

## Chapter 6: Establishment- The First Fleet

### Chapter Vocabulary

1. Student should pre- read the key terms below prior to commencing reading Chapter 6.

Key Terms	
Rudiments	Basic principles or elements; fundamental skills or knowledge
Allure	Attraction or appeal; the power to entice or captivate.
Prudence	The quality of being cautious, careful, or wise in making decisions.
Penal colony	A settlement or colony where convicts or prisoners are sent to serve their sentences.
Ramifications	Consequences or outcomes that result from a particular action or event.
Agrarian	Relating to agriculture or farming; characteristic of a rural or agricultural society.
Leniency	The quality or act of being merciful or forgiving; a lenient or gentle approach.
Itinerant	Traveling from place to place; not settled in one location
Strategic	Relating to strategies or plans aimed at achieving a particular goal or advantage.
Naval supplies	Resources, equipment, or provisions needed for naval operations or activities

*Read the first section of Chapter 6; 'Captain-General and Commander in Chief Arthur Phillip' and answer the following questions.*

2. **What experiences and achievements contributed to Arthur Phillip's promotion as a Lieutenant at the age of twenty-three?**

Arthur Phillip's experiences during the seven years' war, where he witnessed both British misfortunes and subsequent glories, along with his naval accomplishments, contributed to his promotion as a Lieutenant at the age of twenty-three.

3. **Why was Arthur Phillip considered a suitable officer to lead the establishment of a settlement in New Holland (New South Wales)?**

Arthur Phillip was considered a suitable officer to lead the establishment of a settlement in New Holland (New South Wales) due to his professional knowledge, habitual prudence, and his previous experiences and achievements in the maritime field.

*Read the section of Chapter 6; 'Britain's Prisons and Legal System' and answer the following questions.*

**4. How did the Industrial Revolution contribute to the increase in prison population and poverty in major cities?**

The Industrial Revolution resulted in the movement of people from rural villages to crowded cities to work in factories, leading to overcrowding, lack of work, poverty, and an abundance of petty crime.

**5. Why did the British legal system during this time favour the wealthy and powerful?**

The British legal system during this time favoured the wealthy and powerful because they were the ones who made the laws to protect their own interests, creating an unequal society.

**6. To what extent can the "Bloody code" be considered excessively harsh in its punitive measures?**

The "Bloody code" can be considered excessively punitive. With over 200 crimes punishable by death, including relatively minor offenses, the severity of punishments was disproportionate to the crimes committed. The legal system during that time favored the wealthy and powerful, leading to a highly unequal society where the laws protected their interests. The harshness of the "Bloody code" punishments was widely criticised even in that era, highlighting the excessive nature of the penalties imposed.

**7. Why were floating prisons or hulks used as a temporary solution in British prisons?**

Floating prisons or hulks were used as a temporary solution to the problem of overcrowded jails. Due to the significant number of people jailed for minor offences, prisons on land were significantly overcrowded. After the American War of Independence when America refused to take any more convicts, more of these prisons were required.

*Read the section of Chapter 6; 'British Decide to Settle at Botany Bay' and answer the following questions.*

**8. What were the reasons behind the British settlement of Australia?**

The British sought to settle Australia for several reasons. Firstly, with America no longer available as a destination for transporting prisoners, Australia provided a solution to the growing problem of overcrowded British prisons. Additionally, both the British and the French were vying for positions on the east and west coasts of Australia, albeit with no formal settlements established yet. This territorial competition fueled the British's urgency to claim parts of Australia. Furthermore, the concept of terra nullius, the belief that land belonged to no one unless a settled population was present, played a significant role. Despite the Aboriginal people's presence, who were considered itinerant hunter-gatherers, the British viewed the land as unowned, reinforcing their rationale for settlement. They also sought the new land for strategic and economic reasons.

**9. Why did the British consider land inhabited by hunter-gatherer societies as unowned?**

The British regarded land inhabited by hunter-gatherer societies as unowned due to their adoption of Enlightenment thinkers' ideas, notably John Locke. According to these thinkers, land ownership or claims could only be justified through agricultural activities, such as farming and establishing permanent housing and communities. In their view, the Aboriginal people's hunter-gatherer lifestyle did not meet the criteria for permanent settlement and agricultural utilisation.

