

The Explorations of Captain James Cook

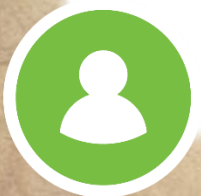
Did he really discover a Terra Nullius?



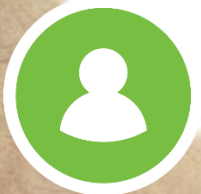
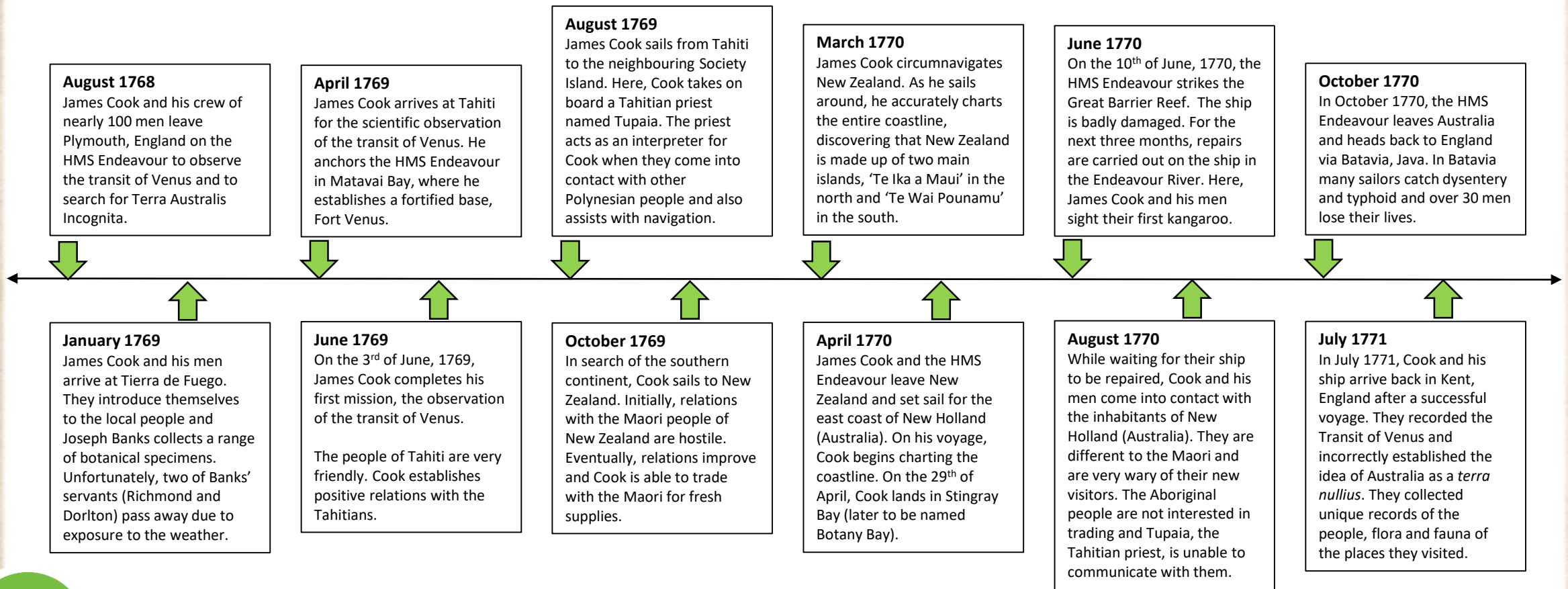
James Cook



- James Cook was born in 1728 in Marton, a town in Yorkshire, England. Although his father was a farm labourer, James decided to be a sailor.
- When he was 18, James became a seaman apprentice. In 1755, he joined the British Navy as an able seaman.
- In 1757, James passed his master's seamanship exams. He used his knowledge of surveying, navigating and astronomy to chart the coasts and harbours of Newfoundland, on the east coast of Canada.
- In 1768, James was appointed First Lieutenant and given command of the HMS Endeavour. His first voyage with this ship was to sail to Tahiti with a team of scientists to observe the transit of Venus across the Sun, so that they could calculate the distance from Earth to the Sun. After this mission, Cook was instructed to sail further south, to look for Terra Australis and to find out what was there.

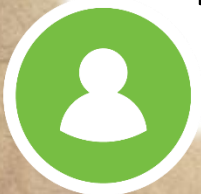


Timeline of Cook's First Endeavour Voyage



Cook Makes First Contact

- While exploring the coastline of Australia in 1770, James Cook recorded in his journal that he had sighted 'native men, women and children sitting around small campfires.' Eventually Cook, Sir Joseph Banks and Tupaia tried to make contact with the indigenous population.
- Cook and his men described the people they saw and wrote detailed journal entries which would later make their way back to England.
- Despite their efforts, Cook and his men were unable to speak with the Australians. They did not welcome the British and had no interest in trading with them.



First Contact with the Original Inhabitants

In 1770, James Cook and his men made first contact with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of Australia.

In small groups, role play what might have happened at this encounter.

Note: The British explorers and the first inhabitants were unable to understand each other. The Australians were very wary of their new visitors.



James Cook - Independent Activity

Imagine you are James Cook. You have just been appointed as First Lieutenant and given command of the HMS Endeavour. Your first voyage is a special mission to the South Pacific and Terra Australis.

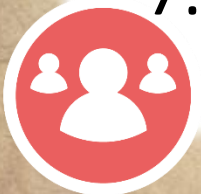
Write a diary entry sharing your thoughts, feelings and experiences about your new role and your first voyage to the south.



James Cook - Quiz

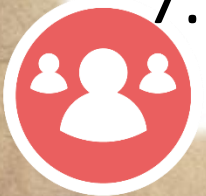
Use the information from the previous slide to answer these questions.

1. What nationality was James Cook?
2. What year was James Cook born?
3. What was James Cook's first job?
4. How old was James Cook when he joined the British Navy?
5. What was one of the places that James Cook drew charts for?
6. What appointment was given to James Cook in 1768?
7. Where did Cook's voyage on the Endeavour take him and why?



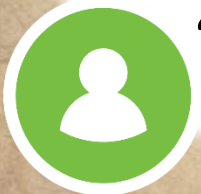
James Cook Quiz - Answers

1. What nationality was James Cook? **British**
2. What year was James Cook born? **1728**
3. What was James Cook's first job? **seaman apprentice**
4. How old was James Cook when he joined the British Navy? **33**
5. What was one of the places that James Cook drew charts for? **Newfoundland**
6. What appointment was given to James Cook in 1768? **First Lieutenant, commander of the HMS Endeavour**
7. Where did Cook's voyage on the Endeavour take him and why? **Tahiti to see the transit of Venus, then south to a possible Terra Australis.**



Terra Nullius

- 'Terra Nullius' was a phrase used to describe a land that was empty of people.
- When James Cook and his men explored the coastline of Australia in 1770, they made some contact with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples (even though this was not overly successful).
- Even though Cook had drawings and other detailed information about encounters he had with the first inhabitants of Australia, he told the British government on his return to England that Australia was a Terra Nullius.
- Using the information presented from Cook, the British government decided that Australia would be a suitable place for England to send their convicts. They decided to establish a penal colony in a place which they believed was 'nobody's land'.



Terra Nullius - Independent Activity

Imagine that you are James Cook.

In pairs, write a letter to convince the British government that Australia is a Terra Nullius and the perfect location to establish a penal colony.

Use the list of reasons from the whole class activity to help you.

