

THE 80^s ARE BACK

History (Stage 5) Topic 7: People Power and Politics

Introduction

The 80s are back is an exhibition that explores Australian life and popular culture during this formative decade of social, cultural, economic and political change. Interpreted through subcultures, movements and trends, this exhibition allows students to explore key themes relevant to history, society and popular culture including design, fashion, film and music.

The variety of objects, images, interactives, audiovisuals and labels in the exhibition, provide an integrated, contextual and multimedia environment that will encourage student enquiry and foster experiential and collaborative learning.

Inquiry questions

- What have been some important political developments in post-war Australian history?
- What role has Australia played in international affairs in the post-war period?

The 80s are back exhibition covers the period when first Malcolm Fraser and then Bob Hawke were prime ministers of Australia. Students can learn about these two influential prime ministers and the impact their period in power had on the lives of their fellow Australians and also on the international stage.

Relevant outcomes

- 5.1** explains social, political and cultural developments and events and evaluates their impact on Australian life
- 5.2** assesses the impact of international events and relationships on Australia's history
- 5.3** explains the changing rights and freedoms of Aboriginal peoples and other groups in Australia
- 5.7** explains different contexts, perspectives and interpretations of the past
- 5.8** locates, selects and organises relevant historical information from a number of sources, including ICT, to undertake historical inquiry
- 5.10** selects and uses appropriate oral, written and other forms, including ICT, to communicate effectively about the past for different audiences.

In these notes you will find

- Exhibition map — page 2
- Malcolm Fraser — page 3
- Bob Hawke — page 3
- Unit of work — page 5

EXHIBITION FLOOR PLAN

The exhibition is divided into eleven sections:



