



# JACK'S BUGLE

## Teachers' notes

Written by Krista Bell

Illustrated by Belinda Elliott

Published by Windy Hollow Books

When Aidan Jackson, known as "Jack", leaves his parents' farm to fight overseas in World War I, he is excited by the promise of travel, adventure and new friends. Although Jack's bugle is brought home from the war by his best friend, it lies idle for years and years. Will the bugle ever be played again? JACK'S BUGLE is a celebration of the music, optimism, mateship and the ultimate peace, that were part of "the war to end all wars".

Set against the background of the Gallipoli campaign of World War One, this picture book follows the journey of a bugle from an Australian farming town, to the big city, to Egypt, to Gallipoli, back to the city and finally into the hands of a boy from the country town where its adventure began.

A few years ago, after speaking at a literature festival in Alice Springs, Krista was told the story of a bugle that had been bought in an Adelaide op shop by an Alice Springs local who then discovered that the bugle had originally come from Alice Springs!

The story of a bugle that makes the return journey to and from a war began to simmer and JACK'S BUGLE was created.

The aim was to write a story for younger readers with a unique and gentler way into the history of the Australian soldiers who took part in creating the legend of the ANZACS. In 1914 Aidan Jackson, 'Jack' to his Army mates, is a young man who is proud to join up and excited about the adventures that await him, especially as he is the first person from his farming family to travel overseas. He takes with him the shiny new brass bugle given to him by his family on his 19th birthday and it is the bugle's journey we follow until finally, back in Australia decades later, it is given to another young boy named Jackson.

### **A note from the illustrator:**

Jack's Bugle is painted in watercolour paint. The colours of the uniforms needed to reflect real life. Researching the battle of Gallipoli was a sad experience. One book in particular was a book of interviews with surviving soldiers.



Their personal accounts of loss were very touching. I did many roughs before creating the final characters. I wanted Harry to be small with a large and cheeky personality. I wanted Jack to be tall with a warm face. After creating Jack I became very sad that he was going to die, to me he represented all of the young men I had studied in preparation for the book. Illustrating Jack's Bugle took me on a journey through time and through the lives lived and lost at Gallipoli, I hope I have shared that journey with the reader.

### Before Reading

What does the cover suggest to you about the subject matter and historical setting of this book?

### After Reading

What are some of the main themes that come through in this book?

What did you already know about the First World War?

Has this changed any of your assumptions?

Which themes in the book are related to the war and which could be universal?

### Writing

Write letter home or diary entries from Aiden Jackson and Spenser Harrington

Imagine you are Spencer Harrington as an old man. How might you retell your experiences of the war?

Consider this description from the book of the battlefield ...

Confusion.

Noise, bullets,

Sand, rocks, smoke,

Death. Confusion.

How else might you describe the confusion of the battlefield?

Using the word confusion and the simple structure of single words that Krista has used here, write your own description of confusion in another setting. Eg on a sports field or lost in a shopping centre etc.

### Visual literacy/ art activities

Look at the illustrator's choice of colour and tone.

Why do you think she has used these colours?

What effect do they have?

The illustrator has used watercolour. Can you experiment with watercolour using only a few colours, to create a sense of place and time?

On the last page the illustrator has drawn an interpretation of the types of recruitment posters that appeared during the First World War encouraging young men to enlist. Do some research in to other recruitment posters of the time and then come up with one of you own.

What mediums are used to encourage people to enlist these days?

### Australian History

Whilst this book is fiction it draws on events in our history, the book imagines what may have happened to two friends. What would have happened if Aiden had been the one to return?

Interview people you know who had family members who fought in WW1

Find out a little more about the history of the bugle in war.

Visit the war memorial in your state

