

Synopsis:

Taha and his mum, a new Australian citizen, are travelling around Australia. They leave Kangaroo Island in South Australia to continue their exciting journey. They take the coastal route to Melbourne, board the *Spirit of Tasmania* to travel across Bass Strait, then drive from Devonport to Hobart. Taha records his travels with photographs and notes in the journal that he was given by his teacher, Mrs Zimmerman. He also writes letters to his neighbour back home, Mr Wilson and emails his best friend, Joel.

Before Reading

Discuss the following:

- The book format – Students can read the blurb, the table of contents and skim additional features such as the Aussie Jokes, Slang and Facts. Note the mix of photography and illustrations. Discuss design features.
- Citizenship and immigration – Review the citizenship ceremony (pp6-9) and discuss the importance placed on this ceremonial event. Talk about why, and from where, people migrate to Australia and then become Australian citizens. Locate Scotland on a world map. Ask: Why do you think Robert compares the weather in Melbourne to Scotland?
- Campervans – Taha and Mum take their campervan, the Southern Cross, on a ferry. Ask: What special features would the ferry need to secure cars and campervans? How would the cars come aboard and disembark? How does this ferry compare to the car ferry that travels between the South Australian mainland and Kangaroo Island?
- Indigenous Australians – Do students know about the indigenous Australians or traditional owners of the land in their local area or in Tasmania? Discuss the references to the original Tasmanians on pages 54, 60 and 90. (It is important to acknowledge the role of indigenous Australians and explore

Australia's indigenous history prior to European settlement.)

Build up a collection of resources such as books, travel magazines, maps, street directories and websites.

Language Features and Activities

First person narrative:

- The author engages the reader by using a character, Taha, to tell the story. This makes the narrative very personal. Taha's conversations with his mum and the people he meets give us an insight into their personalities and characters. (For example, Taha has great self-confidence and enthusiasm for life and often imagines himself in roles such as 'official chocolate taster' or 'engine driver'.)

Journals:

- Taha uses his journal to keep photographs and record written information about his trip. Re-read Taha's journal entries (pp77-85). Ask: What would you write about the history of Hobart and Tasmania? What do you think about the way Taha presents information? (For example, he includes photographs, notes on how he feels, details of places he sees, and so on.) Use Taha's journal entries to help with BLM 4 when writing the itinerary that Taha and Mum follow.

Emails and letters:

- Talk about both formats in terms of language, forms of address, use of images, intended reader and reading/writing equipment required. Explore similarities and differences between the forms. Re-read Taha's email to Joel (pp70-71) and Joel's response (p72). Ask: Why do you think Taha wrote about his visit to the Cadbury factory? What do you think about Joel's response? Why do you think Joel made the remark to Taha about eating chocolate? (Is he envious or is he being sarcastic?) Look at the picture of Joel (p73). How does it show how Joel was feeling?

Factual writing:

- Most of the factual information in the text is presented using the device of the Oracle Pod. However, there are other occasions when Mum and Taha give information to the reader. Use the shape of an oracle pod, cut out of card, to record research information about topics or places in this book that the students are interested in. For example, students can use the information from the Oracle Pod to make data tables about the animals found in Tasmania (pp36-45) and on Bruny Island (pp94-101). Include headings such as Name, Description, Food, Habitat, Interesting Fact. Students can also use Blackline Master 3 to investigate and research topics referred to in the text.

Vocabulary:

- Use BLM 5 to explore nautical language. Write the sea shanty (p119) on a large sheet of paper or card. Underline the old English words such as *taint* and *ticker*, and replace them with current words with similar meanings. Use some sticky notes in a different color to cover the original word(s).
- Use a dictionary to find meanings for words and phrases such as 'purser', 'officially', 'awesome', 'mouth of the (Mersey) river', 'tumour', 'extinct' and 'remote'.
- Ask students to make a list of bold or coloured words and explain why these are used in the text

(for example, as sound effects or to describe and emphasise feelings, reactions or other physical features). Refer to 'island hopping' (p12), 'I'm really hungry' (p52) and 'Let's go to Byron Bay!' (p121).

Grammar:

- Make a list of contractions found in the text. Write them out in full to show how letters have been replaced with apostrophes to shorten the words.
- Use an example of alliteration ('some sand, sea and sunshine' – p121) to encourage students to devise their own examples with repetitive consonants in two or more words (such as wild and woolly, threatening throngs). Discuss how alliteration is used in poetry and collect examples to read and display.

