

# EARLY EXPLORERS

*Who explored Australia before the British?*



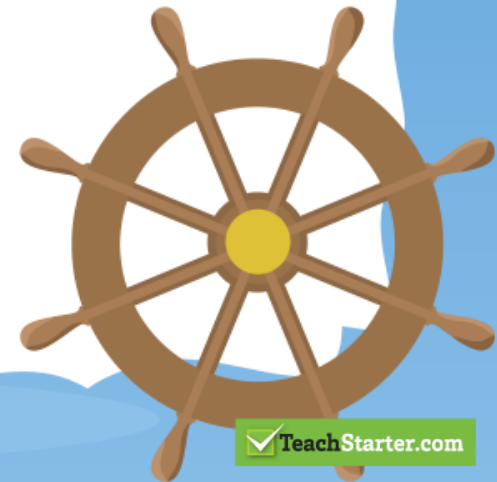
# Why Explore?

- In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, people became more curious about the world around them.
- With improvements in transport (especially in shipping), people in the northern hemisphere became more adventurous and started exploring further afield to discover new lands.
- One of the most significant journeys took place in the early 1490s, when Christopher Columbus (an Italian explorer) stumbled upon the 'New World' (the Americas).
- Europeans were keen to explore these new lands. They wanted to trade with Asia to get spices, to find gold, to expand their knowledge of the world, to create larger empires and to spread Christianity.



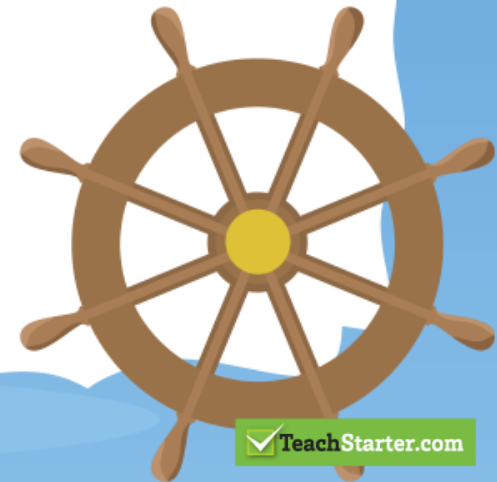
# A World to Discover

Below is a map of the world from 1560. Which countries are missing?



# Terra Australis Incognita: The Great Unknown Southern Land

- Australia was not yet known to explorers from the northern hemisphere when they began travelling the world. The land was populated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Early European explorers did not know if land existed in the southern hemisphere; however, many believed that such lands must certainly exist. The name 'Terra Australis Incognita' was devised by the explorers to describe this hypothetical landmass.
- Eager to discover and claim these new lands, explorers from countries such as China, Portugal, The Netherlands and Britain embarked on long and dangerous voyages by sea.



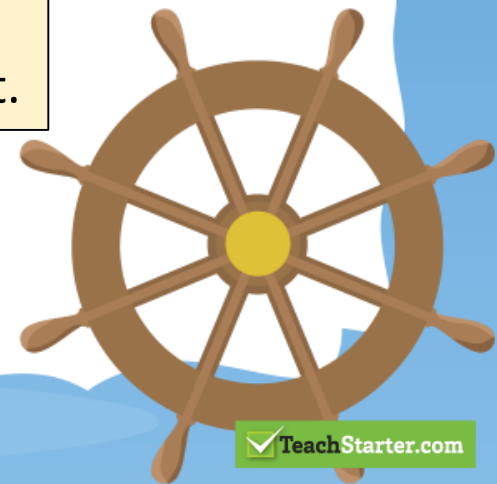
# Terra Australis

What does Terra Australis mean? Identify the correct definition for Terra Australis from the options below.

The Dutch word for 'unknown land' devised in the 14<sup>th</sup> century to describe an unexplored land of the south.

The Spanish word for 'land of terra' devised in the 16<sup>th</sup> century to describe the terrifying land of the south.

