**Australia and its neighbours**

**reasoning and interpretation**

Learn how to:
- recognise how evidence and values produce different versions of past events, people and institutions
- compare different perspectives of Australia and the Asia-Pacific area
- use a range of primary and secondary sources and use historical conventions to document sources
- represent the past in a variety of forms including oral presentations, timelines and tables, short essays, discussion and debate
- describe and explain key changes in Australia’s relationship with the Asia-Pacific region, including key political ideas
- understand Australia’s international role in our region
- frame research questions and locate relevant resources, including online resources
- critically evaluate sources including oral history and visual representations.

**knowledge and understanding**

Learn about:
- investigate what society, politics and culture is like in the Asia-Pacific area.
- learn about significant issues and events for Australia and the countries of our region.
- describe and explain the events and ideas that shaped Australian society and its attitude to the Asia-Pacific area.
- learn about Australia’s involvement in international organisations such as the United Nations, and Australia’s security treaties.
- examine the emergence of the USA as a superpower and its effect on Australia.

**Australia — European outpost or part of Asia?**

Australia has long cast its glance towards Europe yet it is located in the Asia-Pacific region. The Asia-Pacific Rim (all the countries bordering the Pacific Ocean) is made up of roughly five areas:
- New Zealand (our closest region neighbour) and the smaller islands of the Pacific Ocean
- South-East Asia
- North Asia
- North America
- South America.

It stands to reason that the Asia-Pacific region is an important part of the world for us.

Australia’s largest trade partners are both in the Pacific — the USA, Australia’s biggest trading partner, and Japan, the second most important. Australia has a special relationship with New Zealand based on kinship, history and free trade. In this chapter we will investigate all the ways in which we depend on the countries of our region.

**Figure 8.1**

Tropical sunset, Bali, Indonesia.
Australia’s place in the world: the background

In spite of being a multicultural society since the end of the White Australia Policy in 1973, Australians still tend to see themselves as having European values, history and institutions. We are a Western democracy. This has created difficulties for our relationships with some other countries in the Asia–Pacific region, which have different traditions.

In the past, Australia saw itself as a European (British) outpost with a small population in a hostile part of the world, far from Europe. Most Australians felt racially superior to non-European neighbouring people, but at the same time feared being overrun or outnumbered by them. For this reason Australians continued to support Britain as their defender but also established a federation in 1901 to improve their defence.

The move away from concentrating on Britain and Europe in Australia’s foreign policy to seeing the USA and the Asia–Pacific as more important was a result of World War II. Britain was defeated by the Japanese in Singapore in 1941 and the Australian mainland was bombed in 1942. As Britain could no longer help, Australia had to look for another ‘great and powerful friend’.

The alliance with the USA was established and strengthened by the ANZUS Treaty in 1951. In 1954 Australia joined the USA’s anti-communist military alliance, the South East Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO), ‘Forward Defence’ was developed by backing Australia’s Western allies in the region. Australia was part of the Commonwealth Occupation Forces in Japan; helped Britain fight the communists in Malaya and aided the USA in Vietnam. These alliances were aiming to keep the presence of Australia’s ‘great and powerful friends’ and their guarantee of protection in the Asia–Pacific region.

Australians continued to fear the intentions of Asian people. Many of these attitudes, until the 1970s, were based on fear of communist expansion and old colonial and racist ideas that were out of step with the times. Australia’s relations with neighbouring Asian–Pacific countries have improved since.
Main themes in Australia’s overseas relations

The three main themes of Australia’s contemporary foreign policy are:

- an alliance with the USA and the West
- good relations with Asia
- an association with the South Pacific.

Some international issues impact Australia’s national interest and security, many of which relate to each other, including:

1. International terrorism (not just based on Islamic fundamentalism)
2. Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) – nuclear, biological and chemical
3. World poverty and related factors such as overpopulation and lack of education
4. Refugees
5. Global warming, climate change and other threats to the environment
6. HIV AIDS, SARS, Avian (bird) flu, tuberculosis and other health threats
7. Natural disasters such as the Indian Ocean tsunami
8. International law and order questions, such as:
   - so-called ‘failed states’
   - countries breaking international agreements
   - other international crimes such as drug trafficking, people smuggling, human rights abuses and environmental abuses.

The government tries to prevent threats to its national security through its relations with other countries. The most important ways it does this are through:

1. Australia’s alliances with the USA and other Western countries.
2. Treaties and exchanges with other countries in defence, trade, law enforcement, the environment and cultural exchange.
3. Involvement with international groups and agencies such as the United Nations and regional associations.
4. Direct military involvement in peace-keeping and military or police operations to support other countries.
5. Overseas aid, investment and help to countries having difficulties such as post-disaster or post-war reconstruction; and assistance with breakdown of law and order, or poverty and disease.
6. Promoting friendly links with other countries through government agencies, non-government agencies (NGAs) and individuals. Much of this happens through cultural and scientific exchange, business connections and tourism.
7. Australia showing itself to be a good example of a world citizen by promoting international law and order, international rights and responsibilities of countries and individuals, and carrying out its international responsibilities.

