Australia Day 1

6:45 p.m.
Dear Diary,

G’day, mate! Greetings from Down Under—Australia, that is. On the plane ride over, I met the most fantastic girl, who actually lives in Australia, or “Oz,” as she called it. She spoke English but used some words that I didn’t understand. I even got a little worried when she said that I’d need my “sunnies” and “cozzie.” I thought I had forgotten to pack something, but it turns out those are just Aussie terms for sunglasses and a swimsuit. I’ve got those, so I’m all set to begin my adventure!

9:10 p.m.
Dear Diary,

We just checked into our hotel, and from my window I can see the Sydney Harbour Bridge, which is just huge. But the unbelievable part is that there are people walking on the bridge—I mean, actually on the arch above where people drive. I’m sure the view is beautiful way up there, but it looks really scary! Still, I did make it to the top of the Eiffel Tower—so maybe it wouldn’t be so bad. Anyway, we have a big day planned for tomorrow, so I’m off to bed. “Hooroo” (good-bye)!
Day 2

12:15 p.m.
Dear Diary,

While souvenir shopping at the Queen Victoria Building this morning, I found the cutest kangaroo charm* to add to my charm bracelet. I want to get a charm from each place I visit, and so far I have an Eiffel Tower charm from Paris and a Merlion charm from Singapore. My bracelet is filling up fast!

3:25 p.m.
Dear Diary,

Coconut and I took a pedal-boat ride together around Sydney’s Darling Harbour. At first we tried a two-person boat so that Coconut could have a seat to herself, but we kept going around in circles with just me pedaling. Once I stopped laughing, we switched to a one-person boat, and Coconut sat on my lap. It was fun to take in the “ace” (excellent) views of the city with the bright sun shining down on us. Good thing I wore my “sunnies”!

9:20 p.m.
Dear Diary,

Oh, I know I should be in bed, but I just can’t keep myself from dancing! After taking a tour of the incredible

* Activity: Draw in and color the Australia charm.
Sydney Opera House (which looks sort of like a bunch of white boat sails), we stayed to see the Three Blind Mice ballet. The costumes were so pretty, the music was wonderful, and the dancing was better than anything I’d ever seen. I can’t wait to tell my dance class all about it when I get back home!

**Day 3**

9:45 a.m.
Dear Diary,

We’re packing up to leave Sydney, but don’t worry. There’s still a lot more of Australia to see! We have a long car trip ahead of us, so I’ll write more when I get to Kangaroo Island. I hope it’s as cool a place as the name sounds!

**Day 5**

11:20 a.m.
Dear Diary,

We’re finally here, and I’m so glad to be out of the car! I thought we’d be staying in another hotel, but instead we’ll be camping. It will be so cool to sleep under the Australian stars! I just hope there aren’t too many wild animals around. While I was setting up my sleeping bag, I saw an echidna from my tent window. It looks like a little porcupine, so I was sure not to touch it. We found a camp ranger, who came over and turned the little guy around. Guess he just got lost. I hope no other critters will lose their way into our campsite!
4:45 p.m.
Dear Diary,

Surfs up! I just got back from taking surfing lessons in Pennington Bay, and it was so much fun. The water was warm and clear—and I would know, since I “came a gutser” (wiped out) five times before I finally caught a wave. I thought my arms were going to fall off every time I had to paddle out into the waves, but surfing was such a blast that I didn’t mind the workout!

8:35 p.m.
Dear Diary,

The night air is kind of chilly, but I’m toasty warm right now! We built a big campfire and just finished making beef burgers and “bangers” (a lot like ham-burgers and hot dogs). We even made “billy tea,” which is an Australian tea made in a tin can. From my viewpoint, it looks like all the sites around us have campfires going, too. At one site people are singing a silly camp song about a bird called a kookaburra.

Surf’s up, dude!
Day 6

7:15 a.m.
Dear Diary,

“Holy dooley!” (My goodness!) Koalas had me surrounded—and it was incredible! I was out early collecting more campfire wood. I heard a chewing noise above me and looked up in this eucalyptus tree to see three koala bears hanging there. I was “gob-smacked” (surprised)! Two were eating leaves and the other one was “resting her eyes” (that’s what my grandma always says when I catch her napping).

2:50 p.m.
Dear Diary,

I thought surfing was the coolest thing you could do in the water, but snorkeling was just as much fun! As I floated in my “cozzie” with the sun shining on my back, I pretended I was a mermaid with all my fish friends swimming around me. I saw a pink, yellow, and blue fish called a Pink-Belly Wrasse; a bright blue and gold Yellowtail Angelfish; and a spotted Triggerfish! I had to be careful not to touch any of the coral so that it wouldn’t get destroyed, but I did get to feel the silkiness of a few fish when they swam right across my fingertips. I can’t wait to get my film developed from my underwater camera!
8:10 p.m.
Dear Diary,

It’s our last night at Kangaroo Island, so instead of cooking out tonight, we’re ending our stay with an Australian meal at The Outback Brasserie. Most of the meal was made on the “barbie” (grill), and I got to try yabbie, which is a lot like shrimp. I just finished my dessert—vanilla slice. It was a little sticky, but super sweet and so yummy! Once everyone else is done, the restaurant host is going to show us how to play a didgeridoo—that’s a wind instrument that’s almost four feet long! It doesn’t look easy, but I can’t wait to pucker up and try! Starting tomorrow, we’ll be back on the road for a while, but I’ll write as soon as I get to our destination.

Day 8

8:30 p.m.
We just “rocked up” (arrived) in Uluru, which some people call Ayers Rock. “I feel stuffed” (I’m tired) from

Take a look at one of the underwater pictures I took. ACTIVITY: Design and color your own underwater photo!
Day 9

7:45 a.m.
Dear Diary,

I bet you think that I just woke up, but you’d be wrong. I’ve been up for hours and got to see the sunrise while riding on a camel! We met our guide an hour before sunrise, and he introduced me to my camel, Ozzie. I was excited at first but quickly started having second thoughts. I mean, he smelled kind of funny and he even spat at the tour guide once. But then, when I finally got up the nerve to pet him, he gave me a big wet kiss—more like a lick—across my left cheek. I couldn’t help but laugh and “give it a burl” (give it a try)! Ozzie walked really slowly, but it gave me a chance to see all different kinds of animals—such as dingoes, which look kind of like dogs, and thorny devils, which look like lizards covered with thorns. And the pinks and oranges of the sunrise were “bonzer” (great)!

4:05 p.m.
Dear Diary,

We’re leaving tomorrow, and I couldn’t think of a better way to end my stay in Australia than climbing to the tip-top of this huge rock formation, Ayers Rock. It used to be part of the ocean floor, so if I had been standing on it 500 million years ago, I would’ve been under water. The rock is sacred
to the “Aborigines” (native Australians). The part I liked best about Ayers Rock is how it changes colors at different times of day, depending on the sun. When we made the long climb to the top, it was a bright reddish color, but when we came down it looked more orange. And the view from the top made me wish I never had to leave!

Day 10

9:25 a.m.
Dear Diary,

I’m so bummed—it’s already time to leave Australia! My “ports” (suitcases) are all packed, but I’m just not ready to go. I think I could spend another year here and not get bored. There’s just so much to see and do. Well, I guess that just means I’ll have to come back again for another visit.

I’m off to catch my plane for ... oops! I almost gave it away. I want my next destination to be a surprise, so you’ll just have to wait ‘til I get there. As they say here in Oz, “see ya in the soup” (see you around)!

I’m sending a postcard to my best friend back home. ACTIVITY: Write a message on the back of the card.