THE RIDE

"Who would have thought the outback was wheelchair accessible?"



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A STUDY GUIDE BY JENNIFER CONNOLLY



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Synopsis

Imagine being sixteen and you can't even pick up a can of coke.

After an accident changes everything, how do you rebuild your life?

The Ride is an observational adventure documentary set in the picturesque expanse of outback Australia. It documents a journey both literal and emotional as four men swap their wheelchairs for quad bikes and return to the crash sites where tragedy struck. It is a heartfelt story of resilience, laughter and survival as they strive to accept the reality of a life interrupted.

As the men hurtle across the outback, the endless banter, one upman-ship and camaraderie reveals a hilarious insight into the subculture of disability. Delving into the most private parts of their lives, the men speak candidly about sex, marriage and catheters.

At each of their crash sites, we witness an intense vulnerability as they face the demons of their past. We explore the moment they knew they would never walk again, what they lost and how they got from the most tragic point of their lives to where they are today. In the final act, torrential rains flood the Simpson Desert and lakes appear where there hasn't been water for 30 years. To reach the final crash site, the men must make an all night dash to Birdsville across the flooded Simpson Desert. In a race against time, they face a struggle that can only be won with sheer will and painful endurance.

With bold and unpredictable humour, the men take us on a fast and furious 5000km ride. Delving into their darkest days, they share an inspirational story about the capacity of the human spirit to make peace with the tragedy of the past.¹

Curriculum and educational suitability Links:

The Ride is most suitable for Senior Secondary (Years 9 – 12). Teachers should note the documentary is rated M and contains coarse language. A bleeped version of the film is available for schools at http://www.theridemovie.org.

Teachers should also be sensitive to the fact that students in their classes may have experienced road trauma. Journey Beyond Road Trauma is an excellent resource that has links to support services that may be of assistance.

http://journeybeyondroadtrauma.org/cms/support-services

General understandings addressed in the documentary:

Risk taking

Road safety education

The effects of a serious injury on future goals and aspirations

Disability awareness and inclusion

The effect of disability on sex, relationships and having children

Achieving goals

Team work







PRE VIEWING:

Understanding Paraplegia and Quadriplegia (p.7)

Links to short, informative Youtube clips about paraplegia and quadriplegia. Comprehension questions accompany the second clip.

(Curriculum Links: Health and Physical Development, English, Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Years 9-12)

Road Safety – Whole Class Debate (p.9)

Instructions for an informal, whole class debate activity using a quote as a starting point

(Curriculum Links: Health and Physical Development, English, Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Year 9-12)

Risk taking (p.9)

The consequences of risk taking is one of the key themes explored in the documentary. This activity is designed to encourage students to think about the risks they take in their own lives.

(Curriculum Links: Health and Physical Development, English, Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Years 9-12)

Understanding disability (p.10)

Activities relating to a website that contains suggestions of books and films about disability and information about famous and successful people with disabilities.

(Curriculum Links: Health and Physical Development, English, Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Years 9-10)

VIEWING ACTIVITES:

Questions for comprehension and analysis (p.10)

(Curriculum Links: Health and Physical Development, English, Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Years 9-12)

POST VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Topics for Reflective Writing Activities (p.11)

Questions and statements requiring students to reflect on the characters, story, themes and issues in The Ride

(Curriculum Links: Health and Physical Development, English, Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Years 10-12)









Media Presentation (p.12)

Students create a visual representation of the themes and issues presented in the documentary.

(Curriculum Links: Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Years 9-10)

Road Safety Awareness Campaign (p.12)

A 4 step project that requires students to complete research, design and deliver a survey, analyse existing media campaigns and create a road safety campaign of their own. Each step in the process can be easily adapted to work as an independent activity if teachers require a less intensive task. Resources including worksheets, web links and videos are provided to assist and enhance the process.

(Curriculum Links: Health and Physical Development, English, Media, General capabilities – Personal and social capabilities. Suitability Years 9-11)

Exploring Media Codes and Conventions (p.15)

Students view the documentary and then respond to questions about the media codes and conventions used.

