

Explorers: Filling in the Map of Australia

By Chris Miles

Four hundred years ago, the outline of Australia as we know it today was nowhere to be found on maps of the world. In its place was an imagined southern continent – the unknown southern land.

About the book

Explorers: Filling in the Map of Australia records in detail the explorers who mapped the coastline of Australia and those who explored inland to discover rivers, mountains and deserts. It is an excellent resource for students studying this part of Australian/European history.

The clear headings and subheadings allow students to hone their skim-reading and note-taking skills. Fact boxes, maps and timelines make the information accessible to a range of learning levels.

The text raises questions about the meaning of 'discovery'. The roles that indigenous people, the Portuguese, the Spanish, the Dutch and the English played in mapping Australia are discussed with detail. The absence of women provides an opportunity for students to explore how gender roles have changed (or not) over time. This book will also encourage discussion on the motives and qualities of explorers. Why did people risk their lives?

It's interesting for students to engage in discussion on the topic of trade. How did the spice trade impact on human life? How did exploration impact on human life? This text could be a starting point for students to map the ongoing impact of past trade and exploration on current-day people and cultures.

Rationale

Students should use the text and other sources to complete the tasks in these teacher notes. The activities are designed to engage students and provide a creative learning experience.

How to use

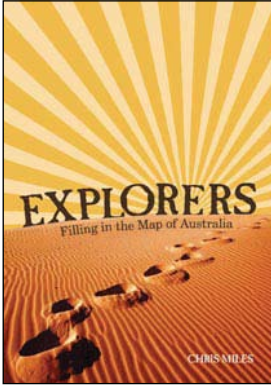
Learning activities suggested in one discipline may also be applicable to another discipline.

Genre

Written and visual
information

Readership

Ages 7 plus

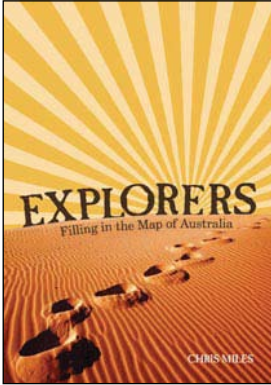


Contents

- Introduction
- Janszoon and the voyage of the *Duyfken*
- Hartog: Blown off course
- Tasman: Naming New Holland
- Cook and the voyage of the *Endeavour*
- Discovering the east coast of New Holland
- Beyond Sydney: Early inland explorers
- Hume and Hovell: Overland to the south coast
- Sturt: The inland sea
- Eyre and Wylie: Crossing the Nullarbor
- Leichhardt: Lost in the desert
- Stuart: Blind ambition
- Burke and Wills: One-way trip
- Epilogue
- Index
- Glossary/references

Topics

- Indigenous people (as first inhabitants, guides)
- Navigational tools
- Pleistocene epoch
- Portuguese and Spanish exploration (1400s and 1500s)
- The spice trade
- Dutch exploration
- The 'roaring forties' and the dangers of sea travel
- English explorers
- The mapping of the east coast of Australia
- Cook and *HM Endeavour*
- Convict settlement at New South Wales



Inland exploration

Food/shortage

Governors

Land use

Exploration of rivers

Exploration of deserts

Federation

SOSE/HSIE

Primary and secondary sources

Chris Miles uses a range of resources in his book. Some are primary resources and some are secondary resources.

- As a class, discuss the meaning of primary and secondary resources.
- Brainstorm some examples of these resources. Why is it important for historians to consult both types of sources?
- In what ways might primary resources be unreliable?
- In what ways might secondary resources be unreliable?

Pleistocene epoch

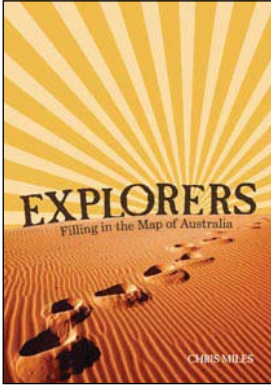
On page 2 we read about the Pleistocene epoch.

- When was the Pleistocene epoch?
- In pairs, make a list of five questions that you have about this time period. Research your answers and present your findings to the class.

Indigenous inhabitants

'The only people who truly knew Australia existed were its indigenous people...'
(p.2)

Choose two of the topics listed below and research how Australia's original inhabitants organised their lives prior to white settlement. Present your findings as a PowerPoint presentation.



- Spirituality
- Land use
- Work
- Food
- Art
- Recreation
- Care of the environment

Close encounters with Australia

On pages 2 and 3 we learn that Portugal and Spain sent explorers in search of sea routes to India and South-East Asia, then known as the 'East Indies'.

- Find a map of the world as we know it today.
- Study the world map on page 2 showing 'Terra Australis Nondum Cognita'. (Teacher note: a larger version of this map can be viewed on the State Library of Victoria's website.)
- As a class, compare and contrast these maps.
- On your map of the world, mark in the journeys of the Portuguese and Spanish explorers as outlined on page 3 of the text.

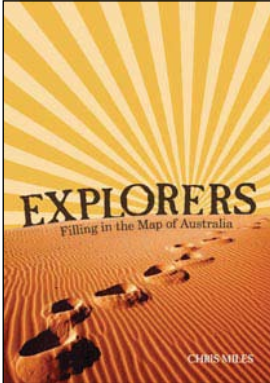
The spice trade

On page 3 we read that spices were extremely valuable. Research the uses of different spices. Use symbols to represent where spices were found and what they were used for on your map.

