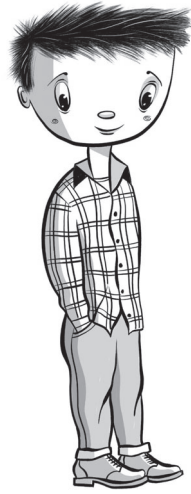


# CLANCY OF THE OUTBACK



PHIL KETTLE & BOB ANDERSEN

Illustrated by Shane McGowan

## Teacher notes

**Introducing the series — this section can also be used by students**

Four additional titles in this series of books which has, at its core, the experiences of city slicker Clancy, his new friend and country girl, Little Bill and their respective families.

HORSE PLAY

Paddock BOMB

EXPLODING DUNNY

FERAL FRENZY



# Introducing the authors and illustrator



**Phil Kettle** was born just outside Mildura in north-west Victoria and is an author of multiple titles.

Phil writes:

‘I was born in Mildura in Northern Victoria and I grew up on a farm a few kilometres away from Mildura, in a small town called Cardross. Cardross, a town with only one shop, one garage, one school and a town hall. Our post-office address was PO Box 1 and our telephone number was 12. I have spent most of my adult life living in Melbourne, but in recent times have moved back to Mildura.

I am the author of many book series, including the Toocool, Billy Kool, Boyz Rule, Girls Rock, Our Australia, Marcy, Get Real, Spike, Kids Rule, and the very new series, Clancy of the Outback — some 220 books in total.

Phil spends a lot of time in schools in country Australia, and that’s where he came up with the concept of Clancy of the Outback. There were few books available for students in country schools that talked about their lives and the reality they were experiencing.

**Bob Andersen** is a writer and publisher. He has worked with Phil Kettle on a number of projects, and has been able to bring his own experience of rural life and living to the Clancy stories.

**Shane McGowan** is a Melbourne illustrator who specialises in picture books. He has illustrated over 30 books so far. Some of the most recent are *Tiger’s Roar* by Alex Rance, *My Bird, Bertie* by Amelia McInerney, *Get back in Your Books* by Rory H. Mather and *The Thing That Goes Ping!* by Mark Carthew, which was awarded Speech Pathology Book of the Year 2021 for the 5-8 year age group. Shane begins his work on any project by reading the story and imagining the characters and what is required to give shape to the written text. He spends a lot of time sketching a scene (these are called roughs) before committing to the final illustration.

# Book features

The Clancy of the Outback series provides enjoyable and easy reading for newly independent readers. Usually these readers are aged between 7 and 10 years old. The books have certain features that are specifically designed to assist early independent readers. These include:

- ♦ Chapters and explanatory chapter titles – usually 8 chapters per book
- ♦ Front matter including a contents page, and illustrations and names of the characters
- ♦ At least one illustration per chapter
- ♦ Endmatter which contains further information about the main topic, a poem or song
- ♦ Some outback jokes



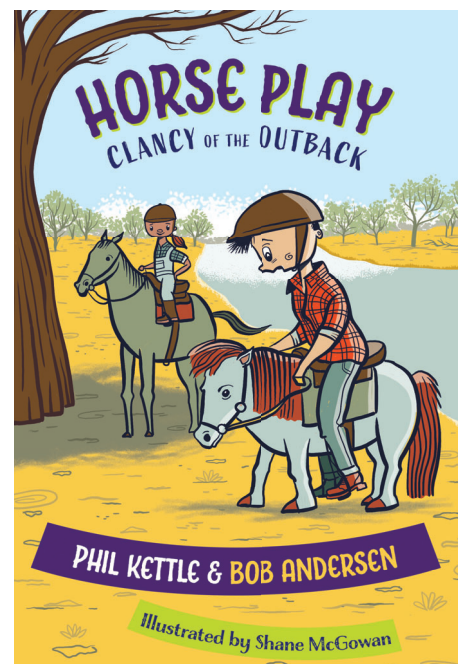
# Plot features and themes

The plots centre around Clancy, a city boy, learning about living in the country. At first Clancy has to suffer the indignities of being seen as a 'city slicker', but he gets used to learning new things and how to survive country life. Some of the incidents are serious, some are humorous and some are hilarious. Much of Clancy's education about country life comes via Little Bill, the daughter of the farm manager, who takes Clancy under her wing.

