

Teacher Lesson Plan

Sidney Nolan - Ned Kelly series

Lesson Title:

Sidney Nolan - Ned Kelly series

Stage:

Stage 3 - Year 5/6

Year Group:

11-12 years old

Resources/Props:

Interactive Whiteboard

Meet Ned Kelly youtube video clip written by Janeen Brian, illustrated by Matt Adams and retold by Renata Posa: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIISPSF8h_o

National Gallery of Australia website link of 'Deborah Hart Nolan Kelly Series Introduction'
<http://nga.gov.au/nolan/index.cfm#source>

National Gallery of Australia, 2002, Sidney Nolan's *Ned Kelly* - The Ned Kelly Painting in the National Gallery of Australia, Publications Department of the National Gallery of Australia

Language/vocabulary:

Iconic, outback, history, armour, national, gallery, Australia, series, narrative, events, arrest, sequence, siege, trial, literal, purpose, violence, injustice, betrayal, imbalance, living conditions, primary, secondary, sources, viewpoint, empathy

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students will be introduced to Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series and their significance as one of the greatest sequences of Australian paintings in the 20th century. Students will learn how Nolan's Ned Kelly series has a strong narrative presence but also reflects his own life and the world of violence and injustice, with a particular emphasis on examining the living and working conditions for people living in 19th century colonial Australia.

Students will explore the main aspects of Nolan's Ned Kelly series and his purpose for creating these works of art which encompass Australian history inclusive of Indigenous Australians, Australian landscape and European modern art. Students will identify Nolan's style of painting and have the opportunity to critically analyse this style through a compare and contrast activity. Furthermore, they will use this gained knowledge to participate in an art making activity to refine their practical skills.

Aims and Objectives:

Upon completion of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify and sequence the collection of Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series of paintings
- Gain insight into the purpose, style and influences of Sidney Nolan's works of art
- Critically analyse and respond to various pieces in Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series
- Participate in an art making experience
- Explore Australian living conditions in the 19th century for European settlers

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Australian Curriculum:

Key Learning Area: Visual Arts

- Explore ideas and practices used by artists, including practices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, to represent different views, beliefs and opinions (ACAVAM114)
- Explain how visual arts conventions communicate meaning by comparing art from different social, cultural and historical contexts, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artworks (ACAVAR117)
- Develop and apply techniques and processes when making their artworks (ACAVAM115)

Key Learning Area: Humanities and Social Sciences

- Examine different viewpoints on actions, events, issues and phenomena in the past and present (ACHASSI099)
- Locate and collect relevant information and data from primary and secondary sources (ACHASSI095)
- Sequence information about people's lives, events, developments and phenomena using a variety of methods including timelines (ACHASSI097) (ACHASSI125)

Cross-curriculum Priorities:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

General Capabilities:

- Critical and creative thinking
- Personal and social capability
- Literacy
- Intercultural understanding

ScOT Catalogue Terms:

Composition (Visual Arts), art materials, settings (narratives) art genres, symbols, attitudes, impartiality, idioms, reading comprehension, listening, reasoning, conversations

Higher Order Thinking Skills:

Theory: Bloom's Taxonomy

Levels addressed:

1. **Knowledge** – Exhibits memory of previously learned material by recalling fundamental facts, terms, basic concepts and answers about the selection
2. **Comprehension** – Demonstrates understanding of facts and ideas by organising, comparing, translating, interpreting, giving descriptors and stating main ideas
3. **Application** – Solves problems in new situations by applying acquired knowledge, facts, techniques and rules in a different, or new way
4. **Analysis** – Examines and breaks information into parts by identifying motives or causes. Makes inferences and finds evidence to support generalisations
5. **Synthesis** – Compiles information together in a different way by combining elements in a new pattern or proposing alternative solutions
6. **Evaluation** - Presents and defends opinions by making judgments about information, validity of ideas or quality of work based on a set of criteria

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Introduction: (10 minutes)

1. Conduct the pre-lesson pop quiz.
 - Where is the National Gallery of Australia located?
ACT
 - What is Sidney Nolan best known for?
Painting
 - Complete this sentence: Ned Kelly was a famous...?
Bushranger
 - Ned Kelly lived in which part of the world?
Australia
 - Complete this sentence: Ned Kelly was born in the year...?
1855
2. Using the interactive whiteboard, display Sidney Nolan's iconic painting which depicts Ned Kelly riding on his horse through the Australian outback.
3. Generate a class discussion by asking the following questions: Have you ever seen this painting? Who is the figure in this work of art? Where is this figure riding his horse? How do you know this? Who painted this work of art? Allow students to share their ideas, providing reasons for their answers.
4. Students may recognise the figure as Ned Kelly by his black armour. They may also have prior knowledge about the life of Ned Kelly and his activities during the 1800's, as well as being an iconic figure in Australian history. Explain that this artwork is one of 25 works of art in Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series gifted to the National Gallery of Australia located in Canberra.
5. Prompting for a show of hands, ask the students whether they have ever visited the National Gallery of Australia. Explain briefly that Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series is among the first works of art that you can see as you enter the gallery. Why might that be? What does that tell you about the importance of this story to Australia?

