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**For ages 10+**

# *Aussie Aussie Aussie*

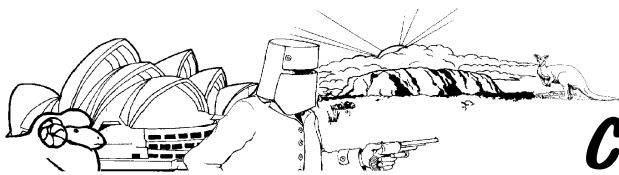
**The stories behind our most famous  
Aussie icons, with classroom activities to  
inspire the imagination.**

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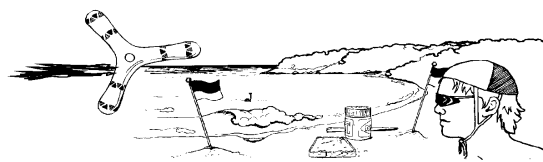
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# Teacher Information

Australian people know that there is more to our great country than the “Crocodile Man”.

There are many other icons, in the form of perfect places, tasty treats, innovative inventions, original organizations, outstanding objects and wacky words that we ourselves strongly associate with the “Land Down Under”.

With the laid-back Aussie sense of humour comes the ability for us to step back and smile, or even laugh at ourselves and embrace these icons as symbols to be proud of and traditions to uphold.

No study on Australia would be complete without an insight into the unique images, many of which this book introduces in an informative and enjoyable way.

Factual and historical information, a wide range of interactive lesson ideas, and photocopiable activity sheets suitable for a wide range of abilities are presented in this book for upper primary students.

Information sheets are designed for both teachers and students as background knowledge, providing a springboard for cross-curricular activities that encourage students to **DISCUSS, DESIGN, WRITE** and **INVESTIGATE** based on their experiences and understanding.

## The following areas are focused on in this book:

**Perfect Places:** The Sydney Opera House, The Great Barrier Reef, Uluru

**Tasty Treats:** Vegemite®, Lamingtons, Damper, Billy Tea, ANZAC biscuits

**Innovative Inventions:** Hills Hoist, Polymer banknotes, Boomerang

**Original Organisations:** Surf Lifesaving, Royal Flying Doctor Service, School of the Air

**Outstanding Objects:** Thongs, Holden Ute, Big Things

**Wacky Words:** Waltzing Matilda, Aussie Slang

**G'day Hollywood!:** A Brief History of Australians and the Silver Screen

**And of course ... The Australian Flag**

Activities are linked to National Outcomes, mainly in the areas of Society and Environment, English and Technology, although several activities also focus on the Arts, Technology and Enterprise and Science. Activities in this book can be given to students as a whole class, or to individuals as an extension or enrichment program. Pages listing activities are suitable to give to independent students who may wish to select their own activities, as well as being useful for teachers as a ready-made list of ideas that range from five-minute discussions to projects that can last the duration of a term.

## Internet References

In addition to the references used to compile the information in this book, websites are suggested for students to view for further research, or for teachers to locate more ideas for classroom activities. Many of the websites listed as references within the text can also be useful sources of research for students.

At the time of publication, all websites were accessible. Should changes be made to these addresses, students and teachers can visit the site below and click on the page number for an updated web site.

***[www.readyed.com.au/urls/ozseries/aussie.htm](http://www.readyed.com.au/urls/ozseries/aussie.htm)***



**Q: What is large, white and spiky, was designed by someone from Denmark, built out of something from Sweden, and took fifteen years to complete in Australia?**

**A: The Sydney Opera House!**

The site of the Sydney Opera House was once the dwelling area for Aboriginal Australians for at least 20 000 years before European settlement. Bennelong Point, where the Opera House is now situated, was named after an Aboriginal man who was captured by Governor Phillip. Bennelong moved into a hut on this point in 1790, which the local Aboriginals later used as a social centre.

Early colonial settlements grew into a thriving population and the need for a performing arts centre in Sydney increased until, in 1954, a committee decided upon Bennelong Point as the best of 30 possible sites. It was advised that an international competition would settle the design of the building.

From over 200 entries by international architects, a design by Danish architect

Jorn Utzon was selected as the winner in January, 1957. The building of the Opera House began in 1958, however problems in raising funds and confirming design solutions for the roof structure, slowed progress considerably.

