The Man from Snowy River

Name: _____ Date: _____ B1 · Student worksheet 1 / 2

1 Lesson Goals



By the end, I can:

- retell the main events in order.
- use words about riding and courage.
- describe interrupted actions in the past.
- explain how a simile creates an image.

Remember and Use — 3 minutes
Recall three words from last time and use one in a sentence. First lesson? Describe the picture. Can appearances tell us how capable someone is?

2 Read the Story

A B1 retelling
Adapted from A. B. "Banjo" Paterson's 1890 poem. This prose is not the original poem.

A valuable young horse escaped from a farm and joined wild horses in the Australian mountains. Skilled riders gathered to bring it back.

A young man from Snowy River joined them. His small horse looked unimpressive. Harrison doubted its ability, but Clancy supported the pair: both knew the mountains well.

The riders chased the wild horses uphill. At the top, the others stopped because the descent was dangerously steep and rough. The young man continued. His pony raced downhill, jumping fallen trees and keeping its balance.

He followed the wild horses alone. Eventually, he turned them towards home and brought them back. His pony was exhausted, but its courage had not failed. The rider became famous, and people continued to tell his story.

3 Vocabulary

Match 1–6 with A–F.

1. valuable
2. slope
3. defended
4. exhausted
5. courage
6. underestimated

A. extremely tired
B. bravery when facing difficulty
C. worth a lot of money
D. thought someone was less capable than they were
E. ground that rises or falls
F. spoke in support of someone

Bush language: a *station* is a large farm; a *stockman* works with farm animals; *brumbies* are wild horses in Australia.

Use two words in sentences about the story.

4 Check Your Understanding

1. Why did the riders gather?

2. Why did Harrison doubt the young man's horse?

3. Why did Clancy support the pair?

4. Why did the other riders stop at the top?

5. What did the young rider do next?

6. How did the chase end?

7. What can the story teach us about first impressions?

Support your last answer with a story detail.

5 Language & Poetry

Original poem — four-line extract

But the man from Snowy River let the pony have his head,
And he swung his stockwhip round and gave a cheer,
And he raced him down the mountain like a torrent down its bed,
While the others stood and watched in very fear.

Poetry detective: A *torrent* is a fast, powerful flow of water. What two things does the poet compare using *like*? What does this suggest?

Past continuous + past simple:
While the riders *were watching*, the pony *raced* downhill.

1. While they ___ (wait), Clancy ___ (speak).
2. The horses ___ (run) when the riders ___ (arrive).

A. B. Paterson · Read the original poem.

6 Watch, Listen & Speak

▶ Watch the poem on YouTube

The Poem, The Song, The Movie
Slim Dusty's sung version with scenes from the 1982 film. Uploaded by AussieOriginal.

First watch: Follow the story. Do not worry about every word.

Watch again: Focus on the mountain chase.

1. Why do the other riders stop?
2. What does the young rider do?
3. How do the music and pictures make the chase exciting?

Discuss: Does the rider show courage, skill, or both? Give evidence.

No video available? Your teacher can read the short alternative account.

The Man from Snowy River — continued

Name: _____ Date: _____ B1 · Student worksheet 2 / 2

7 Use Your English

Write 80–100 words: a witness's account.

You watched the chase. Explain your first impression, the most exciting moment and what you thought afterwards.

Use *first*, *while* and *finally*; two lesson words; and one past continuous sentence.

Choose Your Challenge

With support: Plan three events. Start: "At first, I thought…"

Extra challenge: Add an original simile and a reason for your changed opinion.

Plan: Who am I? What did I see? What did I learn?

8 Puzzle or Game

Story scramble

Put these events in order. Retell them to a partner using sequencing words.

A. The others stopped at the steep slope.
B. The young rider brought the horses back.
C. A valuable horse escaped.
D. Clancy supported the young rider.
E. The pony raced downhill.

Bonus: Retell it in 30 seconds without looking.

9 Success Criteria

- I can explain the main events.
- I can use three lesson words.
- I can combine past tenses.
- I can explain the torrent simile.

One thing I learnt:

10 Show What You Can Do

Improve your panel 7 account. Check event order, past tenses and punctuation. Add a detail that explains why your opinion changed.

