

# TALKING MACHINES

## Stage 2 HSIE Education Resource NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum



*Included in this resource:*

- Video Clip Synopsis
- Duration
- Context/Background Information
- Suggested lesson activities
- Activities to incorporate geographical tools

**Bill Browne's Mallee Roller  
Weethalle**

### Key Curriculum Outcomes – Stage 2

| HISTORY                   |   | GEOGRAPHY               |   |
|---------------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| Community and Remembrance | <b>HT2-2</b><br>describes and explains how significant individuals, groups and events contributed to changes in the local community over time | The Earth's Environment | <b>GE2-1</b><br>examines features and characteristics of places and environments                        |
|                           | <b>HT2-5</b><br>applies skills of historical inquiry and communication  |                         | <b>GE2-2</b><br>describes the ways people, places and environments interact                             |
|                           |   |                         | <b>GE2-3</b><br>examines differing perceptions about the management of places and environments          |
|                           |   |                         | <b>GE2-4</b><br>acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry |

## **Video Clip Synopsis**

Bill Browne is a farmer and donor of 'The Bill Browne Vintage Machinery Collection', to the Weethalle Museum. Long after other farmers had given up their horses for tractors, Bill continued using huge teams of up to 14 horses to pull his farm machinery. Hear about Bill's life working with horses and why he persisted in farming with horses into the age of technology.... In this clip, Bill talks about clearing the land with the community built Mallee Roller (built in 1925) – a great demonstration of Australian farming ingenuity, the impact of Australians on the landscape and change and continuity in rural areas.

Duration: 4 minutes

## **Context/ Background Information:**

Talking Machines: reviving Riverina rural technology collections with video testimonies, captures the histories and stories of generations of Australian men and women who farmed the Riverina, through the rusted metal frames and once sharp blades of dormant farm machinery they used.

The project creates a series of thematic trails across the Riverina and key objects have been selected to support the development of these themes which in turn speak to Australia's role in the industrial revolution- this is the focus of an educational resource. Australia's role in the industrial revolution and the impact of the revolution is little documented in Australian education resources- these films provide an access point for teachers on examples of the impact of the revolution upon rural Australian society. It should be noted that the full impact in Australian society occurred after the curriculum notes on the European based experience- thus date relating to the manufacture and use of some equipment may not align with those published in the curriculum.

## **Suggested Lesson Activities**

### **Lesson Introduction Activities**

- Bill Browne began farming in Weethalle during the soldier settlement period, discuss what other individuals would have lived in the community that contributed to the everyday needs of people such as grocery stores, haberdasheries, teachers, doctors etc.
- Present findings as a chart or poster to compare and contrast then compared to now.  
*(What is the nature of the contribution made by different groups and individuals in the community?)*
- Discuss how Bill Browne prepared and maintained his land for farming. What farming techniques that Bill used are also used today e.g. the use of horses?  
*(How do different views about the environment influence approaches to sustainability?)*
- How can farming affect the environment and how can we make it more sustainable?
  - clearing trees for cropping
  - decreased soil nutrition due to constant cropping
  - interrupting natural waterways
  - using chemicals for farming.

*(How can people use places and environments more sustainably?)*

### **Independent/Small Group/Hands on Activities**

- Have a class debate about one of the following issues:
  - Should horses be used for farming and other similar tasks?
  - Should trees be cleared for farming?
  - Is pollution from modern day machines an issue?

*(How do different views about the environment influence approaches to sustainability?)*

- Students create a video/poster using digital technologies to encourage sustainable farming e.g. planting more trees or organic farming.

*(How can people use places and environments more sustainably?)*

### **What I learnt today (Reflection)**

- Class discussion to share what students have learnt about Bill Browne and the town of Weethalle
- Students share why they think machinery is important for farming
- Students present activities to the class

## **Incorporating Geographical Tools**

### **Maps – M**

#### **pictorial maps, large-scale maps, world map, globe**

- Study a map of Australia and discuss and mark your location as well as the location of Weethalle.
  - Discuss the latitude/longitude
  - Discuss its location e.g. what state is it in, is it rural or urban?
  - How far away is your location from Weethalle (this can be done using a paper map to estimate or Google maps for more accuracy)?

### **Fieldwork – F**

#### **observing, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys**

- Students visit a local museum and observe machinery that was used in the past.
- Students draw and label a piece of machinery
- Students conduct a list of questions that they would like to ask Bill Browne
- Students conduct an interview with a friend or family member and discuss differences and similarities between the past and present e.g. education, leisure activities, employment and housing.

### **Graphs and statistics – GS**

#### **tally charts, pictographs, data tables, column graphs, weather data**

- Students collect weather data from Weethalle as well as their own location and present in their chosen way e.g. column graph.

## **Spatial technologies – ST**

### **virtual maps, satellite images**

- Use Google Earth to look at a map of Weethalle. Discuss the landscape compared to your local landscape.
  - What other major towns, rivers and highways are near Weethalle?

## **Visual representations – VR**

### **photographs, illustrations, diagrams, story books, multimedia, web tools**

- Students visit a local museum and create an advertisement for an exhibition. This can be done as a poster format or using multimedia to create a video advertisement that can be presented to the class.