Year 5 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).

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| Unit no. | Unit title | Duration of unit |
| 2  | Investigating the impact of natural hazards  | 20 hours |

| Unit outline |
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| The Year 5 curriculum continues to develop students’ understanding of place by focusing on how climate influences the human characteristics of places. They learn how some climates produce hazards such as bushfires and floods that threaten the safety of places and gain an understanding of the application of the principles of prevention, mitigation and preparedness as ways of reducing the effects of these hazards. Comparative studies of natural hazards in Australia occur at the national and global scale.There is a strong focus in this unit on the use of geographical inquiry and skills. The students will:develop geographical questions to investigate and plan an inquiry * collect and record relevant geographic data and information from a variety of sources such as weather maps, satellite images and media reports
* evaluate the usefulness of data and information in sources
* represent data and information in different forms such as small-scale and large-scale maps, plans, graphs, tables, sketches and diagrams
* interpret geographical data and information to identify distributions, patterns and trends and infer relationships using spatial technologies where appropriate
* present findings and ideas and reflect on learning to propose actions and describe effects of proposals

Specific new geographic skills in Year 5-6 include the constructing and interpreting of graphs such as bar, column and line graphs. There are opportunities to make connections to Australian Curriculum: Mathematics and Australian Curriculum: Science in working with tables and graphs. Fieldwork opportunities exist in this unit at local area sites. Possible data collection techniques include observing, field sketching, taking photographs, constructing maps, interviewing and conducting surveys.The inquiry questions for the unit are:* How do people and environments influence one another?
* How can the impact of bushfires or floods on people and places be reduced?
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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 influence people have on the human [characteristics of places](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Characteristics%20of%20places) and the management of spaces within them [(ACHGK029)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK029)
* The impact of bushfires or floods on environments and communities, and how people can respond [(ACHGK030)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK030)
 | Observing, questioning and planning* Develop geographical questions to investigate and plan an inquiry [(ACHGS033)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS033)

Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing* Collect and record relevant geographical [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and information, using [ethical protocols](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Ethical%20protocols), from primary and [secondary sources](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Secondary%20sources), for example, people, maps, plans, photographs, satellite images, statistical sources and reports [(ACHGS034)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS034)
* Evaluate sources for their usefulness and represent [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) in different forms, for example, maps, plans, graphs, tables, sketches and diagrams [(ACHGS035)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS035)
* Represent the location and [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) of places and different types of geographical information by constructing large-scale and small-scale maps that conform to cartographic conventions, including border, source, [scale](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Scale), legend, title and north point, using [spatial technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Spatial%20technologies) as appropriate [(ACHGS036)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS036)

Interpreting, analysing and concluding* Interpret geographical [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and other information, using digital and [spatial technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Spatial%20technologies) as appropriate, and identify spatial distributions, patterns and [trends](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Trends), and infer relationships to draw conclusions [(ACHGS037)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS037)
 | The application of the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities in this include may include:Description: Description: gc_literacy Literacy* Present a multimodal presentation about a natural hazard

Description: Description: gc_numeracy Numeracy* Display data in a line graph to show patterns

Description: Description: gc_ict **ICT capability*** Generate a spatial map using Google Earth

Description: Description: gc_critical Critical and creative thinking* Evaluate management plans for natural hazards

Description: Description: gc_personal_social **Personal and social capability*** Interview a council officer about local flood management

Description: Description: gc_ethical Ethical understanding* Reflect on personal actions to communities impacted by natural hazards

Description: Description: gc_intercultural Intercultural understanding* Investigate the effects on natural hazards in different global contexts
 |
|  | Communicating* Present findings and ideas in a range of communication forms, for example, written, oral, graphic, tabular, visual and maps; using geographical terminology and [digital technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Digital%20technologies) as appropriate [(ACHGS038)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS038)

Reflecting and responding* Reflect on their learning to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge and describe the expected effects of their proposal on different groups of people [(ACHGS039)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS039)
 |  Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures* Identify how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities prevent, prepare and respond to natural hazards