Themes include sustainability, conservation, animal welfare, family relationships, friendship, small-town life and institutions, colloquial language, food and cooking, farm machinery, country characters, country and small-town work and pets.

## HORSE PLAY

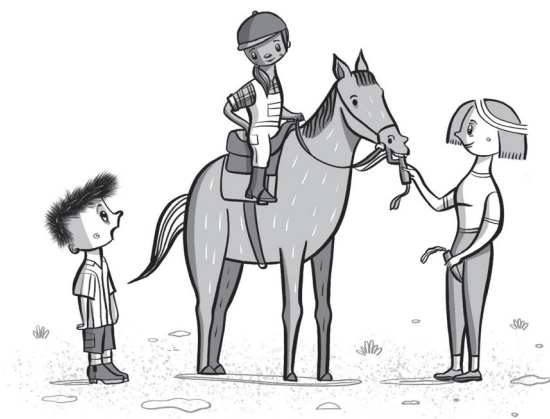
Little Bill decides that Clancy should learn to ride a horse. The horse she finds for him is a small Shetland pony, which is really quite embarrassing. Little Bill and Clancy set out on their horses to ride to Chance, but then everything goes wrong. Fortunately Clancy rises to the occasion.



## THE EXPLODING DUNNY

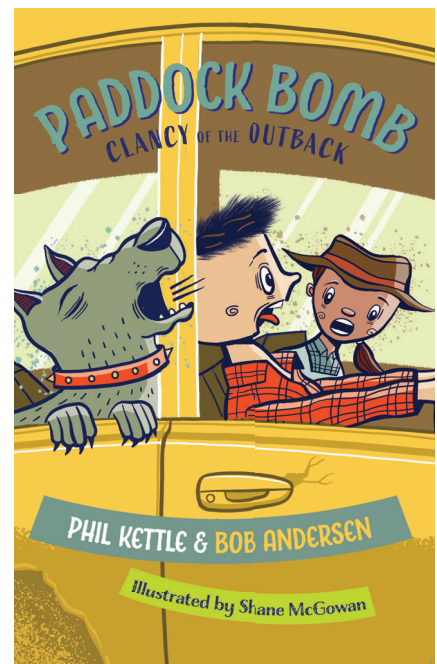
The shearers have returned to the Overflow and there is the usual grumbling about the cook. It is Mum who comes to the rescue. In the meantime Clancy and Little Bill are helping out in the shearing shed. One of Clancy's tasks involves keeping up paper supplies to the dunny. A series of events leads to a surprising conclusion.





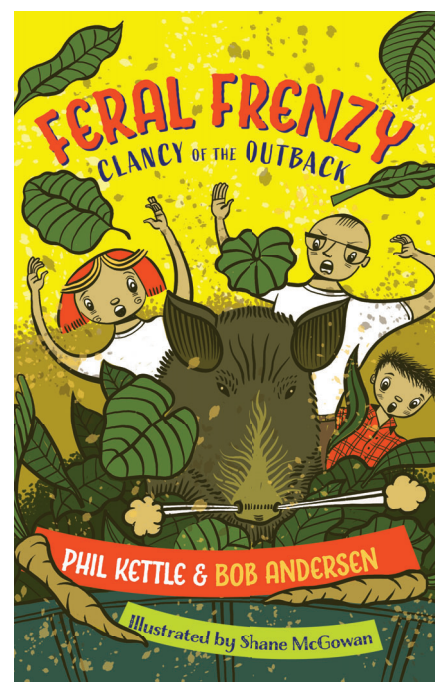
## PADDOCK BOMB

When the local policemen tells Dad his car has to be taken off the road, Little Bill suggests that it be used as a paddock bomb – a car for use around the paddocks. Clancy has already had a bad experience with driving a car, but he bravely takes the wheel again, with dramatic results.



