

## Rabbit Proof Fence

Yvonne Manners lives in the Australian outback, on a large sheep farm which her mother and father run. There are thousands of sheep on the farm and it covers thousands of square kilometres.

### rabbit proof

fence – kaninsäkert staket

outback – vildmark

run

(ran, run) – *h. sköta, driva*

cover – *h. omfatta*

square – kvadrat

reach – *h. komma till*

far – långt

- 5 Everything about the Manners' farm is large. It takes many hours to travel from the farm to the nearest town and the Manners family usually fly in their own airplane.
- 10 Yvonne doesn't go to school like most other children. She doesn't go to school? Well, yes and no. She has a very special school called The School of the Air. It started back in the 1950s for children who could not reach normal schools because, like
- 15 Yvonne, they lived too far away. Teachers gave



lessons over the radio, and the students sent their homework to the teachers through the post.

Nowadays the Internet has made this much simpler.

- 5 Lessons are online and the students can send their homework at the touch of a button. Then the teachers can send back their comments and corrections almost immediately. All the children at The School of the Air get together for a week three or four times a year.

10

Research has shown that this type of education is neither better nor worse than traditional schools.

Yvonne's English teacher asked her to write a

- 15 speech about someone she admired a lot. Most of the other children chose sports stars or musicians or actors or celebrities.



**at the touch**  
**of a button** – med en knapptryckning  
**correction** – rättelse  
**immediately** – omedelbart  
**research** – forskning  
**education** – utbildning  
**neither...nor** – varken...eller  
**admire** – beundra



<b>amazing</b>	– häpnads- väckande
<b>magnificent</b>	– enastående
<b>brave</b>	– modig
<b>related</b>	– släkt
<b>worry</b>	– oroa sig
<b>set up</b> (set, set)	– inrätta
<b>attend</b>	– vara närvar- ande
<b>authority</b>	– myndighet
<b>by force</b>	– med våld
<b>educate</b>	– utbilda
<b>maid</b>	– hembiträde
<b>wealthy</b>	– rik
<b>punish</b>	– straffa
<b>harshly</b>	– hårt, strängt
<b>disobey</b>	– inte lyda
<b>even worse</b>	– än värre
<b>staff</b>	– personal
<b>whip</b>	– piska
<b>solitary con- finement</b>	– isoleringscell
<b>tiny</b>	– väldigt litet
<b>several</b>	– flera
<b>dreadful</b>	– avskyvärd
<b>porridge</b>	– gröt
<b>escape</b>	– fly
<b>tracker</b>	– spårare
<b>hunt</b>	– jaga
<b>in spite of</b>	– trots att

## This is what Yvonne wrote:

*I am going to pick three young girls who did something truly amazing, something quite magnificent and very, very brave. Their names were Molly and Gracie and Daisy. Molly was 14, Gracie was 11 and Daisy was just 8 years old. They were*

5 *all related to each other.*

*All three girls were part Aborigine and part English: their fathers were English settlers and their mothers were Aborigine.*

10 *As early as in the 1930s the Australian Government worried about what to do with children like Molly, Gracie and Daisy, so they set up schools where the children had to attend. The authorities took them from their homes, sometimes by force, and put them in schools sometimes over a thousand kilo-*

15 *metres from their homes, families and friends.*

*At these schools the girls were educated so that they could be maids to wealthy white families or perhaps marry one of the men who worked on the local farms.*

20 *The girls in the schools were punished harshly if they disobeyed instructions or, even worse, tried to run away. Members of the staff whipped them and cut their hair off. Sometimes they were put into solitary confinement in a tiny prison with no light*

25 *and very little air. For several days they just had bread and water. Their normal food was dreadful, and their breakfast was sometimes porridge with insects in it. None of the children were ever allowed to speak in their own language: everyone had to speak English or the teachers punished them.*

30 *Nobody had ever escaped from the girls' school before. Aborigine trackers hunted those who tried, always found them, and then took them back to the school. There they were beaten and put in solitary confinement.*

35 *In spite of being so young Molly was a leader. One day she decided that she did not want to stay at the school. She wanted to be in charge of her own fate.*



One morning she and her two little relatives managed to escape and began their long walk home.

The girls set off with only breadcrumbs and a little water.

5 They walked through thick forests and across burning sands. They met wild animals and trapped birds and rabbits for food. They went through rain storms and dreadful heat. More than anything they were frightened that the trackers who they knew would be following them would catch them.

10

Sometimes they visited farms where kind people gave them food and clothes. They soon learnt that they had to be careful. They would sometimes walk away in the wrong direction and then double back to carry on their journey.

15

Molly's plan was to use the Rabbit Proof Fence. This was a really crazy idea thought up by the English settlers. They built a fence from the north coast to the south coast to try to keep out rabbits and foxes. It took eight years to build and

20 covered 1,833 km. It did no good whatsoever. There were still rabbits and foxes on both sides of the fence. It was a complete waste of time and money.

25 But it was useful to the girls. Molly's father was one of the inspectors of the fence and she knew that if she could find it and follow it, then she would eventually reach her home.

So that is what she did.

30 Their journey took months and is one of the longest journeys on foot ever made in Australia.

35 So that is why I admire the three girls, members of the Mardu people who lived at Jigalong. Molly, as the oldest, had made up her mind that she would be someone who decided what she would do – and she did it.

And she, Gracie and little Daisy did it barefoot!

<b>be in</b>	
<b>charge of</b>	– bestämma över
<b>fate</b>	– öde
<b>relative</b>	– släkting
<b>manage</b>	– lyckas
<b>set off</b>	
<b>(set, set)</b>	– ge sig iväg
<b>bread-crumbs</b>	– brödsmulor
<b>forest</b>	– skog
<b>trap</b>	– fånga, snara
<b>heat</b>	– värme
<b>more than</b>	
<b>anything</b>	– mest av allt
<b>frightened</b>	– rädd
<b>direction</b>	– riktning
<b>double back</b>	– gå tillbaka i samma spår
<b>carry on</b>	– fortsätta
<b>think up</b>	
<b>(thought, thought)</b>	– tänka ut
<b>cover</b>	– h. sträcka sig
<b>whatsoever</b>	– som helst
<b>still</b>	– fortfarande
<b>complete</b>	– fullständig, total
<b>waste of</b>	– slöseri med
<b>useful</b>	– nyttig, användbar
<b>eventually</b>	– till sist
<b>reach</b>	– nå, komma fram till
<b>journey</b>	– resa
<b>on foot</b>	– till fots
<b>make up</b>	
<b>one's mind</b>	– bestämma sig