

Cook's Endeavour Journal



Advice and instructions from Lord Morton to Lt James Cook. *Cook's Endeavour Journal*, p 150. National Library of Australia.

Captain James Cook played a vitally important role in the white settlement of Australia, and in establishing Australia's relationships with other nations.

Cook's Endeavour Journal: the Inside Story is a fabulous resource from the National Library of Australia. It contains the real journals of Cook, where he recorded his thoughts, challenges and achievements. Its content covers the curriculum areas of HSIE/SOSE, Science and Technology, the Arts, Mathematics and English.

Additional Teaching ideas

By accident or design

Encourage the students to choose their favourite journal entry of Cook's. Have them look at the style of writing used by Cook and ask them to use old-fashioned cursive lettering to write a journal page. Make the page look old and worn using a warm, wet tea bag.

To extend the activity, encourage the students to create their own journal entry about life aboard the *Endeavour* as a member of the crew. Have them describe the sleeping quarters, the food, the discipline and the work regime (see page 48).

The transit of Venus

On 3 June 1769, the *Endeavour* crew watched the planet of Venus move over the Sun's face (page 73). Encourage the students to read about Cook's experiences of observing this transit. Invite the students to research more recent transits of Venus or Mercury. Have them prepare a PowerPoint presentation to explain it to others.

Kangaroo sighting

Read with the class Cook's description of the first kangaroo he sees (pages 139–40). Invite the students to draw the creature that Cook describes.

Indigenous Australians

Cook compares the 'Natives of New Holland' (that is, the Indigenous Australians) with the Europeans. Discuss with students how and why Cook would perceive the differences as he did. (pages 155–56).

Arriving home

Discuss as a class what had happened to Cook's family while he had been away. Talk about how long he had been gone, his communication (or lack of communication) with them, and any milestones that occurred in his absence.

Encourage the students to use the information in the last chapter to draw Cook's family tree, listing what happened to each family member. Have the students include their dates of birth and death.