For teachers wondering how to bring history to life, YHA Australia offers sleeping in a prison cell in Fremantle or discovering what life in early Sydney was like at an archaeological dig.

In Sydney, curriculum-related learning is available at The Big Dig – an archaeological site in the historic Rocks precinct. Run by Sydney Learning Adventures, schools can choose from a range of education programs, including Little Diggers (Stage 1 HSIE), Dirt Detectives (Stage 2), Pieces of the Past (Stage 3), Cesspits and Old Rubbish (Stage 4) and beyond.

There’s even a simulated dig with real remnants from the colonial era waiting to be unearthed. Ball-and-chain shackles? Bottles of bootleg beer? Students work as archaeologists to excavate artefacts, using their investigative skills to discover what life was like for settlers during the early years of the colony.

www.thebigdig.com.au

Groups can stay above the site at the award-winning Sydney Harbour YHA. www.yha.com.au

In Western Australia, students can learn about convict history by visiting and even sleeping in a former jail, Fremantle Prison, a UNESCO World Heritage listed site, is now a museum offering various educational excursions including convict history, torchlight, and tunnel tours. www.fremantleprison.com.au

School groups can sleep inside the jail at Fremantle Prison YHA. This fully restored part of the prison has retained its original fabric and character while providing purpose-built facilities to make for a comfortable stay. www.yha.com.au

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