

History 3

Chapter 4 — Skills: interpreting and communicating the past

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What changed and what stayed the same

History 3 · Chapter 4 · Section 4A

In this section we look at one real place: the area around **Port Jackson**, where the first British colony began in 1788. You met this story in 2A and 2B. Here we find what **changed** and what **stayed the same**. Then you do the same for a place in your own community.

1. The big idea — two words historians use

Historians are people who study the past. They sort what they find into two baskets.

- **Change** — when something becomes different.
- **Continuity** — the things that stay the same, or keep going, over time.

Historians also ask how fast a change happened.

- **Sudden** — quick, all at once.
- **Gradual** — slow, little by little.

Words we use in this section

continuity	the things that stay the same, or keep going, over time
change	when something becomes different
gradual	happening slowly, little by little
sudden	happening quickly, all at once
colony	a new settlement started by people from another country
population	all the people living in a place
source	something that helps us find out about the past

These words are defined here the first time they are used.

Card with the key words for this section: continuity, change, gradual, sudden, colony, population and source, each with a short meaning

2. A historian's question set

To find change and continuity in a place, historians ask a set of five questions. These are the questions used to look at the start of the colony.

A historian's question set

Q1 Why did the colonists choose this place?

Why did they pick this place?

Q2 Where did the colonists sail from?

Where did they travel from?

Q3 What changes happened in the area?

What became different?

Q4 Were the changes slow or quick?

Did change happen slowly, or all at once?

Q5 What things stayed the same?

What did not change?

Historians ask these questions to find continuity and change.

Five question cards: why the colonists chose this place, where they sailed from, what changes happened in the area, whether the changes were slow or quick, and what things stayed the same — each card has a kid-friendly gloss

3. Worked example 1 — the Port Jackson area

Let's use the five questions on a real place. Every fact below is real and dated.

Why did the colonists choose this place? The ships first went to Botany Bay. The soil was poor and there was little fresh water. So they moved to Port Jackson. It had good, safe water for ships and fresh water close by.

Where did the colonists sail from? From Britain. The First Fleet — 11 ships and more than 1,400 people — left England in 1787 and arrived in January 1788. Some were **convicts** (people sent from Britain as a punishment). Some were soldiers, or people with colony jobs.

What changes happened in the area? Tents went up. Trees came down. A farm started at Farm Cove in 1788. In 1791, James Ruse, a convict from Cornwall, became the first person given land of his own to farm, at Rose Hill.

Were the changes slow or quick? Both. The arrival of the ships was **sudden** — 11 ships in a few days. The farms and buildings growing was **gradual** — it took years.

What things stayed the same? The harbour, the hills and the rivers.

Worked example 1 — the area around Port Jackson after January 1788

What changed? What stayed the same?

CHANGED	STAYED THE SAME
People arrived: the First Fleet came in January 1788 (11 ships, more than 1,400 people).	The harbour of Port Jackson.
Tents and huts were built near Sydney Cove.	The hills around the water.
Trees were cleared for wood, gardens and a farm.	The rivers that flow into the harbour.
The colony's first farm was started at Farm Cove.	The seasons, year after year.

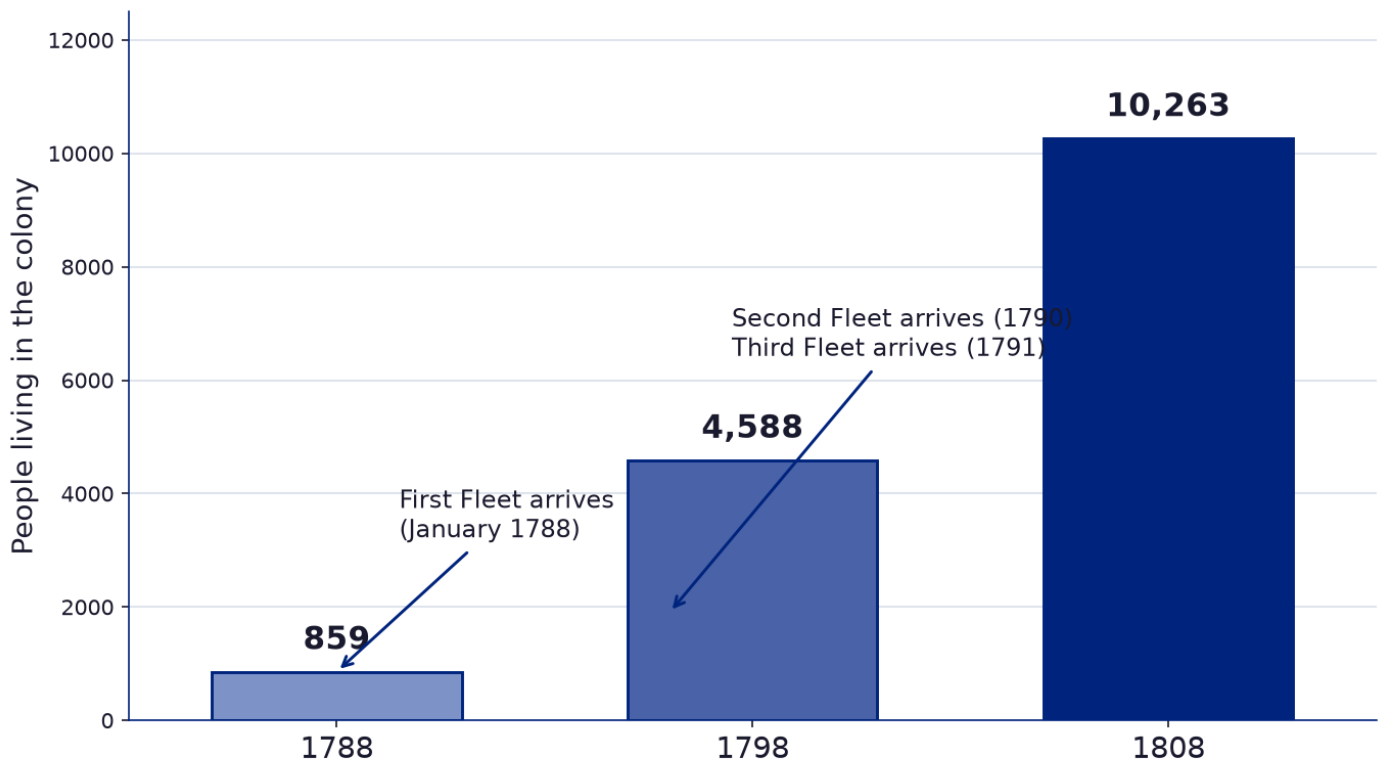
Every fact here is real and dated. Each one came from a source.

Worked example table for the Port Jackson area after January 1788, with two boxes: Changed (people arrived with the First Fleet; tents and huts were built; trees were cleared; the first farm at Farm Cove) and Stayed the same (the harbour, the hills, the rivers, the seasons)

4. Worked example 2 — counting the people

The number of people living in a place is called its **population**. Historians count it over time to see change and continuity.

How did the population of the colony change?



Figures: Australian Bureau of Statistics (checked 24 August 2026).

Bar chart titled *How did the population of the colony change?* Three bars: 859 people in 1788, 4,588 in 1798, 10,263 in 1808, with notes that the First Fleet arrived in January 1788 and the Second Fleet and Third Fleet arrived in 1790 and 1791

Look at the chart.

- In 1788 the population was **859**.
- In 1798 it was **4,588**.
- In 1808 it was **10,263**.

The pattern of the change: more people, then more again. The big jumps came when ships arrived — the First Fleet (1788), the Second Fleet (1790) and the Third Fleet (1791). Between those ship arrivals, the growth was slower.

Now describe it. Historians use sentence starters like these.

Sentence starters for describing continuity and change

1. Between _____ and _____, the number of people _____.

2. One change was _____.

3. One thing that stayed the same was _____.

4. The change was gradual / sudden because _____.

5. We know this because the source shows _____.

Pick the starters you need. Fill the gaps with your own facts and dates.

Five sentence starters: Between _____ and _____, the number of people _____. One change was _____. One thing that stayed the same was _____. The change was gradual or sudden because _____. We know this because the source shows _____.

A model answer:

Between 1788 and 1808, the number of people went up a lot. One change was that more and more ships brought people from Britain. The big jumps were sudden, because a whole group of ships could land in a few days. We know this because the chart shows 859 people in 1788 and 10,263 in 1808.

5. What the land looked like — pictures and letters from the time

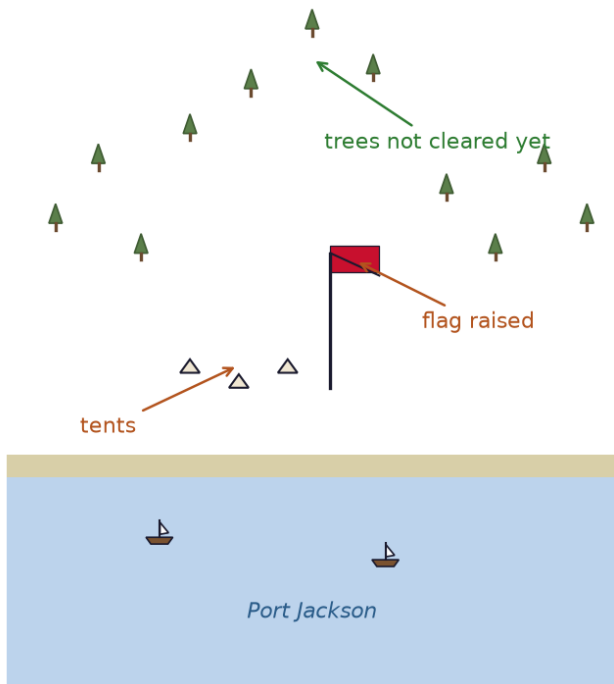
How do we know about these changes? People at the time made things we can still look at today: drawings, paintings, diaries and letters. We call these **sources** — things that help us find out about the past.

