

Australian Aviation – Activities

Website resources

Search on the **Culture and Recreation Portal** website:

www.culture.gov.au/articles/aviation/
(Australian aviation)

www.culture.gov.au/articles/charleseaton
(Charles 'Moth' Eaton)

www.culture.gov.au/articles/kingsfordsmith
(Charles Kingsford Smith)

www.culture.gov.au/articles/aviatrices
(Aviatrices—female aviators)

www.culture.gov.au/articles/flyingdoctor
(Royal Flying Doctor Service)



The *Southern Cross* on its arrival in Sydney from the flight across the Pacific, 10 June 1928. Broughton Ward & Chaseling. National Library of Australia.

Introduction

Aviation has helped to reduce the challenges associated with Australia's remote position and has greatly improved the nation's link to the rest of the world.

Powered flight in Australia began in 1910, and air services — such as cargo transport, airmail, and medical, search and rescue services — soon followed. Until after World War II, Australia was one of the world's leaders in civil and military aviation, with some very prominent aviation pioneers.

Activities

Research project

Invite the students to select two of the following aviation pioneers (one male and one female): Bert Hinkler, Lawrence Hargrave, Charles Kingsford Smith, Charles 'Moth' Eaton, Mary Bell, Amy Johnson, Janine Shepherd and Lorres Bonney. Encourage the students to use books and the internet to find out the following details about each aviator they choose:

- date of birth and death (if applicable)
- place of birth
- early background and life history
- achievements in aviation
- later achievements
- interesting facts.

Female aviators



Portrait of Nancy Bird Walton
Roberts, Russell. National Library of Australia.

Encourage the students to use different sources to research the life so far of Nancy Bird-Walton. Invite the class to become reporters and researchers for a popular TV current affairs show and write some interview questions they might ask Nancy Bird-Walton.

Have the students break into small groups to answer the following questions:

- Why was it hard for women to break into aviation?
- What association did Nancy Bird-Walton form?
- What was the Powder Puff Derby and what trophy did Nancy win?

Mapping England to Australia routes

Provide the students with a stencil of a map of the world. Ask them to draw and label the England to Australia flight paths taken by one or all of the following aviators: Ross and Keith Smith, Bert Hinkler, Charles Kingsford Smith or Freda Thompson. Have them include a timeline and any interesting facts about the challenges the aviators faced, as well as their successes. Ask them to write an outline of the final flights of the aviators.

Journal entry

Invite the students to imagine they live in the remote inland of Australia in the early twentieth century. Have them write daily journal entries, describing a situation where a family member is sick or injured and needs the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Survival

Discuss what it was like in remote areas of Australia before the Royal Flying Doctor Service was established. Talk to students about how many people died without the medical help that the RFDS now brings.

As a class, learn some basic first aid, including CPR, bandaging, and treating broken limbs and snake bites, that you could use if medical help was not available.

Air travel times

In 1930, Charles Kingsford Smith flew from London to Australia in 9 days and 22 hours.

Encourage the students to find out how long it takes now to travel from:

- Sydney to London
- Melbourne to Los Angeles
- Perth to Singapore
- Brisbane to Alice Springs
- New York to London.

Ask them to include the distances between each pair of destinations.

Design a new logo for Qantas

Qantas is known as 'The Flying Kangaroo'. As a class, look at past and current Qantas logos.

Encourage the students to design their own Qantas logo, writing why they have selected particular colours, shapes and symbols.

Sing and recite

Some airlines use particular songs, music and even poems as part of their advertising campaigns. Ask students if they can remember any that they have heard or seen. Discuss with them why they think airlines keep using the same song, music, etc? Invite the students to work in small groups to make up a poem or a song as part of a new advertising campaign in the 1930s to show people the benefits of air transport. Encourage the students to perform their piece for the class.

Win a ticket

Discuss with the class how they might run a competition to be the first passenger to travel first-class on the new Airbus A380. Ask the students to invent their own competition for winning these tickets. As part of the competition, students could create a poster and design the tickets.

The large and small of it

Invite the students to research and compare the Airbus 380 with a smaller aircraft flown before World War II. Have them draw both of the planes and label their unique features. Ask the students to include the dimensions. Encourage the students to research one of the smallest commercial planes flown today, and complete the drawing activity again for this plane.

Travel brochure

Have the students use the internet to research the places that the Airbus 380 flies to and from. Ask the students to work in pairs to design an online or paper boarding pass for the Airbus.



Frank Hurley, *Landing of Ross Smith's Vickers Vimy at Mascot — Sydney, NSW, 14 February 1920*. State Library of NSW.