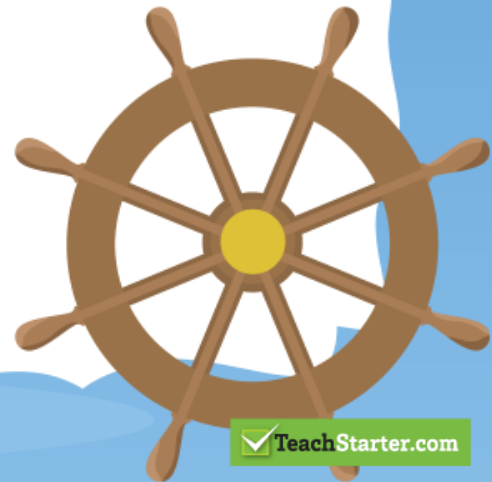
The Latin word for 'south land' devised in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to describe a hypothetical southern continent.



# Terra Australis - Answer

Terra Australis is a Latin word meaning 'south land'. The word was used from the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the 18<sup>th</sup> century to describe the unexplored land in the south. At the time, it was unsure if this land existed, though many believed there was an untouched continent in the south waiting to be 'found'.

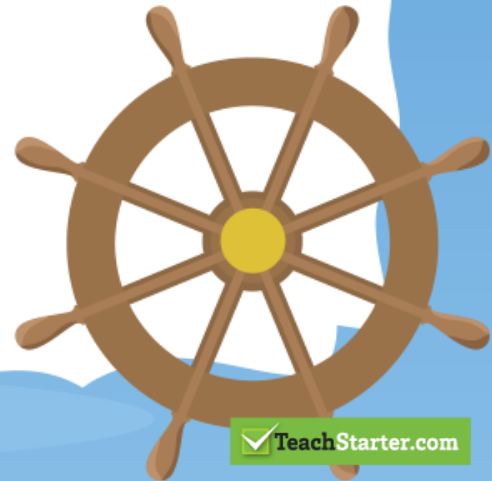
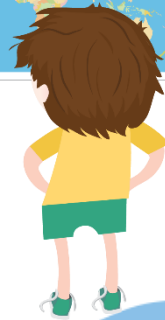
The Latin word for 'south land' devised in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to describe a hypothetical southern continent.



# Terra Australis – Independent Activity

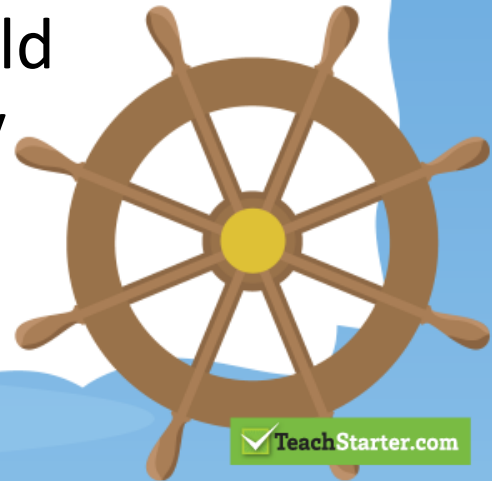
Early cartographers (map makers) drew their own interpretations of the great unknown southern land, Terra Australis.

Imagine you are a 15<sup>th</sup> century explorer. Discuss where you might have explored, then draw your own hypothetical map of Terra Australis.



