

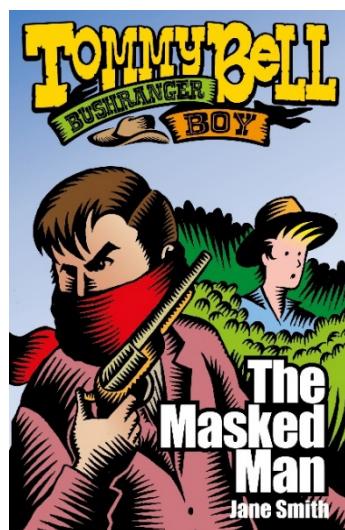


# Tommy Bell Bushranger Boy Series

## Book 8 – The Masked Man

by

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## About the Book

Tommy Bell's father is driving to Ballarat on business, and he's brought Tommy and his friend Martin along for the ride. But when the car breaks down in the small former goldmining town of Mt Egerton, they are all stranded in a motel for the night. Tommy and Martin go out in search of fast food for dinner, but when they have a minor tiff about their friend Francis, Tommy goes off in a huff – back to 1869.

Tommy's magical cabbage-tree hat takes him back to a moonlit night on a deserted street, where he is shocked to witness an armed bank robbery in progress. The masked gunman forces his victim to walk to the schoolroom, where he makes him write a note (which the robber signs) and ties him to a chair. Tommy follows and, when the gunman finally leaves, he slips into the room to free the young bank manager, Ludwig Bruun. Ludwig tells Tommy that his attacker was his former friend, the lay preacher Andrew George Scott, though the robber had signed the note 'Captain Moonlite'.

The next morning, Tommy is shocked to hear that Ludwig has been arrested for the crime. He tries to tell the police that Ludwig was innocent, but the police don't believe him. He returns to the present to seek Martin's help. When they go back to the past together, they learn it is three years after the robbery and Scott is still free. Ludwig's father has hired a private detective, but it is Tommy who gives them the idea to search the nearby well for evidence in the form of the robber's gun.

An exciting descent into the well to retrieve the gun follows, and Tommy saves the day. The boys return to the present, satisfied that Ludwig will see justice at last. As a side benefit of their adventure, Tommy has brought back a red neckerchief – the one used as a mask by Captain Moonlite – that he hopes will give their friend Francis a means of joining them on their next adventure.

The narrative travels forwards and backwards in time and Tommy faces danger, fear and outrage as he tries to find justice for a young victim of crime. Through his adventures, Tommy also comes to appreciate loyalty in his friendships.

*The Masked Man* is the eighth 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
- The gold rush
- Criminal behaviour
- Adventure
- Law and justice
- Police

## **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](#)).

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](#)).

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

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](#)).

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](#)).

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](#)).

#### **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).

## Australian Curriculum Year 5 HASS

The nature of convict or colonial presence, including the factors that influenced patterns of development, aspects of the daily life of the inhabitants (including Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples) and how the environment changed (ACHASSK107).

The reasons people migrated to Australia and the experiences and contributions of a particular migrant group within a colony (ACHASSK109).

## 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).
- Using Google Maps, locate Mt Egerton and explore the town today using street view. What signs of the past can be identified?
- Draw the Mt Egerton that Tommy describes in chapter one.
- Create a word wall, including unknown words and words relating to the era in which Captain Moonlite lived.
- Choose words from within the text to include in spelling lists.
- Begin a character web showing the characters linked to Captain Moonlite 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 Masked Man Character Profile' activity template.
- Add to the class K.W.L. chart

## Suggested After Reading Activities

- Read the historical note. Brainstorm and record both the real events and those that the author made up.
- Refer to Jane Smith's 'Australian Bushrangers' series book, *Captain Moonlite*. Create a timeline of the life of Andrew George Scott. Compare it to the timeline made of events of Australian history during the time.
- Write a letter to author and historian Jane Smith asking further questions about Captain Moonlite 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 Captain Moonlite or Tommy Bell. Write a series of diary entries based on events in the book.
- Explore the history of the cabbage-tree hat. Can you identify the cabbage-tree plant growing in your area?
- Choose a bushranger to research. Write a report and create a brief PowerPoint presentation on the life and crimes of the bushranger.
- Tommy and Martin have decided to give Francis the neckerchief. Plan and write a short story about the day Francis receives the neckerchief and the boys are transported back in time. Include the boys meeting the bushranger you have researched.
- Read the interview with Captain Moonlite. Write a question you would like him to answer. Try writing the answer. Swap questions with a partner and each answer your partner's question from Captain Moonlite's perspective. Are your answers similar? Repeat for Tommy Bell and then for Ludwig Bruun.

