

Mathematics Level 7

Chapter 3 — Doing history: questions, chronology and sources

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Building questions that guide an investigation

For the teacher — VC2 codes: VC2HH6S01 (Historical Concepts and Skills · Historical questions)

Drawn on: VC2HH6S01.E01 · VC2HH6S01.E02 · VC2HH6S01.E03* (*one example clause cut per the book's §2A register)

For the teacher — teaching sequence

1. **Hook.** Show the Source 1 card (Figure 7) with the worked questions hidden. Collect every question students can ask about it on the board, uncategorised.
2. **Name the tool.** Teach the key words (Figure 1) and the four question families (Figure 2). Sort the board's questions into the families; the leftovers usually sort into before/during/after (Figure 3).
3. **Model with a real source.** Walk Worked example 1 (Figures 7–8) slowly: the source toolkit (Figure 4) first, then the stage questions. Stress that each answer raises the next question.
4. **Model with a real dataset.** Walk Worked example 2 (Figures 9–10): one main question growing sub-questions, and each sub-question pointing to a different kind of source.
5. **Practise.** Scaffolded tasks, then unscaffolded, then the one-page investigation plan. Students test every question they write against the checklist (Figure 6) before it counts.
6. **Check the skill, not the facts.** A question is good here if it is historical, clear, checkable with sources and worth asking — never because it “gets” a particular answer.

Key ideas

Historians are people who study the past. They do not just read about the past — they question it. A good question works like a torch on a dark path: it decides where you look and what you notice. That is what this section is about — **asking** good questions, and **developing** them (changing them until they are stronger) so they **direct** your investigation.

Key words for this section

historical question

a question about the past
that sources can help answer

investigation

a careful, step-by-step look
into a question about the past

source

anything we can study to learn
about the past

primary source

a source made AT the time
being studied — e.g. a photo
taken in 1858

secondary source

a source made LATER by someone
who studied the time — e.g. a book
written today

probing question

a question that digs for detail —
who exactly? how many? what next?

open-ended question

a question that lets in many ideas —
what was it like? why do you think...?

context

the who, when, where and why
around a source

In this book, these words are always used with these meanings.

Eight key word cards with simple definitions: historical question, investigation, source, primary source, secondary source, probing question, open-ended question and context

What is a historical question? A question about the past that sources can help answer. “What is for lunch?” is not one. “What did diggers eat on the goldfields in the 1850s?” is — because letters, photos and newspapers from that time can help you answer it.

The four families. Most historical questions belong to one of four families.

The four families of historical questions

Every question you ask about the past belongs to a family. Strong investigations use more than one.

FACT questions

Find out **WHAT** happened.

Starter words: who? what? where? when?

"When was gold first found in Victoria?"

example

CAUSE and EFFECT questions

Ask **WHY** things happened and what changed.

Starter words: why? how?

"Why did diggers rush to Castlemaine in 1851?"

example

SOURCE questions

Ask what a source tells us — and what it cannot.

Starter words: what does this show? who made it?

"What does this photo show about the goldfields?"

example

SIGNIFICANCE questions

Ask why something mattered, then and now.

Starter words: why does it matter? why remember it?

"Why do people remember the gold rush today?"

example

Four colour-coded cards showing the four families of historical questions — fact, cause and effect, source and significance — each with starter words and an example question about the gold rushes

- **Fact questions** find out *what* happened: *When was gold first found in Victoria?*
- **Cause and effect questions** ask *why* things happened and what changed: *Why did diggers rush to Castlemaine in 1851?*
- **Source questions** ask what a source can tell us: *What does this photo show about the goldfields?*
- **Significance questions** ask why something mattered: *Why do people remember the gold rush today?*

A strong investigation uses questions from more than one family.

Before, during and after. Good investigators ask questions at every stage of an investigation — not just at the start.

Asking questions at every stage

A good investigator asks questions before, during AND after looking at sources.



Your questions DIRECT the investigation: they decide what you look for and what you notice.

Three panels labelled before, during and after, each listing three example questions a student can ask at that stage of an investigation

The source toolkit. Whenever you meet a source — a photo, a letter, a map, an object — three groups of questions tell you what it is worth. *Features:* what can I notice about it? *Type:* what kind of source is it — and was it made **at** the time (a **primary source**) or **later** (a **secondary source**)? *Context:* what was going on around it — who, when, where and why?

The source toolkit: three groups of questions

Whenever you meet a source — a photo, letter, map or object — ask these three groups of questions.

1 FEATURES	2 TYPE	3 CONTEXT
What can I notice about it?	What kind of source is it?	What was going on around it?
- What can I see or read? - What are its parts? What words, pictures or numbers does it have? - What is it made of, and how big is it?	- Is it a photo, letter, map, object, newspaper or other? - Was it made AT the time (primary source) or LATER (secondary source)? - Who made it?	- When and where was it made? - Why was it made? - What was happening at that time and place?

Features, type and context tell you how much you can trust a source — and what it is useful for.

Three cards showing the source toolkit question groups: features, type and context, each with three example questions

Questions with different jobs. Questions are also developed for different purposes. A **closed** question takes one short answer, often yes or no — fine for checking a fact, but it stops there. A **probing** question seeks detail: *how many? who exactly? what happened next?* An **open-ended** question lets in many ideas: *what was it like? why do you think that?* Probing and open-ended questions keep an investigation moving.

Questions come with different jobs

Developing a question means picking the kind of question that fits what you need.

CLOSED

One short answer — often yes or no

"Was gold found in Victoria in 1851?"

Good for a quick fact. It stops there.

PROBING

Seeks more detail

"How many people reached the diggings in the first two years?"

Digs for exact details: how many? who exactly? what happened next?

OPEN-ENDED

Lets in many ideas

"What was daily life like for a digger at Castlemaine?"

Draws out ideas and talk. There is more than one good answer.

Probing and open-ended questions keep an investigation moving. Save closed questions for checking facts.

Three rows comparing closed, probing and open-ended questions, with a gold rush example and a note on what each kind is good for

The checklist. Before a question gets to work, test it.

Is it a strong historical question?

Test your question against this checklist before you start your investigation.

- ☐ **Is it about the past?**
It asks about people, places or events that have already happened.
- ☐ **Does it need more than a one-word answer?**
A question answered by 'yes' or 'no' stops an investigation. Yours should start one.
- ☐ **Can sources help answer it?**
There must be letters, photos, maps, objects, records or reports you can check.
- ☐ **Is it clear?**
It says who, where and when — not just 'the old days'.
- ☐ **Is it worth finding out?**
The answer helps someone understand what happened, why, or what changed.

If your question misses a check, DEVELOP it — change it until it passes, then start looking.

A checklist card with five tick boxes for testing whether a question is a strong historical question

Worked demonstrations

Worked example 1 — questioning a real source

Here is a real primary source. Everything on the card is true and checkable.

SOURCE 1

“Group of diggers, Castlemaine” — a photograph from the goldfields

What is it?	A photograph — a primary source. It shows a group of gold diggers at Castlemaine in Victoria.
When was it made?	1858, during the gold rush.
Who made it?	Antoine Fauchery and Richard Daintree. Fauchery ran a photo studio on Collins Street, Melbourne.
What set does it belong to?	‘Sun Pictures of Victoria’ — a series of 50 large photographs of Melbourne and the goldfields, released in parts during 1858.
Where is it kept?	State Library Victoria.

One of the oldest surviving photograph sets showing the Victorian goldfields.

A source card for the 1858 photograph “Group of diggers, Castlemaine” by Antoine Fauchery and Richard Daintree, part of Sun Pictures of Victoria and kept at State Library Victoria

Now watch a historian's questions move through it, stage by stage.

Worked example 1 — questioning a real source

One source, four sets of questions. Watch how each set points the investigation in a new direction.

BEFORE — set my direction

"What was life like for diggers at Castlemaine in the 1850s?"

SOURCE TOOLKIT — features, type, context

"What can I see?" "It is a photograph — a primary source."
"It was made in 1858, in the middle of the gold rush."

DURING — dig for meaning

"What does this photo tell me about diggers' lives?"
"What can it NOT show — sounds, weather, feelings?"

AFTER — where to next?

"Where did these diggers come from?" "Did families live here too?"
"What other sources could I check — a map or a letter?"

Each answer raises the next question — that is how questions direct an investigation.

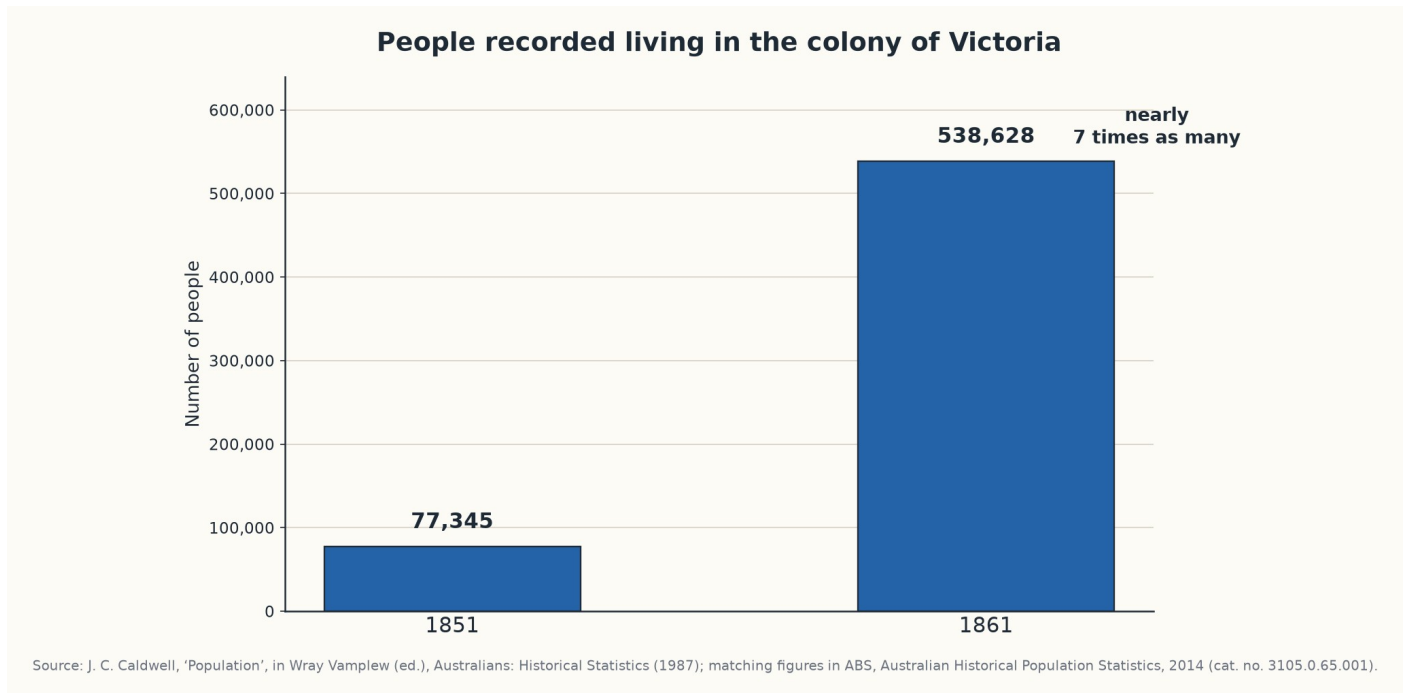
Four panels showing worked example questions about the 1858 diggers photograph: before questions, source toolkit questions, during questions and after questions

Stage	Question	What it does
Before	<i>What was life like for diggers at Castlemaine in the 1850s?</i>	Sets the direction of the whole investigation.
Features	<i>What can I see? What words or numbers are on the card?</i>	Collects the plain facts of the source.
Type	<i>Is it a primary or secondary source?</i>	Made in 1858, at the time → primary. Strong for showing what people and places looked like.
Context	<i>What was happening in 1858?</i>	The gold rush was at its height; Castlemaine was a busy goldfields town.
During	<i>What does it tell me about diggers' lives? What can it NOT show?</i>	A photo shows what stood in front of the camera that day. It cannot show sounds, weather, feelings, or the people the camera missed.
After	<i>Where did these diggers come from? Did families live here too?</i>	Each answer raises the next question — and points to the next source (a map, a letter, a newspaper).

The point of the example is the last line. The photo answered some questions and raised new ones. That is how questions direct an investigation: every answer chooses the next thing you look for.

Worked example 2 — growing a question from real numbers

Not every source is an object or a photo. Numbers are sources too. Here are real figures for the colony of Victoria.



Bar chart showing the number of people recorded living in the colony of Victoria: 77,345 in 1851 and 538,628 in 1861, with a source line

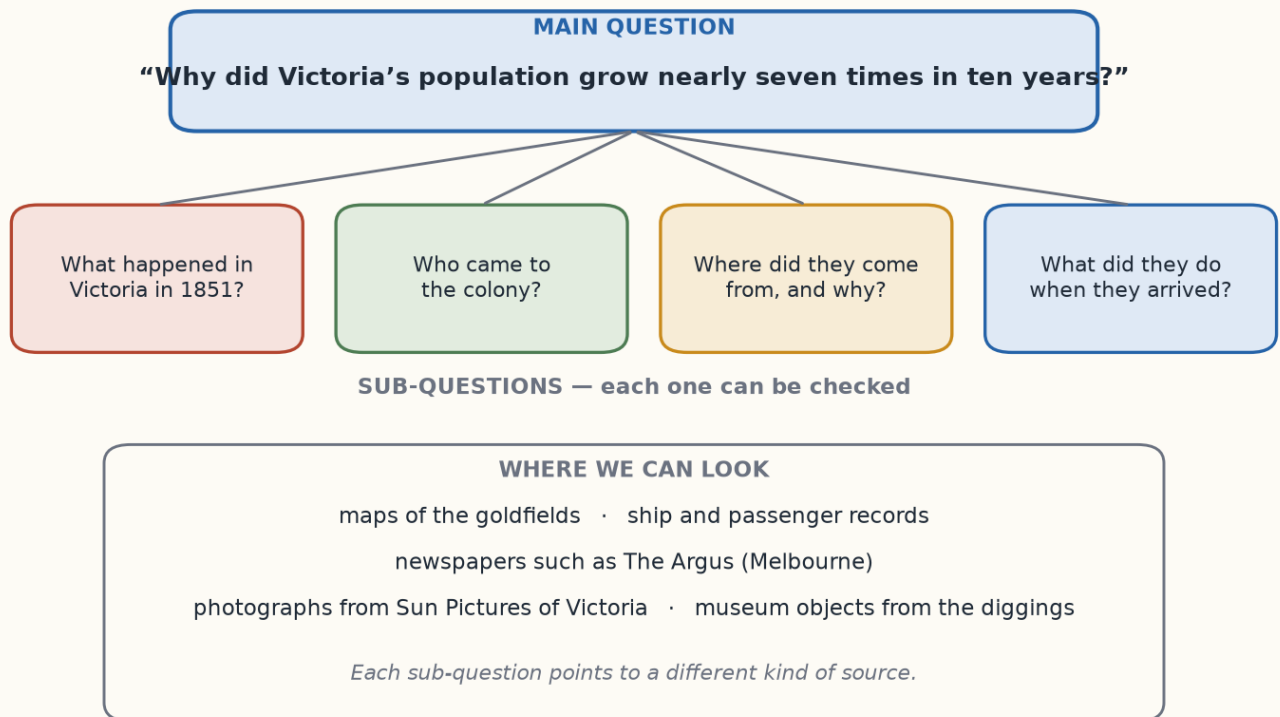
Source: J. C. Caldwell, 'Population', in Wray Vamplew (ed.), Australians: Historical Statistics (1987); the same figures appear in the ABS historical population release (cat. no. 3105.0.65.001). Checked 2026-08-24.

Notice two things at once: gold was found in Victoria in 1851 — the same year Victoria became its own colony with its own government — and in the ten years after that, the number of people recorded in the colony grew nearly seven times.

One big question grows from that noticing.

Worked example 2 — growing a question from numbers

The Victoria population figures make us ask WHY. One big question grows into smaller questions we can check.



Question map: one main question about Victoria's population growth, branching into four sub-questions, above a card listing where to look for answers

Developing the question is the skill. The main question is too big to answer in one look, so it is developed into sub-questions — and each sub-question points to a different kind of source. The map of the goldfields helps with *where*; ship and passenger records help with *who* and *where from*; newspapers such as *The Argus* (Melbourne) help with *what happened*; photographs such as *Sun Pictures of Victoria* help with *what it looked like*.

And notice what the numbers **cannot** do. They say *how many*, not *who*, *why* or *what it felt like*. So the figures push the investigation toward letters, photos and newspapers. Your questions choose your sources — that is what “direct an investigation” means.

Practice tasks

Practice with support

Q1. Sort each question into its family (fact; cause and effect; source; significance).

- When was gold first found near Castlemaine?*
- Why did so many people leave home to dig for gold?*
- What does a digger's letter home tell us about camp life?*
- Why does Castlemaine still celebrate its gold rush past today?*
- How did the gold rush change the size of Melbourne?*
- Who made the photograph "Group of diggers, Castlemaine"?*

Q2. These closed questions stop an investigation. Develop each into a stronger question: one probing, one open-ended.

- a. *Did diggers find gold at Castlemaine?*
- b. *Was 1858 a busy year on the goldfields?*

Q3. Use the source toolkit (features, type, context) on the Victoria population chart (Figure 9). Write one question from each group.

Q4. Sort each question into the stage where it is asked: before, during or after.

- a. *What do I already know about the gold rush?*
- b. *Who made this letter, and why?*
- c. *Did I answer my big question?*
- d. *What is this map not showing me?*
- e. *Which sources could I look at?*
- f. *What new questions do I have now?*

Q5. Three students wrote a question for an investigation about how the gold rush changed Victoria. Use the checklist to choose the strongest one, and say which check the other two fail.

- a. *Was there gold in Victoria?*
- b. *How did the gold rush change life in Victoria between 1851 and 1861?*
- c. *Is gold shiny?*

Q6. Label each question closed, probing or open-ended. Then write one probing question and one open-ended question of your own about the discovery of gold in Victoria in 1851.

- a. *How many ships reached Melbourne in 1852?*
- b. *What was it like to sail to Victoria in the 1850s?*
- c. *Did ships carry passengers to Victoria in the 1850s?*

Q7. For an investigation of *life on the goldfields in the 1850s*, write two BEFORE questions and two AFTER questions.

Q8. Label each source primary or secondary.

- a. a photograph taken at Castlemaine in 1858
- b. a book about the gold rush written in 2020
- c. a letter a digger wrote home in 1852
- d. a museum web page about the Eureka Stockade, made last year
- e. a passenger list from a ship that reached Melbourne in 1854

Practice on your own

Q9. Choose one topic from Chapters 1–2 (for example: why people came to the colonies; life on the goldfields; how a colony changed during the gold rush). Develop one main question and grow four sub-questions from it, like Figure 10. For each sub-question, note one kind of source you would check.

Q10. *Gold was found in Victoria in 1851. Ten years later, nearly seven times as many people were recorded living there.* Write six questions this makes you ask. Use at least one question from each family, and at least two probing or open-ended questions.

Q11. Two real sources from this section: the 1858 photograph (Source 1) and the Victoria population chart (Figure 9). For each question below, say which source would help more, and why. If one source alone is not enough, say what else you would look at.

- a. *What did a goldfields camp look like?*
 - b. *How many people were recorded living in Victoria in 1861?*
 - c. *Why did people come to Victoria in the 1850s?*
-

Writing task — your investigation plan

Your one-page investigation plan. Choose a topic from Chapters 1–2. Write:

1. your **main question**, tested against the checklist;
2. **three sub-questions** developed from it;
3. **two kinds of real source** you would look at (for example: photographs such as *Sun Pictures of Victoria*; newspapers such as *The Argus*; maps; letters; ship records; museum objects), and one sentence each on why;
4. **two after-questions** you expect to have when you finish.

What good looks like: every question is historical, clear and checkable; the questions choose your sources (not the other way round); and your after-questions show that answers raise new questions.

Answers

Q1. a. fact. b. cause and effect. c. source. d. significance. e. cause and effect (it asks about change). f. fact.

Q2. Sample answers. a. probing: *How much gold did diggers find at Castlemaine in the first year?* b. open-ended: *What was a busy day on the goldfields like in 1858?*

Q3. Sample answers. Features: *What years and numbers does the chart show?* Type: *It is a chart made later from old records, so it is a secondary source — the records behind it are primary.* Context: *The numbers are for 1851 and 1861, when the gold rush brought many people to Victoria.*

Q4. a. before. b. during. c. after. d. during. e. before. f. after.

Q5. (b) is the strongest: it is about the past, needs more than a one-word answer, can be checked with sources, says where and when, and is worth finding out. (a) fails “needs more than a one-word answer” — yes or no stops the investigation. (c) fails “about the past” and “worth finding out” — it is a science question, not a historical one.

Q6. a. probing. b. open-ended. c. closed. Sample own questions: probing — *How many people heard about the gold in the first month?* open-ended — *Why do you think people were willing to risk the long sea trip?*

Q7. Sample answers. Before: *What do I already know about goldfields life? Which sources could show me a digger's day?* After: *Did my sources agree with each other? What would I investigate next?*

Q8. a. primary. b. secondary. c. primary. d. secondary. e. primary.

Q9. Sample. Topic: life on the goldfields. Main: *What was daily life like for a digger at Castlemaine in the 1850s?* Sub-questions: *What did diggers eat?* (letters, diaries) *What did their camps look like?* (photographs) *How did they get water and tools?* (maps, museum objects) *Did families live there too?* (newspapers, ship records).

Q10. Sample. Fact: *When exactly was gold first found in 1851?* Cause and effect: *Why did people rush to Victoria?* Source: *What can passenger lists tell us about who came?* Significance: *Why did the gold rush matter to Victoria's story?* Probing: *How many people came by ship each year?* Open-ended: *What would you have packed for the trip?*

Q11. a. the photograph — it shows a real camp at the time. b. the chart — it gives the exact number. c. you need more than one — the chart shows the change but not the reason; letters, newspapers and ship records help explain *why* people came.

Writing task. Check that the main question passes all five checks; that sub-questions are smaller and checkable; that each named source is a real kind of source and is matched to a question it can actually help with; and that the after-questions are new questions, not the old ones repeated.

Putting events in time order: timelines, continuity and change, causes and consequences

History 5 · Chapter 3 · 3B

Owens: VC2HH6S02 (Chronology) **Draws on:** VC2HH6S02.E01 · VC2HH6S02.E02 · VC2HH6S02.E03 · VC2HH6S02.E04

For the teacher — VC2 codes: VC2HH6S02

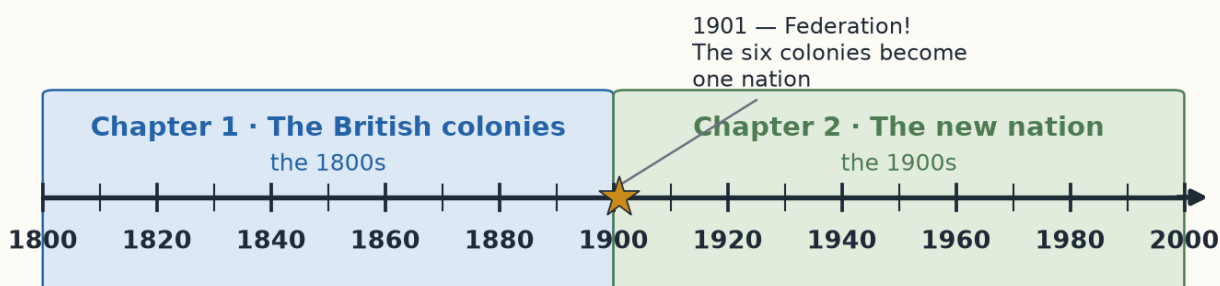
The events and lives we sequence here come from Chapter 1 (the colonies, the gold rushes and Eureka) and Chapter 2 (Federation and the new nation). The sequencing tools taught here come back in 4A (patterns of continuity and change) and 4B (causes and consequences).

