

King of the Outback: The Story of Sidney Kidman

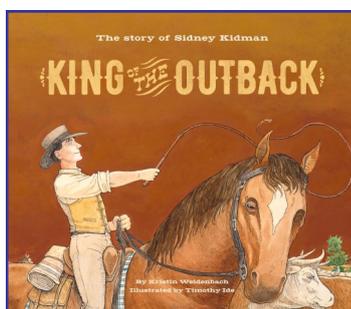
By Kristin Weidenbach & Illustrated by Timothy Ide

Publisher: MidnightSun Publishing

ISBN 9781925227246 SCIS: 1795768

\$26.99

Sidney Kidman runs away from home at thirteen and travels to the outback on a one-eyed horse. He finds stray cows in the scrub, swims across rivers by hanging on to a bullocks tail and dreams of having the biggest herd of cattle in Australia. Many years later, when the workers on Sid's cattle station organise a giant rodeo for Sid's birthday party the cattle from the bush take fright in the city. People panic and horses bolt. Can the Kidman stockmen save the day? *King of the Outback* tells the rags to riches story of one of Australia's greatest pastoral pioneers.



Teacher notes have been based on those supplied by the publisher. A full version is available on our website.

Themes:

- Pastoral Pioneers
- Australian outback

Discussion Questions & Activities:

- Sidney Kidman had a job and left home at age 13. How does this compare with expectations of children in Australia today? Discuss how Australian society compares with other countries where children may still be expected to work and assume responsibilities at a young age.
- Sidney Kidman made his living in the Australian outback. He focused his cattle stations on the Channel Country in southwest Queensland. How does the Channel Country differ from where you live? What makes your area special? What are the grasses, soils and trees unique to your area and how can you look after them?
- Identify specific and distinctive Australian terms or concepts that are mentioned in the story and discuss their meaning e.g. bed roll, tucker bag, hobbles, swag, long paddock.
- Find equivalent terms used in other countries and discuss how language evolves over time and place e.g. Akubra (Australia) vs Stetson (USA); drover (Australia) vs cowboy (USA); cattle station (Australia) vs cattle ranch (USA).
- Kidman's life story demonstrates that people can achieve in life with perseverance and hard work even if they are not traditionally academically gifted. Discuss how we can learn outside the classroom by spending time with experts and experienced mentors. Think about mentors that could guide you in your chosen field.
- Different fonts are used throughout *King of the Outback*. Discuss how different font styles and sizes can be used to emphasise certain parts of a story.
- Study Timothy Ide's ink and water colour illustrations. Clever illustrations can add visual literacy to supplement the text of the book. Look for the illustrations of the baby in the birthday rodeo sequences. Discuss how the illustrator has created a visual story of the baby's peril and safe return, which adds to the drama of the rodeo.
- Facts & Figures at the back of the book provide additional information about the life of Sir Sidney Kidman. Use this material as a starting point for further research about his life. Present your findings to the class in either poster format or as a powerpoint presentation.