



*Billie & the Outback*  
*Dinosaurs*  
Stella Rose Productions  
Teacher Resources  
2021

Ideal for Foundation – Year 6

Image Credit: Mark Ryan

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## ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

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This resource has been created to provide teachers with curriculum links to the Victorian Curriculum, and includes some preliminary and post show ideas and activities as to how to extend their experience of *Billie & the Outback Dinosaurs*. The activities are designed to be open-ended and multi-ability. They may need differentiation for your specific cohort.

The performances and workshops included in the Arts & Education program are designed to offer students engaging arts experiences with strong links to the Victorian Curriculum and to VEYLDF, and VCE subjects where appropriate. Each Arts & Education program varies in its purpose and content and as a result the scope for integration across the curriculum varies. Please feel free to contact the Arts & Education team on (03) 9644 1808 or at [education@rav.net.au](mailto:education@rav.net.au),

If you have any questions about this resource, its content or its implementation within your classroom please do not hesitate to contact the Arts & Education Department.

## ABOUT REGIONAL ARTS VICTORIA

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Regional Arts Victoria inspires art across the state. Through creative facilitation, touring, education, specialised resources, artistic projects and advocacy, we develop and sustain creative communities and artistic practice all over Victoria.

Regional Arts Victoria is an independent, not-for-profit, membership-based organisation working in long-term partnerships with every level of government, fostering contemporary and innovative regional cultural practice across five decades. We advise and impact on decision-making across multiple portfolios and levels of government.

Regional Arts Victoria is the peak body for regional artists and arts organisations, and the leading organisation for regional creative practice in Victoria.

### PARTNERSHIPS

Regional Arts Victoria facilitates the partnerships, the organisations and the practices that create new work.

- Regional Cultural Partnerships
- Creative Arts Facilitators
- Membership program
- Devolved grants programs
- Resources, workshops and events
- Sector advocacy and leadership development

### PROGRAMMING

Regional Arts Victoria nurtures the experts who foster local artistic experiences and stimulate young minds.

- Arts & Education Program
- Connecting Places
- Touring programs
- Education resources
- Industry development resources and events
- Sector advocacy and leadership development

### PROJECTS

Regional Arts Victoria presents major artistic projects that build local artistic leadership and legacy.

- State-wide projects including *Small Town Transformations and Artlands Victoria*
- Internal Creative Professional Development programs
- Sector advocacy and leadership development

## ARTS & EDUCATION

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Regional Arts Victoria's Programming department has nearly 50 years of experience touring work to schools, community halls and theatres across Victoria and Australia. The department programs are the Arts & Education, Touring Services and Connecting Places programs.

The Arts and Education program also provides significant subsidy assistance (up to 75% of program costs) to eligible remote and disadvantaged schools. Your school may be eligible so please contact us to find out more.

For general enquiries please contact: [education@rav.net.au](mailto:education@rav.net.au)

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## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAM

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We all know Tim Ferguson as part of the legendary Doug Anthony All Stars and more lately, as a popular comedic performer in his own right and an advocate for people living with multiple sclerosis. Now Tim brings his considerable talents to Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs. Together with award winning writer Chris Thompson, composer Geoff Willis and educational consultant David Willis, the team has created a musical journey through storytelling, movement and orchestral performance where audiences of young learners can consider the unique palaeontology of the Australian continent while meeting the hero of the story, Billie.

Billie lives in regional Australia, and likes science, history and geography but most of all she likes tinkering with old junk to make new inventions. When Billie runs away from school to escape being picked on by Rodney and his gang, she stumbles across a lost valley which is home to a world of Australian dinosaurs! Afraid at first, Billie soon makes friends with them and promises to keep the lost valley a secret, but that all changes when Rodney follows her into the valley and gets chased back to town by the most ferocious dinosaur. Will the secret of the lost valley be revealed, or will Billie save the day?