Did you know?

Global warming may be a real problem for some of the smaller Pacific countries. Many scientists believe that greenhouse gas emissions may warm the Earth, melt the polar ice caps and force the sea level to rise. Tuvalu, a small country north of Fiji, is no more than four metres above sea level and is very worried about this possibility.

Understanding the topic

1. What are the three main themes in Australia’s foreign policy?
2. What are some of the important ways in which the Australian government tries to protect its citizens from overseas threats?
Australia and Japan

Japan is Australia's second biggest trading partner. The excellent relationship between the two countries, as democracies with shared interests, only dates from the 1950s. Australia has a low population (20 million) and abundant natural resources. Japan is an ancient, heavily populated country of over 130 million with a shortage of natural resources. The two countries therefore have complementary trade arrangements where Australia provides raw materials and food and Japan trades manufactured goods in return.

Japan's democratic tradition is half a century old and Australia's White Australia Policy has been dead for over 30 years. Relations have not always been friendly though, as during the early part of the 20th century Japan sought to expand its empire in the Asia-Pacific region through military conquest and Australia had a fearful and racist attitude towards Japan.

Japan is an independent country that has been racially, linguistically and culturally distinct for 3000 years. It tried to isolate itself from the West after the 17th century.

In the 1850s, the Black Ships of US Commodore Matthew Perry forced Japan's opening to the West with a threat of invasion. Japan began to modernise in order to catch up with the technology of the Western powers from the 1860s under Emperor Meiji. At the end of the 19th century Japan modernised its navy. Many Australians feared Japan and felt betrayed by Britain, which many Australians still thought of as the home country, over this treaty with Japan.

Just two years after the Anglo-Japanese naval treaty and alliance, Japan's modernised navy defeated the Russian fleet in the Pacific, which added to Australia's fears. This was the first time a modern European nation had been defeated by an Asian nation, and it ran counter to racist ideas of European superiority common at the time.

Japan's Pacific empire expanded through the next decades, putting it on a collision course with the other major Asia-Pacific powers of the time: the USA, Britain, France and Holland. All these countries had extensive colonies in the region. Britain occupied present-day Malaysia, Burma and India, and its major naval base in Singapore was meant to help protect Australia. France occupied Indochina (present-day Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) and Indonesia was then the Dutch East Indies. Portugal ruled East Timor. The USA took over the Philippines from Spain in 1898.

Japan said that it needed the resources of Asia for its own development and that the USA was preventing this. It also claimed that it wanted to liberate Asia from the European colonisers. In practice, however, Japan's expansion during World War II was brutal and many atrocities and war crimes were committed, such as the Rape of Nanking (Nanjing) and the Sandakan Death March.

In 1942 Singapore fell and Australia was bombed. But in the same year the tide of war started to turn against Japan. Australian troops inflicted the first land defeat on the Japanese at Kokoda and Milne Bay in present-day Papua New Guinea. With US assistance, victory came to the Allies after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan in 1941 caused the USA to enter the war. The USA dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 and Japan had no choice but to surrender unconditionally.

For Japan, the Allied occupation after the War sowed the seeds of their post-war prosperity and democracy. In 1945, the Allies were taking over Japanese territory as a conquered enemy. By 1952, Japan had emerged as a fledgling democracy, welcomed back into the community of nations. The Allies had treated Japan generously and the Japanese were given aid to reconstruct their country. Japan became a democracy (even though the Emperor was retained as ceremonial head of state), a US ally and part of the Western Alliance.

Australia's role in the Allied occupation force in Japan after the War positioned Australia as a reliable Western ally of the USA and Britain. Australia's contribution to the occupation of Japan helped put the hatred of that country as an enemy behind it, and sowed the seeds of a close and mutually profitable relationship between Australia and Japan. The issue of Australian soldiers' Japanese war brides put some of the first cracks into the White Australia Policy.

USA, Britain, France and Holland. All these countries had extensive colonies in the region. Britain occupied present-day Malaysia, Burma and India, and its major naval base in Singapore was meant to help protect Australia. France occupied Indochina (present-day Vietnam, Cambodia and Laos) and Indonesia was then the Dutch East Indies. Portugal ruled East Timor. The USA took over the Philippines from Spain in 1898.

Japan said that it needed the resources of Asia for its own development and that the USA was preventing this. It also claimed that it wanted to liberate Asia from the European colonisers. In practice, however, Japan's expansion during World War II was brutal and many atrocities and war crimes were committed, such as the Rape of Nanking (Nanjing) and the Sandakan Death March.

In 1942 Singapore fell and Australia was bombed. But in the same year the tide of war started to turn against Japan. Australian troops inflicted the first land defeat on the Japanese at Kokoda and Milne Bay in present-day Papua New Guinea. With US assistance, victory came to the Allies after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan in 1941 caused the USA to enter the war. The USA dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 and Japan had no choice but to surrender unconditionally.

