Year 1 unit overview — Australian Curriculum: Geography

Source: Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA), *Australian Curriculum v5.0 Geography for Foundation–10*, [www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Geography/Curriculum/F-10](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Geography/Curriculum/F-10).

| Unit no. | Unit title | Duration of unit |
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| 1 | Features of places | 10 hours |

| Unit outline |
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| The Year 1 curriculum develops the concept of place through studies of what places are like and how their features have changed.Children learn that places can have natural, managed and constructed environmental features, and range from those that have largely natural features to those with largely managed or constructed features. Included in these understanding are the weather and seasons of place and the ways different cultural groups, including Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, describe the seasons. While the local place should be the initial focus of learning, children are also aware of and interested in more distant places. The concept of environment is introduced, as students study the daily and seasonal weather patterns and natural features of places. Children develop geographical skills by observing, collecting, recording, representing and interpreting geographical data and information to answer inquiry questions. This unit provides opportunities fieldwork to observe and record information outside the classroom. Possible data collection techniques include observing, field sketching and taking photographs, and creating story maps. Opportunities exist for the use of spatial technologies such as Google Earth. Learning opportunities in this unit are collaboratively developed between children and adults. Contexts for learning include play, real-life situations, routines and teachable moments. The inquiry question for the unit is: * What are the different features of places?
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| Identify curriculum |
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| Content descriptions to be taught | General capabilities and cross‑curriculum priorities |
| Geographical Knowledge and Understanding | Geographical Inquiry and Skills |
| * The natural, managed and constructed [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) of places, their location, how they [change](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Change) and how they can be cared for [(ACHGK005)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK005)
* The weather and seasons of places and the ways in which different cultural groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, describe them [(ACHGK006)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK006)
 | Observing, questioning and planning * Pose questions about familiar and unfamiliar places [(ACHGS007)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS007)

Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing* Collect and record geographical [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and information, for example, by observing, by interviewing, or from sources such as photographs, plans, satellite images, story books and films [(ACHGS008)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS008)
* Represent [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and the location of places and their [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) by constructing tables, plans and labelled maps [(ACHGS009)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS009)

Interpreting, analysing and concluding * Draw conclusions based on the interpretation of geographical information sorted into categories [(ACHGS010)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS010)

Communicating * Present findings in a range of communication forms, for example, written, oral, digital and visual, and describe the direction and location of places, using terms such as north, south, opposite, near, far [(ACHGS011)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS011)

Reflecting and responding * Reflect on their learning and suggest responses to their findings [(ACHGS012)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS012)
 | The application of the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities in this include may include:Description: Description: gc_literacy LiteracyDescribe the features of places using photographsDescription: Description: gc_numeracy NumeracyConstruct a table to show the uses of familiar placesDescription: Description: gc_ict **ICT capability**Use Google Earth to identify the natural features and constructed features of a local placeDescription: Description: gc_critical Critical and creative thinkingPose questions about familiar and unfamiliar placesDescription: Description: gc_personal_social **Personal and social capability**Discuss the features of places in small groupsDescription: Description: gc_intercultural Intercultural understandingCompare how different cultural groups describe the weather and seasons  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culturesIdentify the Aboriginal peoples’ or Torres Strait Islander peoples’ seasonal calendar for the local area |
|  |  | Description: Description: cc_sust SustainabilityPropose actions to look after places such as the school grounds or local park  |
| Geographical understandings |
| The unit provides opportunities for children to develop geographical understandings that are particularly focused on the following concepts.  |
| ☒ Place | ☒ Space | ☒ Environment | ☐ Interconnection | ☒ Scale |
| Explanations of these geographical concepts for Prep to Year 2 are provided in the QSA Year level plans, available at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/yr1-geography-resources.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/yr1-geography-resources.html) > Curriculum > Planning templates and exemplars > Year level plans, and in the Appendix. |
| Achievement standard |
| By the end of Year 1, students identify and describe the natural, managed and constructed features of places at a local scale and recognise that people describe the features of places differently. They identify where features of places are located and recognise that spaces can be arranged for different purposes. Students identify changes in features and describe how to care for places.Students respond to questions about familiar and unfamiliar places by collecting, recording and sorting information from sources provided. They represent the location of different places and their features on pictorial maps and present findings in a range of texts and use everyday language to describe direction and location. They reflect on their learning to suggest ways that places can be cared for. |