**10. How did the British view Captain Cook's proclamation of ownership over Australia?**

The British did not view Captain Cook's proclamation of ownership over Australia as sufficient to establish British ownership. Despite Cook's mapping of the East Coast of Australia, the British recognized that mere proclamation alone did not grant ownership. To assert sovereignty and claim the land for Britain, permanent settlement and utilisation were deemed necessary. The British believed that they needed to establish a thriving colony with agricultural activities, infrastructure, and a functioning society to legitimize their ownership claims.

**11. Why did the British send a fleet of ships to establish a settlement in New South Wales?**

The British dispatched a fleet of ships to establish a settlement in New South Wales for various reasons. One concern was the presence of other nations who had also explored parts of Australia, including the French. There was a genuine fear that the French might attempt to outpace Britain and stake their own claims in New South Wales or other strategic locations. To secure their interests and preempt any rival claims, the British saw the urgent need to establish a settlement before other European powers could assert their presence.

**12. Review question (incorporate information from previous chapters in this response). Which colonial powers had a presence near Australia during the Age of Exploration, and what were the approximate dates of their activities?**

During the Age of Exploration, several colonial powers had a presence near Australia. The Portuguese were the first to explore Australia's northern coast in 1522, with Cristóvão de Mendonça reaching the western coast. The Dutch made significant explorations during the 17th century, including Willem Janszoon's landing on Cape York Peninsula in 1606. The Dutch East India Company conducted further expeditions, led by Dirk Hartog (1616) and Abel Tasman (1642-1644). While the Spanish Empire had a strong presence in the Pacific, there is no recorded evidence of direct Spanish exploration in Australia during this period. The French showed interest in Australia in the late 18th century, with explorers such as Louis Aleno de St Aloüarn (1772), Jean-François de Galaup, comte de La Pérouse (1788), and Nicolas Baudin (1801-1803) conducting expeditions along the Australian coastline. These explorations predated significant British colonization efforts, which began with the establishment of the New South Wales colony in 1788.

**13. If Britain had not colonised New South Wales, would another colonial power potentially have? Explain your reasoning.**

If Britain had not colonised New South Wales, it is reasonable to assume that another colonial power could have potentially sought to establish a presence in the region. During the era of colonial expansion, various European nations were engaged in global exploration and colonisation. The strategic importance of New South Wales, its resources, and the presence of other European powers exploring parts of Australia create a scenario where another colonial power might have seen an opportunity to claim and settle the territory. The dynamics of competition, territorial ambitions, and the desire for global influence make it plausible that if Britain had not taken the initiative, another colonial power could have stepped in to colonise New South Wales.

*Read the section of Chapter 6; 'Ideas and Philosophy- Preparing for settlement' and answer the following questions.*

**14. How did Arthur Phillip demonstrate his foresight and wise decision-making in preparation for the voyage to New South Wales?**

Arthur Phillip showed his wisdom by requesting the authority to select the best site for the new settlement based on his judgement, if Botany Bay prove unsuitable. He also gained permission to grant lands to people, had the power to exile convicts to neighbouring islands, and had the power to provide freedom to convicts.

**15. What was Arthur Phillip's stance on slavery in the new settlement of New South Wales? In what ways was this significant in the cultural milieu of his time?**

Arthur Phillip's stance on slavery in the new settlement of New South Wales was firmly against its existence. In his memorandum, he expressed his intention to introduce the laws of the country from the moment the British forces took possession of the land, stating, "That there can be no slavery in a free land, and consequently no slaves." Arthur Phillip was resolute in his belief that a just society should not tolerate the institution of slavery.

His commitment to abolishing slavery in the new colony was significant, considering that slavery was legal both in Britain and America at that time. Slavery would only be abolished in Britain in 1833 with the Slavery Abolition Act and in America in 1865 with the ratification of the 13th Amendment. Despite the prevailing social norms and legal framework of the time, Arthur Phillip took a forward stance and aimed to build a nation without the stain of slavery at its core.