Teacher note. Teaching sequence: (1) orient with the 200-year band line and revisit the Chapter 1–2 story the tasks will draw on (D11) — the gold rushes, Eureka and the road to Federation are assumed knowledge from 1C and 2A, not re-taught here; (2) teach the anatomy of a timeline and the century/decade naming; (3) teach continuity/change and cause/consequence with the “after is not because of” caution; (4) walk Worked examples 1 and 2; (5) run the scaffolded tasks; (6) finish with the constructing task (by hand or with a digital application per .E03) and the narrative writing task (.E04). Difficult history: the Eureka deaths are stated plainly and calmly (“about 27 people lost their lives”) — do not add graphic detail, and keep the cause/consequence language about groups and systems rather than blame of individuals. For your own reference, the historical permit is the miners’ licence and the 1898–1900 colony votes are called referendums; students here say “permit” and “yes/no vote”. “Premier” is glossed as “leader of the colony”. Annotating = adding notes to a chart or timeline. No First Nations content appears in this section (Rule 1); the front-of-book notice carries that. Watch for: students reading “after” as “because of” (the Q5 and Worked example 2 cautions target this), and uneven tick spacing when constructing (the checklist figure targets this).

What you are learning

Where this section sits. This book tells the story of Australia from 1800 to 2000. Chapter 1 covers the 1800s, when Britain set up colonies here. Chapter 2 covers the 1900s, starting with the birth of the nation. This section gives you the tools to put that story in order.

This book covers 200 years: 1800 to 2000

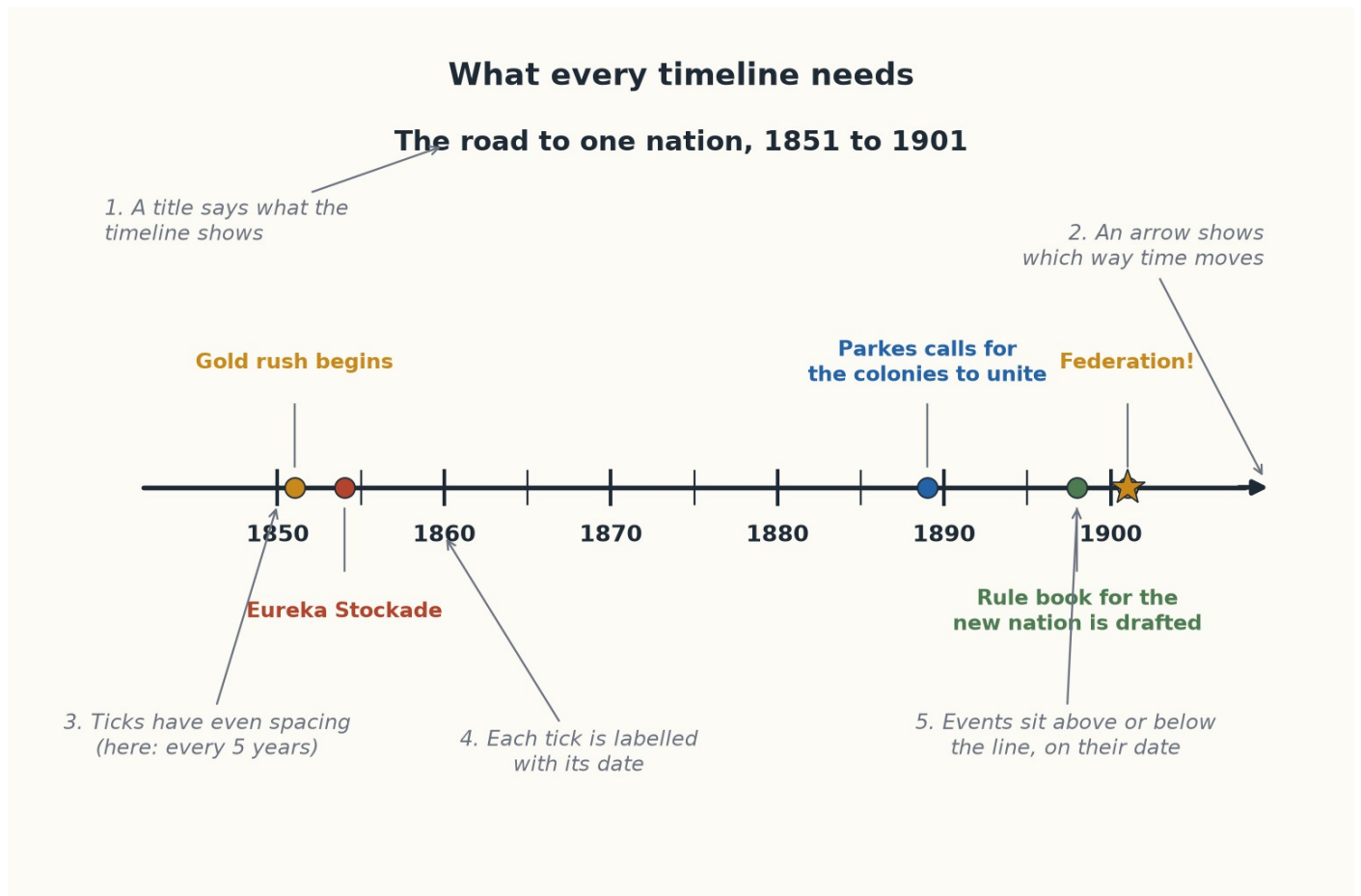


Time in this book moves from left to right: earlier dates sit on the left, later dates on the right.

Timeline from 1800 to 2000 showing Chapter 1 covering the 1800s British colonies and Chapter 2 covering the 1900s new nation, with a star marking Federation in 1901

Putting events in time order. To sequence events **chronologically** means to put them in time order: first, next, then, last. The skill has a short name: **chronology**. Historians use timelines, tables and flow charts to show chronology. When you read a timeline, time moves from left to right: earlier dates sit on the left, later dates on the right.

What every timeline needs. Here is a model timeline with its five parts labelled.



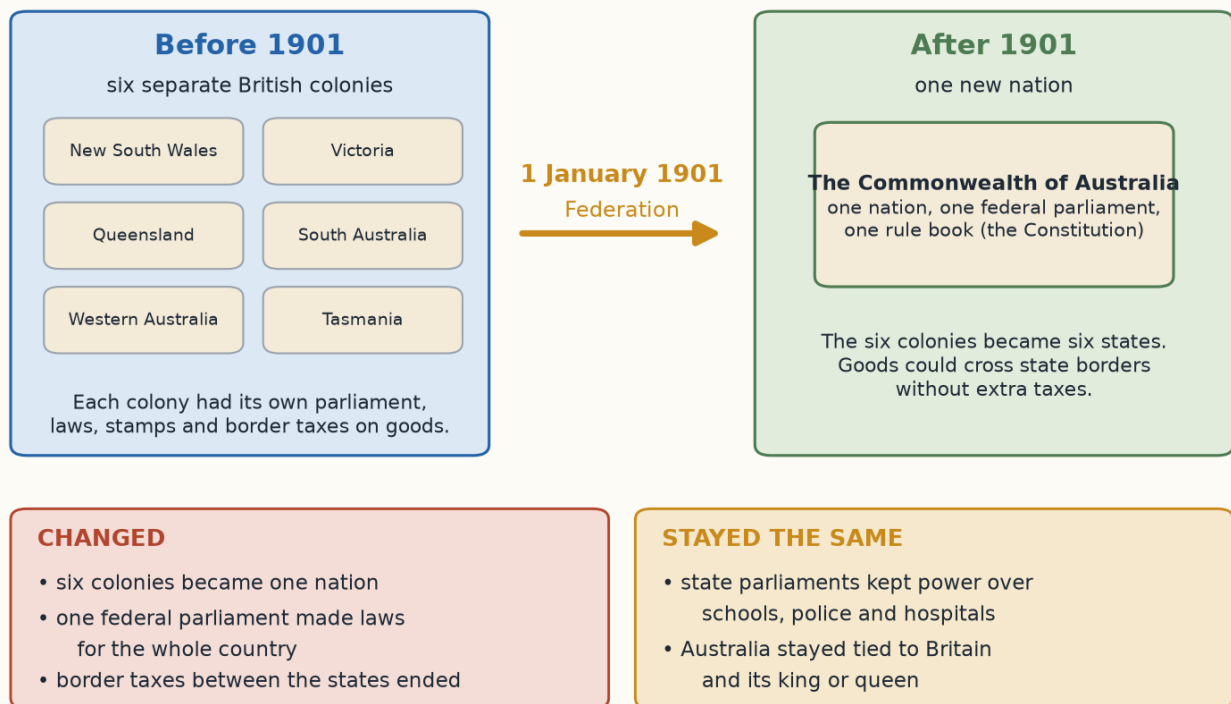
Model timeline titled *The road to one nation, 1851 to 1901*, with five parts labelled: a title, an arrow showing which way time moves, ticks with even spacing, a date under each tick, and event markers above or below the line on their date

1. A **title** says what the timeline shows.
2. An **arrow** at the end shows which way time moves.
3. **Ticks** have even spacing — each gap is the same number of years.
4. Each tick is **labelled** with its date.
5. **Events** sit above or below the line, on their date.

Centuries and decades. A **century** is 100 years. A **decade** is 10 years. The years 1801–1900 are the **19th century**; the years 1901–2000 are the **20th century**. So 1851 and 1854 sit in the 19th century, and 1901 opens the 20th century. Decades are named by their tens: 1851 and 1854 are in the **1850s**, and 1889, 1896 and 1901 are in the 1880s, 1890s and 1900s.

Continuity and change. **Continuity** is what stayed the same. **Change** is what became different. Every time you study a period, historians ask both questions: what changed, and what went on as before? Here is the big change this book studies — Federation. On **1 January 1901** the six British colonies joined to become one nation, Australia. We call this **Federation**.

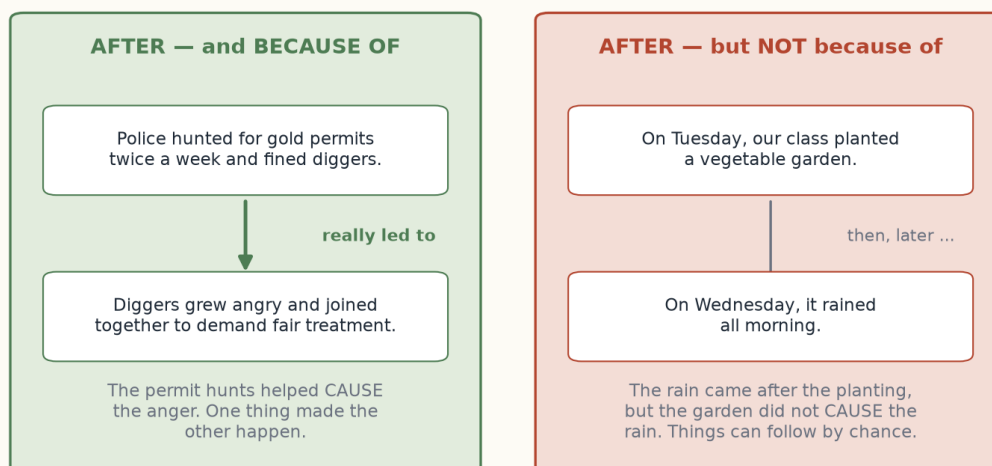
Continuity and change: Australia at Federation



Before and after panels showing the six British colonies becoming one nation at Federation on 1 January 1901, with a list of what changed (one nation, one federal parliament, no border taxes) and a list of what stayed the same (state parliaments kept local power; Australia stayed tied to Britain)

Causes and consequences. A **cause** is what made something happen. A **consequence** is what happened because of it. Timelines show *when* things happened. Causes and consequences go one step further: they say one thing *made* another happen. And here is the big caution: **after is not the same as because of**. Just because B came after A does not mean A caused B.

'After' is not the same as 'because of'



Timelines show WHAT came before and after. To talk about causes, you need evidence that one thing made the other happen.

Two panels: one shows a real cause, with police permit hunts really leading to diggers' anger; the other shows a coincidence, with rain on Wednesday coming after a class planted a garden on Tuesday but not caused by it

Significant events. Historians call an event **significant** if it changed life for many people, and if people still talk about it today. Federation is significant. So is the Eureka Stockade. A stubbed toe is not!

Word bank — time and cause words. When you write about order, use words like: *first, next, then, later, after that, by 1890, when, before, after*. When you write about causes, use words like: *because, so, as a result, this led to, this meant*.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — building a timeline (with help)

Task: Build a timeline of the road to Federation using the event table below, then read it back as a story.

Date	Event
1851	Gold is found; the gold rush begins
3 December 1854	Eureka Stockade at Ballarat
24 October 1889	Henry Parkes gives his famous speech calling the colonies to unite
1891	Leaders from the colonies meet in Sydney
1897–98	Leaders draft the rule book for the new nation (the Constitution — the rule book that says who has power and how it is used)
1898–1900	Voters in the colonies vote on the plan in yes/no votes; most say yes
9 July 1900	The plan becomes law in Britain
1 January 1901	Federation: the six colonies become one nation

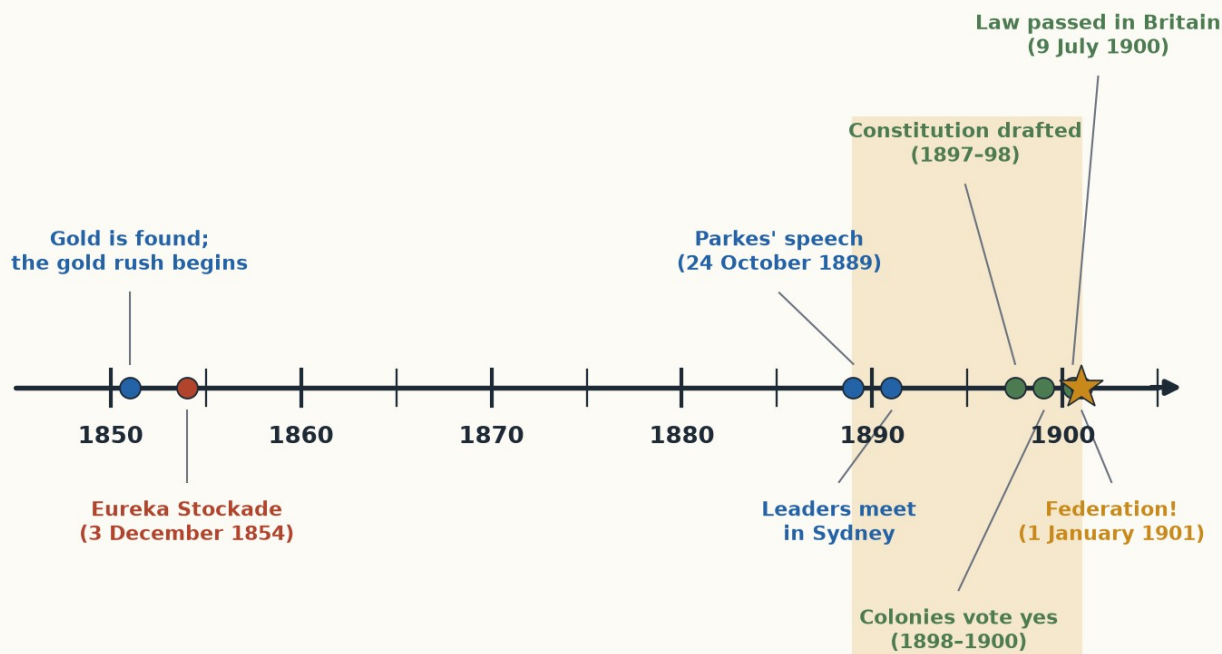
Source: National Museum of Australia, Federation and Eureka online material; Australian Dictionary of Biography, 'Parkes, Sir Henry' (both retrieved 24 August 2026).

Step 1 — draw the line and place the ticks. Time runs left to right. The events run from 1851 to 1901, so ticks every 5 years, labelled every 10 years, work well.

Step 2 — put each event on its date. Place each dot at its true date, not just “in order”. 1851 and 1854 sit close together on the left; then comes a long quiet stretch; then 1889–1901 is busy. Put labels above and below the line so they do not sit on top of each other.

Step 3 — check against the finished timeline.

The road to Federation, 1851-1901



Notice: six of the eight steps fall inside the shaded busy years, 1889 to 1901.

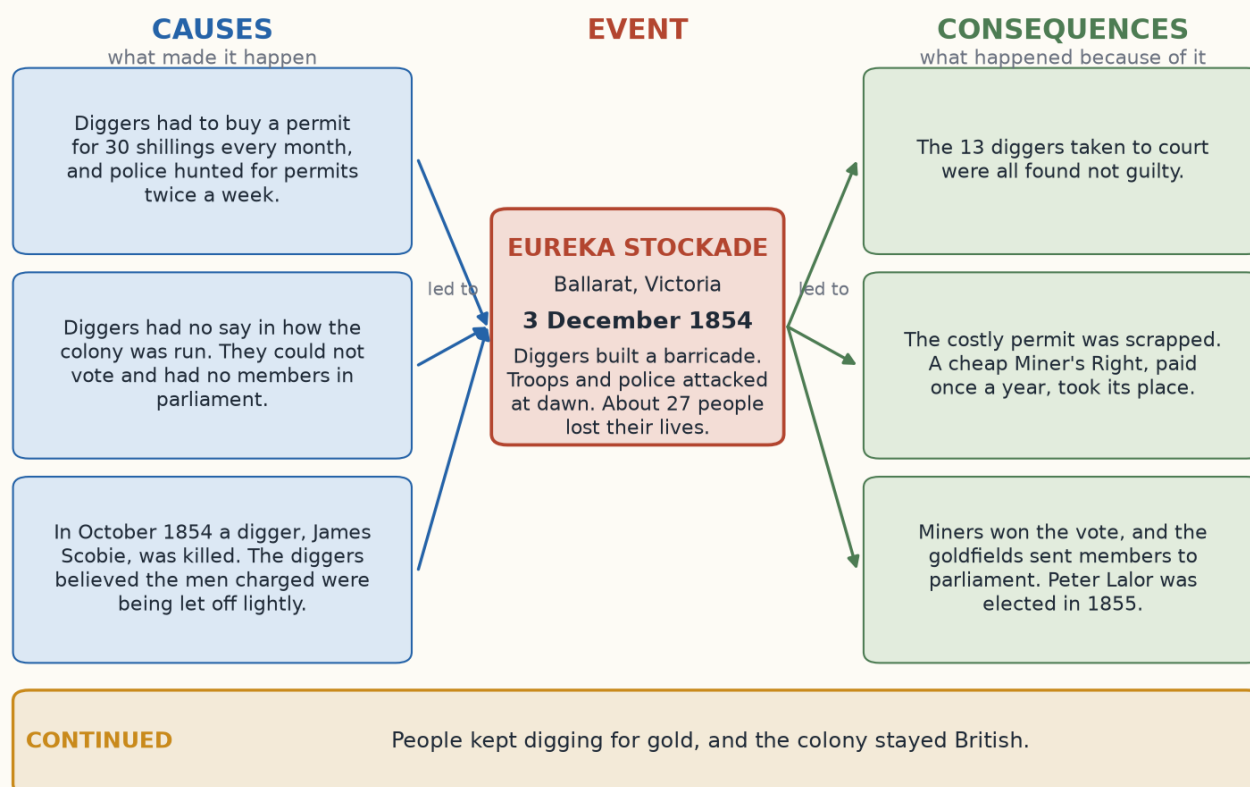
Finished timeline of the road to Federation with eight dated events placed from the 1851 gold rush to the 1 January 1901 Federation star, with the busy years 1889 to 1901 shaded

Step 4 — read it back as a story. “First, gold was found in 1851. Four years later came the Eureka Stockade. Then, in 1889, Parkes gave his speech. Next, colonial leaders met and drafted the Constitution. After the colonies voted yes, the plan became law in Britain. So, on 1 January 1901, the six colonies became one nation.” Notice the timeline shows something a list cannot: *six of the eight steps crowd into the twelve busy years 1889–1901.*

Worked example 2 — adding notes to a flow chart (with help)

Task: A flow chart puts causes on the left, the event in the middle and consequences on the right. Here is one for the Eureka Stockade, with notes already added. Check each note against the question it must answer.

Causes and consequences of the Eureka Stockade



The arrows carry the causes forward and the consequences on. The gold strip marks what did not change.

Flow chart with three cause cards (the costly monthly permit and permit hunts; no vote and no say in parliament; the killing of James Scobie and the let-off trial) leading into the Eureka Stockade event card (Ballarat, 3 December 1854), and three consequence cards leading out (13 diggers found not guilty; the permit scrapped for a cheap Miner's Right paid once a year; miners won the vote and Peter Lalor was elected in 1855), with a gold strip noting what continued

Source: National Museum of Australia and State Library of Victoria, Eureka online material (retrieved 24 August 2026).

- **Cause notes answer "what made it happen?"** Diggers had to buy a costly permit every month and were hunted for it twice a week; they had no vote and no say in parliament; and after James Scobie was killed in October 1854, diggers believed the men charged were let off lightly. Each note is a thing that *made* the anger grow — not just a thing that happened earlier.
- **Consequence notes answer "what happened because of it?"** The 13 diggers taken to court were found not guilty; the costly permit was scrapped and replaced by a cheap Miner's Right, paid once a year; and miners won the vote, with Peter Lalor elected to parliament in 1855. Each happened *because* of the Stockade and what followed it.
- **The gold strip answers "what stayed the same?"** People kept digging for gold, and the colony stayed British. That is the continuity note.

The caution again. The attack on the Stockade came *after* the flag meeting, and the rain in our class example came *after* the planting — but "after" alone is not a cause. The cause notes above are causes because we have evidence that one thing made the other happen: diggers said the permit hunts and the let-off trial made them angry.

Your turn — with help

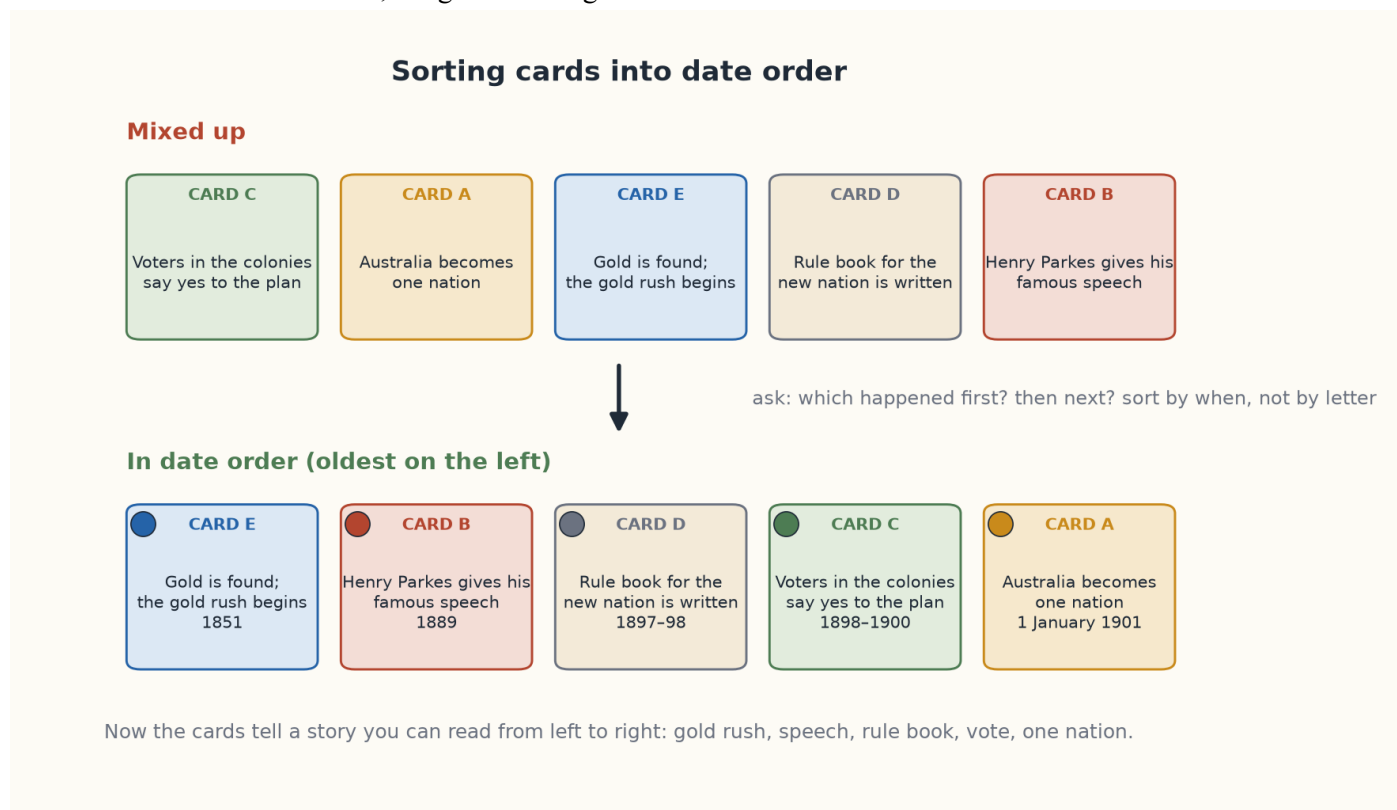
Q1. Look at the band line figure at the start of this section. (a) Which century does Chapter 1 cover? (b) Which century does Chapter 2 cover? (c) Time runs left to right: which chapter's events happened first?

