



# We Are the Rebels

## CLARE WRIGHT

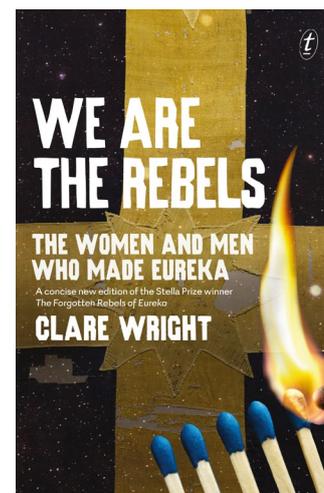
ISBN 9781922182784

RRP AU\$19.99

Non-fiction, B paperback

RECOMMENDED SCHOOL YEAR LEVEL: 7–11

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### TEACHING NOTES FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CURRICULUM

- ▶ These activities are designed for teachers to explore the book in line with the *Australian Curriculum: History*.  
Year 5 Level – The Australian Colonies  
Year 9 Level – The Making of the Modern World (Depth Study – Movements of People (1750–1901))
- ▶ Activities are arranged in ascending order of complexity. The earlier activities may be more suited to the year 5 classroom, and the later to the year 9 classroom.
- ▶ These activities cover the following historical skills:  
Chronology, Terms and Concepts  
Historical questions and research  
Analysis and use of sources  
Perspectives and interpretations
- ▶ Links to the Australian Curriculum: History content codes and capabilities are provided next to each question. Refer to the legend below and the accompanying [Australian Curriculum: Scope and Sequence reference chart](#) to decipher these codes.

<b>Strands</b>	LA – Language LT – Literature LY – Literacy
<b>Modes</b>	W – Writing L – Listening R – Reading S – Speaking
<b>General capabilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literacy</li> <li>Intercultural understanding</li> <li>Personal and social capability</li> <li>Information and communication technology</li> <li>Critical and creative thinking</li> <li>Numeracy</li> <li>Ethical behaviour</li> </ul>
<b>Cross-curriculum priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainability</li> <li>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures</li> <li>Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia</li> </ul>

### SYNOPSIS

Many Australians recognise the Eureka Stockade as a pivotal moment in Australia’s quest for democracy. The Victorian governor, Sir Charles Hotham, regarded the Ballarat Reform League’s demand for manhood suffrage, opening up the lands and abolishing the mining tax as rebellious. Military forces attacked the flimsily built stockade in the early hours of the morning of 3 December 1854. The attack lasted little more than ten minutes and when the gunfire stopped maybe fourteen were dead inside the stockade. More died in the coming days from injury, and they included an unnamed woman. Historian Clare Wright uses the white-draped coffin of this woman as a starting point in her examination of what the women were doing on that night, and in that place. Her research challenges the perception that the Eureka Stockade and the goldfields experience were overwhelmingly masculine in character.

*We Are the Rebels* takes its readers back to 1854 to explore the everyday experiences of the emigrants who travelled from Great Britain, Europe and the Americas in search of wealth, freedom and a new life. Distinguished historian Clare Wright trawled the archives to discover the goldfields were not a male bastion, but a place of men and women, children and families, living cheek by jowl in a canvas city trying to make a living. Women took out gold licences, worked as entertainers, wrote poetry, sold everything from sly grog to baby clothes and, most importantly, were political players in the Eureka rebellion. It was the women, Clare Wright argues, who created the Southern Cross flag—Australia’s first flag which flew above the Stockade on that night.

*We Are the Rebels* is a result of years of painstaking historical research into primary sources held in Australian and British archives. The story of the gold rush emigration and the Eureka Stockade is one of national significance as identified in the Australian Curriculum, and this book is a valuable and entertaining teaching resource for the history classroom.



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Clare Wright is a historian who has worked as a political speechwriter, university lecturer, historical consultant and radio and television broadcaster. Her first book, *Beyond the Ladies Lounge: Australia's Female Publicans*, garnered both critical and popular acclaim. Her groundbreaking second book, *The Forgotten Rebels of Eureka*, which took ten years to research and write, won the 2014 Stella Prize.