Description: Description: cc_asia Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia* Investigate how Australia has responded to the effects of natural hazards in the Asia region

Description: Description: cc_sust Sustainability* Research sustainable principles of prevention, mitigation and preparedness to minimise the effects of natural hazards.
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| Geographical understandings |
| The unit provides opportunities for students to develop geographical understandings that are particularly focused on the following concepts.  |
| ☒ Place | ☒ Space | ☒ Environment | ☒ Interconnection | ☒ Change | ☒ Sustainability | ☒ Scale |
| Explanations of these geographical concepts for Years 3–6 are provided in the QSA Year level plans, available at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/yr5-geography-resources.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/yr5-geography-resources.html) > Curriculum > Planning templates and exemplars > Year level plans and in the Appendix. |
| Achievement standard |
| By the end of Year 5, students explain the characteristics of places in different locations at the national scale. They describe the interconnections between people, places and environments and identify the effect of these interconnections on the characteristics of places and environments. They describe the location of selected countries in relative terms and identify spatial distributions and simple patterns in the features of places and environments. They identify alternative views on how to respond to a geographical challenge and propose a response.Students develop geographical questions to investigate and collect and record information from a range of sources to answer these questions. They represent data and the location of places and their characteristics in graphic forms, including large-scale and small-scale maps that use the cartographic conventions of border, scale, legend, title, and north point. Students interpret geographical data to identify spatial distributions, simple patterns and trends, infer relationships and draw conclusions. They present findings using geographical terminology in a range of communication forms. They propose action in response to a geographical challenge and identify the expected effects of their proposed action. |

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| Relevant prior curriculum | Curriculum working towards |
| The Queensland Studies of Society and Environment (SOSE) Essential Learnings by the end of Year 5 Knowledge and understanding Place and space* Interactions between people and places affect the physical features of the land, biodiversity, water and atmosphere
* Physical features of environments influence the ways in which people live and work in communities
* Maps have basic spatial concepts that describe location and direction, including north orientation and four compass points, symbols and a legend or key.

Ways of working Students are able to:* pose and refine questions for investigations
* plan investigations based on questions and inquiry models
* collect and organise information and evidence
* evaluate sources of information and evidence to determine different perspectives, and distinguish facts from opinions
* draw and justify conclusions based on information and evidence
* communicate descriptions, decisions and conclusions, using text types selected to match audience and purpose
* reflect on and identify personal actions and those of others to clarify values associated with social justice, the democratic process, sustainability and peace.
 | Year 6 Australian Curriculum: Geography Geographical Inquiry and SkillsObserving, questioning and planning * Develop geographical questions to investigate and plan an inquiry [(ACHGS040)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS040)

Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing * Collect and record relevant geographical [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and information, using [ethical protocols](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Ethical%20protocols), from primary and [secondary sources](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Secondary%20sources), for example, people, maps, plans, photographs, satellite images, statistical sources and reports [(ACHGS041)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS041)
* Evaluate sources for their usefulness and represent [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) in different forms, for example, maps, plans, graphs, tables, sketches and diagrams [(ACHGS042)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS042)
* Represent the location and [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) of places and different types of geographical information by constructing large-scale and small-scale maps that conform to cartographic conventions including border, source, [scale](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Scale), legend, title and north point, using [spatial technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Spatial%20technologies) as appropriate [(ACHGS043)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS043)

Interpreting, analysing and concluding * Interpret geographical [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and other information using digital and [spatial technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Spatial%20technologies) as appropriate, and identify spatial distributions, patterns and [trends](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Trends), and infer relationships to draw conclusions [(ACHGS044)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS044)

Communicating * Present findings and ideas in a range of communication forms, for example, written, oral, graphic, tabular, visual and maps, using geographical terminology and [digital technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Digital%20technologies) as appropriate [(ACHGS045)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS045)