- Thomas Watling could draw. He was sent to the colony as a convict and arrived in 1792. In 1794 he made a picture of Sydney Cove from the water side. It shows the houses, the ships and the land.
- Governor Arthur Phillip wrote letters about the place. (*Teacher reads from his letter to Lord Sydney, 15 May 1788: he had the satisfaction of finding the finest harbour in the world.*)

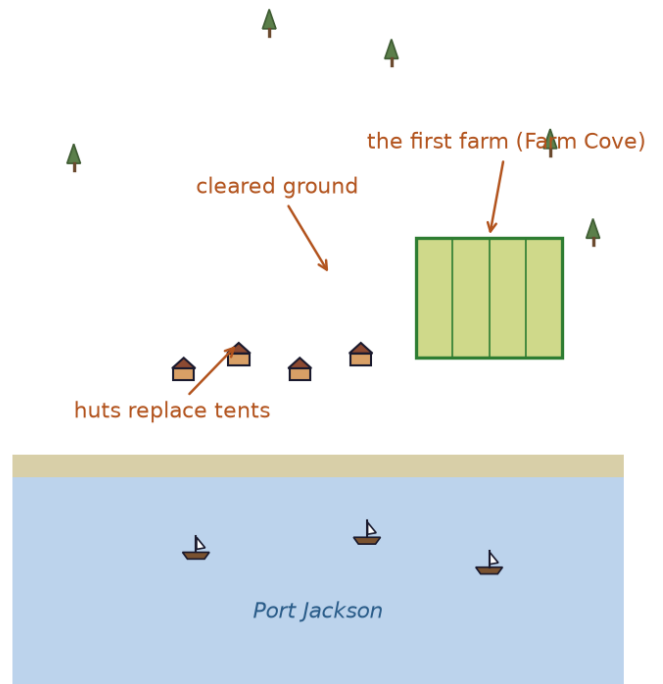
Sources like these let us see the changes in the land: trees cut down, tents turned into huts, the first farm — and the same harbour, still there.

One place, then and later — what changed? What stayed the same?

Sydney Cove in 1788



Sydney Cove about 1792



The harbour, hills and rivers stayed the same. This is a model drawing made for this book — not a picture from the past.

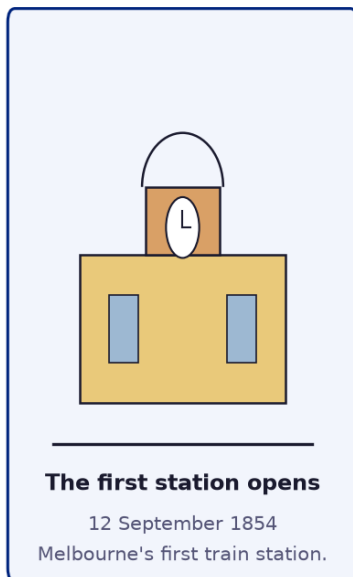
Model drawing in two panels, Sydney Cove in 1788 (tents, a flag, many trees, ships in the harbour) and about 1792 (huts, the first farm at Farm Cove, cleared ground, fewer trees), with the harbour the same in both

6. The same idea at home — your community

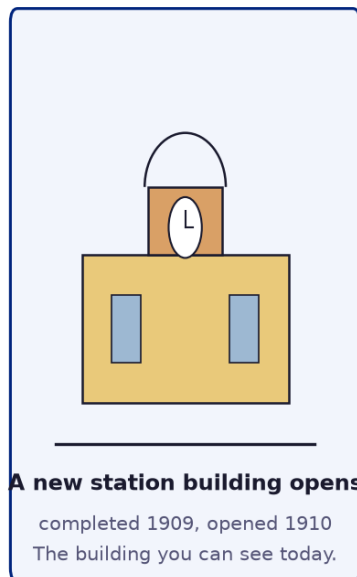
The same two words work for **your** community.

One place in a community — Flinders Street Station, Melbourne

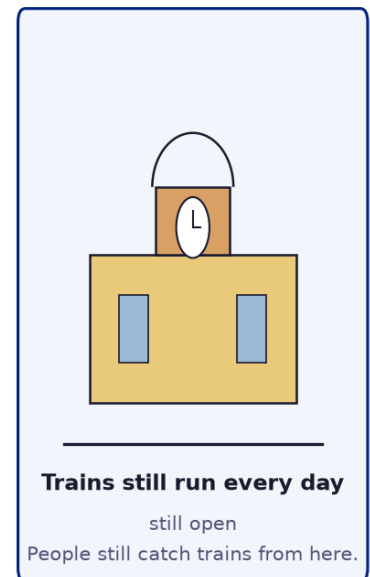
1854



1910



Today



The station stayed part of the community (continuity). The building changed over time (change). Dates checked 24 August 2026.

Three cards about Flinders Street Station, Melbourne: 1854, the first station opens on 12 September 1854; 1910, the station building used today opens; today, trains still run every day

Flinders Street Station, Melbourne: the first station opened on 12 September 1854. The big station building you can see today opened in 1910. Trains still run from there every day.

- Change: the building.
- Continuity: a station at that spot, trains every day.

Practice tasks — with help

T1. Write C (changed) or S (stayed the same) next to each fact about the Port Jackson area after January 1788.

- Tents went up where there were no tents before.
- The harbour water.
- Trees were cut down for wood.
- The hills around the water.
- A farm was started at Farm Cove.

T2. Put these events in time order. Write 1, 2, 3, 4.

- James Ruse is given land of his own to farm at Rose Hill.
- The first farm starts at Farm Cove.
- The ships move from Botany Bay to Port Jackson.
- The First Fleet arrives at Botany Bay.

Then: were events (c) and (d) sudden or gradual?

T3. Read the population chart.

- (a) How many people lived in the colony in 1788?
- (b) How many lived there in 1798?
- (c) Did the number go up or down between 1798 and 1808?
- (d) Name one group of ships that brought more people.

T4. Use the sentence starters to write three sentences about the Port Jackson area: one about change, one about what stayed the same, and one about gradual or sudden. Word bank: grew · went up · stayed the same · still · harbour · people · ships · farms.

T5. Write **S** (sudden) or **G** (gradual).

- (a) The First Fleet arriving — 11 ships in a few days, January 1788.
- (b) Trees being cut down around Sydney Cove over four years.
- (c) The Second Fleet landing in June 1790.
- (d) Farms starting one by one between 1788 and 1791.

T6. With a teacher or family member, pick one place in your community — a street, a park, a shop, a station. Answer the five questions from section 2 about your place. Write your answers in a table.

Practice tasks — on your own

T7. In 3–4 sentences, describe one change and one thing that stayed the same in the Port Jackson area between 1788 and 1792. Use at least two dates. Then tick the checklist at the end of this section.

T8. “*The population of the colony grew a lot between 1788 and 1808.*” Do you agree? Give two pieces of evidence from the chart.

T9. Pick one place in your community. Describe one change, one thing that stayed the same, and whether the change was gradual or sudden. Say how you know.

Source task — look at one, listen to one

(Teacher: show Thomas Watling’s 1794 view of Sydney Cove in class — the State Library of New South Wales holds it and shows it online — and read Governor Phillip’s words aloud. The student’s job is to look and listen, then answer.)

Source task — look at one source, listen to another

LOOK

A picture made at the time:

Thomas Watling,
'A direct north general view
of Sydney Cove', 1794

Kept at: Dixon Gallery,
State Library of New South Wales

Made about six years after
the First Fleet arrived.

Look for buildings, the water,
and the land.

LISTEN

Words written at the time,
read to you by your teacher:

Governor Arthur Phillip,
letter to Lord Sydney,
15 May 1788:

*'...had the satisfaction of
finding the finest Harbour
in the World'*

Listen for why he liked
this place.

1. What is one change you can see or hear about?
2. What is one thing that stayed the same?
3. How do you know? Point to your evidence.

Source task card: LOOK — Thomas Watling, 'A direct north general view of Sydney Cove', 1794, kept at the Dixon Gallery, State Library of New South Wales; LISTEN — Governor Arthur Phillip, letter to Lord Sydney, 15 May 1788; and three questions to answer

Answer the three questions on the card:

1. What is one change you can see or hear about?
2. What is one thing that stayed the same?
3. How do you know? Point to your evidence.

Before you finish, check your work

☐

I named something that changed.

☐

I named something that stayed the same.

☐

I said if the change was gradual or sudden.

☐

I used at least one date.

☐

I named the source that gave me my evidence.

Tick each box. If one is not ticked yet, you know what to add.

Checklist card: I named something that changed; I named something that stayed the same; I said if the change was gradual or sudden; I used at least one date; I named the source that gave me my evidence

Answers

T1. (a) C. (b) S. (c) C. (d) S. (e) C.

T2. Order: (d) 1, (c) 2, (b) 3, (a) 4. Events (c) and (d) were sudden.

T3. (a) 859. (b) 4,588. (c) Up. (d) The First Fleet (or the Second or Third Fleet).

T4. Answers will be different. Check that each sentence uses one starter and one real fact.

T5. (a) S. (b) G. (c) S. (d) G.

T6. Answers will be different. Check that all five questions are answered.

T7. Check for one change, one thing that stayed the same, and two dates. Example: “In 1788, tents went up at Sydney Cove. By 1791, a farm was growing at Rose Hill. The harbour stayed the same.”

T8. Agree. The chart shows 859 people in 1788 and 10,263 people in 1808 — more than ten times as many.

T9. Answers will be different. Check for one change, one thing that stayed the same, and a call about gradual or sudden, with a reason.

Source task. Answers will be different. Check for one change, one thing that stayed the same, and a named source.

Teacher note (not student text)

Curriculum: VC2HH4S06 (code only; wording not reproduced). Draws on VC2HH4S06.E01 (minus the question excluded at §2A), .E03, .E04. VC2HH4S06.E02 excluded entire (§2A); all ids retained as linkage keys per TOC D7.

Exclusions honoured: no First Nations material is taught or assessed here. The §2A-excluded .E01 question (about who lived in the area first) and the whole of .E02 are absent; the “Gadigal” place-naming in VC2HH4S06.E01 is dropped with it, and the colony questions are posed about the Port Jackson/Sydney area (per the 2A precedent in §2A).

Sources (all checked 24 August 2026): First Fleet ship and people counts and dates — Wikipedia, *First Fleet*; the move from Botany Bay to Port Jackson and its reasons, and Phillip’s harbour words — Wikipedia, *Arthur Phillip* and *Port Jackson* (letter to Lord Sydney, 15 May 1788, held at The National Archives (UK), Colonial Office papers CO 201); Second Fleet — Wikipedia, *Second Fleet (Australia)*; Third Fleet — Wikipedia, *Third Fleet (Australia)*; population figures 859 (1788), 4,588 (1798), 10,263 (1808) — Australian Bureau of Statistics long-run historical population series, as published in the “Settlement–Federation” table of Wikipedia, *Demographics of Australia*; Farm Cove first farm — Wikipedia, *Farm Cove, New South Wales*; James Ruse — Wikipedia, *James Ruse*; Thomas Watling and his 1794 view of Sydney Cove — Wikipedia, *Thomas Watling* (Dixson Gallery, State Library of New South Wales); Flinders Street Station dates — Wikipedia, *Flinders Street railway station*.