For Japan, the Allied occupation after the War sowed the seeds of their post-war prosperity and democracy. In 1945, the Allies were taking over Japanese territory as a conquered enemy. By 1952, Japan had emerged as a fledgling democracy, welcomed back into the community of nations. The Allies had treated Japan generously and the Japanese were given aid to reconstruct their country. Japan became a democracy (even though the Emperor was retained as ceremonial head of state), a US ally and part of the Western Alliance.

Australia's role in the Allied occupation force in Japan after the War positioned Australia as a reliable Western ally of the USA and Britain. Australia's contribution to the occupation of Japan helped put the hatred of that country as an enemy behind it, and sowed the seeds of a close and mutually profitable relationship between Australia and Japan. The issue of Australian soldiers' Japanese war brides put some of the first cracks into the White Australia Policy.

Japan said that it needed the resources of Asia for its own development and that the USA was preventing this. It also claimed that it wanted to liberate Asia from the European colonisers. In practice, however, Japan's expansion during World War II was brutal and many atrocities and war crimes were committed, such as the Rape of Nanking (Nanjing) and the Sandakan Death March.

In 1942 Singapore fell and Australia was bombed. But in the same year the tide of war started to turn against Japan. Australian troops inflicted the first land defeat on the Japanese at Kokoda and Milne Bay in present-day Papua New Guinea. With US assistance, victory came to the Allies after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan in 1941 caused the USA to enter the war. The USA dropped atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945 and Japan had no choice but to surrender unconditionally.

For Japan, the Allied occupation after the War sowed the seeds of their post-war prosperity and democracy. In 1945, the Allies were taking over Japanese territory as a conquered enemy. By 1952, Japan had emerged as a fledgling democracy, welcomed back into the community of nations. The Allies had treated Japan generously and the Japanese were given aid to reconstruct their country. Japan became a democracy (even though the Emperor was retained as ceremonial head of state), a US ally and part of the Western Alliance.

Australia's role in the Allied occupation force in Japan after the War positioned Australia as a reliable Western ally of the USA and Britain. Australia's contribution to the occupation of Japan helped put the hatred of that country as an enemy behind it, and sowed the seeds of a close and mutually profitable relationship between Australia and Japan. The issue of Australian soldiers' Japanese war brides put some of the first cracks into the White Australia Policy.

Japan—the US's long-time ally—entered the conflict on the side of the Axis powers, attacking the USA on December 7, 1941. This attack marked the beginning of the Pacific War and led to a series of costly battles in the Pacific and Asia. Japan was eventually defeated and occupied by the Allies, leading to its surrender in 1945. Japan's defeat was a significant turning point in World War II and its aftermath had profound implications for both Japan and the world. 

Japan's post-war state was dominated by military occupation and reconstruction. Japan's government was dismantled and new democratic institutions were established. The country was demilitarised and its military and industrial capacities were significantly restricted. The Allies were determined to prevent Japan from ever again being a threat to world peace. This was the context in which Australia and Japan started their post-war relationship.

Australia's reaction to Japan's post-war state was complex. On one hand, there was a desire to see Japan democratise and become a reliable ally. On the other hand, there was a lingering fear of Japan and its aggressive past. This had implications for Australia's foreign policy and its relationship with Japan. The relationship between Australia and Japan has since evolved, with periods of tension and cooperation. Despite these challenges, the two countries have maintained a strong and mutually-beneficial relationship, reflecting the importance of the Asia-Pacific region in global politics.
Australia and Korea

Korea is divided into the Republic of (South) Korea, which is a Western ally and has a population of about 50 million people, and The Peoples’ Republic of (North) Korea, which is communist and has a population of about 20 million. South Korea became Australia’s fourth-biggest trading partner in 1997, and has a similar complementary trade relationship with Australia today as does Japan.

Korea was one of the oldest, most isolated nations on Earth – racially, linguistically and culturally distinct for 5000 years.

Christianity was brought to Korea in the 18th century, creating civil war and strife, but was eventually adopted by about one-third of the people. From 1885 Presbyterian and Methodist missionaries came to Korea. Australian and other Western missionaries worked in Korea from the mid-1880s, establishing schools and hospitals.

Over the centuries Korea was devastated by foreign invasions, particularly by Imperial Japan. Japan had taken over the country by 1910, turning it into a puppet state and brutally suppressing its language and culture for nearly four decades. In 1919, when the last Korean king, King Kojong, refused to be a puppet ruler, the people rose up, but Imperial Japan ruthlessly put down the uprising. From 1919 to 1945 Korea was one of the oldest, most isolated nations on Earth – racially, linguistically and culturally distinct for 5000 years.

Did you know?