Comprehension:

- To maintain an awareness of students' understanding throughout the text, use the chapter headings to ask questions about their content. For example, look at the titles for Chapters 3 and 8 and ask if they are related. Use a variety of question types as well as asking for opinions ('Why do you think few convicts escaped from Port Arthur?') and inference ('Why are the numbers of whales seen around Tasmania increasing?').

Maps and Markers

- Divide the class into groups to find the route from Kangaroo Island to Melbourne. List the main towns that Taha and his mum may have stopped at for fuel or food. Compare each group's suggestions.
- Estimate the number of days Taha and his mum spend in Tasmania.
- How far is Tasmania from the mainland? Which processes are needed to calculate the answer?
- Research the length and width of Bruny Island. Calculate the distance from North Bruny Island to Adventure Bay.

Characters

Taha remains keen to travel and seek out new places and people. He is committed to staying in touch with his neighbour, his teacher and his best friend, Joel.

Taha meets characters such as the Tourism Ambassador, who makes him feel a little scared, and Lachie. Mum reveals she is tiring of the travel when she comments on someone else cooking breakfast on the *Spirit of Tasmania*, but she is determined to finish up their adventure in Byron Bay.

Research Topics

- citizenship and immigration
- the history of Aboriginal people in Tasmania – especially the story of Truganini, the Tayaranutapuna and Mouheneer people
- the history of Hobart and Tasmania
- the history of convict settlement in Port Arthur
- the extinction of the Tasmanian Tiger
- the importance of the Derwent River
- types and habitats of animals in Tasmania and on Bruny Island – especially the Tasmanian devil
- the Australian Antarctic Division in Hobart
- the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race
- the voyages and work of Matthew Flinders and George Bass
- sea shanties and the role they played in a sailor's life



Our Australia series by Phil Kettle
Illustrations by David Dunstan
Teacher notes by Judi Champion
Edited by Emma Short
Design by Goanna Graphics (Vic) Pty Ltd

Useful References

- Tourism agencies
- Local councils, libraries, historical societies
- State automobile clubs – maps and trip planners
- <http://www.hobartguide.com>
- <http://www.spiritoftasmania.com.au>
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruny_Island
- www.dpiw.tas.gov.au (for Tasmanian devils)
- www.cadbury.com.au
- www.discovertasmania.com (information about convicts for teachers)
- *Australian Geographic* articles relating to Tasmania:
 - <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/nsw-gets-large-breeding-population-of-tassie-devils.htm> Tassie devils get sanctuary in NSW, News | 15 July 2010
 - <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/scientists-closer-to-cracking-tasmanian-tiger-genome.htm> More funding needed for thylacine genome, News | 21 June 2010
 - <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/migratory-birds.htm> World's only migratory parrots in peril News | 11 May 2010
 - <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/travel-to-save-a-devil-wildlife> Travel to save a devil, Wildlife | 25 November 2009
 - <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/when-driven-by-hunger.htm> When driven by hunger (convict article), Features | 29 June 2009
 - <http://www.australiangeographic.com.au/journal/tasmanias-adventure-islands-breathtaking-bruny.htm> Tasmania's adventure islands: Breathtaking Bruny

Name: _____ Date: _____

Draw a map of Taha's trip. Add pictures, captions or labels.



Name: _____ Date: _____

Write a review about this book.

Title:

