

Media release

History is not “old hat”

With the launch of Kevin Rudd’s **new National Curriculum** this week, Jack Drake is happy that there is a new found focus on Poetry and Australiana, a subject matter that has been rather over looked by schools over the past few years.

Jack Drake is a well known Australian Bush Poet, and true bushie, who was first introduced to the bush poetry of Banjo Paterson at the age of ten, in 1960.

He has produced four CDs "The Cattle Dog's Revenge", "Dinkum Poetry", Bronco Harry's Last Ride" and **his latest CD “Australian Bush Poetry Classics”**. His first 3 CD’s have all gained nominations for the Australian Bush Laureate Awards.

Jack has also the author of three books published by Central Queensland University Press. “The Cattle Dog's Revenge”, “Wild West in Australia and America” and The Outback verses the Wild West”.



Jack’s wins in Bush Poetry Competitions include:

- His CD “The Cattle Dog’s Revenge” was a finalist in the 2002 Australian Bush Laureate Awards, his CD “Dinkum Poetry” was a finalist in 2003, and the CD "Bronco Harry's Last Ride" made the finals in 2005.
- His book “The Cattle Dog’s Revenge” earned a Golden Gum Leaf Trophy at the Australian Bush Laureate Awards, Tamworth 2004 for the best book of original verse for the year.
- The Asthma Foundation of NSW’s “Bush Poet of the Year 2001” in Sydney.
- The Tenterfield Oracles of the Bush Written Section in 1999, and Original Performance Section in 2000 and 2001;
- The Original Performance Section, National Bush Poetry Championship at the Brisbane Ekka 2001 as well as wins and places in many other regional contests.

Jack has now turned his attention to the youth of Australia and wants to **help teachers engage students in our Early Australian history and language**. He with the help of a Queensland teacher Jenna Towers, has designed a teaching package to support the new National Curriculum and help English teachers to focus on the essential skills of oral and visual language and the strands of listening, speaking, viewing and presenting.

The activities in this package aim to encourage students to think critically and interpret analyse and identify literary features, conventions, structures and language featuring in a variety of classic Australian poems. It is Jack’s hope to inspire students to gain an understanding of the early Australian way of life, and for them to write their own bush poetry and perform their own poems to their classmates, family or friends and continue this Australian tradition.

The multimedia Package contains a CD, DVD and Teacher’s notes. It is the first Bush Poetry Education package of it kind and includes poems such as “The Man from Snowy River” by A.B. (Banjo) Paterson; “Sweeney” by Henry Lawson, and “An Old Master by C.J.Dennis, along with 9 other classic Australian poems.

If you would like to contact Jack Drake. He is happy to be interviewed; he lives just outside Stanthorpe, QLD.

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