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| Relevant prior curriculum | Curriculum working towards |
| Year 1 Learning Statements Social and environmental inquiry Children build knowledge, understanding and skills to:* pose questions and communicate ideas about social and environmental points of view
* explore sustainable practices to conserve a natural feature of their local environment
* identify and collect information and stories about their families and the practices and contributions of people in their communities
* explore the stories and contributions that Indigenous people make to their communities
* reflect on contributions individuals and families make to communities and the environment.

Scientific inquiryChildren build knowledge, understanding and skills to:* pose questions about the natural and physical world
* plan and conduct investigations, collect data, record or report on observations
* discuss and investigate phenomena related to living things, energy and its effect, the earth and observable environment, and the ways materials may or may not change
* reflect on observations and discuss why things happen, and consider other points of view.
 | Year 2 Australian Curriculum: Geography Geographical Inquiry and Skills Observing, questioning and planning* Pose geographical questions about familiar and unfamiliar places [(ACHGS013](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS013))

Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing* Collect and record geographical [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and information, for example, by observing, by interviewing, or from sources such as, photographs, plans, satellite images, story books and films [(ACHGS014)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS014)
* Represent [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and the location of places and their [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) by constructing tables, plans and labelled maps [(ACHGS015)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS015)

Interpreting, analysing and concluding* Draw conclusions based on the interpretation of geographical information sorted into categories [(ACHGS016)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS016)

Communicating * Present findings in a range of communication forms, for example, written, oral, digital and visual, and describe the direction and location of places, using terms such as north, south, opposite, near, far [(ACHGS017)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS017)

Reflecting and responding* Reflect on their learning and suggest responses to their findings [(ACHGS018)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS018)
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| Bridging content |
| Programs need to provide opportunities for children to collect geographical information, using sources such as photographs or satellite images, and to represent information using geographic methods, such as pictorial maps and tables.  |
| Links to other learning areas |
| Geography is a subject in the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area and has connections to History, Civics and Citizenship, and Economics and Business. There are opportunities to connect learning experiences in Geography to other learning areas. Australian Curriculum: History* Explore a point of view [(ACHHS036)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS036)
* Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written, role play) and digital technologies [(ACHHS038)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS038)

Australian Curriculum: Mathematics * Represent [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=M&t=Data) with objects and drawings where one object or drawing represents one [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=M&t=Data) value. Describe the displays [(ACMSP263)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACMSP263)

Australian Curriculum: Science * Use informal measurements in the collection and recording of observations, with the assistance of [digital technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Digital%20technologies) as appropriate [(ACSIS026)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACSIS026)
* Use a range of methods to sort information, including drawings and provided [tables](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Table) [(ACSIS027)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACSIS027)

Australian Curriculum: English* Construct [texts](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=E&t=text) that incorporate supporting images using software including word processing programs [(ACELY1664)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACELY1664)
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| Assessment | Make judgments |
| Describe the assessment | Teachers gather evidence to make judgments about the following characteristics of children’s work:Understanding* Identify and describe natural, managed and constructed features of places
* Recognise that people describe the features of places differently

Skills * Respond to questions by collecting and recording data and information
* Sort information from the sources provided
* Represent the location of different places and their features on pictorial maps

The valued features of the standard elaborations targeted in this assessment are: * Geographical knowledge and understanding
* Questioning and researching
* Interpreting and analysing
* Communicating