## FERAL FRENZY

The family wakes to find that feral pigs have broken into Mum's veggie patch. The result is devastating. Dad even decides to get a gun, but that idea is quashed by the local police. There is a positive outcome when Little Bill and Clancy embark on a campaign to rid the Overflow of feral animals.



# TEACHING NOTES

## Scaffolding and extending the reading experience

### Read aloud

If you have only one copy of a Clancy of the Outback book then reading aloud will be an important strategy. Reading aloud to the class also provides great opportunities for the teacher to model expression, phrasing and pronunciation

First introduce the series and the book by backgrounding the students on authors, illustrator and themes. Be prepared to stop to explain words or phrases or to ask questions of the students; for example, Why do you think the author calls the book *Horse Play*? Do you think Dad is capable of handling a firearm? Why does Mum call Dad Francis on certain occasions? How does Little Bill know the shearers are happy? Encourage students to interrupt with questions.

### Choral reading

If you have multiple copies of the books then you can give an individual student or groups of students different characters to read. You could also give the role of narrator to a group of students.

For example, there are five main characters and, from time to time, new characters are introduced. The poems or songs at the end of the book will require special effort and practice.

### Paired reading

In pairs or in small groups, students take turns at being the teacher by reading a short passage or even a chapter and then asking a partner or group questions about it. This gives students the chance to explore strategies such as questioning, summarising, clarifying and predicting.

## Shared reading

This would require access to the e-book so that it could be displayed for the whole class to read. This would be useful in an ESL class, but most probably not with first language learners.

## Guided reading

This is usually a one-on-one activity with the teacher identifying or guiding engagement with text features as the student reads. It can also work in very small groups.

The student is encouraged to read and, as they do, the teacher notes words missed or misunderstood, lack of recognition of punctuation and comprehension issues. These can then be addressed both during and after reading.



# Scaffolding and extending the writing experience

*Note: All of the following activities require a short teacher discussion before students embark on the exercises.*

## **Exploring book features**

The Clancy of the Outback series provides opportunities to discuss book features. The following activities can be done by an individual student or in pairs, small groups or even whole class.

## **Creating a story plan (whole class or small group)**

Invite students to come up with a topic for another Clancy story. The teacher suggests the story be about eight chapters, and the students give chapter headings for each chapter. The teacher explains that stories have a beginning, a middle and an end. This is known as the 'story arc'.

If the story line is a bit thin, then a sub-plot can be introduced.

- ♦ Series title, book title, author(s) and illustrator. Come up with your own series or book. Illustrate the front cover yourself.
- ♦ Contents page. Create a title page and contents page for your own book.
- ♦ Character pages with illustrations. Create your characters and write a brief thumbnail about each of them. Illustrate if possible.
- ♦ Introductory chapter – welcome to the subject of your story. Describe the setting.
- ♦ Outback Facts. Research an information section for your book and write it using report-genre features.
- ♦ How it works. If your story involves machinery or some complicated process you could write a procedural text explaining how it works.
- ♦ Poems or songs. Using the poems in the Clancy series, write your own poem about one of the themes.



- ♦ Outback jokes. Can you make up a new joke? Research jokes and riddles related to your story.
- ♦ Back cover copy. Write a short blurb for the back cover. What is a blurb?
- ♦ Students could also discuss the possibilities of characters, settings and themes.

## Exploring structural devices

*Engaging with Clancy of the Outback through story writing*

- ♦ Settings – The Overflow and Chance. Discuss these and come up with your own story setting.
- ♦ Characters – the gang, and also characters like Mel Bell and Senior Constable Brian George. What are each character's strengths and weaknesses? Come up with your own family of characters.
- ♦ Animal characters – Butters and Biscuit. What are their strengths and weaknesses? Come up with your own pets. Describe them and their characteristics.
- ♦ Discuss the use of colloquial language; for example, 'Dad gave him an earful', 'rouseabout', 'dunny', and many more. How many can you find in the Clancy book you are reading? Does your family use any of them?
- ♦ Brainstorm language that might be used that is unique to your story line or setting.
- ♦ A moral or ethical slant. For example, in *Feral Frenzy*, Big Bill is planning a kangaroo cull. And the poem, *Brumby's Run*, is about culling feral horses. What do you think about this?
- ♦ Invite the students to think of a positive 'message' that comes out of the story.
- ♦ Discuss the importance of the basic rules of language such as sentences, phrases, paragraphs and punctuation.

