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## Tommy Bell Bushranger Boy Series

### Book 7 – The Runaway

by

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## About the Book

When Tommy goes on a trip to a farm in Queensland with his friend Martin, he thinks that his biggest problem will be Francis, his former friend who has gatecrashed the holiday. Tommy has fallen out with Francis because, as Tommy sees it, Francis caused him to get into trouble at school. When the three boys are out riding with Martin's cousin, Carly, Francis slams Tommy's magic cabbage-tree hat onto Tommy's head and inadvertently sends him back to the past.

Tommy finds himself in the company of the kindly Mr Craig, who gives him a ride in his dray to the Apis Creek of old, where he introduces Tommy to his business partner, the innkeeper Mr Christie. Tommy is horrified to discover that Mr Christie is actually his old enemy, the dangerous bushranger Frank Gardiner. Frank is on the run from the law with his girlfriend Kate, and will do anything to keep Tommy from revealing his true identity. He locks Tommy up, but before he can form a plan, the police catch up with Frank and arrest him – along with his friends and Tommy.

The group of prisoners rides with police to Rockhampton, where Tommy spends a few miserable hours in a cell before the police realise that Tommy is not a criminal and release him. Later, Tommy returns to the past with Martin just in time to witness Frank Gardiner's trial in Sydney, in which he is convicted and sentenced to thirty-two years behind bars.

The narrative travels forwards and backwards in time as Tommy has several encounters with Frank Gardiner and Kate. Tommy faces danger, dilemmas and emotional conflict as he befriends Kate while questioning her support for a notorious criminal. Meanwhile, Tommy comes to realise that he is responsible for his own behaviour and should not shift the blame for his trouble at school to Francis.

*The Runaway* is the seventh book in the 'Tommy Bell, Bushranger Boy' series and is an excellent resource as a stand-alone fiction novel for classroom units or to be enjoyed by readers as part of the ongoing series.

## From the Author:

One of my favourite pastimes – besides reading and writing – is learning about history. I love to visit museums and old houses and old towns and discover the stories behind them. That's what history is, really: stories. Some are true and some are not, but all of them can be fascinating.

My interest in Australian history led me to write my true stories about the bushrangers in the *Australian Bushranger* series. In turn, these true stories led to the not-so-true stories about Tommy Bell, an ordinary boy who goes back in time to have extraordinary adventures with the colourful criminals of our past.

The *Tommy Bell, Bushranger Boy* series combines fact with fiction. The books contain true settings and events and some real people, but the main characters – Tommy and his friends – are characters that I made up. This is what we call *historical fiction*. I've tried to keep the history part as accurate as possible, and to help you to separate the fact from the fiction, I've included some historical notes at the end.

A final note: I owe my love of reading to many authors who wrote the wonderful books that brought me so much joy in my childhood. I especially loved adventure stories, so it has been a thrill to have had the chance to write some adventure stories of my own. I've dedicated each book in my *Tommy Bell* series to characters in books that I enjoyed as a child. Can you work out who those characters are? Maybe your teacher or librarian or parents can help you to find the books they came from!

## Emerging Themes and Issues:

- Australian bushrangers – heroes or villains?
- Time travel
- Friendships
- Loyalty
- Moral dilemmas and the complexity of human behaviour
- Comparison of rural communities in the past and present
- Criminal behaviour
- The Outback
- Adventure
- Law and justice

## Key Curriculum Areas

### KLA: English

#### Australian Curriculum English Year 3

Draw connections between personal experiences and the worlds of texts, and share responses with others ([ACELT1596 - Scootle](#)).

Discuss how language is used to describe the settings in texts, and explore how the settings shape the events and influence the mood of the narrative ([ACELT1599 - Scootle](#)).

Identify the point of view in a text and suggest alternative points of view ([ACELY1675 - Scootle](#)).

Discuss the nature and effects of some language devices used to enhance meaning and shape the reader's reaction, including rhythm and onomatopoeia in poetry and prose ([ACELT1600 - Scootle](#)).

Create imaginative texts based on characters, settings and events from students' own and other cultures using visual features, for example, perspective, distance and angle ([ACELT1601 - Scootle](#)).

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning and begin to evaluate texts by drawing on a growing knowledge of context, text structures and language features ([ACELY1680 - Scootle](#)).

#### Australian Curriculum English Year 4

Discuss literary experiences with others, sharing responses and expressing a point of view ([ACELT1603](#)).

Discuss how authors and illustrators make stories exciting, moving and absorbing, and hold readers' interest by using various techniques, for example, character development and plot tension ([ACELT1605](#)).