For further advice and guidelines on constructing task-specific standards, refer to the standards elaborations: [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/26025.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/26025.html) > select the Year level > choose the Resources tab > Standards elaborations. |
| Collection of work (Written and multimodal) The purpose of this assessment is to make judgments about children’s responses to focused tasks about a contextualised investigation. Teachers and children collaborate on tasks which are conducted in class and in children’s own time. The focus of the collection of work is to identify and describe the natural, managed and constructed features of places and compare the Aboriginal peoples’ or Torres Strait Islander peoples’ seasonal calendar with one that children are familiar with, such as the four-seasons calendar derived from Europe. The collection of work used for this unit will include:* a sort of natural, managed and constructed places (Session 3)
* a map of the school and a letter to send to Ernie (the letter from the literacy sessions and the map from Session 6)
* a mini book of seasons similar to the book *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo* (Session 8)
* a class journal or reflection entries (all sessions)
* a post-unit reflection of what children know and have learnt about places. These can be drawn, written or scribed.

Refer to *Australian Curriculum: Geography — Assessment categories, techniques and conditions:* [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p\_10/ac\_geography\_assess\_advice.pdf](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/downloads/p_10/ac_geography_assess_advice.pdf) |

| Teaching and learning |
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| Teaching strategies and learning experiences | Supportive learning environment[[1]](#footnote-1) | Resources  |
| Across Prep–Year 2, there are several contexts for learning. The Focused teaching and learning and investigations contexts for learning are an explicit focus in Geography.Context: Play* In socio-dramatic play spaces, provide opportunities for children to explore place with various place-based activity centres, e.g. home corner, beach, shop etc.
* In exploratory play, provide source materials (e.g. photos of various places) for children to explore and discuss.
* In manipulative play, provide blocks and manipulative materials for children to construct imaginative and real places.
* When discussing rules for each play space, introduce understandings that different places have specific purposes.

Context: Routines* Provide opportunities for children to share their own view of place through short presentations, e.g. “My favourite place” show and tell sessions.

Context: Real-life situations* Invite guests into the classroom to talk about different places in the community.
* Use own favourite place as a context for discussion.
* Lead a class discussion about places that children know, have been to or have come from around the world and mark these on a map for display.

Context: Teachable momentTake opportunities to respond to the interests and experiences of individual children, small groups or the whole class in relation to their understanding of place. | Adjustments for needs of learners | Children would benefit from access to:* a range of literary and non-literary texts related to features of places, the weather and seasons of places and the ways in which different cultural groups, including Aboriginal peoples or Torres Strait Islander peoples, describe them.
* paper, pencils, clipboards for field drawings
* a camera for taking photos during field work
* a range of games and puzzles
* digital resources about local and more distant places
* spatial technologies, such as Google Earth, simple maps, a globe, charts and diagrams to develop spatial awareness
* outline maps of the school grounds and local places.
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| Context: Focused teaching and learning and investigations The focused teaching and learning and investigation experience allows children opportunities to build, revisit and contextualise their understandings of place and connections to place.Session 1: Exploring maps Skill: Observing, questioning and planning* Read *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo* with the children and identify the natural and constructed features of the places visited.
* Discuss where Arnhem Land may be located in Australia using the picture from the front of the book as a clue and locate it on a map using a spatial application such as Google Earth. As the story progress, continue to locate the places Ernie visits on a map.
* Compare on a map where Ernie lives to where the children live. Use questions to elicit positional language and introduce direction, i.e. north, south, east and west.
* Discuss the importance of maps and have the children share their experiences of using maps. Ask: What do we use maps for? Why do we need them?
* As a class, brainstorm local places that children have visited and compare them to the places in the story.

Session 2: What is place? Skill: Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing* Choose one place from the brainstorm activity of the previous session. Draw, identify and label the features of that place, e.g. the park (has grass, a swing etc.).
* As a class, construct a definition for what a “place” is by looking at the similar features of all of the places the children had brainstormed, drawn and labelled, e.g.“A place is a part of the Earth’s surface and can be described by its location, shape, and environmental and human features and characteristics”.
 |  | Suggested texts* Lester, A 2006, *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo*, Hatchette, Sydney.
* Lester, A 2004, *Are we there yet?*, Penguin, Camberwell.
* Godwin, J & Walker, A 2010, *All Through the Year*, Penguin, Sydney.
* Lucas, D and Searle, K 2005, *Walking with the Seasons*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney.
* Seuss, Dr 1990, *Oh, the places you’ll go*, Random House, New York.

