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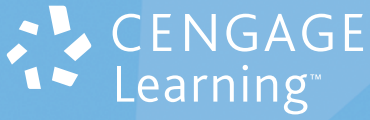
6TH ED

EXPERIENCE OF NATIONHOOD

K J MASON



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KJ Mason

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AUTHOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book first appeared in 1975, some 40 years ago. It has been in print ever since and over the years it has undergone revision and modification to suit the changing demands of the curriculum it addresses.

This is the sixth edition of *Experience of Nationhood* and while syllabus and content may have changed over the decades, what has not changed is the contribution and commitment of many people who have assisted in the creation of this book. This new edition has been significantly revised to meet the challenges of the new national curriculum and my task in writing the book was made much easier by the unfailing support from Cengage Learning. In particular I wish to acknowledge my publisher, Michael Spurr, and Robyn Beaver, the project editor. I have worked with both of them before on other projects and their contribution has been substantial. Equally so, I acknowledge the work of Tanya Wasylewski. My thanks also to my editor for this new edition, Nick Tapp, to Debbie Gallagher my permissions researcher, to Luana Keyes who was responsible for the design features of the book and to Erin Dowling, who was responsible for production control.

Finally I acknowledge the support from my family who have always been part of this long journey with *Experience of Nationhood*.

James Mason OAM

For Robert Firth

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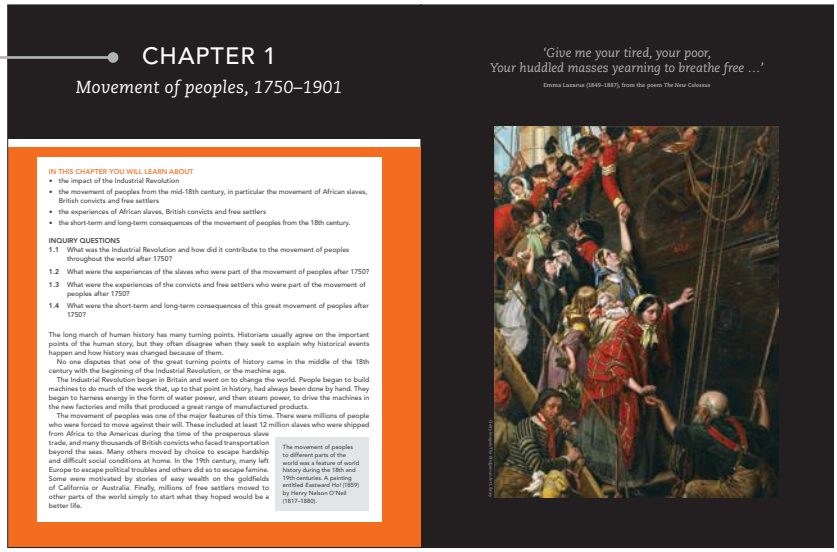
WORKING WITH *EXPERIENCE OF NATIONHOOD*

Experience of Nationhood has enjoyed a long history. First published in 1975, it has been regularly updated and revised to match the changing needs of students, teachers and the History curriculum. This new edition has been developed specifically for the Stage 5 New South Wales History Syllabus and the Australian Curriculum. As a Stage 5 resource, this new edition retains the defining features that have made the work an enduring classic – extensive use of primary and secondary sources, well-developed narrative and meaningful activities. It is now also fully supported with a range of NelsonNet Resources and an accompanying *Experience of Nationhood Teacher Edition*.

Chapter openings include brief topic introductions, learning summaries and inquiry questions.



CHAPTER 1

Movement of peoples, 1750–1901

'Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free …'

Emma Lazarus (1849–1887), from the poem *The New Colossus*

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- the impact of the Industrial Revolution
- the movement of peoples from the mid-18th century, in particular the movement of African slaves, British convicts and free settlers
- the experiences of African slaves, British convicts and free settlers
- the short-term and long-term consequences of the movement of peoples from the 18th century.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

1.1 What was the Industrial Revolution and how did it contribute to the movement of peoples throughout the world after 1750?

1.2 What were the experiences of the slaves who were part of the movement of peoples after 1750?

1.3 What were the experiences of the convicts and free settlers who were part of the movement of peoples after 1750?

1.4 What were the short-term and long-term consequences of this great movement of peoples after 1750?

The long march of human history has many turning points. Historians usually agree on the important points of the human story, but they often disagree when they seek to explain why historical events happen and how history was changed because of them.

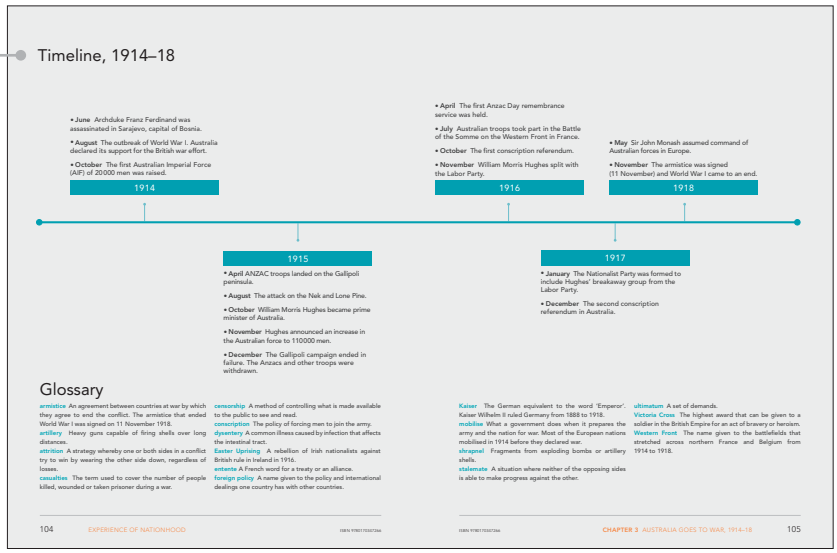
No one disputes that one of the great turning points of history came in the middle of the 18th century with the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, or the machine age.

The Industrial Revolution began in Britain and went on to change the world. People began to build machines to do much of the work that, up to that point in history, had always been done by hand. They began to harness energy in the form of water power, and then steam power, to drive the machines in the new factories and mills that produced a great range of manufactured products.

The movement of peoples was one of the major features of this time. There were millions of people who were forced to move against their will. These included at least 12 million slaves who were shipped from Africa to the Americas during the time of the prosperous slave trade, and many thousands of British convicts who faced transportation beyond the seas. Many others moved by choice to escape hardship and difficult social conditions at home. In the 19th century, many left Europe to escape political troubles and others did so to escape famine. Some were motivated by stories of easy wealth on the goldfields of California or Australia. Finally, millions of free settlers moved to other parts of the world simply to start what they hoped would be a better life.

The movement of peoples to different parts of the world was a feature of world history during the 18th and 19th centuries. A painting entitled *Eastward Ho!* (1859) by Henry Nelson O'Neil (1817–1880).

Timelines and a key terms **Glossary** are reference points for students as they navigate the chapter.



Timeline, 1914–18

1914

- **June** Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia.
- **August** The outbreak of World War I. Australia declared its support for the British war effort.
- **October** The first Australian Imperial Force (AIF) of 20 000 men was raised.

1915

- **April** ANZAC troops landed on the Gallipoli peninsula.
- **August** The attack on the Nek and Lone Pine.
- **October** William Morris Hughes became prime minister of Australia.
- **November** Hughes announced an increase in the Australian force to 110 000 men.
- **December** The Gallipoli campaign ended in failure. The Anzacs and other troops were withdrawn.

1916

- **April** The first Anzac Day remembrance service was held.
- **July** Australian troops took part in the Battle of the Somme on the Western Front in France.
- **October** The first conscription referendum.
- **November** William Morris Hughes split with the Labor Party.

1917

- **January** The Nationalist Party was formed to include Hughes' breakaway group from the Labor Party.
- **December** The second conscription referendum in Australia.

1918

- **May** Sir John Monash assumed command of Australian forces in Europe.
- **November** The armistice was signed (11 November) and World War I came to an end.

Glossary

armistice An agreement between countries at war by which they agree to end the conflict. The armistice that ended World War I was signed on 11 November 1918.
artillery Heavy guns capable of firing shells over long distances.
attrition A strategy whereby one or both sides in a conflict try to win by wearing the other side down, regardless of losses.
casualties The term used to cover the number of people killed, wounded or taken prisoner during a war.
censorship A method of controlling what is made available to the public to see and read.
conscription The policy of forcing men to join the army.
dysentery A common illness caused by infection that affects the intestinal tract.
Easter Uprising A rebellion of Irish nationalists against British rule in Ireland in 1916.
entente A French word for a treaty or an alliance.
foreign policy A name given to the policy and international dealings one country has with other countries.
Kaiser The German equivalent to the word 'Emperor'. Kaiser Wilhelm II ruled Germany from 1888 to 1918.
mobilise What a government does when it prepares the army and the nation for war. Most of the European nations mobilised in 1914 before they declared war.
shrapnel Fragments from exploding bombs or artillery shells.
stalemate A situation where neither of the opposing sides is able to make progress against the other.
ultimatum A set of demands.
Victoria Cross The highest award that can be given to a soldier in the British Empire for an act of bravery or heroism.
Western Front The name given to the battlefields that stretched across northern France and Belgium from 1914 to 1918.

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CHAPTER 3 AUSTRALIA GOES TO WAR, 1914–18 105

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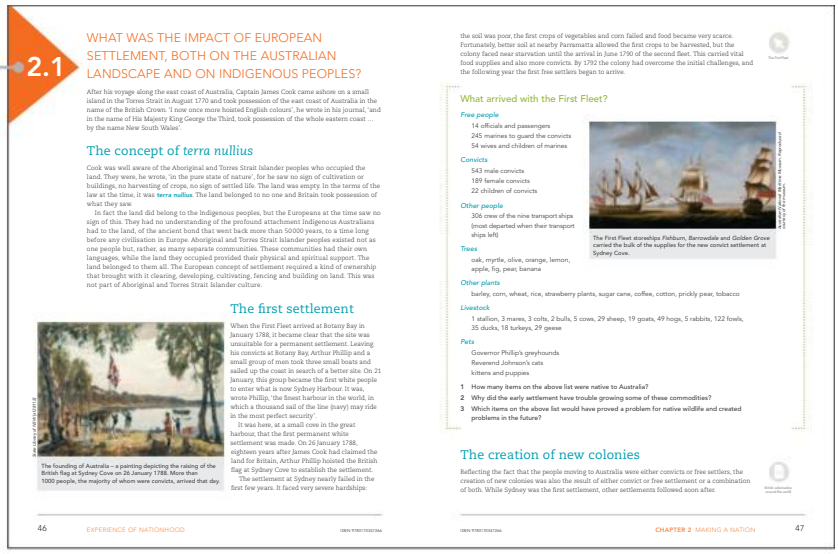
Each chapter is structured around a series of **inquiry questions** that provide a focus as you read and learn from the text.

Contemporary artworks, cartoons and photographs, as well as maps, diagrams and other illustrations, complement and expand on the written word, adding visual richness to historical sources.



2.1

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT, BOTH ON THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE AND ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES?

After his voyage along the east coast of Australia, Captain James Cook came ashore on a small island in the Torres Strait in August 1770 and took possession of the east coast of Australia in the name of the British Crown. 'I now once more hoisted English colours', he wrote in his journal, 'and in the name of His Majesty King George the Third, took possession of the whole eastern coast … by the name New South Wales'.

The concept of *terra nullius*

Cook was well aware of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who occupied the land. They were, he wrote, 'in the pure state of nature', for he saw no sign of cultivation or buildings, no harvesting of crops, no sign of settled life. The land was empty. In the terms of the law at the time, it was **terra nullius**. The land belonged to no one and Britain took possession of what they saw.

In fact the land did belong to the Indigenous peoples, but the Europeans at the time saw no sign of this. They had no understanding of the profound attachment Indigenous Australians had to the land, of the ancient bond that went back more than 50 000 years, to a time long before any civilisation in Europe. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples existed not as one people but, rather, as many separate communities. These communities had their own languages, while the land they occupied provided their physical and spiritual support. The land belonged to them all. The European concept of settlement required a kind of ownership that brought with it clearing, developing, cultivating, fencing and building on land. This was not part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

The first settlement

The founding of Australia – a painting depicting the raising of the British flag at Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788. More than 1000 people, the majority of whom were convicts, arrived that day.

When the First Fleet arrived at Botany Bay in January 1788, it became clear that the site was unsuitable for a permanent settlement. Leaving his convicts at Botany Bay Arthur Phillip and a small group of men took three small boats and sailed up the coast in search of a better site. On 21 January, this group became the first white people to enter what is now Sydney Harbour. It was, wrote Phillip, 'the finest harbour in the world, in which a thousand sail of the line (navy) may ride in the most perfect security'.

It was here, at a small cove in the great harbour, that the first permanent white settlement was made. On 26 January 1788, eighteen years after James Cook had claimed the land for Britain, Arthur Phillip hoisted the British flag at Sydney Cove to establish the settlement.

The settlement at Sydney nearly failed in the first few years. It faced very severe hardships;

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the soil was poor, the first crops of vegetables and corn failed and food became very scarce. Fortunately, better soil at nearby Parramatta allowed the first crops to be harvested, but the colony faced near starvation until the arrival in June 1790 of the second fleet. This carried vital food supplies and also more convicts. By 1792 the colony had overcome the initial challenges, and the following year the first free settlers began to arrive.

What arrived with the First Fleet?

Free people
14 officials and passengers
245 marines to guard the convicts
54 wives and children of marines

Convicts
543 male convicts
189 female convicts
22 children of convicts

Other people
306 crew of the nine transport ships (most departed when their transport ships left)

Trees
oak, myrtle, olive, orange, lemon, apple, fig, pear, banana

Other plants
barley, corn, wheat, rice, strawberry plants, sugar cane, coffee, cotton, prickly pear, tobacco

Livestock
1 stallion, 3 mares, 3 colts, 2 bulls, 5 cows, 29 sheep, 19 goats, 49 hogs, 5 rabbits, 122 fowls, 35 ducks, 18 turkeys, 29 geese

Pets
Governor Phillip's greyhounds
Reverend Johnson's cats
kittens and puppies

The First Fleet storeships *Fishburn*, *Barrowdale* and *Golden Grove* carried the bulk of the supplies for the new convict settlement at Sydney Cove.

1 How many items on the above list were native to Australia?
2 Why did the early settlement have trouble growing some of these commodities?
3 Which items on the above list would have proved a problem for native wildlife and created problems in the future?

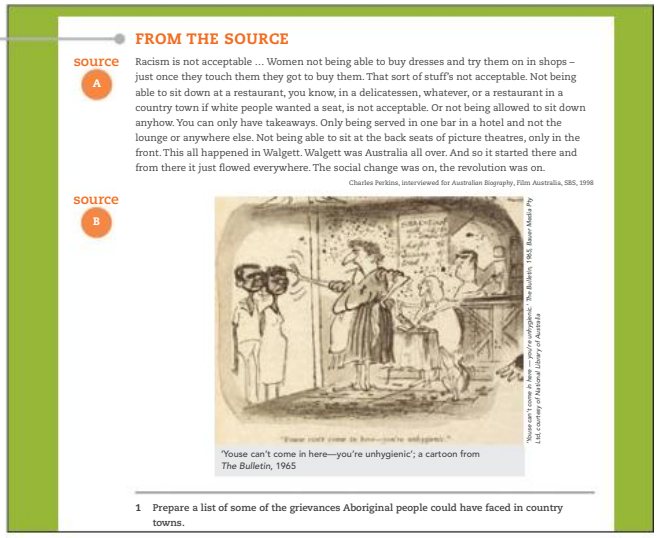
The creation of new colonies

Reflecting the fact that the people moving to Australia were either convicts or free settlers, the creation of new colonies was also the result of either convict or free settlement or a combination of both. While Sydney was the first settlement, other settlements followed soon after.

47 CHAPTER 2 MAKING A NATION

From the source

Uses primary and secondary sources with questions and activities to aid students in the evaluation and interpretation of evidence from the past and the works of historians and other interpreters of the past.



FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Racism is not acceptable … Women not being able to buy dresses and try them on in shops – just once they touch them they got to buy them. That sort of stuff's not acceptable. Not being able to sit down at a restaurant, you know, in a delicatessen, whatever, or a restaurant in a country town if white people wanted a seat, is not acceptable. Or not being allowed to sit down anyhow. You can only have takeaways. Only being served in one bar in a hotel and not the lounge or anywhere else. Not being able to sit at the back seats of picture theatres, only in the front. This all happened in Walgett. Walgett was Australia all over. And so it started there and from there it just flowed everywhere. The social change was on, the revolution was on.

Charles Perkins, interviewed for *Australian Biography*, Film Australia, SBS, 1998

source B

'Youse can't come in here—you're unhygienic'; a cartoon from *The Bulletin*, 1965

1 Prepare a list of some of the grievances Aboriginal people could have faced in country towns.

Information boxes

Provide brief introductions to key concepts and ideas, as well as biographical information about historical figures or events. These appear regularly throughout the book.

Prominent Indigenous Australians: Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1920–1993), poet

Oodgeroo was born in 1920. She was from the Noonuccal people, who for many thousands of years lived on Stradbroke Island, which they called Minjerriba, in Moreton Bay, near Brisbane. For most of her life Oodgeroo was known by her Western name of Kath Walker; she only returned to her traditional name in 1988. Oodgeroo was a poet, a writer and a champion of the cause of reconciliation between Aboriginal and white Australia. She was involved with many Aboriginal rights organisations. Acknowledged as a significant poet, she was the first Aboriginal person to have her volumes of poetry published. She died in 1993.

Oodgeroo Noonuccal was a prominent Aboriginal activist and poet.

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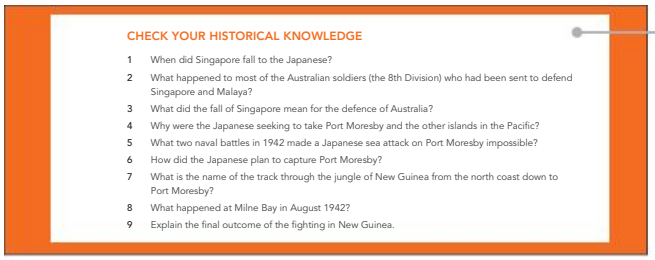
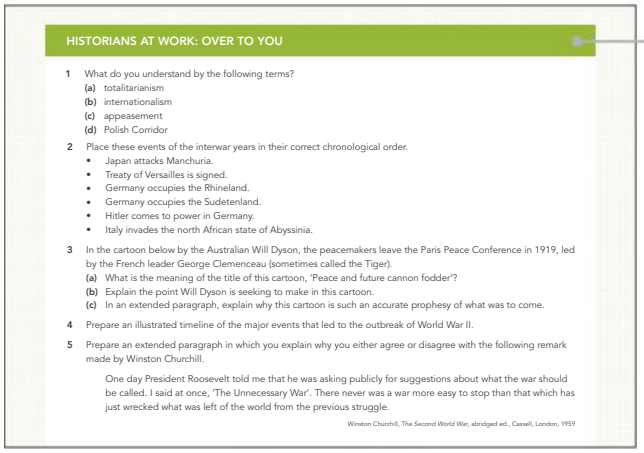


CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 When did Singapore fall to the Japanese?
2 What happened to most of the Australian soldiers (the 8th Division) who had been sent to defend Singapore and Malaya?
3 What did the fall of Singapore mean for the defence of Australia?
4 Why were the Japanese seeking to take Port Moresby and the other islands in the Pacific?
5 What two naval battles in 1942 made a Japanese sea attack on Port Moresby impossible?
6 How did the Japanese plan to capture Port Moresby?
7 What is the name of the track through the jungle of New Guinea from the north coast down to Port Moresby?
8 What happened at Milne Bay in August 1942?
9 Explain the final outcome of the fighting in New Guinea.

Check your historical knowledge

These frequent question blocks review and consolidate learning progressively through each chapter.



HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
(a) totalitarianism
(b) internationalism
(c) appeasement
(d) Polish Corridor

2 Place these events of the interwar years in their correct chronological order.
- Japan attacks Manchuria.
- Treaty of Versailles is signed.
- Germany occupies the Rhineland.
- Germany occupies the Sudetenland.
- Hitler comes to power in Germany.
- Italy invades the north African state of Abyssinia.

3 In the cartoon below by the Australian Will Dyson, the peacemakers leave the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, led by the French leader George Clemenceau (sometimes called the Tiger).
(a) What is the meaning of the title of this cartoon, 'Peace and future cannon fodder'?
(b) Explain the point Will Dyson is seeking to make in this cartoon.
(c) In an extended paragraph, explain why this cartoon is such an accurate prophesy of what was to come.

4 Prepare an illustrated timeline of the major events that led to the outbreak of World War II.

5 Prepare an extended paragraph in which you explain why you either agree or disagree with the following remark made by Winston Churchill.

One day President Roosevelt told me that he was asking publicly for suggestions about what the war should be called. I said at once, 'The Unnecessary War'. There never was a war more easy to stop than that which has just wrecked what was left of the world from the previous struggle.

Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, abridged ed., Cassell, London, 1959

Historians at work

A series of activities and tasks that enable students to consolidate their knowledge and draw on this to respond to the chapter inquiry question. Each chapter contains at least three Historians at work question blocks, each of which incorporates the range of historical skill and understanding of the syllabus as well as extension tasks.

Federation achieved

The first National Australasian Convention opened in Sydney in March 1891. Representatives from all the colonies as well as New Zealand came together in a series of meetings to discuss how the new nation could be created and how it would be governed. The most important task of this convention was to prepare a constitution that would set out the structure of the federal system.

Federation was not an easy process and there were differences between the colonies and particular disagreement about what powers should be given to a new federal government. There was always the possibility that some of the colonies (especially Western Australia) might decide not to join the federation.

The mood for federation revived during the 1890s, and in 1897, the year after Parkes' death, a second National Australasian Convention began work revising the draft constitution to make it more acceptable to the colonies.

This revised constitution was finally complete and in June 1898 the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania voted on the idea of federation in a **referendum**. This referendum failed but, a year later, after some further changes to the constitution, there was a second referendum and all the colonies except Western Australia voted to join the federation. The final step on the path to creating a nation was for the British Parliament to approve the new Australian constitution. The *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act* 1900, which contained the new constitution, was formally passed by the British Parliament in 1900 and came into effect on 1 January 1901. Before that date Western Australia finally agreed to join the union of the Australian colonies.

Call to the people

Constitution for a nation

Nelson Net

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Authors: Judy Adnum, Rima Kandalaft, Claudia Pantschenko

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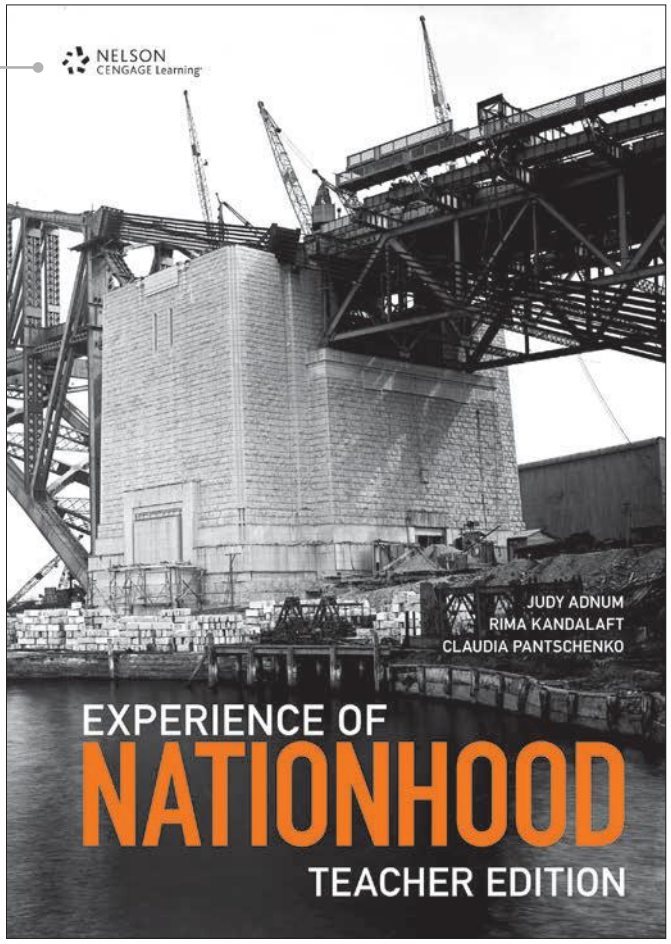


ISBN 9780170347266

CHAPTER 1

Movement of peoples, 1750–1901

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- the impact of the Industrial Revolution
- the movement of peoples from the mid-18th century, in particular the movement of African slaves, British convicts and free settlers
- the experiences of African slaves, British convicts and free settlers
- the short-term and long-term consequences of the movement of peoples from the 18th century.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

1.1 What was the Industrial Revolution and how did it contribute to the movement of peoples throughout the world after 1750?

1.2 What were the experiences of the slaves who were part of the movement of peoples after 1750?

1.3 What were the experiences of the convicts and free settlers who were part of the movement of peoples after 1750?

1.4 What were the short-term and long-term consequences of this great movement of peoples after 1750?

The long march of human history has many turning points. Historians usually agree on the important points of the human story, but they often disagree when they seek to explain why historical events happen and how history was changed because of them.

No one disputes that one of the great turning points of history came in the middle of the 18th century with the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, or the machine age.

The Industrial Revolution began in Britain and went on to change the world. People began to build machines to do much of the work that, up to that point in history, had always been done by hand. They began to harness energy in the form of water power, and then steam power, to drive the machines in the new factories and mills that produced a great range of manufactured products.

The movement of peoples was one of the major features of this time. There were millions of people who were forced to move against their will. These included at least 12 million slaves who were shipped from Africa to the Americas during the time of the prosperous slave trade, and many thousands of British convicts who faced transportation beyond the seas. Many others moved by choice to escape hardship and difficult social conditions at home. In the 19th century, many left Europe to escape political troubles and others did so to escape famine. Some were motivated by stories of easy wealth on the goldfields of California or Australia. Finally, millions of free settlers moved to other parts of the world simply to start what they hoped would be a better life.

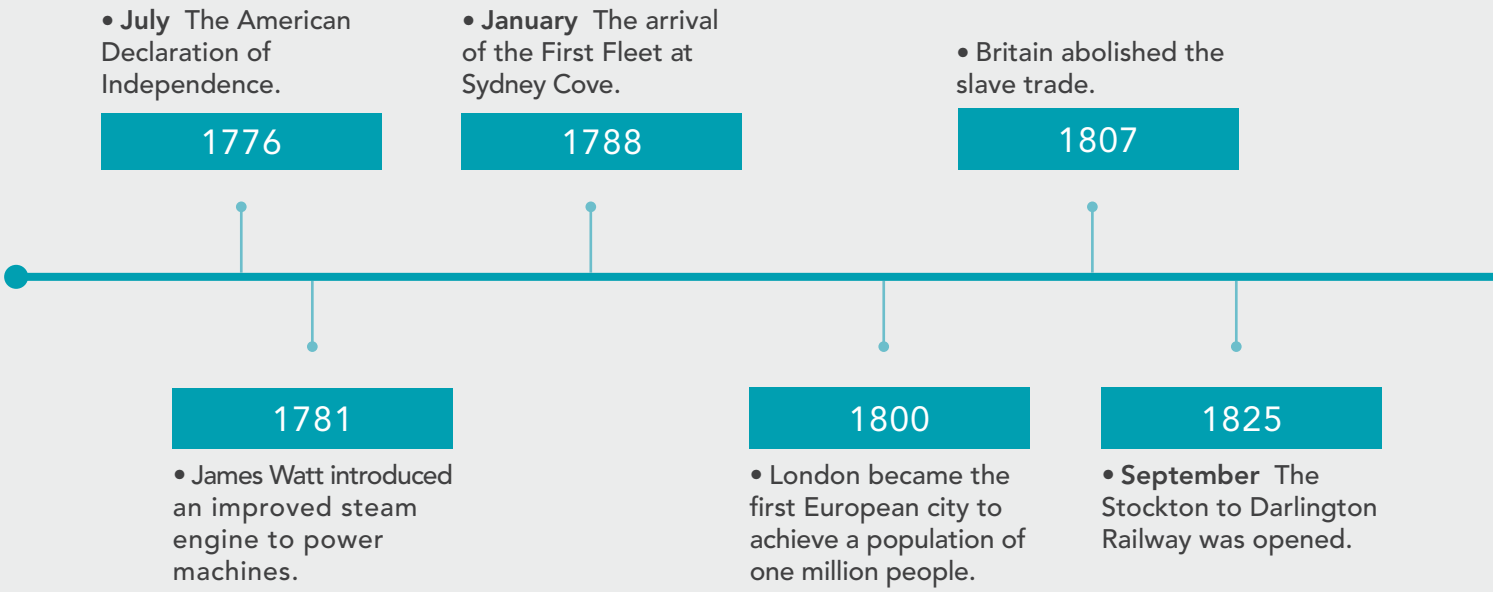
The movement of peoples to different parts of the world was a feature of world history during the 18th and 19th centuries. A painting entitled *Eastward Ho!* (1859) by Henry Nelson O'Neil (1817–1880).

'Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free …'

Emma Lazarus (1849–1887), from the poem *The New Colossus*

Getty Images/The Bridgeman Art Library

Timeline, 1776–1868



Glossary

American War of Independence A conflict between Britain and its 13 American colonies. It resulted in the colonies breaking away and forming the United States of America in 1776.
captain's log The official record of a sea voyage kept by the captain of a ship.
clippers Large and fast sailing ships of the 19th century.
colonies Land settled or controlled by another country.
common land Land that is accessible to anyone.
dispossess To take away from someone what they formerly owned.
foundries Places where metal is worked.
frontier The line of settlement. It was a term commonly used in the United States to define the point to which white settlement had advanced.
indigenous Native to a country.
indigo A distinctive blue dye extracted from plants.
secession The act of breaking away.
Suez Canal The canal from the Mediterranean Sea to the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, which dramatically cut the time for a sea voyage from Britain to Australia.
urban Related to city life.

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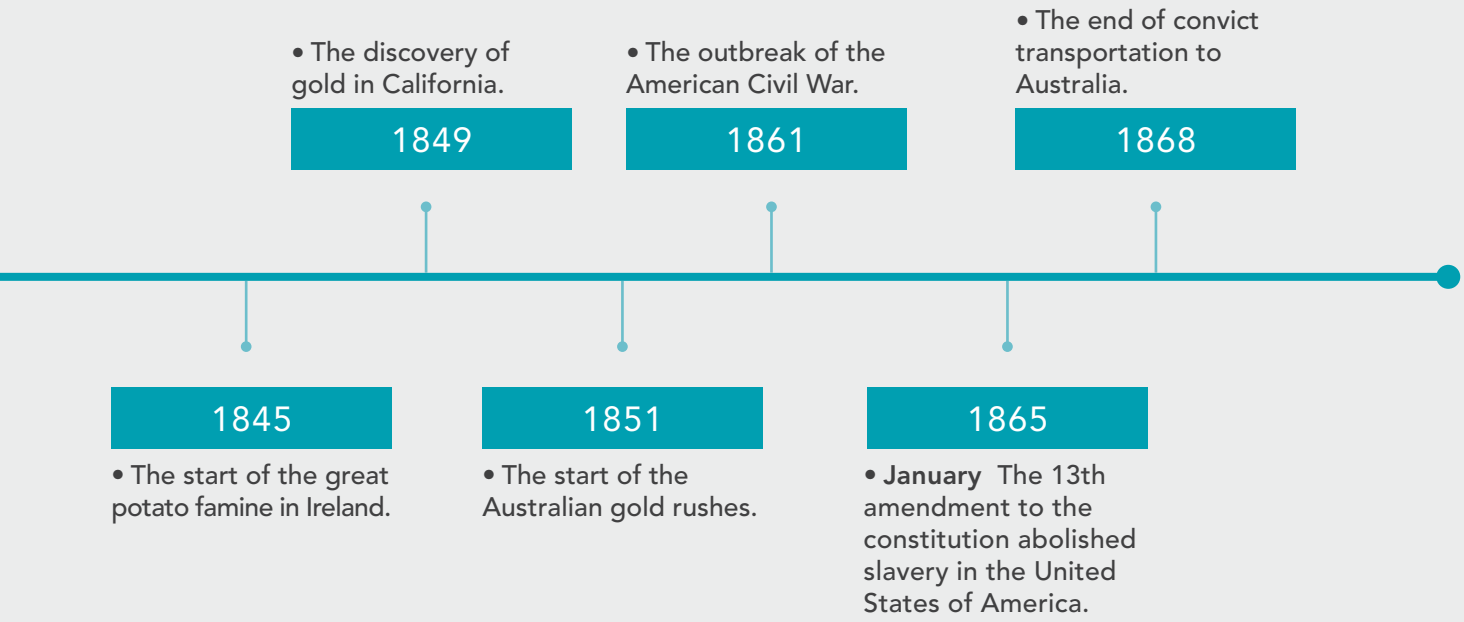

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1.1 WHAT WAS THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND HOW DID IT CONTRIBUTE TO THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AFTER 1750?

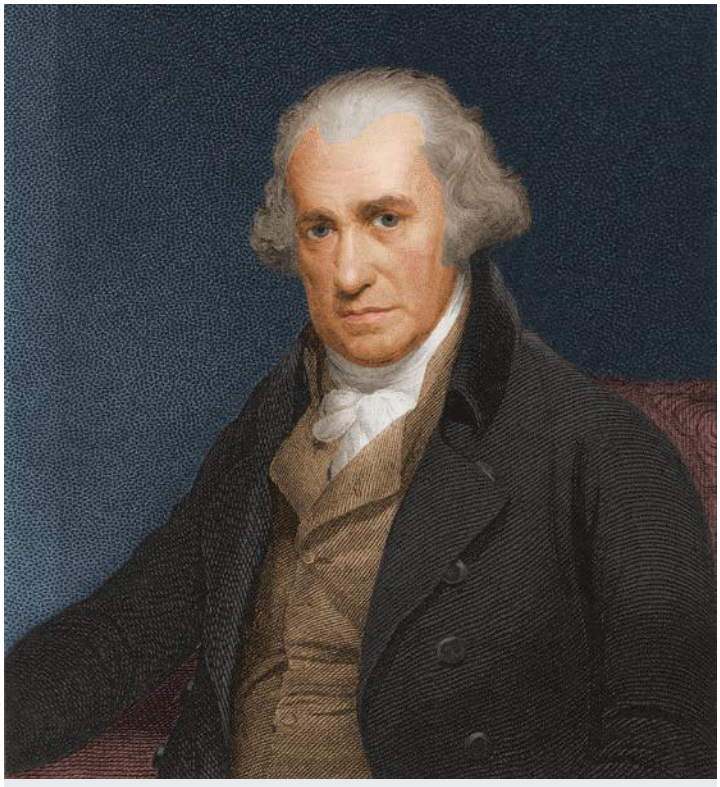
Until the middle of the 18th century, Britain was mainly an agrarian society. Most people lived on the land and production of food was their main activity. Village life was dominant and towns and cities were relatively small. The Industrial Revolution, which began in Britain in the mid-18th century, started a period of rapid change as machinery began to change many aspects of daily life.

It was in the textile industry that machines were used for the first time. The cotton imported from Britain's **colonies** in America was spun into yarn (thread) and then woven into cloth. This task had always been done by hand and in the home. In 1768, Richard Arkwright invented the spinning frame. This machine, which wove cloth, was too large to drive by hand so water power was used. Factories were built near streams so that waterwheels could be used to power the new machines. As methods of manufacture changed from handmade to machine made, production increased and the factory age was born. Machine had now replaced muscle.

Water power had its limitations, but the use of steam power began to change everything. The earliest steam engines were developed as a way of pumping water out of coalmines, but it was the steam engine refined by James Watt in 1781 that really began the Industrial Revolution.

James Watt was born in Scotland in 1736. He had trained as an engineer and understood the power and properties of steam. Energy produced by compressed steam could drive pistons and shafts that, when linked to machines, drove the machines themselves. There was no longer a need to build factories near streams for access to water power, as coal and coke (a product of coal) were used to fuel steam engines that in turn drove the factory machines. New factories were now built closer to the supply of coal – and Britain was blessed with an abundance of coal, which was found relatively close to the surface and could be easily mined. Britain also had good iron ore deposits, and the arrival of the Industrial Revolution meant that people began to make increasing use of natural resources such as coal and iron.

Industrial Revolution



Getty Images/Archive Photos

James Watt (1736–1819). Watt not only developed a more efficient steam engine from earlier models, but also a rotary-motion engine in 1781 which was capable of driving machines in the factories of the Industrial Revolution.

Britain also developed techniques for making cast iron, which was used extensively in manufacturing. To get the great heat needed in the ironworks required a fuel that generated much greater heat than wood. This fuel was coke, which is produced from coal. Coke came to be used at the many **foundries** that began to appear in areas where the supply of coal was plentiful.

During the 19th century, steel (far stronger than iron products) finally became a mass-produced commodity after the British engineer Henry Bessemer perfected a way of blasting air through molten iron ore to remove the impurities, increase the temperature and create steel. Britain was now on its way to becoming the greatest industrial power in the world as factories producing all types of manufactured goods spread across the landscape, particularly in the British Midlands. With the exception of our own age, there was probably no period in history during which so much progress in technology took place as in the machine age.

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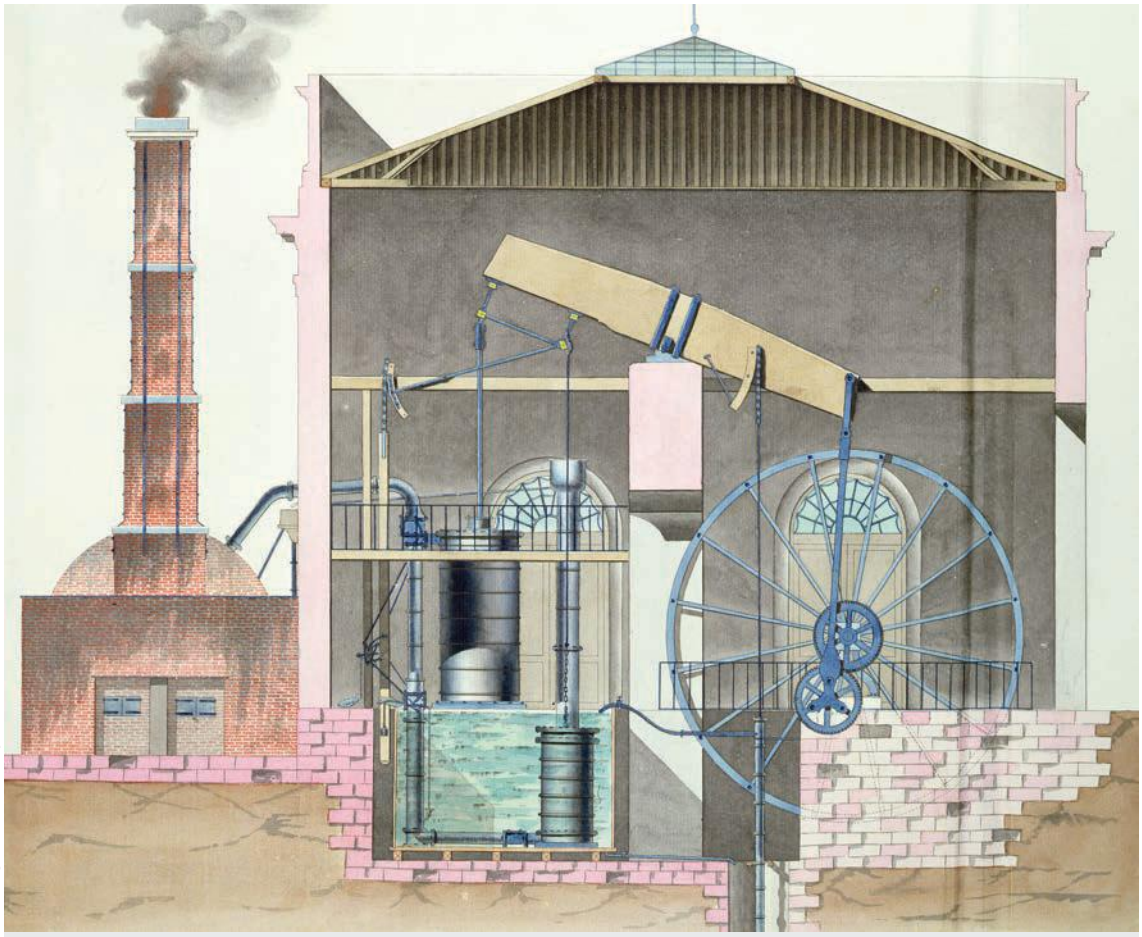

The Bridgeman Art Library/Archives de l'Ecole Nationale des Ponts et Chaussees, Paris/ Archives Charmet

A cross-section drawing of James Watt's steam engine. Using this image as your evidence, explain how Watt's steam engine was able to power machinery in factories.

With steel and the steam engine, production increased and so did trade. Roads, which until this time were no more than tracks, were improved to move the products of the Industrial Revolution to new markets. The application of steam power and steel meant the coming of the railway and a transport revolution. For the first time in human history, people were no longer limited to travelling at the speed of a horse. In 1825, the Stockton and Darlington Railway opened, and the engineer and inventor George Stephenson drove his locomotive with 36 wagons the 19 kilometres between the two towns.

Another important form of transport during the Industrial Revolution was the growing system of canals that were built in Britain from the mid-18th century. Canals, which connected with many of the major rivers, gave easy access to coal areas and to new factories that needed efficient transport. Canal travel was also reasonably fast, particularly when horses walking along the banks propelled the barges in the canals. Canals were ideal for moving large volumes of goods or coal and very heavy machinery. Water transport was not only the preferred mode for moving heavy

Thinkstock/Christopher Elwell

The world's first iron bridge became a symbol of the Industrial Revolution. This bridge, over the River Severn in Shropshire, England, was made entirely of iron. Construction began in 1779 and the bridge was opened in 1781. It is still used today.

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The Bridgeman Art Library/Howard, Norman (1899-1955)/Private Collection/© Look and Learn

The application of the steam engine with wheels began a transport revolution. George Stephenson with his train at the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, the first public rail service in the world, in 1825. The 19-kilometre journey took two hours.

items; it was also ideal for delicate items such as the growing output of the booming pottery and ceramics industry. Huge sums of money were invested in canal construction. By the 1840s, Britain had a network of nearly 12 000 kilometres of working canals across the country.

The roads, an expanding canal network and, ultimately, the new railways moved people and products around the country. In time, too, steamships took the place of sail, and steel ships driven by steam power took British products to all parts of the world.

The Agricultural Revolution

As the industrial age began, there were already important changes taking place in British agriculture. Parliament had passed a series of Enclosure Acts, which allowed the once open **common land** to be divided up, creating larger and more efficient farm units. Improved techniques such as crop rotation, better drainage, and improved animal breeding meant that more food could now be produced on the same area of land. Iron tools, especially ploughs and hoes, were more efficient than wooden ones. New machines such as the wheeled seed drill replaced the inefficient hand-sowing of crops, and new harvesting machines for grain allowed wheat production to increase by 25 per cent between 1750 and 1800, and then by 50 per cent in the next half-century. Grain production also rose as farmers better understood the value of fertilisers – especially nitrogen, much of which came from animal manure – and their benefits for the soil.

The Agricultural Revolution

The growth of the city

The rapid improvements in agriculture came at a time when the population began to increase – from six million people in Britain and Ireland in 1700 to more than 16 million one hundred years later. Before this time, the population had increased only very slowly, but with a more reliable food supply and improvements in medicine, the population began to increase far more rapidly than at any other time in Britain's history. As the enclosure of common or public lands increased and fewer people were needed to produce Britain's food, many people who had once worked in agriculture were forced off the land. For the first time in British history there was movement of people away from the land. They had the choice of moving to the growing towns and cities, where their labour could be used in the new factories, or to the British colonies overseas as new settlers.

Populating Britain

This major movement of people from the countryside to the cities began to change British society. The traditional aristocracy retained its influence, but a new working class slowly emerged that was made up of industrial workers. At the same time there was a growing middle class of factory owners, merchants, traders and professional people who benefited from the great changes taking place.

As people moved, the growth of cities became an important feature of the Industrial Revolution. At the start of the Industrial Revolution in 1760, London had a population of 740 000. Forty years later, in 1800, it became the first city in the modern world to have over one million inhabitants. It would remain the largest city in the world until 1925.

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Living and working conditions for the new working class

The workforce that made the Industrial Revolution gained little immediate benefit from it. Although conditions for workers in industrial Britain did gradually improve over time, the majority of workers at first endured poor living conditions, and working conditions that were harsh and often dangerous.

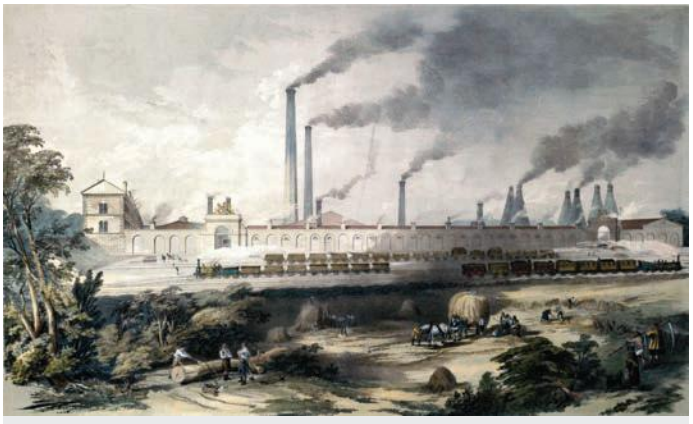
At the bottom of this social order, the poor lived in harsh, crowded conditions. The workforce had to live close to the place where they worked, so housing was often built within the shadow of the factories and the mills, and was usually basic and overcrowded. Many families were forced to live in small, substandard spaces, and they often faced the dangers of poor sanitation and disease and a rising crime rate.

Getty Images/Hulton Archive

Coalminers at work during the Industrial Revolution

In the factories, workers, including women and children, faced long hours of monotonous work for six days a week. Factories were poorly lit and ill ventilated (a tax on windows meant that they were often dark). Unprotected machinery was dangerous and working accidents were common.

At this time there was little or no consideration given to workers' rights, and people had little or no say about the conditions in which they worked. The first to protest and demand change were seen as agitators and faced the harsh justice of the time. In the coal mines conditions were even worse. Underground mining increased and the work of miners, including young children, was always hazardous and often deadly.



Getty Images/SSPL

Cyclops Steel Works, Sheffield, in about 1845

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What advantages did Britain enjoy that contributed to the Industrial Revolution in that country after 1750?

2 Why do we remember James Watt, George Stephenson and Henry Bessemer?

3 Explain two of the benefits canal transport had over land transport in the early years of the Industrial Revolution.

4 Why was there an improvement in agricultural output in Britain in the 18th century?

5 Explain why the rights of workers in factories were virtually non-existent when the Industrial Revolution began.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
- **(a)** Industrial Revolution
- **(b)** Agricultural Revolution
- **(c)** convict transportation
- **(d)** enclosure movement

2 Select *one* of the following inventions and explain how its arrival was important for the Industrial Revolution.
- Richard Arkwright's spinning frame
- James Watt's steam engine
- George Stephenson's Rocket locomotive

3 What were some of the important changes that took place in British agriculture in the early 18th century?

4 Which of the following statements cannot be supported by the historical evidence?
- **A** Improvements in agriculture in the 18th century came about through the use of new farm machines and new farming methods.
- **B** Improvements in agriculture in the 18th century increased the food supply.
- **C** Improvements in agriculture in the 18th century allowed more people to work on the land.
- **D** Improvements in agriculture in the 18th century included the development of better breeds of livestock.

5 In 1808, with the Industrial Revolution at its height, the great English poet William Blake wrote a poem entitled 'And did those feet in ancient time'. Find a copy of the poem on the Internet. In the poem Blake wrote of the 'dark satanic mills' in 'England's green and pleasant land'.
- **(a)** Explain what you think Blake meant by these words.
- **(b)** From the Internet, select two images or paintings of the time that you feel capture Blake's feelings. Write a short paragraph expressing your own feelings about these images.

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WHAT WERE THE EXPERIENCES OF THE SLAVES WHO WERE PART OF THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLES AFTER 1750?

1.2

Movement of peoples: The slave trade

The transatlantic slave trade that flourished between the 16th and the 19th centuries was probably the greatest forced movement of people in world history, and one of the most savage. It involved the transportation of at least 12 million Africans from their own lands to work as slaves for the rest of their lives in different parts of the Americas, or what was called the New World.

The severity and harshness of the transportation of 165 000 convicts to Australia in the 18th and 19th centuries is dwarfed by the brutal reality of the African slave trade. If the convicts sent to Australia had been unwilling but not completely innocent victims, African slaves were true innocents: men and women taken from their homes in the interior of Africa, imprisoned and then shipped to a life of servitude in another part of the world.

The Bridgeman Art Library/Jackson, William (1730-1803)/© Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool

A British slave ship from Liverpool off the African coast during the time of the great transatlantic slave trade. The British had a major involvement in this trade.

The origins of the transatlantic slave trade

Slavery has existed throughout history. It was a feature of the ancient world, survived in parts of Europe and around the Mediterranean during the Middle Ages and was a feature of the Islamic world.

After the voyages of Christopher Columbus to the New World between 1492 and 1500, the Spanish and the Portuguese soon established colonies in these new lands. Spain became the first European country to use slaves in its possessions, and other nations soon followed. From the vast regions of Brazil in South America, which was a Portuguese colony, to the Spanish colonies in Central America and the Caribbean, new plantations grew valuable commodities such as sugar, tobacco, coffee and rice. At first the **indigenous** people were forced to labour under the hot sun in these new colonies, but they had no experience of working the land and many fell victim to diseases that the Europeans had carried to the New World. Slavery, or some form of forced labour, was the only alternative if the plantations of the colonies were to prosper. At the same time, improvements in ocean-going technology made the transportation of peoples across the Atlantic possible, and so the slave trade from Africa began. By 1560 the Portuguese were active slave traders, providing labour to Brazil with its vast sugar and coffee plantations. In Central America and the Caribbean, slavery became vital to the Spanish, British, Dutch, French and Portuguese colonies, and the African slave trade flourished in this region throughout most of the 18th century.

Transatlantic trade

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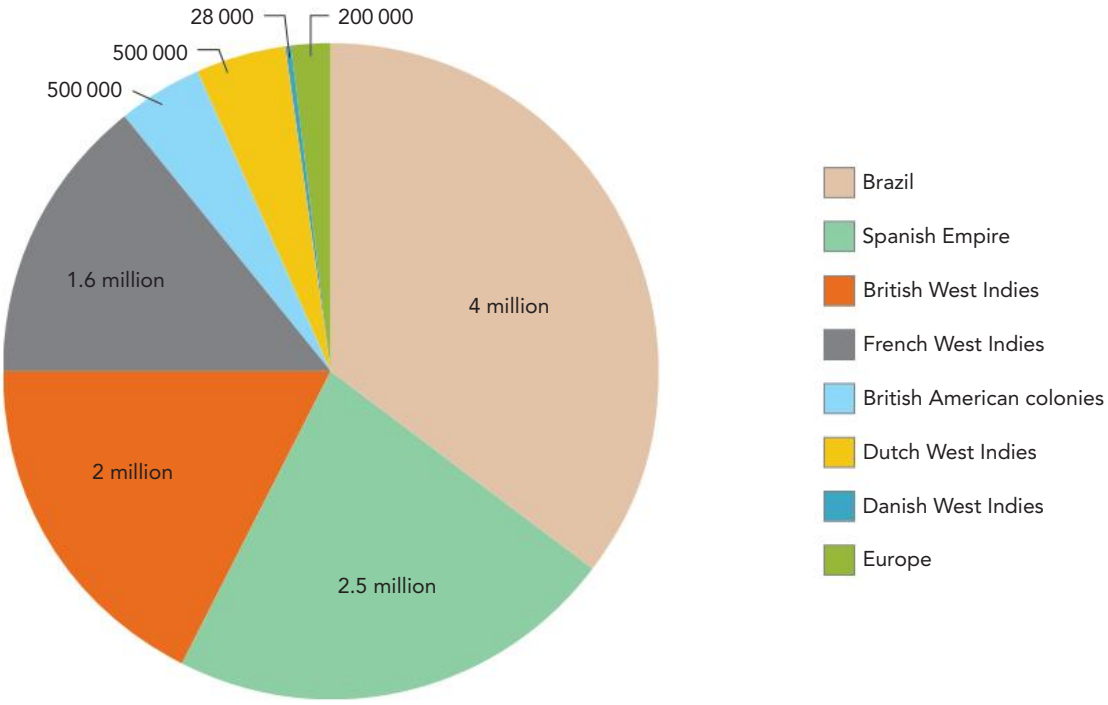
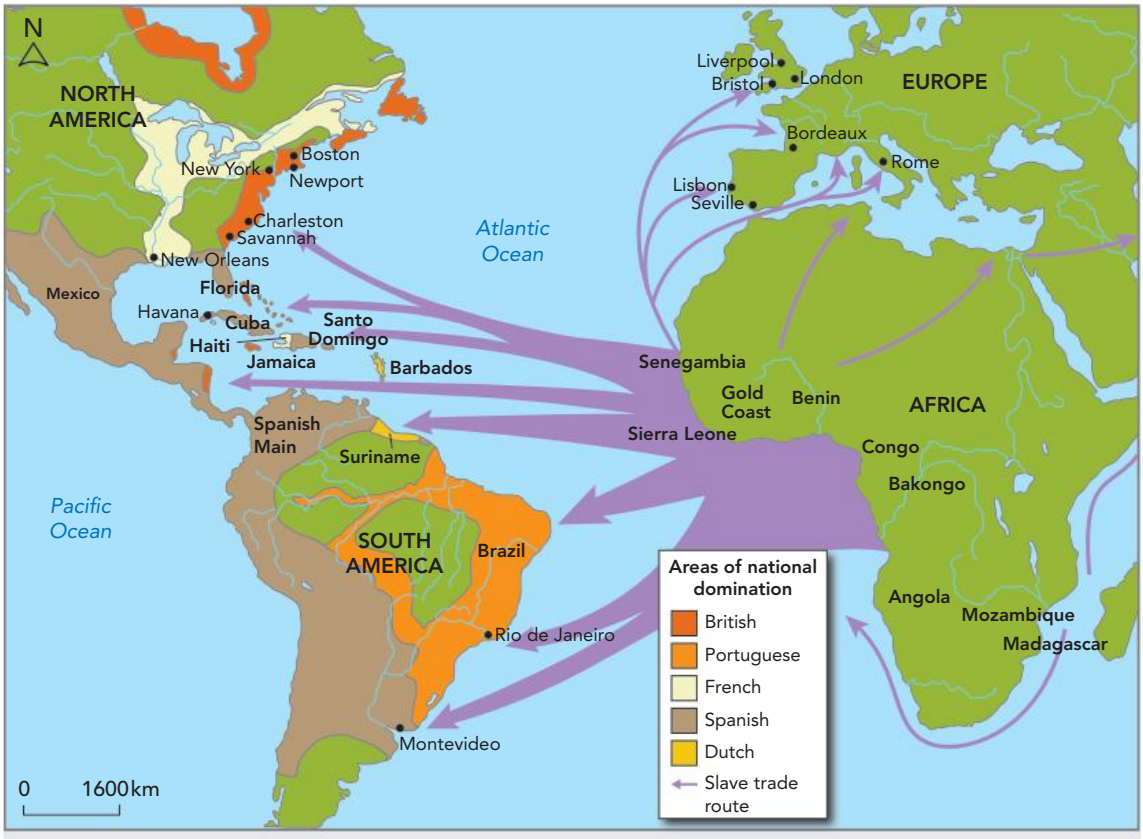
FROM THE SOURCE

source A



The main destinations of slaves taken from Africa during the time of the slave trade.

source B



Map showing the main destinations of the transatlantic slave trade

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1 Where were the main Spanish and Portuguese possessions in the Americas?

2 Explain why there was such a demand for slavery in the Americas.

3 Which of the following statements is supported by evidence from the map in Source B?

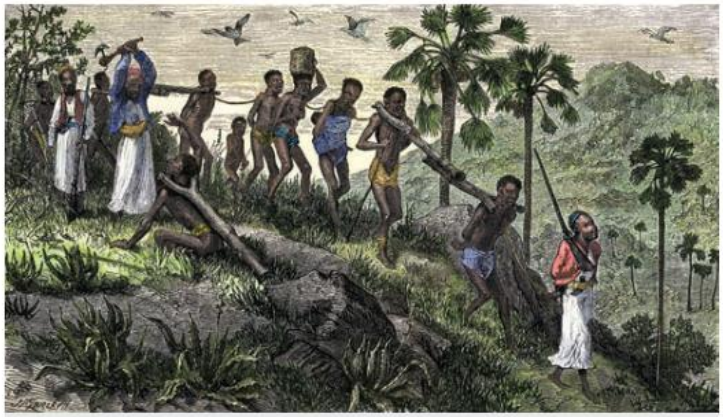
A Most slaves were sent to the British North American colonies.

B Most slaves came from the west coast of Africa.

C Slavery existed only in the Americas.

D There was a significant slave trade into French possessions in North America.

The triangular trade



Alamy/North Wind Picture Archives

In this 19th-century wood engraving, African captives, yoked in pairs, are marched by slave traders from the interior to the coastal markets in West Africa. From there they will be shipped as slaves to the Americas.

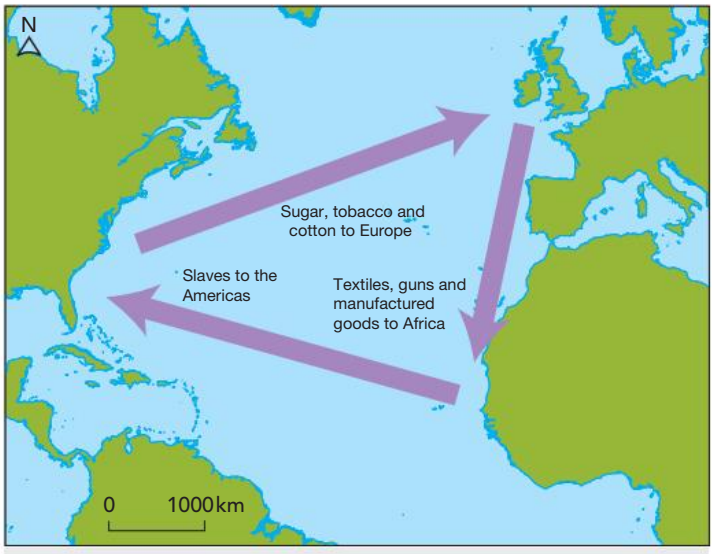
From the 17th century to the early 19th, English merchants became active in the profitable slave trade. As many as six million Africans were taken as slaves to the Americas in the 18th century, and about two million of them were traded from British ships.

In England the major ports used by the slave ships were London, Bristol and, in particular, Liverpool. By 1750 Liverpool was the largest centre in Europe for those who managed and profited from the African slave trade. The profits from the trade helped to fuel the Industrial Revolution. Evidence suggests that in the 18th century about 75 per cent of all the ships involved in the slave trade left from Liverpool.

Ships were especially refitted to carry large numbers of slaves – at least 200, and up to 600, at a time. These ships left British and some European ports for the coast of Africa loaded with trade goods. The Industrial Revolution provided the ships with cargoes of textiles, guns and manufactured goods. At ports along the West African coast, ship captains traded these commodities for living cargoes of slaves.

Then began the six- to eight-week voyage across the Atlantic – the so-called Middle Passage – before the slaves were unloaded and then sold to plantation owners and others at different places in the Americas and the islands of the Caribbean.

The empty ships were then loaded up with the products of the New World: rum, coffee, molasses, tobacco, rice, **indigo**, timber, cotton and particularly sugar. All of these were highly profitable items in British and European markets. Once the ships returned home from the triangular crossing, the profits from the sale of slaves and the sale of cargo would be calculated. The captain and crew and the shipowners would be paid, and all those who had never left the



The triangular trade route, used by slave traders, across the Atlantic Ocean between Europe, Africa and the Americas

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comfort of London or Liverpool, but who had invested in the venture, would usually receive their money with profit.

It is estimated that some 10 to 12 million African slaves were moved to the Americas between the 16 century and the close of the 18th. The trade reached its peak in the middle of the 18th century, when more than 80 000 Africans per year were crossing the Atlantic as slaves.

FROM THE SOURCE

Settling the accounts

Once more the well-known merchants enter the office of Thomas Clarke, to settle the accounts of the good ship *Thomas*. Mr. James takes the chair, as he has often done before … He commenced with 'Well, gentlemen, I am glad to say, all things considered, Captain Roberts has made a good voyage; and I for one am willing to give him a lump sum for himself, for you see, gentlemen, it's just as how you treat your captain, so you come off well or bad, for I have been a captain myself … let us look at the state of the accounts first, and here I find the **captain's log** shows 400 men slaves; 230 women slaves = 630 total. 100 died; 530 sold at Jamaica.

'Averaging £60 per head, this gives £31 800. The rum and sugar is all well sold; after paying all bills there is a clear profit of £24 000 on the twelve months' voyage, all I say is God be praised. Well, gentlemen, here are the bills of payment: £8000 for John Simmons, £8000 for Thomas Ratcliffe, and the same for myself, William James.' Mr. Ratcliffe proposes that Captain Roberts receives £1000 for his long and good services, to which the others mutually agree; the captain thankfully accepts the £1000, and gladly retires from the sea.

'A genuine "Dicky Sam"', *Liverpool and Slavery: An Historical Account of the Liverpool–African Slave Trade*, A. Bowker & Son, Liverpool, 1884, p. 38

1 **Explain the event described in this document extract.**

2 **Approximately what percentage of the slaves died on this particular voyage? Is this within the normal range of slave deaths on a voyage?**

3 **Why is Captain Roberts treated so well by the businessmen at this meeting? Is there any evidence that the captain has done other slave voyages?**

4 **The extract contains the following statement: 'The rum and sugar is all well sold'. Explain the presence of this reference to rum and sugar even though the *Thomas* is a slave ship.**

The journey to the Americas

Conditions on the slave ships were subhuman. Because each slave was valuable, as many as possible were crammed into the narrow spaces built beneath the decks. Most slave traders believed in 'tight packing'. This involved chained slaves lying side by side on planks with limited ability to move. It usually resulted in more slave deaths than other methods, but traders considered that the loss was made up for by the increased number of slaves who could be carried. 'Loose packing', on the other hand, allowed slaves more room; they were usually chained in a sitting position. It reduced the number of slaves on any voyage and the death rate was often lower. In the packing process, slaves would have their clothing removed and were usually branded with hot irons so they could be identified.

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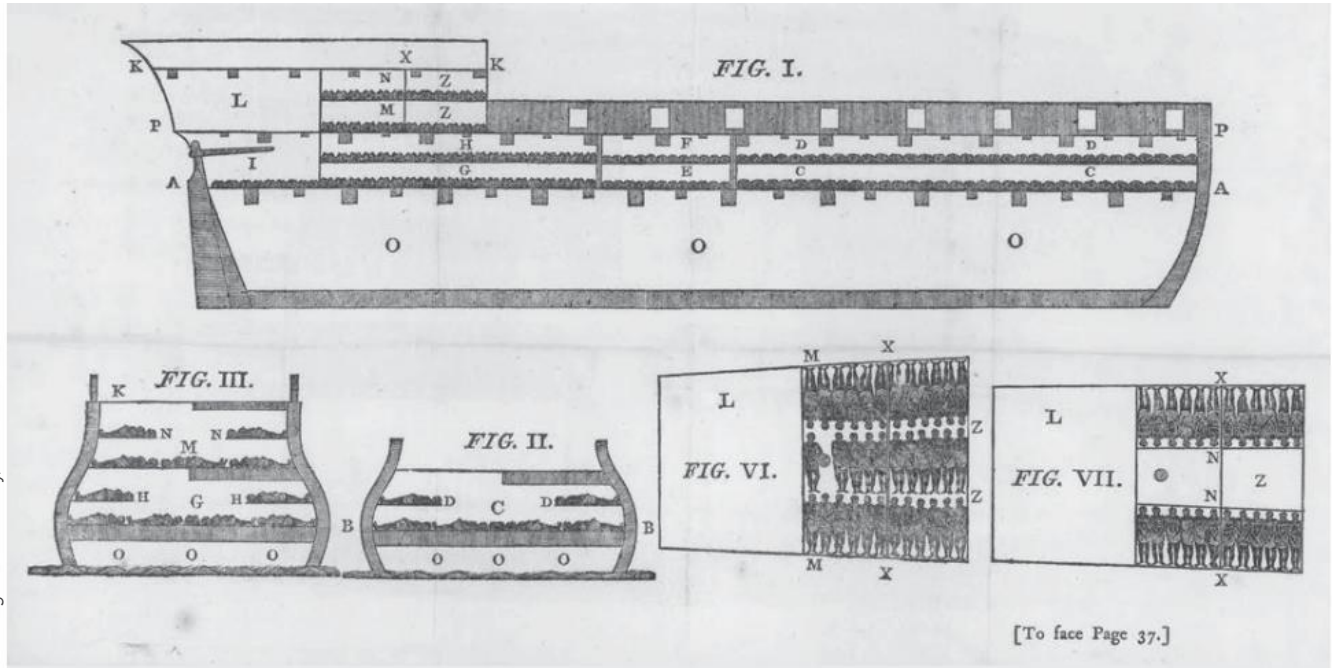

The Bridgeman Art Library/Private Collection

Tight packing of slaves is clearly illustrated in this 1791 diagram of the slave ship *Brookes*, which was based in Liverpool. Most captains used tight packing because it allowed them to transport a greater number of slaves.

Inside the slave decks, the lack of fresh air and adequate ventilation, the lack of sanitation and outbreaks of disease took their toll on every crossing. The stench of slave ships was overwhelming – so much so that other ships at sea claimed they could identify a slave ship by its smell. On arrival at their destination, slave ships were usually not permitted to anchor by the docks because of the smell. Slaves were taken from the ship on board small boats to holding cells on land.

Slaves did not only die of disease and ill treatment. Some otherwise healthy slaves died of what was called melancholy or sadness. Slaves who died were simply thrown overboard. Historians who have studied slave records have suggested that as many as 1.5 million slaves died at sea during the time the slave trade operated. A loss of between 15 and 20 per cent of the slaves on each voyage was not unusual.

Basic food, usually a porridge made from grain, was provided twice a day. Slaves who refused to eat were force-fed using a device that forced their jaws apart. Logbooks from slave ships also suggest that slaves were often fed increased rations in the week before the ships docked. On some crossings, slaves were allowed on deck in small groups. The chains remained to prevent slaves from jumping overboard, for slave suicide was not uncommon. 'Dancing the slaves' was a part of the ships' routine during which slaves were made to dance as a form of exercise. African song and dance styles such as the limbo, now part of Caribbean culture, came to the Americas on the slave ships.

On arrival at their destination, the slaves were washed and then sold at auction. Prices varied according to the quality of the slaves and their age. Inspection of their teeth usually gave an indication of their physical condition. A slave's life after sale depended on many factors. Those who went to the North American colonies (about 6 per cent of all slaves) generally fared better than those who were sold to the plantations of the Caribbean and South America. Slaves who became household servants, particularly in the American colonies, were often treated better than those on the plantations, who might have to work for up to 18 hours a day.

Research: Slave plantations

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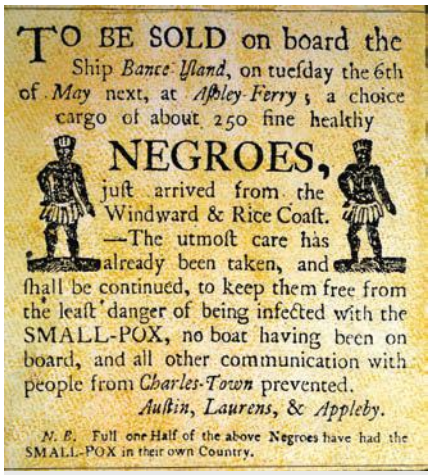


TO BE SOLD on board the Ship *Bance-Island*, on tueſday the 6th of *May* next, at *Aſhley-Ferry*; a choice cargo of about 250 fine healthy

NEGROES,

juſt arrived from the Windward & Rice Coaſt. —The utmoſt care has already been taken, and ſhall be continued, to keep them free from the leaſt danger of being infected with the SMALL-POX, no boat having been on board, and all other communication with people from *Charles-Town* prevented.

Auſtin, Laurens, & Appleby.

N. B. Full one Half of the above Negroes have had the SMALL-POX in their own Country.

Notice of a slave sale to be held in Charleston, South Carolina, in July 1769

Mary Evans/INTERFOTO / Bildarchiv Hansmann

Corbis/Historical Picture Archive

A painting of the time showing the harvesting and transportation of cotton by slave labour on a plantation in the West Indies. What four different tasks were the slaves doing in this image?

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What was the main British trading port during the transatlantic slave trade?

2 To which South American colony were the majority of slaves taken?

3 Apart from Britain, name three major European states that were involved in the transatlantic slave trade.

4 List four major products that slaves were forced to produce.

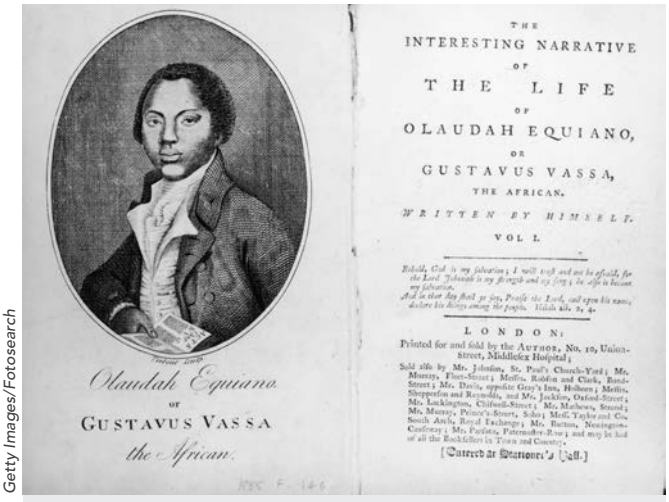
5 The number of slaves taken to the Americas between the 16th and the 18th centuries was:

A about six million

B about 12 million

C about 15 million

D more than 20 million.



Olaudah Equiano or GUSTAVUS VASSA the African.

THE INTERESTING NARRATIVE OF THE LIFE OF OLAUDAH EQUIANO, OR GUSTAVUS VASSA, THE AFRICAN. WRITTEN BY HIMSELF. VOL I.

LONDON: Printed for and sold by the AUTHOR, No. 10, Union-Street, Middlesex Hospital;

Getty Images/Fotosearch

The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African was published in 1789. It is a rare and valuable account of slave experiences written by a man who had been a slave.

The experiences of Olaudah Equiano, also known as Gustavus Vassa

About Olaudah Equiano

Born in what is now Nigeria, probably in 1745, Olaudah Equiano was sold into slavery and sent to Barbados in the West Indies. He was later sold a number of times to different masters and had the opportunity to travel with them. Unusually for a slave, he also learnt to read and write.

Ultimately, Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa (a name given to him by a British naval officer who had been his master) had enough money to secure his freedom, and he became active in the movement to abolish slavery.

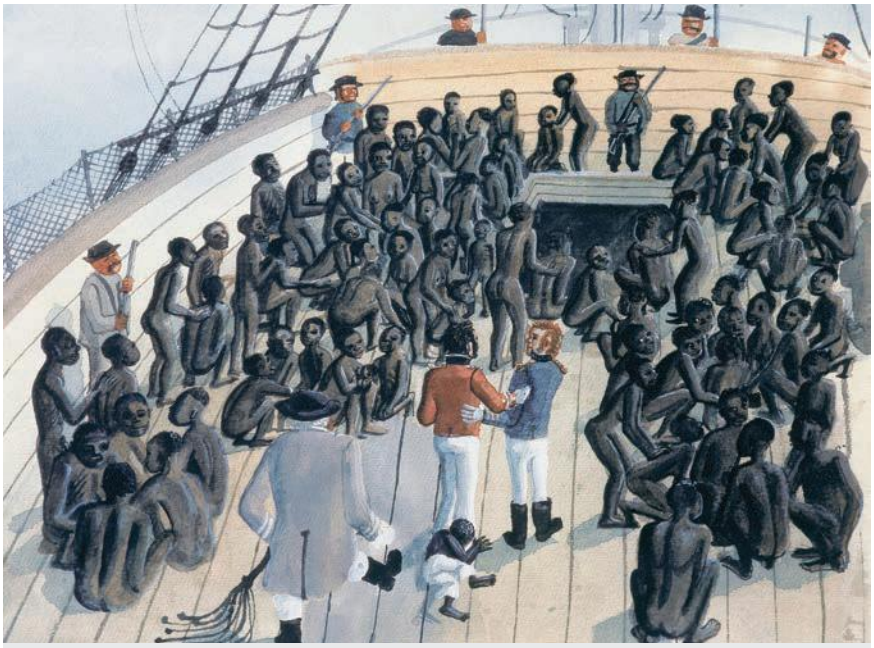
In 1789 his autobiography, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or*

ISBN 9780170347266

Gustavus Vassa, the African, was published. It is one of the few documents about African slavery that was written by a person who had been a slave. Olaudah Equiano died in 1797.

Extracts from *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano or Gustavus Vassa, the African*

The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave-ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror … I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste any thing. I now wished for the last friend, Death, to relieve me; but soon, to my grief, two of the white men offered me eatables; and, on refusing to eat, one of them held me fast by the hands, and laid me across, I think, the windlass, and tied my feet, while the other flogged me severely. I had never experienced any thing of this kind before; and although, not being used to the water, I naturally feared that element the first time I saw it … In a little time after, amongst the poor chained men, I found some of my own nation, which in a small degree gave ease to my mind. I inquired of these what was to be done with us? They gave me to understand we were to be carried to these white people's country to work for them.



Slaves under guard are allowed on the deck of a ship carrying them to the plantations of the West Indies.

© De Agostini/The British Library Board, 11229207

At last, when the ship we were in had got in all her cargo, they made ready with many fearful noises, and we were all put under deck, so that we could not see how they managed the vessel. But this disappointment was the least of my sorrow. The stench of the hold while we were on the coast was so intolerably loathsome, that it was dangerous to remain there for any time, and some of us had been permitted to stay on the deck for the fresh air; but now that the whole ship's cargo were confined together, it became absolutely pestilential. The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. This produced copious perspirations, so that the air soon became unfit for respiration, from a variety of loathsome smells, and brought on a sickness among the slaves, of which many died …

One day they had taken a number of fishes; and when they had killed and satisfied themselves with as many as they thought fit, to our astonishment who were on the deck, rather than give any of them to us to eat, as we expected, they tossed the remaining fish into the sea again, although we begged and prayed for some as well we could, but in vain; and some of my countrymen, being pressed by hunger, took an opportunity, when they thought no one saw them, of trying to get a little privately; but they were discovered, and the attempt procured them some very severe floggings …

When we had a smooth sea, and a moderate wind, two of my wearied countrymen, who were chained together (I was near them at the time), preferring death to such a life of misery, somehow made through the nettings, and jumped into the sea: immediately another quite

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dejected fellow, who, on account of his illness, was suffered to be out of irons, also followed their example; and I believe many more would soon have done the same, if they had not been prevented by the ship's crew, who were instantly alarmed … At last we came in sight of the island of Barbados, at which the whites on board gave a great shout, and made many signs of joy to us.

1 Why would it have been possible for many slaves never to have seen the sea?

2 Is there any evidence in this extract that the slaves had some knowledge of what was happening to them?

3 What particular aspect of his treatment features most prominently in this account by Olaudah Equiano?

4 List three features of Olaudah Equiano's account that are also confirmed by historical evidence from the painting.

5 What was this slave ship's particular destination in the Americas?

6 Explain what these slaves could expect to happen to them once they arrived at this destination.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain the meaning of the following terms:
   (a) triangular trade
   (b) plantation economy

2 Explain in an extended paragraph how merchants and sea captains made money on the triangular trade.

3 Imagine you are the captain of a slave ship operating the triangular trade in the early 19th century. Prepare an entry in your ship's log in which you explain:
   (a) why you prefer tight packing rather than loose packing
   (b) some of the measures you take to reduce the death rate among your slave cargo.

4 Consider the slave trade from the perspective of Thomas Golightly (1732–1821), a wealthy merchant from Liverpool and later mayor of the city (1772), who invested in the slave trade and made significant profit from it. Ask Thomas Golightly the following questions and, considering the matter from his time and perspective, write down in extended paragraphs what you imagine his responses would have been.
   (a) Why are you involved in the slave trade?
   (b) How does the slave trade operate from your point of view?
   (c) How are the slaves treated on the ships under your control?
   (d) Have you ever considered the consequences of your business involvement in slavery?

courtesy National Museums Liverpool

Thomas Golightly

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WHAT WERE THE EXPERIENCES OF THE CONVICTS AND FREE SETTLERS WHO WERE PART OF THE MOVEMENT OF PEOPLES AFTER 1750?

1.3

Movement of peoples: The convicts

The Industrial Revolution began a process of great social and economic change. Many of those who moved from the countryside to the growing **urban** centres in search of a livelihood were poorly educated and unskilled. Life in the cities of industrial Britain was difficult. It was a world of inequality where life was hard, brutal and often short. Life in the 18th century brought increasing challenges and struggle, and Britain's population was growing. The crime rate also increased.

The convict system

As part of an effort to control a worsening situation and limit the danger of social unrest, Britain had harsh penalties for crime. Over 200 different crimes carried the death penalty in 1790. The other major punishment was transportation over the seas.

Britain had been able to transport many of its convicts to work in its American colonies. The numbers transported to these American colonies were significant. Historical evidence suggests that, of the 580 000 people who moved to the American colonies between 1700 and 1775, about 52 000 had been convicts.

After 1775, however, with the onset of the **American War of Independence**, Britain could no longer transport convicts to the American colonies. As the prisons at home became overcrowded, many convicts were kept on disused ships called 'hulks' in various harbours and estuaries around the country. Conditions on many of these hulks were extreme. There was unrest and disease, and escapes were a regular occurrence.

'Relief guard arriving at a prison hulk, Deptford', by E Tucker, 1821, courtesy of National Library of Australia

This 1821 painting by E Tucker is entitled *Relief guard arriving at a prison hulk*. Hulks were used to house the overflow of convicts from the British prison system. Some hulks held as many as 600 prisoners.

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Transported beyond the seas

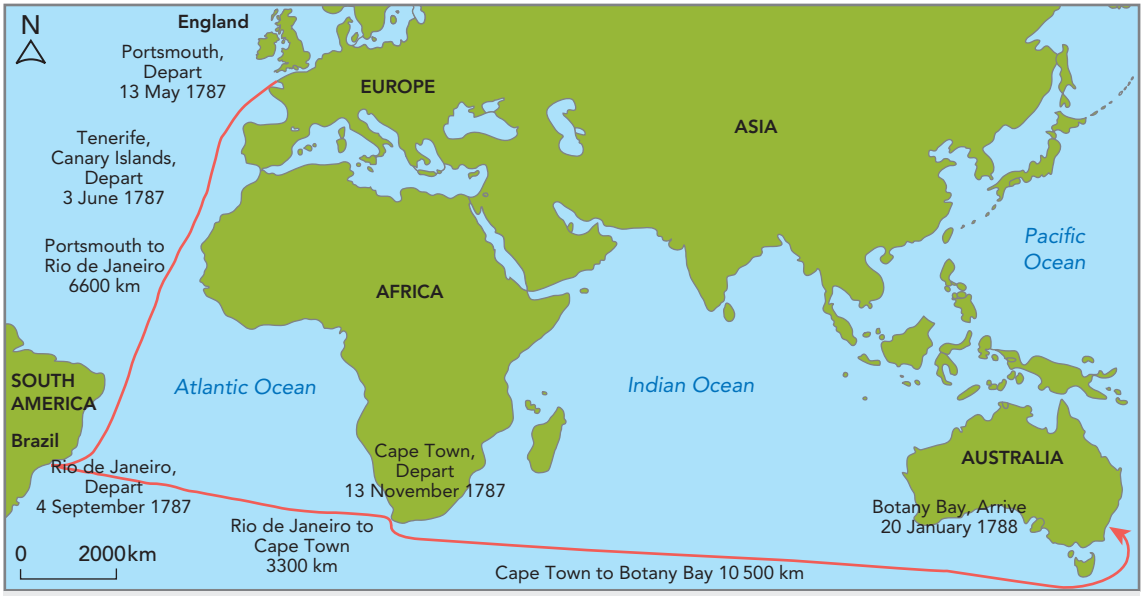
By the 1780s the issue had become increasingly urgent. The overcrowded jails and hulks were overflowing with people who had fallen foul of the harsh legal codes of the time. The obvious solution to the problem, at least in part, was to find a new place to send British convicts. In August 1786 the British government finally made the decision to send convicts to the far side of the world, to Botany Bay in New South Wales, and to establish a new penal colony there.

Captain Cook had entered Botany Bay during his great voyage of discovery along Australia's east coast in 1770. A number of men, including the influential Sir Joseph Banks, who had been with Cook, spoke favourably of New South Wales as a place for settlement.

However, there were other reasons as well for setting up a colony in New South Wales. There were strategic reasons – to formally settle part of the vast territory that Cook had claimed in Britain's name but as yet had no permanent British settlement. Other nations, especially France, were on the move in the Pacific at this time. There was the potential for future trade with China and there was the possibility of securing supplies of important commodities such as flax. From the flax plants of the region came rope and sailcloth, which were vital commodities for the British navy.

Voyage of the First Fleet

On 13 May 1787 the First Fleet of 11 ships, including six transport ships for the convicts, sailed from Portsmouth, England. It attracted little interest as it left and, apart from a brief item in a newspaper, very few were aware of the departure of almost 1500 people, including more than 700 convicts, for Botany Bay.



The voyage of the First Fleet, which lasted from May 1787 until January 1788.

The fleet sailed to Tenerife, in the Canary Islands, and then to Rio de Janeiro, in South America, where it was resupplied with food and repaired before the next leg to Cape Town, at the tip of Africa. More provisions were taken on board in Cape Town, including livestock, and in November 1787 the fleet left for the final leg of its journey. This was the longest and hardest part of the voyage, leaving the last point of civilisation and heading to a place that existed only as a name on a map. Finally, after a 10-week voyage across the Southern Ocean, and eight months out from its starting point, the fleet arrived at Botany Bay on 20 January 1788.

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It had been an extraordinary feat to get the entire fleet to its destination after a voyage of 24 000 kilometres across three oceans. The fleet was in good condition, with a death rate from disease that was remarkably low for such a journey. The voyage revealed that the choice of Captain Arthur Phillip to lead the enterprise had been a very sound one. Phillip, a naval officer who had come out of retirement to accept the position, was above all a practical man who had a rare combination of strength and purpose with humanity and compassion.

Botany Bay proved to be unsuitable as a landing spot. The shallowness of the bay forced the ships to anchor near the entrance, where they were exposed to wind and sea. There were concerns at the sandy soil, poor grazing lands and limited fresh water. On 21 January Phillip left the fleet at Botany Bay. He took a small group of men in three longboats to travel north in search of another landing site. Later that day they became the first white men to enter Port Jackson, the great harbour hidden behind towering sea cliffs. It was, wrote one officer, 'a harbour capable of affording security to a much larger fleet than would probably ever seek for shelter or security in it'. In one of the coves of this 'noble and capacious harbour, equal if not superior to any yet known in the world', Phillip found a place for permanent settlement. By 26 January 1788 the entire fleet was anchored safely in a small inlet that Phillip named Sydney Cove.

State Library of NSW [a5869001]

Captain Arthur Phillip (1738–1814), commander of the First Fleet and the first governor of New South Wales. He was a man who combined strength and purpose with humanity and compassion.

'The First Fleet in Sydney Cove, January 27, 1788', by John Allcot, Sydney Mail, 26 January 1938, courtesy of National Library of Australia

After a voyage of eight months, the First Fleet entered Sydney Cove in January 1788. A print of this 1938 painting by John Allcott (1888–1973) appeared in a supplement to the *Sydney Mail* newspaper on Australia Day, 1938.

The convict voyage

Conditions for convicts on the long voyage to Australia could vary greatly. Some 48 people died on the journey of the First Fleet. The Second Fleet, which arrived in June 1790, had the highest death rate in the history of convict transportation to Australia: 267 convicts died on board and another 125 after landing at Sydney.

Convicts were usually transported by private contractors who provided the ships and were paid a fee for each convict carried. Some of the same shipping companies had also been involved with the slave

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trade to the American colonies and it did not matter to them whether the convict arrived dead or alive. 'The slave trade is merciful compared with what I have seen in this [second] fleet', wrote Captain William Hill of the New South Wales Corps in 1790. 'The contractors [Camden, Calvert and King] had been in the Guinea [slave] trade, and put on board the same shackles used by them in that trade.'

Gradually conditions for the transportation of convicts improved, but food was still basic and disease was common. There were diseases such as dysentery and fever, and the lack of fruit and vegetables often led to scurvy, which caused teeth to fall out. Although convicts were allowed on deck to wash and take fresh air, they spent most of the journey confined below deck, often behind bars or in chains. Although it only happened once during transportation to Australia, fear of a convict escape or a mutiny was always present.

The historical debate: Who were the convicts?

For the next 80 years, from 1788 until 1868, a total of 165 0000 convicts were transported to Australia. Sydney remained the main convict settlement in New South Wales from 1788 to 1840 though convict settlements were also set up at Newcastle (1804–22) and then Port Macquarie (1821–28). Convict settlements in other parts of the country included Norfolk Island (1788–1808), Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) from 1803 to 1853, the Moreton Bay Settlement, now the site of Brisbane, from 1824 to 1839, and a settlement in Western Australia from 1849 to 1868, the year that transportation of convicts finally ended.

A question that has interested Australian historians is this: What type of people were the convicts who came to these shores? Initially, the convict past in Australian history was played down in favour of the story of nation building and the role of the free settlers. In 1938, when Australia celebrated the sesquicentennial (150th anniversary) of white settlement, the convict past received hardly any mention in the official events and the celebration.

In the decades that followed, historians began to see the convict history as important and many of the convicts as victims of a harsh penal system – people driven to crime by poverty, hardship and hunger. A study of convict records then available suggested that most were not hardened criminals but people from the lower levels of the social system, whose main offence was petty theft. Many had skills that were used for the benefit of the colony. Historians and writers before the 1950s saw convicts more as nation builders.

From the 1950s, however, some historians began to challenge this view. Historians began to argue that many of the convicts were hardened and professional criminals. Relatively few were political prisoners. Historians such as Manning Clark and A. G. L. Shaw in the 1960s and, more recently, Robert Hughes in his book *The Fatal Shore*, suggested that most convicts were in fact from the criminal class.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A — Manning Clark, *A History of Australia*

When these men and women spoke for themselves before their judges, they seemed to be liars, drunkards and cheats … With hearts and minds unsustained by any great hope of mankind, driven on by the terror of detection, strangers to loyalty, parasites preying on society … they were men and women who roused their contemporaries to disgust and to apprehension but rarely to compassion and never to hope.

C. M. H. Clark, *A History of Australia*, vol. 1, MUP, 1962, p. 95

source B — New account of convict life released

SYDNEY: Australia's first wave of European settlers were young, fit and literate men and women with skills no less than average for Britons of the time, according to a radical new history of early convict life.

ISBN 9780170347266

Most were 'ordinary working-class people who stole occasionally', not habitual criminals, Steve Nicholas, editor of a newly released book, *Convict Workers*, said yesterday.

Mr Nicholas, an academic at the University of New South Wales, said the book had been compiled using data relating to the age, sex, religion and occupation of convicts transported to Australia up to 1840.

He said historians believed convicts came from a 'criminal class, separate from the working class, who stole habitually and were the lowest of the low. In fact there was no such thing as a criminal class and these people were just ordinary people who were transported here because of, perhaps, a one-off crime', he said.

'Their skills were on a par with the average person in Britain and they were probably more literate than most free settlers. They were young – most between 18 and 35 – and quite healthy.'

Mr Nicholas said historians had made the mistake in the past of not checking occupational data on the convicts. 'They just accepted they were part of this criminal class', he said.

The Canberra Times, 30 November 1988

Mary Gilmore (1865–1962), 'Old Botany Bay'

source C

I'm old
Botany Bay;
stiff in the joints,
little to say.

I was the conscript
sent to hell
to make in the desert
the living well;

I split the rock;
I felled the tree:
The nation was–
Because of me!

I am he
who paved the way,
that you might walk
at your ease to-day;

I bore the heat,
I blazed the track–
furrowed and bloody
upon my back.

Old Botany Bay
Taking the sun
from day to day ...
shame on the mouth
that would deny
the knotted hands
that set us high!

Mary Gilmore, 'Old Botany Bay', courtesy of the publishers, ETT Imprint, Sydney

1 **C. M. H. Clark was a highly respected Australian historian. What is the main point Clark is making about Australian convicts in Source A?**
2 **Is the extract from *The Canberra Times* in Source B a statement of fact or opinion?**
3 **Does Source B support or challenge the historical view put forward by historians such as C. M. H. Clarke in Source A?**
4 **Mary Gilmore was a famous Australian poet and she appears on the Australian $10 banknote. Read her short poem *Old Botany Bay* in Source C. Prepare an extended paragraph explaining how Mary Gilmore saw the place of convicts in Australia's history. Refer to parts of her poem to support your case.**
5 **Can you offer a reason why there was a good deal of historical discussion about the convict era in 1988?**
6 **Explain why it is possible for historians and others to have different interpretations of the same historical event.**

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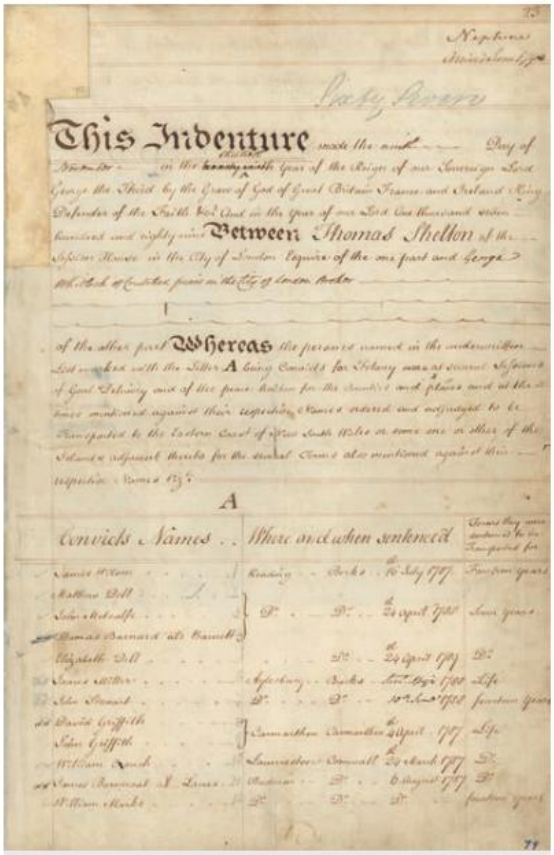
This Indenture
Between Thomas Shellon
Whereas
A
Convicts Names
Where and when sentenced

State Records NSW [NRS1150[SZ115] Convict Indents]

A page from the NSW convict records of 1787. Why would historians be able to gain a much better understanding of who the convicts were from studying records such as these?

Convict records

The official convict records are contained in what is called the Convict Indent (or Indenture). This contains particulars for each convict transported to New South Wales from 1788 to 1842. These documents are so important that they were recently added to the UNESCO World Memory Register. Historians who have studied these records have added to our knowledge of who the convicts were.

Who were the convicts?

- The average age of a convict was 25 years.
- 75 per cent of all convicts were men; 25 per cent were women.
- 70 per cent came from England or Wales.
- 24 per cent came from Ireland.
- 5 per cent came from Scotland.
- 80 per cent of all convicts were sentenced for theft or property crimes.
- 68 per cent were second offenders.
- 68 per cent were Protestant.
- 32 per cent were Catholic.
- 75 per cent were unmarried.

Proceedings of the Old Bailey

Convict records

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Explain why there were so many convicts in British prisons by the late 18th century.

2 What is a hulk and where would you have found one in 18th-century Britain?

3 Why was the American War of Independence a factor in the decision to send convicts to Botany Bay?

4 Who had actually seen Botany Bay and recommended it to the government as a possible convict colony?

5 List three reasons why the decision was made to establish a convict settlement in New South Wales.

6 Approximately how many convicts arrived on the First Fleet?

7 List three other places in Australia where convict settlements were established after 1788.

8 Which of the following statements cannot be supported by the historical evidence?

A The average age of convicts sent to Australia was under 30 years.

B Arthur Phillip was an effective choice to command the First Fleet.

C Despite hardship, Captain Phillip settled on Botany Bay as the place of settlement.

D Sydney was not the only convict settlement to be established in Australia.

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The convict experience

The experiences of convicts in the different penal settlements of Australia varied greatly. Unskilled convicts were usually assigned to labouring jobs, which could vary from farm work or clearing bushland to being put on the road gangs that cut out the colony's first roads. The Great North Road from Sydney Town to the Hunter Valley and the first road over the Blue Mountains, from Emu Plains to Bathurst, were the result of convict labour. Others could be assigned to work for emancipists – people who had been convicts but had won their conditional or absolute pardon and were now residents of the colony. Skilled convicts such as wheelwrights, coopers, stonemasons, blacksmiths, carpenters and shipbuilders could generally expect to work where their skill could benefit the colony. Convicts who were educated could expect an easier time and were usually used in government and records administration and bookkeeping.

Convict experience

Francis Greenway (1777–1837)

The convict Francis Greenway arrived in Sydney in 1814, sentenced to 14 years for forging a document associated with his work as an architect in Bristol, England. On his arrival in Sydney, Greenway was given almost complete freedom and he began work as an architect. Until his death in 1837 he designed some of the colony's most important buildings. Among them were the lighthouse at South Head, the convict barracks and three important churches, including St James' Church in King Street, Sydney.

courtesy of Australian Banknotes

A portrait of the convict architect Francis Greenway appeared on the Australian $10 banknote from 1966 until 1993. It was unusual to commemorate a person convicted for forgery on a banknote.

Francis Greenway designed the convict barracks at Hyde Park. It survives today in the heart of Sydney as a museum to convict history.

Female convicts made up about 15 per cent of the convict population of Sydney. Usually, convict women were restricted to working in female factories, which were essentially women's prisons. There they performed basic tasks that included washing and making clothes. From there many were assigned as house servants or cooks. Many women convicts had children, or gave birth after arriving in the colony. These children were taken from their mothers and placed in an orphanage.

Vinegar Hill

Overseers and soldiers supervised convict life. Punishments were common, and varied from being put to work on a treadmill or solitary confinement to flogging or hard labour. Hanging was reserved for serious offences. In February 1788, one month after the arrival of the First Fleet, convict Thomas Barrett became the first person hanged in Australia after he stole some meat. Barrett was only 17 years old. Some places, such as Van Diemen's Land and the Moreton Bay Settlement, were classed as places of secondary punishment. Conditions there could be

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State Library of NSW [a1528484]

The convict settlement takes shape: painting by George Williams Evans (1780–1852) of Sydney Cove in 1803, looking toward the east. The Tank Stream, which supplied fresh water to the early colony, is also seen in the painting.

From an early history

particularly harsh and brutal. People sent there were often the more hardened convicts or those who had committed offences in other penal settlements.

Most convicts could look forward to a Ticket of Leave after serving part of their sentence. A Ticket of Leave meant that a convict was released from public works and could work for himself or herself in the colony, and could even acquire property and land. Later, a convict could be granted conditional pardon, which granted freedom as long as they remained in the colony. Finally, an absolute pardon allowed convicts to return to England if they wished.

ML DOC

TICKET OF LEAVE.

NO. 28/102

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
NEW SOUTH WALES.
16th May 1828.

IT is His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR'S Pleasure to DISPENSE with the Attendance at Government Work of William Anson who was tried at Waterford Summer Assizes 1823 Convict for Seven years arrived per Ship Castle Forbes Master, in the year 1824, and to permit him to employ himself (off the Stores) in any lawful Occupation within the District of Parramatta for his own Advantage during good Behaviour; or, until His EXCELLENCY'S further Pleasure shall be made known.

By His Excellency's Command.

State Library of NSW [a128342]

A Ticket of Leave issued to an Irish convict, William Anson, in May 1828. Anson had been sentenced to seven years transportation and arrived in the colony in 1824.

NOTICE
TO TICKET-OF-LEAVE MEN.

Police Department, 21st February, 1842.

NOTICE is hereby given, that I am authorised by the Lieutenant-Governor to offer the Indulgence of a Conditional Pardon to such *well-conducted* Ticket-of-Leave Men as will serve in the POLICE, as hereinafter stated, at the expiration of their respective terms of Service: viz.

TICKET-OF-LEAVE Men, whose term of Transportation is Seven Years—to serve with good conduct for Six Months.
Ditto, ditto Fourteen Years—ditto One Year.
Ditto, ditto Life—ditto Fifteen Months.

It is, however, to be clearly understood, that no Pardon will be issued under these Regulations until such Ticket-of-Leave Men shall have been in the Colony for either Four, Six, or Eight Years respectively, according to their terms of Transportation being either for Seven Years, Fourteen Years, or for Life.

Men wishing to enter under these Regulations are to address their Applications to the CHIEF POLICE MAGISTRATE, and send them through the Police Magistrate of the District in which they may reside.

M. FORSTER,
Chief Police Magistrate.

State Library of Victoria [H22214]

After the transportation of convicts to New South Wales ended in 1840, former convicts of good behaviour could join the colonial police force.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Explain the meaning of each of the following terms.

(a) transportation

(b) emancipist

(c) conditional pardon

(d) absolute pardon

(e) Ticket of Leave

2 Place these historical events in their correct chronological order.

- Arrival of the First Fleet at Sydney Cove
- The American War of Independence
- Establishment of a convict colony in Van Diemen's Land
- Establishment of the Moreton Bay Settlement as a convict colony
- Arthur Phillip appointed to command the First Fleet
- The voyages of Captain Cook along the east coast of Australia

Site study: Convict heritage

Movement of peoples: Free settlers

During the 18th and 19th centuries there was another great movement of people. Unlike the victims of the slave trade or the convicts transported beyond the seas, these millions of people, mainly from Britain and Europe, made the choice to leave their homes and journey in search of new homes in the United States, Canada, South Africa and Australia.

They left for different reasons – some to escape the famine in Ireland, others leaving behind political unrest in Europe or the hardships of industrial Britain. Some moved in search of the gold discovered in California and, later, Australia. Whatever the reason for this migration of people, they all shared a common hope (a hope denied to the slaves and the convicts): that they would find a better life.

The Last of England, a painting by Ford Madox Brown, depicts a British emigrant couple at sea with the coast of England behind them. The painting was completed in 1855, a year during which 350 000 people left Britain for new lives in other countries.

The Bridgeman Art Library/Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery

Across the Atlantic

From 1789, when the United States set up its system of government, until about 1820, the movement of free people across the Atlantic Ocean to the United States was relatively small. In 1820 only about 8000 immigrants arrived in the United States. In the decades that followed, however, this pattern changed dramatically.

Ireland's great hunger

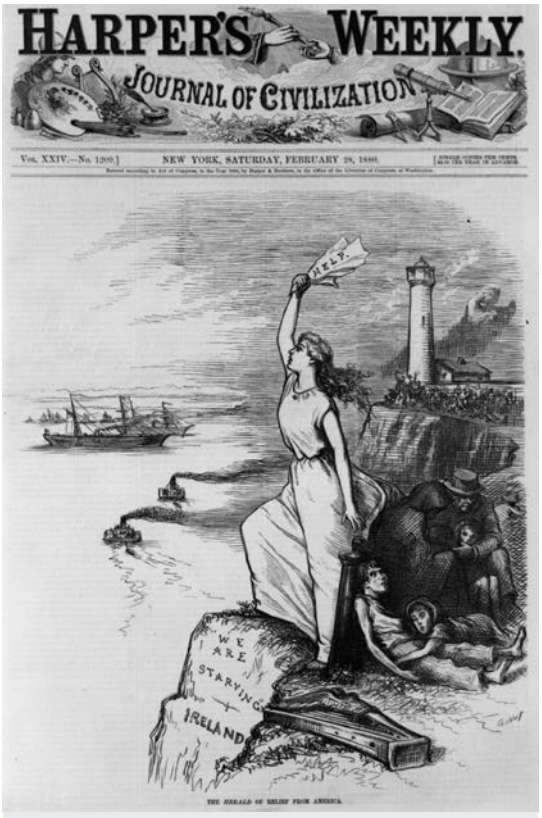
ISBN 9780170347266

TABLE 1.1 Emigration of free settlers to the United States of America, 1821–1910

YEARS	NUMBER OF IMMIGRANTS
1821–30	143 439
1831–40	599 125
1841–50	1 713 251
1851–60	2 598 214
1861–70	2 314 824
1871–80	2 812 191
1881–90	5 246 613
1891–1900	3 687 654
1901–10	8 795 386

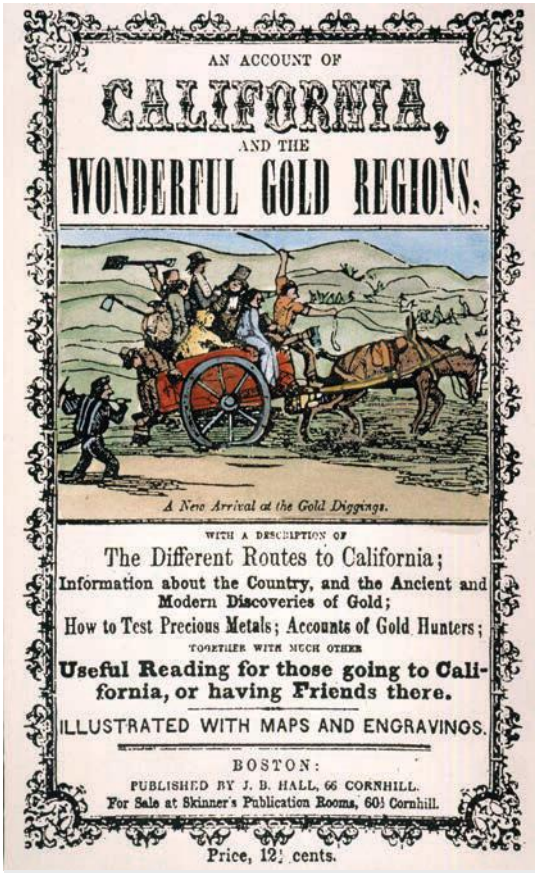
The United States was a land of new opportunity. The northern states, in particular, had begun to industrialise and, as the demand for labour grew, there was a constant flow of people across the Atlantic Ocean. They came to settle in the United States and, to a lesser extent, in Canada. They came because of hard times in their homelands and out of faith that in North America things were better.

In Ireland in 1845, a fungus caused the vital potato crop to fail. This resulted in the devastating Irish potato famine, which lasted from 1845 until 1851. Since the potato was the staple crop for most of Ireland's eight million people, the impact was disastrous. More than one million people died and almost another million left the country. In six years the population of Ireland dropped by 25 per cent. In the years that followed, the movement of people out of Ireland continued. Many went to nearby England, but 1.7 million Irish moved to the United States in the 1840s and 1850s. Among this number was Patrick Kennedy (1823–1858) from County Wexford, Ireland, who went to America in search of a better life in 1848. More than a century later, his great-grandson would be elected President of the United States.



Getty Images/Hulton Archive

The front cover of *Harper's Weekly*, with a drawing entitled 'We are starving in Ireland – the Herald of relief from America'. In what way was America the 'herald of relief' for Ireland during the great potato famine of the 1840s?


AN ACCOUNT OF
CALIFORNIA,
AND THE
WONDERFUL GOLD REGIONS.
A New Arrival at the Gold Diggings.
WITH A DESCRIPTION OF
The Different Routes to California;
Information about the Country, and the Ancient and Modern Discoveries of Gold;
How to Test Precious Metals; Accounts of Gold Hunters;
TOGETHER WITH MUCH OTHER
Useful Reading for those going to California, or having Friends there.
ILLUSTRATED WITH MAPS AND ENGRAVINGS.
BOSTON:
PUBLISHED BY J. B. HALL, 66 CORNHILL.
For Sale at Skinner's Publication Rooms, 60½ Cornhill.
Price, 12½ cents.

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A guidebook for those seeking their fortunes on the Californian goldfields. Published in Boston in 1849, it was prepared by people who had never seen a goldfield.

ISBN 9780170347266

In the same year a series of political revolutions swept much of Europe, and this political instability caused more movement of peoples. In the German states, where the revolutions were more widespread, more than one million Germans left for the United States in the decade after 1848. Similar numbers moved from southern Europe, especially Italy. Large numbers, including many Jews, left Russia during the 19th century to escape political and religious oppression.

A final factor was the discovery of gold in California in 1848. The great American gold rush that followed caused another mass migration to America. Ships carried people from Europe to the ports on the east coast of the United States. From there they all took the long journey west across the entire United States. They could travel by train for part of the way and then faced the ordeal of five or six months by wagon train or on foot across the vast interior. On a good day, those with the wagon trains could cover 20 kilometres. Others, who had more money, could get to the goldfields by sea, taking a sailing ship from the ports of the east coast around the tip of Cape Horn in South America. Close to 300 000 people moved to the American goldfields after 1848, about half of them travelling by land. The destination for all the 'forty-niners', as they were called, was San Francisco, which was transformed from a small, windswept seaport of 800 people in 1848 to an expanding town of over 50 000 people by 1849.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What is an emigrant?
2 Why was gold important in the free emigration story of both the United States and Australia?
3 What event in Ireland caused an increase in migration, particularly to the United States?
4 What factors in Europe contributed to increased emigration in the mid-19th century?
5 What were the two main methods of getting from Europe to the goldfields of California?

Free settlement in Australia

Governor Arthur Phillip, who founded the first white settlement in Australia with his unwilling convicts in 1788, always held the belief that the colony was destined to be much more than a prison. 'I would not wish convicts to lay the foundation of an Empire', he wrote, for he looked to the day when free settlers would come to Sydney. Phillip left the colony only a few months before the arrival in 1793 of the first free settlers – two families and a number of young, single men.

Initially the flow of free settlers to New South Wales was slow, and until the 1820s the population consisted mainly of convicts and former convicts or emancipists. The main obstacles for new settlers were the problem of distance and the expense involved. Since the British government was also in favour of free settlement and of establishing a stronger British presence, it set up a scheme of assisted migration, which from 1831 encouraged people to move to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. The government in Britain also supported the migration to Australia of particular types of people – in particular, young workers who had skills or trades. Since the wool and wheat industries were growing, people who had experience on the land were also in demand.

By 1830, convicts in Australia were outnumbered by free settlers and emancipists. Free settlers were often given land grants and convicts to work for them. Many settled in the pastoral lands

Immigration Museum

State Library of NSW [a6087009]

An emigration poster from 1860 encouraging single women to travel to Australia

away from the towns and became prosperous and influential. Other free settlers, many of whom had money of their own, chose not to go onto the land, but did well as they invested in the colony as merchants and professional people.

The transportation of convicts to New South Wales finally came to an end in 1840 and Sydney began to forget its convict origins. Four years earlier, in 1836, the colony of South Australia had been founded entirely by free settlers, many of whom had purchased land in the new colony before they left England. In 1834 the Henty family had crossed Bass Strait from northern Tasmania and set up a small pastoral settlement in the Port Phillip District, and more free settlers who moved into the district successfully established the site of Melbourne in 1837.

As settlers came, they in turn encouraged others. In the late 1830s a bounty system began. This meant that free settlers could pay for the passage of new settlers, who would work for them to pay back the cost. The scheme had problems, particularly when the new arrivals did not have the skills they claimed. Another issue for the colonies was that men outnumbered women by as much as four to one. Special advertising in Britain encouraged young, single women to use the offer of assisted passage to move to the colonies, where there was an increasing demand for domestic servants. Most single women who travelled as assisted immigrants were aged between 18 and 35 years. On these voyages, the women travelled in groups accompanied by a matron who supervised their life on the ship until they reached their destination.

State Library of NSW [a089762]

Sydney Town in 1876. With the colony's convict past behind it, emigrants who arrived in Sydney found a growing settlement of almost 150 000 people.

As in the United States, the discovery of gold in Australia in the 1850s began a rush of migration as people flocked to the newly discovered goldfields of Victoria and New South Wales. People came from many different parts of the world, including China. The population of the Australian colonies grew rapidly from 400 000 in 1850 to 1.1 million in 1860.

Hardship and hazard

The common experience of all who left their homelands was hardship and hazard. Although the hardships suffered by African slaves cannot be compared with the lesser hardship of free settlers on the move in search of a new home, all those who were part of this great movement of peoples faced voyages that were long, uncomfortable and with the ever-present danger of the sea.

Diary of Fanny Shorter

The early free settlers to Australia booked passage on sailing ships. Although steamships appeared early in the 19th century as a result of technologies from the Industrial Revolution, most ships on the trade route to Australia – at least until the gold rushes of the 1850s – were still sailing vessels. These were not the slow ships familiar to the convicts, but fast **clippers** that could make the journey from Britain to Australia in eight to 10 weeks. Most took the 'clipper route', travelling south of the Cape of Good Hope to catch the 'Roaring Forties', the

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John Charles Dollman, Britain, 1851–1934, The immigrants' ship, 1884, London, oil on canvas, 111 x 162.5 cm. Transferred from the office of the Agent-General for South Australia, London 1979. Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

Painting by John Charles Dollman (1851–1934), *The Immigrants' Ship*, 1884 depicts a migrant family on deck during the voyage to Australia.

powerful prevailing winds that carried the clippers across the Southern Ocean. The further south the ship ventured, the faster the passage. It was also an area of greater danger, affected by severe storms and ice. The clippers also carried the products of industrial Britain to Australia and returned laden with the produce of Australia, especially wool and grain.

Once steamships took over, and especially after the opening of the **Suez Canal** in 1861, the journey to Australia could be done in about six weeks.

On board the ships, those immigrants who could afford it (usually about one in 10) had cabins, but most people travelled steerage. This meant they were accommodated in an area, usually below the water line, that could also contain cargo. Steerage passengers were usually separated into areas for married people, a separate area for single men and a supervised, restricted area for women travelling alone. It was not unusual for single women to be restricted to special parts of the ship and to be forbidden to talk to male passengers or crew. Steerage passengers had access to part of the deck only when the weather was suitable.

Most families occupied a space of about one by two metres. Cramped and poorly ventilated, the area was often sealed off when the severe storms that were a feature of the Southern Ocean pounded the ship. Conditions were hard, sanitation was basic and sickness and outbreaks of disease were common. Passengers were expected to provide their own bedding and most sailed with their own food chests. The contents of these chests supplemented the food provided on these voyages, which consisted mainly of preserved pork and beef, fish, potatoes and grain products.

Some ships had different classes of accommodation, and passengers with their own cabins had a more comfortable voyage. Their meals were prepared for them (steerage passengers prepared their own food in mess shifts) and their bedding and clothing was also washed for them.

Historic shipwrecks

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 When did convict transportation to Australia finally come to an end?

2 How did the British government support and encourage emigration to the Australian colonies?

3 Which Australian colony was established without any convict presence?

4 The population of the six Australian colonies by 1860 was:

- A more than one million people
- B 900 000 people
- C 700 000 people
- D 400 000 people

5 In what year was the Suez Canal opened and how did this assist the emigration of free settlers to the Australian colonies?

6 List three of the prevailing dangers of any sea voyage to the colonies in the 19th century.

Experience of free settlers

Almost 200 000 free settlers arrived in the Australian colonies between 1793 and 1850, the great majority of them from Britain and Ireland. Only their letters and journals give any hint of the emotions these people felt, confined in a dangerous and unfamiliar place (few had ever travelled by sea before), and heading to an unknown, faraway land.

FROM THE SOURCE

Arthur Wilcox Manning, *Journal of a Voyage from Plymouth to Sydney on the* Earl Grey, *1839–1840*

This day commences with beautiful weather and a fresh breeze – A public auction was held on board this morning, consisting of the property of our poor steward, and the emigrant Mahi who died two or three days ago. It is an old and regularly established custom at sea, that when anybody died on board or deserts his ship, all the property of which he may have been possessed is sold by auction to the highest bidder … About five o'clock this afternoon we crossed the Equator … We are now making south Latitude fast – Several nights ago we lost sight of the 'North-Star' which is only visible to a certain degree of Northern latitude; and now we may shortly expect to get the first sight of The 'Southern Cross', which is considered by far the most brilliant and beautiful constellation in the Heavens … We are in different hemispheres, and gaze on different Heavens at night. There is certainly something melancholy in the idea, although I am going to my home, where I know I shall be happy …

Today, while the ship was tacking, one of the emigrants was badly hurt by a sail rope, which swung with great violence against his face. The poor man's lips and face were very much lacerated, and three or four of his teeth were actually knocked out! Mr. Lunn was obliged to sow up his lip … This is the first accident we have had. I only wonder we have not had many cases, as the decks are so crowded … Read Dr. Lang's 'History of New South Wales' before getting up – rather a lazy mode of reading, but better than being in bed doing nothing. No one would deny that Lang has considerably

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benefitted the Colony by inducing many people to emigrate to it; but who has been most benefitted by that immigration? Lang has been amply remunerated in more ways than one …

At the dinner table today, Captain Surflen announced his intention of taking the ship to the Cape of Good Hope, for supplies of every kind, etc. We are all delighted at the idea of touching Terra Firma so shortly. In three weeks we may hope to be on shore, enjoying ourselves, and stretching our cramped legs. This break in the monotony of a voyage will do us all a great deal of good, as none of us are particularly healthy. Our learned doctor says we have not a single case of regular fever on board at present, although there are a great many invalids in hospital.

1 Which of the following statements can be supported by the historical evidence?

A The *Earl Grey* was a steamship.

B The ship travelled across the equator and around South America.

C The ship travelled around the Cape of Good Hope.

D All of the passengers enjoyed a healthy voyage.

2 What unusual event can happen if a passenger or crew member dies at sea?

3 Research task: Who was Dr Lang and what involvement did he have with free emigration to the colony of New South Wales?

4 Imagine you were also on the *Earl Grey*. Based on your reading and research about sea travel to Australia by immigrants during the 19th century, prepare a letter home after your arrival in Sydney in which you include some details of the voyage to Australia and some of the hardships you faced.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Offer five different reasons why people moved from Britain, Ireland and Europe to both the United States and Australia in the 19th century.

2 Take one of the reasons from question 1 and explain the reason more fully in an extended paragraph.

3 Put yourself in the position of the governor of New South Wales in the 1850s, after the transportation of convicts to that colony had ceased. Prepare a dispatch to your superiors in London, explaining not only why more free settlers were needed in the Australian colonies but also what particular types of people were preferred.

4 Prepare a multimedia presentation on *one* of the following topics:
(a) The dangers and hardships of emigration
(b) The changing technology of sea transport available for emigrants in the 19th century
(c) A detailed research presentation on one shipwreck involving an emigrant ship in the 19th century
(d) How the gold rushes increased emigration to the United States or Australia.

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5 Put yourself in the position of Sir Joseph Banks, who in 1779 was asked to give evidence to a committee of the British House of Commons about a possible site for a convict settlement in New South Wales. Prepare a statement that you imagine Banks might have produced. In this statement you should include:

- why Banks favoured Botany Bay
- what he did when he was there
- why he believed a settlement on the east coast of Australia was needed
- what planning would be needed to establish such a settlement.

Augustus Earle, A government jail gang, Sydney N.S. Wales 1830, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Purchased 1995

A government work gang leaving the convict barracks in Sydney in 1830 – a watercolour painting by Augustus Earle (1793–1838)

6 Examine the watercolour painting of the convict work gang, above, and answer the following questions:

(a) Is this painting of a jail gang a primary or a secondary source?

(b) Using this painting as your source, what conclusions can you draw about convict life?

(c) Why should we believe this to be a reasonably accurate representation?

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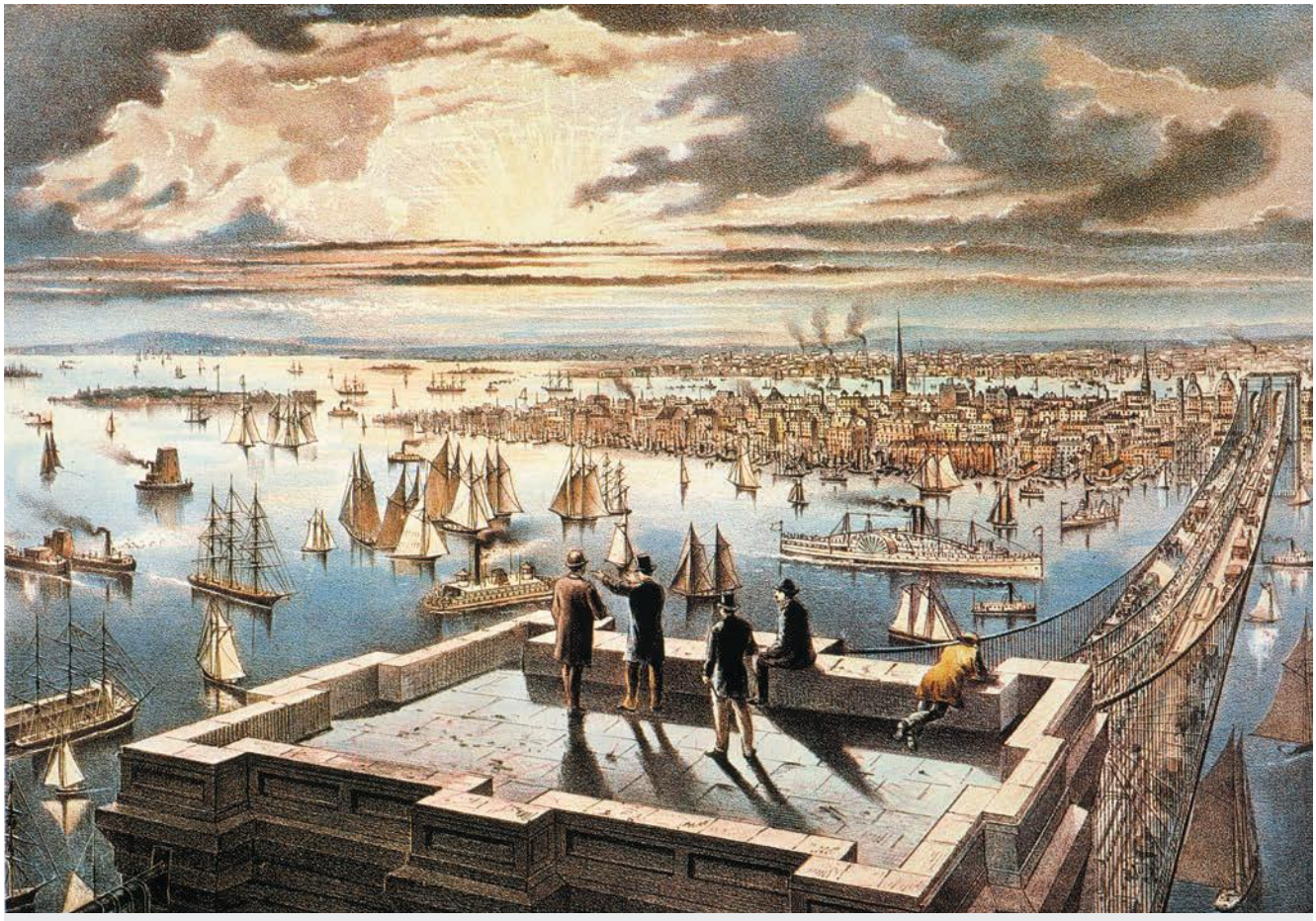
WHAT WERE THE SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM CONSEQUENCES OF THIS GREAT MOVEMENT OF PEOPLES AFTER 1750?

1.4

The great movement of people between 1750 and 1900 had significant consequences for many places, but above all it was a force for nation building. In 1776 the 13 British colonies of North America had defied the authority of Britain and become a new nation, the United States of America. Just over a decade later, in 1788, a new British colony was established in New South Wales. In time this lone settlement in faraway Australia would grow to six colonies, and in 1901 those colonies, as the United States had done, became a new nation: the Commonwealth of Australia. The common force that created these nations was the arrival of millions of people to the shores of these lands.



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New York Harbor in 1882 – a view from the newly constructed Brooklyn Bridge. New York was the point of entry for millions of settlers moving to the United States in the 19th century.

The United States of America

There were two main types of people who came to the United States: slaves and immigrants, or free settlers. Slave arrivals had reached their peak in the 1780s, while the arrival of immigrants remained slow until the 1830s, then increased dramatically, especially in the 1840s and 1850s.

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One of the consequences of the migration of people was the opening up of the American frontier. The town of Deadwood, founded in the Dakota Territory, was established by mainly immigrant settlers in 1876.

The north and the south

Most free settlers who came to the United States before the American Civil War travelled to the northern states, where the Industrial Revolution was well underway. Unlike the southern states, the northern states had the opportunities, the work, and the coal, iron and steel to feed the growing factories. The north also had an expanding **frontier**, and each new wave of immigrants slowly pushed the frontier westward. 'Gone west' was a common expression as people settled and established towns and communities. In time these populated areas would become new states of the United States. New waves of settlers would push on into the wilderness in search of land and opportunity. As the frontier continued to move westward, more settlements and towns were established. Some historians have suggested that America had a moving frontier and that the experience of pushing back this frontier created the American character. Immigrants arrived as English, Irish, Scots, Poles, Germans, Italians and Russians, and through this shared experience of the wilderness they became Americans.

As free settlers pushed west into the Great Plains of the United States, and as slavery spread across the rich delta lands of the Mississippi and into Texas, native American Indians were affected by this movement of people. The *Indian Removal Act of 1830* gave the president power to remove Indian tribes from their traditional homes in the rich lands east of the

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The Trail of Tears (1942) by Robert Lindneux, depicting the removal of the Cherokee Native Americans to the west in 1838

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Mississippi River to new reservation areas further west. This was to allow the opening up of these new lands for white settlement, both in the north and in the south. Despite protest and resistance, and even appeals to the United States Supreme Court, the removal of Native Americans from their traditional lands continued throughout the 19th century.

Empathy task: Current affairs

Slavery and the south

As the northern states had embraced the Industrial Revolution, the southern states rejected it. Across the southern states of the United States there was an expanding agrarian system with a plantation economy, and slaves were an essential part of it. The south's prosperity depended on the demand for its products: sugar, tobacco and in particular cotton. The cotton was picked, cleaned, packed and then exported to Britain and Europe through the southern seaports, particularly New Orleans. Cotton, like other crops in the south, could not be produced or harvested without slaves. As the plantation economy of the south spread, new states came into existence and they too embraced slavery – or what southerners preferred to call 'the peculiar institution'.

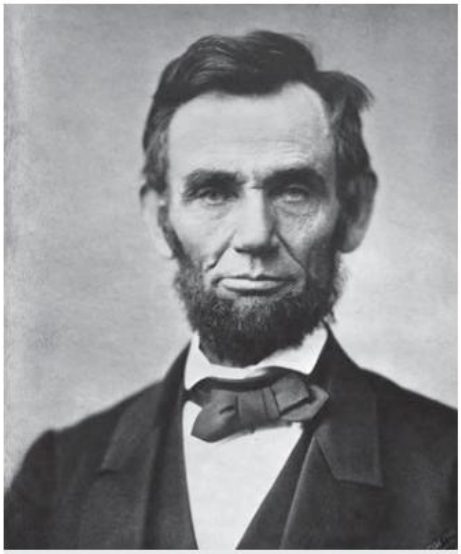
Document study: Runaway slaves

The Civil War

By the 1850s tensions had developed between the northern states, which condemned slavery, and the southern states, where it was seen as essential. The north was not so much opposed to slavery as it had existed in the south, but they feared the spread of slavery into new states and territories. President Abraham Lincoln, who was elected in 1860, spoke of the United States as 'a house divided against itself'.

The tensions finally came to a head in 1860 and 1861 when 11 southern states broke away from the Union. They declared themselves to be the Confederacy of the United States and elected their own president. This act of **secession**, which was not allowed under the American constitution, was the cause for the American Civil War. The key reason, however, why the southern states broke away or seceded was to protect their way of life and, in particular, their right to have slaves.

The American Civil War, which only ended in 1865 with the complete defeat of the south, was one of the major consequences of slavery for the United States. At least 618 000 people were killed in the American Civil War; some historians now believe the figure was even higher. Either way, this war, fought in part over the issue of slavery, caused greater loss of life than any other war in American history.



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Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States from 1861 to 1865. He led his nation through the American Civil War.

The African-American

The obvious long-term consequence of the movement of so many African slaves to the United States is the significant numbers of African-Americans who now make up a large part of the population of the country. In 2013 there were over 44.5 million African-Americans, or about 14 per cent of the entire population of the United States.

Although slavery had been abolished in the United States during the Civil War, African-Americans continued to face serious racial discrimination well into the 20th century. They may have had equal rights under the law in theory but, across the country, and particularly in the south, black Americans occupied the lowest levels of society and were severely restricted in their opportunities to vote and access legal rights. They had the lowest paid jobs and fewer opportunities for employment. In many parts of the south they were segregated and were unable

National Museum of African American History

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Corbis/Bettmann

Corbis/Flip Schulke

Descendants of immigrants: President John Kennedy (right) and Dr Martin Luther King (left), one the great-grandson of a poor Irish immigrant and the other the great-grandson of a slave. President Kennedy was a supporter of Dr King's campaign for civil rights for African-Americans. Both men were assassinated in the 1960s.

to use the same schools, shops, transport and parks as white Americans. White supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan used violence and threats to maintain the unprivileged status of African-Americans.

Only in the 1960s did the descendants of the slave trade finally gain some measure of equality as the great civil rights movement began across the United States. Led by men such as Dr Martin Luther King (whose great-grandfather had been a slave), and with political action by President John Kennedy (whose great-grandfather had been a poor emigrant from Ireland), the civil rights movement of the 1960s was the closing part of the story of slavery in the United States.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Explain why most free settlers to the United States in the 19th century tended to settle in the northern states.

2 Why were many Native American tribes removed from their traditional lands in the 19th century?

3 What was 'the peculiar institution'?

4 What was the most important port in the south before the outbreak of the American Civil War? What factors gave it this importance?

5 What name was given to the southern states that broke away from the union in 1860 and 1861?

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Australia

The arrival of non-Indigenous people to Australia came in two waves and they occurred almost at the same time. First came the convicts and within a few years free settlers began to arrive. Between 1793 and 1850 almost 200 000 free settlers, many of them assisted immigrants, arrived in the country. The major consequence of this movement was that it laid the foundation for the Australian nation.

One continent, one nation

The short-term impact of the movement of people to Australia was that, within a relatively short time, the entire Australian mainland came under British control. The British were not the first to discover Australia, and after the voyage of Captain Cook in 1770 they had a claim only to the east coast, which they called New South Wales. European nations such as the Portuguese, the French and particularly the Dutch, with their colony in the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia), were well aware of the 'great south land'. The Dutch had discovered the west coast of Australia and Tasmania but did not settle there. The French had sailed into Botany Bay within hours of the arrival of the First Fleet but chose to sail on. The short-term consequence was that all of this land became a British possession, made up of separate British colonies.

The long-term consequence is that, with the passage of time, these separate Australian colonies united (or federated) to create a new country, the Commonwealth of Australia. Thus in 1901 an entire continent became one nation.

The consequence of the movement of people on the Aboriginal people

The Australian Aboriginal people were the first people to live on the continent of Australia. It is known that they have lived here for at least 50 000 years, and probably longer. When this is placed against just over 220 years of white settlement, the contrast is overwhelming.

The early white settlers of this land had little understanding of the close relationship Indigenous or Aboriginal people had with the land, or that through the land they maintain their links to ancestral Aboriginal spirits. The land was sacred to Aboriginal people, and for tens of thousands of years they lived in harmony with the land.

As white settlement began to expand, and as explorers marked their trails across the country, land was taken from the Aboriginal people. The expansion of new industries such as wool, wheat, sugar and cattle became essential for colonial Australia, and it was assumed that the vast lands belonged to no one except the British crown that had claimed them. Violence against Aboriginal people and the spread of disease such as smallpox, influenza, pneumonia and tuberculosis, unknown before white settlement, also took their toll. The Aboriginal people progressively lost their traditional lands as tribal groups were almost all broken up and the cultural traditions of the people began to disappear.

First Australians

As the Aboriginal people who came into contact with white settlements became **dispossessed**, they also became displaced. Their labour was exploited, many family groups were broken up, and thousands of Aboriginal people survived on handouts.

