

TEACHER NOTES



# River to Bay

## Victoria's Maritime History



CAROLE WILKINSON & PRUE PITTOCK

## Blurb:

Kulin Nation Country is abundant with waterways essential to the way the traditional custodians have lived for more than 60,000 years. Those same crucial waterways are where the first ships of European settlers found safe harbour, food and water in their trips of exploration.

What they found would determine the development of Victoria.

## Specifications

Authors:	Carole Wilkinson
Illustrator:	Prue Pittock
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Category:	Juvenile Non-Fiction

## National and Victorian Curriculum Outcomes Year 3 to Year 6

## Curriculum Links

- First Nations Peoples
  - Australian History
  - World History
- Exploration and discovery
  - Geography

## Study Notes

- Australia's First Nations Peoples • First Nations culture
  - exploration • natural resources • natural landforms
  - history • colonisation • Melbourne • Port Phillip
  - maritime history • geography • ships • waterways
    - rivers • bays.

# Synopsis

Kulin Nation Country is abundant with waterways essential to the way the traditional custodians have lived for more than 60,000 years. Those same crucial waterways are where the first ships of European settlers found safe harbour, food and water in their trips of exploration.

What they found would determine the development of Victoria.

*River to Bay – Victoria's Maritime History* explores the history of the area we now call Victoria.

## National Curriculum Outcomes Year3-Year 6

Year 3  
ACHASSI052  
ACHASSI056  
ACHASSI059  
ACHASSK063

Year 4  
ACHASSI073  
ACHASSI076  
ACHASSI080  
ACHASSK083  
ACHASSK085  
ACHASSK086

Year 5  
ACHASSI094  
ACHASSI097  
ACHASSI099  
ACHASSK106  
ACHASSK107  
ACHASSK109  
ACHASSK110  
ACHASSK112

Year 6  
ACHASSI122  
ACHASSI127  
ACHASSI129

## Victorian Curriculum Outcomes Year3-Year 6

Year 3/4  
VCCCC006  
VCCCC007  
VCCCTQ010  
VCCCTR017  
VCELA271  
VCELT274  
VCELT251  
VCHHC066  
VCHHC068  
VCHHC069  
VCHHK078  
VCHHK079  
VCHHC070  
VCHHK072  
VCGGC075  
VCGGK080

Year 5/6  
VCELA334  
VCELA335  
VCELY337  
VCELT315  
VCGGK094  
VCHHC082  
VCHHC084  
VCHHK089  
VCHHK091  
VCHHK092

## About the Author



### Carole Wilkinson

[www.carolewilkinson.com.au](http://www.carolewilkinson.com.au)

Carole Wilkinson is an award-winning children's author who writes historical fiction and non-fiction. She is best known for her much-loved *Dragonkeeper* double trilogy set in Han Dynasty China. Carole has also authored *Matthew Flinders – Adventures in Leaky Ships* and *Putting Australia on the Map*.



### Writing style

Carole Wilkinson uses simple, direct language to engage emerging and established readers. She delivers the major events that established Port Phillip and Melbourne since European arrival in a clear and concise manner. The carefully chosen details will spark readers' further investigation. Carole's accessible writing combined with the bright, modern style of illustration combine to create an engaging history of Melbourne and Port Phillip's ports and waterways.

## About the Illustrator



### Prue Pittock

[www.pruepittockillustrations.com](http://www.pruepittockillustrations.com)

Prue Pittock studied Art and Design in Melbourne and now lives and works on the Mornington Peninsula and in Broome. She feels very lucky to be able to bring stories alive for young readers. Prue is also the illustrator of *Matthew Flinders – Adventures in Leaky Ships* and *You Matter – Be Your Own Best Friend*.



### Illustrative Style

Prue Pittock's diligently researched illustrations are traditional drawings with digital rendering. The bright and engaging images are skilfully filled with a playful and charming wit.



## Before Reading

### Wonderings

Find a blank map of Victoria, or use the template attached (see page 12). Print A3 sized map. Attach the map to the whiteboard.

While examining the book, add to the map template students' questions, as well as any words, names or images they aren't familiar with. After reading, return to the wonderings and ensure questions have been answered, and words defined. Investigate any still unanswered.

