 Australia’s neighbours

Focus area – Places are similar and different

Content

* Different environments
* Significance of environments

Key inquiry questions

* How does the environment support the lives of people and other living things?
* How can people use places and environments more sustainably?

Content focus

Students:

* explore the climate, natural vegetation and native animals of places in Australia
* examine the importance of natural vegetation and natural resources to the environment, animals and people
* learn about the ways people value environments, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Outcomes

A student:

* examines features and characteristics of places and environments **GE2 1**
* describes the ways people, places and environments interact **GE2 2**
* acquires and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry **GE2 4**

Outcomes and other syllabus material referenced in this document are from:

* [Geography K-10 Syllabus](http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/geography-k10/) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2015

Overview

The geographical inquiry process will investigate the location and geographical characteristics of Australia’s neighbouring countries. This includes the investigation of the natural characteristics of a country in Asia in the content area ‘Different environments’ in the focus area ‘The Earth’s environment’.

Through investigation of a geographical issue, students will examine the interconnections between people’s perceptions and the protection of a significant cultural site.

The learning is shaped by three inquiries, which vary in length.

Note – the capacity of students to engage with Inquiry 2 will be much greater at the end of Year 4 than the start of Year 3. Teachers will need to adjust and scaffold learning activities as appropriate. Teachers can choose whether the cultural study is undertaken by the whole class, or as individuals, pairs or groups.

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 – Australia’s neighbours

Students identify and locate Australia’s neighbouring countries.

Content

Australia’s neighbours

Students:

* investigate Australia’s neighbouring countries and their diverse characteristics, for example: (ACHGK016)
* location of Australia’s neighbouring countries

Acquiring geographical information

Question

* Who are Australia’s neighbours?
* What are the locations of Australia’s neighbouring countries?

Acquire data and information

* Refer to a virtual or printed map of the Asia Pacific region, e.g. an atlas, Google maps.
* As a class, name as many neighbouring countries as possible, such as China, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, India, Japan, Singapore, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, New Zealand, Timor Leste, Thailand and New Caledonia.
* Students use an atlas to examine the map of the region and locate the list of neighbouring countries.
* Discuss knowledge and experiences of neighbouring countries. Examine news events, travel experiences and personal connections with countries in the Asia Pacific.
* Students reference travel website such as [Lonely Planet](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/) to gain an overview of countries in the region.

Processing geographical information

* Students label Australia’s neighbours on an outline map of the Asia-Pacific region. They may colour code each country using the legend.
* Students use cartographic conventions by adding a border, north point, legend and title to their map.
* Imagine the class has been asked to participate in a market research project to identify ten places in close proximity to Australia for including in new travel itineraries. Students create a preliminary ‘Top Ten Picks’ of places they would like to investigate as the potential ‘top ten’. Rank these according to class opinion.

Communicating geographical information

Communicate

Students use the language of direction, e.g. north, north-west, to make statements describing the location of Australia’s neighbours in relation to Australia.

Respond

Students decide on one or more neighbouring countries to examine in detail for Inquiry 2.

Inquiry 2 – Cultural study of a neighbouring country

Students select a neighbouring country to study in detail. They will use the information gathered to complete a travel brochure on the country and provide recommendations for including the country as one of the Top Ten travel destinations.

Note – the geographical inquiry process will need to be modelled and guided by the teacher. This may be through a class study of one neighbouring country. Students groups may also undertake independent research into another neighbouring country for sharing with the class to recommend the ‘Top Ten’ travel destinations.

Content

Australia’s neighbours

Students:

* investigate Australia’s neighbouring countries and their diverse characteristics, for example: (ACHGK016)
	+ examination of the natural and human features of neighbouring countries
	+ comparison of the natural and human features of a city in Australia with a city in a neighbouring country

Climate of places

Students:

* investigate the climates of different places, for example: (ACHGK017)
	+ comparison of climates in different places

Similarities and differences between places

Students:

* investigate the settlement patterns and demographic characteristics of places and the lives of the people who live there, for example: (ACHGK019)
	+ examination of the varying settlement patterns and demographics of places
	+ comparison of the daily life of people from different places

Different environments

Students:

* investigate the natural characteristics of Australia and a country in Asia, for example: (ACHGK020)
	+ comparison of climate, natural vegetation and native animals

Acquiring geographical information

Question

Pose geographical questions to be contextualised to the focus country.