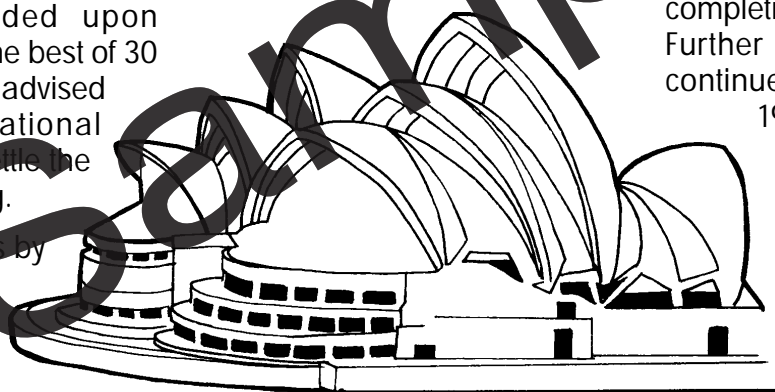
Changes needed to be made to Utzon's original designs, which were thought to be impractical. It was Utzon himself that finally solved the dilemma as to how the shells of the roof would be made. However, the problems were far from over and disagreements about payment and design issues

led to Utzon's resignation in 1966.

The remainder of the building was overseen by a panel of architects known as Hall, Todd and Littlemore.

After 15 years of building, the first public Sydney Opera House performance was in 1973, the same year that the Opera House was opened by Queen Elizabeth II. Utzon's name did not appear on the plaque on the entry to the building.

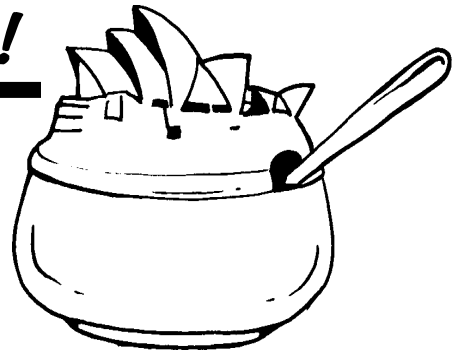
The world of performing arts in Australia was spurred on by the completion of the Opera House. Further work on the building continued into the 1980s and 1990s, with the aim of maintaining both the visual appeal of the building as a major tourist attraction and to utilise its functional purpose as a performing arts centre.



### Fun Facts:

- Sydney Opera House includes the following:
  - The Opera Theatre, seating 1547.
  - The Drama Theatre, seating 544.
  - The Concert Hall, seating 398.
  - The Playhouse, seating 398.
  - The Studio, seating between 220 and 324, 5 rehearsal studios, 60 dressing rooms, five restaurants, six theatre bars and five foyer and lounge areas.
- How many times over could the students from your school fit into the seating space in the Opera House?
- The Opera House has 2 200 doors and its roof contains 1.056 million white and cream Swedish-made tiles.
- The Sydney Opera House is open for almost 16 hours a day, every day of the year except Christmas Day and Good Friday. **(Source: [www.sydneyoperahouse.com](http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com))**

# Souvenir for Sale!



- Design a souvenir in the shape of, or featuring the design of the Opera House, for international tourists. For example, a hat with a "pointy roof" or a sugar bowl with an Opera House lid. Try to make it as unique as possible – no snow-domes please!

What will your souvenir be? \_\_\_\_\_

What will it be made from (materials)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who will buy your souvenir (target audience)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

- Draw your souvenir here. Label the parts and colour in.



- Think of a catchy name for your souvenir:

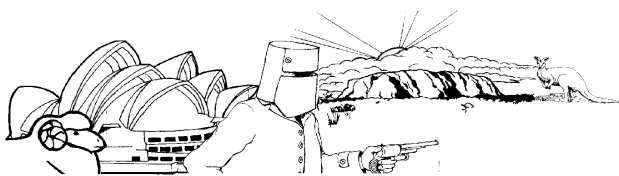
How much will it sell for? \_\_\_\_\_

What will you do to promote your souvenir to tourists visiting Sydney gift shops?