Q2. Look at the model timeline figure (“What every timeline needs”). Name its five numbered parts in your own words.

Q3. Sort these years into centuries and decades: 1851, 1854, 1889, 1896, 1901. (a) Which are 19th-century years, and which are 20th-century years? (b) Which decade is each year in?

Q4. These five cards are mixed up. Put them in date order, starting with the one that happened first. Then check your order against the sorting figure below.

- **Card A** — Australia becomes one nation
- **Card B** — Henry Parkes gives his famous speech
- **Card C** — Voters in the colonies say yes to the plan
- **Card D** — Rule book for the new nation is written
- **Card E** — Gold is found; the gold rush begins



Five event cards shown mixed up in one row, then sorted into date order in a second row from the 1851 gold rush to 1 January 1901, numbered 1 to 5

Q5. Cause, or just after? For each pair, tick whether the first thing *caused* the second, or the second just came *after* the first. (a) Police hunted for permits twice a week and fined diggers → diggers grew angry and joined together. (b) Our class planted a garden on Tuesday → it rained on Wednesday. (c) James Scobie was killed and the men charged were let off lightly → diggers held protest meetings. For each cause you tick, say *why* the first thing made the second happen.

Q6. Change or continuity? Sort these four statements about Australia at Federation into “changed” and “stayed the same”. (a) One federal parliament made laws for the whole country. (b) Each state kept its own parliament for local matters like schools and police. (c) Goods could cross state borders without extra taxes. (d) Australia stayed tied to Britain and its king or queen. Check against the continuity and change figure.

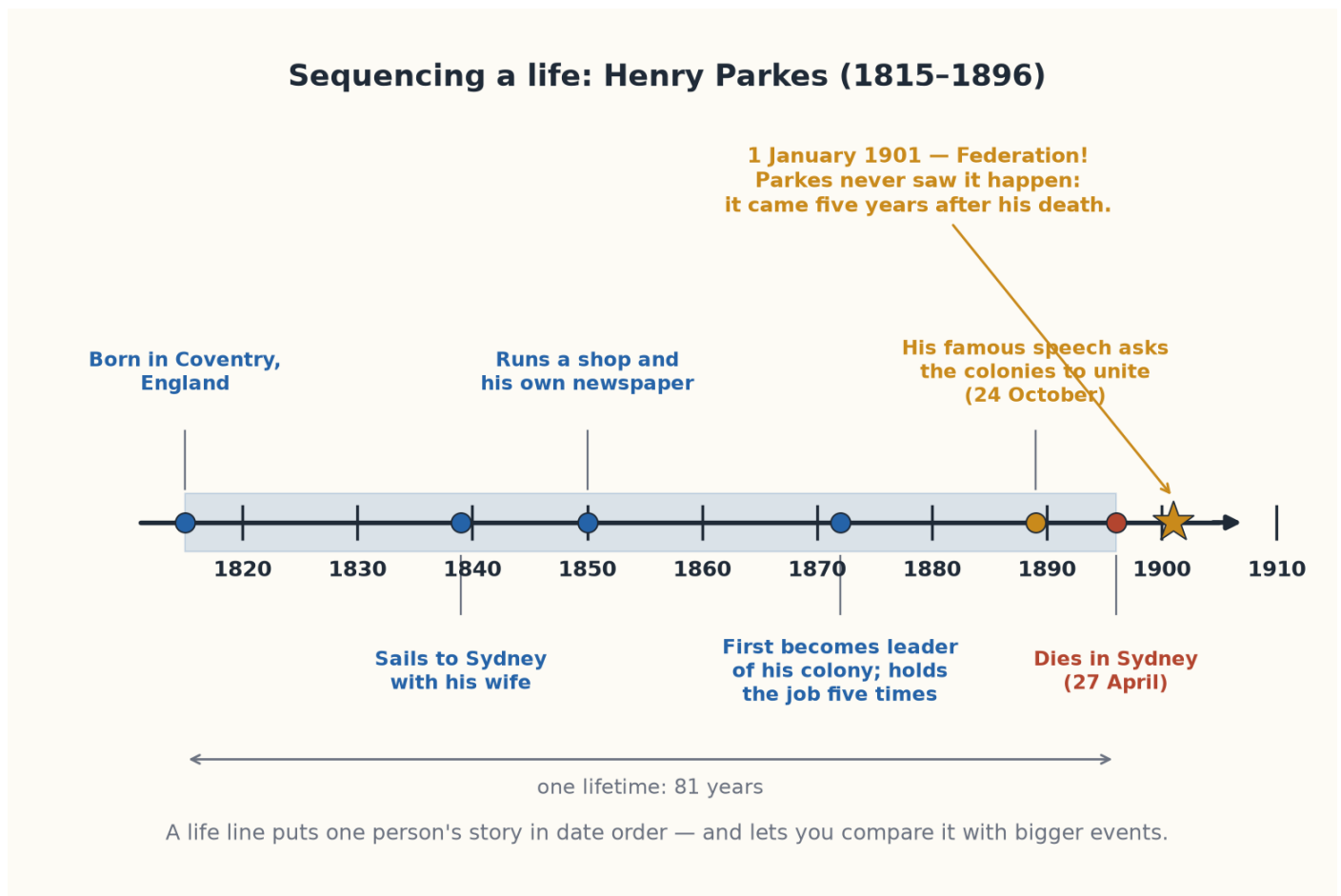
Q7. Here is a small flow chart with gaps. Add notes to it.

```

[ cause 1: permit hunts and fines made diggers angry ]  ┌┐
[ cause 2: ? ] ┌┐→ [ EVENT: diggers
built the
[ consequence 1: ? ] ←┐ Stockade, 3 Dec
1854 ]
[ continuity: ? ] ←┐
  
```

Fill cause 2, consequence 1 and the continuity note using this word bank (one item is a trick and does not belong):
miners won the vote · diggers had no vote and no say in parliament · the costly permit was scrapped · gold was found in 1851.

Q8. Look at the life line of Henry Parkes below. (a) In what year was he born, and where? (b) In what year did he sail to Sydney? (c) Which came first: his famous speech or his death? (d) Did Parkes live to see Federation? How does the line show this? (e) He lived for 81 years. Check this by subtracting.



Life-line timeline for Henry Parkes, 1815 to 1896, with six dated events (born in Coventry England; sails to Sydney; runs a shop and newspaper; becomes leader of his colony five times; gives his famous speech in 1889; dies in Sydney) and the 1901 Federation star placed after his death

Q9. Spot the mistakes. A student's timeline fails the checklist below in three places. Find all three.

- Title: "Stuff that happened"
- 1901 Federation on the left, then 1889, then 1851 on the right
- Ticks: the gap between 1850 and 1860 is drawn much wider than the gap between 1860 and 1870
- No arrow at the end; every tick labelled; each event on its date

Timeline checklist: check each box before you finish

- ☐ My timeline has a title that says what it shows.
- ☐ Time runs left to right: oldest dates on the left.
- ☐ The ticks have even spacing (each gap is the same years).
- ☐ Every tick is labelled with its date.
- ☐ An arrow at the end shows which way time moves.
- ☐ Each event has a short label and sits on its date.
- ☐ I can read my timeline out loud as a story, in order.

Tick each box as you check. A timeline that passes all seven is ready to share.

Checklist of seven tick boxes for building a timeline: a title that says what it shows; time runs left to right; ticks with even spacing; every tick labelled with its date; an arrow showing which way time moves; each event has a short label on its date; the timeline reads aloud as a story in order

Your turn — on your own

Q10 — build your own timeline. Choose one set of events and construct a timeline, by hand or with a timeline app or program on a device. Give it a title, ticks with even spacing, dates, an arrow, and short labels on their dates. Check it against the seven-box checklist figure before you share it.

- **Set 1 — the gold rush years:** 1851 gold is found · 1854 Eureka Stockade · 1855 the 13 diggers are found not guilty · 1855 miners win the vote · 1889 Parkes' speech · 1901 Federation
- **Set 2 — migration milestones:** 1850s gold draws migrants from Britain, Europe and Asia · 1901 Federation · 1946 Britain offers cheap ship fares to migrants after the world war · 1949 a new law creates Australian citizenship

Q11 — continuity and change, in your words. Write three sentences about the diggers after Eureka: two changes (each with a date) and one continuity (what went on as before). Use at least one change word (*changed, became, replaced, won*) and the word *still*.

Q12 — the sequencing story (writing task). Write one paragraph (6–10 sentences) that sequences at least **five** events between 1851 and 1901 in chronological order, and weaves in the life of **one** person from this section (Henry Parkes or Peter Lalor). Include at least **one cause** and **one consequence**, using cause words from the word bank, and name **one source** from the sources box below that backs up your events. Underline your time words and circle your cause and consequence words.

Answers

Q1. (a) The 19th century (the 1800s). (b) The 20th century (the 1900s). (c) Chapter 1's — its events sit on the left.

Q2. 1 title; 2 arrow showing which way time moves; 3 ticks with even spacing; 4 a date on each tick; 5 events above or below the line on their date.

Q3. (a) 19th century: 1851, 1854, 1889, 1896. 20th century: 1901. (b) 1851 and 1854 → 1850s; 1889 → 1880s; 1896 → 1890s; 1901 → 1900s.

Q4. E (1851), B (1889), D (1897–98), C (1898–1900), A (1 January 1901).

Q5. (a) Cause — the hunts and fines made diggers angry; diggers said so at the time. (b) Just after — planting a garden cannot make it rain. (c) Cause — the killing and the let-off trial made diggers believe the courts were unfair, so they met to protest.

Q6. Changed: (a) and (c). Stayed the same: (b) and (d).

Q7. Cause 2: diggers had no vote and no say in parliament. Consequence 1: miners won the vote (or: the costly permit was scrapped). Continuity: people kept digging for gold — from the worked example. The trick item: “gold was found in 1851” (it came *before* the anger but did not cause it — after is not because of!).

Q8. (a) 1815, in Coventry, England. (b) 1839. (c) The speech (1889) came before his death (1896). (d) No — the 1901 star sits to the right of his death; the note says it came five years after he died. (e) $1896 - 1815 = 81$. ✓

Q9. 1. Time runs right to left (1901 on the left) — the oldest dates must sit on the left. 2. The ticks do not have even spacing. 3. There is no arrow at the end. (The title is weak too — “Stuff that happened” does not say what the timeline shows!)

Worked solutions

Q10 (model). A Set 1 timeline: title “The gold rush years, 1851–1901”; ticks every 5 years from 1850 to 1905, labelled every 10; dots and labels for 1851, 1854, 1855 (two labels, stacked above and below), 1889 and 1901; arrow at the right end. Read back: “First gold was found in 1851, then the Stockade in 1854, then in 1855 the diggers were found not guilty and miners won the vote...” A digital version must still pass the same seven checks.

Q11 (model). “After Eureka, the costly permit **was replaced** in 1855 by a cheap Miner’s Right, paid once a year, and miners **won** the vote. Life on the goldfields **changed** in another way too: the goldfields now sent members to parliament. But digging went on — people were **still** digging for gold, just as before.”

Q12 (model paragraph). “*First*, gold was found in 1851, and the gold rush brought thousands of diggers to the colonies. *Next*, because police hunted for costly permits twice a week, diggers grew angry, and *then* they built the Eureka Stockade in December 1854. *As a result* of the Stockade, miners *later* won the vote, and Peter Lalor — born in 1827, who led the diggers and lost an arm there — was elected to parliament in 1855. *Earlier* than that, Henry Parkes had sailed to Sydney in 1839; he rose to lead his colony, and *in 1889* he gave the speech that set the colonies talking about uniting. *After that*, leaders drafted the Constitution, the colonies voted yes, and *so, by 1901*, the six colonies had become one nation. The National Museum of Australia’s Federation material backs up this sequence.”

Sources for this section

- Australian Dictionary of Biography (Australian National University) — ‘Parkes, Sir Henry’ and ‘Lalor, Peter’. Retrieved 24 August 2026.
- National Museum of Australia — online material on the Eureka Stockade and on Federation. Retrieved 24 August 2026.
- State Library of Victoria — online gold rush and Eureka collections. Retrieved 24 August 2026.
- National Archives of Australia — online Federation documents. Retrieved 24 August 2026.

Historical sources up close: what they show, what they say, and where they come from

TEACHER-FACING METADATA – NOT STUDENT TEXT (the vocabulary gate excludes this block)

Section 3C – Chapter 3 – Strand: Historical Concepts and Skills

Sub-strand: Using historical sources

Owns: VC2HH6S03

(The second sentence of the band achievement standard is owned by 3D / VC2HH6S04.)

Draws on (linkage keys per D10, VCAA export order): VC2HH6S03.E01, VC2HH6S03.E02, VC2HH6S03.E03

First Nations disposition (TOC 3C row): none – no 3C elaboration carries an exclusion; nothing excluded is taught or referenced.

Working material (D11): all sources sit inside the Chapter 1 / Chapter 2 content – Eureka and the gold rushes (1B/1C/1F), the convict-era colonies (1A), Ned Kelly (1F), the vote for women (2B), Federation and the first Parliament (2A), post-war migration (2C).

Source lines for real-world data (D6), all checked 24 August 2026:

- The Monster Petition (1891): about 30,000 signatures on paper about 260 metres long, collected across Victoria by the Victorian Women's Franchise League (Annette Bear-Crawford chaired the campaign); presented to the Victorian Parliament on 16 September 1891 with the Women's Suffrage Bill, which was defeated; Victorian women voted in colony elections from 1908. The petition is kept today in the National Museum of Australia.
- Women's Anti-Suffrage League of New South Wales, founded 1912 by Lillie Goodisson, printed leaflets against votes for women (State Library of New South Wales; National Library of Australia).
- South Australian women won the vote in 1894 and could stand for parliament; New Zealand women won the vote in 1893.
- The Argus, a Melbourne newspaper begun in 1846, printed news of the attack on the Eureka Stockade (attack at dawn Sunday 3 December 1854) on Monday 4 December 1854; the paper is digitised on Trove, National Library of Australia.
- The Eureka Flag: wool flag about 4 metres by 2.6 metres, made at Ballarat in 1854, attributed to Anastasia Withers and two other women; flown at the Eureka Stockade; kept today at the Art Gallery of Ballarat.
- Ballarat Reform League Charter, 11 November 1854, held in the Public Record Office Victoria (VPRS 4066/P): it demands, among other things, "a full and fair representation" and "manhood suffrage".
- Opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament, 9 May 1901, Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne, by the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York: painted by Charles Nuttall (1902; Parliament House collection) and photographed by J.W. Lindt (State Library of Victoria).
- Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902, assented 12 June 1902: gave most adult women (and men) the federal vote and let women stand for federal parliament; it also shut some people out because of where they or their families came from – clauses later repealed. Held at the National Archives of Australia.
- Certificate of freedom of Charlotte Rhymes, 1840, New South Wales – a convict-era paper saying her sentence was over and she was free; kept in the NSW State Archives (Museums of History NSW).

- Ned Kelly's armour: steel armour made in 1880 from plough metal, worn by Ned Kelly at Glenrowan in June 1880; kept today at the State Library of Victoria; it weighs more than 40 kilograms.
- Arthur Calwell, first Minister for Immigration (from 1945): his push to fill Australia with people after the Second World War is remembered in his words "populate or perish" (his writing and speeches of the late 1940s; Hansard, 2 August 1945). The Assisted Passage Migration Scheme began in 1945; British adults paid a 10-pound fare, so they were nicknamed "Ten Pound Poms"; more than a million British migrants came under such schemes.

Teacher read-aloud lines (Rule 4 relaxation, recorded here, NOT in the checked student text): the Charter's own words "manhood suffrage – a vote for every grown man" (PROV VPRS 4066/P), and Calwell's own words "populate or perish". The student's task is to think about the source, not to decode words above the ceiling; the teacher reads those two lines aloud.

Model images (SOURCE_USE Rule 3): 3c_newspaper_parts.png and 3c_petition.png are original drawings made for this book and say so on their face. They are NOT sources; they are labelled as made for this book.

Volume (TOC calibration): one teaching sequence; two worked examples; eight scaffolded and three unscaffolded tasks; one teacher-supported source task.

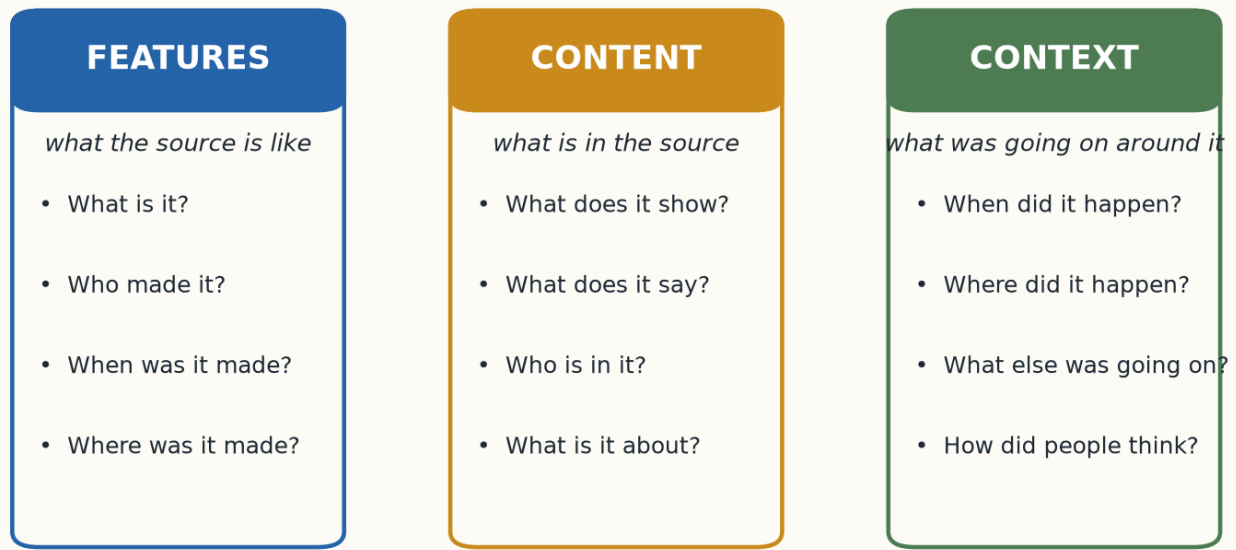
Teaching sequence

From naming to describing

In earlier years you learned that a **source** is anything left from the past that helps us find out about the past, and you learned to *name* a source's **features** (what it is like) and its **content** (what is in it). This year you go further. A Level 5 historian does not just name these things — they **describe** them: they say more, and they say *how they know*. And they add a third word: **context**.

Describe three things about every source

Features, content and context — the historian's three questions



Same source, three questions: what it is, what it says, what was going on around it.

A chart with three cards. The *FEATURES* card says *what the source is like*, with questions *what is it*, *who made it*, *when was it made*, *where was it made*. The *CONTENT* card says *what is in the source*, with questions *what does it show*, *what does it say*, *who is in it*, *what is it about*. The *CONTEXT* card says *what was going on around it*, with questions *when did it happen*, *where did it happen*, *what else was going on*, *how did people think*.

Describing means adding detail and reasons. “It is a newspaper” names a feature. “It is a newspaper called *The Argus*, printed in Melbourne on 4 December 1854, the day after the fight at the Eureka Stockade” *describes* that feature. See the difference? The second one tells us how the source fits into the past.

The families of sources

Sources come in families. A source can be a piece of **writing** (a letter, a diary, a petition, a law), an **image** (a photograph, a painting, a map), an **object** (a flag, a suit of armour, a coin), or a **recording** (a sound recording, a film, a recorded talk).

Sources come in families

Four families of sources — each can be primary or secondary

WRITTEN SOURCES

- letters and diaries
- petitions
- laws and rules
- newspapers
- tickets and certificates

IMAGE SOURCES

- photographs
- paintings and drawings
- maps and plans
- posters
- cartoons

OBJECT SOURCES

- flags and uniforms
- tools and machines
- coins and medals
- clothes
- buildings

RECORDED SOURCES

- sound recordings
- films
- radio and TV clips
- recorded talks
- oral histories

PRIMARY SOURCE

made at the time, or close to the time,
by people who were there or close by

Example: a letter written in 1854 on the goldfields

SECONDARY SOURCE

made later, using primary sources,
to tell the story again

Example: a book printed today about the gold rushes

Four cards name the families of sources. Written sources: letters and diaries, petitions, laws and rules, newspapers, tickets and certificates. Image sources: photographs, paintings and drawings, maps and plans, posters, cartoons. Object sources: flags and uniforms, tools and machines, coins and medals, clothes, buildings. Recorded sources: sound recordings, films, radio and TV clips, recorded talks, oral histories. Below, two cards: a primary source is made at the time, or close to the time, by people who were there or close by; a secondary source is made later, using primary sources, to tell the story again.

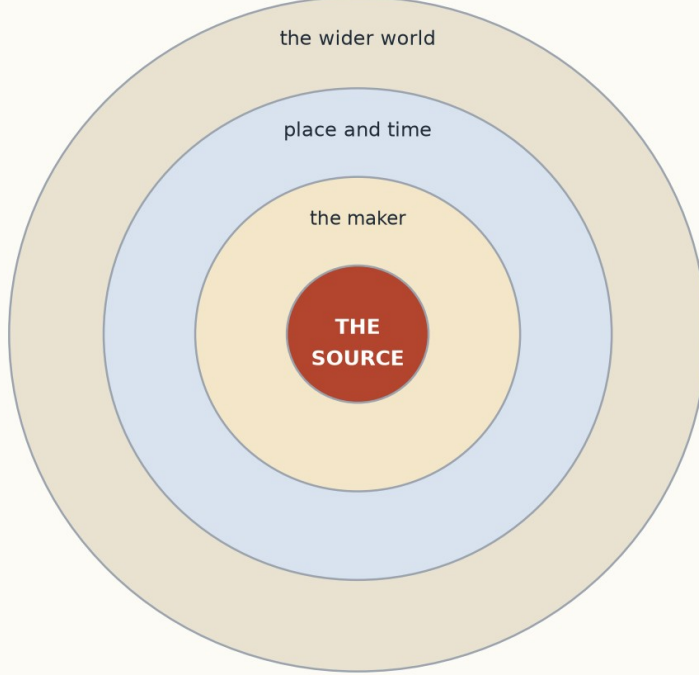
Remember the two kinds. A **primary source** was made at the time of the event, or close to it, by people who were there or close by. A **secondary source** was made later, using primary sources, to tell the story again. Every family above can hold both kinds.

The new word: context

The **context** of a source is what was happening at the time and place it was made. A source never floats free of its world. To describe the context, move out from the source in rings: the maker, then the place and time, then the wider world.

What counts as context?

The context is the world the source was made in — start at the source and move out



THE SOURCE

a petition asking for votes for women, collected in Victoria in 1891

THE MAKER

women and men who wanted the vote for women, working together

PLACE AND TIME

Victoria in 1891 — a colony where only men could vote

THE WIDER WORLD

people in other countries were asking the same question at the same time

Example: the 1891 petition for votes for women

A diagram of rings around a centre that reads THE SOURCE. The rings are the maker, then place and time, then the wider world. At the right, an example using the 1891 petition for votes for women: the source is a petition asking for votes for women, collected in Victoria in 1891; the maker is women and men who wanted the vote for women, working together; the place and time is Victoria in 1891, a colony where only men could vote; the wider world is people in other countries asking the same question at the same time.

