

Australian Quiz

This may be given as a short research assignment. Students could choose one of the topics upon which to give a 2-3 minute talk. (answers in blue).

1. I am an Australian inland explorer. I travelled overland from Melbourne to the Gulf of Carpentaria with my accomplice Robert O'Hara Burke. Who am I? *William John Wills*
 2. I am a mammal found in Australia's outback. I arrived in Australia from SE Asia 3500-4000 years ago. My most common colour is yellow-ginger. What am I? *dingo*
 3. I am one of Australia's most valuable exports. I am mainly found in rocks more than 600 million years old. 95% of my Australian production is in WA. What am I? *iron ore*
 4. I was born Helen Mitchell in 1861. Appointed Dame Grand Cross of the British Empire in 1927 I was the first Australian to appear on the cover of Time magazine. Who am I? *Dame Nellie Melba*
 5. I am a large town/ small city in outback Australia. Home to a large rodeo in August I am one of the largest producers of both lead and silver in the Western world. I am? *Mt Isa*
 6. I am an island situated 112 km from a major Australian city. With a population of about 4 000 I am Australia's 3rd largest island after Tasmania and Melville Island. I am ...? *Kangaroo Island*
 7. Rising 546 m above the surrounding plain I am a group of 36 large domed rock formations in the NT. My aboriginal name means 'many heads'. I am.....? *Kata Tjuta (the Olgas)*
 8. Born on the Grenfell goldfields in 1867 I became famous for my Australian bush ballads. I was depicted on early versions of the Australian \$10 note. Who am I? *Henry Lawson*
 9. I am a reptile found in areas of northern Australia. My length can be up to one metre. A large ruff of skin attached to my neck flares out when I'm frightened. I am...? *frill-necked lizard*
 10. I am an Australian wild flower. I have a covering of fine coloured hairs. My red and green variety became the floral emblem of Western Australia in 1960. What is my name? *kangaroo paw*
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Opalised Dinosaurs

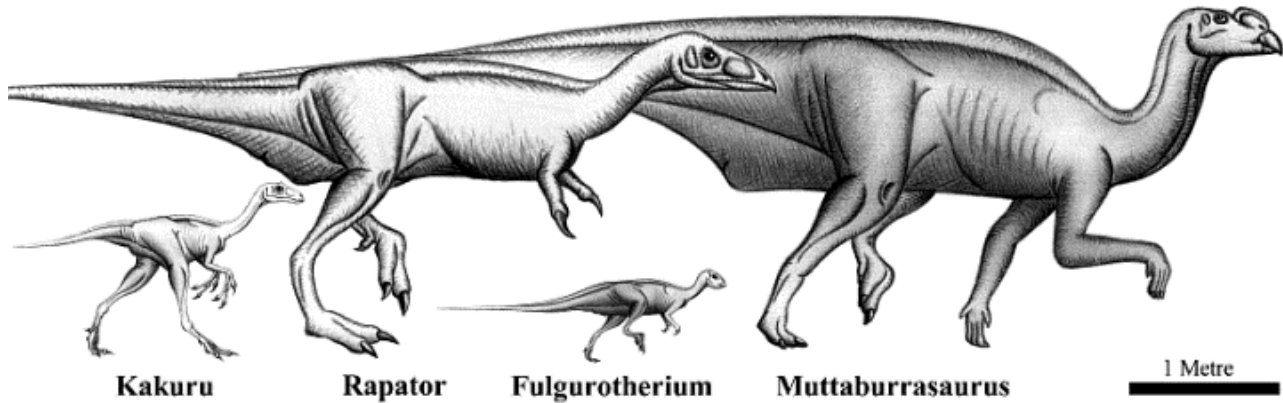


image courtesy and © Dann Pigdon

Dinosaur remains have been found in the opal fields of South Australia and New South Wales. **Kakuru** is represented by a single almost-complete tibia (lower leg bone) from Andamooka in South Australia. The word "Kakuru" means "rainbow serpent" in the local Aboriginal language, probably because the opalised fossil sparkles with many colours. Other South Australian fossil material includes a juvenile hypsilophodontid vertebra from Andemooka, and an ankle bone of a large ornithopod, perhaps something like **Muttaborrasaurus**, from Coober Pedy.