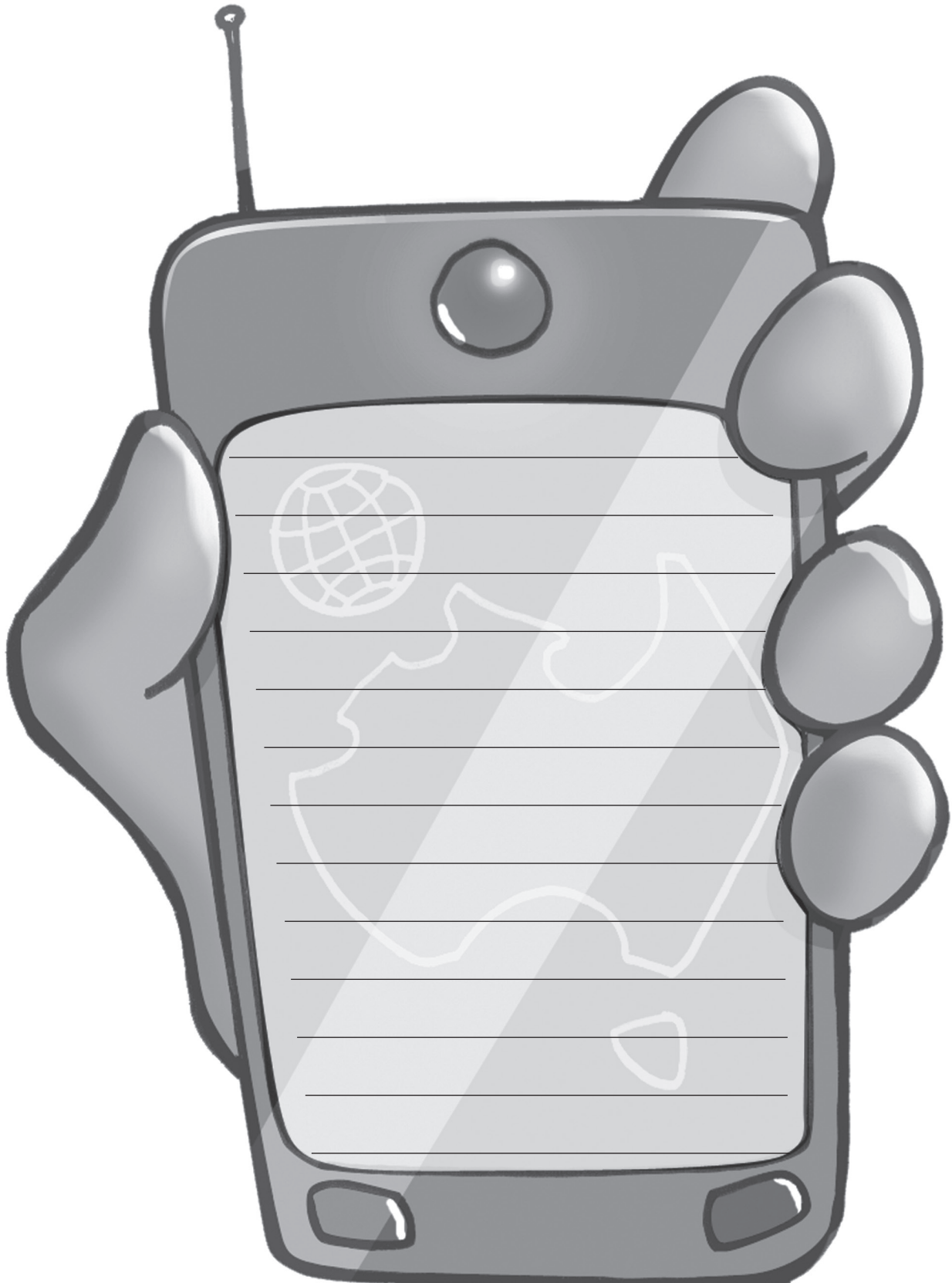
Author:

What happens:

My opinion of this book:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Choose a topic or idea from *Our Australia Hobart*. Use the Internet, books or other resources to research this topic. Record the information you find on the Oracle Pod below.

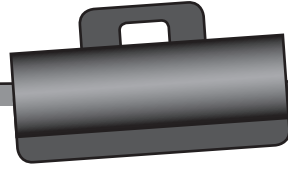


BLM 4

Taha's Hobart Itinerary

Name: _____ Date: _____

Re-read the places that Taha and his mum visited in Hobart. Write the name of each place or area. Then write what Taha or mum did at or thought about that place. The first one has been done for you.



Place:

Tasmanian Transport Museum

Comment:

Taha saw locomotives, rail cars
and carriages, goods wagons,
tram cars and a trolley bus.

Place:

Comment:

Place:

Comment:

Place:

Comment:

Place:

Comment:

Place:

Comment:

Name: _____ Date: _____

Use a dictionary, encyclopedia or the internet to find the meanings of the words below. Write the meaning and use each word in a sentence on the back of this sheet.

deck

cabin

disembark

dock

berth

moored

purser

skipper

catamaran

port

seasick

vessel

