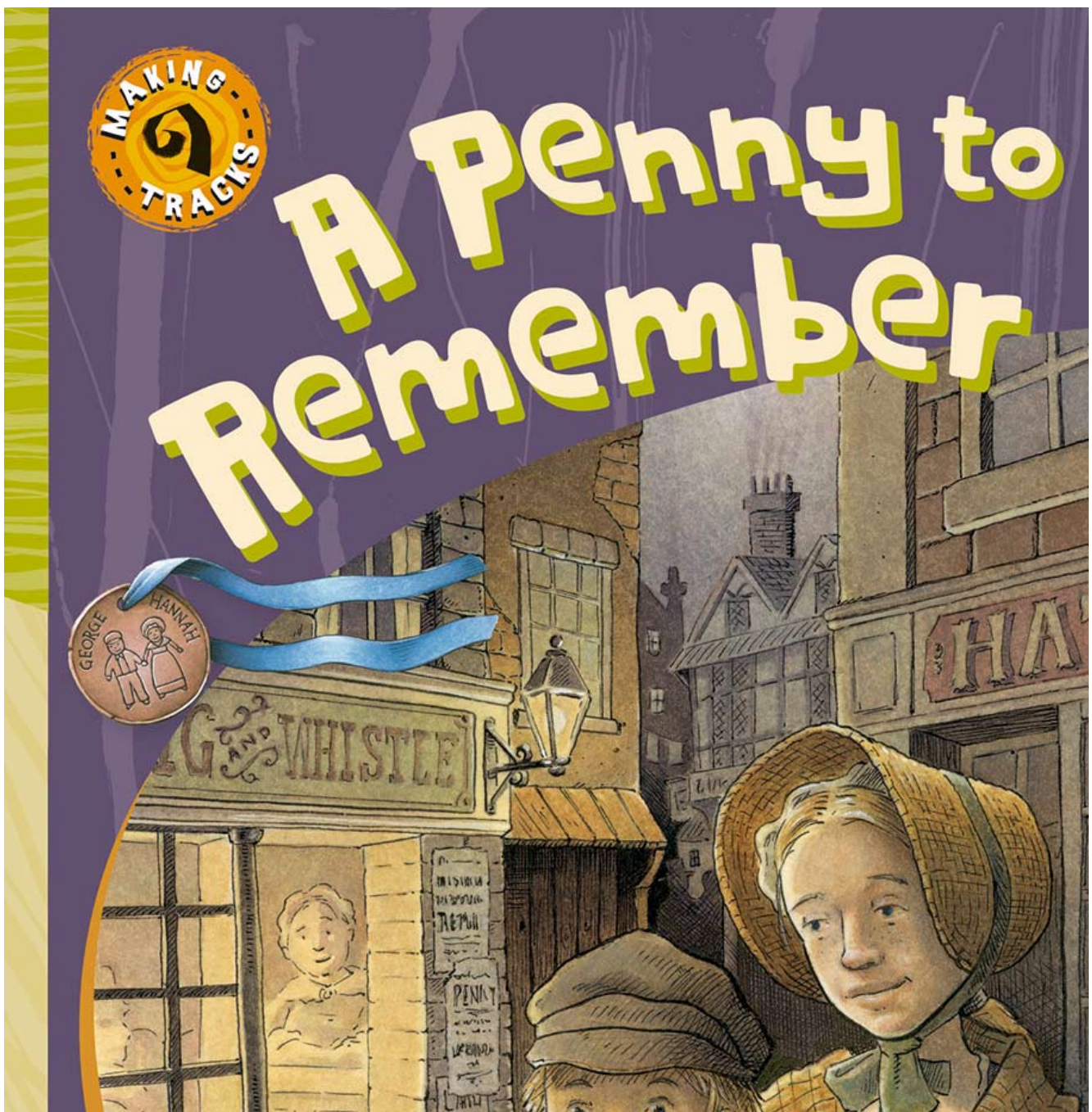
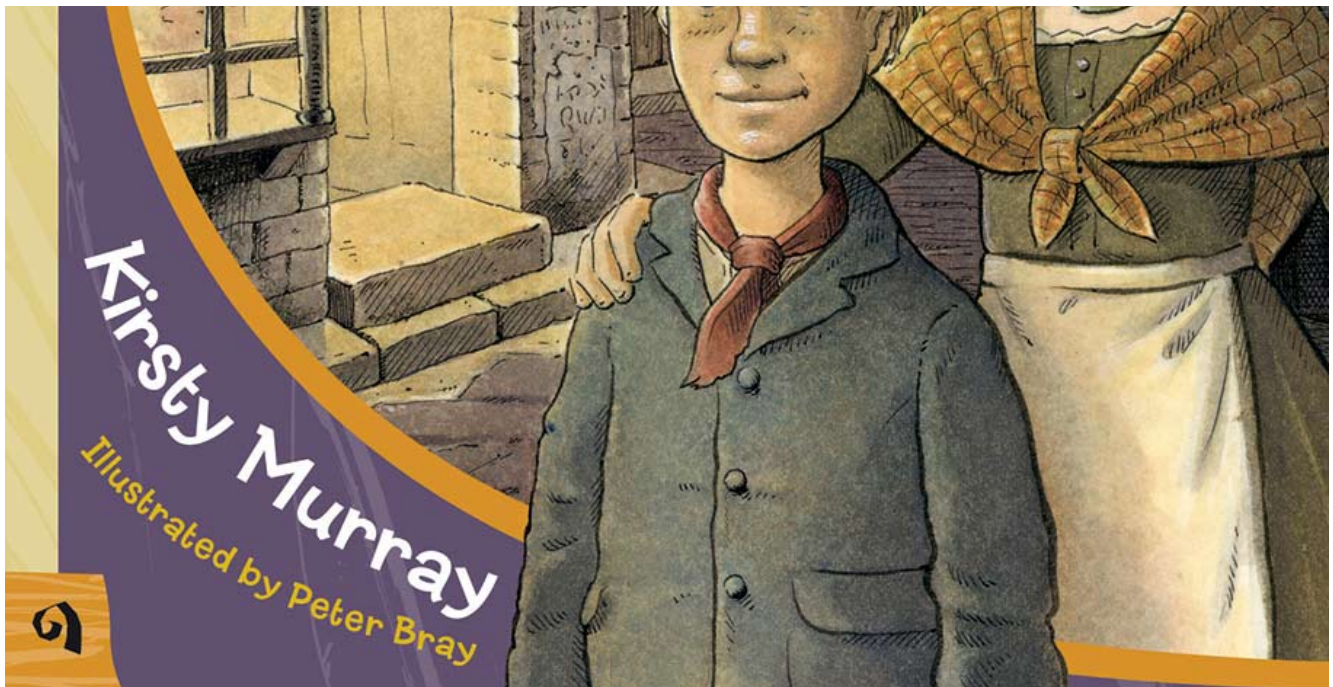