Talk about or Write about

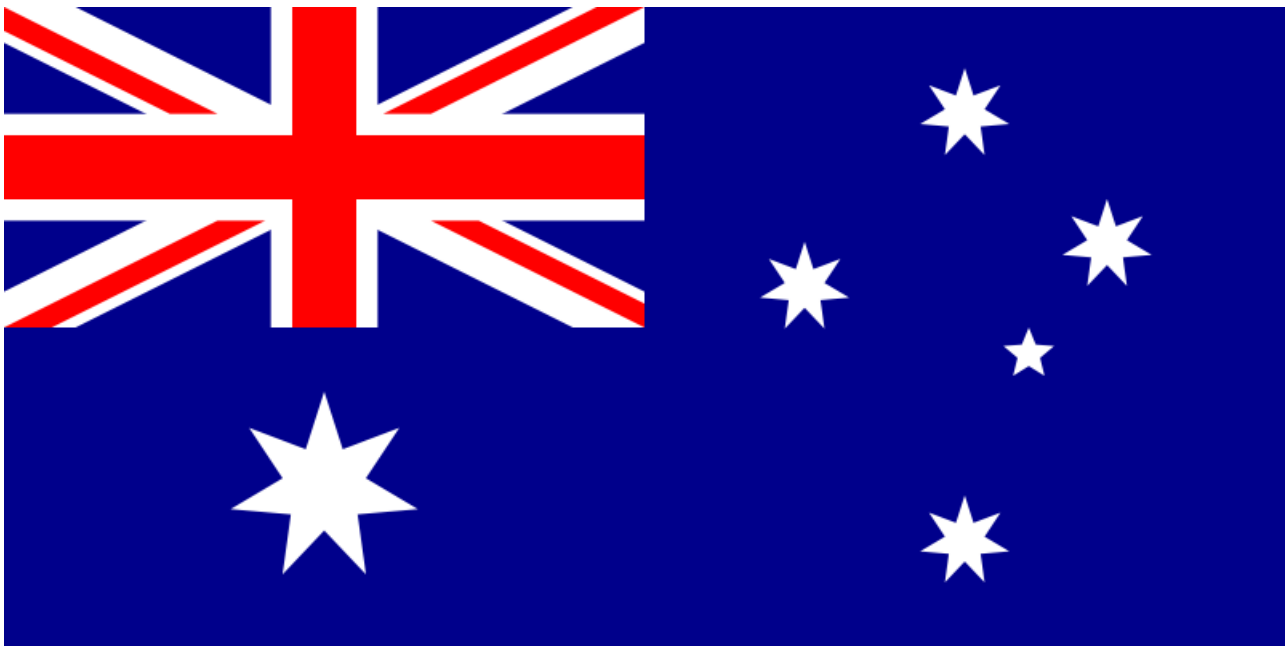
1. When people learn that dinosaurs lived in Australia many don't realise that our land looked nothing like it does now. The Australian continent had not long broken away from Antarctica and would have had a different size and shape than what it has today. Also, there was a large inland sea occupying about a third of Australia's land area. So what does it actually mean to say that dinosaur remains have been found in South Australia?
2. What do opals and rainbows have in common?
3. Looking at the image above, how tall and how long would you say Kakuru was?
4. What would you estimate the height and length of Muttaborrasaurus to be?
5. Of the four dinosaurs in the picture, three are bipeds and the other is quadrupedal. What does this mean?

6. What modern-day creature does Kakuru most remind you of?

7. If you were lucky enough to find an opalised dinosaur fossil would you value it more for its beauty or its rarity? What would you do with it?



Australian Flag



The Australian flag has the Union Flag (the flag of the United Kingdom and commonly known as the Union Jack) in the upper left corner, with a large white seven-pointed star known as the Commonwealth Star underneath. The Commonwealth Star is a seven-pointed star symbolising the Federation of Australia (which came into being on New Years Day 1901). Six points of the Star represent the six states of the Commonwealth of Australia, while the seventh point represents the territories. The right half of the flag features the Southern Cross constellation, made up of five white stars...one small five-pointed star and four, larger, seven-pointed stars. The Southern Cross is one of the most

distinctive constellations visible in the Southern Hemisphere. All six stars on the flag are on a dark blue background.

The flagpole atop Parliament House in Canberra is an impressive sight. It is 81 metres tall and measures 12.8 by 6.4 metres (the size of half a tennis court).