Recognise how quotation marks are used in texts to signal dialogue, titles and quoted (direct) speech ([ACELA1492](#)).

Understand, interpret and experiment with a range of devices and deliberate word play in poetry and other literary texts, for example, nonsense words, spoonerisms, neologisms and puns ([ACELT1606](#)).

Create literary texts that explore students' own experiences and imagining ([ACELT1607](#)).

Use comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning to expand content knowledge, integrating and linking ideas and analysing and evaluating texts ([ACELY1692](#)).

## Australian Curriculum English Year 5

Understand that patterns of language interaction vary across social contexts and types of texts and that they help to signal social roles and relationships ([ACELA1501](#)).

Identify aspects of literary texts that convey details or information about particular social, cultural and historical contexts ([ACELT1608](#)).

Understand how the grammatical category of possessives is signalled through apostrophes and how to use apostrophes with common and proper nouns ([ACELA1506](#)).

Investigate how the organisation of texts into chapters, headings, subheadings, home pages and sub-pages for online texts and according to chronology or topic can be used to predict content and assist navigation ([ACELA1797](#)).

Recognise that ideas in literary texts can be conveyed from different viewpoints, which can lead to different kinds of interpretations and responses ([ACELT1610](#)).

Create literary texts that experiment with structures, ideas and stylistic features of selected authors ([ACELT1798](#)).

Identify and explain characteristic text structures and language features used in imaginative, informative and persuasive texts to meet the purpose of the text ([ACELY1701](#)).

Use a range of software including word processing programs with fluency to construct, edit and publish written text, and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements ([ACELY1707](#)).

## Australian Curriculum Year 6 English

Understand how authors often innovate on text structures and play with language features to achieve particular aesthetic, humorous and persuasive purposes and effects ([ACELA1518](#)).

Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts ([ACELT1613](#)).

Identify the relationship between words, sounds, imagery and language patterns in narratives and poetry such as ballads, limericks and free verse ([ACELT1617](#)).

Participate in and contribute to discussions, clarifying and interrogating ideas, developing and supporting arguments, sharing and evaluating information, experiences and opinions ([ACELY1709](#)).

Analyse how text structures and language features work together to meet the purpose of a text ([ACELY1711](#)).

Select, navigate and read texts for a range of purposes, applying appropriate text processing strategies and interpreting structural features, for example, table of contents, glossary, chapters, headings and subheadings ([ACELY1712](#)).

## Suggested Pre-Reading Activities

- Discussion: If you could travel back in time and visit a certain place or event, where might you like to go? What might you choose to see or do? What might be the same? What might be different?
- What do you know about bushrangers? Create a class K.W.L. chart (see template).
- View maps and photographs (from the past and present) of the settings.
- Identify the period of Australian history in which bushrangers were prevalent. Show or locate on a timeline. Discuss other events that were occurring in Australia's history at that time.
- Show students the cover of the novel and read the blurb to them. Ask them to write down their predictions of what might happen to Tommy throughout the story.

## Suggested During Reading Activities

- As students progress through the story, create a story map that outlines the generic features of the novel (introduction, conflict, resolution, further action, conclusion).
- More about Frank Gardiner is revealed as the story unfolds. Research online to see if any of the events in the story happened in real life (refer to Jane Smith's 'Australian Bushrangers' series books, *Frank Gardiner* and *Ben Hall*).
- Search for Rockhampton and Apis Creek on Google Maps – what have you discovered? The boys live in Orange, NSW. How far would the boys have travelled to reach Rockhampton?
- Create a word wall, including unknown words and words relating to the era in which Frank Gardiner lived.
- Choose words from within the text to include in spelling lists.
- Begin a character web showing the characters linked to Frank Gardiner and his story. Add to it as characters are introduced throughout the story.
- Build a profile for each character throughout the book. Include descriptive words found in the text and personal inferences. Use 'The Runaway Character Profile' activity template.
- Add to the class K.W.L. chart

## Suggested After Reading Activities

- Write a letter to author and historian Jane Smith asking further questions about Frank Gardiner or Australian bushrangers in general.
- Research the questions in the K.W.L. chart and complete the 'What Have I Learned' column.
- Create and film a 'book talk' reviewing the book.
- Produce a new book cover and blurb for the story.
- Compile a book review, outlining details of the storyline, recommended readers, etc.
- Create an advertising poster, which could be displayed in a bookstore, that would persuade readers to purchase the book.
- Imagine you are Frank Gardiner or Tommy Bell. Write a series of diary entries based on events in the book.
- Tommy and Martin have decided to show Francis about their secret one day. Write a short story of that adventure.

