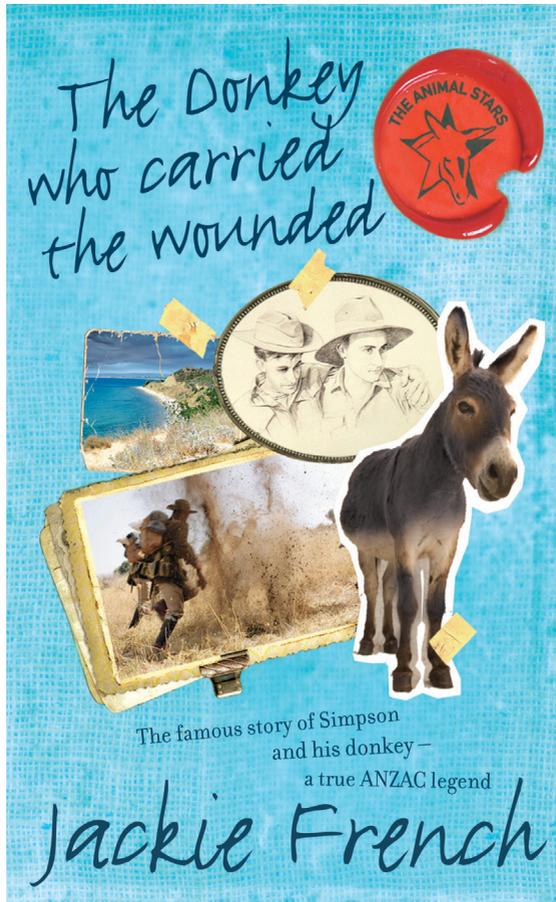
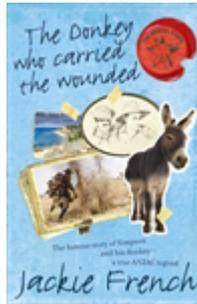


 HarperCollins *Publishers*



TEACHING NOTES  
Prepared by  
CHRISTINE SARANDIS

***The Donkey Who Carried the Wounded***  
**Animal Stars Number 4**  
**by Jackie French**



**ISBN: 9780732288396**  
**Publication date: April 2009 RRP: \$14.99**

**Contents:**

- **Book description**
- **About the author**
- **Pre-reading**
- **Characters**
- **Setting**
- **Timeline**
- **Themes**
- **How to use the activities and question**
- **Chapter questions and discussion points**
- **Author's Note**
- **Tasks**
- **Further related reading**
- **Research Web links**

## **Book Description**

Most Australians know of Simpson and his donkey, who became heroes at Gallipoli, even among the Turkish forces. Few know where the donkey came from, or what happened to him after World War I. Or that another man carried on rescuing the wounded with the donkey after Simpson died.

This is the story of a small unassuming donkey. It's also the story of Gallipoli, of Jack Simpson, and New Zealander stretcher-bearer Richard Henderson, who literally took up the reins after Simpson's death. Exhaustively researched, it gives a new depth to our understanding of this story of Anzac heroism.

## **About the author**

Jackie French is a full-time writer who lives near Braidwood in the Araluen Valley, NSW. In 2000, *Hitler's Daughter* was awarded the CBC Younger Readers' Award. *To the Moon and Back* won the Eve Pownall Award in 2005. *Pharaoh* and *The Shaggy Gully Times* were both shortlisted for the 2008 CBC Awards.

## **Pre Reading**

- Brainstorm, take class notes and discuss what students know about World War 1, the Gallipoli campaign and the story of Simpson and his donkey.
- Read the author's dedication and discuss.

## **Characters**

- Jack Kirkpatrick/'Simmo' Simpson and his family, Dad, Ma and Annie
- Orphan girl
- Lieutenant Gorman
- Lieutenant General Birdwood
- the donkey, Neddy
- the donkey, Duffy
- the donkey, Queen Elizabeth

- Captain Evans, Commander of the Indian field ambulance
- Corporal Smithy
- Padre
- Maurice Mahney
- Teddy Langoulant
- Richard Henderson
- Dimitri
- Kyria Calliope
- Creon

### **Setting**

- South Shields, England
- Lemnos Island, Greece
- Gallipoli, Turkey

### **Time-line**

- Jack' was only in Gallipoli for 24 days before he was shot and killed, but the impact that he had was so profound that he became a heroic symbol of the Anzacs' bravery.
- The duration of the entire Gallipoli Campaign was approximately eight months, and in that short amount of time, 33,000 Allies had been killed. 78,000 were wounded. 8,000 were missing. There were about 7,600 dead and 13,855 wounded and missing Australians. (ref: pg. 192).

