

# TALKING MACHINES

## Talking Machines Education Resource

**Theme:** Pests

**Film Title-** Langwill Rabbit Fumigator, Traps and Selling Akubra Hats (Wyalong)

### About the Clip:

Synopsis: Rabbit Fumigator at Wyalong. Beginning in Victoria in 1859, Australia's rabbit problem was enormous. The extensive degradation of land from burrows and consumption of grass greatly affected Australian agriculture. This film examines the various means of dealing with this pest problem including trapping and rabbit fumigators.

Duration: 6.37 mins

### Study Module:

**Curriculum Focus:** History – NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum

**Year:** 9 (Stage 5)

**Strand:** Historical knowledge and understanding; Historical inquiry and skills

### Theme:

- Depth Study 1: Making a Better World? – The Industrial Revolution (1750 – 1914)
- Depth Study 2: Australia and Asia – Making a Nation

### Key Concepts:

- Evidence; continuity and change; cause and effect; perspectives; empathy; significance

### Curriculum Applicability:

- The technological innovations that led to the Industrial Revolution (**ACDSEH017**)
- The nature and significance of the Industrial Revolution and how it affected living and working conditions, including within Australia (**ACOKFH016**)
- the emergence and nature of significant **economic**, social and political ideas in the period, including nationalism (**ACOKFH019**)
- The experiences of men, women and children during the Industrial Revolution, and their changing way of life (**ACDSEH081**)
- The short and long-term impacts of the Industrial Revolution, including global changes in landscapes, transport and communication (**ACDSEH082**)

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- Living and working conditions in Australia around the turn of the twentieth century (that is 1900) **(ACDSEH090)**

## Historical Skills:

- **Chronology, terms and concepts**
  - Use chronological sequencing to demonstrate the relationship between events and developments in different periods and places **(ACHHS164)**
- **Analysis and use of sources**
  - Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources **(ACHHS169)**
  - Evaluate the reliability and usefulness of primary and secondary sources **(ACHHS171)**
- **Perspectives and interpretations**
  - Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past **(ACHHS172)**
  - Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own) **(ACHHS173)**
- **Explanation and communication**
  - Develop texts, particularly descriptions and discussions that use evidence from a range of sources that are referenced **(ACHHS174)**

## General capabilities:

- **Critical and Creative Thinking**
  - Developing questions about aspects of the past that require historical argument
  - Identify and clarify information and ideas
  - Organise and process information
- **Personal and Social Capability – social awareness:**
  - Appreciate diverse perspectives
- **Ethical Understanding**
  - Recognise ethical concepts
  - Explore rights and responsibilities
  - Consider points of view
- **Intercultural Understanding**
  - Investigate culture and cultural identity
  - Explore and compare cultural knowledge, beliefs and practices

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## **Context/ Background Information:**

Beginning in Victoria in 1859, Australia's rabbit problem was enormous. With vast open spaces, little human population to hunt them and no natural predators, swarms of rabbits in plague proportions crossed Victoria and reached South Australia and NSW by 1880. The extensive degradation of land from burrows and consumption of grass greatly affected Australian agriculture.

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.

## **Discussion Pointers:**

- Did some pests have a positive outcome (e.g. developing local industry, refrigeration, canning etc?)
- There was an economic imperative for family run farms to solve these issues; what was their response to pests?
- Did all solutions to the pest problems have positive outcomes and what was the impact of human activity on the environment?
- What significant point in time does this represent? How has our response to the challenge changed over time?
- Are there ethical considerations in dealing with pests? Where these considerations taken into account at the time? What is the difference between then and now?

## **Suggested Classroom Activities:**

- Debate – rabbits: friend or foe?
- Take a site visit to the museum.
- Interview people who remember rabbit stories – grandparents etc.
- Research early farmer responses to other pests e.g. Prickly pear. Have students identify the short and long term consequences of these responses.

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## More Information, Contact Details & Arrangements for Visits

The Wyalong Museum is located at 69 Neeld St (cnr Neeld & Slee Sts) in Wyalong and is open daily from 2pm – 5pm or at other times by appointment.

Contact with the Museum can be made by phoning (02) 6972 3303 or by emailing [stanford@internode.on.net](mailto:stanford@internode.on.net).

More information on the Wyalong Courthouse Museum can be obtained at: <http://www.wyalongmuseum.com.au/> or <http://blandshire.nsw.gov.au/about-bland-shire/visiting-shire/museums>.