Billie & the Outback Dinosaurs is a rare mixture of music, movement and storytelling inviting audiences to discover the unique palaeontology of the Australian continent, and to meet an amazing young woman who finds her own strength to become the hero of the story.

Following the performance/presentation of Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs the two performers will conduct movement-based workshops for small groups of the audience where children can explore the physicality and sounds of the dinosaurs and the characters in the story, and use that (along with selections of music from the original score) to create their own tales from the Lost Valley.)

Beyond the schools touring experience, an alternate version of the script exists where each character in the story can be played by students using live action and puppetry or costumes for the dinosaurs, either as a classroom-based drama project or as a full school production. The original score is also available for those schools with strong music programmes or orchestras who would welcome the challenge to play live as the story is told.

## BIOGRAPHIES

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### Tim Ferguson

Tim is a widely acclaimed comedian, writer and producer. He's toured the world performing stand-up and musical comedy, co-writing dozens of live stage comedy shows and light entertainment programmes. Most notably, Tim was a member of the Doug Anthony Allstars winning numerous awards in festivals all over the world. Together with Paul McDermott and Richard Fidler, they performed in the scifi sitcom Daas Kapital, live comedy show The Big Gig, the feature film The Edinburgh Years, the BBC's DAAS LOVE and UK Channel 4's Viva Cabaret. They broke box office records during nine world tours and released various books, comics, artworks, live recordings and Australia's biggest selling independent album, ICON. In 2013 they reformed with Tim, Paul McDermott & Paul 'Flacco' Livingston for three sell-out tours of their new show Near Death Experience. Tim is Australia's foremost narrative comedy teacher. He currently lectures in comedy, screenwriting and concept development at New York University, the Sydney Film School, the Australian Film TV & Radio School (AFTRS), RMIT University. Tim has written and produced comedy for film and television including Shock Jock and With Tim Ferguson (both created with Marc Gracie and Chris Thompson) and the feature film Spinout (written with Edwina Exton and directed by Marc Gracie). In theatre he played Frankenfurter in The Rocky Horror Show and, with Marc Gracie, created the hit show Carry A Big Stick (a tale of love, laughter & MS) and are currently developing his new stage show A Fast Life on Wheels.



### Chris Thompson

Chris is a multi-award winning writer, director and teacher working in film, television and theatre. His plays for young people have received five AWGIE nominations winning for Shady Characters, The Bridge and The Sadness of Mister Saisson. His feature film The Tumbler was nominated for the QLD Premier's Literary Award and won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award and his short screenplay Cow won the VCA/Whistling Woods Mumbai Award and was produced in India. Together with Tim Ferguson and Marc Gracie, he was Co-Creator and Writer for Shock Jock (Foxtel) and With Tim Ferguson (C31). He won the Alan Marshall Award for his short story If You Sleep You Die and Prayers of the Pagans was a finalist in the Aesthetica International Creative Writing Contest. He's been Artistic Director of St Martins Youth Arts Centre, HotHouse Theatre in Albury-Wodonga, Jigsaw Theatre in Canberra, Union House Theatre at Melbourne Uni and both the Boroondara and St Kilda Writers' Festivals and continues to work as a Teaching Artist at Arts Centre Melbourne and as a sessional lecturer at ACU. Chris has reviewed children's and young adult fiction for Viewpoint Youth Literature Magazine, the Age and the Australian Book Review, has reviewed theatre for Lowdown (the National Youth Arts Magazine) and was a regular reviewer for the Cinephilia Movie Review website. He currently hosts the arts and culture show Behind the Scenes on Vision Australia Radio where he and Marc Gracie present a fortnightly movie review segment.



## SUGGESTED PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

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The following activities are designed for teachers and students to explore before *Billie & the Outback Dinosaurs*. They aim to give context and prepare students for the upcoming performance. Activities can be pitched differently for different achievement standards.

