

TOWNSVILLE EISTEDDFOD BUSH POETY SET POEMS 2025

Age10 & Under

Old Man Crocodile by Anne McBurnie

Old Man Crocodile lying on the bank,
One eye open and one eye blank,
Waiting, just waiting,
For YOU!

Then slither, slide, splash, you make a dash,
Lurking and smurking, looking for someone rash,
Waiting, just waiting,
For YOU!

You hunt along the swirling stream,
Looking, looking really mean,
Waiting, just waiting, for YOU!

So when you go up north, don't be a fool,'
Just swim in a chlorine pool,
For YOU!

I've got a hunch
That one day soon you'll be his lunch,
Crunch, Crunch, Yummee lunch,
Drool, Drool,
CROCS RULE

OR

The Boxing Kangaroo by Anne McBurnie

King Red is an Australian Kangaroo.
He lives in the outback and sometimes at the zoo.
He's Australian, through and through!
He's large and strong and he can clobber you!
They call him – The Boxing Kangaroo.

He stands up tall like an India rubber ball.
He doesn't care for wimps at all!
He jumps like a spring.
Boing! Boing! Boing!
He's Australia's Outback King.

Baby Joey is as tiny as a Jelly Bean.
He jumps into his mother's pouch if anyone's mean.
He stays 6 months till he is strong.
His mother nuzzles and says, "Come along".

He features on our Coat of Arms.
Like a true blue Aussie, he doesn't give a darn.
So watch out, because one day too,
Joey becomes The Boxing Kangaroo.

Age 11-13

Old Man Platypus by A.B. Paterson

Far from the trouble and toil of town,
Where the reed beds sweep and shiver,
Look at a fragment of velvet brown –
Old Man Platypus drifting down,
Drifting along the river.

And he plays and dives in the river bends
In a style that is most elusive;
With few relations and fewer friends,
For Old Man Platypus descends
From a family most exclusive.

He shares his burrow below the falls
They live in a world of wander,
Where no one visits and no one calls,
They sleep like little brown billiard balls
With their beaks tucked neatly under.

And he talks in a deep unfriendly growl
As he goes on his journey lonely;
For he's no relation to fish nor fowl,
Nor to bird nor beast, nor to horned owl;
In fact, he's the one and only!

OR

My Country by Dorothea Mackellar

I love a sunburnt country,
A land of sweeping plains,
Of ragged mountain ranges,
Of droughts and flooding rains;
I love her far horizons,
I love her jewel-sea,
Her beauty and her terror –
The wide brown land for me!

Core of my heart, my country!
Land of the Rainbow Gold,
For flood and fire and famine
She pays us back threefold,
Over the thirsty paddocks,
Watch after many days,
The filmy veil of greenness
That thickens as we gaze.

An opal-hearted country,
A willful lavish land –
All you who have not loved her,
You will not understand –
Though earth holds many splendors
Wherever I may die,
I know to what brown country,
My homing thoughts will fly.

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Age 14-18

SHEARERS by Henry Lawson

No church-bell rings them from the Track,
No pulpit lights their blindness-
'Tis hardship, drought, and homelessness
That teach those Bushmen kindness:
The mateship born, in barren lands,
Of toil and thirst and danger,
The camp-fare for the wanderer set,
The first place to the stranger.

They do the best they can to-day –
Take no thought of the morrow;
Their way is not the old-world way –
They live to lend and borrow.
When shearing's done and cheques gone
wrong,
They call it "time to slither" –
They saddle up and say "So-long!"
And ride the Lord knows whither.

And though he may be brown or black,
Or wrong man there, or right man,
The mate that's steadfast to his mates
They call that man a "white man!"
They tramp in mateship side by side –
The Protestant and Roman – they call no biped
lord or sir,
And touch their hat to man!

They turn their faces to the west
And leave the world behind them
(their drought-dry graves are seldom set
Where even mates can find them).
They know too little of the world
To rise to wealth or greatness;
But in these lines I gladly pay
My tribute to their greatness.

WE ARE GOING by Oodgeroo Noonuccal

They came into the little town
A semi-naked band subdued and silent,
All that remained of their tribe.
They came here to the place of their old bora
ground
Where now the many white men hurry about
like ants.
Notice of estate agent reads: "Rubbish May
be Tipped Here".
Now it half covers the traces of the old bora
ring.
They sit and are confused, they cannot say
their thoughts:
'We are as strangers here now, but the white
tribe are the strangers.
We belong here, we are of the old days.
We are the corroboree and the bora ground,
We are the old sacred ceremonies, the laws of
the elders.
We are the wonder tales of Dream Time, the
tribal legends told.
We are the past, the hunts and the laughing
games, the wandering camp fires.
We are the lightning-bolt over Gaphembah Hill
Quick and terrible,
And the Thunderer after him, that loud fellow.
We are the quiet daybreak paling the dark
lagoon.
We are the shadow-ghosts creeping back as
the camp fires burn low.
We are nature and the past, all the old ways
Gone now and scattered.
The scrubs are gone, the hunting and the
laughter.
The eagle is gone, the emu and the kangaroo
are gone from this place.
The bora ring has gone.
The corroboree is gone
And we are going.'