* What are the main physical characteristics of the country (e.g. landforms, bodies of water, rivers) and where are they located?
* What is the climate of the country, its indigenous vegetation and animal life?
* What are the main human features (e.g. cities, cultural sites) of the country and where are they located?
* What are the settlement patterns and demographics of the country?
* How do people interact with the place? What are the language, religions, cultural and economic activities?
* What is the daily life of the people who live in different places in the country?

Acquire data and information

Support students to access a wide range of information sources, for example:

* Reference large-scale maps, such as relief maps, political maps and satellite images which show the landform and other physical features of the country.
* Source appropriate climate, population statistics and demographic data such as food production, occupations and religions.
* Examine daily life and culture, such as schooling, making a living, recreation, and special events. Use photographs, illustrations, diagrams, picture books and multimedia including apps.
* Identify and locate cultural and heritage sites and research their significance.
* Interview friends and family who have lived in or visited the country. Ask questions about their experiences and advice regarding travel within the country.
* Research and list well-known indigenous animals and plants of the country.

Processing geographical information

Students use geographical tools to represent, organise and analyse the data and information, for example:

* Use cartographic conventions to construct a map of the country. Plot and label the main physical characteristics and major cities.
* Annotate photographs to describe the indigenous plants and animals. Organise and compile images and video clips. Add media to specific places on maps.
* Create an illustrated table of the major cultural and heritage sites, explaining the significance of each site.
* Construct climate graphs that show rainfall (precipitation) as a column graph and temperature overlaid as a line graph. Interpret the data. Compare this to climate data at home in Australia.
* Use a pictographs, tables, diagrams and/or column graphs to present data on demographics and settlement patterns.
* Use annotated photographs, diary style entries or descriptions to present information on culture and daily life.
* Compare daily life of the people in rural and urban areas. Discuss what daily life is like in this country compared to student’s own daily life. Represent similarities and differences using a Venn diagram.
* Use a consequences chart to examine how the climate and weather affects the daily life in the country, including getting around, clothing worn, effect on transport. Compare to the impact of weather and climate of own location.
* Use a comparison table to compare cultural events that are features of life in the country to similar local customs and events in Australia.
* Generate a table of travel destinations within the country and their main attractions.

Ensure students have developed their understanding of the characteristics of the place:

* Does the information relate to the inquiry questions used to shape the investigation?
* Can generalisations be formed?
* Does the information describe the physical characteristics of the place?
* Are the human characteristics of the place described?
* Has the lifestyle of the people been described, including similarities and differences to own?

Communicating geographical information

Communicate

Support students to develop a detailed and appealing travel brochure (print, digital or multi-modal) which should include:

* a description of the place with maps and images
* description of the physical, human and cultural features, with annotated images
* climate and weather data, recommendations of best time of year to visit and advice for travellers
* description of daily life, with images and comparisons to own lifestyle in aspects such as schooling, work, recreation, housing, food, celebrations, events
* explanations which relate to travel tips, social responsibilities and ethical considerations when interacting with the local people and places
* descriptions of places suitable for tourist visits.
* recommendations for inclusion in the ‘Top Ten’ travel destinations.

Display or present students’ travel brochures. As a class, decide on the ‘Top Ten Picks’ of places for new travel itineraries. Compare to the preliminary list generated in Inquiry 1.

A class Google tour of the ‘Top Ten’ could be constructed and annotated in Google Earth.

Respond

Develop a discussion that supports intercultural understanding. Refer to the [Intercultural Communicator](http://interculturalcommunicationkit.weebly.com/uploads/1/4/4/5/14456032/poster_final_flatcmyk.jpg) poster.

Cross reference typical social situations where simple cultural understandings can affect the way people are perceived, e.g. manners, greetings, sharing food, gift protocol, to the actions described on the poster.

* How has learning about another country changed the way you think about your own life and how people live in another country?

Resources

* Travel websites, e.g. [Lonely Planet](http://www.lonelyplanet.com/)
* Virtual mapping tools, e.g. [MapMaker Interactive](http://mapmaker.nationalgeographic.org/)
* Demographic statistics, e.g. [World Health Organisation](http://who.int/countries/en/)
* Country profiles and facts, e.g. [The World Factbook](https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/docs/profileguide.html)

Inquiry 3 – Perception and protection of a cultural site

Case study – Taj Mahal, India

Students investigate how the protection of the Taj Mahal (or alternative site in a neighbouring country) is influenced by peoples’ perceptions of it.