### **Themes**

- duty
- bravery
- conflict
- mateship/friendship
- companionship and unity between man and animal
- loyalty
- suffering
- humility

## **How to Use the Activities and Question**

Below are suggested activities for use alongside specific parts of the novel. It is not suggested that you use all of the following questions or activities, rather that you alter tasks and select activities best suited to your class.

## **Chapter Questions and Discussion Points**

### **Prologue**

- What did you learn about Jack in this section of the novel?
- From Jack's thoughts about Neddy, write a description of the donkey's characteristics.
- How did Jack define or justify his decision to give the orphan girl a ride on Neddy and what does this say about him?

### **CHAPTER 1**

- What sort of life did the donkey experience on Lemnos Island?

### **CHAPTER 2**

- Describe how the donkey's life suddenly took a new turn.

### **CHAPTER 3**

- What did the donkey remember as the boat carried him away from his home?

### **CHAPTER 4**

- What did you learn about Jack's life between 1904 in England up until 1915 when he was in the army?
- Why had Jack kept his real name a secret when he enlisted in the army?
- What was Jack's departing impression of Lemnos?
- Describe the rumour regarding the ships' apparent destination.
- Despite the Lieutenant's message to the sailors, what did Jack expect in Gallipoli?

## CHAPTER 5

- Describe the scene as the *HMAS Ribble* approached the shore of Gallipoli.
- Why didn't Jack have any '*time to feel*'?
- What 'crazy' memory did Jack ponder as the boat entered Gallipoli harbour?

## CHAPTER 6

- After he was thrown overboard, which thoughts gave the donkey the strength needed to make it to shore?

## CHAPTER 7

- From what did Jack gain strength after he made it safely to the beach?
- Analyse the situation revealed in the following words: '*No more splints. He glanced around, trying to find something to use instead. Driftwood? No that had been used up too. Finally he grabbed some dead bloke's bayonet. Funny he thought. Use the dead's leftovers to save the living.*'
- Consider Jack's thoughts as he did his best to rescue the wounded: '*What flaming drongo, [thought Jack, licking his dry lips, tasting the tin of the other men's blood] decided to send men into battle in a place with no fresh water? What stupid sod decided to send them into hell where the enemy controlled the heights?*'
- How did Jack and his fellow soldiers view the officers and generals commanding them?
- What was Jack's assessment of the first day in Gallipoli?

## CHAPTER 8

- What made Jack accept the fact that he didn't have a fellow man working alongside him as a stretcher-bearer?
- Discuss the significance of the names that the soldiers gave to different aspects of the landscape in Gallipoli.
- As Jack assessed his situation and attended another wounded

soldier, how did he hope his own death would be? Discuss.

- What did Jack resolve to do after a dying soldier gave him a letter to send home?
- Describe Jack's first encounter with the donkey.

## **CHAPTER 10**

- Describe how Jack learnt of the donkey's origins.

## **CHAPTER 11**

- What was it about Jack's behaviour, combined with the donkey's memory that encouraged it to be tethered and led?

## **CHAPTER 12**

- How did the donkey get his name?
- What memories were aroused by Jack's close proximity to the donkey?
- How did Jack try and block out some of the pain he was experiencing on the battlefields and what triggered this behaviour?

## **CHAPTER 13**

- What sight gave the English Lieutenant hope and the chance to think he might survive?

## **CHAPTER 14**

- Describe Jack's feelings as he led Duffy along for the first time carrying a wounded soldier.

## **CHAPTER 15**

- What new feelings did the donkey experience with Jack working alongside him?
- For the donkey, which of Jack's actions felt 'best of all'?

## **CHAPTER 17**

- Why do you think Hasan chose not to shoot Jack, the donkey and the wounded soldier, when he first had the chance?

## **CHAPTER 18**

- Describe why Jack felt that he was ill prepared to deal with the carnage he saw around him.
- Why didn't Jack want to cross paths with Sergeant Hookway?

## **CHAPTER 19**

- What did the donkey notice about Jack's movement that was different to that of the other men?
- How did the donkey become an official member of the unit?
- For the first time in his life, what made the donkey decide to do anything for the man?

## **CHAPTER 20**

- Which scent brought the 'comfort of [Jack's] childhood' back?
- What did the letters LMF represent and how did a person receive this label?
- What made Jack take pity on the boy who'd shot himself in the foot?
- What reason did Billo give for his actions?

## **CHAPTER 21**

- What was the one thing in 'this strange dug-and-shot-up world' that the donkey actually enjoyed?
- How did the new donkey get her name?
- How did the presence of Queen Elizabeth alter Duffy's workload?

## **CHAPTER 22**

- How were the two donkeys different and in what way were those differences of benefit to Jack?
- Upon what did Jack reflect after Queen Elizabeth's death?
- Why did Jack accept and even embrace the fact that he burnt his

throat while drinking tea?