The Hangul alphabet, consisting of 28 letters, and promulgated by King Sejong in 1446, was created to allow common people to be literate. Turtle-boat, Robukon, iron-capped warship, were invented by Admiral Yi Sun-shin in 16th century to defeat the invading Japanese navy of Toyotomi Hideyoshi.

Ondol, or under-floor heating, has been a feature of Korean homes for thousands of years. Tribulat Korea were movable wooden printing blocks of the complete collection of Buddhist texts, carved in the early 13th century. Source: Colin Wood, Effra, VATST, 1968

Did you know?

Recently a modern, high-tech freeway tunnel was built through a mountain in South Korea, where a tiger had been held to be shaped like a tiger. When many road accidents happened, the local villagers lobbied the government to build statues of tigers, and accidents stopped. The Korea-Monastery culture — to cope with the natural monster. What was the only animal stronger than a tiger? Did you guess? An elephant!

Today South Korea has become one of the richest capitalist economies in the world, while the communist North stands isolated, starving, and its people governed under some of the planet’s last communist dictators. The rebuilding of South Korea after the Korean War has been a modern miracle. South Korea is a world leader in technology and the Global Economy. Korean brand names like Samsung, LG, Hyundai and Daewoo are household names in the West. In 1965 Australia signed a South Korea Trade Agreement. In 1992 the Australia–Korea Free Trade Agreement was created to forge closer ties.

South Korea is now giving economic help to the impoverished North Korea. There is still a state of military tension, but this may diminish as the two nations move closer. North Korea’s nuclear weapons program continues to be of great concern for the Asia–Pacific region.

In 1950 the Korean War broke out: one of the most savage in recorded history. UN Forces under US command managed to protect the South from the North’s communist takeover, but destroyed the country through bombing. As a direct result of the three-year war, Korea was left geographically and ideologically divided, impoverished and ruined.

The Statue of the Brothers (Figure 1.13) is an 18-metre wide and 11-metre high symbol of the Korean War at the Republic of Korea National War Memorial in Seoul, South Korea and depicts a famous story about two brothers on opposite sides of the Korean War. The plaque reads in part:

The statue symbolising the Korean War depicts the past sufferings of the Korean people … the statue represents the dramatic reunion of an elder brother who was a Republic of Korea Army office and his younger brother who was a soldier of the North Korean Army on the Korean War battlefield.

Source 1

Source: ROK National War Memorial, Seoul

Understanding the topic

1 Read ‘Did you know?’ (on p 198).
2 In groups, discuss the early Korean innovations listed, and explain reason why each was important. Which do you think was most important and why?
3 Why is Korea important to Australia politically, economically and historically?
4 How did Korea come to be divided?
5 What was the result of the Korean War for both South Korea and North Korea?
Australia’s involvement in the Korean War 1950–53

The North Korean People’s Army crossed the 38th parallel into South Korea on 25 June 1950. Their intention was to push southward and reunify Korea under a communist government. After 72 hours of rapid advance, the North Koreans captured the southern capital, Seoul, and continued their offensive under increasing aerial bombardment from US and South Korean aircraft. Within days the USA, Britain and Australia had dispatched air and naval forces to support the hard-pressed Republic of Korea (ROK) forces.

The Australian government broke the news during an evening radio interview that Australian troops would be committed to Korea. The Third Royal Australian Regiment (3 RAR) was to fight alongside the two British battalions in the Commonwealth Brigade under the command of US General Douglas Macarthur’s UN forces in Korea. As the South Koreans fought against the northern invaders, the USA and its allies within the UN prepared to fight what they feared was a foray of communism into the post–World War II free world. The Korean Peninsula was to be the major battle ground.

By September 1950, when 3 RAR arrived, UN forces had been driven back by the North Korean invaders to a small area around Pusan in the south but UN forces then began driving the invaders back towards the 38th parallel. The UN forces continued to push the communists north towards the Yalu River and the Peoples’ Republic of China. Then, in 1951, the communist Chinese invaded Korea and the UN forces were then fighting a two-front war. The War continued, with no outright victory for either side until 1953, when a ceasefire line was established on the 38th parallel once more.

Seventeen thousand Australian Service personnel served in Korea, including Army and RAAF nurses. Of these, 339 were killed, 1216 were wounded and 29 became prisoners of war. As a proportion of forces committed to the war, Australia suffered the highest casualties of any war it has fought apart from World War I.

There were 74 000 UN fatalities, 35 000 US fatalities, and a staggering three million Korean dead. The ceasefire accorded no glorious victory, only a bitter truce which did, however, secure South Korea’s future prosperity.

The Battle of Kapyong

The Australian Army’s participation in the Korean War included several exceptional actions. Of all the military feats of the battles of the Royal Australian Regiment in Korea, only the Battle of Kapyong was recognised formally with the award of a US Presidential Unit Citation, shared with a Canadian infantry battalion and a US tank company. It elevated a hard-fought rearguard action to the most commemorated Australian action of the Korean War.

