Introduction

By the time Captain James Cook set sail as the commander of his second voyage aboard the Resolution, he was well on his way to becoming the widest-ranging explorer who ever lived. Captain Cook eventually sailed around the globe twice and discovered more territory than anyone else in history. The British Admiralty was so pleased with the discoveries that Cook had made during his first voyage that he was promoted to Commander and given a second set of orders: to explore the Southern Hemisphere see Neal Lineback’s article http://www.geographyinthefuture.com/cgi-bin/gitn/Archives650_111502cook.

In 1772, it was still unknown whether the Southern Hemisphere was only an immense mass of water or could possibly contain the fabled continent of Terra Australis Incognita (The Unknown Southern Land). The idea of Terra Australis Incognita began with the Greeks, who argued that the earth is a sphere and this land was a counterweight to the landmass of the Northern Hemisphere. Capt. Cook traversed the Southern Hemisphere in such a manner as to leave no room for possibility of the existence of this unknown southern land.

The purpose of this activity is to use journal entries to trace Capt. Cook’s second voyage using a methodology suggested by Suzanne Hull in "Mapping Migration: Experiencing Geography Through Travelers' Diaries" (Journal of Geography 93(4): 172-179).

Grade Level: 5-8

Time Frame: One or more class meetings

Objectives

Students working in small groups will be able to extract geographic information from journal entries and plot coordinates on a world outline map to “disprove” the existence of the fabled Terra Australis Incognita.
Terms

• *Latitude* - The location of a place measured as angular distance north and south of the equator.
• *Longitude* - The location of a place measured as angular distance east and west from the Prime Meridian.
• *Prime Meridian* - The meridian passing through the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England, from which longitude is measured.
• *Equator* - An imaginary circle around the earth, equally distant at all points from both the North and South Poles; it divides the earth's surface into the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

National Geography Standards

• Standard 1. How to use maps and other geographic representations tools and technologies to acquire, process, and report information from a spatial perspective.

Getting Started

1. Introduce, identify and define the terms listed above.
2. Place students in small groups with a world atlas and a world outline map.
3. Extract latitude/longitude and place names from the diary entries. List these in chronological order.
4. Use this data to plot and trace Cook’s route on a world outline map.

Diary Entries

The following excerpts are entries from a chronology compiled by Paul Capper and originally published in “Cook’s Log”.

**1772**

• Sept. 7: Crosses Equator.
• Sept. 16: Off Ascension Island
• Sept 28: 25°29.
• Oct. 30: Sights Table Mountain and anchors in Table Bay. Lands. Provisions ships and makes observations. (Cape of Good Hope)
• Nov. 23: Sails from Cape. Heads south.
• CJC: "...we now made the best of our way to the Southward to look for Cape Circumcision, which Monsr Bouvet has laid down in 54ºS Latde and 9º or 10º Et Longitude from London."
• Dec. 10: Sights iceberg to the west at about 51º S.
• Dec 14: In "immense field of ice".
• Dec 18: Heads north after reaching 55º16'S.
• Dec 21: Heads south again.

1773
• Jan. 1: Still in ice at 60º21'S. Farthest south since 30th January 1769.
• Jan. 3: Sights the moon for second time since leaving the Cape. Decides that Bouvet's Cape Circumcision (New Year's Day, 1739) did not exist.
• Jan. 9: At 61º36'S. Sends out three boats. They collect about 15 tons of fresh water from loose ice
• Jan. 17: Crosses Antarctic Circle to 66º36'S. First known mariner to do so. Ice thickening. Heads NE.
• Feb. 1: Burney recorded, "we were this morning due South from the Island of Mauritius, our Latitude being 49ºS."
• Feb. 24: Reaches 61º52'S. Because of ice and weather decides to head NE in the direction of New Zealand.
• Mar. 17: Having followed this course, at about 60'S, finally, he decides to head for New Zealand.
• Mar. 25: Sights New Zealand. 4 months since last seeing land at the Cape.
• Mar. 26: Off Chalky Inlet. Enters Dusky Bay.
• Mar. 29: Goes ashore, finds huts, leaves medals, glass and beads.
• Apr. 6: Visits Resolution Island, Duck Cove, Indian Island, meets native family.
• Apr. 19: Visited by chief and daughter. They come aboard and gifts are exchanged.
• May 5: Boats haul Resolution and manage to anchor in cove at Passage Point at bead of channel to sea (now Acheron Passage).
• May 11: Sails NE to open sea, passing Entry Island, Gilbert Islands, Disappointment Cove and Breaksea Island.
• May 12: Heads for Queen Charlotte Sound, sailing along coast.
• June 8: Off Cape Palliser and heads SE into Pacific.
• June 10: CJC: "at Noon we were in the Latitude of 43º55'S. Longitude 179º50' East...As we shall presently pass the Meridian of 180º after which I shall count my Longitude West of Greenwich, that it may be more consonant to the situations or Longitude of places mentioned in my Voyage on which I counted my Longitude west."
• July 13: Heads North.
July 14: CJC: "altered at noon the course and began to run towards NE so that having run down more than 220º East Longitude from Greenwich we now begin to move towards warmer Climates."

