

OBEDIENCE

Australian Supplement to the Character First Education Curriculum

I Will:

- Obey my authorities immediately
- Have a cheerful attitude
- Complete all that I am expected to do
- Go the “extra mile”
- Not obey the wrong command



Definition

Cheerfully carrying out the directions and wishes of those who are responsible for me.

Illustration

The kelpie sheepdog has been a longstanding best friend of sheep farmers right across Australia for the last century. Energetic, loyal and intelligent when trained well by their masters, kelpies can respond quickly and effectively to instructions, when herding sheep. Read the nature story about a farmer and his obedient kelpie, “Digger.”

No-one ever thought that 800 Australian Horsemen could accomplish what they did – liberating Beersheba and paving the way for the foundation of modern day Israel, ending centuries of Muslim rule. The history story will open your eyes to how the last great cavalry charge in history was only achieved through obedience.

Obedience in Nature

The Australian Kelpie

The morning air was still, as the sun crept up over the horizon. The galahs in the gum trees squawked their good morning to the farmer, who purposefully hunched his shoulders against the winter chill in the air and wandered down to the shed. It was Shearing Time and there was work to be done.

The farmer looked up and smiled, as he saw his faithful Kelpie, "Digger", sitting bolt upright outside his kennel—a half 44 gallon drum sufficed for that. The excited dog strained at the chain that held him there, his tail wagging incessantly. This lean-short-haired, brown Australian Kelpie sheepdog knew what his task was today.

The farmer reached down and patted his dog's head and let him off the chain, then they continued down to the

shearing shed. The sheep filled the shed. They had been in there all night, so that they kept dry ready for this new day of shearing. "Up," called the farmer and immediately Digger jumped up onto the backs of the sheep, to move them out of the shed back into the yards.

The sheep pushed and shoved as they were hustled down the race out to the yards' holding pens. Their fleeces were big and bulky but by the end of the day, they would look like balls of white cotton wool in the distant, green grassy paddocks.

That job done, Digger raced back to the farmer with his tongue hanging out, tail wagging enthusiastically and his eyes gleaming with the invitation for another



instruction from his master.

A new lot of sheep were ready for Digger to bring up to the shed. The farmer hopped on his motorbike and Digger jumped up behind him. They headed off down to the paddock and Digger quickly jumped off and ran around to the back of the mob, pushing the sheep forward.

Digger had almost finished, when a few of the sheep turned around to the left of the flock, running in the opposite direction. Digger didn't need the farmer's command to know what to do. He ran off and circled behind the sheep trying to cut them off, but the sheep ran in the opposite direction. "Get behind!" shouted the farmer and Digger ran hard to get behind the sheep and drove the few strays back towards to the flock again. All was looking good, until the stubborn sheep ran in the other direction. Undeterred, Digger tried again and again, until he rounded them back



into the mob with the other sheep.

With the mob in the yard, Digger sat down puffing hard. It had been a trying task, but he had completed the task well and the farmer was pleased with him. He had some time to have a break now from his job of rounding up the sheep and seeing that all was well for the farmer's day of shearing.

The sun was shining down as he sat in the warm green grass, content to soak up the warmth and take a moment to rest. "Digger!" It was the farmer's voice. Digger's ears pricked up and he turned his head to see his master coming out of the shed. "Come here, boy." Digger sat up straight away and trotted over to the farmer. "Time to get some sheep out of the shed, now, boy." Digger knew just what to do. He sat at the bottom of the race, as the farmer counted the shorn sheep out of the shed. Then, he herded them back out of the yards and down into the paddock, where the sheep ran and leapt with the joy of freedom.

The day was coming to a close, the sun was sinking lower on the horizon and the men were packing up their shearing equipment ready to head home. The newly shorn sheep dotted the paddocks and more

sheep were waiting in the yards for the next round.

Digger ran behind the next mob. He sensed the farmer was tired and he knew it wouldn't take long to get these sheep up, so they could retire for the evening.

He barked and stood on his two back paws to see what was happening, then he jumped the fence to push the mob up from the front, closer to the ramp. He barked more and then ran back behind the mob and the sheep started moving up the ramp and into the shed.