## Chapter Summaries and Comprehension Questions

### 1. Stranded

Tommy Bell's father is driving to Ballarat on business, and he's brought Tommy and his friend Martin along for the ride. But the car breaks down in the small former goldmining town of Mt Egerton, and they are all stranded in a motel for the night. Tommy and Martin go out in search of fast food for dinner. They argue about whether to tell their friend Francis about their secret time-travelling adventures and Tommy, annoyed, puts on his cabbage-tree hat and disappears to the past.

1. Why did Tommy's father allow the boys to go and buy food after dark, although his mother wouldn't have allowed it had she been there?
2. Why does Tommy have a great interest in the *gold rush days*? When were the *gold rush days*?
3. Why did Tommy's mum suggest that he travel to Ballarat with father and invite Martin along?
4. Tommy thinks that his friend Martin is kind and fun but sometimes *a bit of a worry-wart*. What does this mean? What does this statement tell us about Tommy's character?
5. Identify and discuss the reasons why Tommy doesn't want to tell his other friend Francis about his time-travel adventures. What would you do? Why?
6. Even though Martin may not realise that Tommy has travelled back in time, was Tommy being a good friend when he put the hat on his head?

## 2. The masked man

Tommy finds himself on a deserted moonlit street. He is shocked to witness a masked gunman force a young man to go into the bank and hand him the bank's gold. Tommy follows and watches as the masked gunman forces his victim to walk to the schoolroom, where he makes him write a note (which the robber signs) and ties him to a chair.

1. What is the *nineteenth century*? Do you know of any major events that happened in Australia during the nineteenth century?
2. Tommy chooses not to call out to the man at the door, but rather to stay hidden. What would you have done? Why?
3. The bank is called the *London Chartered Bank*. Where is London? Why would there be a bank called that in Australia?
4. Are there any clues that could be used to identify who the masked man is?
5. What does the word *bluffing* mean? Why does Tommy think the masked man is a bully?
6. Why would the robber write a letter that protects the young man?

## 3. The bank manager

When the armed robber finally leaves, Tommy slips into the room to free the terrified victim. The young man, seventeen-year-old Ludwig Bruun, explains that he is the bank manager. He tells Tommy that although his attacker wore a neckerchief across his face, he recognised his Irish accent. The robber was his former friend, the lay preacher Andrew George Scott, though the robber had signed the note 'Captain Moonlite'. When they part, Ludwig tells Tommy that he is going to tell the police the bank was robbed by Scott.

1. Compared to what we know about employment today, Ludwig Bruun is very young to be a bank manager. What reasons might there be for people of the past being employed at a younger age than they are today?
2. Tommy decides he'd be a farmer if he lived in colonial times. What would you be? Why?
3. What is a neckerchief? What use does a neckerchief have for the wearer?
4. Why would the masked man call himself Captain Moonlite?
5. Bruun accuses Andrew George Scott of committing the crime. Why would a man with a respected social position, such as a preacher, want to commit a crime?
6. What is a lay preacher?

## 4. Arrested

Tommy spends an uncomfortable night trying to sleep under the stars. Next morning, he goes in search of food and finds a bakery. On the way, he discovers a piece of red cloth stuck in a tree and realises it is the red neckerchief the robber was wearing as a mask. At the bakery, Tommy is shocked to learn from Ludwig's father that the police have arrested Ludwig, believing that he committed the robbery himself. He accompanies Ludwig's father to the police station to tell them what he saw, but the police refuse to believe him. Outraged, Tommy decides to go back to the present and fetch Martin, knowing that Martin will help him save Ludwig.

1. Tommy is used to sleeping under the stars and thinks it has a *special charm*. What does this mean? Why is it different this time?

2. Tommy thinks the lady in the bakery probably believes he is a *homeless orphan*. What does this mean? Why was she kind to Tommy?
3. Why would Ludwig's father have an accent? Where might he have migrated from? What reasons might he have had for coming to Australia?
4. Captain Moonlite was also described as having a strange accent – soft and singsong. Ludwig earlier mentioned that he is an Irishman. Where is Ireland? Why did people of Ireland migrate to Australia?
5. What reasons might there be for Constable Monckton to not believe Tommy? How would this make Tommy feel?
6. Tommy is described by Constable Monckton as being like a 'filthy urchin'. What does this saying mean?
7. Could Tommy have done anything else to convince Constable Monckton?
8. What does having a *cool head* mean? Predict what you think will happen when Tommy returns to today. Will Martin agree to help?