Kapyong was not a big battle but it was a significant one. Timing was the key to its importance and subsequent recognition. It was an important delaying action holding up the Chinese advance to the South Korean capital, Seoul, allowing its evacuation and probably saving many lives.

Source: based on Bob Breen, The Battle of Kapyong, Sydney, 1992

Did you know?

The Battle of Kapyong was the most significant battle for the Australian Army in the Korean War. In the valley below, a combined small force of 7400 Australians and 900 Chinese soldiers supported by 15 US tanks and New Zealand field artillery. These 10 000 Chinese soldiers had Division 20 kilometres to the South of the forces with whom they were fighting. By 23 April 1951, the Allied forces withdrew strategically through heavy fighting. The Chinese incurred such high losses (they became exhausted and incapable of continuing the advance towards Seoul). Source: Dedication at the site of the Battle of Kapyong

Thinking historically

Frame research questions and locate relevant resources

1. Read the story of the mountain shaped like a tiger in ‘Did you know?’ (p.199)? As a class, discuss the relevance of ‘Feng Shui’ to the construction process. What conclusions can you draw about modern South Korea from it?
2. Investigate the symbolism of South Korea’s flag.
3. Using the Internet and other media, investigate the recent relations between the two Koreas. Are they likely to become unified in the future? Justify your answer.
4. Explain the representation of the Statue of the Brothers (Figure 8.13 and source 1) in terms of literal (content and context) and symbolic meaning.

Understanding the topic

1. Construct a timeline on the main events in the history of Australia–Korea relations.
2. What overseas obligations led Australia to send troops to the Korean War?
3. What is your reaction to Mrs Kim’s story (see the Did you know? on page 200)?

Did you know?

The 1951 Chinese attack that led to the Battle of Kapyong interrupted ANZAC Day for the Turkish soldiers of the Royal Australian Regiment who had been in the New Zealand artillery.

Explain the representation of the Statue of the Brothers (source 1) in terms of literal (content and context) and symbolic meaning.
Chapter 8 AUSTRALIA AND ITS NEIGHBOURS

8.6 Australia, South-East Asia and Indonesia

The ten countries of South-East Asia – Kampuchea (Cambodia), Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar (Burma), the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste (East Timor) and Vietnam – are so different from one another that it is difficult to work out what they have in common. The area is a patchwork of different languages, cultures and religions.

Some of these countries have histories going back nearly 2000 years to early Buddhist and Hindu kingdoms and empires (Funan in Indochina in the 2nd century AD, Srivijaya in Indonesia during the 5th century AD and the Khmers of Cambodia in the 6th century AD, to name but three).

A common experience of all the countries of South-East Asia except Thailand is that they were colonised by foreign powers from the 16th century, but all at different times. The Portuguese were the first in Timor in the 16th century. The Dutch began colonising Indonesia from the 17th century but did not finish this process until they took over Aceh in northern Sumatra at the end of the 19th century. The Americans were the last, defeating the Spanish and conquering the Philippines in 1898.

All the colonised countries of South-East Asia developed ideas of nationalism and a desire for independence in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Revolutions were often brutally crushed by the European rulers, but independence heroes emerged such as Jose Rizal in the Philippines, Sukarno in Indonesia and Ho Chi Minh in Indochina.

Imperial Japan’s Asia-Pacific War interrupted this process. By 1942 Japan had taken over all the European and US colonies in the region. Some independence fighters such as Ne Win in Burma and Sukarno in Indonesia sided with the Japanese against their imperial masters. Others, such as Ho Chi Minh, fought against the Japanese. The goal was the same, however: independence after the end of the War.

After independence the new countries in South-East Asia experienced a turbulent history. Much tension erupted during the birth of the new country of Malaysia. The Islamic Malays of the area were concerned about being outnumbered by the Chinese, and with the help of the British, limited their rights to land and political power. Many Chinese rebelled against this and joined the communists. The communists were eventually defeated by the British with the help of Australia. The final Malaysian Federation was established in 1963. Two years later, the overwhelmingly Chinese city of Singapore broke away from the Malaysian Federation to gain independence.

Indonesia became a dictatorship after 1947 and was ruled by its independence leader, Achmad Sukarno, until 1965. Indonesia had a troubled beginning because of many regional differences with its thousands of islands, which were hard to keep unified.

Sukarno also wished to take over land in North Borneo which led him into conflict (confrontation) with Malaysia in 1962. British and Australian troops fought to stop Indonesian infiltrators from entering North Borneo.

Concern about Sukarno’s Indonesia was a main reason why Australia lent its support to the USA in Vietnam in 1962. It was felt that because of help given, the Americans would support Australia if attacked by Indonesia.

In 1966 Sukarno was thrown out of power and replaced as president by General Thoujub Suharto in a bloody revolution in 1965 when tens of thousands were killed (communists and ethnic Chinese particularly).

President Suharto was anti-communist and pro-Western. He was also a dictator and corrupt, but Australia’s relations with Indonesia improved.