(Curriculum Links: Media. Suitability Years 10-11)

Using the Documentary for Context Study (p.15)

The Ride could be viewed and studied as part of a context study on Identity and Belonging. Suggestions of texts the documentary could be studied in conjunction with and writing prompts accompany this activity.

(Curriculum Links: English. Suitability Years 11-12)

ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM RESOURCES

Links to additional curriculum resources have been included under sub headings.

Summary of links to the National Curriculum

The following table provides a summary of links to the National Curriculum.

Learning areas:

- English 9-12
- Media 9-12
- Health and Physical Education 9-12
- General capabilities Personal and social capabilities 9-10

Reference:

http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/2











LEARNING AREA

English

YEARS 9 AND 10

Year 9

Listen to spoken texts constructed for different purposes, for example to entertain and to persuade, and analyse how language features of these texts position listeners to respond in particular ways (ACELY1740)

Present an argument about a literary text based on initial impressions and subsequent analysis of the whole text (ACELT1771)

Explore and reflect on personal understanding of the world and significant human experience gained from interpreting various representations of life matters in texts (ACELT1635)

Year 10

Analyse and evaluate how people, cultures, places, events, objects and concepts are represented in texts, including media texts, through language, structural and/or visual choices (ACELY1749)

Use organisation patterns, voice and language conventions to present a point of view on a subject, speaking clearly, coherently and with effect, using logic, imagery and rhetorical devices to engage audiences (ACELY1813)

Plan, rehearse and deliver presentations, selecting and sequencing appropriate content and multimodal elements to influence a course of action(ACELY1751)

Evaluate the social, moral and ethical positions represented in texts (ACELT1812)

Create imaginative texts that make relevant thematic and intertextual connections with other texts

YEARS 11-12

Year 11 Unit 1

Analyse and evaluate how responses to texts, including students' own responses, are influenced by:

- purpose, taking into account that a text's purpose is often open to debate (ACEEN008)
- personal, social and cultural context (ACEEN009)
- the use of imaginative, persuasive and interpretive techniques. (ACEEN010)

Year 11 Unit 2

Reflect on their own and others' texts by:

- analysing the values and attitudes expressed in texts (ACEEN038)
- evaluating the effectiveness of texts in representing ideas, attitudes and voices (ACEEN039)
- explaining how and why texts position readers and viewers. (ACEEN040)

Year 12 Unit 3

Compare texts from similar or different genres and contexts by:

- analysing language, structural and stylistic choices (ACEEN041)
- explaining how each text conforms to or challenges the conventions of particular genres or modes such as crime fiction, advertising or short films (ACEEN042)
- analysing and evaluating how similar themes, ideas or concepts are treated in different texts. (ACEEN043)



LEARNING AREA	YEARS 9 AND 10	YEARS 11-12		
Health and Physical Education	Year 9 and 10 Evaluate factors that shape identities, and analyse how individuals impact the identities of others (ACPPS089) Propose, practise and evaluate responses in situations where external influences may impact on their ability to make healthy and safe choices (ACPPS092) Plan, implement and critique strategies to enhance the health, safety and wellbeing of their communities (ACPPS096)	Various links as to studies across different national senior Health and Physical Education curricula		
Media	Year 9 and 10 Evaluate how technical and symbolic elements are manipulated in media artworks to create and challenge representations framed by media conventions, social beliefs and values for a range of audiences (ACAMAR078) Analyse a range of media artworks from contemporary and past times to explore differing viewpoints and enrich their media arts making, starting with Australian media artworks, including media artworks of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, and international media artworks (ACAMAR079)	Various links as to studies across different national senior Media curricula		
General	Self-awareness Reflective practice in relation to personal qualities and responses to challenges Self-management Developing confidence, resilience and adaptability Decision making, conflict resolution and negotiation Building and maintaining relationships Social awareness Contributing to society, developing empathy and understanding relationships.			