Vocabulary gate exemptions (WORD_LEVEL_POLICY Rule 2, D2): (1) the curriculum’s own codes and ids in this block; (2) subject terminology defined at first use (historian, continuity, change, gradual, sudden, colony/settlement, population, source, convict, evidence, pattern); (3) proper nouns and numerals. Primary- source wording (Phillip’s letter) is teacher-read-aloud per the TOC §3 reading calibration (“every source that exceeds the ceiling is read aloud by the teacher”) and is tagged as such on the source card.

Causes and consequences: why change happens

VC2HH4S07 · Historical Concepts and Skills: Causes and consequences · Draws on .E01 .E02 .E03 · Links to 1A (change in our local community) and 2A (why Britain started a colony in Australia).

History Level 3 · Chapter 4 – Skills: interpreting and communicating the past · Section 4B

Owns: VC2HH4S07 (code only; wording not reproduced)

Draws on: VC2HH4S07.E01 .E02 .E03 (linkage keys per D7, VCAA export order; codes only, wording not reproduced)

Pitch: Level 3, the lower year of the Levels 3-4 band (TOC D1). One teaching sequence; two worked examples built from real, dated, checkable referents (D4, D9); six scaffolded tasks, three unscaffolded tasks and one short source task led by a picture and a letter read aloud (TOC volume note). Chapters 3-4 carry the most doing and the least prose.

D3 notes: E02 is taught with the 1A boundary-note example of migration (gold-rush-era Chinese miners at Bendigo, Victoria – real, dated, non-First Nations). E03's elaboration names Gadigal Country (Sydney); per CONTENT_POLICY Rule 1 and the 2A treatment of acknowledgement place-naming, the section teaches the geography only – the first British colony at Sydney (Port Jackson) – and teaches nothing about those Peoples. Consequences of early colonisation are confined to convicts, marines, officials, free colonists and the environment; the K09 sentence of the band achievement standard is not attainable through this book (TOC §1 note).

Gate: vocabulary ceiling Yr3 (TOC D2); the curriculum's own codes and ids, subject terms defined at first use, and proper nouns are exempt (WORD_LEVEL_POLICY Rule 2). Figure labels held at the same level.

Every change has a story. One part tells us **why** it happened. One part tells us **what happened next**. In this section you will learn to tell both parts.

Teacher note: this section starts its big idea from the beginning and does not lean on any earlier book (TOC D1). At Foundation to Level 2, students identify causes and consequences (VC2HH2S06); here they move to describing them (TOC §4). Any source above the reading ceiling is read aloud by the teacher; the student's task is to think about the source, not to read it alone.

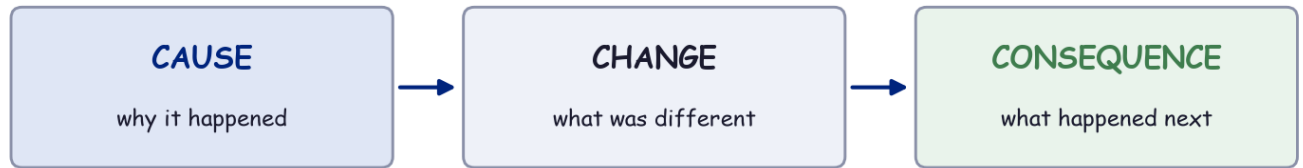
Our learning

A **cause** is why something happened. A **consequence** is what happened next, because of it. The **change** sits between them. The change is the thing that became different.

Students learn to *describe what caused a change, and what consequences followed*. But what do *cause* and *consequence* mean? This section uses the meanings above, and every task here can be answered with them alone.

To **describe** a cause or a consequence is to tell more about it, not just point at it. Say *what* it was, *how* it worked, and *who* or *what* it changed. That is what *describe* means in history.

Every change has a cause and a consequence



History uses the same idea. In this section, you use it on true stories from the past.

Three boxes in a row: cause, change, consequence. Below them, a short story about a school bell.

Three more things to know:

1. **One event can have more than one cause.** It can have more than one consequence too.
2. **Consequences can be good or hard.** Some help people. Some make life hard for people.
3. **History words.** This section uses some history words. The word wall defines each one the first time it is used.

Words we use in this section

cause	why something happened
consequence	what happened next, because of the change
change	when something is not the same as before
describe	to tell more about something — what, how and why
migration	when many people move to a new place to live
colony	a far-away place that a country starts and rules
convict	a person sent to a colony as punishment
governor	the man in charge of a colony
marines	soldiers who sailed with the First Fleet
fishbone diagram	a way to sort the causes and consequences of a change

These words are defined here the first time they are used.

A word wall with ten history words and their meanings.

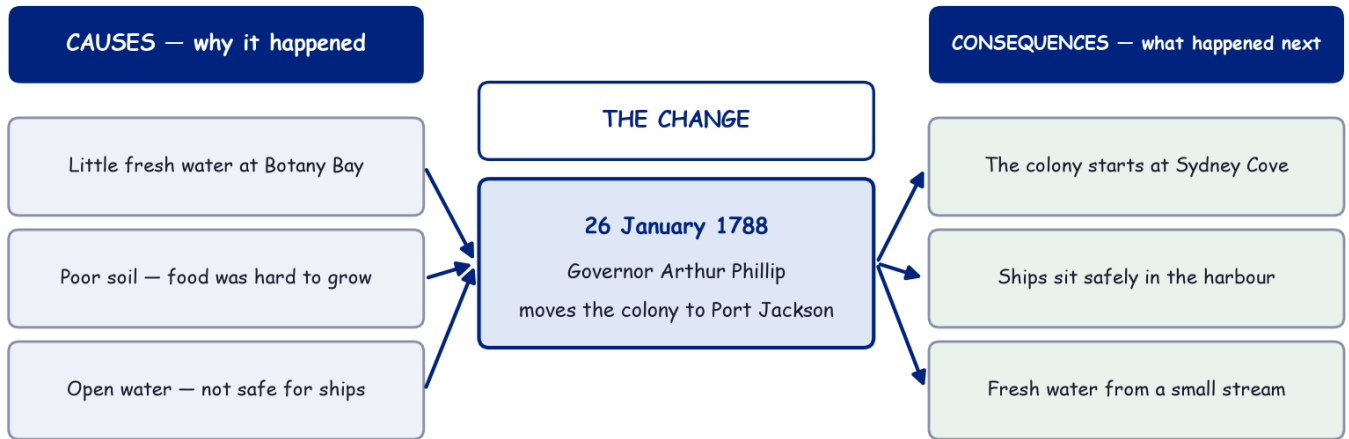
Worked example 1 — with help

This example uses true, dated facts from the story told in Chapter 2.

In 1787, Britain sent eleven ships to start a colony far away. The ships are called the **First Fleet**. They carried about 1,420 people — **convicts** (people sent to a colony as punishment), **marines** (soldiers), officers and ship crews. Captain Arthur Phillip led them.

The ships reached Botany Bay on 18 January 1788. But Governor Phillip found three big problems there. So on 26 January 1788 he moved everyone north to Port Jackson. The colony started at Sydney Cove.

Why did the colony move to Port Jackson?



One event can have more than one cause, and more than one consequence.

Facts from 1788. The people in the colony needed fresh water, safe ships and soil to grow food.

A diagram of causes and consequences for the move from Botany Bay to Port Jackson in January 1788. Three causes on the left, the change in the middle, three consequences on the right.

What we say	The kind of story part
Botany Bay had little fresh water.	a cause
Phillip moved the colony to Port Jackson.	the change
Ships sat safely in the new harbour.	a consequence

Now we describe, not just point. Say it in full sentences:

One cause of the move was that Botany Bay had very little fresh water, and people cannot live without water. Because of that, Governor Phillip looked for a better place. One consequence was that the ships sat safely in the new harbour, so the colony could get food and people by sea.

Worked example 2 — with help

How migration causes change in a local community.

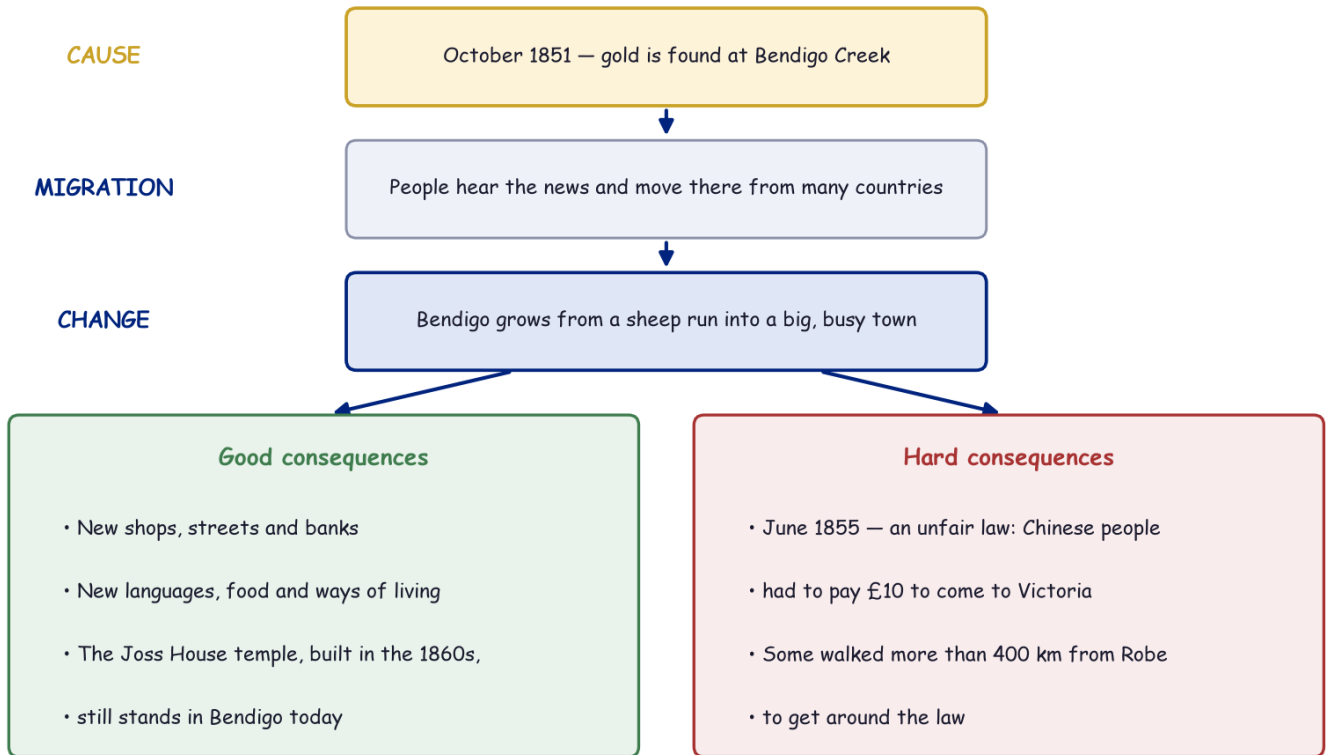
Migration is when many people move to a new place to live. Migration is a big cause of change. Here is a true story from Victoria.