1. ON THE SCREEN



2. VIDEO AND COMPUTER GAMES



3. MUSIC



4. SUBCULTURES



5. PARTYING



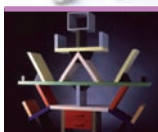
6. THE AIDS CRISIS



7. FASHION



8. FADS AND TOYS



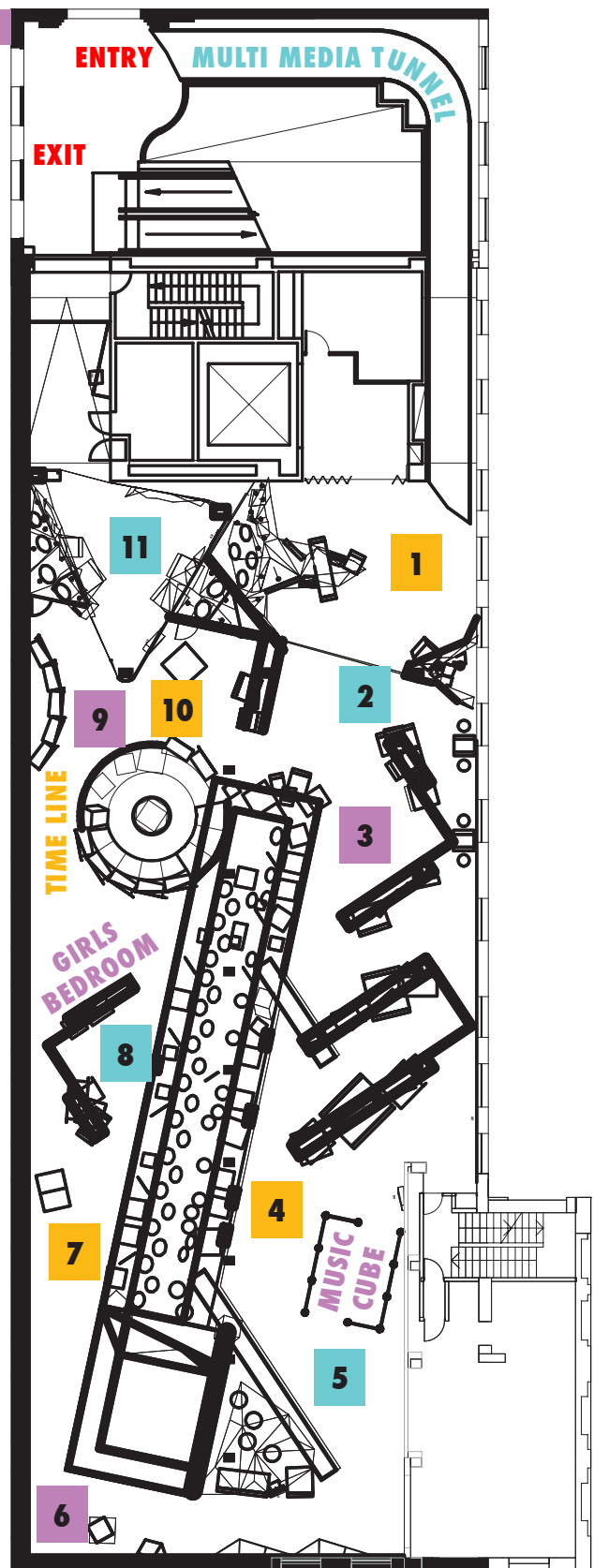
9. DESIGN



10. THE BIG EVENTS



11. THE NEO-80S



■ Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser

Term of office: 11 November 1975 to 11 March 1983

Malcolm Fraser was re-elected prime minister in 1980. Australia's 22nd prime minister, he gave a new conservative direction to the Liberal/National Party Coalition. Fraser was considered a conservative on economic issues, resisting economic deregulation and tariff reform. His policy of 'fight inflation first' meant cutting government spending and setting up a ministerial 'razor gang' to do so. In 1982 he presided over the worst recession since the 1930s.

Malcolm Fraser was satirised for his aloof personality, autocratic leadership style and dour 'life wasn't meant to be easy' philosophy, which made him unpopular with many young people. However he was a consistently outspoken critic of South Africa's apartheid regime and his government set multicultural policies in action.

Some of the key events in the 80s which impacted on people's lives during the Fraser era include:

1980

- Aboriginal Development Commission established
- Number of Vietnamese refugees accepted by Fraser government reaches 56,000
- 23 May: Australian Olympic Federation votes 6–5 in favour of sending a team to the Moscow Olympics despite the Federal government's request for boycott in response to USSR invasion of Afghanistan.
- 18 October: Malcolm Fraser's government re-elected
- 24 October: SBS launches multicultural television Channel 0/28 in Sydney and Melbourne

1981

- 26 January: Australian Institute of Sport (AIS) in Canberra is officially opened by Malcolm Fraser
- US president Ronald Reagan inaugurated, aged 69
- June: Federal government introduces a new tax concession (known as **10BA**) to encourage investment in film and television.
- 12 November: Federal government declares the Cairns section of the Great Barrier Reef a marine park, overriding Queensland government

1982

- New migrant selection scheme introduced, based on family reunion and the need for skilled workers
- 29 January: Tasmanian Labor government gives go ahead to **dam** the **Franklin River**
- May: Eddie Mabo launches historic landrights case in High Court
- Caroma develops the **dual flush toilet**. Funded by a Commonwealth government grant, the innovation saves 32,000 litres of water per household per year when trialled.

1983

- 6 March: Malcolm Fraser concedes defeat when Australian Labor party's **Bob Hawke** elected prime minister

■ Prime Minister Bob Hawke

Term of office: 11 March 1983 to 20 December 1991

Bob Hawke was Australia's longest-serving Labor prime minister, with four terms in office. The 1983 election win was the greatest Labor electoral win since John Curtin's 1943 Labor victory.



A former Rhodes Scholar, Bob Hawke was a populist who sought to govern by consensus and inspire cooperation between unions and employers, in an effort to help foster economic growth. This is reflected in his campaign material on display in the exhibition which states 'Bob Hawke. Bringing Australia Together. Australian Labor Party'.

Hawke's first term coincided with the end of a recession and the breaking of a drought. Australia entered a boom period of economic growth and industrial expansion. Deregulation by the Hawke government, with Paul Keating as Treasurer, opened the country to international competition and world markets.

