

Activity 1- Ned Kelly Timeline

Purpose – To assess the important facts that shape an event

Look at the events below.

1. **Answer the questions**
2. **Choose the 10 most important events and create a timeline of Ned's life**

1865 - Ned Kelly, aged 11, risked his life to save a drowning seven-year-old. The boy's parents gave Ned a green sash in recognition of his courage. Ned would later wear the green sash under his armour at his last stand.

Question 1: Why do you think Ned held onto the sash and wore it at his last stand?

December 1866 - Ned's father dies. At the age of 12, Ned takes a job and becomes the family's bread winner.

October 1869 – Ned, aged 15, gets into an argument with a Mr and Mrs McCormack over the use of a horse. Ned is subsequently sentenced to three months jail for the assault of Mr McCormack and a further three months for obscene language towards women.

March 1871 – Ned, aged 16, gets into a brawl with Constable Hall outside a hotel. Ned is arrested, beaten and visits doctor to get 9 stitches in his scalp.

August 1871 – Ned is sentenced to three years jail for being in possession of a horse stolen by a man named Isaih Wright (Wright is only sentenced to 18 months for stealing the horse.)

February 1874 – Ned is released from prison. A boxing match is arranged between him and Isaih Wright to settle a feud between them.

1874 – 1877 – Ned works as a labourer in a variety of jobs

September 1877 – Ned is arrested for being drunk. He is fined four pounds and six shillings.

April 1878 – A warrant is issued for Dan Kelly on the charge of horse theft.

April 1878 – A drunk Constable Fitzpatrick visits the Kelly homestead to arrest Ned's brother Dan, but does not have the warrant. There he makes a pass at Kate Kelly, Ned's sister. Friends of the Kellys come to Kate's defence and Fitzpatrick receives an injury to his wrist. Fitzpatrick leaves, is treated by a doctor who notes that he had been drinking. Fitzpatrick informs his station that the Kelly family tried to murder him. Dan Kelly flees into the bush. An arrest warrant is also issued for Ned, despite the fact that Ned was not present at the homestead when Fitzpatrick visited. Ned also goes bush.

Question 2: Fitzpatrick turns up at the homestead drunk, without a warrant and sexually harasses a woman. What do his actions reveal about how police could act at the time? What do the actions of his fellow officers reveal about their attitudes to the abuse of power?

October 1878 – Ned's mother is sentenced to 3 years hard labour for aiding and abetting the attempted murder of Constable Fitzpatrick. The two men who had been at the homestead are sentenced to six years each. The judge remarks that had Ned been arrested and brought to trial, he would have received 20 years.

Question 3: Seeing what happened to his family, and hearing the judge's comments, was Kelly right in choosing to stay in the bush?

Question 4: Fitzpatrick's account was disputed by five other people. Furthermore, it was implausible. Why was it relied upon?

October 1878 - Sergeant Kennedy, with Constables Lonigan, Scanlon and McIntyre, ride out from Mansfield to search for Dan and Ned in the Wombat Ranges. Not only are the police well armed, not in uniform, they also bring along a pack horse fitted with heavy leather straps. The sole purpose of these straps is to lash the bodies of Ned and Dan for their return to Mansfield.

The police find the gang, but three are shot dead. McIntyre escapes.

Question 5: For almost three months, the Kelly gang had been alone in the bush and had made no threats against anyone. Were they justified in thinking the police were out to kill them?

December 1878 - the Kelly gang invade a station property near Euroa, 27 miles west of Benalla. Twenty-two people at the sheep-station are rounded up and locked in a storeroom. Then, leaving Joe Byrne to guard the prisoners, Ned, Dan and Steve Hart drive into Euroa in a hawker's cart. Ned Kelly enters the bank with a drawn gun, and Dan comes in from the rear. Ten minutes later they are out on the street again, richer by £2000 in notes and gold. No shots were fired.

Question 6: The Kelly gang hid in the bush and could not safely purchase anything in towns. What were they planning to do with the money?

