



PORT  
ARTHUR  
HISTORIC  
SITES

# PORT ARTHUR HISTORIC SITE EDUCATION PROGRAM GUIDE



## YEAR NINE

THE MAKING OF THE MODERN WORLD

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## INTRODUCTION

The Australian Curriculum for Year Nine provides a study of the history of the making of the modern world from 1750 to 1918. The first of three depth studies, *'Making a Better World?'* examines three major developments: the Industrial Revolution, movement of peoples and progressive ideas and movements.

As a site recognised for its global significance and inscribed on the World Heritage List, Port Arthur can offer a unique insight into this depth study. The Historic Site represents several key elements of the forced migration of convicts, as well as associated global ideas and practices relating to punishment and reform during the modern era.

The *'Making a Better World? The evolution of a convict settlement'* tour and associated classroom activities have been developed in line with the Australian Curriculum. On the tour, students will examine the convict settlement of Port Arthur in the global context of the period, by considering the geo-political goal of colonial expansion, as well as the penal objectives of deterrence and reformation.

This booklet is a guide to assist teachers in incorporating an in-depth study of Port Arthur into the Year Nine history curriculum. The suggested activities provide opportunities for students to develop historical understanding through the following key concepts:

- **Evidence** - Historical evidence which will be highlighted through on-site and classroom activities includes the natural environment, buildings, artefacts and additional primary sources
- **Significance** - In this program the significance of Port Arthur is explored in the context of global history
- **Continuity and Change** - Through discussion of assignment, probation and the separate system, students will identify aspects of the prison system which have changed and those which have stayed the same
- **Cause and Effect** - Demonstrated throughout the chronological narrative of the tour and the pre-visit activities which focus on the effect of the industrial revolution and other global events on the development of the Port Arthur penal settlement
- **Perspectives** - Differing perspectives of Port Arthur will be examined during the tour and in the post-visit activities, through both primary and secondary sources
- **Empathy** - Students will develop empathy for the convicts as they see, hear and read about the conditions of Port Arthur and the experiences of individuals who lived here during the convict period
- **Contestability** - Explored through discussions of how interpretations of Port Arthur's history are open to debate, as a result of a lack of evidence or differing perspectives

## THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM – YEAR NINE HISTORY

The table below outlines the elements of the Year Nine history curriculum which have been incorporated into this program.

<b>Content Focus</b>	The Making of the Modern World – Depth Study 1: ‘Making a Better World?’
<b>Historical Knowledge and Understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The short and long-term impacts of the Industrial Revolution</li> <li>• The emergence and nature of key ideas in the period</li> <li>• The influence of the Industrial Revolution on the movement of peoples throughout the world</li> <li>• The experiences of convicts and free settlers upon departure, their journey abroad, and their reactions on arrival, including the Australian experience</li> <li>• Changes in the way of life of a group(s) of people who moved to Australia in this period</li> <li>• The short and long-term impacts of the movement of peoples during this period</li> </ul>
<b>Historical Skills</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chronology, terms and concepts</li> <li>• Analysis and use of sources</li> <li>• Explanation and communication</li> <li>• Perspectives and interpretation</li> <li>• Historical questions and research</li> </ul>
<b>Inquiry Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What were the changing features of the movements of people from 1750 to 1918?</li> <li>• How did new ideas and technological developments contribute to change in this period?</li> <li>• What was the origin, development, significance and long-term impact of imperialism in this period?</li> </ul>
<b>Achievement Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place events, people and societies within a chronological framework</li> <li>• Process information from sources to answer inquiry questions</li> <li>• Explain the context for people’s actions and experiences in the past</li> <li>• Examine sources to identify and describe different points of view, values, attitudes and perspectives</li> <li>• Compose historical texts, particularly explanations and discussions (incorporating historical argument) and use evidence from primary and secondary sources to support their conclusions</li> <li>• Use appropriate historical terms, concepts and appropriate acknowledgement or referencing of source material in their historical texts</li> </ul>

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Port Arthur began as a timber-getting station in 1830. The site then operated as a penal station for secondary offenders between 1833 and 1877. Under the punishment regime at Port Arthur, convicts were employed in hard labour including timber felling and quarrying sandstone. Convicts were also given incentives to reform and many were taught trades and literacy skills. Religion played an important part in the reform process, with convicts regularly exposed to moral and religious teaching.

Port Arthur was an important site of manufacturing for Van Diemen's Land. In addition to timber-getting, industrial activities at Port Arthur included boat-building, shoe-making, carpentry, blacksmithing, and stone masonry. The Penitentiary building, today an imposing ruin in the centre of the site, was originally built as a flour mill and granary. It was converted to accommodation to house a growing convict population between 1854 and 1857.

