Rampage at Waterloo

By Brian Falkner

- Ages 12+
- Young Adult Fiction
- Alt-History / War

NZCYA AWARD WINNER Best Young Adult Novel

Rampage at Waterloo

BRIAN FALKNER

"Thrilling and positively addicting" - School Library Journal
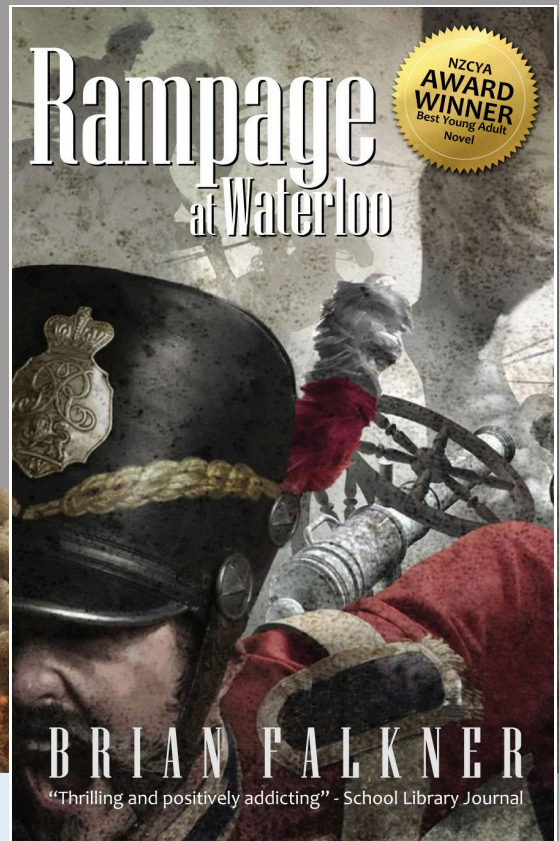
Synopsis

"Rampage at Waterloo" by Brian Falkner is an imaginative blend of historical fiction and fantasy, set during the tumultuous period of the Napoleonic wars. The novel follows Willem, a brave and resourceful teenager, who becomes entangled in a covert mission to thwart Napoleon Bonaparte's bid for power. As Napoleon escapes from his prison on the island of Elba and gathers his forces, Willem discovers a secret army of massive, carnivorous 'saurs' led by the fierce General Marc Thibault.

Willem, along with his companions Jean, Francois, Cosette and Heloise must navigate a perilous landscape filled with both human and saur enemies. Their journey takes them from the quiet village of Gaillemarde to the chaotic battlefield of Waterloo, where they face numerous challenges and moral dilemmas.

Willem's mission is not only to survive but to find a way to neutralize the saur threat and alter the course of history. Through acts of bravery, ingenuity, and sacrifice, Willem and his friends confront their fears and uncover their true strengths.

"Rampage at Waterloo" is a thrilling tale of adventure, exploring themes of courage, loyalty, and the harsh realities of war.

About the Author
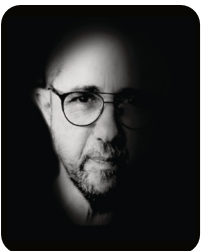
Brian wanted to be an author ever since he was a child. It only took him thirty years to realise that dream. Along the way he worked as a reporter, advertising copywriter, radio announcer and internet developer. Now an award-winning author, with twenty-one books published internationally, he is also an internationally acclaimed writing coach, running workshops and writing camps around Australia, the USA and New Zealand. He lives in Queensland.

RED BUTTON PRESS

Key Learning Areas

- **History and Social Studies**
- **Literature and Language Arts**
- **Ethics and Philosophy**
- **Science and Technology**
- **Critical Thinking and Analysis**

Themes

- **Courage and Heroism:** Characters demonstrate bravery in the face of overwhelming odds.
- **Loyalty and Betrayal:** The impact of trust and deception on relationships and outcomes.
- **War and Conflict:** The brutal realities of war and its effects on individuals and communities.
- **Survival:** Strategies and moral choices characters make to stay alive.

Characters

Willem: The protagonist, a young, courageous teenager.

General Marc Thibault: The antagonist, a ruthless French general.

Cosette: A key character whose interactions with Willem highlight themes of love and loyalty.

Heloise: A damaged child of the forest.

Jack Sullivan: a young and earnest private in the British artillery.

Jean and Francois: Willem's companions who add depth to the narrative through their own arcs.

Napoleon Bonaparte: Historical figure

Genres

- **Alt-Historical Fiction**
- **Young Adult Fiction**
- **Adventure**
- **War**

Writing Style

Brian Falkner's writing style in "Rampage at Waterloo" is characterized by its vivid and immersive descriptions, which bring historical settings to life while seamlessly integrating fantastical elements. The narrative is fast-paced, with a strong emphasis on action and suspense that keeps readers engaged. Falkner skilfully uses dialogue to develop characters and advance the plot, creating a dynamic interplay between historical accuracy and creative fiction. His prose is accessible yet detailed. The use of multiple perspectives enriches the narrative, providing a comprehensive view of the complex world Falkner has crafted, where history meets imagination in a gripping tale of adventure and survival.