By rejecting the notion of slavery in the new settlement, Arthur Phillip demonstrated a remarkable understanding of the moral implications and human rights concerns associated with the institution. His perspective marked a significant departure from the historical practices of colonisation, where the capture and enslavement of people had been prevalent throughout various civilisations and time periods. Phillip's commitment to a free land without slavery

showcased his modern ideals and the desire to establish a just and equitable society in New South Wales.

**16. How did Arthur Phillip's approach to class segregation reflect the societal norms of his time?**

Arthur Phillip adhered to the social norms of his era, which involved maintaining a clear distinction between convicts and free settlers. While convicts were granted land as a reward for good behaviour, he believed in maintaining a separation between individuals who had committed crimes and those who had not.

**Key Historical Figure**

*The key Australian historical figure you have studied in this chapter is Arthur Phillip, prior to his commanding of the First Fleet.*

**17. Create an annotated chronological timeline of key information about key events in his life that shaped his character and consequently shaped Australian history.**

- (i) 1755: Arthur Phillip begins his maritime career at the age of sixteen during the seven years' war, gaining experience and witnessing both British misfortunes and glories.
- (ii) 1762: By the age of twenty-three, Arthur Phillip's naval accomplishments and capabilities lead to his promotion as a Lieutenant.
- (iii) 1763: With the end of naval conflicts, Phillip returns to land, engages in farming, and gets married, following the customs of country gentlemen.
- (iv) 1775: Arthur Phillip offers his skills to the Portuguese in their war with Spain, showcasing his conduct and success, which earns him recognition for fulfilling his duty.
- (v) 1779: Phillip is appointed as the master and commander of the Basilisk fireship, marking a significant promotion in his naval career.
- (vi) 1783: Arthur Phillip sets sail for the East Indies to provide reinforcements, where he demonstrates bravery and negotiation skills.
- (vii) 1786: Phillip is selected to lead the establishment of a settlement in New South Wales (New Holland), given his professional knowledge and prudence.
- (viii) 1787: A group of over 1,400 people, including Arthur Phillip, sets sail from Portsmouth, England, as part of the First Fleet to establish the new colony.
- (ix) 1787: Prior to departing, Phillip writes a memorandum outlining his plans for the journey and settlement, demonstrating concern for the convicts' well-being and potential for redemption.
- (x) 1788: Phillip's memorandum addresses the issue of slavery in the new settlement, stating that there can be no slavery in a free land, setting the stance against slavery in Australia.

These annotations highlight key moments in Arthur Phillip's life and career, including his early maritime experiences, his rise through the ranks in the navy, his leadership in various military

endeavours, his appointment to lead the establishment of a settlement in New South Wales, and his stance against slavery in the new colony.

### **Document Analysis: Primary Sources**

Instructions from King George III to Arthur Phillips (Excerpts)

**Context:** Prior to his departure for New South Wales, Arthur Phillip received his Instructions (composed by Lord Sydney) from King George III, 'with the advice of his Privy Council'. The first Instructions included Phillip's Commission as Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of New South Wales. The original document handwritten on 6 [size] pages.

Date: **25 April 1787**

#### **Excerpt 1**

According to the best Information which We have obtained, Botany Bay appears to be the most eligible situation upon the said Coast for the first Establishment, possessing a commodious Harbour and other Advantages which no part of the Coast hitherto discovered affords. It is therefore Our Will and Pleasure that you do immediately upon your landing after taking Measures for securing Yourself and the people who accompany you, as much as possible from any attacks or Interruptions of the Natives of that Country, as well as for the preservation and safety of the Public Stores, proceed to the Cultivation of the Land, distributing the Convicts for that purpose in such manner, and under such Inspectors or Overseers and under such Regulations as may appear to You to be necessary and best calculated for procuring Supplies of Grain and Ground Provisions. The Assortment of Tools and Utensils which have been provided for the use of the Convicts and other Persons who are to compose the intended settlement, are to be distributed according to Your discretion, and according to the employment, assigned to the several persons.