Research task: Colonisation and Indigenous populations

Many white Australians in the 19th century and well into the 20th century held a belief that the Aboriginal people were a dying race. At a time of great ignorance and lack of sympathy, it was easy to accept the racist argument that they were a race doomed to extinction. When white settlement came to Tasmania in 1803 the Aboriginal population on the island was between 3000 and 5000. Aboriginal people had lived in Tasmania for at least 35 000 years before the arrival of the convicts and free settlers. When Truganini, accepted as the last full-blooded member of that race, died in Hobart in 1873, there were no Aboriginal people left on mainland Tasmania.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

courtesy of National Library of Australia

This photo, entitled 'Aborigines, the last of the race, Tasmania', was taken by Henry A Frith, c. 1866. Pictured are, left to right: Maryann, William Lanne, Bessy Clarke and Truganini.

source B

From a newspaper of 1888

It may be taken for granted that the aboriginal race is doomed, and is fated to disappear entirely within a few years … it seems a law of nature that where two races whose stages of progression differ greatly are brought into contact, the inferior race is doomed to disappear … It may be doubted whether the Australian aborigine would ever have advanced much beyond the status of the neolithic [Stone Age] races in which we found him, and we need not therefore lament [feel sorry for] his disappearance.

The Age, Melbourne, 1 January 1888

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1 How does the image in Source A indicate the way Aboriginal people had been affected by European influences? Based on your reading, what is not revealed about the experiences of Aboriginal Australians and the impact of European settlement?

2 Is the view expressed in this newspaper item of 1888 (Source B) a statement of fact or of opinion?

3 The main point made in this newspaper item was that:

- **A** Aboriginal Australians were a Stone Age race.
- **B** There was a need to assist Aboriginal Australians to progress.
- **C** Many Australians at that time in our history were sympathetic to issues involving Aboriginal people.
- **D** The Aboriginal population was in decline and would soon disappear.

4 What probable cause for the decline in the Aboriginal population is not mentioned in the newspaper article in Source B?

5 Prepare your own letter to the newspaper, expressing your own understanding of the impact of white settlement on the Aboriginal population of the country.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Give *five* reasons why people chose to emigrate from Britain, Ireland and Europe and travel to places such as the United States and Australia.

2 The opening up of the interior of the United States was achieved by the progressive movement of the frontier to the west as more and more people arrived in the country. Explain why did this not happen in the case of Australia.

3 Based on your reading and research, prepare a brief essay response on *one* of the following topics.
(a) The longstanding effects of slavery on American history
(b) The dangers and hardships faced by emigrants in the 19th century
(c) How the movement of people brought about change in either the United States or Australia.

Quiz

Hypothetical

Crossword

Chronology

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CHAPTER 2

Making a nation

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- the arrival of European settlement in Australia
- the nature of the contact between European settlement and Indigenous peoples
- the experience of non-Europeans in Australia in the 19th century
- living and working conditions in Australia at the turn of the 20th century
- how and why the Australian colonies federated to create the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901
- key legislation that influenced the development of Australian society after 1901.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

2.1 What was the impact of European settlement, both on the Australian landscape and on Indigenous peoples?

2.2 What was the experience of non-Europeans living in Australia before 1900?

2.3 How and why did Australia become a nation in 1901?

2.4 What were living and working conditions like in Australia at the start of the 20th century?

2.5 How did legislation passed between 1901 and 1914 shape social and political change?

Australia became a nation in 1901. On the first day of the 20th century, Australia achieved its nationhood in a way so many other nations had not – without war or conflict. The people of the six separate British colonies that had been established on the continent made the decision to become one country. They not only voted this new nation into existence but, with the new Australian **constitution**, they also chose the type of government that would operate there.

The making of the Australian nation, from its fragile beginning as a lone convict settlement in 1788 to the modern democratic nation we know today, is a remarkable story.

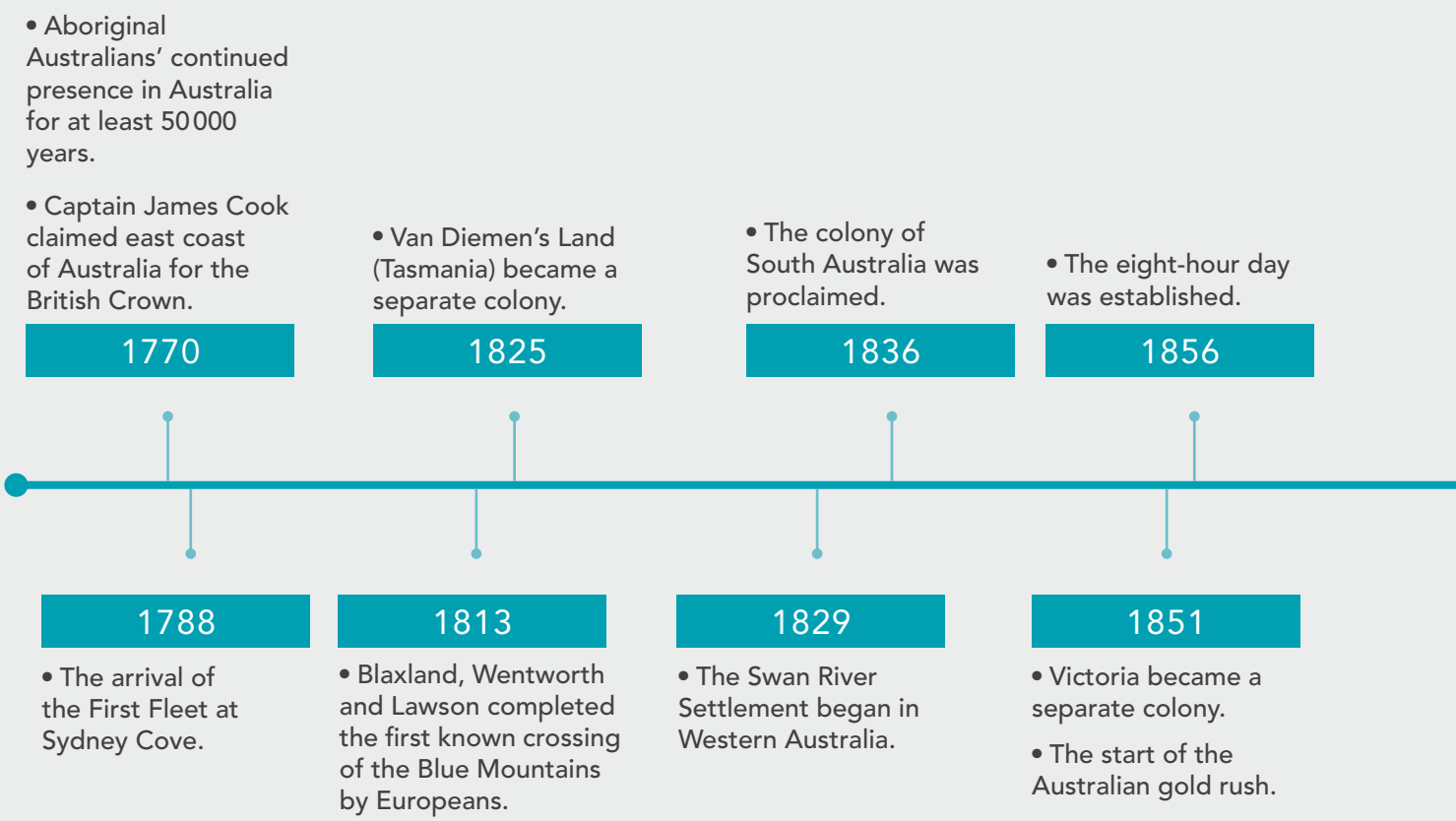
George Street, Sydney, in 1883, looking towards the newly constructed Sydney Town Hall

A nation for a continent, a continent for a nation

Edmund Barton, first Prime Minister of Australia

State Library of NSW [a152817]

Timeline, 1770–1914



Glossary

census A count of the population of a country.

constitution The document that defines the system of government of a country.

egalitarianism The concept that each person in society is equal to any other, and should have equal rights and opportunities.

indentured Bound by a contract or understanding that usually involves an agreement regarding work.

referendum A vote that is held to approve or reject a measure proposed by the parliament of a country.

squatter A person who takes land without legal authority and who resides on that land or property.

tariff A sum of money (also called a duty) that is added to the cost of a product when it enters the country.

terra nullius A Latin phrase meaning 'uninhabited land'. The belief that Indigenous Australians did not own the land and that, as a result, European settlement could take place.

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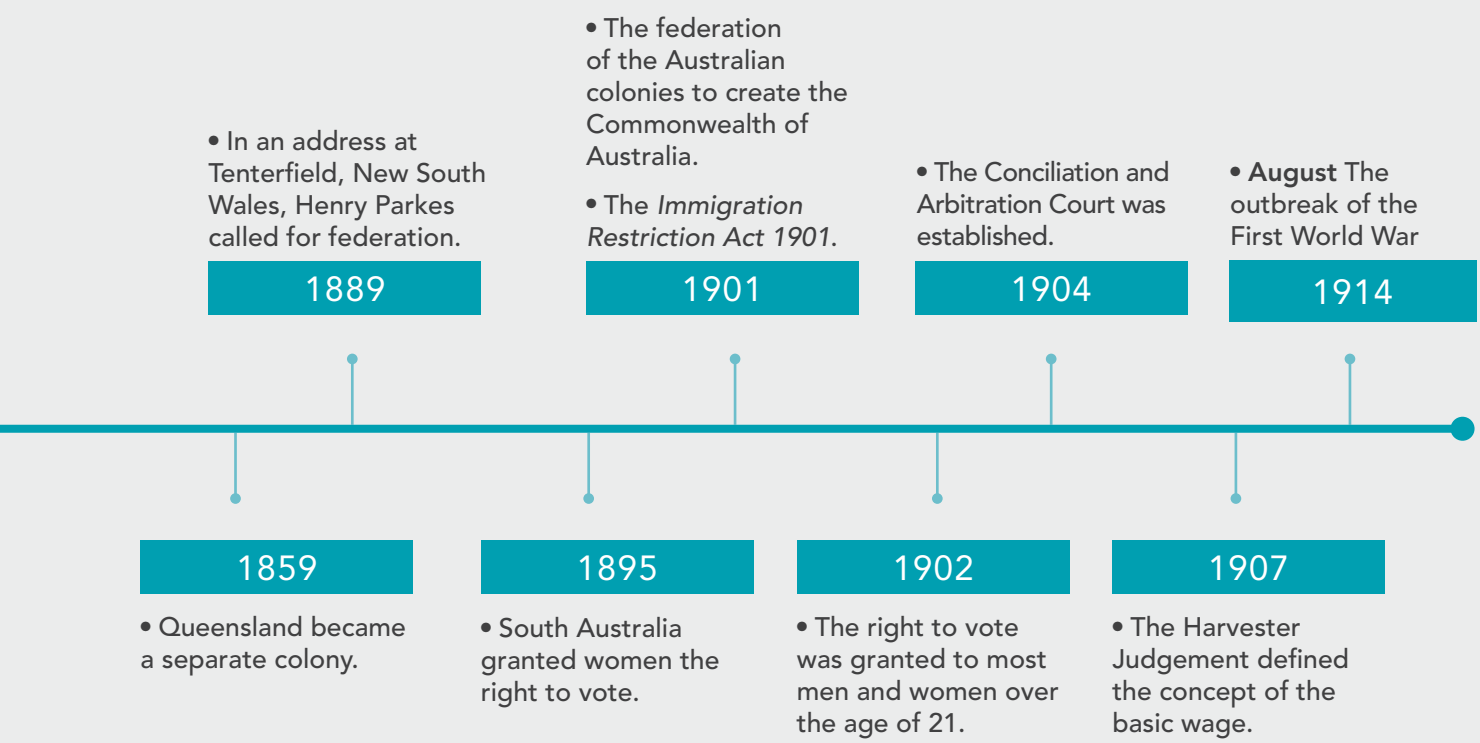

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2.1 WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT, BOTH ON THE AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE AND ON INDIGENOUS PEOPLES?

After his voyage along the east coast of Australia, Captain James Cook came ashore on a small island in the Torres Strait in August 1770 and took possession of the east coast of Australia in the name of the British Crown. 'I now once more hoisted English colours', he wrote in his journal, 'and in the name of His Majesty King George the Third, took possession of the whole eastern coast … by the name New South Wales'.

The concept of *terra nullius*

Cook was well aware of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who occupied the land. They were, he wrote, 'in the pure state of nature', for he saw no sign of cultivation or buildings, no harvesting of crops, no sign of settled life. The land was empty. In the terms of the law at the time, it was ***terra nullius***. The land belonged to no one and Britain took possession of what they saw.

In fact the land did belong to the Indigenous peoples, but the Europeans at the time saw no sign of this. They had no understanding of the profound attachment Indigenous Australians had to the land, of the ancient bond that went back more than 50 000 years, to a time long before any civilisation in Europe. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples existed not as one people but, rather, as many separate communities. These communities had their own languages, while the land they occupied provided their physical and spiritual support. The land belonged to them all. The European concept of settlement required a kind of ownership that brought with it clearing, developing, cultivating, fencing and building on land. This was not part of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture.

State Library of NSW [a128112]

The founding of Australia – a painting depicting the raising of the British flag at Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788. More than 1000 people, the majority of whom were convicts, arrived that day.

The first settlement

When the First Fleet arrived at Botany Bay in January 1788, it became clear that the site was unsuitable for a permanent settlement. Leaving his convicts at Botany Bay, Arthur Phillip and a small group of men took three small boats and sailed up the coast in search of a better site. On 21 January, this group became the first white people to enter what is now Sydney Harbour. It was, wrote Phillip, 'the finest harbour in the world, in which a thousand sail of the line (navy) may ride in the most perfect security'.

It was here, at a small cove in the great harbour, that the first permanent white settlement was made. On 26 January 1788, eighteen years after James Cook had claimed the land for Britain, Arthur Phillip hoisted the British flag at Sydney Cove to establish the settlement.

The settlement at Sydney nearly failed in the first few years. It faced very severe hardships:

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the soil was poor, the first crops of vegetables and corn failed and food became very scarce. Fortunately, better soil at nearby Parramatta allowed the first crops to be harvested, but the colony faced near starvation until the arrival in June 1790 of the second fleet. This carried vital food supplies and also more convicts. By 1792 the colony had overcome the initial challenges, and the following year the first free settlers began to arrive.

The First Fleet

What arrived with the First Fleet?

Free people

14 officials and passengers
245 marines to guard the convicts
54 wives and children of marines

Convicts

543 male convicts
189 female convicts
22 children of convicts

Other people

306 crew of the nine transport ships (most departed when their transport ships left)

Trees

oak, myrtle, olive, orange, lemon, apple, fig, pear, banana

Australian National Maritime Museum. Reproduced courtesy of the museum.

The First Fleet storeships *Fishburn, Barrowdale* and *Golden Grove* carried the bulk of the supplies for the new convict settlement at Sydney Cove.

Other plants

barley, corn, wheat, rice, strawberry plants, sugar cane, coffee, cotton, prickly pear, tobacco

Livestock

1 stallion, 3 mares, 3 colts, 2 bulls, 5 cows, 29 sheep, 19 goats, 49 hogs, 5 rabbits, 122 fowls, 35 ducks, 18 turkeys, 29 geese

Pets

Governor Phillip's greyhounds
Reverend Johnson's cats
kittens and puppies

1 How many items on the above list were native to Australia?
2 Why did the early settlement have trouble growing some of these commodities?
3 Which items on the above list would have proved a problem for native wildlife and created problems in the future?

The creation of new colonies

Reflecting the fact that the people moving to Australia were either convicts or free settlers, the creation of new colonies was also the result of either convict or free settlement or a combination of both. While Sydney was the first settlement, other settlements followed soon after.

WS
British colonisation around the world

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Tasmania

Tasmania had been discovered in 1642 by the Dutch navigator Abel Tasman, who named it Van Diemen's Land. The first British settlement in Van Diemen's Land began in 1803, and in a short time a number of convict settlements were established there. Within a decade, the ports were opened to merchant and whaling ships, and free settlers began to arrive in increasing numbers. In December 1825 the colony became independent. The transportation of convicts to Van Diemen's Land continued until 1853, and soon after that the colony changed its name to Tasmania.

Western Australia

In 1829, five years after Tasmania became a separate colony, the British secured the western coast of Australia with a settlement known as the Swan River Settlement. One of the reasons for establishing the settlement was a growing fear that the French were about to set up their own convict settlement on the west coast of Australia. The new colony in the west struggled, and by 1838 the settlement had only 2000 inhabitants, all of them free settlers. The only solution that would ensure the survival of the settlement was to introduce convict labour. Convicts began to arrive in 1850, and by the time transportation to Western Australia ended in 1868, more than 9000 convicts had been sent to the colony.

South Australia

The need for convicts to assist free settlers in the foundation of the colony, as experienced at the Swan River Settlement in Western Australia, did not happen in South Australia. One of the figures behind the idea of developing a free settlement in South Australia was Edward Gibbon Wakefield, who believed in the idea of 'systematic colonisation'. He argued that land in the colonies should be sold and the money used to promote the migration of free settlers. Although Wakefield never visited Australia, his ideas were influential, especially in the move to establish the colony of South Australia. In 1834 the British Parliament passed the *South Australia*

Charles Hill, Australia, 1824-1915, The Proclamation of South Australia 1836, c. 1856-76, Adelaide, oil on canvas, 133.3 x 274.3 cm, Morgan Thomas Bequest Fund 1936, Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

The Proclamation of South Australia 1836, an oil painting by Charles Hill (1824–1915), depicts the foundation of the colony of South Australia. Unlike most Australian colonies, South Australia was founded entirely by free settlers, who had moved there from Britain and Ireland.

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Colonisation Act 1834, which defined the area of the new colony and forbade the transportation of convicts to this part of the world. In the quest for this new society, the first free settlers arrived in South Australia directly from England in 1836.

Victoria

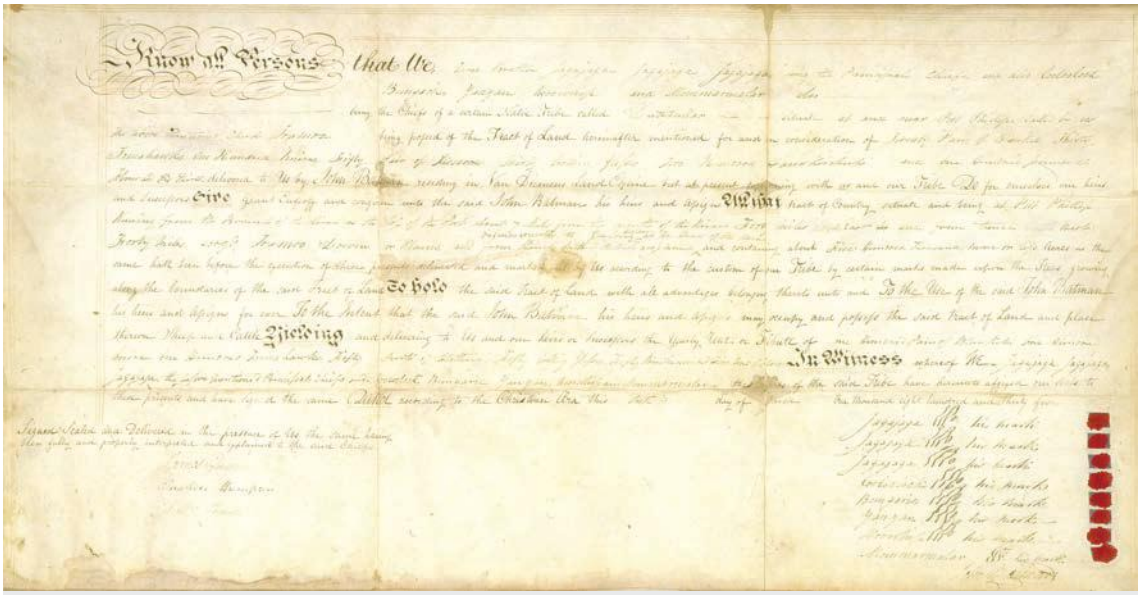
The origin of the colony of Victoria was also the work of free settlers. The first settlement in Victoria, near Sorrento on Port Phillip Bay, failed in 1803, mainly because of the lack of good water. The good farming and grazing lands of what is now the Western District, however, soon attracted the attention of the Henty brothers, who moved some livestock from Van Diemen's Land and settled on the coast at Portland in 1834. Although the Hentys were **squatters** and had no legal right to settle there, Portland was the first permanent settlement of what would become Victoria.

John Batman – who, like the Hentys, owned grazing lands in northern Tasmania – arrived in the area near the Yarra River in 1835. In June of that year, he negotiated a treaty, or land deed, with the elders of the Aboriginal people. In return for a yearly rental that included food, blankets, knives and mirrors, he claimed the right to land on the site of what is now Melbourne.

Batman's actions have generated a long historical debate. Some historians question whether the Aboriginal elders understood what the treaty intended. However, the mere fact that a document was prepared is significant: it marks the first time a white settler had negotiated with Aboriginal people over land. The normal procedure was simply to take it. The British held the position that the land belonged to the Crown. Governor Bourke of New South Wales later declared the land treaty invalid because in the eyes of the British authorities the land involved did not belong to the Aboriginal people.

FROM THE SOURCE

Extracts from the Batman Treaty



National Museum of Australia Ref. 1997.0019.0001

The treaty John Batman signed with elders of the Aboriginal people in 1835

Know all Persons that We, Three Brothers Jagajaga, Jagajaga, Jagajaga, being the Principal Chiefs and also Cooloolock, Bungarie, Yanyan, Moowhip, and Mommarmalar also being the

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Chiefs of a certain Native Tribe called Dutigullar situate at and near Port Phillip, … being [possessed] of the Tract of Land hereinafter mentioned for and in consideration of Twenty Pairs of Blankets, Thirty Tomahawks, One Hundred Knives Fifty Pair of Scissorrs, Thirty looking Glasses Two Hundred Handkerchiefs and One Hundred Pounds of Flour and six shirts delivered to Us by John Batman residing in Van Diemens Land Esquire … Do for ourselves our heirs and Successors Give Grant … and confirm unto the said John Batman his heirs and Assigns All that tract of Country situate [the area is defined] To use of the said John Batman and his heirs and Assigns for ever To the Intent that the said John Batman his heirs and Assigns may occupy and possess the said tract of Land and place thereon Sheep and Cattle Yielding and delivering to Us and our heirs or Successors the Yearly rent or Tribute of one hundred Pair of Blankets, One Hundred Knives, One Hundred Tomahawks, Fifty Suits of Clothing, Fifty looking Glasses, Fifty Pair scissors and Five Tons of flour. In Witness whereof We Jagajaga, Jagajaga, Jagajaga, the before mentioned Principal Chiefs and Cooloolock, Bungarie, Yanyan, Moowhip, and Mommarmalar the Chiefs of the said Tribe have hereunto affixed our seals to these presents and have signed the same Dated according to the Christian Era this sixth day of June One thousand eight hundred and thirty five. Signed sealed and delivered in the presence of us the same having been fully interpreted and explained to the said Chiefs.

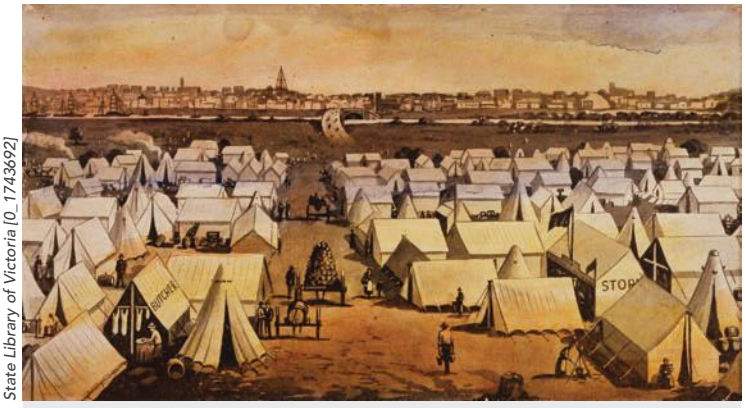
1 **What was the purpose of the treaty?**

2 **How many Indigenous leaders signed the treaty?**

3 **Under the terms of the treaty, what rental did John Batman pay and how often did he pay it, and how long could he possess the land?**

4 **What is unusual about the agreement John Batman made with the Indigenous people?**

5 **Explain why the British authorities did not regard the treaty as legal or binding.**



State Library of Victoria [0_1743692]

Canvas Town, between Princess Bridge and South Melbourne in the 1850s. Explain why there was such an expansion in Melbourne at this time. What impact would this have on the development of Melbourne?

In 1837 the small settlement on the Yarra River was named Melbourne, after the then prime minister of Britain. The wool industry prospered in this area and more free settlers moved into the region. With time, the settlements here felt that they were not really part of the colony of New South Wales, and in 1851 this area separated from New South Wales and officially became a separate colony. It was called Victoria, after the Queen. The discovery of gold in 1851 brought enormous prosperity and wealth to the new colony of Victoria. Free settlers in search of land, and people in search of gold, poured into the colony. Between 1852 and 1860, 290 000 people arrived in Victoria; by 1861 the population of the new colony had grown to 540 000. In 1840 Melbourne had a population of 10 000 people; twenty years later it stood at over 120 000, and by 1880 Melbourne was the second-largest city in the British Empire, after London.

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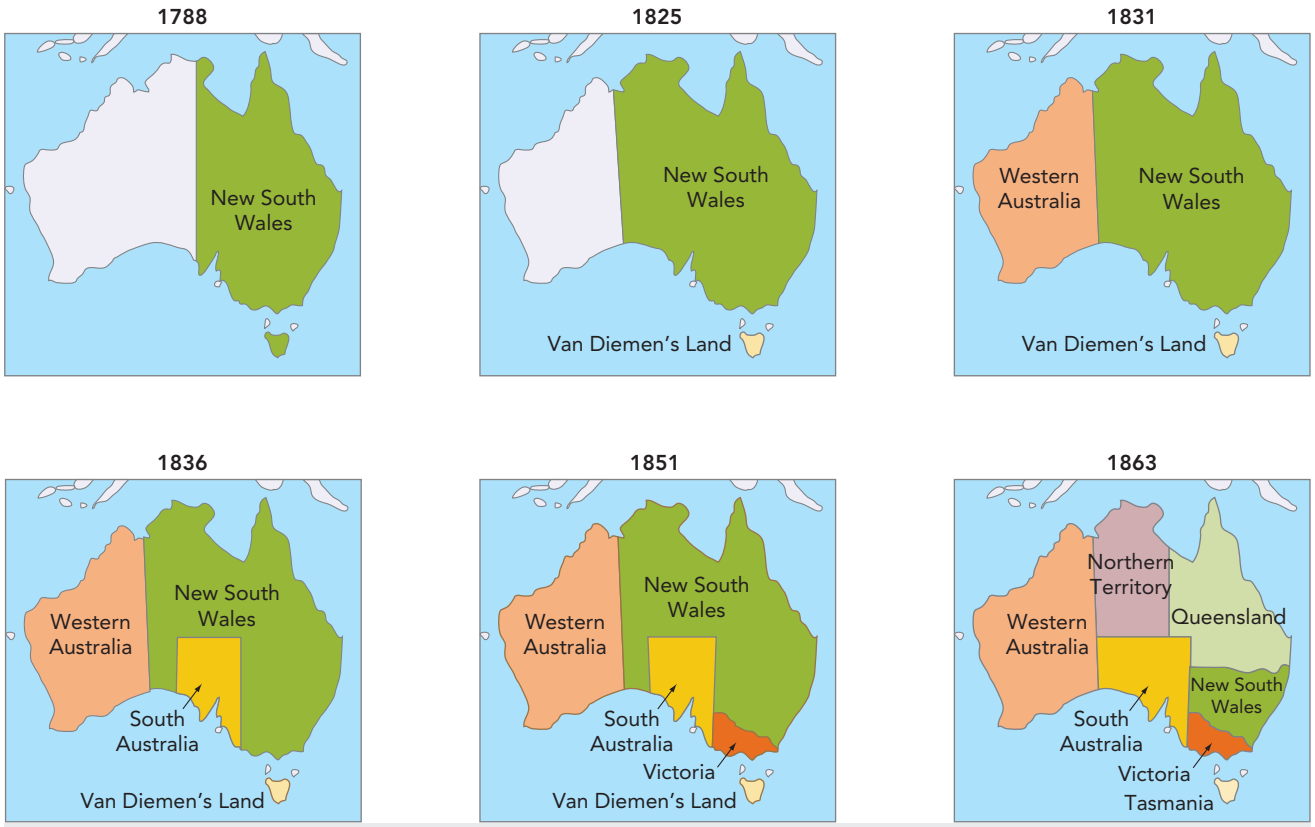

The map of modern Australia began to emerge as the six separate British colonies were created across the continent between 1788 and 1863. The Northern Territory was administered by South Australia from 1863. In 1911 it passed to Commonwealth control.

TABLE 2.1 Population of the Australian colonies

	NSW	VIC	QLD	SA	WA	TAS
1851	197 200	97 490	8600	66 500	7100	69 180
1861	357 300	539 800	34 400	130 800	15 900	89 900
1871	516 700	746 500	121 700	188 600	25 400	102 000
1881	777 000	874 000	221 850	285 900	30 100	117 700
1891	1 153 170	1 158 300	400 000	324 700	53 100	151 100
1901	1 355 000	1 201 000	498 000	363 000	184 100	172 400

Queensland

The final area to become a separate colony was Queensland. Convicts had first been sent to the Moreton Bay Settlement, on the site of what is now the city of Brisbane, in 1824. This was intended to be a place of secondary punishment for the worst offenders, and free settlement was not allowed. The transportation of convicts to Moreton Bay finally ended in 1839, and in 1842 the area was opened to free settlement and the city of Brisbane began to take shape. Free settlers moved into Queensland by travelling overland from the south, and by sea. Those who had arrived by sea established a number of settlements along the coast. In 1859 the area we now know as Queensland became an independent colony.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 In what year did the Second Fleet arrive at Sydney Cove?
2 What was the second major settlement in Australia after the settlement in New South Wales?
3 Where would you have found the Swan River Settlement and the Moreton Bay Settlement?
4 Why does history remember John Batman?
5 Why did the colony of Victoria prosper so soon after its foundation in 1851?
6 The formation of which Australian colony was influenced by the writings of Edward Gibbon Wakefield?
7 What was the last Australian colony to be established?

The expansion of settlement

Early explorers

The early colonial settlements were all on the coast of the continent, and very little was known of what lay beyond. Exploration of the land was a natural progression. The Blue Mountains west of Sydney formed a natural barrier to the expansion of settlement, but in 1813 an expedition led by Gregory Blaxland, William Charles Wentworth and William Lawson found a path over the mountains. These men were motivated by the quest for new grazing lands, and they found them on the great western plains beyond the mountains. In 1815 Governor Macquarie proclaimed the establishment of Bathurst, the first inland town in Australia.

In the period that followed, the map of modern Australia took shape. In 1799 George Bass and Matthew Flinders, together with Flinders' cat Trim, had sailed around Tasmania, proving a long-held belief that Tasmania was in fact an island. Three years later, Flinders mapped much of the Australian coastline during the first circumnavigation of the continent. Once the coastline was

State Library of NSW [a1481001]

The expedition of Robert O'Hara Burke (1821–1861) and William Wills (1834–1861) departs from Melbourne in August 1860. The epic expedition was the first to cross the continent from south (Melbourne) to north (Gulf of Carpentaria). Both Burke and Wills died on the return journey.

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finally mapped, a series of exploratory expeditions moved across the interior. Some explorers, such as Charles Sturt, John Oxley and Thomas Mitchell, mapped the fertile lands and river systems that allowed settlement to expand, while others, including John McDouall Stuart, John Eyre, Robert O'Hara Burke and William Wills, were the great inland explorers.

Settlement followed the paths of many of these explorers – into inland New South Wales and Victoria, north along the Queensland coast and into the good cattle country of that colony. The wool, wheat, beef and sugar industries grew, and increasing numbers of free settlers began to arrive in the colonies. Many settlers selected, and were granted, land; others simply moved onto Crown land without any legal title and used it anyway. The thirty years from 1820 to 1850 saw increasing numbers of squatters take up land in this way and graze their livestock. Squatters were a problem for the colonial governments, but they also produced commodities – particularly wool, which Britain needed. The solution was to allow squatters to lease their land and, finally, purchase it outright.

Settlement and the environment

From the time the first Australian Aboriginal people arrived on the continent until 1788, when white settlement came to Australia, the land had remained essentially unchanged. Although Aboriginal people used fire, the land had been defined, not by human activity, but only by time, nature and the endless cycle of the seasons. The expansion of settlement dramatically changed the environment. This began when the first tree was felled at Sydney Cove and the first stone house was built, and it has continued to this day.

For the first time in the history of Australia, large areas of land were cleared to provide space for crops, and even larger areas were given over to grazing, to support the economy of the colonies. In many coastal regions, where great forests stood, trees were felled to satisfy the growing demand for timber. Roads and bridges were built, and lighthouses, harbours and breakwaters were created to assist sea travel, which was the only link to the outside world.

New animal species were introduced: sheep, cattle, horses, pigs, goats, camels and oxen. The introduction of some species, such as the rabbit and the fox, had a serious impact on some of the native wildlife, as did the emergence of feral wildlife as domestic pigs, goats and horses escaped and reverted to a wild state.

New plant species also arrived with the Europeans. Many new settlers found the Australian environment strange and harsh, and nothing like the gentle rural lands of England or Ireland. There were deliberate attempts to change the nature of the environment by introducing new plants, trees and animal species. Acclimatisation societies (groups dedicated to introducing new plant and animal species to the Australian landscape) were established in all of the colonies. Plants and animals were imported, established and then distributed to different parts of the country. Artists of the time often depicted the Australian landscape as if it were in Britain or Europe.

Nicholas Chevalier, The Buffalo Ranges, 1864 oil on canvas 132.4 x 183.7 cm. National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, purchased 1864

The Buffalo Ranges Victoria, 1864, by Nicholas Chevalier (1828–1902). Chevalier was born in Russia and came to Australia in 1855. Like many colonial artists, he replaced the light and harshness of the Australian environment with softness and colour, creating images that could have been made in Britain or Europe.

The gold rushes

Early in 1851, gold was discovered near Bathurst in New South Wales. A few months later, much larger deposits of gold were found at Ballarat and Bendigo in the colony of Victoria. The Australian

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Gold

gold rush was a major turning point in the history of colonial Australia. It marked the start of a rapid increase in population as people flocked to the new goldfields from around the world. In the decade from 1851 to 1861 more than 600 000 people came to the colonies in search of gold. The gold, as well as the population increase, boosted the economies of New South Wales and, in particular, Victoria. By the late 1850s the colony of Victoria produced about one-third of the world's gold supply.

There was an expansion in trade and investment. New towns emerged and communications improved as roads were extended and the first railways were constructed. The first telegraph line was opened in 1854 in Victoria, and the rapid spread of the telegraph began to break down the isolation of the different colonies. Before the gold rushes, all communication between the colonial capitals had been by land or sea.

The gold rush also had other important influences. It created a bond between the 'diggers' on the goldfields, particularly when they faced unfair regulation and excessive control by the government. The diggers' dislike for and defiance of authority was a feature of this time; it created a bond of mateship and a sense of **egalitarianism**, which are still seen as national characteristics and very much a feature of Australian society today.

Some historians have seen a link between the Australian concept of mateship and the idea of egalitarianism and life on the goldfields of Australia. This is related to the belief in the democratic ideal.

State Library of NSW [a2825335]

A group of miners with reef gold from the Star of Hope gold mine, Hill End, near Bathurst, New South Wales, in about 1870

The Roaring Days

The night too quickly passes
And we are growing old,
So let us fill our glasses
And toast the Days of Gold;
When finds of wondrous treasure
Set all the South ablaze,
And you and I were faithful mates
All through the roaring days!

Extract from Henry Lawson, 'The Roaring Days', 1889

The true digger

The true digger, whether Irish, Scotch, or English, is a brave, high spirited working man, ready with his purse as a friend, or with his fist as a foe. He … imparts a free and careless bluffness to his manner, which is a great relief from the reserve and formality that prevail among nearly all classes in the old country. I know no more hospitable individual, in the full sense of the word, than this honest, jolly, free-hearted spendthrift. A share of his damper and bacon, or whatever else he may have, a pannikin [metal cup or plate] of tea, or half his blanket or opossum rug, are always at your disposal if you choose to accept them.

Extract from George Ogilvy Preshaw, *Banking under difficulties, or, Life on the Goldfields of Victoria, New South Wales & New Zealand by a bank official*, 1888

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Why was the crossing of the Blue Mountains in 1813 a significant event in colonial history?

2 Which of the following was not an inland explorer: John Eyre, Matthew Flinders, Charles Sturt, Thomas Mitchell, John Oxley?

3 List three activities of early colonial settlers that caused distress and resentment among Indigenous Australians.

4 If you joined a colonial acclimatisation society, what would you have been interested in?

5 Why were Bathurst, Ballarat and Bendigo such busy places in the 1850s?

Colonisation and its impact on Aboriginal people

When Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet arrived in 1788, Phillip carried with him clear instructions that he was to establish friendly relations with the Aboriginal people and that they were to be protected. In the early years Phillip tried to uphold this and took a genuine interest in their customs and lifestyle. Tensions emerged, however, as the white settlers began to clear land for crops, which threatened traditional food sources for the Aboriginal people. There was no suggestion in British thinking that the Aboriginal people had any claim to the land.

FROM THE SOURCE

Address to Aboriginal inhabitants by George Gawler, Governor of South Australia, 1 November 1838

Black men –

We wish to make you happy. But you cannot be happy unless you imitate good white men. Build huts, wear clothes, work and be useful.

Above all you cannot be happy unless you love God who made heaven and earth and men and all things.

Love white men. Love other tribes of black men. Do not quarrel together. Tell other tribes to love white men, and to build good huts and wear clothes. Learn to speak English.

If any white man injure you, tell the Protector and he will do you justice.

From 'The natives', *South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register*, 3 November 1838

Imagine you are an Aboriginal person hearing this advice from the Governor of South Australia in 1838. Explain your response, from the perspective (point of view) of an Aboriginal person, to these remarks by Governor Gawler.

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The decline in the Aboriginal population

As settlement expanded and new colonies were established, the push to take land caused a series of outbreaks of violence. There were killings on both sides. Aboriginal peoples lost lands to which they had a spiritual bond, their food and hunting activities were threatened and the death rate among Aboriginal people began to climb. No one knows exactly how many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people there were when the First Fleet arrived, but research suggests at least 350 000 with the probability that the number was much higher. Indigenous Australians were not counted in the first **census** of 1901, but it is estimated that they numbered about 90 000 when the Australian colonies federated in that year.

The decline in the Aboriginal population during the 19th century was both dramatic and constant. Many accepted that it was also inevitable. 'This is the history of all new countries', wrote one parliamentary report of 1889; '… the Australian blacks are moving rapidly on to the eternal darkness'.

There were three main reasons for the decline in the Indigenous population in the 19th century. First, there was dispossession. The expansion of settlements meant that Aboriginal peoples lost their land and were forced out of areas that had not only sustained them with food and shelter for generations but also had great spiritual meaning. Their lands were cleared for grazing, while fences and buildings began to define areas that had always been open spaces.

Second, white settlement brought diseases from abroad that were totally unknown in Australia and to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had no immunity or protection. These diseases included measles, whooping cough, influenza, smallpox and venereal diseases.

Finally, there was dispute as settlers pushed into new country. In an effort to maintain their traditional lands and secure their food sources, Indigenous peoples clashed with white settlers. These clashes were a feature of life in all the colonies. There were frequent examples of outrages committed by whites against Aboriginal people and of Aboriginal people killing whites. Historians dispute the exact number of people who died in these clashes during the 19th century, but there is some agreement that at least 2000 Europeans died in conflict with Indigenous peoples and that the number of Indigenous Australians who died violently was close to 20 000. The most notorious example of this took place at Myall Creek in New South Wales in 1838, when 11 white people hunted and killed 30 Kwaimbal Aborigines in reprisal to an earlier violent incident involving a land dispute. The Myall Creek incident is unusual in that it was the only case of its kind in which the justice system condemned seven of the white men to hang for their crime.

Yagan

Yagan was an Aboriginal warrior whose tribal land included areas near the Swan River Settlement in Western Australia, which was first established in 1829. Yagan became known to the British when he led a series of attacks on white settlers along the Canning and Swan rivers. In 1832 Yagan was captured and sentenced to death, but a settler, Robert Lyon, persuaded the court to detain him on Carnac Island, off Perth. There Lyon had frequent meetings with Yagan to study Aboriginal customs and language. Yagan later escaped from the island, and in 1833 he was involved in the killing of two white men and theft from settlers. A price of £30 was placed on his head. In July 1833, Yagan was shot dead by two teenage brothers who had befriended him.

Opinion on Yagan was divided even during his life. Some saw him as an outlaw who threatened white settlers, while other white settlers, who had met Yagan, argued that he was defending his tribal grounds. The execution of his father Midgigoroo in May 1833 and the shooting of his brother Domjum a month later had prompted his attacks on settlers.

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FROM THE SOURCE

Recollections of the pastoralist George Fletcher Moore, June 1833

source A

When my eyes first fell upon Yagan, (and) seeing that I knew him perfectly, he came forward, and entered into a long argument and defence of his conduct … I did not understand him, but replied, 'If white man steal white man shoot white man; if black man steal, white man shoot black man; if black man no kill cow, no kill sheep, no kill pig, white man all same as brother to black man, shake hands plenty, corroboree plenty.'

… Yagan again stepped forward, and leaning familiarly with his left hand on my shoulder, while he gesticulated with his right … I regret that I could not understand him, but I conjectured, from the tone and manner, that the purport was this: – 'You came to our country; you have driven us from our haunts, and disturbed us in our occupations: as we walk in our own country, we are fired upon by the white men; why should the white men treat us so?'

… I answered slowly, 'White man angry, Governor angry.' He then said with extraordinary vehemence of manner, distinctness of utterance, and emphasis of tone, 'White man shoot Midgegoroo, Yagan kill three' (holding up three fingers). I said, 'Yagan kill all white man, soldier man and every man kill Yagan.'

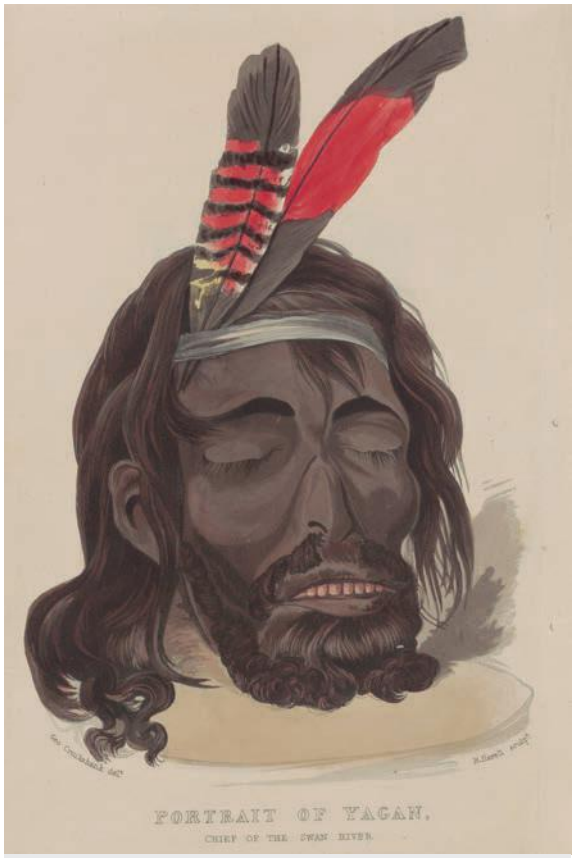
Extracts from *The Letters and Journals of George Fletcher Moore, Esq.* edited by Martin Doyle, London, 1834, p. 269

Recollections of Robert Dale, a white settler in the Swan River Settlement of Western Australia, 1833

source B

To revenge the death of Midgigoroo [Yagan's father], Yagan immediately proceeded to the Canning, and, having laid an ambush, killed two men who were driving a cart in advance of a party of settlers, who were moving up the river. He was now outlawed, and constantly pursued from place to place for three months. At length two brothers, shepherds, one eighteen the other fourteen, met him in the woods along with five other natives. The boys instantly armed themselves each with a gun, and the elder, engaging Yagan in conversation until his head was in a line with the muzzle of his gun, shot him. The boys did not both escape; the elder was overtaken and speared.

Yagan always displayed an inveterate hostility towards the Europeans. He certainly was a dangerous character, and decided steps were necessary to be taken, nor merely on account of his past behaviour, but also of a determination which he expressed, and would have no doubt carried into effect, of taking the lives of three 'white men,' in revenge for the death of his father



courtesy of National Library of Australia

Portrait of Yagan, by Robert Havell (1769–1832). Yagan's head had been removed after his murder in 1833 and taken to London, where it was put on public display.

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Midgigoroo, who had been shot by order of Government, upon being tried and convicted of murder. The justice of his death appears to have been recognised by his tribe; for after [Yagan's death] all hostility ceased, and a friendly feeling was soon established.

Robert Dale, *Descriptive Account of the Panoramic Views of King George Sound*, London, 1834

source G

News item from the *Perth Gazette*

[The killing of Yagan] … was a wild and treacherous act; and not the heroic and courageous deed, which some unthinkingly have designated it … We do not remember to have heard of one instance, in which the aborigines of this country have abused our confidence, when we have encountered them in the bush; we must therefore again deplore, an act, which it appears to us will annihilate the surest road to perfect amity – mutual confidence. We must remember Yagan was killed, after spending the morning in company with the youth, who shot him, and when upon the point of taking his frugal food, a portion of which he would not have withheld from the hand that slew him; we are not vindicating the outlaw, but we maintain it is revolting to our feelings to hear this lauded as a meritorious deed; It was a rash, and unadvised adventure of youth …

Perth Gazette, 20 July 1833

source D

Remains of Aboriginal warrior Yagan laid to rest in Perth

The remains of 19th-century Aboriginal warrior Yagan have been laid to rest in Western Australia, nearly 180 years after he was killed and his severed head was displayed in a British museum. The private ceremony held Saturday by the Noongar tribe coincided with the opening of the Yagan Memorial Park in Swan Valley, just outside of Perth.

'The Yagan Memorial Park is a fitting tribute to the life, struggles and death of Yagan and to the memory of all Aboriginal people who suffered and died in support of their land, culture and heritage,' WA Premier Colin Barnett said.

Yagan was shot by a European settler in 1833. His body was believed to be buried in Swan Valley but his head was taken to England, where it sat in a museum for a century before being buried in an English cemetery. After years of petitions by the Aboriginal community, Yagan's head was exhumed and returned to Australia in 1997.

The Australian, 11 July 2010

1 **What arguments does Yagan put forward in Source A to explain why some Aboriginal people resorted to violence?**

2 **What evidence is there in Source A that Yagan believed in the idea of retaliation?**

3 **Explain how and why Yagan met his death in 1833.**

4 **What opinion did the settler Robert Dale have of Yagan, as expressed in Source B?**

5 **Explain the main point being made in Source C, the newspaper report in the *Perth Gazette* of 20 July 1833.**

6 **During his lifetime Yagan was seen by white settlers either as a dangerous outlaw or as a native warrior, the son of a chief, defending his people. Based on your readings of this source material, prepare an extended paragraph in which you present your view on Yagan and his life.**

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Protection, missions and the dying race

Although the British government had always wanted peaceful relations with Aboriginal peoples, the contact experience between settlers and the Aboriginal peoples did not match the ideal.

From the 1830s onward, the British government supported a policy of protectionism towards Indigenous peoples of the Empire. In the decades that followed, protectorate areas were established and Christian missionary activity increased. In Australia, large numbers of Aboriginal people came under the influence of different missionary groups. Many missions failed in their quest to 'civilise' Aboriginal people and spread the Christian message, and in the process certain activities caused new hardship. In particular, the later practice of removing some Aboriginal children from their families, and thus from tribal influences, became an official government policy in the 20th century. This created a legacy of hurt and great emotional suffering.

From the mid-19th century and into the 20th century, there was an accepted belief among the white population that the Aboriginal people were a dying race – that they were doomed to extinction. The decline in the Aboriginal population confirmed people in this view and in the belief that Aboriginal society was a primitive one, incapable of progressing to the advanced level of western society. For this reason there was no consideration given to including Aboriginal people in the decisions that set up the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901. Because they were considered a primitive race and unable to exercise democratic responsibility, Aboriginal people were not included in any census, had no right to vote and were not considered Australian citizens. Despite this, Aboriginal people were employed during this period as stockmen, as trackers and as guides for the early explorers, and played an important role in the era of expanding settlement.

Galmahra, or Jackey Jackey

Galmahra (1833–1854), a member of the Wonnaura tribe, probably came from the Muswellbrook region of New South Wales. He is also known as Jackey Jackey, a name given to him by white people. As a tracker, he guided the explorer Edmund Kennedy on his expedition into Cape York in 1848. Galmahra's loyalty to Kennedy and the help he provided after Kennedy was fatally speared were later acknowledged with the presentation of a silver breastplate by the Governor of New South Wales.

State Library of NSW [a928501]

The silver breastplate presented by the Governor of New South Wales to the Aboriginal tracker Galmahra in 1850

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) *terra nullius*
   (b) squatter
   (c) diggers
   (d) egalitarianism

2 Write an extended paragraph in which you identify some of the main problems that Governor Phillip had to face after he established the first settlement at Sydney Cove in 1788.

3 Prepare a list of the six Australian colonies in order of the year of their formation. For each of these colonies add the following information:
   - the major city of the colony and why it was so named
   - how and why the colony was founded
   - the degree of convict involvement or otherwise.

4 Read the letter below and answer the questions that follow.

To the Editor, *Perth Gazette*, 27 July 1833

SIR:

Did it never occur to us that in thus extending the dominion of Great Britain, in thus acquiring a territory for our country whilst seeking a fortune for ourselves, we were about to perpetrate a monstrous piece of injustice, that we were about to dispossess unceremoniously the rightful owners of the soil?

…[land] was a gift which we were eager to accept; we looked not too scrupulously to the title of the donor; we mounted this gift horse and rode proudly away, though at the hazard of being challenged by the real owner for the theft. … we owe the Aboriginal Inhabitants of this country a debt which as honest conscientious men we are bound to discharge, but by acts of substantial good, by advantages equivalent to those of which we have deprived them … there are benefits which we have in our power to bestow, there are advantages which we are able to confer, that may make reparation for our injustice, may make amends for the injuries we have inflicted.

I am, Sir,

yours,

PHILALETH.

   (a) Explain the main points being made in this letter to the *Perth Gazette* of 27 July 1833.
   (b) Write your own response, either agreeing or disagreeing with the sentiments in the letter.
   (c) Apart from land, in what other ways did white settlement impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?
   (d) In what way could it be argued that the 'benefits which we have in our power to bestow, [and] advantages which we are able to confer' that are mentioned in the letter may not have been particularly beneficial to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people?

5 The cartoon on the following page by Philip May, entitled 'A curiosity in her own country', appeared in *The Bulletin* on 3 March 1888.
   (a) Why is the Aboriginal woman with her child described as a 'curiosity in her own country'?
   (b) Describe what is happening in this cartoon from 1888.
   (c) How does the cartoonist draw the Aboriginal woman and her child in comparison with the way he draws the various onlookers. Can you offer a reason why the cartoonist might have done this?

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(d) Is the cartoonist sympathetic or unsympathetic to the plight of the Aboriginal woman? Explain why you reached your conclusion.

(e) What evidence is there in this cartoon to support an argument that the cartoonist may not have agreed with the concept of *terra nullius*?

(f) The cartoon appeared a few weeks after Australia celebrated the centenary of the arrival of white settlement in Australia. Imagine you have seen this cartoon in your issue of *The Bulletin* of March 1888. Write a letter to *The Bulletin* expressing your thoughts on the subject of the cartoon.

'A curiosity in her own country', *Bulletin* 1888, National Library of Australia

Cartoon from *The Bulletin*, 3 March 1888

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2.2 WHAT WAS THE EXPERIENCE OF NON-EUROPEANS LIVING IN AUSTRALIA BEFORE 1900?

The Chinese in Australia

During the gold rushes many thousands of Chinese arrived in the colonies, mainly in Victoria. By 1861 almost 24 000 Chinese were working the Victorian goldfields while another 11 000 Chinese had arrived on the goldfields of New South Wales. By 1861 some 3.4 per cent of the total population of the colonies had been born in China. When gold was discovered in the Palmer River and near Cooktown in Queensland in the 1870s, Chinese miners arrived in these areas as well.

The Chinese endured difficult times on the goldfields. Despite the fact that they were usually peaceful and industrious, racism was a common feature of the goldfields. For many Europeans it was based on the fact that the Chinese were different in language, customs and habits that included gambling and opium smoking. Often denied access to the most productive areas of the goldfields, the Chinese worked hard and tended to keep to their own communities, which increased suspicions. Resentment towards the Chinese, particularly as gold became harder to find, developed into instances of racially based violence.

Lambing Flat

In 1861 a series of riots and attacks on the Chinese took place on the New South Wales goldfield at Lambing Flat. In one violent outbreak in June 1861, some 2000 European miners attacked the Chinese camp. Two hundred and fifty Chinese miners were injured and most of their property was destroyed.

As a consequence of this and other violence, the governments of New South Wales, Queensland and, later, Western Australia passed laws to restrict the number of Chinese who could enter the colonies. In New South Wales after 1861, Chinese had to pay a special poll tax of £10 simply because they were Chinese.

State Library of NSW [a2822083]

On Lee Hing's shop in Herbert Street, Gulgong, New South Wales, in about 1870. After the gold rush had passed, many Chinese stayed on to conduct businesses in the colonies.

Other than the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Chinese remained the largest non-European group living in the Australian colonies before federation. When the gold rush era passed, most Chinese returned to their homeland in southern China. Of those who remained, many worked as labourers to earn money for their families in China. This explains why there was such a gender imbalance in the Chinese population. In 1881, only 0.6 per cent of the 38 500 Chinese in Australia were women; twenty years later, in 1901, the number of Chinese in the colonies had fallen to 29 600, and 1.6 per cent of them were women. By the turn of the 20th century, most resident Chinese worked as shopkeepers, market gardeners or in the import–export trade.

South Sea Islanders in Australia

Sugar cane came to Australia on the First Fleet. Initially, the growing of sugar cane in the south was not very successful. As the coastal plains of Queensland were opened up for settlement, however, the sugar industry assumed new life. In 1862 Louis Hope established the first profitable sugar plantation near Brisbane, and during the 1860s the industry expanded rapidly. The government of Queensland actively supported the new industry as a source of vital income for the new colony.

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FROM THE SOURCE

A newspaper correspondent reports on his visit to sugar plantations in northern Queensland, 1893

source A

Having now visited plantations throughout the whole length of the sugar-belt and, I think, almost every plantation north of Mackay, having been allowed everywhere to inspect the kanaka* quarters and rations, and to have perfectly fair talks with the kanakas, I am in a position to say that not only are they not ill-treated, but that I have never in any country seen the lot of the average manual labourer so well cared for …

The quarters in which they live are less good than the cottages of our agricultural labourers. They are either large sheds of corrugated iron with partitions, similar to those in which the white labourers of the West are housed, or grass huts built by the kanakas themselves after the fashion of their island homes … He has no furniture but the wooden bed and blankets provided for him, and no possessions. If he has a wife and family, he lives with them in the same animal simplicity as in their own island.

The time-expired boy, as a rule, has adopted the household customs of civilization. He has a bedroom and a living-room; his beds rise to the dignity of mosquito curtains; his kitchen boasts of table and chairs and pots and plates … all who choose are allowed, on most plantations, to have gardens, in which they grow vegetables for their own use … The rations, which are made compulsory by Government, consist of tea, sugar, tobacco, soap and 6 lb. of solid food a day. This food includes … meat … bread and … sweet potatoes or equivalent vegetable. To this is usually added in the North, where fruit is plentiful, as many bananas, pineapples, mangoes and watermelons as they can eat … Clothes are supplied to them at the rate of four suits a year, and where there are children food and clothes for them are thrown in as an extra.

The Brisbane Courier, 3 February 1893

* kanaka: a term commonly used until more recent times to describe Islander workers

1 **In what way does this photo add to your knowledge of South Sea Islander life in Queensland during this time?**

2 **Based on the evidence in Sources A and B, what conclusions can you draw about the life of Islander people who were used as workers on the sugar farms of Queensland in the late 19th century?**

source B

John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland, Neg. 24462

A group of Islander workers and their families attending a church service at a palm leaf church in the small sugar town of Farleigh, near Mackay, Queensland, in about 1890.

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The production of sugar, and in particular the cutting of the cane and its transportation to the sugar mills, required hard manual labour. As the sugar industry became a vital feature of most coastal towns in the new colony of Queensland, the cost of paying white men to do the work would have been too great. The solution was to use cheap, **indentured** labour, a system in which a person was legally bound to work for another for a fixed time. Pacific Islanders, mainly from Melanesia – parts of New Guinea, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, the New Hebrides (present-day Vanuatu), Fiji and New Caledonia – were recruited, usually for a period of three years. They were provided with shelter, food rations and a wage of about £6 ($12) per year, to be paid at the end of their contract. A white labourer's wage was close to £30 ($60) a year.

A small number of these Islander workers were 'blackbirded', a term used to describe the forced movement of Islanders to Queensland by kidnapping or deceit. The use of violence, including kidnapping, took place in the early years of the sugar industry. Most Islanders came to work in Queensland willingly: if the system was to work, there was a need for a degree of cooperation and consent from those who worked in the cane fields. As well, the Queensland government opposed blackbirding and established regulations to prevent Islanders from being forced to travel to Australia against their will.

WS

Pacific Island labourers

Attempts to compare the use of Islander workers in Queensland to the use of slaves in the United States of America are difficult to support. Historical evidence suggests that close to 62 000 Islander people came to Queensland between 1863 and 1901, after which time the use of South Sea Islander labour was abolished.

State Library of Western Australia (008693PD)

Japanese pearl divers on a pearling lugger (sailing vessel) at Broome, Western Australia, in 1901

The Japanese and Afghans

Although the Chinese were the major non-European immigrant group in 19th-century Australia, there were other non-European groups in the particular colonies that benefited from their labour. As Queensland had its South Sea Islanders associated with the sugar industry, so Western Australia looked to Japanese and Malay pearl divers to work in its growing pearling industry, and South Australia allowed Afghan camel drivers (known as 'Ghans') to come to that colony to serve a particular purpose.

The pearling industry was based around the new settlement at Broome in Western Australia from the 1880s. The development of the diving suit made the pearl trade even more profitable and the Japanese were regarded as the most capable divers. Like the South Sea Islanders in Queensland, they were indentured for fixed terms of work.

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In the vast interior, the use of camels brought Afghan camel drivers to the country. These Afghans, who were also indentured workers, not only assisted in the exploration of the centre of Australia but also formed an essential supply and communication link between distant communities. Their most important role was to assist with the construction of the vital Overland Telegraph Line in the 1870s, a project that linked Adelaide to Darwin, and Australia to the world. By the time of federation in 1901 there were some 2000 Afghans living in the country.

Alamy/Andy Selinger

A Japanese cemetery in Broome, Western Australia, contains the graves of many of the Japanese pearl divers who were killed while working in the pearling industry of the 19th century.

The cameleers

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Define the following terms.
   (a) indentured labourers
   (b) blackbirding

2 Explain why Chinese miners on the Australian goldfields experienced special hardship.

3 Image you have been asked to prepare a report for the Governor of New South Wales on the riots at Lambing Flat in 1861. Your report should include who was involved, why the riots took place and the consequences of the riots for the parties involved.

4 Chinese, Afghans, Japanese and South Sea Islanders are examples of non-Europeans who lived in Australia during the 19th century. Prepare a multimedia presentation on *one* of these groups and its place in Australian history. Your presentation should include why they came to the colonies, how they were received by others, the nature of their work, including its hardship or danger, and the contribution they made to the settlement of Australia.

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2.3

HOW AND WHY DID AUSTRALIA BECOME A NATION IN 1901?

Federation is a process in which a number of states or colonies join together and agree to set up a federal or central government for the entire nation. In Australia, the six separate colonies (or states, as they were called after 1901) each kept its own state government and its own state laws, but they gave to the new federal government the power to make laws in matters that affected the nation as a whole – for example, in defence, trade, foreign affairs and immigration.

George Street, Sydney, c. 1901, National Library of Australia

George Street, Sydney, in 1901, showing Sydney Town Hall and the dome of the Queen Victoria Building, which had been built only seven years earlier. What major difference do you notice between George Street in 1901 and George Street today?

The reasons for federation

While there were many issues that divided the six Australian colonies at the close of the 19th century, there were also strong reasons why these colonies should move beyond these differences and create one Australian nation.

Nationalism

By 1901, more than two-thirds of the 3.7 million white people who lived in the six colonies had been born in Australia. By this time, fewer Australians still looked on England or Ireland as home; instead, they were coming to identify with their native land – the place of their birth. Despite the rivalry between the colonies, a sense of Australian nationalism had begun to emerge.

Nationalism is the desire to be a nation, a feeling of belonging to a particular country. By the late 19th century, a majority of Australians increasingly felt as if they were one people. They spoke

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the same language and had a common cultural background, and most shared British ancestry and a loyalty to the powerful British Empire. Australians were beginning to discover themselves as a nation, and through federation they hoped to achieve the goal of creating a nation. Newspapers and national publications such as *The Bulletin* promoted this sense of national identity. There were times of great national pride, such as in 1882, when an Australian cricket team defeated England at cricket in London and began the tradition of competing for the Ashes.

This new sense of national identity and pride was reflected in the art and writing of the time. Artists such as Tom Roberts, Arthur Streeton, Charles Conder and Frederick McCubbin discovered the beauty of the Australian bush and painted scenes of Australian life. The bush was also the setting for the flowering of a new literature, by writers including Henry Lawson and A. B. 'Banjo' Paterson. Paterson's *The Man from Snowy River*, published in 1895, became Australia's first bestseller.

State Library of NSW [a928805]

In 1882 the third Australian cricket team to tour England won the Test match at the Oval, London, that established the Ashes legend.

Much of the early work of writers such as Lawson and Paterson was published in *The Bulletin*, one of the most important publications of the period. *The Bulletin* preached a form of radical Australian nationalism. It favoured the creation of a white Australia with its banner slogan proclaiming 'Australia for the White Man'. It also favoured federation and the creation of a united Australia that would be a republic rather than part of the British Empire. However, the majority of Australians still looked to Britain as the 'mother country'. They wanted to create a united and democratic Australia that would remain a loyal part of the British Empire.

FROM THE SOURCE

Nationalism: a view from 1887

source A

By the term Australian we mean not those who have been merely born in Australia. All white men who come to these shores – with a clean record – and who leave behind them the memory of the class-distinctions and the religious differences of the old world … all men who leave the tyrant-ridden lands of Europe for freedom of speech and the right of personal liberty are Australians before they set foot on the ship that brings them here …

The Bulletin, 2 July 1887

A new nation

source B

The fact simply is that the country of our birth is the land about which centre our proudest feelings. Our English fellow-citizen naturally glories in his English birth, and we, as naturally, in the fact that we are native-born Australians … One obstacle to Australia's development … has been the strong and natural feeling of our parents … accustomed to the vivid green of an English landscape they could see no beauty, as we can, in the grades of colour and the clearness and brightness of our atmosphere. They were exiles, not Australians, and had not the joyous confidence in the land beneath the Southern Cross. We have learned from our mothers to call old England 'home', but … our home is Australia.

Advance Australia: Journal of the Australian Natives' Association, 16 December 1913

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source C

Oil on canvas on composition board 122.4 × 183.3 cm. Felton Bequest, National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne.

Shearing the Rams (1890) by Tom Roberts (1856–1931)

source D

A Song of the Republic

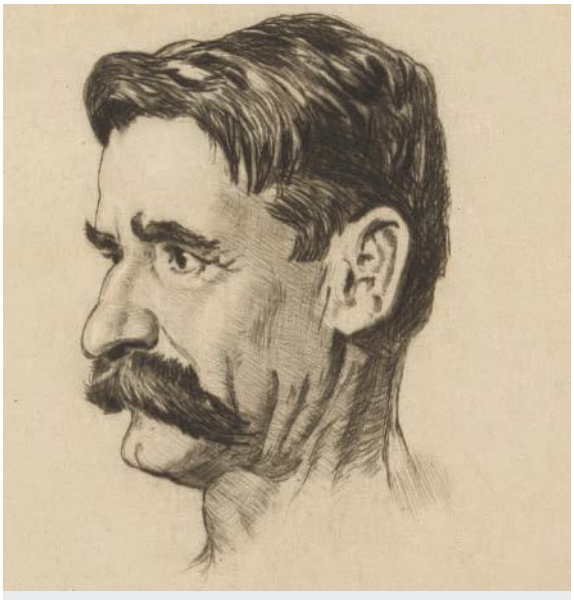
Sons of the South, awake! arise!
Sons of the South, and do.
Banish from under your bonny skies
Those old-world errors and wrongs and lies
Making a hell in a Paradise
That belongs to your sons and you.

Sons of the South, make choice between
(Sons of the South, choose true)
The Land of Morn, and the Land of E'en,
The Old Dead Tree and the Young Tree Green,
The Land that belongs to the lord and Queen,
And the land that belongs to you.

…

Sons of the South, aroused at last!
Sons of the South are few!
But your ranks grow longer and deeper fast,
And ye shall swell to an army vast,
And free from the wrongs of the North and Past
The land that belongs to you.

Henry Lawson, *A Song of the Republic*, 1887



Lionel Lindsay, Henry Lawson 1919, National Gallery of Australia, Canberra, Bequest of Alan Queale, 1982 © National Library of Australia

Portrait of Henry Lawson (1867–1922) by Lionel Lindsay. Lawson's writing captured the spirit of the bush and the feeling of being Australian.

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1 How did *The Bulletin* newspaper, Source A, explain what it was to be a true 'Australian'?

2 Which two groups of people are not mentioned in this ideal of what a true Australian was?

3 From Source B, what do you understand by the terms 'native-born Australians' and 'land beneath the Southern Cross'?

4 Explain what you think is the main point being made in this extract from the Australian Natives' Association.

5 The writer of Source B is expressing a feeling of:

- **A** loyalty to England
- **B** pride in being of English birth
- **C** pride in Australia as his or her true home
- **D** admiration for the beauty of the English landscape.

6 The painting by Tom Roberts in Source C is important because:

- **A** It shows the importance of the wool industry.
- **B** It shows how shearing was done before machines.
- **C** It is a painting with images that are very Australian.
- **D** It shows the working conditions of the time.

7 Some of the important painters who painted Australian scenes and expressed the beauty of Australian life in art were called the Heidelberg School (after the suburb in Melbourne). Find examples of the artwork of some of these artists. Examine three paintings you find and explain how each is distinctly Australian. In what way were these paintings different from the paintings of many earlier colonial artists like the one on page 53? Can you explain why?

The Heidelberg School

8 Explain what Henry Lawson is saying in the poem in Source D. It what way does it reflect the feeling of nationalism at the turn of the century?

9 What is Lawson referring to in the following lines?

The Old Dead Tree and the Young Tree Green
The land that belongs to the lord and Queen
And the land that belongs to you.

10 Which one of the following statements relates best to the ideas in *A Song of the Republic*?

- **A** That British civilisation has bought great benefits to Australia
- **B** That Australia must remain a loyal part of the British Empire
- **C** That the future belongs to a free and independent Australia
- **D** That all Australians want to see an end to British control in Australia.

Transport and communication

Differences and rivalry between the colonies were a feature of life in Australia in the years before federation. One of the results of this rivalry was that transport and communication between the colonies were difficult. The colonies could not even agree on the gauge (width) of rail track to be used. In New South Wales the rail line was 1.42 metres wide, in Victoria it was 1.6 metres wide, while in Queensland it was 1.06 metres wide. When people travelled between colonies they had to change

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trains at the borders and there were customs checks, not unlike when you travel between different countries today. At the town of Albury, on the border of New South Wales and Victoria, everyone travelling by train from Sydney to Melbourne had to change trains in the middle of the night. One person who experienced this inconvenience was the famous American writer and novelist Mark Twain, who travelled to Melbourne by train in 1895. Twain wrote:

> "Now comes a singular thing, the oddest thing, the strangest thing, the most unaccountable marvel that Australasia can show. At the frontier between New South Wales and Victoria our multitude of passengers were routed out of their snug beds by lantern-light in the morning in the biting-cold ... to change cars ...! Think of the paralysis of intellect that gave that idea birth; imagine the boulder it emerged from on some petrified legislator's shoulders."

Many people believed that federation, by replacing six colonies with one country, would improve transport and communication for the nation as a whole.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

State Library of Victoria [0_488305]

A cartoon from the *Australasian Sketcher*, 1887

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An unhappy traveller: a letter to *The Argus*, 1887

source B

Sir,

I write to protest against your barbarous Custom House regulations. I and my wife were passengers on the express from Adelaide last Thursday and on arrival in Melbourne on Friday we were subjected to the insult of having our boxes etc. searched … I consider it a disgrace to the colony of Victoria that visitors from neighbouring colonies should be subjected to such treatment. What is the use of talking about Federation when I cannot travel from South Australia to New South Wales without having my luggage searched? Victorians should be heartily ashamed of themselves.

Yours etc.

Indignant

1 **Explain what is happening in the cartoon, Source A.**

2 **What is the probable place where this event is taking place?**

3 **What argument in favour of federation is suggested in the letter to *The Argus*, Source B?**

4 **The intended audience for the letter of 1887 in Source B was:**

A people who live in Victoria and South Australia

B *The Argus* newspaper

C the colonial government of Victoria

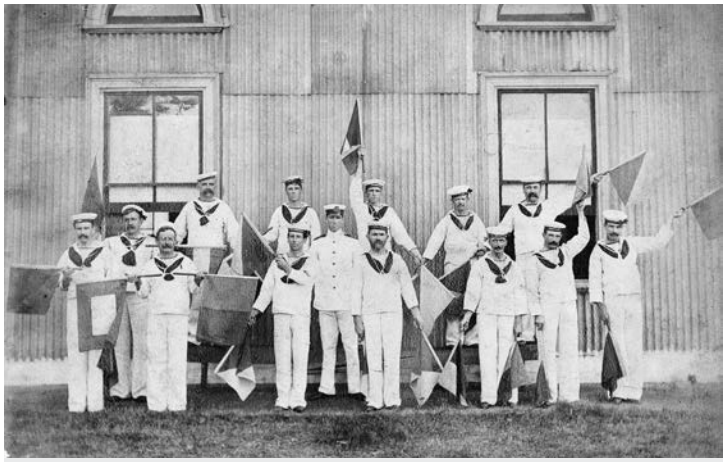
D all of the above

5 **In what way does the cartoon, Source A, support or contradict Source B?**

Economic and trade advantages

Each of the Australian colonies had different economic policies. Victoria had a policy of protectionism, with **tariffs** imposed on goods coming into Victoria from other colonies. In this way Victoria protected its own goods against competition from outside. New South Wales had the opposite system, a policy of free trade. These different economic polices between the two most important colonies did not help business or trade.

In the 1890s the eastern colonies experienced a severe economic depression caused mainly by drought, a fall in prices for wool and wheat, and the decline of British investment money in the colonies. Many believed that the country needed a national banking system and a unified economic policy to reduce colonial rivalry, competition and the tariff barriers. It was also argued that Britain would prefer to trade with one nation rather than have to deal with six different colonies.



Australian War Memorial [P02233.002]

Signallers from the New South Wales Naval Brigade in 1890. The Australian Navy was not established until 1911, ten years after federation. Before federation, each of the Australian colonies except Western Australia maintained its own colonial naval force.

Defence

Another strong argument in favour of federation was the issue of defence. Each colony had its own defence units and there was a growing concern in the 1880s and 1890s about the ability of these forces to defend Australia if the need should ever arise. In 1889 the

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British government asked Major General J. B. Edwards to report on the state of Australia's defences. His report criticised the wastage of the separate colonial defence units. Supporters of federation, including Henry Parkes, argued that federation would give Australia a united and stronger defence capacity.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Major General Edwards reports on Australia's defences, 1889

If the Australian colonies had to rely at any time solely on their own resources, they would offer such a rich and tempting prize. Isolated as Australia would be with forces which cannot be considered efficient in comparison with any moderately trained army, and without any cohesion or power of combination for mutual defence among the different colonies, its position would be one of great danger. The defence forces should at once be placed on a proper footing, but this is however quite impossible without a federation of the forces of the different colonies.

New South Wales Legislative Assembly, *Votes and Proceedings* 1889, vol. 1, p. 172

source B

An opinion from *The Bulletin*, 1898

Australia's six baby armies with their six different commanders, different systems, different weapons and ammunition are a howling mockery. If they were all combined as one force under one head they wouldn't amount to very much; as six straggling atoms they amount to nothing. They couldn't even move easily to each other's aid ... the break of gauge would prevent the others sending assistance. And it is abundantly evident that nothing save Federation will settle the break of gauge difficulty.

The Bulletin, 15 January 1898

1 **What was the great weakness in the Australian defence system referred to in both the report of Major General Edwards and *The Bulletin* extract of 1898?**

2 **From *The Bulletin* extract, Source B, what do you understand by the following terms?**

   (a) Australia's six baby armies

   (b) the break of gauge difficulty

3 **What recommendation is contained in both of these sources?**

4 **Explain how the issue of Australian defence could be solved by the federation of the six colonies into the Commonwealth of Australia.**

Fear of other races

Of all the arguments used to support the cause of federation, none had more popular support than the issue of immigration. Australians had a fear of non-white races. The objects of their fear were the Chinese and the Japanese, and to a lesser extent the Pacific Islanders who had come to work on the sugar farms of northern Queensland. Non-white races were seen as a threat to the goal of creating a white Australian nation. All political groups in Australia agreed on the need to restrict the entry of non-white races. In addition, the Labor Party opposed Asian immigration because of the threat of cheap labour.

Before 1901 each of the six colonies had its own immigration policy. The argument for federation was that, with a federal government, laws could be passed that would exclude the non-white races from all of Australia. After federation, one of the very first actions of the new parliament was to pass the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, which set up the White Australia policy.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

State Library of Victoria

'The yellow-trash question': a cartoon from *The Bulletin*, August 1895. The wording on the side of the raft says, 'Australia for the Australians'.

source B

'An earnest appeal to the sons of Australia'

As to the virtues of the Chinese as citizens: who has seen them? … His house is rarely washed out; the windows are never open, and the blinds are eternally down. Look at the Chinaman's backyard, and unless the police are constantly watching him, you will find disease and malaria seething in every hole and corner. In short his house is a den and his yard is a sewer …

… a Chinese threat of invasion would immediately federate our states into one nation; it would give us a permanent national government, and the flag of our new-born nation, the blue banner of the Southern Cross would be an emblem that henceforth to all time would inspire the sons of our country with patriotic pride.

R. Thomson, *Australian Nationalism: An Earnest Appeal to the Sons of Australia in Favour of Federation*, Burwood, 1888

1 **Was the cartoon in Source A published before or after federation?**

2 **Explain why the cartoonist has included the drawing of a young boy in this cartoon, and who the boy represents.**

3 **Which of the following statements best describes the main intention of the cartoon?**

- **A** That Australia had no real defence from outside danger
- **B** That the Chinese should be forced out of Australia
- **C** That Australia was isolated and very much alone
- **D** That Australia should oppose the entry of Chinese and other Asian people into the country and that federation was one way to achieve this.

4 **Are the comments made in Source B statements of fact or opinion?**

5 **How does Source B use the issue of the Chinese to argue in favour of federation?**

Issues that hindered the idea of federation

While there were strong arguments in favour of federation, there were also issues that worked against the idea of creating one nation.

Distance

One of the arguments used against the idea of federation concerned the size of the new nation that would be created if federation occurred – a nation bigger in size than Europe. Within this new nation there were also vast distances between the capital cities. The main method of travel between the capitals at that time was by sea; despite the railways and the telegraph, transport

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and communication between the capitals were still difficult. The colonies of Western Australia and Tasmania felt particularly isolated from the other colonies.

Colonial self-interest

Some of the colonies felt that, if federation happened, the larger colonies such as New South Wales and Victoria would dominate and the interests of smaller colonies such as Tasmania or distant colonies such as Western Australia would be ignored. In the 1890s there were already parliaments in each of the six colonies that promoted the interests of the people in that colony, and some argued that progress would best be achieved by the different colonies themselves. The trade unions in particular believed that the interests of their workers would be best served by the existing colonial system rather than a federal system.

Pacific Islanders and the sugar industry

The colony of Queensland had a particular reason to be against federation. Sugar was a major product of that colony, and most of the hard work on the cane farms of northern Queensland was done by Pacific Islanders who were paid very low wages. It was clear that one of the reasons for federation was to control the entry of non-white people into Australia. This would have an adverse effect on the Queensland economy.

Distribution of power

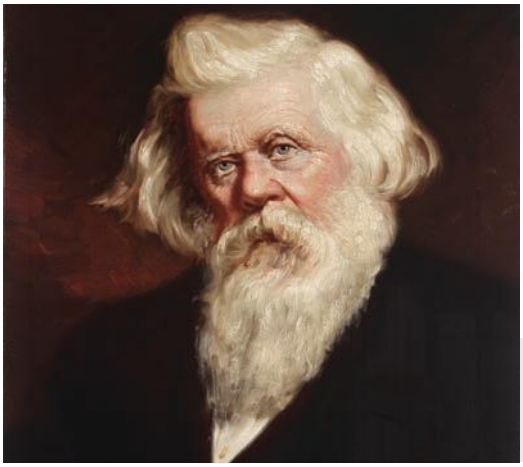
If a federal parliament was established, what would its powers be? All the colonies feared the loss of some of their power to the new federal parliament. Some also questioned the expense of setting up a federation, particularly at a time when there was an economic depression, as there was in the 1890s.

How Australia became a nation

The role of Sir Henry Parkes

Henry Parkes

The idea of federation had been suggested as early as the 1840s, but it was not until the 1880s and 1890s that interest in the idea was revived. One of the leading voices in favour of federation was that of Sir Henry Parkes, the premier of New South Wales. The trigger that revived the push for federation came in October 1889 when, in a speech in the New South Wales town of Tenterfield, Parkes called for the colonies to unite and 'create a great national government for all Australia'. As a result of Parkes' call, a national convention, or meeting, was held in Sydney in March 1891.



State Library of NSW [a928710]

Extract from a speech by Sir Henry Parkes to the Australasian Federation Conference, Melbourne, 1890

Why should not the name of an Australian citizen be equal to that of a Briton? ... Make yourselves a united people, appear before the world as one, and the dream of going 'home' would die away ... We should have home within our shores.

Portrait of Sir Henry Parkes by Gladstone Eyre, painted in 1896, the year Parkes died. Parkes had been a powerful force in favour of federation but he did not live to see it achieved.

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Federation achieved

Call to the people

The first National Australasian Convention opened in Sydney in March 1891. Representatives from all the colonies as well as New Zealand came together in a series of meetings to discuss how the new nation could be created and how it would be governed. The most important task of this convention was to prepare a constitution that would set out the structure of the federal system.

Federation was not an easy process and there were differences between the colonies and particular disagreement about what powers should be given to a new federal government. There was always the possibility that some of the colonies (especially Western Australia) might decide not to join the federation.

The mood for federation revived during the 1890s, and in 1897, the year after Parkes' death, a second National Australasian Convention began work revising the draft constitution to make it more acceptable to the colonies.

This revised constitution was finally complete and in June 1898 the people of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania voted on the idea of federation in a **referendum**. This referendum failed but, a year later, after some further changes to the constitution, there was a second referendum and all the colonies except Western Australia voted to join the federation. The final step on the path to creating a nation was for the British Parliament to approve the new Australian constitution. The *Commonwealth of Australia Constitution Act 1900*, which contained the new constitution, was formally passed by the British Parliament in 1900 and came into effect on 1 January 1901. Before that date Western Australia finally agreed to join the union of the Australian colonies.

Constitution for a nation

How federation came about

The six separate Australian colonies

New South Wales (founded 1788)
Tasmania (founded 1825)
Western Australia (founded 1829*)
South Australia (founded 1836**)
Victoria (founded 1850)
Queensland (founded 1859)

* Originally the Swan River Settlement; the name was changed to Western Australia in 1832

** From 1863 to 1911 the Northern Territory was part of South Australia

1891 – First National Australasian Convention. A draft Constitution is produced

1897 – Second National Australasian Convention

1898 – The first referendum on federation is unsuccessful

1899 – The second referendum on federation is successful

1 January 1901 – a new nation, the Commonwealth of Australia comes into being

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FROM THE SOURCE

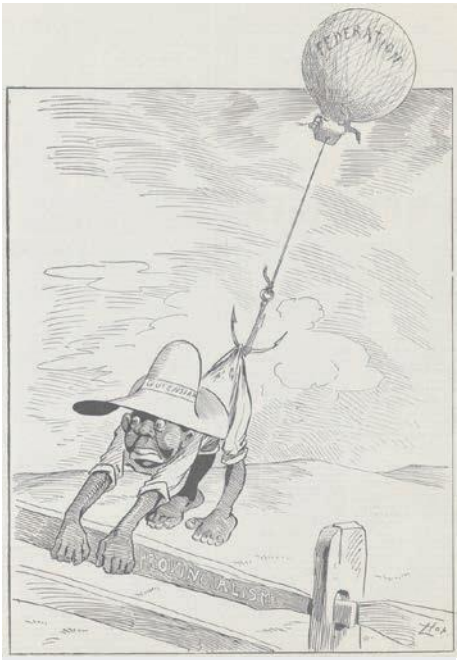
source A

TABLE 2.2 The referenda on federation

	1898 REFERENDUM (Percentage of population who voted: 45%)			
	YES VOTE	% [a]	NO VOTE	%
New South Wales[b]	71595	52	66228	48
Victoria	100520	82	22099	18
Queensland	No referendum held			
South Australia[c]	35803	67	17320	33
Western Australia	No referendum held			
Tasmania	11706	81	2716	19
	1899 REFERENDUM (Percentage of population who voted: 60%)			
	YES VOTE	%	NO VOTE	%
New South Wales	107420	57	82741	43
Victoria	152653	94	9805	6
Queensland	38488	55	30966	45
South Australia[c]	65990	79	17053	21
Western Australia[d]	44652	69	19636	31
Tasmania	13437	94	791	6

[a]% is the percentage of the total number of votes cast
[b]NSW had set 80000 as the necessary 'yes' vote. This vote was therefore declared to be negative
[c]Includes the population of the Northern Territory
[d]Vote taken in July 1900

source B



National Library of Australia

'More or less in the air': a cartoon from *The Bulletin*, 29 January 1898

source C

State Library of NSW [a9340001]

A cardboard badge created for supporters of federation during the crucial referendum of June 1899 that decided the issue of federation.

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1 Explain why the first referendum of 1898 was unsuccessful.

2 Using the referendum results as your evidence, which colony was the most reluctant to join the federation? Explain why that colony might have been so unwilling.

3 Explain why Queensland is represented as a non-white person in the cartoon in Source B.

4 Explain the main point being made in the cartoon.

5 Does the evidence in the voting figures support or reject the idea suggested in the cartoon?

6 Is there any evidence in the voting figures to support the following statement? 'Many Australians were, in fact, generally uninterested in the whole idea of federation.'

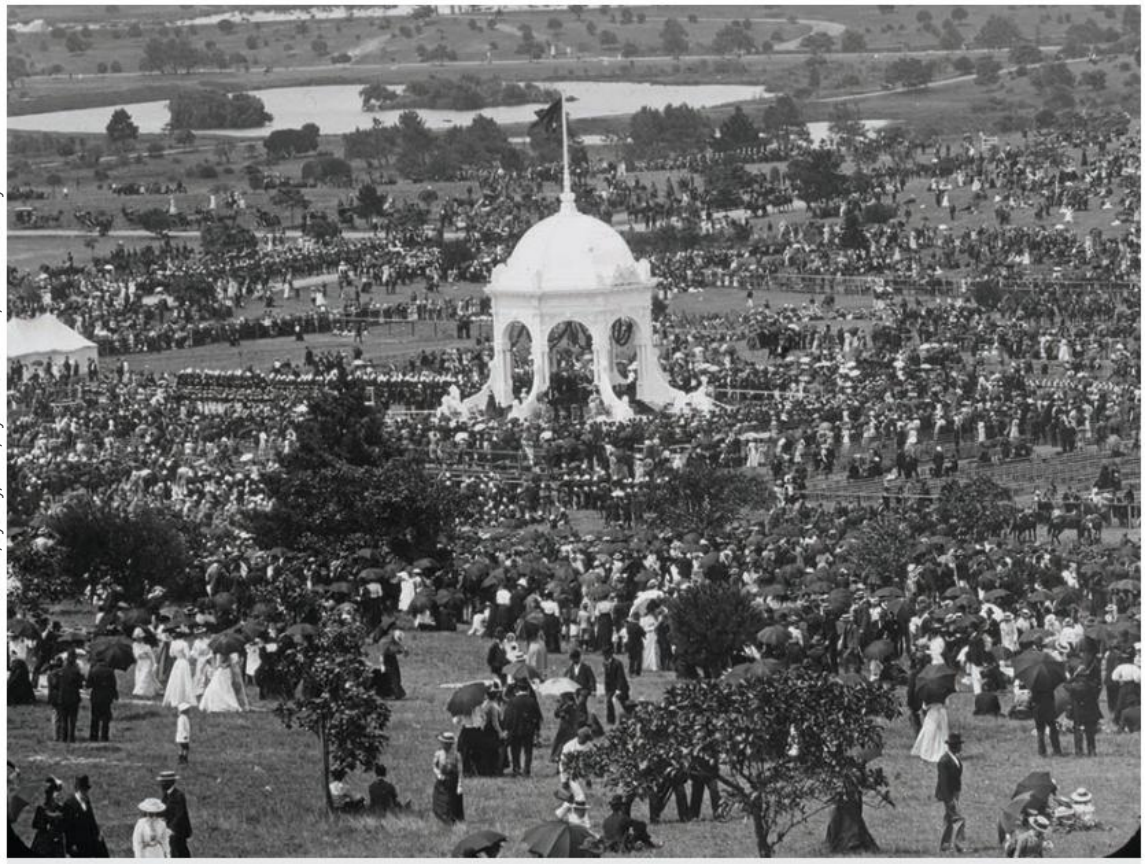
7 Explain the meaning of the cardboard badge in support of federation (Source C).

8 Prepare your own image, cartoon or badge to support the idea of federation.

Australia became a nation on 1 January 1901. On this day, the first day of the 20th century, 200 000 people gathered in sweltering heat in Centennial Park, Sydney, to witness the ceremony that proclaimed the federation of the six colonies into the new Commonwealth of Australia. The Earl of Hopetoun, whom the governor of Victoria described as 'charming but not at all clever', became the first governor-general and Edmund Barton was sworn in as the first prime minister. Australia's experience of nationhood had begun.

WS Symbols of nationhood

WS Opening of the first Australian Parliament



Federation celebrations in Centennial Park, Sydney, 1901, by JW Mildenhall, National Library of Australia

Crowds surround a plaster pavilion in Centennial Park, Sydney, where the federation ceremony took place on 1 January 1901.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What was the Heidelberg School?
2 What do you understand by the word 'federation'?
3 Did *The Bulletin* magazine support or oppose the idea of federation?
4 Who made a famous speech in Tenterfield, New South Wales, appealing for federation?
5 List three major reasons why the colonies decided to federate.
6 List three reasons that were put forward against the idea of federation.
7 What is a referendum?
8 How many referenda were held on the question of federation?
9 Which two Australian colonies were more reluctant about federation than other colonies? Can you explain why?
10 When did the new Commonwealth of Australia come into being?

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
(a) Australian nationalism
(b) convention
(c) 'break of gauge'
(d) governor-general
(e) protectionism
(f) free trade

2 The following box contains names, events and dates that are all related to the topic of federation. Create nine correct matching pairs.

The Tenterfield oration	Death of Henry Parkes	1889
Protectionism	Second referendum on federation	1901
Shearing the Rams	Edmund Barton	Pacific Islanders
Federation achieved	1899	The first prime minister
1896	Queensland	Tom Roberts
Free trade	New South Wales	Victoria

3 Explain how the idea for a federation finally became a reality. What were the key obstacles to be overcome, and what was the process by which six separate Australian colonies became the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901?

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4 Using the internet and other resources, prepare a multimedia presentation on how the growing sense of Australian nationalism at the close of the 19th century was reflected in the art and literature of the time.

5 The poster, 'To the Australian born', (below) appeared at the time of the federation debate in 1899. Prepare your own poster in which you support or oppose the idea of federation. The poster should contain some of the arguments that were used at the time to promote or oppose the idea of federation.

6 Refer to the federation souvenir of 1901 below.

(a) Identify the man in this souvenir issue and the position he held in the new Australian government from 1 January 1901.

(b) What evidence is there in this image that loyalty to Britain as the 'mother country' was still very strong?

(c) Explain why there is no Australian flag in this image.

(d) Prepare your own poster to celebrate the federation of the six Australian colonies in January 1901.

To the Australian Born.

No people in the world have been so manifestly marked out by destiny to live under one Government as the people of this island continent; but no people with so little reason have been so disunited in their public actions.

The Vote on Tuesday next will determine whether we will continue as we are, **a cluster of petty provinces,** each waging a wasteful competition with the other by means of hostile tariffs and railway rates; or whether **we shall have the courage to accept the responsibility cast upon us by our heritage of this great Continent.**

"A Continent for a People, a People for a Continent," was Mr. Barton's fine expression of a noble hope four years ago. If Australians are true to themselves this hope will be realised on June 20th.

All the difficulties in the way of Union vanish if we look at them as **Australians,** and not as the inhabitants of any single province. There should be no more difference between, say **Victoria** and **New South Wales,** than there is in **Great Britain** between **Somerset** and **Yorkshire.**

Australia is our home. Our aspiration is to **make Australia great.**

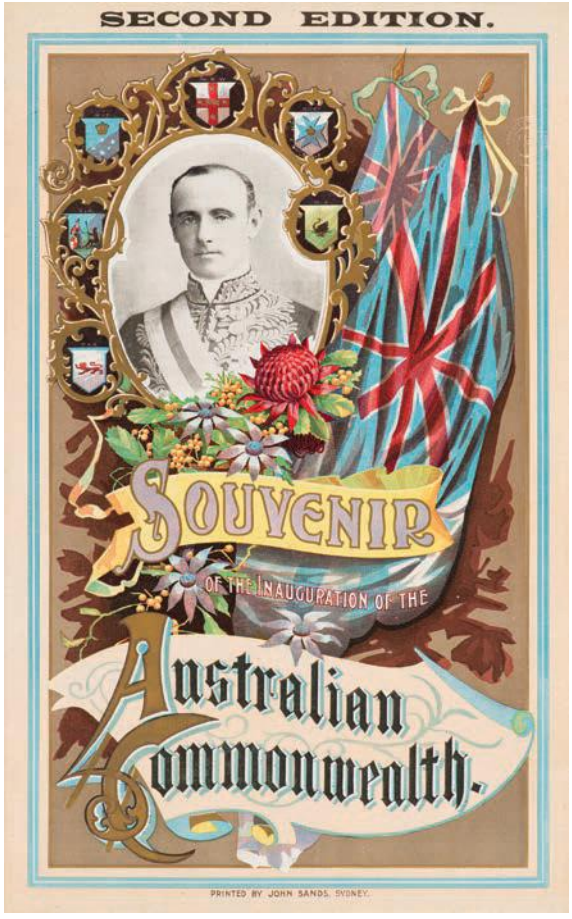
If this is **"sentiment"** it is also **"hard sense."** No Nation has ever played a worthy part in the world unless it has had confidence in its own future.

A Nation's Greatness does not depend upon Acreage of Territory or Material Wealth, but on the **nobleness of the thoughts by which its people are inspired;** and of all the impulses to noble deeds which history records there is none more universal or more potent than **this** sentiment of Nationality.

Let us become a Nation

and establish in the Southern Hemisphere a POWER which makes for Peace and Order in the sight of other nations, and which will prove to men of every race that the descendants of Britons in AUSTRALIA HAVE NOT LOST THEIR CAPACITY FOR SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Federation referendum leaflet, 20 June 1899, National Library of Australia



State Library of NSW [a086067]

2.4

WHAT WERE LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS LIKE IN AUSTRALIA AT THE START OF THE 20TH CENTURY?

Class divisions

Although Australia was very much a British society early in the 20th century, Australians had rejected the concept of the British class system. Instead, Australians liked to think of theirs as an egalitarian society where everyone had equal opportunities. In reality, class divisions did exist, and these divisions were based on wealth and occupation. The working class was at the bottom of white society.

The working class

The working class included people who had skills or trades and the many unskilled workers. Some of the skills people had at the start of the last century were in trades that hardly exist today – saddlers and blacksmiths, coopers and bootmakers, domestic servants, coachmen, masons, milliners and housemaids.

While skilled workers could demand better pay and conditions, urban (or city-dwelling) unskilled workers faced greater hardships. They worked mainly in factories or on the docks. The conditions

'Playfair Street, The Rocks (NSW)', State Records NSW

Playfair Street, The Rocks, Sydney, in October 1901. The area was very much a working class district. What conclusions can you draw about aspects of life at the time from images like this one?

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were hard and workers had very little job security. These were the days before strict workplace safety laws, and a worker who was injured might lose their job and receive no compensation. At the end of their working life there was the possibility of a small age pension for women over 60 and for men over 65, but others had to rely on charity to support them in old age.

Most unskilled Australian workers, including women and children, worked long hours (sometimes twelve to sixteen hours a day) for a very low wage. Many women found jobs as domestic servants in the homes of wealthier Australians, doing the labour-intensive jobs of cleaning, washing and ironing. Working-class families usually lived in the inner-city areas close to their places of employment. Many who worked on the docks of Sydney, for example, lived in Balmain or Five Dock. These and other inner-city suburbs such as Pyrmont, The Rocks and Darlinghurst in Sydney, and Richmond and Carlton in Melbourne, had high-density housing in terraces and tenements (houses that were subdivided into smaller flats or rooms), and many working-class families lived in poverty.

State Records NSW

The backyard of a working-class house in Walton Place, Sydney, in 1900. The toilet was outside and laundry and washing were done in the large washing tubs that hang on the back fence.

Working-class families rarely owned their home, and they were required to pay rent for housing that was often bleak and poorly built. The prospect of eviction from their homes was very real if they failed to meet their rental payments. Families at the beginning of the century also tended to be larger, and many working-class families found it very hard to make ends meet. They endured unsanitary living conditions. Toilets were nothing more than a small shed at the back with a can that was collected once a week by the night-cart man. Working-class people had very little leisure time, suffered poorer health than wealthier Australians and many had inadequate diets. Their children were raised with a basic education that offered few prospects for advancement. Before World War I it was not unusual for working-class children to leave school after their primary school years.

The Australian Labor Party and workers' benefits

During the 19th century, members of the working class in Australia had to struggle to improve their working conditions, and in 1856 the concept of the eight-hour working day had been accepted for some skilled workers in Victoria. This gave rise to a belief that Australia had created a 'working man's paradise' which in turn attracted many more workers to come to Australia from Britain and Ireland.

Despite the real hardship of working-class life, Australia at the turn of the century was in fact one of the most socially progressive countries in the world. Some historians have suggested that, although the conditions for the working class in Australia were very hard compared with today's standard of living, Australia led the world when it came to workers' rights and conditions.

During the 1880s and 1890s trade unions had become more influential in Australia, including unions for shearers, miners, factory workers and shop assistants. In the fight for better working conditions a series of important strikes took place, but it became clear to the working class that more than strikes were needed to achieve their goals. It was important to get workers and people

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who represented them into parliament. During the 1890s the unions supported a number of separate Labor parties in the different colonies, and when Australia became a nation in 1901 the Australian Labor Party was formed. It is Australia's oldest political party.

The middle class

State Library of Victoria [0_305742]

Members of a middle-class family in the sitting room of their home in Melbourne in 1905. Their home life and possessions provided a level of comfort unknown to most working-class families of the time. What features displayed in this room would you not find in working-class homes?

While inner-city areas tended to be where working-class people lived, the more prosperous middle-class Australians preferred to live outside the city in the newly developing suburbs. The growth of suburbs depended very much on transport, and electric trams and steam trains made it possible for new suburbs to take shape.

Life for middle-class families was considerably better than life for the working class. With greater incomes they had more spacious homes and the opportunity to acquire some of the labour-saving household devices that became available. Domestic duties in middle-class homes were made a little easier by the introduction of new consumer items such as the gas cooker and the sewing machine.

Since middle-class people were usually professionals or self-employed, they generally enjoyed a higher standard of education than working-class people, and their children had greater opportunities than working-class children. They also enjoyed greater leisure time and more opportunities for travel, for family outings such as picnics, and for visiting friends or attending the various live entertainments such as the concerts and dances that city life provided.

The role of women in society

Society at this time still saw a woman's role in a very traditional way, as that of wife and mother. For women who did work outside the home, social standing and educational levels often determined the nature of their employment. Women from working-class backgrounds were often employed in factories or hotels or as domestic help, while middle-class women worked in stores or in secretarial roles. The hours were usually long and there was little opportunity for advancement. Among the few professions to which women had easy access were teaching and nursing.

For women the decade after federation was a period of change. Women had always had fewer educational opportunities than men, but very gradually the number of girls completing a secondary education began to grow. The opportunity for a university education had been for the very few: it was only in 1881 that Sydney University admitted women students. Women were gradually given the same property rights as men and in 1902 the new federal government passed the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902*, which gave women the same political rights as men. More women entered the workforce, although their wages remained well below those of men.

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FROM THE SOURCE

From *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 10 May 1881

If the aid of the Government is necessary to secure the admission of female students to the University, we may hope that it will be readily granted …

Whenever the determination to admit women to the University is finally made, the customary objections to the concession may be expected. We shall be told that Universities are conservative institutions; that the agitation which is being carried on with a view of getting women into the University is but a phase of the movement for securing what are known as woman's rights; that the household is the proper place for women; that it is not fair to permit them to pass through a course that will allow of their competing with men; that their manners, if not their morals, will suffer by being brought into everyday contact with the harder sex at Universities; that if women are allowed to enter Universities they will soon demand admission to places for which University training qualifies; and above all, that if they attend lectures and take degrees they will lose the sweetness and simplicity by which they are supposed to be made attractive to the stronger sex.

It would be sufficient to answer that none of those consequences have followed the admission of women into Universities elsewhere, and there is no ground for fearing that they would follow it here … It is prejudice which assumes that an educated woman must of necessity be unfeminine, and unfit for domestic duties.

1 **Is this extract from *The Sydney Morning Herald* of 1881 in favour of or opposed to the entry of women into universities?**

2 **What arguments are put forward in opposition to women going to university?**

3 **Imagine you have read this item in the newspaper. From the perspective of the 1880s, prepare your own Letter to the Editor in which you express your opinion about the issue.**

Aspects of daily life

Melbourne 1910

There were people alive as recently as 2001 who had been very small children in 1901. They were born before Australia as a nation even existed. It is hard to imagine the great changes that have taken place during the long lives of these people. They lived through the first century of Australia's experience of nationhood – a century of extraordinary change and great achievement.

Transport and communication

People's lifestyles at the turn of the 20th century were very different from those of today. The traffic that clogs our modern cities did not exist and most travel within cities was still by horse-drawn carriages, steam trains or the new electric trams. In the decade after 1901 the first motor vehicles began to appear, although until the 1920s they were owned mainly by the very rich. By modern standards, early cars were unreliable and uncomfortable. They required someone to crank the car to start it, and the driver and the passengers usually wore goggles and special clothing. By 1906 more people were being caught exceeding the defined speed limit of 19 km/h. Magistrates, worried at this speeding traffic, began to impose fines of five shillings (50c) for offenders.

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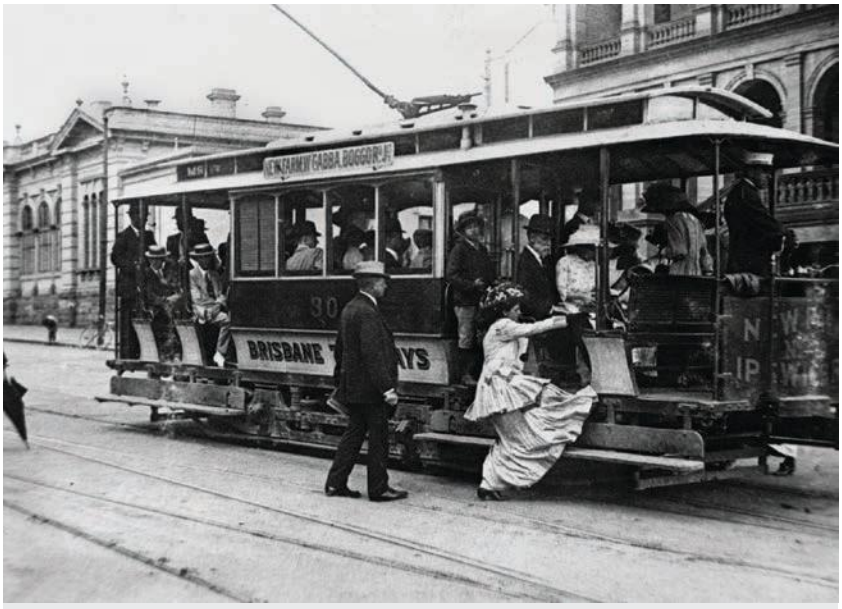
FROM THE SOURCE

source A



John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland Neg: 18151

Passengers join a Brisbane tram in 1903.

source B

State Library of Victoria [0_499533]

Flinders Street railway station, Melbourne, in 1905

1 Place yourself in the position of one of the passengers in Source A. Prepare an extended paragraph in which you list the good and bad features of the tram service at that time.

2 How many different forms of transport are identified in Source B?

3 Is there any evidence in Source B that there was traffic control at this time?

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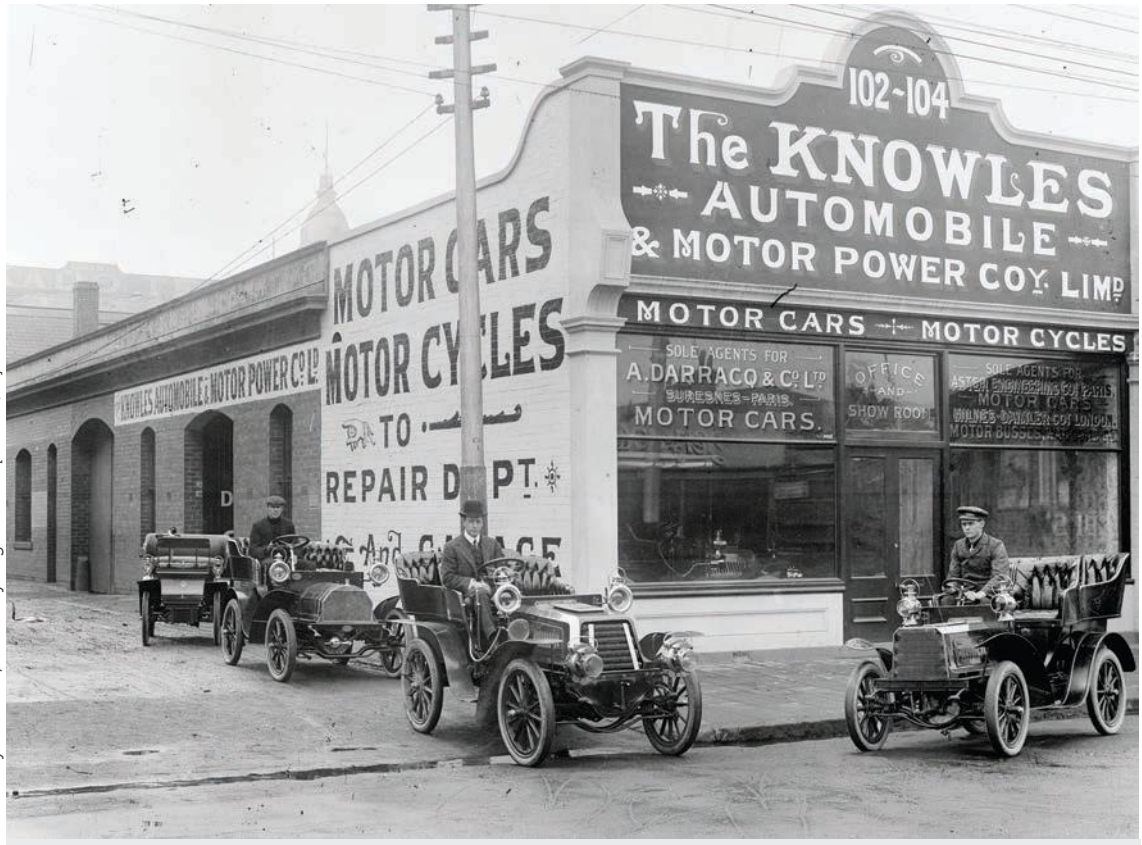
source C



State Library of Victoria, Harold Paynting Collection [H99.100/89]

Motor vehicles for sale in Spencer Street, Melbourne, in 1912

source D

'Please do not spit' by Harold Cazneaux, 1906, courtesy of National Library of Australia, with permission of the Cazneaux family

Middle-class businessmen travel to work on a Sydney ferry in 1906.

4 Which of the following statements about daily life at the start of the century cannot be supported from the evidence in Source C?

- **A** Motorcycles were also in use by 1912
- **B** Motor vehicles required repair facilities
- **C** Motor vehicles were not very comfortable in wet weather
- **D** Motor vehicles were expensive to operate.

5 From your study of the photo in Source D, list three differences between going to work (commuting) on this ferry in 1906 and going to work on a ferry (or train) today.

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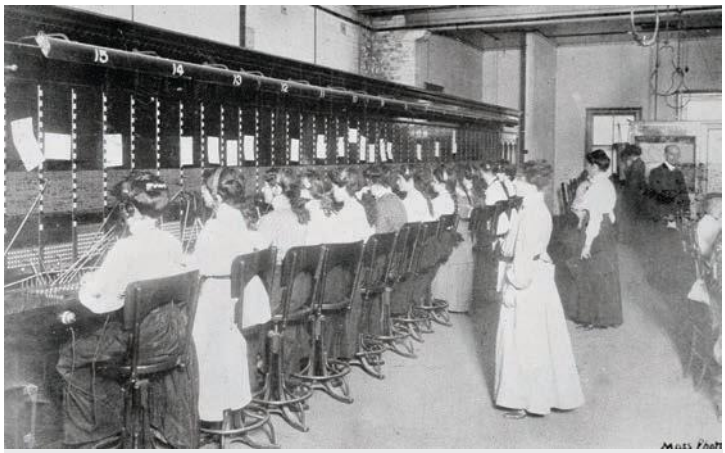

National Archives of Australia [J2879, QTH321/2]

Female telephonists at the Brisbane telephone exchange in 1910. All telephone calls had to be connected by hand.

By 1912 the number of vehicles on the roads had increased to such an extent that the government decided to register motor vehicles and make drivers take out a driver's licence. The few motorists in Western Australia received their licences from the city dog catcher. In 1914, when World War I began, there were 37 000 registered motor vehicles in Australia.

Along the main streets, buildings rarely went higher than five storeys and important government buildings were ornately constructed in stone. Some of these, such as the Queen Victoria Building in Sydney, have survived and are now regarded as an important part of our nation's heritage. Only the most important city roads were sealed; most were not. Along some roads gas lighting was in place and, since the telephone had just arrived, a complex of telephone wires strung from poles ran down many streets.

All telephone calls had to be connected by an operator through a local telephone exchange and calls could as a rule be connected only within the city.

The decade after federation also saw the arrival of aviation. The first powered flight in Australia occurred in 1909, a mere six years after the Wright brothers' first flight in the United States. The machine was in the air for six seconds and 'there was every prospect of the aeroplane soaring aloft,' wrote *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 'had not the engine worked badly'. In 1914 the first airmail was carried from Melbourne to Sydney. When the frail Bleriot plane touched down in Moore Park, Sydney, the flight had taken nine hours, with seven stops. To navigate between the capitals, the pilot simply followed the railway line.

The household

People who could afford to pay for domestic help in the years before World War I did so because, in the days before washing machines and dishwashers, some aspects of daily home life were still very labour-intensive. Washing of clothes had to be done by hand in a copper (a large container of heated water), and all clothes had to be wrung by hand before being put out to dry. In an age long before the supermarket and one-stop shopping, food had to be purchased almost daily from small corner shops or from the many travelling food sellers who carried their produce from street to street, usually in horse-drawn carts. Other familiar sights in surburban Australia were the travelling ironmonger (hardware), cobblers who repaired boots and the iceman.

With no refrigeration, food could not be stored for very long. It could be kept in a Coolgardie safe – a box covered with gauze to keep out the flies and with cooling water dripping down the sides – or in one of the ice chests that were becoming more common. Every town and city had its iceworks, and the daily delivery of slabs of ice wrapped in hessian cloth was a part of life.

Australians lived on a heavy, if unhealthy, diet of meats and dairy produce. Meats rarely included chicken, for that was a luxury food; eating rabbit was much more common. Other common foods at the time were stews, tripe (the stomach of a cow), boiled potatoes, and puddings made from rice, sago or tapioca. A person from that time would have difficulty even recognising many of the foods that Australians eat today. Food was cooked mainly on wood-fired stoves, which created a smoke haze over the areas where people lived. Much time in the kitchen was also spent baking and preserving food in sealed jars for later use.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

State Library of Victoria [0_2986673]

Interior view of a family kitchen in Melbourne in 1907. The wood-burning stove provided heat for cooking and hot water.

source B

Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney. Photo: Penelope Clay

In the days before refrigeration, the Coolgardie safe was used for preserving perishable food in many Australian homes, particularly in the country.

source C

Museum Victoria / Mrs M Edwards

Horse-drawn carts deliver ice in the Melbourne suburb of Brighton in 1908. Why would ice be an important delivery to homes during this time? Is there any evidence in this photograph that telephones were a new development in the period?

1 **Using Sources A, B and C and other materials you find in your research as sources, prepare an essay or a multimedia presentation on the features and challenges of domestic and home life in Australia before World War I.**

ISBN 9780170347266

State Library of Victoria [0_3005995]

Young people enjoying a bush picnic outside Melbourne in 1910

Leisure and entertainment

Australians in the years before 1914 found amusement and entertainment in many ways. In the days before radio and television, reading was a very popular activity and newspapers and magazines were the only way of transmitting the news. It was also a time when lending libraries were very popular and most towns had a School of Arts that promoted lectures, meetings and other activities to improve the mind. For outings there were sporting events, and live theatres were very popular, especially among the working class. For wealthier families the centre of family entertainment was often the piano or the pianola, or they could enjoy the Edison phonograph, which was capable of playing a four-minute cylinder of recorded music. Dances were another form of entertainment, and special dance halls existed in all major cities and towns. The family picnic, particularly among middle-class people, was always a popular outing.

Families would travel by train or carriage to nearby parks or bushland with their picnic hampers. Picnics were sedate affairs and people were expected to dress for the occasion. On Sundays most families had some time together as no shops opened and all businesses closed. For many it was a time for church, a family lunch and visiting.

Swimming in the surf became a popular pastime in the decade before the war. Outdated regulations had made surfing illegal at New South Wales beaches between sunrise and sunset, but in 1902 William Gocher, the mayor of the seaside suburb of Manly in Sydney, put this regulation to the test. He announced in the press that he intended to swim at the beach at midday. He was arrested after his third midday swim, but the case was dismissed and daylight surfing had arrived. Nonetheless, many still believed that the sexes should swim separately, and beaches were often

State Library of NSW [a 116279]

A group of men enjoy a surf carnival at Manly Beach, Sydney, in 1904. Swimming at the beach in daylight hours had been illegal until 1902.

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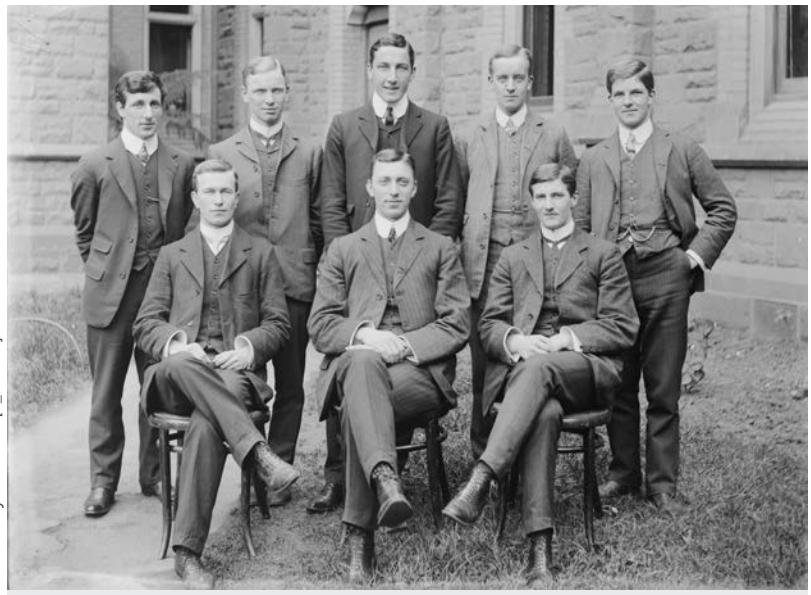

State Library of Victoria [0_181484]

Most well-dressed men at this time wore a three-piece suit with high collar and lace-up boots. These are students at Ormond College, part of the University of Melbourne, in 1910.

State Library of Victoria [0_2682701]

A fashionable young woman in 1908. Women wore clothing that was elaborate and uncomfortable.

roped off to segregate males and females. With the new popularity of surfing, the rate of death by drowning increased and surf lifesaving clubs came into being. In January 1907 the first surf rescue took place at Bondi Beach. The young boy saved from the surf that day was Charles Kingsford Smith, the future aviator.

Dress and fashion

Australian dress and manners remained those of Britain. Among the middle class, the well-dressed man always wore a suit, complete with a waistcoat, a stiff high collar, lace-up leather boots and a hat. Younger men often wore a type of straw hat known as a boater, which became fashionable just before World War I. In an age before wristwatches, a gold watch on a chain was usually worn across the waist.

Fashion for women required a slim waistline, which was usually achieved by means of elaborate underwear including a whalebone corset. Middle-class women selected their fabrics from drapery shops and then had dresses made by dressmakers who followed the fashion that dresses should cover from the neck to the toe. Shoes were not an item of fashion, and many well-dressed women wore sturdy boots.

Make-up was generally not worn, although middle-class women used creams and soaps for the skin. In high summer, lower necklines and the use of white and cooler materials were acceptable. Large, ornate hats with plumes, or ostrich feathers, were the height of fashion, and women usually kept their hair long and always wore it pinned up.

For working-class people, clothes were much less ornate. Working men rarely wore full suits. Braces, rolled-up sleeves and a cap or older hat were the normal working dress. Working-class men usually had one suit, sometimes called their 'Sunday best' and worn only on special occasions. Most working-class women made their own clothes and clothes for their children. It was a time when working-class women were expected to have dressmaking skills, and many women worked in factories producing items of clothing.

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State Library of Victoria [0_240144]

An outing of young people in 1908. By today's standards, dress even for these informal gatherings was still very formal. Photography was also a popular activity although a good image required a very still pose. The blur in this photograph was caused by a dog that refused to remain still.

State Library of NSW [d1_31733]

The dentist comes to a school in Gulgong, New South Wales. Dentists would visit schools to conduct dental checks and treat children. Nothing the teacher could do would be as bad as the dentist's slow pedal drill.

Public health

The decade before World War I saw increasing concern at the standard of health care. In 1901, one child in every ten did not live for more than a year. Diseases that today are either eliminated or well under control were common in Australia at this time. Pneumonia and tuberculosis were major causes of death, and other diseases such as whooping cough, diphtheria, scarlet fever, rheumatic fever and polio were prevalent. Medical care was expensive and, not surprisingly, the magazines of the day were full of cures and remedies, most of them useless. The death rate in hospitals was high, particularly from blood poisoning after surgery. Death in childbirth was common, with an average death rate of 1800 a year in the decade to 1910. Dental health was also neglected. In 1910 a survey of primary school children found that 90 per cent had decayed teeth. As well as

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performing extractions, the dentist would use a pedal drill to fill cavities with tinfoil, gold or even melted-down coins.

Public health suffered because there were no health inspectors, garbage removal was inadequate, and work was just starting on sewerage systems for the capital cities. It was only at the beginning of the 20th century that a regular water supply began to be available in the capital cities. In 1901 rat infestations caused an outbreak of bubonic plague, which killed more than 100 people in the working-class areas of Sydney. With the *Pure Food Act 1905* in Victoria, attempts began to be made to control the quality of food production. The first health inspectors were appointed and a new regulation stopped the Sydney abattoir from throwing its waste products directly into Sydney Harbour.

Bubonic plague

Never ever!

State Library of NSW [a419005]

A ward in Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney, in 1905. In what way is this hospital ward different from a hospital ward today?

State Records NSW

Sydney ratcatchers display their haul. Parts of working-class Sydney had an outbreak of bubonic plague in 1901, largely as a result of rat infestation.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What do you understand by the term 'egalitarian'?
2 Why did some people regard Australia at the start of the last century as a working man's paradise?
3 Explain why working-class people tended to live in the suburbs closest to the city.
4 Which political party emerged to represent the interests of the working class?
5 List three ways in which middle-class life was different from the life of working-class people at the start of the 20th century.
6 Explain why there were so many so-called medical cures advertised in newspapers and magazines at the time.
7 What were the main forms of transport in the period from 1900 to the start of World War I in 1914?
8 Why did people have to shop for fresh food almost every day at the turn of the 20th century?

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Using web resources and your own research, select *one* of the following aspects of life in Australia at the start of the 20th century.

- Daily life in the home
- Food
- Entertainment and leisure time
- Dress and social customs
- Public health and medicine
- Transport

(a) Prepare an essay or multimedia presentation in which you describe what this aspect of life was like at the start of the 20th century.

(b) Follow this with another paragraph in which you explain how different this aspect of life is at the start of the 21st century.

2 'Daily life was much harder at the beginning of the 20th century than it was at the close of the century.' Write an argumentative essay in which you agree or disagree with this statement.

3 There are a number of resources on the Internet that contain photographs of life in Australia at the turn of the century. These photos may be downloaded for study purposes. Imagine that you are living in 1914 and you have been asked to prepare a collection of photos of life in Australia between 1900 and 1914 that will be sealed away to be reopened by historians a century later. Prepare this selection of photos with brief details of each photo and store them on a CD or online. A link is provided to get you started.

4 Health was always an issue during this time with many illnesses and many suggested cures. It was an age of quackery, or the promotion of fraudulent or unproved medical cures and treatments. The poster and advertisement below are typical of those that filled newspapers in the prewar years.
Assume you have a cure for an illness. Putting yourself in the perspective of a time when medical science was not as advanced as it is today, prepare your own poster for inclusion in a newspaper.

State Library of Victoria [pi001712]

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HOW DID LEGISLATION PASSED BETWEEN 1901 AND 1914 SHAPE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CHANGE?

2.5

In the years from 1901 to the outbreak of World War I in 1914, the different Australian governments carried out many changes that benefited the lives of ordinary Australians. These political and social reforms included extending the vote to women, the idea of a basic wage, workers compensation and new social welfare payments such as maternity benefits and old age and invalid pensions. Compared with what was happening in many other countries, some of these changes were very progressive. Many Australian workers already had the eight-hour day, and strong trade unions kept up the struggle for improved working conditions. Since many of these things did not exist in other countries, Australia was regarded as a place in which workers and their families enjoyed much better conditions and an improved standard of living.

Women and the right to vote

Australian suffragettes

At the start of the 20th century women in Australia did not have the same rights as men. Women were not expected to get involved in politics or, indeed, to have an opinion about important matters of government. However, not all women were prepared to accept this situation, and in the 1890s there was a movement for female suffrage (the right to vote).

The Women's Suffrage League of South Australia was formed in 1888, and in 1891 the Womanhood Suffrage League was founded in Sydney under the slogan 'Equality is Equity'. Of the six colonies, South Australia was the most progressive. One of the leading figures there was Catherine Helen Spence (1825–1910), who came to South Australia with her parents in 1839. She embraced many social causes during her life, and in particular the right for women to vote. In 1895 South Australia became the first colony in Australia to grant women the right to vote and to stand for election to parliament.

The campaign for women to get the right to vote continued. In 1898 Maybanke Wolstenholme founded the Women's Federal League in New South Wales, and members of this organisation spoke in favour of federation at federation meetings. They also demanded that in the new federated nation women should have equal voting rights with men. In Victoria the Women's Suffrage League also pushed for the right for women to vote. By the time of federation in 1901, women had the right to vote in only two of the six colonies (South Australia and Western Australia).

In 1902 federal parliament passed the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902,* which gave Australian women the vote in federal elections and the right to stand for federal parliament. Vida Goldstein, who had campaigned so hard for this right, became the first woman to stand for federal parliament. She sought election to the Senate five times and was unsuccessful five times.

The Franchise Act did not mean that women had the same rights in the six states, and for the most part it took longer for women to gain equality in state elections. It was not until the 1920s that Australian women had achieved the right to vote and seek election to parliament in every Australian state.

State Library of South Australia [B11192]

A portrait of Catherine Helen Spence in 1900. A writer and champion of social causes in South Australia, Spence was also a leading figure in the movement to gain women the right to vote. She died in 1910.

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FROM THE SOURCE

I have a mother, and I have a wife and a sister and daughters, and I wish to continue in the position of their supporter and their protector … I do not wish to have extended to them the right not only to vote but also to sit in this Chamber. It is man's duty to be here, and it is woman's duty to attend to the family.

William Knox, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 23 April 1902, p. 11 941

The very men who say that giving a woman a vote would degrade her, have not the slightest problem about making her a drudge. They do not regard it as degrading … for her to scrub a floor or to be turned into a stuffy kitchen to cook for a man, or to be put into a factory where she will have to work nine or ten hours a day for a wretched pittance. None of these things will degrade a woman, but to give her a voice in the government of the country will degrade her! That is what the opponents of female suffrage tell us.

James Stewart, Senate, *Debates*, 9 April 1902, p. 11 499

I see no reason in the world why we should continue to impose laws which have to be obeyed by the women of the community without giving them some voice in the election of the members who make those laws. Their capacity for understanding political questions, for thinking over them, and for exercising their influence in regard to public affairs, is certainly of that order and of that level which entitles them to take that part in public affairs which the franchise proposes to give them.

Richard O'Connor, Senate, *Debates*, 9 April 1902, pp. 11 451–2

Only yesterday I heard a woman say that she did not think it would be safe to confer this right on women, because very dire things were likely to follow. It is also alleged that women would be influenced by the clergy, by good-looking candidates, and by young men.

Thomas Glassey, Senate, *Debates*, 9 April 1902, p. 11 474

1. **From your reading of these remarks to parliament in 1902 about the issue of giving women the vote, prepare a list of some of the main reasons put forward by these politicians *in favour of* and *in opposition to* the extension of the franchise to women.**
2. **Imagine that you worked for *The Age* newspaper in Melbourne in 1902 and you were in parliament listening to these debates. Prepare a brief newspaper report in which you outline some of the ideas expressed in parliament.**
3. **Select one of the extracts above and prepare a cartoon for the newspaper which captures the main idea the speaker is making, or write a letter to the editor of the newspaper expressing your opinion.**

Social welfare legislation

In 1908 the federal government introduced the *Invalid and Old-age Pensions Act 1908*. This Act introduced an old-age pension from 1909 and an invalid pension from 1910, replacing some pensions then offered by some of the state governments. The age pension of ten shillings a week was paid to men at age 65 and to women at age 60, at a time when life expectancy for men was 55 years and for women 59 years.

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In 1912 the *Maternity Allowances Act 1912* introduced the concept of maternity benefits. Sometimes called the 'baby bonus', this was a payment of £5 paid on the birth of a child. It did not apply if the mother was Asian or Aboriginal.

FROM THE SOURCE

In 1901, the year in which Australia came into being as a nation, 102 000 babies were born. The most popular names in 1901 for girls were Dorothy, Jean, Winifred, Marjorie and Doris, and for boys, John, William, George, Reginald and Ernest. The infant mortality rate was high (103 deaths per 1000 births); in 2013, by comparison, the infant mortality rate was 3.3 deaths per 1000 births. A baby born in 1901 had a one-in-ten chance of not surviving to its first birthday.

Prepare a research paper into this aspect of social life before 1914. In your paper you may wish to consider some of the following:

- **What was happening to the Australian birth rate?**
- **Why was a maternity allowance or baby bonus introduced?**
- **Why were families larger in size in those days?**
- **What were the dangers of childbirth at that time?**
- **What were conditions like for Indigenous mothers and babies?**
- **What were hospitals, midwives and doctors like?**
- **What were the most common causes of death among infants?**

'Bathing Baby', c.1909, by Harold Cazneaux, National Library of Australia, published with permission of the Cazneaux Estate

Bath time – a photo taken in Riley Street, North Sydney, in 1909

The Conciliation and Arbitration Court

With the memory of the industrial strikes of the 1890s still fresh, all the political parties after 1901 agreed on the need to set up a special court to try to settle industrial unrest. In 1904 the federal parliament passed *The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904*, which set up the Conciliation and Arbitration Court. The new court was to settle disputes between workers and their employers and, in doing so, define the rights and obligations of employers and employees. In 1907 the court went further and developed the concept of the basic wage.

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HB Higgins, 1898, National Library of Australia

Justice Henry Bournes Higgins (1851–1929). In the Harvester Judgement in 1907 he defined the basic wage.

The basic wage

One of the most important achievements of the time was the introduction in 1907 of the concept of a basic wage for the unskilled worker. Employers were expected to pay their workers a 'fair and reasonable wage' but it was unclear what such a wage was. In 1907 H. V. McKay, the owner of the Sunshine Harvester Company, which produced agricultural machinery, went to the Conciliation and Arbitration Court with the argument that the six shillings a day his company paid to unskilled male workers was 'fair and reasonable'. In what was called the Harvester Judgement, Justice Henry Bournes Higgins ruled against the Sunshine Harvester Company and defined what he thought was a 'fair and reasonable wage': seven shillings a day, or forty-two shillings a week.

Justice Higgins said that this was the weekly wage needed to support an unskilled working man, his wife and three children. What Higgins had devised was the concept of the basic wage, a minimum wage to which all workers were entitled. It was a wage based on the needs of the worker, not on the capacity of industry to pay. It was now illegal for an employer to pay an unskilled man less than the basic wage.

Federation and Indigenous Australians

The Australian constitution in 1901 made only two references to Aboriginal people and both of these references were aimed at excluding them from participation in the life of the new nation.

Section 127 of the constitution said that 'in reckoning the numbers of people in the Commonwealth … Aboriginal natives shall not be counted'. Thus, when the first national census took place in 1901, the number of Aboriginal people was not recorded. The first Australians were not to be counted as citizens of the new nation.

The other part of the constitution in which Aboriginal people were mentioned was Section 51, which gave the new federal government the power to pass law about 'the people of any race other than the Aboriginal race in any State'. The welfare of Aboriginal people, except for those living in Australian territories such as the Northern Territory, was to be a state matter.

When it passed the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902*, the federal government denied the vote to the following people: 'aboriginal native[s] of Australia, Africa, Asia or the Islands of the Pacific, except New Zealand'. This law, which gave the right to vote to women, effectively denied it to anyone who was non-white.

It is estimated that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population of Australia at that time was about 94500, or 3 per cent of the total population. Neither the states nor the Commonwealth had a good record in providing for Aboriginal people. In most of the states after federation, and in the Northern Territory after its separation from South Australia in 1911, protectionist policies were adopted. These meant that full-blooded Aboriginal people were moved to reserves or put under the care of missionary groups. Protectionism became the accepted policy towards Aboriginal people through most of Australia. It was, in fact, a policy of segregation, or keeping people apart, and it resulted in more discrimination against, and control over, Aboriginal people. It also led to the creation of remote and isolated Aboriginal communities. In these communities Aboriginal people had no right to vote and no right to receive the basic wage or the old age or invalid pensions that white Australians received. As well, there were many restrictions on private life that would have been totally unacceptable to white Australians. The policy of protectionism fitted in with the view, then widely held, that Aboriginal people belonged to a dying race. A Commonwealth report on Aboriginal people in 1913 recommended that 'mixed race' children be taken from their mothers so they could be better integrated into white Australia. The report also recommended that full-blooded Aboriginal children be withdrawn from camp life so they would lose their nomadic lifestyle.

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FROM THE SOURCE

An exchange in federal parliament, 1901

source A

Senator Matheson: We all admit that the black people have to live. What we say is the black people should live in their own country.

Senator Walker: This was a blackfellow's country before it was a white man's country.

Senator Matheson: The honourable gentleman fails to recognise that we have taken this country from the blacks, and made it a white man's country, and intend to keep it a white man's country, so that there is no earthly use in the honourable gentleman saying that 100 years ago this was a black man's country.

