



BEACONS BY THE SEA

Stories of Australian Lighthouses

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA
EDUCATION KIT



36. Student Activity Worksheets — Secondary



Cape Don Lighthouse, NT NAA: A1200, L4366A



**BEACONS BY THE SEA:
STORIES OF AUSTRALIAN LIGHTHOUSES**

Your group members' names:

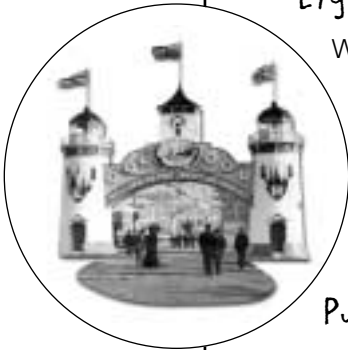
Welcome to *Beacons by the Sea*. We hope you enjoy your visit.

What to do

1. Write your names on the worksheet. Listen to your teacher's instructions about where your group will start the tour.
2. Read the questions on your worksheets carefully and answer each one as you go.
3. Hand in your worksheets to the teacher when you finish exploring the exhibition.

Lighthouses, lightships, beacons & buoys

Why were lighthouses so important in the early colonisation of Australia?



Public servants at the edge of the sea

If you had been an Australian lighthouse keeper, who would your employer have been?

Were women allowed to join the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service?

Day in, day out

Find the Cape Borda lighthouse keeper's logbook.

What happened on Thursday 29 November 1877?

Lighthouse maintenance and 'paperwork' were important duties for a lighthouse keeper. List some of the kinds of paperwork and correspondence that you have seen in this exhibition. Where is this paperwork kept now?



'I herewith beg leave to inform you'

Who was Australia's longest serving lighthouse keeper?

People said he was dedicated to 'the Service' – why?

What activities would you enjoy doing if you were a lighthouse keeper?



So far away/ The dark side of the lights



Living on a lightstation was a very isolated lifestyle. Imagine your family in this situation. What would be the positive and negative aspects of this life?

Positive

Negative

What kind of work was carried out by pigeons like the one you can see on display?

Flagging a message



Find some examples of the kind of messages that were sent using flags.

Lighthouse to ship

Ship to lighthouse

What do the flags say? Write your answer here.

Why do you think it is important that lighthouses have individual flashing patterns?

The eye of the needle



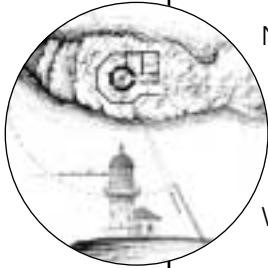
Often lighthouses were built near the sites of shipwrecks on the Australian coastline. Watch some of the video *Shipwreck!* and read the stories about shipwrecks. List some of the factors that may cause a ship to be wrecked.

What is the name of the first recorded British ship to be wrecked on the coast of Australia? Where did it go aground?

How to build an Australian lighthouse

Name at least four kinds of building materials used to construct lighthouses.

What is a daymark?



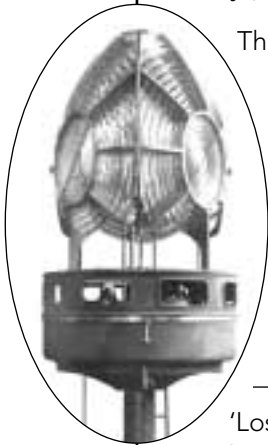
Sending out the light

The distance a light is visible out to sea depends on the following three things:

Lost me my job, technology did

What kind of fuel would be used to power a modern lighthouse?

'Lost me my job, technology did.' What did ex-lighthouse keeper Stan Gray mean by this statement?



Back to life

What do you think should happen to lighthouses which are no longer in use?
Make some notes for and against restoring lighthouses as tourist sites.

For:

Against:



Who's watching the light?

'Lighthouses, once the prime messengers, are often the back-up system today'.
Explain this statement in the light of current communications technology.

Places in the imagination

Has anyone in your group ever visited a lighthouse?
Write down a few words about your experience/s.



Look around the exhibition and find a lighthouse design or artifact that interests you. Draw your selected object below. Write down the information from the label that identifies the object that you have drawn.