Main Body of Teaching: (40 minutes)

6. Using the interactive whiteboard, students view a small collection of works of art in Nolan's Ned Kelly series. Students are asked to observe each of the paintings and discuss briefly with a partner, who is depicted and what is happening in each.
7. Explain to the students that Nolan's paintings tell the story about Ned Kelly and his gang similar to a **narrative**.
8. Using the interactive whiteboard, students view the YouTube video *Meet Ned Kelly* written by Janeen Brian, illustrated by Matt Adams and uploaded and retold by Renata Posa. This story tells of Kelly's early life and the **events** that led to his **arrest** and eventual death. Students are encouraged to write notes as they view the video, focussing on the **sequence** of main events such as the death at Stringybark Creek, the **siege** at Glenrowen and the trial of Ned Kelly.
9. Upon completion of the story, students conduct the drag and drop activity labelling each of the works of art with a main event from the Ned Kelly story.
10. Explain to the students that although Sidney Nolan's portrayal of the Ned Kelly story is depicted as a narrative, it was never intended as a literal illustration or actual record which will be explored more throughout the lesson. What actual record of these events exist? Research Ned Kelly at the [State Library of Victoria](https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/) and the National Library of Australia online.

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The National Gallery of Australia's publication Sydney Nolan's Ned Kelly, with essays by Murray Bail and Andrew Sayers, also provide valuable insights into his life. In particular, Sayers links to poetry and literature make for a useful critical literacy study as a supporting lesson.

11. Using the interactive whiteboard, students listen to the NGA video clip ('Deborah Hart Nolan Kelly Series Introduction') which introduces Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series and explains the purpose of his paintings.
12. Based on the information in the audio clip, students use the interactive whiteboard to answer the multiple choice questions. See appendix for list of the questions and answers.
13. Students read the information on the interactive whiteboard which introduces the main 'ingredients' of the Ned Kelly series, namely 'Kelly's own words, and Rousseau, and sunlight'.
14. Students explore each of these aspects in more detail by completing the activities on the interactive whiteboard.

Kelly's own words:

Students complete a close activity to gain knowledge about Nolan's influences and his purpose for creating the artworks. This will provide insight into the themes of violence, injustice, love and **betrayal**.

Rousseau:

Task 1 - Students complete a simple drag and drop activity to identify the style of Nolan's paintings.

Task 2 - Students complete a compare and contrast activity to describe Nolan's paintings. Encourage the students to identify the **simplicity** of his works, his use of big and bold forms, the themes of violence and injustice and his depiction of the Australian **landscape**.

Sunlight:

Students view the work of art titled *Ned Kelly 1946* and explore what Nolan meant by the phrase 'a story arising out of the bush and ending in the bush'. Explain that the Australian landscape is a crucial part of Nolan's paintings; the story of Ned Kelly gives meaning to the place.

15. Using acrylic paints, students create a canvas employing the same techniques used by Nolan's style of painting of the Ned Kelly series. These techniques may include his use of colours and images, the black form of Kelly which is found in many of his paintings and horizon perspectives from the Australian landscape. They must create their own interpretation of Nolan's *Ned Kelly 1946* painting. Students can be given time after the lesson to complete this activity.
16. **Extension activity:** Explain to the students that Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series depicts an aspect of Australian life during the 1800's. The story of Ned Kelly highlights the violence, perceived injustices and imbalance of power at the time. Using the interactive whiteboard, students read each of the significant events listed at the bottom of the slide: First anti-Chinese legislation passed; Black Wednesday; Great Maritime Strike; Gold found in Ballarat; Eureka Stockade and Women's enfranchisement in South Australia. Students conduct a web search to identify when each of these events occurred and drag and drop each event along the timeline provided.

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In groups of 2 or 3, students use a variety of primary and secondary sources to investigate these events in more detail, to determine the living and working conditions for the people living in Australia during this time, both European settlers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Conclusion: 10 minutes

17. Conduct the post-lesson pop quiz using the interactive whiteboard.
 - Sidney Nolan has a collection of paintings known as the Ned Kelly series which was gifted to the National Gallery of Australia in 1977 from Sunday Reed. (**True/False**)
 - Sidney Nolan's main purpose for creating his paintings was to show the historical events of Ned Kelly and his gang. (True/**False**)
 - Sidney Nolan's paintings consisted of stylised images with a vivid of colours. Landscape was a crucial aspect of the Kelly paintings. (**True/False**)
 - Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly series encompasses Australian history, landscape and European modern art. (**True/False**)
 - The following words and phrases best describe Australian life in the 1800's: Equal opportunity, access to education, optimal working conditions (True/**False**)

Homework Task:

18. Building on from the viewing of *Meet Ned Kelly*, students explore the use of language and how ideas and points of view in texts are conveyed through the use of vocabulary. Janeen Brian uses words and phrases to portray a particular **viewpoint** about the Ned Kelly story.

Activity:

- Ask a parent to view the *Meet Ned Kelly* story on you tube and/or obtain a copy from school or the local library
- Write a list of the words and phrases used by the author to describe her viewpoints/ feelings of the main character, Ned Kelly. For example, '*Ned loved his family and he was brave*', '*Ned held no fear*', '*Ned was fair*' etc
- Write a list of the words and phrases used by the author to develop **empathy** in the reader. For example, '*Then Ned helped a stranger by swapping a horse. It was stolen but Ned didn't know*' etc
- Evaluate whether you think Janeen Brian considers Ned Kelly a hero or a villain. Provide reasons to support your answer
- Conduct research to find information to counteract this viewpoint
- Do you think Ned Kelly was a hero or a villain? Provide reasons to support your answer