

Exploration: Captain Cook's third voyage



A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean

In this activity sheet you'll learn about Captain James Cook's third voyage. You'll also be able to explore Cook's book *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, which describes this voyage, on the Mirror of the World website.

In the spotlight

A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean: Undertaken ... for Making Discoveries in the Northern Hemisphere ... James Cook's Third Voyage (1776–80)

James Cook
1784

Words to know

Longitude, latitude, chronometer, scurvy, HMS, circumnavigate

People and places

James Cook, New Holland, Botany Bay *Terra Australis*

Pages to visit

http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/exploration/terra_australis/index.php

http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/exploration/terra_australis/cook_third_voyage.php

Three extraordinary world voyages

Captain James Cook was an extraordinary explorer. This is because he achieved so many 'firsts'. He was the first European explorer to map the east coast of Australia and the first European to land there. He mapped many islands in the Pacific Ocean for the first time. He also sailed further south than any other explorer before him. It's no wonder he's so famous.

Captain Cook is most famous in Australia for his first voyage (1768-71), when he landed in Botany Bay in 1770. The goal of his first voyage was to travel to Tahiti, but he also was given a secret mission.

Many people in Europe used to think there was a giant southern continent which they called '*Terra Australis Incognita*' (not to be confused with Australia) which means: unknown southern land in Latin. Cook's secret instructions were to try and find *Terra Australis*. He didn't find it, but he did manage to **circumnavigate** (sail all the way around) and map New Zealand, as well as the east coast of what would later be called Australia for the first time. Before Cook's voyage, explorers had only managed to map the rugged west coast of Australia.

Cook's second voyage (1772-75) was one of the longest and most dangerous voyages ever made. It was expected on most voyages like this that many of the crew would die, but after three years of sailing, only four of his crew had died – and none from the terrible disease of **scurvy**. This was a great success for its day.

The voyage was also important for another reason. Sent to prove or disprove the existence of *Terra Australis*, he also planned to circumnavigate the world in the high southern latitudes. He sailed south of Australia and crossed the Antarctic Circle for the first time in history, but didn't find the proposed *Terra Australis*. He then sailed back and forth across the Southern Pacific, circumnavigating the world and proving once and for all that the imaginary continent *Terra Australis* didn't exist.

Cook made his third voyage to try to find the Northwest Passage, a sea route that people hoped would be able to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans above North America. This route would be very important to European trade if found, because it would mean that ships wouldn't have to sail all the way south around South America or Africa to get from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

Cook sailed to the Pacific Ocean once again; he discovered the Cook Islands and Hawaii which he called the Sandwich Islands after his friend Lord Sandwich. He also mapped the west coast of America and Siberia before going back to Hawaii for the winter.

It was here that Cook met his end in 1779. There was an incident where a few indigenous Hawaiians stole some of the expedition's boats. Cook, in turn, took their chief hostage and was killed in the conflict that ensued.

Question time 1

a) What were some of Captain James Cook's 'firsts'? List five of them.

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b) What does **HMS** stand for? Clue: think of the British Navy and monarchy.

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c) Cook's ships were called the *Endeavour*, the *Resolution*, the *Adventure* and the *Discovery*. What would you name your ship if you were captain?

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Activity 1 – Get interactive!

Read the information on Captain Cook's third voyage on the Mirror of the World website.
http://www.mirroroftheworld.com.au/exploration/terra_australis/cook_third_voyage.php

Question time 2

1. Who was the artist on board Cook's ship?

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2. What are the Sandwich Islands called now?

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3. Why do you imagine this picture is so valuable to historians interested in the Pacific cultures?

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Where in the world are you?

Latitude & longitude

Have you ever seen a grid on a world map? The horizontal lines are called lines of **latitude** and the vertical lines are called lines of **longitude**. We use these lines to find where we are in the world. Hundreds of years ago, longitude was very difficult to measure when you were sailing and many ships got lost or shipwrecked.

Aeroplanes rely on knowing longitude and latitude and they get their information from satellites. But 200 years ago, the only way to measure longitude was with a really good clock. On his second voyage, Cook tested a new, very accurate clock, called a **chronometer**. It could keep its time on the rough seas and withstand heat and cold.

Using the chronometer, if you knew that it was 12 noon back in England and about 10 am in the morning where you were, then you could measure the difference between the two times. They already knew the size of the earth, so with this time difference, they could measure their distance from England. After the invention of the chronometer, ships would be much safer and wouldn't get lost as often.

Activity 2 - Can you find the lines of longitude on a world map?

With an atlas find the approximate longitude and latitude co-ordinates for some of the places from Cook's voyages. You might need to look up some of these place names in the index and on a map.

	Plymouth, England	Cape of Good Hope, South Africa	Botany Bay	Hawaii
Longitude				
Latitude				

Activity 3 – Mapping Cook's voyage

Go to this website to see a map of Cook's three voyages.
<http://www.hunterian.gla.ac.uk/collections/museum/cook/cook.shtm>.

Now trace the route of one of Cook's voyages onto the map below.
Using an atlas, label the major continents and the oceans.
Find Hawaii in your atlas. Label this on your map as the Sandwich Islands, which Cook named after Lord Sandwich. Don't forget to draw a north point for orientation.



When you've finished drawing one of Cook's voyages on the map, give some directions for the voyage.
For example: 'Go west between the north and south island of New Zealand, and then go west to Australia.'

A large rectangular box with rounded corners and a scroll effect at the top and bottom edges. It is intended for students to write their directions for the voyage.

Question time 3

Imagine you are on Cook's ship. You are away from home for years. The only things to eat are foods such as dry salted meat and pickled cabbage. The work is hard and the sun burns your pale English skin.

a) How do you keep your spirits up?

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b) What would you miss most?

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c) If you could take three things with you what would they be? Make a list and also give your reasons.

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Activity 4 – Write like an adventurer

Imagine you are on one of Cook's long voyages and you are one of the first Europeans to see the east coast of Australia, the Antarctic Circle and many tropical islands in the Pacific.

- What else do you notice about new and strange lands? (Think in terms of people, nature and animals you might encounter.)

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- What do you write in your journal? Remember that you could make a lot of money by selling your story back in England when you return, and make it exciting.

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Activity 5 – Named in honour of Cook

Look in the index of your atlas – can you find three places named after James Cook? Where are they?

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Did you Know?

Cook helped to discover a cure for scurvy. This is a terrible disease from malnutrition that many sailors used to get. Some symptoms of scurvy are: tiredness, weakness, aches and pains, bleeding gums, being easily bruised and not healing.

What was it that saved his crew? Pickled cabbage! The vitamin C in it prevents scurvy.

When Cook himself got very ill, he was told he needed the vitamins and nutrients only available from fresh meat. Unfortunately it was the ship's pet dog that ended up on his dinner plate!