PRE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Understanding Paraplegia and Quadriplegia

1. The main characters in *The Ride* have all experienced spinal cord injuries. Before viewing it may be useful to show the students some short videos that detail the causes and effects of paraplegia and quadriplegia.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PseUxltlw_U

The above video is 3.30 minutes long and gives general information on the levels of function and classification of spinal cord injury. Craig, one of the main characters in the documentary, has a C6 injury. This video will give students an understanding of what this means in medical terms.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ibrZzDZb-PU

The above video runs for 11.25 minutes and gives a more detailed overview of the definitions, causes and effects of spinal cord injury. Teachers should be aware that the second video references sexual function after injury.

Students can demonstrate their understanding of the content by answering the following questions:

1.	What are the most common causes of spinal cord injury?
2.	The majority of people who sustain a spinal cord injury are between the ages o
	due to
3.	Define paralysis:





4.	Paraplegia typically affects
5.	Quadriplegia (or Tetraplegia) is associated with partial or total
6.	An "A" grade after ISCOS/ASIA testing indicates
7.	Recovery, if it occurs, typically starts betweenafter injury.
8.	List 5 other effects of spinal cord injury:



Road Safety - Whole Class Debate

2. Put the following quote on the board:

The NSW Government Motor Accidents Authority claims cognitive, attitudinal, behavioural and cultural and social factors make young people more susceptible to being involved in road crashes.3

- Divide the class into half and decide who will take the affirmative and negative side of a debate on this topic.
- Explain that the two sides will face each other in a line and students from each team will take turns to present a short argument (1 minute maximum)
- Every student that presents a new argument will be awarded a point for their team.
- The last student on each side will have 5 minutes, with their team, to develop a rebuttal to the opposing team's arguments, as well as summing up the argument for their team.
- Students should be given time to work in their team to brainstorm and research arguments. This could also be set as a homework activity.
- Teams should be encouraged to use persuasive devices when constructing their arguments. Persuasive techniques could include the use of: evidence, alliteration, anecdotes, emotive language, exaggeration, rhetorical questions, repetition and metaphor.

Students could also respond to this quote by writing a persuasive essay, a letter to the editor or a personal reflection.



Risk Taking Group Reflection Activity

3. The consequences of risk taking is one of the key themes explored in the documentary. This activity links to the Health and Physical education curriculum and will encourage students to think about the risks they take in their own lives.

Divide the class into groups of 4 and ask the groups to allocate the roles: timekeeper, scribe, encourager and presenter (they can remove one of the roles if smaller groups are required.) The timekeeper is responsible for making sure that the group completes the questions in the set time, the encourager makes sure the group stays on task, the scribe takes notes and the presenter will report back to the class. Write the following questions and statements on the board and give students 20 minutes to complete the task.

- What does it mean to take a risk?
- As a group brainstorm examples of when you have taken a risk and the outcome has been positive.
- Brainstorm examples of your own, or stories that you have heard of, where risk taking has not resulted in a positive outcome.
- What kind of risks do you face in your life now? (at school, at home, at work)
- What kinds of risks do you think you will face in 5 years time?

After 20 minutes ask the presenters to report back to the class. Record the class responses to the first 3 points in a table with columns labelled 'negative' and 'positive'. As groups present, look for points that cross over and discuss areas that come up frequently. Record the responses for the last 2 points in a table with columns labelled 'now' and 'the future'. Again, take the time to discuss and explore the reasons behind reoccurring findings.

Ask students to consider how we can manage risk taking without negative consequences. Come up with a list of strategies as a class.









Understanding disability 4. The website below could be used as a starting point for discussion on disability and is also a useful teacher resource. The website contains suggestions of books and films about disability and also has comprehensive information about famous and successful people with disabilities.

http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/CEDIR/kidsweb/

Suggested activities could include:

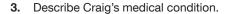
- Asking students to research one of the famous people listed on the site and present a brief oral presentation that explains what the persons disability is, how they have overcome challenges and information about their career.
- Watching sections of the films and documentaries on the site and completing a written reflection using these questions as a guide:
 - How is the central character viewed by other people in the film or documentary?
 - In what ways is the character treated respectfully?
 - What issues do they have to overcome to achieve their goals?
 - How effectively do the people that surround the central character support them? What are the challenges these people face?
 - How are people with disabilities treated in your community? Does this mirror the subject matter of the film or documentary?
 - What did you learn from watching the film/documentary?

