

## How the arrival of Europeans from 1788 impacted Aboriginal peoples

### Australian Curriculum Links

Humanities and Social Sciences/7-10 History/Year 9/Historical Knowledge and Understanding/Making a better world?/Movement of peoples (1750-1901)/ACDSEH084

### Australian Curriculum Content Description

Changes in the way of life of a group(s) of people who moved to Australia in this period, such as free settlers on the frontier in Australia.

### Australian Curriculum Elaboration

Describing the impact of this group on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of the region.

### Australians Together Elaborations



**The Wound**



**Our History**



**Why Me?**



**Our Cultures**



**My Response**

### Essential question

In what ways did the arrival of European occupiers change life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?

### Introduction

This topic examines what happened to Aboriginal peoples when Europeans first came to live in Australia in 1788. It provides the opportunity for teachers to explore Aboriginal perspectives on the colonisation of Australia. Students think deeply about the devastating impact of European settlement on Aboriginal communities.

This resource uses the Eora peoples' experiences as a case study, but it can be used as a basis on which to make a specific examination of your location. For example, the activity ideas, such as creating a map to show clans and language groups and the spread of Europeans, can be done anywhere across Australia. A comparable examination can be made for the Torres Strait Islands. However, while perspectives are similar, the circumstances are significantly different, so appropriate facts and information would need to be sourced.

## Glossary

Because this topic examines the early colonisation of Australia, the terminology used refers specifically to Aboriginal peoples.

**Australia's dominant culture:** the views, customs, behaviours and ideas that are, and have traditionally been held, by governments, schools, other institutions, and Australians who have British heritage.

**Clans:** a term that's sometimes used to describe Aboriginal language groups and communities with shared culture.

**Eora Country:** the land on which Sydney now sits. The Eora people comprise of a number of different clans.

**Europeans/British/early settlers/colonisers/occupiers/invaders/convicts/free settlers/First Fleet:** various terms used to describe Europeans who came to live in Australia.

**Frontier Wars:** the organised conflict that occurred between Aboriginal peoples defending their Country and Europeans who wanted to use land for their own purposes.

**Herd immunity:** the resistance to a disease that occurs in a community when enough people have become immune.


**Intergenerational trauma:** the ongoing physical, mental and emotional effects of past violence and injustices.



**Missions and reserves:** places created by the British where surviving Aboriginal peoples were required to live.



**Terra nullius:** a Latin term used in European law meaning 'land with no people'.

**Traditional Custodian:** a term used to describe Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' sense of ownership and connection with their community's traditional lands.

**Treaty:** a formal agreement or settlement between two groups of people.

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
 <p><b>The Wound</b></p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives on the issue</p>	<p><i>It's a good idea to introduce students to Aboriginal perspectives at the beginning of a study to ensure they are central to the topic.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Europeans</b> invaded and considered Australia falsely to be <b>terra nullius</b>, which denied humanity to Aboriginal peoples. The <b>Traditional Custodian</b> relationship to land was ignored. This was an act of invasion similar to other invasions in world history.</li><li>• The <b>colonisers</b> had no understanding of, or respect for Aboriginal peoples on their traditional lands, and disregarded sacred Aboriginal sites and places of importance for sourcing food and materials.</li><li>• In the early years, the colonisers brought diseases that killed what's generally estimated to be at least half of all Aboriginal peoples in south-eastern Australia. Aboriginal peoples were murdered, executed, massacred and violated while defending their land and cultures.</li><li>• Aboriginal peoples waged <b>Frontier Wars</b> to defend their land. These Frontier Wars, and the people who fought in them, should be acknowledged and commemorated.</li></ul>	<p><b>Class discussion point or short writing task</b></p> <p>It has been said, "In a time of war, it's children who suffer the most".</p> <p>Do you agree?</p> <p>What impact would the smallpox epidemic and the Frontier Wars have had on children who experienced and survived them after they grew up and became adults?</p> <p>How might it have shaped their approach to life?</p> <p>How might it have led to <b>intergenerational trauma</b>?</p> <p><b>Class discussion point or short writing task</b></p> <p>Is it reasonable to say that "the <b>British</b> began to invade Australia in 1788" in the same way that it's said, "the Vikings began to invade Britain in AD793"?</p> <p>Why might there be differing views about the reasonableness of the above statement?</p>

