# Post-War Immigration

After the Second World War, the Australian government decided the country needed to increase its population. This was because people did not feel as safe anymore and the country needed to protect itself in case it was ever invaded. The government tried to encourage people to build the population up themselves, but it wasn't enough.

Arthur Calwell, who was the Minister of Immigration, tried to convince Australians that the only solution was to invite people from other countries to live in Australia. But not all Australians liked the idea of sharing their country with others. The government made it clear that this was the only option for the country. In their opinion, Australia had to 'populate or perish' - immigration was the only choice.

During the time of the Gold Rush, many people from Asian countries came to live in Australia. Some people, including the government, didn't want too many people coming from Asia anymore and so they encouraged people from Britain and other European countries to migrate to Australia.
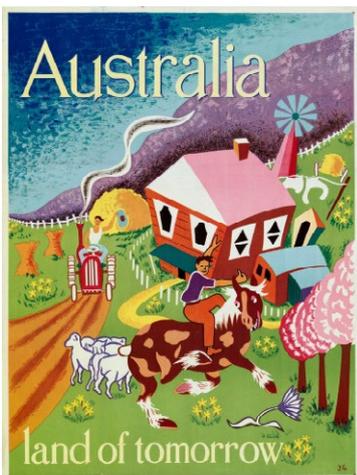
Australian Government Poster

The first new immigrants that came to Australia were displaced persons. These were people who left their countries due to the war and no longer had a place to call home. Most of these people came from Eastern European countries including Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Latvia.

The Australian government used adverts in Britain to entice people to move to Australia. They called Australia 'the land of opportunity' or 'land of tomorrow'. In the 1950s and 1960s, more immigrants came to Australia. These were people mostly from Britain and other European countries. Most came to Australia in search of new careers and a better life.

Dutch immigrants arriving in Australia, 1954

Millions of immigrants continued to settle in Australia in the decades after the war. Each of the immigrant groups that settled in Australia, brought something special to the country. They have shared their stories, culture and art with Australia and its people.

Questions

1. What type of text is this?

   _____

2. Why do you think people felt less safe after war?

   _____

   _____

3. What did Arthur Calwell try to convince Australians to do?

   _____

   _____

4. When did many people from Asia migrate to Australia?

   _____

   _____

5. What is a Displaced Person?

   _____

6. What does the word 'entice' mean?

   _____

7. What happened in the 1950s and 1960s?

   _____

   _____

8. Do you think Australia would be a different place without such a large immigrant community? Explain your answer.

   _____

   _____

   _____

Answers

1. What type of text is this?

   The text is an information text.

2. Why do you think people felt less safe after war?

   Students own answers.

3. What did Arthur Calwell try to convince Australians to do?

   He tried to convince Australia that they needed to invite people from other countries to live in the country in order for the country to have better protections against invasion.

4. When did many people from Asia migrate to Australia?

   Many people migrated from Asia to Australia during the Gold Rush era.

5. What is a Displaced Person?

   A displaced person is someone who has left their home and cannot return/has no place to call home.

6. What does the word 'entice' mean?

   Entice means encourage, attract, allure, tempt.

7. What happened in the 1950s and 1960s?

   In the 1950s and 1960s, people from Britain and other European countries migrated to Australia.

8. Do you think Australia would be a different place without such a large immigrant community? Explain your answer

   Students own answers.

Post-War Immigration

Before the end of the Second World War, the Australian government made plans to develop an immigration programme to increase Australia's population. After the war, people felt less safe and were concerned the country could be invaded. The government tried to encourage people to build the population up themselves but it was not enough and the best answer was foreign immigration.

An immigration programme was led by the Minister of Immigration, Arthur Calwell, who believed that Australia would be a safer place with a larger population. However, not all Australians liked the idea of sharing their country with new residents.