### Activity 1: Music that Helps Tell Stories

There are many examples of stories that are told with the help of music. One really good example is:

**PETER AND THE WOLF by Sergei Prokofiev** uses the instruments of the orchestra to play characters in a story about a boy called Peter, who ignores his grandfather's warning and goes beyond the garden gate into the woods where the wolf lives. Have a listen to Peter and the Wolf and think about what sort of pictures the words and music working together conjure up in your imagination.

[Peter & the Wolf narrated by famous orchestra conductor Leonard Bernstein.](#)

When you've had a listen, see if you can share your own imagined version of Peter and the Wolf, and the Cat, and the Duck and other characters from the story, either by DRAWING A PICTURE OF THEM, or WRITING A DESCRIPTION OF THEM or DESCRIBING THEM TO EACH OTHER as a class discussion. (or, of course, you could do all three of these things).

Another good example is:

**THE CARNIVAL OF THE ANIMALS BY Camille Saint-Saens.** This is different from Peter and the Wolf because it doesn't tell a story... it just uses the instruments of the orchestra to help us imagine all different sorts of animals. (in fact, there's even a piece called Fossils that's supposed to make you think of dinosaurs). Originally, there was no narration at all for Carnival of the Animals, but just over sixty years after it was composed, a writer called Ogden Nash wrote some humorous rhyming verses to introduce each animal and that's often how we now hear the piece. Since then, other writers have also had a go at writing introductions to the music. Try listening to Carnival of the Animals without the rhyming introductions and without knowing the names of the tracks. See what kinds of animals the music makes you think of. It doesn't matter whether you get it right or not... what's more important is letting the music help you imagine things.

[Carnival of the Animals](#)

After you've listened to the music and thought about the animals, you could do the same exercises that you did for Peter and the Wolf - share your own imagined versions of the animals by drawing a picture of them, or writing a description of them or describing them to each other as a class discussion.

### Resources

[Peter and the Wolf - YouTube](#)

[Carnival of the Animals - YouTube](#)

### Activity 2: Movement that Helps Tell Stories

It's not just music that can help tell stories. The way we move our bodies, or use gestures or facial expressions can also help tell stories, sometimes without words at all.

As an example of how we use our bodies in this way, you can do a simple exercise where you see how many things you can communicate with each other just by using movement, gesture and facial expressions.

Here's some hints... you can wave, smile, stomp, shrug, scowl, tip toe, wink or many other things. Make the longest list you can and then ask yourself, what do we understand when we see people doing these things?

Once you've done that, now you can try and use some of these things to tell a really simple story with movement and no words. If you need help, here are some examples, but see if you can make up your own.

- Example 1: Two people meet and they are really happy to see each other.
- Example 2: Two people meet and they are both angry with each other.
- Example 3: One person is chasing after another who is really scared of being caught.
- Example 4: One person is chasing after another who is having a really good time.

Once you've worked these out and had a chance to practice them, show the rest of the class your 'movement' stories and ask them what they think is happening in each one and who the characters are.

If you're really ambitious, you could combine some of the music from Activity 1 and see what happens when you add movement to it.

### **Activity 3: Australian Dinosaur Research**

Lots of people know about dinosaurs like the T-Rex and the Raptors, but they're all northern hemisphere dinosaurs. Not as many people know that in the southern hemisphere, places like Australia had dinosaurs of their own. ●

See if you can find out how many different dinosaurs there were in Australia. What were their names? What did they look like? You might find books in the library about them, or you might find information online. As a starting point, did you know that in 2013 Australia Post produced a set of stamps with pictures of Australian dinosaurs on them? Some of the dinosaurs on those stamps are in Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs.

Once you've gathered your research information about Australia dinosaurs, work out how you can share it with the class... it could be a classroom talk or presentation, it could be a poster, it could be a power-point slideshow, or any other way you can think of.

### **Resources**

[Australian Dinosaurs- The Australian Museum](#)  
[Dinosaur Facts for Students](#)

### **Activity 4: Become a Dinosaur**

Now that you know something about Australian dinosaurs, see if you can become a dinosaur!

