

AUSTRALIAN RESOURCES

When Europeans **arrived** in Australia, they found a **continent** rich with **natural resources**. They used the land for farming, and dug for gold. In Australia's waters, they hunted whales for their **blubber** and bones.

Taking **advantage** of Australia's natural resources kept the settlers fed and **housed**. The resources **contributed** to improving the lives of most people settling here. However, these activities also caused a lot of damage to Australia's **environment**.

Whaling

Early settlers hunted whales, which they valued very highly. Settlers used the oil in the whale's **blubber** to fuel lamps, and whale bones were used to make umbrellas, whips and many other items. By 1900, many species of whale had been hunted almost to **extinction**.

▼ Whaling was an important industry in Australia in the 18th and 19th centuries.



Farming

Finding **reliable** sources of food was an **urgent** need for the early settlers. Trees were cleared from huge areas of land to make way for sheep and cattle, and for growing wheat.

Wool production

For thousands of years, **Indigenous Australians** had used fire to clear the land. This created ideal areas for the settlers to raise sheep. The settlers also cut down tens of thousands of trees to make room for more sheep.

▼ *Shearing the Rams*, by Tom Roberts



Gold

In the 1850s, large amounts of gold were found in New South Wales and Victoria. Gold brought a lot of wealth to Australia. It also led to the pollution of creeks, and damage to land. Miners cut down many trees. They used the wood to strengthen their tunnels, and also for tent poles.

Australia's resources have given **prosperous** lives to millions of people. We shouldn't forget that this prosperity often came at great cost to the environment.

QUESTIONS

1. Which three of Australia's natural resources are mentioned in the text?
2. What do you think the author means by 'prosperous lives'?
3. Go to <http://ab.co/1J5rNGF/> to watch the video about building a sheep wash. What resources were used to make the sheep wash? Why do you think it was necessary?
4. Watch the video about the history of Australian wool at <http://bit.ly/1EnzIDf>. Make notes about the things you learn. How has the wool industry changed since the early days? How is it the same?
5. What would you most like to have been involved in: farming, whaling or mining? Conduct some research on your chosen area and write a short explanation about your choice.

FACT!

By 1860 there were one million people in Australia – and about 25 million sheep and cattle!

Scan the code to learn about sheep shearing in the 1950s.



EARLY TOWNS AND CITIES

Towns were a part of the Australian **colonies** from the earliest days of European settlement. Most towns were built near sources of fresh water, and both settlers and convicts stayed close together to take advantage of food supplies and fresh water, and for safety.

▼ Sydney in the early days of European settlement

The earliest towns were all in coastal areas. They needed to be easily **accessible** by ship, so that they could receive **supplies** and **communicate** by mail with the rest of the world.

The first town

Australia's first town was **established** in the area we now call Sydney. At first, tents were set up, then convicts **constructed** buildings, including hospitals and courthouses.



The British Government did not **intend** Sydney to become a large city. They saw it **purely** as a prison settlement for criminals. Nevertheless, between 1810 and 1820, the Governor of New South Wales, Lachlan Macquarie, oversaw the **construction** of many fine buildings, such as a hospital. Part of this hospital is now part of the Parliament House of New South Wales.

The Royal Exhibition Building, Melbourne



A golden leap

Australia's towns took a big leap forward during the gold rush, which began in the 1850s. Money flowed into the cities because of gold finds, and this money allowed governments and settlers to build grand buildings. Melbourne, in particular, boomed during this time. Many fine buildings from the gold rush era are still standing today.

By 1891, two-thirds of the people in the colonies lived in a city or a town. This was a higher level of town and city living than anywhere else in the world at that time.

FACT!

Adelaide was the only major city in Australia to be founded purely by free settlers, without convicts.

Scan the code and explore an artist's impression of Australia's first town, Sydney.



QUESTIONS

1. Who used money from the gold rush to construct buildings?
2. How do you think Sydney developed from a prison settlement to a major city?
3. Research the history of Parliament House in NSW, including the Rum Hospital. How has it changed since it was first built? What has stayed the same?
4. Read the information about the establishment of the town of Bundaberg at <http://bit.ly/1BXcCO7>. Construct a simple timeline to show the major events in the town's history.
5. Choose another historical Australian town from the Australian Heritage website <http://bit.ly/1BQSI5M>. Prepare a presentation on the town to share with your classmates, incorporating visual elements such as timelines, images or audio/visual resources.