The government worked hard to convince Australia that it must "populate or perish". This message of fear was sent across the country and it was not long before people started believing it. However, at that time many Australians wanted the new settlers to come from particular countries. Some Australians, including those in government, still feared the country might be overpopulated by Asians as many of them came during the Gold Rush. Because of this, the immigration programme was very discriminative as it was aimed at people living in Europe.
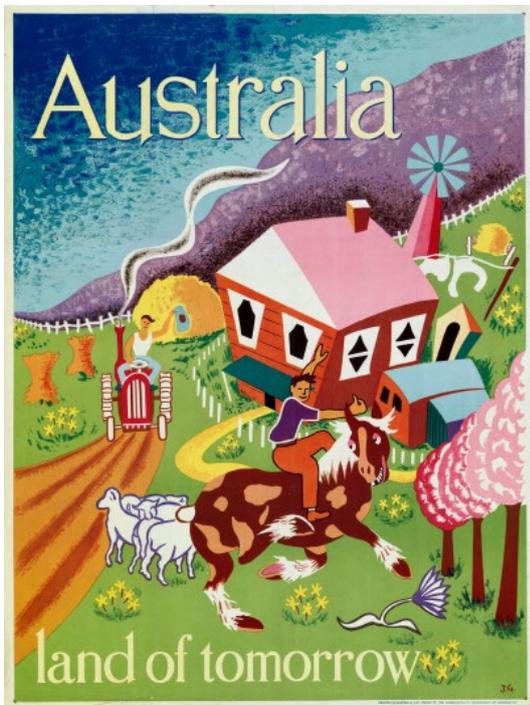
Advertisements were put up throughout Britain to entice people to move to Australia; they referred to it as the 'land of opportunity' or 'land of tomorrow'. Programmes were also established back home to support new British immigrants living in the country.

Australian Government Poster

The first new immigrants that came to Australia were displaced persons. They were people who left their countries due to war or unrest and no longer had a place to call home. The majority of these people came from Eastern European countries, such as Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Latvia. In the 1950s and 1960s, more immigrants came to Australia. These people were seeking new jobs and a better life in Australia. They mostly came from Britain and other European countries, such as Italy and the Netherlands.

Dutch immigrants arriving in Australia, 1954

Between the years 1949 and 1959, Australia welcomed over 1,200,000 new Australians. These numbers continued to grow in the years that followed. Each of the immigrant groups that settled in Australia, brought something special to the country. Immigrants have shared their stories, culture and art with Australia and its people.

Questions

1. What type of text is this?

   _____

2. Why did the government develop an immigration programme?

   _____

3. Why do you think people felt less safe after war?

   _____

4. What did Arthur Calwell believe?

   _____

5. Why do you think the phrase 'populate or perish' was used?

   _____

6. When did many people from Asia migrate to Australia?

   _____

7. From which countries did many displaced persons arrive from? Tick all that apply.

   Poland   Latvia   England

   America   Yugoslavia

8. What does the word 'entice' mean in the sentence: 'Advertisements were put up throughout Britain to entice people to move to Australia.'

   _____

9. According to the text, what were new immigrants seeking in Australia?

   _____

10. Do you think Australia would be a different place without such a large immigrant community? Explain your answer.

    _____

    _____

1. What type of text is this?

   An information text.

2. Why did the government develop an immigration programme?

   The government developed an immigration programme to increase the population.

3. Why do you think people felt less safe after war?

   Students own answers.

4. What did Arthur Calwell believe?

   He believed that Australia would be a safer place with a larger population.

5. Why do you think the phrase 'populate or perish' was used?

   The phrase 'populate or perish' was used because it was a stark warning. The words populate and perish are alliterative so they make the phrase memorable.

6. When did many people from Asia migrate to Australia?

   During the Gold Rush era, many people migrated from Asia to Australia.

7. From which countries did many displaced persons arrive from? Tick all that apply.

   Poland   Latvia   England

   America   Yugoslavia

8. What does the word 'entice' mean in the sentence: 'Advertisements were put up throughout Britain to entice people to move to Australia.'

   The word entice in the sentence means encourage/attract/allure/tempt.

9. According to the text, what were new immigrants seeking in Australia?

   New immigrants to Australia were seeking new jobs and a better life.

10. Do you think Australia would be a different place without such a large immigrant community? Explain your answer.
    Students own answers.

Post-War Immigration

Even before the conclusion of the Second World War, the Australian government was making plans to develop an immigration programme to persuade large numbers of international immigrants to settle permanently in Australia. Due to the number of young men killed during the conflict, the country was left vulnerable; there were concerns that the country may be a target for foreign invasion. Although the Curtin government was encouraging natural population growth, it was not going to be enough and the best answer seemed to be foreign immigration.

A large-scale immigration programme was proposed by the Minister of Immigration, Arthur Calwell, who believed that by quickly increasing Australia's numbers, the country would guarantee its economic and military stability. Despite the country's low population and vulnerability after war, some Australians were in favour of sharing their country with new residents.

