

GEOGRAPHY

Geography is a structured way of exploring, analysing and understanding the characteristics of the places that make up our world, using the concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale and change. It addresses scales from the personal to the global and time periods from a few years to thousands of years.

Geography integrates knowledge from the natural sciences, social sciences and humanities to build a holistic understanding of the world. Students learn to question why the world is the way it is, reflect on their relationships with and responsibilities for that world, and propose actions designed to shape a socially just and sustainable future.

The concept of place develops students' curiosity and wonder about the diversity of the world's places, peoples, cultures and environments. Students examine why places have particular environmental and human characteristics, explore the similarities and differences between them, investigate their meanings and significance to people and examine how they are managed and changed.

Students use the concept of space to investigate the effects of location and distance on the characteristics of places, the significance of spatial distributions, and the organisation and management of space at different scales. Through the concept of environment students learn about the role of the environment in supporting the physical and emotional aspects of human life, the important interrelationships between people and environments, and the range of views about these interrelationships.

Students use the concept of interconnection to understand how the causal relationships between places, people and environments produce constant changes to their characteristics. Through the concept of sustainability students explore how the environmental functions that support their life and wellbeing can be sustained. The concept of scale helps them explore problems and look for explanations at different levels, for example, local or regional. The concept of change helps them to explain the present and forecast possible futures.

Geography uses an inquiry approach to assist students to make meaning of their world. It teaches them to respond to questions in a geographically distinctive way, plan an inquiry; collect, evaluate, analyse and interpret information; and suggest responses to what they have learned. They conduct fieldwork, map and interpret data and spatial distributions, and use spatial technologies. Students develop a wide range of general skills and capabilities, including information and communication technology skills, an appreciation of different perspectives, an understanding of ethical research principles, a capacity for teamwork and an ability to think critically and creatively. These skills can be applied in everyday life and at work.

The Australian Curriculum: Geography is organised in two related strands: Geographical Knowledge and Understanding, and Geographical Inquiry and Skills.

By the end Foundation Year, students

- describe the features of familiar places and recognise why some places are special to people
- recognise that places can be represented on maps and a globe and why places are important to people
- observe the familiar features of places and represent these features and their location on pictorial maps and models
- share observations in a range of texts and use everyday language to describe direction and location
- reflect on their learning to suggest ways they can care for a familiar place

By the end of Year 6, students

- explain the characteristics of diverse places in different locations at different scales from local to global
- describe the interconnections between people and places, identify factors that influence these interconnections and describe how they change places and affect people
- describe the location of selected countries in absolute and relative terms and identify and compare spatial distributions and patterns among phenomena
- identify and describe alternative views on how to respond to a geographical challenge and propose a response
- develop geographical questions to frame an inquiry
- locate relevant information from a range of sources to answer inquiry questions
- represent data and the location of places and their characteristics in different graphic forms, including large-scale and small-scale maps that use cartographic conventions of border, source, scale, legend, title and north point
- interpret data and other information to identify and compare spatial distributions, patterns and trends, infer relationships and draw conclusions
- present findings and ideas using geographical terminology and graphic representations in a range of communication forms
- propose action in response to a geographical challenge and describe the expected effects of their proposal