VIEWING ACTIVITES

Questions for comprehension and analysis

- 1. The central characters in the documentary are: Jim, Anton, Terry and Craig. Choose one of the men to focus on when completing these questions:
 - List the personal qualities that your chosen character displays in the documentary.
 - Describe what the person was like before the accident
 - In what ways did the accident affect their life?
 - What are the challenges they face on the journey shown in the documentary?
 - How did they react to revisiting their crash site?
 - How does the experience change them?
 - In what ways were the lives of the people around them affected as they rebuilt their life after the accident?
 - What impact does the journey have on the lives of people that surround them?





- **4.** Jim makes an announcement at the beginning of the journey that outlines what the men intend to do. What are their aims and how long is their journey?
- 5. List the occupations that the men work in.
- **6.** Why is Anton made to wear the ladies jacket that is described as the 'Tour de France jacket'?
- 7. How did Anton try to deal with his injury?
- 8. Terry talks about the fact that 'After the crash I couldn't imagine doing anything like this, it was just me in a chair and everyone looking at you thinking that is so sad.'4 What was your reaction when you realised what the men were aiming to do on their journey?
- 9. The middle section of the documentary (from 31.12-37.37) shows us Anton and Kate's wedding and delves into the relationship the men have with their partners and children. The men reveal personal information and are very honest. What is your response to the information they discuss?
- **10.** The journey is difficult enough as it is for the men but more obstacles present themselves as Jim tries to reach his crash site. How do the men overcome them?





POST VIEWING ACTIVITIES Topics for Reflective Writing Activities

A selection of these topics could be set as reflective writing activities after viewing the documentary.

1. Display these quotes on the board:

'No matter what happens in life you can rise up from it. Life is all about choice. So choose it.'5

'Once you are broken what have you got to lose?'6

Choose one of these statements and discuss it with close reference to the themes and characters in the documentary.

- 2. Did the four men learn from the experience? Justify your opinion using examples from the documentary.
- 3. The documentary explores themes such as the consequences of risk taking, overcoming challenges and making peace with the past. Which theme resonated the most with you and why?
- 4. The men have to overcome physical and mental challenges to achieve their goals. Is there a difficult challenge you would like to achieve? What did you learn from the documentary that could help you attain this goal?
- 5. Anton is pressured into making a decision that ultimately leads to his injury. Have you experienced peer group pressure? Reflect on the ways that you have dealt with peer pressure, is there anything you would do differently now?





Media Presentation

Use ICT to create a 2 minute visual account of the themes explored in *The Ride*. Use voice over, images and appropriate music to represent the documentary and to show your understanding of the themes and issues.

Road Safety Awareness Campaign

Students will work in groups to produce a road safety campaign that targets an issue of concern in their local community. The project is a 4 step process that requires students to complete research, design and deliver a survey, analyse existing media campaigns and create a campaign of their own. Each step in the process could be easily adapted to work as an independent activity if teachers require a less time intensive task.

Step 1 : Research

Students should create 5 research questions on the topic of road safety and use these when conducting some general research into the issue. To create the questions students should consider what they would like to know about road safety. They could also be allocated different subjects to develop questions on such as: speeding, drink driving, riding motor cycles, road rules for bike riders etc. The websites below can be used as a starting point for research.

Younger students may need to be given research questions. These could include:

- What are the road toll statistics in each state?
- Who are the main casualties on our roads?
- Why do accidents occur?
- What is being done to combat road safety in the state that I live in?
- What kinds of injuries are sustained as a result of road accidents?

http://www.infrastructure.gov.au/roads/safety/index.aspx

http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety

http://www.mac.sa.gov.au/drivers#speed

http://www.ors.wa.gov.au/Campaigns-Programs/ Serious-Injuries

http://rac.com.au/news-community/news-and-reports/media-releases/media-releases-2013/worrying-trends-in-2012-crash-stats

Step 2 : Survey

After conducting initial research students can create a survey, to be given to members of their school community that aims to identify the local areas of concern in relation to road safety.

