



The First Fleet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Life of the Settlers

We know that life at sea was hard and dangerous, but what about settling in Australia? Very few convicts knew how to farm and the First Fleet settlers quickly discovered that the soil in Botany Bay was poor. So after just a few days Governor Arthur Phillip moved the entire settlement north to Sydney Cove, where Sydney is today. Because they were having trouble growing crops, food was a big problem for the settlers. Governor Phillip placed everyone on rations. Supplies were so low that people were eating rats, dogs and even crows. The settlers and convicts also had trouble with shelter. Only a small amount of tools were brought along and they were of poor quality. When used on Australia's hard timber they didn't last very long. Conditions were so bad that some convicts tried to escape, thinking that China was not far north. Those that didn't die in the harsh Australian outback were executed when they returned.



What other hardships might the settlers have endured?

What do you think the settlers and convicts could have learnt from the Aboriginal people about surviving in Australia?

Pretend you are a settler or a convict arriving in Australia on the First Fleet. In your workbook, write a diary about your first days in Australia.