### **Document Analysis Questions Excerpt 1**

#### ***Document Identification and Context***

**17. Determine if it is a primary or secondary source.**

The provided document is a primary source. It is a direct record of the instructions given to Arthur Phillip, the Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of New South Wales, from King George III.

**18. Identify the document's format.**

The document appears to be an excerpt from the instructions received by Arthur Phillip. The original document handwritten on 6 [size] pages. The excerpt is a typed reproduction of the original document.

**19. Establish the document's origin and authorship.**

The document originates from King George III of England. The authorship can be attributed to Lord Sydney, who composed the instructions on behalf of the King, "with the advice of his Privy Council."

**20. Investigate who created the document and their role or position.**

King George III, as the monarch, holds the highest position of authority. Lord Sydney, as a member of the Privy Council, played a significant role in drafting the instructions.

**21. Consider the author's potential biases, motives, and intentions.**

As the document is an official set of instructions from the King, it is important to consider the biases, motives, and intentions of the British monarchy. The motives may include expanding British influence, establishing a settlement, and procuring supplies for the colony.

**22. Establish the document's date and historical context.**

The document is dated April 25, 1787. It provides instructions to Arthur Phillip prior to his departure for New South Wales. The historical context is the colonial period when European powers, including Britain, were exploring, and establishing settlements in various parts of the world.

**23. Determine the historical events occurring during that period.**

During this period, Britain was actively engaged in exploration, colonization, and establishing new territories. The American Revolutionary War had recently concluded in 1783, and the British Empire was looking for new territories to establish its presence and secure resources.

*Close Reading - Examine the document's content in detail.*

**24. What is the language and style of this document?**

The language used in the document is formal and authoritative, reflecting the royal decree of King George III. It employs the pronouns "We" and "Our" to convey the authority of the monarch and the British government.

**25. Identify key themes, ideas, and arguments presented in the document.**

- a. The selection of Botany Bay as the most suitable location for the establishment of the first settlement.
- b. The importance of securing the safety of the people accompanying Arthur Phillip and protecting the public stores.
- c. The directive to proceed with the cultivation of the land for the purpose of procuring supplies of grain and ground provisions.
- d. The distribution of tools and utensils to the convicts and other persons based on discretion and assigned employment.
- d. Distribution of tools and utensils based on discretion and assigned employment.

The logical flow of the document follows a sequence of presenting the selected location, emphasizing security and preservation, and then focusing on the cultivation of the land and distribution of resources.

The document demonstrates coherence in its logical progression and provides clear instructions for Arthur Phillip.

**26. Identify and interpret any significant symbols, metaphors, or allusions.**

The document does not contain explicit symbols, metaphors, or allusions. However, it does make use of language that emphasizes the authority and will of the King, signified by the use of "Our Will and Pleasure" and the instruction given to Arthur Phillip as the representative of the British monarchy.

Considering the broader historical context, the document reflects the colonial mindset and the belief in the superiority of the British Empire. The language used reinforces the power dynamics between the British monarchy and the colony being established.

The author's intent, in this case, is to clearly communicate the instructions and expectations of the British government regarding the establishment of the settlement in New South Wales. The language used also aims to assert the authority and control of the British monarchy over the colony.

By examining the document's language, structure, and underlying themes, we can gain insights into the intentions of the British government and their approach to colonial expansion during the late 18th century.

*Interpretation: Synthesise the information gathered from the previous steps.*

**27. Connect the document's content to its historical context and purpose.**

The document, dated April 25, 1787, was issued during a period of colonial expansion and exploration. European powers, including Britain, sought to establish settlements in various parts of the world to expand their influence and secure resources. In this context, the document serves as a set of instructions from King George III to Arthur Phillip, who was tasked with establishing a settlement in New South Wales. Its purpose was to provide guidance and directions to ensure the successful establishment of the colony.

**28. Consider how the document contributes to our understanding of the past.**

The document offers insights into the priorities and motivations of the British government during the late 18th century. It highlights the emphasis on finding a suitable location for the settlement, with Botany Bay identified as the most eligible situation due to its advantages, including a commodious harbor.



