

Rationale

In a world of increasing global integration and international mobility, it is critical to the wellbeing and sustainability of the environment and society that young Australians develop a holistic understanding of the world. This requires deep knowledge and understanding of why the world is the way it is and the interconnections between people, places and environments over place and time.

The Australian Curriculum: Geography empowers students to shape change for a socially just and sustainable future. Geography inspires curiosity and wonder about the diversity of the world's places, peoples, cultures and environments. Through a structured way of exploring, analysing and understanding the characteristics of the places that make up our world, Geography enables students to question why the world is the way it is, and reflect on their relationships with and responsibilities for that world.

Geography teaches students to respond to questions in a geographically distinctive way; plan inquiries; collect, evaluate, analyse and interpret information; and suggest responses to what they have learnt. Geography provides students with opportunities to develop a wide range of general skills, capabilities and dispositions that can be applied in everyday life and at work. The subject helps students to develop information and communication technology skills; an appreciation and respect for social, cultural and religious diversity and different perspectives; an understanding of ethical research principles; a capacity for teamwork; and an ability to solve problems and to think critically and creatively.

Geography helps students to be regional and global citizens capable of active and ethical participation.

Year 8 Achievement Standard

By the end of Year 8, students explain geographical processes that influence the characteristics of places and explain how places are perceived and valued differently. They explain interconnections within environments and between people and places and explain how they change places and environments. They compare alternative strategies to a geographical challenge, taking into account environmental, economic and social factors.

Students identify geographically significant questions from observations to frame an inquiry. They evaluate a range of primary and secondary sources to locate useful and reliable information and data. They select, record and represent data and the location and distribution of geographical phenomena in a range of appropriate digital and non-digital forms, including maps at different scales that conform to cartographic conventions. They analyse geographical maps, data and other information to propose explanations for spatial distributions, patterns, trends and relationships, and draw reasoned conclusions. Students present findings, arguments and ideas using relevant geographical terminology and digital technologies in a range of appropriate communication forms. They propose action in response to a geographical challenge, taking account of environmental, economic and social factors, and predict the outcomes of their proposal.

Aims

The Australian Curriculum: Geography aims to ensure that students develop:

- a sense of wonder, curiosity and respect about places, people, cultures and environments throughout the world
- a deep geographical knowledge of their own locality, Australia, the Asia region and the world
- the ability to think geographically, using geographical concepts
- the capacity to be competent, critical and creative users of geographical inquiry methods and skills
- as informed, responsible and active citizens who can contribute to the development of an environmentally and economically sustainable, and socially just world.

Key Ideas

Through their learning in each subject or sub-strand, students develop knowledge and understanding relating to broader enduring ideas that underpin the Humanities and Social Sciences in the Australian Curriculum, which are represented in varying ways across the subjects. The key ideas are outlined below:

Who we are, who came before us, and traditions and values that have shaped societies

Students explore their own identity, Australia's heritage and cultural diversity, and Australia's identity as a nation in the world. They examine the significance of traditions and shared values within society.

How societies and economies operate and how they are changing over time

Students learn about Australian society and other societies in the world, both past and present; and how they function socially, culturally, economically and politically. Students examine developments that have resulted in or are bringing about change.

The ways people, places, ideas and events are perceived and connected

Students are provided with opportunities to explore different perceptions of people, places, ideas and events. They develop an understanding of the interdependent nature of the world and the interrelationships within and between the natural environment, human communities and economies. They explore how people, ideas and events are connected over time and increasingly interconnected across local, national, regional and global contexts.

How people exercise their responsibilities, participate in society and make informed decisions

Students examine how individuals and groups have participated in and contributed to society past and present. They examine the rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups over time and in different contexts. They develop an understanding of the need to make decisions, the importance of ethical considerations and being informed when making decisions, the processes for decision-making and the implications of decisions that are made for individuals, society, the economy and the environment.

Year 8 Level Description

There are two units of study in the Year 8 curriculum for Geography: 'Landforms and landscapes' and 'Changing nations'.

'Landforms and landscapes' focuses on investigating geomorphology through a study of landscapes and their landforms. This unit examines the processes that shape individual landforms, the values and meanings placed on landforms and landscapes by diverse cultures, hazards associated with landscapes, and management of landscapes. 'Landforms and landscapes' develops students' understanding of the concept of environment and enables them to explore the significance of landscapes to people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples. These distinctive aspects of landforms and landscapes are investigated using studies drawn from Australia and throughout the world.