Why does context matter? Because the same source means more once you know its world. A petition asking for votes for women is interesting; the *same* petition, made in a colony where only men could vote, is a brave thing. The context is part of the meaning.

A worked look at one source

Here is a drawing of a real source — the **Monster Petition** of 1891. It is a **petition**: a piece of writing that asks for something, signed by many people to show how many agree.

The Monster Petition of 1891

A drawing made for this book — not the real petition



A labelled drawing, made for this book and not the real petition. It shows pages sewn together and rolled around a wooden rod, covered in about 30,000 signatures collected all over Victoria, about 260 metres long when joined, given to the Victorian Parliament on 16 September 1891. A box says it was collected in 1891 by the Victorian Women's Franchise League and is kept today in the National Museum of Australia.

Sources with a range of views

Some questions split people into sides, and each side leaves sources behind. Around 1900, Australians argued hard about one question: should women vote? (The right to vote is also called the **franchise** or **suffrage**.)

One question, two views: should women vote?

Around 1900, Australians argued about this hard. Each side left sources behind.

YES — votes for women

A source for this view: the Monster Petition (1891), signed by about 30,000 people in Victoria

- Women must obey the laws, so they should help make the laws.
- Women pay taxes, just as men do.
- Women already vote in South Australia (from 1894) and New Zealand (from 1893).

NO — keep the vote for men

A source for this view: the leaflets of the Women's Anti-Suffrage League of NSW (from 1912)

- Most women, they said, did not want the vote.
- Women's voices were already heard through their families.
- Public life, they said, was too rough for women.

A historian describes each view carefully, then asks WHY each side believed what it did.

Two cards. The YES card says votes for women, and names a source for that view, the Monster Petition of 1891, signed by about 30,000 people in Victoria; its points are that women must obey the laws so they should help make the laws, that women pay taxes just as men do, and that women already vote in South Australia from 1894 and New Zealand from 1893. The NO card says keep the vote for men, and names a source for that view, the leaflets of the Women's Anti-Suffrage League of NSW from 1912; its points are that most women, they said, did not want the vote, that women's voices were already heard through their families, and that public life, they said, was too rough for women. A box below says a historian describes each view carefully, then asks why each side believed what it did.

When sources disagree, a historian does not pick a side and stop. They describe each view carefully, and then they ask the context questions: *who made this source, and what was their life like?* A woman who ran a business and paid taxes had one view of the question. A man who believed a woman's place was the home had another. The context helps explain *why* the views differ.

Checking the publishing details

For a printed source — a newspaper, a book, a leaflet, a law — the fastest way into its features and context is to check its **publishing details**: the name of the paper or book, the date, the place, the price, and who printed or made it.

The publishing details of an old newspaper

Model page made for this book — so you can see where the details live

the VOLUME and NUMBER tell you how long the paper has been printed

the PRICE it cost



the NAME of the paper

the DATE — when it was printed

the HEADING of the story

COLUMNS of print — where the story is

Checking these details is how a historian finds out when, where and by whom a printed source was made.

A model newspaper page made for this book, clearly labelled as a model. The page is called The Acacia Creek Herald, dated Saturday 12 March 1859, priced threepence, with a heading New School House Opened above columns of print. Labels point to the name of the paper, the date, the price, the volume and number, the heading, and the columns of print.

The date tells you *when* the source entered the world. The name and place tell you *who* it was made for. A Melbourne paper the day after a battle tells its readers what Melbourne wanted to know first. That is context, read straight off the page.

Putting sources into a table

Historians keep their source notes in order. One strong way is a **summary table**: one row per source, with columns for the features, the type, the context, and the information the source holds. Here is a worked one for four of the real sources in this section.

A worked summary table of four sources

Features, type, context, information — one row per source

Source	Type	Features	Context	Information it holds
A The Eureka Flag (1854)	an object	a wool flag, about 4 metres long, made at Ballarat in 1854	miners on the Ballarat goldfields were fighting for their rights	what the miners flew above their stockade
B The Argus, 4 Dec 1854	a newspaper	printed in Melbourne on the day after the attack on the Eureka Stockade	news of the battle had just reached Melbourne	what Melbourne readers first heard about the battle
C The Monster Petition (1891)	a petition	about 30,000 signatures on paper about 260 metres long, collected in Victoria	in Victoria, only men could vote in colony elections	how many people wanted votes for women
D Commonwealth Franchise Act (1902)	a law	a law made by the new Australian Parliament in 1902	the new nation was writing the rules for its elections	who could vote in federal elections from 1902

Your turn in Task 9: build your own table like this one for three sources of your choice.

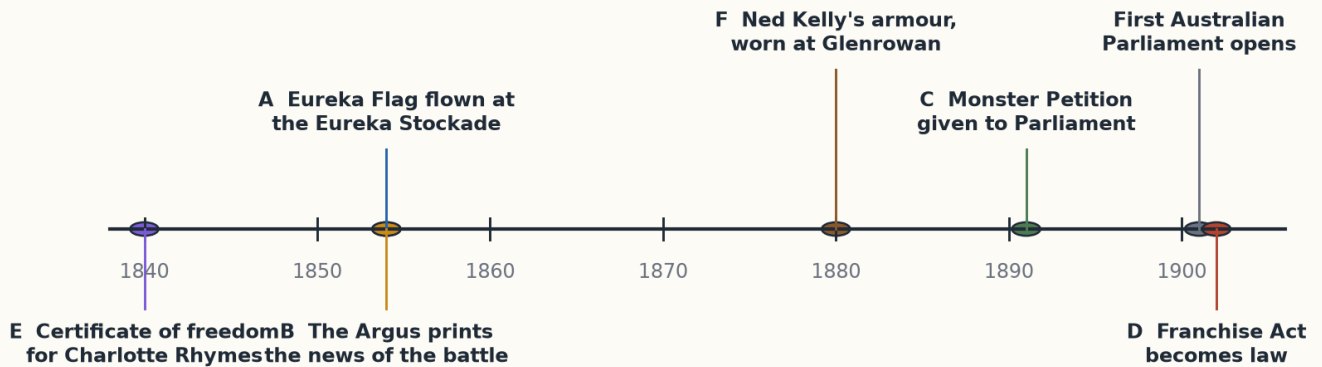
A worked table with one row per source and columns for source, type, features, context, and information it holds. Row A: the Eureka Flag, 1854, an object, a wool flag about 4 metres long made at Ballarat in 1854; miners on the Ballarat goldfields were fighting for their rights; it shows what the miners flew above their stockade. Row B: The Argus, 4 December 1854, a newspaper, printed in Melbourne on the day after the attack on the Eureka Stockade; news of the battle had just reached Melbourne; it shows what Melbourne readers first heard about the battle. Row C: the Monster Petition, 1891, a petition, about 30,000 signatures on paper about 260 metres long collected in Victoria; in Victoria only men could vote in colony elections; it shows how many people wanted votes for women. Row D: the Commonwealth Franchise Act, 1902, a law, made by the new Australian Parliament in 1902; the new nation was writing the rules for its elections; it shows who could vote in federal elections from 1902.

When was each source made?

Every source sits at a moment in time, and that moment is one of its features. Placing sources on a timeline is a quick check that you have the features right.

When was each source made?

Every source sits at a moment in time — that moment is part of its features.



A timeline from 1840 to 1902. At 1840, E, a certificate of freedom for Charlotte Rhymes. At 1854, A, the Eureka Flag flown at the Eureka Stockade, and B, The Argus prints the news of the battle. At 1880, F, Ned Kelly's armour, worn at Glenrowan. At 1891, C, the Monster Petition given to Parliament. At 1901, the first Australian Parliament opens. At 1902, D, the Franchise Act becomes law.

Worked examples

Example 1 — with help: describing the Monster Petition

Describe the Monster Petition of 1891 (Source C) under the three headings.

Heading	Description	How we know
Features	A petition — a written source. Made in Victoria in 1891 by the Victorian Women's Franchise League and its helpers. About 30,000 signatures, on paper about 260 metres long, sewn and rolled on a rod. Kept today in the National Museum of Australia.	The petition itself carries the signatures and the date; the museum keeps it and lists it.
Content	It asks the Victorian Parliament to give women the vote, and it carries the names of the people who agree.	That is what a petition is for; the words at its top ask for the vote.
Context	In Victoria in 1891, only men could vote in colony elections. The petition was given to Parliament on 16 September 1891 with a bill — a draft law — that would have given women the vote. The bill was defeated. Victorian women did not vote in colony elections until 1908.	The date sits inside the story of the vote for women: before 1894 (South Australia), before 1908 (Victoria).

One sentence of description joins all three: *Made in a colony where only men could vote, this petition is the voices of about 30,000 people asking for that to change.*

Example 2 — with help: checking where and when a newspaper was published

Describe Source B, *The Argus* of Monday 4 December 1854. First check the publishing details, then fill in the three headings.

Publishing detail	What it is	What it tells us
Name	<i>The Argus</i>	a Melbourne newspaper, begun in 1846
Date	Monday 4 December 1854	the day after the attack on the Eureka Stockade
Place	Melbourne	it tells city readers the news of the goldfields

Heading	Description
Features	A printed source — one day's issue of a newspaper, printed in Melbourne on 4 December 1854. We can read it today on Trove, the National Library of Australia's newspaper site.
Content	It carries the news of the fight at Ballarat: that soldiers and police attacked the miners' stockade at dawn on Sunday, and that men on both sides were killed and many miners taken prisoner.
Context	On the Ballarat goldfields, miners had grown angry about the gold licence — a paper miners had to buy to dig for gold — and about having no say in the laws. They built a stockade — a fort of logs — at Eureka. The attack on it, at dawn on 3 December 1854, was the sharp end of that argument.

Because it was printed the day after the event, this issue is a **primary source** for the news of that day. It is one window into what Melbourne heard, and how soon.

Practice tasks

These tasks use six real sources. The cards below give the features of four of them. Source E (the certificate of freedom for Charlotte Rhymes, 1840) and Source F (Ned Kelly's armour) appear in the timeline above.

Four real sources, 1854 to 1902

Each card gives the features. The tasks ask you for the content and the context.

SOURCE A

The Eureka Flag (1854)

an object — a flag made of wool
made at Ballarat in 1854
flown at the Eureka Stockade
kept today at the Art Gallery of Ballarat

SOURCE B

The Argus, 4 December 1854

a printed source — a newspaper
printed in Melbourne, the day after
the attack on the Eureka Stockade
read today on Trove (National Library
of Australia)

SOURCE C

The Monster Petition (1891)

a written source — a petition
about 30,000 signatures on paper
about 260 metres long
kept today at the National Museum
of Australia

SOURCE D

Commonwealth Franchise Act (1902)

a written source — a law
made by the new Australian Parliament
in 1902; gave most women the federal
vote; kept today at the National
Archives of Australia

Four source cards. Source A, the Eureka Flag of 1854, is an object, a flag made of wool, made at Ballarat, flown at the Eureka Stockade, kept today at the Art Gallery of Ballarat. Source B, The Argus of 4 December 1854, is a printed newspaper, printed in Melbourne the day after the attack on the Eureka Stockade, read today on Trove at the National Library of Australia. Source C, the Monster Petition of 1891, is a petition with about 30,000 signatures on paper about 260 metres long, kept today at the National Museum of Australia. Source D, the Commonwealth Franchise Act of 1902, is a law made by the new Australian Parliament, giving most women the federal vote, kept today at the National Archives of Australia.

With help

Q1. Sort these notes about Source A (the Eureka Flag) into the three headings: features, content, context. (a) It is a flag made of wool, about 4 metres long. (b) Miners on the Ballarat goldfields were fighting for their rights. (c) It shows a white cross of stars on a blue ground. (d) It was made at Ballarat in 1854. (e) It flew above the miners' stockade — what they stood under. (f) It is kept today at the Art Gallery of Ballarat.

Q2. Look again at the three-question chart. For Source F (Ned Kelly's armour), answer any four of the twelve questions on the chart. Use: a suit of steel armour, made in 1880 from plough metal; worn by Ned Kelly at Glenrowan in June 1880; kept today at the State Library of Victoria; it weighs more than 40 kilograms.

Q3. Publishing details. Look at the model newspaper page. (a) Name four publishing details you can check on a printed source. (b) Which one tells you *when* the source was made? (c) The model page is dated Saturday 12 March 1859. Is that page a primary source for the year 1859? Say why, carefully.

Q4. Source B. (a) Why is *The Argus* of 4 December 1854 a primary source for the battle? (b) Name one thing its content tells us. (c) Name one context fact that helps explain why the battle happened.

Q5. Two views. Look at the two-views chart. Put each remark on the right side: YES or NO. (a) "Women pay taxes, just as men do." (b) "Most women do not want the vote." (c) "Women must obey the laws, so they should help make them." (d) "Public life is too rough a business for women." (e) "Women in South Australia and New Zealand already vote." (f) "Women's voices are already heard through their families."

Q6. Families. Put Sources A to F into families: written, image, object. (Hint: one family holds four of them, one holds two, and not one is an image.)

Q7. Timeline. Using the timeline figure, put these in order, from first to last: the Monster Petition; Ned Kelly's armour; the Franchise Act; the certificate of freedom for Charlotte Rhymes; the Eureka Flag.

Q8. Here is a half-finished summary table. Finish row B in your own words.

Source	Type	Features	Context	Information it holds
A Eureka Flag	an object	wool flag, Ballarat, 1854	miners fighting for their rights	what the miners flew
B <i>The Argus</i> , 4 Dec 1854	?	?	?	?
C Monster Petition	a petition	30,000 signatures, Victoria, 1891	only men could vote in the colony	how many wanted votes for women

On your own

Q9. Build your own summary table (like the worked one) for three sources of your choice from this section. Columns: source, type, features, context, information it holds.

Q10. Describe Source F (Ned Kelly's armour) in three or four sentences, using the words *features*, *content* and *context*.

Q11. Source D, the Commonwealth Franchise Act of 1902, gave most women the federal vote — a big change. But the same law shut some people out of the vote because of where they or their families came from. That was unfair, and those clauses were later taken away. Use the context of 1902 — a brand-new nation writing its first voting rules — to explain in two or three sentences why a historian must describe *both* parts of this law, not just one.

Source task

Your teacher will help with this one. It is about migration. Like the vote for women, migration split people into sides, and each side left sources behind.

Your teacher will read the words of Arthur Calwell, Australia's first Minister for Immigration, from 1945: "*populate or perish*." He meant that Australia should fill up with people, or it would be lost. Under a scheme begun that year, British families could sail to Australia for a ten-pound fare — people nicknamed them "Ten Pound Poms", and more than a million British migrants came.

- What kind of source is a minister's spoken words, written down at the time — primary or secondary? Say why.
- Many Australians welcomed the new arrivals. Some people worried the new arrivals would take their jobs. Name one source from this section's world — a newspaper, a poster, a letter — that each side might have made, and say what it would show.
- What was happening in the world in 1945 that made Australia want more people? (Hint: the Second World War had just ended.)

Answers

Q1. Features: (a), (d), (f). Content: (c), (e). Context: (b). (Note: (e) says what the flag shows *and* what it stood for — content; (f) is a feature of the flag today.)

Q2. Any four, for example: What is it — a suit of steel armour. When was it made — 1880. Who wore it — Ned Kelly. Where — Glenrowan. What is it made of — plough metal. What is it like — heavy, more than 40 kilograms.

Q3. (a) Any four of: the name of the paper, the date, the place, the price, the volume and number, who printed it. (b) The date. (c) No — the model page was made for this book, long after 1859, so it is not a source from 1859. A real page printed on that date would be primary.

Q4. (a) It was printed the day after the battle, in the city that heard the news — made at the time, close to the event. (b) For example: that soldiers and police attacked the stockade at dawn; that men on both sides were killed; that many miners were taken prisoner. (c) For example: miners were angry about the gold licence and had no say in the laws; they built the stockade at Eureka.

Q5. YES: (a), (c), (e). NO: (b), (d), (f).

Q6. Written: B (newspaper), C (petition), D (law), E (certificate of freedom). Object: A (flag), F (armour). Image: not one of A–F (a photograph of the first Parliament opening would be an image source).

Q7. Certificate of freedom (1840); Eureka Flag (1854); Ned Kelly's armour (1880); Monster Petition (1891); Franchise Act (1902).

Q8. For example: Type — a newspaper (a printed source). Features — one day's issue, printed in Melbourne on 4 December 1854. Context — news of the attack on the Eureka Stockade had just reached Melbourne. Information it holds — what Melbourne readers first heard about the battle.

Q9. Check: three rows; each row has a source, a type, features (what, who, when, where), a context (what was going on), and the information it holds.

Q10. For example: "The features of this source are that it is a suit of steel armour, made in 1880 from plough metal, and kept today at the State Library of Victoria. Its content is a helmet and plates that cover the body. Its context is that Ned Kelly was a bushranger — an outlaw — and in June 1880, at Glenrowan, he wore the armour in a fight with police."

Q11. For example: "The context of 1902 is a new nation writing its first rules. Giving most women the federal vote was a big step forward, and shutting some people out because of where they came from was unfair. A historian describes both parts, because the one law holds both, and leaving one out would not be the whole story."

Source task. (a) Primary — the words were spoken and written down at the time, by the man who meant them. (b) For example: a welcoming side might make a poster showing families stepping off a ship, saying Australia needs people; a worrying side might make a letter or cartoon about jobs. Each source would show one view of the same question. (c) The Second World War had just ended; Australia felt it needed more people to work and to keep the country safe.

Example answers

Q9. "My table rows: (1) The Eureka Flag — object — wool flag made at Ballarat in 1854, kept at the Art Gallery of Ballarat — miners fighting for their rights — what the miners flew above their stockade. (2) The Monster Petition — petition — 30,000 signatures, 260 metres of paper, Victoria 1891 — only men could vote in the colony — how many people wanted votes for women. (3) The Franchise Act — law — made by the new Parliament in 1902 — a new nation writing its voting rules — who could vote in federal elections from 1902."

Q10. See Answers Q10. A strong answer uses all three words, gives at least two features, says what the armour is and covers (content), and places it at Glenrowan in June 1880 (context).

Q11. A strong answer names the context (a new nation, first voting rules), names the change (most women could now vote in federal elections), names the unfair part (some people shut out because of where they came from), and says why both parts belong in one description (the one law holds both).

Where we found these facts

Historians always say where they found things out. So do we.

- The Monster Petition of 1891 — National Museum of Australia; the story of its making (Victorian Women's Franchise League, 16 September 1891, the defeated bill, votes for Victorian women from 1908) is told in the museum's and the Victorian Parliament's records.
- The leaflets against votes for women — the Women's Anti-Suffrage League of New South Wales, from 1912 (State Library of New South Wales; National Library of Australia).
- South Australian women's vote, 1894; New Zealand women's vote, 1893.
- *The Argus*, 4 December 1854 — Trove, National Library of Australia; the newspaper began in Melbourne in 1846.
- The Eureka Flag — Art Gallery of Ballarat.
- The Ballarat Reform League Charter, 11 November 1854 — Public Record Office Victoria (VPRS 4066/P).
- The opening of the first Commonwealth Parliament, 9 May 1901 — Charles Nuttall's painting (Parliament House collection); J.W. Lindt's photographs (State Library of Victoria).
- The Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902 — National Archives of Australia.
- The certificate of freedom of Charlotte Rhymes, 1840 — NSW State Archives (Museums of History NSW).
- Ned Kelly's armour — State Library of Victoria.
- Arthur Calwell and "populate or perish"; the Assisted Passage Migration Scheme from 1945 — National Archives of Australia; Hansard, 2 August 1945.

All checked on 24 August 2026.

Sources as evidence: value, strengths and limitations; fact, opinion and stereotype

History 5 · Chapter 3 · Section 3D

TEACHER-FACING METADATA – not student text; excluded from the vocabulary gate.

Section 3D of 6 in Chapter 3 (skills: sources and evidence), History 5 single-year book. One CD only (D2).

For the teacher – VC2 codes: VC2HH6S04

Drawn on (illustrative only, D10): VC2HH6S04.E01, VC2HH6S04.E02, VC2HH6S04.E03

Binding decisions honoured: D4 Yr5 ceiling on student-facing text (gate at CEILING_RANK=5 with the three house exemptions); D5 no Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content in this section (none is required by the CD); D6 every source examined is a real, citable artifact – source lines below; D10 elaborations are illustrations, not syllabus; D11 all working material is drawn from Chapters 1-2; D12 en-AU spelling and retrieval dates on source lines.

Contested terms: the curriculum names "stereotype" and "generalisation" (E01) but defines neither. This section defines both at Yr5 level (figure 3d_stereotype_card and the Word check) and applies a symmetry rule: any claim about a group – flattering or insulting – is tested the same way, against the evidence. The steelman box ("Two ideas to test") presents positions A and B each at their strongest; marking rewards reasoning and use of evidence, not the conclusion reached.

Volume (TOC calibration): one teaching sequence; two worked demonstrations (WE1 Charter value table, WE2 Roberts painting); eight scaffolded tasks (Q1-Q8); three unscaffolded (Q9-Q11); one evidence-based writing task (Inquiry, with writing frame).

Teaching sequence: Learn (value -> fact/opinion -> generalisations and stereotypes -> strengths/limitations -> change/continuity -> two ideas to test) -> WE1 -> WE2 -> scaffolded Q1-Q8 -> unscaffolded Q9-Q11 -> Inquiry.

Source lines (all real; checked 24 August 2026):

- Ballarat Reform League Charter, 27 November 1854, Public Record Office Victoria; agreed at a meeting at Bakery Hill.
- Raffaello Carboni, The Eureka Stockade (book, 1855); Carboni sat on the Reform League committee, was outside the stockade during the attack of 3 December 1854, and was later charged and found not guilty (21 March 1855).
- The Argus (Melbourne newspaper), 4 December 1854 reporting of the fall of the stockade; copies held by the State Library of Victoria.
- Charles Evans diary, 24 September 1853 – 21 January 1855, State Library Victoria; Evans kept a shop at Ballarat; the diary lists the dead and the funerals after 3 December 1854.
- S. T. Gill, Sketches of the Victoria Gold Diggings and Diggers as They Are (1852); copies held by the State Library of Victoria.
- The Monster Petition (1891), about 30,000 signatures asking for votes for women in Victoria; Public Record Office Victoria. Women in Victoria won the vote in 1908.
- Tom Roberts, The Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia ... May 9, 1901 (finished 1903; 269 portraits; Roberts attended the event); Royal Collection, displayed at Parliament House, Canberra.

- Population counts rounded from colonial government musters and censuses: about 77,000 (1851); about 540,000 (1861); about 1.2 million (1901).

Figures (10; generated in this tree by src/gen_3d_*.py): value_questions, same_source, fact_opinion_sort, stereotype_card, strengths_limits, population, source_cards, we1_charter, we2_painting, writing_frame.

In this section you will learn to: - describe the **value** of a source for a question; - sort **fact** from **opinion** in what a source says; - spot **generalisations** and **stereotypes**, and test them against the evidence; - describe the **strengths** and **limitations** of real sources; - use sources to see **change** and **continuity**, and causes and consequences.