The document also reveals the immediate actions required upon landing, such as securing the safety of the settlers and preserving the public stores. Furthermore, it emphasizes the cultivation of the land for procuring supplies and the distribution of tools and utensils. These details contribute to our understanding of the challenges, strategies, and objectives associated with establishing a new colony during that time period.

**29. Assess the document's reliability and credibility.**

To assess the document's reliability and credibility, we should evaluate the author's authority and expertise on the subject matter. In this case, the document is issued by King George III of Britain, who holds the highest position of authority in the British monarchy. The instructions are composed by Lord Sydney, a member of the Privy Council, indicating a level of expertise and involvement in matters of colonial administration. As an official document issued by the British government, it can be considered reliable and credible in terms of representing their directives and policies.

**30. Identify potential biases or limitations that may affect the document's accuracy.**

Despite its reliability, the document may have biases inherent to its colonial context. The instructions primarily focus on the interests and objectives of the British government, such as securing resources and establishing control over the territory.

**31. Formulate an interpretation based on evidence and analysis.**

Based on the evidence and analysis, the document can be interpreted as a clear directive from the British government to Arthur Phillip, outlining the priorities, strategies, and expectations for the establishment of the colony in New South Wales. It reveals the imperial ambitions of the British Empire and its focus on resource acquisition, territorial control, and the cultivation of land for sustenance.

**32. Craft a thesis statement or argument about the document's significance.**

The document's significance lies in its representation of the British mindset and the exercise of imperial power during the late 18th century. It reflects the strategic planning and objectives of the British government in expanding its influence and establishing control over new territories.

### 33. Support the interpretation with specific examples and evidence from the document.

The document explicitly states the eligibility of Botany Bay as the chosen location, emphasizing its advantages compared to other parts of the coast. It outlines directives for securing the safety of the settlers, preserving public stores, and focusing on the cultivation of the land for sustenance. The distribution of tools and utensils based on assigned employment demonstrates the practical considerations for resource allocation within the intended settlement. These specific examples from the document support the interpretation of the document's significance in revealing the colonial ambitions and power dynamics of the British.

**Excerpt 2.** *This is from the same source as Excerpt 1. Thus, some questions from the document will be excluded as they have already been completed in the analysis from the first primary source.*

You are to endeavour by every possible means to open an Intercourse with the Savages Natives and to conciliate their affections, enjoining all Our Subjects to live in amity and kindness with them. And if any of Our Subjects shall wantonly destroy them, or give them any unnecessary Interruption in the exercise of their several occupations. It is our Will and Pleasure that you do cause such offenders to be brought to punishment according to the degree of the Offence. You will endeavour to procure an account of the Numbers inhabiting the Neighbourhood of the intended settlement and report your opinion to one of our Secretaries of State in what manner Our Intercourse with these people may be turned to the advantage of this country.

*Close Reading - Examine the document's content in detail*

### 34. Identify key themes, ideas, and arguments presented in the document.

- a. *Establishing Intercourse and Conciliation:* The primary theme is the directive to establish a peaceful and friendly relationship with the Indigenous population of New South Wales. Phillip is instructed to open an "Intercourse" with the Native inhabitants and to conciliate their affections, emphasizing the importance of peaceful coexistence.
- b. *Protection of Indigenous Rights:* The document emphasizes the protection of the Natives' rights and occupations. It condemns any wanton destruction or unnecessary interruption caused by British subjects, stating that offenders should be punished accordingly.
- c. *Gathering Information:* Another theme is the gathering of information about the Indigenous population. Phillip is instructed to procure an account of their numbers in the vicinity of the intended settlement and provide a report on how the British can benefit from their interactions with the Natives.

### 35. Identify and interpret any significant symbols, metaphors, or allusions.

There are no explicit symbols, metaphors, or allusions present in the document. The text primarily focuses on conveying instructions and guidelines regarding the interaction with the Indigenous population in New South Wales. It does not employ symbolic language or make metaphorical references.

The document's emphasis on "opening an Intercourse" and "conciliating their affections" with the Indigenous people may symbolise a broader objective of establishing peaceful and cooperative relations between the British settlers and the native population. This symbolises a desire for understanding, mutual respect, and a peaceful coexistence.