Portrait of Alfred Deakin seated at his desk, National Library of Australia

Alfred Deakin (1856–1919), second prime minister of Australia

Senator Walker: There are still 100 000 Aborigines in Australia.

Senator Matheson: We are aware of that fact and it is very regrettable, and the only consolation we have is that they are gradually dying out.

Senate, *Debates*, 22 May 1901, vol. 1, p. 152

Alfred Deakin on Aboriginal Australians, 1901

source B

The Commonwealth has power to deal with people of any and every race within our borders except the Aboriginal inhabitants … There is that single exception of a dying race, let us hope that in their last hours they will be able to recognise not simply the justice but the generosity of the treatment which the white race are according them.

House of Representatives, *Debates*, 1901, vol. HR 4, p. 4804

1 Which of the two senators in Source A displays some knowledge of Australia's Aboriginal people?

2 Given Senator Matheson's comments in Source A, a historian could conclude that Senator Matheson:

- **A** supported any move to give Aboriginal people the vote
- **B** had an understanding of, and sympathy for, the Aboriginal people
- **C** did not regard it as regrettable that the Aboriginal people were considered a dying race
- **D** believed that Aboriginal people should be given back some claim to the land.

3 What particular view about Australia's Aboriginal people is evident in both Source A and Source B?

4 Explain why the new Commonwealth government after 1901 could 'deal with any and every race within our borders except the Aboriginal inhabitants'.

5 Why has Australian history forgotten Senator Matheson and Senator Walker but not Alfred Deakin?

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 At the time of federation which two Australian states had given women the right to vote?
2 Why have H. V. McKay and the Sunshine Harvester Company found a place in Australian history?
3 List two features of social welfare legislation that gave particular support to the Australian working class.
4 In what year did women get the right to vote in federal elections?
5 What was included in Section 127 of the Australian constitution?
6 Was government policy concerning Indigenous people a state or a federal matter after 1901?

Creating a White Australia

Immigrant nation

After creating one Australia in 1901, Australians now set out to create a white Australia. This policy said that the nation's best interests were served by excluding non-white races, and at its heart was xenophobia, or the fear or distrust of other races. This racist element in our early history was hardly questioned at the time, for it had been an accepted part of British thinking as Britain established control over so many parts of the world. It was a belief shared by the leading politicians and by all political parties and the newspapers. In 1907 *The Bulletin* magazine changed its banner slogan from 'Australia for the Australians' to 'Australia for the White Man'. All levels of society were united by a fear of Asia and the non-white races, and by a determination to keep Australia white.

Why White Australia?

- Australia was a new nation of mainly British origin in a region of the world where there were very few other white races. There was a real sense of isolation and a fear of the larger numbers of Asian people to the north.
- Australians not only had a distrust of other races but also a belief that they were in some way superior to other races. There was a belief that the white races, particularly the British and the Europeans who had carved out the great world empires, were superior to non-Europeans, and that some races were in fact inferior.
- Australian workers feared that non-white people coming from Asia would work for less money and accept lesser working conditions. As the Labor movement and the trade unions fought to improve the conditions of the working class in the years after federation, they supported all attempts to restrict the entry into Australia of people who could in any way undermine the interests of Australian workers.

The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*

One of the first laws passed by the new Australian parliament was the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, which set up the White Australia policy. There was no political division over the issue and all the major politicians supported the bill.

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Edmund Barton, the first prime minister, who introduced the bill to parliament, said:

> "I do not think that the doctrine of the equality of man was really ever intended to include racial equality. There is no racial equality. There is that basic inequality. These races are, in comparison with white races ... unequal and inferior."

Edmund Barton, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 26 September 1901, p. 5233

All politicians agreed on the idea of keeping non-white races out of Australia and they finally agreed that a dictation test would be the best way to achieve this. Under the law any person seeking to enter the country could be required to do a fifty-word written dictation test in 'a European language directed by the officer'.

At this time Japan was the most economically developed of the Asian states. Japanese people were very sensitive to the idea of the White Australia policy and the suggestion that the white race was in some way superior to the Asian races. At the same time Britain was seeking to form an alliance with Japan for political and military reasons (the Anglo–Japanese Alliance was signed in 1902). While it could not stop Australia from passing the Immigration Restriction Act, Britain made it clear that it did not support a total ban on non-white entry and tried to put pressure on Australia to relax the restrictions as they applied to the Japanese.

The *Pacific Islander Labourers Act 1901*

In the years before federation, Pacific Islanders had been brought to Queensland to work in the cane fields, and by 1901 there were nearly 9000 Islanders working in the state. The issue of Pacific Islanders working in Queensland had been part of the federation debate. People had argued that immigration could only be controlled if there was one immigration policy for the whole country. Since the sugar industry was important to Queensland, this was one of the reasons that Queensland was reluctant to support federation.

The Pacific Islander Labourers Act, passed in 1901, was the second measure on which the White Australia policy was based. The aim of this Act was to remove Pacific Islanders from Australia. Under this law, no more Pacific Islanders were allowed to enter the country, and those who had not been born in Australia (of whom there were about 7000) were to be deported.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by these terms?
   (a) franchise
   (b) basic wage

2 Place these events in their correct chronological order.
   - The Harvester Judgement
   - The Immigration Restriction Act
   - The Old-age Pensions Act
   - The Maternity Allowances Act

3 Explain the role of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Court.

4 What were some of the arguments used at the time to support the idea of White Australia?

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5 Which of the following has the events of the period in the correct chronological order?

A Federation was proclaimed. The White Australia Policy was introduced. Women were given the right to vote in federal elections. The basic wage was introduced.

B Federation was proclaimed. The basic wage was introduced. The White Australia Policy was introduced. Women were given the right to vote in federal elections.

C Federation was proclaimed. Women were given the right to vote in federal elections. The White Australia Policy was introduced. The basic wage was introduced.

D The White Australia Policy was introduced. Women were given the right to vote in federal elections. The basic wage was introduced. Federation was proclaimed.

6 In an extended paragraph, explain how each of the following pieces of legislation passed by the early federal parliament helped to shape the type of society that existed in Australia in the years before World War I.

- *The Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902*
- *The Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act 1904*
- *The Invalid and Old Age Pensions Act 1908*
- *The Maternity Allowances Act 1912*

7 Imagine that you are a customs officer in 1904 in charge of the Sydney Customs Office. Prepare an official memo to your staff about the dictation test. Your memo should have five sections, in which you set out:

- what the dictation test is
- the law that gives you the power to carry it out
- how you will administer it
- to whom you will administer it
- the purpose of having this dictation test.

8 Based on your research on female suffrage, complete the following table and then answer the three questions that follow. The first two lines have been done for you.

PARLIAMENT	WOMEN GET THE RIGHT TO VOTE	WOMEN GET THE RIGHT TO STAND FOR PARLIAMENT	THE FIRST WOMAN ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT
Federal	1902	1902	1943
South Australia	1894	1894	1959
Western Australia			
New South Wales			
Tasmania			
Queensland			
Victoria			

(a) Which Australian colony was progressive in giving women the vote but the slowest in actually electing a woman to parliament?

(b) In which of the Australian states was there the shortest gap, and in which state was there the longest, between women having the right to enter parliament and a woman being elected to parliament?

(c) Why do you think women were slow to enter parliament?

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State Library of Victoria [0_752578]

9 Imagine you are the theatre critic for *The Bulletin* in 1909 and you have just seen a performance of this play called *White Australia or the Empty North*. Write a review in which you include:

- your understanding of White Australia and how the policy operated
- what you considered to be the message of the play
- how and why the Chinese were depicted in the play
- why the play was so popular with the audience in 1909
- what you expect your employers at *The Bulletin* would wish you to write.

Site study : Local cemetery

Quiz

Crossword

Questioning activity

White Australia or the Empty North was a four-act play performed in Melbourne in June 1909. The four acts were:

Act 1 Fight in the Joss house*

Act 2 Bombardment of Sydney

Act 3 Murder in the Telegraph Station

Act 4 The Chinese in Australia.

* Joss house: a place of worship for Chinese

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CHAPTER 3

Australia goes to war, 1914–18

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- why World War I began, and how and why Australia became involved in the war
- the places where Australian soldiers fought in World War I
- the Gallipoli campaign and the experiences of the soldiers who were part of that campaign
- the impact of the war on the home front
- how the **conscription** campaign divided Australian society during the war
- the experiences of women during World War I
- the creation of the Anzac legend and how Australia has commemorated World War I.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

3.1 Why did World War I break out in 1914?

3.2 What were the experiences of Australians in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915?

3.3 What happened on the **Western Front**?

3.4 What was the impact of World War I on the Australian home front, 1914–18?

3.5 How has Australia commemorated the experience of war?

In 2014 the world commemorated the 100th anniversary of the outbreak of World War I. Of all the wars of the 20th century, historians still look back to this war as one of the major turning points of modern history. It was the first great war of the masses, drawing millions of people into combat. During the war, Britain and its empire **mobilised** more than eight million men, France another eight million, Austria–Hungary 6.5 million, Germany 11 million and the Russian Empire another 12 million. In all, some 60 million were mobilised for war. These huge armies faced each other across Europe from Switzerland to the North Sea, men fought in eastern and south-eastern Europe, on the northern borders of Italy, on the coast of Turkey, in Africa, in the deserts of the Middle East, at sea and in the air. When it was over, some eight million were dead and another 20 million were wounded.

The terrible destruction of the war was made possible because of the length of the conflict, the way it was fought, and because this was the first great war of industrial Europe. The industrial and scientific revolution during the 19th century had created new technology, which in turn produced new weapons: powerful artillery, gas, barbed wire, machine guns, U-boats, the aeroplane and, in the closing part of the war, the tank. There was, however, very little new thinking in terms of military strategy. Along most of the fronts, mass armies faced one another, each trying for the breakthrough with the great push forward. Such strategy in the face of advanced weaponry gave rise to the huge casualty rate of World War I.

A Sergeant of Light Horse in Palestine 1920. Oil on canvas 77.0 (h) × 62.0 (w) cm, signed and dated 'G. W. Lambert/ 1920', National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, purchased through the Felton Bequest in 1921.

I am going to a place where monotony is unknown and a year seems like one crowded hour of glorious life. Am on the eve of entering the firing line and rejoicing.

Captain Walter Gamble, 15th Light Trench Mortar Battery, 1915

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Felton Bequest, 1921

Timeline, 1914–18

1914

- **June** Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated in Sarajevo, capital of Bosnia.
- **August** The outbreak of World War I. Australia declared its support for the British war effort.
- **October** The first Australian Imperial Force (AIF) of 20 000 men was raised.

1915

- **April** ANZAC troops landed on the Gallipoli peninsula.
- **August** The attack on the Nek and Lone Pine.
- **October** William Morris Hughes became prime minister of Australia.
- **November** Hughes announced an increase in the Australian force to 110 000 men.
- **December** The Gallipoli campaign ended in failure. The Anzacs and other troops were withdrawn.

Glossary

armistice An agreement between countries at war by which they agree to end the conflict. The armistice that ended World War I was signed on 11 November 1918.

artillery Heavy guns capable of firing shells over long distances.

attrition A strategy whereby one or both sides in a conflict try to win by wearing the other side down, regardless of losses.

casualties The term used to cover the number of people killed, wounded or taken prisoner during a war.

censorship A method of controlling what is made available to the public to see and read.

conscription The policy of forcing men to join the army.

dysentery A common illness caused by infection that affects the intestinal tract.

Easter Uprising A rebellion of Irish nationalists against British rule in Ireland in 1916.

entente A French word for a treaty or an alliance.

foreign policy A name given to the policy and international dealings one country has with other countries.

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• **April** The first Anzac Day remembrance service was held.

• **July** Australian troops took part in the Battle of the Somme on the Western Front in France.

• **October** The first conscription referendum.

• **November** William Morris Hughes split with the Labor Party.

1916

1917

• **January** The Nationalist Party was formed to include Hughes' breakaway group from the Labor Party.

• **December** The second conscription referendum in Australia.

• **May** Sir John Monash assumed command of Australian forces in Europe.

• **November** The armistice was signed (11 November) and World War I came to an end.

1918

Kaiser The German equivalent to the word 'Emperor'. Kaiser Wilhelm II ruled Germany from 1888 to 1918.
mobilise What a government does when it prepares the army and the nation for war. Most of the European nations mobilised in 1914 before they declared war.
shrapnel Fragments from exploding bombs or artillery shells.
stalemate A situation where neither of the opposing sides is able to make progress against the other.
ultimatum A set of demands.
Victoria Cross The highest award that can be given to a soldier in the British Empire for an act of bravery or heroism.
Western Front The name given to the battlefields that stretched across northern France and Belgium from 1914 to 1918.

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WHY DID WORLD WAR I BREAK OUT IN 1914?

3.1 The British connection

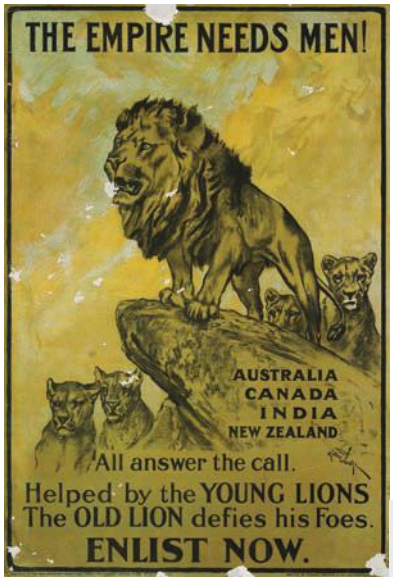
In 1901, when Australia became a self-governing nation, it was also part of the British Empire. At this time Britain had an empire of more than 367 million people and ruled over sixty colonies around the globe. It was the greatest empire the world had ever known and it was said that the sun never set on the British Empire. Australians were citizens of the new nation created in 1901, but they were also proud to be part of this great empire. Today it is hard to understand this loyalty to Britain, but at the start of the 20th century, and especially during World War I, it was very real.

- Most Australians held an emotional loyalty and deep affection for Britain. Part of this came from the fact that most Australians at the start of the century were of British descent, and many still thought of Britain as home, even those who had never been there.
- Situated 19 000 kilometres from Britain, Australia was isolated at the far reaches of the empire, and this isolation made the bond with Britain even stronger. Britain was the Mother Country and there was a belief that, as Australia was a loyal part of the empire, the Mother Country would protect her children if danger threatened.
- Australians were proud of their British heritage and sought to re-create Britain under the Southern Cross. Australia had taken the British political and legal system, and the culture, customs and manners of the time were essentially British. Schools taught British literature and history.
- In 1905 it was decided to celebrate Queen Victoria's birthday, 24 May, as Empire Day. Thus the first national public holiday in Australia was to celebrate the glory of the British Empire.
- Australia maintained its trade links with Britain. Most of Australia's exports of wool, wheat and other products went to Britain, and British goods imported to Australia were given special treatment with lower tariffs.

In 1901 Australia had no independent **foreign policy**. The British Foreign Office shaped policy for the empire, and Australia was prepared to accept the role of supporting Britain in its

FROM THE SOURCE

The empire needs men



Australian War Memorial [ART00819]

1 Why is the poster entitled 'The empire needs men?'

2 Explain the message of this poster and how the images in the poster and their positioning are used to convey this message.

3 Why would Australia in 1914 have regarded itself as very much part of the British Empire and committed to the aid of Britain in World War I?

A recruitment poster entitled 'The empire needs men', issued by the British Government in 1915

Recruitment posters

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international dealings. As a loyal member of the British Empire, Australia was willing to support Britain in its military conflicts.

The coming of war, 1914

Like most of the great conflicts of human history, there were both long-term and more immediate, short-term reasons why World War I broke out in August 1914. The long-term reasons had been building up for many years, creating increasing international tension. There was a growing feeling among most European governments that some form of conflict was hard to avoid. It would just take one more international incident or crisis to cause the great European powers to collide. In 1914 that is precisely what happened.

Imperialism

Imperialism (or colonialism) is a term applied to the process of acquiring colonies, by means of which one nation takes over other countries or regions of the world and creates an empire. Imperialism has existed throughout history, and even in ancient times – as with the great Roman Empire, for example – imperial rivalry among powers has often caused war.

By the 19th century Britain was the greatest imperial power in the world. France was another significant imperial power. In the late 19th century, as new nations such as Germany and Italy were created, there was a new wave of imperial expansion, particularly in Africa. This scramble to gain new overseas possessions (in the case of Germany) or protect existing colonies caused increasing political tensions in Europe and is considered a long-term cause for the outbreak of World War I.

FROM THE SOURCE

The scramble for Africa

1. **Name the two parts of Africa not under the control of European powers in 1914.**
2. **Prepare a list of the benefits European countries gained from having colonies.**
3. **Apart from German East Africa, name the three other German colonies in Africa.**
4. **Explain why German East Africa was a cause for particular tension between the British and the Germans in Africa?**

Africa, 1914. In the 'scramble for Africa', European powers established colonies in most of that continent during the 19th century.

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Nationalist rivalry and tensions in Europe

By 1914 the six major European powers were Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Italy and Austria–Hungary. Most of these great powers also had overseas colonies. There was rivalry among many of these powers as they sought to preserve their influence in Europe and to expand and protect their influence in the world. There were also a number of longstanding or developing tensions across the continent.

The map of Europe in 1900. It was a continent of increasing tensions. After the Balkans Wars of 1912 and 1913, the Ottoman Empire was largely driven from Europe. In its place Greece, Serbia and Romania expanded their territories and the new country of Albania was created.

Map exercise

One such tension was between Germany and France. Germany had only become a unified nation state in 1871. In the Franco-Prussian War that had created the unified German nation, Germany had defeated France and had taken the French territory of Alsace-Lorraine on the French–German border. The next generation of French people looked to the day when they would have revenge on Germany.

Another point of serious tension was developing between Britain and Germany. As an island state, Britain had a mighty navy to protect its empire and its all-important trade links. From the 1890s Germany, the most powerful military power in Europe, began to challenge Britain by building its own navy and it, too, sought to expand its overseas empire.

There was also tension in eastern Europe between the Austro–Hungarian Empire and the vast Russian Empire. Their area of potential conflict was in the Balkans, in south-eastern Europe. The Ottoman or Turkish Empire had once dominated this area and controlled the different national groups who lived there. As Turkish power began to decline in the 19th century, the force of nationalism – the desire to be a nation – triggered the creation of new independent states among the Slav peoples of the Balkans. In 1908 Bulgaria declared itself to be independent of the Turkish Empire, and in the same year Austria–Hungary annexed the region of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Two short wars in the Balkans in 1912 and 1913 effectively eliminated Turkish power.

The most aggressive of the Balkan states was Serbia. Serbia was strongly opposed to the Austro–Hungarian Empire to its north, particularly after Austria–Hungary added Bosnia-

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Herzegovina to its empire in 1908. Serbia felt threatened by any expansion of Austrian influence into the Balkans as Turkish power declined. Austria–Hungary was equally opposed to Slav nationalism on its southern border. Slav nationalism threatened the stability of the Austro–Hungarian Empire, which consisted of many nationalities and would fall apart if the desire for national independence grew. To complicate Balkan politics even further, Serbia had a powerful supporter in Russia, which also opposed any Austro–Hungarian moves into the region.

The alliance system

The tensions among the great European powers were also expressed in the formation of political alliances. Germany had a natural ally in Austria–Hungary, and in 1879 the two powers had signed the Dual Alliance. By 1882 this had expanded to include an alliance with Italy.

Britain had always adopted a policy of 'splendid isolation' and tried to stay out of European alliances. The only alliance Britain had with a European state was the Treaty of London, signed with Belgium in 1839, which gave British support to Belgium if ever it should be attacked.

As the 20th century began, however, tensions between Britain and Germany deepened. **Kaiser** Wilhelm II, who came to the throne in 1888, dreamt of making Germany a world power and of creating a great German Empire. Wilhelm II had made naval developments his personal obsession, and he admired and envied Britain's role as the world's greatest sea power. The German naval build-up began to challenge not only the British Royal Navy, which was essential for the survival of Britain and its empire, but also the concept of Britain's supremacy and its dominance in world affairs. At the same time Germany sought to expand its empire with a push for new colonies overseas. This 'new course' that Germany followed after 1890 meant that it now came to challenge Britain in two vital areas: its navy and its empire.

The potential threat that Germany posed to both Britain and France was one factor in the creation of another major European alliance bloc by 1907. It was known as the Triple **Entente**, and it was an alliance between Britain, France and Russia.

By 1907 the six major European powers had formed themselves into two rival alliance blocs:

- the Triple Alliance (Germany, Italy and Austria–Hungary)
- the Triple Entente (Britain, France and Russia).

The intent of the alliance system had not been to cause war but rather to prevent it. However, what this now meant was that, if a war were to start for any reason, there was a very real danger that it would become a major war or even a world war. Mighty wars often begin in distant and backward places, and it is in the Balkans, then a less advanced area of south-eastern Europe, that the final causes for the war are to be found.

AAP Image/Mary Evans

A cartoon from the French magazine *Le Petit Journal* in October 1908 highlights the involvement of the great powers in the Balkans. Identify the three powers in this cartoon and explain why there was a real danger of conflict in the Balkans.

Getty Images/Imagno

Kaiser Wilhelm II, Emperor of Germany from 1888 to 1918. A grandson of Queen Victoria, he saw Germany as a young, vigorous nation destined to replace Britain in world influence and power. As a result, relations between Germany and Britain declined and Britain joined in alliance with France.

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Europe before World War I was a continent of great empires bound by two major alliances, the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente.

Corbis/Stefano Bianchetti

The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife in Sarajevo, Bosnia, on 28 June 1914. The killing of the heir to the Austro–Hungarian throne triggered a diplomatic crisis that led to the outbreak of World War I in August 1914.

The July Crisis, 1914

On 28 June 1914 the heir to the Austro–Hungarian throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, and his wife were assassinated in the town of Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia. The assassin, 19-year-old Gavrilo Princip, was one of six young men associated with a Serbian terrorist organisation, the Black Hand, who set out to kill the archduke.

Although the Serbian government had not planned the assassination, the murder of the heir to the Austro-Hungarian throne provided Austria–Hungary with the opportunity to take action against Serbia and eliminate Serbian influence in the Balkans. However, any action against Serbia would provoke Russia, Serbia's ally, so the role of Germany, Austria's ally, became critical. Austria–Hungary sought support from Germany and, on 6 July 1914, the German government gave this support and encouraged Austria–Hungary to deal with Serbia. For Germany, it was important that Austria–Hungary should prove itself as a great power and punish the murder of the archduke.

There is strong evidence that the Germans then expected another small, localised war in the Balkans, as had happened in 1912 and 1913. The German view was summed up by its foreign minister, Gottlieb von Jagow, in a secret dispatch to the German ambassador in London on 18 July 1914:

> "We must see to localizing the conflict between Austria and Serbia. Whether this is possible will depend in the first place on Russia. The more boldness Austria displays, the

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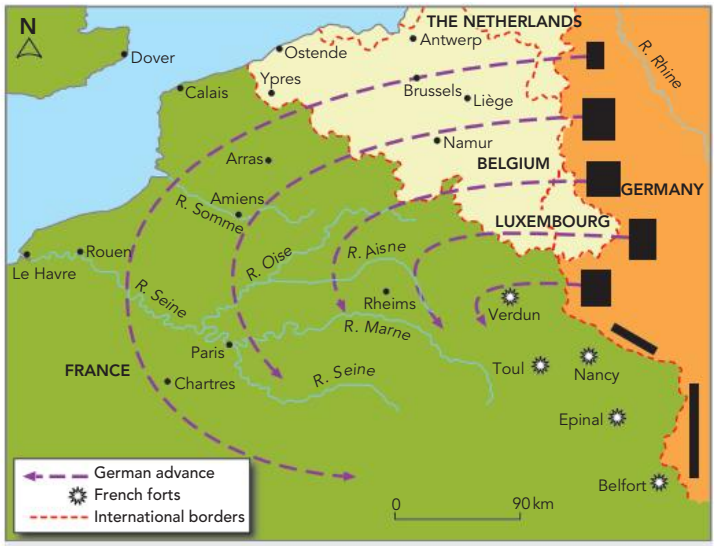
more strongly we support her, the more likely is Russia to keep quiet. There is certain to be some blustering in St Petersburg, but at the bottom Russia is not now ready to strike ... I still hope and believe that the conflict can be localized. England's attitude in this matter will be of great importance. ”

On 23 July, Austria–Hungary delivered an **ultimatum** to Serbia. Two days later, on 25 July, Serbia accepted most of the ultimatum but, unable to accept it all, mobilised its army for war. Germany now exerted greater pressure on Austria–Hungary to act, fearing that any further delay would involve the great powers. Under intense pressure, the Austrians almost reluctantly declared war on Serbia on 28 July.

Serbia always had the support of Russia, and threats to Serbia now caused Russia to react. France made it clear that it would stand by its ally Russia; Britain mobilised the Royal Navy; and the German ambassador in London was told by British foreign secretary Sir Edward Grey that Britain would have difficulty staying out of a war involving its allies France and Russia.



The Schlieffen Plan. Schlieffen's original plan of 1905 was changed a number of times before war broke out in 1914. The original plan included a much stronger German attack with the sweeping advance into France coming through Holland and Belgium.

There is evidence that on 30 July the German government, almost in panic, tried to restrain Austria–Hungary, but it was too late. On that same day Tsar Nicolas II ordered the mobilisation of the Russian army. Germany demanded that Russia cease its mobilisation and, on the following day, 1 August, Germany declared war on Russia.

The Schlieffen Plan, which was the German strategy for fighting a war on two fronts, now came into effect. On 2 August Germany demanded access through Belgium. Belgium had no defences against an aggressive neighbour such as Germany but it did have one important ally. In 1839 Britain had signed the Treaty of London with Belgium that guaranteed support if Belgium were ever attacked. The Germans were well aware of the treaty but, because of the time that had passed, dismissed it as unimportant. The German chancellor, Bethmann-Hollweg, called it 'a scrap of paper'. With great courage, the Belgians rejected the demand and prepared for invasion. On 3 August Germany declared war on France, and German troops crossed the Belgian border. Because Germany had invaded Belgium, on 4 August Great Britain declared war on Germany.

The path to war, 1914

28 June	The assassination of the Archduke Franz Ferdinand.
5 July	Germany gave support for Austria–Hungary to take action against Serbia.
23 July	Austria–Hungary presented Serbia with a 10-point ultimatum.
25 July	Serbia accepted nine of the 10 points and began to mobilise.
28 July	Austria–Hungary declared war on Serbia.
30 July	The Russian army began to mobilise.
31 July	France declared full mobilisation.
1 August	Germany mobilised and declared war on Russia.
3 August	Germany declared war on France and began to move on the Belgian border.
4 August	Britain declared war on Germany.
6 August	Austria–Hungary declared war on Russia.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Name the two alliance blocs that existed in Europe when war broke out in 1914.
2 Name the six powers that made up these blocs.
3 What was the Treaty of London (1839)?
4 What was the name of the Austrian Archduke assassinated in Sarajevo in June 1914?
5 What great power backed Austria and why?
6 What great power backed Serbia and why?
7 Why did Germany attack Belgium in August 1914?
8 Why did Britain declare war on Germany?

Bravo Belgium

Causes of World War I

Shared responsibility

Most historians today accept the idea of shared responsibility for the outbreak of World War I in 1914. After the war, the peacemakers made Germany accept total responsibility for causing it, but today it would be difficult to justify that argument. The events following the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand – the so-called July Crisis – were a diplomatic crisis that went wrong. It was the result of a decade of rivalry and distrust among the great power blocs that had created great tensions within Europe. All it needed was an incident to allow these mighty empires to collide.

State Library of Victoria [H99.166/87]

'Bravo Belgium', a cartoon from *Punch* magazine, 12 August 1914

These rivalries and tensions partly explain why Russia could not afford to back down in 1914, why Austria–Hungary had to prove it was a great power at the expense of Serbia, why Germany had to give support to its only real ally in Austria–Hungary, and why Britain, despite the treaty with Belgium, could not afford to let France fall to the Germans.

Equally, every nation had something to gain from a war. Britain could end the challenge of the German navy; France could take revenge for 1871 and restore its honour; Germany could finally break out of the encirclement that constantly threatened it; and Austria–Hungary and Russia could reassert their power and achieve their ambitions in the Balkans.

Europe went to war in August 1914 amid great joy and a belief on all sides that this was an honourable war and that it would be over by Christmas. Fear of war was felt to be worse than actual war, and after August 1914 each nation knew where it stood. Each believed that attack was the only form of defence, and so to defend themselves they had to attack each other. The British foreign secretary, Sir Edward Grey, understood the reality of it all better than most. 'The lamps are going out all over Europe', he said. 'We shall not see them lit again in our lifetime.'

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) mobilisation
   (b) nationalism
   (c) imperialism
   (d) militarism

2 Place these historical events of 1914 in their correct chronological order.
   - Germany declared war on Russia.
   - The Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated.
   - Britain declared war on Germany.
   - Germany attacked Belgium.
   - Germany declared war on France.

3 Historians sometimes speculate about the 'What if …?' in history – the idea that, if something different had happened, historical events that followed would also have been different. Select *one* of the following 'What if …?' situations and prepare an extended paragraph on how you think historical events might have developed differently.
   (a) The Ottoman Turkish Empire, rather than being known as 'the sick man of Europe', was in fact strong and united.
   (b) Germany decided not to seek an expanded overseas empire and not to build a large navy.
   (c) Kaiser Wilhelm II, like his father Frederick III, reigned for only 99 days.
   (d) Archduke Franz Ferdinand did not go to Sarajevo on 28 June 1914.
   (e) Britain had no treaty obligation with Belgium.

4 'The scrap of paper'.
   (a) Explain the reference to the term 'scrap of paper' used as part of this enlistment poster of 1914.
   (b) Imagine you saw this poster on display in 1914 after Britain had declared war on Germany. Write a letter to your friend in faraway Australia (which was also now at war with Germany) and explain your understanding of the historical events, both long-term and more immediate, that led Britain to go to war with Germany in 1914.

Australian War Memorial [ARTV00423]

A British enlistment poster of 1914

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3.2 WHAT WERE THE EXPERIENCES OF AUSTRALIANS IN THE GALLIPOLI CAMPAIGN OF 1915?

The events in distant Europe had little to do with Australia. For more than a century Australia had enjoyed peaceful growth and development, and in 1914 it was still isolated from the rest of the world.

Australia goes to war, 1914

The origins of the war remained unclear in the minds of most Australians, yet there was almost universal agreement on what Australia's role would be. The prime minister, Joseph Cook, said:

> "Whatever happens, Australia is part of the Empire right to the full. When the Empire is at war, so is Australia at war. All our resources are in the Empire and for the preservation and security of the Empire."

Australia remained loyal to the British Empire and was swept by a wave of emotional support for the Mother Country. 'The British Empire is our family', wrote one newspaper in 1914. 'We cannot live outside it.' The nation was almost united in its determination to assist the British and their allies. The causes of the war and the justification for it became unimportant, and emotional concepts of honour, duty and obligation became the reason to fight. The leader of the Labor Party, Andrew Fisher, expressed the mood of the nation when he said that Australia would 'stand by our own to help and defend her to our last man and our last shilling'.

Australians in World War I

'I think I ought to go'

As soon as war was declared, Australia offered the British an immediate force of 20 000 men, and the ships of the Australian navy were placed under the control of the British Admiralty. A few weeks later, at the general election in September, the Labor Party led by Andrew Fisher came to power, but the change in government meant no change in war policy. 'The greatest crisis in our history', said the Labor politician William Morris Hughes, 'is faced by a united people'.

Preparing for war was particularly difficult for a young nation that had little experience of such a war effort. Troops had to be recruited, trained, equipped and transported to the other side of the world. Finance had to be allocated, munitions and weapons developed, and technical and medical services expanded.

Recruitment of men for war service was not a problem in 1914, and the enthusiasm for the war drew thousands of young men to enlist as soon as the call was made. By the end of August over 10 000 had enlisted in Sydney alone, and by the end of the year enlistments for war service stood at 52 000.

Australian War Memorial [PB1086]

Australian soldiers of the First AIF set sail for the war from Port Melbourne, 22 December 1914.

With such an influx of young men, the army set high standards. Men had to be at least 168 centimetres tall and in very good health. By October 1914 the first expeditionary force of 20 000, known as the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), had been raised by purely volunteer enlistment. After a few weeks of training the troops left Australia in November, heading for the uncertainty of war on the other side of the world. The English poet John Masefield called them 'the finest body of young men ever brought together in modern times … they were in the pink of condition and didn't give a damn for anybody'.

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These men had joined the AIF for different reasons. For some it was a great escape to an exciting adventure; others were attracted by the pay of four shillings a day, which was much more than the pay that British soldiers received. But most men who enlisted were also motivated by a deeply felt sense of loyalty towards the Mother Country. It was a question of honour. One volunteer wrote:

> "I am going to have a try for the war. I think I ought to go … I think it is the greatest opportunity for a chap to make a man of himself, those that come back from this war will be men of the right sort that anyone would be proud of."

This particular soldier never returned. He was killed in France in 1917, aged 24.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

From the Australian historian Manning Clark

Great Britain had declared war on Germany and Austria–Hungary. That afternoon the electric telegraph and the bush telegraph carried over the ancient continent the news that as Britain had declared war Australia was therefore also at war. That night in Melbourne a mob attacked the German club. Crowds spilled over the streets, singing patriotic songs. In one café the band struck up 'Rule Britannia' to thunderous applause from the audience … the bugles of England were calling to the manhood of Australia.

On 11 August 1914 a vast crowd of men waited outside the barracks in Sydney for the doors to be opened. One was attracted by 'brilliant uniforms, marching soldiers, music, drums and glory', one was itching to 'git a dig at a few Germans', one wanted to 'do his bit to wipe out such an infamous [evil] nation', one was there because if he had not been there he would never be able to look any decent girl in the face again … Some were attracted by the pay, four shillings a day with allowances for wives and families.

C. M. H. Clark, *A History of Australia* (abridged by Michael Cathcart), MUP, 1993, p. 442–444

source B

State Library of NSW [bcp_04975]

A recruiting march through the main street of Port Macquarie, New South Wales, in 1914

source C

'The call'

Coo-ee! It's the mother country calling;
Coo-ee! Her sons shall make reply;
The children of the free,
From sea to surging sea,
Have heard the call, they'll stand or fall, prepared to do or die.

Forget our tale of party strife, forget our varied creeds,
Perhaps we've wrangled over words, we stand as one in deeds;
Divided in her time of peace – when first the bugles blare
Her enemies have yet to learn the Empire stands foursquare!

The Argus, August 1914

source D

A letter to the Editor, 1914

Sir,

We live in epoch making days. The sands of time are sinking and the dawn of a New Year already looms on the threshold of our door. The Hun [the Germans] is at our gateway, and liberty and nationhood are suspended in the balance … Shall we not therefore here and now make a New Year resolve to increase our contribution. Yes truly shall we not attempt to put into action the words of our Prime Minister when he spoke of the last man and the last shilling? To this end therefore let our motto be *Non dicta, sed facta* [not words, but action].

I am etc.

E. Ross.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 29 December 1914

1 How do you explain the fact that, since Britain had declared war on Germany, 'Australia was therefore also at war'?

2 Why would a mob in Melbourne attack the German club?

3 The main idea expressed in Source A is

- A that the news of the outbreak of war travelled very quickly in Australia
- B that the news of the outbreak of war caused trouble
- C that the news of the outbreak of war was received calmly by the Australian people
- D that the news of the outbreak of war generated great support for the British cause.

4 Prepare a list of reasons mentioned in Source A as to why young men enlisted to join the war in 1914.

5 Explain what is happening in Source B.

6 Prepare a caption and news report that might have gone with the photo in Source B when it appeared in the local newspaper in 1914.

7 The main purpose of this parade in Source B was

- A to show loyalty to the British cause
- B to allow people of small towns to celebrate the start of the war
- C to allow small towns to show unity with the rest of the country
- D to encourage young men from the town and surrounding districts to join the army and support the war effort.

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8 What is the mood or feeling expressed in both the poem in Source C and letter in Source D?

9 Who was the prime minister referred to in Source D?

10 Why do you think the writer of the letter to the editor in Source D would use the phrase 'The Hun is at our gateway'?

11 The evidence in the letter in Source D suggests that the writer:

A believes that Australians are united in their support for Britain

B is opposed to the war effort

C believes that the government needs to do more to help Britain

D believes that the government has contributed enough to the war effort.

12 These sources suggest that there was genuine support for the war in Australia. Explain, in an extended paragraph, why Australia was so willing to go to war in 1914.

Call from the Dardanelles: Gallipoli

Australian War Memorial: sound collection

Gallipoli

On the very day that the AIF sailed from Australia, Turkey entered the war on the side of Germany. The Western Front in Europe was almost at a **stalemate** by late 1914 and the British and French sought to regain the military advantage by defeating Germany's weaker ally, Turkey. It was argued

The Dardanelles and the Gallipoli peninsula, 1915

that, if Turkey could be knocked out of the war quickly, greater support could be given to Russia, the ally of Britain and France.

The key to defeating Turkey was the ability to drive up the Dardanelles, the narrow waterway that led to the Sea of Marmara and the Turkish capital of Constantinople. In March 1915 ships from the British and French navies attempted to do this but Turkish defences and mines in the narrow waterway caused the naval plan to fail. It then became necessary to take the Turkish capital by a land attack, and the first phase of this operation would be to capture the strategic Gallipoli peninsula.

Preparation for the Gallipoli landing

The Australian and New Zealand troops, originally destined for the fighting on the Western Front against the Germans, left their ships in Egypt and transferred to training camps under the very shadow of the ancient pyramids. Here they were formed into an army corps and the name ANZAC (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps) was born. By January 1915 another 12 500 men had arrived in Egypt, and the ANZAC force, weary from months of waiting, was keen to see action.

Australian War Memorial [C02588]

Men of the 9th and 10th Battalions at their army camp near the great pyramids of Egypt in 1915. A soldier plays with a kangaroo, which was a battalion mascot. When the men moved on to war, Australian animals kept as mascots were given to the Cairo zoo.

FROM THE SOURCE

Australian soldiers write home from Egypt, 1915

Well Ma, I shall soon be seeing the real thing and believe me I am looking forward to it. When I was at Broadmeadow I used to think it was silly when I heard others talking like that, but now I am right up against it and I want to be there.

Private McWhinney, 23, Hawthorn, Victoria, killed in action, 27 July 1916

I am sick and tired of wasting leather on the gritty paving stones of Cairo. Egypt is all right for a week, but soon everything becomes a drag, so now I am going to a place where monotony is

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unknown, and a year seems like one crowded hour of glorious life. I am on the eve of entering the firing line and rejoicing.

Captain Walter Gamble, 15th Light Trench Mortar Battery

1 **Are these letters primary or secondary historical sources?**

2 **Explain why letters written by soldiers in World War I would be such a valuable historical source for historians.**

3 **Would letters and diaries of the soldiers always be accurate as historical evidence?**

4 **What is the common mood or feeling expressed in the above letters?**

5 **Can you offer possible reasons why these young men were so keen to enter the firing line?**

Australian War Memorial [A01829]

Australian troops with full military kit on the deck of a British ship in Lemnos Harbour, Greece, on 24 April 1915, only hours before the short journey across to the landing at Gallipoli

The Gallipoli landings

The campaign to capture the Gallipoli peninsula began before dawn on 25 April 1915 with two landings. A large force of British and French troops landed at five different beaches at Cape Hellas on the southern tip of the Gallipoli peninsula. To the north, in what was intended as a surprise attack, the Australian and New Zealand troops had been given the task of making a landing near Gaba Tepe.

Although the Turks had defended all the landing places along this coast, these beach defences were relatively light. The larger Turkish forces were kept to the rear, ready to be deployed quickly against any attack.

The landing of the first wave of ANZAC soldiers began in the pre-dawn darkness, and took place some two kilometres to the north of the planned spot. The long-accepted reason for this, first mentioned by the official war historian Charles Bean, was that a change in the ocean

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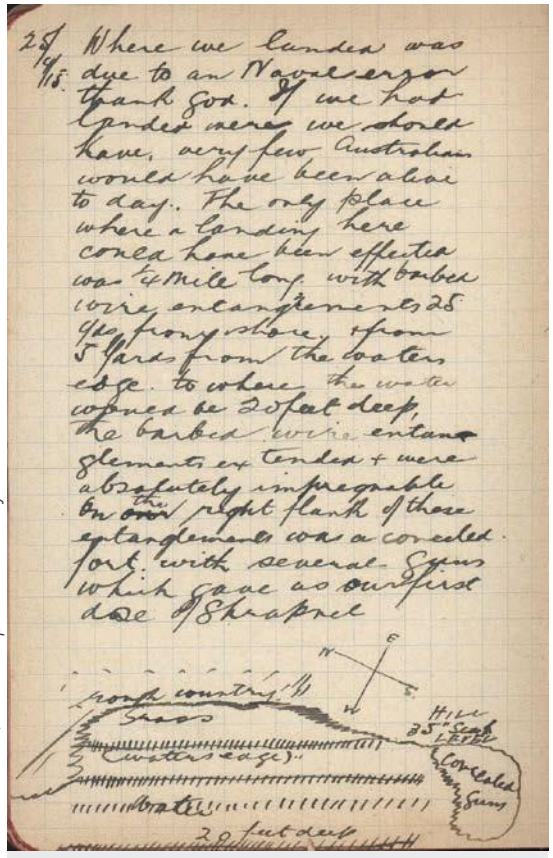
current carried the landing away from its target. More recently some historians have questioned this explanation, arguing that a last-minute decision by General William Birdwood, the corps commander, was made to change the landing site. 'I had purposely not intended to land at the spot we arrived at', Birdwood later told his commanding officer, 'because from what I had seen of it, the country looked extraordinarily difficult'. The actual landing beach was much smaller than the more open beach originally intended, but it also had much lighter Turkish defences.

The landing place was a narrow beach with difficult cliff terrain rising behind it. Despite the confusion, the first wave of 1500 men held formation and cleared the beach of the light Turkish defences, allowing the second and third waves of ANZAC troops to land. By 6 a.m. the line had moved to the first ridge, which had been taken with savage fighting, some of it hand-to-hand combat. By mid-morning almost 8000 ANZAC soldiers had landed. The main fighting was now for the ridges, and the Turkish forces from the higher points held the advance. Turkish shelling of the landing beach began, which added to the rising toll of **casualties**. One-third of all the casualties for the entire Gallipoli campaign were suffered on that first day.

The tiny beach, known as Anzac Cove, became congested as 16 000 men landed. The Turks, from their position on the heights of the Sari Bair ranges, held the advantage, and by the first evening, surrounded on three sides by the enemy and with the sea at their backs, the ANZAC force had advanced only about 900 metres at the farthest point. The dead and hundreds of wounded lay on the beach, as the order was given for the men to dig in and hold their ground.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A



Museum Victoria/Author: Corporal S.W. Siddeley

A page from the war diary of Corporal S. W. Siddeley, who landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. This page includes a sketch he made of the landing beach.

Transcript of Corporal S. W. Siddeley's diary entry

25/4/15

Where we landed was due to a naval error thank God. If we had landed where we should have, very few Australians would have been alive today. The only place where a landing here could have been effective was a ¼ mile [0.4 kilometres] long with barbed wire entanglements 25 yards [23 metres] from shore and from 5 yards [4.5 metres] from the waters edge to where the water could be 20 feet [6 metres] deep, the barbed wire entanglements were absolutely impregnable. On the right flank of these entanglements was a concealed fort which gave us our first dose of **shrapnel**.

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From the Australian historian Manning Clark

source B

At 3.30 am steamboats towed landing craft towards the beach. It was Sunday 25 April … In the majesty of the moment the minds of the men did not turn to their 'sun-burnt country' or 'the vision splendid of the sunlit plains extended'. Their thoughts turned to those they loved … With the barges 40 yards [37 metres] from the beach a single shot rang out. Machine-gun bullets from the shore and shrapnel ripped into human flesh … men fingered their bayonets or what they called their 'pen-knives' to make sure everything was in order before leaping into the sea to wade for the beach and scramble up that bloody cliff to finish off the 'bastards at the top' … On shore, the first to land rushed a Turkish trench to give them the 'pen-knife treatment' and drove the others away.

Then they began to climb the cliff. By the time the sun had risen, the first Australians had reached the ridge … All morning the murderous fight went on. By afternoon the Turks were spraying the beach with two field guns causing heavy casualties among the soldiers on the beach and those still attempting to land …

C. M. H. Clark, *A History of Australia* (abridged by Michael Cathcart), MUP, 1993, p. 451

From a soldier who landed with the first group on 25 April 1915

source C

All day long the fire of the big guns was terrific, the crack of rifles incessant. All day stretcher bearers carried away the wounded down rugged paths hastily cut by the pioneers and men struggled up the same paths carrying ammunition … About 8 pm or perhaps later, it came on to rain; although not heavy it added to the darkness and misery of the already miserable state of affairs, particularly in the case of the wounded. Men struggled through the wet scrub, groping their way and slipping down every few steps, but only to struggle on again without a murmur. All night I sat half dozing and half wondering what the cost of this ceaseless fire would mean to our men …

In the early hours of the morning I heard the officers going along amongst the men, saying 'Stick to it lads, don't go to sleep', and the cheerful reply would be 'No Sir; we won't go to sleep', and my heart swelled with admiration … I was justified in being proud of being an Australian … Give me Australians as comrades and I will go anywhere duty calls. Thus it was the Australians passed their first day and night on the battlefield, Sunday, April 25th. What a difference to the Sunday spent at home; I wondered often through the day and night if the loved ones at home had any kind of a presentiment of what we were doing.

From the time we settled down on that point until my last day on the peninsula, when I was wounded, each day was very much the same. Shrapnel poured onto the beach each day, picking off men every now and again. Terrible sights of suffering were seen at the hospital near our quarters, each day. The usual line of dead were to be seen waiting for sunset to be laid to rest on the hillside, when it would be safe to hold the usual burial service. And so things went on, day after day, we getting more accustomed to it each day.

Roy Howard Denning, letter to his mother, 1915. Yass District Historical Society.

1 **What important information does the diary entry in Source A provide about the landing on the beach at Anzac Cove?**

2 **Explain why is it possible that accounts like these may have errors of historical fact.**

3 **Which of these sources is a primary historical source and which is a secondary historical source?**

4 **List two things about the Gallipoli landing mentioned in the sources.**

5 **List things about the Gallipoli campaign mentioned in the primary source but not in the secondary source.**

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Fairfax Syndication/The Age/Philip Schuller

A rare photo of the beach at Anzac Cove on the day of the landing, 25 April 1915.

The fighting at Gallipoli

The military goal of the first day of the landing had been to take the three ridges inland from the sea. This was never achieved and as a consequence the fighting at Gallipoli became a series of combats along the ridges and gullies. The reinforced Turkish positions prevented any breakthrough. The major casualties came when the ANZAC forces attempted to advance or the Turkish forces counterattacked in attempts to push the Anzacs off their positions.

By 1 May 1915, 27 000 men had landed at Anzac Cove, holding the beach and a network of dugouts and trenches on the slopes of the range. The Turkish positions were only metres away and the Anzacs faced almost constant attack. On 19 May the enemy launched a major offensive and 42 000 Turkish troops in four divisions advanced on the ANZAC position. In fierce fighting, including hand-to-hand combat, the line held and the Turks were forced back. Thousands of dead and wounded lay in the open spaces. A few days later both sides agreed to a temporary ceasefire to bury the dead and retrieve the few wounded who had survived.

Australian War Memorial [A02022]

Australian troops in the Turkish Lone Pine trenches, captured after heavy fighting on the afternoon of the 6 August 1915

In August 1915 the British attempted to break the stalemate on the Gallipoli peninsula with a landing of 25 000 British troops at Suvla Bay, north of the ANZAC position. As part of this strategy, the ANZAC troops were to attack the Turkish stronghold at Lone Pine, primarily to divert the Turks from the landing at Suvla Bay. The attacks on Lone Pine on 6 August 1915, and another diversionary attack on a Turkish position called the Nek on the following day, provided the most heroic ANZAC fighting of the entire campaign. Fierce fighting from 6 August to 10 August saw Lone Pine taken and held. The attack on the Nek, however, failed as waves of soldiers from the Light Horse Brigade advanced from their trenches, only to be shot down by well-positioned Turkish machine-gun posts. Thirty per cent of all the ANZAC deaths in the Gallipoli campaign happened in the month of August 1915. More than 2300 Anzacs were killed and no fewer than seven **Victoria Crosses** were awarded. Turkish casualties numbered over 6000. The outcome of these attacks simply confirmed that a situation of stalemate existed along the Gallipoli peninsula.

The end of the campaign

By late August the entire Dardanelles campaign had failed to achieve its objectives. More than 120 000 British, French and ANZAC troops had barely established a foothold on the Gallipoli peninsula. No major

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FROM THE SOURCE

Recollections of a soldier who was at Gallipoli

The dead were that thick, thousands right along there, and the place smelled terrible. There were big rats, nearly as big as poodle dogs, running around everywhere, squeaking and fighting over the corpses. Both sides were getting riddled with disease from the stench of the dead. The armistice [ceasefire] was signed, and the Ninth was elected to go out, right along the line carrying a little white flag, and with stuff stuck up our nostrils to kill the smell. I led the second platoon, and as I went, a Turk came out, we were about ten feet or so from each other, and he followed along with me. We had no rifles, just the white flag. The chaps came out of the trenches, and pulled what was left of our dead over to our side, and the Turks did the same. We just hooked a pick into their belts and dragged what was left of them away. And that lasted all day and by that time we were all well and truly sick. While I was out a young German officer came up and started talking to me, he spoke perfect English. He said, 'You Australians are stupid, you know. You'll never win this place. No nation has won it yet properly. Just trace back in history and you'll see that.'

'Oh well,' I said, 'we'll be one of the unlucky ones. As far as that goes don't forget you people are paying a good price for it aren't you. Look at your dead.' Well he said, 'They're just the Turkish dead.' So then the bugle sounded [to end the armistice] and I had to run up a stiff hill, and just before I jumped in [to the trench] I gave a wave back, and the Turks waved back too. A few minutes after that, two red flares were fired, and that was the signal that the armistice was really over. The war was on again.

Recollections of James Donaldson, quoted in T. Matthews, *Crosses: Australian Soldiers in the First War*, Boolarong Press, Brisbane, 1987

Australian War Memorial [H03920]

During an arranged nine-hour ceasefire on 24 May 1915, Turkish and Australian soldiers recover the dead who had been killed in a major attack on 19 May 1915.

1 **Why would it be necessary to call a truce like this in the fighting at Gallipoli?**

2 **Why would there be a German officer in the Turkish trenches? Is there any indication of what he thought of the Turkish troops?**

3 **Is there any evidence of respect or comradeship between the Turks and the ANZAC soldiers?**

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military gains had been achieved in almost a year of ceaseless fighting, and the cost in terms of casualties had been high. Of the ANZAC force of 60 000 that fought at Gallipoli, 8709 Australians and 2701 New Zealanders had been killed and 17 924 Australians and 4852 New Zealanders had been wounded.

With the coming of winter the decision was made to withdraw, and on the night of 19 December 1915, in what proved to be the most successful part of the Gallipoli campaign, both Anzac Cove and Suvla Bay were evacuated without a single casualty.

Life at Anzac Cove

Life at Anzac Cove was desperately hard. Surrounded by constant danger, the troops survived in trenches and dugouts protected by sandbags. They lived on irregular supplies of food and water that had to be shipped 1100 kilometres from Egypt. Fresh water was always scarce and was rationed, while the food was basic and unchanging, mainly tinned beef and dry biscuits, potato, cheese, bacon, tea and tinned milk. The Turks had access to much better food as their supply lines were more secure. Many farms behind the Turkish line supplied fresh food, including fresh meat, fruit and vegetables.

Nurses

The health of the ANZAC troops suffered, and with the coming of the hot summer plagues of flies helped to spread **dysentery** and other diseases. Sickness caused by the primitive conditions was a major problem. By July, in high summer, as many as 200 ill soldiers were being evacuated from the beachhead each day. Because of the isolation and danger of the beachhead, as well as the rugged countryside, caring for the wounded and ill was particularly difficult. Doctors worked in primitive dressing stations on shore but there was no nursing support. Hospital ships staffed by doctors and nurses operated off the coast and carried the seriously wounded back to Egypt or Malta.

Two soldiers on the beach at Anzac Cove with food supplies and cans used to carry water or kerosene.

Australian War Memorial [H03951]

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FROM THE SOURCE

Letters and writings from soldiers at Gallipoli, 1915

source A

My dearest Mum,

If you could manage to send a few cigarettes and sweets of some sort. Of course they must be in tins … I know you won't mind because life is terribly rough and we have no comforts at all. There were a lot of fellows either killed or wounded yesterday, and the whole thing's very sad indeed. I wish to Heaven it were all over.

These letters are censored. I can't write any news except that we are still on Gallipoli in the trenches and under fire. The flies are something frightful. I can't get used to them at all. It's like living in a beehive all the time. Dear Mum, it will be glorious to be home again. War makes me sick of living. It all seems so foolish and useless. I never knew the full meaning of war till I got here and it will be a very long time before I venture into another, of that I'm certain.

Best love to all at home and trusting you are getting along all right financially.

Fondest love

from Ernie

Private E. Harris, 29 June 1915. Killed in action, 5 May 1917

It's a funny war here – dug into the ground like great rabbit warrens with the enemy only 40 yards [36 metres], in some places only five [4 metres] away and also dug in, and often days elapse and you never see a Turk, in fact … lots of us haven't seen one at all yet.

Lieutenant R. Hunter Forbes, New South Wales, 25 September 1915. Killed in action, 13 June 1916, aged 24

Do you know what a mess tin is like, well it holds about two ordinary cups of tea. I managed to get half a mess tin of water after tea last Sunday so I made a fire, warmed it, cleaned my teeth, had a shave, had a bath, then tried to wash my towel with the water that was left. A mess tin is a very handy thing to have.

Lieutenant J. H. F. Barnes, Malvern, Victoria, 9 December 1915. Died of wounds, 8 May 1917

I had the misfortune to break one of my front teeth that I got fixed up in Charters Towers just before enlisting. I was trying to break one of our ration biscuits and the biscuit proved its superiority to dentistry.

Private P. Jackson, Kynuna, Queensland, 1 November 1915. Died of wounds, 19 April 1917

We charged three hills that night. On the first hill I bayoneted a Turk, who was feigning death, with a few extra thrusts. Coming up the third hill a gigantic Turk grabbed me round the chest, and slowly began to crush the life out of me. I was almost gone when a mate of mine called Tippen came up and bayoneted him. We made sure of him then continued up the hill. Poor Tippen got shot in the stomach with two bullets, he died groaning horribly. I killed his assailant however with five rounds in the head. I let him have it full in the face. It was unrecognisable.

Sergeant H. M. Jackson, 21 August 1915. Died of wounds, 15 August 1916, aged 23

We have cold nights and a lovely beach to surf in during the day. It is not like Manly but is perfectly calm and you can go anywhere without fear of sharks. The Turks generally wait until two hundred or more men are there and then shell with shrapnel.

Captain P. Howell-Price, Richmond, NSW, 27 June 1915. Killed in action, 4 October 1917

The loss of life is appalling, rivers of blood … sometimes I weary so of it all and long for peace. It is only the fact that the safety of our loved ones, the integrity of the Empire is at stake that lifts one's spirit up again.

Lieutenant H. Ruddle, Bundaberg, Queensland, 5 December 1915. Died of wounds, 23 July 1916, aged 30

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I must honestly say I will be highly delighted when this war is over for it is simply terrible … For the last 19 days it has not been safe anywhere, and I am not even safe writing this letter here. The first night … I tried to get a couple of hours rest, and where I was I could not shift my position so I had to use a dead man's leg for a pillow.

Corporal R. Antill, Windsor, Victoria, 14 May 1915. Killed in action, 5 July 1917, aged 21

source B Bathing at Anzac Cove

Australian War Memorial [H16605]

Troops in the sea at Anzac Cove with allied shipping and hospital ships in the background. Despite the danger from enemy shelling, the sea was the only way to bathe during the campaign.

source C Reflections on the war

Someone remarked very truly once that this campaign at the Dardanelles was only rendered tolerable by the excellent bathing. I do not suppose any other factor counted so much in keeping the troops healthy and clean, and in restoring their spirits after days and nights in the stuffy, dirty, smelly trenches. Especially do the Australians and New Zealanders love their periodical dips. To them the sea and the sun-bath are as the breath of life. From earliest childhood they have been accustomed to live in the water.

The bathing at Sydney, where as many as 50 000 men, women and children take the water at the same time, is world famous.

At Gallipoli straight from the trenches, this endless procession of naked warriors, covered with sand and dirt, never ceased from sunrise to sunset. No sooner was a man released from duty than he made for the water, no matter the snipers and the bursting shrapnel. For there, in far-off Gallipoli, for a short period each day, they imagined themselves once more under the southern sun, and returned reinvigorated and refreshed to the stern work on the hills above.

E. Ashmead-Bartlett, *Some of my experiences in the Great War*, G. Newnes, London, 1918

Based on your reading of this material from soldiers and others who were at Gallipoli, as well as these images, and from your own study of the Gallipoli campaign, put yourself in the position of the war correspondent in 1915 for the *Sydney Daily Mail*. Prepare a short article for your newspaper, to be entitled 'Daily life at Anzac Cove'.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who was prime minister of Australia at the start of World War I?
2 What was the AIF?
3 What does the acronym ANZAC stand for?
4 When did the ANZAC force land at Gallipoli?
5 Who was the commander of the ANZAC force in 1915?
6 Apart from the ANZAC force, what other military landing took place on the Gallipoli peninsula?
7 What were Lone Pine and the Nek?
8 When were the ANZAC forces withdrawn from Gallipoli?
9 How many Australian soldiers died in the eight-month Gallipoli campaign?

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Place these events in their correct chronological order.
- The entry of Turkey into the war against Britain
- The landing at Gallipoli
- Major military action at the Nek and Lone Pine
- The first of the ANZAC force arrived for training in Egypt

2 Explain the strategic reasons for the Gallipoli campaign and how the land and naval forces of Australia, New Zealand, Britain and France were used in this campaign.

3 Prepare a list of reasons why you believe the campaign to take the Gallipoli peninsula in 1915 was a failure.

4 The military records of the men who served in World War I are now available in digital form at the National Archives of Australia.

A read of the military file of Charles Alexander Masters reveals a great deal about this man. The file tells us, among other things, that he was born in 1886 and came from rural Victoria. We know he was a blacksmith and enlisted in August 1914, the month the war began. We know he was 1.72 metres tall and single. He arrived in Egypt in March 1915 and was promoted to corporal. He served at Gallipoli from June to September 1915 and was evacuated ill in a hospital ship back to Egypt. Promoted to sergeant in January 1916, he moved to the Western Front and arrived in France in March 1916. On 9 November 1916, aged 30, he was killed in action in France, fighting the Germans.

As a research activity, select any soldier who served in the Great War and, using the resources of the National Archives of Australia, prepare a report on their military career.

5 Using the website Gallipoli and the Anzacs or a similar reputable site, and based on other research, prepare a multimedia essay presentation on the Gallipoli campaign of 1915. Illustrate your presentation with images or maps or other relevant material. Your essay should examine three themes:
- The aim of the Gallipoli campaign
- The experience of the soldiers involved in the campaign
- The outcome of the campaign.

National Archives of Australia

Gallipoli and the Anzacs

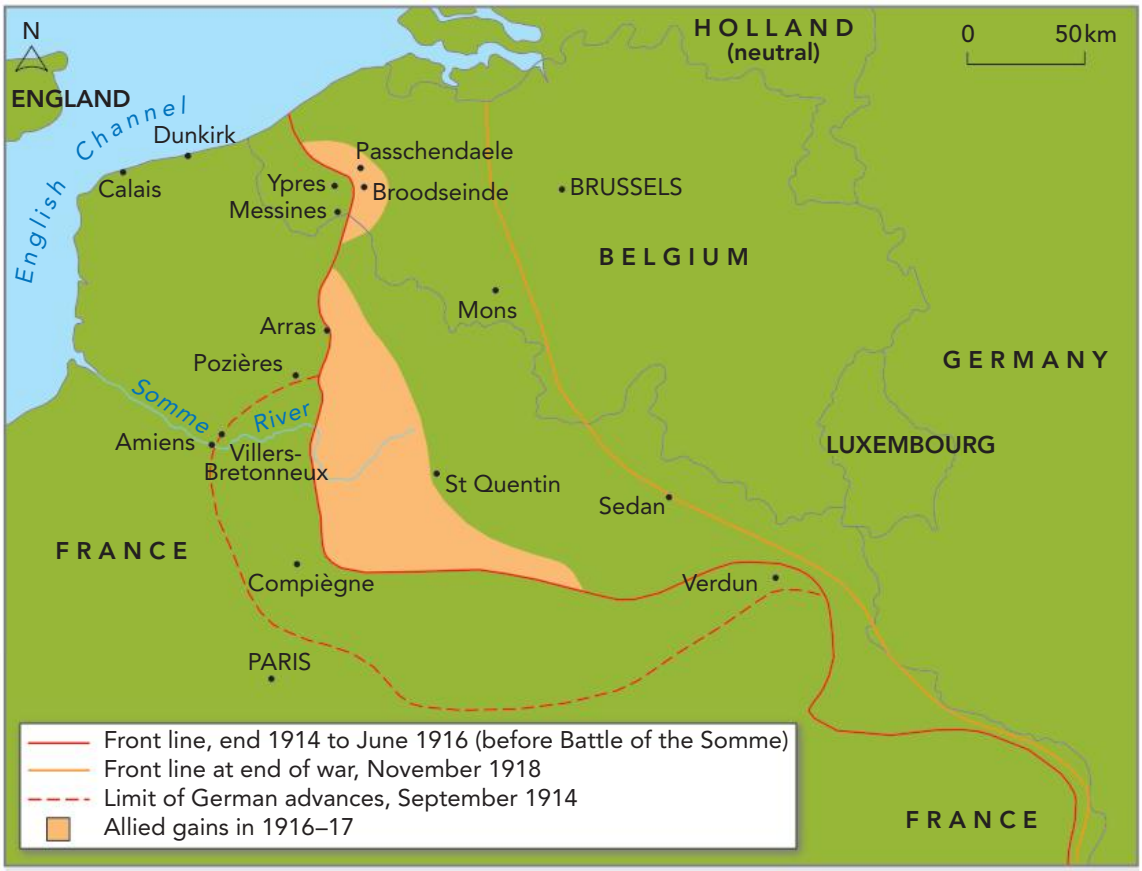
3.3 WHAT HAPPENED ON THE WESTERN FRONT?

The Western Front, 1916–18

The conflict with Turkey and other military activity in the Middle East was never the real theatre of war. In reality, the outcome of the Great War was being decided on the Western Front, where Germany and its allies were in a life-and-death struggle with the forces of Britain, France and their allies.

The Western Front was a military line of trenches and fortifications stretching from Switzerland across northern France and through Belgium to the North Sea. Men who had seen service at Gallipoli were now joined by many thousands of new troops direct from training in Australia. In March 1916, when Australian troops of the AIF began to arrive in France, the war along the Western Front had settled into a stalemate. It had also settled into a fearful war of **attrition**, a war where the mass armies faced each other along an extended front line and each sought to wear the enemy down until one side collapsed. The cost in men and resources was staggering. The losses at Gallipoli in 1915 were small compared with the suffering and heavy loss of life Australian forces would experience in the next three years of the war on the Western Front. Almost 60 000 Australians died in World War I and, of these, 53 000 were killed on the Western Front in France and Belgium.

Battles of the Western Front



The major battle lines of the Western Front

Trench warfare

In July Australian troops were ordered into the great Battle of the Somme. This was a major British and French push along a 30-kilometre front on the Somme River in northern France, which proved to be one of the bloodiest battles of the war. On the first day, 1 July 1916, Britain suffered 60 000 casualties, including 20 000 killed. On 19 July, at Fromelles on the Somme, Australian and British

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troops were used to attack German fortifications. In the open ground before the German defence, and in broad daylight, the Australian force suffered more than 5500 casualties on that one day, including 2000 killed. After the battle Lieutenant Ronald McInnis, who had been at Gallipoli the year before, wrote in his diary, 'We thought we knew something of the horrors of war but we were mere recruits, and have had our full education in one day'.

A few days later ANZAC troops were ordered into battle in an attempt to take the German-held village of Pozières. In seven weeks of brutal fighting, the troops captured and held Pozières despite intense German counterattacks. In the course of the battle the AIF suffered another 23 000 casualties in seven weeks. By the end of 1916 there were more than 42 000 Australian casualties on the Western Front.

Through my eyes

Diary of a soldier

Fighting In Flanders

In 1917 the British commander-in-chief, Sir Douglas Haig, launched a new offensive in Flanders (Belgium), and again ANZAC troops were ordered in. Between April and November 1917, Australian and New Zealand forces took part in many of the battles that sought to break the German line near the town of Ypres. The first came when the troops attacked the strategically important Messines Ridge in June 1917, in a careful attack planned by the Australian commander, General Sir John Monash. In a week of fighting Messines Ridge fell with 10 000 Australian and 5000 New Zealand casualties. ANZAC troops also played a prominent part in the battles raging around Ypres, Menin, Polygon Wood and Broodseinde Ridge.

The final battle of the tragic Flanders campaign, for the village of Passchendaele, near Ypres, began in October 1917. Rain had fallen almost unceasingly throughout October, transforming the scarred battlefield into a mud lake. Troops and supplies bogged down, and by November it took 16 men instead of two to carry the stretcher cases to the field dressing stations. Yet, in these indescribable conditions, the battle for Passchendaele went on until November before the hopelessness was realised. 'I died in hell', wrote the war poet Siegfried Sassoon, 'they called it Passchendaele'. The campaign in Flanders in 1917 had raged for five months. In that time the British alone suffered the loss or wounding of 245 000 men and advanced a total distance of 11 kilometres. In 1917 these battles in Flanders saw a further 76 800 Australian casualties.

Life on the Front

Weapons of World War I

Australian War Memorial [ART03557]

A painting depicting Australian troops at the start of the Battle of Messines Ridge, on the Western Front, on 7 June 1917. The victory came at the cost of 15 000 Australian and New Zealand casualties.

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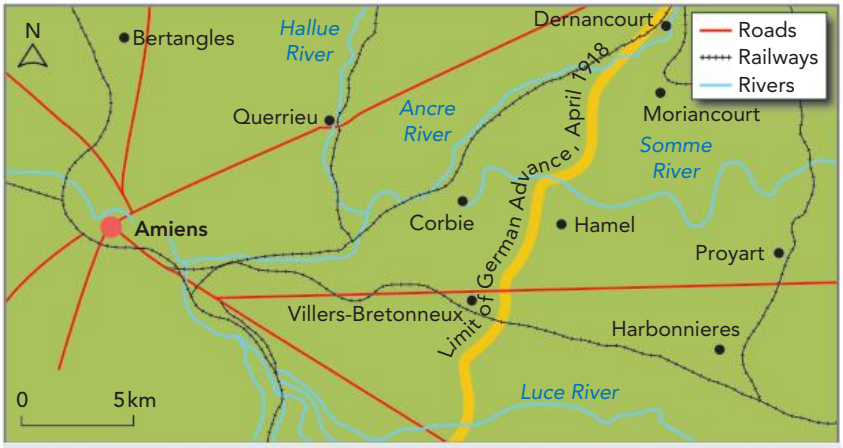
The end of the war

Site study: Villers-Bretonneux

In March 1918, having defeated Russia in the east, the Germans were able to concentrate their forces for a great spring offensive on the Western Front. By this time the United States had entered the war against Germany, and the Germans hoped to break through with their new offensive and win before the Americans could get fully involved. The offensive began at dawn on 21 March 1918. The German advance was swift and they regained much of the territory they had lost in the first Battle of the Somme in 1916.



A map showing the German line in April 1918 in the Somme region of northern France. Australian troops took part in important battles at Villers-Bretonneux and, later, at Hamel, where their victory in July 1918 pushed back the German line.

Villers-Bretonneux, 1918

In their push towards the key town of Amiens and then the English Channel, in April 1918 the Germans recaptured the village of Villers-Bretonneux, an important target from where they could shell Amiens. Within a day, British and Australian troops counterattacked, drove the Germans out of Villers-Bretonneux and secured the surrounding countryside.

At this late stage in the war, Australian and New Zealand troops were separated. The Australians were grouped into a single corps numbering 117 000 men, and in May 1918 General Sir John Monash was appointed commander of the Australian forces.

Musée Franco-Australien de Villers Bretonneux

Monash, born and educated in Victoria, was an outstanding commander. He had fought at Gallipoli and took a major role in planning the final offensive, which broke the German line in 1918 and ended the war. Respected by his fellow officers as well as by the men in the field, Monash gave intelligent and effective leadership at a time when it was desperately needed.

Australian War Memorial [ART02986]

Lieutenant General Sir John Monash (1865–1931) was appointed commander of Australian forces in Europe in 1918.

John Monash and the Battle of Hamel, July 1918

In April 1918, during their Spring Offensive, the Germans had captured the village of Hamel. The task of recapturing this key military location was given to the Australian troops, now under the command of Sir John Monash.

The importance of the battle for Hamel, apart from its military value, was that it was a classic example of how a battle of this type – the capture of a fortified location – should be conducted. Monash made careful plans, for he was not prepared to subject his men to the old strategy of simply advancing on an enemy position and the heavy losses that resulted. Tanks were now being used on the Western Front, and Monash planned an attack involving infantry soldiers who would be supported by 60 tanks. To avoid confusion, the tanks had coloured markings to match the colour code of the Australian battalion they were supporting. He also intended to use the concept of the 'creeping barrage', which meant that **artillery** shells were carefully fired in front of the men as they advanced on the enemy. He planned to attack in the early dawn again to protect his troops from full daylight exposure. To

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complete his planning, planes would be used to bomb enemy positions in Hamel, to report on enemy positions and even to parachute ammunition and supplies to the advancing troops. The noise of the planes was also used to block out the sound of the advancing tanks.

Since Monash had some American troops under his command, he selected 4 July 1918 (American Independence Day) as the date for the attack. The attack began at 3 a.m. and Monash planned that the entire operation would take 90 minutes. In the event, it took just 93 minutes and the stronghold of Hamel was taken. Eight hundred Australians and more than 2000 Germans were killed in the battle.

Australian War Memorial [E02864]

One of the tanks used in the battle for Hamel is seen in the main street of the village after the Australian attack which captured the position from the Germans in July 1918.

Monash's planning won well-deserved praise, for he and his planners had defined the strategy for attacking entrenched enemy positions. Other battles of 1918 used similar tactics. The French prime minister, Georges Clemenceau, who visited the Australian forces on the front line, remarked, 'When the Australians came to France, the French people expected a great deal of you … We knew that you would fight a real fight, but we did not know that from the very beginning you would astonish the whole continent'.

Sir John Monash

The armistice, 11 November 1918

Throughout August and September 1918 the Australians were engaged in their final battles of the war. Finally, with British and other allied troops, they broke through the Hindenburg Line at Bellicourt on 29 September 1918. With this great achievement the Australian campaigns on the Western Front ended. The cost, however, was heavy. In 1918 alone, Australia lost over 15 000 men.

In November 1918, amid defeat on the front and revolution and starvation at home, the Germans negotiated an end to the war. An armistice was signed in the railway car of the French commander, Marshal Foch, in the forest of Compiègne at dawn on 11 November 1918, to come into effect at 11 a.m. At that time – the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month – the guns fell silent. The war was over.

Australian War Memorial [E01233]

The road through Chateau Wood near Ypres, Belgium, in November 1917

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain the meaning of the following terms.
   (a) war of attrition
   (b) stalemate
   (c) armistice

2 What was the Western Front?

3 Draw a sketch map of the area where most of the fighting took place along the Western Front. On this map mark (in different colours):
   (a) the front line before the German Spring Offensive of 1918
   (b) the front line at the time of the German surrender in November 1918.

4 'One feels on a battlefield such as this that one can never survive, or if the body lives the brain must go forever. For the horrors one sees and the never-ending shock of the shells is more than can be borne. Hell must be a home to it!'

Letters of Lt. J A Raws (1917), Australian War Memorial Ref: 2DRL/0481

   (a) Explain the main point Lieutenant Raws is making in his letter.
   (b) Based on your reading and research, prepare a list of some of the 'horrors' to which Lieutenant Raws refers.
   (c) Based on research, prepare an extended paragraph on one of the following:
   - 'shell shock'
   - the medical support for Australian soldiers on the Western front.

5 Australian soldiers were involved in many battles on the Western Front between 1916 and 1918. Here are three of them:
   - Fromelles, July 1916
   - Villers-Bretonneux, April 1918
   - Hamel, July 1918

   Select *one* of these (or another of your own choosing) and prepare a research-based multimedia presentation in which you explain:
   - the aim of the battle
   - the troops involved
   - the nature of the combat
   - the outcome of the battle.

   Conclude your presentation by finding primary sources that add to our knowledge of this particular conflict on the Western Front.

Australian War Memorial [H00047]

Henry Dalziel wearing the Victoria Cross he won for his heroism in the battle for Hamel in July 1918. With him is Sister Elizabeth Mosey of the Australian Army Nursing Service, who was awarded the Royal Red Cross medal.

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WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF WORLD WAR I ON THE AUSTRALIAN HOME FRONT, 1914–18?

3.4

Australia had been a nation for only 14 years when World War I broke out, and the terrible experience of war had a massive impact on the political, social and economic life of the Australian people. It was, in every sense, the first great test of nationhood.

Australia had a population of just under five million people when World War I began in 1914. By the time the war ended, over 416 000 men had enlisted for service, all of them volunteers. More than 333 000 men had served overseas, 60 000 were killed and 150 000 were wounded. The horror of it all became apparent only much later. In proportion to the number of troops in the field, Australia suffered a casualty rate (killed, wounded or captured) of 65 per cent, the highest casualty rate of any Allied force in the war.

Life in Australia during the war

When the war began, the government passed the *War Precautions Act 1914*, which gave it wide powers over the Australian people for the duration of the conflict. **Censorship** was introduced, in an attempt not only to stop information from reaching the enemy but also to control those Australians who weakened morale and the war effort by speaking out against the war. It became an offence to discourage men from enlisting. There was also a strong hostility towards Germans who lived in Australia. Workers in some industries threatened to strike unless German workers were removed. It was illegal to communicate or publish in the German language, and Germans who were not Australian citizens were declared to be enemy aliens and were detained in special camps. German music was banned, German Lutheran schools were closed or restricted and German foods were renamed, as were places that had German names.

Recruitment posters

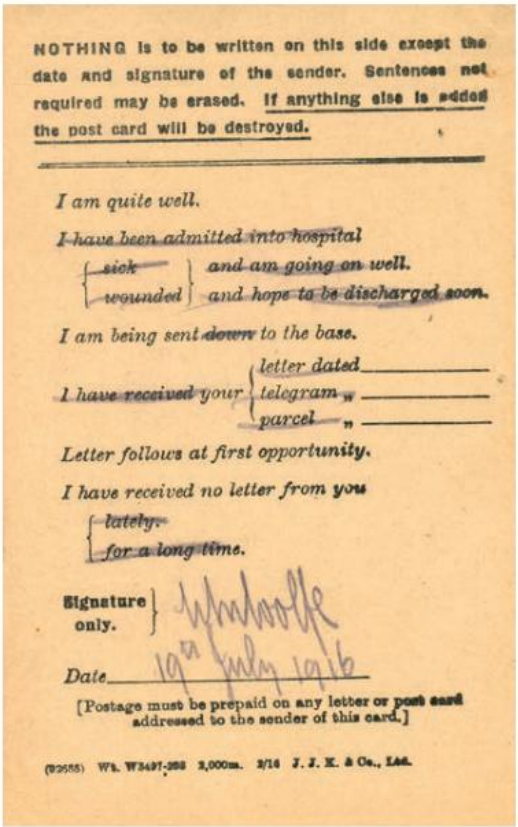
Hardship and division

The war caused increasing hardship in Australia. Although there was never a shortage of food, the war disrupted normal life and there was a need to make sacrifices.

The cost of living increased by 45 per cent, while the basic wage increased by only twelve shillings ($1.20). The cost of basic commodities such as bread, milk, meat and vegetables increased, new taxes were introduced, and unemployment grew as Australia's trade with overseas countries fell away.

Apart from what they read in newspaper reports, which were censored, Australians actually knew very little about the battlefronts. Letters from the soldiers, again censored, gave comfort to know that they were still alive, but little else. Families at home lived with the dread that at any time a telegram could arrive to announce the death or wounding of a family member in the war zone.

The war years increased the divisions in Australian society. The enthusiasm that greeted the outbreak of war began to decline as the conflict dragged into its second year. The high cost of life at Gallipoli,



NOTHING is to be written on this side except the date and signature of the sender. Sentences not required may be erased. If anything else is added the post card will be destroyed.

I am quite well.

I have been admitted into hospital { sick / wounded } and am going on well. and hope to be discharged soon.

I am being sent down to the base.

I have received your { letter dated _____ / telegram " _____ / parcel " _____

Letter follows at first opportunity.

I have received no letter from you { lately. / for a long time.

Signature only. _____

Date 19th July 1916

[Postage must be prepaid on any letter or post card addressed to the sender of this card.]

(29555) Wt. W3497-253 2,000m. 2/16 J. J. K. & Co., Ltd.

Alamy/Amoret Tanner

A field service postcard of the type used by Australian soldiers in World War I. These cards conveyed very little detail to their families back home.

ISBN 9780170347266

the news of suffering and hardship, the apparent inability to break the enemy on the Western Front, as well as the restrictions at home, destroyed the idealised vision many people had of the conflict.

It was working-class Australians who carried the greatest burden during the war. Despite government attempts to promote the war effort with posters and appeals to patriotism, many working-class Australians came to believe that they were being exploited by the capitalist system. In 1916 and 1917 thousands of workers were involved in strikes in the wool and coal industries and on the waterfront. All were seeking better wages and the 44-hour week. There was also a growing belief that the sacrifice the war demanded was not being spread across all sections of the community. Since war service was voluntary, many able-bodied young men were not in uniform and got about their lives as if the war did not exist, and this added to the sense of inequality and social divisions.

William Morris Hughes

In October 1915 Andrew Fisher resigned as prime minister, to be succeeded by William Morris 'Billy' Hughes. Born in London in 1864, Billy Hughes had migrated to Australia in 1894. Described by one observer as 'all ears and crinkles', Hughes was an energetic, ambitious and capable politician. Though he was small in stature and partly deaf, his restless, driving personality, his inflexibility and his sheer will to prevail make him one of Australia's most interesting and controversial prime ministers. He provided determined war leadership at a time when it was badly needed.

courtesy of National Library of Australia

Prime Minister Billy Hughes with Australian soldiers in London in 1918. Always popular among the troops, Hughes was nicknamed 'the Little Digger'.

The conscription issue

The issue that really divided Australian society during World War I was conscription. Hughes was totally committed to the war effort, and in December 1915 he announced that Australia needed 50 000 new troops to form new units of the AIF and a further 16 500 men a month. Volunteer enlistments had been falling since July 1915, when the full reality of war had become apparent to many Australians. Despite a vigorous recruiting campaign carried out by the government, enlistments continued to fall.

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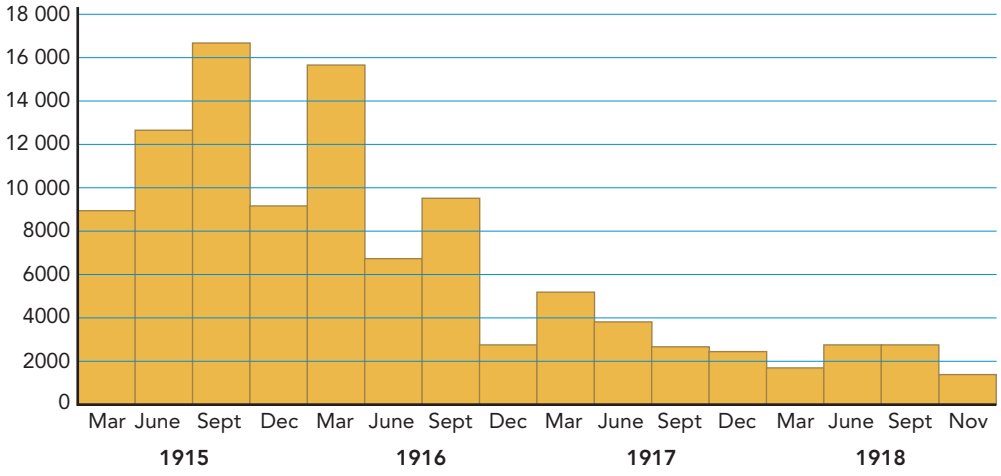
FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Enlistments in the First AIF, 1915–18



A recruitment poster of 1916

source B

1 How do you explain the sudden increase in enlistments in 1915 and again early in 1916?

2 What reasons could you suggest that might have contributed to the progressive fall in voluntary enlistments after 1916?

3 If you were living in Australia during World War I, would the data in the enlistment graph, Source A, persuade you to vote for conscription?

4 The intended audience for the poster, Source B, was:

- **A** Australian men who could fight but were still at home
- **B** the Australian public, to support the war
- **C** the Australian government, to get more weapons and supplies
- **D** young Australians reading about the deeds of the soldiers.

5 Explain how the artist achieved the intended effect in this poster.

Harry Weston, 'We took the hill', 1915, lithograph, 91.2 × 59 cm

Australian War Memorial [ART00140]

ISBN 9780170347266

1916: The call to introduce conscription

Conscription referenda

In July 1916, after his return from a visit to England and the battlefront in France, Hughes was convinced that Australia had no alternative but to introduce conscription for military service overseas. The need to raise more troops was made even more urgent by the very heavy Australian casualties suffered in the fighting against the Germans on the Western Front. In the Battle of the Somme in July 1916, Australia suffered 27 000 casualties in the first five weeks.

The Labor Party, of which Hughes was now the leader, had always opposed compulsory military service outside Australia. However, regardless of the deep divisions within his own party, Hughes went ahead with his efforts to introduce conscription of all men aged from 18 to 40 years.

Hughes did not have the numbers to have the measure passed in parliament, so he decided to appeal directly to the people in a referendum. In October 1916, Australians would be asked to vote 'YES' or 'NO' to the following question:

Are you in favour of the government having in this grave emergency, the same compulsory powers over citizens in regard to requiring their military service, for the term of this war, outside the Commonwealth, as it now has in regard to military service within the Commonwealth?

If the people gave a YES vote, parliament – and in particular the Labor-dominated Senate – would be more inclined to pass the legislation. Hughes campaigned vigorously in favour of conscription.

FROM THE SOURCE

Mr Hughes' call for Conscription, 1916

Our great enemy Germany is as yet undefeated, her mighty military power yet unbroken. Victory can only be achieved by a tremendous effort on the part of our allies. And that effort must be made NOW … This is a war to the death, a fight to the finish. The future of Australia and the hopes of Australian democracy hang upon victory. Britain is calling up more men. New Zealand is calling up more men. Canada is calling up more men. Upon us rests the same burden, we too must make the same sacrifice …

What we are expected to do in this great hour has been stated in precise terms. We are to keep our five divisions up to their full strength. For September of this year 32 500 men are required and for each subsequent month 16 500 men to maintain our five divisions in the field …

Not only to ourselves do we owe the duty of supreme endeavour in the present crisis in the world's affairs. We owe it to our great armies who daily rush into the very jaws of death never doubting that the Australian people will stand behind them to the end. We owe it to our heroic dead who have already offered up their lives on the altar of their country.

Australian Worker, 21 September 1916

1 **Why, according to William Morris Hughes, was conscription necessary after 1915?**

2 **How many men did the Australian army need each month?**

3 **What arguments does Hughes use to support the case for conscription?**

4 **Imagine you have read this speech in the *Australian Worker* in 1916. Prepare a letter to the editor of this newspaper in which you offer your point of view on the conscription issue.**

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The conscription referendum of 1916 generated bitter feelings across the country. The major groups supporting conscription were:

- the Liberal opposition in the House of Representatives and the Senate
- the national press, including *The Bulletin*
- the Anglican Church
- the Returned Soldiers' Associations
- the Employers Federation
- the Chambers of Commerce.

Opposed to the idea of conscription were:

- most of Hughes' own Labor Party
- the majority of Labor voters
- most trade unions
- influential leaders of the Roman Catholic Church.

Opposition to conscription

The opponents of conscription put forward many arguments against the idea of forcing men to join the army. There were emotional pleas about the moral issues of forcing men to kill, while others questioned whether conscription would in fact make a difference in the war. The Labor Party saw conscription as an attack on the working class, since it was argued that the workers, more than any other group in society, would be conscripted. The trade unions opposed conscription because they saw it as a threat to the hard-won gains that the working class had made since the 1890s. Finally, there were arguments about the right of government to have such great power over their citizens when the nation, so far from the war, faced no threat of invasion or attack.

Mannix on conscription

The most influential voice against conscription was that of the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Daniel Mannix. Archbishop Mannix had arrived in Australia from Ireland in 1913, and in his long life of 99 years Mannix was never afraid to speak out on political issues. He had a commanding presence and was a gifted speaker. Because of his importance as a church leader, the government was not prepared to censor his comments.

In 1916 Mannix came out firmly against conscription, believing that it would only prolong the war. He believed that the war was a trade war, and he argued that Australia and the working class, many of whom were Roman Catholics, had done enough for the British war effort. 'Australia has done her share and more than her share in this war', he told an audience in October 1916. He also expressed the feelings of many Irish Australians who had been angered by the British suppression of the **Easter Uprising** in Dublin in 1916 and by the later execution of the Irish leaders of this uprising.

Australian War Memorial [P0138.001]

Archbishop Daniel Mannix (1864–1963) was one of the leading opponents of the introduction of conscription during World War I.

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A divided nation

The Australian community appeared equally divided on the issue of conscription, and emotive and impassioned appeals for the YES vote and the NO vote often confused rather than convinced. Voting was compulsory and the referendum took place on 28 October 1916. By a very narrow margin the Australian people voted against conscription.

The result of the first conscription referendum, October 1916

Results of the first conscription referendum, October 1916

	YES	NO	RESULT
New South Wales	356 805	474 544	NO
Victoria	353 930	328 216	YES
Queensland	144 200	158 051	NO
South Australia	87 924	119 236	NO
Western Australia	94 069	40 884	YES
Tasmania	48 493	37 833	NO
TOTAL	**1 087 557 (49%)**	**1 160 033 (51%)**	**NO**

Results of the second conscription referendum, December 1917

	YES	NO	RESULT
New South Wales	342 256	487 774	NO
Victoria	329 772	332 490	NO
Queensland	132 771	168 875	NO
South Australia	86 663	106 364	NO
Western Australia	84 116	46 522	YES
Tasmania	38 881	38 502	YES
TOTAL	**1 015 159 (46%)**	**1 181 747 (54%)**	**NO**

1 Which two states changed their position on conscription between the 1916 vote and the 1917 vote?

2 Which state was most in favour of the introduction of conscription?

3 Which state was least in favour of the introduction of conscription?

One of the results of the failure of the 1916 conscription referendum was a split in the Labor Party. In November 1916 the party passed a vote of no confidence in Billy Hughes because of his pro-conscription policy. Hughes and 24 of his followers were then expelled from the party.

Hughes' breakaway group joined with the opposition Liberal Party and formed a new political party – the Nationalist Party. In the general election that followed in May 1917, the new party won a large majority and Hughes was able to remain as Australia's wartime prime minister.

In 1917 Hughes decided to hold another referendum on the issue of conscription. Once again bitter debates divided the nation, and again Archbishop Mannix campaigned against conscription. Voting for the second referendum took place in December 1917. The vote was again negative: 1 181 747 were opposed and 1 015 159 were in favour. Hughes had lost, and conscription for overseas service in World War I was never introduced.

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FROM THE SOURCE

1 Is this poster, Source A, in support of conscription or opposed to it?

2 What, according to this poster in Source A, are the 'vital facts'?

3 A person reading this poster in 1916 could come to the conclusion that:

- **A** the allies were losing the war
- **B** if Germany won the war, Australia would be in danger
- **C** people opposed to conscription were helping the Germans to win
- **D** Australia's safety lay in the fact that the war was far away.

4 Explain why, from the perspective of a person in 1916, the message of the poster, Source A, could be believed?

5 What arguments could you advance, from the perspective of a person today, that the message of the poster is seriously flawed?

source A

WARNING!

The ANTI'S have commenced to cloud the issue. They are side-tracking the question. The VITAL FACTS to remember are:—

AUSTRALIA is FIGHTING FOR HER EXISTENCE!

Germany conquered and crushed Belgium in three weeks. Belgium had a population of **Nine Million** to defend a small tract of country.

Australia has only **Five Million** to defend a huge Continent. If Germany defeats the Allies

AUSTRALIA IS DOOMED!

Keep the war at a distance by reinforcing the men who are holding the enemy at bay!

VOTE YES FOR VICTORY.

No. 12

Authorised by the Reinforcements Referendum Council. Claude McKay, Publicity Secretary, 398 Collins Street, Melbourne.

Anderson, Gowan & De Rieu Pty. Ltd., Melb.

Australian War Memorial [RC00310]

A conscription poster of 1916

source B

Copyright: HC & A Glad, courtesy of National Library of Australia

'My mate Bill', a cartoon by Norman Lindsay from *The Bulletin*, 1917

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source C

From *The Bulletin*, 1917

The men who went and the men who won't

Private William James, Australian solider, sprung out of a ditch in France the other morning with a bayonet in one hand and a bomb in the other – and disappeared into a reek of mud and smoke and flame.

He had no personal quarrel with whoever it was that killed him, but he had a very abrupt difference of opinion with the country which made war on this Australia of his; and because William James had believed that it was the only country on earth worth living in, it was also worth fighting for; he had gone, a volunteer, to meet the enemy while those of his countrymen who remained at home said he had done a fine thing. Well William struck a blow for human freedom and Australian liberty according to schedule, and so doing died.

Is that the end of it? Do our obligations to William end with his death? He did not finish the job: the enemy stands unbroken before his grave.

The Bulletin, 5 November 1917

1 **Explain why *The Bulletin* (Source C) makes the point that William James was a volunteer.**

2 **From the evidence in the extract and the cartoon (Sources B and C), both from *The Bulletin*, what conclusions can you draw about the attitude taken by *The Bulletin* towards the war effort and towards the issue of conscription?**

3 **Why would you expect this attitude to be taken by *The Bulletin*?**

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who became prime minister of Australia in October 1915?
2 When did soldiers of the First AIF begin to arrive on the Western Front?
3 Which is the odd one out and why: Pozières, Villers-Bretonneux, Hamel, Gallipoli, Messines Ridge?
4 How many troops did the Australian Government believe were needed each month to keep up the war effort from 1915?
5 Who led the campaign against conscription in 1916 and 1917?
6 What groups in Australian society were opposed to conscription?
7 What were the results of the two referendums on conscription in 1916 and 1917?
8 What impact did the conscription issue have on the Australian Labor Party?

Women and World War I

Since the 1890s Australian women had been successful in winning rights that were still denied to women in many other countries. Although it had been a slow process, Australia and New Zealand had been at the forefront of advancing the rights of women. During the war the Australian government, unlike the British government, failed to take full advantage of the ability and determination of many women who wanted a more active role in the war effort.

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Women on active service

State Library of Victoria [0_1130876]

Two Australian nurses, members of the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service, with naval officers on board a ship en route to Egypt in 1915

Except for nurses, Australian women were not permitted to serve in the military forces during World War I. During the war over 2500 nurses served overseas in the Australian Army Medical Services. They provided medical help to wounded and incapacitated soldiers at Gallipoli and later on the Western Front. Most of the hospital clearing stations were very close to the front line. Nurses and male medical staff (female doctors were not allowed to serve overseas) were exposed to shelling and aerial bombs and a number lost their lives in war service.

The many women who wanted to serve and to take a more active role in the war were discouraged and, in some cases, derided. In 1916 a group of women determined to do more for the war effort formed the Australian Women's Service Corps (AWSC). Its aim was to train women to take up roles they had never done before and so to release able-bodied men for military service. Despite the AWSC's best efforts, the military authorities politely ignored it. Another organisation, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps, was also largely ignored. Australian women had little success in persuading the government to change traditional views on the role of women. War was men's business, and the role of women, it was said, was to 'wait and weep'.

Women and World War I

Women and the home front

Unlike the situation in Britain, where women were actively engaged in war productions, including munitions factories, very few Australian women were permitted to work in war-related industry. Despite the opposition from trade unions and resistance from government, many young women did find work in areas that had traditionally been the domain of men – in transport, factories, banks and a range of government jobs. Many took paid work for the first time, although their pay rates remained 54 per cent below those of males. However, it was always understood that men would reclaim the priority to work when the war was over. During the war many women were also forced to accept the physical and financial burden of supporting their family.

Women and the war

For many women, used to traditional female occupations or home-based duties, employment during the war years was a liberating experience and a step forward on the road to equal rights for all women.

For the majority of women, particularly older and middle-class women, the war offered an opportunity to serve the British Empire through charity work and fundraising. The Australian Red Cross was founded in 1914, and soon there were branches in every state. It was an organisation of mainly middle-class women and it was most active in the more prosperous suburbs of the capital cities. Working-class women, with less free time and less income, were not prominent in the Red Cross.

As well as the Red Cross, thousands of women worked for the Australian Comforts Fund (established in 1916). This organisation raised money for the dispatch of 'comfort boxes' to the soldiers on the front. These packs usually contained knitted socks and scarves, newspapers, preserved foods, hair oil, tobacco, and often unusual items, such as pyjamas, that were of less use to soldiers in the trenches.

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'One for the boys'

Knitting and sewing are personal activities associated with love and concern. Undoubtedly many of the knitters in wartime Australia may have been similarly moved. Denied the opportunity to contribute directly to the nation's war work, women discovered that in knitting 'one for the boys' they found a closer identification with his life and thus with the nation's sacrifice. Many thousands of them slipped notes and messages of encouragement into the socks they knitted, reminding the men of their high esteem amongst the women of Australia.

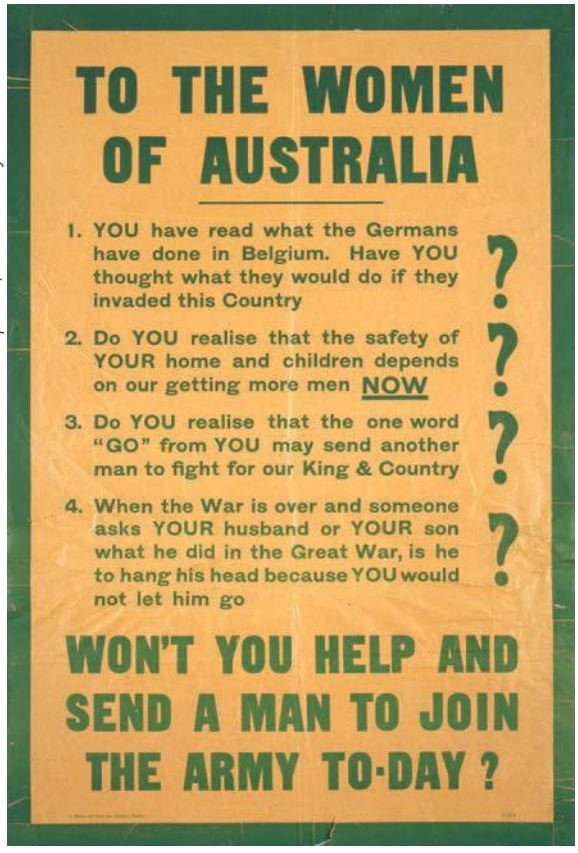
M. McKernan, *The Australian People and the Great War*, William Collins, Sydney, 1980, p. 74

Motherhood and sacrifice

Throughout the war there were constant appeals to women to support the war effort and encourage men to enlist. Posters and other printed material of the time deliberately used images of women to encourage men to answer the call.

source A

FROM THE SOURCE



From collection of Queensland and Tasmanian World War I Recruitment posters, National Library of Australia

1 Explain the aim of this poster (Source A).

2 Why is this poster addressed specifically to women?

3 Prepare your own poster in which you put forward arguments against each of the four points made in this poster.

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4 What does the poster in Source B suggest happened to the women and children of France and Belgium?

5 How does it convey this message?

6 How does the author deliberately portray the woman in the poster, and why?

7 What is the main aim of the poster in Source B? Do you think it would have been effective?

8 Why are women being used in this poster to 'send a man to fight'?

9 What suggestion is being made by the slogan on the poster: 'Send a man to-day to fight for you'?

10 A historian could conclude from this poster that:

- **A** the Germans would treat women and children of Australia worse than they treated women and children of Belgium
- **B** the women of Queensland are in the greatest danger
- **C** the poster plays on emotions rather than conveying accurate historical facts
- **D** the enemy deliberately attacked women and children.

11 The response this poster was trying to encourage from the Australian people was:

- **A** fear
- **B** patriotism
- **C** unity
- **D** commitment

source B

Australian War Memorial [ART05632]

Women and conscription

The image of the self-sacrificing mother was a constant theme and was used in particular to support the conscription case. The equally powerful image of the mother protective of her children was used for the case against conscription.

These contrasting images reflected the true division of women on the issue of conscription. Some women supported the pacifist cause and campaigned against the war and against the introduction of conscription. Vida Goldstein, who had been one of the leading figures demanding the vote for women a decade earlier, founded the Australian Women's Peace Army, a small but determined group of women who were against Australia's involvement in the war. Their slogan, 'I didn't raise my son to be a soldier', used the words of a popular antiwar song of the time, and one of their leading figures was Adela Pankhurst, the daughter of Emmeline Pankhurst, who had been one of the leaders in the fight for women's rights in Britain before the war. Many working-class women also began to question the war effort and the hardship and suffering it inflicted on their daily lives.

Vida Goldstein

Women and conscription

ISBN 9780170347266

source A

FROM THE SOURCE

Australian Labor Party, Anti-Conscription Campaign Committee, 'Vote no mum, they'll take Dad next', Vote No, 1917, National Library of Australia

source B

Australian War Memorial

1 Which of these two posters supported conscription and which one opposed it?

2 What emotions do you think these posters were intended to focus on?

3 Compare and contrast the two sets of images of mother and son. What effect is the author of this poster trying to achieve?

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'I didn't raise my son to be a soldier'

Chorus and verse of 'I didn't raise my son to be a soldier', a popular antiwar song of the Women's Peace Army in 1916

I didn't raise my son to be a soldier,
I brought him up to be my pride and joy.
Who dares to put a rifle on his shoulder,
To kill some other mother's darling boy?

The nations ought to arbitrate [solve] their quarrels,
It's time to put the sword and gun away.
There'd be no war today,
If mothers all would say,
'I didn't raise my son to be a soldier'.

In support of the empire and the war effort was the Australian Women's National League, which helped to organise patriotic pageants and public rallies. Some of its members were also prepared to send a white feather (a wartime symbol of cowardice) in the mail to able-bodied men who had not enlisted. Other women found the antiwar activities of people such as Adela Pankhurst totally unacceptable and almost treasonable. Millions of Australian women supported the war and many experienced great anxiety and sadness because of the war.

FROM THE SOURCE

A letter to *The Argus*, 20 July 1917

Sir,

Miss Pankhurst and others like her, are not needed here, and in fact are a dangerous nuisance, I myself have heard her make statements which at one time in our Empire's history would have marked her down as a traitor, and caused her immediate expulsion if not imprisonment.

I have lost two sons in the service of their country, and my other remaining one is about to enlist. In common with others I feel it is a gross injustice that we the fathers and mothers, who are making sacrifice daily for love and duty to the Empire should be subjected to these insults … Freedom of speech is all very well, but at times like this it surely has its limits.

Yours etc.

Patriot

1 **Why is the author of the letter to *The Argus* unhappy with women who urge opposition to the war effort?**

2 **Imagine you are from the family of the person who wrote this letter. Putting yourself in the position of this family and what it has experienced, and in the context of the times, prepare a letter to Miss Pankhurst in which you explain *either* why you totally oppose her position *or* why you have come to support her position.**

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) censorship
   (b) enemy alien
   (c) white feather

2 During World War I colourful posters on public display (such as 'It is nice in the surf'), as well as cartoons in the newspapers, were a very effective way to convey feelings and emotions about the war.

   Imagine you have the responsibility of preparing a poster for display around the country during World War I.

   Select the issue you wish to focus on as well as the message you wish to deliver. Create a poster with your message.

3 Prepare a research essay or multimedia presentation on *one* of the following topics:
   (a) How and why did the conscription issue in 1916–17 divide Australian society?
   (b) Describe the experiences of women in Australia during World War I.

4 Imagine that you have discovered in the National Archives a file of old letters between Archbishop Mannix and the prime minister, William Morris Hughes, all dated 1916. Based on your understanding of the points of view of these two men on conscription, rewrite Archbishop Mannix's letter to William Morris Hughes and then William Morris Hughes' letter in reply to Archbishop Mannix.

5 This photograph, taken at Sydney's Central Railway Station, appeared in the *Sydney Mail* in 1916. As a reporter for the newspaper, prepare a brief story that would accompany the photo in the newspaper. Your story should be based on historical fact. You may wish to consider one of the following themes:
   - where the wounded soldier has been
   - where the soldiers on the train are going
   - why the soldiers enlisted
   - how this photo could be used to promote the war effort
   - the mateship theme of the Anzac legend.

6 In a short essay, explain how and why the role of women in Australian society began to change during World War I.

Create conscription posters

Empathy tasks

Poster by DH Souter, National Library of Australia

'It is nice in the surf'

Australian War Memorial [AWMH11578]

A wounded soldier farewells his mates at Central Station, Sydney, 1916.

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HOW HAS AUSTRALIA COMMEMORATED THE EXPERIENCE OF WAR?

3.5

The Anzac legend

From the tragic events on the Gallipoli peninsula and the battles of the Western Front, there emerged the Anzac legend, which has become an important part of Australian history. A legend is a belief or story or ideal that may not be completely true but is accepted and passed on to each new generation. King Arthur and Camelot may or may not have existed, but the legend of Arthur and his high ideals survived because it inspires. So it is with the Anzacs.

The reason that the Anzac legend emerged was that Australians needed something positive out of the dreadful experience of war. For a young and small nation such as Australia, the loss of almost 60 000 men was a terrible price to pay. Although these young men had lost their lives, the Australian people needed them to live on in memory and reputation. The legend that began with Gallipoli overlooked the fact that the Gallipoli campaign had ended in defeat. What was important was how these men behaved and how they fought at Gallipoli, in Europe and in other places to achieve the difficult goals and objectives that had been set for them.

The Anzac legend had two main elements:

- World War I was the first great test of Australia's nationhood, its 'baptism of fire', and Australia proved its nationhood by the deeds of its soldiers in the war. Australia as a new nation came of age through the terrible experience of war. As a nation we took our place in the world.
- In the experience of war, the qualities that make up the true Australian spirit were also revealed and Australians came to see themselves in a particular way. It was believed that the soldiers of the war displayed qualities that set them apart and defined them as Australians. Some believed that they were the same qualities that the pioneers of earlier days had displayed – qualities that helped them to create a nation in the first place. These qualities were easy to identify: bravery; a defiant disregard for hardship; a dislike of authority; humour, especially larrikin humour; resourcefulness; mateship and a belief in equality; endurance and never giving up; a belief in democracy and a fair go for all.

George Lambert

These qualities, born from the struggle in the bush and from the days of the diggers on the goldfields, had been reinforced and redefined by the struggle of battle and had become the characteristics of a true Australian.

Creating the legend

The Anzac legend began almost immediately after the landing in 1915. The only way the Australian people got to know about the campaign (apart from censored letters from the soldiers themselves) was through the newspapers. The experienced English war correspondent Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett was at Gallipoli, and his dispatches gave Australians at home the first news of how their countrymen had performed in battle. He was full of praise for the heroism of the soldiers. Ashmead-Bartlett's reporting captured the nation's imagination and started the legend of the Anzacs. The following year he went on a lecture tour around Australia and spoke to large audiences. That same year the first Anzac Day services were held in the country.

Gallipoli may have been a military failure, with the loss of much life for little gain, but it was seen as an important turning point in Australian history. On the first Anzac Day celebration, held in 1916, Prime Minister William Morris Hughes also added to the development of the Anzac legend.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

An early newspaper account of the landing at Gallipoli

There was no sign of nerves or excitement … Not waiting for orders or for the boats to reach the beach, but, springing out into the sea, they waded ashore, and, forming some sort of rough line, rushed straight on the flashes of the enemy's rifles … the Turks in the first trench were either bayoneted or they ran away …

Then this race of athletes proceeded to scale the cliffs without responding to the enemy's fire … but then [their] blood was up, they rushed northward and eastward searching for fresh enemies to bayonet … I have never seen anything like the wounded Australians before … they were happy because they knew that they had been tried for the first time and not found wanting … There has been no finer feat in this war than this sudden landing in the dark … These raw colonial troops proved worthy.

Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, dispatch, the *Mercury*, Hobart, 8 May 1915

source B

An assessment of the Anzacs

The Australians and New Zealanders are very different in their customs and habits to their British comrades. They are not so much an army, as an independent community who have come together for a certain job and who have formed their own code of laws to ensure its being carried out. An officer derives little authority over them from the mere fact of holding a commission. They only judge of men by their approved merit in the field, and not by the number of stars and crowns a man brings with him into camp.

Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, *Some of my experiences in the Great War*, G. Newnes, London, 1918

source C

State Library of NSW [a8162001]

Heroes of the Dardanelles, a souvenir of April 25th, 1915, a drawing by Charles Henry Hunt. This drawing, and others like it, were on sale and available to the Australian public in 1915.

1 **What qualities of the Australian troops are revealed in the dispatch, Source A, by Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett?**

2 **Why was it important for Australians to know that 'these raw colonial troops proved worthy'?**

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3 Do you think the fact that this was written by an experienced English war correspondent was important?

4 What particular Australian characteristic is defined by Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett in Source B?

5 A historian would find this account in Source A of value because the author:

- **A** was an experienced war correspondent
- **B** was an eyewitness to the events
- **C** provided a good level of detail of the event
- **D** was British, not Australian.

6 Explain why images such as the one in Source C were popular and how such images contributed to the development of the Anzac legend.

FROM THE SOURCE

William Morris Hughes in 1919

The imperishable deeds of Australia's glorious soldiers have carved for themselves a deep niche in the topmost towers of the Temple of the Immortals. The story of their valour will live throughout the ages, and future generations of Australians will speak of them as we do of all the heroic figures of antiquity … Their valour has covered Australia with a lustre that shines throughout the world so that her name, which but yesterday was almost unknown, is now a household word in the mouths of all the peoples of the earth.

The war has made of Australia – a young community without traditions – a nation, acutely and proudly conscious of its nationality, its record in this war, and the great future which awaits it. Upon that day some four years gone, when in the grey of early dawn the Australian soldier leapt upon an unknown shore and in the face of a murderous fire scaled the heights of Gaba Tepe – a feat of arms almost unparalleled in the history of war – the young Australian Commonwealth put on the toga* of manhood, and at one stride entered on a footing of equality the family of free nations of the earth.

* a garment worn by men in ancient Rome

William Morris Hughes in the Foreword to Patrick MacGill, *The Diggers: The Australians in France*, Herbert Jenkins, 1919

Apart from demonstrating the heroism of Australian troops, what, according to Hughes, was the other great achievement of the soldiers of World War I?

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Australian War Memorial [A05389]

Charles Edwin Woodrow Bean (1879–1968), a former teacher and journalist who became the official war correspondent with the AIF. He landed at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and later followed the Australian troops to the Western Front. This photo of C. E. W. Bean in about 1935 shows him at his desk researching operational files for his history of the war.

Another observer at Gallipoli was Charles Bean (1879–1968), the official Australian war historian. Bean was with the soldiers both at Gallipoli and, later, on the Western Front. He was an intelligent observer and his writings also helped to develop the Anzac legend, in particular through his focus on the qualities of the Australian soldiers. In 1916 he published *The ANZAC Book*, containing stories from men at Gallipoli, which by the end of the year had sold more than 100 000 copies. Bean later edited and wrote part of the 12-volume *Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918* and was involved with the establishment of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

source A

FROM THE SOURCE

The historian C. E. W. Bean on the Anzac spirit

What motive sustained them? At the end of the second or third day of the landing, when they had fought without sleep until the whole world seemed a dream, and they scarcely knew whether it was a world of reality or of delirium – and often, no doubt, it held something of both; when half of each battalion had been annihilated, and there seemed no prospect before any man except that of wounds or death in the most vile surroundings; when the dead lay three deep in the rifle-pits under the blue sky and the place was filled with stench and sickness, and reason had almost vanished – what was it then that carried each man on?

It lay in the mettle [toughness] of the men themselves. To be the sort of man who would give way when his mates were trusting to his firmness; to be the sort of man who would fail when the line, the whole force, and the allied cause required his endurance; to have made it necessary for another unit to do his own unit's work; to live the rest of his life haunted by the knowledge that he had set his hand to a soldier's task and had lacked the grit to carry it through – that was the prospect which these men could not face.

Life was very dear, but life was not worth living unless they could be true to the idea of Australian manhood. Standing upon that alone, when help failed and hope faded, when the end loomed clear in front of them, when the whole world seemed to crumble and the heaven to fall in, they faced its ruin undismayed.

C. E. W. Bean, *The Story of ANZAC: Official History of Australia in the War of 1914–1918*, vol. 2, Australian War Memorial, 1941

1 **Is Source A a primary or a secondary historical source?**

2 **Who was C. E. W. Bean and why are his writings such an important source for those studying this period of Australian history?**

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3 Is there any particular reason why we should take notice of Bean's account of the Gallipoli campaign?

4 How does Bean explain the endurance of the ANZAC soldier?

5 What, according to Bean, were some of the qualities these soldiers displayed?

'A voice from Anzac'

source B

1 The Anzac legend suggested that the soldiers had particular qualities. These included:

- mateship
- courage
- support
- humour.

The pencil drawing done at Gallipoli in 1915 reflects:

A all four of these qualities
B mateship and courage
C mateship and support
D mateship and humour

2 Imagine you were given this drawing by Will Dyson, who was Australia's official war artist. What would you write on the back of it?

Australian War Memorial [ART19662]

A pencil sketch by the artist Will Dyson. Drawing for cartoon: 'Funny thing, Bill – I keep thinking I hear men marching!', brush and ink and pencil heightened with white, 6.32 × 50.2 cm.

A. B. 'Banjo' Paterson, 'We're all Australians now'

source C

Australia takes her pen in hand,
To write a line to you,
To let you fellows understand
How proud we are of you.

From shearing shed and cattle run,
From Broome to Hobson's Bay,
Each native-born Australian son
Stands straighter up today.

The mettle that a race can show,
Is proved with shot and steel,
And now we know what nations know
And feel what nations feel.

And with Australia's flag shall fly
A spray of wattle bough,
To symbolise our unity,
We're all Australians now.

A. B. 'Banjo' Paterson (published as an open letter to the troops, 1915)

1 Explain why Banjo Paterson called his poem 'We're All Australians Now'?

2 What aspect of this poem contributed to the idea of the Anzac legend?

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War and remembrance

Visiting Gallipoli today

The 'Great War for Civilisation', as it was then called, had a massive impact on the lives of the people and the future development of the nation. Something had to be done to honour the sacrifice and to make the death and injury to so many meaningful:

- *Memorials.* Immediately after the war every city and almost every town in Australia erected memorials to the men who fought in World War I. These war memorials still survive and are lovingly preserved across the nation. Some of them are simple, with only a few names of local people who died; others are more elaborate and contain the names of many. In Canberra the Australian War Memorial was built and on its walls are the names of all the men and women who died in World War I and in the wars that followed.

Understanding Anzac Day

- *Anzac Day.* A special day was one way to recall the sacrifice of war, and the first Anzac Day was held in 1916. What was remembered on that first Anzac Day was not the defeat at Gallipoli but the tremendous courage, sacrifice and spirit of the original Anzac troops. Since then, Anzac Day has changed to become a day of remembrance and thanksgiving on which Australia honours all Australians who have served in war down to the present day.
- *Remembrance Day.* Australia also honours its war dead on Remembrance Day, 11 November, the day World War I ended in 1918. At 11 a.m. on this day, many people across the nation stop for a minute of silence, remembering all of Australia's war dead. Many wear a red poppy, a symbol associated with World War I. During the war in Flanders (a part of Belgium) the red Flanders poppy was a common sight. It grew well in disturbed earth, and particularly in areas where battles had been fought. Some saw it as a symbol of the blood of sacrifice coming up from the earth.
- *The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.* In World War I soldiers who were killed were buried close to where they died. Soon after the war Britain and France decided to honour all their war dead by selecting the body of an unknown soldier and reburying him in a place of great honour in his native land. Today a tomb of the unknown soldier lies in Westminster Abbey in London and under the Arc de Triomphe in Paris. In 1993 the Australian government decided to honour our war dead in the same way. One unknown Australian soldier was exhumed, or removed, from his grave in France, and on Armistice Day in 1993 he was reburied in an honoured place in the Australian War Memorial. His importance is that he was 'known only to God' and represents all the Australian dead of war.

WS Commemorating the Anzacs

- *Living remembrance.* Another way to honour the war and the people who served was to take care of those who survived. In 1916 the Returned Services League (RSL) was established and grew to become an important organisation for war veterans. In 1923 another organisation, called Legacy, was set up. Its work was to care for the wives and families of ex-servicemen, a role it continues to carry out. Today the government takes responsibility for helping those who served in any of the wars in which Australia has been involved. The Department of Veterans Affairs provides special assistance by way of pensions, medical support and other benefits to all those who enlisted and served in the armed forces.

Fairfax Syndication/Canberra Times/Marina Neil

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Canberra

Although there are no men still alive who served in World War I, and the numbers of the men and women who served in World War II (1939–45) are quickly declining, Anzac Day has not lost its importance. It has become the true national day for Australia. Each Anzac Day across the nation, dawn services are held at the exact time the first Anzacs landed on the beach at Gallipoli, and later in the day marches attract

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large crowds. In recent years many Australians have gone to Gallipoli itself to take part in services held on the beach and near the graves of the men who died there so long ago.

The ode of remembrance

> They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
> Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
> At the going down of the sun and in the morning,
> We will remember them.

From the poem 'For the fallen' by the British poet Laurence Binyon, written in 1914

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Site study: Visit a war memorial in your school, town or suburb and select the names of three soldiers from World War I. Using the Internet, and by accessing the extensive data records of the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and the National Archives of Australia, find out what you can about these three soldiers. Your research could include:

- their names, occupations and places of birth
- their ages and enlistment dates
- the military units they served in
- what happened to them
- if they were killed in action, in which military battle or engagement, and where
- any other details (including photos or other records) that the Australian War Memorial can provide.

Prepare a multimedia presentation on *one* of these three soldiers who particularly captured your interest. You should also include in the presentation a brief background of the war memorial itself.

Australian War Memorial

National Archives of Australia

Quiz

Crossword

2 Mustafa Kemal Atatürk was one of the Turkish commanders against the ANZAC force at Gallipoli and later the first president of modern Turkey from 1923 to 1938. In 1934 he wrote:

> Those heroes that shed their blood
> And lost their lives … you are now lying in the soil of a friendly country. Therefore, rest in peace.
> There is no difference between the Johnnies
> And the Mehmets to us where they lie side by side here in this country of ours.
> You, the mothers, who sent their sons from far away countries wipe away your tears;
> Your sons are now lying in our bosom and are in peace.
> After having lost their lives on this land they have become our sons as well.

Based on Ataturk's writing, the statue at Gallipoli, and your own research, describe to what degree there is support for the claim that a bond of respect developed between Australian and Turkish troops and that this bond has endured ever since.

Corbis/Demetrio Carrasco/JAI

A Turkish statue showing the situation on the battlefield of the Gallipoli peninsula

3 Prepare an essay on the following question: 'What was the Anzac legend, and why and how did it develop?'

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CHAPTER 4

Australia at war, 1939–45

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- how and why Australia was involved in World War II
- where Australians fought during World War II
- the experiences of Australian soldiers during the war
- the impact of the war on the Australian people
- how and why the government imposed controls over civilian life during the war
- the role of women during World War II
- why the war was a significant event in Australia's international relationships
- the Holocaust and the atomic bomb – a legacy of World War II.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

4.1 Why did World War II break out in 1939?

4.2 Where did Australians fight during World War II?

4.3 What were some of the experiences of Australians as a result of their involvement in the war?

4.4 What was the impact of the war on the Australian home front?

4.5 What was the significance of World War II in Australia's international relationships?

4.6 What was the legacy of World War II?

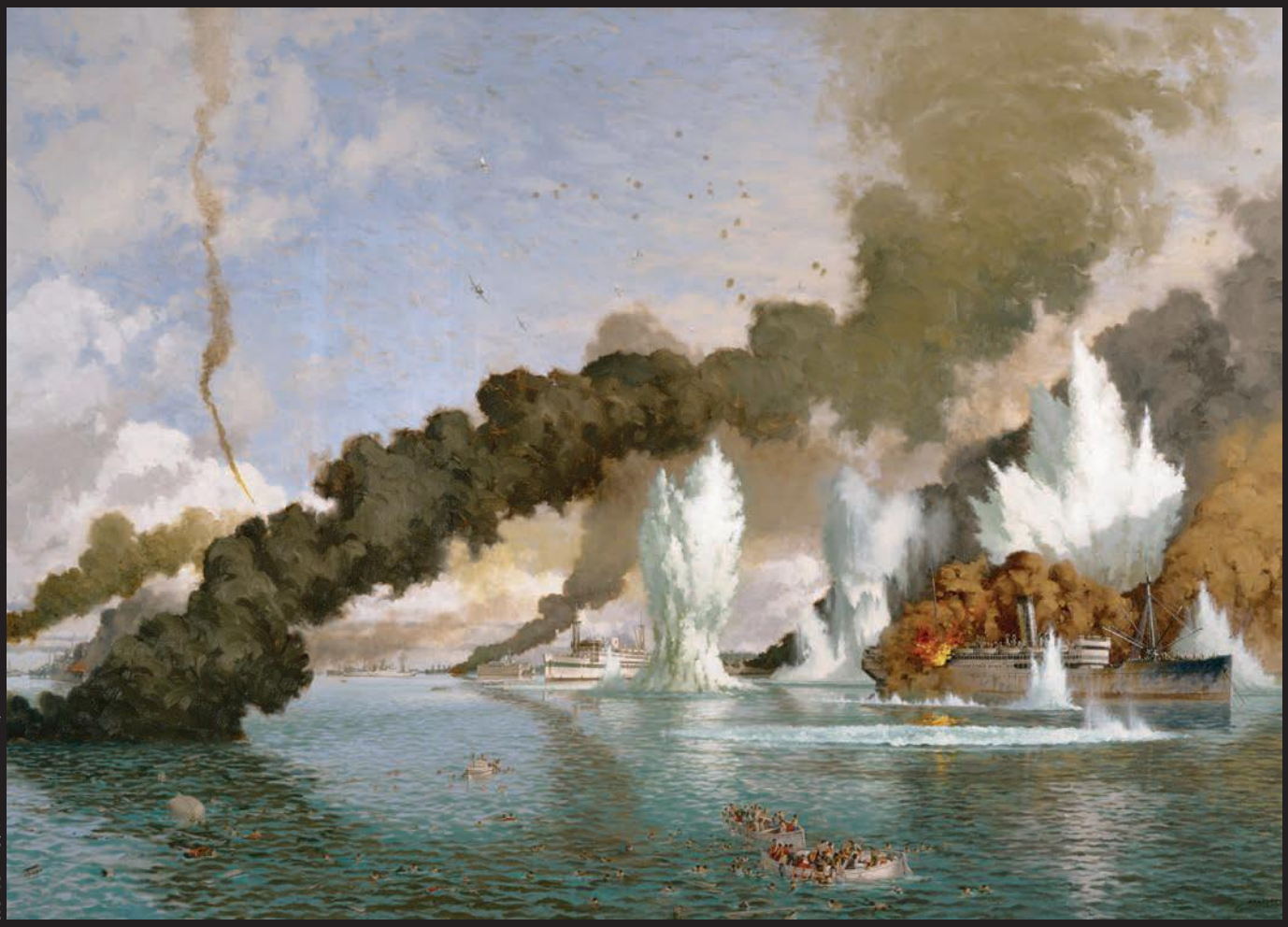
World War I had been called the Great War, or the war to end all wars. When it ended in 1918, after four years of savage fighting that saw over nine million killed in battle, no one could imagine that a war so destructive could ever happen again. When it was over, the victorious powers, led by the United States, Britain and France, met at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919 to redraw the map of Europe and to deal with the defeated enemy. They believed they were making a just peace.

Yet just 20 years later, in 1939, Britain and France once again found themselves at war with Germany. As in World War I, both Russia (or the Soviet Union) and the United States became involved. Australia had been one of the first to declare its support for Britain in World War I. In 1939 Australia became the first to declare its support for Britain in World War II. In 1941, when Japan entered the war and began to invade and occupy much of Asia, Australia was also at war with the Japanese. For the first time in the nation's history Australia was attacked and faced the threat of an aggressive power on our very borders. For the Australian people World War II became a new and demanding test of nationhood.

The Japanese attack on Darwin Harbour, 19 February 1942

We will advance over blackened ruins, through blasted and fire-swept cities, across scorched plains, until we drive the enemy into the sea.

John Curtin, Prime Minister of Australia, 15 March 1942



Australian War Memorial [ART28520]

Timeline, 1939–45

1939

- **September** World War II began.
- The Second AIF was formed.

1940

- **January** Australian troops sailed to the Middle East to support the British war effort.
- **December** Australian troops saw action in North Africa against the Italians.

1941

- **January** The port of Tobruk was occupied by British and Australian troops.
- **April** German forces began their advance in North Africa. The siege of Tobruk began.
- **May** Australian and British troops suffered defeats in Greece and Crete against the Germans.
- **October** John Curtin became prime minister of Australia.
- **December** Japan attacked the US fleet at Pearl Harbor.
- Australia declared war on Japan.

Glossary

anti-Semitic A term that means anti-Jewish.

appeasement The name given to the foreign policy followed by the British and French governments in the 1930s towards the European dictators. Appeasement was based on the belief that Hitler in particular had limited demands and that by giving in to his demands another war could be avoided.

austerity The idea that people had to live simply, avoid waste or excess and go without luxury items for the sake of the war effort.

chancellor A word which means 'prime minister'.

Final Solution The term used by the Nazis for the murder of the Jews.

genocide The killing of a race.

ghettos Defined parts of some European cities in which the Jewish population were forced to remain.

Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere The overall plan Japan had to link the countries it had conquered so they

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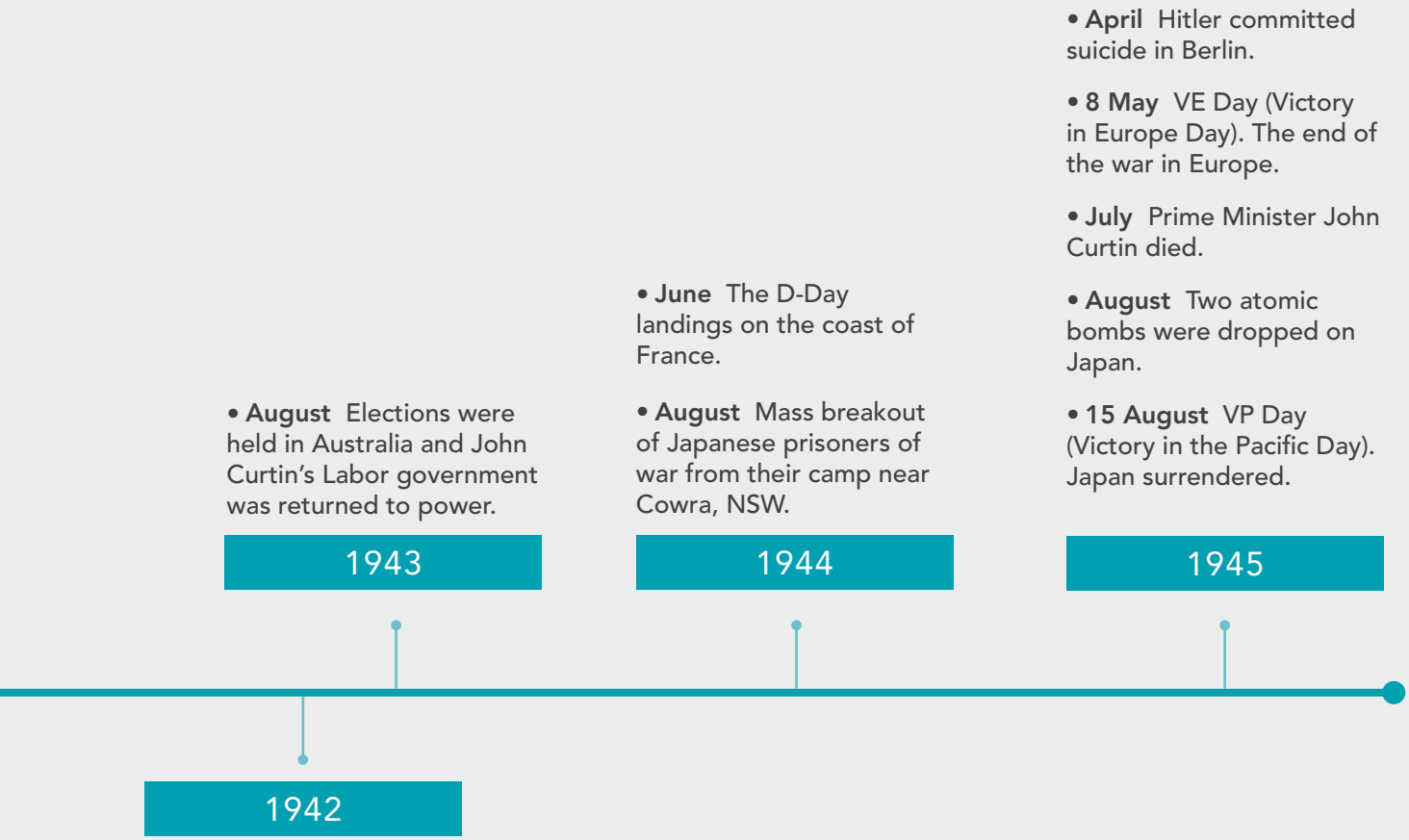

- **February** The fall of Singapore. Most of the Australian 8th Division became prisoners of war. Darwin was bombed by the Japanese.
- **March** The Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) fell to the Japanese and Japanese troops moved into New Guinea. General Douglas MacArthur arrived in Australia after the Philippines fell to Japan.
- **May** The Battle of the Coral Sea. Three Japanese midget submarines entered Sydney Harbour.
- **June** The Battle of Midway. Japanese naval power was checked with the loss of four aircraft carriers.
- **July** Australian troops began operations on the Kokoda Track in New Guinea.
- **August** Australian troops fought the Japanese at the Battle of Milne Bay in New Guinea.
- **October** The Battle of El Alamein. The defeat of the Germans in North Africa.

provided raw materials to Japan and became in turn a market for Japanese goods.

militia The name given to the volunteer part-time soldiers in Australia at the outbreak of the war in 1939. During the war, conscription was introduced to increase the size of the militia, and these soldiers later fought in combat outside Australia.

rationing A system devised to ensure the fair distribution of essential commodities in wartime.

sanctions Restrictions, usually economic, placed on a country by other countries in an effort to make it conform or accept a particular position.

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4.1

WHY DID WORLD WAR II BREAK OUT IN 1939?

World War II in Europe began in September 1939. For many years after the conflict ended, there was no significant debate among historians about the origins of the war. It was widely accepted that Hitler had caused the war through his policy of deliberate aggression in Europe, first in the east against Poland in 1939, and then in the west against Britain and France in 1940. In 1941 he widened this war when Germany attacked the Soviet Union and declared war on the United States.

How and why a person such as Hitler came to power in a nation like Germany is itself another great historical question. Hitler's rise to power in 1933 is usually seen as a long-term cause for the war, as is the Great Depression that helped him into power. Another long-term cause was a deeply felt belief among Germans that their country had been unfairly treated after World War I.

Hitler and the Nazi movement he led believed in the revival of German power. During the 1930s Nazi Germany began rebuilding the country's armed forces, and then began a policy of deliberate aggression against neighbouring states. As in the case of World War I, there were long-term factors and more immediate causes; this time, however, the responsibility for the war, when it came in 1939, was clear. It was Hitler's war and for Britain and, later, the United States it was a 'just war' – a war fought to destroy a great evil.

The Treaty of Versailles

At the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, after World War I, the defeated Germans were forced to accept the Treaty of Versailles. Germany and the other defeated powers had not been allowed to attend the peace conference and, when the treaty was ready in May, Germany had no choice but to accept it or face renewed war. Germany saw the treaty as unfair and called it a *Diktat*, or an imposed peace. Germany lost all of its overseas colonies, its army was reduced to only 100 000 men, it was forbidden to have an air force and the British took most of the German navy. Germany lost about 13 per cent of its territory to neighbouring European states, in particular the newly formed state of Poland. Under Clause 231 of the treaty, Germany was required to accept responsibility for causing the war and was expected to pay for the cost of the war. The bill for these reparations was massive. The result of the treaty was a deeply felt sense of bitterness in Germany.