Share: Read your best two sentences to a partner. Your partner says one thing that works well and asks one question.

Final response: In two sentences, explain why judging ability by appearances can be misleading. Use evidence from this story.

The Man from Snowy River — Teacher Answers

A. B. “Banjo” Paterson · B1 · 50–60 minutes

Preparation and timing

Use the simplified retelling as the core B1 reading. The original extract is supported literary language, not a claim that the complete poem is B1. Warm-up 5 minutes; reading and vocabulary 12; understanding 8; language and poetry 8; video and speaking 12; writing, game and review 10–15. Select a replay excerpt to keep within 60 minutes. Use the game orally and panel 10 to revise panel 7, rather than requiring a second full composition.

1–2. Goals and reading

Predictions vary. Main events: an escape; riders gather; initial doubt; Clancy’s support; a difficult chase; a solo descent; the horses return. Themes include courage, skill, trust and misleading first impressions. The poem celebrates a daring ride; invite reasoned discussion of its risks and the pony’s welfare.

3. Vocabulary

1–C; 2–E; 3–F; 4–A; 5–B; 6–D. Accept accurate original sentences.

4. Understanding — suggested answers

1. To bring back a valuable young horse that had joined wild horses.

2. It was small and did not look capable of a long, difficult ride.

3. He knew that the rider and pony had experience in the mountains.

4. The descent was dangerously steep and rough.

5. He followed the horses down the slope on his pony.

6. He turned the horses towards home and brought them back alone.

7. Appearance can hide ability: the small, unimpressive pony succeeded where the others stopped. Accept other supported interpretations.

5. Language and poetry

The simile compares the horse’s downhill movement to a torrent rushing along its channel. It suggests speed, power and unstoppable movement. “Let the pony have his head” means allowing it freedom of movement rather than holding it tightly with the reins. A stockwhip is a long whip traditionally used in livestock work.

1. **were waiting; spoke**. 2. **were running; arrived**. The past continuous gives the ongoing background; the past simple gives the event. Other tense choices may be grammatical in different contexts, but these practise the stated pattern.

6. Watch, listen and speak

The Man from Snowy River: The Poem, The Song, The Movie — AussieOriginal. Slim Dusty’s sung rendition is paired with scenes from the 1982 film. It is a musical adaptation with film imagery, not a recording of Paterson himself. Preview it, then use one full viewing and a short replay of the chase. The original language is an extension: assess gist and interpretation rather than every word.

Video answers: 1. The downhill route is steep, rough and dangerous. 2. He follows the horses downhill on his pony. 3. Answers vary: the rhythm, singing, quick movement, steep landscape and action can create speed, tension or excitement. Accept observations students can support from the video.

Alternative listening script — original lesson text

Read twice at a natural, clear pace. Students see the questions first. This is an imagined witness, not a quotation from Paterson.

At first, I thought the young man should stay behind. His pony looked too small for such a difficult chase. While we were watching from the top, it jumped over a fallen tree and kept its balance. I could hardly believe my eyes. Later, the rider brought the horses back. I realised that I had judged the pair too quickly.

Alternative questions: What did the speaker think at first? What did the pony do? How did the speaker’s opinion change?
Answers: 1. The young man should stay behind / the pony was too small. 2. It jumped a fallen tree and kept its balance. 3. The speaker realised they had judged the pair too quickly. Speaking answers vary; require a reason or a reading detail.

7–8. Writing and game

Look for a clear sequence, a change of opinion, two appropriate lesson words and an accurate past continuous sentence. Give one specific improvement. **Game order: C, D, A, E, B.**

9–10. Reflection

Students revise the same account. Example final response: “The pony looked small, so Harrison doubted its ability. However, it managed the steep descent and helped bring the horses back, showing that appearance does not always reveal skill.” Accept equivalent supported responses.

Source and teaching distinction

Student prose and listening text are original EnglishDrills adaptations based on Paterson’s poem. The four-line extract is from the original poem. The prose retelling follows the poem. The optional video uses film imagery; do not treat additional film details as evidence from the poem.

Original text: Project Gutenberg, The Man from Snowy River and Other Verses. Publication background: State Library of New South Wales.