A few strays decided to back out of the mob and ran to the back of the holding pens. Digger ran back and rounded them up, easing them back into the mob, as the last few sheep straggled up the ramp and into the shed.

The farmer closed the shed door and it rattled into its locked position. All the sheep were in and all was well, ready for the next day when the shearers would return and Digger's job would start all over

again.

The farmer looked at his faithful Kelpie. He patted his head and said, "Well, Digger boy, you've done a great job today. What would I do without you?" Digger could sense his master's pleasure and the encouraging tone of his voice made him feel pleased with all the work he had done that day.

He followed his master and they walked up past the sheds towards home. At his kennel, Digger was rewarded with a bowl full of food and another pat. He sat with satisfaction as he watched the farmer head up to the house, the last few rays of light disappearing and the night sky held the twinkling of the first evening star. It had been a long day and now Digger laid down to a well-earned rest.

Written by Kathryn Birch



Obedience in Australian History

800 Horsemen

"We're staring defeat squarely in the face!" Brigadier-General William Grant said to Harry Chauvel, Commander of the Desert Mounted Corps.

"However, I believe we can take the town of Beersheba by nightfall!"

Harry Chauvel stroked his chin. "And what might you suggest?" he asked.

"A cavalry charge, sir!" William Grant stated.

"But the odds are against us!" Harry cried, as he sighed and turned to one of his staff. "It is our only option," he stated flatly. "Put Grant straight to it."

Eight hundred Australian Horsemen assembled with their ammunition and rifles, their bayonets glinting in the dying sun.

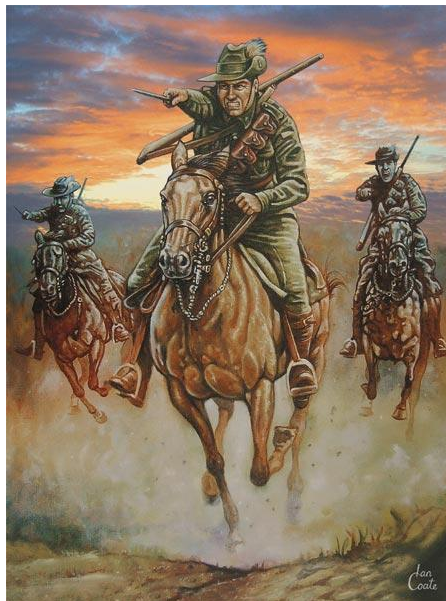
"Mount!" Harry Chauvel barked. Immediately, the horsemen swung themselves into the saddles of their big "whaler" horses.

Did you spot the "I will"? The horsemen obeyed immediately when commanded to mount.

It was 1917, and World War I was raging throughout Europe and the Middle East. The Desert Mounted Corps, made up of soldiers from Australia and New Zealand, where fighting the

Turkish in Palestine. In order to succeed, the Allies needed to capture the Wells at Beersheba to water their thirsty soldiers and horses.

When 28,000 British soldiers with tank support tried to rout Beersheba, they had met fierce opposition and were forced to



retreat. Sending a mere 800 horsemen against such a formidable force seemed like a recipe for disaster.

The 800 Light Horsemen crested the final sand hill, the emu plumes on their slouch hats fluttering in the wind. On the other side of the plain lay rows of Turkish trenches, armed machine guns and coils of barbed wire. Would they be able to succeed against such stiff opposition?

"Forward at a canter," was the command. The men surged forward on their massive horses, encouraging their mates as they went.

Did you spot the "I will"? The 800 Horsemen obeyed cheerfully as they advanced.

Adrenalin pumped through the men as their horses cantered across the stony desert sand. Suddenly, the horses broke into a gallop. They could smell water in the Wells of Beersheba!

The thunder of hundreds of hooves and the cry of "Charge!" echoed among the horsemen as they flew onwards. The riders were packed together so tightly that they could sometimes touch the heel of the man next to



Suddenly, Turkish gunmen opened heavy fire on the advancing horsemen. Shells exploded in masses of flames. Horses reared and some men fell.

Bullets whizzed by like angry bees. The machines staccato rattat added to the clamour, but nothing would stop the galloping horsemen now!

Some men succumbed and fell from their horses. The officers had given strict instructions to charge forward and leave the wounded, but some faithful soldiers turned back to pick up their mates.