- Why did the donkeys' response to Queen Elizabeth's death somehow comfort Jack?

### **CHAPTER 23**

- As Jack and the donkey carried another wounded soldier through the war zone, what feelings did Jack find it hard to suppress, despite his desire to do so?
- Why did Jack react angrily when Tom rode Duffy up the path?

### **CHAPTER 24**

- What was Jack's opinion of the wounded officer, especially when he offered him a gold sovereign, and what thoughts did the officer regret sharing with Jack?
- How did Jack misconstrue the officer's intentions?

### **CHAPTER 25**

- What did Jack find comforting and feel grateful for amidst the dreadful hardship of his situation?
- Describe the degree of comfort Jack gained from Duffy's loyalty and companionship when things were at their worst.

### **CHAPTER 26**

- Interpret the thoughts going through Hasan's mind just before he shot Jack.

### **CHAPTER 27**

- Describe Jack's own thoughts just before he was shot and killed.

### **CHAPTER 28**

- What did the donkey think of the men's response to Simmo's death?
- Discuss the comparison Duffy made between his own mother and the Man with Kind Hands.

## **CHAPTER 29**

- How does our knowledge that Jack is dead affect the reading of his mother's letter? (Ref. Author's notes pg. 178 regarding the authenticity of the letter's source).
- What impact, if any, is achieved by fact that the letter was actually written before Jack died?

## **CHAPTER 30**

- According to Richard Henderson, what was the main reason for the truce at Anzac Cove?
- What proved to be a greater threat to the soldiers than bullets?
- Why did Richard hesitate before helping a wounded Turk?
- On the day of truce, interpret the Turkish officer's words – *'Smiling may you go, and smiling come again.'* pg. 134
- How did the sight of Duffy encourage Richard to move forward and take on the work that Simpson had done?

## **CHAPTER 31**

- Despite the donkey's grief, how did Henderson provide him with some comfort?

## **CHAPTER 32**

- Why might some of the soldiers at Gallipoli have called Henderson 'Simmo', even after Jack had died?

## **CHAPTER 33**

- In comparison with the Gallipoli campaign, how successful was the evacuation?

## **CHAPTER 34**

- During the evacuation, what encouraged Duffy to board the boat?

## **CHAPTER 35**

- Once on Lemnos Island, why did the donkey feel a need to escape?

## **CHAPTER 36**

- What made the donkey feel strangely content after he carried the midwife to deliver a baby?

## **CHAPTER 37**

- Explain how Kyria Calliope, the midwife, became the new owner of the donkey.

## **CHAPTER 38**

- Analyse the donkey's new role in helping Kyria Calliope and compare it with his previous life on Gallipoli.
- How similar or different was the relationship between the donkey and all of the following people: Dimitri, Kyria Calliope, Jack and Henderson?

## **Author's Note**

- Read the section at the back of the book and discuss how the impact this information has on your reading of the novel.
- Describe the difference between fiction and fact and give an opinion on the historical fiction genre.
- After reading the section of Author Notes, choose one of the following topics to research and prepare a report or project; the project could be in the form of a collage or artwork, an oral presentation, a PowerPoint presentation, or a Word document.
  1. Historical accuracy in fiction.
  2. WWI and the separate battles named in the novel.
  3. The different perspectives of the Anzac and the Turkish soldiers.
  4. The incompetence and stupidity of the strategy and campaigns.
  5. The evacuation from Gallipoli.
  6. The fictional beginning and ending to the story.
  7. Bravery of the stretcher bearers.
  8. Anzac heroes.

9. The significance of the pine tree and its commemorative symbolism.
10. The memorial at Anzac cove – analyse the meaning behind the words that are inscribed on the memorials in Anzac Cove and Canberra.

## **Tasks**

- Jack and Richard Henderson 'do their duty', despite the danger. Discuss other times and other places where it might be your duty to do something you are afraid of or dislike. Think of 'large duties' like war or fighting bushfires, but also 'small duties' that you might owe to family or friends.
- Describe a time when you have felt very close to an animal. Include examples of how animals show their love and loyalty towards people. See if you can find out about other situations in which animals have behaved remarkably as a sign of their loyalty and dedication to their owner or carer. Now describe the relationship between Jack and Duffy.
- Produce a collage using torn paper that represents your impression of one aspect or part of the novel. Write a short commentary explaining your work.
- How does the realism and horror of the soldiers' situation affect your understanding of this historical event? Write your answer using evidence from the text.
- Write the letter that Jack might send to his mother and sister, explaining the reality of his daily life and his relationship with Duffy.
- Read the author's notes on the songs in the book (see pg. 202). Research the place of songs in wartime and write a short piece on their placement in the novel. Compose a song written by the other soldiers to commemorate Jack's death, describing all that he had meant to them.
- In your own words, write and perform a monologue taking the part of either Jack or Duffy to describe one of the scenes in the novel.