Activities

- **Historical Research:**
Students can research the Battle of Waterloo and compare historical facts with the events described in the novel.

- **Creative Writing:**
Write a short story set in an alternate historical period, incorporating a fantastical element.

- **Debate:**
Organize a debate on the ethical implications of using dinosaurs in warfare.

- **Character Diary:**
Write diary entries from the perspective of different characters at key points in the story.

- **Map Creation:**
Create detailed maps of the novel's key locations, including battle sites, villages, and travel routes.

- **Soundtrack Creation:**
Create a soundtrack or playlist of music that captures the mood and themes of the novel. Students can explain their song choices and how they relate to specific scenes or characters.

Exercises and Questions

The Prisoner of Elba

Exercise:

Create a timeline of Napoleon's exile and escape from Elba.

Questions:

• What is the significance of Major Thibault's arrival on Elba?

• How does the author set the stage for the impending conflict?

The New World

Exercise:

Compare the descriptions of the New World in "Rampage at Waterloo" with actual historical accounts of the early explorers' encounters with the Americas. Write a short essay on how Falkner's fictionalized account enhances or alters the reader's perception of these historical events.

Questions:

• Why did Falkner include this chapter?

The Bonfire

Exercise:

Research traditional bonfire celebrations and compare them to this scene.

Questions:

• How does the bonfire scene contribute to character development?

• What thematic elements are highlighted during the festivities?

The Artilleryman

Exercise:

Write a diary entry in Jack Sullivan's voice about the challenges faced while moving the heavy cannon.

Questions:

• How does Jack Sullivan's character introduction set the tone for his role in the story?

• What are the main challenges the artillerymen face, and how do they overcome them?

Night

Exercise:

Write a news article about the attack.

Questions:

• How does the presence of dinosaurs change the tone of the story?

• What are the immediate and long-term effects of the attack on the village?

Ligny

Exercise:

Map out the key locations mentioned in the battle scenes.

Questions:

• How does Falkner describe the chaos of battle?

• What strategic importance does Ligny hold in the narrative?

Retreat

Exercise:

Research real medical procedures carried out in field hospitals during these times.

Questions:

• Why is Willem unable to search for the ring and why does he initially refuse Cosette's help.

• What does this chapter mean for the developing relationship between Willem and Cosette.

Under the Bridge

Exercise:

Draw a diagram of the bridge scene, including character placements.

Questions:

• How does Captain de Lessart's internal conflict enhance the story?

• What does the bridge symbolize in this chapter?

The Ruien

Exercise:

Create a survival plan for navigating the sewers.

Questions:

• How do the characters demonstrate resourcefulness in this chapter?

• What does the sewer setting reveal about the conditions of war?

Mont-Saint-Jean

Exercise:

Draw a map of the Battle of Waterloo, using real historical accounts

Questions:

• Through Jack's eyes, the battle is depicted as a colourful garden with gaudy, waltzing flowers. Why is this horrific and bloody conflict described in such a way?

• What was the real outcome of the Battle of Waterloo, and why?

Discussion Questions

- How does the author blend historical facts with fictional elements in the novel?
- What are the key motivations for Willem's actions throughout the story?
- How do the characters' experiences in the novel reflect the broader themes of war and survival?
- In what ways does the presence of dinosaurs change the dynamics of the Battle of Waterloo?

What motivates Francois to take the actions he takes in the novel particularly in relation to Jean.

Essay Topics

- Explore the impact of historical accuracy and creative liberty in "Rampage at Waterloo."
- Evaluate the ethical dilemmas faced by characters in the novel and their relevance to real-world scenarios.
- Examine the portrayal of young characters, such as Willem and the young lieutenant Frost, in the novel. What commentary does Falkner provide on the role and experiences of youth in wartime?
- Discuss the cultural and social impacts of the Napoleonic Wars as depicted in "Rampage at Waterloo."

Anagrams

Can you unscramble this list of Brian Falkner book and series titles?

1.	A Pilot Airflows Joke	
2.	A Tangy Toad Met Shunned Wicket	
3.	A True Classical Wok	
4.	Acne Veg En	
5.	AI Crew	
6.	An Odd Doberman	
7.	Assault Brute	
8.	Doctor Who Remote	
9.	Earthen Light	
10.	Gentleman Or Ace	
11.	Half Eight Ten	
12.	Hangs Its Roots	
13.	Jackpot Pay Forties	
14.	Jab Car Ink	
15.	No Hot Word	
16.	Patio Joke	
17.	Salutes Hat	
18.	Shake up ferret	
19.	Strong wind to the horrible moon	
20.	Track Foes	
21.	War Eagle Arm Potato	