Welcome to Cockatoo Island.

Here you’ll step back in time to visit the past, a world of the colony of NSW’s worst criminals and their grim and grizzly lives as prisoners on Cockatoo Island.

An adventure to uncover the story of the colonisation of Australia and life in the nineteenth century.

Your Name

Your Character’s Name
There are many different stories that make up history

The first fleet arrived in Sydney in 1788 with over 700 convicts; Australia was a strange land far away from everything they had ever known. When the first fleet arrived in Australia there were already people who lived in Sydney. Try to imagine how these two groups of people felt when they saw each other for the first time.

Write down some words that describe the feelings that these different groups of people might have felt when they met for the first time.

When looking at history it is important to think about different people’s perspectives.
Fill in the right words to find out information about Cockatoo Island

Cockatoo Island is the __________ Island on Sydney Harbour

In its original state it was a heavily timbered sandstone knoll, rising __________ above sea level. A rocky island ‘abound with ____________’

When it was first settled the Island was 12.9 hectares in size, however as the sandstone cliffs were cut into, refuse was thrown into the sea, eventually expanding the area to ____________.

The hard work that the __________ did dramatically changed the shape of the Island

The Island was settled in __________ when a group of prisoners from Norfolk Island were bought here to start a jail and a quarry. They quarried sandstone from the cliffs which helped to build Sydney and they had to build their own jail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Largest snakes</th>
<th>convict</th>
<th>1839</th>
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<tr>
<td>18 metres</td>
<td>17.9 hectares</td>
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Timeline

Prison 1839-1869

Girls reformatory school and industrial school 1871-1888

Boys industrial school 1871-1911

Working dockyard from 1848-1991

Island Closed 1991-2001

Sydney Harbour Federation Trust site from 2001 - current
Be A History Detective

Physical evidence is an important part of studying history. Draw in the details from the guardhouse that gives us clues about what it was used for originally.

Each of these stones were carved out by hard working convicts. Look at the stones at see the different patterns in each one. Each convict made a different kind of mark as he was chipping away at the rock. Record some of the different marks here.
The Escapades of Captain Thunderbolt

One of Cockatoo Island’s most famous prisoners, and the only successful escapee, was Frederick Ward. He escaped by swimming off the Island and then became the notorious bushranger Captain Thunderbolt. Have a look at the following newspaper clippings to see what he got up to. Can you put the clippings in the right order and match them with their correct date. Connect them with a line.

**Wednesday 16th September 1863**

**Monday 2nd November 1863**

**Saturday 9th February 1867**

**Friday 27th of May 1870**
Constable Gladhill was a water police officer who was stationed on Cockatoo Island in the 1850s. He wrote a letter to his brother in 1856 explaining his life on the Island.

8th of October 1856

Dear Brother,

I am on an island called Cockatoo, it is a place for old offenders such as thieves, murderers and the worst characters in Australia. The place is one mile round and is guarded by a strong body of soldiers of the 11th regiment of the foot. The work is making docks and all sorts of trade, it is about 3 miles from Sydney; it is surrounded by water.

Well there are 16 of us constables here and we have to sit in our turns in a boat on the water and we have a gun each and a pair of pistols. There are three in the boat at once and we are there to see they do not go into the water and if they was we are to shoot them. Once two was in the river but they was secured.

Dear Brother, we are paid every month, we have £8 8s per month, good rooms to live in, coals, found candles, 12 pounds of beef and mutton, soap and all articles, even tobacco. Everything we have found by government except for butter and shirts and stockings.

-Constable Gladhill

Pretend you are a constable or a convict on Cockatoo Island. Write a letter to your family at home in England telling them of your days on the Island. Tell them how you got there, what kind of work you do and the conditions you live in.
Classroom debate

Get together with your classmates and have a debate about convict transportation to Australia.

**Topic: Sending English prisoners to Australia was unnecessarily harsh punishment and was a bad way to start a new settlement**

Split the class in half. One half must argue in the affirmative, agreeing with the topic and the other half in the negative disagreeing with the topic.

You can either hold the debate informally as a classroom discussion, or as a formal debate

The format for a formal debate is as follows

1. First Affirmative Speaker - Presents the outline of the topic and presents a major argument supported with evidence
2. First Negative Speaker - Defines the outline of their team's argument. Rebuts the affirmative team's introduction. Presents the major argument supported with evidence
3. Second Affirmative Speaker - Rebuts the first negative speaker's argument. Presents one to two arguments supported with evidence
4. Second Negative Speaker - Rebuts the second affirmative speaker's argument. Presents one to two arguments supported with evidence
5. Third Affirmative Speaker - Rebuts the second negative speaker. Summarises and closes the affirmative argument
6. Third Negative Speaker - Rebuts the third affirmative speaker. Summarises and closes the negative argument

Use your excursion to Cockatoo Island and further research to inform your debate. Have the class discuss the outcome of the debate afterwards and agree on a winner.