

Name:

Class:

Teacher:

A STRANGE ENCOUNTER



Reg Baxter

EVERY MAN and his dog laughed us out of town when I told the story about the dropbear at the pub. They thought I was as mad as a cut snake, had lost all my marbles. I may no longer be a young man but, I can tell you, I saw it with my own two eyes. So did Bluey, my dog, not that he talks much anymore at his age.

The bush was as quiet as a grave that balmy, dusky evening. I'd just finished helping Jack put in a new fence along his river boundary. "Those city slickers think they can swim anywhere," he had been saying under his breath all day. I suppose us country folk like things nice and peaceful around here.

Me and Bluey took Old Stockmans Bridge out of town, toward the coolibah tree where our camp was. You know sometimes when you sense a thing before it happens? Well, I felt a tingle of fear down my spine and my insides went as soft as damper. Then the branch above my head started rustling.

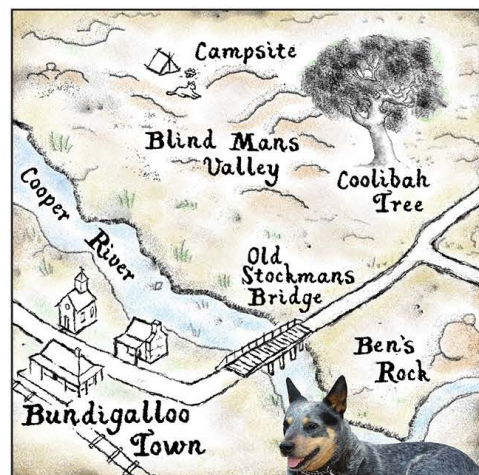
It sounded like ten dead snakes when it hit the ground. Bluey jumped straight into my arms, squealing and shaking. Stone the crows if it wasn't the elusive dropbear! Its beady eyes glowed in the faint light; its claws scabbled in the gum leaves. I thought we were gone for all money.

Then I remembered what my father used to say: "Rub Vegemite behind your ear if you ever see a dropbear. Works a treat." With eyes trained on the dropbear, I slowly reached into my swag and pulled out a jar. Bluey hated the stuff but I got a little under his good ear and some behind my own.

You'd never guess what happened next! The dropbear went up on its back legs, like a huge boxing kangaroo, and started a merry dance. Then a few seconds later it just flopped to the ground and it was out cold!

Bluey leapt down and went over to sniff the sleeping dropbear. It was snoring louder than an old tractor engine. We took our chance and scurried through Blind Mans Valley and made it safely to our camp. I can tell you now, we both slept like logs that night.

To be honest, that night was like opening one of Mum's old music boxes. The haunting tunes and the wonky, mesmerising ballerina – they make you dream of different worlds where things aren't as they seem and anything is possible. Even a dancing dropbear.



Tasks

- 1 Answer the questions to complete an extended personal evaluation of this text. Don't forget to answer the evaluation question.
- 2 How well do you think the writer used the text features in *A strange encounter*? Give the writer a score out of 5 in the **Your rating** column for questions 1 to 4 in the table. Use the **Your rating scale** above the table. Add up the points to find the total score.
- 3 Use complete sentences and include evidence from the text to support your answers.

Glossary

adverb: A single word or expression that adds detail to a verb, an adjective, another adverb or a whole sentence. For example: He painted **beautifully**.; She walked very **slowly**.; They are **really** happy.; **Surprisingly**, I enjoyed the party.

adverbial phrase: A phrase that gives more information about a noun. For example: That story was **more interesting**.; The girl **with the cast on her leg** sat near the back.

colloquial language: An informal expression of language, characteristic of speech and often used in informal writing.

descriptive language: Language that is used to describe or evoke images in the mind of the listener or reader. For example: The looming trees became a dark blur as we hurtled past them.

evocative language: Language that calls up or produces memories, feelings, images or ideas. For example: The fields of war are always sown with the blood and bones of young men.

narrator: A person who tells or narrates a story.

tall tale: A far-fetched or incredible story.

Your review

Your rating scale: 1 = satisfactory, 3 = good, 5 = excellent

Text features	Answer the questions in the spaces provided.	Your rating
Purpose and audience: To entertain and amuse an audience of all ages	1 Do you think the text would entertain and amuse someone of your age? Give evidence to support your opinion.	1 3 5

A strange encounter

Writing 3: Evaluating text

Text type: Narrative

Text features	Answer the questions in the spaces provided.	Your rating
<p>Structure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Complication • Resolution • Coda 	<p>2 How effective is the structure? In what ways does it match a typical Narrative? Give evidence to support your answer.</p>	<p>1 3 5</p>
<p>Key language features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • colloquial language • adverbs • adverbial phrases 	<p>3 How does the use of colloquial language reinforce the text's style as an Australian bush yarn? Give evidence to support your answer.</p> <p>4 How do adverbs and adverbial phrases help shape the sequence of events in the text? Give evidence to support your answer.</p>	<p>1 3 5</p> <p>1 3 5</p>
<p>Total score:</p>		<p>/ 20</p>

Your evaluation

What is your overall response to the text? You may use ideas from the comment bank.

Comment bank

- 1 The writer (Reg Baxter) has clearly expressed an encounter with a dropbear using colloquial language and exaggerations.
- 2 The writer has attempted to express his ideas in a creative and descriptive way.
- 3 The design and image used in the Narrative help to express the ideas in the tall tale.
- 4 Some features of the design and layout help to convey meanings.
- 5 The writer has used a narrator to tell the story of what happened when a dropbear fell out of a tree.
- 6 The writer has attempted to use humour to create a story that would appeal to people of all ages.
- 7 The writer has made good use of Narrative elements, including imagery, evocative language and precise words to convey mood and tone.
- 8 The writer has used evocative and expressive language to build images and feelings in the story.
- 9 The writer has used grammar, punctuation and formatting to good effect.
- 10 The writing is correct in terms of grammar, spelling and punctuation.

Teacher comments