# My school grounds

Early Stage 1 geography.

## Focus area – people live in places

* Important places.
* Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander places.
* Locating places.

### Key inquiry questions

* What are places like?
* What makes a place special?
* How can we look after the places we live in?

### Content focus

Students:

* explore the places they live in and belong to
* develop an understanding of what makes a place special and how this may differ for different people
* learn about the importance of looking after places
* explore how the location of places can be represented.

### Outcomes

A student:

* identifies places and develops an understanding of the importance of places to people **GEe-1**
* communicates geographical information and uses geographical tools **GEe-2**

Outcomes and other syllabus material referenced in this document are from [Geography K-10 Syllabus](https://educationstandards.nsw.edu.au/wps/portal/nesa/k-10/learning-areas/hsie/geography-k-10) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2015.

### Overview

In HSIE, inquiry involves a deliberate, structured approach where teachers employ explicit teaching strategies such as the gradual release of responsibility, chunking and sequencing of content, connecting new knowledge with prior learning, and using effective questioning. This structured approach contrasts with the more open-ended exploration typically associated with inquiry learning. Instead, our syllabuses adopt a disciplined inquiry process to deepen students’ understanding through carefully structured learning. Key inquiry questions from the history and geography syllabuses are thoughtfully incorporated into these resources, to further focus and guide student understanding. This approach ensures that foundational knowledge is clearly taught, preparing students for more complex, independent tasks. For further details, see our [statement on Explicit teaching in NSW Public Schools](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Feducation.nsw.gov.au%2Fteaching-and-learning%2Fcurriculum%2Fexplicit-teaching%2Fabout-explicit-teaching%23%3A~%3Atext%3D%2527Explicit%2520teaching%2520in%2520NSW%2520Public%2520Schools%2527%2520(PDF%2520966%2520KB).&data=05%7C02%7CRuby.Kilroy%40det.nsw.edu.au%7C2b0c602a036943bd072708dc68c5d59b%7C05a0e69a418a47c19c259387261bf991%7C0%7C0%7C638500446136788745%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=sZHjyF9PtsZ8S2noNFhlf7o03O%2FLhzFccNREvpPEeQw%3D&reserved=0).

The geographical inquiry process will identify the importance of places that students belong to and why they are special. Through investigation of a local geographical issue, students will examine why people need to take care for these places.

This learning is shaped by four small inquiries, which vary in length.

### Assessment

Many of the activities require students to demonstrate their learning. These activities can be used to assess student progress at various stages throughout the inquiry process.

## Inquiry 1 – classroom pictorial map

Students develop a pictorial map of the classroom to represent furniture and objects in the room.

### Locating places

Students:

* investigate how the location of places can be represented, for example: (ACHGK001)
  + location of familiar and local places on maps
  + description of the location of places

### Acquiring geographical information

* How are places represented?
  + What is a map?
  + What is its purpose?
  + Why do we need maps?
  + How is a map made?

#### Acquire data and information

* Use a variety of strategies to support students to understand the purpose and characteristics of **maps.**
* Use the **picture book**, My Map Book by Sara Fanelli, to support the explanation of pictorial maps as a geographical tool. Describe the features of maps to students with a focus on pictorial maps of schools and familiar places, including an example of a picture map of a bedroom and classroom.
* View examples of maps of the school, for example, site map, evacuation map, [Google map (virtual map)](https://www.google.com/maps) and **satellite image**.
* Develop a practical understanding of ‘birds’ eye view’ or ‘looking down’ using construction toys. Build **3D models** and view them from a variety of points of view.
* Take digital **photographs** of the 3D models from various points of view.

#### Processing geographical information

Jointly construct a **pictorial map** of the classroom:

* Consider the spatial arrangement of furniture and other 3D objects in the classroom.
* Consider how 3D objects are represented on a map, consider size and scale in relation to each other.
* Compare and discuss the point of view in the photographs of the 3D model. Guide students to develop understanding of point of view and the spatial arrangements of objects.

#### Communicating geographical information

Communicate – Students draw the classroom as a **pictorial map** and provide a verbal explanation of the spatial relationships of objects represented.

Respond – Discuss ways of caring for the classroom, for example, keeping it tidy.

## Inquiry 2 — Important places at school

Explore important places in the school grounds.

### Important places

Students:

* investigate the importance of places they live in and belong to, for example: (ACHGK002, ACHGK004)
  + identification of places they live in and belong to
  + discussion of why places are special and how people care for them
  + explanation of why people need to take care of places.

### Locating places

Students:

* investigate how the location of places can be represented, for example: (ACHGK001)
  + location of familiar and local places on maps
  + description of the location of places.

### Acquiring geographical information

* What are places like?
  + What are important places in our school?
  + What are the features of important places in our school?
  + Why are places in our school in their current location?
  + How do people use these places?
  + Why do we need to look after our school?
  + How can we care for our school?

#### Acquire data and information

Fieldwork:

* Walk around the school and observe and identify the natural and human features.
* Take **photographs** to record places in the school.
* Identify the locations of features using the language of position to describe these features in relation to each other, for example, between, next to, behind.
* Discuss uses of places and relate to their location. This develops spatial awareness.
* Create a **tally chart** of the places used by Early Stage 1 students.