Websites * Aboriginal Art Online[www.aboriginalartonline.com](http://www.aboriginalartonline.com)
* Tandanya National Aboriginal Cultural Institute Inc.[www.tandanya.com.au](http://www.tandanya.com.au)
* My Little Bookcase —Activity: Make your own flip-the-flap memory book[www.mylittlebookcase.com.au/activities/activity-make-your-own-flip-the-flap-memory-book/](http://www.mylittlebookcase.com.au/activities/activity-make-your-own-flip-the-flap-memory-book/)

Other* Google Earth (for bird’s-eye view of their school)
* Class journal (interactive whiteboard/ butchers paper)
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| Session 3: Exploring the features of placesSkills: Interpreting, analysing, concluding and representing* Sort the places the class has drawn into groups or tables. Ask the children: How could we sort them? Guide the discussion into sorting the places by those that have natural features, managed features and constructed features. Ask: Do some places have more than one feature?
* Devise a way to collect, record, evaluate and represent the information from the sorting activity using a graph or simple table. Represent this data and information in the folio for the collection of work.

Session 4: Field study of the features of places Skill: Interpreting, analysing and concluding* Undertake a field study of the school grounds, splitting the class into three expert groups looking for:
* natural features
* managed features
* constructed features.

Ask the children to record their observations using drawings, diagrams or photographs that fit these descriptions for their group.* Have the children share their expert group findings with the class to collate information. Pose questions about their findings using the stems *where*, *what*, *how*, and *why* to find out information about the features of the school grounds. Use the children’s responses to draw conclusions.
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| Session 5: Communicating directionSkills: Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing* Create and then read a letter from Ernie asking the children about their school.
* Identify Ernie’s location using a map and ask the children to identify why drawing a map is a good way of communicating what their school looks like to Ernie.
* Discuss the best route for exploring the school. Undertake another field trip of the school ground, pausing to use directional and positional language to communicate the route travelled. Ask the children to:
* identify the features of the school grounds to record on a pictorial map
* record this information using photographs, drawing pictures or drawing maps.
* Form the children into pairs or small groups to discuss their journey around the school, using the drawings or pictures or positional language. Ask the children: Do the directions (or pictures or maps) lead you in the correct way? Is it clear to your partner or group? How could it be clearer?

Session 6: Describing features of a local areaSkills: Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing* Look at maps in Aboriginal artwork or recount an Aboriginal Dreaming story and/or a Legend of the Torres Strait story that identifies the natural features of a place.
* Describe common symbols used by Aboriginal peoples to identify features of places.
* As a class, examine the school grounds on Google Earth. Use field observations to identify and describe the natural features (e.g. hills, rivers, native vegetation), managed features (e.g. , gardens, playgrounds) ) and constructed features (e.g. roads, buildings) of the school. Ask the children: How could we show these places using common symbols?
* Have the children identify and describe the natural, managed and constructed features of the school grounds by creating a map for Ernie, using symbols.
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| Session 7: Connecting seasonal change to features Skills: Interpreting, analysing and concluding* As a class, reread *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo* and highlight the seasonal changes identified in the story.
* List the six Arnhem Land seasons and ask the children to recall or role play what Ernie and his friends did in each season.
* Ask: What seasons do we use to describe the weather?
* As a class, read *All through the Year* and discuss the similarities and differences in seasons highlighted in both books.
* Place, approximately, the six Arnhem Land seasons into the months of the year.. Compare the Aboriginal peoples’ or Torres Strait Islander peoples’ seasonal calendar with one that children are familiar with, such as the four-seasons calendar derived from Europe.

