

**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**

*Male quadrangle // Entrance to male dormitories.*

## 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

First Fleet Marine Officer

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First Fleet Convict

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First Fleet Child Convict

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Eora Woman

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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.

<b>Largest</b>	<b>snakes</b>	<b>convicts</b>	<b>1839</b>
	<b>18 metres</b>	<b>17.9 hectares</b>	

### Timeline

Prison 1839-1869

Girls reformatory school and industrial school 1871-1888

Boys industrial school 1871-1911

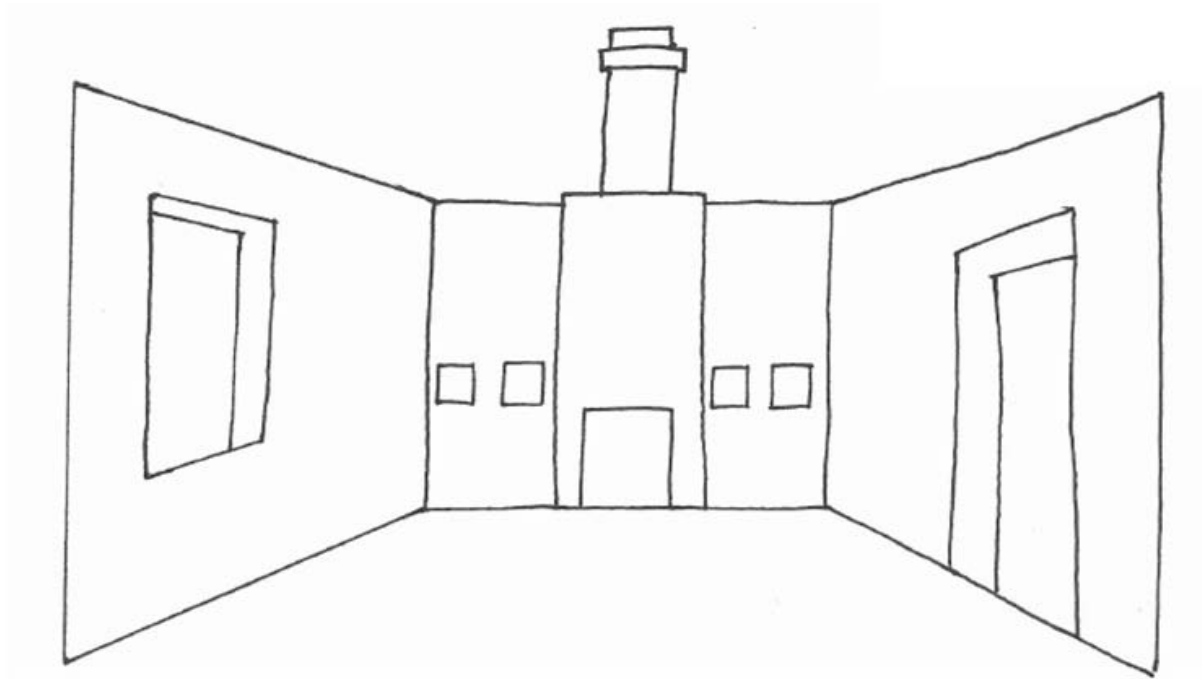
Working dockyard from 1848-1991

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.

### CAPTAIN THUNDERBOLT.

**The police met Thunderbolt near Manilla, yesterday, and chased him for six miles. They recovered four hundred pounds which he had taken from the mail. Thunderbolt escaped!**

Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup>  
September 1863

### The Sydney Morning Herald

#### BENDEMEER, Saturday 6pm.

It has been ascertained that the two men who up a hut at Gostwick are the identical two who escaped from Cockatoo Island some time ago. It appears that after their affray with the police they managed to elude all further pursuit by secreting themselves in a hut belonging to one of Mr. Stitt's shepherds while he was absent, who upon his return found of them quickly feasting upon his

supper. These robbers have now separated from each other. One was last seen about twelve miles from Bendemeer, on Thursday. One of the townspeople who was out after cattle met him, and he related the manner of his escape from Cockatoo. He carried a double barrelled gun, one barrel only being loaded, he having no more gunpowder.