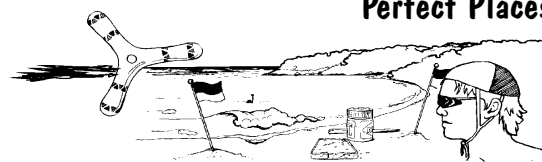
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Extra** Write a letter to a new Sydney gift shop at the airport, promoting your souvenir and asking them to sell it for you.



# Uluru



Uluru is a huge rock, or monolith, 348 metres high, with a circumference of 9.4 km, and is situated 465 km south west of Alice Springs in the Northern Territory. Although some scientists disagree, the most common theory about the origin of Uluru is that it is the tilted remains of ocean sediment laid down 600 million years ago. Underneath its red iron oxide coating, the rock is actually grey in colour. The surrounding countryside is a harsh desert landscape with temperatures that can range from  $-8^{\circ}$  Celsius at night-time in winter and  $47^{\circ}$  Celsius during the day in summer.

Although Aboriginal people may have lived in the area for over 10 000 years, Europeans first explored Uluru in the 1870's, when Ernest Giles became the first European to climb the rock. Another explorer who also sighted the rock named it "Ayers" after the chief Secretary of South Australia at the time.

In 1958, Ayers Rock and the nearby land formation known as the Olgas were combined to form a National Park. The traditional owners - the indigenous

locals - have held the title to Uluru since 1985, but have allowed the National Parks and Wildlife Service to continue their operations there. Uluru is a sacred site for the Aboriginal people and many rock paintings can be found on the site.

Today, the rock can still be climbed, although the traditional owners have asked that visitors respect their culture and not choose to climb it. It is up to the individual to make the choice.

(Source: [www.walkabout.com.au](http://www.walkabout.com.au))



## Interesting Facts



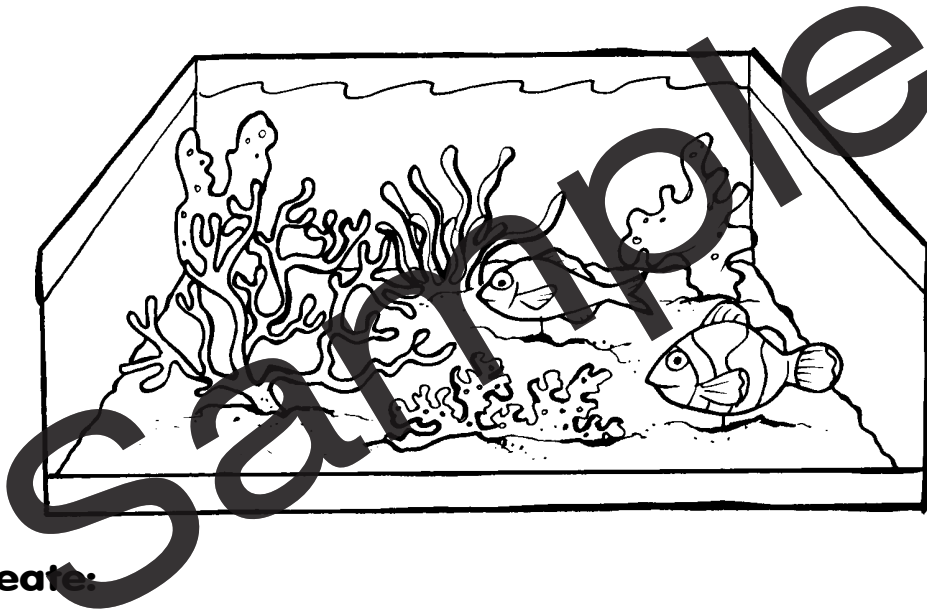
- Of the 400,000 visitors who come to Uluru each year, only 10% now choose to climb it.
- One current estimate is that at least one person a month dies from climbing the rock, either by falling off the edge or as a result of a heart attack.
- The best times to see the rock are sunrise and sunset, when the rock appears to change colour, creating a spectacular and beautiful display

(Source: [www.walkabout.com.au](http://www.walkabout.com.au) ).



### Discuss:

- Read the history on the Sydney Opera House website. Should Utzon's name have appeared on the plaque that commemorated other builders and designers? Why? Why not?
- What do you think the reaction of a city would be today if a building took 15 years to be completed. What might happen? How could problems like this be avoided?
- Should tourism continue at the Great Barrier Reef? Consider issues such as human waste, rubbish, anchors destroying the reef surface, fishing, how people learn about the reef, the money from tourism and what can be done with it, rules and restrictions that can be imposed.
- Would you climb Uluru? Why? Why not? Try to convince a classmate with the opposite view from you. Create a tally and compare results. Do you think results might be different in another state or another country? Do you think climbing should be stopped altogether?