Session 8: Connecting seasonal change to features Skills: Interpreting, analysing and concluding, and Communicating* Ask the children to create seasons that more accurately reflect the weather changes where they live, e.g. the windy season, the storm season, the dry season, the snow season etc.
* For each season, ask the children to list or role play what they do, e.g. “In Winter, I play soccer and netball, turn on the heaters …”
* As a class, make a seasons book for Ernie, using the model in to *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo*.
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| Sessions 9–10: ReflectingSkills: Reflecting and responding* Collaborate with the children to reflect on, and respond to, their compilation of sample work, using formats such as:
* sorted groups of natural, managed and constructed places (from Session 3).
* a map of the school and a letter to send to Ernie (the letter from the literacy sessions and the map from Session 6)
* a mini book of seasons similar to *Ernie Dances to the Didgeridoo* (from Session 8)
* a class journal or reflection entries (from all sessions).
* a post-unit reflection of what children know and have learnt about places. These can be drawn, written or scribed.
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| Use feedback |
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| Ways to monitor learning and assessment | Teachers meet to collaboratively plan the teaching, learning and assessment to meet the needs of all learners in each unit.Teachers create opportunities for discussion about levels of achievement to develop shared understandings; co-mark or cross mark at key points to ensure consistency of judgments; and participate in moderating samples of student work at school or cluster level to reach consensus and consistency. |
| Feedback to children | Teachers strategically plan opportunities and ways to provide ongoing feedback (both written and informal) and encouragement to children on their strengths and areas for improvement.Children reflect on and discuss, with their teachers or peers, what they can do well and what they need to improve.Teachers reflect on and review learning opportunities to incorporate specific learning experiences and provide multiple opportunities for children to experience, practise and improve. |
| Reflection on the unit plan | Identify what worked well during and at the end of the unit, including:* activities that worked well and why
* activities that could be improved and how
* assessment that worked well and why
* assessment that could be improved and how
* common misconceptions of children that need, or needed, to be clarified.
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## Appendix

### Concepts for developing geographical understandings in Prep–2

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| Concept | Description |
| Place | Places are parts of the Earth’s surface and can be described by location, shape, boundaries, features and environmental and human characteristics. Places are unique in their characteristics and play a fundamental role in human life. They may be perceived, experienced, understood and valued differently. They range in size from a part of a room to a major world region. For Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Country/Place is important for its significance to culture, identity and spirituality. In P–2, children explore the places they live in and belong to, and learn to observe and describe features of places. Children also become aware of, and interested in, more distant places. The idea of active citizenship is developed as children consider how places can be cared for. |
| Space | Spaces are defined by the location of environmental and human features, geographical phenomena and activities across the Earth’s surface that form distributions and patterns. Spaces are perceived, structured, organised and managed and can be designed and redesigned to achieve particular purposes. Space can be explored at different levels or scales. In P–2, children’s spatial thinking starts by learning about direction and distance and how familiar things, such as the classroom or school grounds, are organised for different purposes. By Year 2, children become aware of the distances between places and how distance constrains their activities. |
| Environment | The environment is the product of geological, atmospheric, hydrological, geomorphic, edaphic (soil), biotic and human processes. The concept of environment is about the significance of the environment in human life, and the important interrelationships between humans and the environment. The environment supports and enriches human and other life by providing raw materials and food, absorbing and recycling wastes, maintaining a safe habitat and being a source of enjoyment and inspiration.In Years 1 and 2, children are introduced to the concept of the environment through the exploration of their own environment and other places, and by recognising how places vary in terms of their natural features. |
| Scale | Scale refers to the different spatial levels used to investigate phenomena or represent phenomena visually (maps, images, graphs), from the personal to local, regional, national, world regional and global levels. Scale is also involved when geographers look for explanations or outcomes at different levels. Scale may be perceived differently by groups and can be used to elevate or diminish the significance of an issue, for example, a local issue or global issue. In P–2, children explore place, space and environment in studies at the personal and local scale. |

1. Part 6 of the Disability Standards for Education (The Standards for Curriculum Development, Accreditation and Delivery) states that education providers, including class teachers, must take reasonable steps to ensure a course/program is designed to allow any child to participate and experience success in learning. The Disability Standards for Education 2005 (Cwlth) is available from: [www.ag.gov.au](http://www.ag.gov.au/) > select Human rights and anti-discrimination > Disability standards for education. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)