The British Empire's first prison for children was established at Port Arthur and operated between 1834 and 1849. The Point Puer prison for boys housed convict boys aged nine to eighteen and aimed to rehabilitate them through religion, education and trade training.

In 1841 the Probation system replaced the Assignment system in Van Diemen's Land, with the aim of punishing convicts differently according to their crimes. All convicts did mandatory time in a prison under this system and from 1849 convicts at Port Arthur were incarcerated in the Separate Prison. This was a silent prison where psychological coercion replaced physical punishment and each man spent 23 hours each day alone in his cell. The idea behind this system was that separation and silence promoted reflection, remorse, and ultimately reformation, in the prisoners.

By the late 1850s, Port Arthur was also welfare station. The Asylum and Pauper's Depot were built to accommodate prisoners who were too old or ill to work. The settlement officially closed in 1877, and Port Arthur became known as the village of Carnarvon in 1784.

Today, the Port Arthur Historic Site comprises more than 30 convict-built structures and substantial ruins in a landscape of 136 hectares. The site was inscribed onto the World Heritage List in 2010 as one of the eleven historic places that form the Australian Convict Sites World Heritage Property.

The other ten sites making up this property are:

Coal Mines Historic Site (Tas)*	Cascades Female Factory (Tas)*
Brickendon-Woolmers Estate (Tas)	Darlington Probation Station (Tas)
Fremantle Prison (WA)	Cockatoo Island Convict Site (NSW)
Old Great North Road (NSW)	Hyde Park Barracks (NSW)
Old Government House and Domain (NSW)	Kingston and Arthur's Vale Historic Area (NSW)

\*These sites are managed by the Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority

## ON-SITE ACTIVITIES

When planning your visit to Port Arthur there are several activities to consider which complement the Year Nine history curriculum.

For more information on these activities, including timing and prices, please refer to [www.portarthur.org.au/education](http://www.portarthur.org.au/education) or contact the Education Officer ([www.portarthur.org.au/educationofficer](http://www.portarthur.org.au/educationofficer)).

### Education Tour

#### **‘Making a Better World? The evolution of a convict site’**

On this ninety minute tour students will discover the significance of the Port Arthur Penal Settlement through examining its three main phases as a timber getting station, a punishment station under the assignment system, and a punishment station under the probation system.

Students will discover the multiple layers of history which are evident in the Port Arthur landscape, and will be introduced to elements of contestability in Port Arthur’s narrative history.

Students will have the opportunity to empathise with the convicts, soldiers and free settlers as they discover their living and working conditions and hear personal stories of daily life at a convict settlement.

Areas of the historic site which are included on this tour include:

- The Penitentiary and Watchman’s Quarters
- The Military and Administration Precincts
- The Hospital
- William Smith O’Brien’s Cottage
- The Separate Prison

The group will also be taken to locations associated with trade and industry at Port Arthur to discover the working life of a convict first-hand.

At the completion of the Education Tour, students will be provided with a worksheet which can be undertaken in the Separate Prison and the Asylum Museum. The worksheet is an extension of the themes covered in the tour and requires students to explore these locations to find the answers to a series of questions.

## Optional Tours

**Isle of the Dead** – this tour enables students to gain a fascinating insight into the lives of the people who lived and died at Port Arthur. Students will discover how this cemetery can be used as evidence of the living conditions in the settlement, and will gain a deeper understanding of the contrast between the lives of the convicts and the free men and women who were separated in both life and death.

**Point Puer** – on this tour students will learn what life was like for the boys at the Point Puer prison; the first prison in the British Empire built specifically for children. Students will have the opportunity to empathise with these boys, many of whom were the same age or younger than them, through hearing stories of individuals who were sent here. The archaeological remains of the prison can also be used as a point of discussion about different types of historical evidence, and the work undertaken by archaeologists and historians to interpret this evidence.

**Ghost Tour** – on this tour students will hear stories of strange occurrences at Port Arthur. In addition to the unique experience of touring the site after dark, the Ghost Tour provides students with an opportunity to explore the concept of contestability, and consider the place of oral narratives in the study of history.

## Hands-on Activities

**What's My Story?** – in this activity students study copies of the original handwritten conduct records of individual convicts who were transported to Van Diemen's Land and who spent time at Port Arthur. Students examine the evidence of the records and artefacts linked to the convicts, to make predictions and draw conclusions about their lives, crimes and trades. See the Port Arthur website for related resources including lesson plans.

**Convict Brick-Making** – this activity allows students to learn first-hand the process by which convicts made bricks at Port Arthur. Students will discuss the brick making process and handle original convict made bricks. Students will then use these processes to create their own brick to take home. This is an excellent starting point for a further exploration of the many trades undertaken by convicts at Port Arthur. See the Port Arthur website for related resources including lesson plans.