Did you know?

At great personal risk to themselves, the Timorese had helped Australian soldiers (Sparrow Force) fight the Japanese in World War II. In 1975, during the Indonesian invasion, to help it in its Hour of Need. Much to the dismay of many Australians, successive Australian governments did not come to East Timor’s aid, recognising Indonesia’s occupation of East Timor.

Did you know?

An Australian General and over 500 Australian service personnel ran the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) from 1992 to 1993, assisting that country’s return to democracy and maintaining law and order after the murderous rule of the Khmer Rouge led by Pol Pot.
In 1975, 400 years of Portuguese rule collapsed in East Timor. No sooner had East Timor declared its independence than it was invaded by Indonesia. It is alleged that Indonesian troops also murdered several Western journalists who were covering the invasion.

Twenty-four years later the East Timorese still demanded independence. The UN finally sponsored a vote for the East Timorese to decide about independence and 78 per cent voted in favour. Violence erupted and the Australian Defence Force led international peace-keepers of INTERFET into the province to protect the inhabitants and UN peace monitors.

Australia handed power over to the UN in 2001 to prepare East Timor for independence, although the Australian Army still provided most of the protection. Finally in 2002, East Timor received its independence and took the name Timor-Leste.

The Indonesian people forced President Suharto’s resignation in a popular uprising in 1999 and put Indonesia on the road to democracy. In 2001 Megawati Sukarnoputri, daughter of Sukarno, became Indonesia’s first democratically elected President. Indonesia recognised Timor-Leste’s independence in 2002.

**Case study 2**

**Capital punishment in Asia**

The use of the death penalty in Asia against Australian citizens is a good indicator of some of the differences between Australia and some of its regional neighbours and continues to create difficulties.

Australia does not have the death penalty, claiming it to be ‘barbaric’. Yet criticising its neighbours for using the death penalty against Australians who break the law in these countries may be seen as arrogant. Australia could be accused of being racist, thinking itself more civilised and progressive than countries that appear to put less value on human life and the reformation of prisoners.

The criticism by the Australian media and other groups of the application of the death penalty to Australians who break the law in other countries may be taken as interference in other countries’ internal affairs and show a lack of respect for their independence and legal systems. It could imply that Australia believes its citizens to be ‘above the law’ in these countries.

Australia may appear hypocritical in its attitude to the death penalty and give mixed signals to our neighbours. Many Australians seemed happy when the Bali Bombers, the Jemaah Islamiyah terrorists who killed 186 people in 2003, were sentenced to death although Australia is officially against the death penalty. The Australian Federal Police continued to cooperate with the Indonesian National Police in providing evidence to convict the Bali Nine, although the penalties for these Australians may be death.

Many Asian countries see Australia as weak in punishing drug offenders. With its emphasis on reforming drug addicts they believe Australia is too soft on traffickers. They think that Australia has a drug problem that does not exist in their countries. In their opinion drug trafficking is a crime similar to murder, as it destroys lives and should be punished in the most severe way in order to protect their citizens.

**Understanding the topic**

1. Summarise some of the main differences and similarities between southeast Asian countries.
3. Who was Sukarno and what were some of his policies?
4. Why did Australia send troops to Vietnam in 1962?
5. What was Australia’s reaction to the Indonesian invasion of Timor in 1975? What do you think about it?
6. Why did Australia–Indonesia relations deteriorate after 1999?
7. How have Australia’s relations with Indonesia and South-East Asia improved since 2001? Why have they improved?
Australia and the Pacific

Australia is important for the South Pacific due to its geography and history. Like Asia, the Pacific Islands are vast and varied. The first inhabitants of the Pacific Islands are thought to have migrated from South-East Asia over 40,000 years ago. They were hunters but they were followed by other waves of migrants bringing pigs and cultivated plants, such as yam and taro.

Contact with the world beyond the Pacific began from the 17th century. By the early 19th century European, Australian and US traders, whalers, missionaries and beachcombers began to enter the Pacific. They were followed by the navies of various countries to protect their citizens and prevent other countries from getting too strong a foothold in the Pacific. These newcomers were the agents of change. Historian Alan Moorehead coined the term ‘fatal impact’ in the 1960s to describe the effects the Western newcomers had on the Pacific people. This is probably far too simplistic, ‘Eurocentric’ and culturally arrogant an explanation and change in the Pacific is far more subtle and complicated than this.