# Chinese Exploration

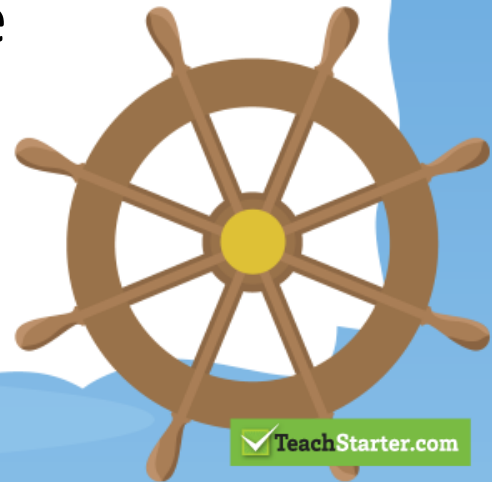
- In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Chinese built ships that were four storeys high, with sails made from plaited bamboo.
- The ships were designed for long voyages and could carry more than 1 000 men. They had several garden boxes on board where fresh herbs and vegetables could be grown.
- The Chinese would sail to Africa, India and through South East Asia in fleets of up to 62 ships. On their journeys, the Chinese would pass over the mysterious land of Australia, which the Malay sailors called 'Greater Java'.





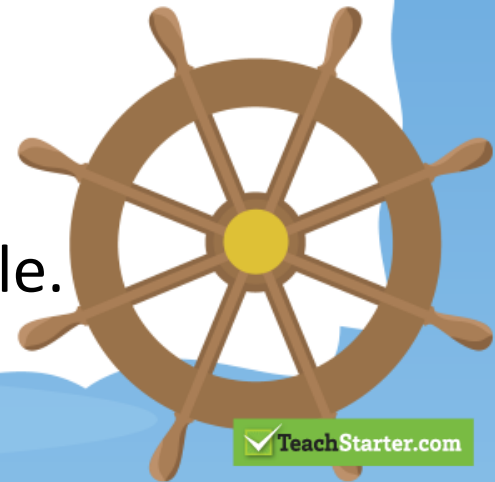
# Zheng He's Voyage

- In 1405, Zheng He and his large Chinese fleet set sail on a voyage of discovery. During the voyage, some of the ships became separated from the fleet and were never seen again. It is thought that these separated ships made their way to Australia.
- Shortly after Zheng He's voyage, the Chinese government introduced a new policy that would stop China from exploring. The aim of this policy was to keep China separated from the rest of the world. With this new policy in place, existing ships were destroyed and the building of any new ships was banned.



# Evidence of Chinese Explorers in Australia

- There is some evidence which supports the argument that Chinese ships from Zheng He's voyage did indeed arrive in Australia.
- During the Australian Gold Rush of the 1800s, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in North Queensland showed great hatred towards the Chinese immigrants. Historians have suggested that this hatred might have been passed down through the generations, due to conflict which may have occurred when the Chinese ships arrived on Australian soil in the 1400s.
- In 1879, a small Chinese statue was found wedged between the roots of an old tree in Darwin, with no explanation of how it got there.
- It is possible that the Chinese were the first non-Indigenous people to arrive on Australian soil. If so, it is unknown whether they stayed for a time or decided that the land was uninhabitable.



# Chinese Explorers - Quiz

Answer **true** or **false** to the following statements.

1. The Chinese built ships that were fourteen storeys high, made entirely out of bamboo.
2. The Chinese were able to go on long voyages as they were able to grow their own fruit and vegetables on the ships.
3. The Malay soldiers called Australia 'Greater Java'.
4. Zheng He was a Chinese emperor who wanted to expand his empire to Australia.
5. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Chinese government banned the building of all new ships and destroyed existing ships.
6. It is impossible that the Chinese made contact with Australia in the 1400s.



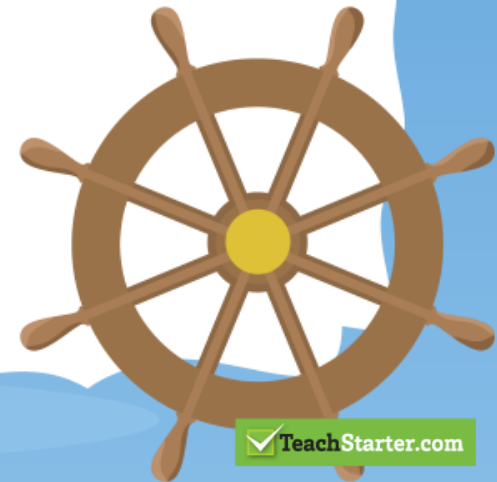
# Chinese Explorers Quiz - Answers

1. The Chinese built ships that were fourteen storeys high, made entirely out of bamboo. **false**
2. The Chinese were able to go on long voyages as they were able to grow their own fruit and vegetables on the ships. **true**
3. The Malay soldiers called Australia 'Greater Java'. **true**
4. Zheng He was a Chinese emperor who wanted to expand his empire to Australia. **false**
5. In the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Chinese government banned the building of all new ships and destroyed existing ships. **true**
6. It is impossible that the Chinese made contact with Australia in the 1400s. **false**



