PORT
ARTHUR
HISTORIC
SITES

ACTIVITY TITLE: *Breaking the Code*

LEVEL: Year 9	YEAR LEVEL FOCUS: The Making of the Modern World	KEY CONCEPTS: Evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance	LENGTH of ACTIVITY: 75 minutes

HISTORICAL KNOWLEDGE and UNDERSTANDING:

- Changes in the way of life of a group of people who moved to Australia in this period (1750-1901)

- The short and long-term impacts of the movement of peoples during this period (1750-1901)

HISTORICAL SKILLS:

- Chronology, terms and concepts

- Analysis and use of sources

- Explanation and communication

- Perspectives and interpretation

- Historical questions and research

INQUIRY QUESTIONS:

- How did new ideas and technological developments contribute to change in this period? (1750-1901)

ACHIEVEMENT OUTCOMES: *Students are able to:*

- Identify and locate both primary and secondary sources using information technologies and other methods

- Process information from sources to answer inquiry questions

- Explain the context for people's actions and experiences in the past

- Compose historical texts, particularly explanations and discussions (incorporating historical argument) and use evidence from primary and secondary sources to support their conclusions

- Use appropriate historical terms, concepts and appropriate acknowledgement or referencing of source material in their historical texts

- Present findings in a range of forms, in particular written and visual texts, including digital technologies

LINKS to OTHER LEARNING AREAS and CAPABILITIES:

- English
- Geography
- Science

- Literacy
- Personal and Social Capability
- Critical and Creative Thinking

LESSON	ACTIVITY	RESOURCES & MATERIALS
Pre-Visit Classroom Activity	***The pre-visit classroom activities below are designed to be undertaken together to allow students to gain a comprehensive understanding of the geographical setting of Port Arthur and the advantages and disadvantages this setting posed for the convict settlement.*** ***In addition to some classroom study of the convict era, these activities provide the background information that student will be asked to recall and build upon in the onsite 'Breaking the Code' activity.*** **Activity 1: Discuss** Hold class discussions on the following topics: 1. **What natural resources would have been necessary for a new settlement in the Australian colonies?** Encourage students to consider the settlers' need for: ▪ A fresh water supply ▪ Farming land to grow crops and raise animals for food ▪ Building materials such as timber, stone and clay for building shelter ▪ A safe port for transporting people and goods 2. **What makes a good location for a prison?** Encourage students to consider factors such as: ▪ The natural environment ▪ Proximity to populations of people ▪ Security ▪ Escape routes **Activity 2: Essay** Students conduct independent research to respond to the following question: **'Port Arthur was a perfect location for a convict settlement'. Do you agree with this statement? Give examples to support your argument.** (See the *Port Arthur Year Nine Education Program Guide* for a list of suggested resources)	Pens and paper Whiteboard/ Smart board Atlas/maps Pre-Visit Resource Internet research

LESSON	ACTIVITY	RESOURCES & MATERIALS
On-Site Activity	*It is suggested that students have a basic understanding of the convict era and the history and significance of the Port Arthur Historic Site. This can be gained through undertaking the Year Nine Education Tour prior to commencing this on-site activity.* **Breaking the Code** • In this on-site activity students will discover how new ideas and technological developments contributed to change during the convict period, through an exploration of how and why the Port Arthur Semaphore system was developed. The 75 minute program will consist of three separate activities: **1. Learning the Ropes** • Using table-top models, demonstrations and worksheets, students will learn how to operate a semaphore station and how to read the semaphore codes developed by Commandant Charles O'Hara Booth. **2. Send for Help!** • Students will split into a 'sending' team and a 'receiving' team and will make their way to the model semaphore stations located on the Port Arthur site. Using the semaphore codes the sending team will write and send a message to the receiving team, who will acknowledge the message using their semaphore station, and work to correctly read and decipher the code. **3. Discussion and Reflection** • At the conclusion of the on-site activity students will return to the Education Centre to discover if the message was received successfully, and to share their experiences of operating the semaphore stations.	On-Site activity resources provided at the Port Arthur Education Centre

LESSON	ACTIVITY	RESOURCES & MATERIALS
Post-Visit Classroom Lesson	***The post-visit classroom activities below are organised according to Bloom's taxonomy of learning objectives. Use these activities in sequence to guide students from low-order thinking to high-order thinking, or select the activities most appropriate for your class.*** **Remember** • The Semaphore Game - One student is selected to be the 'code master' to write a message of five codes using Booth's semaphore telegraph code. Another student is selected as the 'signal master' to draw the semaphore signal for the first code on the board. The first student to correctly decipher the code takes over as the 'signal master' and draws the signal for the next code in the message. The game continues until the message has been completely deciphered. **Understand** • Write a one page 'statement of significance' which describes why the Port Arthur semaphore system was a significant development in the history of the colony. **Apply** • Write a list of all of the problems associated with sending messages using the semaphore system. Work with a partner to brainstorm possible solutions for each problem. **Analyse** • Select two people from the classroom resource *'People of the Port Arthur Convict Era'* and identify and compare the impact that the semaphore system may have had on their lives. **Create** • Work in groups to design and construct a model of a system of communication which could be used to send messages over long distances. **Evaluate** • Research one other type of communication used during the period 1750 – 1901 and compare it to the Port Arthur Semaphore system. Consider factors including access, speed, reliability, distance and complexity of message. Examples include: ▪ The English 'Murray' and 'Popham' semaphores ▪ The French 'Chappe' semaphore ▪ Morse Code ▪ The electric telegraph ▪ Radio ▪ The early telephone	Pens and paper Whiteboard/ Smart board Atlas/maps Port Arthur Classroom Resources: *How to Read a Semaphore* *Semaphore Telegraph Code* *People of the Port Arthur Convict Era* Internet research