Survey monkey is a free online service that allows users to create surveys for a variety of purposes. Respondents complete the survey online and this allows for data to be collected and analysed quickly. The first link will assist students in the creation of the survey and the second link will take them directly to the site.

http://www.wikihow.com/Create-an-Online-Survey-With-Surveymonkey

https://www.surveymonkey.com/

After analysing the completed surveys; groups can identify the main areas of concern in their community and choose one of these issues to use as the focus for the creation of a road safety campaign.











Step 3: Media Analysis

Each Australian state and territory has their own advertising campaigns relating to road safety, the next step in the process is for students to look at a selection of these campaigns and analyse their effectiveness.

The following websites link to advertising campaigns and short films as part of the MAFMAD (Make a Film Make a Difference) short film competition. Teachers should be aware that some of the films and campaigns contain confronting subject matter.

http://www.allianz.com.au/car-insurance/news/road-safety-ad-campaigns

http://www.mafmad.com.au/

After viewing a selection of media relating to the topic students can answer the following questions:

- 1. Compare and contrast the clips you have viewed. Which was the most effective and why?
- 2. Identify the purpose, audience and effect of the clip you found most powerful. How was the work structured to inform, engage and persuade?
- **3.** Evaluate the social, moral and ethical positions represented in the texts you have viewed.
- **4.** What aspects of these clips could be used to enhance your own work?

Step 4 : Campaign Creation

You have researched, surveyed and analysed and now it is time to create your own campaign. There are many possible ways that you can deliver your community awareness campaign, be creative and consider what method will most effectively convey your message.

Some suggestions include: a short film, a documentary (use *The Ride* as inspiration), a poster campaign, a presentation to the community involving an outside speaker, organizing an awareness day, writing a play, creating a brochure or developing a website.

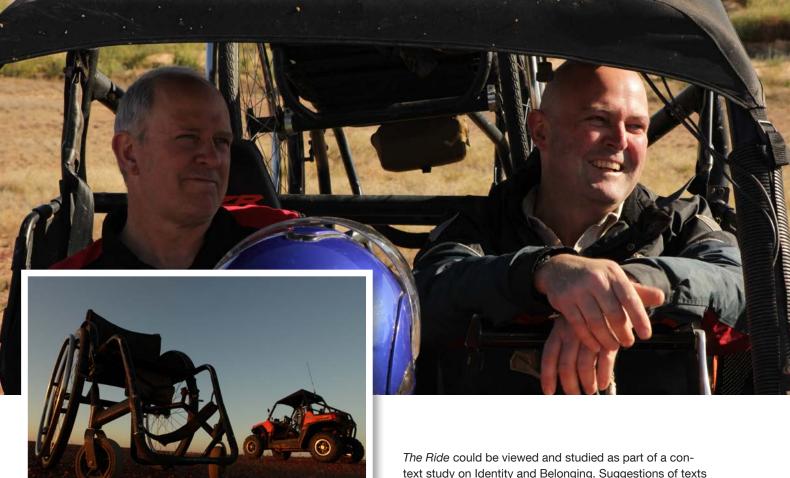
Criteria:

- The wider community has been consulted in the choice of issue
- The campaign has a clear message
- A range of methods have been used to engage and inform the target audience
- Statistics are used to reinforce your message
- ICT has been used to create and edit the work

The planning sheet below will help you develop and refine your ideas:
Issue:
Target audience:
Describe the form your campaign will be presented in
Explain how your campaign will engage and appeal to your audience:
What statistics will you use to reinforce your message?
How will you gauge the effectiveness of your campaign?



*This task has obvious links to the National Curriculum standards for Media and Health and Physical development. The activities could also be adapted for English with a greater focus on the use of persuasive language and techniques in road safety advertising campaigns.



Exploring Media Codes and Conventions

Students view the documentary and then respond to the following questions:

- Identify the codes and conventions used in the documentary.
- How does the use of codes and conventions evoke a personal response?
- How does the use of codes and conventions convey a message about the consequences of risk taking?
- What are the other key messages conveyed in the documentary?