The League of Nations

British Cartoon Archive

The idea for a League of Nations had been developed during the war and its driving force was Woodrow Wilson, the President of the United States. President Wilson believed that World War I had been fought to 'make the world safe for democracy'. What was needed to preserve future world peace was an international organisation in which all the great powers would work together to prevent future war.

The League of Nations, which had its headquarters in Switzerland, represented the first modern attempt at internationalism – nations working together to preserve peace.

For political reasons, the United States was never a member of the League of Nations, and this seriously weakened the organisation. By the 1930s democracy had failed in a number of important countries, including Germany, Italy, and Japan. These countries left the League in the 1930s and followed policies of deliberate aggression against other nations.

- In 1931 Japan invaded and occupied Manchuria (northern China) to gain possession of valuable raw material there. When the League condemned this aggression, Japan simply left the League.
- In 1937 Japan invaded the rest of coastal China and the League took no action except to condemn the aggression and the atrocities the Japanese committed against the Chinese.
- In 1935 Italy under the dictator Mussolini invaded the African state of Abyssinia. The League tried to punish Italy by imposing economic **sanctions**, but they failed and Italy walked out of the League in 1935.

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The League was incapable of dealing with these examples of aggression. Apart from moral condemnation and imposing economic sanctions, it had no ability to impose its will against countries that deliberately sought to break the peace.

Nazi Germany

In January 1933 Adolf Hitler became **chancellor** of Germany. Hitler led the National Socialist German Workers' Party, better known as the Nazi Party, and their victory in 1933 came after a long struggle for power. By 1934 Hitler had changed the German constitution and established a dictatorship. German democracy ended, all political parties (except the Nazi Party) became illegal, trade unions were abolished and the basic freedoms of the German people were suppressed. Germany became a totalitarian state with one leader, one party and a terror system to eliminate all opposition.

Europe after World War I

Nazi foreign policy

Long before he came to power, Hitler had developed his ideas about Germany's role in the world. In his book *Mein Kampf* (*My Struggle*; published in 1924) Hitler declared that Germany had to be restored as a great power and that it was Germany's destiny to end the restrictions of the hated Treaty of Versailles. He also believed that, if Germany was to survive as a great power, it needed new territory. This German expansion was to take place, not in overseas colonies, but in Europe itself.

Hitler's aims and actions

Hitler believed that a policy of eastern European land expansion was logical and necessary. In the east there were significant numbers of Germans, living in other countries, who had been cut off from Germany. There was independent Austria, which was Germanic and where Hitler himself had been born in 1889. There were three million Germans living in the neighbouring state of Czechoslovakia, and there were Germans living in the Polish Corridor, an area cut off from Germany by the Treaty of Versailles and given to the newly created state of Poland. Hitler wanted to unite all Germans into a greater Germany and to bring the vast areas of eastern Europe, rich in resources, into this Third Reich (empire or realm) that would last for a thousand years.

Australian War Memorial [137692]

Adolf Hitler (1889–1945) became leader of Germany in 1933. His aggressive foreign policy was a major cause for the outbreak of war in Europe in 1939.

The policy of appeasement

Once Hitler was secure in power, he began to carry out his foreign policy goals. In 1935 Germany broke the Treaty of Versailles when it introduced conscription for an expanded German army as well as plans to develop a modern air force. The major western powers, Britain and France, did nothing. In 1936 Germany moved troops into the Rhineland. Under the Treaty of Versailles this area on the French–German border was supposed to be demilitarised. In 1938 German troops crossed the border of Austria. Austria ceased to be an independent country and became part of Germany.

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The British and the French were seriously concerned at the nature of Hitler's foreign policy actions. There were in fact two positions that the western democracies could take: they could oppose Hitler, which they were not prepared to do, or they could come to terms with him. Above all, the western democracies feared the outbreak of another war and they believed in peace almost at any cost. The policy that emerged was called **appeasement**. It was based on the belief that the avoidance of war was the highest goal and that somehow Britain and France had to deal with Hitler and seek to settle the German problem peacefully. Many believed that Germany had a case and that the problems had been caused by the harshness of the Treaty of Versailles. They also believed, at least until 1938, that Hitler was a reasonable politician with limited aims, and that he could be satisfied. The western leaders did not understand the true aims and intentions of the Nazi leader.

FROM THE SOURCE

David Low, 'Stepping stones to glory', in the *Evening Standard*, 8 July 1936

1 What historical event of 1936 is the background to this cartoon?

2 Explain the main point the cartoonist David Low is making in this cartoon.

3 Consider these two statements and select the correct alternative from A to D below.

I The cartoon shows Hitler confident of where he is heading.

II The cartoon shows Hitler achieving his goals by the failure of others.

A Both of these statements are true.

B Both of these statements are false.

C Statement I is true and Statement II is false.

D Statement II is true and Statement I is false.

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The coming of war, 1938–39

In 1938 Hitler demanded the return to Germany of the Sudetenland region of Czechoslovakia , an area that was the home of three million German-speaking people. As the threat of war built up over the issue of the Sudetenland, Britain and France effectively forced Czechoslovakia to give this disputed territory to Germany. They may not have believed Hitler's claim that this was his 'last territorial demand', but in 1938 peace had been preserved. It was the high point of the policy of appeasement.

In March 1939 Hitler ordered his army to move in and occupy the rest of Czechoslovakia. The Czech state, which had been a modern European democracy, was abolished and the area became part of Hitler's expanding empire.

To the western powers it was now clear that the policy of appeasement had failed. Hitler could not be satisfied. The British and French, who had given in to German aggression for much of the 1930s in the hope of preserving peace, now gave a firm promise of support to the state of Poland, for it was clearly the next nation to be threatened by Germany. Hitler intended to destroy Poland, seeing it as the pathway to his ultimate goal, the destruction of the Soviet Union.

Throughout the summer of 1939, international tensions increased over Poland as Hitler demanded the return of the Polish Corridor, once part of Germany, which had been given to Poland by the Treaty of Versailles. On 1 September 1939, one week after Germany signed a non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union, which contained a secret provision to allow the Soviet Union to occupy half of Poland, Germany attacked Poland. Britain and France made it very clear that they would honour their treaty to Poland, and on 3 September Great Britain and France declared war on Germany.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What was the name of the treaty Germany was forced to sign at the end of the World War I?
2 What was the name of the international organisation set up after World War I?
3 Explain why this organisation ultimately failed in its aim to keep world peace.
4 Which country committed acts of aggression against:
   (a) China **(b)** Abyssinia?
5 What were the main aims of Germany's foreign policy under Hitler?
6 In what year did Germany re-take the Rhineland?
7 Which country signed a non-aggression treaty with Germany in 1939?
8 Why did Britain and France declare war on Germany in September 1939?

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) totalitarianism
   (b) internationalism
   (c) appeasement
   (d) Polish Corridor

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2 Place these events of the interwar years in their correct chronological order.

- Japan attacks Manchuria.
- Treaty of Versailles is signed.
- Germany occupies the Rhineland.
- Germany occupies the Sudetenland.
- Hitler comes to power in Germany.
- Italy invades the north African state of Abyssinia.

3 In the cartoon below by the Australian Will Dyson, the peacemakers leave the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, led by the French leader George Clemenceau (sometimes called the Tiger).

(a) What is the meaning of the title of this cartoon, 'Peace and future cannon fodder'?

(b) Explain the point Will Dyson is seeking to make in this cartoon.

(c) In an extended paragraph, explain why this cartoon is such an accurate prophesy of what was to come.

4 Prepare an illustrated timeline of the major events that led to the outbreak of World War II.

5 Prepare an extended paragraph in which you explain why you either agree or disagree with the following remark made by Winston Churchill.

> One day President Roosevelt told me that he was asking publicly for suggestions about what the war should be called. I said at once, 'The Unnecessary War'. There never was a war more easy to stop than that which has just wrecked what was left of the world from the previous struggle.

Winston Churchill, *The Second World War*, abridged ed., Cassell, London, 1959

British Cartoon Archives, University of Kent (https://www.cartoons.ac.uk/record/p0497)

A cartoon by Will Dyson in the *Daily Herald*, 13 May 1919

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WHERE DID AUSTRALIANS FIGHT DURING WORLD WAR II?

4.2

Although some people thought that Australia should not get involved in another war, the bonds of loyalty to Britain were still strong and Australia became the first country in the British Empire to declare war against Germany. On 3 September 1939, only a few hours after Britain had declared war on Germany, the Australian prime minister, Robert Menzies, broadcast to the nation and told the Australian people that, because Britain was at war, Australia was also at war.

Australia's involvement in World War II falls into two phases.

- The first phase was from 1939 to the end of 1941. During this time the war was with Germany and its allies, including Italy.
- The second phase of the war for Australia began dramatically in December 1941 when a restless and aggressive Japan attacked the United States and began to advance south into South-East Asia. For the first time in its history, Australia itself was now threatened.

National Library of Australia

Robert Menzies (1894–1978), prime minister of Australia at the outbreak of World War II in 1939

The Second AIF

Unlike at the outbreak of war in 1914, there was no great outpouring of emotion. Australians accepted the news calmly. Many could remember very clearly the suffering and pain of World War I. Now, just over twenty years after the end of the first war, Australia was once again at war with Germany.

FROM THE SOURCE

From Mr Menzies' speech on the declaration of war, September 1939

Fellow Australians,

It is my melancholy [sad] duty to inform you officially that, in consequence of the persistence by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war on her, and that, as a result, Australia is also at war … It may be taken that Hitler's ambition is not to unite all the German people under one rule, but to bring under that rule as many countries as can be subdued by force. If this is to go on there can be no security in Europe and no peace for the world …

There was never any doubt as to where Great Britain stood … There can be no doubt that where Great Britain stands, there stands the people of the entire British world.

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Menzies declares war

1 Why did Britain declare war on Germany in 1939?

2 How does Menzies explain why Australia must be involved in this war?

3 Explain why some Australians would question the statement by Menzies that, if Britain went to war on the other side of the world, then 'as a result, Australia is also at war'.

Australian War Memorial [ART04314]

A Second AIF enlistment poster, 1940

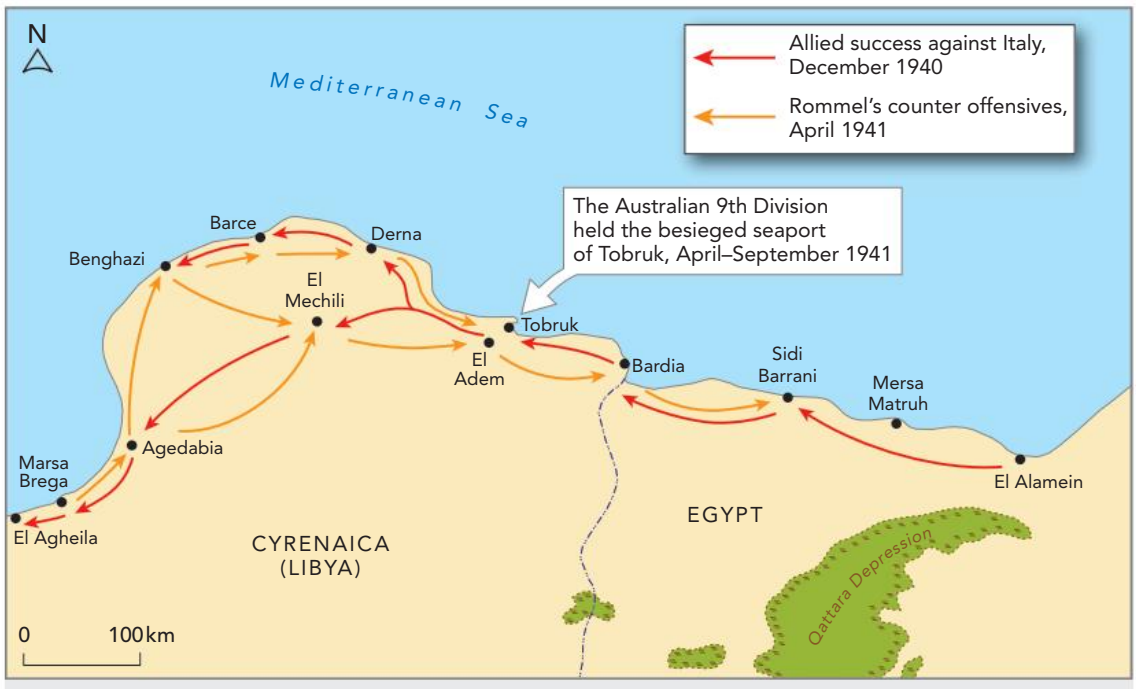
When the war began in 1939, Australia had a small permanent army of only 3500 soldiers and a part-time Citizen Military Force (CMF) of 80 000 men, which was also known as the **militia**. This force was intended for home defence. Twelve days after the war began, the Menzies government announced that a 'special force' of 20 000 men would be raised by volunteer enlistment for service 'at home or abroad as the need arises'. This special force was soon renamed the Second Australian Imperial Force (Second AIF) and was modelled on the First Australian Imperial Force (First AIF) that had been formed during World War I.

Facing the enemy in North Africa

It was in the desert of North Africa that Australian troops were first involved in World War II. The 6th Division, part of the Second AIF, sailed from Australia in January 1940 to support the British war effort. As the First AIF had done in 1914, the troops sailed to Egypt, and there they became part of the great sweep against the Italians in December 1940.

Italy had come into the war on the side of Germany in June 1940. In September 1940, from the Italian colony in Libya, North Africa, the Italians advanced towards the British in Egypt. Within two months, however, the British

Recruitment posters



The war in North Africa, 1940–42

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and Commonwealth forces in Egypt, under the command of General Wavell, were able to counterattack. The Italians were driven back from Sidi Barrani, Bardia and Tobruk to Benghazi and beyond. Nine Italian divisions were destroyed, and more than 130 000 demoralised and confused Italian troops surrendered.

As the Italians collapsed in North Africa, Hitler was forced to intervene and dispatch German troops to support his ally. In March 1941 General Erwin Rommel and his *Afrika Korps* arrived. Rommel was a remarkable and brilliant commander. Within a month he had counterattacked and driven the British and Commonwealth troops back to the borders of Egypt.

The Rats of Tobruk

In April 1941, as Rommel advanced across North Africa, a garrison of 24 000 troops, including 14 000 Australians of the 7th and 9th Divisions, held the important seaport of Tobruk. The Germans lay siege to the port, but the defenders of Tobruk, supplied only from the sea by vessels from the Royal Australian Navy, withstood the German air attacks and land assaults. The flat, open plains around Tobruk gave the Germans no cover, and the area was defended with minefields, anti-tank ditches and barbed-wire fences. The Germans needed Tobruk as a supply base to continue their advance to Egypt, and, as the soldiers of Tobruk dug in and fought back the German attacks, German propaganda said that the Australians were caught 'like rats in a trap'. The Australians began to call themselves 'the Rats of Tobruk' and it became a name the soldiers carried with pride. In September and October 1941 most Australians were withdrawn from Tobruk, but the vital port held out against the Germans for 242 days from April to December 1941.

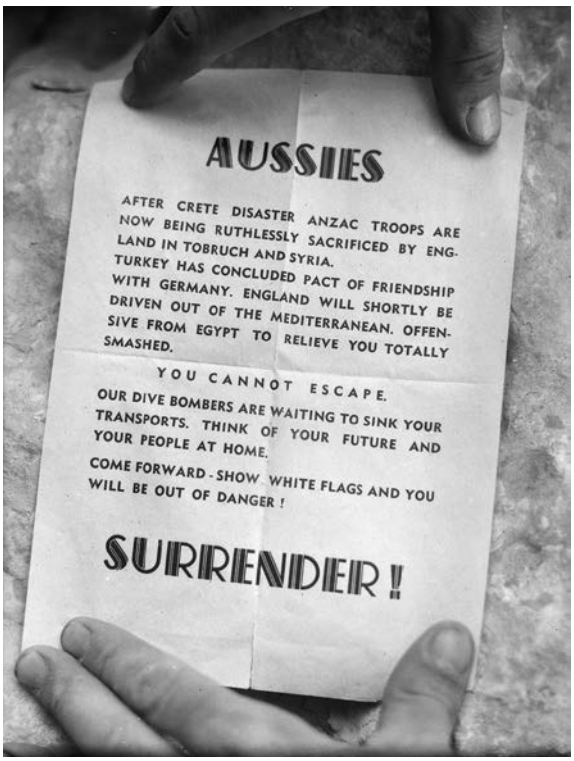
Rats of Tobruk

FROM THE SOURCE

1 **What reasons do the Germans put forward as to why the soldiers in Tobruk should surrender?**

2 **Does the fact that the Germans used this type of propaganda tell us anything about the determination of the soldiers in Tobruk?**

3 **One soldier, when he found this leaflet, wrote on it: 'Where the hell are we going to get white flags from?' What do comments like this tell us about the mood of the Australians in Tobruk?**



Australian War Memorial [009509]

ISBN 9780170347266

Australian War Memorial [009822]

An Australian gun crew manning one of the forward defence positions near Tobruk in 1941

Australians in Greece, Crete and the Battle of El Alamein

While Australian troops took part in the defence of Tobruk, other Australian troops of the 6th Division were sent to Greece to assist the British to defend that country after Germany invaded in April 1941. Despite gallant resistance, Greece fell to the advancing Germans and the British, Australian and New Zealand troops were evacuated. Some were sent to defend the nearby island of Crete, which also fell to the Germans. In a series of hopeless military actions in Greece, Crete and Syria in 1941, Australian troops suffered more than 6000 casualties.

The fighting in North Africa came to a head in the great battle of El Alamein in October 1942. By this time many troops from the 6th and 7th Divisions of the AIF had returned to Australia to fight against the Japanese, but part of the Australian 9th Division had remained in the desert with British forces in the campaigns against Rommel. They took part in the final battle of El Alamein, which saw General Montgomery's Eighth Army finally defeat the Germans. By the end of 1942 the 9th Division had also returned to Australia to fight in the Pacific war.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who was prime minister of Australia at the start of World War II?
2 Why did Australia declare war on Germany in September 1939?
3 What was the Second AIF?
4 Why were Australians fighting Italians and Germans in North Africa?
5 What was the name of the vital seaport in North Africa that Australian troops defended against German attack in 1941?
6 Why were Australian troops sent to fight in Greece and Crete?
7 What was the outcome of the battles for Greece and Crete in 1941?
8 Which important battle saw the final defeat of the German and Italian forces in North Africa?

The war against Japan

Unlike other Asian countries, Japan by the 1930s was a modern industrial power, and when the Great Depression began in 1929 Japan felt its full impact. For economic and security reasons Japan invaded the northern part of China, called Manchuria, and made it part of the Japanese empire. The western powers, in the depths of the Depression, took no action.

In 1937 Japan took its next aggressive step when it invaded and occupied large areas of mainland China. Again there was little response from the other world powers. By 1940 Japan was an ally of

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Nazi Germany, and the swift German military victories in Europe gave Japan the opportunity to move into South-East Asia. Most Asian states in 1940 were colonies of the European powers: the Dutch had the East Indies (Indonesia), the French had Indochina (Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos), and the British had India, Malaya, Burma, Borneo and Singapore. In 1940 both France and Holland had fallen to the Nazis, and Britain was fighting for its survival. It was in no position to adequately defend its empire.

Economic factors had always been important in explaining Japanese expansion and Asia offered Japan the vital raw materials it needed – oil from the Dutch East Indies, rubber and tin from Malaya – as well as vast markets for Japanese goods. Japan had plans to establish a **Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere**, which meant increasing Japanese military and economic domination of South-East Asia. Hitler's great success in Europe encouraged the Japanese to move south and take this territory that they felt was vital for Japan's survival.

MAPGraphics

The war in Asia began in 1931 when Japan occupied Manchuria (northern China). In 1937 the Japanese attacked and occupied much of coastal China.

By 1941 only the United States stood in the way of Japan achieving its goals in Asia. Japan's military leaders drew up plans for a Japanese attack on the United States Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor in the Hawaiian Islands, to be followed by a Japanese push south to Malaya, Singapore, the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies.

Pearl Harbor

A Japanese attack force of six aircraft carriers and 24 warships sailed under strict radio silence from its base in Japan in late November 1941. By the morning of 7 December 1941 the fleet had sailed undetected to within 400 kilometres of Pearl Harbor, and at dawn it launched its airborne attack. Seven United States battleships were either sunk or damaged and over 2400 men were killed. Fortunately for the United States, all four of its aircraft carriers were at sea on the morning of the attack and thus were undamaged.

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, which brought the United States and Australia into the war against Japan, the Japanese began a swift advance southwards. In the same week as Pearl Harbor the Japanese bombed Hong Kong, Singapore and the Philippines, and a Japanese army landed in northern Malaya and southern Thailand. On Christmas Day, Hong Kong fell and the Japanese began their march down the Malay Peninsula towards the vital British base on the island fortress of Singapore.

Corbis/Bettmann

The battleships USS *West Virginia* (foreground) and USS *Tennessee* sit low in the water and burn after the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941. Why was the attack on Pearl Harbor such an important event in World War II?

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The island of Singapore in 1942 as the Japanese advanced down the Malay Peninsula.

The fall of Singapore, 1942

Australia had always regarded the British naval base at Singapore as vital to Australia's security and as the front line of its defence. In fact there was no permanent British naval presence in Singapore, for it was always accepted that ships could be sent to reinforce the base if the need arose. In October 1941 two British ships, the battleship *Prince of Wales* and the battle cruiser *Repulse* had been sent to the region without adequate air protection. On 10 December 1941, three days after Pearl Harbor, Japanese aircraft sank both ships with heavy loss of life off the coast of Malaya.

Singapore was supposed to be impregnable (impossible to take by force) and it was in fact well defended for any attack from the sea, but the Japanese advanced down the Malay Peninsula and approached Singapore from its undefended landward side. The island was defended by more than 130 000 British and Commonwealth troops, and in 1941 Australia had sent 15 000 men of the newly formed 8th Division AIF to assist in the defence of Malaya and Singapore.

On 21 January 1942 the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, seriously considered evacuating Singapore and concentrating British forces in nearby Burma. The Australian government strongly opposed this idea. John Curtin, who had become prime minister in October 1941, made the point clearly in a dispatch to Churchill.

> "After all the assurances we have been given the evacuation of Singapore would be regarded as an inexcusable betrayal ... we understand that it was to be made impregnable and in any event it was capable of holding out for a prolonged period until the arrival of the main fleet ... we expect you not to frustrate the whole purpose by evacuation."

Australian War Memorial [009249/28]

Troops of the Australian 8th Division arriving in Singapore in August 1941. Most of these men would be captured by the Japanese when Singapore fell in February 1942 and would spend the rest of the war in Japanese prisoner-of-war camps.

Faced with Australia's insistence that Singapore be defended, the British forces in Malaya, including the Australian 8th Division, tried to hold the advancing Japanese, but they were forced back across the Strait of Johore to Singapore itself. The island was, in fact, reinforced to the point where the Allied soldiers outnumbered the advancing Japanese. However, Singapore had little air defence and Japanese air attacks caused widespread panic and loss of nerve. The Japanese air force was able to bomb the island and defence was poorly planned. Australian nurses were evacuated and the injured were treated in makeshift hospitals, including inside Singapore's St Andrew's Cathedral.

On 15 February the British commander of Singapore, General Percival, surrendered. It was the largest surrender in British history, with

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130 000 Allied soldiers, including 15 000 Australians, surrendering to the Japanese. Most of these Australians would endure the rest of the war in Japanese prison camps and many thousands would die.

Australians had always feared invasion from the north, and they had always believed that Britain would come to Australia's aid if ever this fear became a reality. Suddenly, in 1942, the possibility of an attack on Australia or of an invasion appeared very real. The great British base at Singapore had fallen and there was nothing to stop the Japanese advance. Britain, strained to its limits in the war with Germany, was in no position to help.

Australia was also in a weakened position for its own defence. The Australian navy had already lost three of its five cruisers in battle, three AIF divisions were still far away in the Middle East, and 15 000 men of the 8th Division had been captured by the Japanese in Singapore. Australia had its Citizen Military Forces (militia) for home defence, no tanks, inadequate weaponry, and a small air force that had been supplying pilots for the British war effort. In 1942 Australia was isolated and not well defended.

The fall of Singapore

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who became prime minister of Australia in October 1941?
2 Which political party did he lead?
3 Why did Japan attack the United States fleet at Pearl Harbor in December 1941?
4 Why did Australia declare war on Japan in December 1941?
5 Name the two British ships sunk by Japanese air power in December 1941.
6 When did Singapore fall to the Japanese?

The war at sea

Despite the Japanese success on land, it was at sea that the Japanese were first checked.

The rapid advance of the Japanese was finally stopped at a major naval battle fought in the Coral Sea in May 1942. From their bases in northern New Guinea the Japanese were anxious to secure their position by capturing Port Moresby. A Japanese naval force, including aircraft carriers to provide air support, was dispatched. The Americans became aware of the plan through intercepted naval intelligence and sent two carrier forces to stop the Japanese. Two Australian cruisers joined to support the Americans.

The Battle of the Coral Sea, fought off northern Australia in May 1942, was fought entirely by aircraft – the first naval battle in which the ships of either side did not see each other. Over two days of attacks both sides suffered heavy losses, both in aircraft carriers sunk or badly damaged and in loss of aircraft, but for the first time Japanese expansion had been stopped, and the vital base at Port Moresby never fell to the enemy.

One month after the Battle of the Coral Sea, Japan suffered a more serious defeat in the great Battle of Midway. The bulk of the Japanese and United States fleets met each other near the Midway Islands, some 2400 kilometres west of Hawaii. Neither navy actually saw the other and this naval battle over three days was again fought entirely by carrier-based aircraft. Japan lost four aircraft carriers, 300 aircraft and over 3500 men. The United States lost one carrier, the *Yorktown*. After these battles, the Japanese were never able to take the offensive at sea again.

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain the meaning of the following terms
- **(a)** militia
- **(b)** Rats of Tobruk
- **(c)** *Afrika Korps*
- **(d)** Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

2 Place these events in their correct chronological order.
- The Battle of El Alamein
- The fall of Singapore
- The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor
- Australian troops sent to fight in Greece against the advancing Germans
- The Japanese invasion of China
- German forces land in North Africa

3 Put yourself in the position of a person living in Australia in 1942 who has just heard the news of the fall of Singapore. Prepare a letter to a friend in which you express either *one* of the following:
- your feelings about what the future may hold for you and others living in Australia
- your concerns for a friend of yours who had enlisted in the 8th Division.

4 Imagine that you are working for the Defence Department. You have been asked to prepare a report for the government about the fall of Singapore. In your report you should explain:
- why Singapore fell
- what the fall of Singapore will mean for Australia.

5 Select *one* of the following military actions that involved Australian troops in World War II. Prepare a multimedia presentation in which you research and explain the aim of the campaign, the outcome of the campaign and the cost in military terms to Australia of its involvement in the campaign.
- The desert war, 1940–42
- The war in Greece and Crete, 1941
- The Malaya campaign, 1942

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WHAT WERE SOME OF THE EXPERIENCES OF AUSTRALIANS AS A RESULT OF THEIR INVOLVEMENT IN THE WAR?

4.3

The fall of Singapore caused great concern in Australia. 'Our honeymoon is finished', said the prime minister, John Curtin.

> "I demand that every Australian everywhere realises that Australia is now inside the fighting lines. It is now work or fight as we have never worked or fought before. There must not be a man or a woman in this Commonwealth who goes to bed tonight without having related his [or her] period of wakefulness to the purpose of war."

Even before the fall of Singapore, the Japanese pushed their advance south. By March 1942 Japanese forces had taken the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia) and Timor, and had landed troops on the northern coast of New Guinea. The islands to the north and east of New Guinea also fell, including New Britain with its important harbour, Rabaul.

Australian War Memorial

The extent of Japanese expansion by 1942

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The New Guinea campaign, 1942

One of the most important places where Australians fought during World War II was in New Guinea. It was here that Australian soldiers endured some of the most difficult fighting of the war.

After the fall of Singapore, the Japanese planned to take Port Moresby and the Solomon Islands. If the Japanese took Port Moresby, they could easily strike at Australia, and with control of this area they could also seriously threaten Australia's vital link with the United States, increasing Australia's isolation.

In March 1942 the advancing Japanese landed at Lae in New Guinea, and in May 1942 a Japanese naval force attempted to round the coast to take Port Moresby. In the Battle of the Coral Sea, the Japanese were stopped, so the only way to take Port Moresby now was overland, across the Owen Stanley Range.

The Kokoda Track

The northern coast of New Guinea, where the Japanese landed, is about 200 kilometres from Port Moresby, but through the middle of the island runs the Owen Stanley Range. This is very rugged country with dense tropical jungle, high mountain passes and many fast-flowing rivers and streams. This extremely difficult terrain is crossed by the Kokoda Track, which begins about 40 kilometres from Port Moresby at a spot called Ower's Corner. The track crosses the Owen Stanley Range, passes the village of Kokoda, then finally descends to Wairopi, on the Kumusi River, and continues on to the small settlements of Buna and Gona on the northern coast.

New Guinea in 1942

The Kokoda Track

What happened on the Kokoda Track from June to November 1942

- A small force of Australian soldiers had been sent up the Kokoda Track in June 1942 to protect the airfield at Kokoda. This Australian force was initially made up mainly of militia soldiers, about 400 young men, most only 18 or 19 years of age, from the 39th Battalion of Victoria.
- Japanese troops landed at Gona (21 July) and pushed out, heading for the small settlement of Kokoda and its important airfield. The Japanese expected to advance over the mountains and take Port Moresby within weeks.

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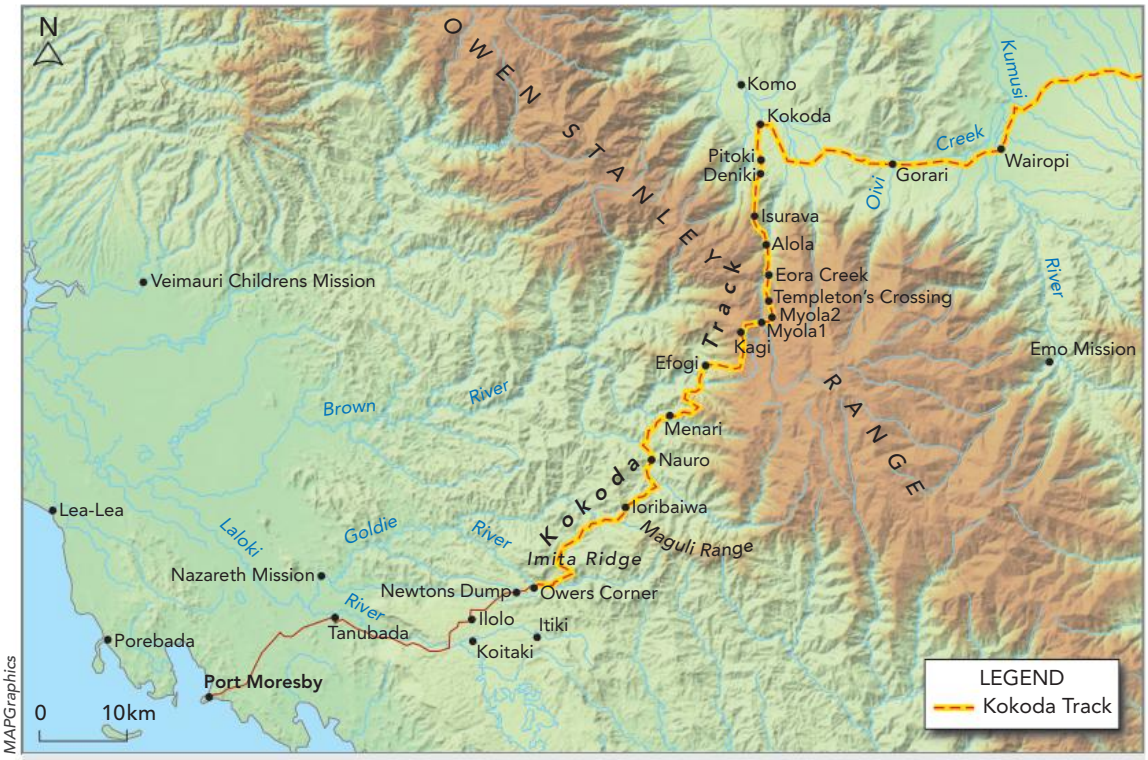
- The Australian troops sought to delay the Japanese advance but, unable to hold the Japanese, the Australians were forced to slowly withdraw. The Japanese force was stronger and the Australians had the added problem of fighting at the end of a long and difficult supply line.
- In August, after they had waited for more troops to arrive, the Japanese attacked the Australians at Isurava and Alola. The Australian forces, now strengthened by men from the 9th Division who had just returned from the desert war, fought bravely to resist the Japanese advance.
- In late August the survivors of the 39th Battalion who had originally faced the Japanese attacks were sent back to Port Moresby and about 1000 men of the 9th Division took over the defence of the Kokoda Track against about 7000 advancing Japanese.
- The Australians withdrew towards Menari, and in heavy fighting delayed the Japanese advance by another three weeks. Reinforcements began to arrive for the Australians from Port Moresby.
- Australian troops withdrew to establish a new position at Ioribaiwa, from which they could ambush and delay the enemy.
- The Australians were ordered to withdraw to Imita Ridge, the last defensive position only 40 kilometres from Port Moresby. Here the Australians had the use of artillery guns from Port Moresby.
- By September the Japanese faced exhaustion, with little food left and many suffering illness. The situation began to favour the Australians, as the Japanese now faced the problem of supply from their original landing base on the other side of the Owen Stanley Range.
- With military defeats in other parts of the Pacific, the Japanese began a slow withdrawal and the Australian troops began to advance. In bitter jungle warfare, some of the hardest fighting Australians faced in World War II, the Australian troops advanced, and by November 1942 the Australian flag flew at the village of Kokoda. The fighting continued with help from the United States, and by early 1943 the Japanese were cleared from Buna and Gona on the northern coast.



The Kokoda Track, the scene of major fighting in 1942 that saved Port Moresby from the advancing Japanese.

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Australian War Memorial [027001]

Australian soldiers resting by a river between the villages of Nauro and Menari on the Kokoda Track in October 1942 during the advance that forced the Japanese back across the Owen Stanley Range.

The bulk of the fighting in New Guinea was done by Australian troops. In heavy fighting around Buna, at the end of the Kokoda Track, 913 Australians were killed before the Japanese were finally defeated. There was also significant help from the indigenous New Guineans, affectionately called 'Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels', who acted as guides and stretcher-bearers in the tropical jungle.

While the battles took place along the Kokoda Track, in August 1942, other Australian troops had stopped the Japanese at Milne Bay on the eastern side of New Guinea. The Japanese had landed there in an attempt to capture the harbour and the landing field. They were defeated, and Milne Bay became the first land battle lost by the Japanese in World War II.

The fighting on the Kokoda Track, which involved almost 54 000 Australian troops and soldiers from the United States, was Australia's most significant land battle against the Japanese. It took place in tropical heat and almost constant rain, and more Australians died in New Guinea and on the Kokoda Track than in any other battle of World War II. One of the reasons was disease, which afflicted thousands of troops: malaria, dysentery and dengue fever took a very heavy toll. There were food shortages, and communications were difficult. There was also the sheer mental and physical exhaustion of fighting this new type of warfare with the enemy ever present. Men lived and fought in a state of permanent nervous tension.

WS
Kokoda Track

The victories on the Kokoda Track and at Milne Bay meant that Port Moresby never fell to the Japanese and the possibility of an attack on Australia was therefore reduced. Although the Japanese still controlled large areas of New Guinea, New Britain and the Solomon Islands, the real threat to Australia had passed.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Conditions on the Kokoda Track

One of the most infuriating things about the bloody track was that so much of it just didn't make sense. Never did it take the shortest route between two points, but instead meandered up the very steepest of the hills, plunged into the deepest valley and then detoured right to the edge of disaster above a killer cliff-face before heading for the swamp … The diggers of the 39th, struggling up these God-forsaken mountains, tried in vain to come to terms with their new surroundings. For many of them, particularly those from the often long, low, featureless plains of western Victoria, it was beyond their imagination. The mountains and ranges continued to the far horizons. To all points of the compass, valleys, crevasses and creases sprayed out seemingly at random, many of them filled with thick mist and most of them, the men knew, entirely uncharted by Europeans …

Before half a day had passed, nearly all of the diggers had used their machetes to good effect by hacking a walking stick out of the jungle, which seemed to help marginally. At least it eased the ache in their knees as they descended by taking some of the strain. Plus, for many of them, a walking stick somehow felt appropriate, as they were suddenly feeling very, very old … Man might find it hard to long endure such conditions, but just about every other life form seemed to

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prosper as nowhere else … Amid the vines, trees, wild orchids, palms, ferns, staghorns and all the rest, snakes, spiders and leeches slithered and skeltered altogether, competing for space …

But this was just the start of nature's array of horrors. There was also the weather. On most days the rain started at around noon and went for hours. There were no drops. Instead, it sort of gushed, rather like a tap turned on just above your head. Buckets of rain from the outside, buckets of sweat from the inside, and such humidity all around that none of it evaporated.

Put together it meant that clothes were permanently wet, as were the contents of your rucksack. All too often, zealously guarded cigarette papers or letters were just turned to mush, maps into goo …

Among these conditions, still the thing the men found most soul-destroying of all was the false crests. Often, after labouring for hours to get to the top of a ridge that steepened as it rose, they would begin to see the hoped-for lightening in the jungle foliage ahead, maybe even a patch of blue sky. It was a sign that the summit might have been reached at last. Yet, all too often, another three minutes climb revealed that it was merely a spur, and the true summit remained, upward, ever upward …

Peter FitzSimons, *Kokoda*, Hodder Headline, Sydney, 2004

The Fuzzy Wuzzies

source B

Many a mother in Australia, when the busy day is done,
Sends a prayer to the Almighty for the keeping of her son;
Asking that an Angel guide him, and bring him safely back –
Now we see those prayers are answered, on the Owen Stanley track.

Tho' they haven't any haloes, only holes slashed through the ear,
And their faces marked with tattoos and with scratch pins in their hair,
Bringing back the badly wounded, just as steady as a hearse,
Using leaves to keep the rain off, and as gentle as a nurse;
Slow and careful in bad places on the awful mountain track,
And the look upon their faces makes us think that Christ was black.

Courier-Mail, 31 October 1942

source C

Australian War Memorial [ART26653]

Stretcher Bearers in the Owen Stanleys, a painting by William Dargie

1 **Who were the diggers of the 39th Battalion?**

2 **From your reading of Source A, prepare a list of features that made fighting on the Kokoda Track so very difficult.**

3 **Who were the 'Fuzzy Wuzzies'?**

4 **Describe the role they played on the Kokoda Track and in the New Guinea campaign.**

In August 1942, United States troops landed at Guadalcanal in the southern Solomon Islands and after heavy fighting secured this vital position. Success here as well as in New Guinea gave the Allies the advantage, and from 1943 they began to 'island hop' north. Despite fierce resistance, the tide of war was turning against the Japanese as the Americans advanced up the Solomon Islands to Bougainville. The Australians forced the Japanese out of Lae in New Guinea, and in December 1943 Australian and United States troops landed in New Britain.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 When did Singapore fall to the Japanese?

2 What happened to most of the Australian soldiers (the 8th Division) who had been sent to defend Singapore and Malaya?

3 What did the fall of Singapore mean for the defence of Australia?

4 Why were the Japanese seeking to take Port Moresby and the other islands in the Pacific?

5 What two naval battles in 1942 made a Japanese sea attack on Port Moresby impossible?

6 How did the Japanese plan to capture Port Moresby?

7 What is the name of the track through the jungle of New Guinea from the north coast down to Port Moresby?

8 What happened at Milne Bay in August 1942?

9 Explain the final outcome of the fighting in New Guinea.

Australian prisoners of the Japanese

An aspect of World War II that is sometimes overlooked is the experience of thousands of Australian prisoners of war captured by the Japanese. Almost one-third of the 27 000 Australian soldiers who died in World War II died in Japanese prison camps.

Some 22 000 Australians became prisoners of war of the Japanese, most of them captured with the fall of Singapore in February 1942. At the end of the war 7600, or 34 per cent, of the prisoners captured by the Japanese were dead. Eight thousand Australians became prisoners of war of the Germans. The death rate for these prisoners of war was three per cent.

There were many reasons for this high death rate. It was caused partly by the lack of adequate food, the tropical climate and tropical diseases such as malaria, beriberi and dysentery. The high death rate also came about because the Japanese violated international rules about the treatment of prisoners of war and treated their prisoners as slave labourers. In the harsh tropical conditions, with little food or medical support, the men were forced to do construction work.

ISBN 9780170347266

The Burma–Thailand Railway

Australian prisoners of war were forced to work on the construction of the Burma–Thailand Railway, a 400-kilometre line designed to carry Japanese troops and supplies north from Bangkok, in Thailand, to the front in Burma. Work began in June 1942. About 61 000 Allied prisoners of war, including 9500 Australians, and almost 250 000 Asian workers were forced to work on the railway.

Prisoners were moved to camps at each end of the line and to other key points in between and the rail line was built in sections. By the time it was complete, in October 1943, 2600 Australians had died because of the harshness of the conditions. Soldiers were forced to move fixed quotas of soil each day, the food was inadequate and, when the monsoon season came, major outbreaks of cholera killed many people.

Australian War Memorial [AWM 045258]

A Japanese soldier stands on guard at the POW camp at Thanbyuzayat, Burma, in late 1942.

FROM THE SOURCE

Life on the Burma–Thailand Railway, 1943

source A

The Japanese placed the dynamite and set off the charges. The rest of the men then had to move the broken rock with their bare hands. It was not unusual for the Japanese to pick out an unusually large rock, and ask three or four men to lift it. If the men were unable to move it, they would stand over them and whip them with bamboo rods until they dropped. When they had amused themselves sufficiently, the Japanese would summon eight or ten men to shift the rock.

On one occasion, an Australian soldier fell exhausted by the side of the embankment. The Japanese wanted his comrades to push him over and tip a truckload of rock on top of him. The men refused and several were beaten badly for not obeying the order.

The condition of the men became progressively worse. Before leaving the camp at daybreak they were given about two ounces of rice that had been ground and boiled until it looked and tasted like glue. Their mid-day meal, which they carried in dixies*, was a mug of dried rice, and sometimes a little dried fish or dried vegetable … The Japanese at first demanded five hundred [men] a day and we would be able to produce only 470, so sick and exhausted men were forced to go out to the railway-line and were treated by their guards as if they were fit and strong.

Inevitably and in spite of all manner of threats, the numbers of men able to go to the railway-line fell day by day. The Japanese always demanded about fifty men more than we could supply and would never be satisfied unless they finally obtained twenty-five more than could reasonably be expected to go out. There were always at least fifty men in the party who could barely drag themselves to work.

Then the Japanese decided to work day and night shifts and I have seen men coming back from a hard day's work change places with sick comrades going out to begin a night shift …

ISBN 9780170347266

The numbers of sick continued to increase and then on June 15 we had our first case of cholera. The patient died four hours after reporting sick … I think that was our worst day in Thailand. The men were warned never to drink water that had not been boiled; but it was impossible to keep a check on all of them, and we knew that some, when overcome by thirst while at work on the railway, were drinking from jungle pools.

… The news spread quickly, of course, and it had a disastrous effect on the men's morale. They had endured the most incredible hardships: they had seen their comrades bashed and beaten: they had starved and suffered: but they had not lost hope. In no time cholera was raging. It was quite a common thing for the commanding officer, a few others and myself to go to the cemetery at 9 a.m. and dig a grave for one man. By 10 o'clock a messenger would come to say that another cholera patient had been taken to hospital.

Leaving my pick and shovel I would return to the camp, give the Last Sacraments, if the lad was a Catholic … Then back to the cemetery to help increase the size of the grave.

One morning we began digging in the hard, rocky ground to bury a boy who had died during the night. Seven times during the day I was recalled to the camp and by dusk we had made the grave big enough and deep enough for eight of our deceased comrades.

Recollections of Father L. Marsden, *Catholic Weekly*, 15 November 1945

* A dixie is a metal tin with a handle and rounded sides that is used to hold food.

source B

Australian War Memorial [122309]

A bridge built by prisoners of war on the notorious Burma–Thailand Railway

Based on your reading of this evidence, prepare a list of the hardships the men building the railway had to endure.

ISBN 9780170347266

Changi prison camp

Prisoners of war were held in different parts of Asia and some were moved to Japan itself. The main camp was at Changi in Singapore, because the largest number of prisoners of war came with the fall of Singapore. After many of these men had worked on the Burma Railway, they were returned to Changi and to other camps in Malaya. From here they were forced to do work in the local area, including the construction of an airstrip not far from the camp. Within the Changi camp the prisoners took care of themselves and the Japanese patrolled the wire fences. To maintain morale, the prisoners often organised concerts or plays, but a constant problem was finding enough food and surviving the many tropical diseases. The greatest and most prolonged atrocity committed against the prisoners of war was that they were always starved of food. With rice and anything they were able to grow inside the camp, a prisoner got about 2000 calories a day, about half of what the soldiers needed. Many began to starve to death.

Australian War Memorial [ART26492]

Murray Griffin, *An Interior View of 100-metre Hut, Changi, 1944.* Brush and brown ink and wash over pencil 37.4 × 53.6 cm.

Life in Changi

From the memoirs of Stan Arneil, captured at Singapore in 1942

2 June 1943

Six deaths in twenty-four hours. We may have the cholera beaten. Malaria now almost as the cholera was. Tip work party today for all the fit men. Two hundred and forty men went to work, we marched in here 2000 strong. I was up last night to the latrines and have had colic pains all day. Tommy Williamson, one of our original eight mates, lost about 1.5 stones [10 kilograms] last night and could scarcely walk today ... looks like cholera to me. His arms are bone thin and his eyes have sunk half an inch into his head.

25 June 1943

Six months to Christmas Day, we may be free by then. Frank Tuckey gave me a great idea today. The first Sunday I am home, regardless of the time of the year, we will have a real Christmas dinner. Tommy and I collected some grass today which we boiled for lunch. We are trying to keep an old cobber of ours, Steve Porter, out of the grave and collected it more for him than ourselves. He also is in hospital in a very bad way.

Australian War Memorial [P01182.005]

Liberated Australian prisoners of war in August 1945

ISBN 9780170347266

I dream nightly of home and beautiful food. We are all the same. What exquisite joy to rock home in an electric train. To sleep between sheets in bugless beds, to know that love and kindness, food and plenty were always at home instead of hate and greed, famine and death waiting to strike one down. I do want to get home, if not entirely well then at least with my senses and sane. It is hard here but we must live through it.

Stan Arneil, *One Man's War*, Alternative Publishing Co-operative Ltd, Sydney, 1983

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Using your knowledge of the fighting on the Kokoda Track and other parts of New Guinea, write an essay in which you explain:
   (a) why the fighting in New Guinea was important for the defence of Australia
   (b) why the soldiers who fought there would have found it a very difficult campaign
   (c) the result of the campaign.

2 Put yourself in the position of a soldier on the Kokoda Track in 1942. Prepare a five-page diary extract which recounts some of the experiences you had during your time there.

3 Stanley James Reay was only one of the 2700 prisoners of war who died at Sandakan. He was born in 1922 and enlisted in the army in July 1940. As a member of the 8th Division, he was forced to surrender with the fall of Singapore and became a prisoner of war. In 1943 he was moved to Sandakan in northern Borneo and he died there as a prisoner of the Japanese in February 1945, aged 23.

   The war is over. You have been sent to Sandakan by the Australian government in October 1945 to find out why there were only six survivors from almost 2700 prisoners of war who were sent there in 1943. Prepare your report explaining what happened.

Australian War Memorial [P02467.715]

Prisoner of war Stanley James Reay

4 There are no Australians alive today who fought in World War I, but there are still soldiers alive who served in World War II. These people provide a very valuable historical source and their memories are worth recording.

   Try to find a person who served in the war and prepare a set of questions so that you can interview this person. On the basis of your interview, prepare an essay on the theme 'Memories of an Australian soldier of World War II'. If possible, record your interview and give a copy of the recording to your school library as a historical source for the future.

5 Use your research skills to find information about one or two Japanese military leaders who were executed for war crimes committed during World War II. Prepare a short class presentation in which you consider:
   (a) the background of the individual you have selected
   (b) what actions he was involved in that caused his arrest as a war criminal
   (c) your own conclusion as to whether justice was done.

Sandakan

ISBN 9780170347266

WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON THE AUSTRALIAN HOME FRONT?

4.4

Political change in Australia

When the war began in Europe in 1939, Australia was led by a coalition of the United Australia Party and the Country Party, with Robert Menzies as prime minister. Menzies was a man of great ability but he was disliked by many within his own party and distrusted by some members of the Country Party. In the federal election of September 1940 the government held on to office, but only with the support of two independents. In August 1941, facing increasing criticism from within his own party, Menzies resigned as prime minister. In October 1941 the government fell when the independent members withdrew their support, and the Labor Party came to power.

National Library of Australia

John Curtin (1885–1945), prime minister of Australia for most of World War II

The new prime minister, John Curtin, was born in Victoria in 1885, the son of a policeman, and left school at the age of thirteen. During World War I his pacifist views made him a vigorous opponent of conscription and his activities put him in gaol for a brief spell. In 1928 he entered federal parliament as the member for Fremantle, and he became leader of the Labor Party in 1935.

Curtin's life had never been easy. He had struggled against the hardships of his youth, against a serious drinking problem, which he conquered, and against bouts of depression. Now the pacifist of World War I was prime minister and war leader in World War II. His character was one of contradictions. By nature he was a lonely, introverted man, shy, reserved and aloof.

Curtin at first doubted his own capacity to lead Australia during the war. Yet, when the times demanded it, he emerged as a man of great willpower and determination, a persuasive orator and a politician of great skill. His success as a war leader came from the fact that he displayed total commitment. He allowed the military to make the important decisions regarding the conduct of the war and he gave Australia decisive and confident leadership at a time when the nation was about to face its greatest test. In March 1942, he was described in the *Sydney Morning Herald* as 'a man unambitious but high principled, of considerable ability, stronger and more decisive than his manner suggests and determined to win the war for his country and humanity. We could not choose a better leader today'.

The bombing of Darwin, 1942

Just four days after the fall of Singapore, Australia itself was attacked. On the morning of 19 February 1942, more than 80 Japanese planes bombed Darwin. The town, the air base and the vital shipping in the harbour were heavily damaged. A few hours later there was a second raid by Japanese bombers. During the raids 234 people were killed and over 300 were injured. Panic broke out in the area, as many expected the air attack to be part of a Japanese invasion and Darwin had little ability to defend itself. In fact, the Japanese had attacked Darwin in order to destroy the air base and the harbour because they saw these as a threat to their invasion of the Dutch East Indies.

Bombing of Darwin

ISBN 9780170347266

Australian War Memorial [ART22720]

An anti-aircraft battery in Darwin during the Japanese attack on 19 February 1942, drawn by Roy Hodgkinson in 1942

This was the first attack by an enemy on Australian soil, but it was not to be the last. In the course of the war Darwin suffered another 64 air raids, and the towns of Broome, Derby, Wyndham and Katherine were also bombed. At the time, the government censored the extent of the damage in Darwin and, in particular, the fact that a general panic had broken out, not only among the residents but also among the troops stationed there.

The events of early 1942 gave urgency to the decision – taken in January 1942, a month before the bombing of Darwin – to recall two of the Australian divisions (the 6th and 7th Divisions), then fighting in the Middle East. Although Australia may have felt isolated and threatened after the fall of Singapore and the bombing of Darwin, in fact it was not alone. By 1942 the United States of America was in the war against both Japan and Germany.

MAPGraphics

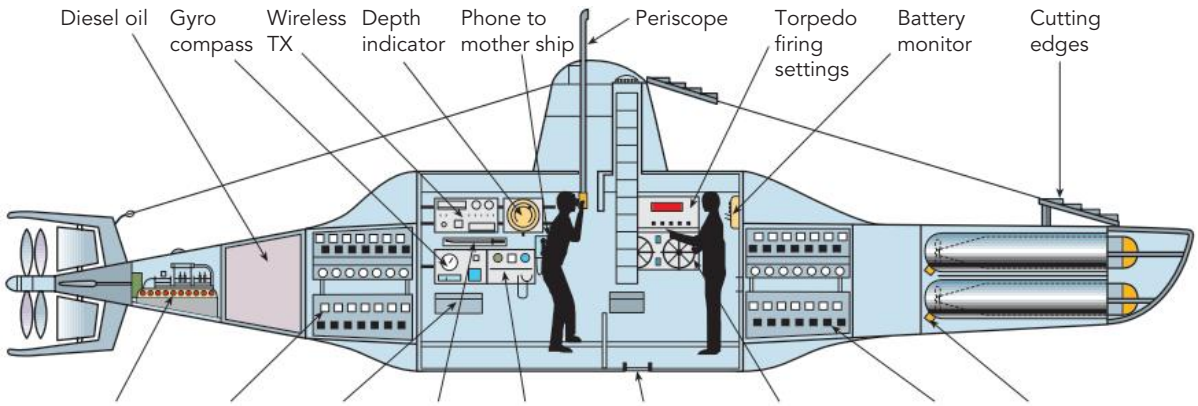
Bombing attacks by Japanese aircraft on targets in northern Australia

The attack on Sydney Harbour, May 1942

Australia attacked

Three months after Darwin was bombed, in May 1942, Sydney Harbour was attacked. At about 4.30 a.m. on the morning of 30 May 1942, an unidentified floatplane circled Sydney Harbour. It was assumed that the plane belonged to the American destroyer USS *Chicago*, which was in the harbour that day. In fact, the floatplane had been launched from a Japanese submarine out to sea. On the following night, 31 May, three Japanese midget submarines, launched by their mother

ISBN 9780170347266



Width 1.8 m
Height 1.78 m
Plating 8 mm
Length 24.4 m

Officer

1. Direction and speed
2. Communications
3. Target calculations
4. Underwater listening
5. Navigation

Petty Officer

1. Torpedo adjustments and firing
2. Air conditioning
3. Steering control
4. Depth control
5. Battery function

A diagram of the type of Japanese midget submarine that entered Sydney Harbour on the night of 31 May 1942.

ships some 15 kilometres east of Sydney Heads, entered Sydney Harbour. Their mission was to sink Allied ships in Sydney Harbour.

Harbour defences detected the first midget submarine just after 8 p.m. when it became entangled in an antisubmarine net near the harbour entrance. Unable to escape, the two crew members blew up their submarine. The second and third submarines avoided the net and entered Sydney Harbour, heading up towards the Harbour Bridge. By now a general alarm had been issued and the submarines were soon detected. When they were attacked by the harbour defences and depth charges, one had the opportunity to fire two torpedoes at the USS *Chicago*. The torpedoes missed their target but one hit the sea wall at Garden Island Naval Base and exploded. The blast destroyed the *Kuttabul*, a converted ferry, and killed 21 young sailors who were sleeping on board. One of the submarines was destroyed; the third submarine, the one that had launched the torpedoes, left Sydney Harbour but sank. Its wreck was found off Sydney's northern beaches 64 years later, in 2006. The four Japanese recovered from the wreckage of the destroyed submarines were given a military funeral.

Australian War Memorial [042975]

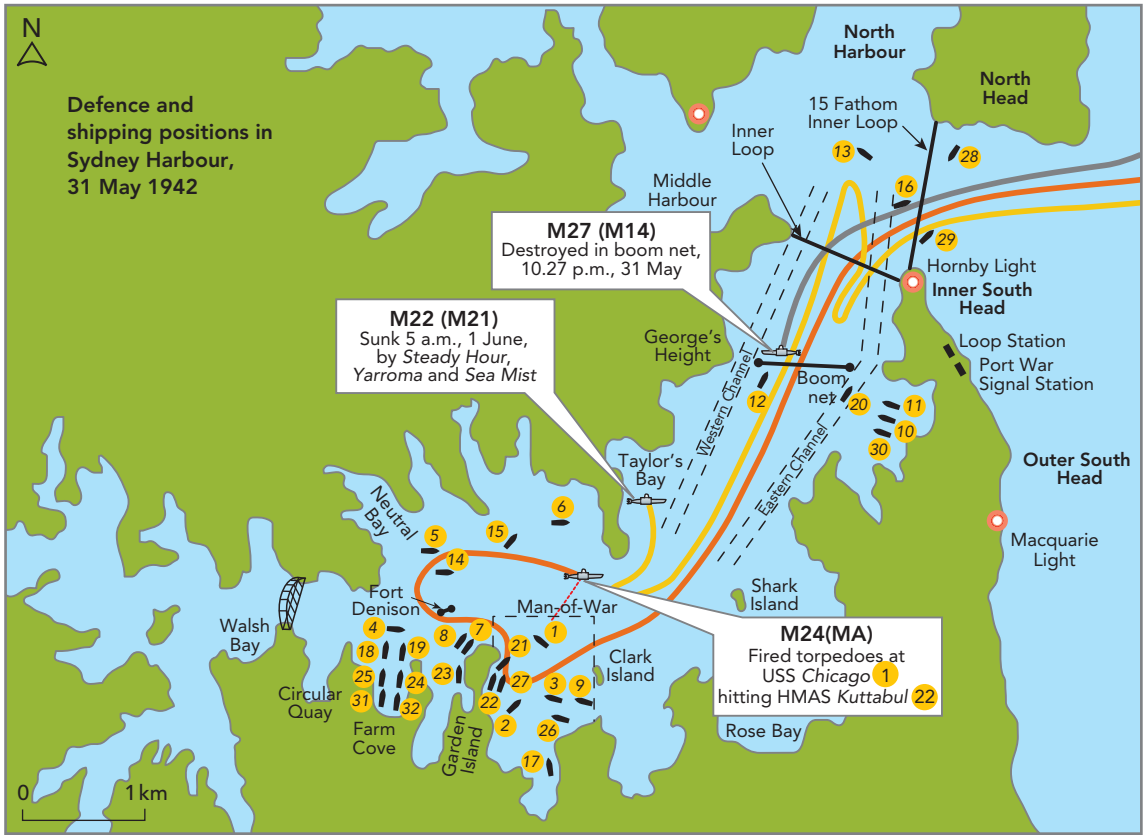
The *Kuttabul*, which was destroyed as a result of a torpedo attack by a Japanese midget submarine in May 1942. Twenty-one young sailors on board were killed.

The Kuttabul

ISBN 9780170347266

Australian War Memorial [P00444.048]

The anti-submarine net across Sydney Harbour in 1942. It extended across the narrowest part of the harbour entrance from Georges Head (foreground) to Watsons Bay.



1 USS *Chicago*
2 USS *Dobbin*
3 USS *Perkins*
4 HMAS *Canberra*
5 HMS *Kanimbla*
6 HMAS *Westralia*
7 HMAS *Geelong*
8 HMAS *Whyalla*
9 HMAS *Bungaree*
10 HMAS *Goonambee*
11 HMAS *Samuel Benbow*
12 HMAS *Yarroma*
13 HMAS *Yandra*
14 HMAS *Bingera*
15 HMAS *Doomba*
16 HMAS *Lauriana*
17 HMAS *Silver Cloud*
18 HMAS *Steady Hour*
19 HMAS *Sea Mist*
20 HMAS *Lolita*
21 HMAS *Miramar*
22 HMAS *Kuttabul*
23 HMAS *Adelaide*
24 HMAS *Leilani*
25 HMAS *Toomaree*
26 HMIS *Bombay*
27 RNS *K9*
28 HMAS *Allura*
29 HMAS *Yarrawonga*
30 HMAS *Adeli*
31 HMAS *Esmeralda*
32 HMAS *Marlean*

Submarine attack on Sydney Harbour, May 1942

ISBN 9780170347266

FROM THE SOURCE

A schoolboy living at Watsons Bay on Sydney Harbour recalls the attack

I can remember the sirens going off. We got out of bed and went to the kitchen, which had plywood on the windows as a blackout precaution. We all put on our ear muffs, which were made out of powder puffs with a cotton tape you tied under your chin. You also put a wooden peg in your mouth to stop the concussion.

We all got under the kitchen table. My Dad and Uncle Vic got an old lounge out because there wasn't enough room under the table and turned that upside down so the top became a cover. My three younger brothers got under that … My Dad was told there was a light showing in the nearby hotel. So he called out and threw small stones at the window to tell them to turn it out.

I remember the rumble. I remember biting on this peg and thinking 'I'm going to hurt my teeth and choke if I keep this peg in my mouth much longer.' I remember everyone got dressed and for some reason they were putting on their Sunday best. I don't know why.

D. Jenkins, *Hitting Home The Japanese Attack on Sydney 1942*, Random House, Sydney, 1992

1 **What was the aim of the Japanese attack on Sydney Harbour that night?**

2 **Explain why these people got under a table when the sirens went off.**

3 **Why was a blackout enforced in Sydney at the time?**

4 **Why was the boy told to bite on a peg in his mouth?**

5 **Put yourself in the position of this boy in 1942. Based on your reading and research, write a letter that the boy later wrote to his grandparents, telling them the details of the attack on Sydney Harbour that night and, in particular, the effect it had on the people of Sydney.**

He's coming south

The morale of the Australian people was already low in 1942, and the raids and attacks triggered a degree of panic among the civilian population. There was a great fear that the Japanese were coming south and that Australia was now open to attack. Britain had always been the traditional defender of Australia and now British power in Asia retreated before the Japanese.

Although many people believed that Australia might face invasion, the reality was that Japanese military leaders had already decided not to invade the country. By August 1942, with the American commander General Douglas MacArthur in Australia along with almost 90 000 American troops, the Australian government itself believed that the threat of invasion had passed. However, the fear of such an event was still promoted to the Australian people in posters and statements. It suited the government to keep the Australian people on a constant war footing so that they would accept the restrictions that the war placed on daily life. Curtin was a clever politician, and promoting the possibility of invasion until well into 1943 helped to motivate and unite the nation. 'The war', he said, 'could not be waged without ruthlessness.'

Wartime controls and the call for austerity

The war affected the lives of all Australians, not just the men and women on active service. During the war the government passed laws to give it great power over the lives and activities of everyday Australians, and many wartime controls and regulations governed daily life.

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Australian War Memorial [ARTV09225]

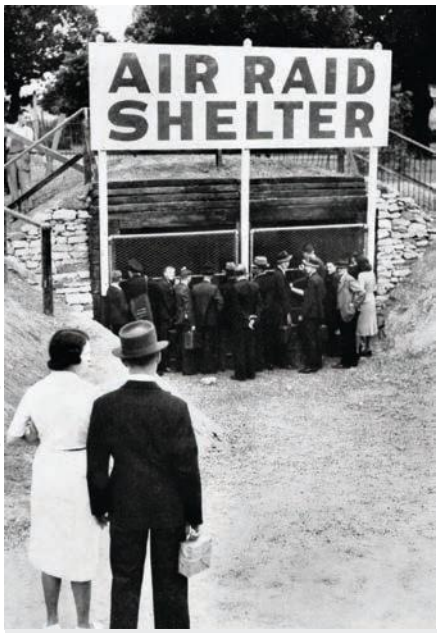
That the Japanese posed a real threat was a common message in Australian wartime propaganda after 1941. This poster, 'He's coming south', clearly illustrates this very real fear.

The *National Security Act 1939* gave the government the power to control the human resources of the country. John Curtin put it bluntly when he said that 'anybody in Australia can be called upon to do whatever the government wants'. Certain occupations such as police, firefighters and people working in war-related industries were classed as 'reserved occupations' and people in these jobs were not allowed to enlist. In addition to this, the government also had the power to direct labour to go wherever it was needed. In January 1942 a Directorate of Manpower was established with the authority to allocate labour on the basis of the war need. Men and women were required to leave non-essential industries and work in essential industries. The government also encouraged women to join the workforce. By the end of 1942 almost 400 000 Australian workers had been directed away from civilian, non-essential industries to war-related industries.

The theme of the war years for the civilian population was **austerity**: cutting consumption, going without, wasting nothing and living simply. Curtin himself set the example with his simple lifestyle and long working hours. Regulations restricted the sale of beer and spirits in the belief that excessive drinking weakened the nation's effectiveness. The first Saturday of each month became a Saturday without any horseraces, and all forms of gambling were actively discouraged. The production of luxury items ceased. Women were encouraged not to wear make-up, silk stockings were banned, and there were even regulations attempting to ban Christmas decorations and the giving of Christmas gifts. Despite the call for sacrifice, many of the austerity measures were unpopular.

There were restrictions on people travelling interstate, and everyone in the country over the age of 16 was required to carry an identity card. People were encouraged to lead by example and show others how their change of lifestyle and self-sacrifice allowed for the concentration of effort in essential, war-related industries. The government urged people to save their money and invest it in war loans, which provided money for the war effort.

Even without austerity measures, daily life on the home front was difficult. Across the country, work began on public air-raid shelters, and trenches were dug in many parks and backyards. Gun batteries were constructed at strategic points on the coast, and antisubmarine nets were placed in Sydney Harbour and major rivers. Swimming at beaches became difficult, as barbed-wire defences were placed across most beaches where a Japanese landing was considered possible. All schools held regular air-raid practices, which disrupted schooling, and some schools near the coast were evacuated inland. Blackouts were introduced in cities and towns near the coast and, if travelling at night, people had to tape the headlights of their cars. In the cities shop windows were boarded up, with peepholes to allow passers-by to view the few items that were on display. Protective sandbags appeared around public buildings, and flags were banned from government buildings so as not to draw attention to these buildings in the event of an air attack.



Australian War Memorial [042825]

An air-raid shelter, 1942. Such shelters were built in all major towns along the east coast of Australia.

Rationing

To ensure that everyone in the community had fair access to goods and to prevent hoarding, a system of **rationing** was introduced in 1942. When it was announced that clothes would be rationed, there was a rush of panic buying regardless of the war effort. Rationing stopped this. Each adult received a ration book with 112 coupons and each item of clothing had a particular coupon value. To buy an item, a person had to hand over the appropriate number of coupons along with the money. Throughout 1942 more and more items were rationed, including tea, butter, sugar, meat,

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firewood and cigarettes. Petrol had been rationed since 1940, forcing many motorists to garage their cars or find alternative fuels. Charcoal burners attached to the rear of cars were the most popular alternative. They produced a gas capable of powering most car engines.

All In

John Oxley Library, State Library of Queensland Neg: 67531

Checking travel documents at South Brisbane Railway Station, 1943. Regulations were in place to restrict non-urgent or unnecessary travel by civilians.

Australian War Memorial [136430]

Austerity at work. A woman takes home her allocated ration of firewood during the hard days of World War II.

FROM THE SOURCE

Austerity begins at home

source A

Do not worry about the high price of some vegetables. Cabbage leaves chopped fine are better than lettuce. Bananas are as valuable as potatoes. Oranges are good, but a quarter of an orange a day is enough for a child, so one orange a day will suffice for four children.

Begin early to teach the children to go without soft drinks and ice-cream. Lemon water with a little sugar and cream of tartar is delicious. So is iced water.

When buying meat, buy cheap cuts or not so cheap, but always buy good fresh meat; if you cannot afford to buy meat for every day, then have one meatless day; meat must be appetising to be valuable to the body, and we could all eat less and be well.

Necessarily, if you buy less meat, less fruit, less vegetables, you must buy more bread. Then buy cheese and serve eggs and cheese on toast in one of the many savoury ways, or just plain bread, butter and cheese.

The Argus, 5 September 1942

Women and stockings

source B

Sir:

It is almost unbelievable that there are people in the government who would abolish the wearing of stockings by women. Why stockings, while there are hundreds of other things which could be dispensed with? Do not those in authority know that the wearing of stockings by girls and women is one of the most vital necessities to the health of womanhood, and that abolition of stockings would undermine the health of all women, especially young expectant mothers?

Much more could be accomplished by restriction of the sale of cosmetics, scents, theatre boxes of sweets, etc. No person should be allowed to spend more than 5 shillings on a Christmas present. The scramble for sport, football and racing is still a disgrace to Australia.

Julia Lloyd Begrave, Elsternwick

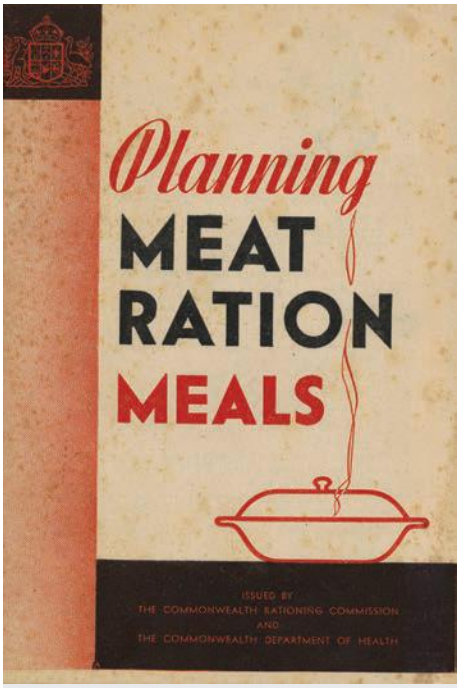
The Argus, 12 September 1942

source C

Regulations to enforce the manufacture and styling of simplified clothing for men women and children takes effect today … The 'Victory Suit' for men consists of trousers and single-breasted, two-button coat only; waistcoats have been abolished. There will be no more double-breasted jackets … It is estimated that 113 'Victory Suits' can be manufactured from cloth needed to make 100 normal suits … (for women) excessive fullness in skirts is banned … No more evening dresses, evening cloaks, evening wraps, dinner gowns and hostess gowns are to be made.

Sydney Morning Herald, 27 July 1942

source D



Museum Victoria

A wartime recipe book offering meals based on the restricted amount of meat that was available through the rationing system.

source E

Australian War Memorial [ART00161]

On the home front posters were used to promote different messages about the war effort.

1 The main purpose of Source A was:

- **A** to encourage people to eat less food
- **B** to help Australians grow food to support the war effort
- **C** to explain how some foods can substitute for others
- **D** to explain to people how rationing worked.

2 Is the letter in Source B a statement of fact or opinion? What reason does the writer suggest for stockings being necessary?

3 Explain why the letter in Source B convinces you or leaves you unconvinced about the banning of stockings.

4 Why would the government seek to control the design of clothing (Source C) and the banning of particular types of clothing?

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5 **Prepare an extended paragraph in which you explain why this measure in Source C is either useful or a complete waste of time and resources.**

6 **Why would a wartime recipe book, such as that shown in Source D, be helpful for the war effort?**

7 **Explain the message of the poster in Source E that 'Food is a munition of war'.**

8 **Imagine that you are a member of the government. Write a letter to explain why the government is seeking to control the aspects of daily life reflected in these sources.**

The American presence

A feature of daily life in the war years was the presence of American troops in the country. By 1943 there were 120 000 American soldiers in Australia, of whom some 96 000 were stationed in Queensland. The American soldiers were generally well received by Australians. They were welcomed into Australian homes and for many Australians it was the first time they came to know people from another country. Maintaining the long-held suspicion of non-white people, however, many Australians treated black American troops with less enthusiasm.

US Marines in wartime Melbourne

The arrival of so many Americans also saw an increase in American goods and popular culture in Australia. Australians were already used to American films and American place names, but now Australians were exposed to products such as chewing gum, hamburgers, coffee and Coca-Cola, and for younger Australians the delight of coloured Superman comics. Many Australians were worried about the impact of American culture on the traditional British culture of the country.

American troops enjoyed better pay and conditions than Australian troops. Many Australian women found the Americans attractive with their smart uniforms, polite manners, greater spending power and access to a steady supply of luxury items. By the end of the war, some 7000 Australian women had left for the United States as war brides.

Conscription again

In October 1939, a month after the war began, the Australian government introduced conscription for 20-year-old men. As a result, two military forces came into being in Australia: the Second AIF, which consisted of volunteers, and the Citizen Military Force, or militia, with volunteers and conscripts. The Defence Act did not require men in the militia to serve outside Australia or its territories.

By late 1942, as military operations against the Japanese increased in the islands to the north, there was a need to increase the numbers of fighting men. The militia, with some 260 000 men in October 1942, was now larger than the AIF, which had 171 000 men, but the law did not allow the militia to serve beyond New Guinea. Some people called the militia 'koalas', suggesting that they were a protected species and could not be shot or exported.

The Labor Party traditionally opposed conscription for overseas service. The issue had split the party and the nation in World War I, and John Curtin himself had not only opposed conscription in 1916 but had briefly gone to jail for his anti-conscription activities. In 1943, however, Curtin believed that Australian troops, including conscripts, should serve overseas and he was under pressure from General MacArthur to make this happen. With great political skill, Curtin persuaded his own Labor Party to accept the need for conscription. The opponent of conscription in World War I became its supporter in World War II.

Under changes to the Defence Act passed in February 1943, the area in which the militia and conscripts could be used was extended north to the equator.

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Censorship

Throughout the war the government had extensive powers of censorship. Radio broadcasts, films and all printed material were controlled. Reporters and war correspondents could publish stories only after the censors had approved them. Among the items never allowed in print were troop movements or military plans. Soldiers' letters were censored, telephone calls could be monitored, and a government campaign of posters warned against idle talk or gossip. On most billboards and in the press there were government posters, of which some listed wartime regulations, others encouraged enlistment or the purchase of war bonds, while others were deliberate propaganda to encourage action and hatred of the enemy. Censorship also promoted a particular image that the government wished to present of the enemy. Racial abuse of the enemy was encouraged, and examples of Japanese brutality in the war were used to reinforce the popular image of a brutal and fanatical enemy.

The object of censorship was not only to protect military operations but also to keep up morale among the civilian population. Bad military news was often modified or not reported at all. When Darwin was bombed, the details of the deaths and destruction were not reported, nor was there any mention of the widespread panic that followed.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Australian War Memorial [139316]

Wartime censorship

source B

Australian War Memorial [ARTV00762]

Wartime poster warning people against idle talk

1 Explain what is happening in Source A.

2 Prepare a list of some of the things that may well have been cut out of the letter.

3 What is the point being made in the poster in Source B?

4 Explain why this poster with only two words can be so effective.

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Indigenous Australians and the war

Historians estimate that some 3000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people served in the Australian armed forces during World War II. The exact figure is difficult to determine since the Defence Act did not permit men to enlist who were not 'substantially of European origin or descent' and enlistment records did not record the race of the men who did enlist.

By 1942, as the war situation worsened and the need for manpower became greater, the enlistment regulations were relaxed. Aboriginal men served in all three branches of the armed forces, but most were in the army. Thousands of others were employed as civilian workers in northern Australia, working on roads and airstrips, as drivers and mechanics and in other duties of military importance. These men were paid, and for many it was the first time in their life they had received a wage. In addition, this wartime experience provided many with skills they would not normally have acquired. A special military unit of Aboriginal men was formed in Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. Using their bush skills, their duty was to patrol the coastal regions east of Darwin to give early warning of any Japanese landings.

Australian War Memorial [057894]

Reg Saunders, then a sergeant, with members of his battalion at a railway station in Queensland in October 1943. Reg Saunders served in the desert war, in Greece and in Crete. After returning to Australia, he saw service on the Kokoda Track. He was the first Indigenous Australian to be commissioned as an officer into the Australian Army.

FROM THE SOURCE

Lieutenant Reg Saunders, an Aboriginal soldier of World War II, speaks out

I never fought for anybody but Australia. I always was loyal to my country … I don't owe allegiance or loyalty to the Queen of England. They tried to bloody destroy me, and my family, my tribe, my people … my loyalty was purely Australian.

Quoted in R. Hall, *Fighters from the Fringe*, Canberra, 1995

1 **Explain why Reg Saunders, an Aboriginal soldier in World War II, was prepared to fight in this war.**

2 **Why does Reg Saunders feel no loyalty to the British or the British cause?**

The changing role of women in World War II

As soon as war broke out in 1939, many women were eager to serve, but there was an early reluctance by the government to allow women into the armed services. War was seen as men's work and many felt that women's participation would be more a hindrance than a help. However, during a visit to Britain in 1940, prime minister Menzies was impressed by the very real

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National Library of Australia

Cover of *The Australian Women's Weekly*, 13 January 1945. How might this cover of a popular magazine shape women's responses to the war?

contribution that women were making to the war effort in that country, and he came to support a more active role for women in the forces.

In 1941, as the war situation worsened, women were allowed to join the armed forces, and in the course of the war 66 500 women did so. Three major women's organisations emerged:

- the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF), formed in March 1941
- the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS), formed in August 1941
- the Women's Royal Australian Naval Service (WRANS), formed in April 1941.

Women in these organisations performed essential duties in clerical areas, transport and mechanical repairs, signals and communications, and freed thousands of men for service overseas. However, with the exception of nurses, women were not allowed to serve abroad.

Other women joined the Australian Women's Land Army. This organisation was formed in July 1942 to deal with the possibility that food production might fall as more men left the farms and rural industries. As its name suggests, the Women's Land Army placed women on the land, harvesting vital crops and managing livestock. They became a valued part of the war effort and played an important role in keeping up food production in a country isolated and at war. Almost 3000 women served in the Women's Land Army.

During World War I, women had been very active in charity and support work. Women did similar work in World War II and many thousands of older women, in particular, devoted themselves to unpaid voluntary work with the Red Cross and the Australian Comforts Fund. Apart from the traditional tasks of providing items for the soldiers, voluntary work included roles as air-raid wardens responsible for air-raid shelters, first aid work, providing hospitality for Australian and American servicemen, fundraising, and even growing vegetables in what were called 'victory gardens'.

Australian War Memorial [013528]

Members of the Women's Auxiliary Australian Air Force (WAAAF) in November 1942, carrying out maintenance work on an aircraft wing

World War II marked an important step on the road to full equality for women in Australia. As the war progressed, women were encouraged to enter the workforce, particularly as men left to join the armed forces. Initially the government favoured only the employment of single women, but after 1942 married women were urged to join the workforce as well. Some 30 per cent of all factory workers were women, and women moved into roles traditionally reserved for men, from bank tellers to tram drivers. Over 150 000 women were employed in munitions plants, and others worked in heavy industry, including shipyards and repair facilities. Women also worked on the land in the vital task of food production.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Looking back over their years of service, WAAAF were almost unanimous in their comments. Many regarded them as the happiest of their lives; all felt they gave them independence – by no means the norm for young women in those days – and lifelong friendships they would never have made otherwise. For the young recruits, many from outback areas or sheltered suburban homes, joining the service was a totally new experience, opening doors they had never contemplated.

After the strangeness of their new lives was overcome, they thrived on it; learning new skills and developing tolerance and understanding as they worked and lived with people of backgrounds different from their own. Most felt they had helped to win the war, which gave them a warm and patriotic glow of satisfaction. Some felt they had gained educationally.

Clare Stevenson, in Clare Stevenson and Honor Darling (eds), *The WAAAF Book*, Hale and Iremonger, Sydney, 1984. p. 28

1 **Based on your reading of Source A, prepare a list of the benefits women found by joining the war effort.**

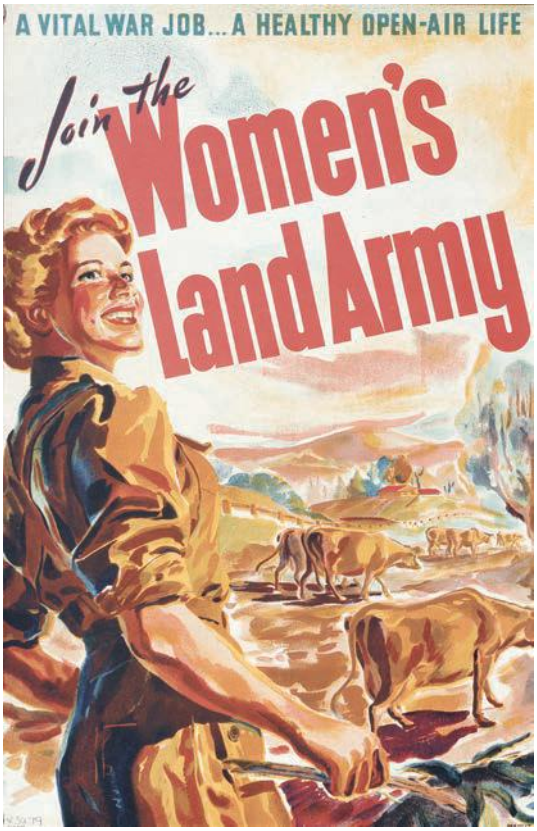
2 **What do you think was the greatest benefit for women? Explain your reason.**

3 **What does the image on the poster in Source B portray?**

4 **What is the main message in this poster for**
(a) women?
(b) men?

5 **Does the poster in Source B support or refute the basic message of Source A?**

source B



Unknown, A vital war job, a healthy open air life: join the Women's Land Army 1943, Lithograph on paper, 74.6 x 47.8 cm, Australian War Memorial (ARTV06446)

By the middle of 1943 more than 840 000 women were in paid employment in Australia, and by the end of the war 33 per cent of women under 65 years of age were in the workforce. As well as serving their country in war, many of these women also had the ongoing responsibility of caring for their families.

Even though women took men's places in the workforce, they were not paid the same wages as men. Women generally received only about 57 per cent of the male wage, and there remained the belief that women's work in industry or in rural production was in some way inferior to the output

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Australian War Memorial [000580]

A group of nurses entertain troops on board a transport ship en route to the Middle East in 1940.

of men. Some trade unions opposed the entry of so many women, fearing that, because they were cheaper to employ, they would permanently displace men.

The other major role of women in the war was in nursing. During the war some 3400 women served in the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS). Many went overseas to provide vital medical support for the troops. Some were captured by the Japanese and some lost their lives. In February 1942 a ship carrying 65 Australian nurses was sunk by the Japanese near Sumatra (Indonesia). Those who survived the sinking were washed ashore on nearby Banka Island. Most became prisoners of the Japanese, but a group of about 20 nurses on a different part of the island were machine-gunned to death. Only one of the nurses, Vivian Bullwinkel, survived the massacre. In the following year, nurses were among the 299 people who were killed when the Japanese sank a hospital ship, the *Centaur*, off the Queensland coast near Brisbane.

WS

Empathy task: Land Army

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What impact did the bombing of Darwin and the Japanese attack on Sydney Harbour have on many Australians?
2 What advantage was there for the government in promoting the idea of a threat from the advancing Japanese?
3 What was the role of the Directorate on Manpower in World War II?
4 List some of the wartime restrictions that average Australians had to endure during World War II.
5 What was rationing? What were some of the items rationed during World War II?
6 What role did Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders play in the defence of Australia during World War II?
7 Why did some tensions develop between Australian and American soldiers during World War II?
8 Before changes to the Defence Act, what were the only areas in which the militia could serve?
9 Why would John Curtain have found it difficult to support conscription during World War II?
10 What was the purpose of the censorship regulations in Australia during World War II?
11 What were some of the organisations that women could serve in during World War II?

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What events or individuals do the following quotes refer to?
   (a) We came to sink some ships in 1942 but we were the ones that got sunk.
   (b) The attack was bad enough but the panic that followed was hard to believe.
   (c) Sometimes we were unfairly called 'Koalas', but they did not call us that after Kokoda.
   (d) The man who opposed me in 1916 went on to introduce me in 1943.
   (e) Australian soldiers sometimes said that the trouble was that we were 'overpaid, oversexed and over here'!
   (f) During the war, I was sometimes called 'the man who killed Christmas'.
   (g) This organisation, consisting mainly of women, helped to maintain food supplies during the war.

2 Explain the meaning of this cartoon from Sydney's *Daily Telegraph* of 1942. Write an extended paragraph on the role of censorship in Australia during World War II. Your paragraph should explain how and why it was introduced. Prepare a censored letter you have received in the mail from a soldier serving in New Guinea.

3 Prepare your own cartoon or poster on one of the following themes:
   (a) Not wasting food
   (b) Not undertaking unnecessary travel
   (c) Not talking about military matters

4 Select *one* aspect of life in Australia during World War II and prepare a multimedia presentation for the class. Include images in the presentation and take the topic you have chosen to some depth.

5 Write an essay in which you outline and explain how the role of women changed in Australia during World War II.

6 Write a letter to a friend in Britain in which you describe what the policy of austerity was like in Australia during 1942. Your letter should also include why the government has introduced so many restrictions and your opinion of them.

A cartoon from the Sydney *Daily Telegraph*, 1942

7 Two very important events happened in early 1942: Darwin was bombed and submarines entered Sydney Harbour.

   You are a reporter for the Sydney *Daily Mail* and you have to prepare a newspaper front page complete with the story and images of one of the events. Your editor wants to use one of these headlines:

   (a) Enemy submarines in Sydney Harbour

   or

   (b) Northern Australia bombed!

   The newspaper item should include some of the following:

   - a recount of the details of the event
   - an explanation of how the enemy got to Australia
   - an explanation of what the aims of the attack were
   - an evaluation of how successful the attack was
   - a judgement about how important the event was in the development of the war.

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4.5 WHAT WAS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF WORLD WAR II IN AUSTRALIA'S INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS?

When the war broke out in 1939 Australia had declared its immediate support for Britain. Troops of the 6th, 7th and 9th Divisions of the AIF were sent to the Middle East, 27 000 Australians in the air force were involved in the Empire Air Training Scheme that provided air crews to fight in Britain, and half of the Australian navy went to the Mediterranean to assist the British war effort. There was always the understanding that, if the time ever came when Australia needed support, Britain would in turn come to Australia's aid.

The entry of Japan into the war not only tested Australia itself; it also tested the bond of loyalty and dependence Australia had always had with Britain. When the United States entered the war in 1941 and took up the fight against both Germany and Japan, the political situation began to change. Britain needed the United States to win the war against Germany, and both Britain and Australia needed the United States to turn back the Japanese advance in Asia. The United States began to assume the role that Britain once had. In defending its own interests, the United States came to defend Australia's interests as well.

'Australia looks to America'

At the close of 1941, after Pearl Harbor but before the final disaster at Singapore and the attacks on Australia itself, Prime Minister Curtin made a powerful appeal, not to Britain but to the United States. In a newspaper article he wrote:

> "Without any inhibitions of any kind, I make it quite clear that Australia looks to America, free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom. We know the problems that the United Kingdom faces. We know the dangers of dispersal of strength, but we know too that Australia can go and Britain can still hold on. We are therefore determined that Australia shall not go, and we shall exert all our energies towards the shaping of a plan, with the United States as its keystone, which will give to our country some confidence of being able to hold out until the tide of battle swings against the enemy."

The *Herald*, Melbourne, 27 December 1941

What was significant in these remarks by Curtin was not the idea that Australia looked to America; that was already accepted and caused no surprise. It was the use of the phrase 'free of any pangs as to our traditional links or kinship with the United Kingdom' that angered both the British and the Americans. Curtin himself later admitted that he regretted the comments.

Australia had always depended on a great power for protection and that power had always been Britain, the 'Mother Country'. Now Britain was fighting for its own survival against Nazi Germany and its empire in the Far East was falling to Japan. Curtin was simply stating the obvious, that the United States alone had the power and the capacity to assist Australia. For the Americans, the call was unnecessary. Australia was the only point from which a counteroffensive against the Japanese could have been launched. President Roosevelt had already pledged that the United States would defend Australia if the need arose.

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FROM THE SOURCE

An assessment of Curtin's remarks

The statement enraged Churchill, who had just sacrificed the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse* to the defence of Australia, and Roosevelt, to whom it seemed to be directed, thought it smacked of panic and disloyalty. Not a clever move to put off the two men who were the ultimate guarantors of Australia's safety.

Churchill was in America conferring with Roosevelt when Curtin's statement appeared. The two great allied powers were planning an unprecedented integration of their command structure … while this was in train the panic merchant from the Antipodes [Australia] declared he preferred one to the other … 'Free of any pangs' was flashed around the world to the dismay of Churchill and Roosevelt and to the delight of the propaganda outfits in Berlin and Tokyo, who had a story about Australia deserting Britain.

John Hirst, *Looking for Australia: Historical Essays*, Black Inc., Melbourne, 2010, p. 180

1 **Explain why John Curtin's New Year message of 1942 was such an important statement at the time.**

2 **Explain the reference to the sacrifice of the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*.**

3 **What kind of source is John Hirst's extract?**

4 **What historical arguments does John Hirst put forward in the above extract?**

A difference of opinion

In February 1942 two Australian divisions, the 6th Division and the 7th Division, had left the Middle East in troop convoys to sail home to Australia. As the Japanese continued their advance into Asia, the British and American governments both requested that the 7th Division of the AIF, then at sea, be sent to Burma to help resist the Japanese advance there.

A cartoon from the *Daily Telegraph*, 1942

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Curtin disagreed and wanted all the troops to come home. Singapore had fallen and Darwin had just been bombed and the government felt that the nation was now in serious danger. Churchill used President Roosevelt to pressure Curtin for the change.

In a dispatch to Winston Churchill on 22 February 1942, Curtin made this position very clear, but the British leader had already ordered part of the convoy to change course. The Australian government now insisted that these Australian troops must come home. In strongly worded telegrams to Churchill, Curtin and the Australian government were determined to have their way. The British were forced to accept the Australian demand and all the troops sailed for home.

Curtin and Churchill

FROM THE SOURCE

John Curtin and Winston Churchill, 1942

Prime Minister Curtin to Prime Minister Churchill, 19 February 1942

CANBERRA, 19 February 1942

MOST SECRET MOST IMMEDIATE

After most anxious consideration Government has decided that it cannot agree to the proposal that 7th AIF Division should be diverted to Burma.

Churchill ignored Australia's wishes and he ordered the convoy to change course towards Burma. He then cabled to Curtin.

Prime Minister Churchill to Prime Minister Curtin, 22 February 1942

LONDON, 22 February 1942

MOST IMMEDIATE MOST SECRET

We could not contemplate that you would refuse our request and that of the President of the United States for the diversion of the leading division to save the situation in Burma ... We therefore decided that the convoy should be temporarily diverted to the northward. The convoy is now too far north for some of the ships in it to reach Australia without refuelling. These physical considerations give a few days for the situation to develop and for you to review the position should you wish to do so.

Australian High Commissioner in London (Stanley Bruce, former prime minister) to Prime Minister Curtin

LONDON, 23 February 1942

MOST IMMEDIATE CLEAR THE LINE FOR PRIME MINISTER PERSONAL HIMSELF ONLY

Have just seen copy of telegram the Prime Minister [Churchill] has sent to you this afternoon ... I feel I must send you privately my reactions; I am appalled by it and its possible repercussions. It is arrogant and offensive and contradicts assurances given that the convoy was not being diverted from its direct route to Australia. Any reaction on your part would be justified. None the less I urge restraint in your reply ... a crisis in the relations between Australia and the United Kingdom arising out of the action of one man must be avoided.

Prime Minister Curtin to Prime Minister Churchill, 23 February 1942

CANBERRA, 23 February 1942

MOST IMMEDIATE MOST SECRET

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From [your dispatch] of February 22 it appears that you have diverted the convoy towards Rangoon [Burma] and had treated our approval to this vital diversion as merely a matter of form. By doing so you have established a physical situation which adds to the dangers of the convoy and the responsibility of the consequences of such diversion rests upon you ... Australia's outer defences are now quickly vanishing and our vulnerability is completely exposed. With AIF troops we sought to save Malaya and Singapore, falling back on Netherlands East Indies [Indonesia]. All these northern defences are gone or going. Now you contemplate using the AIF to save Burma ... We feel a primary obligation to save Australia not only for itself but to preserve it as a base for the development of the war against Japan. In the circumstances it is quite impossible to reverse a decision which we made with the utmost care and which we have affirmed and reaffirmed.

When it became clear that the Australian government would not change its position, Churchill conceded. He cabled to Curtin.

Prime Minister Churchill to Prime Minister Curtin, 23 February 1942

LONDON, 23 February 1942

Your convoy is now proceeding to re-fuel at Colombo before proceeding to Australia in accordance with your wishes ... Of course I take full responsibility for my actions.

1 **Explain why in the fourth cable (Curtin to Churchill, 23 February) the government would not allow the troops to be diverted to Burma.**

2 **From your reading of the second cable (Churchill to Curtin, 22 February), what action has the British government taken?**

3 **Why do you think the President of the United States is mentioned in the second cable?**

4 **What is the main point being made by the Australian High Commissioner in London in the third cable?**

5 **From your reading of the Australian High Commissioner's cable, what do you think is his main worry?**

6 **Explain what John Curtin means by the remarks in his cable of 23 February that 'Australia's outer defences are now quickly vanishing'.**

7 **What comment by Curtin in that cable probably caused Churchill some annoyance? Is there any evidence of this annoyance in the last cable (Churchill to Curtin, 23 February)?**

General Douglas MacArthur

As the 7th Division sailed for home and a rapturous welcome, Australia was welcoming another arrival in General Douglas MacArthur. In March 1942, as the Japanese advanced on the Philippines, President Roosevelt ordered MacArthur to move his headquarters to Australia. Only after his safe arrival in Darwin was the Australian government informed that he was in Australia. The Australian people greeted MacArthur's arrival as a sign that the United States had committed itself to Australia's defence. General MacArthur was confirmed as the supreme commander of all Allied forces in the south-west Pacific. The Australian commander, Sir Thomas Blamey, was given command of all land forces in the area.

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Australia, Britain and the United States: A changing relationship

World War II marked a decisive turning point in Australia's relationship with Britain and the United States.

In 1940 the British government had doubts that Japan would, in fact, begin to move into South-East Asia. When this happened in 1941, the British government then expressed doubt that Japan would mount an invasion of Australia. In a telegram to reassure the Australian government in 1940, Churchill said that 'if Japan set about invading Australia or New Zealand on a large scale, Britain would cut our losses in the Mediterranean and proceed to your aid sacrificing every interest except only the defence position of this island [Britain] on which all else depends'. It could be argued that assurances like this were intended mainly to ensure that Australia maintained its support for the British war effort, which is in fact what happened. The British Government was not completely open in its dealings with the Australian government in 1940 and 1941, and Australia made the mistake of not being more assertive or critical of aspects of British policy.

In 1942, with the fall of Singapore, Australia itself was threatened by Japan and the reality was that Britain was unable to come to Australia's aid. Britain was in a desperate struggle for survival against Nazi Germany, and with Japan advancing into Asia Britain was able to provide little assistance. For Britain the absolute first priority was the defeat of Nazi Germany. This meant priority for the Middle East and not Malaya, where the Japanese were poised to advance.

In the dark days of 1942 Australia was vulnerable and alone. Despite assurances from Britain the Australian government had to accept that Britain saw Australia as an expendable part of the empire and that the country was very much on its own. Attempts by the Australian government to secure additional British support for the war against Japan failed. Even General MacArthur noted this when he told Prime Minister Curtin in June 1942 that Britain had not sent 'an additional ship, soldier or squadron' to Australia, despite the fact that 'Australia was part of the British Empire and it was related to Britain and the other Dominions by ties of blood, sentiment and allegiance to the crown'.

FROM THE SOURCE

General MacArthur and John Curtin

The relationship between MacArthur, the theatrical, ambitious deeply suspicious yet gifted showman and the principled rather aloof Curtin was an extraordinary one … Conscious of his complete lack of military experience, Curtin rarely challenged MacArthur's judgement. He was content to let the American general be the dominant member of the partnership in military matters … Towards the end of the war especially, when the Prime Minister's health was failing, Australia's interests were not well served by the subordination … even if Curtin had tried to exert more influence over MacArthur, he would have failed given the egoism [self-importance] of the US general and the imbalance of power within the Australian–US relationship.

J. Beaumont, *Australia's War 1939–1945*, Allen & Unwin, 1996, pp. 35–6

1 **Explain why Curtin made no real attempt to influence the military decisions of General MacArthur.**

2 **What opinion does the author of this extract have of General MacArthur?**

3 **Explain what is meant by the 'imbalance of power within the Australian–US relationship'.**

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Australia's acceptance that it was alone is evident in John Curtin's 'Australia looks to America' speech in December 1941. In this statement Australia was acknowledging two facts: the limits of British power and influence and the fact that Australia still needed an ally and protector.

The United States of America did come to Australia's aid in 1942, but the main motive was self-interest on America's part. Australia was the best place from which America could begin a counteroffensive against the Japanese, who had so deliberately attacked the American fleet at Pearl Harbor. When General MacArthur arrived in Australia in 1942, he was welcomed by the Australian government and the Australian people. Given the danger from Japan and the failure of British power, the government had little choice but to fall in with the United States' military plans and strategy.

World War II therefore marked the beginning of Australia's relationship with the United States. The United States was to assume the role of Australia's great and powerful protector. In the past Australia had demonstrated its loyalty to Britain by fighting in Britain's wars. In the future Australia would once again demonstrate its loyalty to its protector, by fighting with the United States in wars such as those in Korea and Vietnam.

Australian War Memorial [139812]

General Douglas MacArthur and Prime Minister John Curtin in 1942

Shifting apron strings

The defeat of Japan

After securing parts of the Solomon Islands and New Britain, MacArthur's strategy was to leave pockets of Japanese where they were, and, with the United States' growing superiority on the sea and in the air, to advance north to the Philippines. Australian forces, commanded by General Sir Thomas Blamey, were left to fight a series of 'mopping up' campaigns in New Guinea, New Britain, the Solomon Islands and Borneo, which had little strategic value in the final defeat of Japan. By 1944 the real war had moved far to the north.

Early in 1945 the Americans reoccupied the Philippines, and in April they landed at Okinawa. In savage fighting there, Japan lost 100 000 men, or 90 per cent of the force defending the island. However, it was the use of the atomic bomb in August 1945 that finally ended the war. On 6 August 1945 a single American plane, the *Enola Gay*, named after the pilot's mother, dropped an atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima in southern Japan. Two-thirds of the city was destroyed and 80 000 people

Australian War Memorial [ART26675]

Painting of the Japanese surrender in Bougainville, New Guinea, August 1945. Geoffrey Mainwaring, *Surrender Ceremony, Bougainville 8th September 1945*, 1948. Oil on canvas, 61.3 × 76.6 cm.

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were killed. Three days later a second bomb killed 40 000 people in Nagasaki. On 14 August the Japanese emperor, Hirohito, broadcast to his people and ordered them to surrender. 'The war situation', he told his people, 'has developed not necessarily to Japan's advantage … we must now bear the unbearable and endure the unendurable.' General MacArthur accepted the formal surrender of Japan on board the battleship *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay on 2 September 1945.

The experience of war

World War I and World War II affected Australians in different ways. The Australian people responded to World War I with great emotion. In World War I Australia announced its newly found nationhood to the world through the deeds of its young soldiers. In World War I, 417 000 men, all volunteers, enlisted and some 60 000 were killed. The war left a permanent scar on the nation with the tragic loss of so many young men.

If Australia had been trying to prove itself as a nation in World War I, World War II was a test of nationhood. For the first time in its history the nation came under direct threat and attack. Civilians were killed, and civilians were affected by the war much more than they had been in World War I. Australia in World War II suffered major disruption to daily life in a way it had not in World War I, as waging war became the common aim of all. In other ways, however, World War II was less of an ordeal than World War I. Some 540 000 Australians served in the armed forces from 1939 to 1945 and 33 826 died, about half the number that Australia lost in the war of 1914–18.

Commemorating World War II

After the initial panic and anxiety of 1941–42, Australia faced up to the reality of war with purpose and determination. After supporting Britain's war in the Middle East and suffering the loss of troops in the desert war, in Greece and Crete, in the air and on the sea, and the 15 000 troops lost with the British surrender of Singapore, Australians as a nation went on to fight bravely against Germany, Italy and Japan and played a significant role in the defeat of the enemy in 1945.

A crowd of civilians, servicemen and schoolboys celebrating in George Street, Brisbane, after the announcement of Japan's surrender on 15 August 1945. There were similar scenes of rejoicing throughout Australia.

Australian War Memorial [P10364.005]

ISBN 9780170347266

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who was the American general who was based in Australia for part of the war?

2 What was the cause of the disagreement between the British and Australian Governments in February 1942?

3 Who was commander in chief of the Australian military forces from 1942?

4 What was the *Enola Gay*?

5 In an extended paragraph, explain the changing nature of the relationship between Britain and Australia during World War II.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Using resources such as the photo on the opposite page and the recollections of people who were there at the time, prepare an essay or multimedia presentation on how Australia celebrated the end of World War II.

2 Write an essay in which you explain how and why Australia's relationship with the United States began during World War II.

3 John Curtin, who was prime minister from 1941 to 1945, did not live to see the final victory. He died on 5 July 1945, only weeks before the end of the war in the Pacific. Prepare an obituary for a newspaper of the time in which you evaluate John Curtin's place as a war-time leader of Australia.

ISBN 9780170347266

4.6 WHAT WAS THE LEGACY OF WORLD WAR II?

World War II ended in 1945 but the consequences of this great conflict remained for the rest of the 20th century, and indeed are still present today. The war had changed the world and caused change in most of the countries of the world, including Australia. It was, by every historical measure, a monumental turning point of world history. All wars are destructive and the most obvious consequence of the war was the cost in life and property, for World War II was also the most destructive war in history.

Every war destroys and every war creates change, but World War II is unique for two factors unseen in any conflict up to that time. It was during this war that two events challenged the consciousness of the world. The first was the Holocaust, the worst example of **genocide** with the systematic killing of up to six millions Jews; and the second was the atomic attacks on two Japanese cities in 1945, for changing the war from a conventional war to an atomic war endangered the whole future of the world.

Hiroshima Peace Memorial

The atomic bomb

The United States began work on the development of an atomic bomb almost as soon as the scientific possibility of such a weapon had become a reality. In 1939, just before the outbreak of war, a number of American scientists urged President Roosevelt to do this and there was a real fear that Nazi Germany might have the capacity to develop a similar weapon.

Corbis/Bettmann

President Franklin Roosevelt (right) with Harry Truman (left) in August 1944. Truman became President of the United States after Roosevelt's death in April 1945. It fell to Truman to make the decision to drop the atomic bomb on Japan.

The construction of the atomic bomb was top-secret and was known as the Manhattan Project. A large number of scientists, led by Robert Oppenheimer, worked on the project for six years before a bomb was ready for testing in the desert of New Mexico. At dawn on the morning of 16 July 1945, the first atomic bomb was successfully detonated. The explosion was equal to 22 000 tons of explosives and the temperature at its core was 60 million degrees Celsius.

By July 1945, Japan was defeated from a military point of view. The United States had total air superiority over the country and could bomb almost any target without resistance. However, the Japanese Government refused to end the war. One of the reasons for this was the American demand for 'unconditional surrender', which the Japanese refused to accept. Some historians have suggested that had the United States demanded a Japanese surrender rather than an 'unconditional' surrender, the Japanese may have been prepared to end the conflict. There were still more than two million troops on the Japanese mainland and any invasion of Japan would have cost a great many lives. The decision to drop the bomb on Japan was made by President Truman, who had become president on the death of Franklin Roosevelt in April 1945. Truman was influenced by the advice he received from his military leaders. A list of possible targets had been prepared and in July 1945 President Truman approved the use of the atomic bomb on Japan, without warning, as soon as the military and air force were ready.

ISBN 9780170347266

FROM THE SOURCE

Notes on initial meeting of target committee, 2 May 1945, top-secret

source A

The following comments were offered on available targets in the Japanese islands:

1 Hiroshima is the largest untouched target not on the 21st Bomber Command priority list. Consideration should be given to this city.

2 Yokohama is lower on the priority list of targets since it has a C priority on the target list.

3 Tokyo is a possibility but it is now practically all bombed and burned and is practically rubble with only the palace grounds left standing. It should also be remembered that Tokyo is the most heavily defended area both by fighter planes and anti-aircraft.

It should be remembered that in our selection of any target the Air Force is systematically bombing out the following cities with the prime purpose in mind of not leaving one stone lying on another – Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe, Yawata and Nagasaki.

From RG 77, MED Records, File no. 5d (National Archives)

1 Why was Hiroshima selected as the target?

2 What two reasons were advanced against the selection of Tokyo as the target?

3 If it was the American intention to bomb cities 'not leaving one stone lying on another', why was the atomic bomb used?

4 What evidence is there that the planning to drop the bomb had begun before the bomb had even been tested?

From the diary of President Harry Truman, 25 July 1945

source B

This weapon is to be used against Japan between now and August 10th. I have told the Sec. of War, Mr. Stimson, to use it so that military objectives and soldiers and sailors are the target and not women and children. Even if the Japanese are savages, ruthless, merciless and fanatic, we as the leader of the world for the common welfare cannot drop that terrible bomb on the old capital or the new.

He and I are in accord. The target will be a purely military one and we will issue a warning statement asking the Japanese to surrender and save lives. I'm sure they will not do that, but we will have given them the chance. It is certainly a good thing for the world that Hitler's crowd or Stalin's did not discover this atomic bomb.

Quoted in Robert H. Ferrell, *Off the Record: The Private Papers of Harry S. Truman*, Harper and Row, New York, 1980, pp. 55–6

1 Which of the following arguments is not supported by this document?

A Truman wanted to drop the bomb.

B Truman was prepared to drop the bomb.

C Truman wanted to give the Japanese one final chance to surrender.

D Truman was glad that the United States developed the bomb first.

2 Which of the following arguments is not supported by this document?

A Truman believed the Japanese should be given a last chance to surrender.

B Truman set a time when the bomb was to be used.

C Truman was prepared to drop the bomb on the capital Tokyo.

D Truman required that the atomic bomb was to be used on a military target.

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Components for the bomb had been sent to the island of Tinian in the Pacific, a busy American air base 2400 kilometres from Japan. On 6 August 1945 a single B-29 bomber dropped the atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima in southern Japan. Hiroshima was selected because it was both an industrial and a military target and one that had not yet been bombed. This made it an ideal target to demonstrate the awesome power of the bomb. The bomb, codenamed 'Little Boy', drifted down on a parachute and then exploded at a preset height. Most of the city was destroyed and 80 000 people were killed. Three days later a second bomb, named 'Fat Man', was dropped on Nagasaki, killing more than 40 000 people. A week later, on 14 August 1945, Japan surrendered.

Alamy/GL Archive

'Little Boy', the name given to the first atomic bomb, sits in a bomb bay awaiting loading onto the B-29 bomber that would drop it on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945.

Corbis/John Van Hasselt/Sygma

Paul Tibbets, who was in charge of the bombing mission, stands beside the *Enola Gay*, the plane that dropped the first atomic bomb.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Leaflets dropped on cities in Japan warning civilians about the atomic bomb

TO THE JAPANESE PEOPLE:

America asks that you take immediate heed of what we say on this leaflet.

We are in possession of the most destructive explosive ever devised by man. A single one of our newly developed atomic bombs is actually the equivalent in explosive power to what 2000 of our giant B-29s can carry on a single mission. This awful fact is one for you to ponder and we solemnly assure you it is grimly accurate.

We have just begun to use this weapon against your homeland. If you still have any doubt, make inquiry as to what happened to Hiroshima when just one atomic bomb fell on that city.

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Before using this bomb to destroy every resource of the military by which they are prolonging this useless war, we ask that you now petition the Emperor to end the war. You should take steps now to cease military resistance. Otherwise, we shall resolutely employ this bomb and all our other superior weapons to promptly and forcefully end the war.

EVACUATE YOUR CITIES.

1 **Based on the historical evidence it contains, what is the probable date for this leaflet?**

   A before 6 August 1924
   B between 6 and 9 August 1924
   C after 9 August 1945
   D about 14 August 1945

2 **What does this leaflet urge civilians to do?**

3 **Do you think dropping this leaflet would have been effective or ineffective in ending the war?**

President Truman's press release, 7 August 1945

source B

Sixteen hours ago an American airplane dropped one bomb on Hiroshima and destroyed its usefulness to the enemy. That bomb had more power than 20 000 tons of TNT.

The Japanese began the war from the air at Pearl Harbor. They have been repaid many fold. And the end is not yet. With this bomb we have now added a new and revolutionary increase in destruction to supplement the growing power of our armed forces. In their present form these bombs are now in production and even more powerful forms are in development.

It is an atomic bomb. It is a harnessing of the basic power of the universe. The force from which the sun draws its power has been loosed against those who brought war to the Far East …

We are now prepared to obliterate more rapidly and completely every productive enterprise the Japanese have above ground in any city. We shall destroy their docks, their factories, and their communications. Let there be no mistake; we shall completely destroy Japan's power to make war.

It was to spare the Japanese people from utter destruction that the ultimatum of July 26 was issued at Potsdam. Their leaders promptly rejected that ultimatum. If they do not now accept our terms they may expect a rain of ruin from the air, the like of which has never been seen on this earth. Behind this air attack will follow sea and land forces in such numbers and power as they have not yet seen and with the fighting skill of which they are already well aware.

1 **What is the purpose of this document?**

2 **Explain why President Truman attempts to explain the power of the bomb.**

3 **What was the Potsdam Declaration of 26 July 1945?**

4 **Is there any evidence in this document that the United States was still thinking of a land invasion of mainland Japan?**

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Corbis/SuperStock

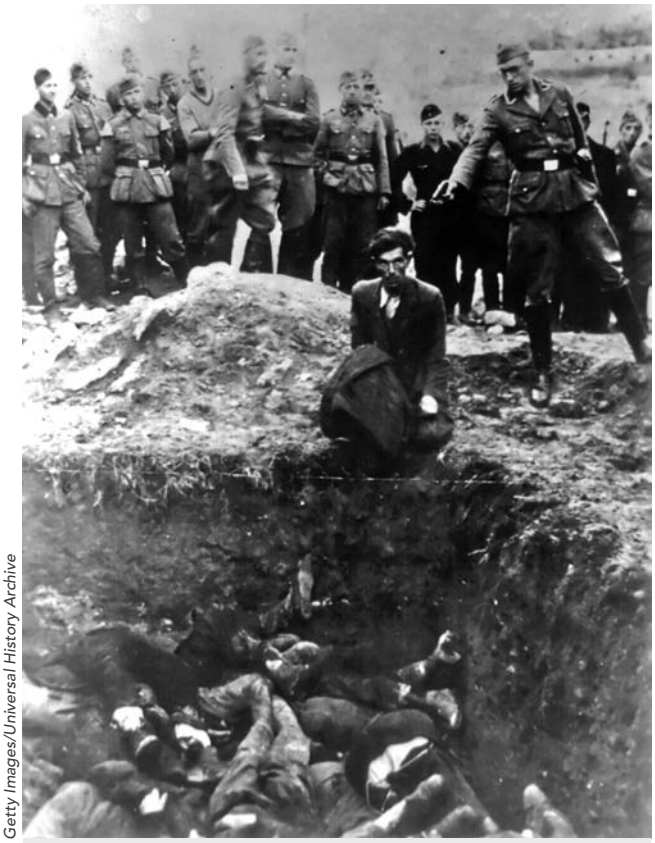
The mushroom-shaped cloud of the atomic bomb dropped on Hiroshima on 6 August 1945

The dropping of the two atomic bombs on Japan undoubtedly shortened the war. In the longer term it laid the foundations for another and longer conflict – the Cold War. This stand-off between the United States and the Soviet Union dominated world affairs from the end of World War II until the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. A central feature of the conflict, which never resulted in direct fighting with each other, was the threat of nuclear war. Both the United States and the Soviet Union throughout the Cold War era built great arsenals of atomic weapons, built to be delivered by rockets and bombs from aircraft, submarines and land-based installation. Some have argued that, as each superpower had these weapons, the threat of mutually assured destruction (MAD) actually prevented a war eventuating. In this way the shadow of World War II and the development of atomic weapons created a legacy that influenced international relations well beyond the peace of 1945.

The Holocaust

US Holocaust Memorial Museum

During World War II the Nazis carried out the most brutal and horrific example of genocide in history: the deliberate policy of killing or exterminating the Jews of Europe. Hitler and the Nazi Party were violently **anti-Semitic**, and as soon as they came to power they began to persecute the Jews in Germany. As Germany began to conquer much of Europe, large Jewish communities, particularly in eastern Europe, came under Nazi control.



Getty Images/Universal History Archive

An *Einsatzgruppe* member about to shoot a Jewish man kneeling at a partially filled mass grave in Vinnitsa, Soviet Union, in 1942

Under the cover of the war, the Nazis planned and carried out the killing of the Jews. From 1942 to the very last months of the war in 1945, Jews were rounded up across Europe and transported to specially constructed camps, where most were killed. At the start of the war in 1939 some nine million Jews (about 60 per cent of the world's Jews) lived in Europe. By the end of the war in 1945, almost six million Jews (two out of every three European Jews) had been killed, including one million children.

The Jews of Poland and the Soviet Union

The systematic killing of Jews began in Poland. Here Nazi rule was based on ruthless terror. Jewish communities that had lived in Poland for over eight centuries were forced to move, herded into more than 400 **ghettos** and camps across the country. The largest ghetto was in the Polish capital, Warsaw, where over 400 000 Jews were confined to a small area of the city. More than 40 000 of them starved to death during 1941. Later in the war the great majority of Polish Jews in the ghettos and labour camps were moved to extermination camps. Of Poland's three million Jews, 2.6 million were dead by 1945.

In 1941, as the German army conquered vast areas of the Soviet Union, special units were formed for the sole purpose of killing Jews and other 'undesirables' in

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the occupied territory of the east. As the German army advanced into the Soviet Union, these *Einsatzgruppen*, or Special Action Units, each consisting of up to 800 carefully selected men, operated with absolute authority behind the line. There was no attempt to conceal their activities; indeed, they often photographed their work. The majority of the victims were Soviet Jews or captured political leaders (commissars). Most were shot and buried in mass graves. The largest single operation was at Babi Yar, near Kiev in what is now Ukraine, where 33 000 Jews were killed in two days in September 1941. In the first year of their activity in the occupied east, these death squads killed 1.4 million Jews and other Soviet citizens.

Planning the Final Solution

Most historians believe that the decision to exterminate the Jews was taken in the summer of 1941 following the initial success of the German attack on the Soviet Union. The victories in the east encouraged the Nazi leadership to plan a more radical solution to the problem. There is no exact date or document that shows when Hitler finally approved the so-called **Final Solution**, but the fact that he approved it is not in doubt. An operation as enormous as the murder of Europe's Jews could not have happened without his approval.

In January 1942 a conference was held at Wannsee, a lakeside suburb of Berlin, to discuss the technical details of the Final Solution. This term was the Nazis' code for the deliberate, planned killing or genocide of all European Jews. The Wannsee Conference met for the purpose of finding ways to expand the slaughter and make the killings more efficient. One of the officials at the Wannsee Conference was Adolf Eichmann, who presented details of the numbers of Jews involved, some 11 million. The conference considered the problems of the transportation of such large numbers and the most effective way of dealing with them when they arrived at the extermination camps that were then opening in occupied Poland.

The death camps

Between 1941 and 1944 the Nazis established six extermination camps: Chelmno, Majdanek, Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka and Auschwitz–Birkenau (part of the Auschwitz complex). All were designed for the systematic and efficient killing of people, although both Auschwitz and Majdanek were forced-labour camps as well as killing centres. All were constructed near railway transport in order to speed the movement of people. The overwhelming majority of the victims of the extermination camps were Jews, and an estimated 3.5 million Jews were killed in these six camps as part of the Final Solution.

The main death camps established by the Nazis for the Final Solution

The Germans had also settled on the most efficient method of killing large numbers. Shooting, as used by the *Einsatzgruppen* in the Soviet Union, was considered too slow, and gassing by carbon monoxide from mobile gassing units using specially modified vans had also proved unreliable. The planners of the Final Solution also used evidence from the elimination of almost 70 000 mentally or physically handicapped Germans who were killed in euthanasia centres. Hitler had ordered the systematic killing of these people in 1939 and it was only stopped, however briefly, when it became public knowledge in 1941.

From 1942, Jews from all over Nazi-occupied Europe were transported east, usually in cattle trains, to the extermination camps. Many were killed almost at once; others were used as

Eyewitness Accounts: Jewish Holocaust Centre

slave labour in industry before most of them were also killed. The systematic extermination campaign began in 1942 and continued until the advancing Soviet forces overran the camps in 1944. Even then, many thousands were taken back to Germany and the killing continued until the last days of the war. The number of Jews who died at the hands of the Nazis was approximately six million.

Shoah Foundation

Most of the killing was done by mass gassing, using a form of prussic acid gas known as Zyklon B. Huge orders for this gas were placed with the chemical company I. G. Farben, one of a number of German companies that also used forced labour from the camps. All of the extermination camps were in occupied Poland, far away from Germany. The largest complex was at Auschwitz–Birkenau, selected because of its easy rail access. Auschwitz–Birkenau had been opened as a labour camp to service the nearby I. G. Farben synthetic rubber plant, but from June 1941 it also became an extermination camp.

Here, between 1942 and 1944, over two million people were killed in the gas chambers, which were disguised as shower rooms and which were capable of killing 2000 people at a time. The gas pellets were dropped down metal columns from the roof, giving off the deadly gas.

As the war continued, the transportation of Jews to Auschwitz and other death camps went on, regardless of arguments that the rail stock was vitally needed elsewhere or that the Jews could have been used more effectively as labour for the war industry. Ideology prevailed over all else. In 1944, as Soviet forces were poised to enter Poland, the killings actually increased. One consignment of Zyklon B gas filled 20 trucks, as more than 400 000 Jews from Hungary were gassed at Auschwitz in a two-month period before the camp closed in November 1944.

The deliberate policy of genocide, the murder of millions of European Jews under the cover of World War II, stands as an eternal crime in the annals of human history. Millions of innocent people were murdered on account of their race and the belief that they were less than human.

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Instytut Pamięci Narodowej

A warehouse at Majdanek death camp, filled with containers containing Zyklon B (poison gas) pellets

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Yad Vashem (Public Domain)

Newly arrived mothers and children on their way to the gas chambers at Auschwitz, May 1944

The horror of the gas chambers

source B

Then they would feel the gas and crowd together away from the menacing columns and finally stampede towards the huge metal door with its little window, where they piled up in one blood-spattered pyramid, clawing and mauling each other even in death. Twenty-five minutes later the exhauster electric pumps removed the gas-laden air, the great metal door slid open and the men entered, wearing gas masks and gum boots and carrying hoses, for their first task was to remove the blood and defecations before dragging the clawing dead apart with nooses and hooks, the prelude to the ghastly search for gold and the removal of teeth and hair which were regarded by the Germans as strategic materials. Then the journey by lift or rail wagons to the furnaces, the mill that ground the remains to fine ash, and the lorry that scattered the ashes in the stream of the Sola River.

G. Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, Vallentine, London, 1953

Himmler speaks to leaders of the SS at Posen in October 1943

source C

I also want to talk to you quite frankly about a very grave matter. We can talk about it quite frankly among ourselves and yet we will never speak of it publicly … I am referring to the Jewish evacuation program, the extermination of the Jewish people. It is one of those things which is easy to talk about … Most of you will know what it means when a hundred corpses are lying side by side, or five hundred, or a thousand are lying there. To have stuck it out and, apart from a few exceptions due to human weakness, to have remained decent, that is what has made us tough. This is a glorious page in our history and one that has never been written and can

never be written … We had a moral right, we had a duty to destroy this people which wanted to destroy us … All in all we can say that we have fulfilled this most difficult duty for the love of our people. And our spirit, our soul, our character has not suffered injury from it.

Nuremburg Document PS1919

source D

Adolf Eichmann at his interrogation by Israeli police, 1960

I think the war against the Soviet Union started in June 1941. And I think it must have been two months later that Heydrich ordered me to come and see him. I went and he said to me 'The Führer [Hitler] has ordered the physical extermination of the Jews'. He said this sentence to me and then, quite contrary to his habit, paused for a long time as if he wanted to test the effect of these words on me. At first I could not grasp the implications because he chose his words carefully. But then I understood and said nothing further because there was nothing more I could say.

J. Noakes and G. Pridham, eds, *Documents on Nazism 1919–1945*, Jonathan Cape, London, 1974, p. 1105

source E

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Israel Government Press Office

Adolf Eichmann, a high-ranking officer of the SS and one of the men who attended the Wannsee Conference, faces trial in Israel in 1961 for his part in carrying out the Final Solution. The glass booth in which Eichmann sat was to protect him from possible attack. Eichmann was hanged in May 1962.

source F

The current estimate is that of the 1.3 million people sent to Auschwitz, 1.1 million died there. A staggering 1 million of them were Jews … It must always be remembered that more than 90 per cent of those who lost their lives at Auschwitz did so because the one crime they had committed in Nazi eyes was to be born Jewish. The highest number of Jews from any one national group transported to Auschwitz came from Hungary, during the frenzied action of early summer 1944 (1 438 000). The next highest number were from Poland (300 000), followed by France (69 114), the Netherlands (60 085), Greece (55 000), Czechoslovakia and Moravia (46 099),

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Slovakia (26 661), Belgium (24 906), Germany and Austria (23 000), Yugoslavia (10 000) and Italy (7422). Of course we must also never forget the non-Jews who perished in the camp: the 70 000 Polish political prisoners; the more than 20 000 gypsies, the 10 000 Soviet prisoners of war, the hundreds of Jehovah's Witnesses; the homosexuals nor any of the others sent to the camp for myriad warped reasons (and sometimes for no reason at all).

L. Rees, *Auschwitz: The Nazis and the Final Solution*, BBC Books, 2005, p. 374

TABLE 4.1 The number of Jews from various countries of Europe who died in the Holocaust and the percentage of the prewar Jewish population they constituted

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	NUMBER WHO DIED	PERCENTAGE OF THE JEWISH POPULATION
Poland	3 000 000	90.9
Soviet Union	1 100 000	36.4
Hungary	569 000	69.0
Romania	287 000	47.1
Lithuania	143 000	85.1
Germany	141 500	25.0
Netherlands	100 000	71.4
Bohemia/Moravia	78 150	66.1
France	77 320	22.1
Latvia	71 500	78.1
Slovakia	71 000	79.8
Greece	67 000	86.6
Yugoslavia	63 300	81.2
Austria	50 000	27.0
Belgium	28 900	44.0
Italy	7 680	17.3
Estonia	2 000	44.4
Luxembourg	1 950	55.7
Norway	762	44.8
Denmark	60	0.7

Encyclopedia of the Holocaust

Based on your study of the historical sources (above) and your own research, answer the questions that follow.

1 **Why did the Holocaust happen?**

2 **Refer to Source A and Source B. How do these sources add to our knowledge of what happened when trainloads of people arrived at Auschwitz? Explain why mothers and children were generally kept together and killed almost immediately.**

3 **Refer to Source C.**

(a) **Identify from your research who Himmler was and what the SS was.**

(b) **Why can Himmler and his men 'never speak about their work publicly'?**

(c) **How does Himmler justify the killing of Jews?**

(d) **Explain why Himmler felt it necessary to speak to his men in this very open and personal way.**

4 **Refer to Sources D and E. Imagine you are a reporter at the trial of Adolf Eichmann in Israel in 1961. Prepare a newspaper report in which you explain who Eichmann was and what he did, how he ended up in a court in the Jewish state of Israel, and what the outcome of the trial was. You may wish to include other researched images in your newspaper report.**

5 **Refer to Source F and Table 4.1.**

(a) Using the data in Source F, prepare a graph showing the nationalities or groupings of the people transported to Auschwitz.

(b) Only about 10 per cent of Poland's Jews survived the war. Can you explain why Poland would have suffered the greatest percentage loss of its Jewish population during the war?

(c) Apart from the Jews, what other groups were also victims of the Nazis?

(d) Why are there no Jews from Britain on the Holocaust list?

(e) It is easy to look at figures and totals and overlook the fact that these were people. Review the range of resources at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, which include many individual accounts of the Holocaust from survivors. Select one and prepare a class presentation about this person: who they were, what they did before the war and what finally happened to them.

The legacies of war

In 1945 Germany and Japan were totally defeated; their great cities were in ruin, industry and infrastructure was destroyed and both countries faced occupation. Before the outbreak of war in 1939 there were seven major world powers: Britain, France, Germany, Italy, the United States, the Soviet Union and Japan. In 1945, when the war ended, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged not only victorious but also as world superpowers. Of the seven great powers of 1939, Germany, Italy and Japan were defeated and in ruin, while Britain and France were victorious but severely weakened and no longer the great powers they were before the war. The balance of power had shifted, as it were, to the two outsiders – the United States and the Soviet Union.

Historians generally estimate that between 50 and 60 million people died in the course of World War II. Close to 70 million people served as military personnel in the conflict, and the impact on individuals who lived through the conflict in Australia, Asia, Europe and North America was profound. The Holocaust and the dropping of the atomic bombs, as well as other aspects of the war, such as the bombing of civilians, the treatment of prisoners of war and the displacement of populations, have had enduring consequences. The use of the atomic bomb recast the relationship between wartime allies, the United States and the Soviet Union, as one of rivalry in the Cold War. This shaped international relations until the 1990s.

The reaction to the Holocaust led to the development of a legal framework for international war crimes trials and the United Nations' declaration that all people have social, cultural and political rights. These developments have had particularly significant implications for Australia when it comes to the struggles for the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and for the many waves of migration that have helped shape the postwar experience of our nation.

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Imagine you are either:
A person in the War Department of the United Sates in 1945 who advised President Truman about the atomic bomb
or
A person who was part of the Imperial Japanese government in August 1945.
Prepare the case why:
(a) The United Sates should or should not drop the atomic bomb on Japan
or
(b) Why Japan should or should not surrender at the start of August 1945.

2 Based on your research on the internet and from other sources, prepare a timeline of some the key events of the Holocaust from 1941 to 1945.

3 Imagine a time capsule containing items relating to World War II is being assembled. It will be sealed for 200 years.
(a) Select one event, one individual and one legacy (or consequence) of World War II that you feel needs to be preserved for the knowledge of future generations.
(b) Your submission for the time capsule can be an extended written piece or a multimedia presentation, which should include sound and moving images. It should also include a brief explanation as to why you selected this particular event, individual or legacy.

Extended response

Quiz

Crossword

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CHAPTER 5
Rights and freedoms

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- the formation and function of the United Nations and the creation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- the origins of the struggle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples for rights and freedoms
- the United States civil rights movement and how it influenced the movement for Aboriginal rights and freedoms in Australia
- how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples struggled to achieve their rights and freedoms
- how the struggle for rights and freedoms continues into the 21st century.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

5.1 What was the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?

5.2 How did the United States civil rights movement influence Australia?

5.3 How did the struggle for the rights and freedoms of indigenous peoples begin?

5.4 How did Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples achieve greater rights and freedoms and what were the key turning points in this struggle?

5.5 How has the struggle for rights and freedoms continued into the 21st century?

The struggle to achieve and to protect the basic rights and freedoms to which all people are entitled has been a feature of recent modern history. After World War II, which had been caused in part by nationalist rivalry, there was renewed hope in internationalism, the idea of nations working together. The United Nations, founded in 1945, was an expression of this faith and promoting the basic rights of all peoples was a core aim of the new world body.

After World War II, colonialism also began to fade from history as more and more people who had been colonial subjects achieved their independence. During the great colonisation periods of the 17th century, during which colonies were established in North and South America, or the 18th and 19th centuries, during which colonies were established in Australia, New Zealand and later in Africa, the common theme of colonisation was the dispossession of the native or Indigenous peoples.

A feature of world history of the 20th century has been the struggle of many Indigenous peoples and others dispossessed in society, such as African-Americans, to achieve their basic rights and freedoms. The Indigenous struggle in Australia has been and still is an important feature of our own national history.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flag and an Australian flag, seen during the Australia Day Parade on 26 January 2014 in Melbourne

When people talk about the history of Australia they mean the history of the white people who have lived in Australia. There is a good reason why we should not stretch that term to include the story of the dark-skinned wandering tribes who hurled boomerangs and ate snakes in their native land long ages before the arrival of the first Europeans.

From a history textbook of 1929, *The Making of Australia*, by Walter Murdock

Getty Images/Darrian Traynor/Stringer

Timeline, 1941–2008

1941

• **January** President Roosevelt defined the Four Freedoms.

• **August** The Atlantic Charter was announced.

1945

• **April** The United Nations was founded.

1948

• **December** The United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

1954

• **May** The US Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that segregated schools in the United States are unconstitutional.

1963

• **August** The Yolngu people of Yirrkala sent a petition to federal parliament asking for protection for their land from the Nabalco Mining Company.

• **August** The American civil rights protest, the March on Washington.

1964

• **July** The *Civil Rights Act 1964* was passed in the United States

1965

• **February** Freedom rides through New South Wales, led by Charles Perkins, highlighted discrimination against Aboriginal people in north-western New South Wales.

1966

• **August** Aboriginal workers from the Gurindji tribe walked off Wave Hill Station in the Northern Territory over poor pay and living conditions.

1967

• **April** The Supreme Court of the Northern Territory rejected the case of the Yirrkala people for their claim to land rights at Gove. The concept of *terra nullius* was affirmed.

• **May** As a result of a referendum, Aboriginal people were included in the Australian census and the Commonwealth government was given the power to make laws regarding Aboriginal people.

1971

• **May** Neville Bonner became the first Aboriginal person elected to parliament.

• **June** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people were counted in the Australian census for the first time.