# Chapter Summaries and Comprehension Questions

## 1. Trouble

Tommy is travelling with his friend Martin to stay with Martin's cousins on their farm at Apis Creek. The boys' friend Francis is with them, but Tommy and Francis are not talking. Tommy is angry with Francis for getting him into trouble – as he sees it – at school.

1. Tommy is angry with Francis for two reasons. What are those reasons?
2. Why did Tommy give Mrs O'Grady his full attention?
3. List some of the ways Francis behaved to convince Mrs O'Grady that he was unwell.
4. What does Tommy think Martin should have learnt by now?
5. If you were Tommy, what would you have done? Why?
6. List four things that happened to Tommy as a result of wagging class.
7. Why does Tommy love riding Combo more than anything in the world?
8. Was it really all Francis's fault?

## 2. Carly

The travellers arrive at the farm and Tommy meets Martin's cousin Carly. The four children plan to go for a horse ride, but in the course of a tiff, Francis slams Tommy's cabbage tree hat on Tommy's head and sends him back to the past.

1. Who is Carly and why is Tommy going to stay with her and her family?
2. Describe what Carly looks like.
3. What was it that had made Francis angry?
4. Why did Tommy and Francis argue?
5. What reasons does Martin give when he explains to Tommy that detention was not all Francis's fault?
6. What did Combo do when he saw Tommy?
7. Why was Tommy planning on not wearing the cabbage-tree hat?
8. Why do you think Tommy chooses to not tell Francis about his magic hat?
9. Francis slams the hat on Tommy's head. What happens next?

## 3. Mr Craig

Tommy finds himself back in the olden days and meets the driver of a passing dray, Mr Craig, who offers Tommy a lift to Apis Creek. He explains to Tommy that he owns an inn there with his friend and business partner, Mr Christie. He takes Tommy to the inn, where the innkeeper's wife gives him food. Some suspicious strangers are in the bar.

1. What was Tommy expecting when he opened his eyes? Why?
2. Tommy has been transported back in time. List some of the clues that tell Tommy he is now in the past.
3. What sort of business did Mr and Mrs Craig open at Apis Creek and why does it have a good reputation?
4. Mr Craig describes his business partner as a fine man. List three reasons why.
5. What does the word *dimpled* mean?
6. Why was Tommy suspicious of the strange man who appeared when Tommy was halfway through his meal?
7. When another man breezed in, Tommy thought it was Mr Christie. What made Tommy feel uneasy?
8. Tommy's heart sank when Mr Christie turned around. What does *heart sank* mean?

## 4. Mr Christie

To Tommy's horror, the innkeeper Mr Christie turns out to be the notorious bushranger Frank Gardiner, with whom Tommy has had previous dangerous adventures. Gardiner is posing as an honest innkeeper and, desperate to keep his identity a secret, he sees Tommy as a threat. He locks Tommy up in one of the inn's bedrooms.

1. Why is Frank Gardiner using the name Frank Christie? Which of these names is Frank's real name?
2. Tommy has met Frank Gardiner in previous adventures. Write a timeline of Tommy's adventures with Frank.
3. Why is Frank more worried about Tommy than he is about the stranger?
4. What had Frank *gotten away with*?
5. Ben Hall turned to a life of crime. Why?
6. Are there any similarities between Frank Gardiner and Tommy's friend Francis?
7. Why do you think Tommy's hat did not work when he tried to escape the room in which he was locked?
8. Tommy's life was in danger, but what was worse?

## 5. The 'prospector'

Next morning, there is a commotion outside Tommy's room. Looking out the window, he sees the suspicious strangers from the bar the previous day outside – in police uniforms. He watches them arrest Frank Gardiner. He is horrified when they storm into the inn and arrest *him* as well. They also arrest Mr Craig. The police set off with their prisoners on horseback for the long ride to Rockhampton jail. Frank's girlfriend Kate ('Mrs Christie') rides with them. The police put Tommy in a cell with Frank, but after a while release him. Kate takes Tommy to stay in a nearby hotel.