## Identifying text types

Genre – discuss what genre the expected writing will fit. Explain that the Clancy series is a recount or retell. What genre is the end matter, e.g Outback Facts? This genre is explanation.

As referenced above, the endmatter in books of this nature could also contain procedural texts explaining how something works, for example, farm machinery.

## **Guided writing.**

**Teachers can conduct a guided writing lesson and select from the ideas below.**

**Recount text structure:** the beginning or orientation, a series of events and a closing statement or conclusion.

- ♦ For one-on-one or small group teaching, the teacher may assist a student with a story map:

First

And then

Later

Finally

- ♦ The student writes points under each of the following headings, guided by the teacher. (Note that these are text features for recount/retell.)

Writing in the past tense

Series of events in order

Personal comment (note Clancy's observations)

Dialogue (this gives a good idea of character)

Background information or setting

Details (about food or machinery or people)

Account of an incident or incidents

Suitable adjectives

Linking words (later, afterwards, following, next, after that)

Colloquial language or language reflecting the setting

## **Reading/writing activity**

With an individual student or small group, and using one of the books the student(s) has read, brainstorm the content under the headings above, then ask the students to write down the points under the headings. Bullet points acceptable. Students then share with the whole class, using their notes as discussion starters.

# Speaking and Listening

The Clancy of the Outback series provides many opportunities for classroom presentations and the use of oral English.

## 1. Prepare a review

Individual students prepare a review of one of the books and include such issues as below to present to the whole class.

- ♦ Strengths/weaknesses
- ♦ Themes
- ♦ Learnings
- ♦ Plot
- ♦ Characters
- ♦ Illustrations

## 2. Speaking activity

A group of students choose either a character, plot or theme to review and then do a group presentation to the whole class. Use the headings above.

## 3. Recount or retell

Invite students to describe an event that has happened to them.

Encourage them to make 'speaker's' notes; that is, words that trigger longer thoughts or ideas. This would be a retell or recount.

## 4. Explanation

Using the Outback Facts section of the books, invite students to talk about something that they know a lot about. Invite them to make speaker's notes and then present to the whole class.

## 5. **Pitch the series**

You are an author's agent and you have been approached by Phil Kettle and Bob Andersen, the authors of the Clancy of the Outback series. They have asked you to find them a publisher in return for a percentage of their royalties.

Use the 'Introducing the series' notes from the beginning of this teacher guide and ensure that students have access to this information.

Students then do their individual whole-class presentation using this information. The presentation should cover author, illustrator and editor roles. They should also cover plots, themes and characters. Enhance the experience by suggesting that they are pitching the series to a major publishing house.

The audience/class then participates in a Q&A where they quiz the presenters about the project and the content with questions such as the following:

Who would buy the books and why?

What would be an appropriate retail price?

How would they suggest you promote the books in the market place?

*Black line master sheets*



# BLM Character profiles

Write key words in the space alongside the character's names below. List not only how they look, but also what they do and say. Select the adjectives that you think describe them best.

Little Bill	
Clancy	
Clancy's Mum	
Clancy's Dad	
Big Bill	
Uncle Buck	
Butters	
Biscuit	
Mel Bell	
Senior Constable Brian George	

## BLM Language study

This series uses language unique to the story setting. See if you can write a definition of each of the following:

dunny	
gluten free	
rouseabout	
shearer	
chalk and cheese	
veranda	
four on the floor	
cop	
cock his ear	
buttoned his lip	
the nub of it	



# BLM Main idea

Choose one of the Clancy titles you read recently and write down the main idea in each chapter. You can use more than one sentence.

Chapter 1	
Chapter 2	
Chapter 3	
Chapter 4	
Chapter 5	
Chapter 6	
Chapter 7	
Chapter 8	
Chapter 9	

# BLM Illustrator's Brief

You are the editor of the Clancy books. You have to brief the illustrator. Write a short illustrator's brief for each chapter (there is one illustration per chapter). This brief should say which characters to include and which event to illustrate. Choose alternatives to the ones in the actual book.