Glossary

amendment Change. The term is usually used in the context of documents.

boycott A refusal to buy or use a product or service as a way of protest.

Dreaming In Australian Aboriginal belief, the time when the natural and spiritual worlds were created.

drug store An American pharmacy.

land rights The struggle by Indigenous peoples to gain legal recognition that they were the original owners of the land.

lease An alternative term for a rental agreement.

missions Places established by religious organisations to promote the Christian faith.

segregation Separation of particular groups of people from others on the basis of race.

universal World-wide.

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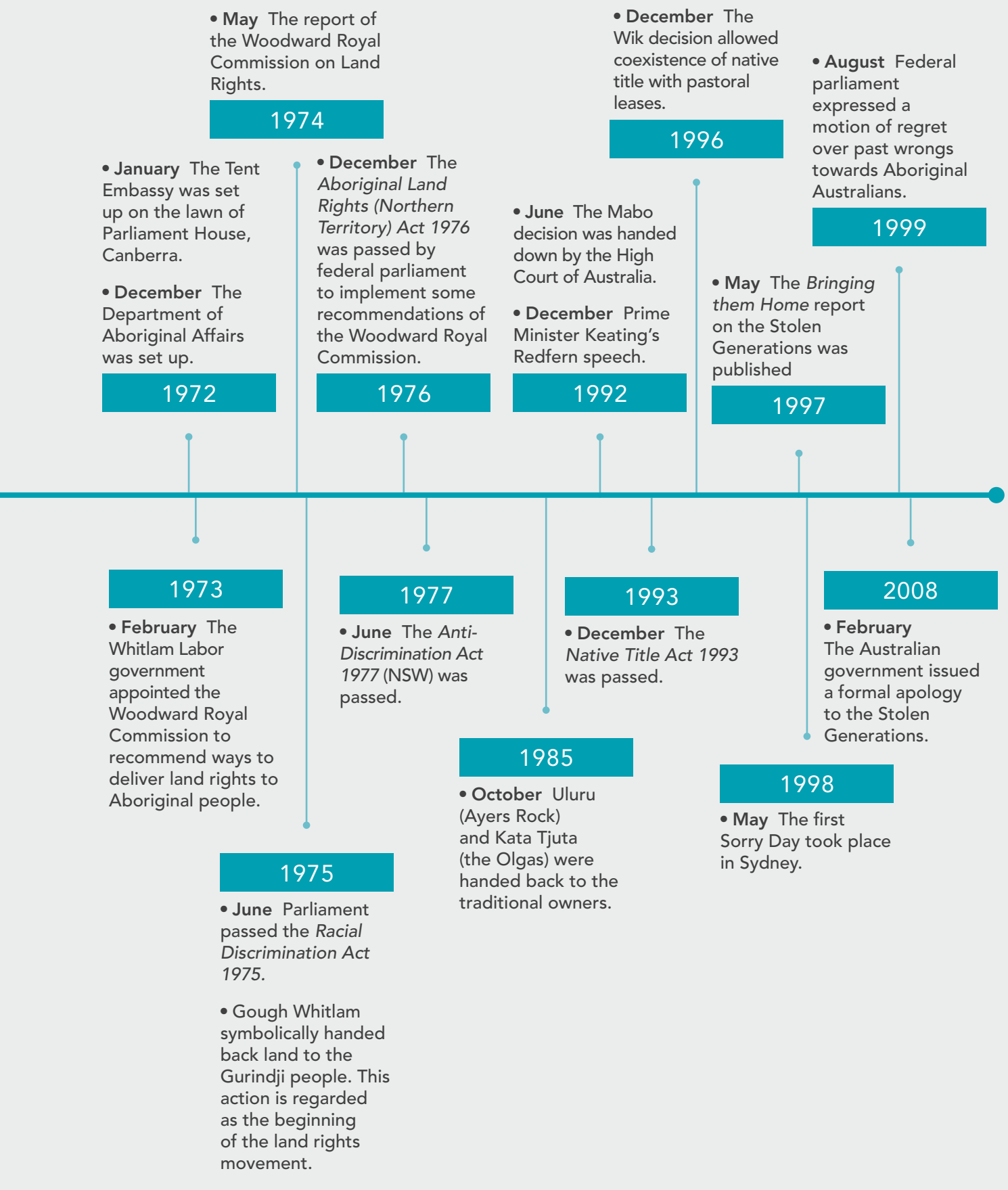

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5.1

WHAT WAS THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS?

History is heavy with examples of peoples who did not have the basic rights and freedoms that many nations enjoy today. Indeed, the very idea that people have human rights is a relatively new one. Two great revolutions, the American Revolution from 1775 and then the French Revolution from 1789 marked the start of modern history. Both were about the struggle for freedom and the creation of the nation state, and both sought to define the basic rights of their people as members of these nation states. In two great documents, the American Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789), the basic human rights were defined.

If the late 18th century gave birth to the modern concept that people have basic rights, the 20th century, with its two brutal world wars, challenged the idea. After World War II and its many examples of the violation of basic human rights, history turned to the newly created United Nations and the hope that it offered the world after 1945.

The United Nations and its role in the world

The League of Nations, the world body set up after World War I, had been based on the concept of internationalism, the idea that the world community was best served by nations working together for the common good of mankind. In the 1930s the League of Nations failed in the face of aggressive nationalism, but the idea for a new world body to replace the failed League of Nations had never been lost. There were a series of wartime conferences to plan the new organisation and the United Nations Organization came into being at the San Francisco Conference in April 1945.Australia was one of the 50 nations that signed the United Nations Charter and became foundation members of the new world body. In 2015 the United Nations had 193 member states.

The United Nations, like the League before it, was based on the concept of collective security, the belief that war can be prevented by all powers uniting to exert pressure on any nation that sets out to break the peace. The aim of the United Nations, defined in its Charter, is very clear:

> “To maintain international peace and security … to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace.”

Corbis/Ramin Talaie

The General Assembly Hall at the United Nations headquarters in New York. All 193 member states of the United Nations have a seat at the General Assembly.

All members of the United Nations have a place in the General Assembly, which meets once a year and where leaders from every country have the opportunity to speak. Here the important issues confronting the modern world can be discussed and a great deal of informal diplomacy takes place among the member states.

However, the real decision-making power in the United Nations lies not with the General Assembly but with a smaller group called the Security Council. At the time when the United Nations was established in 1945, five nations were recognised as great powers: the United States, the Soviet Union, the Republic of China (Taiwan), Britain and France. Each had a seat on the most important decision-making body of the United Nations, the Security Council. In 1971 the People’s

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Republic of China (Communist China) replaced Taiwan on this body, and the Russian Federation took over the seat formerly held by the Soviet Union in 1991. These five powers are known as the permanent members of the Security Council. There are also 10 states that are non-permanent members of the Security Council. Meetings of the Security Council make all the major decisions about the use of UN peacekeeping forces or military action in time of conflict. In this sense, the United Nations can only get involved in world issues after all the five great powers agree.

Preserving world peace is not the only activity of the United Nations. There are many other agencies that make up the world body, and many of these are devoted to fulfilling the economic, cultural, social and humanitarian aims of the organisation. The International Court of Justice, based in the Netherlands, has 15 judges drawn from member nations and settles legal disputes among nations and questions of international law. In 1974 Australia took France to the International Court of Justice over the French testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific. In 2014 Australia won a case in the International Court of Justice to stop Japan from whaling in the Southern Ocean.

Other important agencies of the United Nations include the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). This body, which was established in 1946 and has its headquarters in Paris, aims to promote peace and security through international collaboration in education, science and culture. One project of UNESCO is the World Heritage List. This is a list of places and objects around the globe, both natural and built, which are regarded as part of the world's heritage. Australia contains 41 such sites, ranging from the Great Barrier Reef to the Sydney Opera House.

The concept of human rights

World War II was a brutal example of the violation of human rights. Under the cover of war, millions of people were murdered because of their race, cities and towns with their civilian populations were bombed, millions were forced into conditions of slave labour, and the right to basic freedoms such as the freedom of speech and religion were denied. As those accused of war crimes faced justice, the full extent of the violation of human rights during the war, both in Europe and in Asia, became clear for all to see.

During the war, President Roosevelt had tried to define why the war was being fought. Not only was it a war to destroy a great evil and stop aggression, but it also had a higher purpose. In a speech in 1941 he spoke of a future world based on what he called 'four essential human freedoms': freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear.

In August 1941 President Roosevelt met the British prime minister, Winston Churchill, and the two leaders issued a statement that became known as the Atlantic Charter. It was a vision for the postwar world. The document issued by the world's two great democracies spoke of a world that would 'respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live' and, reflecting Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, a world where 'all the men [people] in all the lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want'.

Corbis/Oscar White

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945), President of the United States from 1933 to 1945

FROM THE SOURCE

President Franklin Roosevelt, address to the United States Congress, January 1941

In the future days, which we seek to make secure, we look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms.

The first is freedom of speech and expression, everywhere in the world.

The second is freedom of every person to worship God in his own way, everywhere in the world.

The third is freedom from want which, translated into world terms, means economic understandings which will secure to every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants, everywhere in the world.

The fourth is freedom from fear which, translated into world terms, means a world-wide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of physical aggression against any neighbour, anywhere in the world.

That is no vision of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation.

From *Congressional Record*, 1941, vol. 87, pt I

1 **Explain what President Roosevelt meant by each of his Four Freedoms.**

2 **When did he see a world based on the Four Freedoms coming into being?**

Getty Images/Fotosearch/Stringer

Eleanor Roosevelt (1884–1962), the wife of the late President Franklin Roosevelt, with a copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1949. Throughout her life, Eleanor Roosevelt promoted the causes of social justice and equal rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

One of the very first acts of the United Nations after its formation in April 1945 was to begin the process of creating the Declaration of Human Rights. It emerged as a consequence of the experience of World War II and it gave formal expression of the ideals of rights and freedoms expressed by Roosevelt and Churchill in the Atlantic Charter of 1941. It was one of the positive consequences of the war. As the Charter of the United Nations defined the aims of the organisation and how it would work, the Declaration of Human Rights defined the principles the United Nations was defending. It was to set out the social, political and economic rights that every person in the world, regardless of race or where they lived, was entitled to have. In this sense it was to be **universal**.

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FROM THE SOURCE

Extracts from the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (adopted by the United Nations in December 1948)

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world …
Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations …

Article 1. All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights …

Article 2. Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status …

Article 3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person …

Article 5. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment …

Article 7. All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law …

Article 9. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile …

Article 12. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honour and reputation …

Article 13. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country …

Article 17. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief …

Article 19. Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association. No one may be compelled to belong to an association …

Article 23. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

Article 26. Everyone has the right to education.

Article 27. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

1 **Explain why the United Nations created the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.**

2 **Are any of the rights in this document denied to Australians?**

3 **Since this document is now over 60 years old, are there any rights that you believe should be defined but were not included in this document when it appeared in 1948?**

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Corbis/David Turnley

Nelson Mandela (1918–2013) revisiting the prison cell in Cape Town, South Africa, that was his home for 27 years. Mandela, who spent most of his life fighting for the rights and freedoms of black South Africans under the apartheid system, served as the first president of a new non-racist South African state between 1994 and 1999.

A Human Rights Commission was set up in 1946 under the leadership of Eleanor Roosevelt, the wife of President Roosevelt, who had died in April 1945. Eleanor Roosevelt had always been committed to the struggle to promote and protect basic human rights and had been very active in defending the rights of women and African-Americans. She led the drafting committee that finally produced the document, and she was present when on 10 December 1948, two years after the process began, the General Assembly of the United Nations formally adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights remains an important document of world history. Human rights movements throughout the world use it as their guiding light, and many governments have included its message in their constitution. Although its language may be outdated, its ideals are not. There are omissions, such as its failure to comment on the rights of indigenous peoples. And the reality is that human rights are still violated in many parts of the world. Nonetheless, the document stands as a statement of how governments should act and how all the peoples of the world should be treated.

In the years since World War II there has been a constant struggle by peoples around the world to achieve democratic and personal freedom and the ideals of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is a struggle that continues today.

Even long-established nations have followed policies that deprived some of their people of basic human rights. In South Africa, a policy of strict racial **segregation** called 'apartheid' was introduced in 1948 and remained in force until 1994. Nelson Mandela devoted his life to the struggle against apartheid and the end of racial inequality in that country. The segregation of African-Americans in the United Sates led to the civil rights movement in that country, while in Australia, Aboriginal people endured discrimination. In most countries women did not have absolute equality with men, and a long struggle for women's rights is also a feature of recent history.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What was the Atlantic Charter?

2 What happened at the San Francisco Conference in April 1945?

3 What is the role of the Security Council?

4 Explain the work of the following United Nations bodies.

(a) WHO (b) FAO (c) UNESCO

5 Who was Eleanor Roosevelt?

6 In what year did the Universal Declaration of Human Rights come into being?

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Australia and the founding of the United Nations

Australia attended the San Francisco Conference in April 1945 and one of the leading figures at the conference was Dr Herbert V. Evatt, the Australian Minister for External Affairs (Foreign Minister). Evatt was a firm believer in the rights of smaller nations and the role they could play in the United Nations.

Evatt was a brilliant lawyer and before he entered parliament he had become a judge on the High Court of Australia at the age of only 36. Evatt suggested some 38 changes to the Charter of the United Nations, and to his great satisfaction 26 of these were accepted. In September 1948, as a sign of Australia's increased influence in world affairs, Dr Evatt was elected President of the General Assembly. He is still the only Australian to have held this important office in the United Nations.

Another prominent person who was part of the Australian delegation that attended the founding of the United Nations was Jessie Street. She was an early champion in Australian public life for social justice, the rights of women, Indigenous Australians and the cause of human rights. She was also an active campaigner for a better understanding of the Soviet Union as it assumed the position of a superpower after World War II.

In the half-century since Dr Evatt's time, Australia has continued to play an active role in the United Nations and contributes to the work of the United Nations in many ways. Australia has also accepted its international responsibilities by supporting UN actions to preserve world peace.

Jesse Street

H.V. Evatt

courtesy of National Library of Australia

A portrait of the Australian delegates to the United Nations founding conference in San Francisco in 1945. Dr H. V. Evatt is seated second from the right and Jessie Street, the only woman on the delegation, stands left of centre.

FROM THE SOURCE

An assessment of Dr H. V. Evatt

Dr Evatt emerged as a remarkably forward looking man … more celebrated outside Australia than within, where he was always a highly controversial figure. His work as one of the drafters of the UN Charter, as President of the UN General Assembly and supporter of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights assure Evatt of an honoured place in history. He realised that the

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future of humanity depended upon the three principles upon which the United Nations was founded: peace and security, economic development and respect for fundamental human rights. Evatt played a critical part in laying them down. We in Australia neglect our heroes. Unless they achieve sporting fame, we tend to ignore and forget them.

Justice Michael Kirby, speaking at the launch of *Doc: A Portrait of Herbert Vere Evatt*, Law and Justice Foundation of New South Wales, 19 October 1995

1 **Is this assessment of Dr Evatt favourable or unfavourable?**

2 **What did Evatt see as the three principles upon which the United Nations was founded?**

3 **List the achievements of Dr Evatt which, according to this source, give Evatt 'an honoured place in history'.**

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Define the following terms.
   (a) internationalism
   (b) collective security
   (c) Four Freedoms
   (d) human rights
   (e) apartheid

2 Below are the opening lines of the American Declaration of Independence (1776) and the French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789).

> We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.
>
> American Declaration of Independence (1776)

> Men are born and remain free and equal in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only upon the general good. The aim of all political association is the preservation of the natural and imprescriptible rights of man. These rights are liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression.
>
> Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen (1789)

   (a) Explain how these two documents from the late 18th century could be regarded as the first modern attempt to define basic human rights.
   (b) To what degree could it be argued that the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights was influenced by these earlier documents and became an extension of the basic ideas contained in them?

3 In December 1948, members of the United Nations voted in favour of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and eight member states abstained (declined to vote for or against). Find out which eight states abstained. Select one of these states and in an extended paragraph explain why that state did not vote in favour of the document.

4 Two prominent Australians who were involved in the discussions at the time of the foundation of the United Nations were Dr Herbert V. Evatt and Jessie Street. Prepare a brief multimedia presentation on the life of one of these people, making special reference to their work at the foundation of the United Nations.

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HOW DID THE UNITED STATES CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT INFLUENCE AUSTRALIA?

5.2

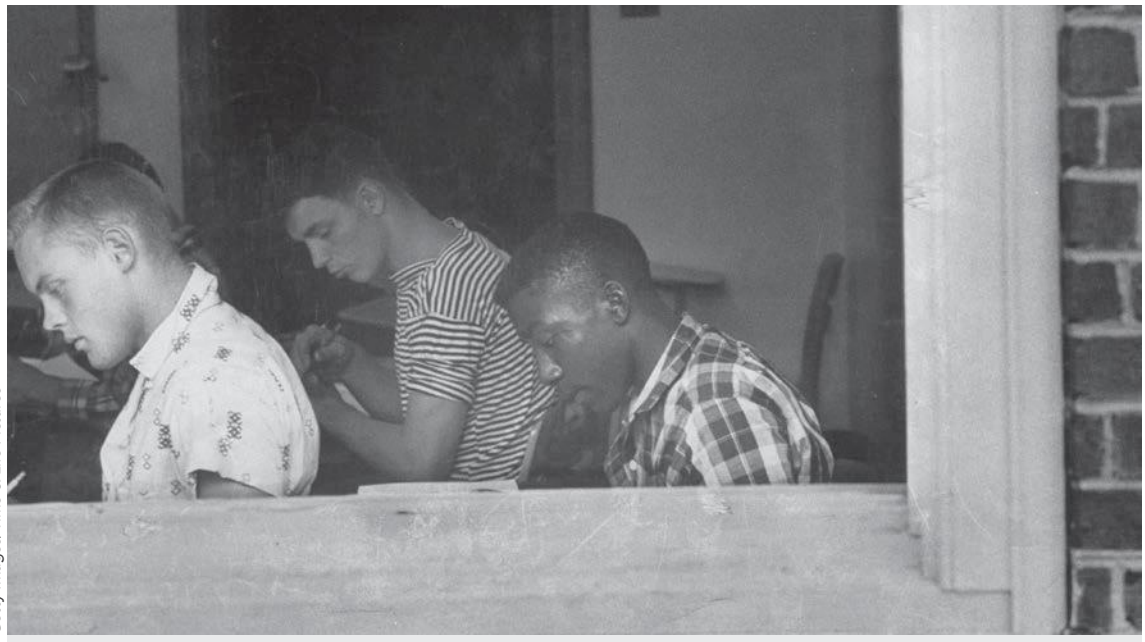
When Thomas Jefferson, who later became the third President of the United States, wrote the American Declaration of Independence, he used powerful words about freedom. 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal', he wrote, 'that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness'. Jefferson saw no contradiction in the fact that, as he wrote these immortal lines, he also owned slaves who had no liberty or equality and little happiness. Before the American Civil War of 1861–65, most African-Americans were either slaves or were descended from people who had been slaves. In the closing months of the Civil War in 1865, the United States Congress formally abolished slavery. This gave African-Americans their legal freedom but little else.

The challenge to racial segregation

In many parts of the United States, and in particular the southern states, a policy of segregation existed to keep African-Americans and white Americans apart. African-Americans tended to live in areas with predominantly black populations. There were separate health services and schools for African-American people, separate places for entertainment and separate eating places, and public transport was segregated. African-Americans also tended to have the lowest paying jobs. Racial segregation was enshrined in law: many southern states had state laws that preserved segregation.

One of the first tests to segregation came with a ruling by the Supreme Court of the United States, the highest legal authority in the land. In 1954, in a case entitled *Brown v. Board of Education*, the Supreme Court ruled that the 14th **Amendment** of the constitution, which required that states provide equal protection under the law to all their inhabitants, was being violated by state-enforced segregation in schools. It ruled that segregation in school was illegal.

Some schools in the south began to integrate while others sought to resist the process. By the end of the 1950s only 10 per cent of schools in the south were desegregated.



Getty Images/Time & Life Pictures

A view through the classroom window of Clinton High School, in Tennessee, in September 1956. African-American student William Latham studies in class with white students at the school, which was one of the first to be desegregated.

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Getty Images/Universal History Archive/UIG

A police photograph of civil rights activist Rosa Parks (1913–2005) after her arrest in 1955 for disorderly conduct. She had refused to give up her seat to a white passenger on a bus.

The start of the civil rights movement

As so often happens with great movements, the civil rights movement began in the most unexpected of ways.

In Montgomery, Alabama, a law required African-Americans who travelled by bus to sit at the back of the bus and, if necessary, to give up their seats to white people. In 1955, a quiet 29-year-old African-American woman named Rosa Parks simply refused to do so, and was arrested. As a form of protest, the African-American population in Montgomery imposed a **boycott** of the bus company. The protest made international news, and it also saw the emergence of the man who would be identified as the leader of the civil rights movement. This was Dr Martin Luther King, who helped to plan the boycott. The protest lasted 382 days before the state of Alabama revoked the law of segregation of public transport in that state.

Martin Luther King and the 1960s

In the early 1960s the civil rights movement began to divide the nation. Martin Luther King and his followers believed in peaceful protest, but violence and arrests became a feature of many civil rights protest gatherings. Many young white Americans from the northern states came south to join the campaign for African-American rights. The aim of those involved in the protest was simply to desegregate the United States so that all Americans, black or white, had the same rights and freedoms.

Getty Images/Paul Schutzer/Time Life Pictures

Julia Aaron and David Dennis with other Freedom Riders in 1961. After threats and violence during much of their ride, armed National Guardsmen provided protection from Alabama to Mississippi. On arrival in Mississippi, the riders were arrested when they tried to desegregate the waiting room at the bus depot.

One form that the protest took in 1961 was a series of Freedom Rides, during which civil rights activists travelled by bus into segregated areas of the south to support African-Americans. The Freedom Rides had a particular impact in bringing the message of protest to many African-Americans living in remote rural communities in the south. The specific target for the Freedom Rides was the segregation of interstate bus travel. Many southerners, who supported segregation, saw the intrusion of people from the north as a provocation. Inevitably, violence often broke out when local police failed to protect the activists.

Other examples of protest in the name of Civil Rights captured the attention of the nation. There were a series of 'sit-ins' at **drug stores** and diners that segregated people. In 1962, when former serviceman James Meredith sought to enrol in the all-white University of Mississippi (known as Ole Miss), his application was rejected. Violence followed, and President Kennedy became involved in negotiations with the segregationist governor of Mississippi. Federal marshals escorted Meredith while he lodged a new application. This triggered violence and two people were killed. Meredith was finally admitted as a student and, on the orders of President Kennedy, National Guardsmen were sent to the university to maintain law and order.

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Perhaps the greatest expression of the civil rights movement came in August 1963 when Martin Luther King led the March on Washington, a massive protest assembly which attracted almost a quarter of a million followers. Standing before the memorial to Abraham Lincoln, who had ended slavery a century before, King gave one of the great speeches of the time, which captured both the intent and the spirit of his movement.

The Kennedy administration had always supported the cause of civil rights and wished to end the violation of rights and freedoms that persisted in so much of the south. But the government, always aware of public opinion, moved very slowly. By the time of the March on Washington in 1963, a Civil Rights Bill was already prepared and awaiting approval by the United States Congress. The assassination of President Kennedy a few months after the March on Washington not only shocked the nation, but also pushed Congress to pass the civil rights legislation in 1964 as a tribute to the president's memory.

The *Civil Rights Act 1964* was signed into law by Kennedy's successor, President Lyndon Johnson, in July of that year. The Act effectively made segregation illegal through the nation. It prohibited segregation of any form in public places. It protected the rights of African-Americans to enrol to vote in elections. An Equal Employment Opportunity Commission was set up to address discrimination in the workplace, and a Community Relations Service was established to help local communities resolve racial disputes. There were also provisions that cut funding and support for any school or business engaging in segregation.

Corbis/Bob Adelman

Dr Martin Luther King delivering the 'I Have a Dream' speech in Washington, DC on 28 August 1963

Corbis/Bettmann

Nearly 250 000 people participated in the March on Washington demonstrations in August 1963, which ended with Dr Martin Luther King's speech.

The civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s had advanced the cause of African-Americans, and the years that followed would see the final implementation of full equality. Although racism still existed, the nation and its people had accepted that rights and freedoms for all, regardless of race, were the basis for a just society.

The King Center

March on Washington

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Why does history remember Rosa Parks?
2 Who was the acknowledged leader of the American Civil Rights Movement?
3 What were the Freedom Rides?
4 What happened at Ole Miss in 1962?
5 Who was President of the United States during the civil rights protests of the early 1960s?
6 When was the March on Washington?
7 What was the Civil Rights Act and when was it signed into law in the United States?

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

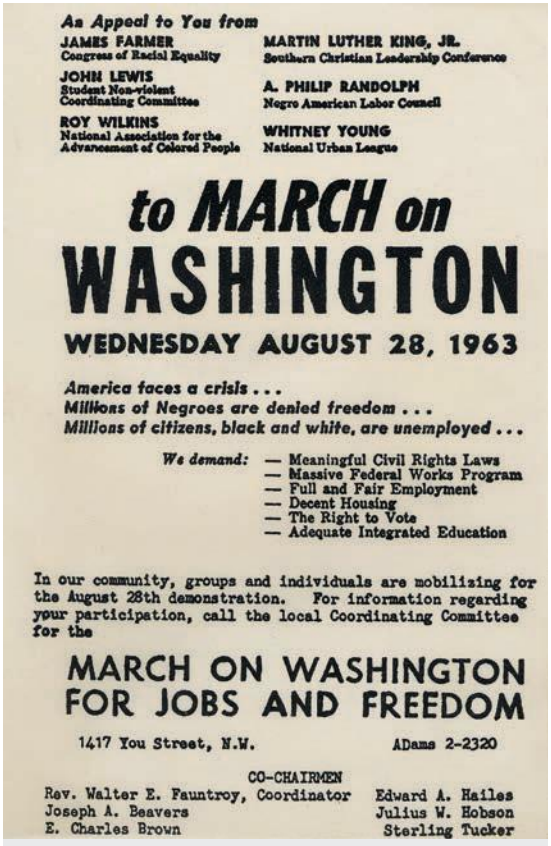
1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) civil rights
   (b) segregation

2 Imagine you are a writer for a newspaper who had to prepare the story of Rosa Parks and what happened to her on the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, on 1 December 1955. Prepare your newspaper report. It should include some background on the laws at that time that discriminated against African-Americans.

3 After reading this handbill about the March on Washington in 1963, you have decided to attend. Put yourself in the position of either a white American or a person of African-American descent. In your presentation you should include:
   - why you have decided to attend
   - your opinion of the civil rights movement from the perspective of the time
   - some features of past civil rights activity on which you have an opinion.

4 Prepare an illustrated timeline of the key events of the American civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s.

5 Select one example of protest or one person that influenced the civil rights movement, and in an essay explain how and why that event or person was important to the movement.



An Appeal to You from

JAMES FARMER
Congress of Racial Equality

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.
Southern Christian Leadership Conference

JOHN LEWIS
Student Non-violent Coordinating Committee

A. PHILIP RANDOLPH
Negro American Labor Council

ROY WILKINS
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

WHITNEY YOUNG
National Urban League

to MARCH on WASHINGTON

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 28, 1963

America faces a crisis . . .
Millions of Negroes are denied freedom . . .
Millions of citizens, black and white, are unemployed . . .

We demand:
— Meaningful Civil Rights Laws
— Massive Federal Works Program
— Full and Fair Employment
— Decent Housing
— The Right to Vote
— Adequate Integrated Education

In our community, groups and individuals are mobilizing for the August 28th demonstration. For information regarding your participation, call the local Coordinating Committee for the

MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM

1417 You Street, N.W. ADams 2-2320

CO-CHAIRMEN
Rev. Walter E. Fauntroy, Coordinator
Joseph A. Beavers
E. Charles Brown
Edward A. Hailes
Julius W. Hobson
Sterling Tucker

A leaflet appealing to people to march on Washington in August 1963

Division of Political History, National Museum of American History, Smithsonian Institution

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HOW DID THE STRUGGLE FOR THE RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES BEGIN?

5.3

The Aboriginal people were the first humans to live on the continent of Australia. It is known that they have lived here for at least 50 000 years, and it is probable that they have been here longer than that.

Australia's Aboriginal people have a close relationship with the land, and through the land they maintain their links to ancestral spirits. The land is sacred, and for tens of thousands of years the Aboriginal people lived in harmony with the land. Once European settlement began, the Aboriginal people progressively lost much of their traditional land and fell victim to exploitation, violence and disease. Their labour was exploited, many family groups were broken up, and thousands of Aboriginal people survived on handouts.

By 1901, when federation occurred, the number of Aboriginal people in Australia was in decline. The tribal groups were almost all broken up and the cultural traditions of the people were fast disappearing. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had no legal rights to land that they had once occupied. Most could not vote, they were not counted among Australian citizens, they were ineligible for the newly introduced age pension and the basic wage, and for them the level of basic services such as health, education and social support was below the level that other Australians expected.

The policy of protectionism

In the 19th century and for much of the 20th century, Australia's official policy towards Aboriginal people was one of protectionism. Protectionism was the idea that Aboriginal people needed to be separated from white Australians and 'protected' for their own good. Many Aboriginal people were removed from their traditional lands and placed in reservations or **missions**. White Australians accepted that these missions, which were usually controlled by Christian churches, were a way of providing support for Indigenous people.

Mission Voices

'The first family of the United Aborigines Mission at Colebrook Home, Quorn, South Australia, c. 1936', by Charles Duguid, courtesy of National Library of Australia

Aboriginal children at Colebrook Home in Quorn, South Australia, in 1936

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At this time most white people had little knowledge of Indigenous customs and traditions and, in particular, the vital bond between Aboriginal people and the land. The forced removal of Aboriginal people from their traditional life to make them live in a style imposed by white Australians broke this central bond of their culture.

Aboriginal people believe that two forms of kinship are central to their lives: the first is their special bond to the land, and the second is their feeling of kinship with their families. Indigenous culture, like so many others, places great importance on children. In the security of extended families, elders are able to share these feelings, values and language. It is through the land that Aboriginal children gain an understanding of their culture and are able to share and express their kinship with the land, to develop an understanding of the **Dreaming**, and to learn the language of their ancestors.

The forced removal of Aboriginal people from their traditional life was in fact a policy of segregation. It resulted in more discrimination against Indigenous people and control over them. It also led to the creation of remote and isolated Indigenous communities.

In these communities the Aboriginal people had few of the rights that white Australians enjoyed. As well, there were many restrictions on their freedom and private life of a kind that white Australians would have found totally unacceptable.

Today it can be seen that such policies were unjust and caused profound suffering among Aboriginal people. Government policies broke up families and led many people to grow up without any knowledge of their culture. Placing women in domestic service and men into work on the land provided the government and European households with cheap labour, but it destroyed many family bonds. Aboriginal workers were paid much less than white Australians, and sometimes not paid at all.

Violence against Aboriginal people was common and in many cases went unpunished. In 1928, after a white man was killed by Aboriginal people at Coniston Station near Alice Springs, 31 Aboriginal men and women were killed by the police officer and his men investigating the killing. An official government inquiry into the incident found that the police action was justified.

The Day of Mourning, 1938

Day of Mourning and Protest

On Australia Day 1938, 150 years after the first white settlement in Australia, some Indigenous people protested at their treatment in white Australia. While many white Australians enjoyed the celebrations for Australia Day in Sydney and looked back on 150 years of progress for the nation, a group of more than 100 Aboriginal men and women assembled to mourn the loss of their lands and to demand basic human rights. Such a protest was an important undertaking given the restrictions placed on Aboriginal people at the time. It was called the Day of Mourning.

The Day of Mourning was important because, in this one brave action, the Aboriginal people defined and demanded the basic rights for which they would have to struggle for the rest of the century. After a small march through parts of Sydney, about 1000 people attended a congress (meeting) to discuss the issue of how Aboriginal people had been ignored in the nation's history. They sent a list of demands to prime minister Joseph Lyons, which included:

- an end to their unfair treatment by white Australians
- the return of their stolen lands
- the same citizen rights as those enjoyed by white Australians
- Aboriginal people's right to be represented in parliament
- equal opportunities in employment, health, education and housing
- the recognition of Aboriginal law
- the abolition of the Aboriginal Protection Board and other official bodies that controlled the lives of Aboriginal Australians
- an end to the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families.

The Day of Mourning was led by Jack Patten and William Ferguson, two Aboriginal men who founded the Aborigines Progressive Association (APA) and who wrote and spoke on the heritage

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of their people as the first inhabitants of Australia. Some historians suggest that this protest was the beginning of a civil rights movement in Australia and was the start of the long, slow push in Australian history to secure justice and fairness for Aboriginal people.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Newspix/News Ltd

The Aboriginal Day of Mourning, 26 January 1938

Resolution passed at the Day of Mourning, 1938

source B

Wednesday 26th January, 1938

The following resolution will be moved:

WE, representing THE ABORIGINES OF AUSTRALIA, assembled in conference at the Australian Hall, Sydney, on the 26th day of January, 1938, this being the 150th Anniversary of white men's seizure of this country, HEREBY MAKE PROTEST against the callous treatment of our people by the white men during the last 150 years, AND WE APPEAL to the Australian Nation of today to make new laws for the education and care of Aborigines, and we ask for a new policy which will raise our people to FULL CITIZENSHIP STATUS and EQUALITY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

The Australian Abo Call, April 1938

A speech from Jack Patten, an Aboriginal leader at the Day of Mourning, 1938

source C

On this day the white people are rejoicing, but we as Aborigines have no reason to rejoice on Australia's 150th birthday. Our purpose on meeting today is to bring home to the white people of Australia the frightful conditions in which the native Aborigines of this continent live. This land belonged to our forefathers 150 years ago, but today we are pushed further and further into the background … White men pretend that the Australian Aboriginal is a low type who cannot be bettered. Our reply to that is 'Give us a chance!'. We do not wish to be left behind in Australia's march to progress.

We ask for full citizen's rights, including old age pensions, maternity bonus, relief work when unemployed, and the right to a full Australian education for our children. We do not wish to be herded like cattle, and treated as a special class … We ask for ordinary citizen rights, and full equality with other Australians.

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1 In what way does the photo of the Day of Mourning, Source A, add to our knowledge about the protest and the people involved?

2 Explain the purpose of the Day of Mourning.

3 List some of the changes and reforms that the Aboriginal people were seeking.

4 What government policy at the time made Aboriginal people feel as if they were 'treated as a special class'?

5 From your reading of this source and your own research, explain, in an extended paragraph, how the majority of Aboriginal people were treated in Australia in the period before World War II.

Kahlin Collection, Northern Territory Library

A group of Aboriginal and part-Aboriginal children in the Northern Territory in the 1950s

The Stolen Generations

As part of the protectionist policy of the time, there was the belief that something had to be done to provide for the increasing number of Aboriginal children who were of 'mixed blood'. It was believed that, if these children were removed from tribal influences, it would be possible for them to become 'European'. At the time the government believed that it was doing the right thing by these children, and there is evidence that many children of mixed blood were not completely accepted by their tribal group. Many children were taken from their families to be raised with new names and in a new culture. Many never knew their real family, and those who did know their family rarely saw them. These children would later become known as the Stolen Generations.

The practice of removing some Aboriginal children from their families or 'taking them into care' was begun at the start of the 20th century and continued until the 1960s. The historical evidence is incomplete and does not provide an accurate number of the children who were affected.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What are the two main forms of kinship that were important for Aboriginal people?

2 What do you understand by the concept of protectionism as it was applied to Aboriginal people?

3 Why were some Aboriginal children taken from their families to become what is now called the Stolen Generations?

4 Why did Aboriginal people select Australia Day 1938 to hold a Day of Mourning?

5 Why was this Day of Mourning important in Aboriginal and Australian history?

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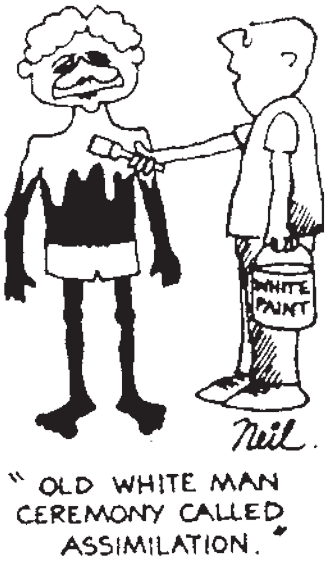
The policy of assimilation

By the 1930s, the federal government and the state governments began to consider a new policy called assimilation. The policy of assimilation was an attempt to make Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples accept the way of life of white Australians. It was the belief that Aboriginal people should now be 'absorbed' into 'mainstream' Australian culture – that they should be removed from reserves and missions and assisted to become more like white Australians. Assimilation was adopted as a policy at a time when most non-Indigenous Australians had a poor knowledge and understanding of Indigenous history, languages and the special links of Indigenous peoples to the land.

Because World War II intervened, assimilation did not really begin until the 1950s. In 1951 the federal government convened the Australian Conference for Native Welfare. The conference was told that the purpose of assimilation was that all persons of Aboriginal birth or 'mixed blood' in Australia would live like white Australians. Ten years later, in 1961, the Native Welfare Conference defined what assimilation was:

> "… all Aborigines and part-Aborigines are expected eventually to attain the same manner of living as other Australians and to live as members of a single Australian community enjoying the same rights and privileges, accepting the same responsibilities, observing the same customs and influenced by the same beliefs, hopes and loyalties as other Australians. Thus, any special measures are … to assist them to make the transition from one stage to another in such a way as will be favourable to their future social, economic and political advancement."



News Ltd/Neil Matterson

A cartoon from *The Sun*, 1969

The impact of assimilation policies on Aboriginal people

The policy of assimilation was based on the belief that the Aboriginal culture and way of life were inferior. It took little notice of the long heritage and traditional lifestyle of the Aboriginal people. The policy of assimilation encouraged many Aboriginal people to give up this traditional lifestyle. They moved to towns and cities, seeking work and a lifestyle that did not involve a protector or government official making decisions for them.

However, while Aboriginal people were expected to assimilate into white Australia, many white Australians were less than accepting. Assimilation did not give Aboriginal people the same rights as white Australians, and Aboriginal people continued to encounter serious discrimination. They found it difficult to find work, they encountered resistance in shops, entertainment venues and public places, and they were denied access to housing and health assistance.

As a result, Aboriginal people were often placed in special housing areas or forced to live on the fringes of towns, where facilities were poor. Aboriginal women who married non-Aboriginal men often found themselves living in areas where neighbours did not want to associate with them. Aboriginal servicemen from World War II were not allowed to drink and socialise freely in Australian towns that still maintained segregationist policies. At the RSL Club at Walgett in New South Wales, Aboriginal men who had served in the war were allowed to enter the club only on Anzac Day. Aboriginal soldiers also found that the pay and entitlements from their service in the armed forces were not equal to those given to white soldiers.

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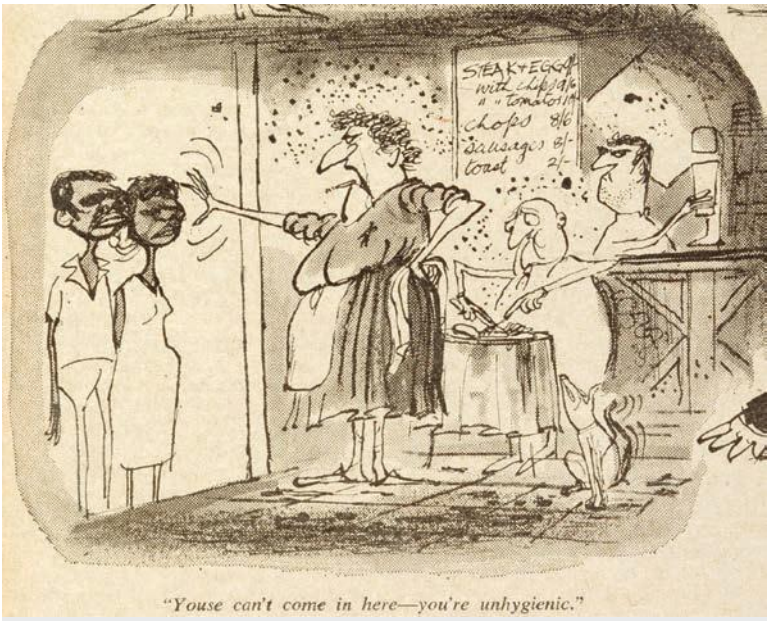
FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Racism is not acceptable … Women not being able to buy dresses and try them on in shops – just once they touch them they got to buy them. That sort of stuff's not acceptable. Not being able to sit down at a restaurant, you know, in a delicatessen, whatever, or a restaurant in a country town if white people wanted a seat, is not acceptable. Or not being allowed to sit down anyhow. You can only have takeaways. Only being served in one bar in a hotel and not the lounge or anywhere else. Not being able to sit at the back seats of picture theatres, only in the front. This all happened in Walgett. Walgett was Australia all over. And so it started there and from there it just flowed everywhere. The social change was on, the revolution was on.

Charles Perkins, interviewed for *Australian Biography*, Film Australia, SBS, 1998

source B



'Youse can't come in here — you're unhygienic.' The Bulletin, 1965, Bauer Media Pty Ltd, courtesy of National Library of Australia

'Youse can't come in here—you're unhygienic'; a cartoon from *The Bulletin*, 1965

1 Prepare a list of some of the grievances Aboriginal people could have faced in country towns.

2 The main point of the cartoon, Source B, is that:

- **A** Aboriginal people are neat and tidy and white Australians are not
- **B** Aboriginal people are not allowed to eat the food in the cafe
- **C** many white Australians deliberately excluded Aboriginal people from places where white Australians went
- **D** Aboriginal people had no rights.

3 Explain how the cartoonist conveys his intentions in this cartoon.

4 Is there any link between the comments in Source A and the cartoon in Source B?

5 Imagine you have just seen this cartoon in *The Bulletin* of 6 March 1965. Write a letter to the editor of *The Bulletin* with your response.

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The policies of integration and self-determination

By the 1960s the policy of assimilation – the idea that Aboriginal people should assimilate, and abandon their traditions and culture – was under challenge. There were demands for reforms from Aboriginal leaders, the churches, the Labor Party and social and humanitarian groups. In 1965, at the Aboriginal Welfare Conference, the definition of assimilation was again changed. Assimilation now meant that 'all persons of Aboriginal descent will choose to attain a similar manner and standard of living to that of other Australians'.

Such a change of statement suggested that Aboriginal people were not required to lose all of their cultural ideas, beliefs and customs, and soon another word was used for this policy: integration. This word suggested a greater acceptance of Aboriginal people's culture and in particular their special relationship with the land. Aboriginal people with their society and culture were to become part of the wider Australian society and culture.

When the Whitlam government came to office in 1972, the word 'self-determination' became the new name for government policy on Aboriginal Australians. This meant that Aboriginal people were to have full control over all the things that affected their lives. It meant that they were no longer a 'dying race', to be protected or assimilated; rather, they were full and equal citizens with all other Australians. Since 1972 the policy of self-determination for Aboriginal peoples has had widespread acceptance in Australia.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain the difference between the policy of protectionism and the policy of assimilation as it applied to Aboriginal people.

2 The Day of Mourning took place on 26 January 1938. As a person sent to report on the activities at Australia Hall in Sydney that day, prepare a brief news report on the nature of the protest, the type of people involved and the demands they wished the Australian government to address.

3 Indigenous Australians have reacted in different ways when white Australia celebrates milestones associated with the settlement of Australia. In 1938 (the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the First Fleet) the protest of the Day of Mourning stands in contrast to Indigenous reactions to later commemorations such as:
- 1970 – the bicentenary of Captain Cook's arrival at Botany Bay
- 1988 – the bicentenary of the arrival of the First Fleet
- 2001 – the centenary of federation.

Select *one* of the celebrations noted above and as a research task prepare a multimedia presentation in which you explain how Indigenous Australians responded to these commemorations and why they responded in that way. You should include in your work extracts from the press, images and, considering the perspective of the time, your own assessment of the events.

Museum Victoria/Photographer: Benjamin Healley

A badge protesting against the celebration of the Bicentenary in 1988

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5.4 HOW DID ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES ACHIEVE GREATER RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS AND WHAT WERE THE KEY TURNING POINTS IN THIS STRUGGLE?

The movement for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to achieve full rights and freedoms was a long one. As early as the 1930s the goals had been defined, but Australian governments and society were slow to respond. Other, more immediate issues, such as the Great Depression and World War II, had confronted the nation, and Indigenous affairs were of little interest to the great majority of Australians, who rarely saw Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people and knew even less about the conditions and restrictions many faced. By the 1960s, at the same time as African-Americans pushed for their rights and freedoms in the United States, the claims of Indigenous Australians finally came to the notice of mainstream Australia.

Changes in the 1960s

Indigenous rights 1960–69

The movement for Indigenous rights and freedoms in Australia has been characterised by different groups pressuring in different ways for change and acceptance. The common theme of the struggle was the push to achieve full legal rights and to redress the complex issue of **land rights**. In more recent times, the focus has moved to a new phase of the struggle – the issue of reconciliation. At the same time, underlying all of this has been the constant need to address the significant social hardships faced by many Indigenous Australians.

The years after 1945 were a period of increased activism (action) from Aboriginal Australians. The Menzies government had been slow to face up to the problems of Aboriginal peoples and Menzies himself had little interest in, or understanding of, the issues. This was a time when the official policy was one of assimilation. In June 1950 the minister responsible for Aboriginal policy, Paul Hasluck, told parliament that the future for Indigenous Australians '… lies in association with us, and they must either associate with us on standards that will give them full opportunity to live worthily and happily or be reduced to the social status of pariahs and outcasts living without a firm place in the community'.

By the 1950s several organisations and individuals began to demand better rights for Aboriginal people. One such group was the Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, which was formed in 1958. A small number of prominent Aboriginal rights activists, such as Oodgeroo Noonuccal, Faith Bandler and Jessie Street, began to support the demand for change. They began to define the demands of the Aboriginal people, including:

- the repeal (cancellation) of all laws that discriminated against Aboriginal people
- a change to the Australian constitution to give the federal government the power to legislate to assist Aboriginal people
- better housing and health care
- equal pay for equal work
- improved educational opportunities
- the protection of Aboriginal rights to their lands.

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Prominent Indigenous Australians: Oodgeroo Noonuccal (1920–1993), poet

Oodgeroo was born in 1920. She was from the Noonuccal people, who for many thousands of years lived on Stradbroke Island, which they called Minjerriba, in Moreton Bay, near Brisbane. For most of her life Oodgeroo was known by her Western name of Kath Walker; she only returned to her traditional name in 1988. Oodgeroo was a poet, a writer and a champion of the cause of reconciliation between Aboriginal and white Australia. She was involved with many Aboriginal rights organisations. Acknowledged as a significant poet, she was the first Aboriginal person to have her volumes of poetry published. She died in 1993.

National Archives of Australia [A6135, K23/1/87/18]

Oodgeroo Noonuccal was a prominent Aboriginal activist and poet.

By the start of the 1960s the Aboriginal population of Australia stood at about 100 000 and the population of the Torres Strait Islander people at about 7500. The constitution in 1901 had failed to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as Australians, but had given power to deal with Aboriginal people to the states. As a result of this, Aboriginal people were subjected to different laws depending on where they lived. Different state laws and regulations saw Aboriginal people with rights in one state that were denied in others. The Federal Council for the Advancement of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders noted the reality of the situation in a report in 1964.

> "… the position is that an Aboriginal or part-Aboriginal person may be in a position where he is allowed to drink alcohol in one state, but not in another; he may be forced to vote in state elections in one state, but prohibited from voting in another; he may move freely in one state, but not in another; he may be free to marry whom he desires in one state, but not in another; he may mix freely with non-Aborigines in one state, but not in another; he may have full rights in a court of law in one state, but not in another; and so on."

FCAA Sub-Committee on Legislative Reform, *Government Legislation and the Aborigines*, 1964, p. 5

The need to resolve this problem gave rise to the demand that Aboriginal people be counted in the Australian census and that responsibility for Aboriginal affairs should become a federal government responsibility. The constitution of 1901, however, had excluded Aboriginal people from the census and had made Aboriginal affairs a responsibility of state governments, not the federal government. To achieve these goals, a referendum of the Australian people would be necessary to change the constitution.

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The 1967 referendum: The right to be counted

The Australian constitution in 1901 made only two references to Aboriginal people and both of these references were aimed at excluding them from participation in the life of the new nation.

- Section 127 of the constitution said that 'in reckoning the number of the people in the Commonwealth, aboriginal natives shall not be counted'. Aboriginal people were not to be counted in the census.
- Section 51 of the constitution gave the federal government the power to pass laws about 'the people of any race other than the aboriginal race in any state'. This meant that responsibility for the welfare of Aboriginal people, except for those living in Australian territories, was a state matter.

To include Aboriginal people in the census and to give the Commonwealth government power to make laws of behalf of Aboriginal people required a change to the constitution. To change the constitution required a referendum. In 1967 the Holt government agreed to hold this referendum.

Source study: Bill Onus

All political parties at the time agreed to the inclusion of Aboriginal people in the census and giving the Commonwealth the power to implement policy and pass laws regarding Aboriginal issues. Through advertising and the media, and particularly in the booklets sent to homes outlining the issue and arguments, the government and the opposition urged a 'Yes' response in the referendum. As a result, almost 91 per cent of Australians voted to allow the constitution to be changed.

Faith Bandler

Before 1967 the states had exclusive powers to make laws for Aboriginal people within their boundaries. After 1967 both the states and the Commonwealth had that power. If laws of the Commonwealth and the states were in conflict with each other, Commonwealth law would prevail.

The 1967 referendum was the most successful referendum in Australian history. The Australian people had taken out two sections of the constitution that had discriminated against Aboriginal people and given Aboriginal Australians the same civil rights as other Australians.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

The result of the 1967 referendum

QUESTION: Do you approve the proposed law for the alteration of the Constitution entitled 'An Act to alter the Constitution so as to omit certain words relating to the people of the Aboriginal race in any state so that Aboriginals are to be counted in reckoning the population'?

STATE	'YES' VOTE	%	'NO' VOTE	%
New South Wales	1 949 036	91.46	182 010	8.54
Victoria	1 525 026	94.68	85 611	5.32
Queensland	748 612	89.21	90 587	10.79
South Australia	473 440	86.26	75 383	13.74
Western Australia	319 823	80.95	75 282	19.05
Tasmania	167 176	90.21	18 134	9.79
Total	**5 183 113**	**90.77**	**527 007**	**9.23**

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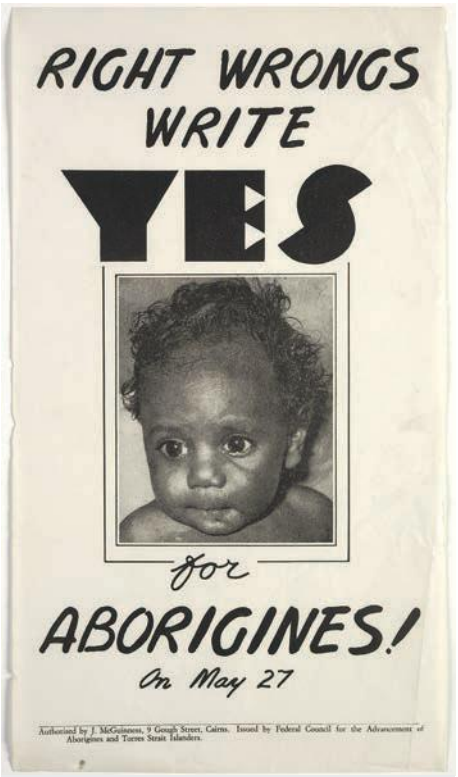
Oodgeroo recalls her work during the 1967 referendum

source B

I [received] a tremendous reception from both my own people and the white races. All the way through I found that the white race, the white Australian, has a very high sense of fair play … My greatest problem was educating the white race, they do not know anything about us …

Address by Kath Walker (Oodgeroo Noonuccal), 6 October 1967

source C



State Library of NSW [1277001]

1967 referendum poster

1 From your understanding of how a referendum works, why was this referendum successful?

2 Which state was most in favour of the proposal and which state was most opposed to it? Can you offer possible reasons for this?

3 Which one of the following statements is supported by the evidence in the table above?

- **A** The Yes vote in Tasmania was equal to the No vote.
- **B** The Yes vote was narrowly defeated by the No vote in every state.
- **C** The Yes vote in New South Wales was higher than the combined Yes vote in all other states.
- **D** The Yes vote was higher than the No vote in every state.

4 Consider these statements:

- **I** White Australians have a sense of fair play.
- **II** The 1967 referendum had little support from Australians.
- **III** White Australians did not know a great deal about Aboriginal people.
- **IV** White Australians did not support Oodgeroo Noonuccal as much as Aboriginal Australians in the 1967 referendum campaign.

Based on the evidence from your reading of Oodgeroo's address:

- **A** Statements I and II are true.
- **B** Statements I and IV are true.
- **C** Statements III and IV are true.
- **D** Statements I and III are true.

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Freedom Ride

In the days before the Vietnam protests, Indigeneous rights had been a popular cause among activist university students in the 1960s – although it was usually promoted under the broad heading of anti-racism. In 1965 a group of students from Sydney University, influenced by the example of the Freedom Rides in the civil rights movement in the United States, launched their own unique action to highlight the plight of Aboriginal people in country New South Wales.

The concerned students formed the group Student Action for Aborigines, and 29 of them organised their own Freedom Ride protest. Most of the students were white, but two of the leaders of the group were Charles Perkins and Gary Williams, both of whom were Aboriginal. In a hired bus, they travelled through the country towns of New South Wales to highlight the discrimination, and Australia's own form of segregation, that existed in rural Australia.

Newspix/News Ltd

The Freedom Riders of 1965. What were these young people seeking to achieve? What would some of the difficulties they experienced have been?

Freedom Rides

Many Australian country towns believed in keeping Aboriginal people away from the non-Aboriginal community of the town. These towns designated certain areas as 'black' in order to reduce white people's experience of Aboriginal people. Many towns still refused to allow Aboriginal people in the same areas as non-Aboriginal people in pubs, theatres, swimming pools and hospitals. Aboriginal people generally lived in reserves on the edges of these towns. These towns in central and western New South Wales, in particular Walgett and Moree, became the focus of the freedom riders. Protests were held in towns such as these to highlight the problems.

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Charles Perkins recalls the Freedom Ride

Well, the Freedom Ride is a copy of really what happened in America, where people wanted to go out, get in a bus, go out there and go to towns and cities and expose discrimination and prejudice wherever it may be. And racism. And that's what we wanted to do, all of us students. And we thought, well we'll go into the country towns of New South Wales. It was the blind leading the blind. We didn't know where to go. And we were a mixture: there were Jewish students there; there was about three or four communists there; there was a Presbyterian lay preacher there. All sorts, you know.

Charles Perkins interviewed in *Australian Biography*, SBS-TV and Film Australia, 1998

Newspix/Neville Whitmarsh

Charles Perkins defies a council ban and takes Aboriginal children swimming in the Moree public pool in 1965.

The experience of the Freedom Ride

In Walgett, New South Wales, where the RSL Club refused to allow Aboriginal people to become members (even if they had served in World War II), Perkins and the other freedom riders organised a protest outside the club. Some Aboriginal people joined the protest. From Walgett, the Freedom Ride travelled east to Moree. Here the focus of the protest was a council law that did not allow Aboriginal people to be in the same hospital wards as white people and did not let Aboriginal children use the local swimming pool unless they were part of a school group. Defying the ban, Perkins took a group of Aboriginal children swimming in the pool. This created serious tension and a few days later the Freedom Riders were confronted by an angry group of 500 local people, who abused and spat at them and threw objects. The police finally escorted the Freedom Riders and their bus out of town.

The Freedom Riders' journey around country New South Wales in 1965

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The Freedom Ride of 1965 was significant for a number of reasons.

- It captured the attention of the media, and *The Bulletin* magazine in February 1965 made the ride its cover story. The issue of injustice to Aboriginal people was brought to the notice of Australians who had never previously considered it.
- It was also the start of the process of activism on the part of many to improve the situation for Aboriginal people, a process that has continued to this day.
- By their actions Charles Perkins and his supporters encouraged others, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, to take up the challenge of working for justice for Aboriginal people. They also showed by their actions that non-violent protest was the way to bring about change.
- Many people believe that the successful 1967 referendum, which allowed Aboriginals to be counted as Australian citizens, was a result of the Freedom Ride two years earlier.

Freedom Rides

A local's view

FROM THE SOURCE

Well, we walked into the Walgett RSL club, and I said to them, 'I want to go into the bar.' They said, 'Aborigines are not allowed in here. Get out, or we'll have the police remove you.' …

We said, 'Righto, we're going to demonstrate against this club. Let's get some placards out. Who's got a pen?' Everybody's saying, 'What'll we write up?' I said, 'Write what you bloody well like. Whatever you want to write, write it up.' So I said, you know, 'RSL are racist.' So, we got our own placards up and stood there.

Well, you couldn't believe the reaction of the RSL club members. Absolutely hostile. They were spitting and everything, you know. 'You're scum of the earth! What are you doing here? Go and have a haircut. Go and have a wash. You're not going to have the blacks around here, are you?'

The Aborigines on the other side of the street [are] watching all this. And I was watching them and they were watching us, and we were sort of looking at each other and it was for them, you know. The whole freedom ride was not so much for white people, it was for Aboriginal people to realise, hey listen, second class is not good enough, you know. You don't have to always be first class, but don't always be second class. And you don't want to have to live on river banks and in shanty huts and at the end of a road where there's rubbish tips. Sitting down the front of picture theatres; not being able to sit in a restaurant, because nobody will allow you as an Aborigine to sit in a restaurant. That's not on.

Charles Perkins, interviewed for *Australian Biography*, Film Australia, SBS, 1998

1 Explain why Charles Perkins was in an RSL club at Walgett.

2 What was the nature of the protest Perkins recounts in this story?

3 Imagine that you are a journalist sent to cover the Freedom Ride of 1965. Prepare a brief account of what happened for your newspaper.

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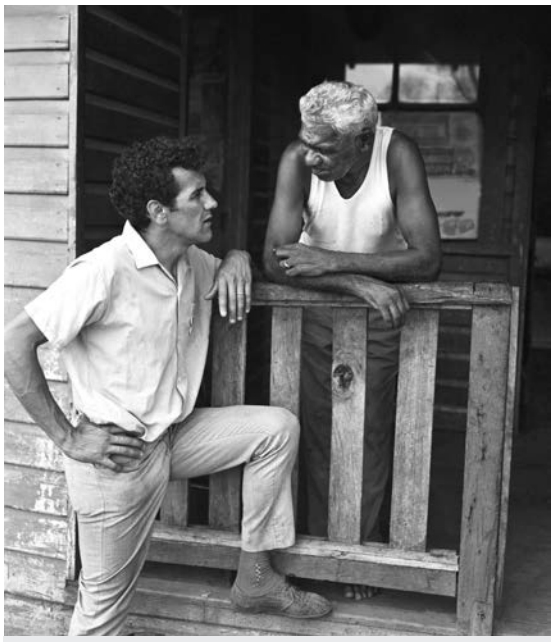
Prominent Indigenous Australians: Charles Perkins (1920–1993), Aboriginal activist and public servant

Charles Perkins was born near Alice Springs in 1936. His mother was a member of the Arrernte people and his father was a non-Aboriginal man whom he met only late in his life. At the age of ten, with his mother's approval, Perkins was sent to Adelaide to a school run by the Anglican Church. By his own recollection, it was a sad and difficult time.

After a time working as a labourer, Perkins' ability as a soccer player gave him a new opportunity. For some years he played for Liverpool and Manchester United in the United Kingdom, and he also played in Adelaide before moving to Sydney. In 1963 he became a student at Sydney University and in 1966 he became the first Australian Aboriginal man to gain a university degree.

For the rest of his life Perkins worked as an activist in the cause of Aboriginal rights. In 1968 he joined the Department of Aboriginal Affairs as a senior research officer, and he went on to be head of the department from 1984 until he resigned in 1988. Charles Perkins died in 2000.



Fairfax Syndication/SMH/Ted Golding

Aboriginal activist Charles Perkins (left), talking to a resident at Bowraville, New South Wales, during the Freedom Ride, 24 February 1965

FROM THE SOURCE

My childhood, from the time I left Alice Springs till the time I was about 22, I hated every minute of it, and that was in the prime of my youth. I hated every minute of it. But being chased down the street as a nigger when I didn't even know what a nigger was, to be never invited, as I never was, to a birthday party of any of the kids.

At the age of 16 I was asked to leave the school. They told me to get. To get going down the road. And I said to this priest, I said, 'Well where do I go?' And he said, 'Well we don't want you here, you're too cheeky, too smart, you're too disobedient, we don't want you in the home, you're causing problems.' And so I started walking down the road with my suitcase.

Charles Perkins interviewed in *Australian Biography*, SBS-TV and Film Australia, 1998

Which of the following statements cannot be supported by the evidence in this extract?

A As a boy Perkins was taken from his family and placed in a church school.

B Perkins faced racial abuse and discrimination.

C Perkins received a good education at the school.

D Perkins displayed intelligence and a spirit of independence.

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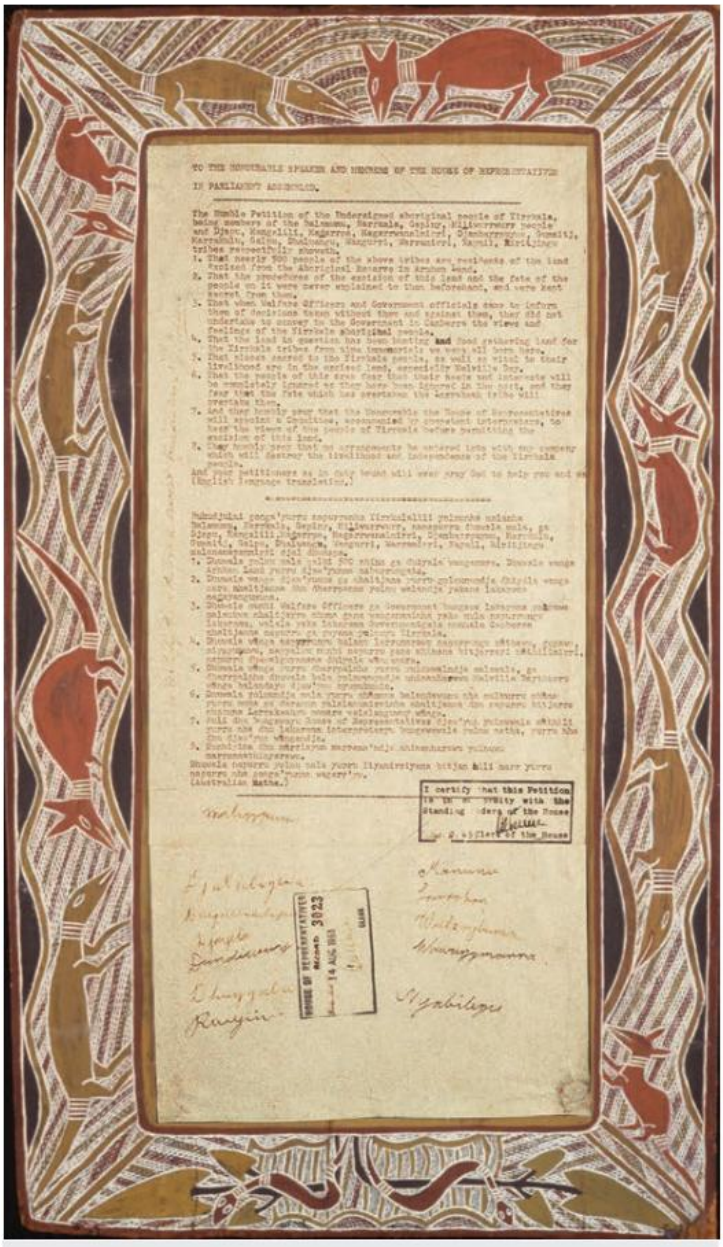
The struggle for land rights and native title

When white settlement began in Australia in 1788, the British adopted the concept of *terra nullius* (Latin words that mean 'the land belonging to no one'). Captain Cook encountered Aboriginal people during his voyage up the east coast of Australia. Because Aboriginal people had not cultivated the land, however, it was assumed that the land was not owned by anyone. As far as British law was concerned, the land was uninhabited. Captain Cook claimed all of the east coast of Australia for Britain. For almost two centuries the idea that Aboriginal people had land rights was ignored by white Australians. By the 1960s, however, the situation began to change and the demand for land rights became a major issue.

Site study: Yirrkala



Yirrkala artists, Dhuwa moiety. Yirrkala Bark Petition 14.8.1963 46.9 x 21 cm natural ochres on bark, ink on paper House of Representatives, Canberra, Parliament House Art Collection

The bark petition presented to parliament in 1963 by the Yolngu people of the Northern Territory, who sought unsuccessfully to stop mining on their traditional lands. The petition is now regarded as a document of historic significance and is on display in Parliament House, Canberra.

The bark petition

In 1963 the Yolngu people of Yirrkala in the Northern Territory lost 300 square kilometres of traditional lands when the government gave this land to Nabalco, a large mining company, which had the right to mine for bauxite (the main ore of aluminium). The Aboriginal people protested by sending a petition, written and painted on bark, to federal parliament. The bark petition, as it was known, was unsuccessful. The Aboriginal leaders then took the case to the Supreme Court of the Northern Territory.

In 1971 the Yolngu people lost their fight to stop the Nabalco company mining for bauxite on their traditional lands. The Northern Territory Supreme Court found that, although the Yolngu people had lived on that land for countless generations and had developed a spiritual bond with the land in question, this did not give them property rights under Australian law. The concept of *terra nullius* applied, and Aboriginal people had no special claim.

The Gurindji people and the Wave Hill protest

Three years after the Yolngu people of the Northern Territory sent their bark petition to the politicians in Canberra, another significant Aboriginal protest also related to land rights captured the nation's interest.

In August 1966, more than 200 Aboriginal workers and their families from the Gurinji people walked off Wave Hill station near Katherine in the Northern Territory. They moved to a small area on Wave Hill called Wattie Creek, where they set up a protest camp.

The Gurindji people, led by the head stockman, Vincent Lingiari, were protesting about the unfair pay and poor living conditions of the Aboriginal

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workers, and were calling for a parcel of land to be handed back to them from the vast area owned by a pastoral company. This particular strike won the attention of the media and the Australian public. Lingiari was an articulate and passionate leader who won much admiration, and this protest strike was recognised as the start of the Aboriginal land rights movement.

Newspix/News Ltd

Vincent Lingiari (far left), the leader of the Gurindji people, at a land rights protest in 1967. They are supported by Australian writer Frank Hardy (centre).

The Tent Embassy

In 1972 another example of Aboriginal activism began with the establishment of the Tent Embassy in Canberra. In January, after the government announced the view that Aboriginal people had no right to land under the idea of traditional ownership, a number of activists erected tents, which they called the Aboriginal Tent Embassy, on the lawns of Parliament House. The Tent Embassy presented a list of demands to parliament. These included demands for the recognition of Aboriginal land rights and the protection of sacred sites, many of which were threatened by mining development. Many people joined the protest and the Tent Embassy drew national and international attention to the issue of Aboriginal land rights. It also highlighted the great contrast in living conditions between black and white Australians, with the Tent Embassy reflecting the fringe-dwelling existence of so many Aboriginal people in modern Australia.

In response to the setting-up of the embassy, federal police were given orders to remove it, and in July 1972 the police tore down the tents. Violence broke out between the police and the protesters. The embassy was re-erected at the end of July and more than 1000 protesters, black and white, gathered to stop its removal. It has survived ever since.

Ningl-a-na

Site study: Tent Embassy

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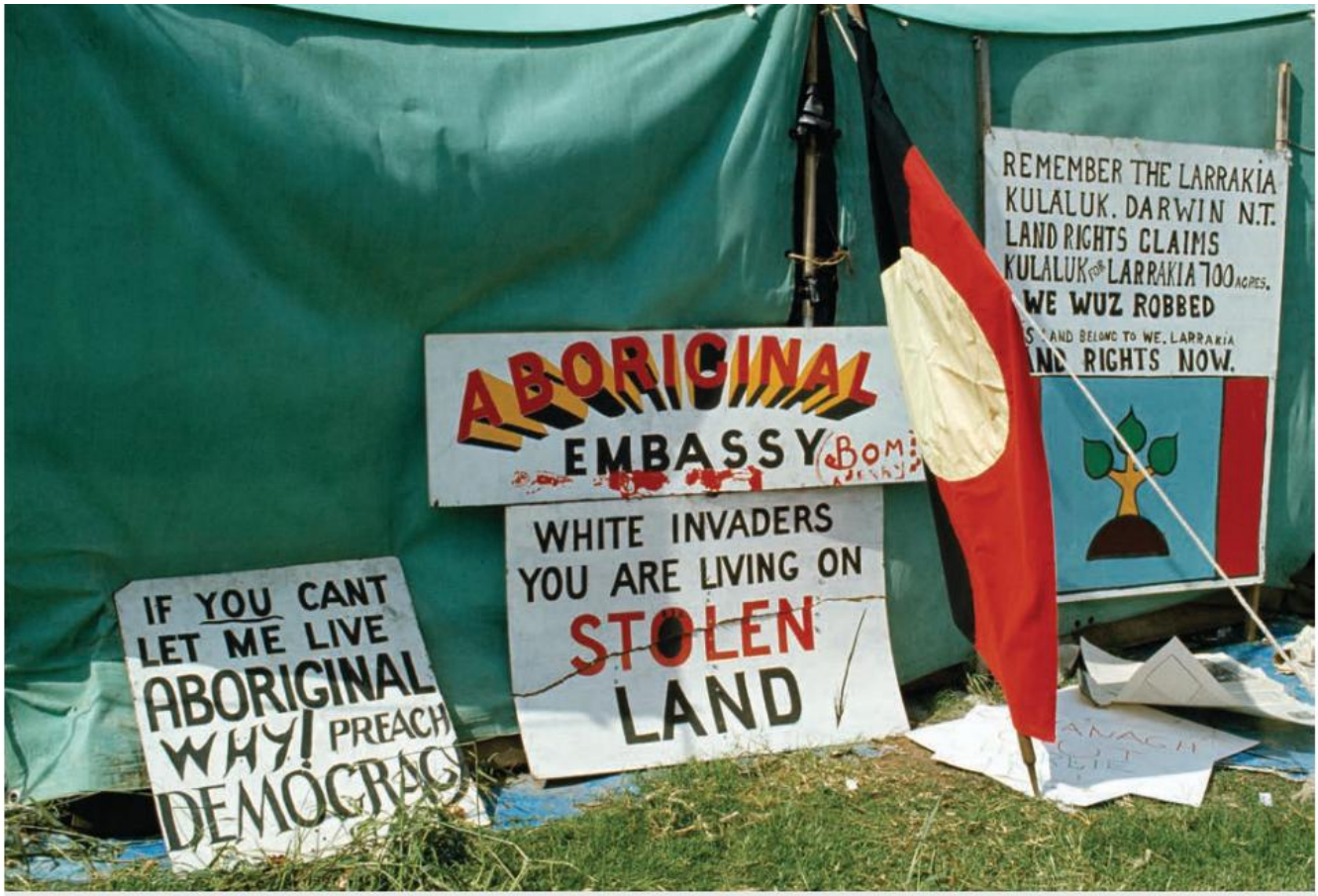


National Archives Australia [A6135, K14/3/74/11]

The Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the lawn of Parliament House, Canberra in 1974

For some it's a Canberra eyesore, for others a curiosity but on the eve of its 40th anniversary the Aboriginal Tent Embassy is still in place – an icon of indigenous struggle for generations of Australians …

Its early days were marred by violent clashes between activists and police, and despite attempts by numerous governments to have it evicted, the embassy will celebrate 40 years with three-day 'Corroboree for Sovereignty' celebration.

Thousands of Indigenous people from across Australia are making the pilgrimage to mark the milestone. `It's a celebration of our survival', said Isabell Coe, whose late husband Mr Craigie was one of the founders …

The embassy is on Canberra's tourist map, and visitors are invited to place gum leaves on the ceremonial fire as a symbol of protection during their journeys in Australia.

'Aboriginal tent embassy clocks up 40 years', by Lisa Martin, AAP, *Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 January 2012

WS

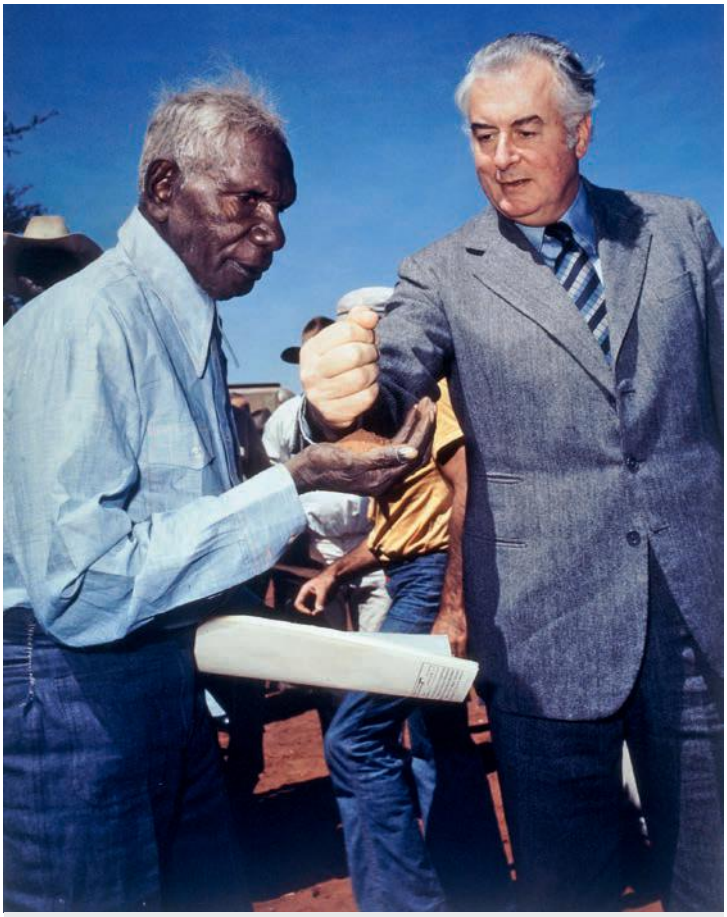
Passing the buck

ISBN 9780170347266

The Woodward Royal Commission

In February 1973, soon after he became prime minister, Gough Whitlam appointed Justice Edward Woodward to hold an inquiry into appropriate ways to recognise Aboriginal land rights in the Northern Territory. Justice Woodward's report in 1974 recommended that:

- all Aboriginal reserve lands be returned to the Aboriginal inhabitants
- Aboriginal people had claim to other vacant Crown land if they could prove traditional ties with this land
- Aboriginal land and Aboriginal sacred sites were to be protected
- Aboriginal land councils were to be set up to administer Aboriginal land
- entry to Aboriginal land for mining or tourism would be subject to Aboriginal control
- mining and other developments on Aboriginal land should proceed only with the permission of the Aboriginal landowners
- if mining companies were allowed to go ahead and mine in Aboriginal lands, the mining companies would be required to pay royalties (financial payments) to the traditional landowners.



Fairfax Syndication/SMH/Mervyn Bishop

Prime minister Gough Whitlam symbolically handing back the land to Vincent Lingiari, leader of the Gurindji people

The Whitlam Labor government supported the findings of the Woodward Royal Commission and in August 1975, in a public gesture of this support, Whitlam himself handed over an area of land to the Gurindji people, whose walkout from the Wave Hill Station in 1967 had begun the land rights movement.

Following the Woodward Royal Commission, the Fraser government in 1976 passed the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, which allowed Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory to make claims on land to which they could prove traditional ties. The action by the federal government to recognise Aboriginal land rights in the Northern Territory was supported by some states and strongly opposed by others.

FROM THE SOURCE

Whitlam hands the Gurindji people back their land, 1975

On this great day, I, Prime Minister of Australia, speak to you on behalf of all Australian people – all those who honour and love this land we live in. I want to acknowledge that we Australians have still much to do to redress the injustice and oppression that has for so long been the lot of Black Australians. Vincent Lingiari [Elder], I solemnly hand to you these deeds as proof, in Australian law, that these lands belong to the Gurindji people and I put into your hands part of the earth itself as a sign that this land will be the possession of you and your children forever.

E. G. Whitlam, *The Whitlam Government 1972–1975*, Viking, Ringwood, 1985, p. 471

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1 The action of giving soil to the Gurindji people is intended to:

A recognise Aboriginal rights to the land

B end discrimination against Aboriginal people

C give them land so they can resettle

D show that all Australian land belongs to the Aboriginal people.

2 Imagine that you are Aboriginal elder Vincent Lingiari on this day in 1975. Prepare a speech that he might have made in reply to the prime minister, which would include:

- why the land is important for Aboriginal people
- how the Gurindji people had struggled since their walkout at Wave Hill Station in 1966
- other issues still facing Aboriginal people in Australia.

Uluru (Ayers Rock-Mt Olga) National Park Handover/Leaseback Ceremony, 1985, Department of Aboriginal Affairs, National Library of Australia

The Governor-General (left) attends a ceremony in central Australia at which Ayers Rock (Uluru) is handed over to the traditional owners in 1985.

Queensland and Western Australia, which both had important mining interests, opposed the policy. In 1978 the Queensland government took over the Aboriginal reserves at Aurukun and Mornington Island in the far north of the state to allow a mining company access to the area. Other states, however, were more sympathetic to the cause of land rights. In South Australia and New South Wales large areas of land were returned to traditional tribal ownership, and in 1985, in a symbolic step towards reconciliation, Ayers Rock was returned to its traditional owners and was thenceforth known by its Aboriginal name of Uluru.

The Mabo decision, 1992

In 1992 the great turning point in the land rights struggle came with a judgement in the High Court of Australia. It concerned the issue of native title: did the Aboriginal people legally own the land before white settlement began?

In the 1970s, as in the case of Aurukun and Mornington Island, the Queensland government took over Aboriginal lands and was unsympathetic to the concept of land rights or any idea of native title to the land. In 1982 a group of people from the Mer (Murray) Islands in Torres Strait, led by Eddie Mabo, took a case to the Supreme Court of Queensland. They claimed that they had ownership of the islands since their people had lived on the islands long before the arrival of white settlement. The Queensland Supreme Court dismissed the case, but Eddie Mabo and four other Torres Strait Islander people took the matter to the High Court of Australia. They requested that the court declare that their traditional rights to the land and seas of the Mer Islands had not been extinguished. Furthermore, they claimed that the Crown's sovereignty (authority) over the islands was subject to the land rights of the Murray Islanders (traditionally known as the Meriam people). The Murray Islanders, on behalf of their people, were challenging the concept of *terra nullius*, the historical declaration by the

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National Library of Australia, reproduced with permission of Geoff Pryor

'Chaos theory (butterfly flapping its wings at Murray Island, birthplace of Eddie Mabo, causing cracks to appear in Australia)', 1993. Cartoonist Geoff Pryor's interpretation of the meaning of the Mabo decision

British that Australian land had belonged to no one when white settlement arrived in the 18th century. It was this concept that not only gave Britain claim to the land of Australia but, more importantly for the Murray Islanders, gave the Queensland government claim to the Torres Strait Islands.

Mabo

In June 1992, 10 years after the case had been filed, the High Court ruled in the case of *Mabo and Others v. The State of Queensland*. By a majority of six to one, the judges of the High Court found in favour of the Meriam people and against the state of Queensland. The High Court decided that the Meriam people were entitled to possession, occupation, enjoyment and use of particular lands in the Murray Islands of the Torres Strait. The decision overturned the concept of *terra nullius*, and held that the common law of Australia recognises that native title to land existed before settlement by Europeans in 1788. This decision also recognised that native title was still in existence on land that had not been sold by legitimate acts of governments, and where those people claiming native title had maintained a continuous spiritual and cultural connection to the land.

Prominent Indigenous Australians: Edward Koiki Mabo (1936–1992), a man who challenged the system

Eddie Mabo was at different times a fisherman, a cane cutter, a groundsman and a labourer. He put himself through a university course and was a champion who promoted the welfare of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. His name has gone into Australian history because of a challenge he and others launched against the long-held concept that Aboriginal people had no rights to the land. He died without ever knowing how successful his challenge would be, and a year after his death white Australia made him Australian of the Year.

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Newspix/News Ltd

Eddie Mabo at Brisbane Supreme Court, 1986

The Mabo decision was important because it recognised that the descendants of people who lived in Australia long before white settlement still had a claim to ownership of the land and to hold native title. This native title existed as a result of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's customary laws, which were in existence long before Captain Cook claimed eastern Australia and before white settlement began.

Prepare a brief biographical summary of the life of Eddie Mabo. You should collect historical evidence about his struggle to promote the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and include an assessment of why the Mabo decision in the High Court of Australia in 1992 was so significant.

Responses to the Mabo decision

The Mabo decision created confusion within the Australian public about which lands might be subject to native title and which lands were not. The High Court did not make a decision regarding whether or not native title could still exist in land not owned by pastoralists but **leased** from the government. This created a strong sense of insecurity, not only among pastoralists on leases, but also among many city people who feared, without any justification, that their suburban homes and land could be lost.

In response to the Mabo case, the Keating Labor government passed the *Native Title Act 1993*, which attempted to put into law the key points of the Mabo decision. The Native Title Act:

- recognised the concept of native title
- required Aboriginal people to prove continuous connection with any land they claimed
- protected the land owned by other Australians (freehold land)
- extinguished native title claims on lands leased by pastoralists.

Source study: Mabo decision

The Wik decision, 1996

Another step in the land rights movement began in 1993 when the Wik people on Cape York in Queensland made a claim for land on Cape York Peninsula that included two large pastoral leases. The Federal Court upheld the Native Title Act and ruled against the Wik people, with the argument that Aboriginal people had no claims on land that had been leased. As in the Mabo case, the matter was taken to the High Court on appeal.

In December 1996, in another important judgement, the High Court ruled that the granting of pastoral leases had not in fact extinguished native title. The High Court referred to a letter of 1848 in which the British Secretary of State for Colonies wrote to the Governor of New South Wales and

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said that 'these leases are not intended to deprive the Natives of their former right to hunt over these districts, or to wander over them in search of subsistence in the manner to which they have been accustomed' (Earl Grey, 1848).

The Wik ruling meant that pastoralists and mining companies on leased land had to negotiate with the traditional owners to allow them access. The people who leased the land and the traditional owners had to coexist. Many pastoralists viewed the Wik decision with great concern, for they had always believed that they had full and sole rights to manage their leases. After the Wik decision, pastoralists would have to negotiate with any group who could prove a native title right.

Miners and pastoralists were not happy with the Wik decision and the idea that Aboriginal people still had rights to leased land. They increased pressure on the government, and after a great deal of debate and division over the issue, the Howard government passed amendments (changes) to the Native Title Act. The amendments reduced the rights of Aboriginal people under the law and removed their right to negotiate with pastoralists. The new law also made it harder for Aboriginal people to make land rights claims by tightening up the requirements for these claims.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What part of Australia was visited in the Freedom Ride of 1965?
2 What was the purpose of the 1967 referendum?
3 When was the Aboriginal Tent Embassy established?
4 What was the Bark Petition?
5 Explain the meaning of the terms 'land rights' and 'native title'.
6 What action by the Gurindji people in 1966 is regarded as a major step forward in the struggle for land rights?
7 What land rights event happened at Ayers Rock in 1985?
8 In what year was the Mabo decision handed down by the High Court?
9 Explain why the Mabo decision is so important in modern Australian history.
10 What was the Wik decision of 1996?

The path to reconciliation

As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples achieved some success in securing their rights and freedoms, and especially after the Mabo case, the nation's focus began to move to the issue of reconciliation. Achieving reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians is an important issue, because it will allow all Australians to leave the past behind and move on to something better.

The meaning of reconciliation

During the century of nationhood, white Australians slowly accepted the need to address the wrongs that had been done to the original inhabitants of the land. There was the long struggle for citizenship rights that was won with the 1967 referendum. There was the struggle for land rights and native title, which achieved great victories with the Mabo and Wik decisions, and which continues.

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Reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians involves building bridges of understanding between the two parties. Part of this process is the need to address the wrongs of the past and to accept that, in the past, the Aboriginal people suffered injustice at the hands of white Australians. Ultimately, the reconciliation process requires an apology for these wrongs.

In 2000, an opinion poll showed that 67 per cent of Australians agreed that Aboriginal culture was an essential part of Australian society. It also showed that 76 per cent of Australians supported the reconciliation process and only 17 per cent opposed it.

Prime Minister Keating and reconciliation

In December 1992, a few months after the Mabo decision was announced and at a time when the nation's attention was drawn to the issue of the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the prime minister, Paul Keating, made a speech at Redfern Park in Sydney to mark the start of the United Nations International Year of the World's Indigenous People. For the first time, the head of the Australian government openly acknowledged the impact that the European settlement of Australia had on the nation's first inhabitants. Many saw this as the start of the reconciliation process.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Extracts from Prime Minister Paul Keating's Redfern Speech, 10 December 1992

Isn't it reasonable to say that if we can build a prosperous and remarkably harmonious multicultural society in Australia, surely we can find just solutions to the problems which beset the first Australians – the people to whom the most injustice has been done.

And, as I say, the starting point might be to recognise that the problem starts with us non-Aboriginal Australians. It begins, I think, with that act of recognition.

Recognition that it was we who did the dispossessing.

We took the traditional lands and smashed the traditional way of life.

We brought the diseases. The alcohol.

We committed the murders.

We took the children from their mothers.

We practised discrimination and exclusion.

It was our ignorance and our prejudice.

And our failure to imagine these things being done to us.

With some noble exceptions, we failed to make the most basic human response and enter into their hearts and minds. We failed to ask – how would I feel if this were done to me?

As a consequence, we failed to see that what we were doing degraded all of us.

Fairfax Syndication/SMH/Pickett

Prime Minister Paul Keating speaking at Redfern Park, 10 December 1992

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Twenty years later: A reflection

source B

Twenty years ago today, the prime minister of Australia went to Redfern to launch the International Year of the World's Indigenous Peoples. He gave a speech the like of which had never been heard from a prime minister since the birth of the nation.

Let me venture two preliminary points. First, such formal speeches attach to the office of prime minister, and are not merely a speech of a political leader who happens to be prime minister. When Paul Keating spoke at Redfern, he did not do so as the leader of the Labor Party which formed the government of the day.

He did so as the 24th prime minister of Australia. As such, he carried the mantle of that office, and spoke for it … Keating gave the speech that Edmund Barton never did. That Alfred Deakin never did. That John Curtin and Ben Chifley never did. That all our prime ministers up to and including Robert Menzies and Gough Whitlam never did. That Malcolm Fraser and Bob Hawke never did.

It was not that Paul Keating made this speech out of some idiosyncratic motivation. It was that some prime minister at some point in Australia's history had to give this speech. Keating's genius was to recognise the time had long fallen due for it … Keating brought indigenous Australians and the challenge of reconciliation to the main table of national priorities … Keating made it possible for Australians to imagine a reconciled nation.

The Australian, 10 December 2012

1 **What is the main point Keating is making in his Redfern Speech?**

2 **Explain why, even though he is talking of past events, Keating chooses to use the word 'we' instead of 'they'?**

3 **Explain what Keating means by the last line in this extract Source A?**

4 **According to Source B, written 20 years later, why is Keating's speech now regarded as a significant speech in modern Australian history?**

5 **In what way does Source B suggest that Keating's speech in 1992 could be seen as the start of the reconciliation process?**

The Stolen Generations: Bringing them home

Redfern Speech

Bringing them Home Report

The wrong that featured most prominently was the consequences of the removal of many Aboriginal children from the care of their parents.

The Stolen Generations were those generations of Aboriginal children who were taken away from their families by government, churches and welfare groups to be raised in institutions or fostered out to white families. The aim of this practice was to assimilate children, particularly those of 'mixed blood', into white society. It was a practice that existed from 1913 to 1969.

In 1995, as part of the reconciliation process, the Keating government established an inquiry, headed by Sir Ronald Wilson. It was called the National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families. Two years later the inquiry's 680-page report, a document entitled *Bringing them Home*, was presented to the newly elected government led by John Howard.

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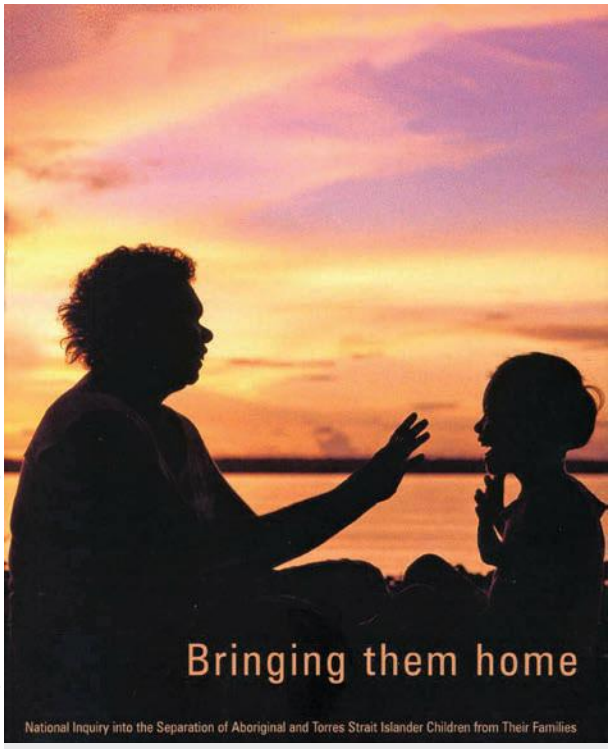

courtesy of the Australian Human Rights Commission

The cover of the *Bringing them Home* report, released in 1997

The document told in moving detail the story of the removal of Aboriginal children. It estimated that, for almost 60 years, between 10 and 30 per cent of Aboriginal children had been taken from their parents. The report called on the government to apologise for this misguided policy of earlier years and to compensate those who had been affected by this action.

For eight months the government made no response except to say that there would be no national apology and that no compensation would be paid. All state governments, through their parliaments, did offer an apology. Many local councils, church groups and non-government agencies did likewise. In 1999 the Commonwealth government finally provided funds to assist family reunions and set up counselling services for members of the Stolen Generations, and expressed, not an apology to Aboriginal Australians, but rather a 'statement of regret' for what had happened in the past:

> "[The government] expresses its deep and sincere regret that Indigenous Australians suffered injustices under the practices of past generations, and for the hurt and trauma that many Indigenous people continue to feel as a consequence of those practices."

Prime Minister John Howard to federal parliament, 26 August 1999

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Three extracts from the *Bringing them Home* report, 1997

I remember this woman saying to me, 'Your mother's dead, you've got no mother now. That's why you're here with us.' Then about two years after that my mother and my mother's sister all came to The Bungalow but they weren't allowed to visit us because they were black. They had to sneak around onto the hills. Each mother was picking out which they think was their children. And this other girl said, 'Your mother up there.' And because they told me that she was dead, I said, 'No, that's not my mother. I haven't got a black mother.'

Confidential evidence number 544, Northern Territory

We didn't have a clue where we came from. We thought the Sisters were our parents … I was definitely not told that I was Aboriginal … They took us around to a room and shaved our hair off … They gave you your clothes and stamped a number on them … They never called you by your name: they called you by your number …

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John: Confidential evidence number 553

When we left Port Augusta, when they took us away, we could only talk Aboriginal. We only knew one language and when we went down there, well we had to communicate somehow. Anyway, when I come back I couldn't even speak my own language. And that really buggered my identity up. It took me 40 odd years before I became a man in my own people's eyes, through Aboriginal law. Whereas I should've went through that when I was about 12 years of age.

Confidential evidence number 179, South Australia

From National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from Their Families, 1997, *Bringing them Home*

Sir Ronald Wilson on the Stolen Generations

source B

For these people to reveal what had happened to them took immense courage and every emotional stimulus they could muster.

We sat there as long as it took. We heard the story, told with that person's whole being, reliving experiences which had been buried deep, sometimes for decades. They weren't speaking with their minds, they were speaking with their hearts … Children were removed because the Aboriginal race was seen as an embarrassment to white Australia. The aim was to strip the children of their Aboriginality, and accustom them to live in a white Australia. The tragedy was compounded when the children, as they grew up, encountered the racism which shaped the policy, and found themselves rejected by the very society for which they were being prepared.

Sir Ronald Wilson, interview, ABC Radio, 1999

1 **What do the extracts in Source A tell us about the emotional impact on the people who were removed from their families?**

2 **Sir Ronald Wilson was the man who led the inquiry into the removal of Aboriginal children from their families. According to Sir Ronald, what were the reasons for this policy?**

3 **Explain Sir Ronald Wilson's remark that 'they found themselves rejected by the very society for which they were being prepared'.**

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Place these events in their correct chronological order:
- The High Court of Australia hands down the Mabo judgement.
- The Freedom Ride promotes awareness of conditions for Aboriginal people.
- The policy of protectionism towards Aboriginal people is replaced by the policy of assimilation.
- Many Australians observe Sorry Day as part of the process of reconciliation.
- The *Bringing them Home* report outlines the story of the Stolen Generations.
- The Gurindji people begin their protest at Wave Hill Station.
- The Aboriginal Tent Embassy is set up outside Parliament House in Canberra.

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2 Prepare a poster either in support of or in opposition to the 1967 referendum. Your poster should explain:
(a) what the referendum is about
(b) why you support or oppose the referendum.
or
Prepare a poster you intend to use as you travel as part of the Freedom Ride in 1965.
or
Prepare a poster that you intend to place in front of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy when it is set up in 1972, which will give people an idea of what the embassy stands for.

3 Read this brief passage from a school history textbook of the 1920s and 1930s, then answer the questions that follow.

> When people talk about the history of Australia they mean the history of the white people who have lived in Australia. There is a good reason why we should not stretch that term to make it include the story of the dark-skinned wandering tribes who hurled boomerangs and ate snakes in their native land long ages before the arrival of the first intruders from Europe.
>
> Walter Murdock, *The Making of Australia*, Whitcomb & Tombs, Melbourne, 1929

(a) Explain in an extended paragraph why comments like this would have been accepted at the time.
(b) Imagine this history book is about to be reissued. Prepare your own introductory paragraph for this history book.
(c) Imagine that you have been asked to write an update to part of this book. Prepare an essay in which you explain the main developments and changes that have affected Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since 1967. Your essay should consider some of the following:
- the 1967 referendum
- the policy of assimilation
- the Stolen Generations
- the land rights issue
- the issue of native title, including the Mabo case.

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HOW HAS THE STRUGGLE FOR RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS CONTINUED INTO THE 21st CENTURY?

5.5

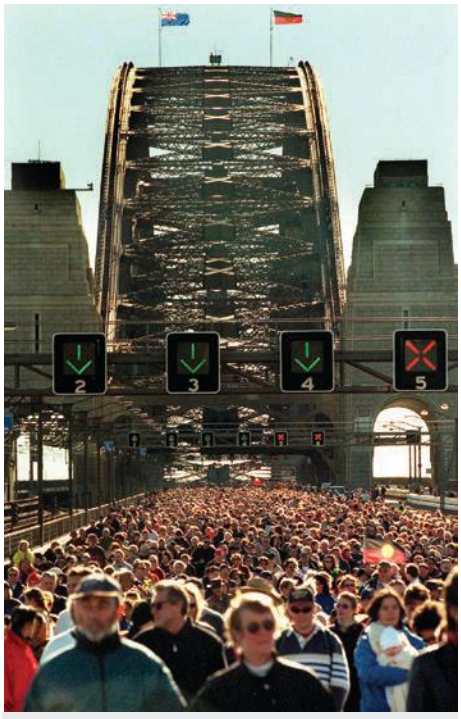
The generation that drew up the Universal Declaration of Human Rights has long passed, and it could be argued that the reality of human rights has fallen well short of the ideal. Many nations around the globe still ignore, totally or in part, the basic rights of their citizens. Examples range from extreme ones, such as North Korea, to many other nations that aspire to be democracies and yet still restrict many basic human rights. In Australia the struggle for the rights and freedoms of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people has been a long one, and many of its outcomes have been remarkable. It is also a very different struggle from those in other parts of the world where death and violence are commonplace and the law is abused or totally absent.

Reconciliation and Sorry Day

One of the recommendations in the *Bringing them home* report was for a Sorry Day that would offer the Australian community the opportunity to participate in activities acknowledging the wrongs done to Indigenous people. The first national Sorry Day was held in May 1998 to mark the first anniversary of the report. During this day, Sorry Books were available in which people could sign an apology to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Some sections of the Australian community did not agree with Sorry Day or the proposal that the prime minister, as head of the government, should make a formal apology on behalf of the Australian people. Many of them felt that, although Aboriginal people were badly treated in the past, it involved people of past generations and the present generation should not have to apologise for the wrong done.

Others feared that to apologise would leave Australians open to legal action for the wrongdoing, and that billions of dollars of compensation could be demanded. In contrast, others who embraced reconciliation believed that these past events had had a strong impact on the lives of Aboriginal Australians today and that an apology was appropriate.



Fairfax Syndication/SMH/Rick Stevens

More than 200 000 people took part in the Walk for Reconciliation over the Sydney Harbour Bridge in May 2000.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

After his election John Howard instigated an implicit assault on the foundations of reconciliation. Unlike Keating, who at least embraced the language if not the spirit of reconciliation, Howard had little time for the concept as it served no useful political or social purpose … Howard felt that Australians needed to be more self confident of their collective identity: a mere 'blemish' does not require atonement acknowledgement or redress. Under Howard, Australian reconciliation … had no place in the national cultural imaginary or the political process since its foundation was instantly undermined by a view of the past that suggested there was nothing really to reconcile.

Damien Short, *Reconciliation and Colonial Power: Indigenous Rights in Australia*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008, p. 170

ISBN 9780170347266

source B

Opinion polls, 30 May – 1 June 1997

QUESTION: Whether the government should apologise for the stolen children

POLL	APOLOGISE (%)	DON'T APOLOGISE (%)	DON'T KNOW (%)
AGB McNair	65	30	5
Newspoll	50	40	10
Morgan	37	57	6

GetUp! press release, 7 February 2008

1 **What reasons are offered in Source A to explain why the Howard government (1996–2007) had little interest in offering an apology to Indigenous peoples for past wrongs?**

2 **Do you agree with the argument in Source A that an apology was unnecessary because 'there was nothing really to reconcile'?**

3 **Are the opinion polls in Source B supportive of or opposed to the views of the Howard government?**

4 **Imagine you have just seen one of the opinion polls in Source B. Take a position with either the Yes vote or the No vote and write a letter to the editor to express your views.**

The Apology

The formal apology

In the federal election of November 2007 the Labor Party was returned to office after an absence of more than 11 years. The prime minister, John Howard, who had led his party to victory in five elections, not only lost office but also became the second prime minister in the nation's history to also lose his own seat.

Unlike the Liberal–National Party Government, the new Labor government was prepared to offer a formal apology to the Stolen Generations on behalf of the Australian people. Amid emotional scenes, the apology was delivered in the federal parliament in February 2008.

The apology

QUESTION: Do you agree or disagree with the Government's decision to say sorry for the forced removal of Aboriginal children from their families, also known as the Stolen Generation?

	AGREE (%)	DISAGREE (%)	DON'T KNOW (%)
Male	51	39	10
Female	59	33	8
Total	**55**	**36**	**9**

GetUp! Poll, 1–3 February 2008

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, Apology to Australia's Indigenous peoples, 13 February 2008

I move:

That today we honour the Indigenous peoples of this land, the oldest continuing cultures in human history.

We reflect on their past mistreatment.

ISBN 9780170347266

We reflect in particular on the mistreatment of those who were Stolen Generations – this blemished chapter in our nation's history.

The time has now come for the nation to turn a new page in Australia's history by righting the wrongs of the past and so moving forward with confidence to the future.

We apologise for the laws and policies of successive Parliaments and governments that have inflicted profound grief, suffering and loss on these our fellow Australians.

We apologise especially for the removal of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from their families, their communities and their country.

For the pain, suffering and hurt of these Stolen Generations, their descendants and for their families left behind, we say sorry.

To the mothers and the fathers, the brothers and the sisters, for the breaking up of families and communities, we say sorry.

And for the indignity and degradation thus inflicted on a proud people and a proud culture, we say sorry.

We the Parliament of Australia respectfully request that this apology be received in the spirit in which it is offered as part of the healing of the nation.

For the future we take heart; resolving that this new page in the history of our great continent can now be written …

Extract from the formal motion passed by the Australian Parliament, 13 February 2008

Issues for the new century

Despite the apologies and the politics, the struggle to lift the living standards and social wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people continues. They remain the most disadvantaged group in modern Australian society.

Fairfax Syndication/SMH/Nick Moir

Sorry Day in Sydney, May 1998

The census of 2011 revealed that there were 548 370 people, or 2.5 per cent of the Australian population, who claimed Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent. Thirty-three per cent of these people lived in or near the capital cities. From every point of comparison, Indigenous Australians still have a long way to progress to equal the standards of white Australians. The life expectancy for Indigenous men is 67.2 years (compared with 78.7 years for a non-Indigenous male). For women the figures are 72.9 years compared with 82.6 years. The infant mortality rate for Indigenous children is double the rate for the non-Indigenous (9.7 deaths per 1000 births for Indigenous people, compared with 4.4 deaths per 1000 births for non-Indigenous people). While 74 per cent of non-Indigenous children finish Year 12, for Indigenous children the figure is 36 per cent. In employment, health and housing, Indigenous Australians are again behind the standard for non-Indigenous people.

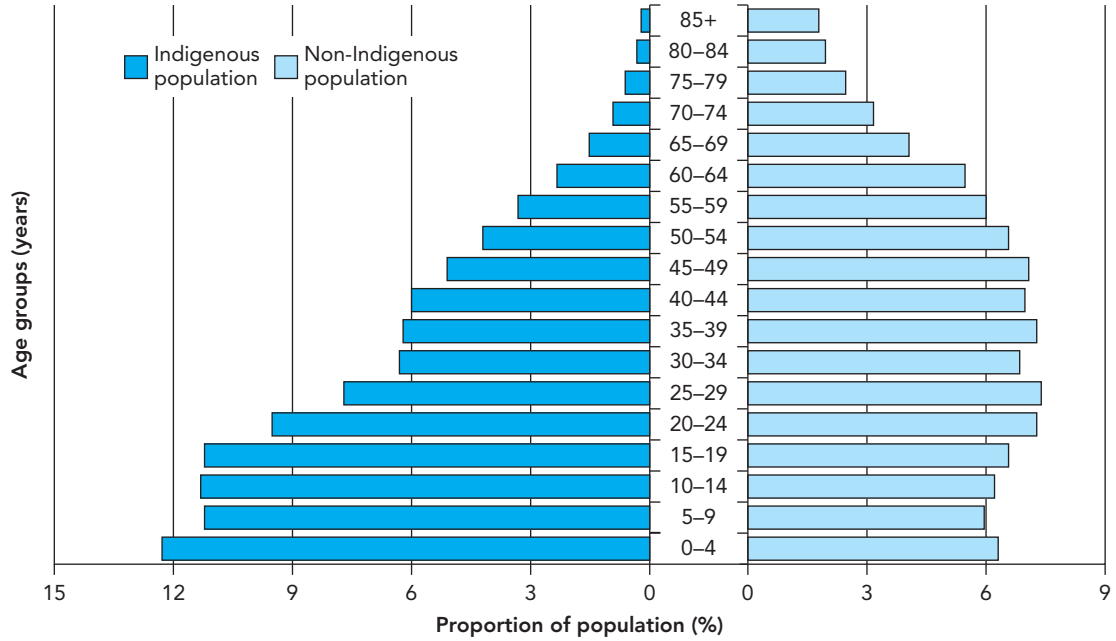
Closing the gap

While rights and freedoms are no longer the headline issue, the continuing challenge for the new century is to address the social inequality.

ISBN 9780170347266

FROM THE SOURCE

Indigenous v. non-Indigenous population graph



Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Australian demographic statistics, March quarter 2012*, Canberra, 2012

Consider this comparison of the age patterns of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in 2012. Prepare a list of four comparative points between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians that you can deduce from this data.

The Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the United Nations made no reference to indigenous peoples. Almost 60 years later, in 2007, the world body issued a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The aim of the document was not only to promote the welfare of indigenous peoples, but also to end the discrimination that many indigenous people still faced in their own country.

Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada all voted against the resolution, unsure how it would influence their own policies towards the indigenous peoples within their borders. In 2009, however, the Labor government reversed this stand and supported the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The United States, Canada and New Zealand have since followed.

Indigenous Australians are now acknowledged as the original owners of the land, and at many gatherings and meetings there is a formal acknowledgement of the former owners of the land. Indigenous people have full legal and voting rights, past wrongs have been acknowledged and formal apologies issued by all of the parliaments of Australia. Since 1971 Indigenous Australians have had their own flag, and in 1995 it was officially recognised as a flag of Australia. But the struggles continue.

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

Geoff Hook

This cartoon appeared in the press during the celebration of Australia's centenary of federation in 2001.

1 **(a)** What is the message of the cartoon?
(b) What were the conditions experienced by Indigenous Australians 100 years earlier, in 1901?
(c) Explain why there was a mood among Australians for an apology as the first part of the reconciliation process.
(d) Prepare your own cartoon on this subject that either supports or rejects the idea of a formal apology.

2 Read the formal motion passed by the Australian Parliament saying sorry to the Stolen Generations, which was passed on 13 February 2008. Imagine you are a journalist in Canberra and you have been asked to write a piece for the newspaper explaining the background to this event. Prepare your article.

3 Select one country in the world in the 21st century where the ideals defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been almost totally ignored. Using the Internet and sites that monitor human rights, such as Amnesty International, prepare a multimedia presentation or essay in which you examine some of the abuses of human rights that exist in that country.

WS Extended response

WS Crossword

WS Quiz

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CHAPTER 6

Popular culture

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- the development of popular culture in the years after World War II
- the influence popular culture has had on Australian society
- Australia's contribution to international popular culture.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

6.1 What were the main features of popular culture in Australia at the end of World War II?

6.2 How has Australian popular culture changed since the 1960s?

6.3 What has been Australia's contribution to international popular culture?

6.4 What beliefs and values have influenced Australian life?

Culture can be a difficult term to understand because it has so many elements, but in simple terms it is the creative product of a society, the things a society creates that people like and enjoy and that shape their lives. There was a time when culture was seen only as an expression of the higher things of creative life: classical music, ballet, art, opera and literature. It was something elitist and for the few. Today that is no longer the case.

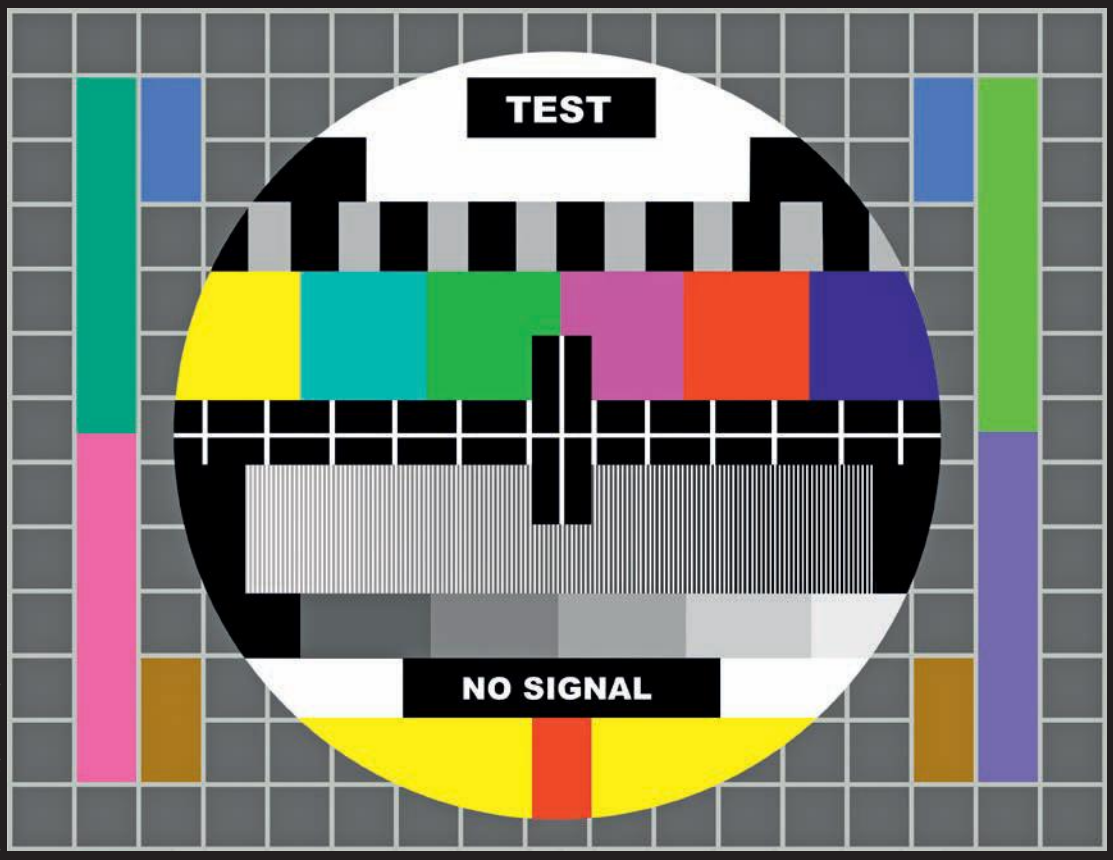
Popular culture influences and shapes society. There are many elements that make up popular culture although the dominant ones tend to be music, film, fashion, television, sport and, more recently, the great advances in computer technology. These elements shape the practices of a society – how a society expresses its attitudes and values – and they create an image of how people see themselves. Popular culture is called 'popular' because it involves the populace, or people; because everyone in different ways engages with it and is influenced by it. For this reason it is sometimes called 'mass culture', which sets it apart from 'high' culture.

Popular culture is both the product of many generations and something very new and changing. Some aspects of Australian popular culture are not easily understood by those who come from outside our land. Many find it strange, just as we might find the popular culture of a foreign country strange. Popular culture is also constantly changing, and for historians and others it provides a snapshot of how society lives at any point in time. It is now regarded as a field of serious study, and universities now offer courses in Popular Culture as a way of understanding the Australian national identity.

Before 24-hour television broadcasting became the norm, the colour test pattern, often accompanied by music, was displayed when there was no program being broadcast.

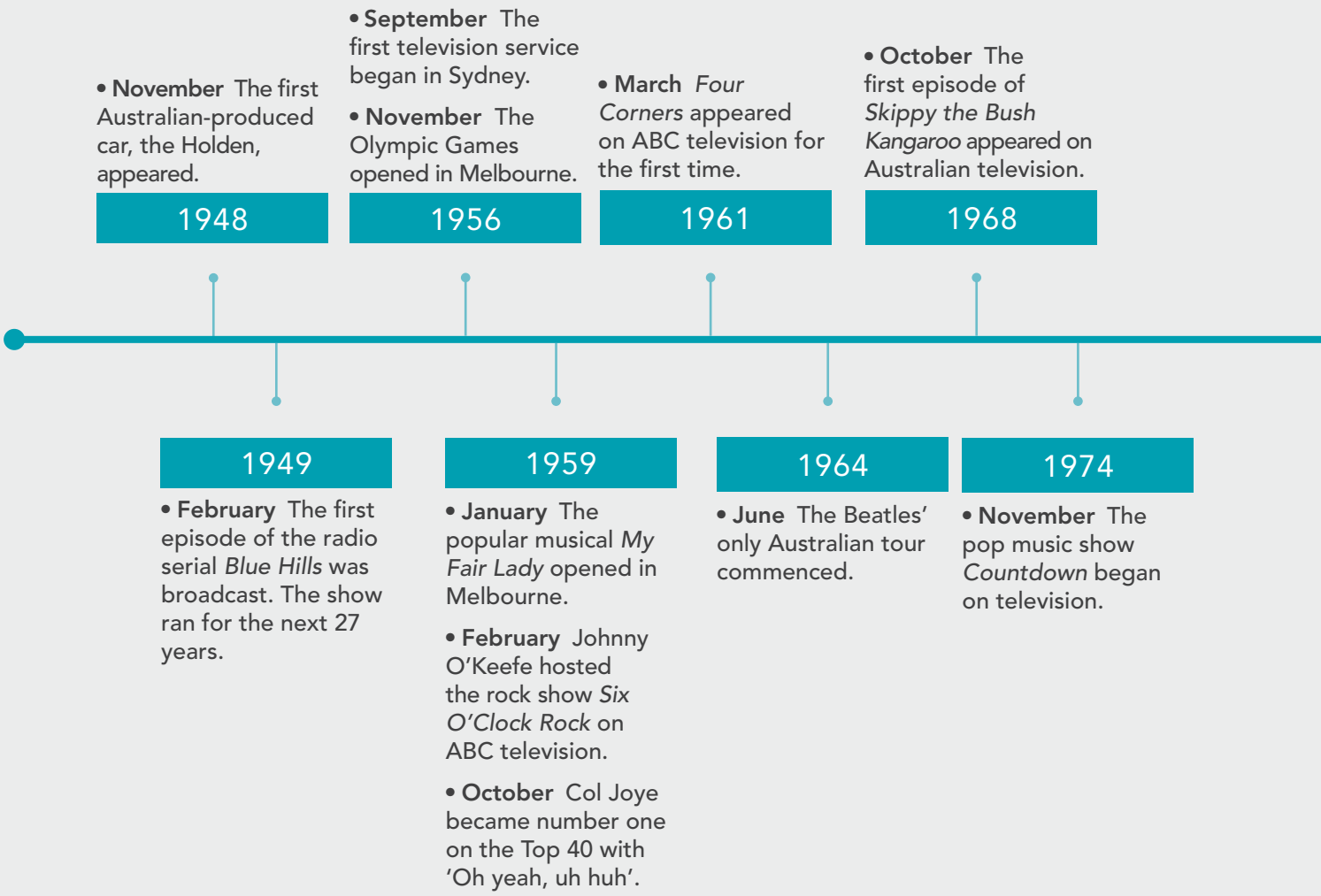
Australia is a lucky country run mainly by second-rate people who share its luck. It lives on other people's ideas.

Donald Horne



Shutterstock/caimacanul

Timeline, 1948–2010



Glossary

androgynous Having both male and female characteristics.
cinematographer A person responsible for the camera work in the production of a movie.
genre A class or type of artistic work.
Grand Slam The name for the French, Australian and United States Open tennis tournaments and Wimbledon in Britain.
Laminex A rigid plastic-based covering used for benches and popular in many Australian homes in the 1950s and 1960s.
Lino Linoleum; a versatile type of floor covering often used in homes until the 1960s.
Merseyside Part of the city of Liverpool in England where the Beatles were formed.

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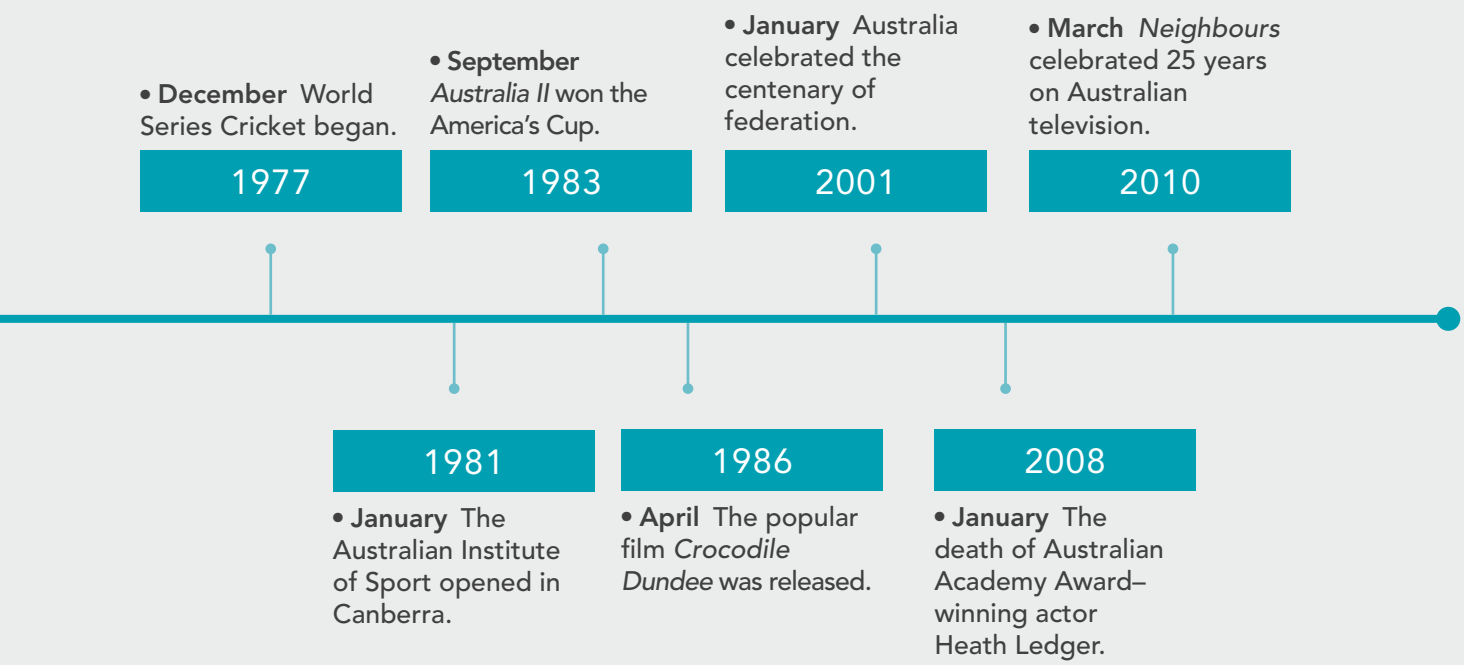

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6.1 WHAT WERE THE MAIN FEATURES OF POPULAR CULTURE IN AUSTRALIA AT THE END OF WORLD WAR II?

Postwar Australia: Creating a new society

When peace came in 1945, Australians looked forward to a better life. Twice in living memory the nation had been at war, and between the wars many Australians had felt the hardship of the Depression. Australians wanted to look forward rather than back, and the immediate postwar era offered a period of new hope, a time for reconstruction. It was a time when Australia elected a conservative government, led by Robert Menzies, that would remain in power for the next 23 years. The population grew with the arrival of the generation that would be called the 'baby boomers' and the thousands of migrants who came to be part of the Australian postwar story. It was a time of economic growth, with the wool and wheat industries providing the bulk of the Australian export trade. It was a time of expanding new suburbs, almost full employment and the confident belief that Australians were beginning to achieve the good life.

The Australian Women's Weekly magazine, National Library of Australia

The image of motherhood was a popular theme in women's magazines throughout the 1950s.

Conservative and cautious

For many people, the decade of the 1930s had delivered only economic struggle while the 1940s had been the decade dominated by the war, with all the disruption to normal life that came with it. The decade of the 1950s, however, offered a new opportunity to create the good life in the setting of a peaceful and increasingly prosperous Australia.

For most people, life in the 1950s was defined by very conservative attitudes. The older generation could not forget the memories of hard times and they tended to be very cautious. Australian popular culture was shaped by this conservative code. People wanted a settled life and the little extras that could also make it a comfortable life. Things that bettered this life were accepted; change that could challenge it was viewed with deep suspicion.

For most women at the time, life centred on the home and the family. Often a woman worked until she married, then based her life on raising a family in a home in sprawling suburbia. Some women chose to follow careers, but they were the exception. The generation born after 1945, who would be known as the 'baby boomers', grew up in this safe and steady world for most of the 1950s and then began to challenge and change it in the 1960s.

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FROM THE SOURCE

It all began about two years ago when my wife decided she was bored staying at home all day. She wanted to get a job, to stop being a 'potato', to meet people, to 'express' herself … I used every argument I could think of to persuade her that the life of a working girl, and particularly a girl with a husband and two children, wasn't all fun, but she was mad keen on the idea of going to work, and finally I gave in …

Before our marriage she had studied dress designing and dressmaking, and had always been interested in clothes. That's why she felt this job would suit her. Unfortunately, it did – but it didn't suit me …

I'm a fairly tolerant fellow. I had a mother who believed that a man should know a bit about cooking and ironing and looking after himself … I have always understood and appreciated the amount of work a woman, and especially a mother, has to do about a house, I have never been over-concerned about a button off a shirt, a hole in a sock, a bit of dust, a late meal … But with my wife at work things were left unfinished, small things at first, then bigger things, until the house and everything about it began to develop an atmosphere of neglect …

The bath wasn't cleaned very often. The fridge often needed defrosting. When I needed a golf shirt it hadn't been ironed and I had to do it myself … We used to have dinner about seven and be cleared up by about eight, but now dinner is any time between eight and nine, and sometimes we're not washed up until 9.30 or even 10 …

My wife buys food at lunchtime or on the way home, and many of our evening meals have that look of being prepared in a string bag. I haven't seen a real pudding for months …

I'm convinced that in our marriage this rare relationship is endangered by an unnecessary job and a disorganised home – in other words, by my wife's selfishness. It's a hard word to use, but she is being selfish. As she has no need to work, her duty is to herself, me, the children and the home. And she is evading this responsibility.

The Australian Women's Weekly, 18 March 1959, p. 10

1 **How does this extract from *The Australian Women's Weekly* of 1959 help your understanding of the role of many women in the 1950s?**

2 **Prepare a list of the particular 'responsibilities' this husband believed his wife had in the home.**

3 **Imagine you read this item in *The Australian Women's Weekly*. Prepare a letter to the magazine in which you explain why you either agree or disagree with the comment that his wife 'is being selfish'. Remember that you are writing as if you are from the 1950s.**

Building the Australian dream

One sign of the economic prosperity of the 1950s was a rapid housing boom across the nation. For many Australians, the great Australian dream – to own one's own home – finally became a reality. This housing boom was triggered by the increasing size of the Australian population, the shortage of housing during the war, and the final removal by the Menzies government of restrictions on the use of building materials. By 1959 two out of every three homes were owner occupied and in the process of being paid for.

1950s housing

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In the decades after World War II, the traditional method of building changed. Because homes had to be built faster and because traditional products, especially timber, were expensive, new building products and materials came on the market. Instead of a traditional brick home, the brick veneer home became popular. This looked like a solid brick home but was in fact a timber frame and one layer of external brick. It gave the 'veneer' or appearance of a traditional brick home. New technology in the production and transport of concrete meant that timber floors (once put down by hand, with each piece cut to size) were replaced by cheaper concrete floors. Timber was often replaced with new products such as Masonite, fibrolite, or sheets of compressed plaster called gyprock. Another development of the time was prefabricated homes, which were delivered to building sites in sections. A man with basic building skills was able to assemble his own home.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

The ideal life in the 1950s

Australians seemed to know what they wanted and it included a house … set in its own garden, a considerable amount of privacy, domestic comfort and an involvement in family life. There was a strong materialistic streak: they liked things that were useful in their homes and they would work overtime to buy them on hire purchase. They had a strong philosophy of how lives should be led: save money and get married; pay a deposit on a house and furnish it; hope your children will lead a happier life than you have led; plan your retirement so that you will enjoy it; and, when you die, leave your house to your children so that it can be sold and the money used to help pay off their mortgages.

Donald Horne, *The Lucky Country Revisited*, Dent, Melbourne, 1987, p. 24

source B

Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, with permission from AICF

An advertisement for Durabestos building sheets, commonly used in the postwar housing boom when good timber was scarce and the demand for homes was great.

1 Explain why was there such a demand for new housing in postwar Australia.

2 Explain how the image in Source B supports the comments being made in Source A.

3 Explain why adults of the postwar generation had
- a strong materialistic streak
- a strong philosophy [to] save money.

4 Consider these two statements.

I Many people lived in the same home for all their married life.

II Because the homes were built quickly with prefabricated materials, most could afford to pay them off at once.

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Based on what you have read:

A Both of these statements are true.

B Both of these statements are false.

C Statement I is true and Statement II is false.

D Statement II is true and Statement I is false.

5 Why would products like the one promoted in this advertisement in Source B be very popular in the 1950s?

6 What is the modern-day health concern that can arise when homes of this period are demolished or renovated?

Most Australians wanted their own large block of land, but people had to live in areas where they could afford to buy. This resulted in the suburban sprawl. As families pursued the dream of home ownership from the 1950s, new suburbs grew ever outwards from the city centre. Suburbia, and owning your own house on your own block of land, became the new Australian dream.

Built long before the days of serious urban planning, many of these new suburbs were never properly planned. They often lacked shopping facilities, convenient schools and adequate transport, and many essential services, such as sewerage, failed to keep up with the sprawl. Above all, the new suburbs lacked a sense of community, and some observers began to write of the psychological effect of living in the expanding suburbia – particularly the effect on wives and mothers who were 'trapped' in the 1950s home. Others, like the architect Robin Boyd, warned of the great ugliness of the Australian urban landscape, as the suburbs developed into endless streets of similar houses.

The 'sterile neatness' of suburbia. A housing development near Newcastle in 1959.

State Library of NSW [hood_28109] reproduced with permission of Fairfax Syndication

FROM THE SOURCE

For the most part modern Australian living is represented best by the shorn look. The countryside in which the suburb grows is shorn of trees. The plot on which the house is built is shorn of shrubs. The house itself is shorn of the verandahs which the colonists knew, shorn of porches, shelter and shade. It sits in sterile shaven neatness on its trimmed lawn between weeded, raked, brilliant beds of annuals, between the grey paling fences which separate each private domain from its neighbours. Very little is planted in the first place which is expected to be or is capable of growing high; and nature never can escape the tidy gardener's shears.

R. Boyd, *The Australian Ugliness*, Penguin Books, Melbourne, 1968, p. 163

ISBN 9780170347266

Which of the following statements best describes the intention of the extract?

A The new suburbs destroy the natural vegetation and do not effectively replace it.

B The new suburbs are well cared for with trimmed lawns and plants.

C The new suburbs are too large in the space they take from nature.

D The houses in the new suburbs are built to suit the climate.

When retro was real: The comforts of home

Two features in particular characterised the Australian home of the 1950s: the use of plastics and vinyls, which defined a home as 'modern', and the increasing use of a new range of home appliances to make life a little easier. Much of this style of home furnishing and clothing is now regarded as 'retro' (from the Latin 'backwards'). There is a genuine interest and desirability for things from the not too distant past that are distinct to a particular era and different from today.

The modern kitchen of the 1950s had **laminex** benches around a stainless steel sink, and the floor often had a plastic-based covering called linoleum or **lino**, which was available in a range of colours and patterns. Lino was both cheap and functional and could be laid over timber or even concrete. Kitchen furniture usually had chairs with chrome-plated metal legs, while in the lounge room the old upholstered furniture of the prewar years was replaced by vinyl-covered sofas and chairs. The range of colours available in vinyl and other synthetic fabrics made the new materials very popular.

General Electric Australia

An advertisement from the 1950s reinforcing the importance of having the very latest labour-saving products in the home

A range of new labour-saving devices was introduced in the 1950s. Electric and gas ovens came into common use, but the major advance of the decade was in refrigeration. Household refrigerators became reasonably reliable and an essential feature in most homes. As a result, shopping was no longer a daily chore, food could be kept for longer, and new items such as frozen food and ice-cream became part of the family menu. Other inventions of the 1950s included better gas and electric hot-water systems, which were usually located in the bathroom itself, electric mixers called Mixmasters, electric kettles and pop-up toasters, pressure cookers, steam irons, and improved electric sewing machines, vacuum cleaners and polishers. In all the newspapers and magazines, intense advertising targeted the market for the new home appliances. The home was still a woman's domain, and advertising featured happy mothers as homemakers with their new appliances. The advertisements aimed at men promoted outdoor appliances, such as the Victa petrol-powered lawnmower (an Australian product), which replaced the old push mower.

In the laundry, the copper boiler and the hand-cranked wringer were replaced by a washing machine. Washing machines could wash clothes, but rinse cycles and spin-drying were yet to come. Clothes still had to be put through the wringer, which was part of the machine, before they were taken out to the backyard on laundry trolleys and hung on the Hills Hoist. This was an Australian invention,

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

From The Australian Women's Weekly, photo: Coo-ee Picture Library

An interior of a home in the 1950s

source B

From Furnishing Australian Homes magazine 1954, photo: Coo-ee Picture Library

A 1950s kitchen

Study these images of the interior of a home of the 1950s and find other images from this decade on the Internet. Prepare a dot-point list of the major differences between this interior and the interior of your home today. In particular, list what items you would find in your kitchen and living room today that are absent from these pictures.

