

# Year 5 – Geography – Australia – Lesson 2

KO: Captain James Cook was a British explorer who travelled to Australia in 1770.

**Where is Australia?**

**What do you know about the physical geography of Australia?**

Before the British came, **Aboriginal** people lived in **Australia**, they developed their own customs, culture and languages.

Aboriginal Cave Art is thought to be some of the oldest art in the world.

Aboriginal people have lived in Australia for over 60,000 years. Rock art found across Australia has been identified as being some of the oldest artwork in the world.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpAS5f4TjNw&safe=true>

Aboriginal people share some similarities, but there are also huge differences between the many groups in terms of language, culture and customs.

As far back as Roman times, there were legends of the 'Terra Australis Incognita' and people thought there must be a large southern landmass to 'balance' out the land in the Northern Hemisphere.

In the 16th century, Dutch explorers sailed along the western coastline, naming the land they saw 'New Holland'. In 1770 British Captain James Cook mapped the East coast, naming it 'New Wales' (It later became New South Wales.)

The British, led by Captain James Cook sailed to Australia, via Tahiti and New Zealand.

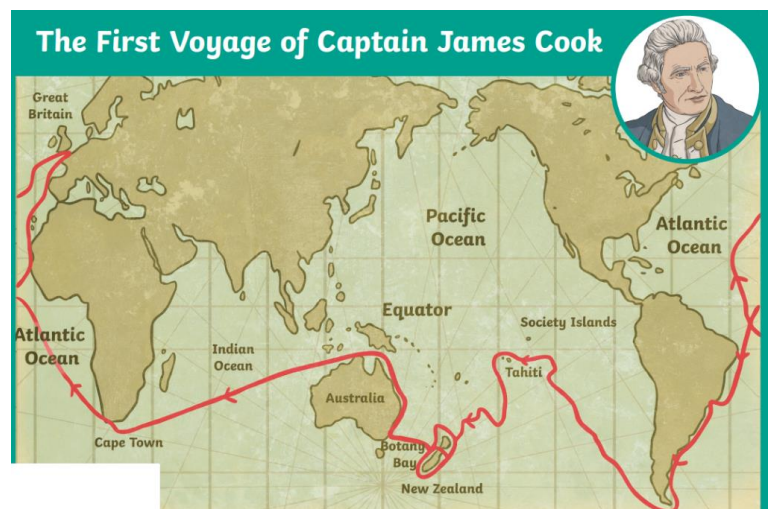
Cook had been sent by the Royal Society to find out how far away the sun was. After the loss of the American Colonies, the British were looking for new places to colonise, particularly to establish penal colonies where they could transport convicts. Cook referred to Australia as 'Terra Nullis' meaning no-one's land, however as we know, this was not the case.

The British established several colonies in Australia from 1788, where they shipped convicts who had been found guilty of petty crimes. This was known as the 'First Fleet' and they arrived on the 24 January 1788. This day is marked annually on the 26th of January as 'Australia Day'.

When the British settled in Australia they introduced infectious diseases that killed many Aboriginal people, there were also conflicts which saw many Aboriginals killed over land disputes. The Aboriginal populations declined as a result of colonisation of regions of Australia. Recently, Aboriginal people have reclaimed areas of land back that they believe were wrongly taken during British settlement. Often, at the beginning of events around the country, there is now an Aboriginal welcome to signify the importance of the land to the Aboriginal people.

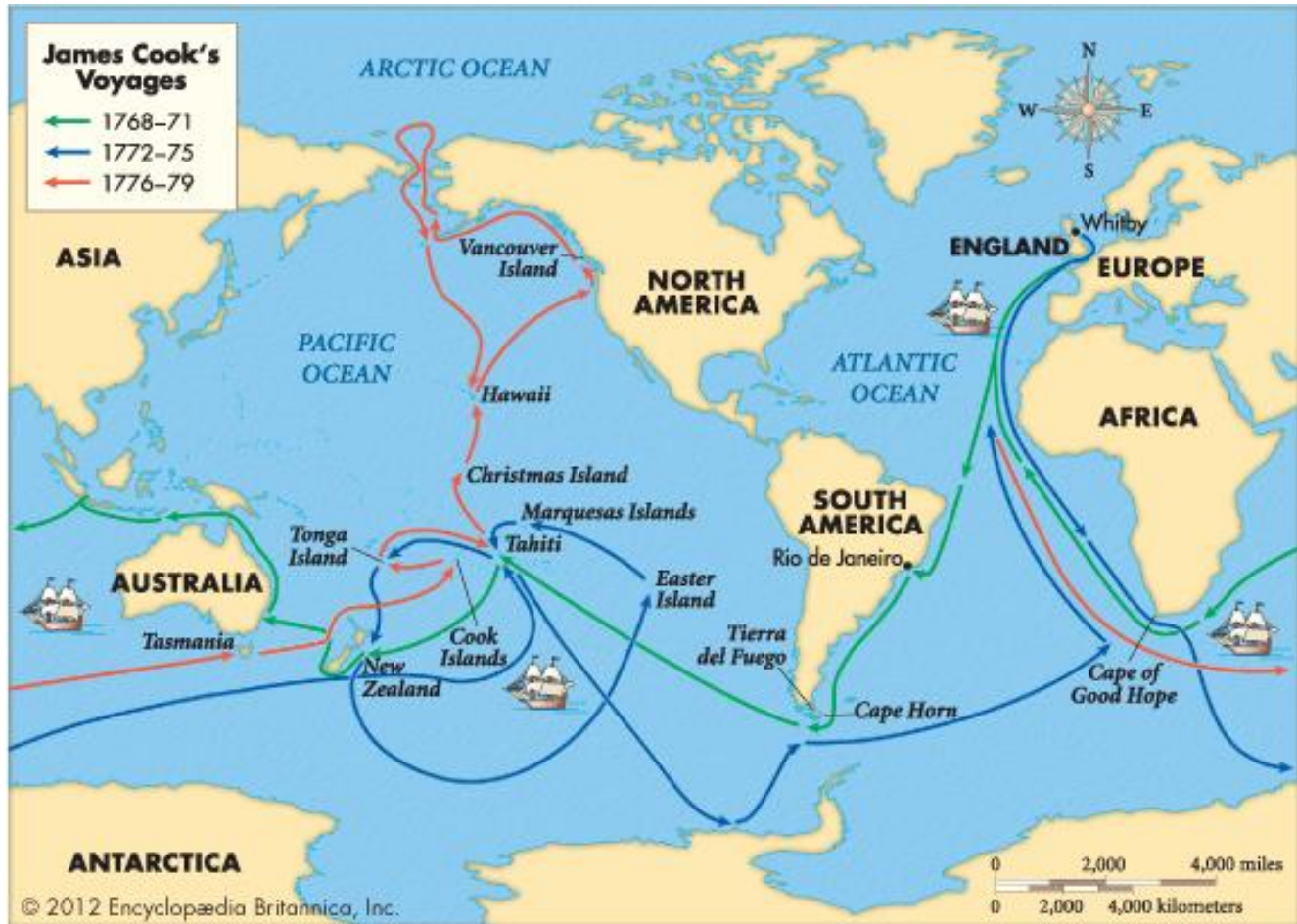
## Key Vocabulary:

- Aboriginal
- Colonise
- Captain James Cook
- New South Wales
- Penal Colony



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Captain Cook made 3 major journeys.



Task: Who was Captain James Cook? What did he do?

Step for depth:

Can you think of another time the British established colonies? What were their reasons for doing so then, and in Australia?