Clare researched, wrote and presented the ABC television documentaries *Utopia Girls* and *The War that Changed Us*. She lives in Melbourne with her husband and three children.

## ACTIVITIES

- Write one sentence identifying each of these objects, people or events.
  - Wathaurong
  - Eureka Stockade
  - Charles Hotham
  - Charles LaTrobe
  - Peter Lalor
  - Commissioner Robert Rede
  - Catherine Bentley
  - Anastasia Hayes
  - Martha Clendinning
  - Red Ribbon Movement
  - Ballarat Reform League

(ACHHK097) (ACHH5164)   
- Put these events in the correct order:
  - Mining licence abolished
  - Monster Meeting held on Bakery Hill, where the Southern Cross is flown
  - Peter Lalor hides wounded in Geelong
  - James Scobie murdered
  - The Eureka Stockade attacked
  - Eureka Hotel (Bentleys) burnt down
  - Governor Hotham arrives in Victoria
  - 13 stockaders accused of treason found innocent and released
  - Gold discovered by Europeans in Victoria
  - The Eureka Stockade built

(ACHHS098) (ACHHK095) (ACHH5164)  
- Artist Samuel Gill painted many scenes of goldfields life. His work can be found online at the National Library of Australia (NLA) TROVE website. Find five images of goldfields life by Samuel Gill you would use to illustrate *We Are the Rebels*. Choose a sentence from the book to accompany each of your chosen pictures. (ACHHS106) (ACHH5168) (ACHH5169) (ACHHS171) (ACDSEH084)   
- Read pp.22–35. This section describes the journey emigrants took to Australia by sailing ship. Answer the following questions:
  - Why is one section on the emigrant journey called 'The Long Goodbye'?
  - What were some of the reasons emigrants gave for leaving their home countries to travel to the Australian goldfields? Provide evidence for your answers.
  - 'These days it's hard to believe that a journey could completely transform you.' (p.22). How is overseas travel a different experience in the twenty-first century? How does Clare Wright suggest the journey to Australia transformed gold-rush immigrants?
  - Write a short (200 words) diary entry from the perspective of one of the travellers mentioned in this section of the book.

(ACHH5102) (ACHHK096) (ACDSEH083) (ACHHS169)

  
- Draw a poster advertising one of the following places. Describe their important features and who might want to visit them. Research existing images of these places to help in your design.
  - Eureka (Bentley's) Hotel (pp.120–123)
  - Adelphi Theatre (pp.124–126)
  - Government Camp (p.60)
  - The Eureka Stockade (p.202)

Write one sentence explaining the role each of these places played in the Eureka Stockade story.

(ACHH105) (ACHHS102)   
- What impact did the discovery of gold have on the natural environment? (Hint pp.58–60)

(ACHHK094)   - How did the immigrants react to the unfamiliar Australian environment? (Hint pp.47–48) (ACHHK094) (ACDSEH083) (ACHHS164)    
- Locate and copy the cartoon from London *Punch* called 'Alarming Prospect of Single Ladies Off to the Diggings' by John Leech (1854) discussed on p.77. Develop five questions for this cartoon, which will help other students understand why the cartoon was drawn and what its message is. (ACHHS166), (ACHHS168) (ACHHS16)    
- Write a newspaper article entitled 'Advice for ladies wishing to travel to Ballarat'. In your article include information on the correct clothing, equipment and attitude to take to the goldfields. (ACHH5102) (ACHHK096) (ACDSEH083) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS172)   
- Many women on the goldfields made a living as storekeepers. One of these was Martha Clendinning (p.34). Write a series of newspaper advertisements for stores on the Ballarat goldfields, one of them should describe the specialty items Martha Clendinning sold. (ACHH5102) (ACHHK096) (ACHHS101) (ACHHS105) (ACHHS168)   
- Ellen Young (p.107) was a Chartist and a poet and political activist who lived with her gold-mining husband at Golden Point. Ellen used words to express her anger at conditions on the goldfields. Ellen's poem 'Ballarat' was published in the *Geelong Advertiser* 4 June 1854.