### Cover

Show students the *River to Bay – Victoria's Maritime History* cover.

Discuss:

- possible genre
- topic
- identify and discuss each of the images and the clues students provide about the book.

### End Papers

Examine the endpapers.

- As a class, discuss the different types of vessels.
- Ask class members what they notice about each ship.
- Ask students to share their own experiences with ships.

### Read the blurb.

'Kulin Nation Country is abundant with waterways essential to the way the traditional custodians have lived for more than 60,000 years. Those same crucial waterways are where the first ships of European settlers found safe harbour, food and water in their trips of exploration. What they found would determine the development of Victoria.'

*River to Bay – Victoria's Maritime History* explores the history of the area we now call Victoria.

- What discoveries might the blurb be referring to?
- How might the Kulin Nation peoples use the waterways compared to Europeans?

## After Reading

### Discussion Points

#### First Peoples

Europeans claim they settled Australia. First Nations peoples say their home was invaded.

- What is the difference between invasion and settlement?
- How would you describe the arrival of Europeans? Explain your reasoning.

What might the Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung people have thought of the Europeans and their ships?

### Fatal Experience and an Invitation to Lunch

When the Boonwurrung men threw spears at the *Lady Nelson* crew, none of the crew were hit. Why do you think the Boonwurrung men threw their spears?

Why weren't the Boonwurrung men frightened when warning shots were fired?

How might this exchange have influenced the relationship between both groups?

What value would items such as mirrors, tomahawks, bread and beads be to First Nations peoples who had thrived for 60,000 years?

How does Flinders' approach to the Kulin Nation people he encountered compare to Murray and the *Lady Nelson* crew?

- Why might Flinders have acted with less aggression?

Flinders' approach to the bay was different to Murray's too. Why might he have sailed through what we now call The Heads?

### A Gardener's Journal.

Grimes and Flemming had different views of Port Phillip's suitability as a settlement. Why might that be?

Why did Governor King ignore James Flemming's report and decide against a convict settlement at Port Phillip?

'What King didn't realise was that the British Government had already decided to establish a convict settlement at Port Phillip Bay. More than 300 convicts were on their way.'

- Why do you think the British went ahead and sent convicts to Port Phillip?
- What are the reasons King was not aware of the decision?
- Discuss communications and the problems caused by how long it took mail to reach Australia.

### Sullivan Bay Settlement

The Europeans couldn't find water around the Sullivan Bay Settlement area, nor did they have success hunting kangaroo. Yet the Boonwurrung had lived in the area for over 60,000 years.

- Why do you think the newcomers couldn't find water?
- Why might they have been unable to hunt kangaroo?
- What actions might they have taken to source fresh water or fresh meat?

### Batman & Fawcner.

Why do you think Victorians are more familiar with Batman than Fawcner?

- Consider each man's background and timing of their arrival in what is now Melbourne.
- What is your opinion of Batman's behaviour towards the Woiwurrung people?
- Given the era, do you think Fawcner would have behaved differently?

Who do you believe should be remembered as founding Melbourne?

## Treaty

Batman called his parchment a treaty. Do you think it was a fair and honourable way to barter with the Woiwurrung people?

Given that First Nations peoples don't own the land but are caretakers of it, if they could have understood what Batman was asking, would the Woiwurrung have agreed to the treaty?

Examine the treaty: <https://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/node/1448>.

- What do students notice about the signatures?
- How likely is it that the Woiwurrung Elders were able to sign the document?

Why did European society view Batman's treaty as valid for so long after Governor Bourke declared the treaty illegal ?

## From Batmania to Melbourne

Melbourne had many names before its current one; Batmania, Glenelg, Bearbrass. Discuss the names and implications with students.

- If students were naming the area today, what names would they choose and why?

View a map of Melbourne. Explore Robert Hoddle's city grid today.

- How well has the design coped with time?

The first wharf was built in 1841 alongside Flinders Street. What problems might the volume of ships and lack of wharf caused for the river and riverbank?

## Fever Ships

Discuss the similarities and differences between the fever ships and Victoria during the COVID-19 lockdowns.