	Teacher guidance	Ideas for student activities
 <p><b>Our History</b></p> <p>A background to the issue (in the Sydney area)</p>	<p><i>Below is a summary of the information on the student handout.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Europeans claimed Australia without making a <b>treaty</b> with the Traditional Owners, as they considered it an empty land.</li> <li>• The <b>First Fleet</b> were under orders to minimise harm to Aboriginal peoples.</li> <li>• Europeans introduced a wave of diseases that killed more than half of Aboriginal peoples in south-eastern Australia.</li> <li>• As a result, many Aboriginal communities lost much of their knowledge, culture and language.</li> <li>• <b>Eora Country</b> was cleared, fauna was depleted, and the Eora people faced food shortages.</li> <li>• Eora peoples waged Frontier Wars to defend their land and to stop Europeans building farms and settlements.</li> <li>• Aboriginal peoples who survived the epidemics and Frontier Wars were forcibly moved away from their ancestral lands, contributing further to alienation of language, culture, knowledge systems and knowledge of Country.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Mapping task</b></p> <p>Use a blank map of the Sydney area and online resources to show the traditional lands and territories of individual clans of the Eora language group, including the Darug, the Gadigal and the Dharawal. Create a code to distinguish between the main economies (food sources) of the <b>clans</b>. Create a series of overlay maps that show the increasing size of Sydney town over the first 30 years for example.</p> <p><b>Research and organising of information task</b></p> <p>Create a flow chart that explains the impact of Europeans on Eora peoples and their food sources. Include as much detail as you can. For example, you might have different strands for ‘farming’ or ‘diseases’. What were the different consequences of each?</p>
 <p><b>Why Me?</b></p> <p>Why am I learning this? What do I need to know to understand the issues?</p>	<p><i>This section focuses on student activities that promote an in-depth understanding of the topic.</i></p> <p>The examination of what happened in Eora Country can be used to explore and understand the experience of Aboriginal communities in your local area. Create a list of sources that relate to the invasion and dispossession of the Traditional Custodians of the land on which your school sits, for students to examine.</p> <p>Explore the following resources to improve your knowledge and your students’ knowledge about the topic.</p> <p><b>Text resource</b></p> <p>Perkins, R &amp; Langton, M 2008, <i>First Australians</i>, The Miegunyah Press, Melbourne</p> <p><b>Web resources</b></p> <p>This summary of the cumulative impact of colonisation post-1788 provides information and evidence that helps the reader understand intergenerational trauma. <a href="https://www.australianstogether.org.au/discover/australian-history/get-over-it/">https://www.australianstogether.org.au/discover/australian-history/get-over-it/</a></p> <p>The Australian Law Reform Commission provides a succinct overview of the experiences and consequences of contact between the British and Aboriginal nations. The language is too complex for most Year 9s, although it may be used for an activity such as note-taking or highlighting relevant points. <a href="https://www.alrc.gov.au/publications/3.%20Aboriginal%20Societies%3A%20The%20Experience%20of%20Contact/impacts-settlement-aboriginal-people">https://www.alrc.gov.au/publications/3.%20Aboriginal%20Societies%3A%20The%20Experience%20of%20Contact/impacts-settlement-aboriginal-people</a></p>	<p><b>Class discussion point or short writing task</b></p> <p>Describe an Aboriginal perspective on this topic.</p> <p>Do you agree? Why/why not?</p> <p><b>Recall or reflection task</b></p> <p>List three events from history that help us understand how the Aboriginal perspective on this topic came about.</p> <p><b>Note-taking and summarising task</b></p> <p>Watch a video such as <i>First Australians</i>. Take notes. Write a summary of the impacts experienced by Aboriginal people as a result of colonisation.</p> <p><b>Comparative analysis task</b></p> <p>Read two primary source documents written by British people about Aboriginal peoples. Identify and list assumptions made about Aboriginal peoples that contributed to their dispossession.</p>

