

HANDOUT

Australia: CONNECT THE DOTS



Follow the instructions to track the possible migration route of early humans out of Africa and to the South Pacific region. Draw symbols from the map's legend along your route to represent different types of movement or features of the environment. Add symbols if you need to.

NOTE

The abbreviation 'c.,' for 'circa,' means approximately.

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| A | c. 200,000 years ago | What may be the earliest fossils of modern <i>Homo sapiens</i> were found at Omo Kibish in Ethiopia. Mark this spot. |
| B | c. 50,000–100,000 years ago | A sudden cooling of the Earth's climate may have made life hard for our African ancestors and reduced their population to under 10,000. Once the climate improved and the population grew again, some adventurous explorers probably left Africa by crossing the Bab-al-Mandab Strait, separating present-day Yemen from Djibouti. The waters of the Red Sea between Africa (at the Horn of Africa) and the Arabian Peninsula were much shallower then, and your ancestors could have used simple rafts to cross. Track their route. |
| C | c. 50,000–70,000 years ago | These early beachcombers may have moved along the coast of the Arabian Peninsula to India, and then Southeast Asia. During this time, the sea levels were lower and many of the islands of Southeast Asia formed a single landmass called Sunda. Track their route. |
| D | c. 50,000–70,000 years ago | Some scientists think your ancestors travelled from Southeast Asia through Indonesia and Timor, then across the sea to the northwest coast of Australia. Others say there is evidence they travelled through Indonesia's northern islands into New Guinea and Australia (then part of a single continent known as Sahul). The migration to Sahul would have required seafaring, and this may be the first time humans anywhere in the world navigated the seas. Track both possible routes. |
| E | c. 50,000 years ago | Your group arrived in what is today Australia. At a burial site at Lake Mungo in southeastern Australia, a fully intact human skeleton was found in 1974. The adult male body was sprinkled with a red powder made from clay before being buried over 40,000 years ago. Over time, his descendants—the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—formed hundreds of nations and spoke over 250 languages and 600 dialects. They are one of the oldest continuous civilizations on earth. Mark Australia on the map to represent these people. |