

## Australia's penal colony



New South Wales, a state in southeast Australia, was founded by the British as a penal colony in 1788. Over the next 80 years, more than 160,000 convicts were transported to Australia from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, in lieu of being given the death penalty.

Today, about 20% of Australians are descendants of convicts, including plenty of prominent citizens. [...]

For at least a century after convict transportation ended in 1868, the Australian colonies tried to hide their founding legacy. But Australia's shame has been transformed into pride in the last century. The truth about many working-class convicts has helped remove the stigma, since some were children, some did little more than steal a bag of sugar, some were political prisoners, and some were falsely accused.

Source: <http://www.bbc.com/travel/story/20120126-travelwise-australias-penal-colony-roots>

1) Pick out the places in the first paragraph:

New South Wales

Ireland

Wales

England

Scotland

Australia

### Vocabulary:

in lieu = instead of

Stigma = a mark of shame

Convict = prisoner

Prominent = important

Say to what this number refers to: 160,000 = convicts

Now, pick out the title and explain what it means:

Title: Australia's penal colony

Convicts were transported to Australia,

2) Find the antonym of shame in the last paragraph: pride

Explain why Australians felt shame: Their descendants were criminals.

Explain why Australia feels pride: Australians have learned the truth about their legacy and their ancestors.

Recap: British sent their prisoners to Australia, because it was a British colony. Australia was a penal colony, given that there

were a lot of criminals. However, Australia is proud of its history, because they were falsely accused. And the criminals were also political convicts.