TEACHERS’ RESOURCES

RECOMMENDED FOR
Upper primary/lower secondary
(ages 8+)

CONTENTS
Summary 1
About the creators 3
Author’s inspiration 3
Key study topics 3
Further reading 6

KEY CURRICULUM AREAS
• Learning areas: Humanities and Social Sciences
• General capabilities: Literacy, Critical and Creative Thinking, Personal and Social Capability, Ethical Understanding, Intercultural Understanding

REASONS FOR STUDYING THIS BOOK
• Investigate historical, geographic, civic and economic concepts and ideas
• Develop critical and creative thinking

THEMES
• The making of the modern world
• Australian explorers & settlement
• Significance of country and place to ATSI
• Diversity and contributions
• Australia’s development
• Prehistory and ancient history
• Human and natural impact on the environment
• Progressive ideas and movement – Unionism, Feminism, Multiculturalism
• The Australian relationship with the world
• Empires and colonisation
• Nationalism
• Historical questions and research
• Primary and secondary sources
• Aboriginal Australia

PUBLICATION DETAILS
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The Upside-down History of Down Under
Alison Lloyd and Terry Denton

SUMMARY
200 million years of Australian history in 304 pages!
By the acclaimed creators of Wicked Warriors, Evil Emperors and Dragons, Devils and Rebels.

The true story of Australia starts with a piece of land that went for a swim. About 200 million of years ago it floated away from Africa. Very, very, slowly. It was home to dinosaurs and giant animals, then the first Australians showed up and got comfortable.

And for a long time this wild and wonderful land was a mystery to the rest of the world. Until the English decided to make it the biggest jail ever . . .

Funny, heroic and tragic – the story of our country from prehistory to federation (1901).

An enjoyable read but also perfect for the classroom – particularly relevant to the National Curriculum Foundation to Year 6 Humanities. The curriculum explores ‘who we are and who came before us’ at each
year level. Like *Wicked Warriors and Evil Emperors* and *Dragons, Devils and Rebels* this book brings history to life. There is a great deal of accessible history for kids on the subject of European history, but a shortage of readable histories of Australia for this age group and none that cover the history of Australia from the creation of the continent to Federation.

F-6 Curriculum topics covered

**Science:**
- Human and natural impact on the environment
- Natural disasters

**History:**
- Continuity and change in daily lives & local area - Past and present
- History of a significant person, building or natural in local area
- Australian explorers & settlement
- Continuity and change local community, region, state - Past and present
- Significance of Country and Place to ATSI
- Early European explorers, First Fleet – impact on Indigenous
- Australian celebrations, symbols, emblems
- Diversity and contributions to shaping local area
- Timeline of Australia’s development – our colonial past and its effect
- Continuity and change in the diverse groups in Australia
- Contributions of significant Australians
- People and events which contributed to Australia’s development
- Democracy & citizenship
- Migration, Federation

**Geography**
- Features and changes of the local area
- ATSI connection to land
- Neighbouring countries and major countries of Africa & South America
- Australian States, Territories and major natural and human characteristics
- ATSI connection to land & sustainability
- Major countries of Europe & North America

- Australia’s location & diversity within the Asian region
- Differences in countries across the world – demographic, economic, social, cultural characteristics
- Impact of floods, bushfires

Rather than bogging students down in heavy and complicated historic facts, Alison Lloyd’s text is broken down into small areas of interest, full of anecdotes, questions and primary source quotations to help bring the information to life and make it more accessible to young readers. Useful hints on the pronunciation and meaning of difficult and important words further increase its accessibility.

Terry Denton’s illustrations depict the information in humorous cartoons adding interest and entertainment that keeps even the most reluctant History students entertained.

This book lends itself well to teaching not only this period of History, but examining a number of History skills and issues, essential for the study of any topic. It provides an excellent tool to increase students’ enthusiasm in the subject whilst also increasing their historical knowledge.

With the emphasis in the National Curriculum on History, it is good to have such a user-friendly text available. Many of the skills and issues that arise during this book will also lend themselves to an examination of issues in European and Asian history.

Further information on bibliographic sources and an index is available on www.alisonlloyd.com.au

Many of the teachers’ resources below are also appropriate for Humanities subjects in the secondary school classroom in the years 7 to 9, especially in the areas of Civics and Citizenship and History.

7-9 Curriculum topics covered

**Civics and Citizenship**
- Citizenship, diversity and identity
- Different perspectives about Australia’s national identity, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives, and what it means to be Australian
- How national identity can shape a sense of belonging in Australia’s multicultural society

**History**

*The ancient world:*
- The theory that people moved out of Africa around 60 000 BC (BCE) and migrated to other parts of the world, including Australia
This book started with an image in my head. I saw a land on the loose, a continent that makes a break from the rest of the world and does its own unique thing – upside-down Down Under. I wanted to write an Australia-centric story, to look at history from a different angle to other (Euro-centric) perspectives. I don’t in any way claim to be the first to do that. I’ve relied on the work of many other Australian writers and historians. But I might be the first author rash enough to cram 200 million years of Australian history into slightly more pages. Certainly I’m lucky to be the first to do it alongside Terry Denton’s delightful illustrations.

In the pages of this upside-down history some of our colonial heroes come out grubbier and worse for wear. But unexpected men and women of the moment also show up. Did you know, for example, that the Womanhood Suffrage League met in the tea-rooms of Quong Tart, a Chinese-born Sydneysider who played the bagpipes? Or that in 1848 Galmorra, an Aboriginal man from NSW, braved crocodile-infested Queensland rivers, alone, to reach a rescue ship with explorer Kennedy’s notes? Australia’s history has upsides and downsides. We need to see them both. It’s my hope The Upside-down History of Down Under gives our kids a lot to think about and a lot to enjoy.

