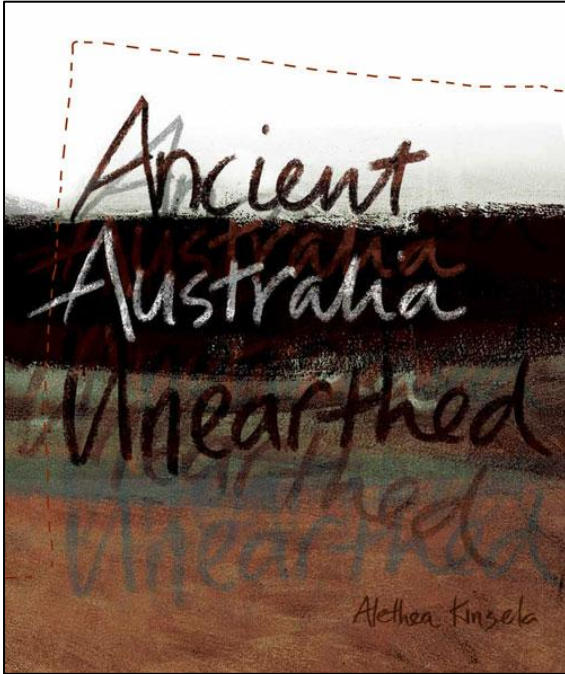
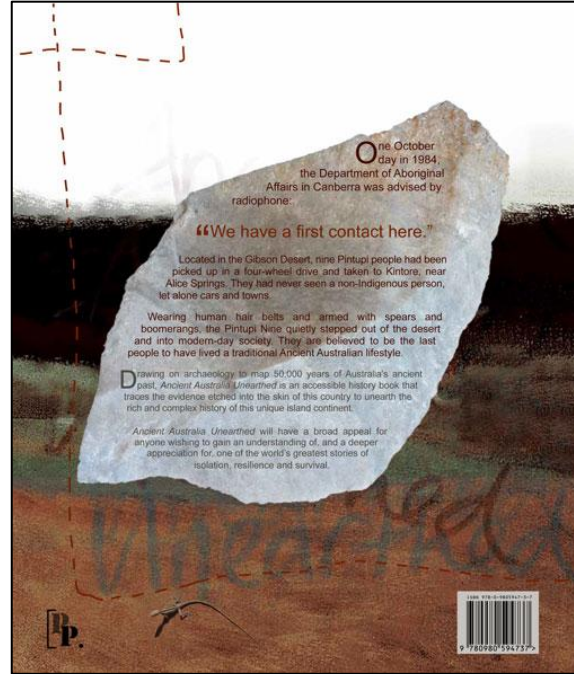


Ancient Australia Unearthed

Alethea Kinsela



Front cover



Back cover

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ANCIENT AUSTRALIA UNEARTHED was shortlisted for Best Education Book in the 2015 ABDA Awards and shortlisted for Best Secondary Education Book in the 2015 EPAA Awards.

Blurb

Drawing on archaeology to map 50,000 years of Australia's ancient past, *Ancient Australia Unearthed* traces the evidence etched into the skin of this country to reveal the rich and complex history of this unique island continent.

Ancient Australia Unearthed directly addresses the Australian Curriculum: History topic 'Ancient Australia'. It will also have a broad appeal for anyone wishing to gain an understanding of, and a deeper appreciation for, one of the world's greatest stories of isolation, resilience and survival.

Review quotes

“A landmark project of global importance.”

“The layout is exceptional, both as a standalone overview of the topic or as a launching pad to steer you to further discoveries either on- or off-line. The artwork is well thought out and adds depth to the text; this is refreshing as I’m finding most texts at this level use pictures in a scattergun approach with little connection to the written word. Deserves to be in every classroom and home library.”

“I have used this book over and over again for my history students. It’s the best available on the market today. Information is clear and precise, and there are stacks of pictures for kids to look at. The questions are well-suited to classes from about grade 4 through to Year 12. Highly recommended!”

“This book is beautifully set out and is a great introduction to Ancient Australia. It points the way to further investigation if something piques your interest. A great book for everyone.”

“Great stuff! Anything that improves our understanding of our Indigenous history is a great thing!”

“I was really excited to hear of this project and it is very much needed...this will be a very useful resource.”

Publication details

Language English

Audience General / Education

ISBN 9780980594737

Publication date 21 May 2014

Format Paperback

Pages 96

Publisher Plainspeak Publishing

Dimensions 9.84 x 7.87 in / 250 x 200 mm

Pricing structure

Currency	RRP (list price)	Wholesale price – 40% discount
USD	26.99	16.19
CAD	36.99	22.19
GBP	19.99	11.99
EUR	22.99	13.79
AUD	39.95	23.97
NZD	39.95	23.97

Sample internal pages

how this book works

A variety of questions are presented in *Ancient Australia Unearthed*. The solutions may not always appear on the page, so be prepared to ask your own questions and apply your historical inquiry skills to unearth the answers.

