# Module: Australia and the Pacific Islands, Topic Content: Cultural Influences of Australia and the Pacific Islands

## Cultural Influences of Australia and the Pacific Islands

Click next to begin.

## Menu

Click each image to learn more.

## Sydney Opera House

Sydney’s most famous landmark is the Sydney Opera House. It is a performing arts center. The opera house’s roof resembles sails of ships on the harbor. It is a tribute to Sydney’s connection to the ocean.

## Cattle and Sheep Stations

Arid areas are well suited for ranching. Thus, cattle and sheep stations are throughout Australia. Much of the Outback is used for cattle and sheep stations. Some stations cover areas so big that ranchers use helicopters to round up cattle. Australia is the world’s largest exporter of wool, and is a major player in the international beef market.

## Uluru

Uluru is located in Australia’s Outback. It is the world’s largest monolith, or single rock. This red-colored rock is four miles long, and looms 1,100 feet above the surrounding desert. Aborigines believe their ancestral spirits inhabit the rock. They have painted pictographs on cave walls at Uluru, which reveal important religious ceremonies, historical events, and elements of nature.

## Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary

The Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary is in Brisbane, Australia. Founded in 1927, it is the world’s largest and oldest koala sanctuary. Many species native to Australia are in the sanctuary. This includes koala, wombats, echidnas, and platypus.

## Thatched-Roof Dwellings

Thatched roofs are made by layering vegetation in such a way that water is redirected from the center of the roof. It is a cost-effective way to create a roof by using local vegetation. For example, palm leaves are used to make thatched roofs in Fiji. All three regions of the Pacific Islands have dwellings with thatched roofs.

## Outrigger Canoes

Early settlers of the Pacific Islands built outrigger canoes to navigate between islands. These canoes had floats attached to them to help with balance.

## Maori Art Carving

Traditionally, the Maori practice toi whakairo, or the art of carving in bone, stone, or wood. Wood is used for items like houses, containers, and tool handles. Stone is used for tools. Bone is used for items like needles and fish hooks.

## Stone Statues on Easter Island

Easter Island is a territory of Chile. Tourism drives most of its economy as visitors come to see the nearly nine hundred giant stone figures on the island. These stone statues date back hundreds of years. They are highly distinct from other stone statues found in Polynesian cultures. Scientists and anthropologists are trying to determine why and how the statues got to the island.