



Eureka On Trial: Archives of the Eureka Stockade

Student Activities

The following questions and activities are designed to help students investigate the impact the Eureka Stockade had on the growth and development of Australia's democratic movement.

In using the website students will be able to explore the conditions under which miners operated during the gold rush, as well as how the government of the day managed its relationship with the diggers.

Activities:

- Divide the class into half, one half diggers, and the other half Gold Commissioners or authorities. Organise for students to argue the case for and against the licence hunts.
- Imagine you are a Gold Commissioner on the gold fields. Write a report to the Governor informing him of the conditions of the goldfields.
- Imagine you are a digger on the goldfields. Describe what your daily living conditions are like.
- Select a key figure in the story of the Eureka Stockade and write a small biography, including the role they played in the uprising ie: Raffaello Carboni, J.B. Humffray, Peter Lalor, Governor Hotham, etc.
- Using the website as a guide construct your own time-line of the events that led to the battle.
- Compare the attitudes of those living in Melbourne to the Eureka stockade to those of the diggers.
- Imagine you are one of the Deputies sent to speak to Governor Hotham. What issues would you raise with him?
- Write a letter to the Editor of a newspaper in which you express your thoughts and feelings about the diggers plight and the way in which the authorities handled the situation.
- Describe what you think this poem by Timothy Hayes would have meant to the diggers:
*"On to the field, our doom is sealed
To conquer or be slaves:
The sun shall see our country free
Or set upon our graves."*

Questions to consider:

- What was the purpose in forming the Ballarat Reform League?
- According to Captain McMahon why were the diggers so frustrated with the authorities?
- How did the Eureka Stockade help shape Australia?
- Why do you think the 13 prisoners tried for treason were not found guilty?
- Do you think the diggers actions were treasonous? Why/ why not?
- Many of the diggers on the goldfields came from different countries including Germany, France and Italy. Why do you think the authorities held these foreigners responsible for the outbreak?
- Raffaello Carboni had fought in wars against oppression overseas. What if any, impact do you think he would have had on the other miners?
- Why were the diggers so determined to get the right to vote and what was the attitude of the authorities towards the idea?

- Peter Lalor is by most recognised as the leader behind the movement. Which other characters played a significant role?
- Do you think the battle at Eureka was influenced by the miners desire for democracy or republicanism?
- Why was the Southern Cross flag so offensive to the Government and so symbolic to the diggers?
- What was the role of the Gold Fields commissioner and why do you think they were so despised by the diggers?
- Why was the meeting on Bakery Hill so significant - what did it represent to both authorities and to the diggers?
- Why did the miners gather at the Eureka hotel and what prompted them to destroy the Hotel?
- Could the miners avoid violence in an effort to achieve their objectives?
- How has the legacy of Eureka affected the way we live today?