writer with many educational and children's books to his credit. Mike has just returned to his home town of Adelaide after working in New York as a Literacy Consultant.

Seven of Mike's picture books have been selected as 'Notable Books' by the Children's Book Council of Australia, and *Passing On* was shortlisted for the 2002 Book of the Year Awards. Also, *Muddled-up Farm* was selected as Speech Pathology Australia Book of the Year 2003, as well as the National Simultaneous Storytime Book for 2004. Mike's young adult fiction title *Watch Out for Jamie Joel* was shortlisted in the 2004 Adelaide Festival Awards for Children's Literature, and his picture book *Cat* was selected as a 2008 CBCA Honour Book.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Snip Green has a degree in graphic design and has been an art director for classic Australian surf label Mambo. Strong demand for his illustrations led him to collaborations with artists, writers, musicians and clients to build shared visions and find new ways to make the world an interesting place to look at. This is his first children's picture book.

INTERVIEW WITH THE AUTHOR

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

I did extensive research, using a mixture of books and internet sites. I had to cross-check information because of conflicting details. A real highlight was the chance to research primary sources by visiting the Mawson Gallery in the South Australian Museum, where I saw Mawson's half sledge on display.

Did your opinion of Douglas Mawson change or deepen as you wrote the book?

I developed a new respect for Douglas Mawson, and his team, for their commitment to researching the unknown and their perseverance in the face of extreme conditions which were always potentially life-threatening.

Why did you choose to tell this particular part of Mawson's story?

It was an amazing chapter in Mawson's life, which

showed exceptional courage and a strength of human spirit that is seldom seen and should not be forgotten.

What was the most challenging part of the project?

It was a challenge to tell the story in a way that brings Mawson to life and reveals both the exhilaration and desperation of his experiences as well as the factual information.

What was the most rewarding part of the project?

Seeing Snip Green's wonderful illustrations. The vast, stark backgrounds emphasise the explorer's small presence in the landscapes and the scale of the challenges they faced.

What do you think is Mawson's greatest legacy?

I think Mawson's greatest legacy was his dedication to meticulous scientific research, which he documented over many years. He was not simply focused on adventures and heroics, they were an integral part of exploring an unknown, inhospitable and unpredictable continent.

PRE-READING QUESTIONS

1. What does the front cover of *Meet Douglas Mawson* tell you about the book?

- Who is the subject of the book?
- Who is the author?
- Who is the illustrator?

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

- Does the blurb explain who Douglas Mawson is and what he is famous for?

3. What do you already know about Douglas Mawson and Antarctica? Start a list and add to it as you read the book.

KEY STUDY TOPICS

English

Questions

1. Create a simple story map of the key elements in the narrative e.g. the setting; characters; beginning, middle and end. See Worksheet 1.

2. The text in *Meet Douglas Mawson* 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.

3. Make a list of words in the text that relate specifically to Antarctica and exploration (e.g. glacier, frostbite, sledge, crevasse, blizzard). Write simple definitions of these words.
4. What does the language used in the book tell you about the climate in Antarctica?
5. There is a timeline at the back of the book with facts about the expedition and the rest of Mawson's career. How is the language in this section different from the rest of the book?

History

Questions

1. This year (2014) marks the 100th anniversary of the Australian Antarctic Expedition (1911–14) led by Douglas Mawson. How different do you think the same expedition would be today? Think about things like modern technology and transport.
2. Mawson and his team left for Antarctica in 1911 and Mawson returned in February 1914. What else was happening in the world at this time? (Use the timeline at the back of the book for extra information).

Activities

1. Research the life of one of Douglas Mawson's companions on the expedition – Belgrave Ninnis or Dr Xavier Mertz. Create your own 32-page picture book about your chosen subject, complete with illustrations.

Visual Literacy

Questions

1. List the colours used throughout the book. Why do you think the illustrator has chosen to use so few colours? What do the colours tell you about the climate in Antarctica?
2. The illustrator has used different patterns to indicate various weather conditions such as wind and snow. Do you think this is an effective way to show the different conditions?

Activities

1. Choose a season and make your own weather collage. Think about which colours, textures and patterns best suit the season you have chosen. See Worksheet 2.

2. Choose one spread from the book to analyse. Make two columns. In one column write down everything the text tells you about the story on that page. In the other column, write down everything the illustration tells you about the story on that page. Does the illustration tell you extra things that are not in the text?

OTHER BOOKS IN THIS SERIES



Meet Ned Kelly
by Janeen Brian & Matt Adams

Ned Kelly was born in 1854 in Beveridge, Victoria. This is the story of how Ned Kelly became Australia's most famous bushranger.

Teachers' resources available.



Meet Mary MacKillop
by Sally Murphy & Sonia Martinez

Mary MacKillop is Australia's first saint. Mary believed all children, no matter how rich or poor, should have the chance to learn. This is the story of the first school Mary opened with her sisters in 1866 in Penola, South Australia.

Teachers' resources available.



Meet Captain Cook
by Rae Murdie & Chris Nixon

Captain James Cook was an English explorer and Navy captain. In 1770 Captain Cook and his crew on the HMB *Endeavour* were the first Europeans to discover the east coast of Australia.

Teachers' resources available.



Meet the Anzacs
by Claire Saxby & Max Berry

Anzac stands for Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. It is the name given to the Australian and New Zealand troops who landed at Gallipoli in World War I. The Anzac name is now a symbol of bravery and mateship. This is the story of how the Anzac legend began.

Teachers' resources available.



Meet Nancy Bird Walton
by Grace Atwood & Harry Slaghekke

Nancy Bird Walton grew up during the golden age of aviation. By the time she was 13, Nancy knew she wanted to fly. This is the story of how Nancy began her career as Australia's first female commercial pilot.

Teachers' resources available.



WORKSHEET 1: STORY MAP

Book title:

Author:

Illustrator:

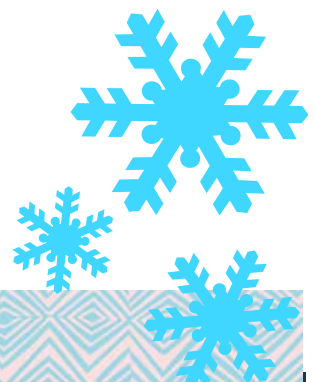
Characters:

Setting:

Beginning
Middle
End

WORKSHEET 2: COLLAGE

Choose a season and make your own weather collage. Think about which colours, textures and patterns best suit the season you have chosen. You could use: paint, fabric scraps, cellophane, crepe paper, newspaper, magazine clippings, crayons, textures and found objects. Most important of all, have fun!



ORDER FORM

TITLE	AUTHOR	ISBN	SCHOOL YEAR	RRP	QUANTITY	TOTAL
Meet Douglas Mawson	Mike Dumbleton	9780857981950	K-4	\$24.99		
Meet Ned Kelly	Janeen Brian	9781742757186	K-4	\$19.99		
Meet Mary MacKillop	Sally Murphy	9781742757216	K-4	\$19.99		
Meet Captain Cook	Rae Murdie	9780857980175	K-4	\$19.99		
Meet the Anzacs	Claire Saxby	9780857981929	K-4	\$24.99		
Meet Nancy Bird Walton	Grace Atwood	9780857983879	K-4	\$24.99		
TOTAL						

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