January 1879 – 30 suspected Kelly sympathisers are arrested and held for up to 4 months without evidence against them.

Feb 1879 – Ned rides into Jerilderie and captures two police officers. Ned subsequently walks around town in their uniform. The next day he robs the bank of £2000. No shots were fired. He then gives an editor a letter to publish which states his side of the argument. Ned's gang seems to disappear for the next 16 months.

Question 7: The Kelly gang have plenty of cash but few avenues to spend it in Victoria. Why did they not flee interstate or to another country?

April 1880 - Constable Fitzpatrick, the police officer who accused the Kelly family of trying to murder him, is dismissed for "not being fit to be in the police force; that he associated with the lowest persons in Lancefield; that he could not be trusted out of sight; and that he never did his duty".

Question 8: Constable Fitzpatrick was dismissed for being untrustworthy, but Ned's family and friends still remained locked up in jail based on the story that Fitzpatrick told. What does this say about justice of the time?

June 1880 - Dan and Joe travelled to the home of Aaron Sherritt (Joe Byrne's old friend turned police informer.) Joe shoots Sherritt on his doorstep, presuming the troopers inside will immediately raise the alarm, which in turn will bring the police rushing by train from Benalla. Meanwhile at Glenrowan, Ned has derailed the track, armed his sympathisers and taken hostages in the Glenrowan Inn. There he waits patiently for the train carrying the police officers to be derailed.

Unfortunately for Ned's plan, the troopers entrusted to guard Sherritt hide under the bed rather than raise the alarm. They stay there until Sunday afternoon, by which time the telegraph offices are closed. Consequently, the train in question does not get under way until Sunday evening. In the delay,

the gang starts drinking, singing and befriending their hostages.

A school teacher named Thomas Curnow wins Ned's trust and is allowed to go free. Curnow heads straight for the railway where he prevents the derailment by waving down the train.

Realising that the plan has not gone as expected, Ned's sympathisers lose their nerve and do not bear arms. However, rather than abort, the gang retreat to the hotel, determined that they would fight. Police surround the hotel and shots are fired back and forth. As the sun rises, Ned bursts from the hotel and clad in his armour, is able to escape into the tree line. Realising that his mates had not made it out with him, he turns back into the line of fire. Bullets ring against his armour as he walks slowly towards the police until his legs are shot out from beneath him. In all, his body suffers 28 separate bullet wounds.

Rumours circulate that Ned had a speech that declared the North East of Victoria a republic. Rumours also circulate that sympathisers had been armed and that his shoot out was a revolutionary struggle.

Question 9: In his two bank robberies, Ned never fired a shot, yet he had a suit of armour made as if planning a conflict where guns would be fired. What was the intention of his shoot out with police?

October 1880 – Ned is found guilty of murder of Constable Lonigan and is sentenced to hanging. The court does not deal with the circumstances of his last stand and Ned is not allowed to speak in his defence.

Question 10: Why didn't the court put him on trial for the attempted murder of the ex-Constable Fitzpatrick, the robbing of banks or the shoot-out where he tried to kill police officers?

Question 11: Knowing what you know about Fitzpatrick and the justice system of the time, do you think Kelly was acting in self-defence?

November 1880 – A mass protest results in 60,000 Victorians signing a petition demanding Ned's life be spared.

Question 12: What does it say about the people's experiences with the justice system that 60,000 people would sign a petition demanding the life of a convicted cop killer be spared?

November 1880 – Ned Kelly is executed.

Question 13: Soldiers, murderers and executioners all kill people. What do they all have in common and what defines them as different from each other?

February 1881 – Mrs Kelly is released from prison after the completion of her sentence for the attempted murder of the now ex-Constable Fitzpatrick.

1906 - The Story of the Kelly Gang, the world's first feature-length film, is released. The film is extraordinary popular; running for five weeks to full houses. It only costs 1,000 pounds to make but returns 26,000 pounds.

Question 14: What does it say about the people's experiences with the justice system that a movie based on a convicted police killer would be so popular?

Source: <http://www.convictcreations.com/history/nedkelly.htm>