Understand
Check your facts and understanding of the topic. You will find the answers on the page.

Inquire
Think further, speculate, and analyse the sources to draw conclusions.

Create
Apply what you know of the topic to interpret it in your own way.

Investigate
Put your historical inquiry skills to the test and research the topic further.

AT THE BACK OF THE BOOK you will find a glossary of key terms (these are also indicated in bold coloured type throughout the book), an index, and a page of useful links to assist with your historical inquiry.

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TYPES OF EVIDENCE

Ancient Australia has no written documents such as books or clay tablets, and sometimes the structures are difficult to see, so it is easy to assume that not much evidence is out there to find. This assumption is wrong. Australia has a rich and diverse ancient past that can be understood using the following evidence.

Archaeology
Archaeology is the study of past human behaviour. Archaeological excavations provide information about when and how people lived, including what they ate, how they hunted and how they moved around the landscape. Often, an excavation can only provide a snapshot of a much larger picture, and to understand more about that larger picture, other study disciplines are required.

Palaeoclimatology
Palaeoclimatology is the study of past climates. Palaeoclimatology is important for understanding Ancient Australia because it provides information about changing sea levels, temperatures and climate conditions. This information helps to answer major questions about Australia's ancient past, such as when the best time for people to arrive was, how they crossed the continent, and what impacts changing environments had on the way people lived.


Palaeontology
Palaeontology is the study of fossils. Palaeontologists study ancient plants and animals to understand how different species developed, adapted or even became extinct. Palaeontologists and archaeologists can work together to examine whether humans may have contributed to or been responsible for the extinction of some animals.




Source 1.13 Archaeologists often excavate a site to learn more about the people who lived in the area.

Anthropology
Anthropology is the study of the origins of people and their physical and cultural development. Many early anthropologists in Australia documented and recorded Aboriginal languages, cultures and customs. This work is still being done today.

Oral histories
Oral histories are spoken narratives that are passed on to younger generations. One of the most important historical inquiry methods is consulting traditional owners and learning about traditions and cultures with understanding and respect. It is through these stories that the rich ancient history of Australia really begins to take shape.



Source 1.14 Leanne Mitchell curating artefacts at Lake Mungo.



100 000 BP 80 000 BP 60 000 BP 40 000 BP 20 000 BP PRESENT

1

Ancient Australia covers a period of around 50,000 years, from the moment people arrived in Australia right up until today. It is important to include the present in the timeline because the cultures and traditions of Ancient Australia are still alive. Contemporary events and stories must be considered alongside the archaeology because they are as relevant to Ancient Australia as **evidence** from the past.

investigating THE PAST



Source 1.1 Tanya Grinica and Discovery Rangers inspecting the Walls of China at Lake Mungo.

ROCK SHELTERS

A rock shelter is an area underneath an overhanging rock where people can shelter from the weather. In Ancient Australia, Aborigines used rock shelters to sleep, craft tools and weapons, prepare and cook food, paint, tell stories, and probably discuss political, spiritual and cultural matters.


Rock shelters are found right across Australia, from the desert to the coast, and the mountains to the rainforests.

When archaeologists excavate a rock shelter, they are able to study the layers, or stratigraphy, to learn how the shelter was used. Some rock shelters have been used only during the last few thousand years, while others, such as Carpenter's Gap in the Kimberley, have been occupied almost continuously for 40,000 years.





Evidence for the use of rock shelters comes in many forms, such as rock art on the walls and ceilings, and stone tools, grinding implements, hearths, bone and charcoal buried in the soil.

People did not always live in a single rock shelter. In some places, one rock shelter may have been used during summer and another during winter.

In regions where yearly monsoons occurred, the wet season might have been spent in an area that was high off the flood plain. During the dry season, people might have moved to lower ground to be closer to the rivers and waterholes.



Source 4.2 Rock shelters sometimes contain rock art.

Source 4.4 Inset: Grindstones were used to prepare foods such as seeds.

100000 BP 80000 BP 60000 BP 40000 BP 20000 BP PRESENT



Source 4.3 Rock shelters are often located near water sources.

Understand

- 1 What were rock shelters commonly used for?
- 2 What evidence reveals whether a rock shelter was used?

Inquire

- 3 Why did people sometimes need to move from one rock shelter to another?
- 4 In which areas of Australia do you think people might have needed to move between different rock shelters?
- 5 In which areas of Australia do you think people might have stayed at the same rock shelter?

Create

6 Think about all the different places you stayed during the last holidays then list them. Make sure you include how long you stayed at each place. You might have stayed at a friend's house or perhaps you went to the beach. Why did you visit each place? Which of these places do you visit regularly and why?