Reflecting and responding * Reflect on their learning to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge and describe the expected effects of their proposal on different groups of people [(ACHGS046)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS046)
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| Bridging content |
| The SOSE Essential Learnings by the end of Year 5 require students to collect, organise and evaluate information from sources. However, the Australian Curriculum: Geography requires students to collect and record information from primary as well as secondary sources using geographic methods, such as graphs and tables. Students are also required to represent information by constructing large-scale and small-scale maps. Bridging learning experiences may be needed to develop the geographical skills of collecting, recording and representing geographical data. |
| 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 * Identify questions to inform an [historical inquiry](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=H&t=Historical%20inquiry) [(ACHHS100)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS100)
* Identify and locate a range of relevant sources [(ACHHS101)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS101)
* Locate information related to inquiry questions in a range of sources [(ACHHS102)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS102)
* Compare information from a range of sources [(ACHHS103)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS103)
* Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies [(ACHHS106)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS106)

Australian Curriculum: Mathematics * Pose questions and collect categorical or [numerical data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=M&t=Numerical%20data) by observation or survey [(ACMSP118)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACMSP118)
* Construct displays, including column graphs, dot plots and tables, appropriate for [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=M&t=Data) type, with and without the use of digital technologies [(ACMSP119)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACMSP119)

Australian Curriculum: Science * Construct and use a range of representations, including [tables](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Table) and [graphs](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Graph), to represent and describe observations, [patterns](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Pattern) or [relationships](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Relationship) in [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Data) using [digital technologies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Digital%20technologies) as appropriate [(ACSIS090)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACSIS090)

Australian Curriculum: English* Use [comprehension strategies](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=E&t=comprehension%20strategies) to analyse information, integrating and linking ideas from a variety of print and digital sources [(ACELY1703)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACELY1703)
* Use a range of software including word processing programs with fluency to construct, edit and publish written [text](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=E&t=text), and select, edit and place visual, print and audio elements [(ACELY1707)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACELY1707)
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| Assessment | Make judgments |
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| Describe the assessment | Teachers gather evidence to make judgments about the following characteristics of student work: Understanding* Explain the characteristics of places in different locations at the national scale
* Identify the influence of the environment on the human characteristics of places
* The impact of natural hazards on environments and communities
* Identify spatial distributions and simple patterns in the features of places and environments
* Identify views on how to respond to hazards

Skills * Develop geographical questions to investigate
* Collect and record geographical information and data from sources
* Represent data and the location of places in graphs and maps
* Interpret geographical data to identify spatial distributions, simple patterns and trends
* Infer relationships and draw conclusions
* Present findings and propose actions

The valued features of the standard elaborations targeted in this assessment:* 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 |
| Students are given opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, skills and understanding across a range of assessments. This assessment is collected in student folios and allows for ongoing feedback to students on their learning. Year 5 teachers make decisions about the length of time required to complete the tasks and the conditions under which assessment is to be conducted. The teaching and learning experiences throughout the term provide opportunities for students to develop the understanding and skills required to complete these assessments. As students engage with these learning experiences, the teacher can provide feedback on specific skills.Research: (Multimodal/spoken) The purpose of this assessment is to make judgments about students’ abilities to research, collect, represent, analyse and draw conclusions about geographical sources. Students gather information about the effects of a selected natural hazard on settlements and environments, using a case study from a selected country in relation to Australia. Students present their findings about how the principles of prevention, mitigation and preparedness reduce the effects of natural hazards in relation to the future. Suggested conditions * Open
* Spoken/multimodal
* 2–3 minutes

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  |
| Developing questions * Complete a PMI (plus, minus, interesting) activity to find out what the students already know about the location, frequency and severity of flooding on the global, national, regional and local scales.
* Identify and explain different the types of floods, such as flash floods, river floods (slow onset or rapid onset), coastal floods, floods due to human error, human alterations to floodplains.
* As a class, use the key inquiry questions for the unit to develop geographical questions such as:
* Why there? (questions about location)
* What might happen? (questions about future consequences)
* What ought to have happen? (questions about ethical behaviour)

Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing * Instruct the students to:
* collect, record and represent relevant geographical data and information from sources about the location, frequency and severity of flooding through history. Ask: Which countries were most badly affected? Was Australia badly affected? Discuss the data, and draw conclusions about the patterns and distributions.
* collect relevant field data in the local area, such as field sketches or annotated photos of river areas, observations of environmental effects, surveys of community attitudes to flood preventions
* represent the locations and features of flood-affected countries or regions on a world map using a spatial application such as Google Earth
* represent the locations of flood-affected areas at a regional or local level using a choropleth map, cartographic conventions and simple grid references to describe location of places and features.
 | Adjustments for needs of learners | Students would benefit from access to: * spatial technologies, such as Google Earth, large-scale and small-scale outline maps, models of maps that conform to cartographic conventions including border, source, scale, legend, and north point
* primary sources materials collected by the students, e.g. field notes from observations, measurements, or responses from a survey.

Teaching geography * Catling, S, Willy, T & Butler, J 2012, *Teaching Primary Geography for Australian Schools*, Hawker Brownlow, Melbourne.
* Australian Geography Teachers of Australia, *Geogspace*, [www.geogspace.edu.au](http://www.geogspace.edu.au/)

Useful websites* Website on the types of floods, *Kidcyber*, [www.kidcyber.com.au/topics/floods.htm](http://www.kidcyber.com.au/topics/floods.htm)

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| * Present data from Bureau of Meteorology website (e.g. day-by-day rise in river heights) in a table or written form. Discuss with the students: Is this information easy to read and understand? Is there a better way to represent it? Ask the students to graph the data and evaluate the usefulness of the graphing format to represent information.
* Invite guest speakers, such as a Department of Primary Industries hydrologist or local councillor, for students to interview about prevention, mitigation and preparedness for floods in the local area or region.

Interpreting and analysing data and drawing conclusions* As a class, choose one flood-affected country or world region from the past or present (e.g. Bangladesh in 1974, Venezuela in 1999, Holland, Venice in Italy) as a case study and explore the geographical data using aerial photos and satellite images. Investigate the management of flooding in this country.
* Introduce new geographical terms: prevention, mitigation, preparedness. Lead a class discussion on how the selected country has minimised the effects of flooding. (Possible resource: The Asia Education Foundation online module “Life in a floating village”.)
* Select a recent Queensland flood as an Australian focus, e.g*.* the2011 Brisbane flood, other floods in the 2011 “summer of disasters”, the 2013 Bundaberg flood. Instruct the students to use historical sources (from the Bureau of Meteorology website) to determine extent and severity of flooding over recorded history and what is known of the evidence of flooding in pre-recorded history. Use a history correlation timeline on Google Earth to examine spatial changes over time.
* Obtain a graph of flood records (1950–present) from the Bureau of Meteorology website. As a class, interpret and analyse information for patterns and relationships, with focus questions such as: In which years have we experienced our worst flood/s? How many major/moderate/minor floods have we experienced in this time? Are there any decades when you can see very high rainfall patterns? Are there any decades when you can see no floods at all? What might have caused this?
 |  | * A virtual tour of flood sites around the world (you will need to install Google Earth)Floodsite, [www.floodsite.net/juniorfloodsite/html/en/student/thingstodo/tour/index.html](http://www.floodsite.net/juniorfloodsite/html/en/student/thingstodo/tour/index.html)
* Asia Education Foundation, “Life in a floating village” (online module), [www.asiaeducation.edu.au/curriculum\_resources/geography/years\_5\_life\_in\_a\_floating\_village/year\_5\_life\_in\_a\_floating\_village\_landing\_page.html](http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/curriculum_resources/geography/year_5_life_in_a_floating_village/year_5_life_in_a_floating_village_landing_page.html))
* Gapminder [www.gapminder.org](http://www.gapminder.org) > Go to Gapminder World > Open graph menu > Disasters > People killed in floods
* “Before and after” aerial photos of several towns and cities that experienced flooding,Queensland Reconstruction Authority, Aerial imaging and mapping, [www.qldreconstruction.org.au/maps/aerial-imaging-and-mapping-pdfs](http://www.qldreconstruction.org.au/maps/aerial-imaging-and-mapping-pdfs)