Choose your favourite Australian dinosaur – maybe it's the Koolasuchas, or the Australovenator or the Muttaborrasaurus – and use what you know about them from your research to turn yourself into that dinosaur. You could draw or paint onto paper to make part of a costume, or use old bits of fabric... but don't stop there. It's one thing to look like a dinosaur, but you should also think about what sound they make (if you don't know, make it up), and how do they move (again,



if you don't know, make it up). Once you've all made your dinosaur costumes complete with sounds and movements, you could have a dinosaur parade around the classroom, or around the playground. Or you could make a prehistoric landscape where the dinosaurs all hang around with each other. But do they all like each other? Or are some not as friendly as others?

### **Activity 5: Resilience Activity**

What is your school's strategy for addressing bullying and developing resilience? In *Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs*, the audience will meet Billie, a little girl who gets called names by some of the other kids and is usually excluded from playground games. What should Billie do?

Students could respond to this question and provide some advice to Billie by developing a poster that might appear in the school hallway, or a video (resources permitting), or a Powerpoint Slideshow that might be used in a school assembly.

If these are issues that are already being addressed in the school's resilience programme then students can draw on that material. If not, this might be a good way to start looking at such strategies. Of course, this activity will depend on how the school is running such programmes and it may be that this activity doesn't fit with where the school is at in this area.

## SUGGESTED POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES:

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Activities that dissect and expand upon the content of *Billie & the Outback Dinosaurs* that the teacher and students can engage in post-performance. Activities can be pitched differently for different achievement standards.

### Activity 1: Music that Helps Tell Stories

Before seeing *Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs*, the students might have participated in an activity that involved listening and responding to *Peter and the Wolf* by Sergei Prokofiev or *The Carnival of the Animals* by Camille Saint-Saens. These weren't the only pieces of music created by these two composers. Have a listen to some more of their music and see what it inspires you to imagine about the characters in *Billie and the Dinosaurs*. Sometimes it helps to do this activity with your eyes closed, or in a darkened room. Sometimes it's good to lie on the floor while you're listening to the music.

The first piece you could try is **Danse Macabre by Camille Saint-Saens**. As you listen to the music, imagine that it's telling you a story about *Billie*, or the dinosaurs or Rodney, or the Oddbods or any other characters you remember from *Billie and the Dinosaurs*. Let the music and your imagination do all the work.

[You can find the music here on YouTube](#)

The second piece you could try is music written for the ballet version of **Romeo and Juliet by Sergei Prokofiev**... a track called *The Montagues and Capulets*. Again, as you listen to the music imagine it's telling you a story about characters from *Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs*. What is that story?

[You can find the music here on YouTube](#)

Once you've listened to one or both pieces of music, take some time to write the story you imagined. Don't worry if you didn't imagine a whole story, or you didn't imagine how it ended or if there's anything else that you think is missing... you can make up the missing bits yourself when you're writing the story. In that way, the music can inspire the story, but you're the one who's telling it.

Once you've written the story, you can share it with the class. It would be really interesting to try reading it out while the piece of music that inspired it is playing in the background.

### Resources

[Danse Macabre by Camille Saint-Saens](#) – YouTube

[Romeo and Juliet: The Montagues and Capulets by Sergei Prokofiev](#) -YouTube

### Activity 2: Make a Picture

In *Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs*, *Billie* goes through the Wetterwall Waterfall and discovers a lost valley where the dinosaurs live. Can you imagine what that valley looks like? Try making a picture that shows the valley the way you imagine it. You could even put some dinosaurs in there if you want to, but you don't have to. Remember, it's not like a valley we would see today - it's a prehistoric valley. How would it be different from a present day valley?