#### Processing geographical information

* Work collectively on the IWB or provide a large blank school **map** and have students position and paste their **photographs** to correspond with their location.
* Add a **symbol** to each of the places used by Early Stage 1 students. Cross reference this to the tally chart.
* Label the features and their use, for example. silver seats for lunch.
* Discuss location and organisation to develop spatial awareness.
* Discuss ways of caring for different places in the school.

#### Communicating geographical information

Communicate and respond.

Organise students to draw and describe an **illustration** of a place they use frequently in the school environment:

* This is the\_
* We use this place for \_
* This place is special because \_
* We look after this special place by \_

### Inquiry 3 – local Aboriginal places

Students begin to learn the history and culture of the Aboriginal people in which the school is located.

### Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander places

Students:

* investigate the Country/Places important to Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Peoples, for example: (ACHGK003).
  + identification of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander site, Country or Place.
  + discussion of why the site, Country or Place is important.

### Acquiring geographical information

* What makes a place special?
  + Who lived here before we did?
  + What are some of the places which are important to Aboriginal people?
  + Why is the land so important to Aboriginal people?

#### Acquire data and information

* Identify the local Aboriginal tribal language group in which your school is located. Reference the school’s Acknowledgement of Country.
* Identify and describe some of the places important to local Aboriginal people such as significant landform features, water sources, camp sites, trails.
* Engage with Community, Elders, storytelling, photographs and shared experiences of visits to local places of Aboriginal significance.

#### Processing geographical information

* Construct **photograph** collages to represent important local Aboriginal places.
* Use **multimedia** apps to organise video recordings of stories and photographs, landform features and sites.
* Support students to draw conclusions, through guided discussions about the places which are significant to the local Aboriginal people and how the land supported their culture.

#### Communicating geographical information

Communicate – Students provide a **verbal response** to the question: what makes a place special? This could be recorded and accompanied by student-selected photographs and illustrations in a multimedia format.

Respond – Discuss ways of respecting and caring for special places.

## Inquiry 4 – Taking care of our place

Examine the geographical issue of litter in the school grounds and explain why people need to take care of their environment.

### Important places

Students:

* investigate the importance of places they live in and belong to, for example: (ACHGK002, ACHGK004)
  + discussion of why places are special and how people care for them
  + explanation of why people need to take care of places.

### Acquiring geographical information

* Why do we need to put our litter in the bin?
  + Is there litter in our school? Where?
  + Why is there litter in our school?
  + What is the impact of litter in our school?
  + How can we reduce litter and take care of our school?

#### Acquire data and information

Fieldwork:

* Walk around the school to observe and **photograph** places that contain litter. Observe use of the area and its location, for example. lunch area, close to canteen.
* Plot places with litter on a **map** of the school.
* Collect litter from an area typically used by Early Stage 1 students, for sorting and analysis.
* Observe and discuss ways that the school grounds are looked after.

#### Processing geographical information

* Sort the litter according to source, for example, from home, canteen products, homework notes. Place the litter on the ground to create a **3D pictograph** to represent the quantity of each according to predicted source. Interpret the data.
* Discuss location of litter in relation to uses of places to develop understandings of cause and effect.
* Brainstorm the impacts of litter in the school environment, for example, aesthetics, birds feed on it, washes into drains.
* Discuss connections between the roles of multiple participants in the maintenance of the school, for example, students, teachers, cleaners, parents, visitors.
* Discuss and **role play** ways to reduce litter in the school environment.

#### Communicating geographical information

Communicate – Students create a visual concept map illustrating how people, including themselves, care for the school.

Respond – Students create a sequence of drawings to illustrate what they do with litter at school. Record students’ verbal explanations of their illustrations for sharing with other students in the school.

#### Geographical concepts

The following **geographical concepts** have been integrated into the teaching and learning sequence:

* Place – the significance of places and what they are like, for example, places students live in and belong to and why they are important.
* Space – the significance of location and spatial distribution, and ways people organise and manage the spaces that we live in, for example, location of a place in relation to other familiar places.
* Environment – the significance of the environment in human life, and the important interrelationships between humans and the environment, for example, how and why places should be looked after.

#### Geographical inquiry skills

The following **geographical inquiry** skills have been integrated into the unit:

* acquiring geographical information
  + pose questions and make observations (ACHGS001)
  + record geographical data and information (ACHGS002)
* processing geographical information
  + represent data using charts or graphs (ACHGS003)
  + draw conclusions based on discussions of observations  (ACHGS004)
* communicating geographical information
  + present information  (ACHGS005)
  + reflect on their learning (ACHGS006)

#### Geographical tools

The following **geographical tools** have been integrated into the unit. These are indicated through **bold text:**

* Maps – pictorial maps.
* Fieldwork – observing and recording data.
* Graphs and statistics – tally charts, pictographs.
* Spatial technologies – virtual maps.
* Visual representations – photographs, illustrations, story books, multimedia.