Gold was found at Bendigo Creek in October 1851. People heard the news and moved there from many countries — Britain, Europe, America and China. In ten years, the people living in Victoria grew from 75,000 to 500,000.

Bendigo changed from a sheep run into a big, busy town. New streets, shops and banks grew because of the people who moved there. By 1856, almost a quarter of the diggers at Bendigo were Chinese. In the 1860s they built the Joss House temple. It still stands in Bendigo today.

But some consequences were hard. In June 1855 the government in Victoria made an unfair law. Chinese people had to pay £10 to come to Victoria, and other people did not. Some Chinese diggers landed at Robe in South Australia and walked more than 400 km to get around the law.

Migration changed a town: the Bendigo story



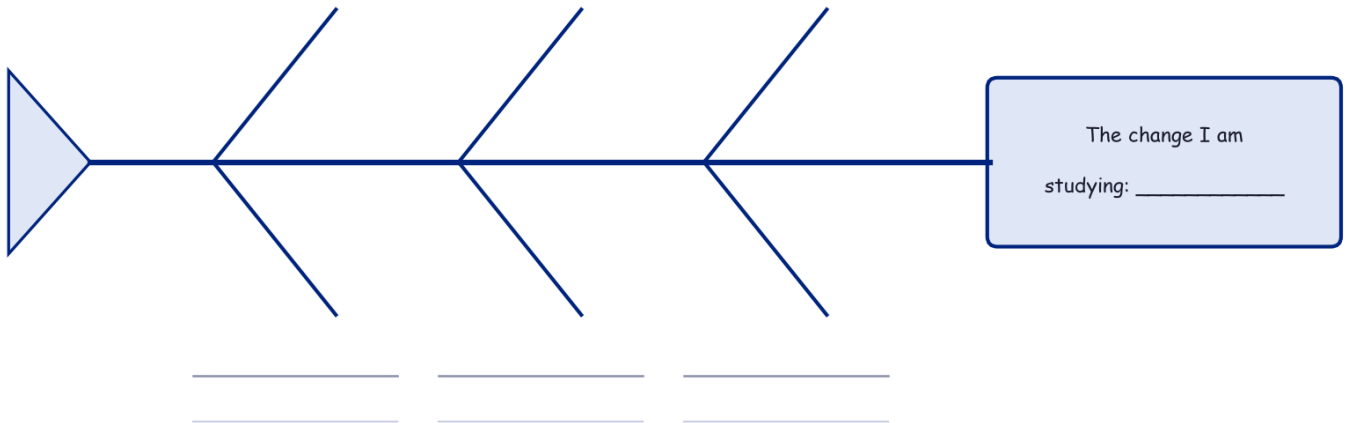
A chain diagram of the Bendigo story: gold found in 1851, people move there, the town grows, then good and hard consequences.

Fishbone diagrams

A **fishbone diagram** sorts a change's causes and consequences on one picture. The change is the fish's head. The causes sit on the top bones. The consequences sit on the bottom bones.

My fishbone diagram

CAUSES — why it happened



CONSEQUENCES — what happened next

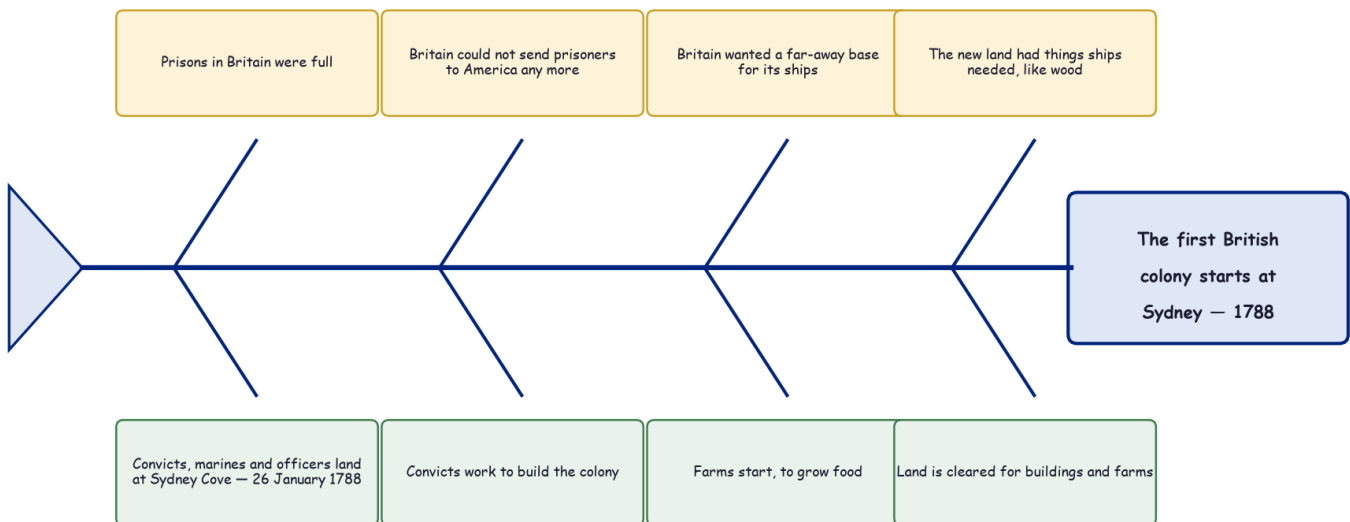
Put each cause on a top bone. Put each consequence on a bottom bone.

A blank fishbone diagram to fill in. Causes go on the top bones, consequences on the bottom bones, the change in the head box.

Here is a model fishbone. It is about the start of the first British colony — the same change as Worked example 1.

Model: why did the first British colony start, and what happened?

CAUSES — why it happened



CONSEQUENCES — what happened next

A fishbone diagram about the start of the first British colony at Sydney in 1788, with four causes on top and four consequences below.

Look at the model. Four causes on the top bones, four consequences on the bottom bones, one head. Each bone is short and clear.

Practice questions

With help

Q1. Join each word to its meaning.

Word	Meaning
cause	what happened next, because of the change
consequence	when something is not the same as before
change	why something happened

Q2. Label each sentence about Worked example 1: *cause*, *change* or *consequence*.

1. Botany Bay had poor soil, so food was hard to grow.
2. On 26 January 1788, Phillip moved the colony to Port Jackson.
3. People in the colony got fresh water from a small stream.

Q3. Finish these sentences about Worked example 1. The sentence starters picture can help.

1. One cause of the move was _____.
2. One consequence of the move was _____.

Sentence starters to help you describe

One cause of _____ was _____.

Because _____, _____.

This changed _____.

One consequence was _____.

This was good (or hard) for _____ because _____.

Use these when you speak or write about a change.

Sentence starters to help finish the sentences: One cause of the move was, and One consequence of the move was.

Q4. Sort these consequences of the Bendigo story into *good* or *hard*.

1. Bendigo grew new shops, streets and banks.
2. An unfair law made Chinese people pay £10.
3. The Joss House temple was built, and it still stands today.
4. Some diggers walked more than 400 km from Robe.

Q5. Look at the model fishbone about the first British colony.

1. How many causes are on the top bones?
2. Write one cause in your own words.
3. Write one consequence in your own words.

Q6. Put the words in order to make true sentences.

1. were / Prisons / full / Britain / in /.
2. moved / colony / Phillip / the / Governor / Jackson / to / Port /.

On your own

Q7. Draw a causes and consequences diagram, like the picture in Worked example 1. Pick one change at your school or in your town — a new building, a new shop, a new park. Show one cause, the change and two consequences.

Q8. Fill in the blank fishbone. Pick a change you know about — people moving to a new town is a good one. Two causes on the top bones, two consequences on the bottom bones.

Q9. Ask your teacher or a family member about one change in your local community. Then describe it: two causes and two consequences, in full sentences.

Source time — a real letter from 1788

A **source** is something that helps us find out about the past. This letter is a source. Your teacher reads it. You look at the picture and think.

A real letter from 1788 — read by your teacher

"We got into Port Jackson early in the
afternoon ... the finest harbour in the world."