Some of the key events in the 80s which impacted on people's lives during the Hawke era include:

1983

- 6 March: Leader of the Australian Labor Party **Bob Hawke** elected Prime Minister

- 11–14 April: Economic Summit held in Canberra with political parties, union and employers meeting in attempt to reach a national consensus on economic policy. A by-product of the summit was the Wages Accord with unions, which became a significant part of economic policy for the Labor government.
- 1 July: High Court of Australia rules that the [Franklin River](#)'s World Heritage listing means the Federal government has an obligation to protect the site. The Hawke government exercises its powers to stop the dam construction, reversing the Tasmanian state government's earlier decision
- 9 December: Australian government floats the dollar and allows foreign-owned banks to operate in Australia in initial attempt to deregulate the national economy

1984

- 26 January: Aboriginal leader [Lowitja \(Lois\) O'Donoghue](#) becomes Australian of the Year
- 1 February: Medicare introduced
- August: National Advisory Council on AIDS appointed
- 1 December: Hawke government re-elected, with a reduced majority
- Changes to Australia's education and training system commence including: amalgamation of smaller tertiary training institutions, upgrading of the Technical and Further Education (TAFE) sector and establishment of national training and qualification standards

1985

- March: Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer adopted
- 27 August: [AUSSAT](#) launches its first domestic satellite from NASA's space shuttle. The AUSSAT satellites allow radio and TV broadcast to remote areas in rural Australia
- 26 October: Uluru National Park is handed back to the Mutijulu Aboriginal community

1986

- 11 February: Joan Child becomes first woman speaker at the Australian House of Representatives

1987

- February: Telecom (now Telstra) establishes first analogue mobile phone network in Australia
- 2 April: Senate rejects Labor's proposed identity card, the Australia Card

- 11 July: Hawke Labor government re-elected for third term
- 27 July: Fitzgerald Inquiry into police corruption in Queensland begins
- 10 August: Bob Hawke announces Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody
- 3 October: Over 25,000 Vietnam veterans participate in belated Welcome Home parade
- Stock markets around the world crash with Wall St suffering its largest drop in history
- The new mobile network, Advanced Mobile Phone Service (AMPS) is launched, replacing the old limited network, Mobile Telephone System 007 (PAMPS)
- Office of Multicultural Affairs established to promote multiculturalism and advise the prime minister directly on issues relating to Australia's multicultural society

1988

- 26 January: celebrations to mark bicentenary of European settlement in Australia
- 26 January: Indigenous response to the bicentenary, as Aboriginal people lead huge 'Invasion Day' rally in Sydney
- November: Bob Hawke agrees to hand over prime minister's job to Paul Keating after next election

1989

- January: Prime Minister Bob Hawke proposes the idea of Asia-Pacific economic co-operation (APEC), during a speech in Seoul, Korea. Later the same year, leaders of 12 Asia-Pacific countries meet in Canberra to establish APEC
- June: Standard variable interest rate hits 17%
- November: end of Cold War symbolised by fall of the Berlin Wall



Unit of Work

History Stage 5: People Power and Politics	1–2 weeks
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Outcomes

- 5.1** explains social, political and cultural developments and events and evaluates their impact on Australian life
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Syllabus link What have been some important political developments in post-war Australian history?	Significance What do my parents remember about Prime Ministers Fraser and Hawke? What impact did they have on Australian’s lives?	Higher order thinking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much power does a prime minister have? • What’s the difference between a ‘good’ and a ‘bad’ prime minister? • Who decides?
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Teaching and Learning Strategies