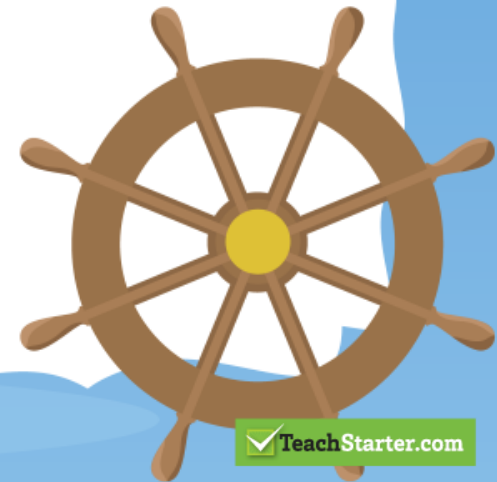
# Chinese Explorers - Independent Activity

Use the template provided to make a 15<sup>th</sup> century Chinese ship.



# A Comparison of Ships

Discuss and compare Zheng He's ship to a ship used by the Europeans.



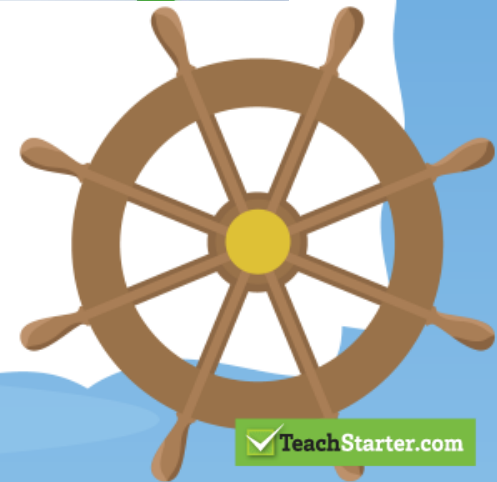
# Spanish and Portuguese Exploration

- In the late 1400s, the Spanish and the Portuguese were the two leading shipping nations of the world. Soon, a rivalry began.
- In 1488, Captain Bartholemeu Dias (a Portuguese explorer) sailed east from Africa, discovering a new route to the east. At the same time, Christopher Columbus (an Italian sailor exploring for Spain) sailed west from Africa, discovering the Americas in 1492.
- In 1498, Vasco Da Gama (a Portuguese explorer) discovered the East Indies. This provided the Portuguese with the opportunity to set themselves up in Malacca and take control of trade across South East Asia.
- Eventually, the Dutch pushed the Portuguese out of the East Indies, taking control of all trade in the region.



# The Portuguese Explore Australian Waters

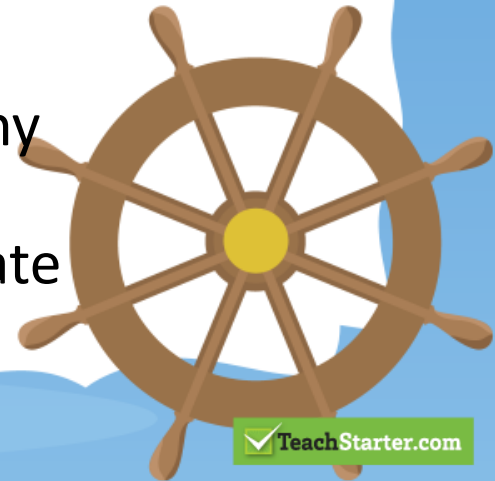
- In 1606, Luis de Torres (a Portuguese sailor working for Spain) discovered a shortcut between Australia and Papua New Guinea. It is thought that he sighted Australia as he passed through these waters, but did not stop, as he did not know what it was!
- The area of water discovered by Luis de Torres and is now known as the Torres Strait.