Create a class Venn Diagram to show the differences and similarities.

## Over the Seas to a New Life

What attracted settlers to travel from England, Scotland, Van Dieman's Land and New South Wales to Melbourne?

What might have made them stay?

The passenger ship, the *Great Britain*, was the first built of iron and to have a screw propeller. How could this have impacted on the numbers of people immigrating to Melbourne?

## Rush for Gold

What was the reality for those rushing to Ballarat and Bendigo?

What impact would the empty vessels have on Melbourne? (Discuss reliance on trade from other countries, the lack of upkeep on vessels, etc.)

## From Sail to Steam

Ask students what they think life would have been like in the late-18th century.

- How did people travel?
- What technology did people have to help them find their way?
- Compare life then with now. Consider:
  - walking/horses/sailing ships VS cars, planes, trains.
  - chronometer, compass, sextant and sails VS satellites, smartphones, sophisticated maps and motor-driven ships.

Discuss the term 'the doldrums'.

- What does it mean?
- Is it a good name for being stuck for long periods with no wind, or becalmed?
- What other words might be a good name for the doldrums?

How did the introduction of steam powered ships influence trade and immigration?

- In what ways did it make trade easier?
- Why was speed so important?

Why might captains have wanted to leave port with a full load?

What do you think was driving the improvement of ships?

## Fears and Scares

Why might Russian ships have been cruising in the Pacific Ocean?

Do you think Australia was ever under threat of invasion? Explain your thinking.

Explore Fort Gellibrand, Point Nepean and Fort Queenscliff today.

- Do they still exist?
- What happens there today?

## Changing the Course of the Yarra

Why do you think Melbourne was known as 'Marvellous Melbourne' by the 1870s?

- Who might have given it that nickname?
- Might all people have agreed it was marvellous?

Why do you think the depth of Birrarung/Yarra River was a problem for ships?

What might have happened if Birrarung/Yarra River wasn't changed?

What are the good and bad impacts of changing the path of Birrarung/Yarra River?

Why was it decided that such an enormous undertaking was worthwhile?

Learn more about the Victoria Dock on the National Trust page: [http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/search/nattrust\\_result\\_detail/3705](http://vhd.heritage.vic.gov.au/search/nattrust_result_detail/3705).



## Stacked Ships and a Collapsed Bridge

Why is the West Gate Bridge such a tall structure?

The maritime industry continues to develop and expand. What changes have been made recently to the waterways and the West Gate Bridge?

## Keeping the Birrarung Alive

Discuss with students what they know about First Nations peoples and their connection to waterways.

Explore the Woiwurrung and Boonwurrung's continued close connection to Birrarung.

Create a timeline showing important events for Kulin Nation peoples. Include Batman's treaty, Coranderrk, petitions, and other important events.

Investigate the Koorie Heritage Trust, now situated on the banks of Birrarung.

As a class, explore the role Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung people play in caring for Birrarung today.

## After Reading Activities

### Map

As a class, examine a map of the Kulin Nation: <http://www.minutesofevidence.com.au/the-coranderrk-story/>. Scroll down to 'A brief history of Coranderrk' to the maps. The map opens in a clearer window.

- Note both Boonwurrung and Woiwurrung Countries.
- Shade these onto the blank map of Victoria.
- Now view an online map of Victoria. (Satellite view gives a better image).
- Zoom in to show Melbourne and Port Phillip.

Find on the map:

- Bowen Point/Sorrento
- Point King
- Point Nepean
- The Heads
- Port Phillip
- Sullivan Bay
- Hobsons Bay
- Mouth of the Yarra River
- Dights Falls
- Western Port
- Fort Queenscliff
- Fort Nepean

Mark each of the places on a second, blank map of Victoria. Discuss any observations students may have about the areas visited.

Which group of First Nations peoples may have been most affected during initial exploration?

### Incursion

Investigate whose Aboriginal land your school is on.

- Invite a local Elder from your local area to come and talk about their traditional culture and lifestyle.
- Before the visit, formulate questions about care for Country, the importance of waterways and how the traditional custodians care for Country today.