“There’s only 800 of us, mate,” said one soldier as he placed an injured man on his horse. “We can’t afford to lose you!”

Did you spot the “I will”? The horsemen didn’t obey the wrong command to continue and stopped to help their mates.

By now, the Light Horsemen had advanced so far that the Turkish shells were exploding harmlessly behind them. The Turkish soldiers began to panic as they realised that nothing was stopping the Australian troops now.

The first line of horses leapt over the trenches. They didn’t stop to

do battle, but charged defiantly on towards Beersheba.

Many Light Horsemen went above and beyond charging the trenches. Major James Lawson was the first to lead his regiment over the trenches and neutralise enemy guns. His courage earned him the Victoria Cross of valour – Australia’s highest military award.

Another horseman, Trooper W. Scott, had his thigh shattered by shrapnel, but refused to quit. He led a team of dismounted horses to safety at a gallop.

Did you spot the “I will”? Some of the Light Horsemen went the “extra mile” by doing more than just the charge.

By the time the last rays of sun had faded from the desert sky, Beersheba lay firmly in the hands of the 800 Light Horsemen and thousands of Desert Mounted Corps were watered at the wells.

Did you spot the “I will”? The 800 Horsemen had obeyed completely by capturing Beersheba.

The casualties of the horsemen were remarkably low, considering the difficulty of the charge. Only 32 troopers had perished, while over 1200 Turkish

soldiers and 14 field guns had been captured.

For the first time in 400 years, the road to Jerusalem was open. The capturing of Beersheba opened the way to the Allies gaining victory in the Middle East. All this could not have been achieved if the 800 Light Horsemen hadn’t obeyed. They had obeyed without considering the strength of the enemy and without considering those who had failed in the past.

This is said to be the last great cavalry charge in history. British General Allenby concluded, “Without the involvement of the Australian Light Horsemen, I doubt if there would be a modern nation of Israel today!”

References

800 Horsemen – God’s History Makers
Col Stringer
Col Stringer Ministries Inc 1998



Project Ideas

Language

Play a game of 'Simon Says' or 'Do this, do that.'

Maths

Mathematics follow a sequence that needs to be obeyed to come out with the right answer. Discuss how obedience to these patterns results in right answers.

Science and Technology

Study the kelpie do and its role on farms and stations

Study recognised buildings and structures in Australia – e.g. Sydney Harbour Bridge, Eureka Skydeck, Sydney Opera House – and how engineers obey the building code rules to ensure safety.

Discuss the collapse of the West Gate Bridge in 1970. What requirements *didn't* engineers obey, and what were the consequences?



Society and Environment

Study Australian soldiers in the Middle East during WWI. Write a report on their obedience in battle or retreat and the results that came of it.



Health

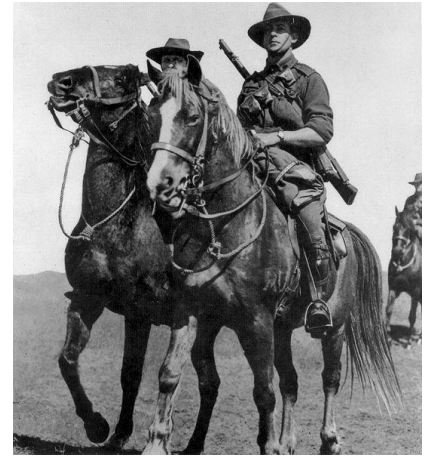
Discuss the coach of a sports team, umpires or referees on the field. How does obedience to them promote good sportsmanship?

The Arts

Watch an orchestra play, focus on the conductor. Recognise how obedience to the conductors keeps the whole orchestra in harmony.

800 Horsemen

What did Harry Chauvel, Commander of the Desert Mounted Corps, decide to do when facing defeat?



How did the 800 horsemen respond to the command?

Their obedience unlocked the way to Israel

On what town did the horsemen charge?



What were some of the results of the charge?

List two ways the 800 horsemen showed obedience:

1.

2.

How can YOU demonstrate obedience...

Today?

This week?

OBEDIENCE

Cheerfully carrying out the directions and wishes of those who are responsible for me.



Draw your own picture of a kelpie mustering sheep on a farm. You might even want to glue balls of cotton wool on the sheep.