

# KERRY GREENWOOD

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**Class grouping:**

Whole Class

**Time:**

60-90 Minutes

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this activity is to introduce students to the work and accomplishments of acclaimed author Kerry Greenwood prior to visiting the *Her Place* exhibition. Students will investigate some biographical details about the author and then respond creatively to her infamous 'lady detective', the Honourable Miss Phryne Fisher.

**Activities:**

- 1. Getting to know Kerry Greenwood**
- 2. A new chapter for Miss Phryne Fisher**

**Preparation  
and Materials:**

Internet access . Poster paper and drawing materials

## Procedure:

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### Activity 1

#### Getting to know Kerry Greenwood

Provide students with the following questions, which they should answer by undertaking some independent research:

1. Who is Kerry Greenwood?
2. Where was Kerry born and what degrees does she hold?
3. How many books has she written (fiction and non-fiction)?
4. What awards has Kerry won and what quality does each award recognise?
5. What previous careers or jobs did Kerry Greenwood hold prior to becoming an author? What job does she still hold as well as being an author?
6. Who is Greenwood's most famous fictional character? Why did she choose the 1920s as the era for her exploits?
7. Why did Kerry Greenwood create a character who is an upper-class woman?

Depending on the time you have available, you may wish to provide your students with the following websites to assist them with their inquiries:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kerry\\_Greenwood](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kerry_Greenwood)

<http://www.theage.com.au/articles/2003/08/13/1060588441841.html>

<https://rithebard.wordpress.com/2016/08/19/interview-with-the-wonderful-kerry-greenwood/>

<http://phrynefisher.com/>

<https://www.allenandunwin.com/authors/g/kerry-greenwood>

<https://poisonedpenpress.com/authors/kerry-greenwood/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFFnihFPloI>

### Activity 2

#### Creative response

In this activity, students have the option to respond to Kerry Greenwood's character Miss Phryne Fisher by either designing a book cover for a new title about Miss Fisher or completing a short creative writing piece.

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1. Before you begin, screen two short clips about the character of Miss Phryne Fisher, then ask students to read the excerpts and quotes beneath.

**6:24-11:10 of the Miss Fisher's Murder Mysteries episode 'Cocaine Blues'. If you are a subscriber, a higher quality version of the clip is available via Netflix.**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NfbjUWB5NYE&index=1&list=PLbDrvJrX-wBHe3MENE5I7XAJL2R1OvRzRO>

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### **The Honorable Miss Phryne Fisher | Trouble (2:13)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZ73AKku2cw>

Quotes about the character of Miss Phryne Fisher:

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“I shall always remember the day that Phryne Fisher walked into my life. I was on the Brunswick Street tram, with a two-book contract in my hand [...]. And I saw her. Small, slim, stunningly dressed in a red woollen coat with an astrakhan collar. Shiny black hair cut in a cap. Russian leather boots and gloves. Enough style to knock your eye out. That was Phryne Fisher.”

**- Kerry Greenwood (2012).**

‘Elegant, fabulously wealthy and sharp as a tack, Phryne sleuths with customary panache ... [she is] irresistibly charming’ - **The Age**

‘Phryne Fisher is gutsy and adventurous, and endowed with plenty of grey matter.’ - **West Australian**

‘Independent, wealthy, spirited and possessed of an uninhibited style that makes everyone move out of her way and stand gawking for a full five minutes after she walks by - Phryne Fisher is a woman who gets what she wants and has the good sense to enjoy every minute of it!’ - **Geelong Times**

‘Fisher is a sexy, sassy and singularly modish character. Her 1920s Melbourne is racy, liberal and a city where crime occurs on its shadowy, largely unlit streets.’ - **Canberra Times**

“I decided that if I want to write about a female hero in the 1920s, I’m going to have to give her all the advantages I can, because she has serious disadvantages in being a woman. I wasn’t going to have her cowed or overawed by class, so she had to be titled. She had to be rich so nobody could make her do something for money, and she had to be bold.”

**- Kerry Greenwood (2003)**

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2. Ask students to nominate an activity from the two options available. Either:
- a) Create **a short story** about the fabulous Miss Phryne Fisher and her latest 1920s 'lady detective' case. Students may make up the 'facts of the case' themselves, but must keep the above descriptions of Phryne in mind, because they will help them to accurately portray her character.

Items and circumstances to be included in the story:

- A pearl-handled pistol.
- A fur coat.
- A silver letter opener.
- A steam train.
- A fancy luncheon.
- The grand 1920s house of a liberated and independent woman.
- A photograph of a child.
- A barking dog.
- A rainy night.

- b) Create **a book cover** for a new Phryne Fisher novel. Students should make up a title for the book and keep the above descriptions of Phryne in mind, because they will help them to accurately portray her character. Viewing some previous covers of Kerry Greenwood's Phryne Fisher series of novels may help to inspire your students. These can easily be found online.