Furthermore, the reference to the Indigenous population as "Savages Natives" might indicate a prevailing colonial perspective of the time, viewing the Indigenous people as primitive or uncivilized. This choice of terminology could be seen as an allusion to the prevailing mindset and attitudes towards Indigenous populations during the colonial era.

*Interpretation: Synthesize the information gathered from the previous steps.*

### 36. Connect the document's content to its historical context and purpose.

The document, the Instructions from King George III to Arthur Phillip, is deeply connected to its historical context and serves a specific purpose in the broader historical narrative of British colonial expansion.

**Historical Context:** The document was written on 25 April 1787, a time when Britain was actively engaged in global colonisation and expansion. It was during this period that the British Empire sought to establish new colonies in various parts of the world, including Australia.

**Purpose:** The document's primary purpose was to instruct Arthur Phillip, the appointed Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of New South Wales, regarding his responsibilities and objectives in the colony. It aimed to promote friendly relations and peaceful coexistence between British settlers and the Indigenous population, emphasizing the importance of kindness and avoiding unnecessary disruptions. Additionally, the document emphasized the strategic and economic goals of the British Empire by instructing Phillip to gather information about the Indigenous population and explore how this interaction could benefit the country.

### 37. Consider how the document contributes to our understanding of the past.

The document, Instructions from King George III to Arthur Phillip, contributes significantly to our understanding of the past by providing insights into the mindset, policies, and objectives of the British Empire during the era of colonial expansion. It offers valuable historical evidence and sheds light on several aspects:

- I) Colonial Intentions: The document reflects the British Empire's intentions to establish and govern colonies in new territories. It demonstrates the deliberate planning and organisation

involved in the colonisation process, as evidenced by the appointment of a Governor with specific instructions.

- II) **Indigenous Relations:** The document highlights the complexities of interactions between British and Indigenous populations. It reveals an awareness of the need for peaceful relations, emphasising the importance of treating the Indigenous people with kindness and respecting their occupations. This provides an understanding of the British mindset towards Indigenous populations and the early stages of attempts to manage these relationships.
- III) **Power Dynamics:** The document showcases the power dynamics inherent in colonial endeavors. King George III, as the monarch, issues instructions that Arthur Phillip, as the appointed Governor, is expected to follow. It illustrates the hierarchical structure of the British Empire and its authority over the colonies.
- IV) **Economic Motivations:** The document references the economic objectives of the British Empire, highlighting the desire to exploit the resources and potential benefits of the newly colonised territories. It underscores the empire's focus on maximizing economic gains and trade opportunities.

**38. Craft a thesis statement or argument about the document's significance.**

The Instructions from King George III to Arthur Phillip hold great significance as they offer valuable insights into the motivations, policies, and power dynamics of the British Empire during the era of colonial expansion, providing a deeper understanding of the complexities and objectives of early colonial endeavors, including the Empire's desire to establish peaceful relations with Indigenous populations, specifically the Aboriginals.

**39. Support the interpretation with specific examples and evidence from the document.**

The Instructions from King George III to Arthur Phillip provide compelling evidence supporting their significance in understanding the motivations, policies, and power dynamics of the British Empire during colonial expansion. The document emphasizes the Empire's desire to establish peaceful relations with the Indigenous population, specifically the Aboriginals. It instructs Arthur Phillip to open an Intercourse with the Indigenous people and conciliate their affections, highlighting the importance of amity and kindness. The document further directs British subjects to avoid unnecessary disruptions to the Indigenous people's occupations and punishes offenders accordingly. This demonstrates a commitment to maintaining stability and peaceful coexistence. Additionally, the document underscores the Empire's economic and strategic objectives by instructing Phillip to gather information on the Indigenous population and explore how interactions with them can benefit the country. These examples and evidence from the document illuminate the complex objectives of early British endeavors and contribute to a deeper understanding of the Empire's motivations and power dynamics during this historical period.

*The Australian History: Pre-History to Early Settlement (Chapter 6) Teacher Study Guide continues after this.*