EXPLORERS

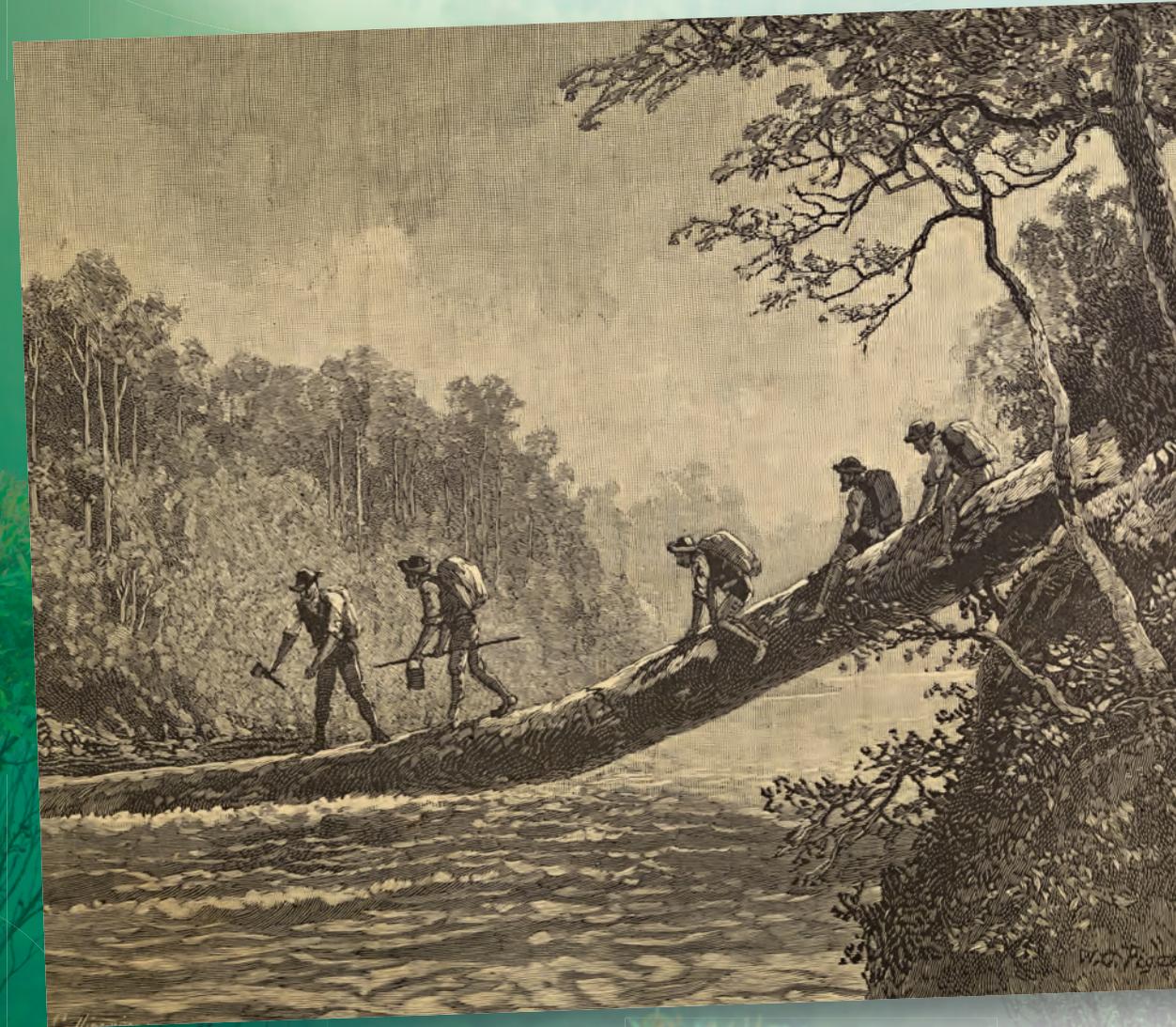
Australia was not an easy place for Europeans to explore. Its size was the biggest problem. Another problem was the **scarcity** of fresh water. Compared to other **continents**, Australia has few **inland** lakes and rivers.