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National Archives of Australia [B941, HARDWARE]

An Australian invention, the Hills Hoist, in the 1950s

State Library of South Australia [BRG305/69/3/1]

The opening of the first supermarket at Morphettville, in South Australia, in 1953

Alamy/tim phillips

One of the earliest Holden cars, an FJ Holden, and a caravan

and in almost every backyard the old clothes line held up by a long pole was replaced by a Hills Hoist, which rotated in the breeze. Many backyards had only two purposes in the 1950s: as a place for the washing to dry, and as a place for the children to play. A number of homes also kept poultry in the backyard and had large vegetable patches. The practice of using backyard space as an extension of the home or as a place for entertainment and enjoyment began in the 1960s.

Transport and communication

From the 1950s, owning a car, as well as your own home, became a priority for many Australians, and today Australia has one of the highest per capita rates of car ownership in the world. In 1948 the first all-Australian car was produced. Prime minister Ben Chifley unveiled the first Holden, known as the Holden FX. It was followed in 1953 by the FJ Holden.

Although expensive for the time, the Holden was a reliable car, and compared with English and American cars it stood up well to rough road conditions. It became Australia's most popular car, and the demand for the FJ Holden exceeded supply. For many Australians in the 1950s, it was the first car they ever owned. With the increasing use of the car from the 1950s, shopping complexes and supermarkets with large car parks began to appear. By 1959 there were 3000 supermarkets across the country. Small corner stores slowly lost out to one-stop shopping, and the days of home deliveries from the grocer, the butcher and the baker came to an end. Not only did Australians spend more, but they also spent their money in different types of shops.

As car ownership took off, the first network of paved highways began to link the major capitals and inland towns. For younger Australians of the 1950s and 1960s, the car offered a freedom unknown to earlier generations. People who had never taken a holiday beyond where they lived now had the mobility to take their family to holiday resorts. Australia's first motels opened for business and, after the years of hardship during World War II, people began to travel for pleasure and a growing tourism industry began to emerge.

Holden cars

In the 1950s the arrival of diesel-electric technology began to transform rail travel. The power of a diesel locomotive was equal to that of two or three steam engines; the diesel

ISBN 9780170347266

courtesy of National Library of Australia

Loading luggage, Kingsford Smith Airport, Sydney, in the1950s. Photo by Max Dupain.

engine was more cost-efficient and required less support than an engine that ran on coal and water. By the mid-1950s long-distance travel on steam trains, and the soot and smoke that passengers endured, was becoming a thing of the past.

Commercial aviation began in the 1930s, but the price of air travel meant that few ordinary Australians could use the service. By the 1950s Australia had two commercial domestic aviation companies: Trans-Australia Airlines (TAA), owned by the government, and Australian National Airways (ANA), which later became Ansett-ANA.

Communication was always difficult in a country as vast as Australia. In the 1950s the only ways to communicate over any distance were by mail or telephone or by sending a telegram. The only telephones were those that used fixed landlines. Until the 1960s, to dial outside your local telephone area meant a 'trunk call' that had to go through an operator. The only way to send a written message, other than through the post, was by telegram. Telegrams were faster than post and were used to send important messages, but the message was brief because you paid for each word. At the point of arrival a telegram boy, who travelled to your door on a bicycle, finally delivered the telegram. Telegrams gave way to the fax machine and better telephones, and ceased to exist altogether with the arrival of email and SMS text messages.

'Fly TAA the friendly way', by Ralph Malcolm Warner, 195?, courtesy of National Library of Australia, reproduced by permission of Qantas

A poster for Trans-Australia Airlines from 1958. The airline operated under the name TAA on the domestic market from 1946 to 1986. It was later taken over by Qantas.

ISBN 9780170347266

National Archives of Australia [C4078, N8005]

National Archives of Australia [C4078, N810D]

Lodging a telegram at the Post Office (left) and the telegram boy who delivered the message to your door.

British and US influence on popular culture

The Australian identity and its popular culture have been influenced by many things. The first and most enduring influence was the British heritage that gave Australia its common language, its system of government and its legal system. The British influence was strongest in the first part of the 20th century, but even up until the 1950s Britain was still the dominant cultural influence. 'God save the Queen' was the national anthem, and on the radio, especially the ABC, the announcers were Australians who used what was called 'cultivated English' rather than the broad Australian accent. It was during the 1950s that this traditional British cultural influence gave way. There were two key elements that caused this:

- the arrival of large numbers of non-British immigrants from all over Europe during the immediate postwar years
- the increasing influence of American commerce and culture.

Australian children of the 1950s read American comics, American films dominated the Australian cinemas, people listened to American popular music, and later in the decade America gave Australia rock'n'roll and models of behaviour for the young. Television, when it arrived in Australia in the 1950s, was dominated by American programs, and visits from American movie or television stars were national events. Advertising based on the American model promoted all manner of products, and in particular products that originated from the United States. The American influence on our popular culture that began in the 1950s has never stopped.

Alamy/LES BREAULT

The popularity of Australian comics, such as the Ginger Meggs series, declined and imported or locally published versions of American comics became more popular in the 1950s and 1960s.

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FROM THE SOURCE

Letter to *The Bulletin*, 30 January 2002

Anyway you are fighting a losing battle, just as the ancient Britons had not much chance against the pervading culture of the Roman Empire. Globalisation means Americanisation. Coke, McDonald's, pop music and Hollywood fantasyland have been followed by the infiltration of Halloween and kindergarten kids chanting 'x-y-zee'. Why bother searching for a national day with meaning for us when we can simply adopt Independence Day, Thanksgiving and September 11 as our holy days?

Rex Benn

Pymble, NSW

1 **Explain the main point being made in this letter.**

2 **Write your own letter to *The Bulletin* in which you express your view on the issue.**

Radio in the 1950s

Corbis/H. Armstrong Roberts/ClassicStock

The portable radio, a popular item of the 1950s that allowed you to carry your music with you.

The only form of broadcast home entertainment until the mid-1950s was the radio – or wireless, as it was often called. Radio thrived thanks to advertising, because of the immediacy of the medium, and because of the lack of competition from television until the latter half of the decade. Most homes had a large radio set as the centerpiece of the lounge or living room, picking up the AM signal that was offered by a range of commercial stations and the ABC. Radio advertising of the 1950s reinforced the increasing American influence on Australian popular culture with radio programs such as the *Lucky Strike Hit Parade*, the *Lux Radio Theatre* and *Colgate Cavalcade* – all sponsored by American-owned companies.

Listening to the hit parade – a selection of popular songs – was a feature of radio, and in 1958 station 2UE in Sydney issued the first Australian Top 40 chart. It was made up entirely of British and American songs. The hit parade was presented by a 'disk jockey', a term copied directly from the United States.

Australian Old Time Radio

By the 1950s, radio sets had become much smaller. Transistor technology arrived and radios became portable – no longer the bakelite item in the kitchen or the fixed furniture piece in the lounge. Long before talkback radio, the programs were mainly music, news services and popular serials.

Blue Hills, a radio serial set in a fictitious country town, ran for 27 years, from 1949 to 1976. It was the radio equivalent of television's *Neighbours*, set in a fictitious suburban street, which only recently bettered the record set by *Blue Hills*. For huge numbers of people, radio was the only way

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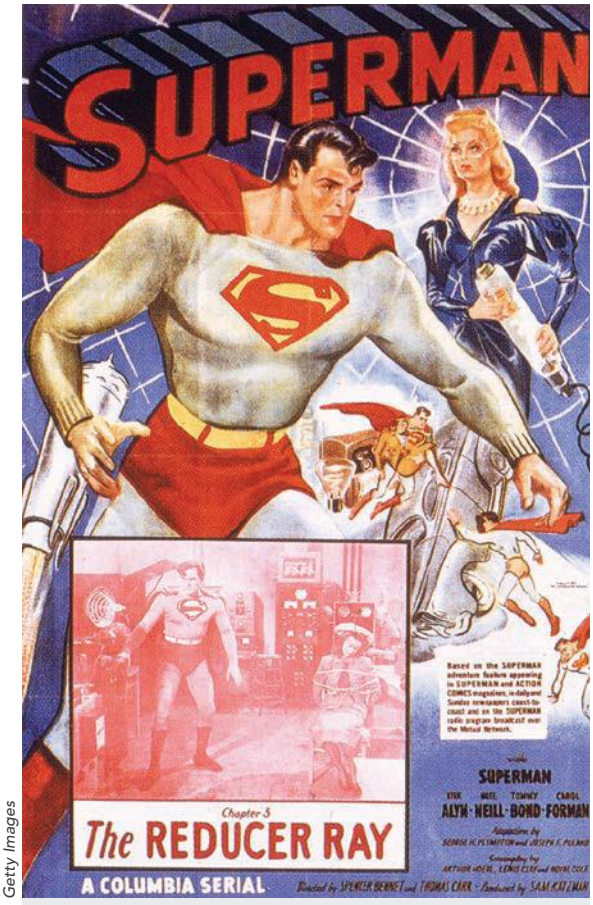
to access sporting events, while smaller numbers of Australians found enjoyment in interests such as opera, drama and classical music.

For children of the early 1950s, the only home entertainment was usually the radio serial, broadcast in the afternoon after school. A series of 15-minute serials, including the adventures of heroes such as Biggles, Superman, Hop Harrigan and Captain Silver and the Sea Hound, each to be continued the following day, kept children entertained. Later in the evening, the radio offered not only a wide range of musical programs but also quiz shows, talent quests, sport and mystery dramas. Audiences attended radio studios for the live broadcast of popular shows, and radio personalities such as Jack Davey, Terry Dean and Bob Dyer became national celebrities.

The movies

In the days before television, those who could afford it went to the movies each week and saw whatever was screening at the local theatre. There were different levels of seating: lounge seating (the most expensive, with comfortable seats), the back stalls, or the cheapest seats in the front stalls. It was a time when movie theatres had one evening session and usually offered two films: the main feature, with the popular stars of the time, and, before intermission, a shorter 'B-grade' movie. Hollywood movie studios turned out B-grade movies quickly and relatively cheaply to meet the demands of the viewing audience. On Saturday afternoon the picture theatres would put on a special session for children and any adults brave enough to go.

FROM THE SOURCE



Getty Images

A poster advertising the Saturday afternoon serial at the movies in the 1950s

Every Saturday afternoon you would go to the matinee at the State Theatre, a huge timber building with canvas seats, leaky toilets behind the screen and a floor with a steep incline. The afternoon was mainly for kids. It would start with *God Save the Queen* with scratchy pictures of the Queen riding out on a brown horse. Then it was cartoons, trailers, and a serial which always ended with the hero in real trouble until next week's episode. There were two movies, usually B grade westerns or adventure movies. My mother would give me two shillings [20 cents] plus a bus fare. It was a shilling [10 cents] to go in, a shilling [10 cents] to spend. Everyone talked and cheered and when the movie or the sound broke down, which it often did, everyone whistled and stamped their feet. If you found three empty bottles after the show and took them to the shop for a refund, you had your bus fare home. No bottles meant you walked home.

Recollections of Red Hill, oral history

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1 **Why would 'God save the Queen' be played before the movies?**

2 **Prepare a list of how going to the movies on a Saturday afternoon in the 1950s was different from going to the movies today.**

Most films that Australians saw in the 1950s came from Britain and the United States. As the American film industry regained its influence after the war, it came to dominate the Australian market and was a major force in the Americanisation of Australian popular culture. By the early 1950s almost 75 per cent of films on Australian screens were from the United States. The Australian film industry, which had enjoyed considerable success before the war, could not compete. The American industry had the technology, and advances in cinema in the 1950s such as Technicolor and CinemaScope added to the appeal of American films. Australian actors who could not find work in their own country went overseas and some, including Peter Finch, Leo McKern and Keith Michell, found international fame.

Reflecting the American influence on popular culture, the first drive-in theatre opened in Australia in 1954. As more Australians now owned cars, drive-ins became a popular and relatively cheap form of entertainment. They allowed people with young children to go to the movies, with the front seat providing movie viewing and the back seat a place for children to go to sleep. For different reasons young couples also found drive-ins particularly attractive and they were often called 'passion pits'.

Drive-ins

'Good evening and welcome to television'

In September 1956, Channel TCN 9 in Sydney became the first commercial television station to begin operations in Australia. Dressed in a formal dinner suit, the station manager, Bruce Gyngell, introduced Australians to the new medium with a simple 'Good evening, and welcome to television'. Television came to Melbourne soon after, and to all Australian capital cities, except Darwin, by 1960.

© THE WEST AUSTRALIAN

In the early days of television people often sat outside shop windows to watch this new form of entertainment.

Television sets were expensive and many Australians at first contented themselves with watching television in shop windows or visiting friends who could afford one. The owner of a television set in the 1950s had to pay a £5 ($10) television licence fee, yet within four years of its introduction over one million Australians owned a television set. In the 1950s television began in the morning and finished with the national anthem at about 11 p.m.

It was through television that the American influence on cultural life was most evident. Throughout the 1950s and into the 1960s most television programs came from the United States or, to a lesser extent, from Britain. Australians became familiar with a long list of American shows, including *Leave It to Beaver*, *I Love Lucy*, *Gunsmoke* and early crime shows such as *Highway Patrol* and *Perry Mason*. For children the radio serials gave way to the *Mickey Mouse Club*, a popular children's television program produced by the Disney organisation in the United States. America aggressively promoted and exported its culture, and countries such as Australia accepted it in full measure. If it worked in America, it came to Australia.

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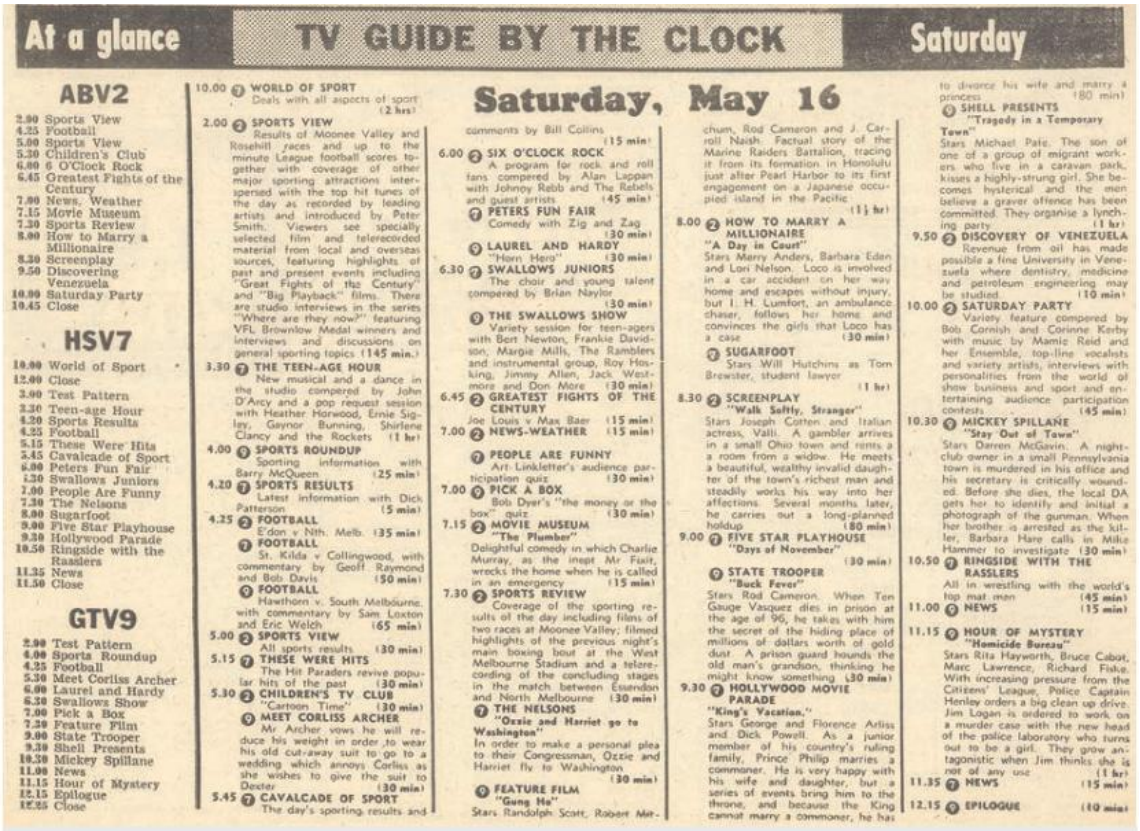

At a glance

TV GUIDE BY THE CLOCK

Saturday

ABV2

2.00 Sports View
4.25 Football
5.00 Sports View
5.30 Children's Club
6.00 6 O'Clock Rock
6.45 Greatest Fights of the Century
7.00 News, Weather
7.15 Movie Museum
7.30 Sports Review
8.00 How to Marry a Millionaire
8.30 Screenplay
9.50 Discovering Venezuela
10.00 Saturday Party
10.45 Close

HSV7

10.00 World of Sport
12.00 Close
3.00 Test Pattern
3.30 Teen-age Hour
4.20 Sports Results
4.25 Football
5.15 These Were Hits
5.45 Cavalcade of Sport
6.00 Peters Fun Fair
6.30 Swallows Juniors
7.00 People Are Funny
7.30 The Nelsons
8.00 Sugarfoot
9.00 Five Star Playhouse
9.30 Hollywood Parade
10.50 Ringside with the Rasslers
11.35 News
11.50 Close

GTV9

2.00 Test Pattern
4.00 Sports Roundup
4.25 Football
5.30 Meet Corliss Archer
6.00 Laurel and Hardy
6.30 Swallows Show
7.00 Pick a Box
7.30 Feature Film
9.00 State Trooper
9.30 Shell Presents
10.30 Mickey Spillane
11.00 News
11.15 Hour of Mystery
12.15 Epilogue
12.25 Close

Saturday, May 16

10.00 (7) WORLD OF SPORT
Deals with all aspects of sport (2 hrs)

2.00 (2) SPORTS VIEW
Results of Moonee Valley and Rosehill races and up to the minute League football scores together with coverage of other major sporting attractions interspersed with the top hit tunes of the day as recorded by leading artists and introduced by Peter Smith. Viewers see specially selected film and telerecorded material from local and overseas sources, featuring highlights of past and present events including "Great Fights of the Century" and "Big Playback" films. There are studio interviews in the series "Where are they now?" featuring VFL Brownlow Medal winners and interviews and discussions on general sporting topics (145 min.)

3.30 (7) THE TEEN-AGE HOUR
New musical and a dance in the studio compered by John D'Arcy and a pop request session with Heather Horwood, Ernie Sigley, Gaynor Bunning, Shirlene Clancy and the Rockets (1 hr)

4.00 (9) SPORTS ROUNDUP
Sporting information with Barry McQueen (25 min)

4.20 (7) SPORTS RESULTS
Latest information with Dick Patterson (5 min)

4.25 (2) FOOTBALL
E'don v Nth. Melb. (35 min)

(7) FOOTBALL
St. Kilda v Collingwood, with commentary by Geoff Raymond and Bob Davis (50 min)

(9) FOOTBALL
Hawthorn v. South Melbourne, with commentary by Sam Loxton and Eric Welch (65 min)

5.00 (2) SPORTS VIEW
All sports results (30 min)

5.15 (7) THESE WERE HITS
The Hit Paraders revive popular hits of the past (30 min)

5.30 (2) CHILDREN'S TV CLUB
"Cartoon Time" (30 min)

(9) MEET CORLISS ARCHER
Mr Archer vows he will reduce his weight in order to wear his old cut-away suit to go to a wedding which annoys Corliss as she wishes to give the suit to Dexter (30 min)

5.45 (7) CAVALCADE OF SPORT
The day's sporting results and comments by Bill Collins (15 min)

6.00 (9) SIX O'CLOCK ROCK
A program for rock and roll fans compered by Alan Lappan with Johnny Rebb and The Rebels and guest artists (45 min)

(7) PETERS FUN FAIR
Comedy with Zig and Zag (30 min)

(9) LAUREL AND HARDY
"Horn Hero" (30 min)

6.30 (7) SWALLOWS JUNIORS
The choir and young talent compered by Brian Naylor (30 min)

(9) THE SWALLOWS SHOW
Variety session for teen-agers with Bert Newton, Frankie Davidson, Margie Mills, The Ramblers and instrumental group, Roy Hosking, Jimmy Allen, Jack Westmore and Don More (30 min)

6.45 (2) GREATEST FIGHTS OF THE CENTURY
Joe Louis v Max Baer (15 min)

7.00 (2) NEWS-WEATHER (15 min)

(7) PEOPLE ARE FUNNY
Art Linkletter's audience participation quiz (30 min)

7.00 (9) PICK A BOX
Bob Dyer's "the money or the box" quiz (30 min)

7.15 (2) MOVIE MUSEUM
"The Plumber"
Delightful comedy in which Charlie Murray, as the inept Mr Fixit, wrecks the home when he is called in an emergency (15 min)

7.30 (2) SPORTS REVIEW
Coverage of the sporting results of the day including films of two races at Moonee Valley; filmed highlights of the previous night's main boxing bout at the West Melbourne Stadium and a telerecording of the concluding stages in the match between Essendon and North Melbourne (30 min)

(7) THE NELSONS
"Ozzie and Harriet go to Washington"
In order to make a personal plea to their Congressman, Ozzie and Harriet fly to Washington (30 min)

(9) FEATURE FILM
"Gung Ho"
Stars Randolph Scott, Robert Mitchum, Rod Cameron and J. Carroll Naish. Factual story of the Marine Raiders Battalion, tracing it from its formation in Honolulu just after Pearl Harbor to its first engagement on a Japanese occupied island in the Pacific (1½ hr)

8.00 (2) HOW TO MARRY A MILLIONAIRE
"A Day in Court"
Stars Merry Anders, Barbara Eden and Lori Nelson. Loco is involved in a car accident on her way home and escapes without injury, but I. H. Lumfort, an ambulance chaser, follows her home and convinces the girls that Loco has a case (30 min)

(7) SUGARFOOT
Stars Will Hutchins as Tom Brewster, student lawyer (1 hr)

8.30 (2) SCREENPLAY
"Walk Softly, Stranger"
Stars Joseph Cotten and Italian actress, Valli. A gambler arrives in a small Ohio town and rents a room from a widow. He meets a beautiful, wealthy invalid daughter of the town's richest man and steadily works his way into her affections. Several months later, he carries out a long-planned holdup (80 min)

9.00 (7) FIVE STAR PLAYHOUSE
"Days of November" (30 min)

(9) STATE TROOPER
"Buck Fever"
Stars Rod Cameron. When Ten Gauge Vasquez dies in prison at the age of 96, he takes with him the secret of the hiding place of millions of dollars worth of gold dust. A prison guard hounds the old man's grandson, thinking he might know something (30 min)

9.30 (7) HOLLYWOOD MOVIE PARADE
"King's Vacation."
Stars George and Florence Arliss and Dick Powell. As a junior member of his country's ruling family, Prince Philip marries a commoner. He is very happy with his wife and daughter, but a series of events bring him to the throne, and because the King cannot marry a commoner, he has to divorce his wife and marry a princess (80 min)

(9) SHELL PRESENTS
"Tragedy in a Temporary Town"
Stars Michael Pate. The son of one of a group of migrant workers who live in a caravan park, kisses a highly-strung girl. She becomes hysterical and the men believe a graver offence has been committed. They organise a lynching party (1 hr)

9.50 (2) DISCOVERY OF VENEZUELA
Revenue from oil has made possible a fine University in Venezuela where dentistry, medicine and petroleum engineering may be studied (10 min)

10.00 (2) SATURDAY PARTY
Variety feature compered by Bob Cornish and Corinne Kerby with music by Mamie Reid and her Ensemble, top-line vocalists and variety artists, interviews with personalities from the world of show business and sport and entertaining audience participation contests (45 min)

10.30 (9) MICKEY SPILLANE
"Stay Out of Town"
Stars Darren McGavin. A night-club owner in a small Pennsylvania town is murdered in his office and his secretary is critically wounded. Before she dies, the local DA gets her to identify and initial a photograph of the gunman. When her brother is arrested as the killer, Barbara Hare calls in Mike Hammer to investigate (30 min)

10.50 (7) RINGSIDE WITH THE RASSLERS
All in wrestling with the world's top mat men (45 min)

11.00 (2) NEWS (15 min)

11.15 (9) HOUR OF MYSTERY
"Homicide Bureau"
Stars Rita Hayworth, Bruce Cabot, Marc Lawrence, Richard Fiske. With increasing pressure from the Citizens' League, Police Captain Henley orders a big clean up drive. Jim Logan is ordered to work on a murder case with the new head of the police laboratory who turns out to be a girl. They grow antagonistic when Jim thinks she is not of any use (1 hr)

11.35 (7) NEWS (15 min)

12.15 (9) EPILOGUE (10 min)

Sun News Pictorial, News Limited, photo: Coo-ee Picture Library

A television program guide from *Listener In TV*, 16 May 1959

Australian content was slow to appear on television screens, but by the late 1950s a number of live entertainment programs were achieving success. The most notable was the nightly variety show *In Melbourne Tonight*, which made Graham Kennedy one of the first Australian television stars.

Older people complained about the impact of television on the young, and the owners of movie theatres complained about the declining attendances at the movies as Australians stayed at home. During the 1950s, as television became the most dominant form of entertainment, hundreds of local theatres went out of business.

Advertising: The Marlboro Man and the American influence

Source study: Advertising

The arrival of television gave an added impetus to another feature of the time – advertising. Using the American model, the print media, radio and television became the agencies for an intensive advertising push to convince Australian consumers to spend their money. The generation that could remember the Depression still believed in thrift and saving. Advertising set out to change this, with a particular focus on the growing teenager market, and set Australia on the path to becoming a consumer society.

Advertising told Australians how they should dress and act and what household items every home should have. It increased the influence of the United States over the Australian way of life, as people were encouraged to buy everything from toothpaste and washing powders to cosmetics, chewing gum, lawnmowers, American-owned petrol and cars. The Marlboro Man, a rugged cowboy promoting filter-tipped cigarettes for an American tobacco company, was one of the most successful advertising campaigns in history. Until then filter-tipped cigarettes were considered the choice of women. The Marlboro Man first appeared in Australia in 1955, and his message appeared on billboards and television screens until cigarette advertising was banned in Australia in 1976.

The 1950s saw the start of the process of exposing Australians to images and examples from the American lifestyle. In the decades since, this Americanisation of Australia has never ceased.

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The American television shows of the 1950s have been replaced by Oprah Winfrey and *The Simpsons*. The young people of the 1950s who wanted to dress like young people in America were no different from their grandchildren today, who wear baseball caps (back to front) and rapper-style fashions and sportswear from American companies such as Nike and Adidas. Many words in common use today are the American version: 'chips' have become 'fries', a 'lift' is now an 'elevator', '24 hours' is now '24/7', and most things are 'cool' or 'awesome'. The word 'guys' can now apply to any group, regardless of gender or age, and everyone is told to 'have a good day'.

Sport: The national obsession

One feature of Australian cultural life in the 1950s in which Australians were able to preserve some of their own identify was sport. Australians had an abiding love of sport in an era which produced many world-class Australian sportspeople. Unlike in the world of film or television, in sport all the national heroes were Australians.

It was a time when Australians dominated world tennis. With players such as Lew Hoad, Rod Laver and Ken Rosewall, Australia won the Davis Cup 15 times between 1950 and 1967, and in the same period Australians won the men's singles title at Wimbledon seven times. In swimming, Australia produced talents such as Dawn Fraser, who represented Australia in three Olympic Games, Murray Rose and Jon and Ilsa Konrads. On the athletics track, John Landy became the second man in history to run a four-minute mile, while Marjorie Jackson, the so-called 'Lithgow Flash', became the first Australian woman to win gold when she secured two gold medals at the 1952 Olympic Games.

In 1956 Australia moved to the centre of the world's sporting stage when Melbourne hosted the 16th Olympic Games. Australia did extremely well, coming third in the medal tally behind the United States and the Soviet Union. Helping the Australian medal tally was the sprinter Betty Cuthbert, who won three gold medals, in the 100 metres, the 200 metres and the relay. Unable to run because of injury at the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome, she went on to win another gold medal, in the 400 metres, at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964.

Getty Images/AFP

Lew Hoad (left), then aged 19, and Ken Rosewall after winning the Davis Cup for Australia in 1953. Hoad and Rosewall were two of a number of Australian tennis greats during the 1950s and 1960s.

Newspix/Bruce Howard

Betty Cuthbert winning the women's 100 metres final at the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956. She went on to win three gold medals at the games.

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Rock'n'roll and the new age

At the start of the 1950s, the only ways to hear music except at a live performance were on the radio or with a gramophone or record player. The music of this time, like film and television, was strongly influenced by the United States. Older Australians enjoyed American singers such as Nat King Cole, Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and Rosemary Clooney, and musicals that included *My Fair Lady*, *South Pacific* and *Oklahoma!* The arrival of vinyl long-playing (LP) records early in the 1950s helped to revolutionise the delivery of music. Before that, a record had a capacity of about four minutes of music before it had to be changed on the record player.

The greatest change, however, came in 1955 with the arrival of a completely new type of sound: rock'n'roll. It began with a movie, *Blackboard Jungle*, a film about rebellious American teenagers that was released in Australia in 1955. The film featured the song 'Rock around the clock' by Bill Haley and his Comets. The following year, the movie *Rock Around the Clock* had a huge impact. The younger generation embraced the new music from America and Bill Haley and his Comets became the first rock'n'roll band to tour Australia in 1957.

In November 1956, Elvis Presley arrived on the scene with his first film, *Love Me Tender*. He became the leading figure of the rock'n'roll era with a string of hit songs and movies and an evocative performance style that shocked many of the older generation.

Australia was quick to create its own pop stars in Johnny O'Keefe and Col Joye. Although television was still new, it picked up on the youth demand and in 1958 Channel Nine began its long-running program *Bandstand*. In 1959 even the ABC began a rock show, *Six O'Clock Rock*, hosted by Johnny O'Keefe – or 'the Wild One', as he was called. Many parents objected to rock'n'roll. It was seen as rebellious – which it was – and as encouraging inappropriate behaviour, which it may have done. Unlike the polite, sensible sound of other musical forms, rock'n'roll was seen as a sound that

Getty Images/Hulton Archive

Bill Haley and his Comets in January 1957. Their classic 'Rock around the clock' became the first hit single of the rock'n'roll era.

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made young people set loose their emotions and lose control. The new solo dance craze called the twist, which came from Chubby Checker's hit song of 1960, was equally condemned.

Youth culture in the 1950s

It was in the 1950s that the teenager was finally discovered. Until that time society had tended to provide for children and for adults. In earlier generations, strict social conformity and the experience of two wars and the Depression had effectively wiped out the teenage experience. All of this began to change in the 1950s as increased prosperity and mobility – and the involvement of business, which was quick to see the market potential of teenagers – gave this group in society the opportunity to define its own identity.

By the late 1950s many young people were demanding greater freedom, and the new modes of expression in music and film were giving them a way of achieving a new sense of identity. The arrival of rock'n'roll marked the beginning of a clearly definable youth culture – a set of interests, values and modes of expression unique to the young. It has continued ever since.

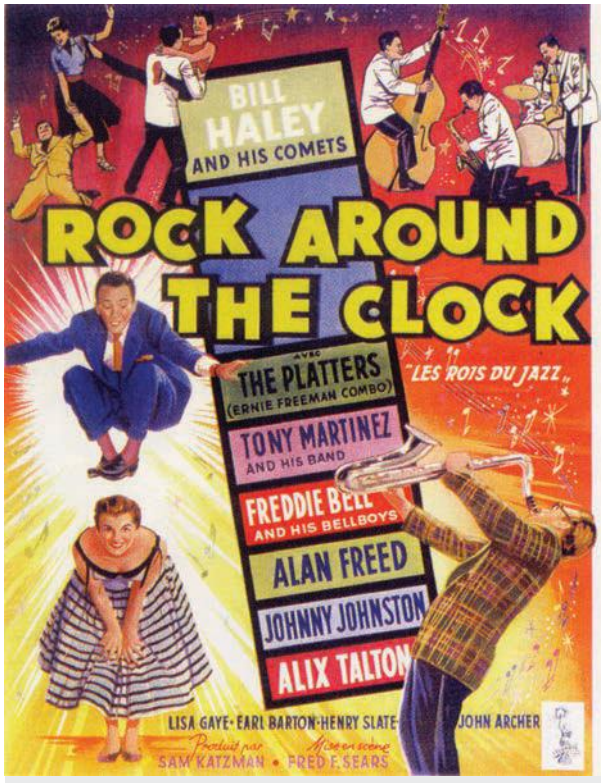
Newspix/Al Pascoe

Johnny O'Keefe was nicknamed 'the Wild One' after his hit song and his provocative and suggestive stage show. His career, which began in the rock'n'roll days of the 1950s, would continue until the 1970s, by which time he was nicknamed 'the Mild One'.

FROM THE SOURCE

I can remember that when I went to see *Rock Around the Clock*, I nearly jumped out of my seat when the music started. I thought 'Wow' this is really something. This was at the Tivoli Theatre and there were two mates and myself who used to go around all the time … one of them just loved Bill Haley and the Comets. I can remember the usherette hitting him on the head with a torch and telling him to shut up. He didn't even hear her – didn't feel it. He was just completely out of it watching the screen and listening to that music.

Bob Halliwell in 1956, quoted in G. Waldron, 'It's only Rock 'n' Roll', doctoral thesis, QUT, 2003



Alamy/Pictorial Press Ltd

Poster for the 1956 movie *Rock Around the Clock*

1. **What was the reaction of young people to the arrival of the sound of rock'n'roll in the mid-1950s?**
2. **Do you believe the example quoted in the source above is typical or atypical of the time?**
3. **What was the role of an usherette in theatres of the 1950s?**
4. **If you know someone who was a young person in the 1950s (possibly a grandparent), read this passage to them and summarise the main points they make in response to it.**

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Lee Atkinson

Bell's Milk Bar, in Broken Hill, NSW, is virtually unchanged from when it opened in the 1950s. Venues like this were popular meeting places for teenagers in the 1950s.

Themes of teenage rebellion, captured in movies such as *Rebel Without a Cause* and *East of Eden*, were well understood, and were personified by the American actor James Dean and his questioning of authority. Young Australians enthusiastically embraced this new music and dance style and bands copied the music. The theme of rebellious youth was also expressed in the first cult groups of the postwar era. Long before mods, hippies, punks and goths, there were bodgies and widgies. These two groups defined themselves with their distinctive dress styles. Bodgies (male) wore a loose jacket, black trousers, bright shirts with a narrow tie and brightly coloured socks, while widgies (female) wore a blouse with tight pants and thin, high-heeled shoes. They also stood out because of their rock'n'roll music, their behaviour and, in the case of the more affluent bodgies, their motorbikes. Their regular haunts were milk bars and fun parlours.

FROM THE SOURCE

Bodgies and widgies

Most 'bodgies' and 'widgies' are not really bad, but the cult had a core of bad youngsters about whom something must be done, the Minister for Education, Mr. R. J. Heffron, told the Legislative Assembly yesterday …

Detectives and uniformed police were keeping a close watch on 'bodgie' and 'widgie' haunts, the Acting Chief Superintendent of the C.I.B., Superintendent J. Wiley, said yesterday.

He said there was no alarming incidence of crime amongst them, but the police exercised strict supervision over them in their regular haunts such as milk bars and fun parlours.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 7 December 1956

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The news report about bodgies and widgies:

- **A** is totally negative towards them
- **B** displays some sympathy towards them
- **C** supports their expression of independence
- **D** suggests they are responsible for criminal behaviour.

Fashion for the fifties

The fashion statements of the bodgies and widgies stood in sharp contrast to the general fashion trends of that time. During the war years, when austerity was in place, women's fashion had been subdued. In the 1950s, however, as life returned to normal, women's fashion sought to be more elegant and stylish. For women the new look was the return of full-length dresses to well below the knee, and well-dressed women still wore a hat and gloves. Fur lining on clothing, and even full fur coats, were also regarded as very fashionable in the 1950s. Early in the decade the focus was on the slim line but, as the decade progressed, this look gave way to the full skirt, often using bright and floral patterns. The stiletto heel arrived in the 1950s, and heels up to 12 centimetres high were not uncommon.

Fairfax Syndication/The Age Archives

Fashions for women of the 1950s had a distinctive style

The influence of British fashion on Australian women was challenged by what American women were pictured wearing in magazines and television shows. Following the American influence, by the close of the decade women had begun to wear slacks. In the days before pantyhose, nylon stockings were high fashion and they were held up by suspender clips that attached the top of the stocking to a suspender belt worn under the petticoat. Make-up was important, but excessive jewellery was not; jewellery might be just a matching brooch and earrings in a simple style.

Reflecting the conservatism of the time, there was little change in men's fashion for much of the decade. For men, regardless of the season, the double-breasted suit was essential. Shoes were laced up and leather, and the only colour for shirts was white. The favoured hairstyle was short back and sides, and a hat was essential. The only cosmetic widely used by men was hair oil. A well-dressed man of the 1950s had his short hair flattened with Brylcreem or Californian Poppy. Before the changes of the 1960s, when hats were replaced by hair, even students at university wore white shirts, ties and jackets or crew-neck jumpers. Men did not wear any form of jewellery, and aftershave was unheard-of.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who was prime minister of Australia for all of the 1950s?

2 Explain why Australia's population began to increase during the 1950s.

3 Why does history remember *Blue Hills*?

4 Explain how telegrams worked.

5 In what year did television begin in Australia?

6 Why does history remember Johnny O'Keefe?

7 Which American group is most associated with the birth of rock'n'roll?

8 What were ANA and TAA?

9 What would you do with Californian Poppy?

10 Which of the following is the odd one out and why?

- A *Perry Mason*
- B *Bandstand*
- C *I Love Lucy*
- D *The Mickey Mouse Club*

11 In which of the following are these events of the 1950s in the correct chronological order?

- A Black and white television was introduced in Sydney and Melbourne. The first Holden car, the FX, was introduced to the Australian public. The opening of the Olympic Games in Melbourne. The movie *Blackboard Jungle* was released in Australia.
- B The first Holden car, the FX, was introduced to the Australian public. The movie *Blackboard Jungle* was released in Australia. Black and white television was introduced in Sydney and Melbourne. The opening of the Olympic Games in Melbourne.
- C The opening of the Olympic Games in Melbourne. The first Holden car, the FX, was introduced to the Australian public. The movie *Blackboard Jungle* was released in Australia. Black and white television was introduced in Sydney and Melbourne.
- D The first Holden car, the FX, was introduced to the Australian public. The movie *Blackboard Jungle* was released in Australia. The opening of the Olympic Games in Melbourne. Black and white television was introduced in Sydney and Melbourne.

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain the meaning of the following terms.
   (a) popular culture
   (b) baby boomers
   (c) suburbia
   (d) bodgies and widgies
   (e) retro

2 Draw up two columns with the headings 'Popular culture' and 'High culture'. Consider the following list and place each of these 10 cultural expressions in their correct column: opera, television, film, drama performance, rock music, literature, classical music, sport, ballet, fashion styles.

3 Place these events associated with Australian popular culture in the 1950s in their correct chronological order.
   - Melbourne hosts the Olympic Games.
   - Holden, Australia's own car, appears in the marketplace.
   - Bill Haley and his Comets tour Australia.
   - *Six O'Clock Rock* begins on the ABC.

4 Prepare an essay or a multimedia presentation on the changing pattern of teenage behaviour in the 1950s. Your presentation should include:
   - an explanation for the change
   - what form this change took
   - what reaction it caused from many older Australians
   - examples of the new teenage identity with fashion, interests and lifestyle.

5 One of the top rock'n'roll songs of 1958 was 'Purple people eater' by Sheb Wooley. Listen to this and nine other rock'n'roll songs of the 1950s on the Internet. From this selection prepare your own Top Five. Include a brief explanation of why these five made it to your list and what influence they had on Australian popular culture.

6 Prepare a multimedia presentation on the arrival and early history of rock'n'roll in Australia in the 1950s. Your presentation should include:
   - how and when rock'n'roll arrived
   - who the main figures were
   - the impact of rock'n'roll on the young, including behaviour and fashion
   - how older generations responded to the phenomenon.

7 Prepare a series of questions for an interview with a person who can remember the 1950s and what life was like then. Your interview should cover such topics as fashion, entertainment, day-to-day life in the home, the royal visit, transport and communication. Make an audio or video recording of your interview and present the finished work to the library at school as an item for their oral history collection.

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6.2 HOW HAS AUSTRALIAN POPULAR CULTURE CHANGED SINCE THE 1960s?

The 1960s were a decade that has become almost legendary, mainly in the minds of people who never really knew it. For many young people who had known only the peace and prosperity of the immediate postwar world, it was a transformative period, a time to challenge and change values and attitudes. Young people born in the late 1940s and 1950s had better education, more buying power, greater freedom and mobility and more leisure time than preceding generations. They believed in causes and social issues. It was a time of political protest, against the Vietnam War and then on wider issues such as nuclear disarmament, the rights and freedoms of women and Aboriginal people, and equality in the work place.

The 1960s and the decades that followed saw radical changes to society. People spoke of the 'generation gap' that developed as many younger people challenged accepted standards. The 1960s saw protest and pop art, psychedelic experiences, free love and the beach culture, but the reality was that the world and Australia had begun to change. In the 1970s people began to talk of a shrinking world, where influences and ideas spread quickly to other places. Globalisation had arrived, and geographical distance no longer counted. Australia benefited more than most from this trend as we were influenced by the world and, in turn, exerted influence on it.

Music

In its time rock'n'roll was seen as something daring and totally new, and Australia quickly embraced its own 'homegrown' rockers: Digger Revell, Lonnie Lee, Col Joye and the Joy Boys. Johnny O'Keefe (the Wild One) was the first to sign with an international music label and many believed he had the talent for true international success.

Site study: The Beatles in Australia

That Mersey sound

Beyond rock'n'roll: Music of the 1960s and 1970s

It was the arrival of British band the Beatles in 1964, however, that really energised the Australian music scene. For the first time, American influences had no answer to the impact of the 'Fab Four' from **Merseyside**. It was the first visit to Australia by a group who were already at the very pinnacle of international fame. The new technologies of the time had made it possible, and even their presence in the country was a statement that the distance between Australia and the rest of the world was breaking down.

Fairfax Syndication/SMH

Beatles fans at Sydney airport, June 1964

The Beatles toured the country for two weeks and gave 20 concerts. Everywhere they were greeted with screaming fans and scenes of wild enthusiasm. Their music was not the old rock'n'roll of the 1950s but something very different. Their style was distinctive, their fashion and hairstyles were an invitation to young people to copy them and question conformity. They symbolised a new freedom for the young. For many, the Beatles' tour marked the start of a period of social change in Australia. Six months after the Beatles left Australia, the Rolling Stones arrived in the country for their tour.

Music in Australia began not only to produce its own talented artists and groups, but also

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to follow different formats. Folk music had always had a following in the United States. The folk musicians Peter, Paul and Mary were hugely popular there, and their music had an influence on Australian group the Seekers, who also achieved international success.

There was surf music, which was a product of the powerful surf culture in Australia. Its characteristic sound was the electric guitar and its main influence was the surf culture of southern California and the music of American groups such as the Beach Boys. Australia found its own talent pool with people such as Little Patti (who was a regular singer at the Bronte Surf Club) and the Atlantics, who produced one of the classic sounds of the beach scene with 'Bombora' in 1963.

The dominant sound of the 1960s and 1970s, however, was that of groups whose work had both commercial and popular appeal and who regularly produced hit songs for the airwaves. The list is long and includes Billy Thorpe and the Aztecs, Daddy Cool, the Masters Apprentices, Cold Chisel (with Jimmy Barnes as their lead singer) and AC/DC.

Fairfax Syndication/A Kemp

The Beatles leaving Australia at the end of their 1964 tour

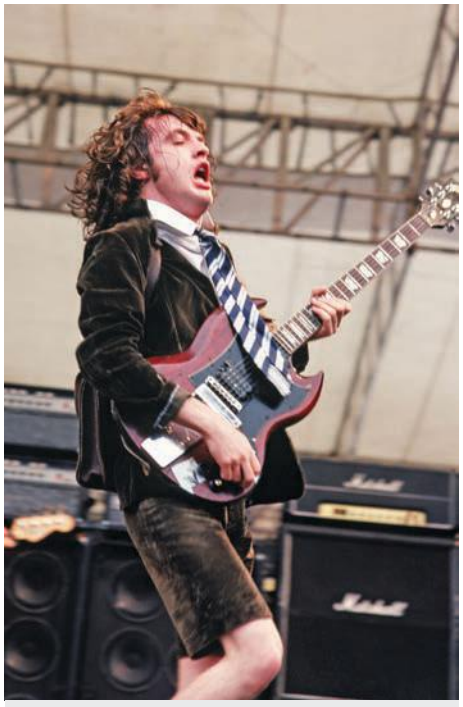
Living in the 70s

In 1974 the music industry was boosted by the arrival of the world's first commercial-free radio station dedicated to contemporary rock and pop music. Sydney's 2JJ (later Triple J) was owned by the ABC and its target audience were 18- to 25-year-olds. A survey that followed indicated that 22 per cent of its target audience were in fact regular listeners to 2JJ. That same year, *Countdown*, a weekly show devoted to popular music, began on ABC television. It would run until 1987.

During the 1960s and 1970s a number of individual singers emerged who would establish themselves on the Australian music scene. Normie Rowe had a huge following, which did not diminish when he was conscripted to serve in the Vietnam war. John Farnham left his plumbing apprenticeship after the success of his first single, 'Sadie the cleaning lady', in 1968 and Olivia Newton-John released her first album in 1971.

A range of other international trends influenced Australian music in the 1970s. Disco, a very dance-focused style that emerged in the United States, for example, was almost a rejection of rock and heavy rock music. The Australian group the Bee Gees, who had been inspired by the Beatles in the 1960s, topped the charts around the world with their soundtrack to the Hollywood disco movie *Saturday Night Fever*.

Besides the disco beat from nightclubs, the 1970s saw another overseas music trend influence Australia in the shape of glam or glitter rock. The influence came from Britain and was characterised by over-the-top clothing, glitter and, in some cases, an **androgynous** image. Like disco, glam was a reaction against heavy rock – although



Getty Images/Michael Ochs Archives

Angus Young, lead guitarist and songwriter for the Australian group AC/DC

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Alamy/© Kevin Sullivan/The Orange County Register/ZUMAPRESS.com

Nick Cave is an Australian performer who made the journey from the pub-based punk rock scene of the late 1970s to international celebrity as a mainstream 'alternative' performer.

Corbis/Bob King

Skyhooks, performing in Sydney in 1975. They had number one hits with 'Living in the 70's', 'Ego is not a dirty word' and 'Horror movie'.

some artists had a rock sound; it was much more about the look. Glam was defined by performers such as David Bowie, Gary Glitter, Lou Reed, Elton John, Rod Stewart and Queen, while in Australia Skyhooks and Sherbet were among the groups influenced by this style.

Pattern of change

Australian music from the 1980s and beyond is very much a story of new talent, changing styles and significant international success. As they had been since the 1950s, overseas influences were still powerful and continued to shape a great deal of musical expression. Apart from country and western and some folk music, and rare but popular classics from performers such as Jimmy Barnes and Men at Work, there was little that was uniquely Australian about Australian music except that it was created by some very talented Australians.

Many of the successful bands that made a name in the 1970s and 1980s, internationally or locally, had their start in pubs and clubs around the country. In the days before poker machines in pubs, many pubs encouraged new bands and performers. INXS, Mental as Anything, Midnight Oil, Rose Tattoo and the Go-Betweens all began in this way. It was also in the 1980s and 1990s that some stars of television used their profile to move into music. Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan, both from the popular television series *Neighbours*, went on successful international music and performance careers, as did Natalie Imbruglia, Craig McLachlan, Natalie Bassingthwaighte and Delta Goodrem.

By the 1990s technology was working both to advance and to challenge the music industry. The quality of recordings, particularly after the arrival of digital sound, was far superior to that achieved even a decade before. Classics from earlier days could be remastered and rediscovered. The platform for delivery of music also changed – from the record player of the 1950s to now long-forgotten cassettes, then to CDs and Walkmans, and then to the personal delivery of music through MP3 players. Music CDs are now under challenge as downloads and streaming make it possible to access virtually any piece of recorded music. People are no longer prepared to pay for an album when they

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can buy just the track that they want. Not only can they create their own music library, but many now carry their entire music collection in their pocket. New media technology, with video cameras and editing abilities, now allows people to make their own contribution to popular culture, as seen in the enormous influence of Twitter and YouTube in the shaping of popular culture.

By the 1990s most major international acts came to Australia on tour, and huge venues were available in all the capital cities for rock and music concerts. Pop concerts were no longer held in the limited spaces of the old Sydney Stadium or Melbourne's Festival Hall, where the Beatles had performed; they were now great staged events with state-of-the-art sound and lighting, attracting audiences well into the thousands. Music festivals, particularly over the summer months, are now a set feature of touring local and international artists. Depending on the group or performer, the audience is usually young. As some performers defy age and continue to deliver concerts, however, the audience can include older people on nostalgia trips to their youth. In 2014, for example, Rolling Stones concerts drew audiences of young people who were not even born when the band was formed, as well as ageing baby boomers who first saw the Stones 50 years earlier in 1964, when they and the music were young.

Alamy/Pictorial Press Ltd

Sydney band INXS emerged in the late 1970s, and enjoyed global success from the late 1980s until the untimely death of their lead singer, Michael Hutchence, in 1998. Since then they have remained in the public eye with a reality TV show seeking a new lead singer and a miniseries in 2014.

Corbis/© W.Teodoro/Zeduce/Robert Wallace/Splash News

'Wally' De Backer, better known as Gotye, had recorded a number of independent releases in the earlier 2000s and broke through to international stardom with his song 'Somebody that I used to know' in 2011. Endorsed on Twitter by Ashton Kutcher and Lily Allen and with millions of views on YouTube, Gotye's song topped the iTunes charts in 46 countries.

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State Theatre (Sydney)

Sydney's State Theatre, one of the last great picture palaces left standing in Australia. Most of these theatres have been demolished and replaced with multiplex cinemas.

Film in Australia

Australians had always been great filmgoers. Whether in the hundreds of suburban cinemas or in the open-air theatres of outback towns, going to the movies was a feature of Australian life. During the 1930s in all the capital cities, palatial theatres were built, of which only a few, such as the State Theatre in Sydney and the Princess Theatre in Melbourne, survive today.

Although films were produced in Australia in the 1950s, the dominant influence remained American film and, to a lesser extent, British film. A number of films made in Australia at that time, including *On the Beach* (1959) and *The Sundowners* (1960), featured famous American actors such as Gregory Peck, Ava Gardner and Robert Mitchum to ensure there was an overseas market.

The arrival of television in the late 1950s did not help the Australian film industry, and not a great deal changed in the decade that followed. One film of the 1960s that stood out was the comedy *They're a Weird Mob* (1966), about an Italian immigrant trying to settle in his new country. Not only did it address the subject of multiculturalism; it also offered a glimpse of what many accepted as the typical, almost ocker Australian. Another film of that time, *Age of Consent* (1969), based on a story by the Australian writer and artist Norman Lindsay, was more controversial for its subject matter and nudity, but it still required an international star in the form of the British actor James Mason to make the film of interest to the outside world.

Poster courtesy of the National Film & Sound Archive, reproduced with permission of MGM Home Entertainment

One of the great Australian plays, *Summer of the Seventeenth Doll*, written by the Melbourne playwright Ray Lawler, was made into a film in 1959 with an American and British cast. The film was renamed *Season of Passion* to attract the overseas audience.

Rebirth of the Australian film industry

The effective beginning of the Australian film industry came in the 1970s when the federal government, and then all the state governments, began to support the industry. The talent had always been there; now it was given the opportunity to display its creative best. This also came at a time when the more restrictive censorship laws that had been a feature of Australian society from the 1920s were erased. A new R (for 'restricted') certificate was introduced for Australian films in the early 1970s, which allowed the production of a series of films that are now classed as 'sexploitation' films, including *The Naked Bunyip* (1970), *Libido* (1973), and *Alvin Purple* (1973).

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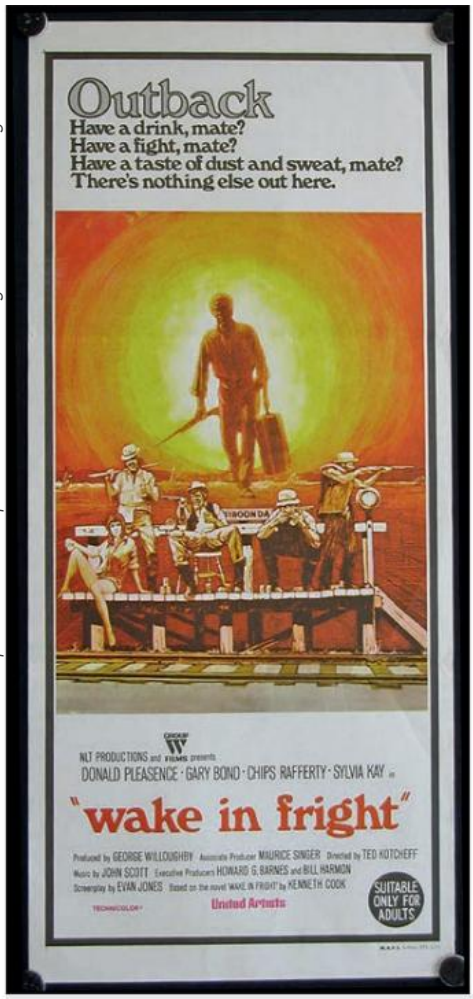
Movie poster for Wake in Fright, 1971, courtesy of theartofmovieposters.com. Directed by Ted Kotcheff, production company NLT Productions Pty Limited (de-registered), screenplay by Evan Jones, based on the novel Wake In Fright written by Kenneth Cook. National Film & Sound Archive of Australia. Reproduced with kind permission of the Wake In Fright Trust © Wake In Fright Trust



theartofmovieposters.com

Two Australian films of the early 1970s, *Wake in Fright* (1971) and *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* (1972), depicted Australia and Australian life in very different ways.

One of the first significant Australian films of the 1970s was *Wake in Fright* (1971). Set in a barren outback town called 'the Yabba', it explored not only features of the Australian national character but also a dark and ugly side of the harsh life of the outback. By contrast, *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie* (1972), about a dim-witted Australian visiting Britain, was a comedy. It set out to satirise the stereotype of the ocker Australian with crude references to minority groups and regular images of Barry's beer-swilling mates. The critics attacked the movie but it proved popular with Australians, who saw the mockery rather than the message. Despite its 'R' rating under the government's newly introduced film classification system, it became the first Australian film to take more than $1 million at the Australian box office.

The ocker offerings soon gave way to quality cinema. In sharp contrast with *The Adventures of Barry McKenzie*, the 1970s also saw the production of some of the finest films ever made in the country. Many of them won international acclaim and announced the arrival of a new Australian film industry. Among them were *Picnic at Hanging Rock* (1975), *Sunday Too Far Away* (1975), *Caddie* (1976), *Storm Boy* (1976), *The Getting of Wisdom* (1977), *The Picture Show Man* (1977), *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* (1978), *Newsfront* (1978), *My Brilliant Career* (1979) and *Mad Max* (1979), the last of which introduced the Australian actor Mel Gibson to a wider audience. They were important films because all were well made, with Australian actors and technicians, and all were based on Australian themes. The view many had that the country could not produce films that would interest Australians had been disproved.

Wake in Fright
Slang

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Films for the world

Australian film releases

Australian themes were again used in some of the successful films of the 1980s. *Breaker Morant* (1980) was the first of a number of films of that time that looked at the Australian identity as it had evolved in the popular imagination. It was about honour and loyalty and the Australian soldier as the victim of British indifference and injustice. Similar themes were reinforced with *Gallipoli* (1981), which arrived a year later. Filmed mainly in South Australia, it captured the core elements of the Anzac legend: mateship, selflessness, the Australian disdain for authority, and humour amid adversity. Other films of that time, including *The Man from Snowy River* (1982) and the highly successful *Crocodile Dundee* (1986), focused on the image of the rugged, self-sufficient individual, the bushman who now belonged to Australia's past rather than its present. Australian themes continued with *We of the Never Never* (1982), a classic tale of life in the outback; *Phar Lap* (1983), about another Australian hero; and a return to the familiar Anzac theme with *The Lighthorsemen* (1987), about the Australian Light Horse Brigade in World War I.

By the 1990s most of the great historical themes that defined Australia's nationhood had been covered and a new type of film began to appear that focused more on contemporary Australian life. Many of these films were able to develop characters and convey feelings in a way big-budget American films had failed to do. The themes in many of these films were familiar: ordinary Australians displaying the habits and values that were seen as part of the Australian make-up. Australians could identify with the characters in *Muriel's Wedding* (1994) and supported the underdog Aussie battlers, the Kerrigan family, in their struggle with town councils and bureaucracy in the highly successful *The Castle* (1997). Other films of that decade were acknowledged for their originality, including *Strictly Ballroom* (1992), *Romper Stomper* (1992), *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* (1995) and *Shine* (1997). A few years after playing a vicious skinhead in *Romper Stomper*, the Australian actor Russell Crowe delivered a totally different performance as a gay man facing life's problems in another successful film, *The Sum of Us* (1994).

The Australian film industry of the 1990s and later needs be seen in a global context. Most films from this period had significant overseas investment and overseas control. The filming took place in Australia mainly because of cost advantages, but they could not be called uniquely Australian films. Included in these works were the Matrix series, two Star Wars sequels, *Mission Impossible II* (2000), *Moulin Rouge* (2001), *Happy Feet* (2006), *Australia* (2008), the first of the Wolverine films in 2008 and *The Great Gatsby* (2011). Most had international stars, who came to work on the projects at the very time when Australia was producing a new generation of its own talent, including Geoffrey Rush, Nicole Kidman, Heath Ledger, Cate Blanchett and Hugh Jackman, who all found opportunities overseas. There were some impressive exceptions, which included *Red Dog* (2011), very much an Australian film in the tradition of those produced in the 1970s and 1980s. *Red Dog* took $21 million at the box office and became eighth on the list of the highest earning Australian films.

Alamy/AF archive

One of Australia's most exciting actors, Heath Ledger, as the Joker in his last film, *The Dark Knight*. Ledger died in 2008 at the age of 29. His Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for *The Dark Knight* was awarded posthumously.

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The international influence

Reflecting the rapidly changing nature of Australian society by the 1990s, there were other overseas influences in the form of films produced for the Asian market, and an altogether different **genre** with the Bollywood phenomenon.

Australia has always had a strong link with the Asian film market, and the martial arts cinema has always been popular in this country. From 1975, when Australia's first martial arts film, *The Man from Hong Kong*, was made in Sydney, actors such as Bruce Lee and Jackie Chan became well known to a world audience.

In recent years there have been increasing links between the Indian film industry and Australia. The Indian film industry is one of the largest in the world, and the term 'Bollywood' is usually applied to this Indian equivalent of Hollywood. It has a large and expanding market, and Australia has become a favourite setting for Bollywood productions. In 2005 *Salaam Namaste*, about an Indian couple living in Melbourne, was the first Indian movie filmed entirely in Australia and was a box office hit in India. More films have followed. Australia is becoming a popular place for Indian filmmakers to make their films, and the diversity of the Australian landscape is always used to advantage. The contrast between the visual impact of Indian settings and the open beauty of Australia is a feature that has increasing appeal to Indian audiences. Bollywood, in turn, has provided work opportunities for many Australians. Australian films have been made there, and the increasing popularity of Indian film in this country can be seen in Melbourne, which is now home to the annual Indian Film Festival in Australia.

Newspix/Ian Cook

Filming a scene of *Salaam Namaste* on the beach at Rye, Victoria

Film and cultural identity

For many years Australian popular culture had been influenced by American films, and one of the reasons the Australian government supported the film industry after 1970 was a genuine concern at the effect of this on Australians.

Australians have always had a particular image of themselves, and film, television and sport have all been used in the postwar years to help define Australia's cultural identity – to offer an insight into what sort of people Australians are. This includes the values most people hold and expect others to hold as well. In the postwar years Australian film has reinforced many of these features, almost reminding audiences that this is what it means to be Australian.

Films about the outback, the bush traditions and the open, honest lives of the people who live there have always had appeal. *We of the Never Never* and *The Man from Snowy River* are only two of any number of films set in the appealing beauty of the Australian bush. At the same time we like to be reminded that our country can be a harsh, unforgiving place, as depicted in *Wake in Fright*; majestic in its landscape, as in *Australia*; or even, in films such as *Picnic at Hanging Rock*, a mysterious, almost supernatural place. The bush can also be evil or deadly, as in *Wolf Creek* (2005).

Film regularly reminds us of the importance of mateship as part of the national character, a quality that emerged from colonial days as people struggled to cope with the challenges of that time. It meant loyalty and the security of knowing that you could rely on the people around you. It was a theme depicted with great force in *Breaker Morant* and especially in *Gallipoli*. Related to this was the character of the Australian larrikin, not taking too much too seriously. He was defined early in Australian cinema history with Dad and Dave and reborn in later times with Barry

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Australian film history

McKenzie and Mick Dundee. Films have also used the larrikin streak to humanise men under pressure, as in *Odd Angry Shot* (1979) or the carefree larrikinism of *Gallipoli*. Australians have always had a respect for the underdog, the battler, and films of the postwar years have regularly returned to this theme. *Muriel's Wedding*, *Newsfront*, *Strictly Ballroom*, *Caddie* and *The Castle* all have struggle as an underlying message. Australian films have also addressed other features of Australian life, from the early representation of multiculturalism in *They're a Weird Mob* (1966) and *Silver City* (1984), both films about the difficulties faced by immigrants to Australia, to the subject of Indigenous Australians, as in *Jedda* (1955), *The Chant of Jimmy Blacksmith* (1978) and *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002).

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 In what year did the Beatles come to Australia on tour?

2 What genre or type of music is associated with:

(a) the Seekers

(b) Men at Work

3 Why does history remember the television program *Countdown*?

4 Which popular music group began with three brothers who grew up in Queensland?

5 Explain the meaning of the term 'glam rock'.

6 Which of the following is not an Australian music group?

A Queen

B INXS

C Mental as Anything

D The Go-Betweens

E Skyhooks

7 What was a Walkman?

8 Which is the odd one out and why?

A Hugh Jackman

B Cate Blanchett

C Geoffrey Rush

D John Travolta

9 For which film role did Heath Ledger win an Academy Award that was presented posthumously (after his death)?

10 The film *Salaam Namaste* (2005) is an example of what style of film production?

Television

Televisionau

The arrival of television in Australia in the mid-1950s affected relatively few Australians at the time. The price of television sets was high and television broadcasts were not available in all Australian capital cities until 1960 – and even later in rural areas. A decade later, in the mid-1960s, all that had changed dramatically. By then black-and-white televisions were in nine out of ten Australian homes, most capital cities had three commercial channels as well as the ABC, and technology had made great advances. A television signal was available in most parts of the country, live broadcasts had become common and satellite communications allowed for direct links to overseas networks. In July 1969, when astronauts first walked on the moon, most

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Australians took time off to view the flickering black-and-white image live on their television.

A brave new world

The 1960s also saw the effective start of Australian television content. Variety shows such as *In Melbourne Tonight* were among the first to establish a presence, and the innovative Crawford Productions studio, which had produced radio shows, began to produce television series with Australian actors and story lines. One of the first was *Homicide* (1964), a police drama set in Melbourne. Other crime dramas, including *Division 4* and *Matlock Police*, followed. The success of these programs was clear evidence that Australians wanted more than overseas shows.

From the early days of television. An outside broadcast van used by Australian Broadcasting Corporation Television (ABC-TV).

Morris Model FE Pye outside broadcast van used by Australian Broadcasting Corporation Television (ABC-TV). National Museum of Australia

Another genre of early television was the quiz show, which attracted a steady following. Especially successful was *Pick-a-Box*, a former radio quiz that made the transition to television in 1957. Its hosts were Bob Dyer and his wife Dolly, both popular figures of television in the 1960s. The show ran for 14 years, until 1971.

Bob and Dolly Dyer on the set of *Pick-a-Box*, one of Australia's first television quiz shows. In the late 1950s Dyer was one of the few radio personalities who made a successful transition to television.

Photo by Ern McQuillan, courtesy of National Library of Australia

Television effectively reduced the impact that radio had on the Australian public, particularly in the presentation of news and current affairs. The six o'clock news became a feature on all channels in all states, and quality current affairs programs began to appear. In 1961 the ABC launched *Four Corners*, which still runs to this day. The broadcasting of sport was another factor in weakening radio's influence. Between them, the television channels of the 1960s offered coverage of all the major sporting events in the country. In 1967 Channel Nine paid $5000 for the right to televise the Sydney Rugby League Grand Final, between South Sydney and Canterbury. One of the results was a record low attendance at the actual match.

By the end of the decade Australian television began to look at ways in which the television industry could develop and compete. There were government regulations to increase the level of Australian content, new technologies arrived – including a transition to colour – and in the name of cost and efficiency the channels began to form themselves into national networks: the National Television Network (now the Nine network), the Australian Television Network (Seven) and finally the Independent Television System (Ten).

The major change for Australian television came with the introduction of colour in 1975. It gave television a new appeal, and Australians quickly embraced the new technology. By 1980 only 10 per cent of households still watched black-and-white television.

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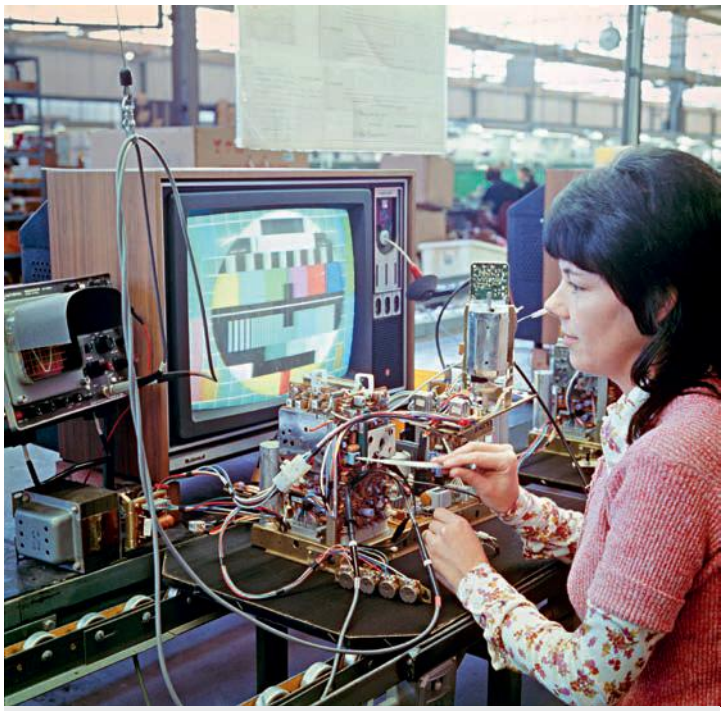
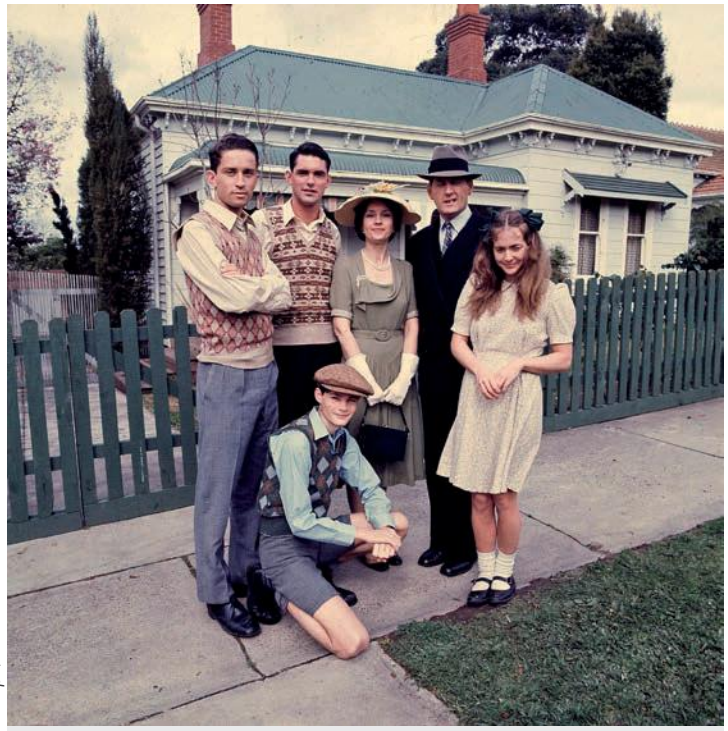


National Archives Australia [B942/2]

Colour television sets being made at a factory at Penrith, New South Wales, in 1976. The image displayed on screen is a colour test pattern. Before 24-hour television broadcasting became the norm, the colour test pattern, often accompanied by music, was displayed when there was no program being broadcast.

The television soapie

The radio serial had been part of Australian life since the 1930s and, once television had established itself, the transition to a television serial or soap opera was a natural development. There was a difference between a television series and a soap opera. The series tended to have a self-contained story that ran for one hour, once a week. A 'soapie', on the other hand, was on every night and each episode was simply a continuation of a story line. One of the earliest, *Number 96*, set in a block of flats in Sydney, was also one of the most controversial with its challenging story lines and nudity. It was highly successful and helped the Channel Ten network to establish its presence in the market. Many others followed, including *The Young Doctors* (1976), *Prisoner* (1979), and *A Country Practice* (1981). *The Sullivans* (1976), about the lives of an ordinary Australian family set against the backdrop of World War II, set a new standard for drama on Australian television, while later arrivals such as *Neighbours* (1985) and *Home and Away* (1988) went on to set new records for endurance.



Newspix/News Ltd

The Sullivans, which began in 1976 after the introduction of colour television, told the story of the lives of a Melbourne family during World War II. The war lasted six years; the series ran for nine.

The search for Australian content

From the 1970s the government wanted television to reflect Australian life. While the screening of American and British shows was always part of the television scene, there were regulations requiring a set amount of Australian-made content per week and other requirements for live Australian-made productions. Australian-made television shows increased and, with them, mini-series, often on Australian themes. There were mini-series revisiting Australian history such as *For the Term of His Natural Life* (1982), *The Dismissal* (1983), *Bodyline* (1984), *Anzacs* (1985), *Vietnam* (1986) and *Captain James Cook* (1987). In the years that followed, mini-series and so-called telemovies continued to provide good-quality entertainment. There were new live variety shows like the *Paul Hogan Show* (1973), the *Norman Gunston Show* (1975) and the *Don Lane Show* (1975). Innovative television often came from the ABC, which produced the *Aunty Jack Show* (1972) and a range of high-quality comedy and drama shows. The ABC also hosted a long-running pop music show in *Countdown* (1974), and led the way with children's shows such as *Mr Squiggle* (1959) and *Play School* (1966).

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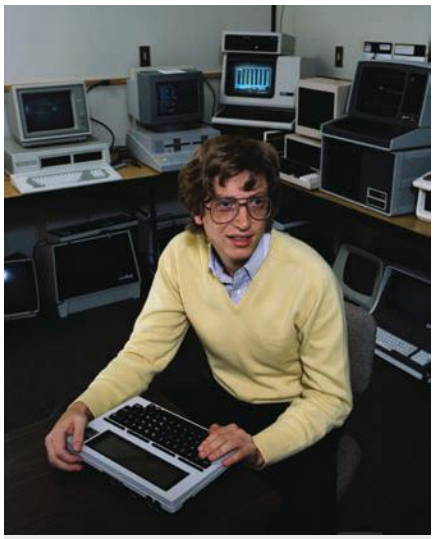
In 1980 the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) began operating in Australia with the aim of providing both multinational and multilingual programs to the country. Originally it was available only in Sydney and Melbourne but SBS has now expanded to cover the entire country.

The new technology

As television entered the 1980s and 1990s, developments in technology changed the way people viewed the medium. Home video systems had arrived in the late 1970s, which gave people greater choice as they watched television. Programs could be recorded on magnetic tape that passed from one spool to the other over a recording head.

In 1995 the development of the DVD (digital video disc or digital versatile disc) marked the end of the magnetic tape as a recording format. As with colour television, the take-up was rapid. The DVD also began the trend for many to buy, rather than rent, movies and to build up a film library in the home. This, in turn, led to the move into home theatres. Despite home entertainment, cinemas fought back with new sound systems in their complexes, cheaper ticketing and different classes of seating (a return to the older model of the 1930s), which could include food and drink service. Cinema attendances began to climb in the 1990s and maintained this trend even when pay television finally came to Australia in the 1990s, with programs now available by cable or satellite.



Corbis/Doug Wilson

Bill Gates with the first laptop computer in 1986. How has computer technology influenced the development of popular culture?

Shutterstock.com/Zoltan Pataki

A state-of-the-art video recorder of the VHS format in 1980

Anime

The arrival of video and then DVDs allowed Australians to access a new world of foreign film, much of it in the original language but with English subtitles. It also allowed Australians to experience animation beyond the usual American cartoons and Disney feature-length animated movies. In video shops from the 1990s 'anime' began to appear as a category and won a large following.

Anime is a distinctive form of animation mainly associated with Japan, but the term should also be applied to other Asian animation centres, such as China. It began, like all animation, with hand-drawn figures, but has advanced to take full advantage of exciting computer-animated images, creating a style that is vivid and fast. Very often it contains variations on the message that good can

Alamy/Photos 12

Astro Boy, an animated science fiction series set in the future, is one of the earliest examples of anime and was screened on Australian television from the 1960s.

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prevail. Australians first became familiar with the hand-drawn style through the adventures of the Japanese hero *Astro Boy* and *Kimba the White Lion* in the 1960s and 1970s. Today, programs such as *Legend of Korra* continue the long tradition of anime-style television programming.

The real world

This period also saw the emergence of two new types of television programs: the lifestyle program and reality television. Lifestyle programs have gained a popular following and range through a full catalogue of subjects including cooking, business, travel, pets, gardening and fishing. Most of these shows centre on the home and the theme of transformation, be it of the garden or the home itself. Home renovation became particularly popular, perhaps a reflection of the very Australian characteristic of owning one's own home.

Newspix/Julie Kiriacoudis

My Kitchen Rules arrived on Australian television in 2010 and has attracted a huge following.

The first major excursion into the genre of reality television was a program called *Sylvania Waters*. Produced by the ABC in 1992, *Sylvania Waters* followed the lives of an unusual Sydney family over a period of six months. Its success started a wave of reality shows that continue today and cover all manner of 'real' subjects. Reality shows such as *Survivor*, *My Kitchen Rules*, *MasterChef*, *Big Brother* and *The Block* are difficult to classify. They are neither comedy, drama, documentary nor current affairs, yet they have elements of all of these.

Reality shows seek to present people in real situations. In fact the 'real situation' has been set up to achieve the best television impact. The shows usually link in with the growth of social media and allow viewers to offer live comment on what they are seeing. This again adds to the interest as you can agree or argue with other viewers about what you are all watching. Despite the claim that they are the unscripted behaviours of ordinary people, all reality television shows – and some, including *Big Brother* in particular – are actually very planned and tightly controlled for maximum television effect.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Initially, reality TV was a variation on cinema verite [real cinema], capturing real people in natural situations. The genre morphed to a point where it put real people in contrived situations, such as *Big Brother*. Now the label reality TV is erroneously given to any program featuring 'real' participants and that is not scripted – basically, anything not a documentary or drama …

These programs should more reasonably be called event programming. Global networks have realised this type of program will still – in the short term at least – attract mass audiences in a manner that no other platform can. As have advertisers …

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Digital entrepreneur and billionaire Mark Cuban told a Los Angeles conference this week that live content was TV's future. 'If you create unique live events that bring people in and make you want to be part of it, and it requires people to be in one place at one time, that differentiates you. It's live, live, live.'

Michael Bodey, 'The reality of the popular format', *The Australian*, 16 June 2012

source B

The format [for *Big Brother*] doesn't fool anyone. Everybody knows the conflicts are contrived by Machiavellian casting choices and cramped spaces. Nevertheless, research on reality television audiences shows that as much as viewers can see the trick being played before them, they still have faith that the combination of constant surveillance and live events will create something unexpected, something true, and something worth watching; or at least something to talk about at work or in the pub. You can count on it.

From Andy Ruddock, '"Be Surprised" … why Big Brother won't go away', 12 August 2012, Monash University, theconversation.com

1 **What point about reality shows made in Source A is also made in Source B?**

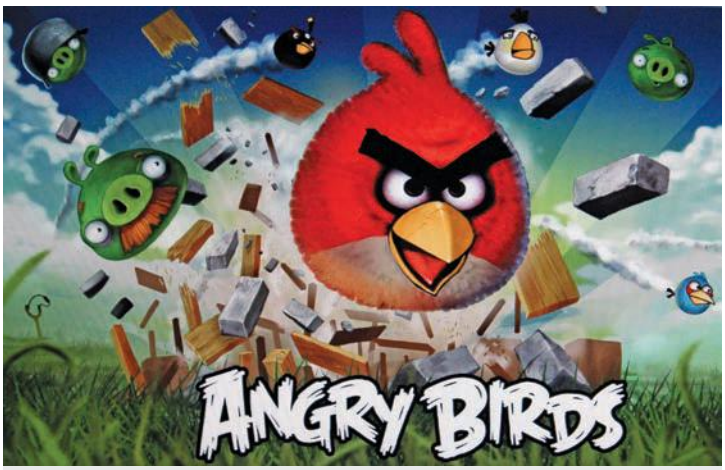
2 **Explain why Source A suggests that the name 'reality show' is in fact an incorrect description.**

3 **Despite the evidence that audiences know reality television is set up, how does Source B explain the continued fascination for it by such large audiences?**

4 **What is the difference between contestants competing against each other in a quiz show and contestants competing against each other in a cooking show?**

The digital age

The arrival of digital television in 2001 marked yet another advance. For the next decade television was broadcast on both the digital and analogue signal to give Australians time to make the switch to the new technology. It was a technology that offered vastly superior viewing as well as other capabilities. Television sets became sleek, flat-line units, a far cry from the huge sets that had existed ever since television arrived in the country in 1956. In December 2013 the analogue signal was finally turned off and Australia embraced the digital age.



Alamy/Peterz pics

Angry Birds, the world's bestselling game. Like all games, it follows the rule that it should be simple to play but difficult to master.

Sport and television became inseparable, especially after the arrival of digital and high-definition television and the advanced technology that brings sporting action to life in a way no spectator at a match or game could ever hope to experience. Great sporting events such as the Olympic Games and the World Cup attract huge viewing audiences. Not surprisingly, the telecast of the opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000 was the highest rating program in Australian television history.

The Internet and popular culture

Before the arrival of the personal computer and the Internet, the influences that contributed to popular culture came at a much slower pace. That is now a thing of the past. The world of instant

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communication and response has taken its place. The Internet, the natural extension of personal computers, will go down as one of the greatest achievements of human history. With high-speed computers and advanced telecommunications we can transfer ideas, influences, images, music, film, fashion and every fad imaginable to any part of the planet. This, as well as the rise of social media, has created a new world in which both distance and time cease to have meaning. Popular culture is changed in such a world.

The world of gaming is now increasingly regarded as an important aspect of popular culture. From the days of Pac-Man and Space Invaders in the 1980s, we now have games available on every mobile device so that the culture of gaming is part of every society. They are also played on game consoles where the technology is producing more advanced models every few years. In 2014, when the new generation PlayStation 4 arrived on the market, it sold one million units around the world in the first 24 hours.

Source study: Social media

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 When did colour television begin in Australia?
2 Which TV show is the odd one out and why?
   A *Big Brother*
   B *My Kitchen Rules*
   C *Neighbours*
   D *The Biggest Loser*
3 What is the name usually given to popular Japanese animations?
4 When did SBS begin broadcasts in Australia?
5 In what year did Australian television become totally digital?
6 What made it possible for gaming to become part of popular culture around the world?

Sport

Sport is a major part of Australia's popular culture. Millions play it and millions more follow it as a national pastime. Our popular culture has a special place for sporting heroes. Statues have been erected to them, stadiums and grandstands named after them, and their exploits, particularly on the overseas scene, reinforce a pride in being Australian. Sport is a constant part of the print media, and radio and television shows are devoted to it. It brings people together as part of a team and it unites the nation when great sporting events are taking place. Australians have been to every Olympic Games since the first modern games were held in 1896 and to every winter Olympics from 1936. Once a year, the entire country stops to watch a horserace from Melbourne.

In the major sports that attract a national following – tennis, cricket, swimming, track and field and the different codes of football, including soccer – Australia has achieved great successes. Names such as Bradman, Border, Goolagong, Thorpe, Freeman, Laver, Newcombe, Perkins, Norman and Lillee gain instant recognition while the names of great Australian figures of the performing and creative arts are hardly known. Who is Brett Whitely when you have a Shane Warne? Who remembers Patrick White when you have the Waugh brothers?

In the decades since World War II, success achieved in sport has been measured by medal counts at every Olympic and Commonwealth Games and analysis of success trends. The 1950s and the 1960s were the golden age of Australian tennis. Rod Laver won the tennis **Grand Slam** twice; a solid team of exceptional players, male and female, delivered the country regular tennis

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wins in the major overseas tournaments; and Australia won the Davis Cup 15 times in the 18 years from 1950 to 1967. Cricketing success is usually measured by how many test matches Australia has won and, in particular, for how long Australia has retained the Ashes, the famous trophy of cricket between Australia and England. Australia defeated England in all five games of the 2013–14 test series, making a total of 123 tests won by Australia to 103 by England.

Sport in Australia has been used to reinforce Australian values. Cheating and examples of bad sportsmanship, from school sports to the high levels of professional sport, are universally regarded as un-Australian. To promote sport, the Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) was opened in Canberra in 1981 with the aim of assisting the next generation of Australian sportspeople to achieve their potential. Those who don't compete watch sport. The most watched sports are the different codes of football: Rugby League, Rugby Union, Australian Rules (a game Australia invented) and soccer, which is rapidly increasing both in participation and as a spectator sport. Cricket and tennis have a huge following and major international competitions, including the Cricket World Cup. When *Australia II* won the 1983 America's Cup yacht race, excitement gripped the entire nation. It was the first time the United Sates had lost the competition in 132 years.

The cricket war

The national enthusiasm for sport has never changed. What has changed is the way sport is packaged and delivered to the public. In 1976 Kerry Packer, the owner of the Nine television network, wanted to take over the rights to televise test cricket, then held by the ABC. When the Australian Cricket Board rejected the offer, Packer set up his own rival cricket competition, which was called World Series Cricket. Investing many millions of dollars, he paid high fees to international cricketers in the different cricketing countries to join. By 1977, with most of the top Australian, West Indian and English cricketers aboard, World Series Cricket began, and in the most spectacular way. A new form of the game was devised that made it faster and more exciting for television. The traditional whites of test cricket were replaced with team colours, and the only white object was the cricket ball, for the games were played under floodlights at night. World Series Cricket was a great success. The fact that it had become very commercialised did not worry the public and by the end of the decade Channel Nine had secured the television rights to two forms of cricket, the traditional test matches and what is now called the limited-overs one-day series.

Getty Images/Adrian Murrell

Portraits of the three cricket captains – Tony Greig (World), Clive Lloyd (West Indies) and Ian Chappell (Australia) – during the World Series Cricket series in Sydney, January 1979

For many years television was unable to deliver quality outside broadcasts of sporting events. The early cameras were large and fixed but by the 1980s it was possible for a more portable camera to be used by a cameraman running closer to the action. Television is sport's natural medium and advances in broadcast technology since the 1990s, and the powerful demand of sponsors who funded major sport events, put pressure on some sports to change the way the game was played – to become more of a spectacle for the television cameras. What happened

Howzat

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to cricket soon happened to other sports, especially the football codes of Rugby League and Australian Rules. Sport had become totally professional, and television created a new generation of sports stars who became part of our popular culture.

Getty Images/Gabriel Bouys/AFP

The opening ceremony of the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000 offered the world audience a cavalcade of images related to Australia's experience of nationhood and aspects of its popular culture.

The image as part of popular culture

Women's magazines have been part of Australian life since the 1930s. As the role of women in Australian society moved away from the homemaker of the early postwar years, magazines changed to reflect this. New products such as *Dolly* (1970) and *Cleo* (1972) entered the market because the traditional offerings from established magazines such as *The Australian Women's Weekly* and *New Idea* had less appeal to modern women and less relevance to their role in society.

From the 1970s there were a number of developments that reflected a growing trend to celebrate Australia's popular culture as a way of bringing the nation together. Figures of popular culture such as Paul Hogan and John Farnham became Australian of the Year. Fashion designers now looked to Australian themes: products and brands such as Driza-Bone, R. M. Williams and even Olivia Newton-John's Koala Blue label were distinctly Australian. Everything from tea towels with Australian images to Australian flags as beach towels, and the desire for native Australian trees for the garden, testified to a new-found pride in being Australian. The lavish parade of Australian images at the opening ceremony of the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games – from tin sheds and Ned Kelly to the Man from Snowy River and the beach culture – and the year-long celebration of the Australian bicentennial in 2001 all signalled that popular patriotism had become a feature of the popular culture. In so many ways Australians were announcing themselves to the world.

Sydney Olympic Games

As the years have passed, there has been an increase in nostalgia and looking back to aspects of popular culture from earlier times. Retro furniture, memorabilia and clothing is now fashionable. Technology has allowed people to retrieve, restore and re-create images and sound related to the popular culture of an earlier era.

A feature of popular culture in relatively recent times has been a growing obsession with the lives of celebrities. Most magazines now use the activities of celebrities as the main source of content for their publications. New publications such as *Who Weekly* (1992) and *NW* (1993) arrived to cater for an apparently insatiable desire to know about the ups and downs of the famous, many of whom have little claim to fame except through exposure to the media. 'Popular culture in the new century', wrote one observer, 'was increasingly preoccupied with "real" people on the one hand and the "ordinary lives" of the famous on the other.'

Research task: Popular culture

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) generation gap
   (b) globalisation
   (c) 'go viral'
   (d) Walkman
   (e) Bollywood
   (f) reality television
   (g) 'cricket wars'

2 Place these events relating to Australian popular culture in their correct chronological order.
   - arrival of MP3 technology
   - arrival of PlayStation 4
   - arrival of the VHS
   - end of analogue television in Australia
   - arrival of the CD

3 What were the characteristic features of Australian film in the 1970s? Explain how the film industry has changed from the 1970s to the present day.

4 Australian film has addressed many themes. Prepare four columns entitled:
   - New Wave Australian cinema of the 1970s
   - Sexploitation /ocker film
   - Film on national themes
   - Film on aspects of Australian life

   Based on your study of the Australian film industry after World War II, select four films that you feel will fit into each of your four categories.

5 The first television news broadcast began when television did in 1956. In a multimedia presentation or an extended essay, explain how and why both news content and the delivery of news as a part of television have changed so dramatically – from one person behind a desk reading news to the situation you see today on the television news.

6 Imagine you have been asked to write the outline for a new television show. Select *one* of the following genres:
   - quiz show
   - reality show
   - lifestyle show

   Write your outline for this new show, in which you should cover the following:

   (a) what your target audience is and why
   (b) what will happen in your show
   (c) your plan to get high ratings and a large viewing audience.

7 Write an essay in which you research and explain how the delivery of music to the people has changed from the days of vinyl recordings to the present.

8 Select one important Australian sportsman or sportswoman who could be regarded as a figure of popular culture. Explain what has been the contribution of that person to his or her sporting field.

9 Design an advertising poster for one of the following:
   - the Beatles concert in the Sydney Stadium in 1964
   - the latest Philips colour television set of 1985
   - the launch of World Series Cricket
   - the launch of a new magazine on Australian pop culture for people aged between 16 and 30 years.

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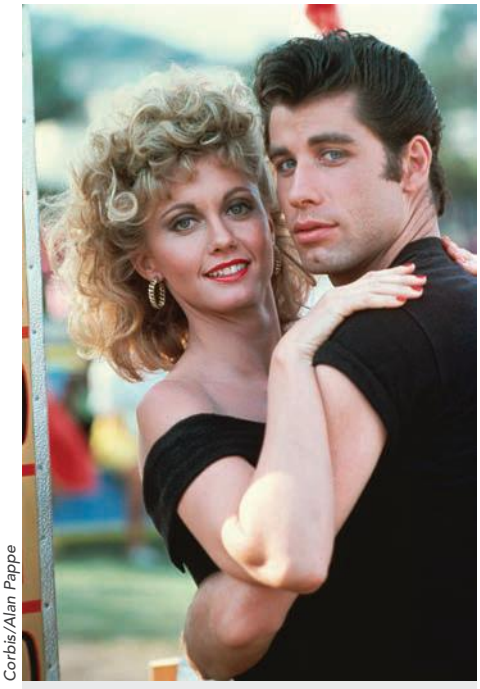
6.3 WHAT HAS BEEN AUSTRALIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO INTERNATIONAL POPULAR CULTURE?

Australia and its creative influence

For a nation that has a relatively small population, Australia has made a significant contribution to international popular culture. It has been said that, as a country contributing to both popular and higher cultural expression in film, sport, literature, music and all the performing arts, Australia is a nation that punches well above its weight. Australia is now recognised as a country that has creative talent of world class. Many talented Australians who came to prominence in their own country were quickly acknowledged as equal or better to many in similar fields overseas, and went on to influence international popular culture.

The sound from the land down under

In 1983, when *Australia II* won the America's Cup amid national celebration, the unofficial anthem of the crew was 'Land down under', written and recorded by the Australian group Men at Work. A year earlier this song had topped the charts, not only in its home country, but also in Britain, the United States, New Zealand, Canada, Ireland, Denmark and other places as well. It was a reminder, not only of Australia's sporting strength, but also of the impact its musicians had been making on the world scene since the days of rock'n'roll. With its references to 'a fried-out Kombi', 'a Vegemite sandwich' and 'the land of plenty', it became a new national song and was played at events including the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games. It became a song that was instantly recognisable anywhere in the world as Australian.



Corbis/Alan Pappe

Olivia Newton-John made the crossover from pop singer to movie star in the 1970s. This image, from the 1977 film *Grease*, shows her with John Travolta. Travolta also starred in the disco movie *Saturday Night Fever*, which featured a soundtrack by the Bee Gees.

It took a while for Australia to contribute to the world music scene because in the immediate postwar years the impact of overseas music, particularly rock'n'roll, was so strong. As the impact of rock'n'roll began to fade, a few Australian groups emerged and were noticed. The Seekers, for example, began their long international career in 1962, and the Easybeats, the Australian answer to the Beatles, formed in 1964 and were an influential fixture in the British music market for the remainder of that decade. Their greatest hit, 'Friday on my mind' (1966), topped the music charts.

There were also talented individuals such as Frank Ifield, a post-war immigrant to Australia, who hit the international scene with 'I Remember You' (1962); and Helen Reddy, whose hit song 'I Am Woman' (1972) became an unofficial anthem in the struggle for women's rights. Rolf Harris, a versatile and popular performer from Perth, established a long career in Britain. In 2014 Harris was found guilty of sexually assaulting a number of young women.

In the late 1960s and the 1970s, one of Australia's most successful groups was the Bee Gees. The Gibb brothers had come to Australia as child immigrants from Britain, and they returned to Britain with their band in the late 1960s. They became a dominant influence on the music scene, in particular the disco sound, with hits that included the classic 'Stayin' alive' (1977). The Bee Gees were influenced by the Beatles and they, in turn, went on to influence other world-famous artists, including Michael Jackson and David Bowie. As a group they sold over 200 million records worldwide. Other Australian bands to receive world attention have included AC/DC (1973), the Go-Betweens (1977), INXS (1977), Men at Work (1979)

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and, in more recent times, Hoodoo Gurus (1981), Crowded House (1985), Savage Garden (1993) and Wolfmother (2000).

As well as groups, the rollcall of talented individual performers continued. Kylie Minogue emerged from the world of the television soap opera to become an international performer in her own right. She followed the model set in earlier days by people such as Olivia Newton-John and the great talent of Peter Allen. In more recent times, musicians such as Keith Urban, multitalented performers such as Hugh Jackman and performing groups such as the Wiggles have won a worldwide audience.

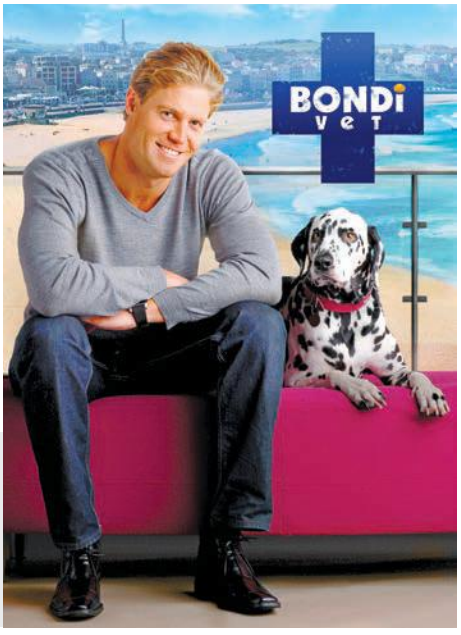
Television and film

It is through television and film that many people overseas first become aware both of Australia and of the Australian cultural identity. Many were introduced to Australia through the activities of a small kangaroo named Skippy in the television series *Skippy the Bush Kangaroo*, which first appeared in 1968. It was picked up by television stations in many countries and it still screens in some countries today. The 90 episodes, filmed mainly in Ku-ring-gai Chase National Park near Sydney, centred on the adventures of a young boy and his pet kangaroo Skippy, which had been orphaned and raised by his family. The fact that Skippy was a 'she', and that nine specially trained kangaroos all played the role in different episodes, was kept from his or her adoring world-wide fans.

Many Australian television productions have had both popular local appeal and a following in other countries. They include earlier shows such as *The Sullivans* (1976) and more recent programs such as *Sea Patrol* (2007), which is screened in 99 countries, and *Bondi Vet* (2009), which is shown in 20 countries. Australian children's shows that have a world following include *The Curiosity Show* (1972) and *Bananas in Pyjamas* (1992). The most successful of them all, however, has been *Neighbours*. It began in 1985 and is now viewed in more than 50 countries around the world. A number of the cast of *Neighbours*, including Kylie Minogue and Jason Donovan, owe successful international careers in part to their original exposure to the world market on *Neighbours*.

Until the 1970s the Australian film industry was never strong enough to exert any real influence on the world scene. The nation had produced a number of talented performers and filmmakers, but the home industry was overshadowed by the power of

Fauna Productions Pty. Ltd., courtesy of the National Film and Sound Archive



WTFN

Australia's contribution to world television viewing began in the 1960s. The television program *Skippy the Bush Kangaroo*, which began in 1968, was popular with audiences both in Australia and overseas. There was also a feature film, *Skippy and the Intruders*, made for the international market. More than 40 years later, new Australian programs such as *Bondi Vet*, which began in 2009, continue to attract large overseas audiences.

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Newspix/News Ltd

The wedding of Charlene (Kylie Minogue) and Scott (Jason Donovan) in 1987 was watched by an estimated 20 million viewers of *Neighbours* in the United Kingdom.

Hollywood and the influence the British film industry had in Australia until the 1950s.

As the Australian film industry grew, particularly after governments began to support the making of films in the 1970s, the quality of both production and performance improved and the industry became confident enough to face the world. The first to really make their mark on the world stage were some very talented Australian film producers, directors and other technicians who began to craft movies of great quality and appeal. They soon won international acknowledgement and worked on major international productions. Peter Weir directed Australian classics such as *Gallipoli* and *Picnic at Hanging Rock* and went on to make works such as *Dead Poet's Society* and *Master and Commander*. He has been nominated four times for an Academy Award as best director. Bruce Beresford is another Australian director with an international reputation. His film *Driving Miss Daisy* won the Academy Award for best film of 1989. Baz Luhrmann is an Australian screenwriter, producer and director who is recognised around the world for the creative originality of his work in *Moulin Rouge*, *Australia* and *The Great Gatsby*. Other notable Australian directors include the New Zealand–born Jane Campion, Fred Schepisi and Gillian Armstrong. One of the world's finest **cinematographers** is the Australian Russell Boyd, who captured the moving image in such films as *Master and*

Corbis/Camilla Morandi

Actors Nicole Kidman and Hugh Jackman starred in Baz Luhrmann's *Australia*.

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Commander, for which he won an Academy Award, and *Crocodile Dundee*. Another world-class cinematographer to win an Academy Award was the South Australian Dean Semler, who filmed *Dances with Wolves* in 1990.

Australian talent behind the camera has been more than matched by a long list of Australian actors who have gained genuine world recognition, particularly in more recent years as the film industry becomes more global. The names of Hugh Jackman, Geoffrey Rush, Russell Crowe, Cate Blanchett, Jack Thompson, Nicole Kidman and Heath Ledger are well known to cinema audiences around the world, as were those of earlier Australians such as Errol Flynn, Judith Anderson, Peter Finch and Rod Taylor.

The individualists

There are a number of Australians who have become part of Australian popular culture while at the same time they have an international profile and are instantly recognisable overseas as uniquely Australian. One of the first was a singer and songwriter from Tenterfield, New South Wales, Peter Allen (1944–1992). His songs were recorded by many leading artists and one of them, 'I still call Australia home', was used for a long time in Qantas advertising and has joined the list of national songs alongside 'Waltzing Matilda'. Allen made his reputation performing around the world, and after his death a successful musical, *The Boy from Oz*, remembered his life and music. With Hugh Jackman playing the role of Allen, *The Boy from Oz* became the first Australian musical to be performed on Broadway in New York City.

Two other figures, Paul Hogan and Steve Irwin (1962–2006), both promoted the image of the quintessential Australian. Both displayed the famous larrikin streak, both enjoyed the image of the rugged individualist and both made their reputation through involvement with one of Australia's less-loved inhabitants, the saltwater crocodile.

Getty Images/Justin Sullivan

Getty Images/Patrick Riviere

Contrasting Australians who both made an important contribution to international popular culture: Steve Irwin won international fame as 'the Crocodile Hunter' while Peter Allen excelled in the world of music and performance.

Getty Images/Don Arnold/WireImage

Newspix/Ross Swanborough

Barry Humphries in his characters of Dame Edna Everage (left) and Sir Les Patterson

The most original of the leading figures of Australian popular culture, and one who also has a world following, is Barry Humphries. Humphries has enjoyed a long reputation, both at home and abroad, as a brilliant comedian, social observer and satirist. He created the character of Edna Everage in 1955 as an ordinary Australian housewife, to challenge and confront the world of suburbia. Over the decades Edna Everage, who has since emerged as a much more confident and intimidating Dame Edna, and another of Humphries' creations, the repulsive Sir Les Patterson, have travelled the world with a cutting and insightful brand of humour and satire that rarely misses its mark. The work of Barry Humphries is unique, for he and his characters are part of Australia's popular culture while at the same time they offer insights and glimpses into its very soul.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1. Prepare a list in which you identify two significant figures of Australian popular culture for each of the decades from the 1950s to the present decade. Add an extended paragraph in which you explain why these figures are on your list and whether you observe any patterns or similarities over the decades.
2. Select one important Australian actor who has made a contribution to world cinema and prepare an illustrated filmography of that person. A filmography is a brief background report on the person and their achievements as well as a list of their films, the year each one was released and a brief comment about each film.

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WHAT BELIEFS AND VALUES HAVE INFLUENCED AUSTRALIAN LIFE?

6.4

The experience of nationhood

When Australia celebrated the centenary of federation on 1 January 2001, there were a small number of living Australians who had been alive when Australia became a nation on 1 January 1901. Apart from the extraordinary achievement of having lived in three centuries, these people had experienced the entire century of nationhood. Through the decades they had seen Australia grow from a nation of three and a half million people in 1901 to almost 20 million people in 2001; from a nation created by people who were almost entirely of British descent to one that was truly multicultural.

These Australians had lived through two world wars and the Great Depression, and they had seen the nation's economy change from one that survived on the export of wool and wheat and depended on a high wall of tariff protection, to a modern, diversified economy linked to world markets and responsive to market forces. These people had seen Australia grow from an isolated nation that sought protection from the British Empire to a nation that was proudly independent and took its place in world affairs. They had enjoyed a century of peaceful democratic government – something given to few other nations in the 20th century. They were part of an Australian people whose attitudes had changed from suspicion of foreign races to a large degree of acceptance, from hostility towards Aboriginal people to the beginnings of reconciliation.

Newspix/Steve Tanner

Caroline Bousie, aged 102, with her Centenary of Federation Medal in 2002

The Australian identity

Long before the arrival of white people and long before the word 'Australian' ever appeared, Aboriginal people had a sense of identity. They identified with their tribal group and they found identity through their strong association with the land.

British settlement after 1788 brought new people to the land, and in time these people established their own identity. Throughout the 19th century and for much of the 20th century, the Australian identity was linked to that of the dominant Anglo-Celtic peoples. This identity was forged by the experience of settling a continent, of facing the challenge of its vastness, and it was shaped by the experience of war and struggle. From their Anglo-Celtic ancestors an Australian character or identity emerged, and there were a set of values and beliefs that were part of it.

- Australians believed in an egalitarian society where no person was better than anyone else. As a people they had little time for pretension or arrogance.
- They had a great deal of time for the underdog, the battler and the concept of a 'fair go'.
- From their colonial past Australians preserved a suspicion of authority and a confident belief in the importance of mateship.

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- They were an easygoing, placid people, and rarely did great passions ignite them.
- There was the image of the rugged outdoor Australian – independent, self–sufficient, steadfast and resourceful.

From being mainly Anglo-Celtic, Australia is now a multicultural society and each culture is encouraged to preserve its own identity. The face Australia presents to the world is now one of a modern, tolerant and independent nation that is made up of many races and cultures. Other beliefs and values have emerged.

- There is an increasing understanding of, and support for, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- A strong nationalism is a feature of the modern Australian identity, and there is an almost unchallenged belief that, despite its problems and shortcomings, Australia remains the best country in the world.
- All Australians respect the rule of law and parliamentary democracy, freedom of religion and freedom of speech, equality of men and women, and equal opportunity.
- The spirit of egalitarianism embraces tolerance, mutual respect, and compassion for those in need.
- Australia holds firmly to the belief that no one should be disadvantaged on the basis of their country of birth, cultural heritage, language, gender, sexual orientation or religious belief.
- Australians display an aspect of their identity in times of national hardship. When cyclones, bushfires or other disasters strike, Australians show a generosity of spirit that reflects their long-held traditions of mateship and fairness.

What is remarkable is that, despite the cultural diversity of its people, the nation remains united by its shared values and beliefs.

Into an unknown future

On 1 January 2001, the first day of the 21st century, a special celebration took place in Centennial Park, Sydney, in the same place where, 100 years earlier, the federation of Australia had been proclaimed. With a huge crowd not unlike the crowd of 1901, and with millions more watching on television, the prime minister and the political leaders of 2001 recalled the actions of the founding fathers of 1901 who had called the new nation into being.

It was a time when many Australians began to reflect on what Australia as a nation had achieved in those 100 years and what great challenges lay ahead in the future.

As Australia entered its second century of nationhood and more extraordinary change, the challenge for all Australians was not to create a new nation, as it had been in 1901, but to build on a century of past achievement and to define its identity in the world. This is a challenge for a new generation, and many people born in 2001 will most certainly survive to see the outcome when the nation celebrates its bicentennial in 2101.

Forty years earlier, the writer Donald Horne had published his famous book *The Lucky Country*. The term 'lucky country' was taken up and used by many to describe Australia. It was believed that in Australia things would always turn out well: 'She'll be right, mate.' In fact, what Donald Horne was saying was that Australia had enjoyed some lucky breaks and that the luck could well run out.

Whether that luck will run out in the decades ahead no one knows, but the arrival of the new century in 2001 reminded all Australians that the challenges for the new century of nationhood have begun.

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Newspix/AFP

Towards the new millennium, Sydney, New Year's Eve, 1999

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Describe and explain the main influences of either the United States or Britain on Australian popular culture in the period from 1945 to the start of the 1960s.

2 Select one example of a person, group or activity that has made a contribution to the popular culture of modern Australia. In a multimedia presentation, which should include sound and video, explain what you understand by the term 'popular culture' and how your selection is seen as part of popular culture expression.

3 Select one of the following and explain how and why this field has changed from the 1960s to the present.
- music
- television
- communications

Crossword

Extend your understanding

Popular culture mind map

Quiz

Find-a-word

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CHAPTER 7

New Australians: The migration experience

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- the different waves of migration to Australia since 1945
- the White Australia policy
- how and why people from so many different parts of the world came to settle in Australia after 1945
- the influence of world events on Australia's migration policy
- the experiences and hardships faced by migrants who came to Australia
- the arrival of refugees to Australia since the 1970s and their treatment
- the contribution migrant men and women have made to Australian society and how social and cultural life has changed since 1945.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

7.1 What were the different waves of migration to Australia?

7.2 What was the White Australia policy and how did it operate?

7.3 How did Australia's migration policies change after 1945 and what were some of the challenges that migrants faced?

7.4 What was the impact of the Vietnam War and Indochinese refugees on the pattern of Australian migration?

7.5 How has Australia responded to the issue of refugees and asylum seekers since the 1980s?

7.6 What has been the contribution of migrant men and women to Australia's changing identity?

In 1788, when Captain Arthur Phillip and his First Fleet sailed into Sydney Harbour, they established the first permanent white settlement in the country. Just over 1000 people arrived on the First Fleet, most of them convicts, and all of them facing the challenge of survival in a strange new land.

From that first settlement down to the present day, people have been arriving to make Australia their home. Australia has sometimes been called a nation of migrants, for every non-Indigenous Australian has either come to this country from somewhere else or can trace their descent to someone who came here in the short span of just over 25 years. In this sense, except for the Aboriginal people whose forebears first came to this land at least 50 000 years ago, everyone is a New Australian.

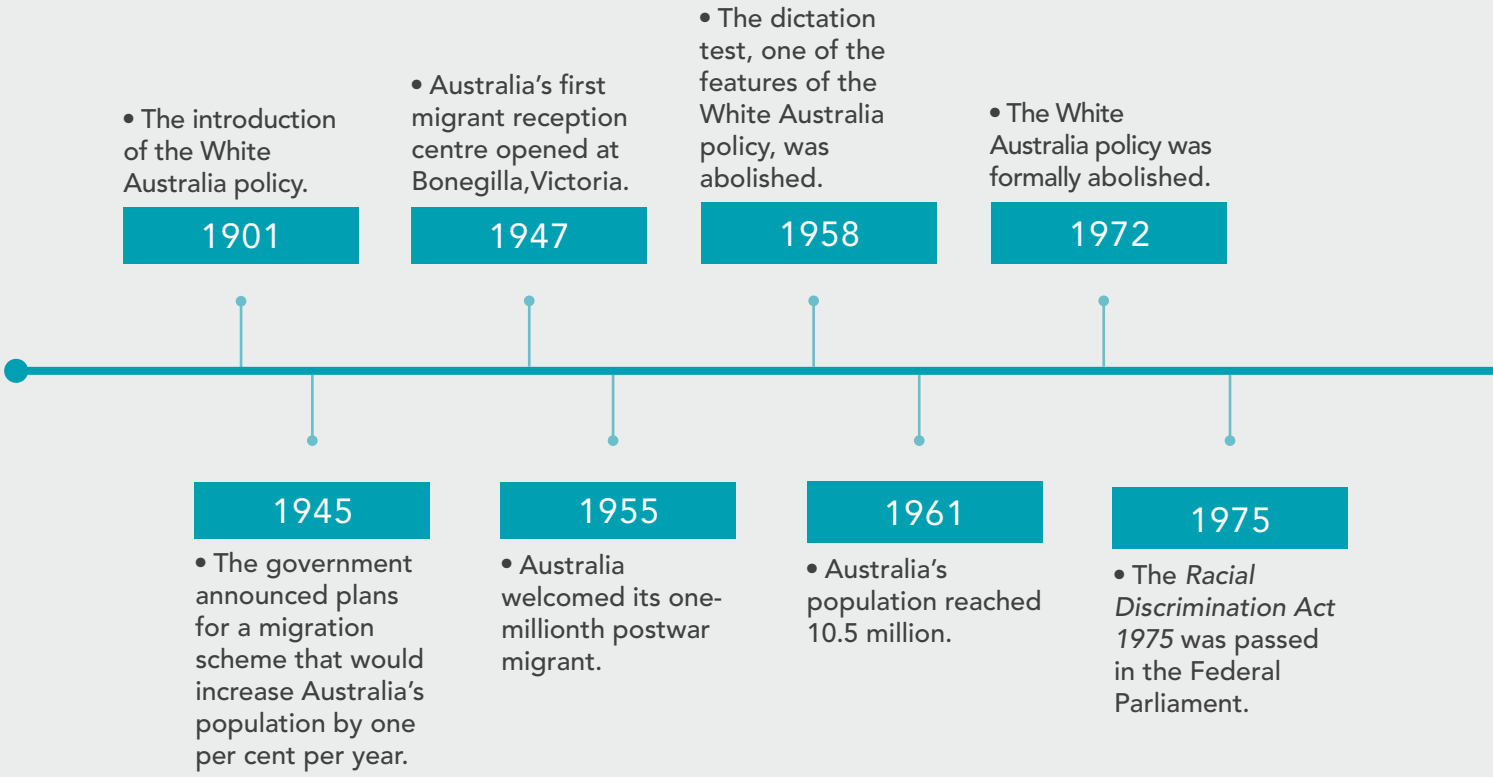
Migrants get their first view of Australia from the deck of the *Fairsea* entering Sydney Harbour in 1962.

In Australia, we are short of nothing but Australians.

Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration, May 1947

National Archives Australia [A12111/2/1962/4A/1]

Timeline, 1901–2013



Glossary

Anglo-Celtic Relating to people from the British Isles and Ireland.

asylum seeker A person who has left their own country and applied to the government of another country to be recognised as a refugee.

refugee A person outside their country of origin who is unable or unwilling to return because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Pacific Solution The name given to the 2001 Australian Government policy of moving asylum seekers to island nations in the Pacific rather than allowing them to land on the Australian mainland.

sub-Saharan Those regions of Africa south of the Sahara desert.

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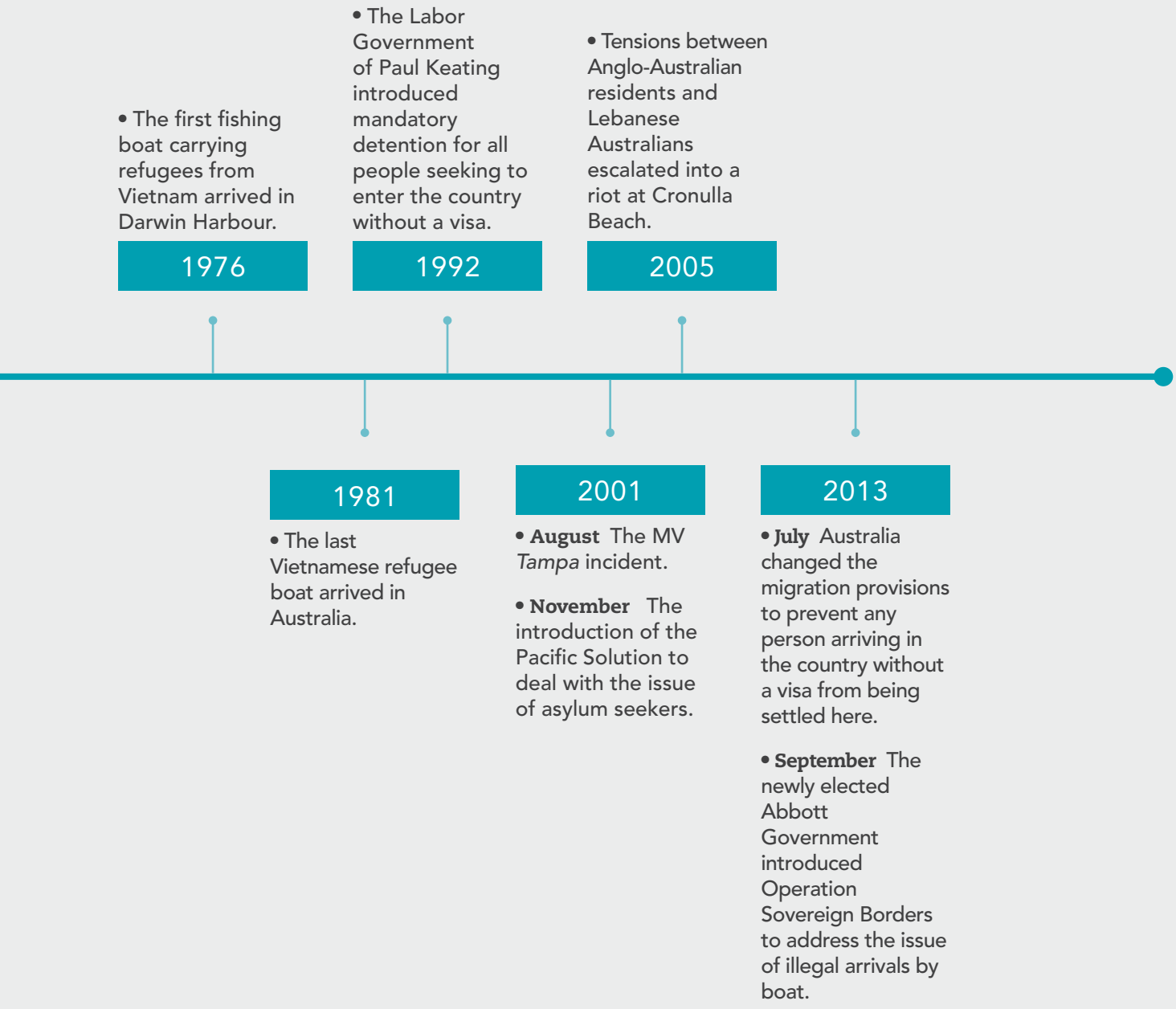

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7.1 WHAT WERE THE DIFFERENT WAVES OF MIGRATION TO AUSTRALIA?

The first sight most immigrants saw as they entered the United States of America was the Statue of Liberty, on Liberty Island in New York Harbor. At the base of the famous statue there is a plaque with a poem by the American poet Emma Lazarus. The poem ends with these lines:

> "... Give me your tired, your poor,
> Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
> The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
> Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
> I lift my lamp beside the golden door."

Australia has no such national monument to remind us of the great waves of migration that came to this country, but the fact remains that between 1945 and 2012 over seven million people arrived here to make Australia their home. It has been one of the great achievements of modern Australian history.

The migration waves to Australia

Australia's migration history

Most people who have come to Australia since 1945 have been migrants who chose to leave their country in search of a better life. Once they settle, such people often encourage other family members to come out as well under government-approved family reunion plans. Another group of people come as **refugees**. They come because they are escaping particular hardships in their own country, which might be war or violence, political, racial or religious persecution, or even natural disaster. A final group have been **asylum seekers**, who come before they have been assessed as refugees.

WS

Migration push and pull factors

The first great migration wave to Australia was the forebears of today's Aboriginal people, who reached the Australian land mass at least 50 000 years ago and probably earlier. Non-Indigenous people began migrating to live in Australia almost as soon as a permanent white settlement was established in 1788. A century later in 1888 the Australian colonies had a population of three million, almost all of British or Irish background.

National Archives Australia [A12111/2/1963/4A/49]

British migrant children newly arrived in Adelaide on board the *Fairsea* in September 1963. Since federation in 1901, the largest migrant group to Australia had always been from Britain and Ireland.

In the mid-19th century the Australian gold rushes saw many thousands come to Australia. The Chinese were the largest non-European group to arrive in the quest for gold and, although most returned home after the gold rushes ended, about 36 000 Chinese (or 1.2 per cent of the total population) still lived in the colonies in the 1880s. Other non-European groups who came to Australia later in the 19th century included Japanese who worked in the pearling industry of Western Australia; South Sea Islander labourers, to work in the sugar fields of northern Queensland; and camel handlers, mainly from Afghanistan, who helped open up the vast interior of the continent.

By the time of federation in 1901, Australia had a non-Indigenous population of 3.7 million. The creation of the Commonwealth of Australia in 1901 also saw the introduction of the White Australia policy, which restricted the entry

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of non-white people to the country. During the decades that followed, the population grew with migration mainly from Britain and Ireland, with the result that by 1945 Australia was a predominantly **Anglo-Celtic** society. The first postwar census of Australia, taken in 1947, showed that Australia had a population of just over 7.5 million and that 9.8 per cent of the population had been born outside the country.

FROM THE SOURCE

TABLE 7.1 Birthplace of people resident in Australia, 1947

PLACE OF BIRTH	NUMBER OF PEOPLE	PROPORTION OF THE TOTAL POPULATION (%)
Australia	6 880 367	90.77
UK and Ireland	546 148	7.20
Europe	105 458	1.39
Asia	24 096	0.31
America	11 630	0.15
Africa	7 537	0.09
Oceania	3 145	0.04

Explain why in 1947, after those born in Australia, the largest group of people born overseas were from Britain and Ireland.

The postwar years heralded the start of a new wave of increased migration as the Australian government actively encouraged more people to move to Australia. Again, most came from Britain and Ireland, and then in the late 1940s war-ravaged Europe became a new source of migrants. Large numbers of migrants moved to Australia from European countries such as Italy, Greece, Germany, Holland, the Baltic states and Yugoslavia. Among them were many refugees, who had been displaced by the war or who were fleeing the threat of communism in Europe after the war. Australia as a nation would ultimately be profoundly changed by these non-British migrants who carried different languages, traditions and lifestyles to its shores.

Australia: land of tomorrow

By the 1970s the White Australia policy had been discarded and a new wave of migration began. For the first time since federation, Asian and other non-European people came to Australia in significant numbers. The first major arrivals of Asian people since the Chinese who came to the goldfields in the 1850s were Vietnamese refugees, who began to arrive in the mid-1970s. The Vietnamese-born population in Australia increased from about 1000 in 1975 to 185 000 in the census of 2011. People from other Asian countries followed. From the 1980s on, significant political upheavals in different parts of the world also caused smaller groups of immigrants to come to Australia. By the 1990s, again reflecting political instability elsewhere, a new migration wave began, bringing people from Middle Eastern backgrounds and from **sub-Saharan** Africa.

Migration through time

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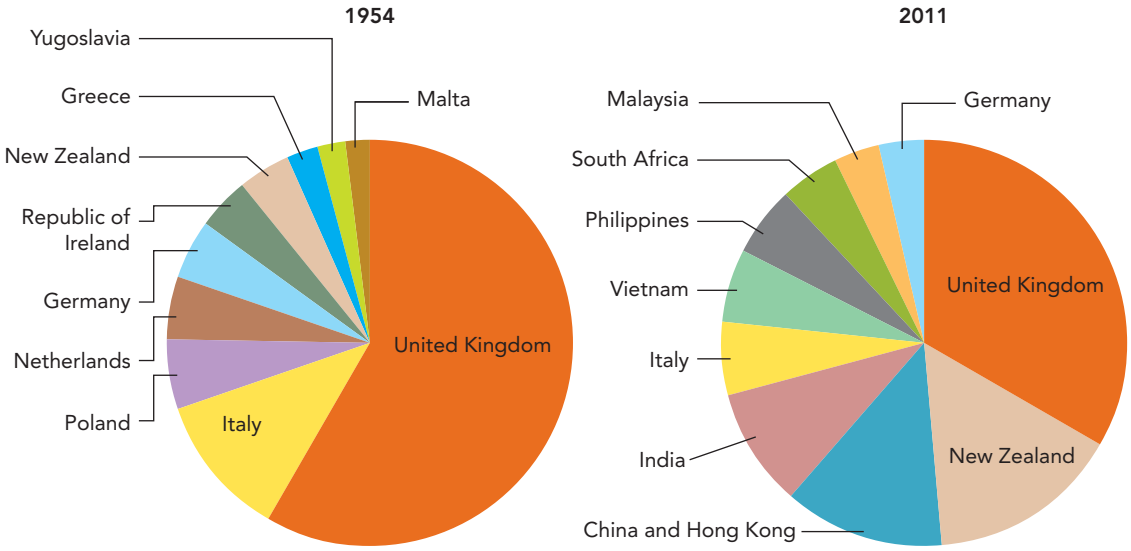
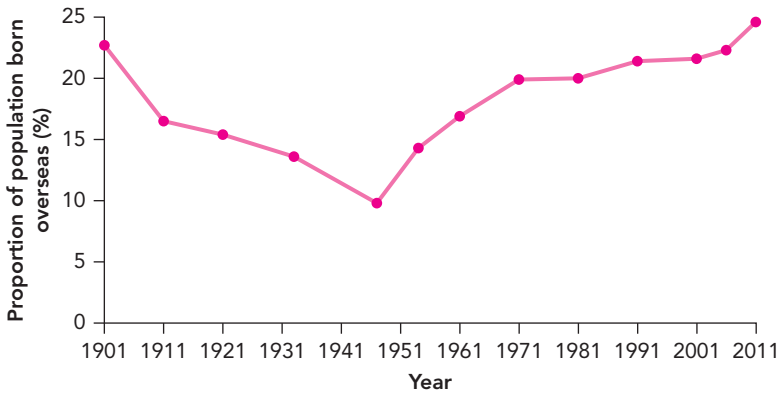
FROM THE SOURCE

source A The top 10 countries of birth of people living in Australia who were born outside Australia, 1954 and 2011



source B Australians born overseas as a percentage of the population, 1901–2011



1 Why were there so many people of European background living in Australia in 1954?

2 Using Source A as your historical evidence, list the conclusions you could draw about the way the source of migration to Australia changed from 1954 to 2011.

3 Using Source B, explain how and why the pattern of migration to Australia has changed in the period 1901–2011.

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Influences on Australian migration

World events that influenced migration to Australia in the 20th century

- World War I
- World War II
- Vietnam War
- Cold War after 1945

Trouble spots in other parts of the world that have affected migration to Australia

- Lebanon and the Middle East
- South America, especially Chile and Argentina (1970s)
- South Africa and Zimbabwe
- China (1989)
- the former Yugoslavia (1991–2001)
- Sri Lanka (1980s)
- Iraq
- Somalia and Sudan, since 1991
- Afghanistan

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 In approximate terms, when did human settlement first begin on the Australian landmass?

2 When did permanent European settlement arrive in Australia?

3 What event in the mid-19th century increased the population of the Australian colonies?

4 What was the first significant non-European group to come to Australia in the 19th century?

5 List three world events since 1945 that have influenced the patterns of migration to Australia, and explain their impact.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) migrant
   (b) refugee
   (c) asylum seeker
   (d) Anglo-Celtic

2 Place these different waves of immigration to Australia in the 20th century in the correct chronological order.
   - European migrants
   - Middle Eastern migrants
   - sub-Saharan African migrants
   - Vietnamese boat people
   - Anglo-Celtic migrants

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7.2 WHAT WAS THE WHITE AUSTRALIA POLICY AND HOW DID IT OPERATE?

Creating a white Australia

Britain had founded the original colony of New South Wales, established settlements across the country and allowed the six colonies to federate to create a new nation. Australia saw itself as a proud part of the British Empire, and the bond to the Mother Country was very strong. Henry Parkes, who had urged federation upon the Australian people, spoke of 'the crimson thread of kinship [that] runs through us all'. There was a wish to increase the size of Australia's population, but at the same time a determination to preserve its white, Anglo-Celtic make-up.

The *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*

Immigration Restriction Act

After 1901, immigration became a federal matter. One of the first acts of the new Australian parliament was to pass the *Immigration Restriction Act 1901*, which set out to control who could enter the country as a permanent resident. It established the White Australia policy, which effectively prevented people of non-European background from entering Australia.

This racist element in our early history was hardly questioned at the time. It was shared by the leading politicians and by all political parties and the newspapers.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Prime minister Edmund Barton speaking in parliament on the Immigration Restriction Bill

I do not think either that the doctrine of the equality of man was really ever intended to include racial equality. There is no racial equality. There is basic inequality. These races are, in comparison with white races – I think no one wants convincing of this fact – unequal and inferior. The doctrine of the equality of man was never intended to apply to the equality of the Englishman and the Chinaman. There is deep-set difference, and we see no prospect and no promise of its ever being effaced [removed]. Nothing in this world can put these two races upon an equality. Nothing we can do by cultivation, by refinement, or by anything else will make some races equal to others.

Edmund Barton, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 26 September 1901, vol. HR4, p. 5233

source B

Donald Cameron speaking in parliament on the Immigration Restriction Bill

I say without fear of contradiction that no race on the face of this earth has been treated in a more shameful manner than have the Chinese. They are about the most conservative race in the world, and up to late years they had no desire whatever for any dealings with what they called the outer barbarians, but they were forced at the point of the bayonet to admit Englishmen and other Europeans into China. Now if we compel them to admit our people into their land, why in the name of justice should we refuse to receive them here? … It appears that two thirds of the honourable members of this House really object to the Chinese, not so much on the ground of the possible contamination of the white race, as because they fear that if they are allowed to come into Australia the rate of wages will go down.

Donald Cameron, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 12 September 1901, vol. HR4, p. 4839

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'Outside, Sir: Outside!'

source C

1 Are these three sources primary sources or secondary sources?

2 Which of the sources appeared before Federation?

3 Which of the following statements best describes the main intention of the cartoon in Source C?

- **A** Australia had no real defence from outside danger.
- **B** The Chinese should be forced out of Australia.
- **C** Australia was isolated and very much alone.
- **D** Australia should oppose the entry of Chinese and other Asian people into the country.

'Outside, Sir! Outside', by Linley Sambourne, *Punch*, London, 2 June 1888, National Library of Australia

A cartoon entitled 'Outside, Sir! Outside' from *Punch* magazine, 2 June 1888

4 The message and intent of the cartoon is supported by:

- **A** Source A
- **B** Source B
- **C** both Source A and Source B
- **D** neither Source A nor Source B

5 Does Edmund Barton support or oppose the Immigration Restriction Bill in Source A? Explain the main argument he uses in this extract.

6 Does Donald Cameron support or oppose the Immigration Restriction Bill in Source B? Explain the main arguments he uses in this extract.

7 Put yourself in the position of a reporter listening to the debate in parliament in 1901. Prepare an item for your newspaper in which you explain what the debate was about and include your own views (from the perspective of 1901) on the issues being debated.

The dictation test

The Immigration Restriction Act made no mention of restriction based on race, but it achieved this by including a clause which said that a 'prohibited immigrant' would be 'Any person who, when asked to do so by an officer, fails to write out at dictation and sign in the presence of the officer a passage of fifty words in length in a European language directed by the officer'. People seeking to enter the country could be required to do a 50-word written dictation test in 'a European language'.

The Labor Party wanted to go further and simply ban anyone from Asia or Africa from being allowed into the country. They were concerned that some non-white races, particularly the Japanese, were better educated and would be able to get around the dictation test.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

From the Secretary of the Department of External Affairs, Mr Hunt, to the prime minister, 1902

We continue to eject the monstrous Jap and the wily Chow with persistence. The Immigration Restriction Act has not exhausted its possibilities yet. The April returns show that no coloured aliens passed the test, over 40 were rejected, mostly Chows who tried to enter Queensland on false papers.

National Library of Australia, Edmund Barton Papers, MS 51/1/976

source B

Instruction to Customs officials regarding the dictation test, 1902

All aboriginal inhabitants of Africa, Asia and Polynesia should be subjected to the test ... In the case of White Races, the test will be applied only under special circumstances ... if in your opinion the immigrant would, for reasons which you would be prepared to state, be an undesirable immigrant, it may be better to substitute for the English test a passage from some other language.

National Archives of Australia, A8-02/108/3

source C

The dictation test

During 1902, 618 intending immigrants were turned away from Australian ports because they were not sufficiently well educated to write out dictation in an unfamiliar European language. Among them were 459 Chinese, 21 Tonkinese [Vietnamese], 6 Egyptians, 3 Kurds, 2 Chileans, and one Seychelles Islander. Thirty-three people passed the test … it must be assumed that these thirty-three had influential friends in Australia, that they wrote English or some other European language, and that the language chosen for dictation was the language they knew. In 1903, 140 coloured immigrants failed and 13 passed; in 1904, 104 failed and 3 passed; in 1905 61 failed and none passed; and so it went on year after year.

G. Souter, *Lion and Kangaroo*, William Collins, 1976, p. 89

1 **Which of the following conclusions could not be justified from reading the government document, Source A?**

- **A** **The language and intent were racist.**
- **B** **The Immigration Restriction Act was not working.**
- **C** **Accurate records were kept about the operation of the Immigration Restriction Act.**
- **D** **The official who wrote this document was happy with the outcomes.**

2 **The purpose of this instruction about the dictation test in Source B was:**

- **A** **to remind officials how important the dictation test was**
- **B** **to make sure all non-white people were given the test**
- **C** **to make sure all white people (even if they appeared undesirable) did not have to do the test**
- **D** **to always use a language other than English when testing non-white people seeking entry to Australia.**

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3 Which three of the following statements can be supported from reading Source C?

A As the years passed, the dictation test worked and achieved its purpose.

B In each year from 1902 to 1905 some people passed the dictation test.

C More people failed the dictation test in 1902 than in 1905.

D Most people who failed the dictation test in 1902 were Chinese.