Using the Documentary for Context Study

A context study, in terms of senior English, is described as a broad focus area where students study and respond to a range of texts that explore similar ideas. The analysis of texts could include exploring why language choices have been made (verbal and non-verbal) and how intended audiences and purposes influenced choices. After studying a variety of texts students respond to a prompt question/ statement by completing a written piece in a persuasive, expository or imaginative style.

The Ride could be viewed and studied as part of a context study on Identity and Belonging. Suggestions of texts that the documentary could be studied in conjunction with include:

Identity and Belonging: *Growing Up Asian in Australia* (Alice Pung, Black inc, Australia, 2008) *The Way* (Emilio Estevez, 2010) *Witness* (Peter Weir, 1985), *Bombshells* (Joanna Murray-Smith, Nick Hern, 2004).**7**

Suggested writing prompts for Identity and Belonging:

- It is difficult to possess a sense of belonging when we are unsure of our own identity
- Discovering our identity is a challenging journey
- Identity is shaped by negative and positive experiences
- Mistakes help shape our identity8

The written responses for these prompts should be between 800-1000 words.

ADDITIONAL CURRICULUM RESOURCES

The TAC (Transport Accident Commission) website has detailed unit outlines and lesson plans relating to Health, English, Legal Studies, Civics and Legal Studies. Topics include improving decision making skills, understanding the consequences of decisions and improving the safety of young people and their peers.⁹

http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety/schools/school-resources



OTHER RESOURCES Road Safety

http://www.roadsafetyeducation.vic.gov.au/resources/secondary-school.html

http://www.rse.org.au/

http://www.det.act.gov.au/teaching_and_learning/ curriculum_programs/student_wellbeing/road_safety_ programs

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/health/Pages/trafficres.aspx

http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/4AC20948-53AA-4F3F-AC5C-4A7356B77AD0/0/VCALRoadSafetyUnitsChoices.pdf -use for activities

http://www.vicroads.vic.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/ CD8E9F79-4244-461F-ABBC-F13FFCA0EE31/0/ newspaper.pdf - use for activities

http://journeybeyondroadtrauma.org/

http://www.curriculumsupport.education.nsw.gov.au/policies/road/assets/pdf/websites%207-12.pdf

http://www.mac.sa.gov.au/drivers#speed

http://www.ors.wa.gov.au/Campaigns-Programs/ Serious-Injuries

Science and the body

http://www.apparelyzed.com/paraplegic-definition.html

http://www.disabled-world.com/artman/publish/article_0082.shtml

http://www.dana.org.au/

Teaching Context – Identity and Belonging

http://englishasanadditionallanguage.wikispaces.com/file/view/Exploring+Issues+of+Identity+and+Belonging.pdf

http://www.maribsc.vic.edu.au/sites/default/files/files/Introduction%20to%20Context%20handout.pdf

Developing an Advertising campaign

http://www.ourcommunity.com.au/marketing/ marketing_article.jsp?articleId=1603

http://mediaeducationlab.com/stand-lesson-8-create-ad

http://www.powayusd.com/pusdctae/exex/2009-products/Hospitality/admin_powayusd_com_20090724_163000LessonPlan6.pdf

(Endnotes)

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- ⁴ The Ride (Sandra Cook, 2012)
- The Ride, Press Kit, op.cit.,p.11.
- ⁶ The Ride, op.cit.
- Peter Cram, Scott Langan, Tara Lloyd, 'English Context Study', Exploring Issues in Identity and Belonging, TSSM, 2010.http://gscenglish3.wikispaces.com/file/view/Exploring%2520issues%2520belonging/287304336/Exploring%2520issues%2520of%2520identity%2520%2520belonging, accessed 18th April 2014
- 'Identity and Belonging Prompts VCE Study Guides.' VCE Study Guides RSS. N.p., n.d. http://www.vces-tudyguides.com/guides/context/identity-and-belonging-prompts, accessed 18th April, 2014.
- 'School Resources.' Transport Accident Commission. N.p., n.d.http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/road-safety/schools/school-resources, accessed 23rd April 2014.















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