The first chart of Australia

On your map of the world, mark in the things listed below.

- The journey of Willem Janszoon's ship, the *Duyfken*.
- The journey of Luis Váez de Torres. Why did the Spanish authorities want to keep the strait a secret?
- The new trade route discovered by Henrik Brouwer in 1610.



Tasman: Naming New Holland

Mark on your map when and where Dirk Hartog accidentally landed in his ship, the *Eendracht*.

Use symbols to represent on your map Tasman's journey in 1642.

Cook and the voyage of the *Endeavour*: Discovering the east coast of New Holland

Mark on your map the part of the coast that Cook charted.

Dangers at sea

Use this text and at least one other source to record some of the dangers that sailors faced while at sea. (You might consider things such as weather, diet, living conditions or unfair Captains.)

Inland explorers

'The land explorers who filled in the map faced incredible danger, unpredictable weather and vast stretches of uninhabitable country. At the end of a day's travel they drew maps, made sketches of their findings and wrote journals of their expeditions by candlelight.' (p.28)

Choose one of the inland explorers written about in the book and write a series of journal entries about their experiences. Comment on why they were willing to face such hardship in order to make discoveries.

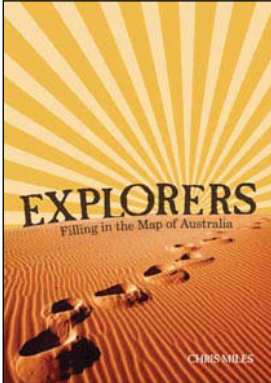
Discussion Questions

Based on what you have learnt, who would you say 'discovered' Australia? You will need to define what you mean by the word 'discover'. Is it mapping the continent? Is it seeing parts of it first?

How did trade and exploration impact on Australia's indigenous people? In what ways are they still effected today?

Discuss ways in which the search for spices changed the world.

Being at sea was highly dangerous. Discuss some of the reasons why men (sailors and captains) would have gone to sea.



Discuss some of the positive and negative qualities of the inland explorers.

Discuss some of the reasons why there are no female explorers recorded in the text. Discuss the reasons why the indigenous guides were named last or not named at all.

SCIENCE

The explorers would have encountered a range of new animals. Choose a native Australian animal to research. Find information on physical characteristics, habitat, breeding habits, diet and interesting facts. Present your information as a journal entry of an explorer who might have come into contact with this animal.

ENGLISH

Reading and writing

Write a short story based on the information in the fact box on page 19, 'Shot by a camel'. You might choose to make your story funny or very serious.

Write the diary entry of a girl living at this time who longed to be an explorer. Include some information about the role of girls/women at this time.

Speaking and listening

The journey to Australia would have been perilous. Write the monologue of a sailor, explaining the things that you love and fear about the sea.

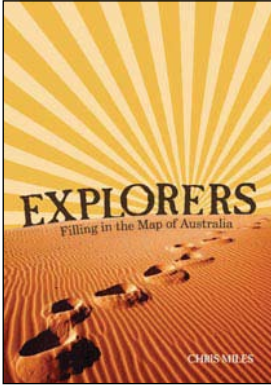
Hold class debates on the topic 'Who really discovered Australia'. Make sure you can support your argument with evidence!

CREATIVE ARTS

Art

Produce a short graphic novel to convey key information about the discovery of Australia.

Design a new cover for the book. Highlight some of the key pieces of information that you have learned from this text.



Drama

Script and perform an advertisement where you try to recruit people into the job of being an explorer. How will you sell the dangers?

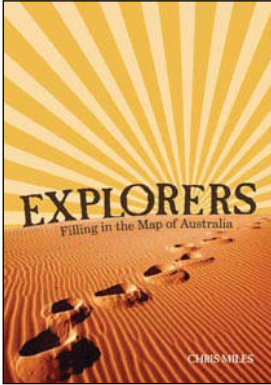
Script and perform a play about a defining moment of Australia's exploration history. The moment might be positive or negative. Make sure your audience sees the impact of this moment on our lives today.

BOOK FEATURES AND FORMAT

Explorers: Filling in the Map of Australia has many features that are important in factual texts:

- Table of contents (note that the word 'chapter' is never used)
- Headings and subheadings
- Fact boxes, maps and time-lines
- Page numbers
- Captions
- Timelines
- Picture sources
- Index
- Glossary (note that the words in bold are included in the glossary)
- References

1. Locate each of the above features in the book.
2. Are these features effective? Why or why not?
3. The paragraphs in this book all begin with a topic sentence. What is the function of these sentences? Why are they important?
4. How is colour used throughout the text to highlight key information?
5. What sort of information is included in the fact boxes? Why use boxes to highlight this information?



6. What design features have been used to convey a sense of time, place and topic?

VISUAL LITERACY

- Study the painting of Abel Tasman and his family on page 9. What do you learn about them from this painting?
- Choose one other picture in the text and explain what you learn from it about Australia.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

CHRIS MILES

Chris Miles holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree, but soon after graduating he made the economically dubious but spiritually fulfilling decision to become a writer and not an accountant. Strangely, his first book is about money.

His favourite banknote is the \$100 note — it holds a mysterious allure for him, since he's rarely had one in his possession.

He lives in Melbourne and as well as being a writer of fiction and nonfiction is also a freelance web designer and an editor for a medical organisation.