Go to the TROVE Australian newspapers online site and download the poem.

Select four lines or phrases from the poem that best describe the living and political conditions at Ballarat.

Write a verse about the Eureka Stockade in Ellen's literary style.

(ACHHSS101) (ACHHSS105) (ACHHSS168)   

12. Clare Wright identifies a number of women in her research who were witness to or involved in the Eureka Stockade but whose names are not often mentioned in history books. Draw up a chart describing what they were doing at Ballarat in 1854 drawing upon information in *We Are the Rebels* and your own research.

<b>HISTORICAL FIGURE</b>	Clara Seekamp (1819–1908)
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	Irish actress common law wife Henry Seekamp
<b>LIFE IN BALLARAT</b>	Editor of the <i>Ballarat Times</i> when her husband was arrested
<b>ROLE AT EUREKA STOCKADE</b>	Supporter of the miners, witness to Eureka Stockade

Sarah Hanmer

Martha Clendinning

Ellen Clancy

Margaret Johnston

Catherine Bentley

Eliza Darcy

Lady Jane Sarah Hotham

Elizabeth Rowlands

Anastasia Hayes

Anne Diamond

(ACHHS098) (ACHHK097) (ACHH5168) (ACHH5169)



13. How did the gold rush offer women more freedom than they experienced in their conventional lives? (Hint pp.48–53) (ACHHK094) (ACHHS104) (ACDSEH083) (ACHHS172)     
14. What was the 'servant problem' in the colonies and what does this suggest about opportunities for immigrants and working people? (Hint p.75) (ACDSEH084) (ACDSEH085)  
15. What would a time traveller from the present find similar and different if they visited the Ballarat goldfields in 1854? (ACHHK094) (ACHHS104) (ACDSEH083) (ACHHS172)  
16. You are a new arrival to the Ballarat goldfields in 1854. Write a letter home to your family describing life and work in and your impressions of life on the goldfields. Use the following sentence starters if you wish.
- My job is ...
- My fellow emigrants ...
- The diggers are ...
- The traps are ...

I live in ...

I eat ...

I wear ...

I saw ...

I was surprised by ...

I feel ...

(ACHHK094) (ACHHS101) (ACHHS104) (ACHHS170) (ACDSEH018)



17. Read 'Poverty Point' (p.93). In point form list the evidence of poverty and hardship experienced on the goldfields in the winter of 1854.
- Which direct quote expresses this sense of suffering most powerfully in your opinion?
- Clare Wright uses this evidence to support her argument stated in the last sentence 'The perception of failure mixed with a sense of entitlement was potentially explosive. Explain what you think she means in your own words. (ACHHS169) (ACHHS172)    
18. The diggers had three main political demands they presented to Governor Hotham, these were:
- abolishing the licence fees
  - access to land
  - suffrage

Explain in one sentence what each of these meant and how they contributed to the uprising at Ballarat.

(ACHHK094) (ACDSEH083)   

19. Clare Wright explains in her introduction how she embarked on 'historical detective work' to search out what women were doing on the goldfields (p.5) She searched archives in for evidence in primary sources such as diaries, letters, newspapers, paintings and government records. One of the mysteries she explores is 'Who Made the Eureka Flag?'
- Read pp.191–194 and answer the following questions.
- What was the Eureka flag?
- Why does Clare Wright call it a 'rebel flag'?
- What are the two theories as to who made the flag?
- What three pieces of evidence does Wright use to argue women sewed the flag?
- Why do you think the flag was listed on the Victorian Heritage Register as an historic object of State significance?
- Where is the flag now?
- (ACDSEH083) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS170) (ACHHS171)
- 
20. People in the nineteenth century had a different worldview from people in the twenty-first century. Ideas about the role of men and women, attitudes towards children, treatment of animals, ideas about race and religion and even health and cleanliness held by people in the past may appear strange, illogical or even cruel today.
- It is important as historians that we try to understand attitudes from the past; this does not mean we accept or support them.



Read the information in the book on Chinese (pp.80–82), Sectarianism (p.138), women's position in society (pp.43–53, 65–67) and medical treatment (pp.87–89).