### Design/Create:

- When Utzon first produced his design, it was considered innovative and very different to anything seen before. Design a performing arts building for your city or town (a place where theatre, opera, musical events and other performances can be held). Try to create a shape that reflects the culture or landscape of the area, and make your design as unique and interesting as possible.
- Design an eco-friendly tourist attraction for the Great Barrier Reef, such as a floating restaurant. Draw and label solutions to pollution issues such as waste disposal, fishing restrictions, rules for reef walking, safety and warning signs, etc.
- Create a reef diorama in a shoebox, or a classroom mural made from recycled items and beach debris. Make signboards for tourists outlining the native history of the site.
- Using a simple black outline of Uluru on an A3 piece of paper, colour in the rock and surrounds at a certain time of day or during certain weather conditions. Post these up on the classroom wall so that it shows the many faces of Uluru.
- Create Aboriginal paintings on brown paper or flat pieces of bark, using small sticks dipped in natural colours of brown, ochre, black, white and yellow.



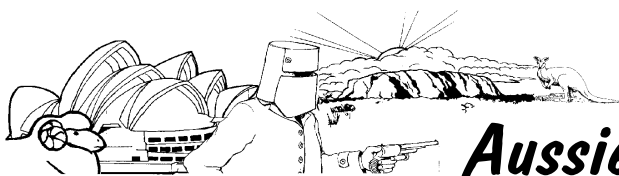
## Write:

- Do you remember the opening ceremony of the Olympics or another international sporting event? Write the program for an Australian opening ceremony for an international event. What will you include to show what Australia is really about?
- Choose your favourite Australian musician or actor. Write the diary entry on the day they are to begin a season performing at the Opera House.
- Write a poem about Australia that could appear on a plaque in the foyer of the Opera House.
- You have been asked to represent the “Future of Australia” at a special Opera House performance for overseas visitors. Prepare a short speech on “What it means to be Australian”, including your hopes for the future of our country.
- Write a humorous story about “A Runaway Mouse in the Opera House”.
- Make a fact card about a sea creature that lives on the Great Barrier Reef. Include a picture on the front and display in the classroom.
- Write a letter to a company that disposes of chemical waste into the sea along the Queensland coast. Include facts that you know about the destruction of the Great Barrier Reef as well as some strong arguments that appeal to the emotions of the company and perhaps even some solutions or alternatives to their waste disposal.
- Learn about Aboriginal Dreamtime stories. Visit [www.dreamtime.net.au](http://www.dreamtime.net.au) for information on indigenous Australians and some examples of dreamtime stories. Write a story of your own.

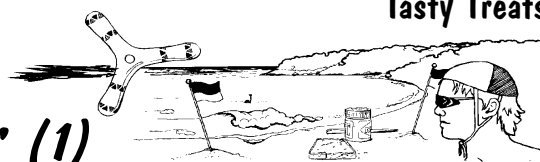
## Investigate:

- Check out the Opera House website ([www.sydneyoperahouse.com](http://www.sydneyoperahouse.com)) and select a performance for you and your family to see at the Opera House. Write an imaginary email to the booking centre for your tickets. What information will you need to include in your request?
- Find out about other famous buildings in each city of Australia. Draw the buildings onto a map of Australia, so that tourists can decide which ones they would like to see.
- Keep a tropical fish tank in the classroom. Roster students to care for the tank, and make notes on changes, behaviour patterns of fish, water temperature and chemical balances in the tank.
- The educational website, [www.reefed.edu.au](http://www.reefed.edu.au) has some great ideas, such as experimenting with “oil spills” in a model of a reef, and recreating a reef ecosystem using a ball of string to link reef life that depends on one another for survival.
- What would it be like to learn without a written language? Spend a day in the classroom, doing all activities by “hands on” experiences, or by sharing pictures. Finish the day off by sitting in a circle and sharing a favourite memory or story. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having no written language and communicating through pictures and stories like the Aboriginal people.
- Are there any sacred Aboriginal sites near your city/town? Research the area and visit on an excursion. If possible, invite a local Aboriginal person who can tell the class about the area from an indigenous perspective.