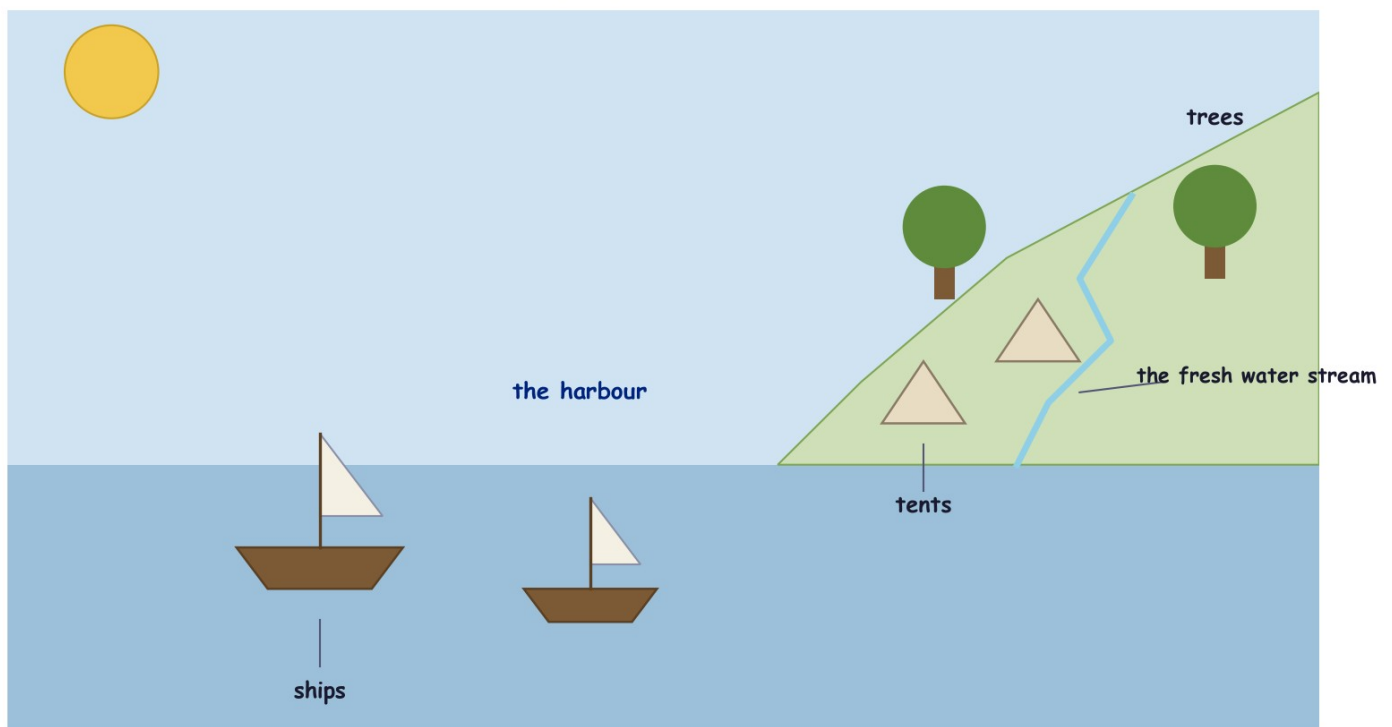
— Governor Arthur Phillip, in a letter to Lord Sydney,

15 May 1788

The dots (...) show that some of his words were left out.

A cream letter card with words from Governor Arthur Phillip in 1788, for the teacher to read out.

Drawn for this book. It shows what Sydney Cove was like in 1788, from what old records tell us.



A drawing of Sydney Cove in 1788: two ships in the harbour, tents and trees on the land, and a fresh water stream running to the sea.

1. What did Governor Phillip think of Port Jackson?
2. A good harbour keeps ships safe. Why did the colony need safe ships? Think about food and people coming from far away.
3. Look at the drawing. Point to the fresh water. Why did the people in the colony need it?

Answers

Q1. Cause — why something happened. Consequence — what happened next, because of the change. Change — when something is not the same as before.

Q2. 1 cause. 2 change. 3 consequence.

Q3. Answers will be different. One good way: *One cause of the move was that Botany Bay had little fresh water. One consequence of the move was that ships sat safely in the new harbour.*

Q4. Good: 1 and 3. Hard: 2 and 4.

Q5. 1. Four causes. 2 and 3. Answers will be different, but they should match the fishbone. One good way: *Prisons in Britain were full. / Convicts worked to build the colony.*

Q6. 1. Prisons in Britain were full. 2. Governor Phillip moved the colony to Port Jackson.

Q7–Q9. Answers will be different for every student. Check: at least one cause and one consequence, each described in a full sentence.

Source time. 1. He thought it was the best harbour in the world. 2. Safe ships could bring food and new people from far away, so the colony could live and grow. 3. People need water every day — to drink, to cook and to wash. (The stream is the blue line running down to the sea.)

Show what you can do

Show what you can do

☐

I can say what a cause is.

☐

I can say what a consequence is.

☐

I can describe two causes and two consequences of one change.

☐

I can sort consequences into good and hard.

☐

I can use a fishbone diagram.

Tick each box when you can do it.

A checklist of five I-can sentences with empty tick boxes.

For the teacher — what to listen for

A student is on track when they can, in their own words:

- say that a cause is why a change happened, and a consequence is what happened next;

- describe (not just name) two causes and two consequences of one true change — the move to Port Jackson, or the Bendigo story;
- sort consequences into good and hard, and say why;
- use a causes and consequences diagram and a fishbone diagram.

The end-of-Level-4 band standard is referred to by code only; its wording is not reproduced here. Foundation to Level 2 asked students to *identify* causes and consequences (VC2HH2S06); this section moves them to *describe* (TOC §4). At Levels 5–6 they will go on to *explain* causes and consequences (VC2HH6S08) — that is not taught here.

Sources read on 24 August 2026: Wikipedia, “First Fleet” (eleven ships; about 1,420 people on board; Botany Bay 18 January 1788; Port Jackson 26 January 1788; Captain Arthur Phillip); Wikipedia, “Arthur Phillip” (Botany Bay was not a good place — poor soil, no safe spot for ships, no good water; the colony was made official on 7 February 1788); Wikipedia, “Port Jackson” (Phillip to Lord Sydney, 15 May 1788 — “the finest harbour in the world”; Sydney Cove was picked for its fresh water; the Tank Stream gave the colony its fresh water); Wikipedia, “Bendigo” (gold found at Bendigo Creek, October 1851; the town was called Sandhurst from 1853 to 1891; almost a quarter of the diggers were Chinese by 1856; the Joss House was built by Chinese miners in the 1860s); Wikipedia, “Victorian gold rush” (the people in Victoria grew from 75,000 in 1851 to 500,000 in 1861; more than 19,000 Chinese people had come by the end of 1855, and about 33,000 by 1858; the June 1855 law and its £10 tax on each Chinese person on a ship; Chinese diggers landing at Robe and walking more than 400 km).

What makes something significant?

In this section you learn to say why things matter — flags, badges, special days, people and big changes — and how people remember them.

What we need to know

1. The big idea: some things matter a lot. In history, we do not just ask *what happened*. We also ask *why it matters*. When something matters a lot, we say it is **significant**. **Significance** means why something matters, and how people remember it.

A note about the word *significance*. The Victorian Curriculum uses the word *significance* but does not pin down one fixed meaning. In this section we always use it in the meaning above: why something matters, and how people remember it. Every task here can be answered with that meaning.

2. Four questions to ask. To describe the significance of anything, answer four questions: what is it, where did it come from, who does it matter to, and how do people remember it.

Describing significance: four questions to ask

What is it?

Say what the thing is.

Where did it come from?

Say when it started or happened,
and how.

Who does it matter to?

Say which people care about it,
and why they do.

How do people remember it?

Say what people do to mark it,
and when.

Use real facts and dates, and say where your information came from.

Four question cards for describing the significance of anything: what is it, where did it come from, who does it matter to, and how do people remember it

3. Five kinds of things. We can describe the significance of five kinds of things.

Five kinds of things we can describe the significance of				
Symbol	Emblem	Individual	Event	Development
stands for something	a badge for a group	a person who made a difference	a day people mark together	a big change over time
Example: the Australian flag	Example: the Commonwealth Coat of Arms; a school badge	Example: Governor Arthur Phillip	Example: Anzac Day (25 April)	Example: the first British colony growing at Port Jackson

Each one can be significant for a different reason.

A symbol stands for an idea. An emblem belongs to a group.

An event is marked on a day. A development is a big change that takes time.

A sorting board with five groups: symbols, emblems, individuals, then events and developments, each with a meaning and an example

- A **symbol** is something that stands for something else. The Australian flag is a symbol of Australia (Section 1B).
- An **emblem** is a picture or badge that belongs to a group and stands for that group. The Commonwealth Coat of Arms is an emblem of Australia. Your school badge is a school emblem.
- An **individual** is one person. In history, we look at individuals who made a difference.
- An **event** is something that happens. Some events are marked every year on the same day.
- A **development** is a big change that takes time. The colony at Port Jackson grew from a small camp into a busy town. That growth is a development.

Two more words we need:

- To **commemorate** something is to remember it together, often on the same day each year. A **commemorative** event is a day that remembers something important.
- A **colony** is a place that people from another country start and run. In 1788, Britain started a colony in Australia (Section 2A). A **governor** is the person chosen to lead a colony.

4. The same day can mean different things. A **perspective** is how someone sees and understands something.

Different groups of people can see the same day in different ways. Each group's meaning is real to that group, so we say what the day means to each group.

Lunar New Year: one time of year, marked in different ways

It begins on the first new moon of the year, in January or February

Chinese families	Vietnamese families	Korean families
<i>call it Spring Festival</i>	<i>call it Tet</i>	<i>call it Seollal</i>
red decorations, dragon dances, presents in red envelopes	families come together, special foods, flowers and visits	time with family, special foods, bowing to elders, games
		

The same days are significant to all three groups — and each group marks them in its own way.

When you describe the significance of a celebration,
say who it matters to and what it means to them.

Lunar New Year marked in different ways by Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean families, with each group's name for the day and what they do

5. Celebrations in Australia and around the world. Some celebrations matter to people in many countries, and to families in Australia too. Five of them are Christmas, Diwali, Hanukkah, the Lunar New Year and Ramadan. Section 1C tells you more about these days. Figure 6 shows who each one matters to, and how people mark it.

Five celebrations: who they matter to, and how people mark them

Celebration	Who it matters to	How people mark it
Christmas (25 December)	Christians — it is about the birth of Jesus. Many other families in Australia mark it too.	Church services for Christians; special family meals; giving presents.
Diwali	Hindus, Jains and Sikhs.	Lamps and lights; sweets; new clothes; spending time together.
Hanukkah	People who follow Judaism.	Lighting the hanukkah over eight nights; songs; special food; games.
Lunar New Year	Many families across Asia and in Australia, including Chinese, Vietnamese and Korean families.	Family meals; red decorations; dragon dances.
Ramadan, ending with Eid	Muslims.	No food or drink during daylight hours; a shared meal when the sun goes down; a feast and presents at Eid.

The same celebration can matter to people in different countries and in Australia.

Chart of five celebrations — Christmas, Diwali, Hanukkah, the Lunar New Year and Ramadan — showing who each one matters to and how people mark it

6. Use facts and sources. Strong answers about significance use real facts and dates, and say where the information came from. A **source** is something that tells us about the past. Before you finish a task, check your work with the list in Figure 8.

Is my work about significance strong?

Tick each box as you check your work

☐

I said what the thing is.

☐

I said when it started or happened, with a date.

☐

I said who it matters to, and why it matters to them.

