

AUSTRALIA - CULTURE

Good morning students. We are going to study Australia because it was part of the British Empire.

English is the official language and Australia is part of the Commonwealth of Nations (a union of countries which have no legal obligations to one another, but are connected through their use of the English language and historical ties.

Have a look to the planisphere map. Australia is in the south east of the world.

here is the Australia physical Map we can say that it is a big island surrounded by the seas: the pacific ocean on the right, the indian ocean on the left, the coral sea in the north-east, the tasman sea in the south east and the Southern Ocean in the south.

If we look at the political map of Australia we see there are six territories: Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia and Northern Territory

The important cities are on the coasts. The capital is Canberra, but the most important and populated city is Sidney, then Melbourne, they are on the south-east coast. Perth is on the south-west coast and Darwin is on the north, Brisbane is on the north-east coast.

The interior part of Australia is known as the Outback, It is a plain red desert. In the centre of the Outback there is only a city: Alice Springs and a high red rock mountain called Uluru or Ayers Rock, It is a sacred mountain for Aborigines.

Aborigines are the descendants of the first inhabitants who arrived in Australia 40 thousand years ago from Asia. They are very famous for their art, music, traditions and their cave paintings.

They live in isolated villages and are not well integrated into Australian society.

James Cook was the first British captain to settle on Australian shores, in Botany Bay. At first there were peaceful relationships with Aborigines but then they started to fight for the land.

The first British people to arrive in Australia were convicts, British criminals sent there as punishment, even because prisons were too crowded. They worked to built houses and roads.

On the north-east coast of Australia there is the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest [coral reef](#) system, in the Coral Sea, off the Coast of Queensland. It is visible from the space.

The flag of Australia has the Union Jack up on the left corner and a blue background with six stars. The biggest star under the British flag represents the Commonwealth Star; the other 5 stars represent the Southern Cross constellation, a symbol of Australia.

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