The experience of Poon Gooey

Poon Gooey was a Chinese man who came to Australia before federation, and therefore had the right of domicile (to live) in Australia and was not subject to any dictation test. Like many Chinese already in the country in 1901, he worked hard, and established a market garden business in Horsham, Victoria. He was fluent in English, he was a Christian, he wore western clothes, and he was well respected in the Horsham district. It was possible for domiciled Chinese of good reputation to bring their wives to Australia for visits 'not exceeding six months'. In March 1910 Poon Gooey sought permission for his wife Hope to visit, and she was given a six-month entry permit that did not require her to take the dictation test. Poon travelled to China and they both returned to Australia in November 1910. Six months later a child was born. Reluctantly, the government gave Poon Gooey's wife a six-month extension, and then, after a good deal of pressure from members of the local white community who liked the Poon family, another year of extension was granted. In that year another child was born.

In 1913 the government told Mrs Poon that she was to be deported (forced to go back to China). The case aroused protest in newspapers from many Australians who felt that the family had been unfairly treated, but the government would not change its position. The case attracted wide interest as most newspapers reported the Poon Gooey case and people took sides as to whether the White Australia Policy was being fairly or unfairly applied.

'It is good to feel that I've had the sympathy of a great number of people of this land, and I feel very grateful for what they have tried to do by deputations, although without success', wrote Poon Gooey in the *Brisbane Courier* on 5 August 1912. 'Since the last deputation I have not received an official letter from the Customs, and can assure you that I will not let my wife go until I am really forced to, and I will fight to the very end to resist the law. It is a pity that in a land like this, though they are trying to spread Christianity they are hindering it more than they realise by bad laws. I trust that some day our Chinese country and yours will be more as brothers should be.'

In 1913 there were an estimated 6700 married Chinese men living in Australia whose wives lived in China. The idea that these wives be allowed permanent residence in Australia would have challenged the very idea of the White Australia policy. Poon Gooey could stay (because he first arrived before 1901) and his two children could also stay (because they were born in Australia), but his wife could not. Refusing to be separated from his wife and two children, Poon Gooey very reluctantly left the country with his family.

In a letter written in 1913, Poon Gooey said:

> "It is finished, I go. I have been so long away from China that I cannot say what I shall do. I find it pretty hard. I had to sacrifice my business to go home with my wife. I like Australia but I do not like the way the government has treated me."
>
> *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 May 1913

Poon Gooey in 1910

National Archives of Australia [B5656 25]

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Alfred Deakin, Edmund Barton, William Morris Hughes and John Watson were all important political leaders at the time of federation in 1901. These men were from different political groups, but all supported the idea of a White Australia policy, and they were all, at different times, prime minister of Australia. Complete the following based on your reading and research from different sources.

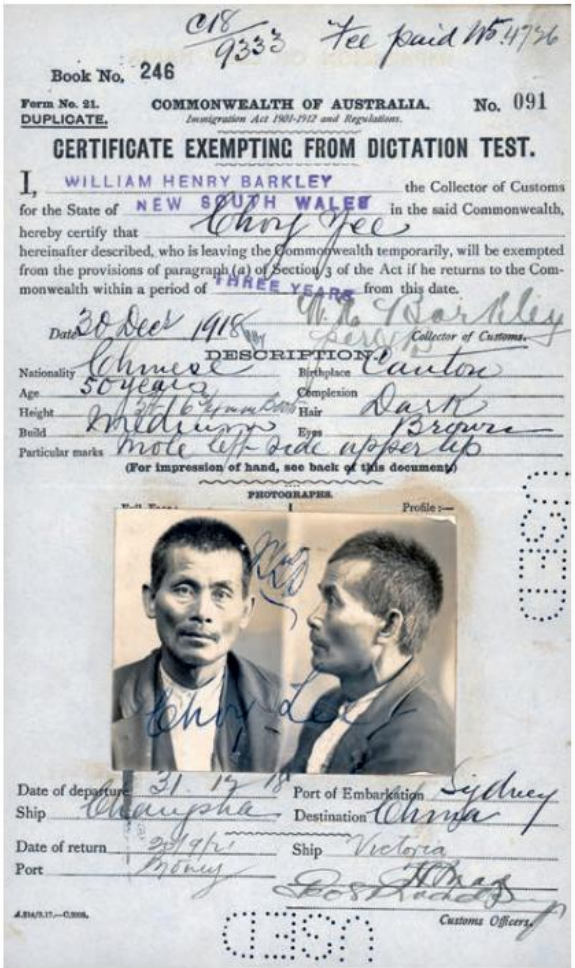
- **(a)** Place these four men in the correct order as prime minister of Australia.
- **(b)** Select a comment each man made that appropriately reflects his view on the White Australia policy.
- **(c)** Explain why you believe each of these men, from different political groups, would have the same view on a White Australia policy.

2 **(a)** Using evidence on the postcard pictured (right), identify the probable decade in which the postcard was in print. Explain what evidence you used as the basis of your identification.

- **(b)** Using this postcard, write a note to a friend in which you give your understanding of White Australia from the perspective of the time in which the postcard appeared.

3 **(a)** Explain how the dictation test worked.

- **(b)** Explain why Choy Yee had an exemption certificate (below) that allowed him to re-enter Australia without having to take a dictation test.
- **(c)** Put yourself in the position of Choy Yee in 1918 and write a letter to your family in Canton, China, explaining why you can visit them but why they cannot come to join you in Australia.



Book No. 246

Form No. 21. DUPLICATE. COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. *Immigration Act 1901-1912 and Regulations.* No. 091

CERTIFICATE EXEMPTING FROM DICTATION TEST.

I, WILLIAM HENRY BARKLEY the Collector of Customs for the State of NEW SOUTH WALES in the said Commonwealth, hereby certify that Choy Yee hereinafter described, who is leaving the Commonwealth temporarily, will be exempted from the provisions of paragraph (a) of Section 3 of the Act if he returns to the Commonwealth within a period of THREE YEARS from this date.

Date 30 Dec 1918 W. H. Barkley *Collector of Customs.*

DESCRIPTION

Nationality Chinese Birthplace Canton
Age 50 years Complexion
Height Medium Hair Dark
Build Medium Eyes Brown
Particular marks Mole off side upper lip

(For impression of hand, see back of this document)

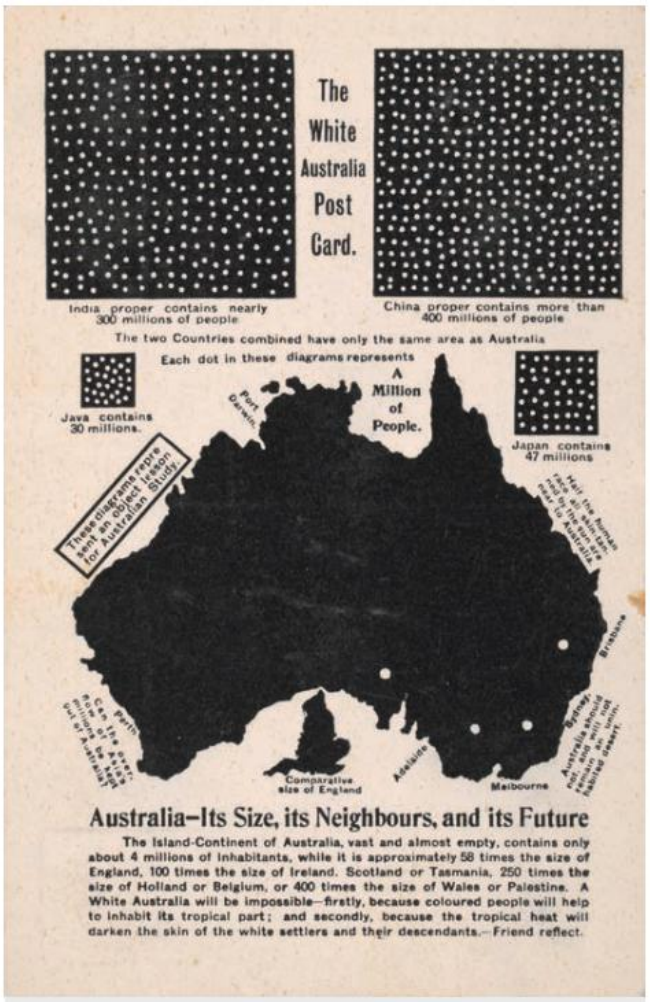
PHOTOGRAPHS. Profile :—

Date of departure 31.12.18 Port of Embarkation Sydney
Ship Changsha Destination China
Date of return 29/9/21 Ship Victoria
Port Manly

Customs Officers.

A certificate of exemption from the dictation test for Choy Yee, December 1918

National Archives Australia [ST84/1, 1918/246/91]



A postcard on the issue of White Australia

State Library of Victoria [0_1126346]

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HOW DID AUSTRALIA'S MIGRATION POLICIES CHANGE AFTER 1945 AND WHAT WERE SOME OF THE CHALLENGES THAT MIGRANTS FACED?

7.3

Postwar immigration

Australia's immigration policy changed very little in the first half of the twentieth century. After World War I, during which Australia had proved its loyalty and devotion to the Mother Country (Britain), the Australian government embarked on a campaign to increase the pace of immigration. There was concern at the small size of the Australian population and, in particular, the declining birth rate. Australia needed a larger population to allow its economy to grow, and Britain was the obvious source.

Immigration patterns before 1945

Between 1901 and 1938 there were 518 000 new arrivals to the country – the great majority of them of British background. Britain also encouraged people to resettle, and from 1922 the Empire Settlement Scheme came into existence. Through this scheme the British Government met part of the cost for the resettlement of British people in the white dominions of the Empire, which included Australia, Canada and South Africa. In the last Australian census taken before the outbreak of World War II, of those who had been born overseas, 10.8 per cent were from Britain or Ireland, 1.4 per cent were from Europe and 0.3 per cent had been born in Asia. The White Australia policy had ensured that Australia was closed to non-European migration.

FROM THE SOURCE

Letter to the Editor, *The Argus*, 25 January 1938

Sir,

The question of immigration is inseparably bound up in that of defence. Seven millions of people cannot develop this vast continent, nor can they finance the cost of doing so. Costs of Government and defence are ever expanding. Taxation has just about reached the limit, consequently we need more and more people to help bear the burden, and at the same time provide more manpower in the country's defence. The natural increase cannot be relied upon to populate the country to any appreciable extent …

Overcrowded nations are looking toward Australia, and it seems highly probable that sooner or later this vulnerable country will be attacked. If that time comes questions of unemployment, hours, wages will sink into insignificance.

Yours,

RED LIGHT.

Melbourne.

1 **Does this document reflect fact or opinion?**

2 **Prepare a brief summary of the main points the writer makes in this letter.**

3 **Which observation in the letter did in fact eventuate only a few years later?**

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'Populate or perish'

Arthur Calwell

Populate or perish

At the end of World War II, the Labor government led by Prime Minister Ben Chifley believed that Australia rapidly needed to expand the size of its population. There were key reasons for this. World War II and the recent Japanese threat to the country had revealed Australia's vulnerability, and there was a belief that a nation as vast as Australia, and so thinly populated, presented an easy target for any aggressive neighbour in the future. The future security of Australia justified an increase in the size of its population. There was also a serious labour shortage after the war, and it was argued that a larger work force was needed to stimulate postwar economic growth. New settlers meant new workers and new skills to strengthen the Australian economy.

The Labor Party had traditionally opposed a policy of large-scale migration, fearing it would lead to fewer jobs for Australian workers and lower living standards, but in the postwar era the need was great and the benefits from such a policy were recognised.

Unlike the migration patterns of the 1920s and 1930s, this was a major initiative, and in 1945 the Department of Immigration was established to manage an enlarged immigration policy. Arthur Calwell, who was appointed Minister for Immigration, provided vigorous and energetic leadership as he developed policies to bring more people to Australia. Calwell borrowed a phrase, first used by Prime Minister Joseph Cook in 1913, that became a new warning for all Australians: 'Populate or perish'.

FROM THE SOURCE

Arthur Calwell on the need for migrants

Australia was lucky that the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor instead of coming south to Australia, for had they done so, Australia would now be a Japanese colony. I have no illusion as to the future of Australia in the South-West Pacific Area. Seven million people will not be allowed to hold 3 000 000 square miles [7.8 million square kilometres] of territory while there are hundreds of millions of people in the islands adjoining us demanding living room. Only by filling this land can we establish a title to hold it, and we cannot attract immigrants, nor perform the works essential for the support of a large population, unless a reorientation of powers takes place.

House of Representatives, *Debates* 1944, vol. HR177, p. 935

1 **What did Arthur Calwell mean by the slogan 'Populate or perish'?**

2 **What arguments does Calwell put forward to support the need for more immigrants after World War II?**

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Ten-pound Poms

As in the past, the government's first aim was to attract more British migrants, and in 1946 an agreement was made with the British Government that gave any British ex-serviceman or woman and their family free passage to Australia. Anyone else over the age of 19 could apply for assisted passage. This required the migrant to pay only £10 ($20), and the British and Australian governments covered the rest of the cost.

The assisted passage scheme survived until 1975, during which time more than a million people, often called 'ten-pound Poms', took the opportunity to move to Australia. In addition, many British settlers were sponsored by service organisations within Australia. As British migration began to decline, the government launched a 'Bring out a Briton' campaign. Australians were urged to nominate people in Britain for assisted passage to Australia.

Many found resettlement in Australia difficult. The promised new life did not eventuate, or they missed their homeland too much. About 25 per cent of assisted migrants from Britain ultimately returned home, although about 250 000 of these, sometimes called the 'boomerang Poms', having gone home, later returned to settle permanently in Australia.

National Library of Australia

Arthur Calwell, Minister for Immigration, welcoming Isobel Savery, the 100 000th British migrant, to Australia in 1949

British child migrants

In the drive to increase the size of the population, almost 10 000 children from Britain, mostly between the ages of seven and 14 years, were sent to Australia as child migrants between 1947 and 1967. Most were orphaned or underprivileged children from British welfare organisations, and the idea was to relocate these children to a better life in a new country. On arrival in Australia, alone and without any family, many suffered neglect and remained in government care or were sent to orphanages run by religious institutions. Once in Australia they were generally denied contact with any family members still in Britain. In 2009 the Australian government formally apologised to all children who were in institutional care, including child migrants, and for the hurt, hardship and in some cases abuse that many of these young people endured.

Collection: Powerhouse Museum, Sydney

A poster used in Britain during the 1950s to encourage people to accept the offer a ten-pound ticket to a new life in Australia

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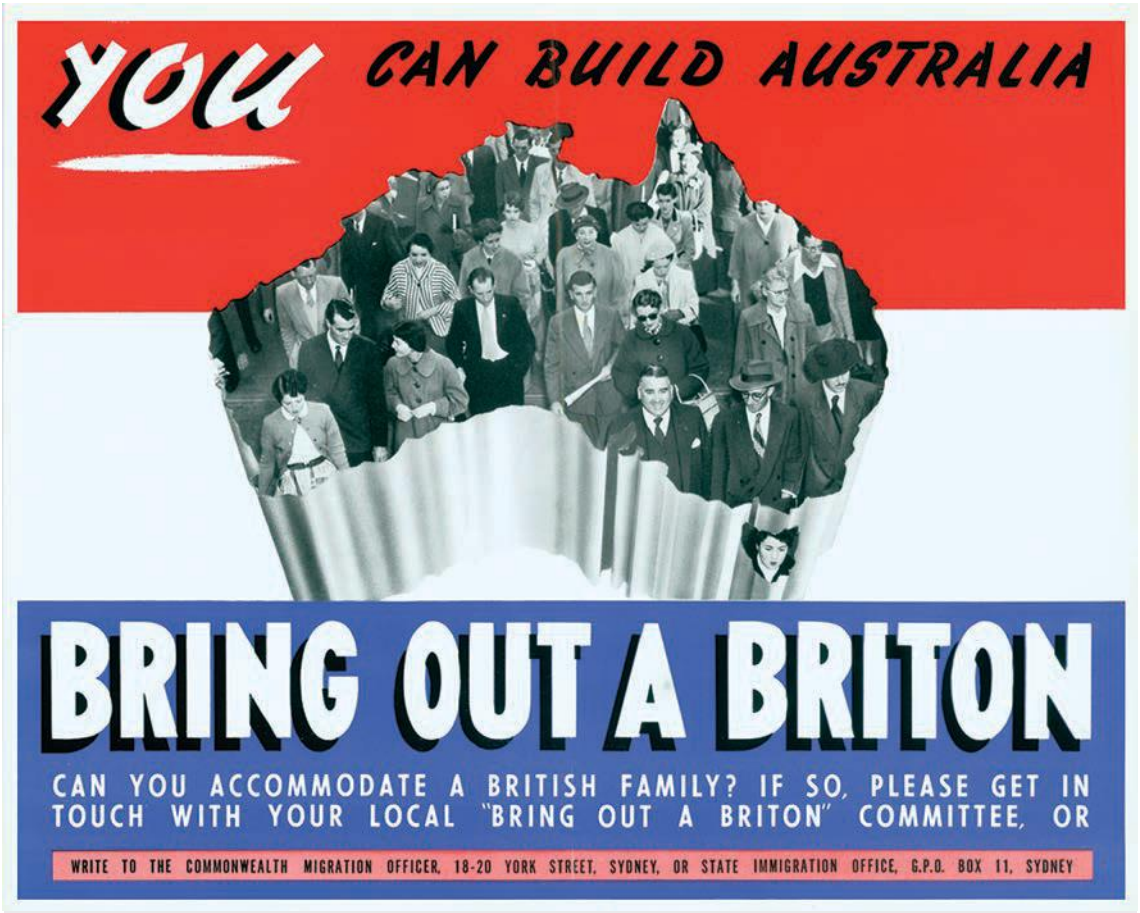

National Archives of Australia [SP545/3, 58/61]

An immigration poster from 1961

FROM THE SOURCE

Bring out a Briton

Since Immigration Minister Townley announced the Government's Bring out a Briton campaign a month or so ago, organizations throughout the country have backed the new drive … It is part of the challenge to every Australian to help people this immense and isolated country during the greatest migration periods in modern history. And if Australians don't measure up to this challenge, other countries will get the people they need while the almost empty Commonwealth lags behind …

Bring out a Briton however does not mean that non-British people are not welcome, or that the significant contribution to this country by European migrants is not deeply appreciated. But this is a British country with blood ties and responsibilities with the British Commonwealth and Australians would naturally like to keep a reasonable balance between British migrants and those who come from other countries.

The Australian Women's Weekly, 13 March 1957

1 **Based on your reading and research, what was the 'Bring out a Briton' campaign?**

2 **According to the extract above why was it important for British people to come to Australia?**

3 **What part of the extract could possibly cause offence to non-British migrants?**

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The New Australians

Although the preference was for British immigrants, the government soon found that this would not provide the numbers they hoped for. Manpower was needed to work on postwar construction projects, particularly the massive Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme. The response was that Australia looked to Europe as a source of 'New Australians'. Initially the focus was on northern Europeans, but soon the peoples of southern Europe were included. The postwar migration policy now opened up the country to many new nationalities. So began a process that would profoundly change the nature of Australian society in the second half of the twentieth century.

State Library of Western Australia (005064D)

Child migrants arrive in Fremantle, Western Australia, on board the SS *Asturias* in 1950.

Accepting European migrants did not challenge the idea of White Australia. Immigrants were welcome provided they were not Asian. Australia accepted Europeans from war-torn Europe, and at the same time deported Asians who had been given refugee status in Australia during the war.

Immigration photographic archive

And so they came, leaving behind a war-devastated Europe. The top five source countries of new arrivals for the decade 1949–59 were Britain and Ireland, Italy, Germany, Greece and the Netherlands. Between 1945 and 1949, 500 000 migrants came to Australia, and only one-third of them were from Britain or Ireland. They travelled alone or with their families, and arrived by air and sea to what seemed a strange but promised land.

FROM THE SOURCE

Immigration Minister Arthur Calwell on White Australia, 1949

So long as the Labor Party remains in power there will be no watering down of the White Australia Policy … No matter how violent the criticism, no matter how fierce and unrelenting the attacks on me personally may be, I am determined that the flag of White Australia will not be lowered … A united race of freedom-loving Australians who can intermarry without the disadvantages that inevitably result from the fusion of dissimilar races, a united people who share the same loyalties, the same outlook and the same tradition …

Arthur Calwell, quoted in *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 24 March 1949

1 **What reasons does Arthur Calwell put forward in this extract for his support of the White Australia policy?**

2 **Calwell was responsible for the immediate postwar arrival of thousands of 'New Australians'. Explain why this migration pattern after 1949 did not really challenge his belief in preserving a white Australia.**

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National Archives of Australia [A12111, 1/1962/4/66]

Sixteen Belgian families, comprising 43 adults and 50 children, arrive in Melbourne on a chartered Qantas aircraft as assisted migrants from Brussels in February, 1962.

Fairfax Syndication/The Age Archives

Italian migrants travelling to Australia on the *Luciano Manara* in May 1949. Finding adequate ships in the immediate postwar years was a major problem for the Australian government.

European refugees

In 1947 an agreement was made with the International Refugee Organisation so that thousands of European refugees could find a new home in Australia. Many of these people who were looking to start a new life included those fleeing from Eastern European countries that were falling under communist control.

Between 1947 and 1953 more than 170 000 refugees or displaced people arrived in Australia. The first to arrive were refugees escaping the Russian occupation of the Baltic countries of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. They were mostly of Nordic or Scandinavian appearance and Calwell called them 'the beautiful Balts'. They were welcome in a nation that still supported the concept of a white Australia. Thirty-five thousand Baltic refugees would come to Australia, as well as people from Yugoslavia, Poland, Hungary, Ukraine and Germany. More than 35 000 Jewish survivors of the Holocaust were also resettled in Australia. Agreements were signed with individual European states such as Greece, Italy and Malta, permitting thousands of their citizens to migrate to Australia. One of the greatest difficulties for the immigration planners was finding a way to get

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migrants to Australia. In the postwar years shipping was scarce and finding suitable transport was a major issue.

FROM THE SOURCE

Recollections of Andrew Havas, a young refugee from Hungary, 1957

My father was desperately trying to get us out of Hungary as early as 1952 as he recognized that we had no future in this communist country. When the Hungarian revolution broke out he seized the opportunity to escape … In Budapest, street-by-street gun battles against Soviet tanks lasted less than two weeks, before the revolt was snuffed out.

The Hungarian toll: more than 2700 killed, 20 000 injured, 35 000 buildings destroyed and 200 000 refugees – including my parents and me. The crushing of the revolt resulted in the biggest mass exodus of Hungarians. The aftermath of the 1956 Hungarian revolution was marked by mass arrests, show trials, executions and long prison terms.

The exodus tore families apart, as people fled to different countries; most separated families had no means of coming together again …

The actual escape from Hungary to Austria is another story … During the escape we were shot at, two people in our party were killed, we had to hide in freezing snow for hours until I could not feel my hands and feet …

In Austria we endured several months in a refugee camp in Salzburg but at least we were safe. You might well ask why Australia … in my parents' case Australia was preferred as it was as far away from Europe as you could go.

In March 1957 … news came that we were accepted and we had passage on a ship called the *Fairsea* … a converted troop ship with no cabins, just big open spaces with triple-decker bunks, so cramped, one could not sit up straight …

We landed in Melbourne on 26 May 1957, took a train to Sydney where we were given 50 pounds by the welfare society to commence our lives. My father took a job as a storeman in a wool factory; my mother went out to do cleaning … We lived in Kings Cross in Victoria Street, above a pub on the third floor of a terrace cottage; in one room …

I went to the local primary school, Darlinghurst Public. I was the only non-English speaking kid. As a result there was never a day in my life, I wasn't called a wog, or that I was not ridiculed, because of my salami sandwiches or because I wore proper school uniform while most kids wore thongs, no tie and a T-shirt, which was not the prescribed school uniform. My parents insisted that I had to go to school looking spick and span in my 'Sunday best'.

Andrew Havas OAM, address to the Refugee Conference, University of New South Wales, 15 June 2011

1 **What was the Hungarian Uprising of 1956?**

2 **Why would Australia be prepared to accept people who fled from Hungary?**

3 **Why would the story of Andrew Havas classify him as a refugee?**

4 **In what way were refugees different from other European migrants of the 1950s?**

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Corbis/Universal/Tempsport

John Konrads and his sister Ilsa in 1958. Why were John and Ilsa Konrads, who arrived in 1949 as refugees from Latvia, one of the Baltic states, so famous by the 1960s?

National Archives of Australia [A12111, 1/1957/5/32]

Refugees from Hungary arrive in Sydney aboard the liner *Fairsea* in February 1957. The Menzies government allowed 14 000 refugees who fled Hungary during the failed uprising against communist rule in 1956 to enter Australia.

TABLE 7.2 Top six countries providing migrants to Australia, 1945–75

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN	NUMBER OF MIGRANTS
Britain & Ireland	1 431 971
Italy	386 575
Germany	259 522
Greece	210 206
Netherlands	149 042
Yugoslavia	161 883

Hardships faced by postwar migrants

The first home for many migrants was a government-run migrant hostel. These were set up across the country, the largest of them at Bonegilla in north-eastern Victoria, where over 300 000 European migrants, including many refugees, were accommodated between 1947 and 1971. In the totally unfamiliar environment of hostels, migrants were taught English and other basic skills needed to assimilate into the wider Australian society. Stays in migrant hostels varied in length depending on employment and resettlement opportunities within the community. Many migrants had to take what work became available, with the result that family separations were common.

In the conservative and closed society of the 1940s and 1950s, many Australians were suspicious of these 'New Australians'. Frequently, new arrivals had to endure not only the hardships of a new land and a new language, but also insulting names such as 'Dago', 'Reffo' or 'Balt'. At the 1961 census, eight per cent of the population were non-British in origin. The largest group came from Italy, followed by those from Germany, Greece and Poland.

The official government policy towards migrants in the 1950s and 1960s was called assimilation. The new arrivals, from whatever part of Europe, were expected to abandon their language and traditions and become Australians. There was to be one culture, not many (or multi) cultures. One immigration official said that migrants were to be 'substantially Australian in the first generation and completely Australian in the second generation'.

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For most migrants becoming Australian was not an easy task, and life for the first generation of migrants was hard. Many were alone, with little support from other family members. On top of the suspicion and hostility of some Australians towards these 'New Australians', they had to cope with a new language and come to terms with a society very different from their traditional society and culture in Europe. Many were unskilled and were forced to accept the hardest jobs. Very often, those who had qualifications and skills found that their skills were not recognised and that they too had to take whatever work was available. Migrants provided labour for the economic growth of the 1950s and 1960s, and they were usually the first to lose their jobs during hard times. Many thousands were employed on the Snowy Mountains Scheme that began in 1949 – a massive engineering project to divert the waters of the Snowy River through a series of tunnels and dams to generate hydro-electricity. Two-thirds of all the men who worked on the Snowy Mountains Scheme were born overseas.

National Archives Australia [A12111/2/1957/22A/37]

Children at the Scheyville Migrant Centre near Windsor, New South Wales, in 1957

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

My mother and father they had a bit of an accent, I can remember my mother went to Nock and Kirby's [a Sydney hardware shop] years ago to do some shopping and the girl that was serving her turned to the other girl and laughed at the way my mother spoke, and she said to her 'What are you laughing at?' She said 'I'm laughing at your accent'. Then mother said 'Yes you laugh at my accent and I'll laugh at you if you speak Maltese. At least I can speak English. Can you speak Maltese?' She always had a quick ready answer to them.

Anglican Church Grammar School, Brisbane, Oral Histories Project

source B

I went to a Catholic boys school and there were many other Italian boys there. Sometimes we were called 'greasers' but one day a Christian Brother heard a boy call my friend Angelo a 'dago'. The teacher punished this boy and kept shouting at him 'Don't you realize Pope John XXIII is a dago'!

Anglican Church Grammar School, Brisbane, Oral Histories Project

What particular problems faced by many migrants are suggested in these two extracts?

Immigration nation

Boneailla

Baltic memories

FROM THE SOURCE

1 Prepare a list of what you believe would be some of the hardships faced by migrants such as the family from Turkey in this photograph when they arrived in a migrant hostel in Australia.

2 From the list below, select one issue that migrants had to face in hostels and camps after their arrival in Australia. Prepare a multimedia report on the issue.

- Housing
- Food
- Language
- Employment
- Care of children
- Entertainment and recreation

Photo by Ern McQuillan, National Library of Australia

A Turkish family eating in the dining hall of the Villawood Migrant Hostel in Sydney, NSW, 15 October 1968. In 1967 Turkey became the first country outside Western Europe to sign an assisted passage agreement with Australia, which allowed an increasing number of Turkish people to move to Australia.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 The approximate number of people who came to Australia as migrants between 1945 and 2012 was:
   A about five million
   B about seven million
   C about eight million
   D more than 10 million

2 Offer two reasons why Australia increased its migrant intake in the years after World War II.

3 Who was the Australian Minister for Immigration who managed the migration program from 1945 to 1949?

4 What was a 'ten-pound Pom'?

5 What important change was there in the pattern of migration to Australia in the immediate postwar years?

6 Consider these two statements:
   i The postwar European migration included refugees.
   ii The postwar European migration ended the White Australia policy in the 1950s.
   Which of the following can be supported by the evidence?
   A Statements i and ii are both correct.
   B Statements i and ii are both incorrect.
   C Statement i is correct and Statement ii is incorrect.
   D Statement ii is correct and Statement i is incorrect.

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The experiences of a migrant group: The Italians

Journey

In the years since 1945 people from Italy have become one of the oldest and largest non-English speaking immigrant groups that make up Australian society. In 2011 about 916 100 Australians, or 4.3 per cent of the population, claimed Italian descent. Of the languages spoken in Australia, Italian is the third most widely spoken after English and Chinese.

During World War II, when Australia was at war with Italy, the government passed a law that defined enemy aliens and allowed the government to intern people who might have been a threat to the country during the war. A number of special camps were set up, but not all Italians were sent to them. Many Italians were Australian citizens, and they were kept under special watch and had to report to the police; others who were seen as a possible threat were interned for different periods of time.

After 1945, when Australia opened up its immigration policy, Italy became one of the main sources for non-British migrants. Between 1947 and 1976 about 360 000 Italians came to Australia. Many came from the poorer parts of southern Italy and all were leaving in search of a better life in Australia. By the 1970s the number of Italian immigrants began to fall as Italy itself entered a period of growth and prosperity. By the census of 1996, the number of people living in Australia who had been born in Italy had declined to 238 263 and in 2001 it had fallen to 218 718, a pattern which has continued.

TABLE 7.3 Italian migration to Australia, 1910–2011.

YEAR	NUMBER OF AUSTRALIAN RESIDENTS WHO WERE BORN IN ITALY	PERCENTAGE OF ALL OVERSEAS-BORN RESIDENTS WHO WERE BORN IN ITALY
1901	5 678	0.6
1921	8 135	0.9
1933	26 756	2.9
1947	33 632	4.5
1954	119 897	9.3
1961	228 296	12.8
1971	289 476	11.2
1981	275 883	9.3
1991	253 332	6.8
2000	218 722	5.3
2011	185 402	3.1

Based on Commonwealth Census documents, 1901–2011

State Library of Victoria [H92.250/782]

Three generations of the D'Aprano family at a traditional Italian family dinner in Melbourne, 1988

Italians, like other immigrant groups, tended to congregate in the same area, where there was some element of support. In Melbourne, Italians tended to live in suburbs such as Carlton, while in Sydney, Italian communities moved into inner-city suburbs such as Leichhardt and Glebe. Italians who sought a new life in rural Australia also tended to form communities, as in the fruit-growing area of Griffith in New South Wales or the sugar-growing area of Ingham in North Queensland.

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State Library of Victoria [0_26145721 © Rennie Ellis Photographic Archive

Like many migrant groups, Italians often settled in close communities. The inner Melbourne suburb of Carlton attracted many Italians, and shops such as this one in Lygon Street provided speciality food and produce.

As a community, Italians have contributed greatly to the richness of Australian society. They gained respect as hard and honest workers. Very soon, Australians came to discover and enjoy aspects of Italian culture such as Italian food, wine with meals, espresso coffee, outdoor eating and Italian fashion, art and history. Today many aspects of the Australian way of life have been influenced by the Italian experience, and Australians also have a better understanding of Italy itself. Italian is now the most popular language for Australians who want to master a second language. After Britain, Italy is the most popular destination in Europe for Australian travellers.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Australia in the 50s was a difficult place for a migrant Italian. As I grew up I faced a climate of suspicion and disrespect from Anglo-Australia. My frizzy hair made me ugly, my dark skin marked me out as a 'dago' and the olive oil and garlic I ate made me smell. These were the things I learnt at school …

It was a difficult time for my mother because by this time she had given birth to my second brother and, with three young children in a strange country, she still could not speak English. Facing her own issues of being discriminated against she had no time to deal with ours. How could I tell her that the fried pepperoni sandwiches she made were never eaten at school and all I wanted was Vegemite. As a child in the fifties, there was a certain shame attached to being ethnic. Italians in my world at this time tended to create their own little sub-communities and stick together, always speaking in their native tongue, so it was imperative that I learn English quickly and act as translator for my parents …

In my family, the men had control of the lives of their women. They dictated the lifestyle and the pace of life. We, my mother and my sisters, were assigned certain roles and our life revolved around those imposed roles. I, being the eldest, had to set the example for my sisters. I was to finish my high school diploma, work until I married (the sooner the better) and then raise the family, support my husband and create a stable home. The notion that I was a good student and had higher aspirations never crossed my father's mind. Indeed this, and the fact that I wanted the same freedom that my brothers enjoyed, was the cause of many arguments with my parents during my teenage years.

Recollections of Elvira Ubaldi, Australia Donna

source B

To try to be accepted I called myself Jean; that wasn't foreign but I still had an Italian surname … after school you'd go out of the school gate but the moment we turned the corner there was always someone waiting, someone to pick on us other kids. We were straight out Dagos … From the Italian community I got warmth, the importance of family life, acceptance as a person

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and sharing our troubles … You applied for a job … your qualifications would be there but the moment you said you were Italian or Catholic, any of those two, it was no job.

M. Loh, *With Courage in Their Cases: The Experiences of Thirty-five Italian Immigrant Workers and Their Families in Australia*, Italian Federation of Emigrant Workers, Coburg, 1984, p. 21

source C

My mother feels that she is a person without a homeland … It's funny what emigration does to identity … Mum feels she doesn't quite belong anywhere … My father never resigned himself to living here … He couldn't do night classes for Australian qualifications because he couldn't speak the language … he always felt uneasy because he couldn't communicate and the only time he could let himself relax and talk was with his relatives and family.

M. Loh, *With Courage in Their Cases*, p. 134

source D

I was four when my father got sick and died. It was wartime [World War II] and we had to evacuate the town, but because my mother was in mourning, we were the last to leave. It was deserted and I remember being scared. We found a place in the bush and eventually went to a cave and lived there …We stayed there until the war was over.

… Leaving Italy was very sad for Mum, but for me, to tell the truth, I was excited. I was young and going somewhere else … but for Mum it was very sad. Mum was very depressed to leave her husband's grave and we had to sell a lot of our belongings and assets to pay for the trip.

Mum bought all her things from her kitchen … Mum's most special belonging was a water jug. It is very light but looked heavy. She used to say, 'Be careful of the jug' … Also a [cup] for café latte … in Italy you had the small coffee or a café latte, which is popular here now. This was Mum's wedding present. In Italy when you get married, the ladies had to supply the china and the glory box of linen and if she didn't get the china as a wedding gift she would have to buy it later. The men used to supply kitchenware. This was [the] tradition.

Mum made sure she packed everything with wool around the fragile things … These special things were not used every day; they were used for special occasions or when the doctor would come around. I remember Mum being proud of these. It is nice to remember your mum with the different things that made her happy. To her they were precious. They were her belongings.

I was 11 when we went on the ship. There was mum and my sister who was 15 and my mother's sister with her two children, a girl, 12, and a boy, 15 … It was beautiful on the boat, we had a lovely time. Going to eat we would sit with the same crowd at the same table. We had a table of about ten and would have a fight over who would get the best fruit. Because I was the youngest and the cheekiest I would always get the best piece.

… We were disappointed when we got off at the railway station in Leeton [550 kilometres west of Sydney] …

… In those days there were no facilities like running water or a toilet inside, no heating, no vehicle to get to town, it was so deserted. We would wake up and wouldn't see any neighbours, like in Italy. In Italy we lived near the ocean with all the friends around and all the neighbours. Mum would cry every day, 'Why did I have to sell everything and come here?' … In those days what could you do? Mum couldn't find work and I was too young [to work]. Where we came from there was no such thing as looking for a job, especially the woman [whose] job was 'inside'. Our culture was to stay home.

In Italy we had the best of food because of the business my father had. You would give someone a fish and trade for what you haven't got. We had the best of fruit and vegies, not so much in meat, but we could go without the meat because we had the beautiful fresh fish every morning. But coming here was the opposite. There was no fish, no fruit, no vegies because you

had to get it from Sydney or elsewhere. You had only what was locally grown and in the winter time there was no fruit so that wasn't easy for us. My aunty would bake bread in a wood oven. They used to have a cow so [we] had milk but no water from a tap, no hot water, no bath.

… Back in Leeton I had to go to school, not that I really wanted to. Nobody would welcome you in those days. The Australians would call you 'Dago'… The nuns, I am sorry to say because I am Catholic, were very tough in those days. They were very strict and it was plain they didn't like Italians. When the nuns [at school] had a bit of time, they used to call me over and draw a little dog and say, 'D-O-G: dog'. I should have started off in first or second class so I could have learned from the beginning [but] they put me into fifth class because I was 12 years old.

Recollections of Teresa Pirrottina, *Belongings: Post World War II Migration Memories and Journeys*, NSW Migration Heritage Centre

1 **Based on your reading of these sources, prepare a list of the common challenges faced by Italian and other immigrants to Australia.**

2 **Put yourself in the position of an immigrant in the 1950s or 1960s and write a letter back to relatives in your home country in which you express how you feel about your decision to migrate to Australia.**

The Snowy Mountains Scheme

The Snowy Mountains Scheme

Site study: Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Scheme

Diary entry task

One place where many migrants found work in their new country was on the mighty Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme, the largest engineering project ever undertaken in Australia. Begun by the Chifley Labor government in 1949, the plan was to hold water from melting snow in the Australian Alps and then divert this water by a complex of tunnels through the Great Dividing Range. The water would be used to create hydro-electricity, and ultimately for irrigation as it made its way to the west and to farms on the Murray and Murrumbidgee rivers. The scheme involved the relocation of towns, and the building of 16 major dams, seven power stations and over 200 kilometres of tunnels.

During the 1950s, as increasing numbers of migrants arrived in the country, the Snowy Mountains Scheme attracted many thousands who found work on the project. Some were skilled, but the great majority were hard-working labourers who carved the tunnels and built the dams. By the time the Snowy Mountains Scheme was finished in 1972, more than 100 000 people from over thirty countries had come to the mountains to work on the project. Seventy per cent of these workers were migrants. Many of the migrants were from countries such as Italy, Germany and Britain, which had only recently been at war. Others came from countries as far away as the Baltic states, Malta, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Poland, South Africa, Pakistan, Turkey and Russia.

On the Snowy Mountains project the past was forgotten and a sense of companionship developed among the workers as they faced a new enemy – the challenge of the mountains and the isolation. The work was hard and dangerous, particularly tunnelling through the granite rock of the Great Diving Range. Some 150 workers were killed in construction accidents.

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Snowy Hydro Limited (Copyright Commonwealth of Australia. Reproduced with permission of Snowy Hydro Limited under licence from National Archives of Australia.)

Many of the migrants who worked on the Snowy Mountains Scheme took time out to attend English classes.

A migrant doctor's experiences on the Snowy

Dr Ina Berents was a doctor from Romania who migrated to Australia and was the only medical provider in hundreds of square kilometres of isolated mountains. She had been summoned on this winter morning in 1955 by an urgent call from within a tunnel … there, deep within the mountains, a worker, Jack Roden, known by his workmates as 'Kiwi Jack', had leaned from the locomotive ferrying his shift from the tunnel and struck his head on a steel roof. When his workmates had gently removed Kiwi Jack's helmet the top of his scalp came away, exposing his brain.

As Dr Berents skied cross-country to the Tumut Pond Camp to render what emergency medical aid she could in the conditions, the injured man was removed from the tunnel to await the doctor and an ambulance. The ambulance had to come from Cabramurra, slowly behind a snow plough … the doctor, however, had more on her mind than just the injured man. Before the urgent summons from the tunnel she had already been about to leave for the Tumut Pond Camp to tend to the pregnant wife of one of the workers, who had gone into labour. She had two emergencies and the weather was worsening. It was going to be a difficult day. Just how difficult, she didn't discover until she arrived. The injured tunneller and the pregnant woman were husband and wife.

She examined the woman and did her best for the man, issuing instructions that on no account was the woman to know the identity of her fellow passenger in the ambulance. She rigged a screen between the two patients … Halfway up the steep climb out of the gorge, the ambulance skidded and slipped onto its side in a snow drift. Doctor, patients and equipment finished up tumbled against each other inside.

Dr Berents disentangled herself and, with the help of the driver, lifted the patients from the vehicle and laid them on stretchers in the snow. Fortunately the man was unconscious, making it easier to devote her attention to the woman, who still didn't realise the injured man behind the mask of bloodied bandages was her husband.

It was many hours before the ambulance finally wheeled into the casualty entrance at Cooma hospital. Despite their ordeal, mother and child were the next day reported healthy and well. Even more amazingly, Kiwi Jack was back at his old job in the tunnel just seven weeks later, the top of his head stitched firmly back in place.

Quoted in B. Collis, *Snowy: The Making of Modern Australia*, Tabletop Press, ACT, 1988

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain the meaning of the following terms
   (a) populate or perish
   (b) assisted migration
   (c) Balts
   (d) New Australians

2 Imagine that you are an immigration official who works for the newly formed Department of Immigration in 1946. Complete these two tasks.
   (a) Prepare a brief report outlining the reasons Australia needed to increase the number of immigrants coming to Australia after World War II. You should include in your report the countries you feel many of these immigrants may come from and what assistance the government could give them to come.
   (b) Prepare a poster for distribution overseas outlining why migrants should come and settle in Australia.

3 Between 1945 and 1949, 500000 migrants came to live in Australia. Imagine that you are one of the Italian migrants in the photo (below), on the boat about to leave Italy in 1954. Write a letter home to a friend in Italy.
   In this letter you should explain:
   - why you left your native country
   - why you chose to come to Australia
   - what was it like arriving in Australia
   - what special difficulties and hardships you found on your arrival.

4 Prepare a multimedia presentation about the involvement of migrant workers on the Snowy Mountains Scheme in the 1950s. You should consider:
   - how important their contribution was to this project
   - what challenges and difficulties they faced working in this environment
   - how working on the project assisted many to become part of Australian society.

Australian National Maritime Museum. Reproduced courtesy of the museum

Migrants leaving the Italian port of Trieste bound for a new life in Australia, January 1954

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WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE VIETNAM WAR AND INDOCHINESE REFUGEES ON THE PATTERN OF AUSTRALIAN MIGRATION?

7.4

The changing patterns of migration

The greatest changes in the history of Australian migration began with the ending of the White Australia policy. It had been supported as a policy by all political parties and it influenced the type of society Australia was until the 1960s. Despite Arthur Calwell's pledge in 1949 that 'the flag of White Australia will not be lowered', he was still in parliament as leader of the opposition Labor Party when the process began in the mid-1960s.

The end of a white Australia

In 1958 a change to the Migration Act abolished the dictation test that had been used since 1901 to exclude Asian people from coming to settle in Australia. In 1966 the government developed a new policy of accepting migrants on the basis of their ability to contribute to Australian life. This allowed the number of non-Europeans coming to Australia to increase. At the same time the government allowed anyone who had been a resident of the country for five years to become an Australian citizen. Australia was moving from a policy that deliberately excluded particular races to a policy that did not.

End of the White Australia policy

In 1972 the Whitlam Labor government came to power with the pledge to introduce a non-racially based immigration policy. This finally erased the last traces of the White Australia policy. Race was no longer a factor in determining who could migrate to Australia, and people of any race could become Australian citizens after three years of permanent residence in the country. These changes, as well as the legacy of Australia's role in the Vietnam War, signalled the start of a new period of increased immigration in which many non-white people made Australia their home.

The Vietnam War and Australian migration policy

Refugees or displaced people formed part of the migration intake Australia was prepared to accept after World War II. Between 1945 and 1960, almost 250 000 refugees arrived in the country, nearly all of them from Europe. As the White Australia policy ended in the 1970s, a wave of refugees came to Australia, not from Europe but from Asia.

In 1975 the long war in Vietnam finally ended when the communist North Vietnam occupied the south and reunified the country. In the same year the neighbouring state of Cambodia fell to an extreme communist movement called the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot. The Khmer Rouge began a brutal period of rule in which about 1.5 million Cambodians were killed. The fall of Vietnam and the rise of Pol Pot confronted the world with a new problem. Almost two million Indochinese people became refugees, fleeing from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia for political, religious and economic reasons.

Michael Jensen, National Library of Australia

Vietnamese 'boat people' fleeing from Vietnam at the end of the war arrive at Darwin Harbour in November 1977. Some 868 Vietnamese refugees arrived by boat in 1977.

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Tu Do refugee boat

Cuc Thi Lam's suitcase

Mongrel nation

In April 1976 the first wooden fishing boat carrying Vietnamese refugees arrived in Darwin Harbour. It was the first of up to 500 boats and 2100 people that made the long and dangerous voyage south to Australia. Some refugees died on the journey when their boats sank or were attacked by pirates. The Australian government believed that the country had an obligation to help the Vietnamese refugees and there was general support among the Australian people for this policy. A poll taken in 1975 found that 54 per cent of Australians believed that Vietnamese refugees should be allowed to settle in Australia, while only 33 per cent said they should not.

From 1977, as the pressure of Vietnamese boat refugees increased, the government of prime minister Malcolm Fraser increased the refugee intake and developed an ordered policy to accept Vietnamese refugees. By 1981, 43 400 Vietnamese refugees had arrived in Australia. The great majority of them – some 95 per cent – came by legal resettlement, after they were approved by the Australian authorities. Only five per cent came as boat people – refugees who risked their lives crossing the sea and who arrived without authority.

Between 1975 and 1985 a policy of resettlement for Vietnamese refugees continued. The majority of Vietnamese refugees who arrived in Australia did so after being processed through refugee camps in other Asian nations.

As a direct consequence of the Vietnam War, more than 150 000 Vietnamese refugees were resettled in Australia. Once settled, these people were anxious to bring out other members of their family. In 1982, the Vietnamese Government allowed refugees to leave the country without persecution, making it possible for people to come to Australia to join family members already here. The Australian government supported the policy of family reunions and signed an agreement with the government of Vietnam to establish the Vietnamese Family Migration Program. The nature of Vietnamese migration changed as arranged migration based on family reunion took the place of refugee resettlement. Some 95 000 Vietnamese people came to Australia through family reunion schemes. By 2012 there were more than 212 000 Vietnamese in Australia, making them the fifth-largest racial group in the country.

The first Vietnamese refugees found life in Australia strange and hard. Not surprisingly, they tended to live close to each other. Cabramatta, a suburb in the western part of Sydney, became a predominantly Vietnamese community, as parts of several cities had become Greek or Italian communities in earlier days. The census of 2011 revealed that 70.6 per cent of the 20 780 people living in Cabramatta had been born overseas. Of these, 32.6 per cent, or by far the largest group, had been born in Vietnam, 9.4 per cent in Cambodia, 5.2 per cent in China, 1.6 per cent in Laos and 1.5 per cent in Thailand.

Vietnamese migration to Australia

1975	Communist North Vietnam occupied South Vietnam and reunified the country.
1976	The first fishing boat carrying Vietnamese refugees arrived in Darwin.
1980	12 915 Vietnamese arrived in Australia.
1981	43 400 Vietnamese had arrived in Australia, 5% by boat and 95% by legal resettlement.
1982	The Vietnamese Government allowed refugees to leave the country. The Australian and Vietnamese Governments agreed on an orderly migration program based on family reunions.
1991	The national census showed 124 800 Vietnam-born people resident in Australia.
2001	The national census showed 154 000 Vietnam-born people resident in Australia.
2011	The national census showed 185 000 Vietnam-born people resident in Australia.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 In what year was the dictation test abolished?

2 In which decade did the White Australia policy end?

3 What caused the exodus of mainly Indochinese refugees from Vietnam and neighbouring states that began in the mid-1970s?

4 When did the first boat people arrive in Australian waters from Vietnam?

5 Explain why Australian public opinion was generally supportive of accepting Vietnamese refugees.

6 Consider these two statements:

I Australia accepted its first refugees when Vietnamese refugees sought to come to Australia after the end of the Vietnam War.

II The majority of Vietnamese refugees to Australia arrived by boat.

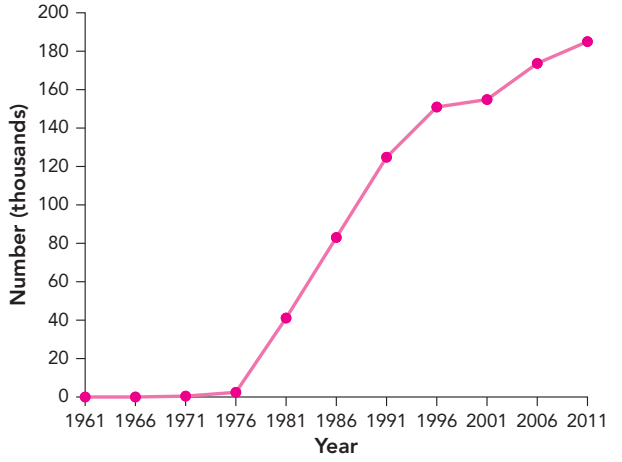
Which of the following can be supported by the evidence?

A Statement I and II are both historically correct.

B Statement I and II are both historically incorrect.

C Statement I is correct and Statement II is incorrect.

D Statement II is correct and Statement I is incorrect.



Vietnamese-born residents of Australia, 1961–2011

Getty Images/Dan Himbrechts/Bloomberg

Lam Nguyen arranges containers of food in his Vietnamese restaurant in the Sydney suburb of Cabramatta, June 2013.

FROM THE SOURCE

Student Vuong Thanh Loc recounts his father's experience

source A

So the following summer in the year 1984 I left Vietnam on a small boat with fifty other people; my boat was unseaworthy because it was very small, just about 8 metres long and 3 metres wide, but it carried fifty people.

The people looked like sardines in a can. The owner told us that a bigger ship would be waiting out in the sea, but we could not see one, we had been tricked …

When we had been out to sea for about ten hours, the engine broke down. We did not have any sails or paddles to keep the boat going, so the boat kept moving without any control or guidance. The food was scarce and can only last for two days. The third day we just drank water when it rained.

Suddenly on the seventh day at night, my boat came to shore. We did not know where this place was until the police came and we knew we had arrived in Malaysia. After that I stayed at a refugee camp for about nine months, then I came to Australia under my brother's sponsorship. I arrived in Melbourne in the spring of 1985.

I felt very strange when I got the bus from Melbourne airport to the Midway Hostel. I saw many things. The traffic, the houses, the life were all different to my country and many gardens filled with beautiful flowers. I was very worried about my new life here, and whether I would be able to find a job, because my English was very poor. Sometimes I felt very upset because of my language problem, and I got very homesick. In 1999 I moved to Sydney because the weather in Melbourne was not suitable for my wife and my children; they were always getting sick.

That is my father's story and he told me that Australia is his second native country, but he will never forget Vietnam. He also told me that I am very lucky to be born here. Now I come to school to learn the Vietnamese language every Saturday, because I was born here so I don't know much about Vietnam. I thank my Vietnamese teacher for teaching me about Vietnamese culture.

Migration Heritage Centre, New South Wales.

source B

Cuc Thi Lam recalls her early years in Australia after arriving in 1978 from a refugee camp in Malaysia

Minh (my husband) and I had literally nothing save the clothes on our back. Walking around the refugee camp [in Malaysia] I remember having seen a shiny red suitcase at one of the market stalls. I decided I wanted it, so we could look as if we possessed something. So I traded my wedding ring. With the money I had left over, I bought some material to make shirts so Minh and I would look presentable when we arrived in our new homeland.

When we set foot in Australia I remembered the amazing feeling. I describe it as being like a bird set free after living its life in a cage …

The first few months were a struggle, to say the least. The Western food was difficult to digest and frequently caused indigestion and a lack of appetite. I had no clue as to the services available around the hostel, save the bus that picked up at the hostel and stopped off at the supermarket. Before I had arrived, I had looked at books and magazines and day dreamed and imagined what Australia would be like and how we would fit in. Australia proved to be a huge culture shock.

Minh (my husband) decided to study to be a chiropractor, and I went on to complete a Bachelor of Arts degree. At the same time, we both had to work to support ourselves and our future children. Minh found a job at St Vincent's Hospital as a clerk and I worked as a teacher's aide. We both took English classes to conquer the language barrier, but our study and work environment forced us to pick up the English language quickly.

I gave birth to my first born son, Phillip, in 1979. Two more children were to follow, my daughter Carolyn in 1980, and finally my youngest Andrew in 1988. I remember waiting to catch the bus to the hospital to give birth to my daughter as we had no car, and were unaware of any other services and alternatives to travel. It was during these younger years that I would work three different jobs to keep the family alive while studying in my spare time and at night.

Our first accommodation was a flat on the 3rd floor in Kensington Housing Commission. The rooms were tiny and we all had to share the same room and bed. I recall, while catching the lift with my husband, a middle aged man and woman stared at us as we entered. The man

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glared at us and said 'Go back home', then spat on us. This happened often in the first few years. However, it was during these years that we also made the most wonderful and loyal friends amongst the Australians that helped us settle in. We remain close friends with them still. We raised our children to play with their children and spent many family functions together.

My husband is now a qualified and practising chiropractor. My daughter Carolyn is a registered pharmacist, while Andrew is studying Pharmacy. My eldest, Philip, works in a comfortable government job and is happily married.

Immigration Place Australia, with permission of Cuc Lam

1 Explain how these recollections in Source A and Source B are helpful to historians.

2 What are some of the hardships that Vietnamese refugees had to face in the years after their arrival in Australia?

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Place these events in their correct chronological order.
- end of the White Australia policy
- arrival of the first postwar refugees
- abolition of the dictation test
- arrival of refugees from Vietnam
- Australia and Britain sign an agreement to promote assisted migration

2 **(a)** Describe what is depicted on this Australia Day stamp of 1982.
(b) Explain the message that the image on the stamp is trying to convey.
(c) Prepare a design for your own Australia Day stamp for the present day, which might reflect how migration patterns have changed since this stamp first appeared.

Artist: Brian Clinton; © Australian Postal Corporation 1982

This Australia Day stamp appeared in 1982 and used the different waves of migration as its theme.

3 The Vietnamese are the largest non-European group to come to Australia since the Chinese came during the gold rushes of the 19th century. Prepare either a multimedia presentation or an extended essay in which you focus on these two themes.
(a) Consider three contributions that Vietnamese people have made to Australian society.
(b) Conduct an interview with a person who came to Australia as a refugee to explore the issue of the hardship and challenge the person faced in the 1970s.

or

Conduct an interview with a younger person of Vietnamese descent and explore how this person deals with the situation of being a Vietnamese Australian today.

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7.5 HOW HAS AUSTRALIA RESPONDED TO THE ISSUE OF REFUGEES AND ASYLUM SEEKERS SINCE THE 1980s?

Unlike migrants who choose to leave their country in search of a better life, refugees are people who have been forced to flee because they fear persecution, or worse, in their own country. They flee for political reasons or on the basis of their race, their religion or ethnic group, or as a response to great natural disasters. They seek protection and resettlement in other parts of the world and most refugees are unable or unwilling to return to their country. By 2012, the United Nations estimated that the number of refugees worldwide stood at 42 million. The main cause for this movement of people has been political unrest including the impact of wars or revolutions, the outbreak of ethnic or religious tensions and natural disasters such as prolonged famines, particularly in parts of Africa. Fleeing from danger or disaster, refugees seek safety and the hope of a better life somewhere else.

An asylum seeker is different from a refugee in that asylum seekers are people who have not yet submitted a request for refugee status. In recent times many people have come to Australia who have not been assessed as genuine refugees. The most visible example of this has been the arrival of asylum seekers coming to Australian shores by boat. To secure passage on these boats, most asylum seekers are forced to pay people smugglers who provide the boats for the final and most dangerous part of their journey across the open sea to Australian territory.

Australia and refugees

The massive dislocation at end of World War II began the great postwar refugee movement. The spread of communism in eastern Europe after 1945 added to this number as people fled or refused to return to their homes. In 1956 the Hungarian Uprising, when Hungary sought to break away from Soviet control, created 200 000 refugees who fled the country. The formation of the independent states of India and Pakistan in 1947 created millions of new refugees on the Indian subcontinent, and each political conflict in the Middle East generated new waves of refugees, many destined to spend their lives in refugee camps. At the end of the Vietnam War in 1975, many thousands of Vietnamese fled their country to escape political persecution. Civil war in Lebanon, Yugoslavia, Sri Lanka, Iran and the Sudan, and the ongoing violence in parts of South America, Iraq and Afghanistan, forced more people to become refugees. Since federation in 1901, close to 750 000 people classed as refugees have been resettled in Australia from many different parts of the world.

The boat people issue

Refugee Council of Australia

In the late 1980s a new group of 'boat people', mostly Cambodians and Chinese, began to arrive in Australia. An immigration detention centre was opened at Port Hedland in Western Australia, and in 1992 the Keating Labor Government introduced a policy of mandatory detention which meant that all people who entered Australia without a valid visa would be detained at an immigration facility until their status was verified. The Minister for Immigration told parliament that 'The Government is determined that a clear signal be sent that migration to Australia may not be achieved by simply arriving in this country and expecting to be allowed into the community'. The policy of mandatory detention had the support of both of the major political parties.

By the 1990s most boat arrivals were made up of people from Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan and Sri Lanka and support of these people was less evident from the Australian people. Unlike the Vietnamese refugees of the 1970s and 1980s who were fleeing communism, later boat people were often seen as illegal immigrants or queue jumpers, unwilling to await processing for genuine refugee status.

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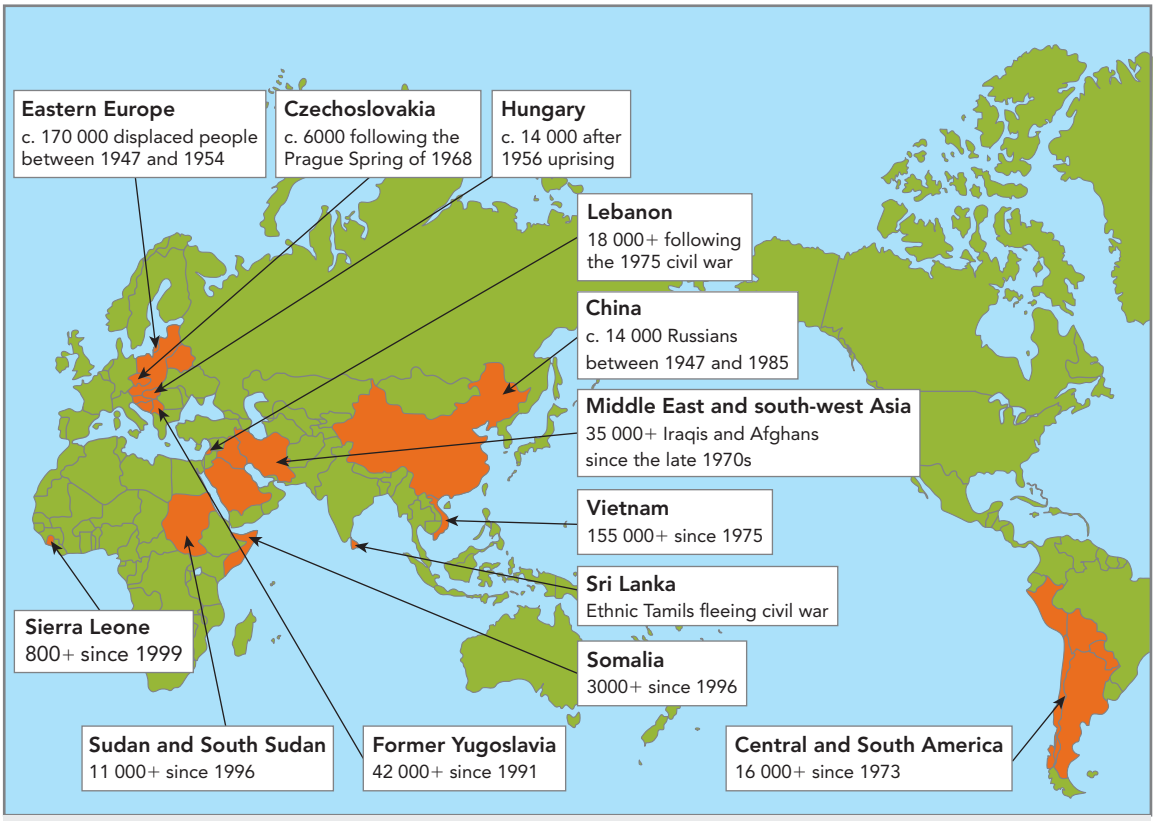

The main places in the world from which refugees have sought a new life in Australia.

FROM THE SOURCE

TABLE 7.4 Numbers of boats and people arriving by boat, 1989–2012

YEAR	BOATS	PEOPLE
1989	1	26
1990	2	198
1991	6	214
1992	6	216
1993	3	81
1994	18	953
1995	7	237
1996	19	660
1997	11	339
1998	17	200
1999	86	3721
2000	51	2939

YEAR	BOATS	PEOPLE
2001	43	5516
2002	1	1
2003	1	53
2004	1	15
2005	4	11
2006	6	60
2007	5	148
2008	7	161
2009	60	2726
2010	134	6555
2011	69	4565
2012	278	17202

1 What patterns can you establish from this data on the number of asylum seeker boats coming to Australia?

2 Explain, in an extended paragraph, why there is such a significant change in the numbers of asylum seeker boats coming to Australia between 1990 and 2012.

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During 1999, 86 boats carrying 3721 asylum seekers were detected in Australian waters. Most of these arrivals were from the Middle East, rather than Asia. Civil conflict in Sri Lanka and prolonged wars in Afghanistan and Iraq led increasing numbers of people from those countries to become refugees when they fled to neighbouring countries. Those who were desperate to get to Australia usually made their way to Indonesia where, with the assistance of 'people smugglers', they could secure a place on a small vessel to Australian waters.

The issue of unauthorised boat arrivals generated increasing public debate. The new wave of arrivals sparked concerns over whether these boat people were genuine refugees or people paying money to enter the country. There were concerns that Australia was losing control over who came to Australia and about whether the nation's northern borders were adequately controlled.

The MV *Tampa* and the Pacific Solution, 2001

In August 2001 the Norwegian container ship the MV *Tampa*, en route from Fremantle to Singapore, rescued 438 Afghan asylum seekers on their way to Australia from their stranded boat near Indonesia. With the rescue complete, a group of asylum seekers then demanded that the captain take them, not back to Indonesia, which had the closest port, but rather to the Australian territory of Christmas Island. For the safety of his ship, the captain agreed.

AAP/AFP

Over 400 Afghan asylum seekers on board the container ship the MV *Tampa*, which rescued them at sea in August 2001. The government refused to grant them permission to land in Australia.

The issue made international headlines when the Australian government refused the MV *Tampa* permission to enter Australian waters. Concerned for the welfare of his ship and the refugees on board, the captain ignored the Australian government order and sailed to Christmas Island. As he anchored a few kilometres out to sea, troops from the Special Air Service Regiment boarded the ship. The issue was ultimately resolved when the refugees were taken from the MV *Tampa* by an Australian patrol boat to the Pacific island of Nauru.

The Tampa affair came at a time of increasing concern about the number of refugees arriving by boats. More than 5500 people arrived during 2001. Opinion polls at the time reflected significant support for the government's position over the MV *Tampa* and there was a growing belief that a more hardline position was needed to protect Australia's borders and stop the increasing number of unauthorised arrivals.

A few weeks after the Tampa affair, the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in New York created increased concerns about terrorism and issues in the Middle East. With a federal election due in November 2001, the Howard government announced the so-called '**Pacific Solution**', whereby people arriving by boat without a visa to enter the country would be moved to locations outside Australia, including Manus Island in New Guinea and the small Pacific nation of Nauru. During the federal election Prime Minister Howard told the Australian people that 'We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come'. The hardline policy won positive support in Australia and effectively stopped boat arrivals. After 43 boats arrived in 2001, only one boat arrived in 2002. In the years that followed, three detention centres in Australia were closed.

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Who will stop the boats?

With the return to office of the Labor government under Kevin Rudd in 2007, changes were made to the policy concerning unauthorised boat arrivals. Among the changes, the policy of mandatory detention was modified and the Pacific Solution was discontinued. Within a short time, the number of people arriving by boat once again began to climb, from 2700 in 2009 to over 17 000 by 2012. A poll conducted in 2010 found that 78 per cent of Australians were now either 'somewhat concerned' or 'very concerned' about asylum seekers coming to Australia by boat.

The question of asylum seekers and stopping the boats became a major political issue, and the Labor government of Prime Minister Julia Gillard, who replaced Kevin Rudd in 2010, was unable to find a political solution to the problem. As the problem grew more difficult and public concern at the number of arrivals increased, the Labor government in 2013 reintroduced even more severe policies to stop the boat arrivals, including the Pacific Solution, which it had scrapped five years before.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Define the term 'mandatory detention' as it applies to asylum seekers.
2. When was the policy of mandatory detention introduced?
3. Which part of the world was the place of origin for most of the asylum seekers coming to Australia on boats from the mid-1990s?
4. Why has a Norwegian container vessel, the MV *Tampa*, found a small place in Australian history?
5. Why was there such a dramatic fall in the number of asylum seekers arriving by boat, from 5516 people in 2001 to only one in 2002?
6. What is the Pacific Solution?

FROM THE SOURCE

It is time for refugee policy to take hard rejection line in favour of helping the most desperate

The definition Australia adopts for a refugee comes straight from the United Nations Refugee Convention of 1951, which limits protection to people who face harm for one of five arbitrary reasons, being their race, nationality, religion, political opinion or membership of a distinct social group. It only protects people who manage to leave their country of origin …

Mass movement and suffering is now likely to be the result of famine, natural disasters and civil wars as opposed to people being on the wrong side of a political demonstration.

It is manifestly discriminatory that humanitarian migration should be denied to people who cannot hobble across their border. Mobility is a sure sign of relative affluence and it is repugnant that the most wealthy should get the most help.

Every asylum seeker who arrives in Australia and is granted refugee status takes an offshore refugee place from a more destitute displaced person. We need to fix this. Australia needs to stop giving displaced people incentives to make their own way here.

Australia has no refugee-producing neighbours. We are half a world away from places that people desperately want to leave. No one accidentally comes here. Every person who arrives

by boat or plane seeking asylum makes an acutely rational decision that they are likely to be conferred a visa.

International refugee numbers have not increased since the dismantling of the 'Pacific solution'. The only thing that has changed is the awareness among the relatively affluent refugee population that if you make it to Australia, you are likely to be able to stay. And so, understandably, we have a mass increase in refugee arrivals.

The only solution is to deny refugee status to any person who arrives in Australia seeking it without approval by the government. We should select our humanitarian quota from refugee camps and fly them to Australia, and refuse everyone who comes here uninvited. The number of such arrivals would dwindle to zero. There would be no more drowning deaths and no mandatory detention, and with the $2 billion saved protecting our borders and imprisoning boat arrivals we could double our refugee intake.

Mirko Bagaric, 'It is time for refugee policy to take hard rejection line in favour of helping the most desperate', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 15 July 2013

1 Prepare a list of the key points the writer is making in the article above.

2 How does the author of this document define a refugee?

3 What does the author mean by 'the dismantling of the "Pacific solution"'?

4 Which of the following points does not appear as part of this document?

A Australia is taking the wrong types of refugees.

B Australia is taking too many refugees.

C Australia should take its refugees from people in refugee camps.

D Australia should not accept people who arrive here without a visa.

5 The author of this document defines a problem and a solution. Explain in your own words what the problem is and what the solution is that is offered.

The opposition, led by Tony Abbott, used the arrival of boat people to their political advantage, promising that if they won the next election they would not only stop the boats but also, where possible, turn them back. In the weeks before the federal election of 2013, in a desperate move to win back some political support, the Labor government introduced a much harsher policy to boat arrivals then had ever existed before. In an attempt to stop the boats, the government announced that anyone coming to Australia by boat would be transferred to offshore facilities in Nauru and New Guinea, and that they would never be granted permanent residency in Australia.

In the federal election of September 2013, the issue of the security of Australia's borders and stopping the boats was a major factor contributing to the defeat of the Labor government and the return to office of a Liberal–National government under Prime Minister Tony Abbott. Within days of coming to power, the new government introduced *Operation Sovereign Borders* to deal with the issue of illegal boat arrivals. While the tougher policies, including turning back the boats, strained Australia's relationship with Indonesia, the number of boat arrivals began to dramatically fall.

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Getty Images/Greg Wood/AFP

Pro-refugee protesters on the street in central Sydney in 2013 voice their opposition to the Labor government decision to send all asylum seekers to Papua New Guinea.

Getty Images/LAKRUWAN WANNIARACHCHI/AFP

An advertisement from the government campaign in 2013 aimed at stopping the arrival of asylum seekers. It was part of the policy by the Labor government to win back some popular support before the federal election of September 2013.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 People seeking to come to Australia as refugees have come from many places including Afghanistan, Iraq, Sri Lanka, and Sudan. Select *one* of these places or another and prepare an extended paragraph in which you explain:
   (a) what event(s) created a refugee problem
   (b) why, although Australia is far away from these countries, it was possible for people from these countries to arrive off the coast of Australia in boats.

2 Based on your study of the evidence in Table 7.5, answer the following questions.
   (a) Which was the largest group seeking visas to enter Australia in 2011–12?
   (b) Which was the largest group seeking visas to enter Australia in 2012–13?
   (c) Which was the largest group seeking visas to enter Australia over the period 2009–10 to 2012–13?
   (d) Which group has seen the largest drop in numbers seeking visas to enter Australia over the period 2009–10 to 2012–13?
   (e) Prepare an extended paragraph in which you present your own conclusions based on this statistical evidence.

TABLE 7.5 Number of people seeking a visa to enter Australia as a refugee under Australia's humanitarian program, 2009–2013

YEAR	SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA		ASIA		NORTH AFRICA AND MIDDLE EAST	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
2009–10	18885	40.0	14588	30.9	13454	28.5
2010–12	23105	42.5	13714	25.2	17373	32.0
2011–12	15059	35.1	15818	36.8	11881	27.7
2012–13	8929	17.7	16932	33.3	24371	48.3

Data: National Communications Branch, Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Canberra

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3 **(a)** Identify the context in which the cartoon below appeared.
(b) Cartoons often convey their message by humour. Identify who you consider is being made the figure of fun in this cartoon.
(c) What is the main point the cartoonist is seeking to make?
(d) Based on your understanding of the refugee issue, prepare your own cartoon.

'Full up.' A cartoon by Peter Nicholson from *The Australian*, 24 October 2009.

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WHAT HAS BEEN THE CONTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT MEN AND WOMEN TO AUSTRALIA'S CHANGING IDENTITY?

7.6

Australian migration policy changed over time. Not only did it change in terms of who could come to the country; there has also been considerable change in thinking about how migrants should fit into the Australian community. Until the 1970s the dominant belief was very simple: anyone coming to Australia should assimilate, discard the language and traditions of their homeland and seek to become Australians. By the 1970s this view was changing and the concept of multiculturalism was born: that Australia had become a land of many cultures and they were all of value to the nation. In more recent times the idea of multiculturalism has been challenged by those who argue that the promotion of different ethnic cultures has in fact created a nation in which allegiance to one's original culture weakens the sense of loyalty to the nation as a whole.

From assimilation to multiculturalism

For many years there had been two elements of Australia's immigration policy: White Australia and assimilation. People had to be white and they had to fit into the Australian way of life. As Australia gained communities of many different nationalities after World War II, assimilation was given added emphasis. The 'New Australians', mainly from Europe, were expected to discard their own culture and traditions. Australia was to have one culture. There was a good deal of planning and public discussion about how migrants could be assisted to embrace the Australian way of life and discard their own culture and traditions.

FROM THE SOURCE

Adelaide *Advertiser*

source A

5 December 1951

Sir –

Australians talk about assimilation of New Australians, but most of them do everything to make these migrants unhappy. The unnecessary and inhuman demand is that New Australians should forget their native land and their language. Would Australians do that if they went to France?

The children of New Australians go to Australian schools and all speak English very well. The older people try to learn English as much as possible.

The love of an old country does not bring any harm to Australia. One does not need to forget her mother to be able to love her child. You can love them both. New Australians have come here to live, because they thought it was the best country in the world, but Australians, by their silly questions and uncomplimentary remarks, make New Australians sick.

If anybody is really interested in the assimilation of New Australians let him start to teach Australians to regard New Australians as he regards his own people, and this assimilation problem will be solved.

MINA GARTNER.

Unley

Adelaide SA

ISBN 9780170347266

source B *The Argus*

3 July 1951

F. J. Donath writes in *The Argus* 28 June that 'one of the main principles of the Australian immigration policy is assimilation in every respect as quickly as possible'. If that is true, we are governed by imbeciles. How can mature adults change their way of life, throw over their culture, and learn our illogical language in a flash? It reminds me of Hitler's race superiority doctrine.

L. COMERFORD

Richmond

Melbourne Vic

1 Which of the following statements is supported by evidence in these sources?

A The writers are totally opposed to the policy of assimilation.

B The writers have no sympathy for the 'New Australians'.

C The writers express concerns about aspects of the policy of assimilation.

D The writers believe the Australian way of life is superior to that which the migrants knew in their former home.

2 Explain the one common point both writers make in their letters.

3 Place yourself in the position of an Australian resident in the 1950s. Prepare your own letter to the newspaper about assimilation.

The expectation that all migrants should drop the culture and language of their birth and become 'true' Australians was never achieved and the policy of assimilation gradually failed. Many migrants did not want to discard their traditional culture.

In time it was accepted that it was better to preserve the different cultures of the people who had arrived in the country. As people from different backgrounds (Italians, Greeks, Vietnamese, Yugoslavs, Maltese, Turks and others) began to maintain their identity, it became evident that Australia had in fact many cultures that all contributed to the richness of Australian life.

Beginning in the 1970s the word 'multiculturalism' came into common use. It means that the people who make up Australian society come from different races and have different cultures, traditions and languages. Multiculturalism encourages these different groups to maintain their identity and many of their traditions while at the same time asking all Australians to live in peace and to respect the culture and traditions of others.

Four principles have governed the promotion of multiculturalism:

- All members of society must have equal opportunity to realise their potential and have equal access to programs and services.
- Every person should be able to maintain his or her culture without prejudice or disadvantage.
- The needs of immigrants should be met by programs and services available to the whole community.
- Services and programs should be designed with a view to helping immigrants to become self-reliant.

After the election of the Labor Party in 1972, the government promoted this concept of multiculturalism. All Australians had the right to express their cultural heritage, including

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their language and religion. The *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*, passed in June of that year, ended discrimination on the basis of race, and another law, the Racial Vilification Act, later made it a crime to stir up hatred against an individual or a group on the basis of their race.

To support the concept of multiculturalism, the Australian government makes grants of money to ethnic organisations to help them maintain their identity. The Australian Institute of Multicultural Affairs was set up to promote multiculturalism, and in 1980 the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) was established to provide television and radio programs to the largest ethnic groups in the country.

The challenge to multiculturalism

The idea of multiculturalism has raised debate within Australia. There are some who criticise the concept. Some argue that multiculturalism promotes division within Australia and weakens the loyalty of migrants to their new land. There is the argument that Australia has become a 'nation of tribes', that this could cause social division in the future and that the increase in the number of non-British and non-European migrants has meant that Australia's ties with Britain have been eroded.

In 1984 Professor Geoffrey Blainey, Professor of History at Melbourne University, made comments about multiculturalism which generated a great deal of discussion. In a speech and other writings, Professor Blainey said that:

- Australia each year was taking in migrants at a rate faster than the nation could absorb them
- many migrants were from backgrounds so different from Australia that it might be hard for them to fit into Australian society. This is because Australian society is still the long-established Anglo-Celtic culture with its institutions, 'with a confetti of other ethnic groups, the largest of which are European and, therefore, not dissimilar to the host culture'
- the time might come when Australians began to feel pressured by new arrivals from such different backgrounds and this could cause people to become less tolerant
- it is wrong to believe that tolerance of new immigrants can be imposed on the Australian people by laws like the Racial Discrimination Act or the Racial Vilification Act.

Professor Blainey was criticised for saying these things and he resigned his position at the university. Other people supported Blainey and argued that he had every right to express his views about the possible problems of multiculturalism.

Two years after Professor Blainey's comments, multiculturalism once again came under public debate. In September 1996 Pauline Hanson, a newly elected independent member of parliament, achieved national fame by openly attacking the policy of multiculturalism.

With the end of the White Australia policy, the increasing numbers of Asian immigrants (and, more recently, people of Middle Eastern background) have generated some concern among many Australians. Some experts believe that by 2020 about 25 per cent of Australia's population will be of Asian origin.

Pauline Hanson's comments attracted national attention. Many condemned them as divisive and uninformed, the views of a person who had little understanding of the complex nature of Australian society. The press and religious leaders were particularly active in condemning her opinions. However, other Australians, particularly older, more conservative people, were prepared to listen to her views. Since the White Australia policy was abolished, some people have expressed fears about an 'Asian takeover' of Australia. Others believe that laws such as the Racial Vilification Act have stopped people and politicians from expressing their views on Asian immigration.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Letter to the Editor

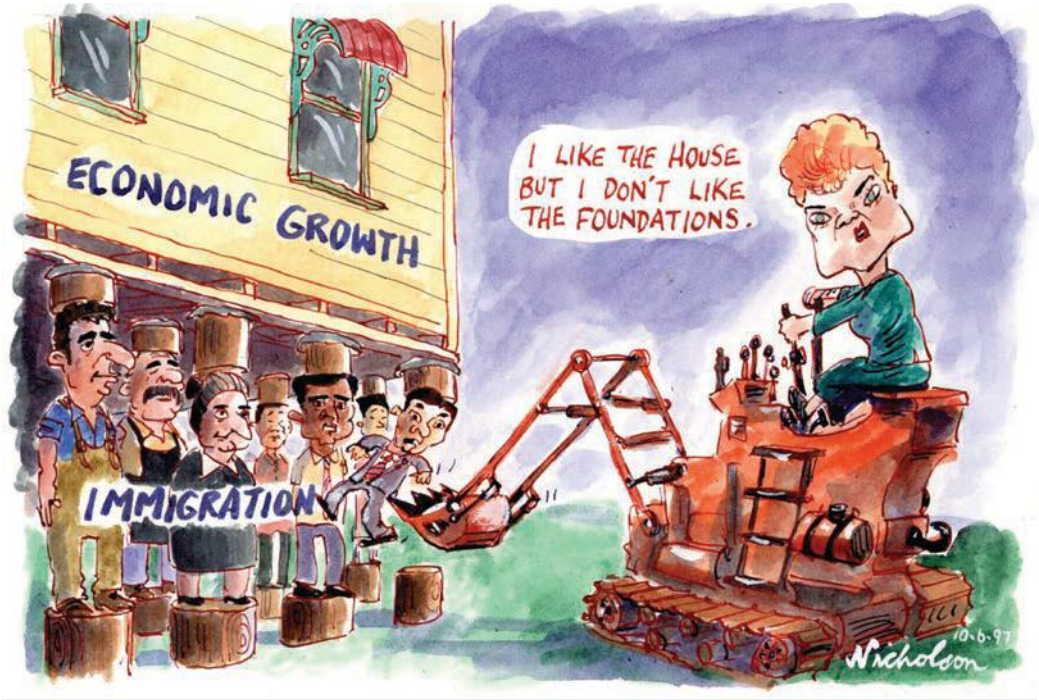
May I state that, although not agreeing with all that Ms Hanson said, I, like most Australians, believe that in the main she speaks for the majority of Australians. Some groups might not like her sentiments but this is still a land where we believe in free speech … Mainstream politicians should realise that they are there to represent us, not to tell us what to do. I wish we had more like you, Pauline.

David Astin

Bankstown

13 September 1996

source B



Cartoon by Nicholson from The Australian www.nicholsoncartoons.com.au

A cartoon by Peter Nicholson from *The Australian*, 10 June 1997

1 Is the letter in Source A favourable or unfavourable towards Pauline Hanson?

2 What point in this letter cannot be supported by historical evidence?

3 The main point the writer is making in this letter is:

- **A** Pauline Hanson has the right to express her opinion.
- **B** Australians don't like mainstream politicians.
- **C** Pauline Hanson is right in what she says.
- **D** Most Australians support Pauline Hanson.

4 Identify the people under the house in Source B.

5 What is the cartoonist suggesting has been one of their contributions to Australia?

6 According to the cartoonist, what is Pauline Hanson's intention?

7 What, according to the cartoonist, would happen if Pauline Hanson got her way?

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The Australian community was shocked by an outbreak of racially motivated violence at Cronulla Beach and other southern Sydney suburbs in December 2005. After simmering tensions involving Lebanese gangs from Sydney's west, over 5000 people gathered at Cronulla on Sunday 11 December 2005 with the provocative intention to 'reclaim the beach'. The gathering degenerated into a violent riot based on race. Eventually 104 people were charged and some were sent to prison.

Getty Images/Cameron Spencer

A young man climbs a telegraph pole and raises an Australian flag during unrest at Cronulla beach on 11 December 2005. Angry crowds singled out and attacked people of Middle Eastern appearance as racial tension erupted into violent scenes after a week of race-related incidents.

A Day that shocked a nation

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 What do you understand by these terms?
   (a) assimilation
   (b) multiculturalism
2 Which decade in Australian history saw multiculturalism begin?
3 What are the aims of the Racial Discrimination Act and the Racial Vilification Act?
4 Why has Pauline Hanson found a place into the Australian history books?
5 Explain the difference between the policy of assimilation as it related to migrants and the new government policy of multiculturalism.
6 Who was the history professor who raised concerns about the policy of multiculturalism in 1984?
7 What is one of the arguments put forward by people who do not agree with the policy of multiculturalism?

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Newspix/Danny Aarons

Members of the Greek community in national and historical costumes celebrate at a Greek Festival at Manly in 2005.

The Australian identity

Modern Australia is made up of people from more than 200 different ethnic backgrounds. For a nation that began with a sense of isolation and fear of other races, it is a remarkable achievement. When people look back on the history of modern Australia at some future date, it may well be that the greatest achievement of the Australian people in the twentieth century was the success of the migration experience. A person from 1901 revisiting Australia in the early 21st century would be stunned, not only by the technological achievements of the century, but also by the fact that the Australian people now come from almost every country on earth and live together with a remarkable degree of tolerance and understanding.

In Australia's relatively short history as a nation, its people's identity has been defined by a number of different factors. These include its beliefs and values, the impact of world events, its historical experiences and its place as an increasingly influential nation in world affairs. The patterns of migration have also defined the Australian identity because migration has profoundly changed the composition of Australian society while preserving its core values and cohesiveness.

Migration has changed Australian society in two important ways.

- First, by accepting people from all over the world, it could be said that an Australian national identity is still evolving.
- Second, the policy of accepting and valuing the cultures of others is creating a richer and more varied Australian society. Immigration has given Australia a cultural and ethnic diversity, and the variety of these cultures has transformed Australia into one of the most vibrant and dynamic societies in the world.

Identity: Yours, Mine, Ours

The end of White Australia as the basis of our migration policy also meant that Australia could advance to a new relationship with other nations – in particular, Asian nations. This is no longer the Asia to be feared and excluded as in the past, but rather an Asia where Australia could be an equal and a partner. Australia is a member of a number of regional trade associations, including APEC, an organisation of 17 nations in east Asia and the Pacific rim. Almost 50 per cent of Australia's trade is with APEC countries. Britain, once Australia's main trading partner, is now sixth on the trading list. Australia's major trading partner is now China, followed by Japan, South Korea and India.

Multicultural influences have certainly changed the lifestyles of many Australians. One of the most obvious changes has been in the eating habits of Australians. In the 1950s eating out was not as common as it is today. Whereas once the most exotic foreign food was Chinese takeaway, Australians today can enjoy any number of European, Asian and Middle Eastern foods in more and more restaurants. The Australian diet was once very bland. It was a country where it was said you could eat meat three times a day. It was an age before pizzas and kebabs, satays and sushi and tacos. Delicatessens, almost unheard of in the 1950s, now offer meats, cheeses, breads and other foods unknown in Australia in the 1960s. In those years bread was white and cheese was Kraft. All this has now changed. Australians started to drink wine with their meals, and the country now produces some of the best wines in the world. Wine and mineral water were uncommon on Australian tables in the 1950s.

The changes to Australian society caused by multicultural influences are not confined to food. In recent times Australians have come to value the use of outdoor space for living and eating. The design of buildings and the use of colour have been influenced by other cultures, and major city

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streets have become malls and plazas. In these outdoor spaces Australians have been taught the enjoyment of public festivals and entertainment. Australians' traditional love of sport has been enhanced. While the first wave of immigrants gave Australia cricket, the more recent arrivals brought new sports such as soccer.

Across the country there are now many ethnic communities that seek to preserve their cultural heritage. There are more than 100 ethnic newspapers or magazines published in Australia in over forty different languages, and multicultural television (SBS) is available as well as many ethnic programs on special radio stations.

Newspix/Mike Keating

Sunshine Heights Cricket Club in Victoria, 2011. The team includes members of Vietnamese, Sri Lankan, Sudanese, Ugandan, Greek and Anglo-Celtic heritage.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Read the migration/population data contained in the Census of 2011, available online at the Australian Bureau of Statistics website. Based on your research and readings from this and other sources, prepare a brief class presentation in which you present the latest information on the make-up of Australian society today. You should include:
- the total population figure
- the number of people born overseas
- the number of migrant arrivals in recent years
- the countries from which most arrivals are now coming
- the number of people from different ethnic groups
- the main languages and religions in Australia.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Census Data

2 Prepare an essay in which you discuss the advantages and disadvantages of multiculturalism.

3 **(a)** By your analysis of this data, prepare a list of *four* key observations about changes in the place of birth of people living in Australia between 1954 and 2008.

(b) Can you explain why these patterns of change have been occurring?

TABLE 7.7 Country of birth of the Australian population, 1954, 1996 and 2008, expressed as a percentage

COUNTRY OF BIRTH	1954	1996	2008
Australia	85.6	78.5	73.6
New Zealand	0.48	1.76	2.16
Britain and Ireland	7.41	6.75	5.65
Europe	5.41	6.72	5.44
Asia	0.57	5.24	7.13
Africa/Middle East	0.17	1.18	1.43
Americas	0.16	0.92	1.02
Sub-Saharan Africa	0.00	0.66	1.09

Crossword

Overview of migration policy in Australia, 1901–present

Quiz

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CHAPTER 8

Between the wars: Australia in the 1920s and 1930s

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- the changes in Australian society and the experiences of different groups of people during the 1920s and 1930s
- political developments in the 1920s and 1930s
- the Great Depression and its impact on Australian social and political life.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

8.1 How did Australian society change from the 1920s?

8.2 What were the important political and economic developments of the 1920s?

8.3 What was the Great Depression and what impact did it have on Australia?

The 1920s and the 1930s were two very different decades in Australian history. After the hardship and suffering of World War I, Australians in the 1920s began to enjoy life once more. For many it was a time for questioning traditional standards and behaviour and embracing new social values. The nation's population grew, its cities began to expand, and advances in technology resulted in new inventions that began to quicken and change the pace of life. Many historians believe this decade was the start of modern times.

But if the 1920s were a decade of hope and optimism, a time of great promise, social change, economic growth and international peace, the decade that followed was almost the exact opposite. The 1930s were a period of increasing doubt and pessimism, a decade of economic decline and of growing international tension. For many Australians, this was an era of renewed hardship and personal distress as the nation's economy collapsed. The dividing line was 1929, the year the Great Depression began.

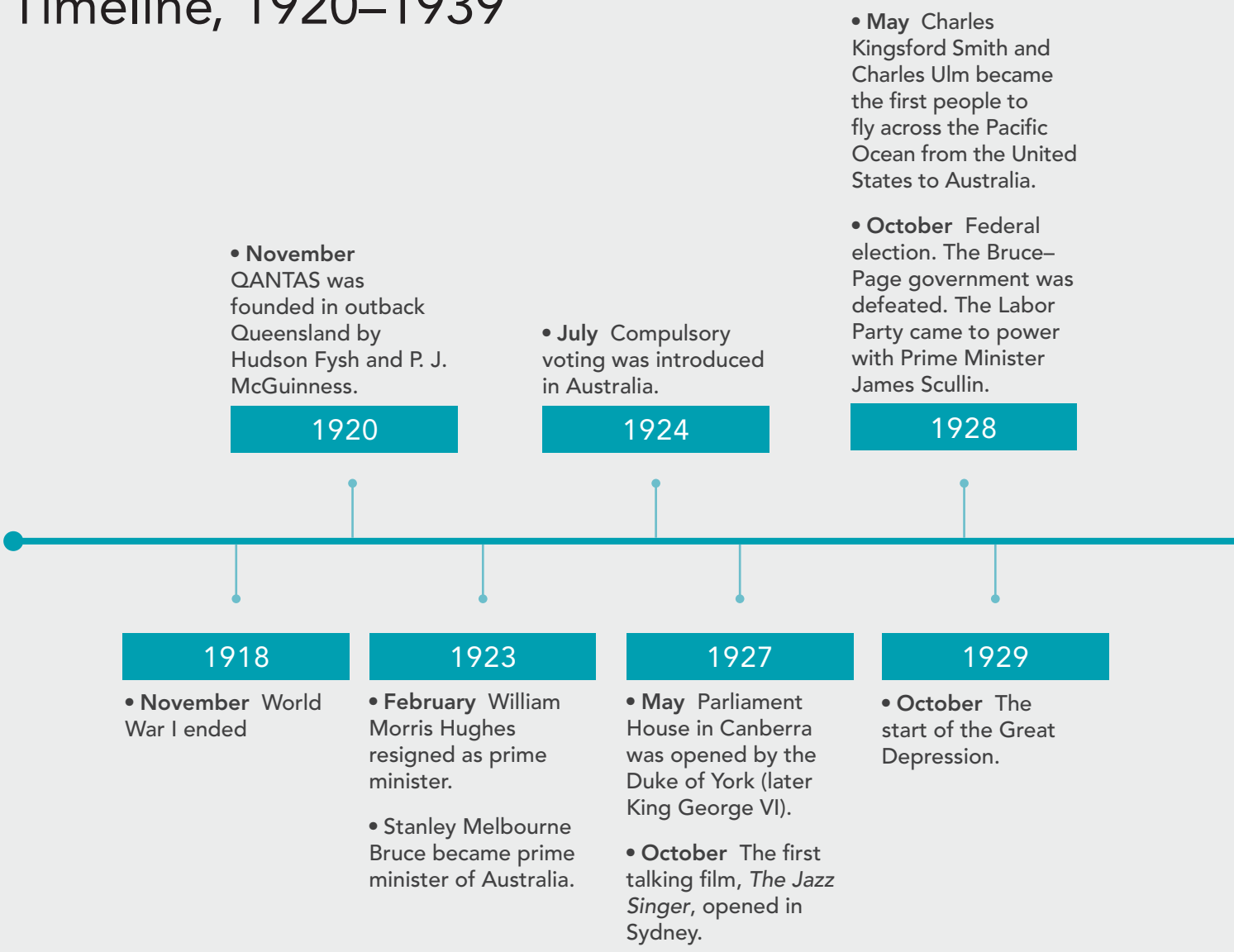
Grace Cossington Smith, *The Bridge In-curve* (1930), tempera on cardboard, 83.6 × 111.8 cm National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne. Presented by the National Gallery Society of Victoria, 1967.

The splendid promise of the future beckons us on.

William Morris Hughes, prime minister of Australia, 1919

National Gallery of Victoria

Timeline, 1920–1939



Glossary

conservative Describes a person who is unwilling or unable to accept rapid change or new ideas. A conservative government is one that is less likely to bring about great change.

deflationary policy One of the possible ways the government could deal with the Depression. A deflationary policy required the government to cut spending, wages and welfare and to increase taxes to balance the budget and meet the overseas debt. This policy would increase social hardship.

dripping Animal fat, usually drained from cooked meat. During the Depression dripping was a common substitute for butter.

eviction The forced removal of people from their home. This happened during the Depression when people could not pay their rent.

inflationary policy The strategy that the best way to get out of the Depression was for the government to increase spending, particularly on public works for the unemployed.

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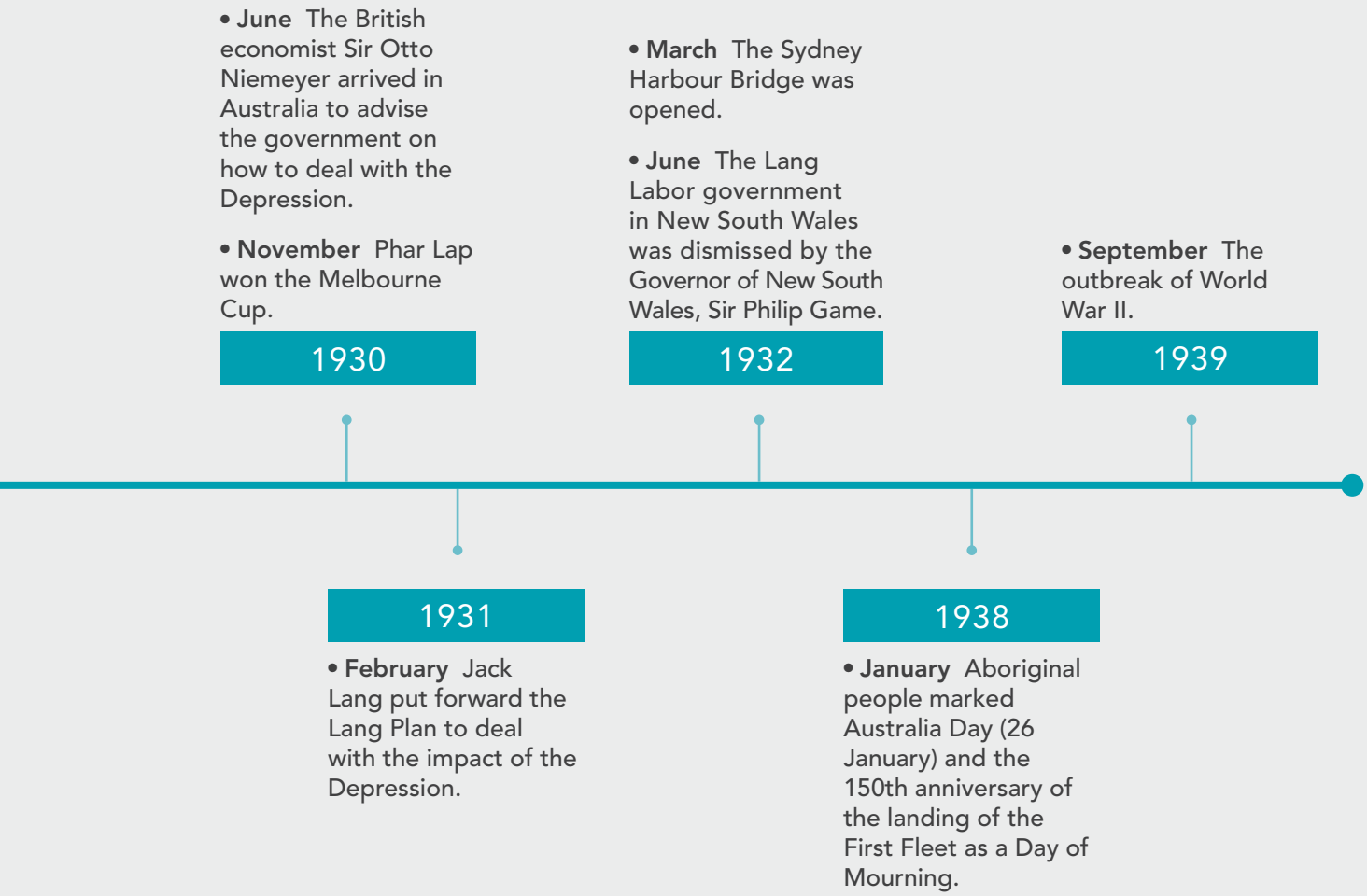

repudiation Refusal to pay your debts. In the Depression, those who believed in repudiation did not want to repay overseas debts until the Depression was over.

subsidies Special grants of money by the government to assist a particular industry or project.

susso Food rations (or sustenance) provided for the unemployed during the Depression.

temperance movement A social movement urging reduced or prohibited consumption of alcoholic beverages.

vaudeville A popular form of live variety entertainment during the 1920s and 1930s.

wowser A name given to someone who did not approve of the more relaxed lifestyle of the 1920s, particularly the increased use of alcohol in society.

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8.1

HOW DID AUSTRALIAN SOCIETY CHANGE FROM THE 1920s?

Australians greeted the start of the 1920s with great optimism and hope. The 'war to end all wars' had been fought and won and, despite the heavy loss of men and the bitter divisions the war had caused, Australia emerged from it with a sense of national pride and a confident belief in the future. Prime Minister Hughes believed that the new decade would offer Australians peace and prosperity built on hard work. 'Australia is safe; liberty is now assured for us and for all men', he told parliament in 1919. 'Victory is ours … upon the foundations of victory we will build a new temple of our choice … The splendid promise of the future beckons us on.'

'Nothing's too good for the soldier'

It was not until 1920 that the last Australian soldier returned home from the war. The government felt it had a special responsibility for the many thousands of soldiers who had no profession, trade or particular skill. It fell to the government to provide for these men and help them back into society and the workforce.

Many of the soldiers returning found it very difficult to settle back into civilian life. Those who returned to their jobs often found that the men who had not gone to the war had advanced and had better wages. The trade unions opposed attempts by the government to give preference to ex-soldiers because they feared it would damage the strength of the union movement. Returning soldiers found that the values they had lived by in war – mateship, loyalty and honesty – did not always apply in the world they returned to in the peace.

A Department of Repatriation (now called the Department of Veterans Affairs) was set up to provide payment of pensions to men who had served in the war and to provide medical and hospital support for returned soldiers in special repatriation hospitals. The government also built thousands of war-service homes that were provided to former soldiers at reasonable rates.

Soldier settlement

The sense of responsibility towards the returned soldiers, as well as the belief that opening up the land and developing rural industry were important for Australia's growth, led to the Soldier Settlement Scheme of the 1920s. Under this plan the state governments made blocks of farmland available to ex-soldiers and the federal government provided cheap loans for the purchase of stock and equipment. Soldier settlements began in the sugar areas of north Queensland, in the Riverina and Murrumbidgee areas of New South Wales, and in the Gippsland and Mallee areas of Victoria. In all, some 50 million pounds were allocated to the scheme. Despite the worthy motives of both the government and the soldier settlers, the scheme was a failure. In many areas the land was too small to support a family. As well, many of the ex-soldiers were completely inexperienced in rural matters. By 1927, almost 30 per cent of soldier settlers had left their land, many simply walking off in despair.

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FROM THE SOURCE

The Bulletin, 29 September 1921

A cartoon entitled 'Nothing's too good for the soldier', from *The Bulletin*, 29 September 1921

1 **The point being made in this cartoon of 1921 is that:**

- **A** **many soldiers were injured in the war**
- **B** **the government had not done enough to assist returned soldiers**
- **C** **all soldiers had to beg for a living**
- **D** **people felt sorry for returned soldiers.**

2 **Explain why Australia is represented as a young boy, looking almost in curiosity at these ex-soldiers.**

3 **Does the name of the cartoon suggest *The Bulletin* was sympathetic or unsympathetic towards the ex-soldiers?**

Women and the changing society

During World War I women had taken the place of men in many areas of employment, and throughout the 1920s the number of women in the workforce increased. Most women, however, were still employed in traditional female occupations such as domestic duties, in offices, shops and factories and in the accepted female professions of teaching and nursing.

Although women in the workforce worked the same hours as men, they still received a lower wage. The basic wage had been defined as the wage necessary for a man supporting a wife and three children. In 1928 the average weekly wage for a male was five pounds two shillings, and for a female it was four pounds four shillings. The trade unions, which fought to improve working conditions and pay for men, did not consider the equality of rights for women to be an issue. In the 1920s there was still a widely held view that women took up employment only to fill in the years before they married.

After school, many young women completed vocational training courses to allow them to work in offices or shops, or in domestic work, but the idea of a career or lifelong work applied mainly to men. A small number of young women entered university but, except for nurses and teachers, women in the professions or public life were still the exception rather than the rule.

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State Library of NSW [bcp_06514]

Young women attending a domestic training class in Sydney in 1924

In the 1920s it was women, more than men, who began to challenge the old ways of the past. Young women now demanded greater freedom, equality and independence and they quickly embraced the changes in lifestyle and manners that came with the 1920s.

Research task: Women

The restricted and uncomfortable fashions of the prewar years gave way to new styles. Whalebone corsets and elaborate dresses and hats were out. It was now the 'flat-chested twenties', when fashion required tubular, sack-like dresses. From the mid-1920s, the length of these dresses shortened dramatically, much to the distress of the more **conservative** elements in Australian society. For the first time, dresses rose above the knee and, as more leg was exposed, silk stockings became an essential part of the fashionable woman's wardrobe. More shocking still was the sight of high-heeled shoes. Women began to smoke and drink, to apply make-up in public, to wear their hair short, to go to parties without supervision and to go bathing in revealing styles of swimwear. Increasing numbers of women also learnt to drive motor cars.

Wowserism

Throughout much of the 1920s there was a tension between the old and the new, between accepted standards of behaviour and morality and the forces of the new. The conservative elements in Australian society, sometimes called the **wowsers**, led campaigns to oppose these new social changes. Church leaders condemned the changing mode of female fashion and singled out for particular attention the new dance crazes of the decade. **Temperance movement** groups totally opposed the consumption of alcohol and campaigned with success against any increase in hotel trading hours. In 1928 the New South Wales government, responding to pressure from temperance groups, held a referendum on the issue of whether the state should introduce prohibition – a ban on the production and sale of alcohol in the state. The referendum failed, but there was pressure to preserve 6 p.m. hotel closing and the ban on alcohol after that hour in the few licensed restaurants that existed in the 1920s. Before World War I most hotels stayed open until 11 p.m. but 6 p.m. closing was introduced during wartime. The result was the '6 o'clock swill', a uniquely Australian practice across the country, in which weary workers who had left work at 5 p.m. consumed as much alcohol as possible in the one hour left to them.

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FROM THE SOURCE

The modern age

source A

Modern ideas, modern 'dress', modern plays, motion picture shows, modern conversation, and many other 'modern' dangers seems to be sapping the purity of mind of our girlhood ... A generation ago the lowest of the slum frequenting would be ashamed to be seen smoking in public, yet today even some Catholic and convent bred girls have no compunction about a 'whiff in public'. Who a generation ago had ever seen a girl or women taking intoxicating liquors?

Freeman's Journal, March 1925

1 **Why do you think the 1920s were called the beginning of the Modern Age?**

2 **To what degree could it be argued that the 1920s saw the true beginning of greater freedom for women and their lifestyle?**

3 **Why did new types of female dress and behaviour upset society?**

Immodest dances: Incitement to sin

source B

'A greater cause for anxiety than ball dresses which are immodest and suggestive and an open incentive to passion is the shameless, wanton, infatuation and endless excitement of dancing,' says the Right Rev. Bernard O'Kane. 'It is a corrupting plague spreading rapidly and dealing ruin in many homes. Some dances imitated the excited orgies of savages, and are not merely an incitement to sin, but are so immodest that they cannot be witnessed without sin.'

The Argus, 1 March 1927

1 **The Rev. Bernard O'Kane was upset by the new modern style of dancing in the 1920s. You are a citizen of the 1920s and you have just read this letter in the *Argus*. Write to Rev. O'Kane and either:**

   (a) tell him that you agree with his letter and outline what else is wrong with society in the 1920s

   or

   (b) tell him how and why you disagree with his view and explain your view on the nature of the changes in this era after World War I.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Explain why many soldiers found it dificult to resume civilian life after they returned from World War I.
2 What was the accepted view of women and employment in the 1920s?
3 Why was life a little easier for women who managed a home in the 1920s?
4 Why did young women demand greater freedom in the years after World War I?
5 Prepare a list of things that women of the 1920s did that would have been unthinkable to their parents.

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Entertainment and the cinema

1920s Australian film

As part of the push to enjoy life after the war, there was a demand for a new style, and a greater range, of entertainment than had existed in earlier years. The most popular forms of entertainment were music, **vaudeville** and dancing. In dance halls and ballrooms across the country, people enjoyed the new sounds in music, particularly jazz from the United States, and new and daring dances such as the Black Bottom and the Charleston. Every country town had its dance hall, while in the larger cities there were elaborate dance palaces and ballrooms, most with complete orchestras. For young people, these dance venues were the places to meet and to be seen.

Coo-ee Picture Library

A group of people celebrate the New Year of 1924.

However, the most popular form of mass entertainment in the 1920s was the cinema. Silent films captivated Australian audiences in the first half of the 1920s, and Australia had the highest cinema attendance rates in the world. Almost every town soon had a permanent picture theatre. In many cases this was only a shed with galvanised iron roofing, but in the capital cities lavish theatres were built on a grand scale. Some of these extravagant new theatres, with their elaborate entry foyers, ornate ceilings and rich curtains, had full orchestras, which played at intermission. Others had Wurlitzer organs that emerged, with the organist, hydraulically from beneath the stage.

A small Australian film industry began in the 1920s to produce silent films, some of which are now acknowledged as classics. The pioneer filmmaker Raymond Longford made *The Sentimental Bloke*, which was based on the poem by C. J. Dennis. Much of the film was shot on location in the working-class Sydney suburb of Woolloomooloo, and it captured the life of working-class Australians. The film was a popular success. Another classic early Australian film was the epic story of the convict era, *For the Term of His Natural Life*, which was made in 1927.

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In 1927 the first talking film, *The Jazz Singer*, opened in Sydney and a new era began for the cinema as a form of mass entertainment. While Australian filmmakers had enjoyed a period of growth with silent movies, the introduction of sound meant increased production costs. That, as well as the coming of the Great Depression, caused the production of Australian sound films to decline.

Most of the films of the 1930s were from the United States and Britain, but some Australian sound films were also being produced. The Cinesound studio produced a series of successful films in the 1930s, including a popular series of films based on the comic characters Dad and Dave, from the novels by Steele Rudd. There were also a number of independent producers who made movies. The most successful was Charles Chauvel. His film *In the Wake of the Bounty*, about the famous mutiny on HMS *Bounty*, was filmed in Tahiti and Sydney and starred a young Australian actor, Errol Flynn, who would become a Hollywood star.

Another development with sound pictures was the popularity of newsreels, which captured the news events of the week and were then rushed to theatres across the country. In the days before television, Cinesound and, later, Movietone News gave Australian audiences images of people and events happening in their own country. The Australian newsreels were issued weekly and usually reached the screen a few days after the events they covered. Newsreels from overseas took longer to arrive.

State Library of NSW [a3010031]

Ushers and the theatre nurse at the Capitol Theatre, Sydney, in 1929. Ushers would guide people to their seats in the grand city cinemas.

National Library of Australia

The Movietone News camera team in Sydney, 1938

FROM THE SOURCE

In every part of this enormous continent listeners-in were as truly present at Canberra last Monday as though each had been on the spot.

They heard all the speeches, the crowds cheering, the bands playing, the joybells ringing, the trumpets fanfaring, all the innumerable sounds of a great pageant were perfectly audible to them. No so-called miracle could exceed that wireless wonder.

Then later on they will SEE it all – on the screen at the picture shows. Not a ribbon fluttered in the breeze at Canberra on Monday but will flutter in exactly the same way on the silver sheet, as often as desired and on any date decreed. Is it not truly astounding?

I have heard it said that the age of miracles is gone. Nay brother, rather let it be proudly proclaimed that we are on the threshold of an era of unparalleled wonders.

The Australian Worker, 16 May 1927

1 **What important historical event is described in this news report of 1927?**

2 **Explain the importance of wireless (radio) and the motion pictures to Australian society in the interwar period.**

3 **Prepare a list of other 'modern miracles', apart from radio and motion pictures, that appeared in the 1920s and began to alter the lifestyle of the average Australian.**

4 **Prepare a list of modern miracles today that would amaze the author of this extract from 1927.**

Urbanism and domestic life

The bungalow

Although many women enjoyed increasing freedom in the 1920s, their role remained the traditional one of wife and mother and the domestic duties of the home. But life in the home was also changing in the 1920s and 1930s. The use of electricity made housework much easier and gave women more free time. A new range of domestic inventions began to appear, including the electric iron, a range of new cookers, the electric vacuum cleaner and the washing machine – although not all families could afford them. Refrigeration had improved with the arrival of the kerosene refrigerator, and telephones were becoming more popular in homes that could afford them.

State Library of Victoria [H83.338]

One device that began to make life easier in the interwar years was the telephone. What three conclusions can one draw about telephones and the telephone service of the 1920s and 1930s from this advertisement?

The interwar years saw unprecedented growth in Australian cities. Most of the immigrants who came to Australia during these years settled for city life rather than face a struggle against hardship and loneliness in the Australian bush. Cities provided greater employment opportunities and most Australian manufacturing industry was located there. By the end of the decade, 50 per cent of Australia's population lived in the six state capitals, with Melbourne and Sydney each having a population of over one million.

The nature of city life changed as well. The Australian dream of owning one's home was born in the optimism of the 1920s. This, in turn, triggered the growth of the suburban sprawl that is a feature of Australian capital cities. Public transport systems developed to service the new suburbs. Sealed roads carried the increasing numbers of cars; and the electrification of the Sydney and Melbourne rail network, in addition to buses and trams, began to move people to and from the city. This decade also saw a boom in the construction of houses as new suburbs opened up. In the capital cities the growth of new middle-class suburbs usually followed the expanding network of tramlines. People built houses close to transport routes to the city, and so modern Australian suburbia was born.

However, for many Australians the dream of home ownership remained just that. Poorer working-class families were still forced to rent houses in inner-city areas where living conditions remained tough, opportunities were limited and life remained a struggle. For those more fortunate Australians, the period between the wars offered the opportunity of a comfortable life in a suburban bungalow equipped with an increasing selection of labour-saving devices.

ISBN 9780170347266

In new homes, the centre of family entertainment now became the wireless set, or radio. The first regular broadcasts began in Sydney in 1923 and by the end of the decade more than 300 000 people had radio licences. As well there were hand-cranked gramophones playing cylinder recordings, and the piano, which was a common item of furniture in homes.

The gadgets and luxuries of the era soon became necessities, and affording them was made easier with the introduction of hire-purchase, whereby customers could have their new goods immediately by making a small down payment and paying the balance by so much a month. To stimulate this demand a new era of advertising began, both in the traditional printed form and over the new medium of the wireless.

Public health

In 1919 Australia was swept by a serious epidemic of Spanish influenza. This strain of influenza swept the world and killed some 21 million people. Returning soldiers carried the infection back to Australia, where it caused the death of more than 10 000 Australians in 1919 and 1920. The toll would have been much higher except for the regulations introduced by state governments to combat the spread of the disease. Many public buildings were closed, quarantine restrictions were introduced and people wore gauze masks in public.

The postwar years saw the start of significant improvements in public health. In the 1920s public authorities began to focus on improved sanitation and waste disposal, and new laws were passed to improve the quality of food production. The most common causes of death then were tuberculosis and pneumonia, and many people also died of diarrhoea and dysentery. The death rate from these diseases began to fall in the 1920s, the main reasons for this being advances in medical science and improvements in housing and sanitation. Vaccinations against diseases such as smallpox were now possible, and vaccinations against other diseases were soon to follow.

Transport

It was during the 1920s that horse-drawn transport finally gave way to the internal-combustion engine and the motoring age began in Australia. The pace of life sped up as sealed roads extended into suburbs and people gained a new mobility to travel outside their local districts. People could travel to places they had only heard of, or take a motor holiday and stay at one of the new resort hotels that were built at scenic holiday locations.

Cars

Most automobiles, or cars, in Australia were British or American and had names such as Morris, Austin, Vauxhall, Buick, Studebaker, Chevrolet and Ford. British cars were fully imported, but American manufacturers, such as Ford and General Motors, began to produce cars in Australia. Australians embraced the automobile with great enthusiasm. By 1929 there were over 450 000 registered motor vehicles on the roads, but they remained expensive. In 1924 a Ford Model T cost 185 pounds ($370) at a time when the wage for an average working man was five pounds ($10) a week.

In the air, Australian pioneers of aviation set records for the world to follow. In May 1928 Charles Kingsford Smith and Charles Ulm became the first people to fly across the Pacific Ocean. Their journey in the *Southern Cross* began in Oakland, California, and ended 83 hours later in Brisbane, Queensland. A few months earlier another Australian, Bert Hinkler, had become the first person to fly solo from England to Australia, his frail Avro Avian biplane reaching Darwin in a record 16 days.

The 1920s also saw the start of general and domestic aviation in Australia. In the same year as Kingsford Smith's Pacific crossing, what would become the Royal Flying Doctor Service began in Cloncurry, Queensland, using aircraft owned by Queensland and Northern Territory Aerial Services. This company, better known as Qantas, was founded in November 1920 by two aviators, Hudson Fysh and P. J. McGuinness. Two years later Qantas began its first passenger service between Charleville and Cloncurry in a two-passenger Avro biplane.

Broughton Ward & Chaseling, Sydney, National Library of Australia

The *Southern Cross* arriving at the landing field at Mascot in Sydney on 10 June 1928. The day before, Kingsford Smith and Ulm had arrived in Brisbane at the end of their historic trans-Pacific flight of 11 500 kilometres from California to Australia.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?
   (a) soldier settlements
   (b) wowserism
   (c) temperance movements

2 Imagine you are a young person living in the 1920s. In those days, long before television and computers, many people wrote a great deal – more than they do today. Some, particularly young women, kept a diary. Complete your diary entry for 8 May 1927. Your diary entry should include reference to:
   - what life was like in 1927
   - how you travelled
   - how you filled in your day
   - what your home and parents were like
   - some significant recent event in Australian history.

3 John Flynn and Dame Nellie Melba were significant individuals of the 1920s who have been honoured by appearing on Australian banknotes. Using the Internet and at least one other resource for your research, select one of these individuals and the banknote that bears their likeness and:
   (a) identify the sets of images on the note
   (b) explain, in an extended paragraph, what these images represent and why they are appropriate for the person on the banknote.

4 A great deal of Australia's early recorded sound and film has been preserved in places such as the National Film and Sound Archive and the National Library in Canberra. Prepare a multimedia presentation of images that reflect the early years of sound and film. You should include examples of film posters, early movie stars, picture theatres in the cities and in the country, and possibly even sound recordings of the time.

National Film and Sound Archive

National Library of Australia

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WHAT WERE THE IMPORTANT POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS OF THE 1920s?

8.2

The 1920s saw the emergence of a new political party. Farmers felt that the interests of rural Australia were not being heard in government and that they needed a voice in the nation's affairs. In the election of December 1919, representatives of the Farmers' Associations won seats in the House of Representatives and a month later they formed themselves into the Country Party. Their leader from 1921 was Earle Christmas Grafton Page, a doctor-turned-politician from Grafton in New South Wales. The Country Party was conservative, representing farmers and graziers and pledging to promote and protect the interests of rural Australia.

The fall of Billy Hughes

Prime Minister Billy Hughes had a particular dislike of the Country Party. He called the members 'hayseeds' and dismissed them and the country people they represented as irrelevant to the government of the nation. In the federal election of 1922 Hughes' Nationalist Party lost its majority in the parliament and Earle Page made it clear that the Country Party was not prepared to form a coalition while the Nationalists kept Hughes as their leader. Pressure from within his own party forced Hughes to resign as prime minister in February 1923.

The Bruce–Page government, 1923–29

Hughes' successor as leader of the Nationalist Party was Stanley Melbourne Bruce. The new prime minister was able to form a coalition with the Country Party, and Earle Page became deputy prime minister. This was a new development in Australian politics: a coalition of non-Labor parties to keep the Labor Party out of office. After the 1922 election, the Country Party gained the balance of power in Parliament. Since that time, these two conservative parties (now called the Liberal Party and the National Party) have continued in coalition.

Men, money and markets

The Bruce–Page government, as it preferred to be called, stayed in power for most of the 1920s, until the start of the Great Depression in 1929. This conservative government gave Australia steady if unimaginative government. It had no great program for social reform. Its major focus was in building up Australia's economy.

The Bruce–Page government believed that, to generate economic growth and prosperity, three essentials were needed:

- Australia needed to increase the size of its workforce both in the cities and on the land.
- Australia needed to borrow money (capital) from overseas to finance development, industry and public works.
- Australia needed good markets overseas to sell the produce the nation produced.

In a speech in 1925, Prime Minister Stanley Bruce summed up the nation's need in a simple, yet effective, line: Australia needed 'men, money and markets'. If the nation was to enjoy the promised prosperity, there was a real need to increase the size of the Australian workforce.

State Library of NSW [hood_03630]

Prime Minister Stanley Melbourne Bruce

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Fairfax Syndication/SMH

Wool bales are loaded on a ship in Sydney bound for the British market in 1925. Wool was Australia's major export earner during this time.

In 1920 Australia had a population of only 5.5 million. The government began a vigorous policy to attract immigrants to the country. However, the government was equally determined to keep Australia's population white, and so it was to Britain that Australia looked for its immigrants in the 1920s.

Britain, suffering from social and economic problems after World War I, supported the resettlement of those who wished to start a new life in distant Australia. The British government joined with Australian governments to provide money to assist the immigration program. Between 1921 and 1929, 260 000 British immigrants arrived in Australia, and over two-thirds of them were assisted.

The growth of the Australian economy in the 1920s also depended on our ability to borrow money. Australia was an attractive place for foreign investment, and between 1919 and 1929 the Commonwealth and the states borrowed over $550 million, most of it from Britain. This money was put into long-term development projects: railways, roads, irrigation schemes and even the construction of a new national capital in Canberra. Loans, however, had to be repaid, and the increasing debt that Australia ran up in the 1920s had long-term consequences in the years to come.

National Archives Australia [A434 1949/3/21685]

An immigration poster of the 1920s

FROM THE SOURCE

1 You would expect to see posters of this type:
   - A throughout parts of Britain
   - B throughout the entire British Empire
   - C throughout the capital cities of Australia
   - D throughout all the Australian states

2 Explain why the poster asks for 'British men and women'.

3 Prepare an application for yourself and your family in which you explain why the poster convinced you to migrate and what you expect to find in the Australia of the 1920s.

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Australia's ability to find export markets for its primary produce, especially wool and wheat, was another important factor, for the sale of our produce on world markets was needed in order to meet our loan and interest repayments. Britain remained the major export market for our wool, wheat, sugar and meat, and prices for Australian produce on the world market had been good. Beginning in the mid-1920s, however, prices began to fall and it became increasingly difficult for Australia to sell its goods overseas. As a result, the Country Party demanded that **subsidies** be paid to Australian primary producers. Primary producers were allowed to charge higher prices for their products on the Australian market in order to make up for the lower prices they received on the world market. With higher prices for commodities such as sugar and butter, the cost of living for the average Australian increased.

Industrial unrest and the formation of the ACTU

The decade of the 1920s was a time of increased industrial unrest. The major cause of the discontent was the demand for higher wages as prices and the cost of living increased. During the war wages had fallen well below the cost of living. An inquiry into the wage level of workers in 1919 found that the basic wage should be 5 pounds 5 shillings and 6 pence per week. In fact, the basic wage at the time was only 4 pounds 5 shillings and 3 pence per week. Throughout the decade, real wages failed to keep pace with the cost of living.

FROM THE SOURCE

State Library of Victoria [H2003.90/364]

A Labor Party poster for the 1925 elections

1 **Identify the person doing the painting. What position did he hold in 1925?**

2 **What evidence is there that this poster was an election poster?**

3 **Explain the meaning of the word 'red' in this poster.**

4 **Who is the intended audience for this poster?**

- **A the Australian government**
- **B Australian workers**
- **C Australian families**
- **D wealthy Australian people afraid of revolution**

5 **Which of the following statements best describes the intention of the poster?**

- **A Australian workers support the idea of revolution.**
- **B Revolutionaries are seeking to overthrow the government with violence.**
- **C Australian workers enjoy a good quality of life with home and family.**
- **D Opponents of Labor suggest workers were revolutionaries.**

Despite his ability as a national leader, the prime minister, Stanley Bruce, had a poor understanding of industrial relations, and his background and experience made him incapable of understanding the life and struggle of working-class people. The conservative Bruce–Page government adopted a hard line towards industrial unrest.

As workers failed to win improvements from a conservative, inflexible government that displayed little interest in their demands, the result was a series of major industrial strikes that became a feature of the period.

The government responded with new laws to restrict trade union activity and strikes. The unrest widened the divisions in Australian society and increased class differences. In this difficult industrial situation of the late 1920s, trade union membership increased. In 1920, 600 000 Australians were members of a trade union. By 1929 the number had increased to more than 900 000. The unions aimed to protect workers' rights, to ensure fair work practices and a reasonable wage.

In May 1927 representatives of 108 unions met at the Melbourne Trades Hall to form the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU). This was to be an organisation to represent all unions and to fight for the goals of its members, including better working conditions and fair and reasonable wages. The ACTU came into being at a time of intense industrial unrest as the Australian economy began to decline and wages began to fall. The Australian nation, and in particular the Australian worker, was about to face another great challenge of nationhood with the onset of the Great Depression.

Creating Canberra, a new national capital

100 Canberra

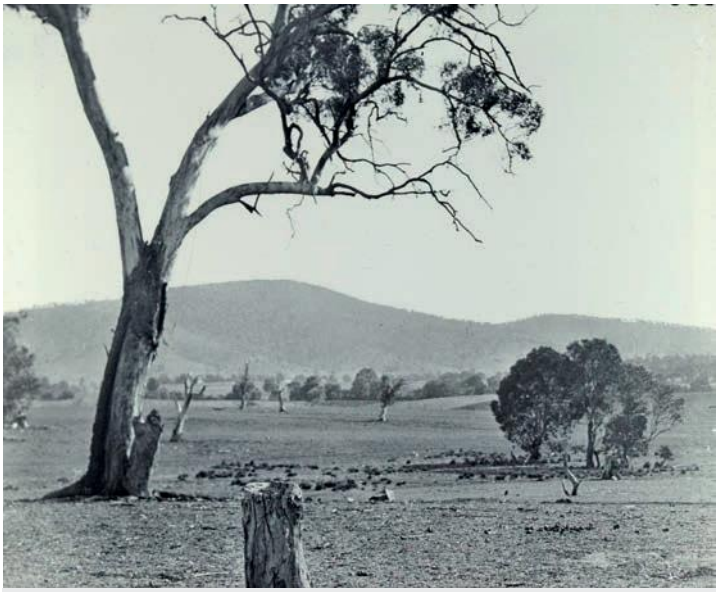
One important task for the federal government in the years after federation was to select the site for the future national capital. Section 125 of the constitution required the new capital to be at least 100 miles from Sydney and, fearing the possibility of a naval attack at some time in the future, the politicians agreed that it would be well inland. In August 1908, a 2368-square-kilometre site in the Molonglo River valley of New South Wales was finally selected. There was more debate over what to call the new capital, but the issue was finally settled in March 1913 when Canberra, an Aboriginal word for 'meeting place', was announced as the name of the Australia's new capital city. It was not until 1927 that the federal parliament finally moved to Canberra. Until then, parliament met in Melbourne.

ISBN 9780170347266

Other names that were suggested for the national capital

- Shakespeare
- Australoo
- Myola
- Melba
- Pacifica
- Kangemu
- Federalia
- Australamooloo
- Wattle City
- Radiance
- Sydmeladlperbriho

The design for Canberra



State Library of Victoria [0_390061]

The Molonglo valley of New South Wales, the future site for the city of Canberra

Canberra is one of the few cities that was planned from the very start. In May 1911 the government announced an international competition for the design of the new city. Since it was very difficult for people to visit the site, entrants were sent details of the topography and layout and were asked to plan their city from this. Some 137 entries were received, mostly from people who had never seen the place. The winning design was from a young American architect, Walter Burley Griffin.

Griffin was a landscape architect and he was influenced by a movement in city design that began at the close of the 19th century. It was called the Garden City movement and it emerged as a reaction to the overcrowding and pollution of industrial cities. The concept was based on the idea of a new town, laid out as a city, with wide streets radiating out from a central point, sufficient unused green space, and areas for specialised activities such as residential housing, recreation, a civic centre, a cultural centre and administrative or government centres.

The outbreak of World War I slowed progress on the new city and, although Griffin was in charge of the planning, he was increasingly frustrated by the delays and the attempts of different government agencies to change his plan.

Parliament moves to Canberra

National Archives of Australia [A1200, L32618]

Walter Burley Griffin, the architect of the national capital, Canberra

Plans were put in place to build a temporary Parliament House that would function for 50 years. It was in fact destined to be used for the next 66 years, until the present Parliament House was opened in 1988.

The design, by a government architect, was for a building that would be functional rather than grand, and to save money it was built at the base of Camp Hill. Griffin had planned for a much grander structure to be built on top of Camp Hill, where indeed Parliament House sits today. Work began on the temporary Parliament House in 1923, and four years later, in May 1927, the opening ceremony was performed by the Duke of York (later King George VI).

As sheep grazed behind the new building, Dame Nellie Melba sang the national anthem *God Save the King* to a curious crowd of about 1000 who watched the historic occasion. Luncheon for the official party consisted of turtle soup, salmon and Canberra pudding while, outside, spectators ate meat pies and scones.

'Dame Nellie Melba singing, God Save the King. Prime Minister S.M. Bruce and Mrs Bruce to her left, 1927', National Library of Australia

The great Australian opera singer Dame Nellie Melba sings the national anthem at the opening of Parliament House in Canberra in May 1927.

'King Billy, i.e. Jimmy Clements in foreground of Parliament House, 1927', National Library of Australia

An Aboriginal man, Jimmy Clements, and his dogs display little interest in the ceremonial opening of the new Parliament House.

With limited accommodation, many of the guests spent the night in tents in the surrounding sheep paddocks. Others quickly departed for nearby Queanbeyan, across the border in New South Wales, because alcohol was banned in Canberra until 1928. At the opening of the parliament, the drink of the day was non-alcoholic fruit punch or ginger beer.

FROM THE SOURCE

Members of Parliament regarded themselves as enduring the hardship of pioneers, and found that three days a week was as much as they could stand, so railway services were improved to allow them to arrive at the latest hour and leave at the earliest moment consistent with their parliamentary duties ... It was Percy Deane (then Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department) who described the best view of Canberra as 'from the back of a departing train'.

F. Green, *Servant of the House*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1969, pp. 67 and 73

1 **What conclusion could a historian make about the early days of Canberra from reading this source?**

2 **Can you explain why Sydney or Melbourne was not used as the national capital rather than build a new city?**

3 **What reasons could you put forward to explain why it took so long for Canberra to develop into a major city?**

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Why did the government actively seek to increase the number of migrants from Britain in the 1920s?
2 What products for export were essential for the growth of the Australian economy during the 1920s?
3 What was the ACTU and in what year was it established?
4 Who followed William Morris Hughes as prime minister of Australia?
5 In what year did federal parliament finally move to Canberra?
6 Where did the Australian parliament meet before the move to Canberra?
7 Who was the architect who won the competition for the design of the new national capital?

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain the meaning of these terms.
   (a) Coalition government
   (b) men, money and markets
   (c) subsidies

2 Which person in this list is the odd one out and why?
   A Walter Burley Griffin
   B William Morris Hughes
   C Stanley Melbourne Bruce
   D Earle Christmas Grafton Page

3 Which of these historical events of the 1920s is the odd one out and why?
   A the opening of the new Parliament House in Canberra
   B the formation of the ACTU
   C the introduction of compulsory voting in federal elections

4 Imagine you have just witnessed the opening of the first parliament in Canberra in 1927. Write a letter to the editor of your newspaper in which you express your views about the location and/or the design for the new city of Canberra.

5 Canberra, as the new national capital after 1927, was intended to become the home of national institutions and organisations. Examine the degree to which this goal has been achieved.

   Prepare a list of as many national institutions and organisations as you can and then select *two* of these groups and explain their national role. Here are two to get started:
   - the National Library
   - the Australian National University.