Guidelines for flying the flag are laid out in the 1953 Flags Act. The guidelines say that the Australian National Flag is allowed to be flown on every day of the year and that it "should be treated with the respect and dignity it deserves as the nation's most important national symbol".

The flag must be flown in all government buildings and displayed in polling stations when there is a national election.

The flag should only be flown during daylight hours, unless it is illuminated. The flag should not be displayed upside down under any circumstances, not even to express a situation of distress. The flag is not to be placed or dropped on the ground. Flags that have decayed or faded should not be displayed.

The Australian flag is flown at half mast on solemn occasions; these include the death of a member of the British Royal Family, ANZAC Day (until noon) and Remembrance Day.

There are many people who would like the Australian flag changed; they would like it to have a completely different design. These people believe the flag should be more 'Australian', perhaps in the green and gold colours of our Olympic teams and maybe featuring an Australian animal - probably a kangaroo. Many say that the current flag doesn't recognize that Australia as a nation has matured and that the Union Flag should be removed. Also, according to these same people, our flag is too similar to some other nation's flags, especially that of New Zealand.

Talk about or Write about

1. What do you think of the Australian flag? Do you like it? (say why or why not)
2. When (if ever) have you waved an Australian flag? Did it make you feel proud to be Australian?
3. Mainland Australia has six states and two territories (we have other territories offshore, for example in Antarctica). Can you name all our states and territories? (*maybe you could sketch a large Commonwealth Star and write the names of the states and territories next to the seven points*)

Teachers: a brief, interesting snapshot of pre Federation Australia could be read out to your students. See [here](#).

(4a) What is a constellation? (4b) Why do you think the Southern Cross constellation is so-called? (4c) Have you ever looked up into the night sky and seen the Southern Cross? (*if not, try it!*)

5. The Flags Act of 1953 states that the Australian flag should be treated with respect and dignity yet there have been a few occasions when individuals and groups have desecrated our flag (some

have even burnt it). What might lead some people do this? Do you think these people should be punished or penalised? If so, what could be a suitable punishment?

6. Do you agree that the Australian flag should be flown at half-mast upon the death of a member of the British Royal Family? *(after all, these persons are not Australian)*

7. Do you think our flag should be changed and have a new design? If so, what should it look like? *(you may wish to sketch your new Australian flag)*

Australian Animals: **Echidna**



Many people do not know that echidnas are named after a monster in ancient Greek mythology, Echidna, who is half woman, half snake.

Echidnas, together with platypuses, are the only mammals that lay eggs. Such mammals are called monotremes.

Echidnas are small (35-53cm long) and covered with coarse hair and spines; with their diet consisting largely of ants and termites echidnas are also known as spiny anteaters.

Echidnas' long, slender snouts function as both mouth (eating) and nose (smelling). Their mouth is tiny and their jaw toothless. They feed by tearing open soft logs and anthills and use their long, sticky tongue, which protrudes from their snout, to collect their prey.

Echidnas have very short, strong limbs with large claws and they are powerful diggers.

The female lays a single soft-shelled, leathery egg and deposits it directly into her pouch. Hatching takes place after ten days; the young echidna, called a puggle, then sucks milk from the pores of the two milk patches (monotremes have no nipples) and remains in the

pouch for 45 to 55 days, at which time it starts to develop spines. The mother digs a burrow and deposits the puggle, returning every five days to suckle it.

Talk about or Write about

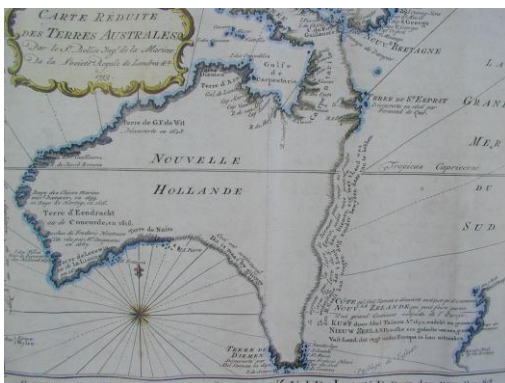
- 1) What do echidnas have in common with reptiles and birds?
- 2) Echidnas have coarse hair. What does *coarse* mean?
- 3) How might an echidna's spines be of use to it?
- 4) Echidnas have a tiny mouth and no teeth. Does this 'fit' with its diet?
- 5) An echidna's tongue protrudes from its snout. What does *protrudes* mean?
- 6) Here is something to think about and if you can come up with a good answer you're very clever! ... How do mother echidnas know when 5 days have passed by? (see final sentence in the passage) *Hint: take a guess or do some research.*

Discovery of Australia

There are some (notably British historian Gavin Menzies) who claim that the Chinese were the first mariners to discover Australia. These assertions are yet to be proved.

