

# Sydney Harbour Bridge

## Comprehension \*

### **What Is It?**

The Sydney Harbour Bridge is a world-famous bridge in Sydney, New South Wales. It is located on Sydney Harbour. It connects the southern and northern shores of the Sydney Harbour and is used by thousands of motorists every day. Australians are proud of this iconic landmark. It is a popular tourist attraction with millions of visitors each year.



### **Why Was It Built?**

The people of Sydney had needed a bridge to connect the southern and northern shores of the Sydney Harbour for a long time. It was too difficult and took too long to get from one side of the harbour to the other. Residents kept asking for one but it wasn't until the early 1920s that it was actually considered. In 1922, the New South Wales government finally decided to build a bridge. They began accepting design proposals from different engineering companies. They chose a bridge design by a talented engineer named Dr John Bradfield. It took eight years to build and opened by Jack Lang, the New South Wales premier, in 1932.

### **Building the Bridge**

A problem faced the builders of the Sydney Harbour Bridge before they even started building it. Prior to construction of Sydney Harbour Bridge beginning, they needed a way to let the steel used in the bridge move. This was important because in Sydney it is extremely hot in summer and extremely cold in winter.



When steel gets hot, it expands (gets bigger) and when it gets cold, it contracts (gets smaller). The engineers designed special giant latches to allow the steel to move when it needed to in different temperatures. These latches allow parts of the bridge to move 18cm without collapsing on itself.

### **Interesting Facts**

- The bridge is 1149 metres long.
- The road on the bridge is called the Bradfield Highway, named after its designer.
- People climb the bridge using special ropes, wires and clothing.
- It weighs 52,800 tonnes.
- It is nicknamed the 'coat hanger' because of its arched shape.

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# Questions

1. Where is the Sydney Harbour Bridge?

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2. What is the purpose of the Sydney Harbour Bridge?

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3. Who designed the Sydney Harbour Bridge?

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4. How long did it take to build the Sydney Harbour Bridge?

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5. True or False: The Prime Minister officially opened Sydney Harbour Bridge.

Tick one.

true

false

6. Describe the problem the builders had before construction began.

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7. How did they fix this problem?

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8. Why is the bridge nicknamed the 'coat hanger'?

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