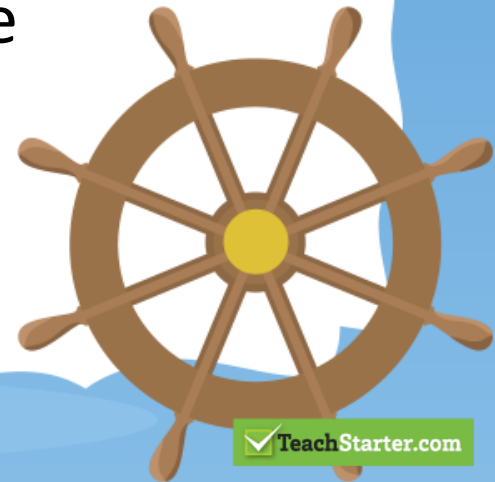
# The Dutch Reach Australia

- As the Dutch began to rule the southern seas, they tried to find quicker ways to get their ships from The Netherlands to the East Indies.
- Rumours began to emerge that there was an island of gold in the south called 'Isla del Oro'. The Dutch hoped to be the first to claim this land of gold, so they sent out ships to find it.
- Unbeknownst to the Dutch, this land of gold did not exist. After several failed expeditions, Willem Jaszoon (a Dutch explorer) set off on a voyage through the Torres Strait in an attempt to find the mythical island. Eventually, he sailed off course and landed on Australian shores.
- The west coast of Australia had a dangerous coastline filled with many reefs, causing ships to become wrecked along the coast. It was not until an accurate map had been drawn that ships were able to navigate safely around the coastline.



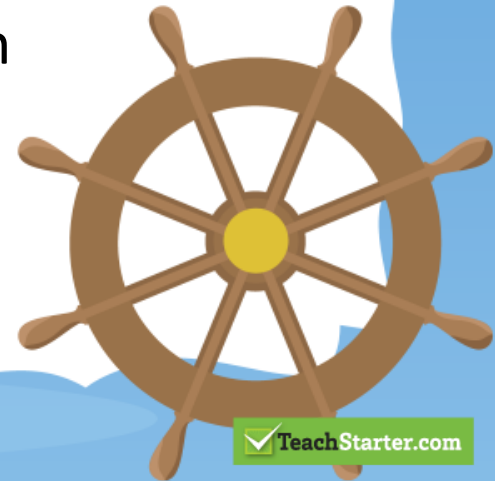
# Willen Janszoon and Dirk Hartog

- When Willem Janszoon found himself on Australian shores in 1606, he was not impressed with what he found. From his perspective, Australia was a land of harsh deserts and was inhabited by 'cruel' people. He had no interest in staying.
- In 1616, Dirk Hartog (another Dutch explorer) dropped anchor at an island along the west coast of Australia, now known as Western Australia. From this island, he could see the mainland in the distance. He nailed a pewter plate to a pole and secured it amongst the rocks to prove that he had been there. Before sailing away, Hartog named the area 'Shark Bay'.