The first records of European mariners sailing into Australian waters date to 1606, and includes their observations of the land known as *Terra Australis Incognita* (unknown southern land). The first ship and crew to chart the Australian coast and meet with Aboriginal people was the *Duyfken* captained by Dutchman, Willem Janszoon.

Between 1606 and 1770, an estimated 54 European ships (many being Dutch and French) made contact. Prominent among these were merchant ships from the Dutch East Indies Company and included the vessels of Abel Tasman. Tasman charted parts of the north, west and south coasts of Australia which was then known as New Holland.



This map was made in 1753 by Frenchman Jacques Nicolas Bellin; the east coast had not yet been charted so an imaginary line was drawn between Tasmania and Papua New Guinea.

In 1770, Englishman Captain James Cook charted the Australian east coast in his ship *Endeavour*. Under instruction from King George III of England, Cook claimed the east coast on 22 August 1770 at Possession Island, naming eastern Australia *New South Wales*.

The coast of Australia, featuring Tasmania as a separate island, was mapped in detail by the English mariners and navigators Bass and Flinders, and the French mariner, Baudin. A nearly completed map of the coastline was published by Flinders -who was the first to circumnavigate Australia- in 1814.

Talk about or Write about

1. One day it may happen that it is proven true that the Chinese were the first to discover Australia. If they *were* the first, and if Australia had been claimed as a Chinese colony (just as the British claimed Australia as theirs) how do you think our country might be different from what it is today?
2. Dutch mariners were the first to meet with Australia's Aboriginal people. When these two very different groups first encountered one another what might have been some thoughts, feelings and emotions experienced by (a) the Dutch and (b) the Aboriginals?
3. Merchants are traders...buyers or sellers of goods. Why might merchant ships from Europe have been in waters near Australia, so far from their home countries?
4. The 1753 map by Frenchman Jacques Nicolas Bellin (above) clearly shows that the west coast of Australia was more thoroughly mapped before the east coast. Yet it was the east coast where settlements began and flourished; why do you think this might have occurred?
5. King George III of England holds a special place in Australia's history. For what reason(s) might the King have instructed Captain Cook to claim the east coast of this distant land for England?

ANZAC Biscuits

During World War 1, the wives, mothers and girlfriends of the Australian soldiers were concerned about the nutritional value of the food being supplied to their men.

There was a problem. Any food they sent to the fighting men had to be carried in the ships of the Merchant Navy. Most of these were lucky to maintain a speed of ten knots (18.5 kilometres per hour). Most had no refrigerated facilities, so any food sent had to be able to remain edible for periods in excess of two months. A group of women came up with the answer -a biscuit with all the nutritional value possible. The basis was a Scottish recipe using rolled oats.

These oats were used extensively in Scotland, especially for a heavy porridge that helped counteract the extremely cold climate.



The ingredients they used were: rolled oats, sugar, plain flour, coconut, butter, golden syrup or treacle, bicarbonate of soda and boiling water. All these items did not readily spoil. At first the biscuits were called Soldiers' Biscuits, but after the landing on Gallipoli, they were renamed ANZAC Biscuits.

A point of interest is the lack of eggs to bind the ANZAC biscuit mixture together. Because of the war, many of the poultry farmers had joined the services, thus eggs were scarce. The binding agent for the biscuits was golden syrup or treacle. Eggs that were sent long distances were coated with a product called *ke peg* (like Vaseline) then packed in airtight containers filled with sand to cushion the eggs and keep out the air.

As the war drew on, many groups like the CWA (Country Women's Association), church groups, schools and other women's organisations devoted a great deal of time to the making of ANZAC biscuits. To ensure that the biscuits remained crisp, they were packed in used tins, such as Billy Tea tins. You can see some of these tins appearing in your supermarket as exact replicas of the ones of earlier years.

Look around. The tins were airtight, thus no moisture in the air was able to soak into the biscuits and make them soft. Most people would agree there is nothing worse than a soft biscuit.

