



THE AUSTRALIAN GOLD RUSH



Australia's Gold Fever

The two images below are artworks depicting the Australian Gold Rush. The first is of Ophir, in NSW, where gold was first officially discovered in 1851, and the second is of Ballarat, Victoria, in 1853.



National Museum Australia



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1. What differences do you notice between the two images? Based on these pictures what could you infer about the course of the gold rush and the impact it had on Australian society and the environment?



2. The role of women in the goldfields is often overlooked, but after the initial 'rush', many women travelled independently or to join their husbands, as gold mining towns sprang up across the colonies. Talk with a conversation partner and discuss how the gold rush might have contributed to women gaining power and financial independence in Australia.



The Eureka Uprising, though short-lived, is one of the most historically significant uprisings in Australian history.



National Museum Australia: Eureka Stockade Riot by JB Henderson

3. Why was it so important, and what outcomes from this event are still evident in society today?

4. The gold rush brought men from all over the world to the goldfields of Australia, but one group in particular was to experience unfair treatment, prejudice, and violence. Why do you think Chinese miners were treated so poorly?



Museum of History NSW

5. Considering the multicultural influx during the gold rush, how might this have influenced attitudes leading to the 'White Australia Policy' in 1901?