July 29: Sends boat to Adventure. Finds that the cook has died and about 20 crew have scurvy and "Flux".

Aug. 2: Passes close to Pitcairn Island but without sighting it.


Aug. 12: Off Tekokoto (Doubtful) Island, Mauritua (Furneaux) Island.


Aug. 15: Sights Osnaburg Island (Mehetia) and Otaheite (Tahiti). Approaching Society Islands.

Aug. 26: Anchors in Matavai Bay. Lands.

Sept. 2: Sights Huaheine, anchors at Owarre (Faro).

Sept. 3: Goes ashore, meets natives, exchanges hatchets, etc., for food.

Sept. 17: Resolution sails with some 230 hogs aboard and Adventure, 150. Heads west to find Tasman's Amsterdam Island (1643; Tongatapu).

Oct. 8: Sails, heads for New Zealand.

Oct. 21: Sights Table Cape, New Zealand.

Nov. 3: Anchors off what is now, Port Nicholson/Wellington. (Capt. Herd, 1826. in N.Z. Co. ship Rosanna). Then heads for Ship Cove. Anchors. Adventure is not there.

Nov. 25: Sails, but is forced to anchor between Motuara and Long Island. Leaves message in bottle for Furneaux or any other captain, indicating his future route. Sails SE passing Cape Palliser.

Dec. 7: Forster: "Our Longitude is as near as possible 180º East of London, & as our Ship goes finely through the water we shall in a few hours be at the Antipodes of London in 51º33' Southerly Latitude. A place where no other Ship has ever been since the Creation."

Dec. 8: CJC: "there can be no land under the Meridian of New Zealand but what must lie far to the South of 60º."

Dec. 20: Crosses Antarctic Circle at approx 148ºW.


1774

Jan. 7: CJC: "at 8 AM observed several distances of the Sun and Moon, the results were as follows, Mr. Wales 133º24', Mr. Gilbert 133º10', Mr. Clerk 133º00', and Self 133º37' West Longitude. Mr. Kendals watch at the same time gave 133º44'W."

Jan. 26: Crosses Antarctic Circle at 109º31'W.

Jan. 30: At latitude 71º10'S. and 106º54'W longitude, farthest South.

Feb. 3: Recrosses the Antarctic Circle going north.
Feb. 6: Concludes no land mass/continent in Pacific at these latitudes and decides to keep northwards in search of Juan Fernandez' Continent (1563) at latitude 38°, then Easter Island/Davis Land and Bougainville's "Great Cyclades".

Feb. 22: At 37°52'S. and 101°10'W., as trying to get in the latitude of Easter Island, concludes no Juan Fernandez Continent here but it must have been "a small isle".

Mar. 9: On westerly course searching for Easter Island.

Mar. 11: Sights Easter Island (Davis Land) and sails SW along south coast.

Throughout the months of March to November 1774, Capt. Cook criss-crossed the south Pacific in search of Terra Australis Incognita.

Nov. 11: Off Snowy Mts., Cape Palliser; heads east to cross Pacific at high latitudes towards Cape Horn.

Nov. 26: Deciding no land to be found in these latitudes, Cook decides to head for western entrance of Magellan Straits.

Dec: 17: Sights Cape Deseado (Magellan) (Cape Pillar), Desolation Island. Now heads SE. along west coast of Tierra del Fuego. CJC: "now I have done with the Southern Pacific Ocean, and flatter myself that no one will think that I have left it unexplor'd."

1775

Jan. 3: Sails, passes Port Cook inlet, St. John Harbour, rounds Cape St. John and heads SE.

Jan. 31: Sights South Sandwich Isles, Freezeland Rocks (Freezeland, Wilson and Grindle), Freezeland Peak, Cape Bristol (Bristol Isle). In Forster's Bay (Passage). Names land "Southern Thule" - now Thule, Cook and Bellingshausen Islands. Heads North.

Feb. 6: Now in open sea, concludes no continent here. Calls the islands, Sandwich Land (Snowland was a first thought), but conjectures that there must be a tract of land near the Pole which was the source of the ice.

Feb 15: Heads NE. to get into the latitude of "Cape Circumcision" (Bouvet, 1739), which Cook had already assumed to be an island not part of a Southern Continent.

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