KEY STUDY TOPICS

Engaging with stories of people, places and events

- How and when did your family come to Australia? Or has your family been here for tens of thousands of years? Interview a family member for more detail of your earliest-known Australian ancestors.
- Choose a topic or place from Australia’s history. Use the index (found online) to locate related information in the book.
- What area of Australia do you live in? Research the local Aboriginal or Islander people. Can you discover any words from the local language?
- When did colonists moved into your area and why? What about the landscape made that part of Australia a good home for local Aboriginal or Islander people and what made colonists interested in moving there? Was it the same thing?
- What area of Australia do you live in? Research the local dinosaurs, megafauna and native animals.
- Research a species of animal that has been introduced into Australia p.18 and pp 210–212. When was it brought here and why? What impact did it have?

ABOUT THE CREATORS

Alison Lloyd and Terry Denton are the creators of the history books Wicked Warriors and Evil Emperors and Dragons, Devils and Rebels. Individually, Alison has written such books as Do You Dare: Bushranger’s Boys, Our Australian Girl: The Letty Stories, and Year of the Tiger and its sequel Battle of the Jade Horse, while Terry has written or illustrated a vast number of amazing books, including the world-famous Treehouse series (with Andy Griffiths) and the picture books Jandamarra and Boomerang and Bat (with Mark Greenwood).

AUTHOR’S INSPIRATION

Alison says:

What did colonial squatters use for toilet paper?

That’s a question that gets school audiences engaged. How our home, Australia, came to be – that also interests kids. I think history is the ‘where do I come from?’ question on a larger, social scale. We’ve already got many great books for children on historical issues, like the convicts, the gold rushes and the Anzacs particularly. But nothing that tells our story from Gondwana to Federation, in one volume.
Primary and secondary sources

- Discuss the difference between primary and secondary sources. Identify the information in one chapter as either a primary or a secondary source.
- What are the benefits and weaknesses of a primary source? What are the benefits and weaknesses of a secondary source?
- What is the context in which the sources were written? Use your research skills to find out something more about one of the authors quoted. What was their cultural background? What was their interest in Australia and their motivation – how did that influence what they have said? What were they hoping to achieve with this quote?
- Use primary sources to find quotes, facts and pictures about a memorable person you have read about. Compile these into a poster that portrays what you find memorable about them.
- Imagine yourself interviewing a person from the book. Write a series of questions and answers, drawing on primary sources where possible.

People

- Choose two people from the book who faced similar situations. Make a chart to show similarities and differences in how they responded. What do you think about the decisions they each made? What would you have done in their place?
- Who is the most memorable person you have read about? Use primary sources to find quotes, facts and pictures relating to that person’s life. Compile these into a collage or poster that portrays what you find most memorable about them.
- Imagine yourself interviewing a person from the book. Write a series of questions and answers, drawing on primary sources where possible.
- Who made a significant contribution to Australia as a nation? Imagine you are responsible for selecting five people to be portrayed on Australia’s bank notes. Explain the reasons for your selection.

Places and environment

- Australia is known for its unique wildlife. Research an animal or plant that is used as the symbol of your state. Find out what makes it unique.
- Make a table comparing life in a time covered in this book with now. What did transportation, homes, food, entertainment, clothing and jobs look like then, compared to now?
The Upside-down History of Down Under  Alison Lloyd and Terry Denton

- Create a piece of art to reflect on one of the stories or a period of history and how it makes you feel.
- Write a dialogue between two people from the book with opposing views, arguing each person’s case.

Reading a map
- Find one of the maps of Australia and mark the places you have been to.
- Examine the ‘upside down’ map in the book (p88). Since the world is round and has no right or wrong way up, how a map is drawn tells us a lot about who made the map. What does the ‘upside down’ map in the book tell us about who made it compared to the person who drew the ‘standard’ modern world map at the beginning of the book?

Identity
- Choose a period of history represented in the book. During this period, what did it mean to be ‘Australian’? How might different people answer that question depending on their cultural background, gender, class, wealth or other factors? How might two real-life characters in this story see their identity differently?
- How would you feel if aliens came to Australia now and decided to make it their home? What would you do? Write a reflection piece.
- Who do you identify with in this book? What about your own background and life so far makes you interested in that person and his or her struggles and triumphs?
- Imagine you are responsible for choosing five people to be on Australia’s bank notes. Explain the reasons for your selection.

Constructing a timeline
- Examine a timeline from the book (p32, 38, 172, 278). Choose another period of history that interests you and construct a timeline from research.
- Discuss the fact that BC dates run in a different direction from AD dates, in that the larger the number the further back in time it is. Imagine you are explaining this concept to a class and prepare a three-minute speech.
- Construct a personal timeline of your life.
- Choose an event from the book and create a flowchart or cause and effect web to show the events leading up to and after it.
FURTHER READING FROM PENGUIN RANDOM HOUSE AUSTRALIA

**Wicked Warriors and Evil Emperors**

*The true story of the fight for ancient China*

by Alison Lloyd and Terry Denton

For anyone who likes their history funny, gruesome, action-packed and thrilling – the true page-turning story of China’s first emperor.

**Dragons, Devils and Rebels**

*The true story of China’s Last Empress* by Alison Lloyd and Terry Denton

When an unknown girl marries the Emperor of China, can she take control and stay in power? Could you? Imagine you were faced with: Dragons, Emperors who had run China for two thousand years, Devils, strange foreigners invading with guns and ships, and Rebels, Chinese bandits and warriors with supernatural powers . . .

**Do You Dare: The Bushranger’s Boys**

by Alison Lloyd

Do you dare . . .

Confront a bully?

Steal to protect someone?

Hide a bushranger?

It’s an adventure in Australian history.

**Do You Dare?**

An exciting, action-packed adventure set in 1841.

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