To counter those people who were against mass migration, the Australian government issued a stark warning: Australia had to populate or perish. However, Australia did not open its gates to migrants from every country. At the beginning of the twentieth century, in 1901, the Australian government devised a policy which placed restrictions on people migrating from certain countries, particularly those in Asia. Although it was completely discriminative, many people still believed that Australia would be overpopulated by Asians. This fear was derived from the fact that so many people from Asian backgrounds had already resettled in the country after the Gold Rush. Due to insufficient numbers arriving from the UK, citizens from other European countries were encouraged to migrate.

The first wave of new immigrants to Australia were displaced persons (people who had fled their countries and no longer had a place to call home). The majority of these people came from Eastern European countries including Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary and Latvia. The second wave of immigrants arrived in the 1950s and 1960s. These migrants were seeking employment and a "better life" in Australia.
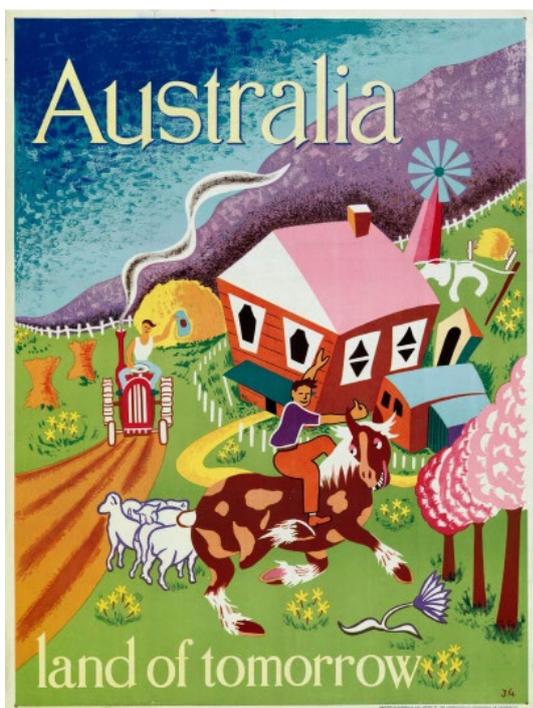
Australian Government Poster

Advertisements were published throughout Britain to entice families and individuals to start a new life in Australia. It was famously referred to as "the land of opportunity" or "land of tomorrow". Back home, the Australian people were encouraged to help support newly-arrived Europeans and their families by accommodating them in their home.

Between 1949 and 1959, Australia welcomed over 1,200,000 new arrivals, who came from a diverse range of countries. In the years that followed, Australia continued to open up its borders to new immigrants. Each of these immigrant groups have brought something unique to the country, whether it be food, business or art. It was not until 1973 that the discriminatory 'White Australia' policy was officially ended.

Dutch immigrants arriving in Australia, 1954

Without such an influx of immigrants during the post-war period, would Australia be what it is today?

Questions

1. What do you think the term "populate or perish" means?

    _____

2. What did Arthur Calwell believe?

    _____

3. Why do you think some Australians were not in favour of new immigrants coming to the country?

    _____

4. From which places did the government encourage people to immigrate to Australia?

    _____

5. What does discrimination mean?

    _____

6. What happened in 1901?

    _____

7. What is a displaced person?

    _____

8. Write a synonym for the following words:

    perish - _____

    vulnerable - _____

    unique - _____

9. What does the phrase 'open up its borders' refer to?

    _____

10. If you were Arthur Calwell in post-war Australia, what slogan would you use to try and convince Australian citizens that it needs to increase its population?

    _____

Answers

1. What do you think the term "populate or perish" means?

   Students own answers.

2. What did Arthur Calwell believe?

   He believed that Australia needed to increase its population in order to have economic and military stability.

3. Why do you think some Australians were not in favour of new immigrants coming to the country?

   Students own answers.

4. From which places did the government encourage people to immigrate to Australia?

   The government encouraged migrants from the UK and other European countries.

5. What does discrimination mean?

   Unfair or unjust treatment against categories of people, often due to race, gender or religion.

6. What happened in 1901?

   A policy was devised to restrict people from certain countries migrating to Australia.

7. What is a displaced person?

   A displaced person refers to someone who has fled their country (usually due to turmoil or war)

8. Write a synonym for the following words:

   perish - **die, fall, be destroyed**

   vulnerable - **unsafe, unprotected, in dander**

   unique - **special, different, individual**

9. What does the phrase 'open up its borders' refer to?

   It refers to Australia allowing new immigrants to enter the country and pass its "borders".

10. If you were Arthur Calwell in post-war Australia, what slogan would you use to try and convince Australian citizens that it needs to increase its population?

    Students own answers.