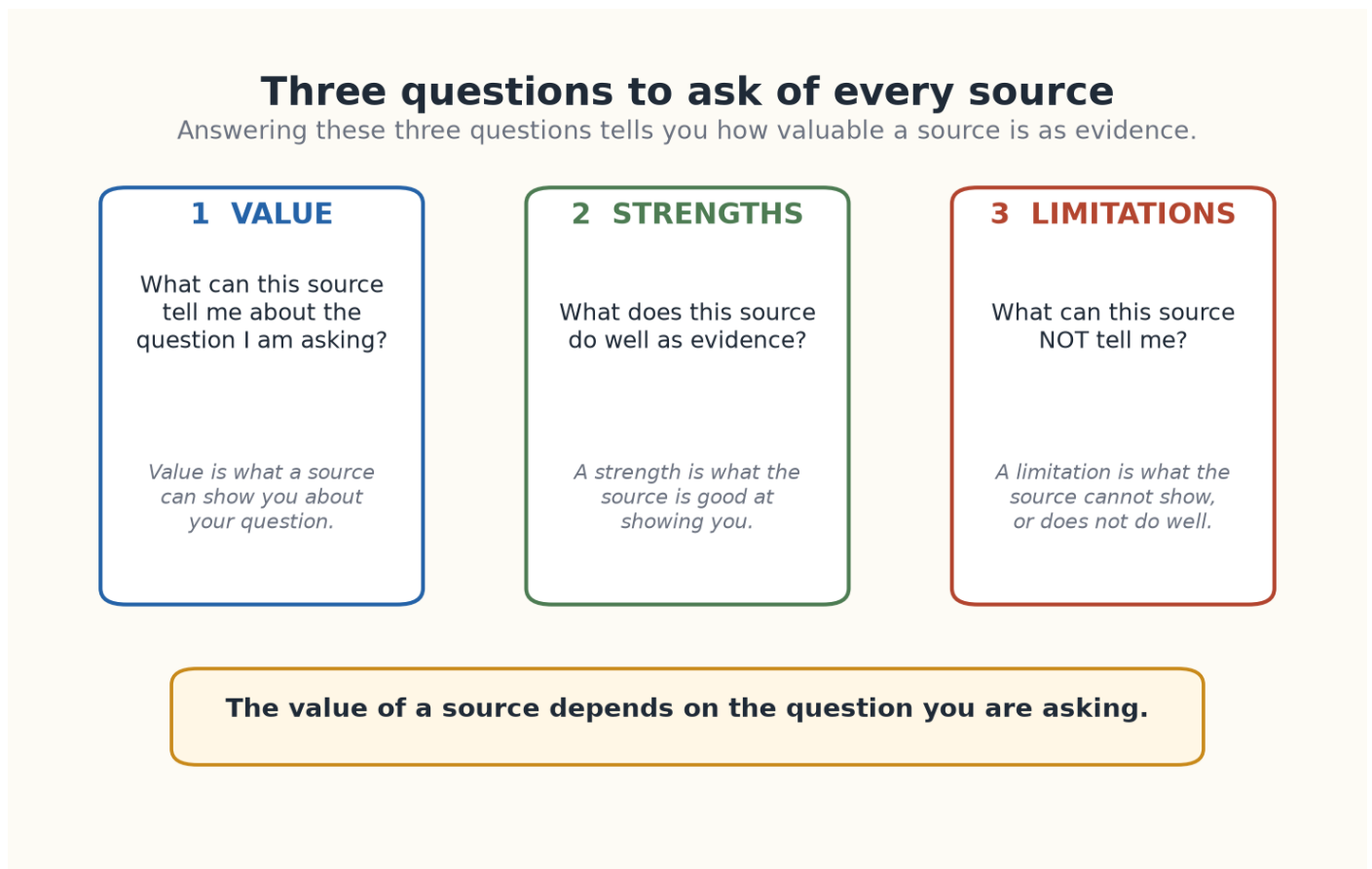
Learn

Sources, quickly. A **source** is anything left from the past that we can learn from — a diary, a letter, a newspaper, a sketch, a painting, a petition. A **primary** source was made at the time, often by someone who was there. A **secondary** source was made later, like a history book. You met our six working sources in Chapters 1 and 2.

Word check — five words from Chapters 1 and 2. A **licence** was a paper a digger had to buy before he or she could dig for gold. A **charter** is a written list of demands a group agrees to. A **petition** is a written request signed by many people and sent to the parliament. A **census** is an official count of people.

Federation was the joining of the Australian colonies into one nation in 1901.

Value. A source is never just “good” or “bad”. Its **value** depends on the question you ask it. Three questions work out the value of any source.



Three question cards: Who made it, and when? What does it say or show? What is it valuable for?

The same source can be strong for one question and weak for another. The next figure asks one diary two different questions.

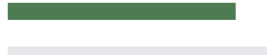
One source, three questions

The same source can be very valuable for one question — and less valuable for another.

SOURCE: Raffaello Carboni, The Eureka Stockade (book, 1855)

written by a digger who was at Ballarat in 1854

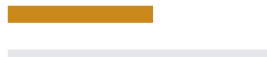
How did the diggers feel about the licence hunts?



HIGH VALUE

Carboni was there, and he tells us how angry the diggers were.

What did the diggers ask the government for?



SOME VALUE

He tells us about the meetings — but the Charter itself is the stronger source.

Exactly how many people died at the stockade?



LOW VALUE

Carboni was not inside that morning. Evans's diary gives the careful list.

Value is not stuck inside the source. It grows out of the match between the source and your question.

One diary asked two questions: very valuable for one question, less valuable for the other.

Fact and opinion. A **fact** is a claim you can check — it can be shown to be true or false. An **opinion** tells you what someone thinks, feels or believes. An opinion is not “wrong” — opinions are gold for historians asking what people felt and wanted. But an opinion can never prove a fact on its own.

Fact or opinion?

A fact can be checked. An opinion tells you what someone thinks, feels or believes.

FACT

a claim you can check — it can be shown to be true or false

On 3 December 1854, troops attacked the stockade at Ballarat.

In 1891, nearly 30,000 people signed a petition asking for votes for women in Victoria.

OPINION

a claim about what someone thinks, feels or believes

The diggers at Ballarat were the bravest people in the colony.

Everyone should have a say in the laws they live under.

Clues

Opinions often carry feeling words (bravest, unfair, wonderful) or the word should.

Facts often carry names, dates and numbers you can check. One sentence can hold both!

A fact and opinion sort board with four example sentences and clues.

Generalisations and stereotypes.

Word check. The Victorian Curriculum uses the words *generalisation* and *stereotype* but does not give them one fixed meaning. In this book, a **generalisation** is a claim that many, most or all of a group are the same — it can be fair, but only after you check the evidence. A **stereotype** is a fixed, too-simple idea that *everyone* in a group is the same. Stereotypes are usually unfair, and they are not checked against evidence.

Generalisations and stereotypes

Spot the difference — then test both against the evidence.

GENERALISATION

A claim that says many, most or all of a group are the same.

It can be fair — but only after you check the evidence.

STEREOTYPE

A fixed, too-simple idea that EVERYONE in a group is the same.

Stereotypes are usually unfair, and they are not checked against evidence.

TEST IT

Some newspapers and officials wrote as if the Ballarat diggers were a wild, lawless mob. But the Ballarat Reform League Charter shows diggers meeting calmly, voting, and writing their demands with care. The evidence tests the idea.

When you spot a stereotype in a source, ask: what does the evidence show?

Cards defining generalisation and stereotype, with a test using the Ballarat diggers.

Strengths and limitations.

Word check. A **strength** of a source is what makes it useful as evidence. A **limitation** is what it cannot tell us, or why we should check it against other sources. Every source has both.

Strengths and limitations of different kinds of sources

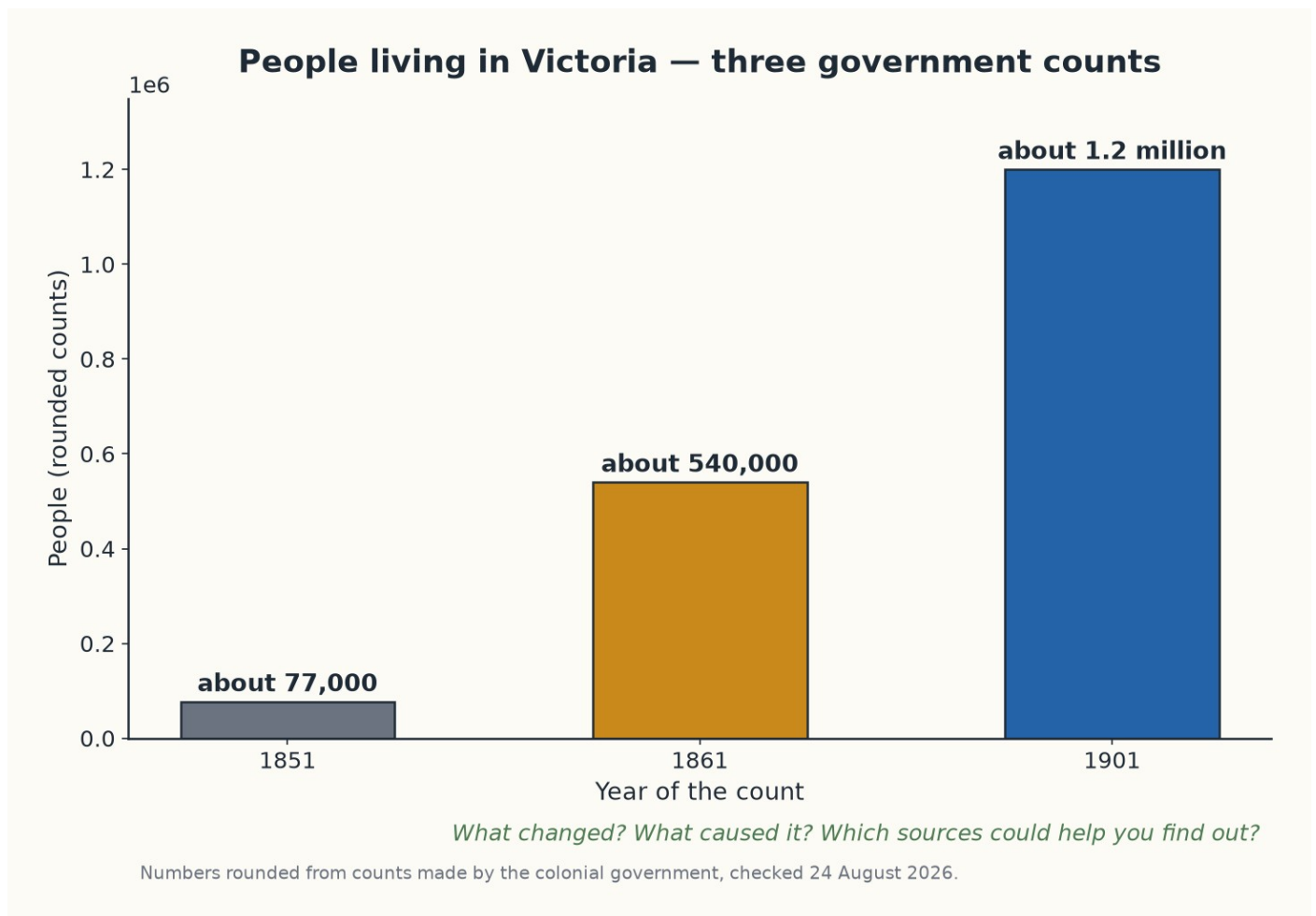
Every kind of source is good at showing some things — and weak at others.

Kind of source	Strengths	Limitations
Official records (government papers)	Careful and dated; show what the government did and knew.	Only what the government thought mattered; ordinary voices are missing.
Diaries and letters	Daily life, and the real thoughts and feelings of one person.	One person only; they may not know the whole story.
Newspapers	What happened, and what people said, at the time; lots of detail.	The editor's views shape the story; papers can take sides.
Images (sketches, paintings, photos)	Show how places, people and events looked.	The artist chooses what to show, and how to show it.
Objects (a licence, a flag, a petition)	The real thing, straight from the past.	Objects cannot speak — you must ask what they were made for.

Copy this table into your book. Add one more kind of source as a challenge.

Two columns listing strengths and limitations of three kinds of sources.

Change and continuity. Numbers can be sources too. The colonial government counted the people living in Victoria.



A bar chart of the number of people living in Victoria in 1851, 1861 and 1901.

A **change** is a difference between two times. A **continuity** is what stays the same. A **cause** answers “why did it happen?” A **consequence** answers “what happened because of it?”

Two ideas to test. History is full of big claims. Here are two. Test them both against the same sources, and give each one a fair test.

Idea A: “A source full of opinions is no use to a historian.” Test it: Carboni’s book is full of opinions — yet it tells us what the diggers felt and wanted, better than any official paper. So Idea A is too harsh. But Idea A has a point too: an opinion never proves a fact on its own.

Idea B: “Official government records always beat personal diaries.” Test it: the government counts show the big change in Victoria. But Evans’s diary gives us the names of the dead and the funerals — the human side the official count misses. So Idea B fails the test too.

You are marked on your reasons and your evidence — not on which idea you pick.

Worked examples

Worked example 1 — what is the Charter valuable for? The Ballarat Reform League Charter is a primary source: the diggers’ own list of demands, agreed at Bakery Hill on 27 November 1854. Read the worked table below. Notice the last step: value is always worked out *for one question*.

Worked example 1 — what is the Charter valuable for?

Question: Why did the diggers at Ballarat build a stockade in December 1854?

1 What is the source?

A handwritten document — the demands of the Ballarat Reform League, agreed at a meeting at Bakery Hill and sent to the government.

2 A fact in the source

It lists what the diggers asked for, such as the vote for all men — something we can check against records of the meeting.

3 An opinion in the source

Its most famous lines: "That it is the inalienable right of every person to have a voice in making the laws which he is called on to obey. That taxation without representation is tyranny." In plain words: it is only fair that people have a say in the laws they obey.

4 Strengths

Made by the diggers themselves, at the time, for a real purpose.
It shows exactly what they wanted and why they were angry.

5 Limitations

It shows the diggers' side only. It does not show what the government thought, or what happened next.

6 VALUE for this question

High value: it is the diggers' own list of reasons — the best single source for what they wanted.

A worked value table for the Ballarat Reform League Charter, with six steps.

Worked example 2 — strengths and limitations of a painting. Tom Roberts painted the opening of Australia's first parliament, which happened on 9 May 1901. Roberts was there and made sketches on the day — but he finished the big painting in 1903, about two years later.

Worked example 2 — strengths and limitations of a painting

SOURCE: Tom Roberts, The Opening of the First Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia ... May 9, 1901 (painting, finished 1903).

Royal Collection; displayed at Parliament House, Canberra. Roberts was at the event.

STRENGTHS

Shows a real moment: the first federal parliament opened on 9 May 1901.
269 real people are painted, many from life — a who's who of Federation.
The artist was there and made sketches on the day.

LIMITATIONS

Painted about two years after the day.
It is not a photograph — the artist chose what to put in, and what to leave out.
It shows the grand official moment, not the ordinary people watching outside.

VALUE for the question: How did Australians want to remember Federation?

Very valuable: the painting was made to celebrate the new nation. It shows who was honoured and how grand the day was meant to look.

Less valuable for the question: What was the day like for ordinary people?

For that, a historian would need diaries, letters and newspapers from the day.

Strengths and limitations of Tom Roberts' painting of the first parliament opening, and its value for two questions.

Practice questions

Use the evidence cards below. Every card is a real source you met in Chapters 1 and 2.

Six real sources — evidence cards

Every source below is real. Each card says what it is, when it was made, and where it is kept.

1 Reform League Charter

A handwritten list of the diggers' demands, agreed at Bakery Hill.

27 November 1854 | document

Kept by: Public Record Office Victoria

2 The Eureka Stockade (book)

Written by Raffaello Carboni, a digger who was at Ballarat in 1854.

1855 | book (personal account)

State Library Victoria (copies)

3 The Argus (newspaper)

Reported the fall of the stockade the day after the fight.

4 December 1854 | newspaper

State Library Victoria (copies)

4 Diary of Charles Evans

A Ballarat shopkeeper's diary. It lists the dead at Eureka and their funerals.

1853 to 1855 | diary

Kept by: State Library Victoria

5 Sketches by S. T. Gill

Sketches of Victoria Gold Diggings and Diggers as They Are — goldfield life.

1852 | printed sketches (images)

State Library Victoria (copies)

6 The Monster Petition

A petition asking for votes for women in Victoria, with nearly 30,000 signatures.

1891 | petition

Kept by: Public Record Office Victoria

You met these sources and the events behind them in Chapters 1 and 2.

Six evidence cards: the Charter, Carboni's book, the Argus, Evans's diary, Gill's sketches, the Monster Petition.

Q1. Sort these four sentences into *fact* or *opinion*. For each opinion, circle the clue word. (a) The Monster Petition was sent to the parliament in 1891. (b) The diggers at Ballarat were braver than the soldiers. (c) Charles Evans kept a shop and a diary at Ballarat. (d) Everyone should have a say in the laws they live under.

Q2. Which of the six cards are primary sources? Pick two cards and give one reason for each.

Q3. Look at card 1 and Worked example 1. (a) Write one **fact** the Charter gives us. (b) Write one **opinion** from the Charter, in your own words.

Q4. Look at card 1. Here are three possible strengths. Two are true strengths; one is not. Pick the two true strengths and say why the third is not a strength. (a) It was made by the diggers themselves, at the time. (b) It shows exactly what the diggers wanted. (c) It tells us what the government thought of the diggers' demands.

Q5. Look at card 4. Copy the table and fill it in.

The diary of Charles Evans

my answer

One fact it gives us

One strength

One limitation

Q6. Some newspapers wrote as if the Ballarat diggers were a wild, lawless mob. Is that a fair generalisation or a stereotype? Test it against card 1, and explain your answer.

Q7. Look at the population chart in *Learn*. (a) Describe the **change** in Victoria between 1851 and 1861. (b) Give one **cause** of that change. (c) Give one **consequence** of it. (d) Name one **continuity** — something that stayed the same across those years.

Q8. Look at Worked example 2. Here are two strengths and two limitations of the painting. Pick the *best* strength and the *best* limitation, and say why you chose them. (a) Roberts was at the event and made sketches on the day. (b) The painting is very big. (c) It was finished about two years after the day it shows. (d) It shows the grand official moment, not the ordinary people outside.

Q9. Look at card 6. Write three or four sentences describing the value of the Monster Petition for this question: *Why did women win the vote in Victoria in 1908?* Include one strength and one limitation.

Q10. Look at card 5. What is the *one* question Gill's sketches are most valuable for? Explain your choice.

Q11. Look at cards 2 and 3. Carboni's book and *The Argus* both tell of the fall of the stockade. Give one strength of each, and explain why a historian would use both sources, not just one.

Inquiry task

An **inquiry** is your own investigation: you pick the question, and you follow the evidence.

Choose **one** evidence card and write **your own** question about it. Then write 4–6 sentences describing the value of your source for your question. Use the writing frame below. Your answer must:

- name the source, and say when and by whom it was made;
- give one fact or one opinion from the source;
- give one strength and one limitation;
- name one other source (from the cards, or one you can imagine a library keeping) that a historian should check it against.

Writing frame: describe the value of a source

Use these five sentence starts to build a strong answer.

1 My source is _____. It was made in _____ by _____.

2 It is valuable for the question _____ because _____.

3 One strength of this source is _____.

4 One limitation of this source is _____.

5 A historian using this source should also check _____.

Aim for 4 to 6 sentences. Name your source, and give a reason for every claim you make.

A five-step writing frame for describing the value of a source.

Sample answers

Teachers: mark the reasoning and the use of evidence, not the conclusion. Where an answer below says “for example”, accept any response with a true reason.

Q1. (a) fact — it can be checked against the petition itself. (b) opinion — “braver” is a feeling word. (c) fact — it can be checked against his diary and shop records. (d) opinion — “should” is the clue.

Q2. All six cards are primary sources: each was made at the time by someone who was there, or made from what the maker saw. For example: card 4, Evans kept his diary at Ballarat in 1853–55; card 3, *The Argus* printed its report on 4 December 1854, the day after the fight.

Q3. (a) For example: it asks for the vote for all men; it was agreed at Bakery Hill on 27 November 1854. (b) For example: the Charter says it is only fair that people have a say in the laws they must obey.

Q4. True strengths: (a) and (b). Not a strength: (c) — the Charter shows the diggers’ side only; it cannot tell us what the government thought.

Q5. For example: fact — it lists the people killed at Eureka and their funerals. Strength — Evans was there at the time, writing day by day. Limitation — it is one man’s view of Ballarat; he may miss things happening in other places, and we should check it against other sources.

Q6. It is a stereotype. A fair generalisation checks the evidence first; this claim did not. The Charter shows diggers meeting calmly, voting, and writing their demands with care — the evidence does not fit “a wild, lawless mob”.

Q7. (a) The number of people in Victoria grew from about 77,000 to about 540,000 — about seven times as many. (b) For example: people rushed to Victoria after gold was found in 1851. (c) For example: towns like Ballarat grew fast, and more people asked for a say in the laws (such as the vote and the end of the licence). (d) For example: Victoria was still a British colony, and many people were still digging for gold.

Q8. For example: best strength (a) — it puts Roberts at the event, so the faces and the room come from real life; (b) is only a fact about size, not about evidence. Best limitation (c) — two years passed, so memory and choice shape the scene; (d) is true, but it follows from (c) and from the painting’s official purpose.

Q9. For example: The Monster Petition is very valuable for this question. It shows that by 1891 tens of thousands of Victorians — nearly 30,000 signatures — were organised and asking for women’s votes, so the 1908 law did not come from nowhere. A strength is its size: a parliament could not pretend not to see it. A limitation is that it shows the asking, not the law-making: to see why the vote finally came in 1908, a historian would also check parliament records and newspapers from 1908.

Q10. For example: What was daily life like on the goldfields? The sketches are most valuable for that question because Gill drew what he saw around him — tents, tools, shops, races — so they show ordinary life better than a report or a count could. They are less valuable for questions about numbers or about what people said.

Q11. For example: *The Argus* strength — a newspaper report printed the day after the fight, close to the event. Carboni strength — he was a digger on the Reform League committee, so his book gives the diggers’ side, in their own feeling. A historian uses both because each has blind spots: *The Argus* was not on the diggers’ side, and Carboni was not inside the stockade during the attack and later stood trial with the diggers. Where the two agree, the story is safer; where they disagree, the disagreement itself is evidence about how people saw the event.

Inquiry task (model, card 4). My source is the diary of Charles Evans. It was kept at Ballarat from 1853 to 1855 by a shopkeeper. My question is: How did the people of Ballarat show respect for the dead after 3 December 1854? It is valuable for this question because Evans lists the dead and describes the funerals he saw. One strength is that he was there, writing day by day. One limitation is that it is one man’s eyes and feelings, not everyone’s. A historian using this diary should also check the newspaper reports and the burial records of the time.

Seeing through their eyes: perspectives in primary sources

For the teacher — VC2 codes: VC2HH6S05 (Historical Concepts and Skills · Using historical sources)

Drawn on: VC2HH6S05.E01* · VC2HH6S05.E02* · VC2HH6S05.E03 (*trimmed per the book's §2A register — the cut examples are not taught here; .E03 is retained whole. Trimmed .E01 keeps the colonial-era worker, business and women examples (its First Nations photographs are cut per §2A); trimmed .E02 keeps the gold-rush and Eureka group comparisons and the past-and-present Ned Kelly comparisons (its First Nations perspectives are cut).)

For the teacher — teaching sequence

1. **Hook.** Show Figure 2 with the five cards covered. Ask: on the same goldfield in the 1850s, does a digger, a Chinese miner, a shopkeeper, a child and the governor all see the same thing? Reveal the cards. Name the gap between them as a **perspective**.
2. **Define the tools.** Work through the definition box and Figure 1 until students can sort a sentence into belief / value / attitude without help. Drill the difference: a belief is held to be true, a value is held to be important, an attitude is a feeling pointed at something.
3. **Teach the toolkit.** Figure 3 is the poster for the whole section. Every later task routes through its five questions, and Figure 4 (the fairness check) is taught with it: sources from the past often carry stereotypes, and students need the habit of spotting them before they repeat them.
4. **Model four times.** Worked demonstration 1 (Figure 5) is the full model: law in, beliefs/values/attitudes out, missing voices named. Demonstration 2 (Figure 6) adds the steelman rule — both the diggers and the government stated at their strongest before anyone is judged. Demonstration 3 (Figure 7) moves the same skill across three sources about one man. Demonstration 4 (Figures 8–10) applies it to women's suffrage and to the first laws of 1901; handle the 1901 laws plainly and briefly — name what they did, name whose beliefs they came from, and name clearly that today we know they were wrong.
5. **Practise.** Scaffolded tasks, then unscaffolded. In Q10 and Q11 insist on the steelman rule: state the other side's strongest point fairly before weighing it.
6. **Assess the skill, not the side.** An answer is good here if it identifies a perspective, ties each belief/value/attitude to a real piece of the source, and notices whose voice is missing — never because it “picks” the approved view. The writing task is the check of VC2HH6S05's verbs, *describe* and *identify*.