From the 1770s in Tahiti right through to the 1890s in the Solomons, when the Pacific leaders realised the newcomers were there to stay, they tried to use them for their own purposes, such as acquiring trade goods and firearms to defeat their traditional enemies and obtain greater power. The newcomers, on the other hand, saw it as in their interests to identify with powerful local leaders to ensure their safety, get a foothold and make money. Once they had identified the powerful local chief, the newcomers would often ‘make’ them a king (an idea traditionally not known in the Pacific) to defeat their traditional enemies and obtain greater power. The newcomers, however, brought about more change than could be foreseen by the Pacific Islanders. Following the whalers came a handful of resident traders. Later labour ships arrived looking for people to work on the plantations of Fiji, Queensland, Samoa, and on the farms and mines of New Caledonia. Some were taken against their will (blackbirding); however, soon Pacific Islanders went voluntarily and made repeated trips. They brought back metal goods, firearms, cloth and tobacco in return for their work. These new forms of wealth on the islands were undermining the traditional way of life. Firearms were often an excuse for Western powers to take over the islands, as when Britain declared a Protectorate over the Solomons in 1893 to regulate the labour and arms trade. The colonists in Australia interfered too and put pressure on Britain to take over many Pacific Islands because they feared the ambitions of other imperial nations.

World War II saw bloody battles being fought in the Pacific Islands to drive the Japanese back. After World War II, ‘the winds of change’ – moves towards independence – came to the South Pacific more slowly than elsewhere, but come they did. However, island independence has brought a whole new set of problems for the Pacific.

- **Did you know?**
  - The Polynesians are closely related to the Malays of Indonesia, Malaysia.

- **Did you know?**
  - In the 1950s Australia established the Colombo Plan to help the countries of Asia with aid and education. It was one of the first challenges to the White Australia Policy as it allowed Asian students to study in Australia. Once they graduated, however, they had to return home so their new skills could be used to help their own country.

- **Did you know?**
  - During World War II when they were fighting the Japanese invaders, some tribes in Guadalcanal took up headhunting again after many years milestones.

**Faces of the Pacific**

- **Figure 8.20**
  - Woman from Trobriand Islands PNG.

- **Figure 8.21**
  - Man from the New Guinea Highlands.

- **Figure 8.22**
  - Man from the New Guinea Highlands.

- **Figure 8.23**
  - Solomon Islander ‘Salt Water’ people on the artificial islands of Malaita.

- **Figure 8.24**
  - Solomon Islander boy with traditional pan pipe.

- **Figure 8.25**
  - Man from the New Guinea Highlands.

**thinking historically**

1. **Explain why significant social and cultural movements have developed and evaluate their influence on societies.**
   1. Complete a table listing reasons supporting and reasons against the ‘fatal impact’ explanation of culture change in the Pacific.
   2. Investigate either the Pomares in Tahiti, Tupoa of Tonga, Kamehameha of Hawaii, or Cakobau in Fiji. Create a brief biography (three quarters of a page) with a correct list of references.
   3. Find out about blackbirding or the cargo cult. What can you learn about how cultures change from this?

**Understanding the topic**

1. Summarise the main details of settlement in the Pacific in point form or in a table.
2. Why did outside countries move into the Pacific? What did they want to gain?
3. What did the Pacific Islanders seek from the newcomers?
4. Draw six conclusions about the lifestyle and culture of Pacific Islanders from the pictures in figures 8.20 to 8.25.
5. List the main ways in which Australia has been involved in the Pacific over the years in the form of a timeline.
In the cool of a dying day, Scott Rush grips his prison bars with both hands and stares out in despair at freedom, something he hasn’t much thought about until recently. It’s been a sweltering day, he’s wearing only board shorts, and is barefooted and bare-chested to catch the faint breeze that comes at dusk. A strong-looking young man. Hanging on, staring out. Silent.

Rush has much to think about and plenty of time to do it. He’s one of the Bali Nine, eight men and one woman, all Australian, arrested the previous Sunday night. Four had packs containing a total of 8.3 kilograms of heroin strapped around their bodies and concealed beneath their clothes, and for them this prison block could be the first step to death row and a firing squad …

At about noon, Rush’s parents spent half an hour in the exercise area with him and half a dozen guards under the unrelenting intrusion of the media, camera lenses thrust through the bars to capture every gesture and expression, tape recorders seeking their words.

They are sun-weathered Queens-landers, decent-looking ordinary people. At first they had been bewildered and distressed by the attention and their son’s circumstances. But with that wonderful resilience of parents when their children are in trouble, they quickly rallied, ignoring the intruders as they sat at a picnic table with Rush. They brought him love, courage and a Bible. And jelly beans. ‘Oh, he’s just a baby,’ said a Balinese woman, a media interpreter. He’s 19.

There is no doubt it is a big catch, but there is equally no doubt their net is full of tadpoles and they have missed the sharks, the suppliers who sold the drugs. Their trumpeting cannot gloss over the reality that instead of being a great triumph of law enforcement, the Bali police and the Australian Federal Police agents who tipped them off have presided over a botched investigation.

In every investigation, the ‘mules’ who carry the drugs across borders are the least important targets. They are expendable and often opportunistic amateurs. The real targets are the criminals who process and sell the drugs. They were not arrested.