☐

I said how people remember it or mark it.

☐

I used real facts, and I said where my information came from.

Good work about significance answers all four questions on the first page.

A checklist with five boxes to tick: said what the thing is, said when with a date, said who it matters to and why, said how people remember it, and used real facts with a source

Worked examples

Example 1 — step by step: an information card for a commemorative event

Section 1B looked at days like Australia Day, Anzac Day and Harmony Week. Here you learn the skill of making an **information card** that explains where a commemorative event came from and what it is for. The blank card is Figure 3. Let us fill one in for **Remembrance Day**.

Commemorative event card

Fill in each part to describe why the event is significant

Name of event

When is it?

Where and when did it start?

What is it about?

Why does it matter, and who to?

How do people mark it?

A blank information card with six fields: name of event, when is it, where and when did it start, what is it about, why does it matter and who to, and how do people mark it

Card field	What we write	Which significance question it answers
When is it?	11 November every year.	How do people remember it — and when?
Where and when did it start?	It started after the First World War ended in 1918.	Where did it come from?
What is it about?	It is about the day the First World War ended, on 11 November 1918. It is a day to remember the people who served in wars.	What is it?
Why does it matter, and who to?	It matters to Australians who want to remember the soldiers and other service people who served, and those who died.	Who does it matter to?
How do people mark it?	At 11 o'clock in the morning, many people stop together and keep still	How do people remember it?

and quiet for one minute.

The finished card is Figure 4.

Remembrance Day

A commemorative event in Australian life



When is it?

11 November every year.

Where and when did it start?

It started after the First World War ended in 1918.

What is it about?

It is about the day the First World War ended, on 11 November 1918. It is a day to remember the people who served in wars.

Why does it matter, and who to?

It matters to Australians who want to remember the soldiers and other service people who served, and those who died.

How do people mark it?

At 11 o'clock in the morning, many people stop together and keep still and quiet for one minute.

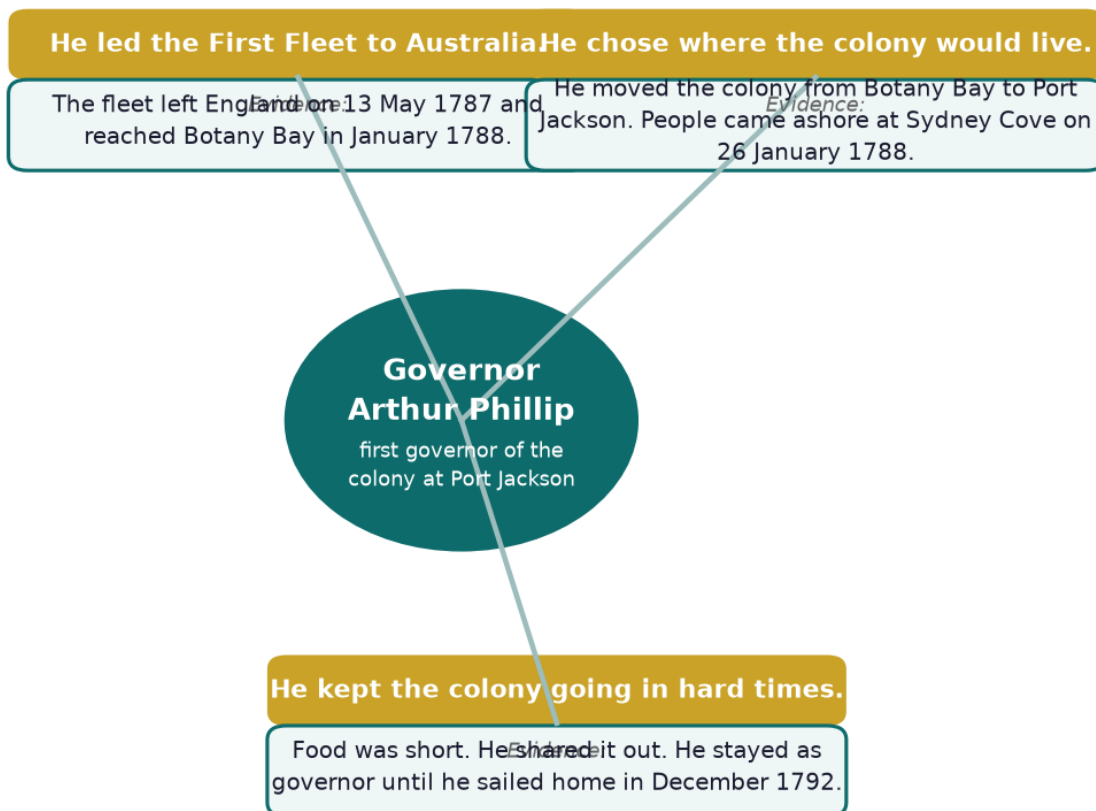
Source: Australian War Memorial, 'Remembrance Day', awm.gov.au (viewed 24 August 2026).

A completed information card for Remembrance Day: 11 November every year, started after the First World War ended in 1918, a day to remember people who served in wars, marked with one minute of quiet at 11 o'clock

Example 2 — step by step: why an individual is significant

Now we describe the significance of a person: **Governor Arthur Phillip**, the first governor of the first British colony (Sections 2A and 2B). We answer the four questions and back each answer with a fact. Figure 5 has the facts and dates you need.

Why is Governor Arthur Phillip significant?



He was born in London in 1738 and died in England in 1814. Source: Australian Dictionary of Biography (viewed 24 August 2026).

A web diagram titled “Why is Governor Arthur Phillip significant?” with three reasons, each with dated evidence: he led the First Fleet, he chose where the colony would live, and he kept the colony going in hard times

Step	What we say
Who was he?	Arthur Phillip was the first governor of the colony at Port Jackson.
What did he do?	He led the First Fleet from England in May 1787. The ships reached Botany Bay in January 1788. He chose Port Jackson instead, and people landed at Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788.
Why did it matter then?	The colony needed a good place to live. The place he chose is where Sydney grew. When food was short, he shared it out so people could eat.
Why do we still remember him?	He was governor until he sailed home in December 1792. Because of him, the first British colony began at Sydney.

Pull the steps together into one short answer:

Governor Arthur Phillip is significant because he led the First Fleet to Australia and was the first governor of the colony at Port Jackson. He chose the place where Sydney grew, and he kept the colony going when food was short. He was governor until December 1792.

Practice questions

With some help

Q1. Look at Figure 2. Sort these six things into the five groups — symbol, emblem, event, individual, development:

- the Australian flag
- the Commonwealth Coat of Arms
- your school badge
- Anzac Day
- Governor Arthur Phillip
- the growth of the colony at Port Jackson

One group gets two things. Which one?

Q2. Use the four questions in Figure 1 to describe the significance of the Australian flag. Write one sentence for each question. Section 1B will help you with what the flag stands for.

Q3. Fill in the blank card (Figure 3) for **Anzac Day**, using what you learned in Section 1B. Start with these hints:

- When is it? — one day in April, every year
- What is it about? — remembering the people who served
- How do people mark it? — dawn services and marches in many towns

Q4. Look at Figure 5, the web about Governor Arthur Phillip.

- (a) What did Arthur Phillip lead in May 1787?
- (b) Where did he choose for the colony to live?
- (c) When did people land at Sydney Cove? Give the day, month and year.
- (d) What did he do when food was short?
- (e) Finish this sentence: *Governor Arthur Phillip is significant because ...*

Q5. Look at Figure 6, the chart of five celebrations.

- (a) Who does Diwali matter to?
- (b) How do Muslims mark Ramadan?
- (c) On what day is Christmas?
- (d) How do people who follow Judaism mark Hanukkah?
- (e) Write one celebration your family or community marks, and one thing people do on that day.

Q6. Look at Figure 7.

- (a) What do Chinese families call Lunar New Year? What do Vietnamese families call it? What do Korean families call it?
- (b) Write one way each group marks the day.
- (c) Finish this sentence: *The same days can be ...*

By yourself

Q7. Choose a commemorative event that is important in Australia. It can be one your family marks. Use the blank card in Figure 3 to make your own information card about it. Then check your card with the list in Figure 8.

Q8. Write 3 to 5 sentences explaining why Governor Arthur Phillip is significant. Use at least two dates from Figure 5. Check your work with Figure 8 before you finish.

Q9. Choose one celebration from Figure 6. Describe why it is significant to the people who mark it. Say who it matters to, and how people mark it.

Source task (teacher-supported)

Q10. Your teacher reads the Remembrance Day card (Figure 4) out loud while you look at it. Then talk about these questions with a partner:

- (a) Someone made this card to share information about Remembrance Day. Was the maker there in 1918? The card was made later to tell us about the past, so it is a **secondary source**. What does this card tell you?
 - (b) Which of the four questions in Figure 1 does each part of the card answer?
 - (c) What one question would you ask to find out more about Remembrance Day?
-

Answers

These are example answers. Your own words are fine if they say the same things.

Q1. Symbol: the Australian flag. Emblems: the Commonwealth Coat of Arms and your school badge (the emblem group gets two things). Event: Anzac Day. Individual: Governor Arthur Phillip. Development: the growth of the colony at Port Jackson.

Q2. For example: *The Australian flag is a symbol of Australia. (What is it?) People first flew it in 1901. (Where did it come from?) It matters to Australians because it stands for our country. (Who does it matter to?) People fly it on days like Australia Day and Anzac Day. (How do people remember it?)* — Section 1B tells you what the stars and colours stand for.

Q3. Example card: *Anzac Day — 25 April every year. It started after the First World War began, to remember the landing at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915. It is about remembering the people who served. It matters to Australians and New Zealanders. People mark it with dawn services and marches in many towns.*

Q4. (a) The First Fleet. (b) Port Jackson. (c) 26 January 1788. (d) He shared it out so people could eat. (e) For example: *Governor Arthur Phillip is significant because he led the First Fleet to Australia and was the first governor of the colony at Port Jackson.*

Q5. (a) Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. (b) They do not eat or drink during daylight hours, they share a meal when the sun goes down, and they have a feast and presents at Eid. (c) 25 December. (d) People who follow Judaism light the hanukkah over eight nights, and they sing songs and eat special food. (e) Answers will be different — for example, *Diwali; people light lamps and eat sweets.*

Q6. (a) Spring Festival; Tet; Seollal. (b) Chinese families: red decorations and dragon dances. Vietnamese families: families come together with special foods and flowers. Korean families: time with family, special foods and games. (c) For example: *The same days can be marked in different ways by different groups.*

Q7. Answers will be different. A strong card has all six fields filled, with a date and a reason why the event matters. Example events: Anzac Day, Australia Day, Harmony Week, Remembrance Day.