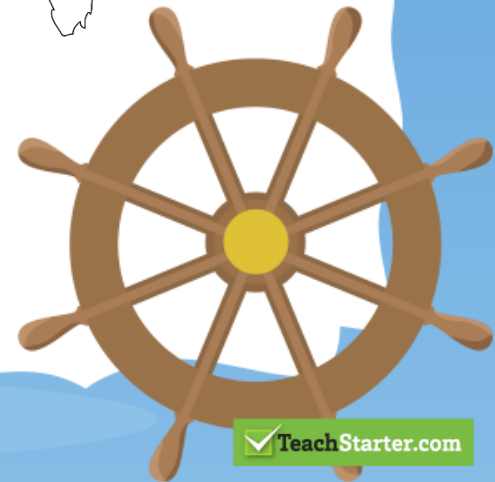
# Abel Tasman

- In 1642, by the instruction of Governor Anthony Van Dieman, Abel Tasman (a Dutch explorer) set out to further investigate the Great South Land.
- Tasman sailed across the Southern Ocean, until he reached the west coast of Tasmania. Due to poor conditions he was unable to approach land, so he continued around the coast until he reached the fertile lands of eastern Tasmania. Here he found an abundance of fresh water and a variety of native animals and birds. However, the trees were extremely large and made Tasman anxious. Thinking the trees were made by giants, he continued his journey east, arriving at New Zealand.
- Tasman named Tasmania 'Van Dieman's Land', in honour of the Dutch Governor, then returned home. The Governor was not pleased by Tasman's return and sent him on another voyage. On his second voyage in 1644, Tasman mapped the remaining coastline. He also named the Great South Land 'New Holland'.



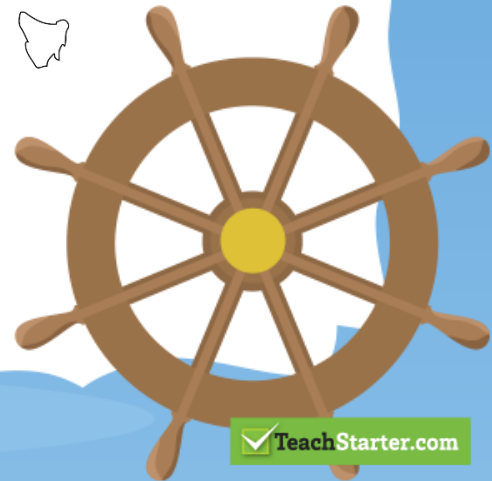
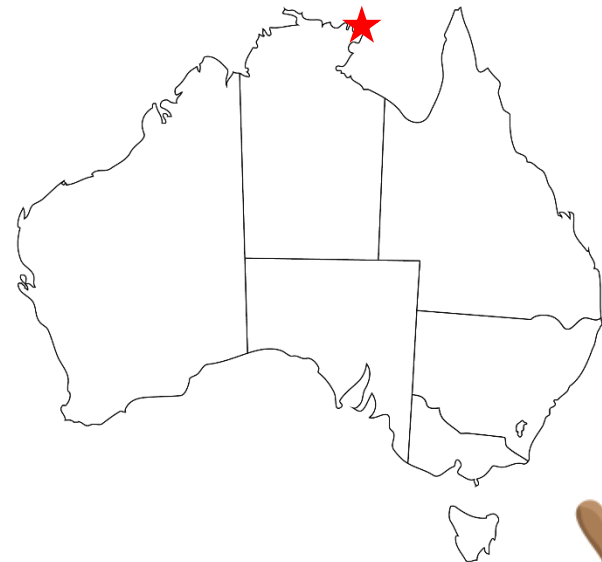
# All in a Dutch Name

- Many places in Australia were named after the Dutch. Some of these places still have the same name, although some have since been changed.
- In 1623, a place in Australia was given the Dutch name 'Kaap Arnhem'. As a class, discuss which place in Australia might have been given this name.



# All in a Dutch Name - Answer

- Cape Arnhem and Arnhem Land in Australia's Northern Territory was traditionally known as 'Kaap Arnhem', named by the Dutch.
- Arnhem was the name of the Dutch ship which explored the area in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. The ship was named after the city of Arnhem in Gelderland, a province of The Netherlands.



# Dutch Place Names - Independent Activity

Initially, about 200 places in Australia had Dutch names. Today, only about 35 of these can be found on a current map.

In small groups, research a current place in Australia that was named by the Dutch. Include the answers to the following questions:

- When was this place discovered?
- Where is it located?
- What was it initially called?
- What is it called today?