'Changing nations' investigates the changing human geography of countries, as revealed by shifts in population distribution. The spatial distribution of population is a sensitive indicator of economic and social change, and has significant environmental, economic and social effects, both negative and positive. The unit explores the process of urbanisation and draws on a study of a country of the Asia region to show how urbanisation changes the economies and societies of low- and middle-income countries. It investigates the reasons for the high level of urban concentration in Australia, one of the distinctive features of Australia's human geography, and compares Australia with the United States of America. The redistribution of population resulting from internal migration is examined through case studies of Australia and China, and is contrasted with the way international migration reinforces urban concentration in Australia. The unit then examines issues related to the management and future of Australia's urban areas.

The content of this year level is organised into two strands: geographical knowledge and understanding, and geographical inquiry and skills. These strands are interrelated and have been developed to be taught in an integrated manner, and in ways that are appropriate to specific local contexts. The order and detail in which they are taught are programming decisions.

Key inquiry questions

A framework for developing students' geographical knowledge, understanding and skills is provided through the inclusion of inquiry questions and specific inquiry skills, including the use and interpretation of maps, photographs and other representations of geographical data.

The key inquiry questions for Year 8 are:

- How do environmental and human processes affect the characteristics of places and environments?
- How do the interconnections between places, people and environments affect the lives of people?
- What are the consequences of changes to places and environments and how can these changes be managed?

HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES- GEOGRAPHY

Structure

In the Australian Curriculum, the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area comprises five subjects: F–6/7 Humanities and Social Sciences, and Years 7–10 History, Geography, Civics and Citizenship and Economics and Business. In all five subjects, the curriculum is organised into two broad interrelated strands: knowledge and understanding, and inquiry and skills.

In the F–6/7 Humanities and Social Sciences curriculum, history, geography, civics and citizenship and economics and business are presented as sub-strands of the knowledge and understanding strand. In these years, students are introduced to history and geography from Foundation Year, civics and citizenship in Year 3 and economics and business in Year 5. In Years 7–10, the curriculum is organised by subject. In Years 9 and 10, student access to Geography, Civics and Citizenship and Economics and Business will be determined by school authorities or individual schools

Year 8 Content Descriptions

Geographical Knowledge and Understanding

Landforms and landscapes

Different types of landscapes and their distinctive landform features.

Spiritual, aesthetic and cultural value of landscapes and landforms for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

Geomorphic processes that produce landforms, including a case study of at least one landform.

Human causes and effects of landscape degradation.

Ways of protecting significant landscapes.

Causes, impacts and responses to a geomorphological hazard.

Changing nations

Causes and consequences of urbanisation, drawing on a study from Indonesia, or another country of the Asia region.

Differences in urban concentration and urban settlement patterns between Australia and the United States of America, and their causes and consequences.

Reasons for, and effects of, internal migration in both Australia and China.

Reasons for, and effects of, international migration in Australia.

Management and planning of Australia's urban future.

Geographical Inquiry and Skills

Observing, questioning and planning

Develop geographically significant questions and plan an inquiry using appropriate geographical methodologies and concepts.

Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing

Evaluate sources for their reliability and usefulness and select, collect and record relevant geographical data and information, using ethical protocols, from appropriate primary and secondary sources.

Represent data in a range of appropriate forms, for example, climate graphs, compound column graphs, population pyramids, tables, field sketches and annotated diagrams, with and without the use of digital and spatial technologies.

Represent spatial distribution of different types of geographical phenomena by constructing appropriate maps at different scales that conform to cartographic conventions, using spatial technologies as appropriate.

Interpreting, analysing and concluding

Interpret geographical data and other information using qualitative and quantitative methods, and digital and spatial technologies as appropriate, to identify and propose explanations for spatial distributions, patterns and trends, and infer relationships.

Apply geographical concepts to draw conclusions based on the analysis of data and information collected.

Communicating

Present findings, arguments and ideas in a range of communication forms selected to suit a particular audience and purpose; using geographical terminology and digital technologies as appropriate.

Reflecting and responding

Reflect on their learning to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge, taking account of environmental, economic and social considerations, and predict the expected outcomes of their proposal.