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	<p>This article lists the changing nature of contact in the Sydney area over the first few years. It would be useful for a timeline activity, or to create a flowchart showing the intended and unintended consequences of dispossession on the Eora peoples.  <a href="https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/first-encounters-and-frontier-conflict">https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/articles/first-encounters-and-frontier-conflict</a></p> <p>The first episode of <i>First Australians</i> video series details the interactions between the First Fleet and the Eora peoples. Students could take notes using a modified 'SHEEP' table, identifying the impacts of colonisation on the Eora peoples (social impacts, cultural impacts, economic impacts, environmental impacts, political impacts). <a href="http://www.sbs.com.au/firstaustralians/">http://www.sbs.com.au/firstaustralians/</a></p>	<p><b>Timeline task</b>  Using a set of websites provided by your teacher, create a timeline that follows the impact of British colonisation on Aboriginal peoples in your area from arrival until now. You can use the stages of history on this webpage for your timeline:  <a href="https://australianstogether.org.au/discover/australian-history/get-over-it/">https://australianstogether.org.au/discover/australian-history/get-over-it/</a></p>
 <p><b>Our Cultures</b></p> <p>Are there any ways that more knowledge of Indigenous cultures can help broaden our understanding of this topic?</p>	<p><i>When teaching content relating to Aboriginal peoples, teachers need to spend time engaging in a positive and thoughtful examination of culture and knowledge systems.</i></p> <p>Knowing about Indigenous cultures and knowledge systems helps us understand why colonisation had such a devastating and far-reaching impact on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It helps all Australians understand why Aboriginal perspectives on colonisation are different to the traditional perspective of <b>Australia's dominant culture</b>.</p> <p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have used traditional knowledge and systems to maintain ecosystems and cultivate land sustainably for many thousands of years. The climate and natural environment provided food, shelter, clean water and medical needs. This changed drastically after European occupation.</p> <p>Aboriginal and Western views on the importance of land and land ownership are completely different. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples believe they belong to the land and have custodial ties and responsibilities, whereas the Western view is that land is something that an individual can buy and sell, much like other goods.</p>	<p><b>Research task</b>  Research the ways that Aboriginal communities are recovering traditional knowledge, language and information about cultural practices. Write a list of the different sources that have been useful for this search.</p> <p><b>Reflection and groupwork task</b>  What's your opinion on the different approaches to land ownership? Which is better for people, and which is better for the environment? In a group, come up with your own system of land ownership that blends the two ideas. Define it in a paragraph to report back to the class.</p>
 <p><b>My Response</b></p> <p>How does this lesson help us do our part to work towards justice and reconciliation?</p>	<p><i>This Key Idea concludes the unit and asks students to consider how they would reframe the situation in Australia to bring about justice and equality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are many ways to respond, including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learning different perspectives and facts about colonisation in Australia from 1788 onwards.</li> <li>• Checking for ways that historical texts and contemporary media sources talk about colonisation and the ongoing effects for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Always consider whether Aboriginal perspectives have been included.</li> <li>• Discussing with others how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have experienced the dispossession of land, violence, and continue to experience harms as a consequence of this history.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Class discussion point or writing task</b>  The arrival of Europeans in 1788 is officially celebrated and commemorated in Australia as a positive event in our nation. How can we bring together the two perspectives?</p> <p><b>Class discussion point or writing task</b>  What's your opinion on how Australia should think about and remember the arrival of Europeans in 1788?</p> <p><b>Research and writing task or project</b>  Write your own version of the events of 1788 that blends the experiences of Europeans and the experiences of Aboriginal peoples.</p>

	<b>Teacher guidance</b>	<b>Ideas for student activities</b>
<b>Other resources</b>	<p>This page gives historical details about the way that smallpox affected Aboriginal peoples. <a href="http://www.myplace.edu.au/decades_timeline/1780/decade_landing_22.html?tabRank=3&amp;subTabRank=2">http://www.myplace.edu.au/decades_timeline/1780/decade_landing_22.html?tabRank=3&amp;subTabRank=2</a></p> <p>This page examines historical facts and debates about how and why the smallpox epidemic occurred. <a href="http://www.ffghs.org.au/page8.php">http://www.ffghs.org.au/page8.php</a></p>	