

TALKING MACHINES

Talking Machines Education Resource

Theme: Crops

Film Title- McKay Combine Seed Drill - Weethalle

About the 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 12 horse seeder and how the length of the season has changed via influences relating to modern seed quality genetics.

Duration: 3 minutes

Study Module:

Curriculum Focus: History – NSW Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum

Year: 9 and 10 (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
- Depth Study 3: World War I (1914-1918)

Key Concepts:

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

Curriculum Applicability:

- 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)**
- The impact of World War I, with a particular emphasis on Australia including the changing role of women **(ACDSEH096)**

TALKING MACHINES

Historical Skills:

- **Chronology, terms and concepts**
 - Use chronological sequencing to demonstrate the relationship between events and developments in different periods and places (**ACHHS164**)
 - Use historical terms and concepts (**ACHHS165**)
- **Historical Questions and research**
 - Identify and select different kinds of questions about the past to inform historical inquiry (**ACHHS166**)
- **Analysis and use of sources**
 - Identify the origin, purpose and context of primary and secondary sources (**ACHHS169**)
- **Perspectives and interpretations**
 - Identify and analyse the perspectives of people from the past (**ACHHS172**)
 - Identify and analyse different historical interpretations (including their own) (**ACHHS173**)

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

Context/ Background Information:

The seed drill enabled seed to be deposited evenly in the right amount and covered at a uniform depth. The first American combines arrived here in the 1880s. Combine seed drills applied both seed and fertiliser (superphosphate) to the soil. Bill used these/these combine drill(s), both made by H.V. McKay, and pulled by horses to sow his crop. Harrows were dragged behind to cover the seed.

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.

TALKING MACHINES

Discussion Pointers:

- Bill persisted in the use of horses when others had made the transition to tractors. Why do you think Bill didn't change for so long? (loved his horses)
- What changes occurred in farming technology whilst Bill was actively farming? (quality of seed, shortening of season due to genetic modifications)
- Environment/place can be an important element of identity. Is this the case with the person in the video? Explain the reasons for your response.
- In your local community has the type of farm animal changed?
- What reminders of farm animals are still in and around your town? What types of industry pertaining to animals still remain in your town? Why? (change/ continuity)

Suggested Classroom Activities:

- Develop a Glossary for terminology used in the film- research and explain terms such as Combine, Super-Phosphate (Super).
- Take a site visit to the Museum.
- Make a site visit to the Weethalle Rodeo (April/May annually).
- Have a class debate: horse drawn vehicles – romance vs. practicality; clearing the land: environmental vs economic, impacts of genetically modified seed for farming- for and against.

More Information, Contact Details & Arrangements for Visits

The Weethalle Whistestop Museum is located at the Railway Station in Weethalle and is open daily from 10am – 4pm (subject to volunteer availability) or at other times by appointment.

Contact with the Museum can be made by phoning (02) 6975 6199 or by emailing p.bluel@bigpond.com.

More information on the Weethalle Whistlestop Museum can be obtained at: <http://blandshire.nsw.gov.au/about-bland-shire/visiting-shire/museums> or <https://mgns.org.au/organisations/weethalle-whistle-stop-arts-and-crafts-and-museum>.