## 5. Noodles

Tommy goes back to the present and tells Martin about his adventure. Martin, despite his misgivings, agrees to try and help Ludwig – but only after he has eaten. The boys buy noodles and go back to the motel to eat, deciding to tackle the problem in the morning.

1. What signs might there be to indicate to Martin that *something was up* and that Tommy may have been back in the past?
2. If Tommy and Martin travel back in time what dangers might be waiting for them? If you were Tommy's friend would you go with Tommy?
3. What dangers might there be in time travel in general?
4. Would you agree to travel back in time? What time period would you like to travel to? Why?

## 6. Back to the past

Tommy uses his cabbage-tree hat and Martin uses his boots to return to the past.

1. Why does Tommy believe that looking clean may help people to believe him? Do you think it will help?
2. Tommy and Martin pack muesli bars and a smartphone to travel back in time. What would a person of the gold rush era think of these items if they found them? Do you think the smartphone will be useful?
3. How did people of the colonial era communicate quickly over a distance?
4. Discuss and record predictions of what might happen next in the story.

## 7. Mr Sly

The boys find themselves at the home of Ludwig Bruun and his father. Three years have passed since the robbery. The court has found Ludwig not guilty, but he is still troubled by the injustice of his situation. 'Captain Moonlite' is still at large. The Bruuns have hired a private detective, Mr Sly, who has discovered that Andrew George Scott has been involved in many dodgy activities – including selling the same amount of gold that was stolen in the robbery. He knows that Scott is guilty but needs more evidence to prove it. The gun from the robbery has never been found, and Mr Sly thinks that if it could be found, it might help their case. Tommy remembers hearing a splash on the night of the robbery as the gunman passed the well after leaving the schoolroom. He thinks the gun might be in the well.

1. Tommy and Martin return to the past. What clues are there to it being a different time to before?
2. List the reasons why Ludwig and his friend were arrested.
3. How would you feel if you were wrongly accused of a crime?
4. What does it mean to have a reputation spoiled?
5. Why would George Scott demand an apology from Ludwig?
6. George Sly is a private detective. Why does Tommy almost laugh when he is introduced to him?
7. Did Captain Moonlite make any mistakes that may have led to his capture?
8. What is a *lunatic asylum*?
9. The superintendent described Scott as ... *an artful designing and unprincipled criminal ready to join in any scheme of fraud or ruffianly violence that had a chance of success*. What does this mean? Why would Scott have chosen to be a lay preacher?
10. Tommy remembers hearing a splash on the night of the robbery as the gunman passed the well. What does George Sly mean when he says, '*... we have to do this properly*'?

## **8. The well**

The Bruuns, Tommy, Martin and Mr Sly fetch the police and suggest they search the well. Constable Monckton asks Tommy to do the search, and Tommy reluctantly agrees. He descends the ladder and sees the gun on the well's floor, but must dive into the water to retrieve it. He eventually seizes the gun and returns triumphantly to the top. Since the well was right next to Scott's house, the boys are able to leave, happy in the knowledge that they have found further evidence to convict the real criminal.

1. Why would Constable Monckton agree to follow Tommy, Martin, Mr Sly and Mr Bruun to the well?
2. Discuss the reasons why Tommy agreed to go down the well. Would you have agreed? Is there any other action that Tommy could have taken? What are the dangers?
3. Discuss lighting of the time period. Compared to lighting today, what problems could a lamp like the one Tommy takes into the well create?
4. Discuss the purpose of a well. How are they created? Are wells still used today?
5. Why is finding the gun important?
6. Tommy and Martin return to today. If Constable Monckton wanted to talk to Tommy again, what explanation could there be for the sudden disappearance of the boys?

## **9. The red neckerchief**

Tommy and Martin return to the present, and Tommy remembers that he still has the red neckerchief in his pocket. The boys wonder if it might have the same power to cause time-travel as Tommy's hat and Martin's boots. They decide to bring Francis on their next adventure.

1. Why has Tommy changed his mind about telling Francis?
2. If you were Francis would you believe Tommy and Martin's time travel story? What evidence might convince you?
3. Brainstorm ideas for further adventures the boys may have.



## # 8 *The Masked Man*

### Character Profiles

Name	Physical Characteristics	Behaviour/Relationships
Tommy		
Martin		
Francis		
Andrew George Scott (Captain Moonlite)		
Ludwig Bruun		
Mr Sly		



## # 8 *The Masked Man*

Bushrangers K.W.L.

What I Know About Bushrangers	What I Want to Know About Bushrangers	What I Learned About Bushrangers

For further information about

***Tommy Bell: Bushranger Boy***

**#8 *The Masked Man***

please visit

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