Brick Making at Port Arthur (Source: PAHSMA)

## Self-Guided Activities

**‘Lottery of Life’** – upon entry to the site all students will be given their own ‘Convict Card’ which relates to an individual who spent time at Port Arthur. Students can then trace their convict through the interactive ‘Lottery of Life’ gallery to discover their fate, including their experiences upon departure, the journey to Van Diemen’s Land, and their life as a convict. This activity brings the convict experience to life and provides students with an opportunity to empathise with their convict characters.

**Explore the Site** – there are over 30 buildings and 136 hectares to explore at the Port Arthur Historic Site. Points of interest include:

- The Separate Prison
- Museum Houses
- Asylum Museum
- Dockyard

To provide a structured exploration of the site, download the self-guided ‘Amazing Race’ or ‘Race through Time’ activity sheets from the Port Arthur website. These scavenger-hunt style activities can be undertaken at your own pace and adapted to suit your needs.



The Asylum Museum (Source: PAHSMA)

## PRE-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Below are some suggested activities to undertake in the classroom as preparation for your visit to the Port Arthur Historic Site. It is recommended that prior to taking the education tour, students undertake the overview of *'The Making of the Modern World'* (Australian Curriculum, History, Year Nine), and/or have a basic understanding of the Industrial Revolution and the social, political and economic context of that period.

### Historical Inquiry – Cause and Effect

In their investigation of the factors which influenced the transportation of convicts to Van Diemen's Land, students will make discoveries about the political, social and economic context of the beginning of the colonial period, and will make links between events and movements in Europe, and the establishment of the Australian colonies.

Areas for investigation might include:

- **The end of the Napoleonic wars (1815)**
- **The Industrial Revolution**
- **The American War of Independence (1776)**
- **The rural to urban drift, including land enclosures and the highland clearances in Scotland**
- **Nationalism and Rebellion in Ireland**
- **Robert Peel and the Metropolitan Police Force**
- **British Imperialism and competition with France**
- **The labour shortage in British colonies**
- **Overcrowding of British prisons**

### Inquiry Question One

Assign each of the 'areas for investigation' from above to individual students, pairs or groups to investigate. Ask students to write a short response to the following question: **'How did (*insert area for investigation*) influence the establishment of a penal colony in Van Diemen's Land?'** Responses can then be shared with the whole class through a resource file or creative presentation.

### Inquiry Question Two

Students develop a multi-faceted response to the inquiry question: **Why did the British Empire establish a penal colony in Van Diemen's Land?** Responses should analyse both the underlying causes of convict transportation; and the factors influencing the choice of Van Diemen's Land for a penal settlement. Students may present their findings in a variety of formats, including:

- Mind map
- Newspaper article
- Essay/Report
- PowerPoint/Prezi presentation
- Annotated timeline



Main Street, Port Arthur, from the Commandant's Garden (1841) – artist Owen Stanley (Source: Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery, Ref: AG1974).

## POST-VISIT ACTIVITIES

Below are some suggested activities to be undertaken in the classroom following your visit to Port Arthur. These activities have been designed to build upon the knowledge and skills developed by students who have undertaken the pre-visit activities and the on-site Education Tour.

### Recall Quiz

Download the online worksheet '**Port Arthur Quiz**' from the Port Arthur Historic Site website ([www.portarthur.org.au/classroomresources](http://www.portarthur.org.au/classroomresources)). This quiz can be used back in the classroom to aid students in recalling the knowledge and understanding they developed during their visit to the Port Arthur Historical Site.

*(To obtain the answer sheet for this quiz please contact the Education Officer using the contact form on the website [www.portarthur.org.au/educationofficer](http://www.portarthur.org.au/educationofficer) )*

### Source Analysis

Download the online worksheet '**Through Their Eyes**' from the Port Arthur Historic Site website ([www.portarthur.org.au/classroomresources](http://www.portarthur.org.au/classroomresources)). This is a source analysis activity which requires students to read and respond to two primary source extracts. These extracts provide two differing perspectives on the treatment of convicts at Port Arthur.

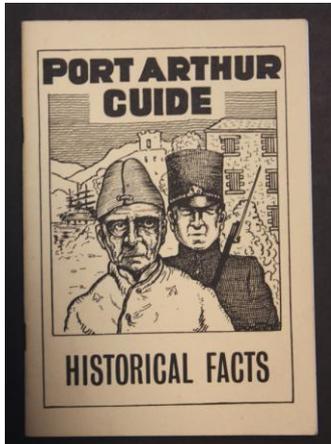
### Class Debate

Select from the following topics for a class debate based on the themes explored on the Education Tour.