## Aussie Tucker (1)



### Lamingtons

How to serve your guests sponge cake that has gone stale:

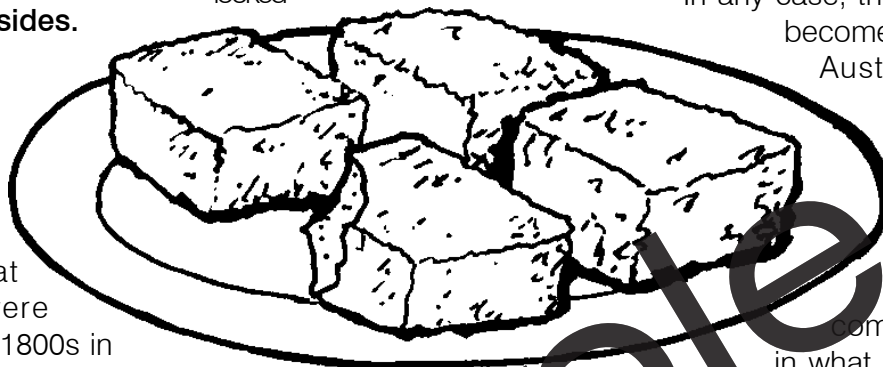
1. Cut it up into squares.
2. Coat it with a tasty chocolate icing.
3. Sprinkle desiccated coconut on all sides.
4. Give it a new name so that it looks like you had planned it all along.

It is believed that lamingtons were invented in the late 1800s in the Queensland Government House kitchen when stale sponge cake was covered in chocolate and desiccated coconut to "freshen it up". One source claims that the lamington is named after Lady Lamington, the wife of a Queensland Governor.

(Source: [www.inmamaskitchen.com](http://www.inmamaskitchen.com))

Another site has given a few other alternatives for the origins of the humble lamington:

The lamington was named after Lord Lamington (not his wife), because he wore a hat that looked



like the lamington. Apparently, Lord Lamington did not think that much of the dessert, calling them "woolly biscuits".

The lamington was invented in Scotland by a sheep shearer's wife for a group of travelling sheep shearers.

**OR** In New Zealand, the cake is sometimes known as Leamington or Leemington – the names of towns.

(Source: [www.whatscookingamerica.net](http://www.whatscookingamerica.net))

In any case, the lamington has become such a popular Australian tradition that it remains one of the most common fund-raisers for schools and community groups, in what is known as the "Lamington Drive".

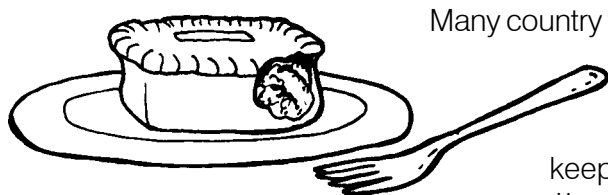
Nowadays, the sponge is not stale, but stays light and fluffy underneath the chocolatey coating.

### Meat Pies

Where would the squeeze pack of sauce be without its inseparable mate – the meat pie?

The meat pie is well known as the warm snack found in most Australian canteens and scoffed down whilst watching Australian Rules football games.

The delicious treat of meat and gravy inside a pastry casing is not complete without the accompaniment of the good old "tomato sauce" in the squeeze pack. Every Australian pie-lover will give you their own special method of eating the pie. Sauce applications include sauce on top, under the lid, on the meat or on the side for dipping bits of pastry into. Then comes the large range of ways that the pie can actually be eaten: by biting into it while and risking spillage, by removing the lid and spooning the meat out, making a hole and sucking the contents out or, for the more sophisticated pie-eater (if there is, in fact such a person), with a knife and fork (preferably plastic).



Many country towns will claim that their bakery makes "the best meat pies", a mouth-watering challenge for any traveller wishing to put them to the test. One well-known manufacturer of pies in Australia, bakes more than 50,000 pies per hour, in order to keep up with some 250 million pies consumed by Aussies each year!!

(Source: <http://www.alldownunder.com/oz-u/food-recipes/meat-pies.htm>)