What do these attitudes suggest about ideas of race, class and science in the mid-nineteenth century?

(ACDSEH083) (ACDSEH084) (ACDSEH085) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS170) (ACHHS172)

21. Choose one of the historical figures described in *We Are the Rebels* and write a biography poem. Write your poem from the point of view of this character. Use language, historical information and dialogue authentic to the period.

I am ... (two special characteristics you have)

I wonder ... (something you are curious about)

I hear ... (imagine you hear a real sound)

I see ... (an imaginary or real sight)

I touch ... (an imaginary or real touch)

I want ... (an actual desire)

I am ... (repeat first line)

I face ... (a barrier or challenge you face)

I worry ... (a worry that you have)

I seek help of ... (a person or people who help you)

I am inspired by ... (a person or people that inspire you)

I am ... (repeat first line)

I understand ... (what you know to be true)

I say ... (something you believe in)

I dream ... (something you dream of)

I try ... (something you really make an effort to do)

(ACDSEH083) (ACDSEH084) (ACDSEH085) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS170) (ACHHS172) (ACHHS173) (ACHHS174)

22. You are an eyewitness to the events of 3 December at Ballarat. Write a letter to the Editor of the *London Times* arguing the event called the Eureka Stockade should be called the Eureka Massacre. Write a reply as the mother of one of the four British soldiers killed on 3 December. (ACHHK095) (ACHHS106) (ACHH172)



23. You are a famous author who has been hired to write a textbook about the Eureka Stockade. Write a proposal to a publisher explaining five historically significant things your book will explore. (ACDSEH083) (ACDSEH084) (ACDSEH085) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS170) (ACHHS172) (ACHHS174)

24. Clare Wright describes what she learnt about the Eureka Stockade at school on p.3. 'Blood stained the wattle, men got the vote and out of all this the first so-called "first" instance of civilian armed contact on Australian soil—democracy was born. All the participants were men of course. That went without saying'.

List three pieces of evidence Clare Wright presents to argue that women **did** participate in the Eureka Stockade. Why does she say 'so-called'? What other examples of armed conflict took place in Australia before the goldrush? (ACHHK095) (ACHHS106) (ACHH172)



25. Work in groups and develop some theories explaining why women were largely absent from Australian history books until the 1970s.

(ACDSEH083) (ACDSEH084) (ACDSEH085) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS170)

26. Visit Victorian gold-rush museum and tourism sites online. How are the gold rush and Eureka marketed for tourists today? (ACDSEH083) (ACDSEH084) (ACDSEH085) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS170)

27. In *We Are the Rebels* Clare Wright uses italics to indicate direct quotes and indented paragraphs for larger quotes. She describes the primary sources and archives she used in the Author's Note on p.vii. Identify five quotes used in the book and explain in your own words what evidence they provide us with about the goldfields experience? (ACHS171)

28. Define the following historical concepts and ideas using examples from *We Are The Rebels* to help explain your answers.

Sectarianism

Suffrage

Chartism

Rebellion

Justice

Treason

Racism

(ACHHS165) (ACHHS101)

29. Research the extent to which historians agree on the long-term impact of the Eureka Stockade on Australia (hint: pp.241–244 is a starting point). What is your opinion? (ACHHS173)

## ESSAY QUESTIONS

Use evidence from the book to help you respond to the following essay topics.

1. 'If there were women there, what were they doing? What drove them to leave their homelands in search of a new life? Did they come for the same opportunities as men: wealth, freedom and independence? If so, did they fight side by side with the men when those freedoms were denied?' *We Are the Rebels* (p.5)
2. What were the women doing on the Ballarat goldfields in 1854?
3. 'The Eureka Stockade changed Australia.' Discuss.
4. 'The diggers and their families were not so different from us.' Do you agree?
5. 'The goldfields offered emigrants the chance to start a new and better life.' Do you agree?
6. How and why did the gold rush change the environment of Victoria?

(ACDSEH083) (ACDSEH084) (ACHHS169) (ACHHS170)