- **The purpose of the Port Arthur convict settlement was to reform prisoners, rather than to punish them**
- **The treatment of convicts in the Separate Prison was more humane than physical punishment**
- **Prisoners at Port Arthur were better off than many people living in Britain at the time**
- **The Assignment System was a fair system which benefited both convicts and free settlers**

## Historical Inquiry

Students develop a set of inquiry questions to frame a research task focusing on one of the following topics:



- **Jeremy Bentham and the separate system**
- **Reform at Port Arthur – Religion and Education**
- **Political Prisoners**
- **The abolition of transportation**
- **The probation system**
- **Convict resistance – rebellion and escapes**

Port Arthur Guide, circa 1930s (Source: PAHSMA collection, Ref: 2004.17)

## An Illustrated Convict Biography

Working in pairs, students select and research a convict who spent time at Port Arthur to discover answers to the following questions:

- **What was their life like before they were transported?**
- **What was their crime and what factors may have led to them committing that crime?**
- **Describe their life at Port Arthur – where did they live? What did they wear? What did they eat? What might their daily routine have been like? What punishments did they receive?**
- **What happened to them after they left Port Arthur? Did they receive a ticket-of-leave? Did they find work and start a family?**

Students should include information and images which relate to the social and political context of their convict's life. Students should be encouraged to develop hypotheses for the gaps in information they may find.

See Appendix 1 and 2 for a list of suggested resources and convict subjects.

## APPENDIX 1 – RESOURCE LIST

### Websites

#### **Port Arthur Historic Site Website**

- Search this site for information on Port Arthur's history and downloadable fact sheets

<http://www.portarthur.org.au/education>

#### **Key to Port Arthur Investigations**

- Download our multimedia program 'Key to Port Arthur Investigations'. The program and the external website contain numerous sources useful for an investigation into convict history.

[www.portarthur.org.au/kpa](http://www.portarthur.org.au/kpa)

#### **The Australian Convict Sites**

- Visit this section of the Port Arthur website to discover more about the World Heritage convict sites. Download the nomination document for a comprehensive explanation of the significance of Port Arthur in the context of global ideas and movements

[www.portarthur.org.au/worldheritage](http://www.portarthur.org.au/worldheritage)

#### **Founders and Survivors**

- This project seeks to record and study the founding population of 73,000 men women and children who were transported to Tasmania. Use the database to search for convict records.

<http://foundersandsurvivors.org/>

#### **LINC Tasmania – Convicts in Tasmania**

- Search for convict records, photos and more

<http://www.linc.tas.gov.au/tasmaniasheritage>

#### **The Companion to Tasmanian History**

- See the section on 'Convicts and the Colonial Period'

[http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion\\_to\\_tasmanian\\_history/index.htm](http://www.utas.edu.au/library/companion_to_tasmanian_history/index.htm)

#### **Trove – The National Library of Australia**

- Search for primary and secondary sources

<http://trove.nla.gov.au>

## **Books**

- Bateson, Charles (1983), *The Convict Ships: 1787-1868*, Library of Australian History
- Brand, Ian (1975), *Port Arthur 1830 – 1877*, Jason Publications
- Brand, Ian (1975), *The 'Separate' Model Prison*, Regal Publications
- Brand, Ian (1978), *Escape from Port Arthur*, Regal Publications
- Brand, Ian (1998), *Penal Peninsula - Tasmania's Port Arthur and its outstations 1827-1898*, Regal Publications
- Graeme-Evans, Alex (1994), *Tasmanian Rogues and Absconders*, Regal Publications
- Hilton, Phillip, Hood, Susan (1999), *Caught in the Act: Unusual Offences of Port Arthur Convicts*, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority
- Hopkins, David (1993), *The Convict Era (series of 3 titles)*, Taswegia
- Lennox, Geoff (1994), *A Visitor's Guide to Port Arthur and the Convict Systems*, Dormaslen Publications
- Lord, Richard (1985), *The Isle of the Dead*, R.Lord and Partners
- Macdonald, Wendy (1999), *Australia's Convicts (series of 4 titles)*, Macmillan Education
- Maxwell-Stewart, Hamish, Hood, Susan (2001), *Pack of Thieves? 52 Port Arthur Lives*, Port Arthur Historic Site Management Authority
- Weidenhofer, Maggie (1981), *Port Arthur – A Place of Misery*, Oxford University Press

## APPENDIX 2 – LIST OF CONVICTS

The following is a list of convicts who spent time at Port Arthur. This is a suggested list to use in the post-visit activity, 'An Illustrated Convict Biography'. Use the resources suggested in Appendix 1 to research these individuals.

**Walter Paisley**

**William Smith O'Brien**

**George 'Billy' Hunt**

**William Pearson**

**Charles Constantini**

**Linus Miller**

**Mark Jeffrey**

**William Thompson**

**Martin Cash**

**William Riley**

**Henry Singleton (aka Richard Pinches)**

**Dennis Collins**

**William Yeomans**

**William Bickle**

**Benjamin Stanton**



Convict Jacket and Trousers (Source: PAHSMA collection, Ref 19970382 and E.73966)