## **A Penny to Remember by Kirsty Murray**

### **Synopsis**





It's London in 1836 and 10-year-old George is caught with a goose drumstick in one pocket and a silver spoon in the other. His sister Hannah hears about her brother's fate when she is told by Mrs Dimple, the owner of the pub where she works, that he has been arrested.

George is sentenced to transportation to the colonies and is sent to the prison hulks to await his departure. He soon meets a forger, Will Nugent, who is busy creating a design on an old penny. He explains that it is a love token to be given to his wife so she has something to remember him by. As luck would have it, George's only possession is a penny given to him by Hannah when he was first imprisoned. George sets to work creating his own token for Hannah. He is able to pass it to her just prior to his departure.

Hannah continues to work for the Dimples for some years, keeping the penny with her at all times. She misses her brother terribly and is saddened when she learns that most convicts never return from the colonies. George, meanwhile, is sent to Point Puer in Van Diemen's Land (now Tasmania) where he vows to keep out of trouble and survive.

Eventually the Dimples decide to move to Van Diemen's Land themselves. They hope to make good in the new colony, where Mr Dimple's brother is a successful publican. Hannah begs to go to although she has had no word of her brother's fate. As she disembarks she is met by George, now a free young man. After an emotional reunion the two plan for their future together and say farewell to the convict stain from their past.

## Discussion questions

- Why did George steal? Did he deserve the punishment he received?
- Why were the Dimples so kind to Hannah? Why was she surprised by this?
- Why do you think Will Nugent helped George create a love token?
- Many love tokens from the convict era survive to this day in museums and private collections. Why do you think so many were made and why do you think they have survived?
- Why do you think so many convicts never returned to England after they had served their sentences?

- What was a ticket of leave? How and why do you think George managed to get his ticket of leave early?
- Why did George make Hannah stop wearing her penny?
- How do you think Hannah and George's lives in Van Diemen's Land would have compared to their lives in England? Where do you think they would be better off living? Why?

## Classroom activities

1. Use the [Police report worksheet \(PDF 692kb\)](https://www.nma.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/573989/Making-Tracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-Police-report.pdf) ([https://www.nma.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/573989/Making-Tracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-Police-report.pdf](https://www.nma.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/573989/Making-Tracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-Police-report.pdf)) to engage students in writing about George's crime. Students are asked to take on the role of a policeman and report details about the crime.
2. Ask students to create a story map to plot the events in *A Penny to Remember*. Students should identify the major events and use illustrations and/or words to map the story, using lines to make connections between events as appropriate.
3. At the end of chapter 8 Hannah leaves the cobbler's shop, upset by his comments. The next chapter begins with Hannah's arrival in Van Diemen's Land. Challenge students to create an extra chapter for the book that would fit between these two and explore the process that leads to Hannah joining the Dimples on their trip to the new colony. Remind students to use the writing style of Kirsty Murray when creating their chapter.
4. Ask students to imagine that a sequel to *A Penny to Remember* is to be written. Distribute [The sequel worksheet \(PDF 1mb\)](https://www.nma.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/573990/MakingTracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-The-sequel.pdf) ([https://www.nma.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/573990/MakingTracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-The-sequel.pdf](https://www.nma.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/573990/MakingTracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-The-sequel.pdf)) which asks students to create a plot, cover illustration, blurb and title for the next book, which focuses on Hannah and George's new life in Van Diemen's Land.
5. Cut out penny-sized pieces of cardboard and invite students to design their own love tokens. Students should imagine they are a convict with a loved one that they are leaving behind. They should design and then create a token using pinpricks in cardboard.

## Book details

*A Penny to Remember* by Kirsty Murray

illustrated by Peter Bray

ISBN 978 1876944 53 7

198mm x 130mm, 64pp

black and white illustrations

RRP \$11.95

Published September 2007; re-released 2014. This book can be ordered through good bookshops and educational suppliers.

## Resources

Collection record — [convict love tokens](http://www.nma.gov.au/collections/highlights/convict-tokens) (<http://www.nma.gov.au/collections/highlights/convict-tokens>)

Find out more about [Kirsty Murray](http://kirstymurray.com/) (<http://kirstymurray.com/>).



Police report

([https://www.nma.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0005/573989/MakingTracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-Police-report.pdf](https://www.nma.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/573989/MakingTracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-Police-report.pdf)). [ PDF | 691.9 kb ]



The sequel

([https://www.nma.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/573990/MakingTracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-The-sequel.pdf](https://www.nma.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/573990/MakingTracks-BLM-2015-A-Penny-to-Remember-The-sequel.pdf)). [ PDF | 1.0 mb ]