

River Murray Website Teachers' Kit



STATE
LIBRARY
South Australia



Government
of South Australia

Senior Secondary School



Notes for teachers

The River Murray website can be used to complement resources for SACE Year 11 *Australian Studies*, especially in addressing learning outcome 3 which is identify and explain the perspectives of indigenous Australians on issues in contemporary Australia.

Teachers of Year 12 *Australian History* will find the website and teachers pages address learning outcomes 1, 4 & 5 of the curriculum statement and provides sources and exercises for topics 2: The bush experience and survival on the land and topic 4: Searching for ideal societies and nations c.1880 – 1914.

Senior Secondary Students

Research exercises for senior secondary students

Who owns the Murray?

Look carefully at the cartoons on the website www.slsa.sa.gov.au/murray. They show the colonies of South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales fighting over the river and its waters.

- In your own words, explain what you think the main grievances were.
- How were the grievances eventually settled?
- The states are still arguing about ownerships and rights to the Murray, but the issues today are different to those of the past. What issues do the states need to address in the 21st century?

Village Settlements along the Murray

During the recession years of the late 1890s, the government supported community based farming settlements along the Murray. The hard economic times encouraged a pioneering spirit and the prospect of being able to carve out a living from the land was attractive to those who were otherwise unemployed. Between 1894–1895 eleven settlements were established along the river

When the European settlers arrived they introduced new species of fish and bird life into the Murray's ecosystem.

- What fish and animals have been introduced by Europeans?
- What sort of problems does their introduction create?
- Why do you think they were introduced?

Murtho, Lyrup, Pyap, New Residence, Moorook, Kingston, Holder, Waikerie, Ramco, Gillen, New Era

- Using an historical map at the State Library, locate these settlements on a map of South Australia.
- How many of the original settlements are still there today?
- Village settlements were set up with high expectations of a new life on the land and profitable communities. What factors worked against this ideal?
- Who were the Chaffey brothers and what part did they play in establishing townships along the Murray?

Background reading

- Painter, Gwenda *A different river: river trade and development along the Murray Valley Network* Chapters 3 & 5
- Mack, David *The village settlements on the River Murray in South Australia 1894-1909*
- Finnis, H.J *Village settlements on the River Murray*
- Woods, Richard Vynne *The Birks Murtho Letters 1894 – 1900*
- Roysland, Dorothy *A Pioneer family on the Murray River*

Business and leisure on the Murray

Research the paddle-steamer era in South Australia and write an essay about river boating on the Murray addressing the following questions:

- What was the main purpose of the paddle-steamer business?
- What factors contributed to the demise of the paddle-steamers?
- What impact did the railways have on the river boats?

Trade along the Murray raised issues of tariffs and smuggling. Examine the problems that the colonies faced in controlling the river trade between them.

Background reading

- Parsons, Ronald *Ships of the inland rivers*
- Painter, Gwenda *A different river: river trade and development along the River Murray Valley Network*

Indigenous communities along the Murray

Research the impact of European settlement on Aboriginal communities along the river. You might want to concentrate on the mission schools like that at Port McLeay or the Manunka Mission at Mannum, or government policies that impacted on the lives of Aborigines.

In 1994 there was a proposal to build a bridge between Hindmarsh Island and the mainland. Research the story of this bridge and the controversy that surrounded it using newspaper and journal articles, and outline the arguments as to why the bridge should or should not have been built.

Background reading

- Brunton, Ron *The false culture syndrome: the Howard Government and the Commonwealth Hindmarsh inquiry*
- Simons, Margaret *The meeting of the waters: the Hindmarsh Island affair*
- Salgado, Barbara *Murrundi voices: Ngarrindjeri people's stories from the Lower Murray*
- Mattingley, Christobel *Survival in our own land: Aboriginal experiences in South Australia since 1836*