This section pairs with 3C and 3D (what sources are, and how strong they are) and hands its material to 3F. The events come from Chapters 1 and 2.

Key ideas

The past leaves things behind: a flag, a letter, a law, a film, a roll of paper covered in names. A **source** is any of those things. A **primary source** was made at the time, by someone who was there or who made the thing itself — the flag the diggers sewed, the law the parliament printed, the letter the bushranger spoke aloud.

A word the curriculum uses but does not define. The Victorian Curriculum asks students to describe perspectives from the past, but it does not say what a perspective is. This section therefore treats it as: *how a person or a group sees something*. Two people can look at the same thing and see different things, because they bring different beliefs, values and attitudes with them.

Figure 1 splits that idea into its three parts. A **belief** is what someone holds to be true. A **value** is what someone thinks is important. An **attitude** is how someone thinks and feels about a person or a thing. All three hide inside primary sources — in the words people use, the pictures they draw, and what they leave out.

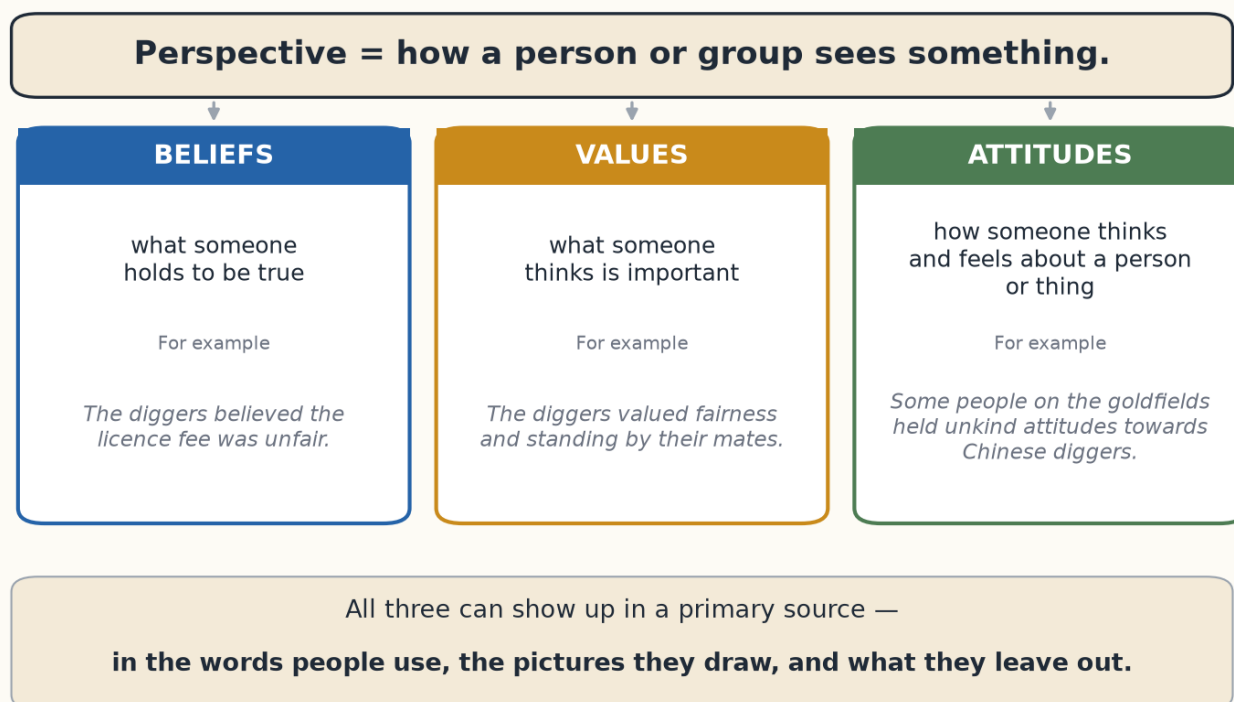
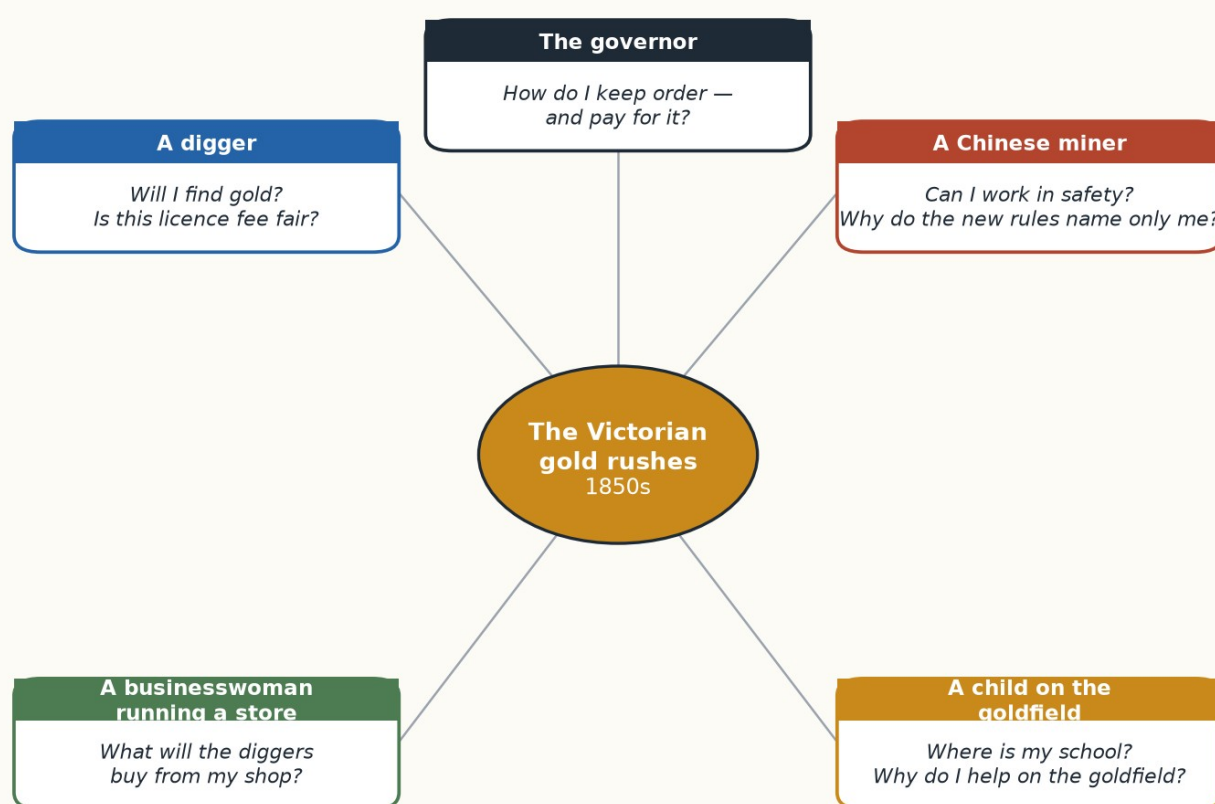


Figure 1. Beliefs, values and attitudes — the three things a source can show.

One event, many perspectives. Figure 2 puts five people on the same Victorian goldfield in the 1850s. Same dig, same tents, same creek — five different ways of seeing it.



One event — five ways of seeing it. That is what a perspective is.

Figure 2. One goldfield, five ways of seeing it.

To pull a perspective out of a source, ask five questions (Figure 3). They are the toolkit of this section.

The perspective toolkit

Five questions to ask any primary source

1

Who made it?
A person? A group? The government? A newspaper?

2

When was it made?
At the time of the event — or long after?

3

What words and pictures does it use?
Strong words? Kind pictures? Unkind pictures?

4

Who is missing?
Whose voice can you NOT hear in this source?

5

What does the maker want you to think or feel?
Every source is trying to tell you something.

Use all five questions, and the beliefs, values and attitudes start to show.

Figure 3. The perspective toolkit — five questions to ask any primary source.

One more habit before we start. Sources from the past often carry **stereotypes** — sayings and pictures that claim a whole group of people are all the same — and **over-generalisations**, where one or two people are made to stand for a whole group. Figure 4 is the fairness check we run on every old source.

Fairness check

Spotting stereotypes and over-generalisations in sources from the past

A stereotype says that ALL people in a group are the same.

An over-generalisation takes one or two people and speaks for a whole group.
Both shut people into a box that does not fit them.

☐

Does the source say that a whole group is “all the same”?

☐

Does the picture make a group look silly, scary or less than others?

☐

Does it leave out the group’s own voice — their words, their feelings?

☐

Would someone from that group tell the story differently?

☐

What does the source tell us about the person who MADE it?

Old sources often carry unkind words and pictures.

We read them to learn about attitudes at the time. We never copy them —
and today we know they were wrong.

Figure 4. The fairness check — spotting stereotypes and over-generalisations.

Worked demonstration 1 — What can a law show? Victoria, 1855

In the 1850s, Victoria was a colony — a land ruled from far away by Britain. Gold had brought people from all over the world, and among them were thousands of Chinese diggers. Some colonists welcomed them; many did not. In 1855 the colonial **parliament** — the group of elected men who made the colony’s laws — passed a law aimed at Chinese arrivals. Figure 5 shows the law and what we can work out from it.

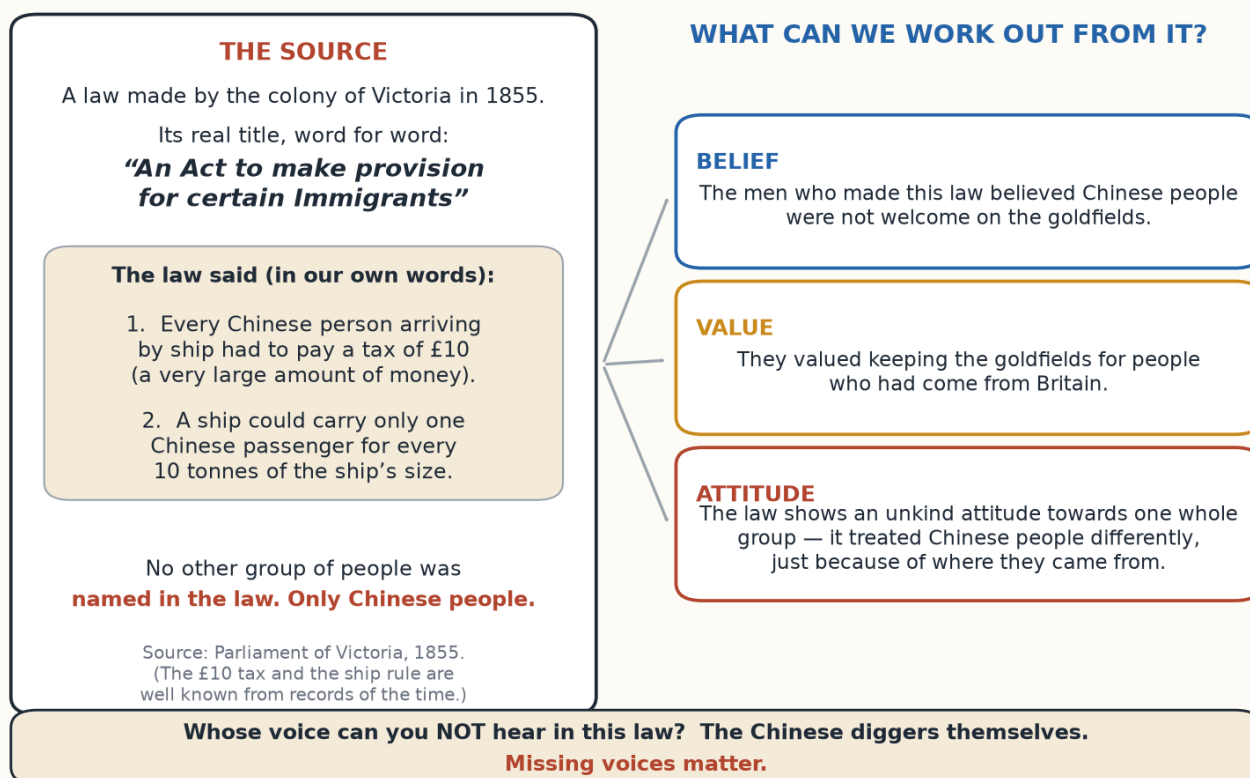


*Figure 5. Reading beliefs, values and attitudes from a real law of 1855. (The law's title is word for word; its rules are put in our own words. Parliament of Victoria, 1855.)

Watch the move. We do not guess what the law-makers felt. We point at pieces of the law and say what each piece shows:

- **Belief** — the men who made this law believed Chinese people were not welcome on the goldfields. The piece: only one group is named, and only one group is taxed.
- **Value** — they valued keeping the goldfields for people who had come from Britain. The piece: the tax makes it harder for Chinese diggers to come and no harder for anyone else.
- **Attitude** — the law shows an unkind attitude towards one whole group. The piece: it treats every Chinese arrival the same, just because of where they came from. That is a stereotype written into law.

Now run the toolkit's fourth question: **who is missing?** The Chinese diggers themselves. The law is *about* them but not *from* them. Missing voices matter, so we look for them — and we find some. **Lowe Kong Meng** was a Chinese businessperson in Melbourne. In 1879 he helped write a small book, *The Chinese Question in Australia*, which asked the government to treat Chinese settlers in a fair way and pointed out that they paid taxes and obeyed the law. That book is a primary source from the missing side.

The attitude in the law also led to harm. In 1857, on the Buckland River goldfield, a crowd of diggers attacked Chinese diggers and chased them off their claims. Today we know the law and the attack were wrong. We still read the law — because a source does not have to be right to show us what people believed, valued and felt.

Worked demonstration 2 — Two voices at Eureka, 1854

The same skill works on a fight. At Ballarat in 1854, diggers and the government clashed over the **licence** — a paper a digger had to buy every month to be allowed to dig, which cost thirty shillings a month even if he found no gold. Figure 6 sets the two voices side by side.

Two voices at Eureka, 1854

THE DIGGERS' VOICE



Our drawing of the Eureka flag. The real one is 260 cm x 400 cm, kept at the Art Gallery of Ballarat.

The oath the diggers swore at Bakery Hill, 1 December 1854 (recorded at the time):

"We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other and fight to defend our rights and liberties."

What made them angry:

- The licence cost 30 shillings a month — whether you found gold or not.
- Police "hunts" checked for licences at any time.
- Diggers could not vote for the men who ruled them.

Their perspective: the rules were unfair, so free people had a right to stand together.

THE GOVERNMENT'S VOICE

A real miner's licence was a paper that proved you had paid. Governor Hotham ordered more licence checks in 1854.

(Licences and the checks are recorded in government papers of the time.)

What the government believed:

- The licence money paid for roads, courts and police on the goldfields.
- The law was the law — everyone had to obey it.
- Armed diggers were breaking the law and had to be stopped.

On 3 December 1854, soldiers and police attacked the stockade. At least 27 people died.

Their perspective: order had to be kept, and the law came before everyone's wishes.

*Figure 6. Two voices at Eureka, 1854. (The oath is printed as it was recorded at the time; the flag is our drawing of the real one.)

Read each voice for beliefs, values and attitudes.

	The diggers	The government
Belief	The rules were unfair, so free people had a right to stand together.	Armed diggers were breaking the law and had to be stopped.
Value	Rights and liberties — the freedoms people should have — and standing by your mates.	Order, and the law being obeyed by everyone.
Attitude	Anger at the licence hunts; the licence felt like a tax on the right to work.	The licence money paid for roads, courts and police, so the fee was fair.

Now the steelman rule: state each side at its strongest before judging it. A digger paying thirty shillings a month for the *right to work* honestly sees a tax on his own effort. A governor answerable for order honestly sees law-breaking when armed men build a **stockade** — a fenced camp — and fight police. Both views are steel-strong when you stand where the writer stood. That is what fair history looks like: you explain a view at its strongest before you weigh it.

Worked demonstration 3 — Three sources, three Neds

Perspectives are not only found across people at one event. They also stack up across time, around one person. Ned Kelly was hanged in 1880, and ever since, sources have shown him in very different ways. Figure 7 lines up three real ones.

Three sources, three Neds

How three real sources show the same man in different ways

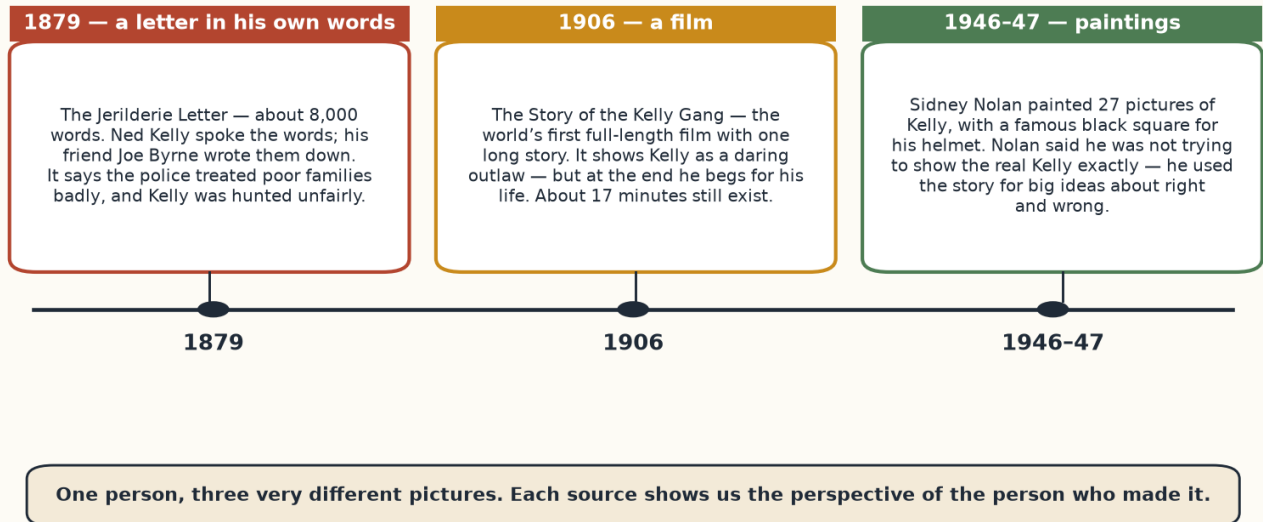


Figure 7. Three sources, three Neds, with 68 years between them.

Run the toolkit and the differences explain themselves.

- **Who made it?** The 1879 letter is Kelly's own voice — he spoke, his friend Joe Byrne wrote. Its belief jumps out: the police treated poor families badly, and Kelly was hunted unfairly. The 1906 film was made by a film company for crowds to buy tickets to; it shows Kelly as a daring outlaw, yet at the end he begs for his life — the film-maker's attitude peeks through. The 1946-47 paintings are by the artist Sidney Nolan, who said he was not trying to show the real Kelly exactly; he used the story for big ideas about right and wrong.
- **When was it made?** 1879 — while Kelly was still being hunted. 1906 — 26 years after his death, when tickets mattered. 1946-47 — 66 years after, when an artist could use the story in his own way.
- **Who is missing?** In the film and the paintings, Kelly cannot answer for himself. Only the letter carries his own words.

One man, three very different pictures. Each source shows us the perspective of the person who made it — which is exactly what VC2HH6S05 asks you to describe.

Worked demonstration 4 — What did women believe and value? The vote

In 1891, women in Victoria were not allowed to vote in colonial elections. They believed that should change. Figure 8 shows what they did about it.

One roll of paper, nearly 30,000 signatures

In 1891, women in Victoria asked parliament to let women vote.



Nearly 30,000 women signed their names.

The paper was 260 metres long — longer than a football ground. It is still rolled up today.

It is kept at the Public Record Office Victoria.

What does such a huge effort tell you about what these women believed and valued?

Figure 8. The 1891 “Monster Petition” — a *petition* is a written request signed by many people. (Public Record Office Victoria.)

What does such a huge effort show? **Belief:** women believed they should have a say in the laws they had to obey.

Value: they valued fairness, and they valued persistence — 260 metres of signatures is patience made of paper.

Attitude: pride in standing together; the roll was built street by street.

Did it work at once? No — Victorian parliament did not change the law in 1891. But the story of **women’s suffrage** — women’s right to vote — moved colony by colony. Figure 9 gives the dates.

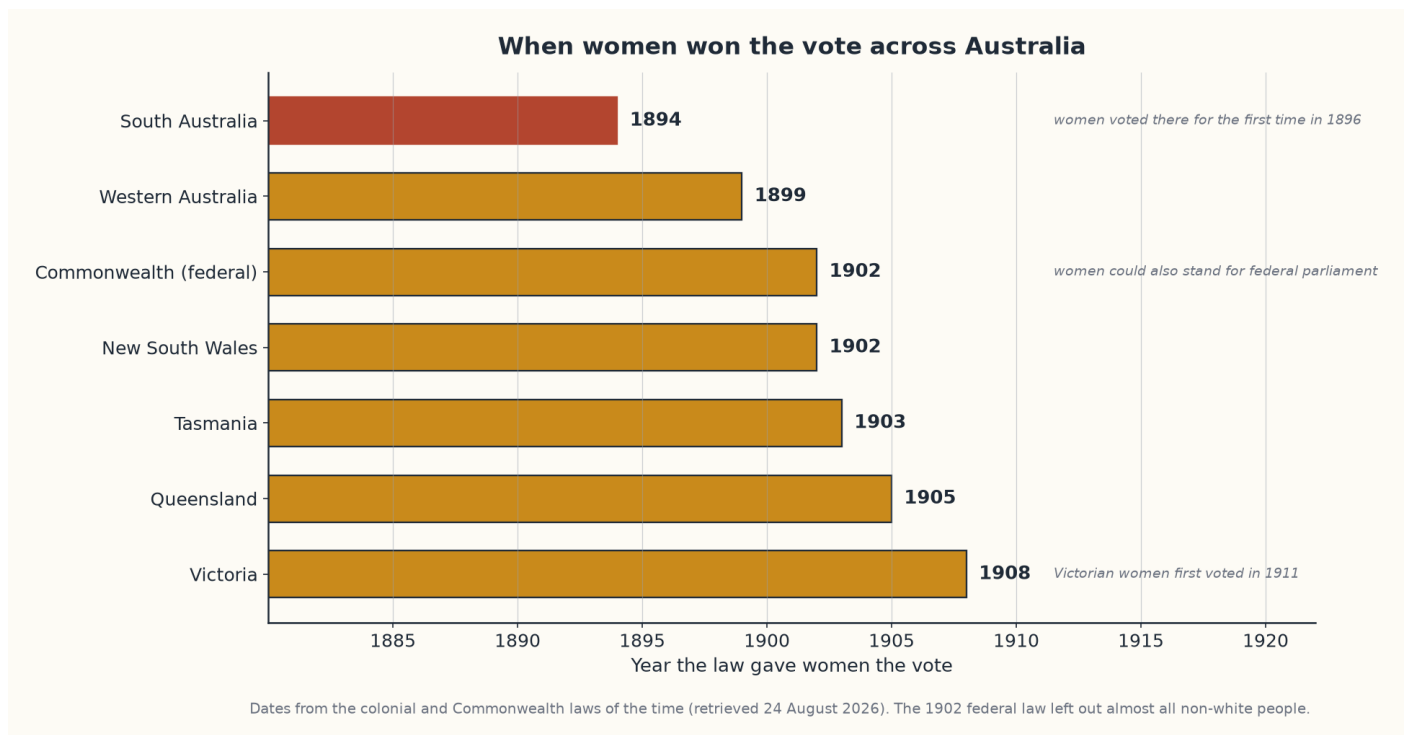


Figure 9. When women won the vote across Australia. (Dates from the colonial and Commonwealth laws of the time.)

Read the chart with the toolkit. South Australian women won the vote in 1894 — and could also stand for parliament, the first in the world to do so. Victorian women waited until 1908 for their colony’s vote, even though they had asked

in 1891. The missing voices in Figure 9's story are the women who signed in 1891 and died before 1908 without voting in their own colony's elections.