Q8. For example: *Governor Arthur Phillip was significant because he led the First Fleet, which left England on 13 May 1787. He chose Port Jackson for the colony, and people landed at Sydney Cove on 26 January 1788. As the first governor, he kept the colony going when food was short, and he stayed governor until December 1792.*

Q9. Answers will be different. For example (Diwali): *Diwali is significant to Hindus, Jains and Sikhs. It is a happy time of lights and lamps. Families share sweets, wear new clothes and spend time together. It matters to them because it is one of their most important celebrations.*

Q10. (a) No — the maker was not there in 1918. The card tells us when Remembrance Day is, what it is about, who it matters to and how people mark it. (b) “When is it?” and “How do people mark it?” answer how people remember it; “Where and when did it start?” answers where it came from; “What is it about?” answers what it is; “Why does it matter, and who to?” answers who it matters to. (c) Answers will be different — for example, *Why do people stand still and quiet for one minute?*

Talking and writing about the past

Teacher note — curriculum traceability (VC2HH4S09, Levels 3 and 4). Content description: VC2HH4S09 (code only; wording not reproduced). Elaboration join keys (codes only; wording not reproduced): .E01 — taught here through the word wall (the single E01 term that §2A and Rule 1 exclude from this book is omitted; id retained for linkage only); .E02 — taught through the timeline and table tasks (Q3–Q5); .E03 — taught through the Mary Bryant biography (worked example 2, Q8). This is the book’s communication capstone: it joins the terms and concepts of every earlier section (1A–4C) into one skill — speaking and writing an interpretation. All sources that sit above the Year 3 reading ceiling are read aloud by the teacher; the students’ job is to think about the source, not to decode it.

Part 1 — The three tools of a history writer

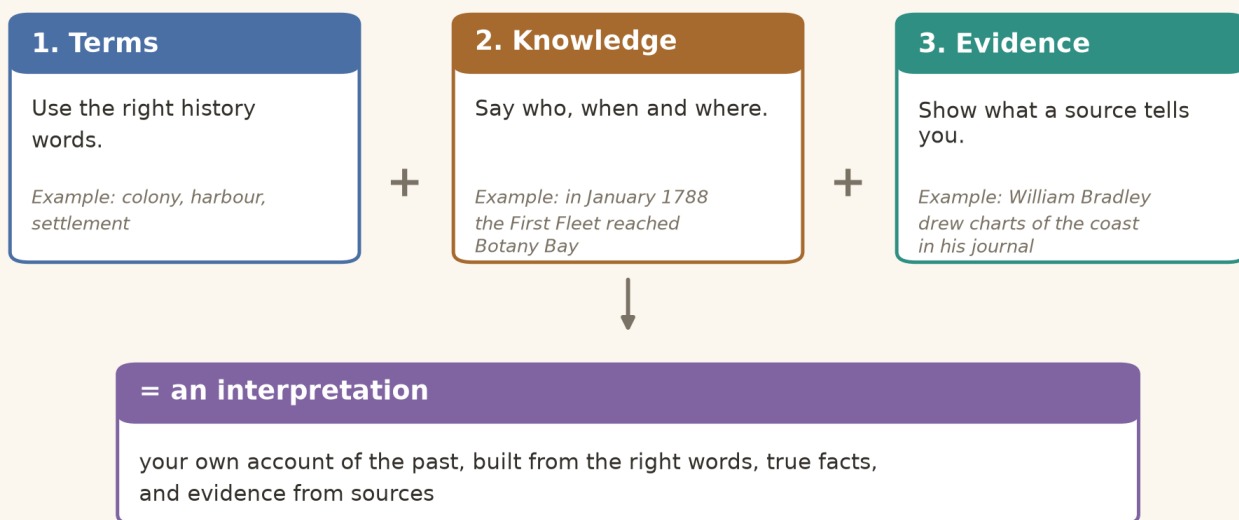
A **historian** is a person who studies the past. When historians speak or write about the past, they do not just tell a story. They build an **interpretation**.

interpretation — your own account of the past, built from the right words, true facts, and evidence from sources.

An interpretation uses three tools at the same time:

The three tools of a history writer

Use all three together to build an interpretation of the past.



A diagram of the three tools: terms, knowledge and evidence join together to make an interpretation.

Tool 1 — Terms. Historians use the right words. Here is the word wall for this book. Every word on it is a history word you can use when you speak and write.

The history word wall

Sixteen words historians use. You will use them too in this section.

community

people who live in the same place, or who share something

immigration

people moving to a new country to live there

commemoration

remembering an important event together, in a special way

emblem

a picture or badge that stands for a group

symbol

a thing that stands for something else

colonisation

one country taking control of another land and settling people there

invasion

coming into a place with an army, to take control of it

settlement

a new place where people come to live

transportation

sending a person who broke the law to a far-away place as a punishment

sources

things left from the past that tell us about it

perspective

the way a person sees something, because of who they are

interpretation

an account of the past that someone builds using evidence

change

when something becomes different over time

cause

what makes something happen

consequence

what happens because of something

significance

why something is important

Some of these words have more than one meaning. In this book they are used with the meanings shown here.

The history word wall: sixteen history words with short meanings.

Some word wall words need a closer look before you use them:

- A **source** is anything from the past, or about the past, that we can learn from — a diary, a letter, a painting, a map, an object, a photograph.
- A **primary source** was made at the time, by people who were there (a diary or a letter from 1788 is a primary source).
- A **secondary source** was made later, by people who looked at primary sources (this book is a secondary source).
- **Evidence** is the information a source gives us. When you say “my evidence is...”, you show where your idea came from.
- A **perspective** is the way one person sees something, because of who they are and what happened to them. Two people at the same event can have different perspectives, and both can be telling the truth about what *they* saw.

Three words for 1788 — a careful-words box. The words **settlement**, **colonisation** and **invasion** can all be used about the same events of 1788, but they do not mean the same thing. The Victorian Curriculum uses these words and does not define them, so this book uses them with the meanings on the word wall: *settlement* names the new places people came to live; *colonisation* names one country taking control of another land; *invasion* names coming into a place with an army to take control. People in Australia choose different words for the events of 1788. **The word a person chooses shows their interpretation.** When you write about 1788, choose your word on purpose, and be ready to say why you chose it.

Tool 2 — Knowledge. An interpretation says *who*, *when* and *where*. Dates, names and places are the bones of your account.

Tool 3 — Evidence. An interpretation shows what a source tells us. You can name the source (“in his journal, William Bradley drew...”) or show the source’s own words (“Phillip wrote that Port Jackson was ‘the finest harbour in the world’”).

Historians also use **graphic organisers** to share their interpretations. A graphic organiser is a drawing that sorts information so it is easy to see — a **timeline** puts events in time order; a **table** sorts facts into rows and parts; a flow chart joins causes to consequences. You can make them on paper, or with a digital app your teacher shows you.

Part 2 — Worked examples

Worked example 1 — read a model interpretation (we do it together)

Here is one short interpretation about the First Fleet. We will find the three tools in it.

In January 1788, the ships of the First Fleet reached Botany Bay. Governor Arthur Phillip saw that Botany Bay was not a good place for the new British colony: the soil was poor, ships had no safe place to anchor, and fresh water was hard to find. Phillip sailed north and found Port Jackson. He wrote in a letter that Port Jackson was “the finest harbour in the world”. On 26 January 1788, the colonists moved to Port Jackson and began the first British settlement in Australia.

Step 1 — Find the terms. The writer uses history words with their word-wall meanings: *colony*, *colonists*, *settlement*, *harbour*. A **colony** is a new place that people from another country come to live in and rule. A **governor** is the leader of a colony, chosen by the country that rules it; **colonists** are the people who came to live in the new colony.

Step 2 — Find the knowledge. Who: Governor Arthur Phillip and the colonists. When: January 1788, then 26 January 1788. Where: Botany Bay, then Port Jackson.

Step 3 — Find the evidence. The writer shows where one idea came from: Phillip’s own words, in a letter — “the finest harbour in the world”. Those words are the evidence.

A model interpretation

One short paragraph about the First Fleet. Find the three tools in it.

In January 1788, the ships of the First Fleet reached Botany Bay. Governor Arthur Phillip saw that Botany Bay was not a good place for the new British colony: the soil was poor, ships had no safe place to anchor, and fresh water was hard to find. Phillip sailed north and found Port Jackson. He wrote in a letter that Port Jackson was “the finest harbour in the world”. On 26 January 1788, the colonists moved to Port Jackson and began the first British settlement in Australia.

Terms — the right words

colony · settlement · harbour · colonists

Knowledge — who, when, where

January 1788, Botany Bay · Governor Arthur Phillip · 26 January 1788, Port Jackson

Evidence — what a source says

Phillip’s own words: “the finest harbour in the world”

Notice: the writer says what happened, and shows where the idea came from. That is what makes it an interpretation, not a guess.

The model interpretation, with its terms, knowledge and evidence picked out in three colour panels.

Worked example 2 — build a biography from researched facts (we do it together)

A **biography** is an account of a real person’s life, written from researched facts. We will build one about **Mary Bryant**, a convict on the First Fleet. (A **convict** is a person who broke the law and was sent away as a punishment.)

Step 1 — Collect the facts. Every fact must be real and checked. Nothing may be made up.

Step 2 — Join the facts into sentences. Put them in time order.

Step 3 — Check the tools. Did we use terms? Knowledge? Evidence? (Our evidence here is the records of the ships and the colony, kept at the time.)

From researched facts to a biography

Every sentence below is built from the fact list. Nothing is made up.

Researched facts about Mary Bryant

1. Mary Bryant was born Mary Broad, around 1765, in Cornwall, England.
2. In 1786 she broke the law by stealing. Her punishment was transportation for seven years.
3. In May 1787 she left Portsmouth with the First Fleet, on the ship Charlotte.
4. The ships reached Botany Bay in January 1788. Mary married William Bryant in the new colony in February 1788.
5. On 28 March 1791, Mary, William, their two children and seven other convicts escaped in a small open boat.
6. After 69 days at sea, they reached Kupang on the island of Timor.
7. Mary was sent back to England. In 1793 she was pardoned — set free.