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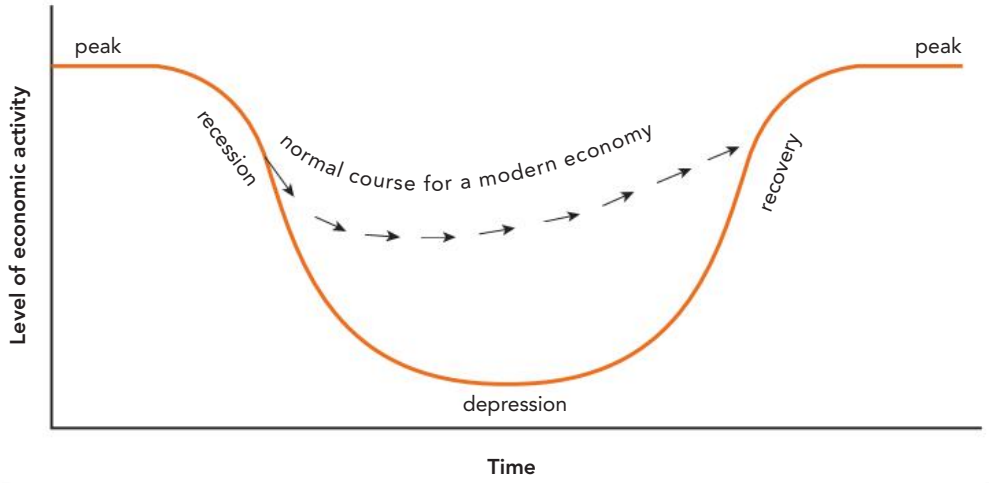
8.3 WHAT WAS THE GREAT DEPRESSION AND WHAT IMPACT DID IT HAVE ON AUSTRALIA?

The 1920s had not only seen changes to society; they were also a time when Australians enjoyed a good measure of economic prosperity. At the end of this decade came the Great Depression and the collapse of the world economy. Then began a long period of severe personal and economic hardship for people in many countries, including Australia. By the early 1930s the full impact of the Depression was felt in Australia, but the impact affected different groups in society in different ways. Some Australians faced severe difficulty as they lost their jobs and could not provide for their families. More fortunate people who kept their employment survived with less hardship, while those who had money and income actually prospered in these difficult days.

What is a depression?

One of the features of a capitalist economy such as Australia's is that the level of economic activity changes over time. Economists call this rising and falling of economic activity over a period of time the 'trade cycle'. When there is a strong demand for products, good investment opportunities, high profit levels and reasonably low unemployment, the economy grows. But there comes a time when these levels cannot be maintained and the level of economic growth begins to fall. This downward movement is known as a recession. Demand, profits and investments decline, and unemployment often rises. In time, the economic forces causing a recession are corrected and a new upturn begins. The economy moves out of recession and into a new period of growth.



The trade cycle

A depression, however, occurs when the economic downturn is sudden and widespread and there is no opportunity for the economy to correct the downward trend. A recession then quickly becomes a depression. In a depression there is a mood of widespread pessimism about the economy, industries and businesses fail, production levels drop, there is a severe cutback in investment, unemployment increases and trade declines.

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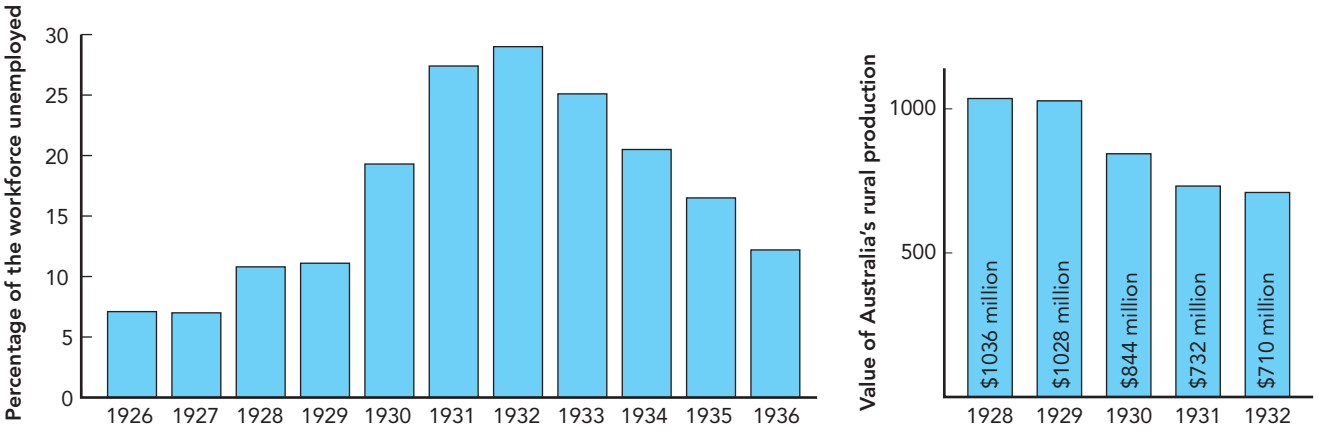
The Great Depression

The Great Depression began in 1929 when the economy of the United States began to collapse. In October 1929 panic and doubt hit the New York stock market. A wave of selling wiped billions of dollars off the value of Unites States companies. Many thousands of people lost all of their savings, unemployment began to climb, the banking system began to collapse and production continued to fall. As the United States slipped into depression, the British and European economies, which were very dependent on the United States economy, also fell into decline.

Causes of the Depression in Australia

- Australia's prosperity in the 1920s was based on its ability to borrow large sums of money from overseas, mostly from Britain. In 1928 alone, the year before the Great Depression, the government borrowed 52 million pounds.
- To meet this very large debt, Australia depended on the export of its primary produce, particularly wool and wheat. These two products accounted for 75 per cent of the nation's export earnings in the 1920s.
- When the Depression began, the flow of overseas money into Australia dried up, but the country still had to repay its debt. Worse still, it was difficult to meet these debt obligations because the prices for vital primary products fell dramatically on the world markets.
- The loss of overseas funds caused a rapid cutting back in public works, from five million pounds spent in 1929–30 to two million pounds in 1930–31. This, along with the sharp fall in the value of Australian wool and wheat, caused unemployment to rise.
- As unemployment increased, the demand for goods and services fell even more, which, in turn, caused more unemployment. By the end of 1929 almost 12 per cent of the work force was unemployed. By 1931 it was 27 per cent. A year later it reached a peak of 29 per cent. One family in four had no income.

FROM THE SOURCE



Unemployment in Australia, 1926–36 (as a percentage of the workforce; left), and right, the value of Australia's rural production, 1928–32 (in dollars)

ISBN 9780170347266

1 During which year did the unemployment level increase the most?
2 According to these unemployment figures, which were the worst years of the Depression?
3 What was the average unemployment figure for the period 1930–33?
4 How great was the drop in value of Australian rural produce from 1929 to 1932?
5 Explain why there was such a drop in value in Australia's rural products.
6 Explain why this drop would make the impact of the Depression even worse.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 In what year did the Great Depression begin?
2 What event in the United States began the Great Depression?
3 Why was the Australian economy already weak and vulnerable in the late 1920s?
4 What did the Australian economy depend on to generate income to meet the nation's debt?
5 How does increasing unemployment make the economic situation worse?

Experiences of the Depression: The unemployed

Sydney in the Depression

Australia during the Great Depression

The groups in Australia most affected by the Depression were people who lost their jobs and were unable to find employment. Unemployment was not just a problem for the working class, which suffered the most; it also hit farmers and people in the country, and middle-class people who ran small businesses or were involved with clerical work or the building trade. The groups least affected were professional people and most of the middle class.

It was unemployment and the inability of men to provide for their families that caused the greatest distress in the Depression years. Many of these men had survived the hardship of war, fighting for Britain on the other side of the world. Now they struggled to survive in their own country, shattered by their inability to provide for their wives and children. Thousands of Australian families faced the daily struggle of having little or no money coming into the household. In the middle of 1933, 12 per cent of men with families earned nothing at all, while another 17 per cent earned less than two pounds a week, which was well below the basic wage. The most visible indication of the hardship were the lines of the unemployed outside soup kitchens and in dole queues. The few jobs that were advertised attracted long queues of hopefuls.

The inability of men to find work had serious social effects. Families that could not pay their rent faced **eviction** from their homes. Their few possessions were often thrown onto the street. Others lost their homes and farms as they found they could not meet their loan repayments to the banks. These homeless and dispossessed people often moved to makeshift settlements in public parks or on the outskirts of towns. By 1933 there were over 40 000 people living in such shanty settlements. The best known was a settlement called Happy Valley, in the sandhills of La Perouse, to the south of Sydney. Here, overlooking Botany Bay, where Arthur Phillip arrived

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with his unfortunate convicts in 1788, equally unfortunate families lived in tents, disused car bodies, or shelters made of corrugated iron and rotting timber, with packing cases for furniture and flourbags for walls.

An estimated 30 000 people were 'on the road', wandering the countryside in search of work. In many cases men simply walked out on their families when the strain and responsibility of trying to provide became too great. Men on the road were forced to keep moving and to report to the local police station once a week to be eligible for 'track rations' of food. There was, in fact, very little work available in the countryside, but there was always food, particularly rabbit, or 'underground mutton', as it was called.

State Library of NSW [hood_00871]

A family, evicted from their home in Sydney during the Depression, with their possessions on the street. As unemployment climbed, eviction was a threat to many families if they could not pay their rent.

Uncertainty and insecurity were a feature of the Depression years, and those fortunate enough to have a job lived with the constant fear that it could disappear overnight. Many could not understand the reasons for the hardship or why hardworking, honest men could not find work. The strain was equally great for mothers providing as best they could for their children.

In winter many families could not afford any type of heating, or electricity for lighting or cooking. When a member of a family got sick, there was no money to pay a doctor or to buy medicines. Clothing had to be improvised from whatever was at hand, flower gardens quickly became vegetable patches, and most working-class families kept chickens and grew fruit trees in the backyard. Poor nutrition was always a problem, with the worst-affected families surviving on a lean diet based on vegetables, bread and **dripping**.

WS
Visual document study: Great Depression

FROM THE SOURCE

Life in Happy Valley, 1931

source A

They call it 'Happy Valley', that little collection of tents and huts erected at La Perouse [Sydney] by homeless men and women, and it does not belie its name. Waiting till the sun shines through the murk of the depression, 350 men, women and children have gathered in a community that for self-help and orderly conduct must stand alone. The persons are bound together by a common misfortune, and determined to make the best of things with a smile and a laugh; there is no bowing down before fate in spiritless resignation, but a wholehearted and concerted effort to see that the lot of none in the camp is harder than it should be.

The Governor and Lady Game visited Happy Valley yesterday and went away greatly impressed with its conduct and the type of men and women composing it. Lady Game said she had seen one little home in which she would not mind living herself.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 10 June 1931

source B

State Library of NSW [hood_06599]

Dispossessed people living in Happy Valley, at La Perouse, Sydney, in 1931

source C

Another account of life in Happy Valley, 1934

We've lived, 400 men, women and children, in our bag humpies in this flea-infested stretch of grubby sand hills … sheltered from the southerly busters [winds] that sweep across Botany Bay. Have a look inside the shacks that look so dilapidated from the road. Bags, these walls, flour bags bummed from the baker, cut open and re-sewn into squares to fit the white-anted, second-hand timber that forms the jerry built walls; painted with a mixture of lime and fat boiled up in salt water to make them weatherproof. The roofs are mostly made of scrap sheets of tin rescued from the garbage tip … the floors are wet sand, smoothed out and covered with more bags. Fleas? Millions of 'em!

Worker's Weekly, February 1934.

1 **Explain why these people were living in Happy Valley.**

2 **Can you offer any possible reason why it was given this name?**

3 **What features of life in Happy Valley impressed the writer of Source A, the article for *The Sydney Morning Herald*?**

4 **Using the photograph in Source B as your historical evidence, what additional information does it provide about life in Happy Valley?**

5 **Explain why the wife of the governor said she would be happy to live there.**

6 **Compare the two accounts of life in Happy Valley in Sources A and C. Explain why the accounts of life are so different from each other. Which do you believe may be the more accurate account?**

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At the start of the Depression the unemployed looked to charities for help, but as the number of unemployed grew the charities could not cope and the state governments had to introduce assistance schemes.

The main relief was in the form of sustenance, or **susso**, as it was called. To be eligible for susso, a man had to register and to prove that he had been unemployed for a period of time and that he had no means of support. The relief was provided, not in cash, but in basic food rations, usually potatoes and bread. No help was given for clothing or with the rent.

As the Depression worsened, most state governments provided some form of relief work for unemployed men on public works. However, there was never enough work for all the unemployed, and the men who gained some work digging canals, improving roads or laying tram tracks faced the added insult of being paid less than the basic wage. By 1932 over 60 000 people depended on sustenance to survive, and the children of the unemployed soon knew the popular rhyme of the day.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

State Library of NSW [hood_04368]

Children lining up for soup and bread at a New South Wales school during the Depression

Which of the following statements is not supported by the evidence in this picture?

A These children were not getting adequate food at home.

B Schoolchildren were given food at school during the day.

C The Great Depression affected young people as well as older people.

D The food consisted mainly of bread and soup.

source B

One man's experience

Out of bed but what to? The drab routine of cleaning the bread tin and making a cup of tea for 'her' lying in a troubled slumber, the effort to convince the kiddies that dripping [fat] is better for them than butter, the equally heroic effort to shave with a hopeless blade and jumping out of one's skin when the baker, not this time the landlord's agent, knocks at the door for payment of his account.

The routine continues in dread, anxiety, and tears. For there is yet the landlord's man – most fearsome of all – and one or two collectors whom it is becoming impossible to placate. Then there is the gas account which the wife weeps over, and the impending electric light bill. To stay at home seems effortless, to walk the streets without definite purpose is futile.

The Sydney Morning Herald, January 1931.

1 **Identify the particular hardships and worries of this unemployed man during the Depression.**

2 **Is there any evidence in this letter that this man was actively seeking work to provide for his family?**

source C

A novelist's account

It was like a great river flooding or changing its course, the way the depression came – the **insidious** creeping movement of dark, strong, unpredictable forces, the flow of hidden currents, a clod falling and dissolving, a slide of earth, the cave-in of an entire bank, a sudden **eddy** swirling around a snag, tilting it over, sweeping it off into the black oblivion.

Even when the disaster had spread everywhere and the destructive menace understood, something unfeasible remained. The work trains, to me, going to my job at the same hour on the same days, seemed just as crowded, the same people pushing at the ticket barriers with the same impatient roughness, the shops were as full as ever of their desperate **enticements**. It was out in the suburbs mostly that one gradually came to see it.

They brought in the dole, and then the dole became 'the sustenance', and around this time they unlocked the Defence Department warehouses and out of the mothballs they took the old surplus greatcoats and tunics and they dyed them a dull black – all that brave **khaki** of 1914–18 – and against the Melbourne winter issued them out as a charity to keep the workless warm. So as the unemployed grew in number the black army coats became a kind of badge of adversity, a **stigma** of suffering.

One would see the shabby figures shambling along the suburban streets, carrying a loaf of bread and in a cloth bicycle bag their **meagre** handout from the Sustenance Depot of tea and sugar and flour and potatoes, and a wisp of tobacco. Or there would be a queue of men the length of a block, most of them in ill-fitting, shameful black, in competition for half a dozen casual jobs.

In our suburb there was a constant, unnerving movement of these pathetic yet somehow oddly sinister figures in their black tunics and greatcoats. Sometimes they would come to the door asking for an hour's work to cut the hedge or mow the lawn or to stack firewood or even to run errands, or sometimes more bluntly just to ask for a handout of food or money.

George Johnson, *My Brother Jack*, Collins, Melbourne, 1966, p. 135

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Glossary

eddy	a small whirlpool of water
enticements	things that tempt people
insidious	something bad and developing in secret
khaki	the dull greenish-brown colour of army uniforms
meagre	few or small
stigma	a mark of disgrace

1 **Why do you think George Johnson used the image of the river to describe the coming of the Great Depression and its impact? Do you think it is a good image to describe the Depression?**

2 **Is there any evidence in this extract that the author was one of the unemployed?**

3 **Explain what is meant by the word 'sustenance'.**

4 **Why does George Johnson call the coats 'that brave khaki of 1914–18'? Why were the old khaki greatcoats distributed to the unemployed men?**

5 **Why was it easy to identify the unemployed men?**

6 **What were the common sights George Johnson saw in Melbourne during the Depression?**

A Letter to the Editor, 1934

source D

I keep house for my brother, a widower, who works on a farm and gets £2/2s [$4.20] a week wages. Meat and milk are supplied free, which is a great help, but I manage to keep the house going for the two of us and two small children, and even save out of his wages.

We rent a house which has the advantage of a large allotment a portion of which is an orchard. We are thus able to grow our own vegetables, including potatoes, and have pumpkins, marrows, jam melons and even rock melons growing among the fruit trees.

I make our preserves, jams and sauces. I also cook a lot of pastry and cakes as flour is cheaper than bread. I keep fowls; they cost nothing as they run wild and so may get pickings, and eat the table scraps. In the summer I am able to preserve sufficient eggs to supply me through the winter months when the fowls do not lay so well.

This is my weekly budget:

Rent	12s [$1.20]
Groceries	10s [$1.00]
Bread	ls/6d [15c]
Papers	4d [3c]
Total	£1/4s/2d [$2.40]

This leaves approximately 17s [$1.70] a week with which to provide fuel and kerosene for the lamps – one tin costing 8s/4d [83c] lasts us for seven weeks. I am also able, by doing the sewing myself, to keep the family decently dressed. And I still manage to save a little.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 15 February 1934

1 **After their expenses, approximately how much does this family of four save each week?**

2 **What is the largest payment this family makes every week? What might happen if they could not make this payment?**

3 **Explain why this particular family is fortunate that the man works on a farm.**

4 **What would happen if this man were to lose his job on the farm?**

5 **Explain how this woman provides food for the family.**

6 **How does this extract add to your knowledge of the particular problems many women faced during the Great Depression?**

In recent times the Australian historian David Potts has argued that, while the Depression inflicted suffering and hardship, many who did face adversity also found the ability to overcome it. Based on an analysis of thousands of oral histories from people who lived through the Great Depression, he concluded that there were also positive experiences. Some people claimed that they were actually happier during the Depression years than before. For many, the struggle gave their life meaning. There was greater community and social interaction as people helped each other, there was the psychological support that came with the knowledge that others were facing the same challenges, and there were closer family bonds.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Which groups in Australian society were most affected by the Great Depression?

2 Which groups in Australian society were the least affected?

3 What were some of the results of men being unable to provide for their families during the Great Depression?

4 What was susso?

5 What conditions were placed on men before they could receive susso?

6 Apart from governments, what was the other type of organisation that tried to help the unemployed?

Experiences of the Depression: The wealthy

Not every Australian suffered the severe hardship and distress associated with the Great Depression. People who had property, savings or a secure job were in fact wealthy by the standard of the day and were able to use the Depression to increase their wealth. During the Depression the value of property and land fell, and many people with ready cash made profits from the purchase of land and property at bargain prices during that time.

For these more fortunate Australians, life went on as usual. Entertainment venues, including dance ballrooms, were popular and newspapers at the time were full of social reports on parties, fashion parades and fetes. Holiday venues near the large cities, such as the Blue Mountains near Sydney, continued to provide for those Australians who had the money to enjoy leisured breaks, while others travelled overseas on the great ocean liners that made weekly departures from Australia. The journey to England by ship took more than a month. From 1934, wealthy Australians were able to fly to Britain with Qantas Empire Airways, a journey of about 13 days with overnight hotel stops along the way.

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FROM THE SOURCE

Extracts from a Sydney magazine, 1931

source A

Mrs Henry Osborne organised a very bright party last month, with the misleading name of *Depression Party*. As a mark of respect to the bad times, the guests provided the supper, the men making themselves responsible for the drinks and the girls for the food.

Mrs Eustace Molroyde of Darling Point is taking two of her daughters, Joane and Norah, abroad this month. They will leave by the German liner *Oder* and France will be their destination. They will probably spend a year in Paris for the girls to perfect their French.

The Home, 2 February 1931

source B

State Library of NSW [hood_06114h]

People at a social gathering during the Depression years. While many suffered hardship during the Depression, for many others life went on very much as usual.

A fete at Castle Hill

source C

In a beautiful setting of leafy trees and firm green lawns at *Ehwatan*, the home of Mr and Mrs R. C. Dixon of Castle Hill, the most successful fete for many seasons was held on Saturday. More than a thousand people defied the prophets' warning and motored out to Castle Hill. The Ryde Home for Incurables will benefit by the proceeds of the fete to the extent of £500 – a wonderful achievement.

Stalls loaded with goods of every description were soon emptied by generous purchasers and nearly every visitor carried a bulging bag around with her on a later tour of inspection of the flower gardens. Sir Philip and Lady Game received a hearty welcome on their arrival to perform the official opening at which Sir Philip Street presided.

Women's World, May 1932

1 **Imagine that you live among the homeless at Happy Valley and have just seen the item in *The Home* (Source A) about Mrs Henry Osborne's party, called a *Depression Party*. Write a letter, either to the magazine or to Mrs Henry Osborne, and express your thoughts.**

2 **How do these extracts and photo add to your knowledge of the way wealthy people lived during the Great Depression?**

3 **Imagine that you were a young person whose father was unemployed and you attended the fete at Castle Hill (Source C) with a friend. Recount your feelings in your diary or in a letter to your grandparents.**

Research task: Life during the Depression

Some Australians who were not affected by the Depression sought to help those who were. Organisations were formed to provide food, particularly at schools, for the children of the unemployed. Other people, worried at the plight of unemployed and unskilled young people who had been forced to leave school, sought to provide training and job opportunities.

Other Australians who were not affected by the Depression lived in a world remote from the experience of those who were suffering hardship. They avoided contact with homeless or unemployed people and expressed little understanding of the severe difficulties these people faced.

The government responds

The Labor government of James Scullin came to power in October 1929, just in time to face the full impact of the failing Australian economy. The problems facing the new government were many. Government revenue was falling, unemployment was rising, the value of Australia's exports had fallen and the government still had to find some way to meet the interest repayments on the overseas debt.

The Scullin government could not end the Depression, for it was a worldwide problem. All the government could do was try to reduce the impact of the Depression on the lives of ordinary Australians. In the face of hardships, the politicians spoke of the need to share the sacrifice.

Sir Otto Niemeyer arrives

In 1930 the Scullin government felt in need of help and invited Sir Otto Niemeyer, a director of the Bank of England, to come to Australia and advise on the best course of action to deal with the Depression. Many resented his arrival, seeing him as an outsider telling Australians what to do. His advice, when it came, was even less welcome.

Niemeyer believed that Australia had borrowed too heavily in earlier years and that the nation had been living beyond its means. The government would have to balance its budget and reduce its spending; wages and social welfare had to be cut; and the government would have to meet its debt obligations. He was urging the government to adopt a **deflationary policy**.

The most able member of the Scullin government was the treasurer, Edward Granville Theodore. He proposed that, instead of cutting spending, the government should follow an **inflationary policy** and increase spending to stimulate the economy. Theodore planned for the government to create credit and to put an additional $36 million into the economy, money that would be spent on public works and creating more employment. The plan failed when the Commonwealth Bank, which was then not subject to government control, refused to support the idea of putting more money into the economy.

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FROM THE SOURCE

1 Identify the man entering the room.

2 The students in this cartoon represent:

- A the Australian people
- B economists trying to solve the depression
- C members of the Scullin Labor government
- D people suffering from the Depression.

3 Explain the main point being made in this cartoon.

4 What advice did Sir Otto Niemeyer give to the Scullin government?

5 Explain why the Labor movement and the working class rejected Sir Otto Niemeyer's advice.

6 Suggest an alternative name for this cartoon.

National Library of Australia

'The inspector arrives', a cartoon from *The Bulletin*, 1 July 1930

The Premiers' Plan

In June 1931, at a meeting of state leaders, a compromise plan was finally agreed to. It was called the Premiers' Plan. The federal government and the state governments agreed to cut spending by 20 per cent, including cuts to wages and pensions. Taxes were to be increased to provide more money for the government. The plan was, in fact, very much the deflationary approach suggested by Niemeyer.

From 1932 there were gradual improvements in the Australian economy. Prices for wool and wheat began to recover and unemployment, which had stood at over 30 per cent in 1932, was down to 16 per cent by 1935. Australia's economy began to revive, not because of any policy of the Australian government, but because there were slow improvements in the global economy. The reality was that the Australian government, through uncertainty and inexperience, had been unable to cope with the impact of the Depression. When bold initiatives were needed, they were not found.

Jack Lang: The 'Big Fella'

One of the most important and controversial political figures of the 1930s was the Labor politician John Thomas Lang. Lang had been premier of New South Wales from 1925 to 1927 and his government had carried out significant social welfare reform.

In October 1930 Lang was once again elected premier of New South Wales and he had a very clear view as to what should be done to reduce the suffering of the Depression. Like all strong personalities, Lang was both admired and hated. To some he was the 'people's champion', the fighter who had known hard times and fought for the interests of the forgotten worker. With his

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State Library of NSW [hood_02777]

John Thomas Lang (1876–1975), the fiery premier of New South Wales, addressing a crowd of people in the Domain, Sydney, in 1932

towering presence and powerful voice, he was the 'Big Fella', who appeared to many as their saviour from the hard times. To other, more conservative Australians he was the wild man of Australian politics.

In February 1931 Jack Lang announced his own solution to the hardship of the Depression. He believed that, if the government were to cut spending, the hardship suffered by ordinary working-class Australians would increase. In what became known as the Lang Plan, he demanded that the federal government stop paying interest on the debt to the British and put the money back into the economy to help reduce unemployment.

The Lang Plan was far too radical for the cautious federal government and for the conservative bankers of the time. Lang was proposing an inflationary solution, putting money into the economy to get it moving. But Lang went one step further and wanted **repudiation**. To the banks and to the government, Lang's proposals were extreme and dishonourable.

The dismissal of Jack Lang

As premier of New South Wales, Lang ignored the proposals in the Premiers' Plan and implemented his own policies to deal with the Depression. He maintained the level of spending on public works, he refused to cut pensions or wages, and he refused to pay back the interest New South Wales owed on its debt to Britain. To Lang the issue was always the welfare of the working man.

The federal government was forced to intervene to pay the interest that New South Wales owed, and it then passed a special Act of parliament that gave Canberra the power to recover the money from the New South Wales Treasury. When in May 1932 Lang refused to allow Commonwealth officials access to the New South Wales Treasury, the Governor of New South Wales, Sir Philip Game, advised Lang that he had broken the law. When Lang refused to change his position, the governor intervened and dismissed Lang from office.

State Library of NSW [hood_02772]

Jack Lang walking through a huge crowd of supporters in Moore Park, Sydney, in May 1932, after he had been dismissed from office by the Governor of New South Wales.

In the state election that followed, Lang drew enormous crowds – up to 300 000 in a rally in Sydney's Domain. The slogan 'Lang is right' appeared everywhere, but it was not enough. Lang and his Labor Party were defeated and Lang himself was finished as a political force. Lang later sat in the federal parliament and retained an active interest in politics into advanced old age. He outlived all of his opponents and died in 1975 at the age of ninety-eight.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who became prime minister of Australia in October 1929?
2 Who was Sir Otto Niemeyer and what policy did he advise to deal with the Depression?
3 Explain the difference between a deflationary policy to deal with the Depression and an inflationary policy.
4 Why was John Thomas Lang such a controversial figure in the 1930s?
5 What did Lang intend to do as his response to the Depression?
6 What was the name of the plan finally adopted by the Australian government to deal with the Depression?

Life in the 1930s

Building the bridge

The New Guard

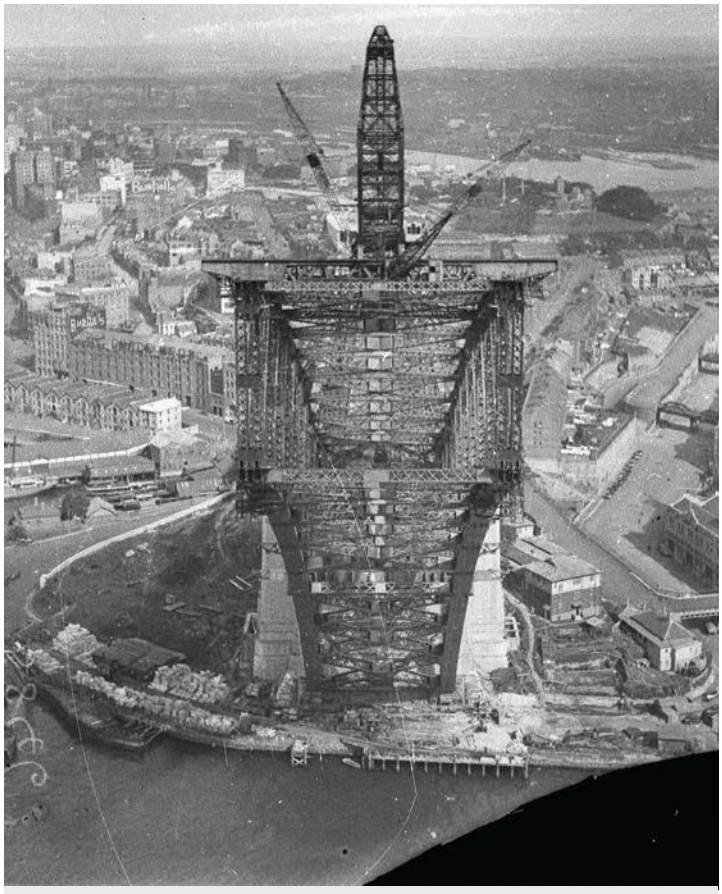
The 1930s were defined by two major world events. The decade began with the onset of the Great Depression in 1929 and ended ten years later in 1939 with the outbreak of World War II. Although all Australians were living under the shadow of the economic failure of the time, and many suffered particular hardship, this period was also defined by some real achievement and change.

The opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge

Work began on the Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1926. An English company won the contract and the total price for the bridge was 6.25 million pounds. It took six years to construct under the supervision of its chief engineer, Dr J. J. C. Bradfield. The bridge was designed as a suspension bridge with its great arch anchored deep in the rock on the shoreline. The arch, which spans 503 metres, carries the weight of the roadway below.

The four great pylons of the bridge, despite their appearance, do not support the bridge and were added at the end to give the bridge a more imposing look. The total steelwork in the bridge weighed 52 800 tonnes, and the road deck was 134 metres above the harbour. Work was completed in January 1932, and during its construction the bridge provided work for 1400 men. It was, at the time, one of the greatest engineering achievements in the world and quickly became a proud symbol of the nation and the city of Sydney. The bridge was opened in March 1932 and is still one of Australia's great landmarks.

Controversy surrounded the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge in March 1932. Traditionally the governor, as the representative of the King, would open the bridge, but the premier



State Library of NSW [hood_02964]

Progress on the construction of Sydney Harbour Bridge in 1930. Despite the Depression years the project continued.

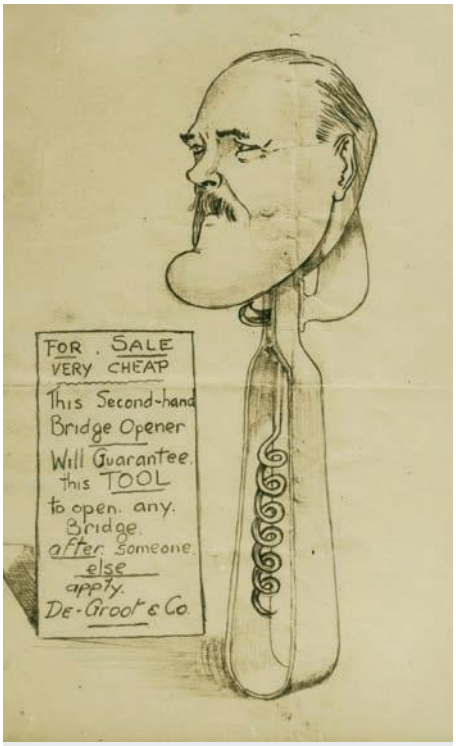
of New South Wales, Jack Lang, who had little regard for the British connection, announced that he would perform the ceremony. On the day of the opening the New Guard, the right-wing movement opposed to Lang and his policies, staged a dramatic protest. As Lang was about to cut the ribbon, a New Guard member, Captain Francis de Groot, charged forward on horseback and in military uniform, shouting 'I declare this bridge open in the name of the people of New South Wales'. After two attempts he slashed the ribbon. When he appeared in court, De Groot claimed it was disgraceful that Lang should open the bridge instead of the representative of the King. He was fined five pounds ($10) for damaging government property (the ribbon).

Fairfax Syndication/SMH

Captain Francis de Groot charges forward on horseback to slash the ribbon at the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Fairfax Syndication/Archives

With the ribbon quickly retied, premier Jack Lang opens the Sydney Harbour Bridge while New South Wales governor, Sir Philip Game, looks on.



Caroline Simpson Library & Research Collection, Sydney Living Museums

A cartoon postcard created after the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge

The day the bridge was opened

The day the bridge was opened, I went to see the show,
With forty politicians all sitting in a row. I gazed across the shoulder
of a drummer in the band, And saw old Jack Lang standing with the
scissors in his hand.

The band played 'Rule Britannia', 'Happy Days Are Here Again'.
We all joined in the chorus led by Sir Philip Game.
We gave three cheers for Aussie, Ned Kelly, and Old Nick,
And gave a hefty raspberry for Jock Gordon and his clique.

The ribbon stretched across the bridge was waiting to be cut.It wanted
just ten minutes before the time was up. Then came the gallant major, he
galloped to the scene, He raised his sword, with one big slash he cut the
ribbon clean.

McKay got very ferocious. He said: 'You bally hound',*
And grabbed him by the wishbone and threw him to the ground.
A fat dame in the grandstand said: 'Oh, you horrid brute', Up came
the Black Maria† and in went old de Groot.

Traditional

* McKay was the commissioner of police for New South Wales.

† The Black Maria was a police vehicle used for the transport of people under arrest.

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The end of the 1930s

As the 1930s came to a close and the probability of another world war increased, Australians managed one final celebration – the sesquicentennial, a celebration of 150 years since the arrival of white settlement in Australia. Although many Indigenous Australians were unhappy with the concept and staged an Aboriginal Day of Mourning on 26 January 1938, the celebration marked the close of a decade of advance in the face of adversity.

Some books banned in Australia during the 1930s

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*
Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*
James Joyce, *Ulysses*
Vladimir Lenin, *The State and Revolution*
Norman Lindsay, *Age of Consent*
D. H. Lawrence, *Lady Chatterley's Lover*
George Orwell, *Down and Out in Paris and London*
Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front*
George Scott, *Modern Birth Control Methods*

Australian society in the 1930s remained very conservative and was still linked by a powerful bond to the Mother Country. Britain remained the dominant social influence. While American influences were present, especially in film and entertainment, the dominance of the American influence on Australian society did not come until after World War II. While the 1930s are remembered as an era of caution with examples of heavy-handed government control and censorship, there were many significant achievements. Australia led the world in pioneering aviation. Domestic passenger air services began and, although it remained a very expensive form of travel, it was possible to travel by air between Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. For the few Australians who travelled overseas, the traditional form of travel was by sea, on board the great ocean liners that departed weekly for Britain. The journey took about six weeks and cost 43 pounds ($86) if travelling tourist class. From 1934 it was possible to fly to Britain with Qantas Empire Airways, a journey of about 13 days with overnight hotel stops on the way. In 1938 Qantas introduced great flying boats for the trip to Britain. Taking off from Rose Bay in Sydney Harbour, they made the journey in a mere nine days.

In the inland, the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which began in Queensland in 1928, expanded to all states and provided vital medical support to those in the outback. Advances were made in medical science, particularly in the treatment of polio, which was a common disease at the time. Life expectancy was on the rise so that a male born in 1940 could expect to live 64 years (up from 58 years in 1920) and a female could expect to live to 68 years (up from 63 years in 1920). Improved care, and especially the treatment of infections, saw infant mortality (the death of a child under the age of one year) drop by 50 per cent during the 1930s. The first medical warning about the link between sunburn and skin cancer was issued in the mid-1930s, though it was a warning that went generally unheeded until the 1970s.

Although cars were becoming more popular in the 1930s, they remained an expensive item for the average middle-class family in the Depression decade. Public transport still moved most Australians in the capital cities. Sydney and Melbourne electrified and expanded their suburban rail networks, and trams remained a feature of all Australian capital cities. Rail travel was the most popular form of transport between urban centres and there were significant improvements in both speed and comfort. In 1937 the first all-steel air-conditioned train, the *Spirit of Progress*, began service between Sydney and Melbourne.

1930s Australian film

Despite the economic hardships of the Depression years, Australians still enjoyed their leisure pursuits. For many in the 1930s a brief escape to a sporting event or the movies was the only release from hard times. Cinema and radio, the most popular forms of entertainment, flourished. Cinema attendances remained high throughout the Depression years and, for those

State Library of NSW [a865001]

Rush hour at Kings Cross, Sydney, 1938. Photo by Max Dupain.

Newspix/News Ltd

Phar Lap and his devoted strapper, Tommy Woodcock

families who could afford it, going to the movies was a weekly activity.

In the era before television, radio remained the most popular form of home entertainment. The Australian Broadcasting Commission was established in 1932, with national stations in all states. Movies reflected a growing Australian film industry at the time, and live theatre also flourished in the 1930s, despite the Depression. The first milk bars appeared, and in 1933 the first issue of *The Australian Women's Weekly* arrived on the news stands.

Sporting heroes

The 1930s produced many sporting heroes, but two in particular captured the attention of the nation. The first was Phar Lap, a New Zealand racehorse, the winner of the 1930 Melbourne Cup and at the time the most successful racehorse in the world. At a time when Australia was in the grip of the Depression, 70 000 people stood to cheer Phar Lap to victory in the 1930 Melbourne Cup. In 1931 he again ran in the Melbourne Cup. By now no horse could equal him and racing officials increased his handicap to give other horses a chance. In this Melbourne Cup Phar Lap carried a weight of 68 kilograms and, despite a gallant effort, he placed eighth. It was said that Phar Lap, like the country in the Great Depression, was carrying too much weight. In 1932 Phar Lap died while on a visit to the United States.

The news of Phar Lap's death shocked Australia. Newspapers and radios produced glowing tributes and flags were flown at half-mast. People expressed their emotion in letters, many addressed to Phar Lap's trainer. 'It rained for a whole week', wrote Mrs Copping from Hobart, 'and I feel quite sure the skies even wept for him.' Phar Lap had been a symbol of hope and courage in the dark days of the Great Depression. The average Australian, battling the hardships of unemployment and poverty, identified with Phar Lap, or 'Big Red', as he was affectionately called. To millions of Australians who followed his brief but spectacular career, he was a true champion of the people. After his death, the memory of Phar Lap was honoured. His hide was respectfully preserved in the Melbourne Museum and his heart was sent to the nation's capital. Befitting the champion that he was, Phar Lap's heart was found to be twice the normal size, which explained to many his enormous stamina and will to win.

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While Phar Lap's career was spectacular and brief, the second sporting hero of the 1930s, Don Bradman, had a career that was spectacular and long. He began his test cricket career when he joined the Australian team in 1928, and he went on to dominate the game for the next 20 years. Bradman's consistency and skill never failed him, and even in 1948, in his final test series before he retired, his batting average was 89.92. In his career Bradman played in 52 test matches for Australia between 1928 and 1948. He scored 6996 test runs, at an average of 99.94 per innings. In those figures were 29 test centuries and 12 test double-centuries or more.

But the importance of Bradman should not be measured in cricket statistics alone. He began his career in the hard days of the Depression, and for millions of Australians he became a focus for admiration and hope. As he battled the odds, he became 'our Don'. Not only was he the best in the world at what he did; he also gave enjoyment and pleasure to millions, even to people who did not know one end of a cricket pitch from the other. He became a hero of his time and maintained his link with the Australian people through his natural modesty and humility. His son, John Bradman, said of his father that 'he remained so astonishingly unimpressed with himself'. Almost alone among great Australians, in a country that can grow tired of people who achieve great success, the affection and respect of the Australian people for Don Bradman never waned throughout his entire life. Don Bradman stood apart.

State Library of NSW [hood_02355]

Bradman (left) and Stan McCabe take the field in Sydney, 1932.

Phar Lap

FROM THE SOURCE

Sir Donald Bradman was the greatest champion there has ever been in what countless millions throughout the world recognise as the greatest of all sports. For us he was much more than 'only a cricketer'. His underprivileged country background, his youthful vitality followed by his mature brilliance, leadership and judgement, his 'give it a go' determination, his uncompromising standards, his down-to-earth common sense, his unmistakably Australian accent combined with his prodigious ability to make him 'our Don Bradman'.

In the dark days of the Great Depression of the thirties he did much to help sustain national pride and hope … he became a national symbol for young and old alike … For it was his qualities as a man as much as his peerless cricketing skills and on-field sportsmanship and decency which made him an important part of our national identity and within his homeland the best and most admired Australian of our times.

Sir William Deane, Governor-General of Australia, speaking at a memorial service for Don Bradman, 25 March 2001

1 **What, according to this extract, were some of the personal qualities of Don Bradman?**

2 **How did many Australians see Don Bradman and his achievements during the hard days of the Great Depression?**

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HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Who am I?
- **(a)** I became prime minister just in time for the Depression.
- **(b)** I came from England with plenty of advice, some of it unpopular.
- **(c)** I arrived by horse but left in a police van.
- **(d)** I never expressed any doubt the two spans would join.
- **(e)** In November 1931 many thought I was carrying too much weight.
- **(f)** He may have been the 'Big Fella' but I had the final word.

2 Draw up three columns in your workbook under the headings 'Theodore Plan', 'Lang Plan' and 'Premiers' Plan'. In each column list the main features of the plan in dot points, then prepare an extended paragraph entitled 'Solving the Depression', in which you compare the features of each plan.

3 You are a reporter for the Sydney *Daily Mail* and your task is to report on the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. Prepare the front page of the paper, including the headline and photos. Your article should:
- recount the events of the day
- identify the individuals involved
- explain why there was a protest
- describe the activities of the day.

4 Consider the two images below, each of a mother and her child from the Great Depression. Imagine that you have been sent to interview these two women during the Depression years. Write a story for your newspaper in which you explain the different lifestyles and challenges these two women faced during the Great Depression.

State Library of NSW [hood_11937]

A woman and child evicted from their home at Hurstville, Sydney, during the Depression

State Library of NSW [a367006]

Mrs Charles Salon and her son on board the SS *Ventura* before departing for a holiday in Britain, 1931

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5 It is 14 May 1932 and Jack Lang has just arrived at the office of the New South Wales governor, Sir Philip Game. Prepare a brief script of what might have passed between these two men as the governor explains to Mr Lang why he is dismissing him as premier of New South Wales.

6 Using your knowledge of the Great Depression, write an essay in which you explain some of the hardships people had to endure during those years. Support your explanation by referring to:
- which people suffered the most and why
- the types of hardships they suffered
- how they sought to overcome these hardships
- what effect these hardships had on their daily lives.

7 Australians always need heroes. Select *one* such hero of the 1930s and prepare a multimedia presentation outlining their achievements and why they captured the imagination of the nation during the difficult years of the Great Depression. Bring you presentation to life with sound resources or the moving image.

Quiz

Crossword

Civics and citizenship

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CHAPTER 9

Australia and the Vietnam War era

IN THIS CHAPTER YOU WILL LEARN ABOUT

- how communism appeared to be a threat to Australia after World War II
- how Australia responded to this threat
- why there was a war in Vietnam, and how and why Australia became part of that war
- how the Vietnam War, unlike World War I and World War II, divided Australian society
- the effect of the Vietnam War on people, on Australian life and on Australia's relationship with modern Asia.

INQUIRY QUESTIONS

9.1 How did the Australian Government respond to the threat of communism after World War II?

9.2 Why did Australia become involved in the Vietnam War?

9.3 How did various groups respond to Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War?

9.4 What was the impact of the war on Australia and neighbouring countries?

In 1945, after the allied powers had defeated Nazi Germany in Europe and Japan in Asia, a new fear emerged in Europe and Asia – the fear of the expansion of **communism**. By 1949 the Soviet Union had set up communist governments in most eastern European states, and the parts of Germany liberated by the Russians also came under communist control. In Asia a communist government came to power in North Korea, and in 1949 Mao Zedong led the Communist Party to victory in China. Most of the second half of the 20th century was dominated by what history has called the **Cold War**, a period of intense suspicion and distrust between the democratic nations of the world, led by the United States, and the communist world, led by the Soviet Union and China.

The Cold War lasted until the early 1990s and ended when both the Soviet Union and the communist system in eastern Europe simply collapsed. In the end there was no great world conflict between the superpowers, but there were continuing conflicts and smaller wars on many fronts. The Vietnam War, which became in fact the longest war of the 20th century, is one such example.

Helicopters land to take Australian troops back to their base camp at Nui Dat after completion of a military operation in August 1967.

The adventurous Australian has been obliged to look elsewhere for the great adventures … that is why his wars must be fought for other causes than his own and always in a faraway place.

George Johnson, *My Brother Jack*, Collins, London, 1967

Australian War Memorial [EKN/67/0130/VN]

Timeline, 1949–75

1949

- **October** Mao Zedong led the Communist Party to power in China.
- **December** Robert Menzies led the Liberal–Country Party coalition to government.

1950

- **April** The Communist Party Dissolution Bill was introduced into parliament.
- **June** The outbreak of the Korean War.
- **July** Australian troops joined the United Nations forces in Korea.

1951

- **March** The High Court declared the Communist Party Dissolution Bill unconstitutional.
- **September** Australia, New Zealand and the United States signed the ANZUS Pact.

1953

- **July** The end of the Korean War.

1954

- **February** The Petrov spy scandal.
- **May** The Battle of Dien Bien Phu. The fall of French power in Indochina.
- **September** The formation of the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO).

1955

- **April** Australia committed troops to Malaya.

1957

- **August** Malaya gained its independence from Britain.

1962

- **July** Australia sent 30 military instructors to South Vietnam.

Glossary

Asian nationalism The desire of Asian people to be free of their colonial masters and to establish their own independent nations.

battalion A military unit of the Australian Army. A battalion can vary in size from about 800 to 1500 or more.

Cold War A period from 1945 to 1991 during which there was great hostility and tension between the United States of America and the Soviet Union. It was a period of global rivalry between the communist world and the non-communist world, and was made more dangerous by the production of nuclear weapons.

colony A territory or region ruled by another nation. The region of Indochina, for example, was once a colony of France.

communism A system of rule in which the state controls most of the wealth of the nation and where the ownership of private property can be limited. In a communist state there is only one political party, which restricts the freedoms and rights of the individual. China became a communist state in 1949 after the Chinese Communist Party came to power.

forward defence The policy, followed by the Menzies government in the 1950s and 1960s, that Australia should

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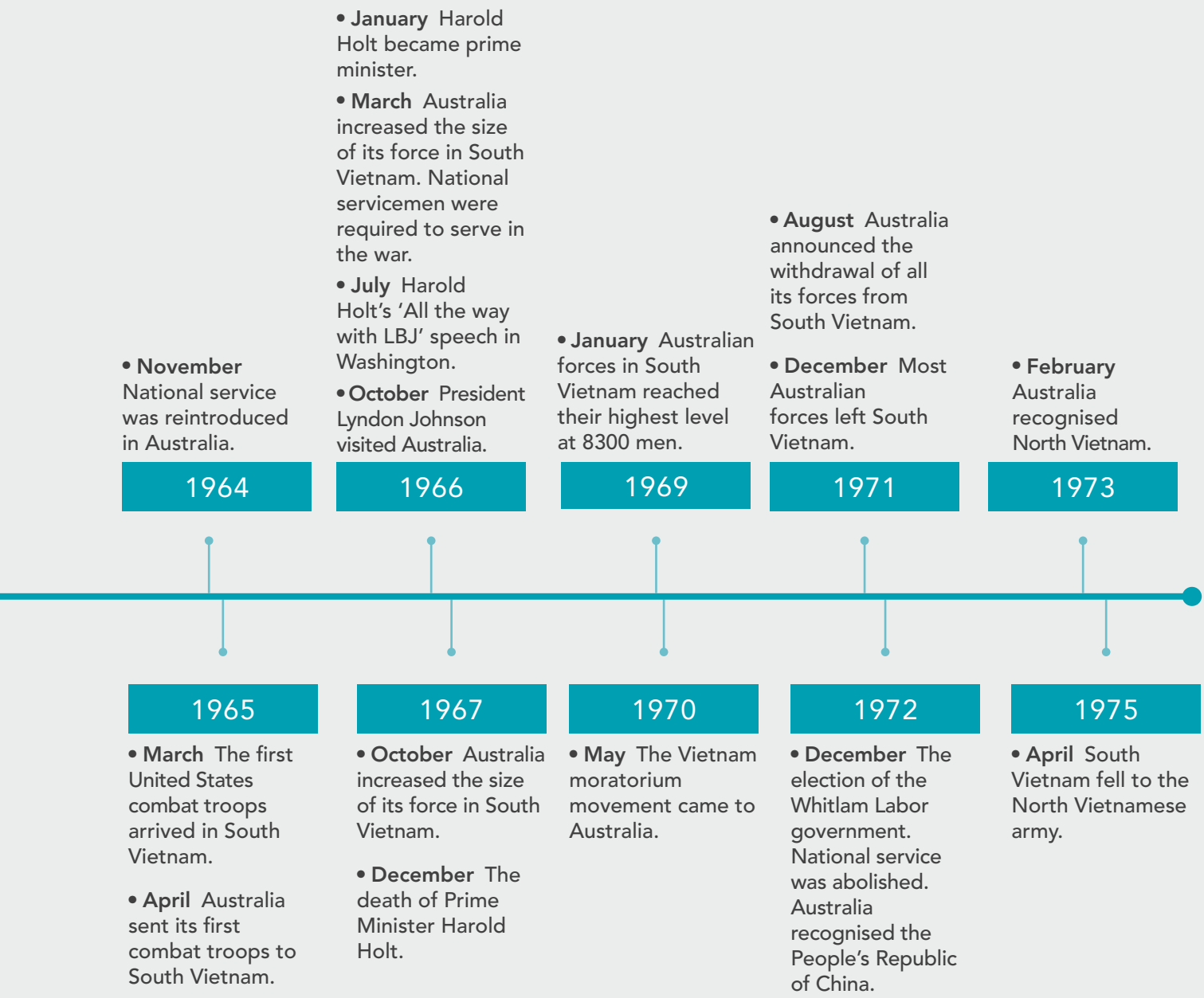

have the capacity to defend its vital interests by taking action away from the Australian mainland.

guerilla warfare The type of fighting or warfare in which small military groups (guerillas) avoid major battles but operate instead with surprise attacks and ambushes. Much of the fighting in the Vietnam War was guerilla warfare.

moratorium The suspension or deferral of something. The moratorium protests in Australia in the 1970s were aimed at ending Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

national servicemen Young men who were conscripted into the army. They were often called 'nashos'.

political asylum The process by which a government grants protection and support for people from another country who, for political reasons, do not wish to return to their own country.

post-traumatic stress disorder A medical condition that affected many soldiers who fought in the Vietnam War and that causes withdrawal, depression, flashbacks and sensitivity to loud noises.

Reds Another name for communists.

royal commission An inquiry set up by the government to investigate a particular issue or problem. A royal commission has authority similar to that of a court of law.

totalitarian A system of government in which total power is in the hands of one political party, which tolerates no opposition.

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9.1 HOW DID THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPOND TO THE THREAT OF COMMUNISM AFTER WORLD WAR II?

The coming of the Cold War

At the end of World War II in 1945, the United States and the Soviet Union emerged as the world's superpowers. During World War II the United States and the Soviet Union, with their allies, had worked together to defeat Nazi Germany and Japan. Once the common enemy had been defeated, however, the differences between these two great powers became apparent. They were very different. The United States was the world's greatest capitalist democracy. This was a system that promoted the belief in the private ownership of property and where the basic rights of the individual were protected in free, regular elections. In democratic countries the people had the right to elect and change their government.

The Soviet Union was a communist **totalitarian** state with an economic system in which the state controlled most of the wealth of the nation and where the ownership of private property was limited. In a communist state there is only one political party, which restricts the freedom and rights of the individual. The first communist state was set up in Russia in 1917 after the Russian Revolution. During the 1920s Russia was renamed the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), or the Soviet Union.

In the closing years of World War II, as the armies of the Soviet Union advanced across much of eastern Europe and finally into Germany itself, many eastern European countries that had been occupied by the Nazis fell under the control of the Soviet Union. The armies of the United States, Britain and their allies advanced into Europe from the west and liberated the western parts of Europe.

At the end of the war Soviet forces stayed in most of the areas they had taken, and by 1949 the Soviet Union had set up communist governments in these eastern European states. In these states any expressions of democracy ceased to exist. Winston Churchill, the wartime prime minister of Britain, spoke of an 'iron curtain' across Europe. 'Whatever conclusions may be drawn from these facts', Churchill said,'… this is certainly not the liberated Europe we fought to build up'.

The United States could not allow the rest of Europe to fall under communist control. The threat of communism had to be confronted and the United States was the only nation with the power to do it.

The end of World War II, the 'hot war', marked the start of the Cold War. The Soviet Union and the states under its control were known as the Eastern bloc, while the United States and its allies were usually referred to as the Western bloc. This was a time of great tension, rivalry and distrust between the United States and the Soviet Union, which would last until the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989.

Mike Coleridge

In Asia, too, communism appeared to be on the march. A communist government came to power in North Korea, and there were communist movements in other Asian states, such as Indochina (Vietnam) and Malaya. In 1949 China, the largest nation on earth, fell to the communists when Mao Zedong led the Chinese Communist Party to victory in that country. The communists were often called the **Reds**, after the red flag that was the colour of revolution. People spoke of 'Red China' and of the 'red menace' that was expanding. In 1945 there was one communist nation in the world; by the end of 1949 there were 12. The age of the Cold War had begun.

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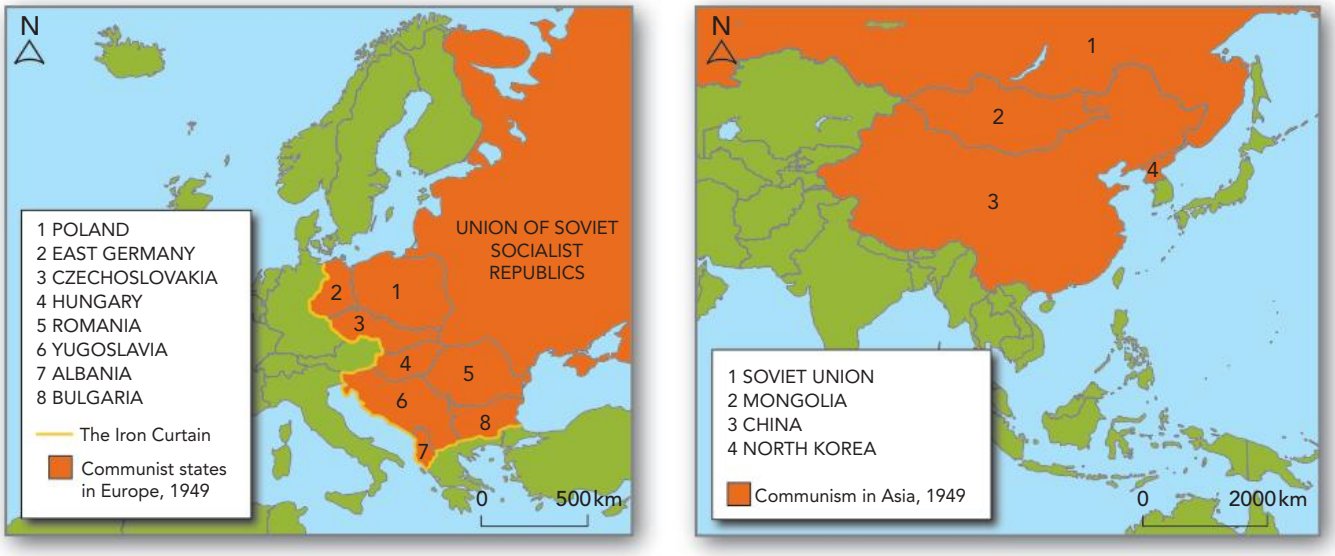

The spread of communism in Europe and Asia by 1949

Australia and the fear of communism

In 1949, the same year that Mao Zedong led the communists to power in China, Robert Menzies became prime minister of Australia when he led the newly formed Liberal Party to office in the election of that year. As a loyal ally of both the United States and Britain, Australia was part of the Cold War rivalry, and the fear of communism was a constant issue in Australian life through the 1950s and 1960s. It was believed that, if communism were to spread in Asia, Australia and its security would be threatened.

Australia's foreign policy from 1949 was based on four important beliefs:

- that communism, particularly in Asia, was a threat to Australia
- that, given the experience of World War II, Australia could never adequately defend itself. It had to look to what Prime Minister Menzies called 'our great and powerful friends' for support. The Australian government after 1949 sought to strengthen Australia's relationships with Britain and, in particular, with the United States
- that Australia had to prove its loyalty as an ally. In 1950 Australia became the first nation to support the United States in the Korean War against communism. In the 1950s Australia supported the British in Malaya as they fought communist activity there, and in the 1960s Australia actively supported the United States against communism in the Vietnam War
- that it was in Australia's best interest to meet any threats to Australia as far away from the mainland as possible. This was known as **forward defence** – a policy that would see Australia set up military bases outside Australia and send Australian troops to Korea, Malaya and, finally, Vietnam to fight the menace of Asian communism.

Getty Images/AFP

Mao Zedong (1893–1976). He led the communists to power in China in 1949 and remained the supreme ruler of his country until his death in 1976.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Copyright: HC & A Glad

A Norman Lindsay cartoon, 'Nearer, clearer, deadlier ...', from *The Bulletin*, 1950

1 Who is the figure in the cartoon (Source A) intended to represent?

2 Explain the title of this cartoon: 'Nearer, clearer, deadlier ...'

3 Find out what the symbol on the shield is intended to mean.

4 What region of the world is this cartoon intended to represent? Explain why you came to this conclusion.

5 What point of view is the cartoonist representing by drawing this cartoon?

6 The emotion or feeling the cartoonist is seeking to create is one of:

- **A** anger
- **B** fear
- **C** isolation
- **D** uncertainty.

source B

The Minister for External Affairs defines Australian foreign policy, 1950

Our first and constant interest must be the security of our own homeland and the maintenance of peace in the area in which our country is geographically placed. Up to the present the main focus of the conflict between democracy and communism has been Europe. But a situation not different from that in Europe is now developing throughout Asia and the Pacific. The dominating fact is that China, with the largest population of any country in the world, has come in recent months almost completely under the control of a government which is communist in form. Should the forces of communism prevail and Vietnam come under the heel of Communist China, Malaya is in danger of being outflanked and it, together with Thailand, Burma and Indonesia, will become the next direct object of further communist activities ...

I have emphasised how essential it is for Australia to maintain the closest links with the United States of America for vital security reasons.

Percy Spender, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 1950, vol. HR206, p. 623

7 What, according to Source B, is the aim of Australia's foreign policy?

8 Describe how the Minister for External Affairs, Percy Spender, explains the potential danger to Australia.

9 Why should Spender's views appear realistic to people in the 1950s?

10 As a journalist watching Percy Spender make his speech to parliament in 1950, write an article for your newspaper. You should use your computer and the appropriate software to

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create a newspaper page, complete with headlines and images. In your article you should also include:

- **the main points made by the Minister for External Affairs**
- **how the points he made fit in with your overall understanding of Australian foreign policy at the time**
- **your own viewpoint about what Mr Spender had to say.**

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Explain the difference between a 'hot' war and the concept of a Cold War.
2 Explain why the Cold War began after 1945.
3 What happened in Asia in 1949 which increased Australia's fear of communism?
4 Who became prime minister of Australia in 1949?
5 What position did Percy Spender hold in the government in 1950?

Australia and the Korean War

The Korean War

In June 1950 war broke out in Korea when the army of communist North Korea invaded non-communist South Korea. President Truman of the United States saw the invasion as a clear example of communist aggression and, with the backing of the United States, the United Nations sent an international force to support South Korea. Sixteen United Nations members sent troops, but the bulk of the force was from the United States. Australia was the first nation to support the United Nations' call and immediately dispatched one aircraft carrier, two destroyers and a squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF).

In July 1950 Australia announced that troops would be sent as well, and there was a call for volunteers to join the United Nations army under General Douglas MacArthur. Two Australian **battalions** arrived in Korea, and Australian troops took part in heavy fighting, which was made more difficult by the extreme cold of the Korean winter. The war ended in a ceasefire in 1953 with the loss of some 118 000 United Nations troops. Three hundred Australians had been killed in the war. Today Korea remains a divided country: the communists are still in power in North Korea.

The Korean War seemed to justify all the beliefs of the Australian government about aggressive communism in Asia. Australia had opposed communism, and Australia had gone into Korea to prove its support as a loyal ally of the United States and to strengthen the bonds between the two nations. It was an example of 'forward defence' and proof that Australia was prepared to fight to oppose the spread of communism.

The ANZUS Treaty and SEATO

An important part of the thinking of the Menzies government of the 1950s was to create a closer link between Australia and the United States.

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In September 1951, with the Korean War still raging, Australia, New Zealand and the United States signed the ANZUS Treaty. It suited Australia to have this treaty with the United States, while the United States saw Australia as another ally in its worldwide struggle against communism. Although the ANZUS Treaty does not say that the United States must come to Australia's aid if it is attacked, it is generally understood that the ANZUS Treaty binds each of the three powers by a sense of obligation to assist each other in the event of an attack.

Korea was not the only trouble spot in Asia. The French were fighting against the communists in their **colony** of Indochina. Here the communists, led by Ho Chi Minh, were fighting for independence from French rule. In 1954 the French were defeated by the communists in the Battle of Dien Bien Phu and France decided to leave Indochina altogether. Against this background, the United States proposed the formation of the South-East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), an alliance of powers opposed to communist activity in South-East Asia. The organisation was set up in September 1954, and its members included the United States, Britain, France, Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Pakistan and the Philippines. Australia was prepared to join SEATO because again it linked Australia to allies, particularly the United States and Britain, in South-East Asia.

The Domino Theory

Domino Theory

There was a widely held belief in the 1950s and 1960s, particularly in the United States and Australia, that, if communism was not stopped, it would spread throughout the rest of South-East Asia. This belief was called the Domino Theory: if one Asian state fell to communism then, like falling dominoes, all of Asia would soon fall to communism. The belief in the Domino Theory influenced Australia's actions in South-East Asia in the 1950s and, in particular, the decision to send Australian troops to the Vietnam War in the 1960s.

South-East Asia in the 1960s

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FROM THE SOURCE

Mr Menzies speaking in parliament, 1955

We are proud to be a member of the British Commonwealth and will ever continue to be so. But we would be strangely blind if we did not see that, on the world scene, the rise of the United States to supremacy … such that she has become vital to the existence of the free world …

We either commit ourselves with our great friends and allies or we do not. If we do not then we must attend to our own defence without calling on the aid of anybody else.

If communist forces again come on the march and a great war ensues, the farther north the lines of defence are drawn the better for those communities in Vietnam and Laos and Cambodia and Thailand and Burma and Malaya and the Philippines and Indonesia and all the rest of us … If there is a war for our existence, it should be carried out as far from our soil as possible.

Australia, House of Representatives, *Debates*, 1955, vol. HR6, p. 45

1 **To which two great powers does Menzies refer in his speech?**

2 **Explain the meaning of the term 'free world'.**

3 **Explain why Menzies felt that Australia needed to support these 'great friends and allies'.**

4 **Is there any evidence in this speech that Menzies believed in the idea of forward defence?**

The Malayan Emergency

Another part of Asia facing a communist threat was Malaya (today, the independent country of Malaysia). After World War II the British re-established their authority in Malaya, but a communist movement had begun to operate in the Malay jungles in 1948. By 1950 the situation had become known as the Malayan Emergency and an increased number of British troops were sent to oppose the communists. In 1955 the Menzies government decided to send Australian ground troops as well as naval and air power to assist the British fighting in Malaya. Australian troops remained in Malaya until the communist threat was defeated in 1960.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Why did war beak out in Korea in 1950?

2 Did the ANZUS Treaty give Australia United States military protection in the event of a war?

3 Name the European power defeated in Indochina in 1954.

4 Rewrite these events in their correct order:

- the formation of SEATO
- the communists came to power in China
- the end of the Korean War
- the Malayan Emergency

5 In a brief paragraph explain why Australia became involved in military action in Korea and Malaya in the 1950s.

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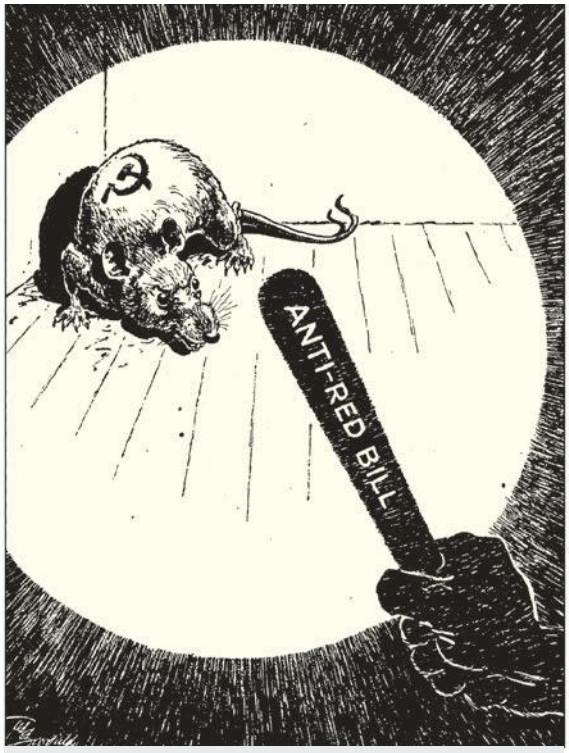
Banning the Australian Communist Party

Communism in Asia was not the only threat to Australia. There was also the issue of the communists within Australia. The Australian Communist Party had been formed in 1920, but until World War II it had a very small membership and limited influence in the trade unions.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

'Cornered'

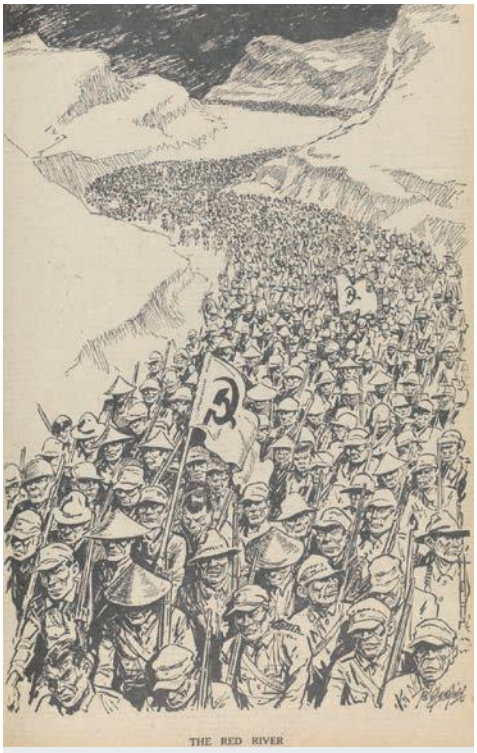


'Cornered', by Scorfield (Edward/Ted), The Bulletin, 1950, National Library of Australia

Cartoon from *The Bulletin*, 1950

source B

'The Red River'



'The Red River', by Schofield, The Bulletin, 16 June 1954, National Library of Australia

Cartoon from *The Bulletin*, June 1954

1 The purpose of the cartoon in Source A was to show that:

- **A** communism was a threat to Australia
- **B** communists were like rats
- **C** communism was spreading in Australia
- **D** the government intended to destroy communism in Australia by the new law.

2 What method does the artist use to convey this understanding?

3 Why is the cartoon in Source B entitled 'The Red River'?

4 Explain why Prime Minister Menzies would have agreed or disagreed with this cartoon.

5 The cartoon suggests that:

- **A** the communists in Asia were on the move
- **B** the communists in Asia were very determined
- **C** the communists in Asia could not be stopped
- **D** the communists in Asia had already taken China.

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However, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the Communist Party began to achieve some control in important trade unions. Strikes broke out in the mining industry and on the waterfront, and communists appeared to be increasing their influence in Australia. The government claimed that communists were responsible for many of the strikes and the industrial unrest. A common phrase at the time was that there were 'Reds under the beds'.

Using this fear of communist influence inside Australia, the Menzies government attempted to ban the Australian Communist Party. In April 1950 it introduced the Communist Party Dissolution Bill, which would have made the party illegal and allowed the government to seize all its assets (property). Under the law, any person declared to be a communist would not be allowed to hold a position in a trade union and their home and property would be subject to search by the police.

Most of the opposition Labor Party, led by Dr H. V. Evatt, opposed the bill on the grounds that it challenged the basic rights of Australian citizens. Nonetheless, the Bill was passed, but in March the following year six of the seven judges of the High Court declared the action unconstitutional.

Menzies, however, was still determined, and in September 1951 he called for a referendum to allow the constitution to be changed to give the government power to make laws in respect of communists and the Communist Party. Like so many attempts to change the constitution, the referendum was unsuccessful, though by only a small margin: 2 317 927 voted in favour and 2 370 009 voted against.

The Petrov affair

Petrov affair

During the 1950s Menzies used the threat of communism to his political advantage, and the best example of this came just a few weeks before the federal election of 1954. On 13 April 1954 Menzies told parliament that an official of the Soviet Russian Embassy in Canberra, Vladimir Petrov, had asked for **political asylum** in Australia. Menzies also announced that Petrov had provided details of a Soviet spy ring operating in Australia and that there would be a **royal commission** into Petrov's claims.

With the federal election due the following month, Menzies deliberately used the Petrov case and the fear of communism for his own political ends. After all, it was he who had tried to ban the Communist Party four years earlier. Many Australians believed that there was a threat to Australia from communism in other countries and from communists within Australia. The leader of the Labor Party, Dr H. V. Evatt, who had opposed the attempts to abolish the Australian Communist Party, was presented as a man who was not strong against the communist menace and indeed was even soft or sympathetic towards communists.

The election campaign was given an added boost on 19 April 1954 when Russian security officials tried to take Petrov's wife, Evdokia, who also worked at the Soviet Embassy, back to the Soviet Union. At Sydney airport crowds tried to stop Mrs Petrov from getting on the plane. A few hours later, when the plane landed at Darwin to refuel, Australian security guards detained the Russian officials, and Mrs Petrov was given political asylum and allowed to stay in Australia. Pictures of Russian officials forcing a very upset Mrs Petrov to go back to the Soviet Union were in all the papers and confirmed many people's fear of communism.

This gave Menzies the political advantage he needed. Before the Petrov affair, the opinion polls had indicated that the Labor Party would win the 1954 election. When the votes were counted, Menzies in fact had won the election with a majority of seven seats. Later in the year the Royal Commission on Espionage (spying) presented its report. While it did find some evidence of Soviet espionage in Australia, there was not enough evidence for anyone to be charged with being a spy.

Mr Petrov died in Melbourne in July 1991, aged 84 years. Mrs Petrov died in Melbourne in July 2002.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

National Archives of Australia [A6201,62]

A distressed Mrs Petrov being escorted by Russian officials on the tarmac at Sydney airport, April 1954. In the process she lost her shoe.

source B

A melee at Kingsford Smith Airport, 1954

One thousand struggling, fighting and screaming people at Kingsford Smith Airport last night attempted to stop Mrs Evdokia Petrov from returning to Russia.

A Russian courier, Mr V. Karpinsky, and a Russian Embassy official dragged Mrs Petrov, who was weeping and dazed, for 200 yards along the tarmac and pushed her up the gangway.

Officials finally succeeded in thrusting a way to the main gangway but a fighting crowd thwarted for two minutes the attempts of officials to mount it. When Mrs Petrov reached the top of the gangway the crowd pulled it away from the side of the plane. Mrs Petrov, the two Russian men and the two airport officers balanced for a minute on the narrow, swaying platform 15 feet above the ground before police could push the gangway back ...

Two airport fire engines arrived and connected up hoses ready to turn them on to the crowd. By the time the hoses were fully run out, Mrs Petrov had entered the plane and the crowd fell back.

The Sydney Morning Herald, 20 April 1954

Explain how scenes like the one in the photo, Source A, and reported in the press, Source B, were used by Menzies to gain political advantage.

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How the communist issue helped split the Labor Party

The Labor Party's loss in the 1954 election was a bitter blow to its leader, Dr H. V. Evatt. When two members of his own staff were named in the Petrov documents, Evatt himself appeared at the royal commission and claimed that the documents had been deliberately forged to ruin Labor's chance in the election. He accused Menzies of conspiracy and of deliberately arranging Petrov's defection. He made claims that he could not prove and his emotional behaviour during the royal commission harmed his career.

Within the Labor Party there was a moderate right-wing group, many of whom were Roman Catholics, who also feared the spread of communism, particularly in the trade unions. They began to question Dr Evatt's judgement, particularly on the issue of communism, and his leadership of the Labor Party. Some of these Labor Party members supported a group called the Movement. This was an organisation, based in Victoria, that sought to reduce communist influence in the trade unions by putting its own followers into trade union leadership roles. The Movement was led by a young Melbourne lawyer, Bob Santamaria, who believed that communism represented a very real threat to Australian society. Santamaria and the Movement also had the support of the influential Roman Catholic Archbishop of Melbourne, Archbishop Mannix, who, decades earlier, had led the campaign against conscription during World War I.

The divisions within the Labor Party over communism were deep, and when Dr Evatt wrote an article in *The Sydney Morning Herald* attacking what he called 'a small minority group of Labor members', who he claimed were 'disloyal to the Labor movement and the Labor leadership', it began a process that split the Labor Party. Right-wing members of the Labor Party either resigned or were expelled and in 1957 they formed their own political party, the Democratic Labor Party (DLP), which was strongly anti-communist. The communism issue had split the Labor Party, and it was a major reason why the Labor Party lost the next six federal elections before it finally returned to power in 1972. Robert Menzies went on to become the longest serving prime minister in the nation's history.

'Prime Minister Robert Menzies addressing Parliament', National Library of Australia

Prime Minister Menzies speaking in parliament in Canberra in 1951

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Why did the attempts by the Menzies government to have the Australian Communist Party banned finally fail?

2 Who was Dr H. V. Evatt?

3 What was 'the Movement'?

4 What new political party was formed in 1957 from the divisions within the Australian Labor Party?

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 What do you understand by the following terms?

(a) Cold War

(b) Domino Theory

(c) forward defence

(d) political asylum

2 Place these events in their correct chronological order:

- Prime Minister Menzies announces that Vladimir Petrov of the Soviet Embassy in Canberra has been granted political asylum.
- The Communist Party Dissolution Bill is introduced in parliament.
- The Australian Labor Party splits over fears of communism.
- A referendum to allow the government to ban the Communist Party is defeated.
- The High Court finds the Communist Party Dissolution Bill to be unconstitutional.
- Russian diplomat Vladimir Petrov and his wife defect to Australia and reveal information about a spy network operating in Australia.

3 Draw or photocopy a blank map of South-East Asia and, remembering that it is the 1950s and 1960s, mark on your map the correct names of the main countries in the region. Then, using your own code of shadings, indicate the countries that:

- were under the control of a communist government by 1954
- had communist-inspired governments within their borders
- were members of SEATO from 1954.

4 Using your computer and the software available, prepare a poster that either:

- supports the banning of the Australian Communist Party

or

- opposes the banning of the Australian Communist Party.

Your poster should reflect how people felt about the issue, and should include a persuasive reason why you are for or against the banning of the party.

5 Prepare an extended paragraph on *one* of the following topics.

- How the Australian government responded to the threat of communism in Asia in the 1950s.
- How the Australian government responded to communism within Australia in the 1950s.

6 Prepare a multimedia presentation on the Petrov case. You should include in your presentation:

- the background to the event and why many Australians were concerned about communism at this time
- what happened to Mrs Petrov when her plane landed in Darwin
- how the Petrov case assisted the government in the 1954 election
- what happened to the Petrovs after the events of 1954.

ISBN 9780170347266

WHY DID AUSTRALIA BECOME INVOLVED IN THE VIETNAM WAR?

9.2

The origins of the war in Vietnam

The region of Indochina (present-day Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia) had been occupied by the French during the 19th century. By the early 20th century the European powers that had colonies in Asia faced the increasing threat of **Asian nationalism**, the desire of Asian peoples to be independent of their colonial masters.

The most important political figure in Indochina was Ho Chi Minh. Ho was born in 1890 and educated in France. He was a nationalist who wanted to see a free Indochina, but he was also a communist who in 1931 helped found the Indochinese Communist Party. Ten years later, in 1941, when the Japanese invaded Indochina and many other parts of Asia, Ho created the Revolutionary League for the Independence of Vietnam, better known as the Vietminh. At the end of the war, the Vietminh was strong enough to declare Vietnam independent, but the French refused to accept this, and after 1945, with American help, they reimposed their control over Indochina. As a result, war broke out between the French and the Vietminh. The fighting lasted for nine years and ended in 1954 with a major military defeat for the French at the Battle of Dien Bien Phu.

The map of Indochina after the Geneva conference of 1954

In 1954 an international conference was held in Geneva, Switzerland, to decide the fate of Indochina. France finally agreed to withdraw from the region and three independent nations were established: Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. Vietnam itself was divided at the 17th parallel (the line of latitude 17 degrees north) into North Vietnam, led by Ho Chi Minh, and South Vietnam. Within a year the United States had set up a government in the south, which survived with American support.

Ho Chi Minh in the north remained the dedicated nationalist. His goal was the reunification of Vietnam under one government. The United States, aware of Ho Chi Minh's popularity and the possibility that all of Vietnam could fall to communism if Ho succeeded, became committed to the support of South Vietnam. In 1960 the various nationalist groups in South Vietnam, both communist and non-communist, formed the National Liberation Front, or the Vietcong. The Vietcong became masters of **guerilla warfare** in their struggle against the South Vietnamese government. They also received support and assistance from communist North Vietnam. Under President John Kennedy, the United States dispatched aid and military advisers to assist the South Vietnamese army.

By 1963, when President Kennedy was assassinated, there were 16 000 United States military personnel in South Vietnam. The problem of what the United States should do in Vietnam now passed to the new American leader, President Lyndon Baines Johnson, often called 'LBJ'.

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Getty Images/Time & Life Pictures

Ho Chi Minh (1890–1969), the Vietnamese nationalist who led the long struggle for Vietnamese independence.

Why Australia entered the Vietnam War

To the United States and its allies, including Australia, Vietnam appeared to be a classic example of the Domino Theory. Many believed that, if South Vietnam fell to communism, then communism would spread to the rest of Asia and even to Australia. In fact, the war in Vietnam was not a war of communist expansion; it was a nationalist conflict, a struggle by the Vietnamese to finally end the many years of occupation of their country by foreign powers – France, Japan and now the United States.

At the time, however, the conflict in Vietnam was seen as yet another example of the downward push of aggressive communism in South-East Asia. Since the United States had become involved in this war, Australia would support its great ally and friend by becoming involved also, just as it had assisted the United States in the Korean War.

Given Australia's military weakness, it was in Australia's interest that the United States should become committed to Asia and the fight against communism in Asia. As Britain withdrew from its world commitments, the Australian government saw the United States as the powerful western nation to take its place.

The Australian government used diplomatic channels to encourage the United States' involvement in Vietnam, and showed its good faith by sending troops as well. Compared with the United States force, the size of the Australian force was never great. What was important was Australia's support as an ally. It fitted in with the concept of forward defence, and once again Australia was supporting a great and powerful friend. This time, however, the great and powerful friend was not Australia's traditional ally, Britain, but a new ally, the United States.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 Who was the leading political figure in the Vietnamese struggle for independence?
2 In what year was Vietnam divided into North and South Vietnam?
3 What was the Vietcong?
4 Why was it in Australia's best interest to encourage the United States to get involved in Vietnam?
5 List two points of similarity between the Australian involvement in Korea in the 1950s and the Australian involvement in Vietnam in the 1960s.

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How Australia entered the Vietnam War

Many of the documents about Australia's involvement in Vietnam are now available to historians, and enough material has now emerged to suggest that Australia actively sought involvement in the conflict. Some historians have suggested that Australia wished to involve the United States in the struggle against Asian communism, and that Australia's enthusiasm for the war may have influenced the United States government in 1964 when it made the decision to increase its military forces in South Vietnam.

The first Australian servicemen to go to Vietnam were 30 military instructors who arrived in July 1962. At that time the government announced that no combat forces would be sent. In April 1965, however, the decision was made to send a battalion of Australian troops to Vietnam if the South Vietnamese government requested it. In fact, the evidence indicates that the South Vietnamese government was reluctant to accept Australian military support.

On 18 April the Australian ambassador in South Vietnam was instructed to seek an invitation from the South Vietnamese government for Australian troops to come to South Vietnam. Prime Minister Menzies intended to announce the decision to parliament on 29 April. The sequence of events was as follows:

- On 28 April 1965 the Australian ambassador persuaded the prime minister of South Vietnam to issue a request for Australian troops.
- The South Vietnamese 'request' arrived in Canberra at 5.30 p.m. on 29 April 1965.
- Two and a half hours later Prime Minister Menzies told parliament that the Australian government was 'in receipt of a request from the government of South Vietnam for further military assistance', and that an infantry battalion of Australian troops would be sent for service in Vietnam.

The Vietnam War

Letter home from Vietnam

Document study: Menzies

Australian War Memorial [EKT/69/0021/VN]

Australian troops arrive at Vung Tau, South Vietnam, with the troop carrier HMAS *Sydney* in the background.

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FROM THE SOURCE

source A

Alan Renouf, First Secretary at the Australian Embassy in Washington, to the Department of External Affairs, Canberra, 11 May 1964

Our objective should be, it is suggested, to achieve such a habitual closeness of relations with the United States and sense of mutual alliance that in our time of need after we have shown all reasonable restraint and good sense, the United States would have little option but to respond as we would want.

The problem of Vietnam is one, it seems, where we could, without a disproportionate expenditure, pick up a lot of credit with the United States for this problem is one to which the United States is deeply committed and in which it genuinely feels it is carrying too much of the load.

source B

Letters between Australia's ambassador to South Vietnam and the prime minister of South Vietnam

Ambassador Anderson to Phan Huy Quat, prime minister of South Vietnam

29 April 1965

Dear Mr Prime Minister,

I have the honour, with reference to our conversation yesterday, to confirm the Australian government's offer to send to Vietnam an infantry battalion of 800 men, with some 100 personnel in logistical support, to serve with the United States forces in assisting in the defence of the Republic of Vietnam.

I have informed the Australian government, following our conversation, that your Excellency has accepted this offer and has requested the dispatch of this force to Vietnam on the basis which we discussed.

Phan Huy Quat to Ambassador Anderson

29 April 1965

Dear Mr Ambassador

I have the honour to refer to your letter of today's date confirming the Australian Government's offer to send to Vietnam an infantry battalion of 800 men with some 100 personnel in logistic support to serve with United States forces in assisting in the defence of the Republic of Vietnam.

I wish to confirm my government's acceptance of this offer and to request the dispatch of this force to Vietnam which we discussed.

Sincerely,

Phan Huy Quat (Prime Minister)

source C

Statement by Sir Robert Menzies, 29 April 1965

The Australian Government is now in receipt of a request from the Government of South Vietnam for further military assistance. We have decided – and this has been after close consultation with the Government of the United States – to provide an infantry battalion for service in South Vietnam. In case there is any misunderstanding, I think I should say, Sir, that we decided in principle some time ago ... that we would be willing to do this if we received the necessary request from the Government of South Vietnam and the necessary collaboration with the United States …

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The takeover of South Vietnam would be a direct military threat to Australia and all the countries of South and South-East Asia. It must be seen as part of a thrust by Communist China between the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

House of Representatives, *Debates*, 1965, vol. HR45, p. 1060

From *The Bulletin*, May 1965

source D

The decision to send the first Royal Australian Regiment to Vietnam has been welcomed throughout Australia … it has been plain to the whole world that South Vietnam is Australia's front line … Since the loss of that country to the communists would inevitably be followed by the communisation of the rest of South-East Asia, Australia has no alternative but to contribute in some significant way to its defence. The basic fact about South Vietnam is that it has been invaded on a large scale by North Vietnam supplied with Red China's arms.

The Bulletin, 8 May 1965

From *The Australian*, April 1965

source E

The Menzies Government has made a reckless decision on Vietnam which this nation may live to regret. It has decided to send Australian soldiers into a savage revolutionary war … searching for friends America has turned to her ANZUS and SEATO associates in the Western Pacific … the decision of Sir Robert Menzies and his colleagues is wrong whatever way we look at it … It could be that our historians will recall this day with tears.

The Australian, 30 April 1965

1 According to Source A what did Australia think it could gain by getting involved in Vietnam?

2 What conclusion can you draw from reading the letters (Source B) about the Australian decision to send troops to Vietnam?

3 Read what Mr Menzies said to parliament in April 1965 (Source C). What did he not tell the parliament about how Australia received the request for the troops to go to Vietnam?

4 Explain how Mr Menzies justified the decision to send the troops to Vietnam in Source C. Is this something new or does it fit in with the nature of Australian foreign policy throughout the 1950s and 1960s?

5 From your reading of this source material, explain in an extended paragraph *how* and *why* the decision was made to send Australian troops to fight in South Vietnam.

6 Does Source D support or oppose the ideas in Source C? Give examples to justify your answer.

7 Does Source E support or oppose the ideas in Source C? Give examples to justify your answer.

8 What were SEATO and ANZUS, mentioned in Source E?

9 President Johnson would approve of Source D because:

A it supports his view of the Domino Theory

B *The Bulletin* was a well-respected magazine

C *The Bulletin* believed that South Vietnam had been invaded by North Vietnam

D it said the decision to send troops was 'welcomed throughout Australia'.

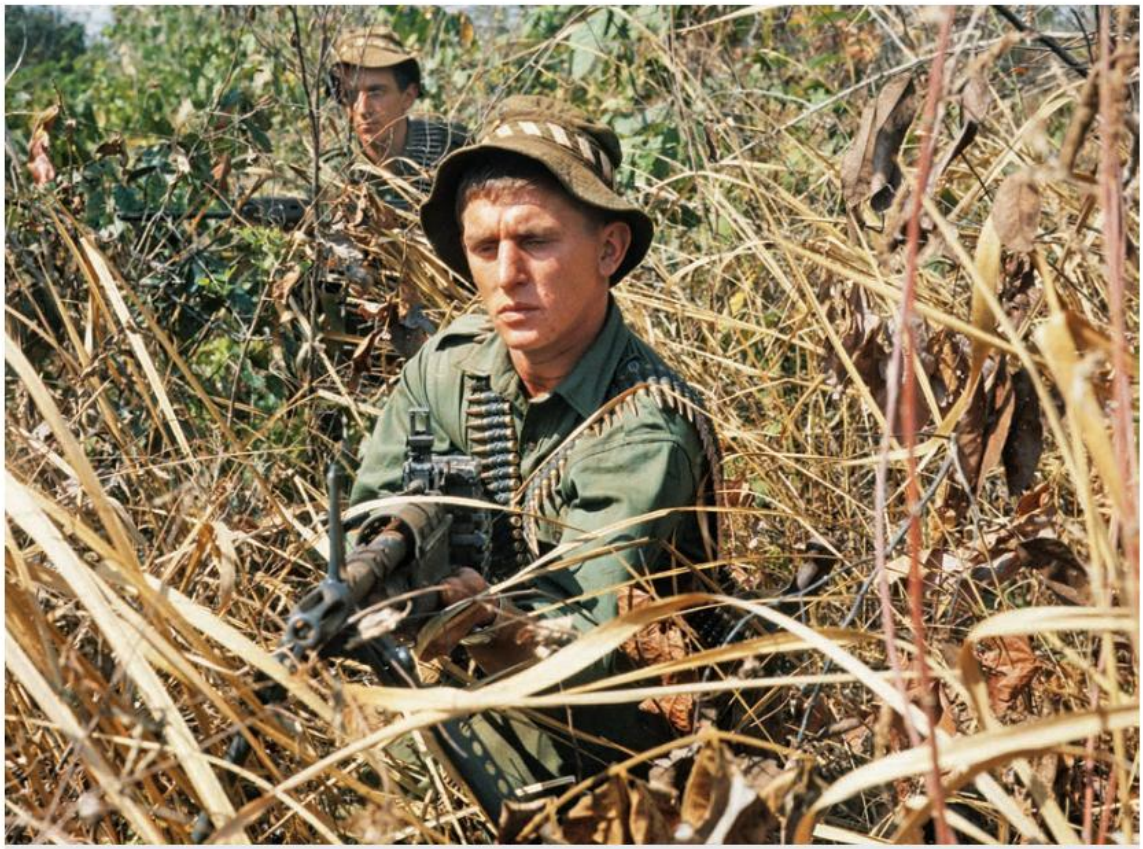
ISBN 9780170347266

Australian involvement deepens

Visual study

In 1965 the United States began to increase its involvement in the war in Vietnam. United States naval forces patrolled the coast, the air force began to bomb North Vietnam, and there was a rapid increase in the number of United States troops. By the end of 1966 there were 383 000 United States servicemen in the country. This increased to 425 000 by the middle of 1967 and to 525 000 by June 1968. Once the United States had committed itself fully to the war, there was an expectation that Australia would also increase its participation.

In January 1966 Robert Menzies retired and Harold Holt became the new prime minister of Australia. Holt believed that Australia had a responsibility to support the United States and in March 1966, following a direct request from the United States, the Australian force was increased to a task force of 4500. Included in this task force of two battalions were 500 **national servicemen**. As well, an RAAF squadron of Iroquois helicopters was deployed and guided-missile destroyers of the Royal Australian Navy joined American patrols off the North Vietnamese coast. In October 1967 the size of the task force was increased by another 1700 men.



Australian War Memorial [EKN-67-0084-VN]

Phuoc Tuy province. Two members of a patrol push their way through tall grass searching for enemy forces near the task force base at Nui Dat in February 1967. How do images such as this help to explain the nature of the fighting in South Vietnam?

'All the way with LBJ'

Holt was an open and likeable man who was able to establish a personal friendship with President Johnson. At a time when the war was growing increasingly unpopular and the United States needed support, Australia offered that support. Harold Holt visited Washington in 1966, and in a speech announced that Australia would be 'all the way with LBJ'.

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FROM THE SOURCE
Prime Minister Holt at the White House, Washington, July 1966

It does not take a war to bring Americans and Australians close together.

You have in us not merely an understanding friend but one staunch in the belief of the need for our presence with you in Vietnam. We are not there because of our friendship; we are there because, like you, we believe it is right to be there …

And so, sir, in the lonelier and perhaps even more disheartening moments which come to any national leader, I hope there will be a corner of your mind and heart which takes cheer from the fact that you have an admiring friend, a staunch friend that will be all the way with LBJ.

1 **Which earlier war had brought 'Americans and Australians close together'?**

2 **Prime Minister Holt said that Australia was in Vietnam because 'we believe it is right to be there'. List the major arguments used to justify the Australian involvement in the Vietnam War.**

Johnson valued Holt's loyalty and support and he, in turn, supported Holt. In October 1966 President Johnson visited Australia, the first ever United States president to do so while in office. Johnson was greeted by huge crowds of supporters, as well as some anti-war protesters. Some protesters got their message across when paint was thrown at Johnson's car in Melbourne. In Sydney protesters lay on the road in front of his car, which caused the New South Wales premier, Robert Askin, to tell the driver to 'run over the bastards'.

Harold Holt

A poll in *The Australian* newspaper in August 1966 showed that 64 per cent of the population still supported the war effort. Johnson's visit to Australia coincided with a federal election, which was held the following month. Holt scored a tremendous electoral victory, securing a record majority of 41 seats in the House of Representatives.

In the early part of 1967 President Johnson and other United States officials had expressed to the Australian government the need for more support. On 6 October 1967 Holt informed Johnson that the Australian force would be increased by 1700 men, bringing the total force to 8300. However, Australia had now reached the limit of its support.

LBJ Library photo by Yoichi Okamoto

Prime Minister Harold Holt (at left) and President Lyndon Johnson

Fairfax Syndication

United States President Lyndon Johnson in the back of his car, which was spattered with paint during his visit to Melbourne in 1966.

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CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 In which year did Australia first send combat troops to South Vietnam?

2 Who followed Menzies as prime minister of Australia?

3 Explain the meaning of the phrase 'all the way with LBJ'.

4 When did President Johnson visit Australia?

5 Was the victory of the government in the 1966 election evidence of support for, or opposition to, the Vietnam War?

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Place these events in their correct chronological order:
- Prime Minister Holt announces that Australia is 'all the way with LBJ'.
- The Battle of Dien Bien Phu
- President Johnson visits Australia.
- Indochina is divided into Laos, Cambodia, and North and South Vietnam.
- Prime Minister Menzies announces the decision to send combat troops to South Vietnam.
- Australian forces to Vietnam increase to 8300.

2 Protesters against President Johnson's visit displayed banners carrying slogans such as 'LBJ, LBJ, how many kids did you kill today?' and 'Welcome Lady Bird [Johnson's wife] and Butcher Bird'. Putting yourself in the position of a person during the time of the Vietnam War, you have three tasks.
(a) Prepare a list of reasons why you support *or* oppose the war in Vietnam.
(b) Using the list you have prepared, write a letter to the editor of *The Sydney Morning Herald*, explaining why you are going to protest *or* support when President Johnson comes to Sydney.
(c) Prepare a poster or banner of welcome *or* protest for President Johnson's visit.

3 Using information from your own research and reading, write an essay in which you explain how and why Australia got involved in the Vietnam War, and how and why Australia's military involvement increased from 1965 to 1968.

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HOW DID VARIOUS GROUPS RESPOND TO AUSTRALIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIETNAM WAR?

9.3

Vietnam and popular opinion

When the decision was made in 1965 to send a battalion to fight in the war, most Australians were not opposed to the decision. As more troops were sent, including young men who were conscripted, there were protests, but the majority of Australians still supported the war. It was only later, as the war continued and an end did not appear in sight, that general support for the involvement gradually turned to opposition.

Most newspapers in the country supported the decision to send troops to Vietnam, and the opinion polls at the time also showed that there was support for the war. In the federal election of 1966 the government that had made the decision to fight in Vietnam won with the largest majority for any Australian government since 1901. The Labor Party, which opposed sending troops to Vietnam and called the war 'an unwinnable war', suffered its worst election result since 1931.

Public opinion

Opinion polls

Nashos: Conscripts for the Vietnam War

In November 1964, before Australia became involved in the Vietnam War, the Menzies government had announced the introduction of conscription and plans to increase the size of the Australian army to 37 500 within three years. The conscripting of young men was called 'National Service' and all young men had to register for military service when they reached the age of 20. A ballot, based on birth dates, was used to select some 6900 young men each year who would then be required to serve for two years in the armed forces. In March 1966, when the government increased the number of troops in Vietnam, national servicemen, or 'nashos' as they were called, were sent to fight. Forty per cent of the Australian soldiers who fought in Vietnam were conscripts. By the time the war ended in 1972, 17 400 national servicemen had served in the conflict, 202 had been killed and 1279 wounded. National service was abolished by the Whitlam Labor government when it was elected in 1972.

National Service

National Service: How it worked

- All young men were required to register in the year they turned 20. These men could not vote, as the voting age at the time was 21 years.
- You were not required to register for national service if you were an Aboriginal Australian.
- A ballot, using marbles in a lottery barrel, was used, with each marble representing a birthday.
- There were two ballots each year, one for the first six months (January to June) and one for the second six months (July to December).
- If the marble came up with your birthday on it, you were required to join the army. The number of national servicemen was about 4200 every six months.
- The term of service was two years and you were liable to be sent overseas.
- If you were conscripted, you could delay (defer) your entry into the army until you had finished your first university degree or your apprenticeship.
- Young men could also be granted indefinite deferment (they would not be required) if they were married before the call-up date.

ISBN 9780170347266

- In May 1968 the *National Service Act 1964* was changed to provide for two years in prison for young men who avoided National Service.
- Young men could be granted exemption on the grounds of physical or mental inability, if they were members of a religious order or were studying to be a minister of religion, if they were conscientious objectors, or if they could prove that their objection to war was based on religious beliefs.

Fairfax Syndication/SMH/George Lipman

The first intake of National Service recruits for the Vietnam War arrive at the Marrickville Depot on 30 June 1965, prior to 12 weeks' initial training.

FROM THE SOURCE

source A

A national serviceman remembers

You just went to the Post Office, got a yellow form, filled in your name and address, date of birth and just posted it back to National Service. I don't know where the card went from there. Then they used to bring the marble out. Certain numbers would be drawn from a lottery barrel and if your birthday corresponded to the number on the marble then you were called up for National Service. The chances of going in were supposed to be one in seven by the marble, but my birthday came out every year from 1965 to 1971. In my class at Kingswood High, there were twenty-eight blokes and twenty-eight were called up. I got a letter to say I'd been posted to Puckapunyal [an army base in Victoria]. I didn't even know where bloody Puckapunyal was.

Quoted in S. Rintoul (ed.), *Ashes of Vietnam: Australian Voices*, Heinemann, Melbourne, 1987, p. 5

ISBN 9780170347266

source B

Fairfax Syndication/The Age

Lindsay Hassett, former Australian cricketer, draws the first marble out of the box to determine the second national service intake on 13 September 1966.

source C

State Library of Victoria [VSL]

A poster urging young men not to register for the birthday ballot for National Service

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TABLE 9.1 Conscription birth dates for men born in 1948

BIRTH DATES DRAWN IN THE SEVENTH NATIONAL SERVICE BALLOT, 15 MARCH 1968 Men included in this ballot were born in the period 1 January 1948 to 30 June 1948	
January	1, 3, 5, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21
February	5, 10, 11, 12, 14, 17, 21
March	2, 7, 8, 9, 15, 22, 25, 26, 29, 31
April	3, 16, 17, 18, 21, 23
May	1, 7, 11, 17, 18, 21, 23, 31
June	10, 17, 24, 28
BIRTH DATES DRAWN IN THE EIGHTH NATIONAL SERVICE BALLOT, 13 SEPTEMBER 1968 **Men included in this ballot were born in the period 1 July 1948 to 31 December 1948**	
July	3, 21, 22, 24, 30
August	1, 3, 16, 18, 24, 26
September	5, 9, 12, 14, 22, 23, 24, 26
October	3, 13, 18
November	5, 18, 24, 28, 29
December	7, 12, 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 26

Imagine that you were a 20-year-old male in 1968 (that is, you were born in 1948). Check these birthdays that were drawn in 1968 to see if you were conscripted.

1. **If you had been born in 1948, would you have been conscripted 20 years later in 1968?**
2. **Imagine that you are a young man and your birthday was drawn in one of the ballots of 1968. Prepare a letter to your member of parliament in which you outline why you consider the system to be unfair.**

Vietnam and the Labor Party

State Library of NSW [d7_24762]

The leader of the Labor Party, Arthur Calwell, speaking at a demonstration against the Vietnam War in January 1967

When the decision was announced to send combat troops to South Vietnam, the Labor Party opposed the decision. Although most members of the Labor Party agreed with the government that communism was a threat to Australia, and that it was important to maintain the relationship with the United States, they did not agree with conscription, and they did not agree that Australian troops should be sent to the war. Some in the Labor Party believed that the conflict in Vietnam was a civil war rather then a push of expansive communism. They also questioned whether increased military action in Vietnam would be successful. The leader of the Labor Party, Arthur Calwell, called it an 'unwinnable war' and the policy of the party was general opposition to the war and Australia's involvement in it. The Labor Party promised to withdraw Australian conscripts and military forces from Vietnam when it won government.

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FROM THE SOURCE

Arthur Calwell on the Australian involvement in Vietnam

We do not think it is a wise decision. We do not think it will help the fight against Communism. We do not believe it will promote the welfare of the people of Vietnam ... It is a gross and misleading over-simplification to depict this war in simple terms of military aggression from the North ... The war in South Vietnam is a civil war, aided and abetted by the North Vietnamese Government ...

To exhaust our resources in the bottomless pit of jungle warfare, in a war in which we have not even defined our purpose honestly, or explained what we would accept as victory, is the very height of folly and the very depths of despair.

Humiliation for America could come in one of two ways, either by outright defeat, which is unlikely, or by her becoming interminably bogged down in the awful morass of this war, as France was for ten years. That situation would in turn lead to one of two things – withdrawal through despair, or all-out war through despair. Australia's aim should have been to help end the war, not to extend it.

House of Representatives, *Debates*, 1965, vol. HR46, p. 1102

1 **What, according to Mr Calwell, was the real nature of the war?**

2 **Describe the two possible outcomes Mr Calwell saw for the United States if it stayed in Vietnam.**

3 **From your knowledge of the Vietnam War, which of these two outcomes finally happened?**

Conscientious objectors

A conscientious objector is a person who, for personal or religious reasons, will not take part in military service or fight in a war. During the Vietnam War a person could refuse to register for national service and say that he was a conscientious objector. The person would then have to prove in a court of law that there were 'deep-seated and compelling' reasons why he could not serve in the armed forces. The number of men who claimed to be conscientious objectors was relatively small. More than 800 000 young men registered for national service between 1964 and 1972 and only 1242 were granted conscientious objector status by the courts.

Fairfax Syndication/SMH

Conscientious objector William White is dragged from his home by police after having been arrested in November 1966.

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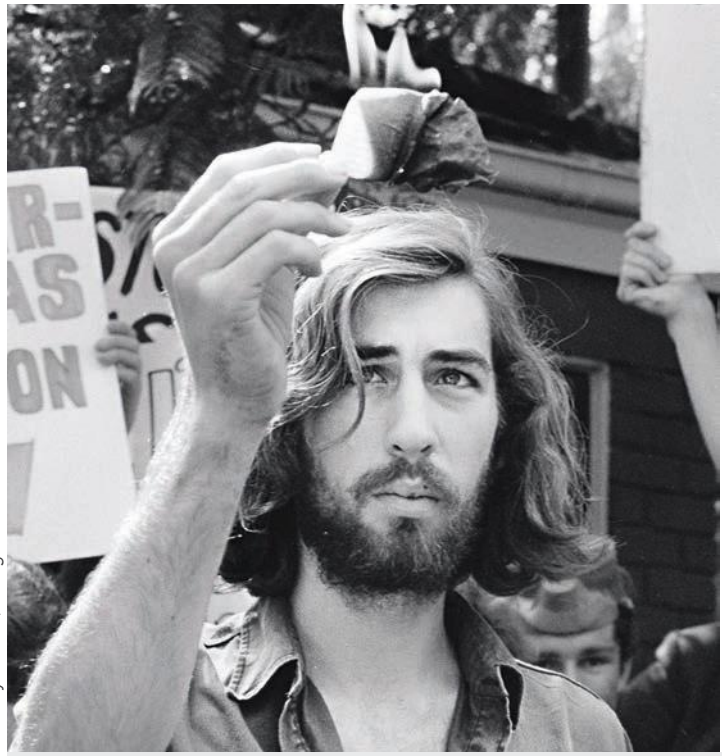
Fairfax Syndication/SMH

Women of the Save Our Sons movement protesting against Australia's involvement in Vietnam. During the war 187 conscripts were killed on active service.

Save Our Sons

Despite the massive involvement of troops and the intense air and sea bombardment of North Vietnam, the war continued to go badly for the United States and its allies. In the United States a strong anti-war movement began as people wearied of the war and its heavy cost in lives. The anti-war movement spread to Australia, and the party in opposition, the Labor Party, which had consistently opposed the Australian involvement in the war, led the anti-war movement. In May 1965, as a direct response to conscription, a group of mothers founded an organisation called Save Our Sons (SOS). The Save Our Sons movement led protest campaigns against conscription that spread to all states, particularly after conscripts were sent to fight in Vietnam. Members of Save Our Sons engaged in a variety of protest activities against conscription, including letter-writing, picketing government offices and protest rallies. In 1971 five SOS members went to prison after handing out leaflets to young men at the Department of Labour and National Service in Melbourne.

Or Forever Hold Your Peace



Fairfax Syndication/The Age

Vietnam War protester Andy Blunden, aged 20, a civil engineering student, burns his national service registration card at an anti-conscription rally outside the home of Prime Minister Harold Holt in March 1966.

The anti-war movement

As the conflict in Vietnam continued and more troops were sent there, support for the war began to decline. The Vietnam War divided Australian society, and the anti-war movement grew in size and intensity. An opinion poll in October 1969 suggested that only 39 per cent of the population supported the war effort, compared with 59 per cent in July 1965. The Vietnam War was the first 'television war' and each evening television images of what was happening were seen in Australian homes.

Across the country there were public rallies and protests, public figures spoke out against the war, and universities became particular centres for opposition to the war. A Draft Resisters Union was formed to help young men evade National Service. Students at Monash University in Victoria even attempted to raise money to assist the North Vietnamese, an act which was widely condemned, particularly by the families of men serving in the war. In May 1968, as more young men refused to register for national service and some burnt their registration papers in public displays of defiance, the government altered the National Service Act to provide for imprisonment for two years for males who defied conscription. In October 1969 John Zarb, a 21-year-old post office worker, became the first person sentenced to two years in prison for failing to register for National Service.

ISBN 9780170347266

FROM THE SOURCE

The experiences of a draft resister

In early March 1972, Bob Muntz received a call at work. A couple of Commonwealth Police had turned up at the workplace of an acquaintance and arrested him for refusing to obey his army call-up notice.

For the next nine months, until the election of the Whitlam Government, Muntz disappeared into the underground, avoiding the authorities by shifting from refuge to refuge. But for most of that time, he and similar Draft Resisters Union fugitives employed a strategy of hiding in plain sight. 'The idea was to circulate as widely as possible in the community, to be in one sense as visible as possible, but not to get yourself arrested,' he recalls. So Muntz would pop up at anti-war protests, union meetings, even the occasional news conference, give a short speech and vanish out the back door.

Muntz was a gradual and, in the beginning, reluctant convert to anti–Vietnam War activism. He went to his first demonstration just before the '66 election and was drafted when he turned 20, the following year. At the end of 1971, he was prosecuted for failing to attend a medical examination to enter the army. 'I duly got my seven-day jail sentence and did it in Pentridge …' The experience played a large role in defining his character: 'And it radicalised me … it wasn't just a matter of opposing Australian involvement, we supported the Vietnamese. I remember rallies where I shouted, with everyone else: 'One side is right, one side is wrong. Victory to the Vietcong.'

'I don't think there's any dispute that the Vietnam experience did change Australia for the better,' he says. 'The Vietnam War was perhaps the main spark, with the whole social movement of the '60s and '70s that converted Australia into a more tolerant, liberal society, willing to question authority and find our own place in the world.'

'The Vietnam War: a nightmare still vivid', *The Age*, 30 April 2005

1 **Explain why this draft resister had to avoid the Commonwealth police 'until the election of the Whitlam Government'.**

2 **Why would he and other draft resisters avoid the police yet 'pop up at anti-war protests, union meetings, even the occasional news conference, give a short speech and vanish out the back door'?**

3 **According to this source, did anything positive come out of the Vietnam War experience?**

In 1970 there were two large anti-war protests in the capital cities. These well-organised and peaceful demonstrations were called the Vietnam **moratorium** marches. They attracted mass support from ordinary people who would normally never have ventured out to protest. The first one, in Melbourne in May 1970, attracted over 100 000 people. Dr Jim Cairns, a Labor member of parliament and leader of the Vietnam moratorium movement, said:

> "What is being done in the Vietnam moratorium campaign is an example of government by the people taking action about issues that are important to them … there is intense and widespread opposition to the death and destruction."

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By late 1970 Australia had begun to reduce its military commitment in Vietnam. Troop reductions continued during 1971, and in February 1972 the last Australian combat troops finally came home. In a long and difficult conflict, some 50 000 Australian military personnel served in Vietnam, 520 died and 2400 were wounded.

Fairfax Syndication/SMH/B. Buckley

Demonstrators in Sydney protest during a moratorium march against the war in Vietnam, 30 June 1971.

CHECK YOUR HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE

1 How long were national servicemen required to serve in the Australian army?
2 What position did the Australian Labor Party take on the Vietnam War?
3 What is a conscientious objector? What was the difference between a conscientious objector and a draft resister?
4 Which group in Australian society was the main force behind SOS?
5 In which year were the moratorium campaigns?
6 Which Australian politician, who later became deputy prime minister, was a leading influence in the moratorium campaigns?

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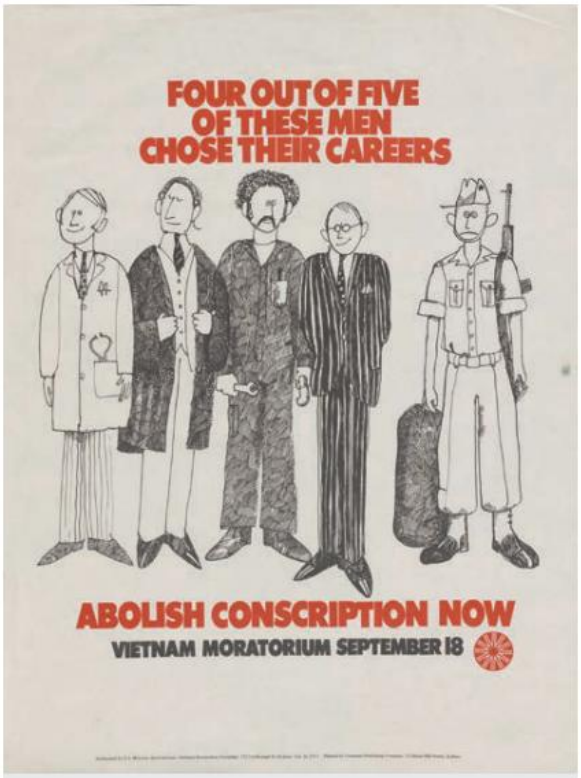
HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Explain why there were such intense feelings against conscription in the period from 1964 to 1972.

2 Place these events in their correct chronological order:
- The anti-war movement begins in Australia.
- National servicemen are sent to Vietnam.
- The government wins an election on the issue of involvement in Vietnam.
- Opinion polls indicate general support for the war.

3 Arthur Calwell was the leader of the Australian Labor Party from 1960 to 1967 and he opposed involvement in the Vietnam War. He made many speeches against the war. Using the Internet and other sources:
(a) Find an example of Arthur Calwell speaking against the Vietnam War.
(b) Find out what happened to Mr Calwell at a political meeting at Mosman Town Hall in Sydney on 19 June 1965.



Anti-conscription poster

'Collection of Australian anti-conscription posters in the Vietnam War', National Library of Australia

4 There were many groups in Australia that opposed the Vietnam War and there were different reasons why people supported the anti-war movement. Select one group in Australia who actively opposed the war. Prepare notes on this group under the following headings:
- The particular aim of the group, including the motives and viewpoint of the people involved in the group
- How the group sought to get its message across
- How effective the group was.

Include images of this group at work and examples of their posters and pamphlets.

5 In earlier wars such as World War I and World War II, posters were used to encourage men to enlist. In the Vietnam War, posters were used to encourage men to resist. The anti-war movement during the Vietnam War period produced many posters and pamphlets to get its message out to the Australian people. The poster pictured above is an example. Analyse this poster under the following headings:
- The intent of the poster
- Why the poster is effective and how it achieves its effectiveness
- The probable audience the poster was intended for.

6 Write an essay in which you explain how various groups in Australian society responded to the Vietnam War. In your essay you may wish to consider some of the following groups: younger Australians, older Australians, the main political parties of the country, trade unions, the newspapers.

WS
Research/ ICT task

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9.4 WHAT WAS THE IMPACT OF THE WAR ON AUSTRALIA AND NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES?

The Vietnam War was a very different war from earlier conflicts such as World War I and World War II. It was a guerilla war, fought for the most part in difficult countryside of rice paddies, jungles and many small villages. This was not a war where the enemy could be clearly identified or where there was a fixed front line. In the search-and-destroy patrols that Australian troops conducted, 'searching' for the enemy was a hard and stressful task. The enemy could appear from anywhere and could look just like innocent villagers or civilians. The enemy might be long gone from an area but have left booby traps and mines that killed many soldiers. It was also a war fought with chemicals, including napalm (a petrol-based explosive that generates great heat) and defoliants (chemicals sprayed from the air over the jungle to kill off the vegetation).

The Vietnam War was the longest war Australia has been involved in. Not surprisingly, since it came to divide Australian society, this war had a significant impact on Australian life. The earlier wars Australia had fought in had not generated the same anger and bitterness. The war also had an impact on the lives of many Australian soldiers who were involved in the conflict. For many of these soldiers, or Vietnam veterans, the war continued to have an influence on their lives and on the lives of their families long after the conflict ended and the troops came home.

Apart from the personal experiences of so many, the war also came to change the way Australia dealt with Asia. The war created almost two million refugees, and as a result of the war many Vietnamese people came to Australia to begin a new life. This began to change Australia and marked the end of the White Australia policy and the long-held attitude that saw Asia as a threat to Australia. Another result of the war was that it began a new age of cooperation and partnership with Asia.

TABLE 9.5 Comparing Australia's role in the Vietnam War with its role in World War I and World War II

WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II	THE VIETNAM WAR
World War I and World War II were declared.	The Vietnam War was never declared. Australia sought to get involved in the conflict.
World War I and World War II were fought in a conventional way, with a front line and with an enemy that was clearly identified.	Australians fought much of the Vietnam War as a guerilla war, on patrol and with no front line. The enemy was not clearly identified.
World War I and World War II were fought with the full support of the Australian people. There was no political division about Australia's need to be in these wars.	There was political division, as the ALP opposed the war. Many Australians came to believe that it was an unjust war and demonstrations took place at home opposing Australia's involvement.
All of the soldiers of World War I and most of the soldiers in World War II were volunteers and believed in their cause.	A significant number of the soldiers in Vietnam had been conscripted.
The soldiers of World War I and World War II were welcomed back to Australia.	There was no welcome home for the Vietnam troops until many years later.
World War I and World War II ended with total victory.	The Vietnam War ended as a defeat.
The average age of a soldier in World War I and World War II was 26 years.	The average age of a Vietnam War soldier was 20 years.

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FROM THE SOURCE

The nature of the fighting in Vietnam

source A

Last night was another disastrous night for 5 Battalion. Again another platoon walked into a minefield. I won't go into details but when it was all over, & the casualties evacuated by helicopter, only one man was left standing. There were 28 men in the platoon ... The mines were freshly laid, & they think they may have been old Australian mines. The VC [Vietcong] often do this. They lift our mines & plant them somewhere else, in the path of our troops ... This all took place pretty close to the base, & we could hear the mines going off & one of the fellows reckoned he could hear screams every so often.

National serviceman Peter Groves, 105 Field Battery, Royal Australian Artillery, letter to family, July 1969
(Source: Australian War Memorial, Canberra)

source B

On the morning of 28 February 1970, 'A' Company was deployed on the eastern edge of the Long Hai Hills. Major Vin Murphy sent his 1 Platoon, under the command of Sergeant Bill Hoban, into an ambush position covering a likely enemy withdrawal route. The platoon was equipped with flak jackets in case of a mine blast and had an attached two-man engineer team with a mine detector to clear the route as they moved. Operating the mine detector was demanding and the engineers needed regular breaks to maintain concentration. Progress was very slow and cautious. The platoon moved only 100 metres in an hour.

Lance Corporal Bob D'Arcy later described what happened next. 'One of the engineers detonated the mine. I heard the explosion and went to ground. I think I was shaky and a little groggy. Sergeant Hoban looked at me and fell to the ground dead.

'Private Casey and myself were only 2 metres from the blast. The M16 mine was of the "jumping jack" variety. Once triggered, a small propellant charge lifts the mine into the air, usually about a metre and a half, before the main charge fires and sends fragments over a wide area. Mines were often a lottery of death. Soldiers only a few metres from the blast might escape injury while those some distance away might be killed or wounded. There were cases where M16 mines killed soldiers over 70 metres from the point of blast and wounded at 200 metres.'

D'Arcy and a few others had miraculously survived the blast unscathed. They were faced with a scene of slaughter – seven dead (including one of the engineers) and thirteen wounded, some very seriously, writhing and screaming in agony. Nor could the survivors help the wounded lest in doing so they triggered other mines. Using their bayonets, they carefully prodded the ground to detect other mines as they moved towards their wounded mates. Bringing them help was agonisingly slow.

The next day the survivors of 1 Platoon were taken back to Nui Dat while the remainder of the company stayed on operations. Someone even arranged a few bottles of Bacardi from friends in the SAS and the survivors set about getting drunk.

Bob Hall, quoted in Vietnam Veterans' Newsletter, VVFA, June 2002

source C

Vietnam, to the fighting men there, half a world from home, the name meant many things, and none of them were good. It was a long way from those we loved. It was the closest place to death. It was the place where I lost my best friend. It was a place where we all surely, and without doubt, lost what was left of our boyhood.

Soldiers' Tales: A Collection of True Stories from Aussie Soldiers, Denny Neav (Ed), Big Sky Publishing, 2008

ISBN 9780170347266

source D

English translation

Mines kill. Mines mutilate. Many good people of Phuoc Tuy [the province in Vietnam where Australians were stationed] have saved lives by informing the allied authorities of the location of dangerous mines, booby traps and artillery shells. Remember it could be your child or your friends that is killed by mines. Help the army to protect you and your family. Report all mines, bombs and booby traps to the nearest allied authorities. Your identity will be kept secret, and you will be suitably rewarded.

1 **Why would the Australian troops distribute a poster such as this (Source D)?**

2 **From your reading of these sources, prepare a list of points that will assist your understanding of what the fighting was like in Vietnam.**

Australian War Memorial [RC02802]

An Australian army poster encouraging Vietnamese people to report the existence of mines

The Vietnam veterans

Because the war divided Australia and became an unpopular one, the honour Australia had paid to soldiers who had served in other wars was not given to the Vietnam veterans. For Vietnam veterans there were no celebration parades and very little official recognition. When the war was over, Australia virtually rejected the men who had served there. Years later, the veterans of that war are still fighting to gain recognition for their service on behalf of their country and compensation for some of the physical and psychological damage the war inflicted on them.

Australian War Memorial [ERR/68/0854/VN]

An Australian soldier 'fogging' a Vietnamese village in Phuoc Tuy province. Insecticides, usually DDT, were used to reduce the incidence of malaria.

In the years that followed the war, large numbers of Vietnam veterans found it very hard to return to civilian life. As many as one in five veterans suffered from **post-traumatic stress disorder**, a condition caused by the nature of the fighting or the experiences the soldiers had in Vietnam. This condition made it very hard for many former soldiers to live normal lives. Studies also found that Vietnam veterans had an above-average incidence of some diseases, including head and neck cancer, and there was a higher rate of suicide and alcohol abuse among veterans than in the general community. During the war chemical defoliants had been sprayed over the

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jungles of Vietnam. One of these defoliants was Agent Orange, which was very toxic, and concerns were raised about the effects of the use of it and other chemicals on the health of the veterans.

Veterans

For years the hardship of many Vietnam veterans was ignored by the government. In 1979 the Vietnam Veterans Association was formed. It aimed to provide support for veterans with problems, and to pressure the government to investigate the effects of the herbicides and chemicals, including Agent Orange, used in Vietnam. The government set up an inquiry, but the inquiry found no clear link between Agent Orange and the health of the veterans. The veterans maintained the pressure, and in 1994, more than 20 years after the end of the war, the government finally accepted a number of medical studies and surveys that suggested there was a link between a number of cancers among Vietnam veterans and exposure to chemicals. Many veterans were then able to lodge claims for compensation from the government.

It was only in March 1987, 15 years after the soldiers had come home, that the government supported a Welcome Home Parade for the Vietnam veterans through the streets of Sydney, and in 1992 the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial was opened in Canberra. Australia had finally acknowledged that, regardless of the politics of the Vietnam War, the people who had served in the war had suffered and they deserved help and recognition.

Newspix/John Hart

Members of the 3rd Cavalry Unit Vietnam Association march on St Kilda Road, Melbourne, during the Anzac Day parade in 2005.

FROM THE SOURCE

'Commie' killer or baby killer

source A

Back home you don't publicise the fact that you were in Vietnam, as, in discussing the war, you could either be praised for keeping the 'commies' at bay or accused of being a baby killer. It's a lot easier to avoid the subject. The anti-war movement is beginning to gain momentum; the 'All the way with LBJ' sentiment of a few years earlier is turning sour.

Geoffrey Jones, 3rd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, in Vietnam 1968, reflecting after returning home (Source: Australian War Memorial, Canberra)

Gary McMahon remembers

source B

We went to Vietnam filled with images of good and bad. We listened to stories our fathers and uncles told us, and we had visions of doing our duty for our country, and returning to a welcome thank you from the people back home.

We did our duty. We were young, most in our early twenties, some of us were only nineteen, mainly working class and patriotic. We went because our government told us that to fight in Vietnam was the right thing to do. We were raised on the Anzac legend and images of Aussie diggers triumphing over the evil enemy. None of those images matched the sweat and mud, blood and tears, body count mentality, or the moral confusion we found in South Vietnam. Our government said we were there to contain communism in South-East Asia, and to halt the so-called Domino Effect, before it reached our shores …

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Returning veterans were ignored. Some of us were spat at, called murderer, or baby killer, or asked how come we were stupid enough to go … A lot of us live lives characterised by a great number of medical and psychological problems. Some of us have retreated into a world of disillusionment, anger, grief and guilt. The bitterness and disillusionment comes from anger towards the society that sent us to Vietnam, and then blamed us for the horrors of the war. When we returned most of us never talked about Vietnam, or even denied that we had been there … Some healing has been done in the last few years. At the welcome home parade in Sydney in 1987, many of us had emotional reunions with mates that we hadn't seen since Vietnam. As we marched through Sydney that day … some of us were waving and calling to the crowd, others were quite expressionless and locked away in a world of memories. Many had tears in their eyes that day.

Recollections of Vietnam veteran Gary McMahon

1 **What is post-traumatic stress disorder?**

2 **Prepare a list of the reasons that so many Vietnam veterans were unable to adjust to civilian life after their service in Vietnam.**

3 **These passages contain *facts* and *opinions*. Prepare a list of facts in these extracts that historians could use and a list of opinions which historians would also consider useful.**

Vietnamese refugees

The Vietnam War ended in 1975 when the communist-led North Vietnam finally conquered the south and reunified the country. In the same year the neighbouring state of Cambodia fell to the extreme communist movement called the Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot. As a result of the war and its aftermath, almost two million Indochinese now became refugees.

Luckiest refugees

Vietnamese refugees came to Australia in two ways. They came either as boat people – refugees who risked their lives crossing the sea and who arrived without authority – or as refugees from camps in Asia, who came after they were approved by the Australian authorities. As a direct consequence of the Vietnam War, more than 150 000 Vietnamese refugees were resettled in Australia. Fifty-five thousand of them came as refugees between 1975 and 1982, and a further 95 000 came through family reunion. Today the Vietnamese community is one of the largest groups from a non-English-speaking background in Australia (see also Chapter 7).

Australia's new relationship with Asia

Until World War II Australia had virtually ignored the reality of Asia. Australians saw themselves as an outpost of British civilisation that happened to be on the rim of Asia. Australia's loyalty was to Britain. In 1901 Australia imposed a White Australia policy to keep Asians out, and came to regard particular Asian states as threats to its survival. Until World War II Australia gained some security from the fact that most of Asia was controlled by Britain or by other European powers.

World War II changed everything. Japan, the power traditionally feared by Australia, swept into South-East Asia. The British were defeated in Malaya, Borneo, Singapore and Burma. The French fell in Indochina, the Dutch in the East Indies, and the Americans lost the Philippines. This was a tremendous blow to Western power and prestige. A modern and aggressive Asian country had been victorious over the Western colonial powers.

During the 1950s and 1960s Australia's relations with Asia were influenced by the Cold War and the fear of communism. Australia viewed communist China as the new threat to Asia, and during these two decades Australia fought communist expansion in Korea and communist activity in Malaya and Vietnam.

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The end of the Vietnam War in 1972 marked the start of a new relationship between Australia and Asia. The White Australia policy that had discriminated against Asian people since federation was abolished, and Australia began to accept Asian migrants and political refugees. Australian governments from 1972 recognised that Australia was a vital part of the Asian region, that there were enormous trade opportunities there and that Australia's links to Britain were declining.

After the Vietnam War and the victory of the communists there, the long-held fear of communism began to decline. The Domino Theory of the 1950s and 1960s proved to be wrong and there was no downward thrust of aggressive communism into other Asian states such as Thailand, Malaysia or Indonesia. The old fear of Asia, common for much of the 20th century, was replaced by partnership with Asia based on equality and trust.

Australia began to forge a new relationship with China and with the new Asian states, which were modernising and developing their economies. Within days of the election of the Whitlam Labor government in 1972, Australia officially recognised China, and early in 1973 Australia's first ambassador arrived to take up his post in Beijing. In the same year, Australia also established diplomatic relations with North Vietnam. This would have been unthinkable in the days of the Vietnam War.

The Vietnam War was one of the reasons why, in the latter part of the 20th century, Australia's entire attitude to, and relationship with, Asia began to change. The same Australia that preached White Australia and excluded Asian peoples for much of the century now welcomed Asian people as Australian citizens. By 1985 Asian-born Australians made up two per cent of the population, and by 2005 it was almost seven per cent.

The reality for Australia at the start of the 21st century is that it is a nation of some 20.5 million people on the rim of the Asian continent, which has a population moving towards four billion people (about 60 per cent of the population of the world). Australia is the only western nation on the rim of Asia and, whereas in the past Australia was able to cut itself off from Asia, this is no longer possible. Australia's economy is now firmly linked with Asia's. Whereas once it was Britain that was Australia's most important trading partner, now Japan and China fill that role. Australia has growing economic links with both the advanced and the developing Asian countries, as almost 60 per cent of Australia's exports go to Asia. Australia may not be an Asian country, but its history and progress in the new century are now firmly interlinked with the destiny of modern Asia.

Newspix/Tricia Johnson

A Vietnamese refugee cheers veterans of the Vietnam War at an Anzac Day march in 2004.

HISTORIANS AT WORK: OVER TO YOU

1 Before the Vietnam War there were very few Vietnamese people in Australia. Today they make up a large and valued group in Australian society. Find out more about the Vietnamese in Australia and prepare a multimedia presentation for the class. You may wish to include research into:
   - family structure
   - religious beliefs
   - the challenges that faced people who came as refugees
   - the special challenges facing second-generation (Australian-born) Vietnamese.

2 Prepare a list of questions you would like to ask a member of the Vietnamese community. Make contact with a person from this community, either a person who came as a refugee in the 1970s and 1980s or a second-generation Vietnamese Australian. Interview this person and record the interview on tape. With this oral history, prepare a story for your local newspaper in which you recount this person's experiences.

3 It has been said that many men who fought in Vietnam fought two wars: the war against the enemy in Vietnam and then a long and lonely personal struggle when they came home. Write an essay in which you explain the 'personal struggle' of many veterans. Your essay should try to see the issue from the perspective of a Vietnam veteran. You may wish to consider the type of stress created by the war, the impact of chemicals such as Agent Orange, evidence of health problems faced by many veterans and the lack of recognition by Australian society after the war.

4 Explain how Australia's relationship with Asia changed in the period 1945–75.

Quiz

Crossword

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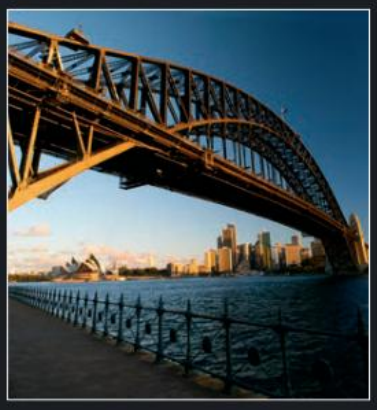

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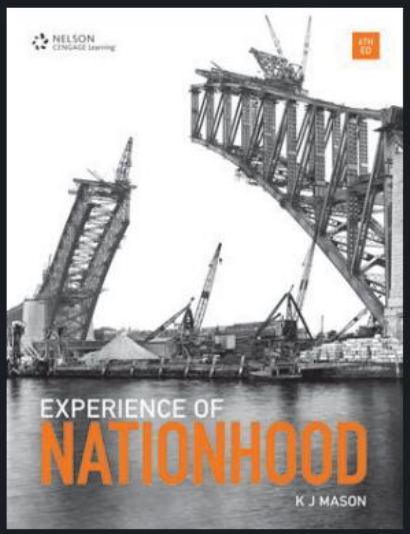

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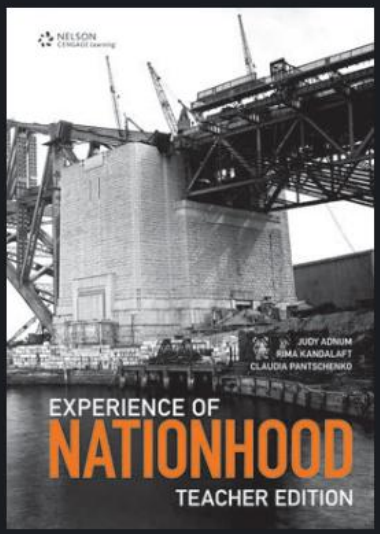

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