Source: Philip Cornford, Sydney Morning Herald, 23 April 2005

The Bali Nine would undergo a jury trial where 12 people would discuss the evidence to see if they were guilty beyond reasonable doubt. Conduct a mini jury. Can your group reach a consensus or agreement about what you believe? Try to compromise with the opinions of others.

Using an Internet search engine such as Google or Yahoo, create a search string to find out about the Bali Nine. Collect one article or website on this and comment on the authors, persuasive techniques, intended audience, and appeal and reliability of the article or website. Are you persuaded by the article or site? Give reasons. Report back to the class about your findings.

Now you have developed a point of view on the Bali Nine cases, write a letter to promote it. Depending upon your point of view, either write a Letter to the Editor to a newspaper if you believe the Bali Nine deserve their fate, even if you think the penalties are too harsh, or write to the Indonesian Ambassador to Australia, or the Australian Foreign Minister if you want better treatment for the Bali Nine. Set out your letter correctly (introduction, main body, conclusion). Be polite, logical and persuasive.

What should the role of the Australian Government be in relation to the Bali Nine? Do you detect any double standards with regard to the application of the death penalty? Brainstorm individually or in groups possible actions that the Australian Government may take and consequences for these actions. Make a recommendation to the Australian Government (either the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister or the Australian Ambassador to Indonesia) as to what you think they should do.
Making links

chapter summary

Australia’s place in the Asia–Pacific region

Some people are concerned about whether Australia is an Asian country and whether Asia should be more important to Australia than the US alliance. Racism against Australia and stereotyping Australians also happens in some Asian countries. For a long time Australia was refused access to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) because it was not considered Asian. Australia also had disagreements with countries such as Indonesia and Malaysia in the region. The longest-serving Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahathir Mohamad, criticised Australia for not having Asian values. He viewed Australia as believing itself to be superior to Asian countries in attitudes to such things as capital punishment of drug traffickers, human rights, and wanting to influence the internal politics of Asian countries to get them to be more like Australia. Although there may be elements of truth in all these points, they were also a stereotype.

In 2005 Australia finally signed the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation with ASEAN, paving the way for it eventually becoming a full member of the association.

what do you know now?

2. In groups, brainstorm as many ideas as you can. Discuss any patterns that emerge. What conclusions can you draw? Report back to the class.

Comparing and contrasting Australia and the Asia–Pacific

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Similarities &amp; shared values</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Society</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art &amp; culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Write a letter to Australia’s Federal Justice Minister expressing your carefully considered opinion on the death sentence handed down to the ringleaders of the Bali Nine. In your letter you must show that you are aware of arguments against your point of view, and refer to them in your letter in order to counter (argue against) them. Find out the name of the Minister, so you can properly address him or her in the letter. Plan and lay out your letter correctly.

4. Debate or write an essay on the topic: “Our attitude to the countries of our region must change if we are to have a future.”

what else could you find out?

1. Find out about Australia’s special relationship with New Zealand. Construct an annotated timeline of the main events in the development of this relationship.
2. Draw a chronologically labelled world map of the history of Australian peace-keeping missions.
3. Investigate the history of the White Australia Policy and construct an annotated timeline of the main historical events concerning it.
4. Refer to the official government website and tourism web pages of one of the countries covered in this chapter. Use a desktop publishing program to produce a pamphlet of important advice for prospective Australian tourists visiting that country. Include correct referencing of resources used.
5. Faith Bandler is a notable Australian whose father was a Pacific Islander from Vanuatu. He was forcibly brought to Queensland to work on the sugarcane fields at the turn of the 20th century. Find out about Faith’s life and her contribution to Australia.

Revision quiz

1. What is the Asia–Pacific Rim? What are the five main areas in the Asia–Pacific Rim?
2. Who are Australia’s two biggest trading partners?
3. What is foreign policy? Write at least half a page. Include the idea of ‘national self-interest’ in your answer (explaining what it is).
4. List four current or recent political or foreign policy involvements Australia has had in the region.
5. Name four treaties or international agreements, in which Australia is or has been involved with the countries of the Asia–Pacific.
6. Explain the ideas of complementary trade with regard to Australia’s trade with Japan and South Korea.
7. When did the Australian Defence Force begin its role as peacekeepers? List four places where Australia has sent peace-keeping forces.
8. How did the Allied occupation of Japan help Japan after 1945?
9. What benefits did Australia derive from its involvement in BCOF?
10. What was Australia’s most significant military action during the Korean War and why was it so important?
11. Why did Australia send troops to Vietnam in 1962?
12. What is ASEAN and why is it important for Australia?
13. What difficulties did the Indonesians have in Aceh and have these been resolved?
14. What was INTERFET and how was Australia involved with it?
15. What is the Timor Gap Treaty?
16. Who is the current President of Indonesia?
17. Who was Pol Pot and how did Australia help solve the problems of his rule?
18. Briefly explain the idea of ‘fatal impact’.
19. What was “blackbirding”?
20. List some of Australia’s involvements with the South Pacific Forum.