

**Genre: Non-fiction, inventions,  
Australian history**

## **Great Aussie Inventions**

**By Amy Hunter**

**Illustrated by David Rowe**

### **About the book**

Great Aussie Inventions is an engaging and humorous book about the history of invention in Australia from 1856 to 2001. Information is provided about important developments in medicine, domestic life, sport, communication and farming. Readers learn about the creator and the circumstances that led to the invention. The clear timeline shows the progression of tools and devices that are part of every day Australian life.

The illustrations are wonderfully inventive, complimenting the themes of innovation and creativity. They give students an excellent opportunity to sharpen their skills of visual literacy. This text is an excellent resource in that it caters for different styles of learning in the classroom.

### **Rationale**

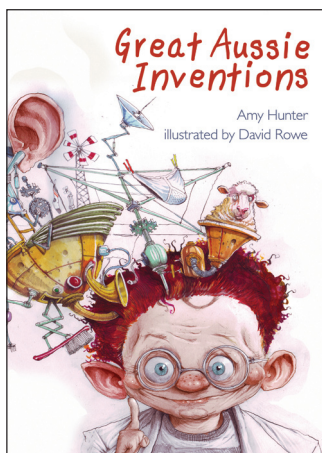
Students should use the text and other sources to complete the tasks in these teacher notes. The activities are designed to engage students and provide a creative learning experience.

### **How to use**

Learning activities suggested in one discipline may also be applicable to another discipline.

### **Readership**

Mid primary to upper primary students.



**Contents**

What makes Australians so inventive?

Cold as ice

On the toilet

Drive on

You're a lifesaver

Smile!

In the hospital

Pedal Power

Ploughs and paddocks

On the sheep's back

Flying high

Howzat!

Timeline

Index

Glossary

**Topics**

Refrigeration

Water tanks

Farming tools

Communication devices

The box kite

The notepad

The surf-life saving reel

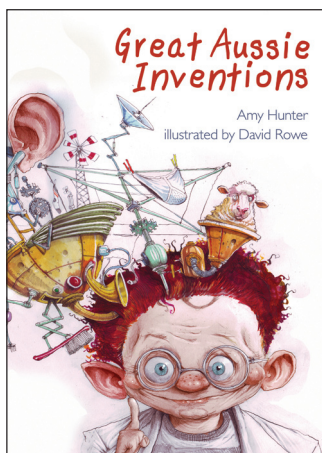
Kiwi shoe polish

Sheep shears

Medical inventions

Dual flush toilets

Sporting inventions



The ute

The Hills Hoist

The inflatable slide raft

### **SOSE/HSIE**

‘When early settlers arrived they found a very different country to anything they knew.’ (p.2)

### **Draw a map of Australia.**

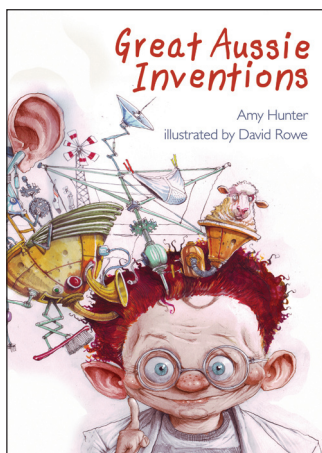
- Mark in the states, territories and capital cities as we know them today. Mark in the surrounding seas and oceans. Include a border, title, northing, key and scale on your map.
- Represent on your map some of the differences between England and Australia. Consider things such as climate, flora, fauna, food and inhabitants. (You might like to use some illustrations like the ones in the text to show the differences.)
- Represent on your map some of the tools or inventions that the indigenous Australians were already using when the settlers arrived.

### **Choose your favourite inventor and create a PowerPoint presentation about them. Make your presentation as eye-catching as this book.**

- Include some biographical details about the inventor.
- Include information about the impact of their invention on Australians.

### **Discussion Questions**

- In groups, order the importance of the inventions presented in this text. Explain to the class which invention you consider to be the most important and why.
- As a class, discuss any negative impacts that have resulted from the inventions written about in this text. Discuss the negative impacts of some inventions that are not mentioned in the text.
- Discuss the important qualities that an inventor must possess. Which of these qualities do have? Discuss times when you have used a creative solution to solve a problem.

**ENGLISH****Reading and writing**

- Use your imagination to write the diary entry of Bruce Thompson on the day that he invented the dual flush toilet. How might it have happened? What thoughts might he have had about the importance of his invention?
- Write a story about an invention that went very, very wrong. You might like to illustrate your piece with some funny pictures.
- Write a story about a character who lives in a world where one or more of these inventions does not exist. For example, what would the world be like today if a dual flush toilet had not been invented? What would be the implications for our water supply? You might like to write about a world that has no television. You might like to write a story about a cricketer who does not have zinc cream and so has to look like a tomato!

**Speaking and listening**

In the 'Creative Arts' section of these notes you are asked to design and draw your own invention. Present this to the class.

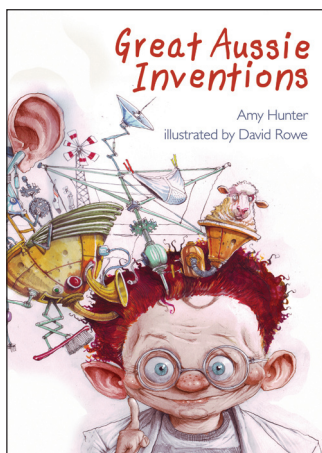
Hold a series of debates about which invention is the most important in Australian life.

- To decide on the topics for the debates you could put all of the inventions into a hat and draw them out two at a time. For example, if zinc cream and penicillin are both drawn out, the teams must debate which is the most important. This will call for great creativity on the part of the 'zinc cream' team.

**BOOK FEATURES AND FORMAT**

Great Aussie Inventions has many features that are important in factual texts:

- Contents Page (note the clear headings)
- Headings
- Sub-headings
- Highlighted key points
- Timeline
- Index
- Glossary



• References

• Page numbers

1. Locate each of the above features in the book.
2. List some features of this book's glossary that make it clear and well organised.
3. Create a set of challenges to test how well a classmate can use the index and glossary sections of this text.
4. The information presented in this book is factual. Discuss how the writing style of this book differs from other non-fiction books that you have read.
5. Think about the qualities that a good inventor must have. In what ways do the design and layout of the book reflect these qualities?

**VISUAL LITERACY**

**Illustrations**

Some of the information in this text is conveyed through illustrations.

- How many inventions can you find on the cover and pages 2 and 3 of the text?
- What is your favourite illustration? Explain your choice.

**SCIENCE**

In this text we learn about many developments in medicine.

- Choose one of the medical developments in this book and list the ways it has impacted on your life.
- Research a medical development that is not described in this text. Present your information in the same way that Amy Hunter and David Rowe have done. (There are some great references at the back of the book!)

**CREATIVE ARTS**

Design an invention that you think is needed in the world. (Or design an invention that is not needed but might be fun!) Draw a picture of your invention and write an explanation of it for the class.



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**Teacher Notes**

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#### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Amy Hunter has an engineering degree and used to work with inventors. Now she writes for children and lives in Melbourne.



#### **ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR**

Award-winning illustrator David Rowe has been published daily in the Australian Financial Review for 10 years.