

**Teacher's Notes:****Goldfields Heritage****Background to the eGold Educational Activities**

The content included here can all be found on the eGold website. Student activities are designed to facilitate the self-exploration of this content and the development of independent research skills using eGold's Search, A-Z Index and Message Tree gateways.

**Timing & resources**

This lesson is designed to take place over three or four periods. Parts A and B require each student to have access to the eGold website. Part C might take place in the classroom over several periods depending on available time.

**Objectives**

At the conclusion of this learning activity students will have demonstrated the ability to;

- Employ social and independent modes of research to find answers to a number of targeted questions relating to Law and Order on the Goldfields.
  - Utilise a variety of online search techniques including eGold's Message Tree, Search engine and navigation tabs to extract information on a defined topic.
  - Analyse and interpret heritage sites through the use of visual sources. Recognise the complexities involved in interpreting heritage sites.
  - Complete a creative activity demonstrating an awareness of heritage values and how national significance is defined.
  - Engage with others in the class and with their work to understand and empathise with different points of view, and to present a considered point of view and reach consensus within a group.
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## Overview

The discovery of gold in Victoria played an enormous role in shaping future Australia. The economic, commercial, political and social changes that occurred rapidly during the 1850s are echoed by the structures, institutions, infrastructure, industry and society that we have today. Understanding the past is linked to how we interpret history. Having a physical link to the past – through an object or a place – helps us to understand and interpret history.

Two Victorian goldfields sites have been placed on the National Heritage List, the site of the Eureka Stockade – the Eureka Stockade Gardens and the Castlemaine Diggings Heritage Park which spans 7,500 hectares. The objectives of the National Heritage List are to identify, protect, conserve and share places that are significant to Australia's heritage and contribute to Australia a national identity.

The National Heritage List has a set of nine criteria by which all potential inclusions on the List are measured. Inclusion on the List means that the site is protected from any changes or alterations that threaten the significant characteristics identified, and the place is acknowledged as being living and accessible record of Australia's national history.

These criteria were created to ensure that all of the places on the register help us to tell stories about people or about the land. These places should have 'outstanding heritage values' and help us to understand something about the nation's past.

Below is a summary as to why the two goldfields sites in Victoria were included on the National Heritage List. Preservation of these sites will help future generations to interpret the past and the present, and help us better understand an event that has had an enormous national impact.

### **Eureka Stockade Gardens**

- **The site's national importance in Australia's cultural history** – The Eureka Stockade has become a symbol of democratic protest and national identity.
- **The site carries evidence of a rare aspect of Australian cultural history** – Excluding Indigenous resistance to colonisation, it is rare to find other examples of organised insurrection in Australia's history.
- **The site's potential to contribute further to our understanding of Australia's cultural history** - Through a wealth of archaeological evidence.
- **A strong and special association for a group for cultural reasons** – This rebellion - the things that it opposed and the things that it changed - is celebrated by many Australians as the catalyst for a move towards more egalitarian and democratic state and universal suffrage.
- **The place has a special association with the life of a person important to Australia's cultural history** – Wounded at the site was rebellion leader and subsequent parliamentarian Peter Lalor.

**Castlemaine Diggings Heritage Park**

- **The site's national importance in Australia's cultural history** – There were more than 30,000 miners in Castlemaine, this influx of people broadened the nation's cultural diversity and motivated rapid social change. The site also has evidence of a diversity of mining methods over a large time period and a variety of habitation sites which provide insight into living on the goldfields.
- **The site carries evidence of a rare aspect of Australian cultural history** – There is a wealth of evidence regarding early mining techniques that are no longer practised, and evidence of the experience of living on a goldfield.
- **The site's potential to contribute further to our understanding of Australia's cultural history** – There is potential new information, especially from the nineteenth century, regarding mining techniques and goldfield habitation to be gleaned from the site.
- **The place demonstrates characteristics of a class of Australia's cultural places or cultural environments** – The site provides examples of alluvial workings throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It also presents a view of what it was like to be a miner living on the goldfields with examples of ruined huts and houses which embody this lifestyle.
- **The place's importance in exhibiting particular aesthetic characteristics valued by a community or cultural group** – Due to the isolation and the regenerating forest, as well as the remains of mines and habitation sites, the Castlemaine goldfields gives its visitors the feeling of a past place and time.