Content

Perception and protection of places

Students:

* investigate how the protection of places is influenced by people’s perception of places, for example: (ACHGK018)
	+ description of how and why people perceive places differently
	+ discussion of how people’s perceptions influence the protection of places in Australia eg sacred sites, national parks, world heritage sites

Acquiring geographical information

Question

How can the Taj Mahal be protected from the impacts of increasing tourism visitation?

* What is the Taj Mahal and where is it located?
* Why is the Taj Mahal on the World Heritage List?
* Who visits the Taj Mahal and why do they visit it?
* What are people’s perceptions of the Taj Mahal?
* How are the impacts of three million visitors a year managed?
* How do peoples’ perceptions influence the protection of the Taj Mahal?

Acquire data and information

* Recall cultural sites included in the students’ cultural study presentations. Identify those listed on the World Heritage List and explain the purpose of the list.
* Locate the Taj Mahal on Google maps and undertake a virtual tour of the building and surrounds using Street View imagery.
* Reference the World Heritage List to view photographs, read descriptions of the site and the significant factors that led to its World Heritage listing.
* Access information about the site, its past and present significance, people’s perceptions of it and ways it is cared for and protected.

Processing geographical information

* Represent the information collected in a table or concept map.
* Construct flow charts to indicate the interconnections between significance, perceptions, visitation, impacts and strategies that help protection it.

Communicating geographical information

Communicate

Students create a fact sheet on the Taj Mahal, explaining its significance and reasons for its popularity as a tourist destination. Students include strategies used to protect the site. They explain how people’s perceptions of the site influence its protection.

Respond

Students write a persuasive text advocating the protection of the site.

Concepts, inquiry skills and tools

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 eg natural and human features and characteristics of different places and their similarities and differences; how people’s perceptions about places influence their responses and actions to protect them.
* Space: the significance of location and spatial distribution, and ways people organise and manage the spaces that we live in e.g. settlement patterns within Australia, neighbouring countries and other countries.
* Environment: the significance of the environment in human life, and the important interrelationships between humans and the environment e.g. how climate and environment influence settlement patterns; interconnections between people and environments; differing ways people can use environments sustainably.
* Interconnection: no object of geographical study can be viewed in isolation eg interconnections between people, places and environments; influence of people’s values on the management and protection of places and environments and the custodial responsibilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.
* Scale: the way that geographical phenomena and problems can be examined at different spatial levels eg types of settlement across a range of scales; the influence of climate across a range of scales.
* Sustainability: the capacity of the environment to continue to support our lives and the lives of other living creatures into the future eg ways in which people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, use and protect natural resources; differing views about environmental sustainability; sustainable management of waste.

Geographical inquiry skills

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

Acquiring geographical information

* develop geographical questions to investigate (ACHGS019, ACHGS026)
* collect and record relevant geographical data and information, for example, by observing, by interviewing, conducting surveys, or using maps, visual representations, the media or the internet (ACHGS020, ACHGS027)

Processing geographical information

* represent data by constructing tables, graphs and maps (ACHGS021, ACHGS028)
* represent information by constructing large-scale maps that conform to cartographic conventions, using spatial technologies as appropriate (ACHGS022, ACHGS029)
* interpret geographical data to identify distributions and patterns and draw conclusions (ACHGS023, ACHGS030)

Communicating geographical information

* present findings in a range of communication forms, for example, written, oral, digital, graphic, tabular and visual, and use geographical terminology (ACHGS024, ACHGS031)
* reflect on their learning to propose individual action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge and identify the expected effects of the proposal (ACHGS025, ACHGS032)

Geographical tools

The following geographical tools have been integrated into the unit.

Maps

* large-scale maps, world map, globe, sketch maps
* maps to identify location, direction, distance, map references, spatial distributions and patterns

Fieldwork

* observing, measuring, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys or interviews
* fieldwork instruments such as measuring devices, maps, photographs

Graphs and statistics

* tally charts, pictographs, data tables, column graphs, simple statistics

Spatial technologies

* virtual maps, satellite images, global positioning systems (GPS)

Visual representations

* photographs, illustrations, diagrams, story books, multimedia, web tools.