During World War 2, with refrigeration in so many Merchant Navy Ships, the biscuits were not made to any great extent. It was now possible to send a greater variety of food, like fruit cake.

ANZAC biscuits are still made today. They can also be purchased from supermarkets and specialty biscuit shops. Around ANZAC Day, these biscuits are also often used by veterans' organisations to raise funds for the care and welfare of aged war veterans.

Anzac Biscuits Recipe (*Melt & Mix Method*)

Ingredients:

- 125 gm Butter
- 2 tablespoons Golden Syrup
- 1 Cup Coconut
- 2 teaspoons Bicarbonate Soda
- 1 Cup Flour

- 1 Cup Sugar
- 1 Cup Rolled Oats
- 2 tablespoons Boiling Water

Method:

1. Melt butter and Golden Syrup.
2. Dissolve soda in boiling water.
3. Add liquids to dry ingredients.
4. Place in teaspoon-size lumps on a greased baking tray.
5. Bake at 160 degrees Celcius for 18 -20 mins.
6. Cool on cake cooler.

Australian Animals: **Numbat**

Numbats are animals that are found only in Western Australia. They are small (35-45 cm in length) and have a long pointy snout.

Numbats have black and white stripes and a bushy tail.



Numbats live in hollow logs and they feed on termites. A numbat can eat up to 20 000 termites in a day; it digs up the termites from loose earth with its front claws and captures them with its long sticky tongue.

Numbats are marsupials. Marsupials are mammals which have a pouch to carry their young. Australia has more kinds of marsupials than any other country.

Questions

- 1) In which Australian state are numbats found?
 - 2) Are numbats longer than your school ruler?
 - 3) Can you think of a reason why a numbat's snout needs to be pointy?
 - 4) Numbats have stripes. What are some other animals that have stripes?
 - 5) Which two parts of its body does a numbat use to capture termites?
 - 6) Can you think of another word for capture?
 - 7) Are all mammals marsupials or are all marsupials mammals?
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Sheep in Australia



Does Australia have more people or more sheep? What do you think?

In 2010 there were 22 million people living in Australia. And 110 million sheep! This means that for every person in Australia there are five sheep.

You might have about 25 people in your class. If there were schools for sheep there would be around 125 sheep in every class!

Sheep give us wool. Australia produces more wool than any other country in the world. Much of this wool is sold to other countries and this brings quite a bit of money into Australia; it's not surprising that people have said, "Australia rides on the sheep's back."

Merino sheep were brought here from England by John Macarthur in 1796 (more than 200 years ago). These sheep were originally from Spain. So, unlike koalas, kangaroos, wombats, echidnas and platypuses, sheep are not native to Australia.

Merino sheep have thick, fine fleece that is suitable for spinning and weaving into a fine fibre that is mainly used to make clothing.

We also get meat from sheep.

Talk about or Write about

- 1) What clothing made of wool do you own?
- 2) What else, apart from clothing, is made of wool?
- 3) Why have some people said, "Australia rides on the sheep's back"?
- 4) What kinds of places would not be suitable for sheep farming?
- 5) Do you know what kind of meat we get from sheep?
- 6) Choose an Australian native animal from paragraph 5. (a) In what ways is it different from a sheep? (b) In what ways is it the same as a sheep?