### Debates: Treaty vs Tandarrum? Settled vs Invaded?

Hold a class debate on one or both of these topics; Treaty vs Tandarrum and/or Settled vs Invaded.

As a class, investigate and define the following terms:

- Tandarrum
- Treaty
- Settle
- Invade.

Spend time discussing differing views, such as those held by Boonwurrung men and the *Lady Nelson* crew, and Batman and the Woiwurrung Elders.

Choose teams to conduct a debate.

Spread roles, such as adjudicator, timekeeper amongst groups.

Alternatively, have students write a persuasive essay on the same topics.

### Useful resources:

[https://deadlystory.com/page/culture/history/Batman\\_treaty](https://deadlystory.com/page/culture/history/Batman_treaty).

<https://ergo.slv.vic.gov.au/explore-history/colonial-melbourne/pioneers/batmans-treaty>.

<https://deadlystory.com/page/culture/history/Invasion>.

### Immigration

'By 1850, 35 per cent of Melbourne's population was assisted migrants.'

Investigate the life of one of the following:

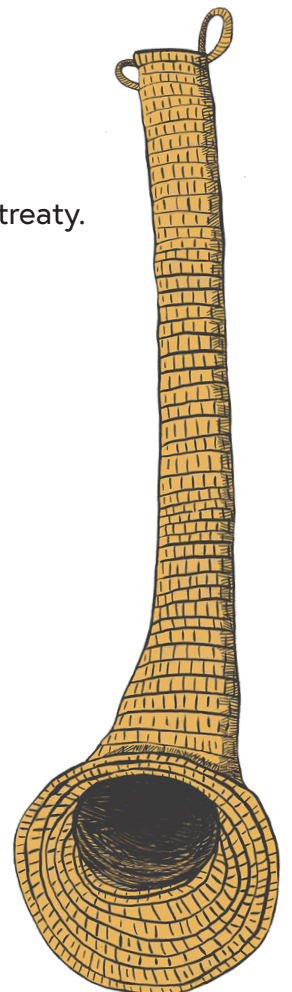
- A sailor leaving his ship for the goldfields
- An Irish orphan girl
- A mother of two children arriving at Port Melbourne
- A sailor of the *Lady Nelson*

Write a diary entry about one day of their life.

### Trade

Allocate groups of three to one of the following topics.

- Wool
- Goldfields
- Immigration
- Mail
- First Nations peoples



Have each group research and create a PowerPoint presentation about their chosen topic. The presentation is to cover the period of River to Bay: 1802 until present day.

### Ship Study

Students investigate and research a report about one of the following ships mentioned in *River to Bay*.

The report should include: the type of vessel, where it travelled, notable crew, interesting information.

- *Lady Nelson*
- *Investigator*
- *Cumberland*
- *Calcutta*
- *Enterprise*
- *Rebecca*
- *Great Britain*
- *Glen Huntly*
- *Ticonderoga*
- *Nelson*
- *Thermopylae*
- *Shenandoah*

### Biographies

Introduce children to the genre of Biographies. In pairs, students research and write a biography on one of the following:

- John Murray
- Matthew Flinders
- Billibellary
- Bebejan
- Acting Surveyor General Charles Grimes
- John Batman
- John Fawkner
- Sir John Coode

The finished biography can be a poster, media or digital presentation, or booklet.

Biographies must include:

- information about the person's life including:
- significant dates, achievements
- their impact on Victoria

### Construction

Explore: <https://www.onlymelbourne.com.au/west-gate-bridge>.

Break the class into teams. Allocate a time for them to create their own West Gate Bridge using materials in the classroom and the playground. Display finished work in the classroom.

## Newspaper Report

Choose one of the chapters in *River to Bay*. Use that chapter as a basis to write a newspaper article about one of the events covered in the chapter.

## Cover

Discuss what makes a good book cover. Remind children of the following points.

A cover should:

- hint at the book's content
- show the book's genre
- set the tone or mood of the book
- show the title clearly
- include the author and illustrator's name.

After reading, re-examine the *River to Bay* cover.

Discuss how the cover works or doesn't work to create interest about the book. Students can recreate their own cover for *River to Bay*.