Secondary Activity Worksheet Answers



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Lighthouses, lightships, beacons & buoys

- Q. Why were lighthouses so important in the early colonisation of Australia?
- A. *Trade, migration and defence were all dependent on safe sea travel. Lighthouses were the 'traffic-lights' of the national maritime highway.*

Public servants at the edge of the sea

- Q. If you had been an Australian lighthouse keeper, who would your employer have been?
- A. *The Commonwealth Government.*
- Q. Were women allowed to join the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service?
- A. *No.*

Day in, day out

- Q. Find the Cape Borda lighthouse keeper's logbook. What happened on Thursday 29 November 1877?
- A. *The body of the lighthouse keeper's three-year-old son was found at the bottom of the cliffs below the lighthouse.*
- Q. Lighthouse maintenance and 'paperwork' were important duties for a lighthouse keeper. List some of the kinds of paperwork and correspondence that you have seen in this exhibition. Where is this paperwork kept now?
- A. *Correspondence, telegrams, visitor books, logbooks, lists of stores, monthly and quarterly returns. The National Archives of Australia keeps valuable Commonwealth records such as these.*

'I herewith beg leave to inform you'

- Q. Who was Australia's longest serving lighthouse keeper? People said he was dedicated to 'the Service' – why?
- A. *Henry Bayles Ford. He stayed at his post until a replacement could be found. Ford's wife had a breakdown and several of his children died during the 30 years he was a lighthouse keeper.*
- Q. What activities would you enjoy doing if you were a lighthouse keeper?
- A. *Various.*

So far away/ The dark side of the lights

- Q. Living on a lightstation was a very isolated lifestyle. Imagine your family in this situation. What would be the positive and negative aspects of this life?
- A. *Some issues for discussion may include: attending school/virtual school; distance from friends; impact on relationships with parents/siblings; hobbies/pastimes and entertainment; food, access to health care.*
- Q. What kind of work was carried out by pigeons like the one you can see on display?
- A. *Carrier pigeons were used for communication between some Tasmanian islands.*

Secondary Activity Worksheet Answers



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Flagging a message

- Q. Find some examples of the kind of messages that were sent using flags.
- A. *Lighthouse to ship: injured keeper, shortage of stores*
Ship to lighthouse: sister ship already passed by? Identify yourself!
- Q. What do the flags say? Write your answer here.
- A. *DANGER AHEAD*
- Q. Why do you think it is important that lighthouses have individual flashing patterns?
- A. *Individual flashing patterns help to identify a lighthouse and distinguish one from another.*

The eye of the needle

- Q. Often lighthouses were built near the sites of shipwrecks on the Australian coastline. Watch some of the video *Shipwreck!* and read the stories about shipwrecks. List some of the factors that may cause a ship to be wrecked.
- A. *Human error, bad weather/sea conditions, errors in navigation, unevenly distributed cargo, lighthouse not working.*
- Q. What is the name of the first recorded British ship to be wrecked on the coast of Australia? Where did it go aground?
- A. *In 1770 Captain Cook's Endeavour ran aground on the Great Barrier Reef.*

How to build an Australian lighthouse

- Q. Name at least four kinds of building materials used to construct lighthouses.
- A. *Double brick, bluestone, timber frame and corrugated iron, reinforced concrete.*
- Q. What is a daymark?
- A. *The identifying pattern painted on the lighthouse. A plain white lighthouse is also a daymark.*

Sending out the light

- Q. The distance a light is visible out to sea depends on the following three things:
- A. *The design of the light; the fuel that powers it; and the atmospheric conditions.*

Lost me my job, technology did

- Q. What kind of fuel would be used to power a modern lighthouse?
- A. *Solar powered electricity.*
- Q. 'Lost me my job, technology did'. What did ex-lighthouse keeper Stan Gray mean by this statement.
- A. *The cheapest and most efficient way to run the Commonwealth Lighthouse Service was to make lighthouses automatic. Over time, changing technology reduced the number of lighthouse keepers until eventually they were all made redundant.*

Secondary Activity Worksheet Answers



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Back to life

- Q. What do you think should happen to lighthouses which are no longer in use?
Make some notes for and against restoring lighthouses as tourist sites.
- A. *For: importance of these in Australian cultural/maritime heritage.*
Against: accessibility, cost.

Who's watching the light?

- Q. 'Lighthouses, once the prime messengers, are often the back-up system today'.
Explain this statement in the light of current communications technology.
- A. *Global Positioning System (GPS) are now the primary messengers for maritime navigation.*

Places in the imagination

- Q. Has anyone in your group ever visited a lighthouse? Write down a few words about your experience/s.
- A. *Various.*
- Q. Look around the exhibition and find a lighthouse design or artifact that interests you. Draw your selected object in the place provided. Write down the information from the label that identifies the object that you have drawn.
- A. *Various.*