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November  
1863

### URALLA.

THURSDAY.

**Ward, the bushranger, had an encounter with the Uralla police at Blanche's Inn, on the main northern road, four miles from here, yesterday. After exchanging several shots, Ward managed to escape, but was closely followed by constable Walker alone, who succeeded in overtaking him after a hard ride of four miles. A desperate fight then took place, when constable Walker shot Thunderbolt dead. Walker deserves great praise for his gallant conduct.**

Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> February  
1867

## The Empire

### ESCAPE FROM COCKATOO

On the muster roll being called at Cockatoo Island on Sunday evening two of the prisoners named Britten and Ward, were found missing. On search being made the irons of the former were discovered on the northern end of the island, and subsequently Britton's clothes were found, but no traces of Ward could be seen. Ward was a Windsor resident, and was under sentence for cattle-stealing.

Friday 27<sup>th</sup> of May  
1870

## Extension Activities

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

*8<sup>th</sup> 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 11<sup>th</sup> 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

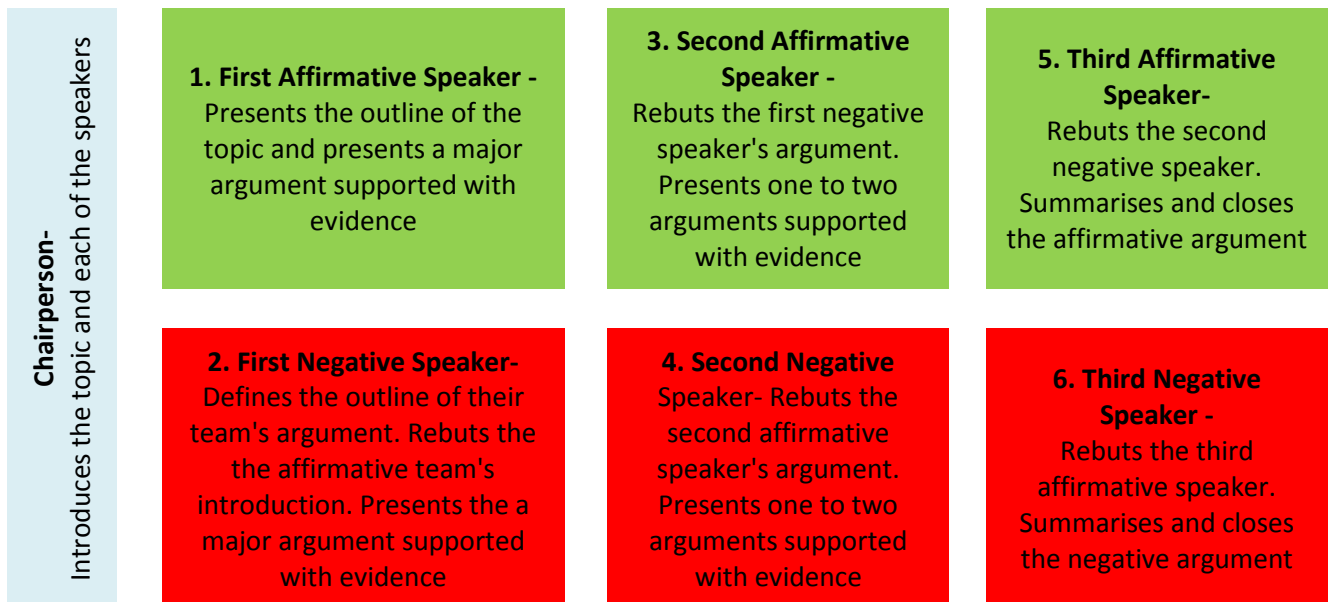
Get together with your classmates and have a debate about convict transportation to Australia.

### ***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



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.