1. Mrs Christie was suspicious of the strange prospector. Who was he really?
2. What are troopers and why did they arrive with Aboriginal men?
3. Why was Tommy relieved when Frank was arrested?
4. What did the policemen find in the chest of drawers in the room in which Tommy was a prisoner?
5. Why did the police take Tommy with them?
6. Mr Craig told the police that Mr Christie was an honest man. Why did Tommy think this was a mistake?
7. What do the crimes *committing highway robbery under arms* and *harbouring a criminal* mean?
8. Tommy thought about flinging his hat off. Why didn't he do that?
9. Cuthbert Fetherstonhaugh arrives as the prisoners and police are preparing to ride to Rockhampton. What does he try to do? Why is he outraged?
10. Cuthbert reveals that the year is 1864. How many years ago is that?
11. Discuss what the journey to Rockhampton may have been like.
12. Research the food *hominy*. How is it made?
13. Why did the police let Tommy go?
14. Why would Mrs Christie want to help Tommy?

## 6. Tricked!

Next morning, the police trick Kate into visiting Frank in jail. When she is there, they arrest her. Kate urges Tommy to leave, for his own safety, so he takes off his hat and returns to the present.

1. Tommy and Mrs Christie are woken by the police. What did they want and why is Tommy suspicious?
2. Why do the police also charge Mrs Christie? Why do they call her Kate Brown?
3. Why do you think Tommy's hat worked this time?

## 7. Riding

Tommy is back in modern times, horse riding with Martin, Francis and Carly. He tells Martin about his recent adventures. Martin offers to go back to the past with Tommy to try and help Kate.

1. Tommy returns to the present. How much time has passed?
2. Describe Francis's behaviour. Why is he behaving like this?
3. Tommy gave Combo *free rein*. What does this mean?
4. Why do you think Martin knew that Tommy had been on an adventure?
5. Martin suggests a reason why Tommy had failed to return to the present when he took the hat off in Apis Creek? What was the reason? Is it similar to the thoughts you had?
6. Why would Francis not want to share his new friend? Have you ever felt like this before?

## 8. Secrets

The boys try to find an opportunity to go back to the past without telling Francis. Francis suspects they have a secret and is annoyed with them, but they are reluctant to let him in on the secret at this stage. Tommy puts on his hat, and Martin dons his magic boots, and they go back to the past.

1. Why would Francis think that Tommy and Martin are keeping secrets from him? How would this make him feel? Have you ever felt that way?
2. Why do Tommy and Martin choose not to tell Francis?
3. Martin and Tommy disappear into darkness. Predict what you think will happen next.

## 9. Sydney

The boys find themselves on a steamer, heading to Sydney. They meet Kate on the deck. She tells them that she has been released from jail but the police are sending Frank on the steamer to Sydney to face trial.

1. Why would the police be taking Frank to Sydney to face trial?
2. What is the meaning of the word *understatement*?
3. Tommy looks for the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Opera House. Why aren't they there? Research when they were built.
4. Why does Tommy advise Kate to *get some sleep*?

## 10. Court

Tommy and Martin attend the trial of Frank Gardiner. They witness Kate's shock as Frank is sentenced to thirty-two years in prison.

1. Tommy and Martin once saw the trial of Harry Readford in 1873. Research Harry Readford and his alleged crime.
2. Why do you think a man like Frank Gardiner would have lots of friends?
3. Why is Tommy surprised by the appearance of Frank's sisters?
4. What reasons did Frank give for his belief that he should not have been found guilty.
5. The judge tells Frank that he had set a 'dreadful example'. What reasons does the judge give?
6. Why would Kate never see Frank again?
7. Why do you think people like Frank Christie turn to crime?

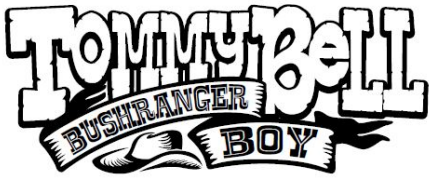


## 11. Sorry

Back in the present, Tommy and Francis apologise and make amends.

1. What reason does Francis give for his behaviour? How does Tommy feel about this?
2. Are there any more similarities between Frank Gardiner and Francis that you have noticed?
3. Why do you think Tommy chose to apologise to Francis?
4. Predict what you think might happen when Tommy and Martin tell Francis about their secret.

Name:



## # 7 *The Runaway*

### Character Profiles

Name	Physical Characteristics	Behaviour/Relationships
Tommy		
Martin		
Francis		
Carly		
Frank Gardiner (Frank Christie)		
Kate Brown (Kate Christie)		

Name:



# # 7 *The Runaway*

Bushrangers K.W.L.

What I <b>K</b> now About Bushrangers	What I <b>W</b> ant to Know About Bushrangers	What I <b>L</b> earned About Bushrangers

For further information about

## ***Tommy Bell, Bushranger Boy***

### ***#7 The Runaway***

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