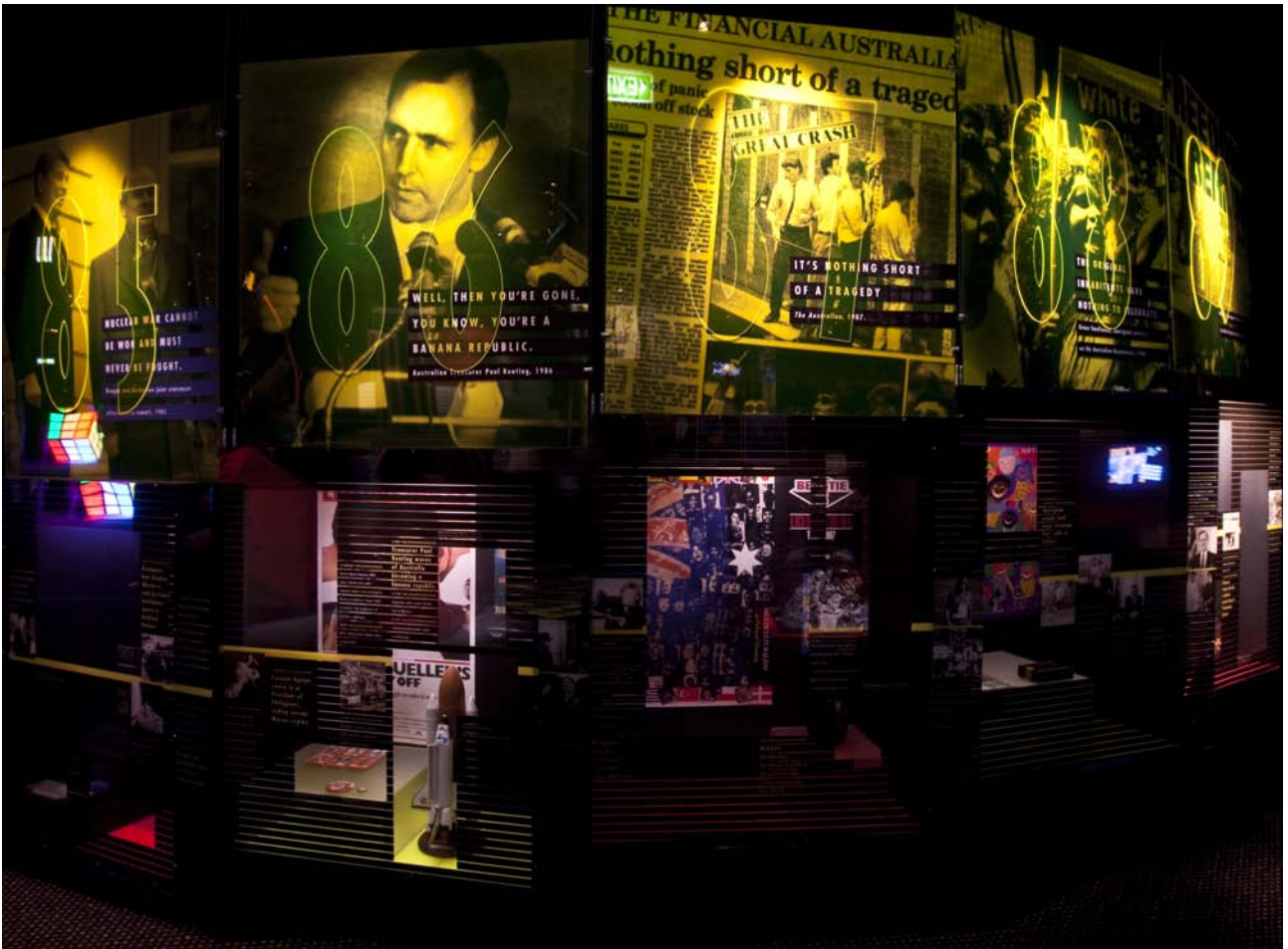
- Contextualisation — place Fraser and Hawke into the timeline of Australian PMs learnt in Topic 7 (1).
- Research — do further research on either Malcolm Fraser or Bob Hawke, considering:
 - How did their ‘time’ reflect the 80s?
 - What were their main achievements?
 - Did they make a difference to the lives of Australians?
 - What is their legacy for future generations?
- Research — research and explain why Malcolm Fraser and the Coalition were voted out of office in 1983.

Resources

- *The 80s are back* exhibition at the Powerhouse Museum
- *The 80s are back* exhibition microsite <http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/the80sareback/>
- Pre-visit exhibition walkthrough <http://www.powerhousemuseum.com/the80sareback/index.php/education/exhibition-slideshow/>
- <http://primeministers.naa.gov.au>
- http://www.nma.gov.au/education/school_resources/websites_and_interactives/primeministers/

Synthesis

Assess the contribution of your chosen PM to Australia’s post-war development.



Above: part of the 1980s timeline in *The 80s are back* exhibition.

Page 4: Bicentennial protest, Australia Day, 1988. Photo © Newspix.


For more information on the exhibition
The 80s are back, visit the Powerhouse Museum's website www.powerhousemuseum.com/the80sareback/

For more information about education support or your booking, contact Bookings at the Powerhouse Museum:
 Telephone — (02) 9217 0222
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