Ancient Australia

for research, discussion and/or writing

Pangaea and Gondwana

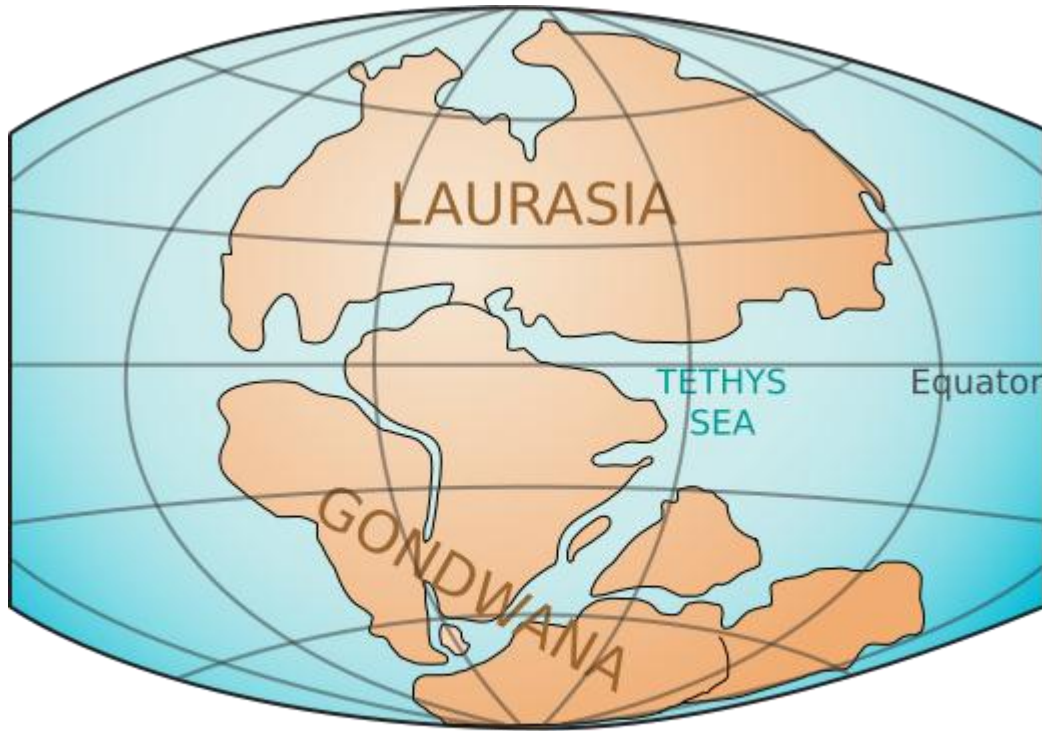
Long, long ago there was no Australia.

Going back in time more than 200 million years there was just one continent on Earth, a supercontinent scientists call Pangaea.



Then, in the Triassic Period, Pangaea broke into two, Gondwana in the south and Laurasia in the north.

The great land mass Gondwana consisted of South America, Antarctica, Africa, Madagascar, India and Australia.



TRIASSIC 200 million years ago

About 184 million years ago South America began to drift slowly westward from Africa and, at about the same time, Madagascar began moving away from Africa to the east, Antarctica drifted south while India moved northward.

Part of Antarctica broke away around 100 million years ago; this became New Zealand. Australia began to separate from Antarctica soon after. Over the years Australia moved further and further north, its shape gradually changing into what it is today.

If ever you visit Albany at the southern tip of Western Australia you can see a sign set amid an outcrop of granite rock at the coast. The sign mentions that the rocks and general geology of this area is of the same type and same age as that along the northern coast of Antarctica.

Talk about or Write about

- 1) What is interesting about the shapes of the east coast of South America and the west coast of Africa?
- 2) What caused Pangaea and then Gondwana to break apart?
- 3) There was life on Earth at the time of Gondwana. What kinds of life were there?

4) Imagine that Australia and all the other continents miraculously came back together again -with no calamities- and everyone on Earth lived on a single continent, similar to Pangaea. How would things be different? (some key words to get you started: *travel, communication, nationalism, wars, climate, trade, ...*).

Golden Wattle *Australia's Floral Emblem*



The Golden Wattle has been the Floral Emblem of Australia for many years though it only became the official emblem in 1988 (Australia's Bicentenary).

The Golden Wattle (scientific name *Acacia pycnantha*) is just one of about 900 species of wattle (*Acacia*) in Australia. Its flowers are bright yellow and scented; its leaves are a shiny dark green. When it flowers in late winter and spring, a mass of fragrant, fluffy, golden flowers are produced.

The Golden Wattle is found in all southern parts of Australia from east to west, very often in the under-storey of eucalypt forests; it thrives in dry, shallow soils.

The Australian Coat of Arms includes a wreath of wattle and the green and gold colours.



Australians representing their country in international sporting events usually wear the national colours, green and gold, said to be based on wattle foliage and flowers.



Here are some stamps and coins featuring the Golden Wattle.



Talk about or Write about

- 1) How many years ago did the Golden Wattle officially become the Floral Emblem of Australia?
- 2) Name the months when the Golden Wattle's flowers appear.
- 3) What do you think is meant by 'the under-storey of eucalypt forests'?
- 4) What does *thrives* mean?

5) Australia's Olympic athletes wear uniforms of green and gold -based on the colours of the Golden Wattle. Do you think our athletes' uniforms should, instead, be in the red, white and blue colours of the Australian flag?