Model biography (your turn to read it)

Mary Bryant was born Mary Broad around 1765, in Cornwall, England. In 1786 she broke the law by stealing, and her punishment was transportation. In May 1787 she sailed with the First Fleet on the ship Charlotte. When the long sea trip ended at Botany Bay, Mary married William Bryant in the new colony. In March 1791, Mary, William, their two children and seven other convicts escaped in a small open boat. After 69 days at sea, they reached Kupang on the island of Timor. Mary was sent back to England — but in 1793 she was pardoned and set free.

A biography is an account of a real person's life, written from researched facts. Check each sentence: which fact does it come from?

Researched facts about Mary Bryant on the left, joined into a model biography on the right.

Read the model biography again. Point to the sentence that came from fact 5. Point to the sentence that came from fact 3. Every sentence has a fact behind it — that is what makes it a biography and not a story.

Part 3 — Practice (with help)

Q1. Sort the cards. Look at the six cards. Write each letter under *Terms*, *Knowledge* or *Evidence*.

Sort the cards

Read each card. Is it a term, a piece of knowledge, or evidence?

A. "On 13 May 1787, the First Fleet left Portsmouth."

B. "Transportation means sending a person who broke the law to a far-away place as a punishment."

C. "William Bradley drew charts of the coast in his journal."

D. "A colony is a settlement that another country rules."

E. "Mary Bryant sailed to Australia on the ship Charlotte."

F. "Arthur Phillip wrote: the finest harbour in the world."

Terms

put cards here

Knowledge

put cards here

Evidence

put cards here

Six sentence cards to sort into terms, knowledge and evidence.

Q2. Word wall gaps. Copy each sentence. Fill the gap with a word from the word wall.

1. Remembering an important event together, in a special way, is called _____.
2. A picture or badge that stands for a group is an _____.
3. Sending a person who broke the law to a far-away place as a punishment was called _____.
4. When something becomes different over time, that is _____.
5. The _____ of an event is why it is important.

Q3. Read the timeline. Use the timeline of the First Fleet journey.

A timeline of the First Fleet journey

A timeline is a graphic organiser. It puts events in time order.



Arrow of time: events run from left (first) to right (last). Over 1,400 people sailed with the First Fleet.

A completed timeline of the First Fleet journey, from Portsmouth to Port Jackson.

- When did the First Fleet leave Portsmouth?
- Name the three places where the ships stopped for food and water.
- What happened on 26 January 1788?
- Which came first — reaching Botany Bay, or leaving Portsmouth? How does the timeline show you?

Q4. Read the table. Use the table of the eleven ships. (A **table** sorts facts into rows, one row for each ship. The parts down the page and across the page hold one kind of fact each.)

The eleven ships of the First Fleet

A table sorts the same facts so they are quick to read.

Ship	Kind of ship	What it carried
HMS Sirius	navy ship	the lead ship of the First Fleet
HMAT Supply	navy ship	sailed ahead and reached Botany Bay first
Alexander	transport	carried convicts, with soldiers (marines) as guards
Charlotte	transport	carried convicts, with soldiers (marines) as guards
Friendship	transport	carried convicts, with soldiers (marines) as guards
Lady Penrhyn	transport	carried convicts, with soldiers (marines) as guards
Prince of Wales	transport	carried convicts, with soldiers (marines) as guards
Scarborough	transport	carried convicts, with soldiers (marines) as guards
Borrowdale	storeship	food and tools for the new colony
Fishburn	storeship	food and tools for the new colony
Golden Grove	storeship	food and tools for the new colony

2 navy ships + 6 transports + 3 storeships = 11 ships

A table of the eleven ships of the First Fleet: navy ships, transports and storeships.

- How many transports sailed with the First Fleet?
- What did the storeships carry?
- Which ship reached Botany Bay first?
- Mary Bryant sailed on one of the transports. Which one? (Check worked example 2.)

Q5. Make your own timeline. Copy the empty timeline. Fill each box with one thing about **your** local community. Ask a family member or your teacher for one fact if you need it. Then tell a partner: what changed? What stayed the same?

Your turn: change in our community

Copy this timeline. Fill each box with one thing about your local community.

Long ago	100 years ago	When my grandparents were young	When my parents were young	Today
write here	write here	write here	write here	write here

When you finish, tell a partner: what changed? What stayed the same? Use at least two words from the word wall.

An empty timeline with five time boxes for the student's own community.

Q6. Be the teacher. Look at worked example 2 (the Mary Bryant biography). Tick the “Before you share” checklist for it, and write one word from the biography next to each tick you give.

Part 4 — Practice (on your own)

Q7. Write your own interpretation. Write four or five sentences about the journey of the First Fleet. Use:

- at least **three** words from the word wall,
- knowledge (who, when, where),
- at least **one** piece of evidence — name your source (the timeline, the table, the source card, or this book).

Then tick the checklist.

Q8. Write a biography. Choose **one** real person from the First Fleet: Governor Arthur Phillip, William Bradley, or Mary Bryant. With your teacher's help, collect four to six researched facts about them. Then write a short biography from your facts. Nothing made up. Use the checklist before you hand it in.

Q9. Speak like a historian. Tell your interpretation from Q7 to a partner. Your partner listens with the checklist and tells you one thing you did well and one thing to add. Then swap.

Before you share — check your interpretation

Use this list every time you speak or write about the past.

☐

Terms

Did I use at least two history words from the word wall?

☐

Knowledge

Did I say who, when and where?

☐

Evidence

Did I name the source that gave me my evidence?

☐

Truth

Are my facts real and checked — nothing made up?

☐

Clear voice

Full sentences. Speak clearly, or check my writing.

If you can tick all five, you have built a real interpretation — not just a story.

The Before-you-share checklist with five checks: terms, knowledge, evidence, truth, clear voice.

Part 5 — Source task

Your teacher reads this card to you. Listen like a historian.

Source task: a real journal from the First Fleet

Your teacher reads this card to you. Then talk about the questions.

About the source

William Bradley was a navy officer on HMS Sirius, one of the ships of the First Fleet. He kept a journal of the long sea trip, starting in 1786. His journal tells about the ships, the weather, and daily life, and it is full of his own charts and drawings of the coast. Today the journal is kept at the State Library of New South Wales.

Source: the journal of Lieutenant William Bradley, State Library of New South Wales.

A journal entry — made-up example

Made up for this book, in the style of Bradley's journal. Not his real words.

20 January 1788. This morning our ship came into Botany Bay. We could see other ships already at anchor. After more than eight months at sea, the whole crew was glad to be here. I have started a chart of this harbour, and I will add to it each day.

journal = a diary kept by a person, often day by day

Talk about: Who wrote it? What does it tell us? Circle the history words you hear.

A source card about Lieutenant William Bradley's real First Fleet journal, with a clearly labelled made-up journal entry for students to think about.

1. Who kept the real journal? What was his job?
 2. Name two things the journal tells us about.
 3. Listen to the entry again. Name two history words you hear in it.
 4. Is the entry on the card Bradley's real words, or a made-up example? How do you know?
 5. What could a historian learn from Bradley's real journal that they could not learn from this book?
-

Part 6 — Answers and notes

Q1. Terms: B, D. Knowledge: A, E. Evidence: C, F. (B and D say what a word means — that is terms. A and E say who, when, where — that is knowledge. C and F point at a source — a journal and a letter — that is evidence.)

Q2. 1 commemoration. 2 emblem. 3 transportation. 4 change. 5 significance.

Q3. a. 13 May 1787. b. Tenerife, Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town. c. The colonists moved to Port Jackson and the colony began. d. Leaving Portsmouth came first; on a timeline, earlier events sit to the left.

Q4. a. Six. b. Food and tools for the new colony. c. HMAT Supply. d. The Charlotte.

Q5. Answers will be about your own community. Check: five filled boxes, in time order, and two word-wall words used when you spoke.

Q6. A good set of ticks: Terms (for example *convict*, *colony*, *transportation*), Knowledge (dates and places such as May 1787, Portsmouth, Botany Bay, Kupang), Evidence (the records of the ships and the colony), Truth (every sentence matches a fact), Clear voice (full sentences). Two students may tick different things and both be right — the ticks must be backed by a word or a sentence from the biography.

Q7–Q9. Answers will not all be the same. Mark on the checklist, not on what the student says: did the student use terms with their word-wall meanings, give true knowledge, and name a source? One possible answer: *The First Fleet was a group of eleven ships that brought the first British colonists to Australia. The ships left Portsmouth on 13 May 1787 and reached Botany Bay in January 1788. My evidence is the ship table, which names all eleven ships. Moving to Port Jackson was a big change, and the colony there was important because it was the first British settlement in Australia.*

Source task. 1. William Bradley; a navy officer on HMS Sirius. 2. Any two of: the ships, the weather, daily life, charts and drawings of the coast. 3. Any two history words heard (for example: *chart*, *harbour*, *crew*, *bay*). 4. A made-up example — the card says so in the green box; a careful reader always checks whether a source is real or made up. 5. Bradley’s real journal is a primary source: it was written at the time by a person who was there, so a historian can see his own words, charts and drawings — this book can only tell you about them.

Source notes (teacher-facing; retrieval date 24 August 2026). First Fleet departure (Portsmouth, 13 May 1787), en-route stops (Tenerife, Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town), Botany Bay arrivals 18–20 January 1788, the move to Port Jackson on 26 January 1788, the eleven ships and their roles, and “over 1,400 people”: checked against the documented record (Wikipedia, *First Fleet*, retrieved 24 August 2026). William Bradley, navy officer and chart-maker on HMS Sirius, keeper of a First Fleet journal (from 1786) with charts and drawings, held by the State Library of New South Wales: Wikipedia, *William Bradley (Royal Navy officer)*, retrieved 24 August 2026. Arthur Phillip’s description of Port Jackson as “the finest harbour in the world”, and the reasons Botany Bay was rejected (poor soil, no safe anchorage, no reliable fresh water): Wikipedia, *Arthur Phillip*, retrieved 24 August 2026. Mary Bryant (née Broad, b. c. 1765, Cornwall; convicted 1786; sailed on the *Charlotte*; married William Bryant 10 February 1788; escaped by boat 28 March 1791 with her family and seven other convicts; reached Kupang after 69 days; pardoned 1793): Wikipedia, *Mary Bryant*, retrieved 24 August 2026. The journal entry on the source card is a clearly-labelled composite written for this book (house rule D9); it is not Bradley’s text.