

Australia Day

Days and weeks celebrated or commemorated in Australia (including Australia Day, ANZAC Day, Harmony Week, National Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week and National Sorry Day) and the importance of symbols and emblems (ACHHK063)



Time line

(Events connected with Australia Day)

- 13 May 1787
Ships of the First Fleet, under the command of Captain Arthur Phillip, leave Portsmouth, England
- 26 January 1788
First Fleet arrives in Port Jackson, Sydney Cove
- 1818
First official celebrations to mark 30th anniversary of white settlement
- 1938
Aboriginal activists organise a 'Day of Mourning' protest on 150th anniversary of white settlement
- 1930
All states/territories recognise the Monday closest to 26 January as a national public holiday to celebrate Australia Day
- 1960
First Australian of the Year appointed on Australia Day
- 1994
Celebrating Australia Day on 26 January becomes established

CELEBRATE AUSTRALIA

Teacher information

Elaboration

Understands the significance of Australia Day and some arguments for and against the way it is celebrated.

Key inquiry questions

Who lived here first and how do we know?

How and why do people choose to remember significant events of the past?

Historical skills

- Use historical terms (ACHHS066) **AC**
- Locate relevant information from sources provided (ACHHS068) **AC**
- Identify different points of view (ACHHS069) **AC**
- Develop texts, particularly narratives (ACHHS070) **AC**
- Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS071) **AC**

Historical concepts

- Sources
- Continuity and change
- Cause and effect
- Significance
- Empathy
- Perspectives



Background information

- Captain Arthur Phillip, a farmer and sailor, led the First Fleet of 11 ships of approximately 1500 men, women and children. Six of the ships were for convicts. Captain Phillip became the leader of the settlement at Port Jackson (renamed Sydney).
- Australia Day has become Australia's single biggest day of celebration and has become synonymous with community, with celebrations relevant to their local areas.
- While many Indigenous Australians celebrate Australia Day, many feel that the date highlights the adverse effects of British settlement on their people; namely, loss of culture. It is described by them as 'Invasion Day' or 'Survival Day'. An alternative date has been suggested several times over many years.



Teaching notes

- Several terms used on pages 35 and 36 may need to be explained to the students; e.g. 'colony', 'First Fleet', 'convicts', 'citizenship ceremonies', 'Invasion Day'.
- For students to complete Questions 1 and 2 on page 37, discussion about the significance of National Sorry Day and Anzac Day will be needed so they can offer suggestions for and against each day. Discuss the fact that Australians continue to celebrate Australia Day in increasing numbers, either at home, with family or at community events. Would this change if the date changed?



Additional activities

- Suggest alternative dates for Australia Day and reasons why. (Other proposed dates include Wattle Day, 1 September; Constitution Day, 9 July; Eureka Stockade, 3 December and the anniversary of the Australia Act, 3 March.)
- Write a factual recount (handwritten or with a word processing program) about how they celebrated Australia Day this year and share with the class. Include photographs or drawings.



Resources

- Type words such as 'Australia Day celebrations', along with your state/city/town and the present or upcoming year to find out what is/was on in your community.
- This site provides an indigenous perspective on Australia Day celebrations (for the teacher) <<http://www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/history/australia-day-invasion-day>>

Australia Day - 1



Australia Day is a public holiday. Many people celebrate the day with outdoor activities such as barbecues (with family or organised by the community), picnics, outdoor concerts or sporting events. Evening firework displays are held in many places around the country. Communities organise citizenship ceremonies on this day. People wave flags at events and attach them to their vehicles. Many of these events are also televised so people can watch them at home. These activities develop a sense of national pride and identity.

The National Australia Day Council gives out many awards on Australia Day, such as Australian of the Year, Young Australian of the Year and the Australia Day Honours list. These awards recognise individual achievements in areas such as the arts, sport, medical research and helping the community. People from all kinds of cultural backgrounds—Asian, European, Aboriginal and so on—can be chosen to receive these awards.

Australia Day used to be widely thought of as Australia's birthday. However, many people, especially Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, consider it 'Invasion Day', the anniversary of when Australia was 'invaded' by Europeans. They feel a different date should be used to celebrate national pride in our country.

Australia Day - 2

Answer the questions about the text.

1. Why was 26 January chosen to be Australia Day?

2. Why do people celebrate Australia Day?

3. Use a green highlight pen to mark some of the ways people celebrate Australia Day described in paragraph 1.



4. What is a citizenship ceremony?

5. (a) Why does the National Australia Day Council give out awards?

- (b) Who can receive these awards?

6. Why do some people feel that Australia Day should be celebrated on a different day?



Australia Day has been called that name by all states and territories since 1946. It has also been known in different states and territories as 'First Landing Day', 'Anniversary Day' and 'Foundation Day'.

Australia Day - 3



- At various times since it became official that Australia Day would be celebrated on 26 January, other dates have been suggested for its celebration. Two of these dates are listed below. Write a sentence for and against each date.

Date	For	Against
National Sorry Day 13 February		
Anzac Day 25 April		

- Do you think we should choose a different day to celebrate Australia Day? Why/Why not?

- Did you and your family celebrate Australia Day this year? If so, what did you do? If not, what would you like to have done?