You can draw with coloured pencil or pastels or paint a picture, or you might like to make a collage from photos you find in magazines or online, or you could use Photoshop if you have access to it. Or if you're really ambitious and have the resources, you could make a 3D landscape out of clay, plasticine, papier-mâché or some other suitable materials.

### **Activity 3: Role Play**

Imagine that Billie and Rodney are students in your school. What would you do if you saw Rodney and his friends being mean to Billie? How does Billie feel when Rodney treats her that way? Why does Rodney say mean things to her?

In this exercise, you can role play these questions.

Put 3 chairs out at the front of the classroom and ask one person to pretend to be Billie, one Rodney, and chose one other person from the story. The rest of the class can then ask them questions and the students have to answer as though they are really the character they're role-playing.

After 2 or 3 questions have been asked to each character, ask three new students to sit in the chairs and take on the roles. The class then ask more questions and then again swap the students playing the roles. The students should remember what has been said in answer to earlier questions and build on that, rather than starting from scratch each time.

### **Activity 4: Cross-Age Performance**

Just because Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs came to end, doesn't mean the stories of those characters are finished for good. What might happen to them next? In particular, what might happen between Billie and Rodney? And what about the dinosaurs?

This is an activity for older students, to come up with a new story that starts after the end of Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs.

Can you turn your new story into a short performance that is presented to the younger students? You can present it in the same style that you saw in Billie and the Outback Dinosaurs where it's partly performed and partly narrated, or you can choose to perform it in a style that you come up with yourself. Use the skills that you tried out in some of the pre-show activities, like movement, music and costume - you might even use some of the stories that were written in response to the music of Dance Macabre or Romeo and Juliet. Keep the performances short, so that they can be well rehearsed and so they're easy to remember. When you think you're ready, show them to your younger audience.

### **Activity 5: News Report- Dinosaur Find!**

How do archaeologists and palaeontologists know so much about dinosaurs? What gives them the clues? What is their starting point? Has anyone ever found an entire dinosaur skeleton in Australia, or do they usually just find much smaller bits of the skeleton, maybe even just one bone?

Imagine that you are a news reporter and someone has just discovered a dinosaur bone in your school's playground. How did they find it? What did they find? What do the experts have to say about it? Your task is to report the facts - it might be written as a newspaper story, or as an online blog, or recorded as radio news, or videoed as a television report. How you report it is up to you, but the challenge is to use what you know to be the facts about other dinosaur discoveries to make your news reporting sound as factual as possible.

If you did the pre-show research activity, you can use some of the information you found out for this activity, but you might need to do a bit more research to add to your report.

Learning Areas	Capabilities
<p><i>The Arts- Drama</i></p> <p><b>Strand: Explore and Express Ideas</b> Explore dramatic action, empathy and space in improvisations, play-building and scripted drama, to develop characters and situations.</p> <p><b>Strand: Respond and Interpret</b> Identify intended purposes and meaning of drama, including the drama of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p><b>Strand: Present and Perform</b> Perform devised and scripted drama that develops narrative and uses performance styles and design elements to engage an audience.</p> <p><b>Strand: Drama Practices</b> Develop skills and techniques of voice and movement to create character, mood and atmosphere and focus dramatic action.</p> <p><b>Achievement Standard</b> By the end of Level 6, students use the elements of drama to shape character, voice and movement in improvisation, play-building and performances of devised and scripted drama for audiences.</p> <p>Students explain how dramatic action and meaning is communicated in drama they make, perform and view. They explain how drama from different cultures, times and places influences their own drama making.</p>	<p><i>Ethical Capability</i></p> <p><b>Strand: Understanding Concepts</b> Explore the contested meaning of concepts including fairness and harm and how they can seem to differ in different situations.</p> <p>Explore the extent to which particular acts might be regarded by different people as good or bad, right or wrong, better or worse, and explain why.</p> <p><b>Achievement Standard:</b> By the end of Level 4, students use concrete examples from a range of contexts to explain the contested meaning of concepts and significance of acts. They explain how to identify ethical considerations in problems.</p> <p>Students use examples to evaluate ethical actions in relation to their outcomes. They explain the role of personal values and dispositions in ethical decision-making and actions, recognising areas of contestability</p>
<p><i>The Arts- Music</i></p> <p><b>Strand: Respond and Interpret</b> Explain how aspects of the elements of music are combined to communicate ideas, concepts and feelings by comparing music from different cultures, times and locations, including the music of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.</p> <p><b>Achievement Standard:</b> By the end of Level 6, students explain how</p>	<p><i>Personal and Social</i></p> <p><b>Strand: Social Awareness and Management- Relationships and Diversity</b> Describe ways of making and keeping friends, including how actions and words can help or hurt others, and the effects of modifying their behaviour</p> <p>Describe the characteristics of respectful relationships and suggest ways that respectful relationships can be achieved.</p> <p><b>Strand: Social Awareness and Management- Collaboration</b> Describe the various causes of conflict and evaluate possible strategies to address conflict.</p> <p><b>Strand: Self Awareness and Management- Development of Resilience</b> Identify how persistence and adaptability can be used when faced with challenging situations and change.</p> <p><b>Achievement Standard:</b> By the end of Level 2, students show an</p>

