



**Author: Stephanie Owen Reeder**

**Illustrator: Liz Duthie**

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### Blurb

In her Heritage Heroes series, Stephanie Owen Reeder celebrates true stories from Australia's past about courageous and resilient young people who survived against the odds. *Courageous Kids and Their Amazing Adventures* brings together the five original, beloved stories with two brand new ones.

Liz Duthie's occasional illustrations give young readers a visual springboard for imagining the story and picturing themselves as these courageous young people.

### About the Creators

Dr Stephanie Owen Reeder is the author of over 20 children's books, including the multi-award-winning *Heritage Heroes* series. She has worked as a teacher, a librarian, a university lecturer and a Hansard editor at Federal Parliament. As well as historical novels, Stephanie has written award-winning picture books, including *Trouble in the Surf* and *Australia's Wild Weird Wonderful Weather* with NLA Publishing. She has won both the Eve Pownall Award for Information Books in the CBCA Book of the Year Awards and the Young People's Prize in the NSW Premier's History Awards.

Liz Duthie is an internationally published children's book illustrator and visual artist. Her first non-fiction children's book, *Wombat* by Christopher Cheng, won the CBCA Eve Pownall Award in 2022. Liz's hand-drawn style expresses humour, emotion and movement, using traditional mediums.

## ***Courageous Kids and Their Amazing Adventures***

### **Teachers Notes**

Recommended for: Age 6+

#### **Using *Courageous Kids* in the Classroom**

Featuring seven true tales set between 1854 and 1932, *Courageous Kids* is a perfect book for introducing the study of Australian history into the classroom. Each story features inspirational children who survive, and often thrive, against the odds. With six chapters, historical fact boxes and an epilogue included in each story, the book lends itself to being read out loud in the classroom, chapter by chapter, story by story, with follow-up activities involving research, language, drama and art activities based around the humanities and social sciences.

#### **Heroic Deeds**

Ask your class to discuss what makes a hero. Is it someone famous, like a sporting star or a film star? Is it someone who helps others or who saves lives? Or can it be someone from your family or a friend? What makes someone a hero in your eyes? Ask students to write a story about or a draw a picture of someone who they regard as a hero.

#### **Young Celebrities**

Most of the children in *Courageous Kids* became 'celebrities' when their story was reported in the newspapers. Ask students to choose one of the main characters from *Courageous Kids* and search Trove to find contemporary newspaper accounts. What did the newspaper reporters find most inspiring about what the children had done? Ask your students to write a script and make a video of an 'interview' with one of the children in *Courageous Kids*, exploring what happened and how the 'hero' felt about it.

#### **Illustrating a Story**

Ask students to look at the illustrations in the book. Liz Duthie's black and white illustrations are injected with humour, personality and movement. Discuss why she chose to illustrate the particular incidents in each story. Ask your students to search Trove for photographs or other images of their favourite character in *Courageous Kids*. Choose an incident in the story that is not illustrated by Liz Duthie and ask your students to illustrate their chosen part of the story in whatever style they think works best.

#### **Inspiring Landscapes**

Each of the stories in *Courageous Kids* is set in a different Australian landscape—an island, the desert, the beach, the countryside, the city and the bush. Ask your students to select one of these landscapes and write a story set in it. They could create their own imaginative story, or base it on a true story from their family history or one that they find on Trove. The story could also be presented as a picture book or a painting.

#### **Finding Historic Stories**

Stephanie Owen Reeder has been described as the 'story whisperer' for her ability to find and bring to life stories from Australia's past. She often selects tales that resonate with her because they mirror events in her family history. Ask your students to consider which stories from their own family history might be worthy of a picture book and which aspects of Australian history the story touches on. They could ask their parents or grandparents to tell them a true family story, which they could write and illustrate as a simple picture book.

### Fascinating Facts

Historical fact boxes accompany each story in *Courageous Kids*. Ask students to select their favourite story and research other interesting facts about the places and/or people featured in it. They could present their fascinating facts on a poster or in an interactive format.

### Writing Biography

Ask your students to search Trove for newspaper articles about one of the characters in *Courageous Kids*. Create a timeline for the story and write a short biographical entry about the character based on both the newspaper articles and the information presented in *Courageous Kids*.

### Writing Stories

As a group, search Trove for newspaper articles about natural disasters such as bushfires, heatwaves, floods, cyclones or blizzards. Ask students to come up with their own character and write a story about how that character survived a natural disaster.

OR

Search Trove to find a historical event such as the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the Great Depression, an attack by bushrangers or the bombing of Darwin during World War II. Ask students to write a story or a newspaper article giving an eyewitness account of what happened.

