

The Australian Population 1

Read the text below which maps changes that have occurred in the Australian population over the last 100 years, then complete the tasks on pages 15 and 16.



Over the past 100 years Australia's population has been affected by historical events such as World War I and II, the Great Depression, medical advances, the Baby Boom, post-war immigration, and technological and global social and economic changes.

Federation 1901: After Federation in 1901, when all of the states joined to become one nation, Australia experienced strong levels of population growth due to a strong faith in the future and reasonably stable economic times. Migration from European countries was strong due to the Commonwealth Government's support of immigrants. It is estimated that at the time of Federation Australia's population was close to 400,000.



The First World War (1914-1918): World War I changed the general growth pattern of Australia's population. Men and women left for war, and approximately 60,000 soldiers did not return. There was also an outbreak of the flu - the Spanish Influenza Epidemic of 1919. It is estimated that 10,000 people died from it.



The Great Depression: The 1930s Depression slowed down the population growth of Australia. Fewer migrants arrived in Australia and some even left in hope of finding employment in another country. Many families delayed having children until they found employment.



The Second World War (1939-45): By 1939, Australia's population was estimated to be nearly seven million. The population remained reasonably stable at this time. Even though 550,000 men fought in this war, it is estimated that over 500,000 soldiers returned. Records show that nearly 40,000 Australians died in the war.

Post War Immigration And The Baby Boom: After World War II, from 1946 to 1971 post-war immigration and the Baby Boom greatly increased Australia's population. Population growth was

estimated at 2.2% per year in comparison with just 0.9% during the Depression. The Australian Government however, believed that Australia's population was still not high enough to ensure its security in the face of another war, or its economic development into the future. Immigration continued to be supported and the Baby Boom, which lasted up until 1971, provided the reassurance the world needed that Australia was an economically stable country.



1970s: In the early 1970s some new factors came into play. A change in attitudes towards the role of women in society allowed women to enter the workforce in previously discouraged roles. This meant more autonomy for women and a fall in population growth. The contraceptive pill was made available on a mass basis at this time which allowed women to more easily control how many children they had, if any. Fertility levels between 1972 and 1980 actually dropped to below those during the Great Depression.



1980s To The Present: Since the 1980s low fertility rates have continued in Australia. Increased immigration has managed to counterbalance low fertility rates, however, the Government has made recent changes to parental leave conditions and maternity pay in order to encourage higher birth rates.



The Future: Australia is currently faced with an ageing population. The Baby Boomers are now retiring and living longer due to Australia's high level of sanitation, diet, public health and medical technology. The future of Australia is in the hands of future generations.



The Australian Population 3

Read the text on page 14, then complete the tasks below.

A. Answer the questions by choosing from the list below.

- a) World War I and World War II
- b) 7 million
- c) contraceptive
- d) retiring Australians
- e) 1901
- f) 1946-1971
- g) 60,000
- h) less
- i) economically stable
- j) fall



1. Which wars had an impact on the population of Australia?	
2. Federation occurred in which year?	
3. How many soldiers did not return from World War I?	
4. Did the Great Depression cause more or less immigrants to come to Australia?	
5. What was the population of Australia at the time of World War II?	
6. Between what years did the Baby Boom happen?	
7. A steady rise in the population of Australia gave the world confidence that Australia was what?	
8. During the 1970s more women joined the workforce. This caused the population to....?	
9. The introduction of what pill caused a decrease in fertility rates?	
10. What does the term 'Baby Boomers' refer to?	

B. Mark on each line how much you agree or disagree with the statement. Explain why after each one.

Statement 1: It is important that men and women have equal opportunities in work.

Agree ←————→ Disagree

Explain why: _____

Statement 2: Immigration has been very important in sustaining Australia's population growth.

Agree ←————→ Disagree

Explain why: _____

Statement 3: It is important that younger generations assist the elderly as they age.

Agree ←————→ Disagree

Explain why: _____