the elements of music are used to communicate ideas and purpose in the music they listen to, compose, and perform. They describe how their music making is influenced by music from different cultures, times and locations, using music terminology.

*The Arts- Visual Arts*

**Strand: Explore and Express Ideas**

Explore ideas, experiences, observations and imagination and express them through subject matter in visual artworks they create

**Strand: Present and Perform**

Create and display artwork considering how ideas can be expressed to an audience.

**Achievement Level:**

By the end of Level 2, students make artworks using different materials, techniques and processes to express their ideas, observations and imagination. Students describe artworks they make and view, including where and why artworks are made and viewed.

By the end of Level 6, students explain how ideas are expressed in artworks they make and view. They demonstrate the use of different techniques and processes in planning and making artworks. They use visual conventions and visual arts practices to express ideas, themes and concepts in their artworks.

awareness of the feelings and needs of others. They recognise the importance of persisting when faced with new and challenging tasks. They describe similarities and differences in points of view between themselves and others. They demonstrate ways to interact with and care for others. They describe their contribution to group tasks. They practise solving simple problems, recognising there are many ways to resolve conflict.

By the end of Level 4, students explain the consequences of emotional responses in a range of social situations. They suggest strategies for coping with difficult situations. They describe factors that contribute to positive relationships with peers, other people at school and in the community. They explain characteristics of cooperative behaviours and they use criteria to identify evidence of this in group activities. They identify a range of conflict resolution strategies to negotiate positive outcomes to problems.

By the end of Level 6, students describe different ways to express emotions and the relationship between emotions and behaviour. They identify and describe personal attributes important in developing resilience. They are able to explain how individual, social and cultural differences may increase vulnerability to stereotypes. They identify characteristics of respectful relationships. They contribute to groups and teams suggesting improvements for methods used in group projects and investigations. They identify causes and effects of conflict and explain different strategies to defuse or resolve conflict situations.

*English*

**Strand: Creating Literature**

Create literary texts that adapt or combine aspects of texts students have experienced in innovative ways.

**Achievement Standard:**

By the end of Level 6 students understand how language features and language patterns can be used for emphasis. They show how specific details can be used to support a point of view. They explain how

their choices of language features and images are used. They use banks of known words and the less familiar words they encounter to create detailed texts elaborating upon key ideas for a range of purposes and audiences. They demonstrate understanding of grammar and make considered choices from an expanding vocabulary to enhance cohesion and structure in their writing. They also use accurate spelling and punctuation for clarity, provide feedback on the work of their peers and can make and explain editorial choices based on agreed criteria.

Contact the Arts & Education team at [education@rav.net.au](mailto:education@rav.net.au) with further questions or, even better, examples of your work!

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