

TAWONGA – 1866

REALISTIC DRAMA: MONOLOGUE/ MIME

Suitable Years: 5 to 12

Number of Students: 1

Cast:

Tawonga

Venue:

York Courthouse Complex

The monologue could be performed in the 1874 Courtroom or exercise or stable yard

Synopsis:

The early settlers relied on the indigenous people in many ways. Some had jobs as mounted police assistants. Their tracking skills were invaluable in finding escaped convicts. Tawonga tells of an unlucky convict who didn't get away.

Costume:

Tawonga would be dressed in the uniform of a police assistant. He would wear a cap, dark blue jacket and blue trousers.

York Courthouse Complex has some costumes available for student use.

Suggested activities:

- The monologue can be rehearsed and performed by one student.
- The monologue can be spoken by one student and acted out by others.
- The piece can be used as background information and expanded and re-written by students to perform in sections.

TAWONGA – 1866

September 1866

I was coming along that big road, the one that goes all the way to York. I was on my big horse they gave me for my job as a special police constable. I can move along pretty fast on this horse. We didn't have any horses here before the white people came to this country. I do lots of different jobs but mostly I help the police find people.

Tracking... that's where we can look on the ground and see what people or animals have been going along there. It's easy for me. But those white people! They would be pretty lost without me and the other special constables to help them. They can read their writing all right but they can't read tracks. They don't know anything about this country.

Now what was I telling you?

I was riding along the York road when I saw some fresh tracks. It was a white man with those trousers that they wear in the gaol. I was thinking that he was a runaway man. He was supposed to be in the gaol.

'Gee up!' I said to my horse, 'We can catch this fella and get a reward.' We took off fast. I was riding, riding riding, catching up to that man real quick. Before too long I saw him. He was trying to get away through the bush.

'Stop!' I called out to him. That runaway man, he was wild! He was yelling and yelling and cursing at me! Bad words. Rude words. He was angry.

I called to him again 'Me Tawonga, You wild man runaway! You come with me'. He just kept on running, trying to get away.

That's when I picked up my big police carbine gun. I pointed it at him; 'You come with me to York.' He saw the gun and stopped being so wild then. I tied him up to the horse so we could walk to York.

The Resident Magistrate was pretty pleased with me when I brought that runaway man back to the York gaol! I am going to get a big reward.