Cover picture	
Preliminary pages	
Chapter 1	
Chapter 2	
Chapter 3	
Chapter 4	
Chapter 5	
Chapter 6	
Chapter 7	
Chapter 8	
Chapter 9	
End matter – glossary, information, etc	
Back cover	

# BLM Story analysis I

## Character

Choose a Clancy story you have read recently and answer these questions. Who do you think is the main character in the story? Why?

Who is the secondary character?  
What role do they play in the story?

## Setting

Describe in detail where a Clancy story of your choosing occurs. What information do you have to establish this?

Identify an experience that Clancy has. What information tells you where this experience occurs?

## BLM Story analysis 2

### **Mood**

Choose a Clancy story that you have recently read. How did you feel as you read this story? Did the story make you laugh, smile, cry or surprise or scare you?

How do you think the author made you feel these ways?

### **Authors' style**

The Clancy stories are personal narratives. What do you know about this genre? Consider who is telling the story, how does the story-teller keep you interested? Have you had similar experiences?

Why do you think the authors chose this genre to tell the stories?

Personal narratives have a structure – a beginning or orientation, a middle, where there is a complication or development of the story, and then a resolution or ending. Can you identify this structure in the Clancy story you have read recently?

## BLM Story analysis 3

### Theme

Choose a Clancy title you have read recently.

What did you learn from the story?

What did it tell you about relationships? Clancy/Little Bill, Mum/Dad, Mum/Big Bill. Dad/Mel Bell, Little Bill/animals.

What did it tell you about authority hierarchies? Who is really in charge?

Did it give you any ideas about what you want to do with your life? Now and into the future?

## **BLM Voice**

The Clancy stories are written in Clancy's voice. This means that Clancy is telling the story. He is the narrator.

Choose a Clancy story you have read recently and re-read chapter 1.

Choose a character other than Clancy and rewrite chapter 1 using your new character's voice.

You might choose Little Bill, Mum or even Brutus.

# BLM Working with words

## Figures of speech

These are commonly used by writers to add colour to their writing.

**Metaphor** is when a description is imaginative and not literal, for example, 'She'll let me have an earful,' he said sheepishly. Or 'Little Bill's poster seemed to have a bit more punch.' See if you can find some metaphors in a Clancy story you have read recently.

**Simile** is when the writer compares two things to illustrate a situation or thing; for example, 'My bum felt like it was on fire'. See if you can find some similes in a Clancy story you have read recently.

**Cliché** is an over-used phrase or figure of speech, for example, 'Dad seemed to be on a roll'. See if you can find a cliché in a Clancy story you have read recently.

Make up your own similes, metaphors and cliches.

# BLM Working with words

## Contractions

Contractions are a short form of two words. For example, 'I'm' is a combination of 'I' and 'am'.

An apostrophe is used to indicate that a letter or letters are missing.

Find the contractions in the following sentences and then write the two words that the contraction replaces.

If I tell her, she'll let me have an earful.	
'And another thing,' said Dad, 'you're not getting into the new ute'.	
'But we'll be covered in mud,' said Little Bill.	
'You'd better be ringing around,' said Senior Sergeant Foot.	
'She's most probably in shock,' Mum said.	
'Don't tell her about the bull ants,' said Little Bill from the back seat.	
I'm afraid I can't repeat what I just heard Little Bill say.	
'What's the story?' I asked.	
'It's not that simple,' said Big Bill.	

Make a list of other contractions you can find in the Clancy books.



# BLM Working with words

## Verbs

Verbs are also known as 'doing words', meaning the word expresses an action being performed.

Some examples of verbs are walk, throw, eat and buy.

**Complete this chart by using the correct word in a sentence.**

### PRESENT

walk

(I walk to school.)

### PAST

walked

(Yesterday I walked  
to school.)

### PARTICIPLE

walking

(Tomorrow I will be  
walking to school.)  
(I'm walking to school right now.)

cook

shear

ride

drive

garden

buy

trap

compete

write