

# 'Stories of Life at Sydney Cove' by Susan E Boyer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet # 5

## Historical Context

Stories should build pictures in a reader's mind about the time and place in which a scene is set. 'Stories of Life at Sydney Cove' begins with the voyage of the First Fleet.

One way the author provides historical context is by using letters and journals written at the time of the event. Read the shaded box on page 27 of 'Stories of Life at Sydney Cove'.

1a. When was the journal entry written? \_\_\_\_\_

1b. What does it tell you about the writer's situation?


1c. How does the map on page 27 help the reader?

\_\_\_\_\_

2a. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 describe the arrival of the First Fleet in Botany Bay. What information do the images on pages 31, 35 and 39 provide the reader?


2b. How does the use of Aboriginal words on pages 34 help build historical context?


2c. On pages 36, 38 and 39 the author uses George Worgan's letter to describe what happened at Botany Bay. Why do you think the author quotes his letter rather than describing the scene herself?


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3. The following paragraphs (from page 56) describe a convict's first impression of Sydney Cove. Look at how much we can learn about time and place from two paragraphs.

Elizabeth Hayward leaned on the ship's rail, taking in the strangeness of the place. The air was hot and humid. Unfamiliar smells tickled her nostrils; a sweet peppery aroma wafted from the woodland.

Looking to the shoreline, she saw the mish mash of tents dotting the clearing amid fallen trees, boxes, piles of provisions and equipment. Marines in their red jackets and black hats paraded around the place trying to look busy, as groups of male convicts were bullied and pressed to carry boxes or drag logs.

3a. How did the convicts arrive in Sydney Cove? \_\_\_\_\_

3b. What was the weather like? \_\_\_\_\_

3c. What was the natural scenery like? \_\_\_\_\_

3d. What accommodation did the first landing party have on shore? \_\_\_\_\_

3e. What kind of clothing did the marines wear? \_\_\_\_\_

4. The following paragraph describes later working conditions for some convicts. (page 90)

Most of the men working at the brickfield had no experience of the job. They had to be trained and it was backbreaking work. There were no spare horses to pull the carts piled high with bricks, so groups of eight, ten or twelve convicts had to drag the loaded carts. It took hours of hauling along the rough, bumpy tracks to get the bricks to the main site where they were used in the building work. In hot weather, the cart-wheels stirred the dust, choking and blinding the men. When it rained, mud dragged at the wheels and sometimes they got bogged. Then it took hours to get going again.

5. What was the road surface made of between the brickfield and Sydney Cove?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What method was used to transport things between the brickfield and Sydney Cove?

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Imagine the scene of making and transporting bricks in the present time with modern equipment. How is the scene different?