One last perspective check for this demonstration. The new Australian parliament of 1901 — the first parliament of the **Federation** of the six colonies into one nation — passed two laws in its very first year (Figure 10).

Two new laws in the nation's first year

The new Australian parliament passed both in December 1901.

Immigration Restriction Act 1901

Made 23 December 1901

People who wanted to come to Australia could be made to sit a writing test: write down 50 words as an officer said them.

At first the test was in a European language. In 1905 the law changed, so an officer could pick any language at all — one the person might not know. That way, the officer could make anyone fail.

This law kept out people who were not white.

Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901

Made 17 December 1901

Thousands of Pacific Islander workers — often called South Sea Islanders — worked in the sugar fields of Queensland. Some had been tricked or forced into coming.

This law stopped new workers from coming after March 1904. After 31 December 1906, most workers already here were forced to leave. About 7,500 people were made to go, out of about 10,000.

Many had lived in Australia for years.

Think about:

- What do these two laws show about the beliefs and attitudes of the people who made them?
- Today we know these laws were unfair. Which groups were hurt by them?

Source: Commonwealth of Australia laws, kept by the National Archives of Australia.

Figure 10. Two new laws in the nation's first year. (Both are real Commonwealth Acts; their words are put in our own words.)

Steelman first: the men who made these laws said they were keeping wages fair for workers and keeping the way of life the colonies had. That is what they believed, stated at its strongest. Now weigh it: the laws judged people by where they were born and by the colour of their skin, and they broke up families and communities that had lived in Australia for years. The 1902 law that gave (some) women the federal vote also left out almost all non-white people. Today we know these laws were unfair. And yet — like the 1855 law — they are brilliant sources for this section, because they show, in writing, the beliefs, values and attitudes of the people who made them.

Figure 11 is the shelf of real sources this section used. Every one of them is kept somewhere real, and you can visit many of them.

The real sources on our shelf

Every source used in this section is real. Here is where it is kept today.

Source	Made	Kind of source	Kept today
The Eureka flag	1854	Object (cloth flag)	Art Gallery of Ballarat
The diggers' oath at Bakery Hill	1854	Words recorded then	Written records from 1854
Miner's licences and licence checks	1850s	Government papers	Public records, Victoria
The Jerilderie Letter	1879	Letter (~8,000 words)	State Library of Victoria
The Chinese Question in Australia, by Lowe Kong Meng	1879	Pamphlet (small book)	Libraries around Australia
The 1891 "Monster Petition"	1891	Signed roll, 260 m	Public Record Office Victoria
The Story of the Kelly Gang	1906	Film (17 min survive)	National Film and Sound Archive
Sidney Nolan's Ned Kelly paintings	1946–47	Paintings (27)	National Gallery of Australia
Immigration Restriction Act	1901	Law of Australia	National Archives of Australia
Pacific Island Labourers Act	1901	Law of Australia	National Archives of Australia

You can visit many of these — and some are free to see online. Real evidence, still alive.

Figure 11. The real sources on our shelf.

Practice — with support

Q1. Sort each sentence into *belief*, *value* or *attitude* (Figure 1). a. “The licence money pays for roads and police, so the fee is fair.” b. “Standing by your mates is what matters most.” c. “Chinese diggers are all the same, and they should not be here.” d. “Women should have a say in the laws they must obey.” e. “Ned Kelly was hunted unfairly by the police.”

Q2. Use the toolkit (Figure 3) on the 1855 law (Figure 5). Answer in one line each: a. Who made it? b. When was it made — at the time of the events it rules, or long after? c. Which single group does it name? d. Who is missing from the law?

Q3. Run the fairness check (Figure 4) on the 1855 law. a. Does the law treat a whole group as “all the same”? Point at the piece that does. b. Whose voice can you NOT hear in it? c. Why do we still read a law we know was wrong?

Q4. Use Figure 6. For the diggers and for the government, give in one line each: a. one belief; b. one value; c. one attitude.

Q5. Match each perspective to the person in Figure 2 who is most likely to hold it: a. “Can I work in safety?” b. “How do I keep order — and pay for it?” c. “What will the diggers buy from my shop?” d. “Is this licence fee fair?” e. “Where is my school?”

Q6. Use Figure 7. a. Which of the three sources carries Kelly’s own perspective? How do we know it is his voice? b. Name one belief the Jerilderie Letter shows. c. The 1906 film shows Kelly as a daring outlaw, but at the end he begs for his life. Whose perspective peeks through that choice?

Q7. Use Figures 8 and 9. a. What does the 260-metre roll show about what the women of 1891 valued? b. How many years passed between the 1891 petition and the 1908 Victorian law? c. Name one group of women whose voices are missing from the winning dates in Figure 9. (Hint: look again at the note under the chart in Figure 9 and at Figure 10.)

Q8. Use Figure 10. The two 1901 laws were made by the same parliament, in the same month, as the new nation began. a. State one belief these laws show, in your own words. b. State one group hurt by each law.

Practice — on your own

Q9. Pick any two people from Figure 2. In two or three sentences each, describe their perspective on the gold rushes using at least one belief, one value and one attitude for each person.

Q10. The Jerilderie Letter (1879) and a Nolan painting (1946–47) both show Ned Kelly. In three or four sentences, explain why their pictures of him are so different. Use at least two questions from the toolkit (Figure 3).

Q11. Steelman task. Before you say whether the diggers or the government at Eureka was more in the right, write two sentences that state the government’s view at its strongest, in a fair way, in your own words. Then write two sentences stating the diggers’ view at its strongest.

Writing task — describe what a source shows

This task checks the skill of this section: to describe a perspective from the past and to identify the beliefs, values and attitudes it shows, using evidence from a primary source.

Using Figures 1 and 5, write 5–7 sentences describing what the 1855 Victorian law shows about the beliefs, values and attitudes of the men who made it.

Your writing must:

- give one belief, one value and one attitude, each tied to a piece of the law;
- name whose voice is missing from the law, and name one real source from the missing side;
- use the steelman rule once: state what the law-makers believed at its strongest, even though today we know the law was wrong.

Sources used in this section

- *An Act to make provision for certain Immigrants*, Parliament of Victoria, 1855 (title word for word; the £10 tax and the ship rule as recorded in the papers of the time, Public Record Office Victoria, viewed 24 August 2026).
- Lowe Kong Meng (with a fellow writer), *The Chinese Question in Australia*, 1879 pamphlet (its asks are put in our own words; copies in libraries around Australia, viewed 24 August 2026).
- Buckland River attack, 1857, as recorded in evidence given to a Victorian parliament committee in 1858 (Public Record Office Victoria, viewed 24 August 2026).
- The Eureka flag (real flag kept at the Art Gallery of Ballarat; our Figure 6 is our own drawing of it) and the diggers’ oath as printed in Raffaello Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, Melbourne, 1855 (full text via Wikisource, viewed 24 August 2026).
- Miner’s licences and licence checks: government papers of the time, Public Record Office Victoria, viewed 24 August 2026.
- The Jerilderie Letter, 1879, State Library of Victoria, viewed 24 August 2026.
- *The Story of the Kelly Gang*, 1906, National Film and Sound Archive, viewed 24 August
- Sidney Nolan, Ned Kelly series, 1946–47, National Gallery of Australia, viewed 24 August
- The 1891 “Monster Petition” (about 30,000 signatures, 260 metres), Public Record Office Victoria, viewed 24 August 2026.
- Women’s suffrage law dates (Figure 9): the colonial and Commonwealth laws of the time, viewed 24 August 2026.
- *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* and *Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901*, Commonwealth of Australia (kept by the National Archives of Australia; put in our own words, viewed 24 August 2026).

Answers

- Q1.** a. belief (held to be true about the fee). b. value (what matters most). c. attitude (an unkind feeling pointed at a group — and a stereotype). d. belief. e. belief.
- Q2.** a. The colonial parliament of Victoria — the elected men who made the colony's laws. b. At the time — 1855, while the gold rushes were happening. c. Chinese people. d. The Chinese diggers themselves (the law is about them, not from them).
- Q3.** a. Yes — it taxes every Chinese arrival the same, just because of where they came from; the piece is the naming of one group only. b. The Chinese diggers. c. Because a source does not have to be right to show us what people believed, valued and felt.
- Q4.** Diggers — a. the rules were unfair, so free people had a right to stand together; b. rights and liberties, and mates; c. anger at the licence hunts. Government — a. armed diggers were breaking the law and had to be stopped; b. order, and the law being obeyed; c. the fee was fair because it paid for roads, courts and police.
- Q5.** a. a Chinese miner. b. the governor. c. the businesswoman. d. a digger. e. a child.
- Q6.** a. The Jerilderie Letter — Kelly spoke the words and Joe Byrne wrote them down, in 1879, while Kelly was still being hunted. b. That the police treated poor families badly (and that Kelly was hunted unfairly). c. The film-maker's — the company chose what the crowd would see and feel.
- Q7.** a. Fairness and persistence — 260 metres of signatures is patience made of paper. b. 17 years (1891 to 1908). c. Non-white women — the 1902 federal law left out almost all non-white people, so many women in Australia still could not vote federally.
- Q8.** a. Sample: they believed Australia should be kept for white people. b. The Immigration Restriction Act hurt people who were not white who wanted to come; the Pacific Island Labourers Act hurt Pacific Islander workers already living in Queensland.
- Q9.** Sample (a digger and the governor). The digger believes the licence fee is unfair, values his right to the gold he digs, and holds an angry attitude towards the licence hunts. The governor believes order must be kept, values the law being obeyed, and holds a strong attitude towards armed diggers. Same dig, different eyes.
- Q10.** Sample. The letter was made by Kelly's own side in 1879, while he was hunted, so it shows Kelly as he wanted to be seen — a poor man hunted unfairly. Nolan painted 66 years after Kelly's death and said he was not showing the real Kelly exactly; he used the story for big ideas about right and wrong. Questions 1 (who made it) and 2 (when) explain most of the difference.
- Q11.** Sample. Government at its strongest: the colony's law said every digger must carry a licence, and when armed men built a stockade and fought police, the governor had to stop them or law meant nothing. Diggers at their strongest: men paid thirty shillings a month for the right to work, were checked by police at any time, and could not vote for the men who ruled them, so standing together was their only lever.
- Writing task.** Check that the writing: gives one belief, one value and one attitude, each tied to a piece of the law (only one group named and taxed; the tax harder on one group; the same treatment for a whole group); names the missing voice (the Chinese diggers) and one real source from that side (the 1879 pamphlet by Lowe Kong Meng); and states the law-makers' belief at its strongest before naming that today we know the law was wrong.

Why historians see the past differently

For the teacher — VC2 codes: VC2HH6S06 (Historical Concepts and Skills · Using historical sources)

Drawn on: VC2HH6S06.E02 · VC2HH6S06.E03* (*the colonisation example is cut per the book's §2A register; .E01 is excluded and is not taught here. Gold-rush, Eureka, migration and Federation examples are retained and are taught in neutral contexts.)

For the teacher — teaching sequence

1. **Hook.** Show Figure 1 with the three view cards hidden. Ask students to guess what a digger, the governor, and a visitor forty years on would each say about the same day. Reveal the cards. Name the gap between the event and the stories as the work of this section.
2. **Define the tool.** Work through the definition box and Figure 2. Drill the split: sources are *pieces*; interpretations are *what people say the pieces mean*. Sort a few items aloud before Q1.
3. **Name the lenses.** Teach the four questions (Figure 3) as a poster. Every later task in this section routes through them.
4. **Model twice.** Walk Worked demonstration 1 (Figures 4–5) showing the compare/contrast move: both views rest on true facts; the difference is what each puts first. Then walk Worked demonstration 2 (Figures 6–7), this time adding Twain as a third voice and using all four questions. Stress fair treatment of Hotham — steelman before evaluating.
5. **Practise.** Scaffolded tasks, then unscaffolded. In Q3 and Q10 insist students handle both Federation views fairly before choosing.
6. **Assess the skill, not the side.** A student answer is good here if it identifies views, rests claims on the record, and explains the difference by who/when/choices — never because it “picks” the approved view. The writing task (Figure 10) is the check of VC2HH6S06's verb, *explain*.

This section pairs with 1F and 2E: the events you met there are the ones we use here to learn the skill.

Key ideas

Historians collect **sources** — the things the past leaves behind: a flag, a letter, a licence, a newspaper, a chart of counted numbers. But a history book is never just a pile of sources. A historian chooses which sources matter, joins them up, and says what they mean. That story-with-choices is an **interpretation**.

A word the curriculum uses but does not define. The Victorian Curriculum asks students to explain why people interpret the past in different ways, but it does not say what an interpretation is. This section therefore treats it as: *a story about what the past means, built from sources, with choices in it*. Two careful people can build two different stories from the very same sources — and both can still be right in different ways.

One event, many views

The Eureka Stockade happened once. But people told very different stories about it.



Figure 1. One event, many views.

The Eureka Stockade happened once, on 3 December 1854, at Ballarat in Victoria. Everything after that — books, monuments, flags carried at marches, museum cases — is people saying what that one day *means*. Before you can explain why those stories differ, you need to sort sources from interpretations.

Source or interpretation?

Two different jobs. Learn to spot which one you are looking at.

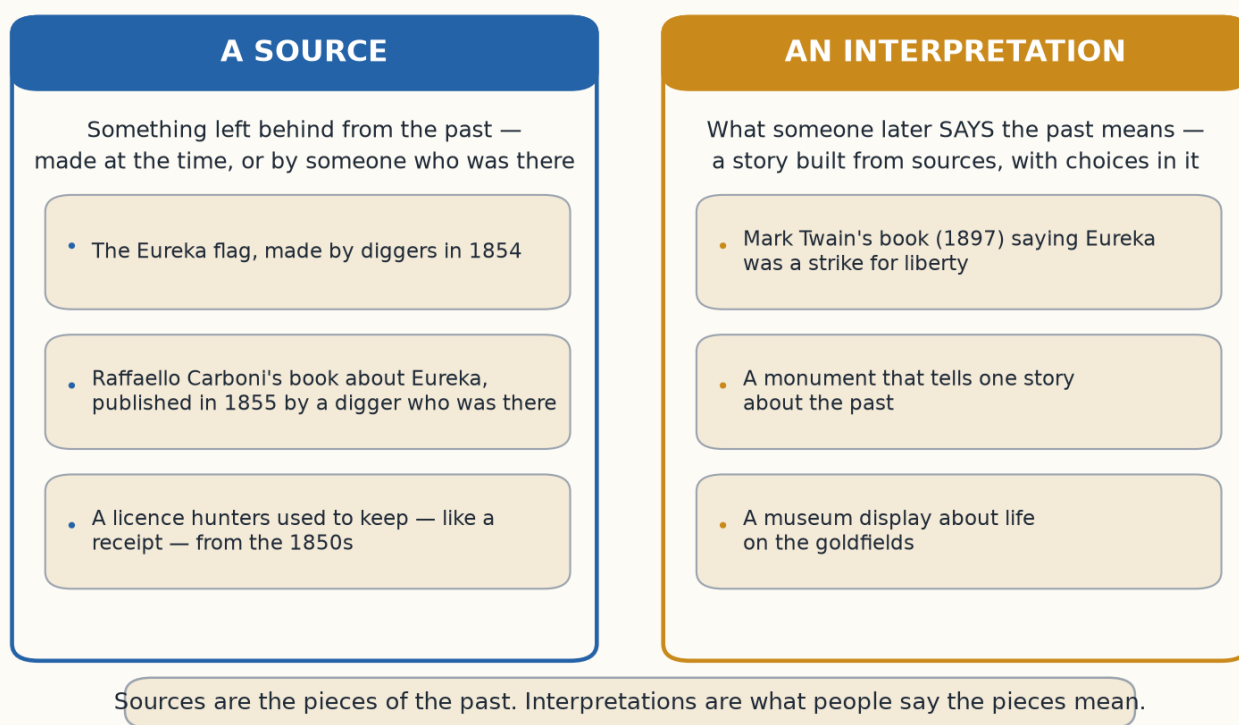


Figure 2. Source or interpretation?

A **source** was made at the time, or by someone who was there. An **interpretation** is made later, and has choices in it: which facts to put first, which to leave out, and what to say it all means.

And when two interpretations differ, the difference is almost always one of four things.

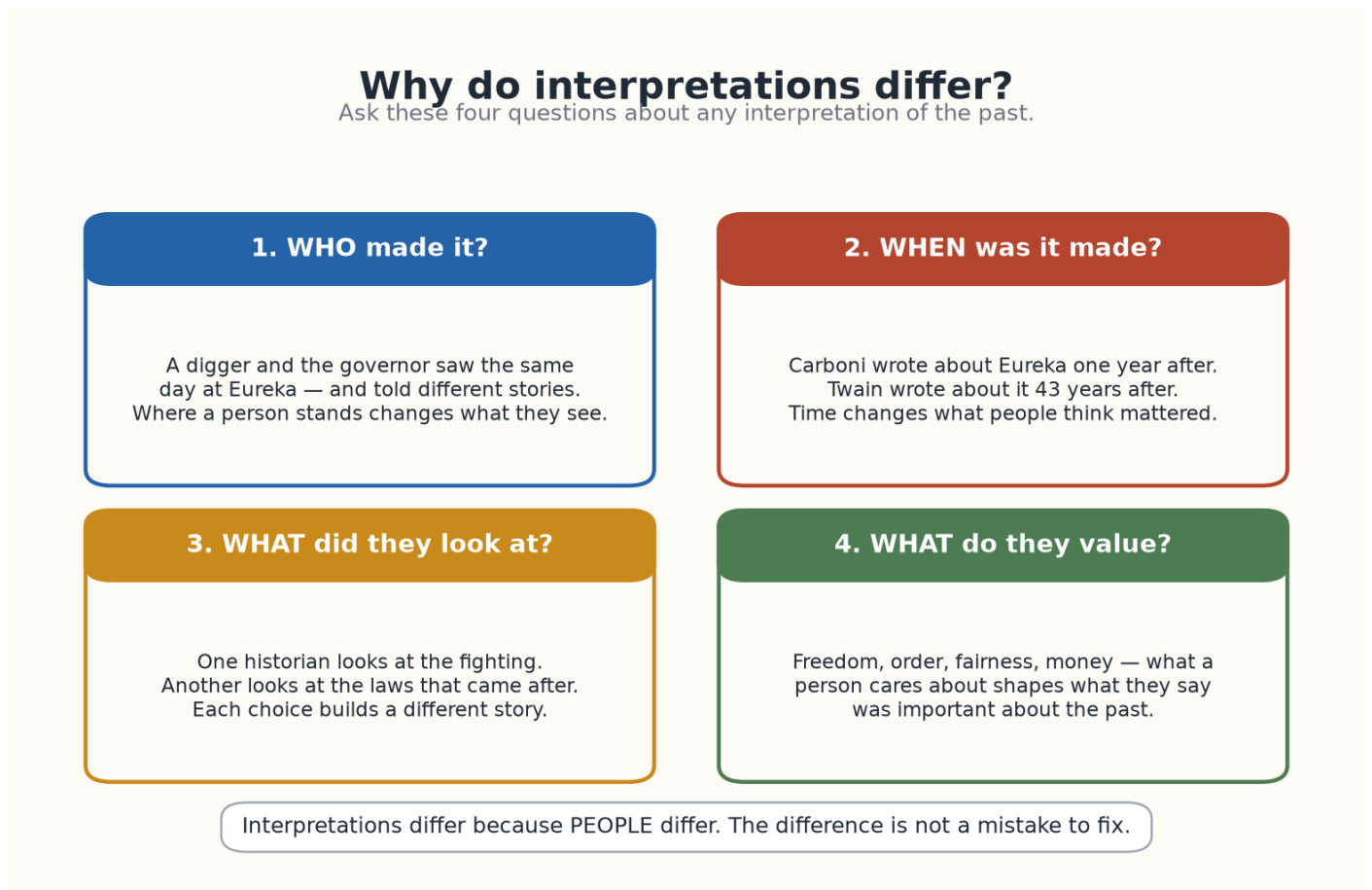


Figure 3. *Why do interpretations differ?*

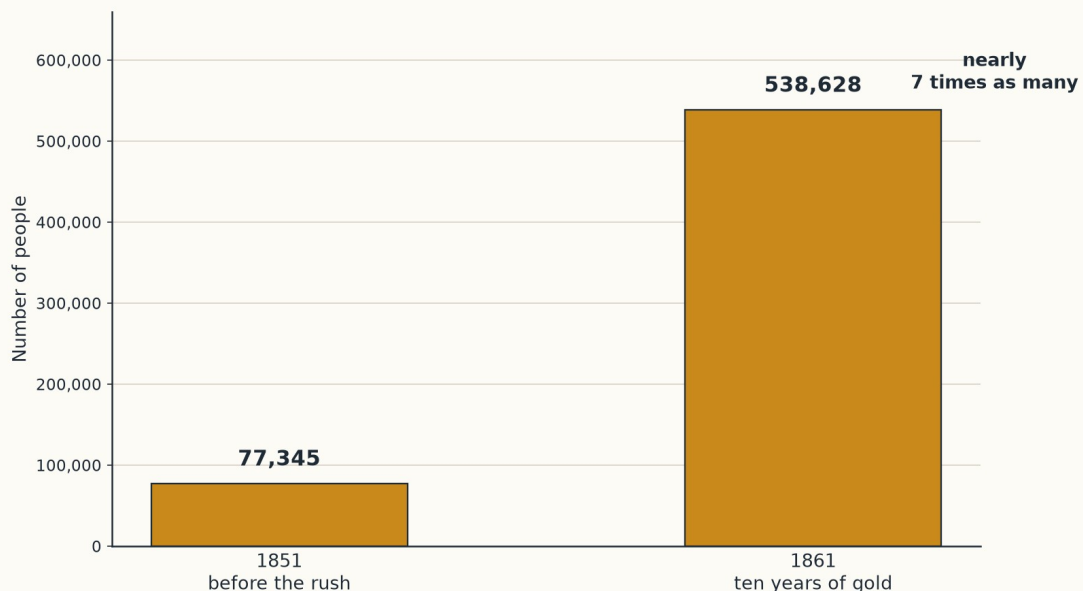
Learn the four questions as a set. They are the tool this section teaches:

1. **Who** made it — and where did they stand?
2. **When** was it made — at the time, or long after?
3. **What** did they choose to look at — and what did they leave out?
4. **What do they value** — what did they think was important?

Worked demonstration 1 — What did the gold rushes mean for Victoria?

Gold was found in Victoria in 1851, and people rushed in from all over the world. Figure 4 shows how big that change was.

People recorded living in the colony of Victoria



Source: J. C. Caldwell, 'Population', in Wray Vamplew (ed.), *Australians: Historical Statistics* (1987); matching figures in ABS, *Australian Historical Population Statistics*, 2014 (cat. no. 3105.0.65.001).

Figure 4. The gold rush change. (Numbers from J. C. Caldwell, 'Population', in W. Vamplew (ed.), *Australians: Historical Statistics*, 1987; matching figures in ABS, *Australian Historical Population Statistics*, 2014, cat. no. 3105.0.65.001.)

Now here is the historians' part. Two careful historians can look at the same ten years and write two different stories. Figure 5 shows two real readings historians give.

What did the gold rushes mean for Victoria?

Two answers historians give. Each one points to true evidence.

Interpretation A	Interpretation B
'The gold rushes made Victoria rich and pushed it toward fairer laws.' People flooded in. The recorded population grew from 77,345 in 1851 to 538,628 in 1861. Gold towns turned into cities. Melbourne grew from about 29,000 people in 1851 to about 123,000 by 1854. Eureka led to change. After 1855 the gold licence went. Diggers could vote. In 1856 Victoria began voting by secret ballot.	'The gold rushes brought hardship and unfair treatment too.' Most diggers stayed poor. The licence cost thirty shillings a month, even for a man who found no gold. The law was used harshly. Licence hunts pushed diggers around — it was anger at the hunts that lit up Eureka. Chinese miners were singled out. In 1855 Victoria passed a law charging Chinese arrivals a tax and limiting how many could come.

Both readings rest on true facts. The difference is what each historian chose to put first.

Figure 5. Two readings of the gold rushes.

Watch the comparison move.

