Commas used after introductory clauses

A comma can be used after an introductory clause in a sentence. Introductory clauses often begin with the words: as, if, when, because, after, since, although, whenever, before, though, until.

1. Underline the introductory clause in each of these sentences.

   (a) As British jails were overcrowded in the 1700s, the British government decided to establish a penal colony in Australia.

   (b) When Captain Arthur Phillip and the First Fleet arrived at Sydney Cove, the land surrounding the harbour was inhabited by Aboriginal Australians (Eora people).

   (c) After the Eora people realised their hunting land was being taken from them, they began to fight with the new settlers.

2. Use a comma to identify the introductory clause in each of these sentences.

   (a) Although 19th century maps had many coastal areas labelled not much was known about Australia’s interior.

   (b) Until explorers finally travelled into the interior it was believed Australia had an enormous inland sea.

   (c) When Charles Sturt’s exploration party reached the Simpson Desert it was finally proved there was no inland sea.

3. Write an introductory clause for each of these sentences.

   (a) Many convicts died on the long sea journey from England.

   (b) The new settlers and the Aboriginal people were often in conflict.

   (c) It was difficult to climb the blue mountains on Australia’s east coast.

   (d) They did not know much about Australia’s interior.