- Research and describe the role of a number of different people in a war zone such as religious ministers, cooks, soldiers, doctors, etc.
- Find out about the condition known as shell shock or combat stress and give a descriptive speech about it to the class.  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combat\\_stress\\_reaction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Combat_stress_reaction)
- Consider the different perspectives of the Turkish and Anzac soldiers. Working with a partner, write a script to present two soldiers' opinions on their country's participation in the war, their possible lack of choice in enlisting and their experience on the front line. Present your script to the class in the form of a dialogue.
- Why do you think soldiers like Jack were asked to tick boxes on postcards to be sent home to their loved-ones? Create a postcard with an illustration on one side and text on the other, like the ones the soldiers were forced to use.
- Paint or draw a picture to depict the scene of the evacuation. (See pg. 146)
- Fictional beginning and ending to the story – as the writer, how might you have written these parts to the story?
- Explain why the Indians bestowed this name upon Jack - Bahadur = bravest of the brave?
- Make the Anzac biscuits using the recipe on pg. 199.
- Using the links below as well as information found in your library, create a project about the donkey using any presentation style you like. You could include information about donkey characteristics, behaviour and temperament, as well as general information on their diet and other essential needs.

<http://www.donkeywelfare.com.au/contact.html>

[http://www.carinyapark.net/main/page\\_about\\_about\\_miniature\\_mediterranean\\_donkeys.html](http://www.carinyapark.net/main/page_about_about_miniature_mediterranean_donkeys.html)

<http://www.donkeysocietynsw.org.au/>

## **Further Reading – Books by Jackie French**

### **Animal Stars series**

- *The Goat Who Sailed the World*
- *The Dog Who Loved a Queen*
- *The Camel Who Crossed Australia*

### **Historical Fiction**

- *Hitler's Daughter*
- *Tom Appleby, Convict Boy*
- *They Came on Viking Ships*
- *The White Ship*
- *How the Finnegans Saved the Ship*
- *The Soldier on the Hill*
- *Daughter of the Regiment*
- *Walking the Boundaries*
- *Beyond the Boundaries*
- *Somewhere around the Corner*
- *Valley of Gold*
- *They Came on Viking Ships*
- *Macbeth and Son*
- *Pharaoh*
- *A Rose for the Anzac Boys*

### **Books about heroic animals**

*The Day of the Elephant.* by Barbara Ker Wilson illus. Frané Lessac

*Animal Heroes* by Anthony Hill

*Animal Heroes: True Rescue Stories* by Sandra Markle

*The Silver Donkey* by Sonya Hartnett

### **Animals that have saved lives**

<http://www.compassionatecitizen.com/animalfeelings.pdf>

## **Other titles about WW 1**

<http://education.qld.gov.au/library/resource/currtopics/bestbooks/worldwar-1s.html>

### **Fiction**

Small, Mary; Langridge, Anne; Anzac Day Commemoration Committee, Queensland 2001, ***The unknown Australian soldier***, ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee, Aspley, Qld.

Greenwood, Mark 2008, ***Simpson and his Donkey***, Walker Books, Australia.

Greenwood, Kerry 2001, ***A different sort of real: the diary of Charlotte McKenzie, Melbourne 1918-1919***, Scholastic, Lindfield, N.S.W.

Jorgensen, Norman; Harrison-Lever, Brian (illus) 2002, ***In Flanders Fields***, Sandcastle, Fremantle, W.A.

Ural, Serpil; Broadbent, Harvey (Ed) 2000, ***Candles at Dawn***, Guldiken Yayinlari, Yenisehir, Turkey.

### **Non-Fiction**

Carlyon, Patrick 2004, ***The Gallipoli story***, Penguin, Camberwell, Vic.

Hill, Anthony 2001, ***Soldier Boy: the true story of Jim Martin the youngest ANZAC***, Penguin, Ringwood, Vic.

## **Research Web links**

### **World War 1 Homework Helper**

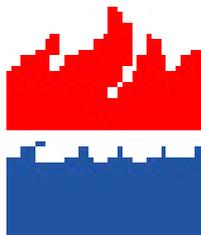
<http://www.canterbury.nsw.gov.au/www/html/367-world-war-one-homework-helper.asp>

**Visit Gallipoli** <http://www.anzacsite.gov.au/>

**Anzac Day Organisation** <http://www.anzacday.org.au/>

### **The Australian War Memorial**

<http://www.awm.gov.au/encyclopedia/simpson.asp>



HarperCollins Publishers *Australia*  
25 Ryde Road  
PYMBLE NSW 2073  
Telephone: 02 9952 5000  
Fas: 02 9952 5599

[www.harpercollins.com.au](http://www.harpercollins.com.au)