These were not problems for **Indigenous** Australians. They had already lived here for thousands of years. They had come to know the land and its challenges very thoroughly. However, European **settlers** needed to make serious efforts to explore Australia. They needed to find **suitable** land for farming where they could grow crops and raise cattle.

G. Collingridge and W.C. Piguenit, ►
Crossing the Picton, 1888

FACT!

Indigenous people helped many explorers find food and water. They showed explorers how to find their way through parts of Australia that were unknown to Europeans.



Scan the code to learn more
about early European explorers.



Overcoming difficulties

Despite the distances, the lack of water and the difficult **terrain**, there were many explorers who were prepared to find out about the rest of Australia outside the settlements.

Paul Strzelecki

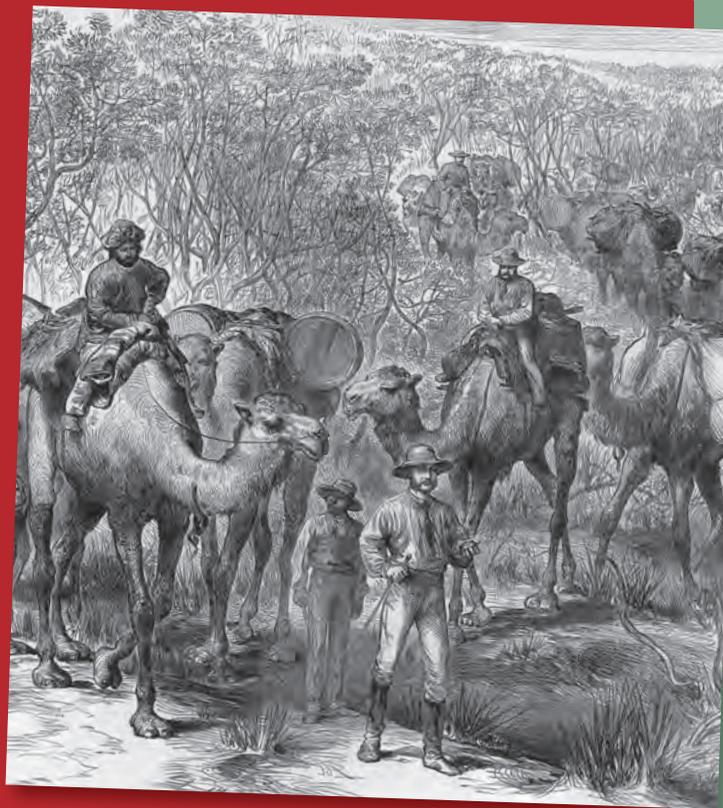
Strzelecki was a Polish geologist (a person who studies the earth and how it was formed). In 1839, Strzelecki arrived in Sydney to study the area's rocks and **minerals**. Later, he explored the Snowy Mountains and the Australian Alps. He also explored large areas of Victoria and Tasmania.

Thomas Mitchell

Mitchell was a Scottish surveyor (a person who studies the land and makes maps). In 1831, Mitchell left Sydney to explore the rivers of New South Wales. Later, he travelled to Queensland, and down to southern Victoria. As he explored, he drew accurate maps of his journeys.

Ernest Giles

Giles was a British goldminer who explored large areas of Australia between 1872 and 1876. Giles led teams of explorers through South Australia, the Northern Territory and Western Australia. He kept journals of his travels, and people still read them today.



▲ The Ernest Giles expedition

QUESTIONS

1. What are two reasons why Australia was difficult to explore?
2. Why do you think Strzelecki, Mitchell and Giles wanted to explore Australia?
3. Watch the video of people travelling along Ernest Giles Road today at <http://bit.ly/1Ito8R7>. How different do you think the landscape is from when Giles first explored it? What challenges might Giles have faced during his exploration?
4. Select one of the explorers from this card and find out about the area they explored. Draw a map of Australia and mark the journeys taken by your explorer.
5. Write five questions about the explorer you selected in Question 4, then research the answers. Choose an appropriate way to present your findings.