- **Both views rest on true facts.** The population numbers, the thirty-shilling licence, the 1855 law aimed at Chinese arrivals, the secret ballot from 1856 — all of these really happened. No view here is made up.

- **The difference is choice.** Interpretation A puts growth and new rights at the centre. Interpretation B puts hardship and unfair laws at the centre. The facts each one leaves at the edges are still true — they are just not the headline.

That is the heart of this skill: when interpretations differ, ask *what did each writer put first?* before you ask *who is wrong?* Very often, nobody is wrong. They are answering “what did it mean?” in different ways.

A quick check of the four questions on Figure 5:

- **Who?** Both writers are historians looking back, so question 1 cannot explain the difference here.
- **When?** Both write long after, so question 2 cannot explain it either.
- **What did they look at?** *There* is the difference — one looked hard at growth and rights, the other at hardship and unfair laws.
- **What do they value?** A writer who values new rights may weigh the secret ballot heavily; a writer who values fair treatment may weigh the 1855 law heavily.

Worked demonstration 2 — Two watchers, two stories of Eureka

Sometimes the difference sits in questions 1 and 2: *who* wrote, and *when*. The events at Ballarat in 1854 give a clean example. Figure 6 sets out what happened.

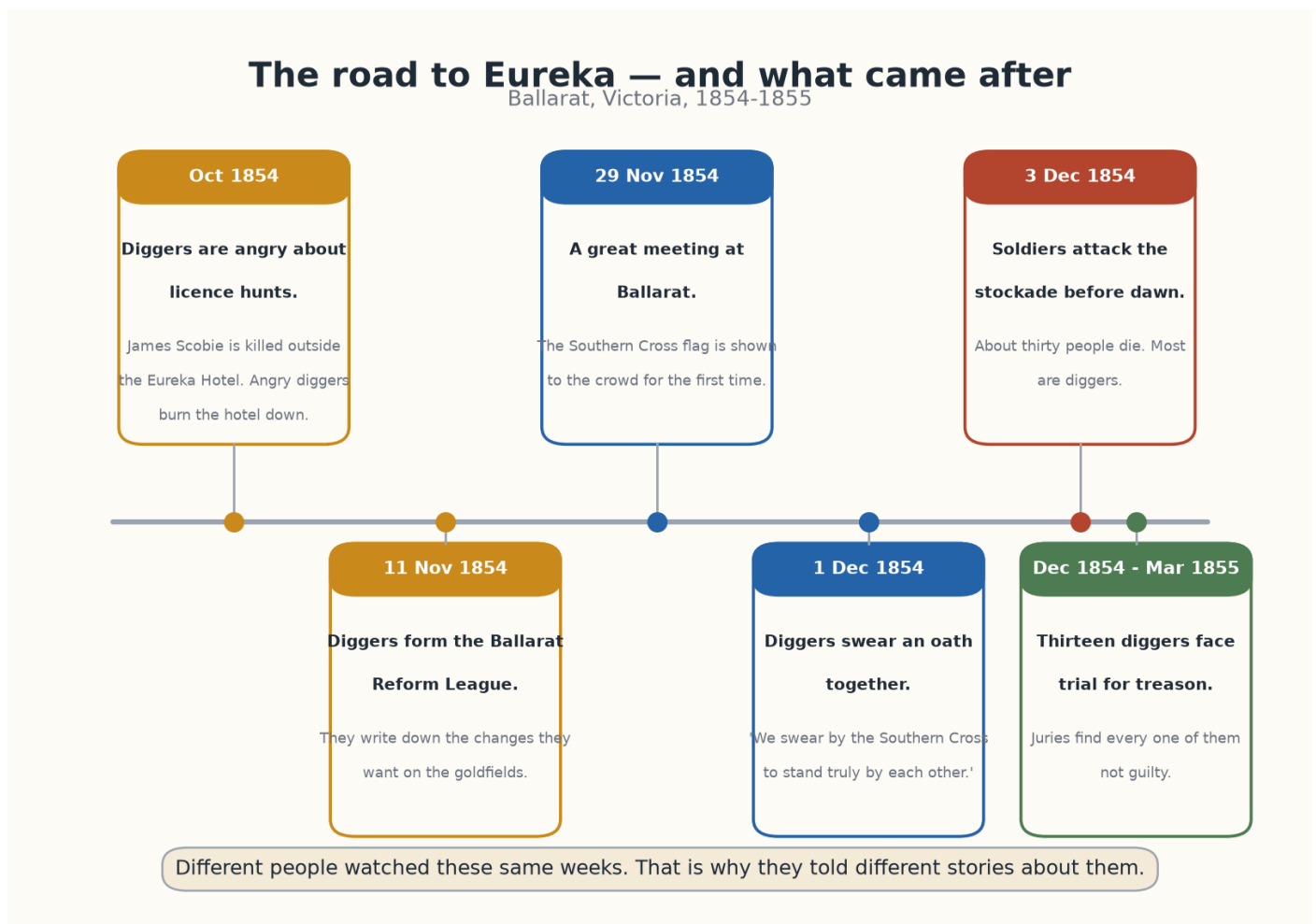


Figure 6. The road to Eureka — and after.

Two words in that timeline are worth defining. A **licence** was a paper a digger had to buy every month to be allowed to dig for gold; it cost thirty shillings a month even if he found no gold. **Treason** is the crime of acting against your own government.

Now meet two people who watched those weeks, and read what each said (Figure 7).

Two views of Eureka, written at the time

Both writers watched the same events. Read what each one said.

A digger's view

Raffaello Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, Melbourne, 1855

Carboni was a digger at Ballarat. He wrote: 'I was an actor, and therefore an eye-witness.' He was tried with the thirteen diggers and found not guilty.

On the oath the diggers swore on 1 December 1854:

'We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other, and fight to defend our rights and liberties.'

What Carboni's story says:

The diggers were pushed too far. They stood up for their rights, as free people should.

The licence cost thirty shillings a month, and Carboni called it 'a nuisance.'

The governor's view

Governor Charles Hotham, reported in *The Argus*, Melbourne, 15 December 1854 (as printed in Carboni's book)

Hotham was the governor of Victoria. He was the man the diggers were defying.

Hotham said the licence fee was not the real cause:

'I consider that the masses were urged on by designing men who had ulterior views, and who hoped to profit by anarchy and confusion.'

In plainer words:

Hotham said clever trouble-makers pushed the diggers along. He said those men hoped to gain from a breakdown of law and order.

Same weeks. Two different stories. Ask: who wrote each one — and what did each stand to lose?

Figure 7. Two views of Eureka, written at the time.

Raffaello Carboni was a digger at Ballarat. In 1855, one year after the stockade, he published a book about it, *The Eureka Stockade*. He wrote, “I was an actor, and therefore an eye-witness” — his way of saying he was there. His book prints the oath the diggers swore on 1 December 1854: “We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other...”. To Carboni, the diggers were pushed too far and stood up for their rights. He called the licence “a nuisance” — a word for something that nags at you and is not fair.

Charles Hotham was the governor of Victoria — the man the diggers were defying. In *The Argus* of 15 December 1854 (printed again inside Carboni’s book), Hotham said the licence fee was not the real cause of the trouble. He said clever men with hidden plans had pushed the crowd along, hoping to gain from a breakdown of law and order.

Apply the four questions and the difference explains itself:

Question	Carboni (digger, 1855)	Hotham (governor, 1854)
Who — where did they stand?	A digger, inside the crowd, on the diggers’ side	The governor, the man in charge of keeping order
When?	One year after	Weeks after
What did they look at?	The licence hunts, the oath, the diggers’ rights	The burning of a hotel, the attack on his officers, law-breaking
What did they value?	Rights and liberty for ordinary working men	Order, and the law being obeyed

One list does not make the other a liar. A governor is answerable for order; when a hotel burns and officers are attacked, “law-breaking pushed by clever men” is an honest way to see it. A digger paying thirty shillings a month for the *right to work* sees a tax on his own effort, and “standing up for rights” is an honest way to see it. **Both views are steel-strong when you stand where the writer stood.** That is what fair history looks like: you explain a view at its strongest before you weigh it.

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A third voice makes the point a third way. The American writer **Mark Twain** visited Ballarat in 1895 and wrote about Eureka in his book *Following the Equator* (1897). He called it “a strike for liberty”. Twain was not there in 1854; he walked the ground, read, and talked to people. His story is an interpretation built forty-three years after the event — and it became one of the most famous. Same dig. Same flag. Different writer, different time, different story.

Practice — with support

Q1. Sort these into *source* or *interpretation*, and give one reason each. a. The Eureka flag made by diggers in 1854. b. Mark Twain’s 1897 claim that Eureka was “a strike for liberty”. c. A miner’s licence from the 1850s. d. A museum display about life on the goldfields, made this century. e. Carboni’s book about the stockade, published in 1855. f. A monument at Ballarat that tells one story of the stockade.

Q2. Figure 5 holds two readings of the gold rushes. Match each fact to the reading it serves best (A, B, or both): a. Victoria’s recorded population grew from 77,345 (1851) to 538,628 (1861). b. The licence cost thirty shillings a month even for a man who found no gold. c. Victoria began voting by secret ballot in 1856. d. In 1855 Victoria passed a law charging Chinese arrivals a tax and limiting their numbers.

Q3. Figure 8 is a timeline of the road to **Federation** — the joining of the six British colonies into one nation, the Commonwealth of Australia, on 1 January 1901. Figure 9 shows two interpretations of what made it happen. Put a tick beside each fact that serves Interpretation 1 (people power), Interpretation 2 (leaders and needs), or both: a. Sir Henry Parkes gave the Tenterfield speech calling for union in 1889. b. Voters said ‘yes’ in referendums in 1898–1900. (A **referendum** is a vote in which the people say yes or no to one question.) c. A ‘People’s Convention’ met at Bathurst in 1896. d. Conventions in 1891 and 1897–98 drafted the Constitution — the rule-book a nation runs on. e. About 30,000 people on the Western Australian goldfields sent the Queen a **petition** — a written request signed by many people — asking to join. f. Six colonies with different rules made trade hard; one nation could keep watch of a huge continent better than six small ones could.

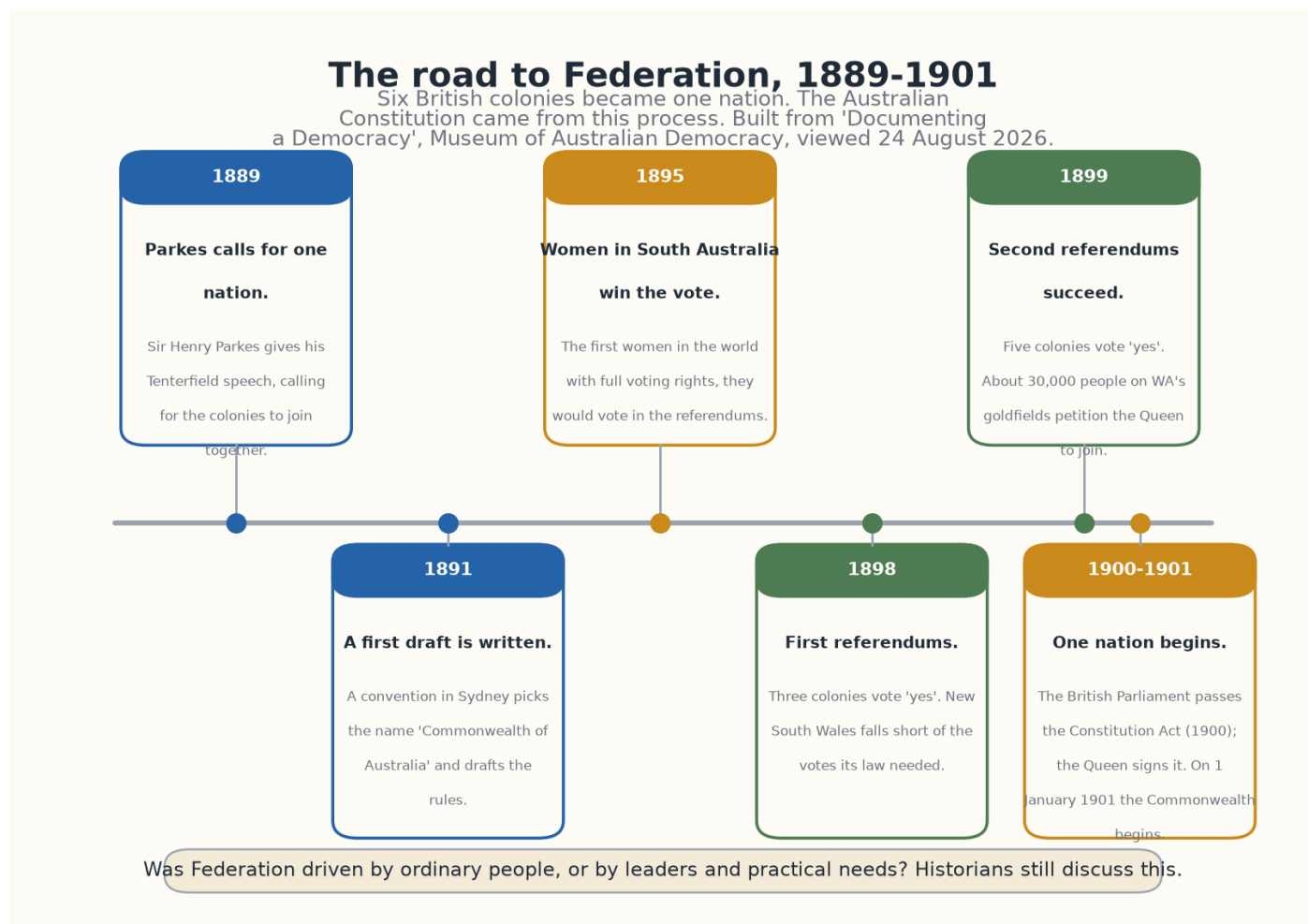


Figure 8. The road to Federation, 1889–1901. (Built from 'Documenting a Democracy', Museum of Australian Democracy, foundingdocs.gov.au, viewed 24 August 2026.)

What made Federation happen? Two interpretations

Both rest on the same record. They put different facts first.

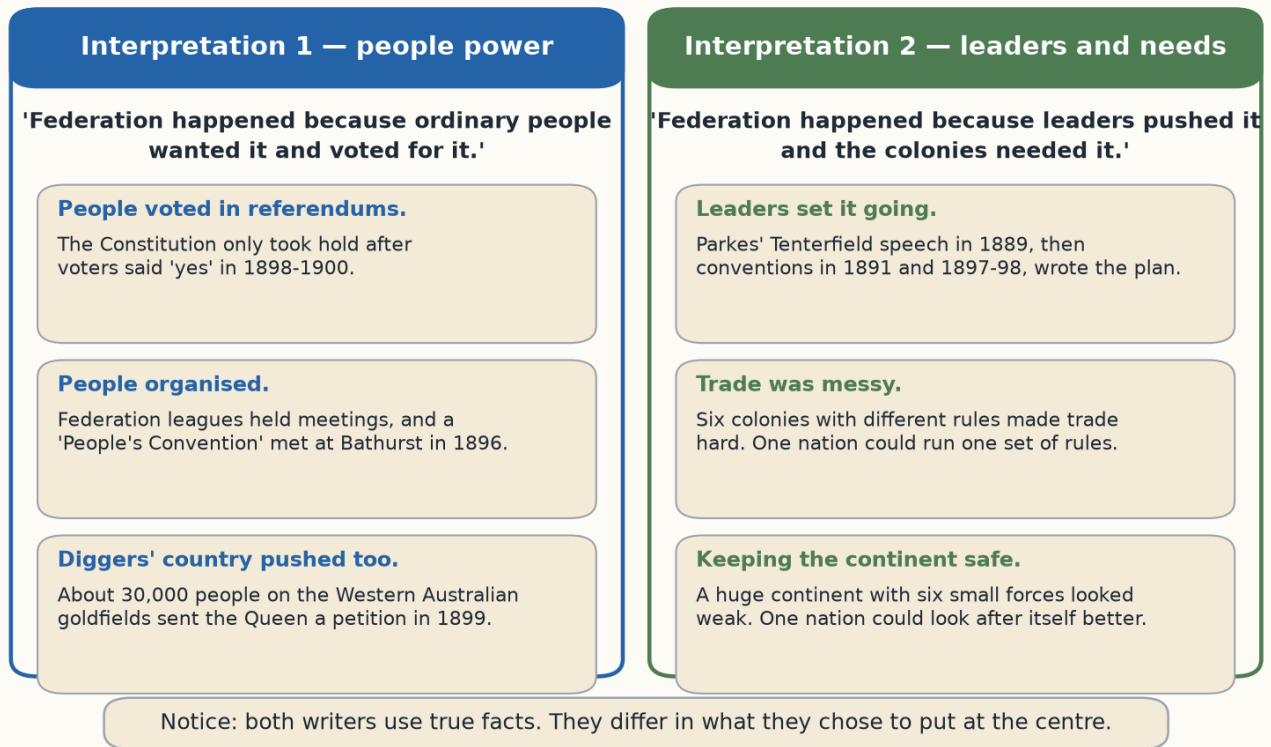


Figure 9. What made Federation happen? Two interpretations.

Q4. Use Figure 7. For Carboni and for Hotham, answer in one line each: a. Where did each man stand in the story he tells? b. Which one fact did each man put at the centre? c. Which single question from Figure 3 explains most of the difference between them?

Q5. Mark Twain wrote about Eureka in 1897, forty-three years after it. a. Which question from Figure 3 do we ask first about Twain's view? b. Name one strength of a view written long after an event. c. Name one weakness of a view written long after an event.

Q6. After the Second World War, Australia needed workers and welcomed migrants from many countries. The Snowy Mountains Scheme (1949–1974) was one big project of those years: it employed more than 100,000 workers, and about two in every three were born overseas, from more than 30 countries. Two interpretations of the Scheme: - *View X*: "The Snowy Mountains Scheme was a great engineering win — dams and power for a growing nation." - *View Y*: "The Snowy Mountains Scheme was a story of new Australians — people from many lands, some recently at war with each other, building a life together." a. Name one fact from the record above that each view puts first. b. Which of the four questions from Figure 3 best explains why X and Y differ?

Q7. The Eureka flag still flies today, carried at marches and hung in museums. a. Is the flag *itself* (made in 1854) a source or an interpretation? b. Is a march that carries the flag today a source or an interpretation of 1854? Explain in one sentence.

Q8. Finish each sentence so it explains a difference, not just names one. a. Carboni and Hotham tell different stories of Eureka because Carboni stood _____ while Hotham stood _____. b. Twain's story differs from Carboni's because Twain wrote _____ after the event, so he could _____. c. Readings A and B of the gold rushes differ because A puts _____ first while B puts _____ first.

Practice — on your own

Q9. In two or three sentences of your own, compare the two readings in Figure 5. You must say one thing each view puts first, and one thing both views agree is true.

Q10. Look at Figures 8 and 9. Which interpretation of Federation do you find better supported by the record — and why? Rule: you must first state the other view’s strongest fact in a fair way, in your own words, before you weigh it.

Q11. Pick any two of Carboni, Hotham and Twain. In three or four sentences, explain why their stories of Eureka differ. Use at least two of the four questions from Figure 3.

Writing task — explain why the stories differ

This task checks the skill of this section: to explain different interpretations of the past.

Using Figure 10 as your frame, write 5–7 sentences explaining why Raffaello Carboni and Governor Charles Hotham tell such different stories of the same weeks at Ballarat.

Writing frame: the different stories about Eureka

Use these five sentence starts to build your explanation.

1 Historians see the Eureka Stockade in different ways. I will explain why.

2 Carboni's view was that _____. His book shows this when it says _____.

3 Governor Hotham's view was different. He said _____.

4 Their views differ because Carboni wrote as _____, while Hotham wrote as _____.

5 So the same event has different stories, because _____.

Aim for 5 to 7 sentences. Give a reason for every claim. Treat both views with fairness.

Figure 10. Writing frame.

Your writing must:

- give at least one detail from Carboni’s side and one from Hotham’s side;
- treat both men with fairness — no heroes, no villains;
- explain the difference using at least two of the four questions from Figure 3;
- use your own words for the explaining parts.

Sources used in this section

- Raffaello Carboni, *The Eureka Stockade*, Melbourne, 1855 (full text via Wikisource, viewed 24 August 2026). Carboni’s quotes of the oath (1 December 1854), of his own eye-witness line, and of the licence as “a nuisance” come from this book.
- *The Argus* (Melbourne), 15 December 1854, report of Governor Hotham’s words, as printed inside Carboni’s book.
- Mark Twain, *Following the Equator*, 1897, chapter 24 (“a strike for liberty”), Project Gutenberg ebook, viewed 24 August 2026. Twain visited Ballarat in 1895.

- Population of Victoria 1851/1861: J. C. Caldwell, 'Population', in W. Vamplew (ed.), *Australians: Historical Statistics*, 1987; matching figures in ABS, *Australian Historical Population Statistics*, 2014, cat. no. 3105.0.65.001.
- Federation timeline facts: 'Documenting a Democracy', Museum of Australian Democracy, foundingdocs.gov.au, viewed 24 August 2026.
- Snowy Mountains Scheme facts (1949–1974; over 100,000 workers; about two-thirds born overseas, from more than 30 countries): 'Snowy Mountains Scheme', Wikipedia, viewed 24 August 2026.

Answers

Q1. a. source — made by diggers at the time. b. interpretation — Twain wrote in 1897, 43 years after, and says what the event *means*. c. source — a paper made at the time. d. interpretation — made later, with choices about what to show. e. source — Carboni was there and wrote one year after. (It becomes a source *for* later interpretations.) f. interpretation — a monument tells one chosen story.

Q2. a. both (A leans on the growth; B can use the rush of people to show how many were caught by the licence). b. B. c. A. d. B.

Q3. a. 2. b. 1. c. 1. d. 2. e. 1. f. 2. (b and c are the people's side; a, d and f are the leaders-and-needs side; e is ordinary people acting, so 1.)

Q4. a. Carboni stood inside the crowd of diggers; Hotham stood above it, answerable for order. b. Carboni put the licence and the diggers' rights at the centre; Hotham put law-breaking and the pushing of the crowd at the centre. c. Question 1 — who made it, and where did they stand.

Q5. a. Question 2 — when was it made? (43 years after.) b. A later writer can see what the event *led to* — the laws, the changes — that people at the time could not see. c. A later writer was not there, so the story leans on other people's sources and on memory.

Q6. a. X puts first the dams and power (the engineering); Y puts first the workers from 30-plus countries, some recently at war, building a life together. b. Question 3 — what did they choose to look at? (One looked at the machines, the other at the people.)

Q7. a. source — it was made in 1854, at the time. b. interpretation — the march is people today saying what 1854 means; the flag is the piece, the march is a story told with it.

Q8. Sample. a. ...inside the crowd of diggers... above it, answerable for order. b. ...43 years... see what the event led to. c. ...growth and new rights... hardship and unfair laws.

Q9. Sample. Reading A puts growth first: seven times as many people, cities, and new rights like the secret ballot. Reading B puts hardship first: the licence tax on the right to work, and the 1855 law aimed at Chinese arrivals. Both agree the gold rushes changed Victoria in a big way.

Q10. Sample. Interpretation 2's strongest fact is that leaders wrote the plan: Parkes' speech, then the conventions that drafted the Constitution. Interpretation 1 answers that the plan only took hold when ordinary people voted 'yes' in 1898–1900, met at Bathurst, and — on the Western Australian goldfields — 30,000 of them sent the Queen a petition. I find Interpretation 1 better supported, because the record shows people acting, not just leaders talking; but the fairest reading is that both were true at once — leaders built the plan and people gave it force.

Q11. Sample. Carboni stood inside the diggers' crowd in 1854–55, so his story values rights and liberty. Hotham stood above the crowd as governor, so his story values order. (That is questions 1 and 4 doing the explaining.) Twain differs from both by question 2: writing 43 years after, he could call it “a strike for liberty” because he could see what it led to.

Writing task. Check that the writing: names both men and gives one detail from each; treats both with fairness (no heroes or villains); uses at least two of the four questions to explain the difference; and explains in the student's own words. A strong answer notes that Carboni wrote as a digger one year after, Hotham as governor weeks after, and that the same weeks honestly held both a fight for rights and a fight over order.