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| * Compare the flood records on the Bureau of Meteorology website with graphs of population growth. As a class, look for patterns and relationships of areas of population growth with flooded areas. Ask the students: Was there a large population growth at a time of drought?
* Examine aerial photographs of the extent of worst-ever flooding (see the Queensland Reconstruction Authority website) and compare them with normal and historical aerial photos of same area. Ask: What patterns are revealed from the aerial photographs?
* Draw appropriate conclusions from the patterns of data examined, e.g. population growth and climate data using a case study on a local or regional scale.

Communicating* Ask the students to:
* prepare a multimodal spoken presentation about the effects of flooding on settlements and environments
* present their findings about how the principles of prevent, mitigation and preparedness can reduce the effects of flooding in the future
* propose actions to respond to flooding and identify the expected effects of their proposals.
 |  | * Flood photographs and maps, Australian Government, *Geoscience Australia,* [www.ga.gov.au/hazards/flood/flood-basics/gallery.html](http://www.ga.gov.au/hazards/flood/flood-basics/gallery.html)

Bureau of Meteorology webpages* “Queensland flood history”, [www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/fld\_history/index.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/fld_history/index.shtml)
* Excellent links to reports on the cities and towns affected by the floods. The summary documents have a variety of data tables and graphs which can be used.“Detailed reports on notable Queensland floods”, [www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/fld\_reports/reports.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/fld_reports/reports.shtml)
* Map of Queensland showing flood affected areas during the “summer of disasters”. [www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/fld\_reports/qld\_flooded\_towns\_2011.pdf](http://www.bom.gov.au/qld/flood/fld_reports/qld_flooded_towns_2011.pdf)
* Booklet*: What to do before, during and after a flood*, [www.bom.gov.au/water/floods/document/What\_todo\_floods.pdf](http://www.bom.gov.au/water/floods/document/What_todo_floods.pdf)

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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 students | Teachers strategically plan opportunities and ways to provide ongoing feedback (both written and informal) and encouragement to students on their strengths and areas for improvement.Students 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 students 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 student misconceptions that need, or needed, to be clarified.
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## Appendix

### Concepts for developing geographical understandings in Years 3–6

| Concept | Description |
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| 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 Years 3–6, students describe and compare the environmental and human characteristics of places in different locations and the factors that shape the diverse characteristics of places. |
| 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 Years 3–6, students examine how human decisions and actions influence the way spaces within places are organised and managed. For example, students can investigate how urban planning organises the space within cities or regions. |
| 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 3–6, students learn how the environment supports their life and the life of other living things. |
| Interconnection | Interconnection is the way that people and/or geographical phenomena are connected to each other through environmental processes and human activity. Interconnections can be simple, complex, reciprocal or interdependent and have strong influence on the characteristics of places. An understanding of the concept of interconnection leads to holistic thinking. This helps students to understand Aboriginal peoples’ and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ holistic connection to Country/Place and the knowledge and practices that developed as a result of this connection*.* In Years 3–6, students examine how human action influences the environmental characteristics of places and how these characteristics influence the human characteristics of places. Students also study Australia’s interconnections with other places and the effects of these interconnections. |
| Change  | Change involves any alteration to the natural or cultural environment and can involve both time and space. The concept of change is about explaining geographical phenomena by investigating how they developed over time. Environmental change can occur over both short and long time frames, and have interrelationships with human activities. An understanding of the current processes of change can be used to predict change in the future and to identify what would be needed to achieve more sustainable futures*.* In Year 3, students explore the changes in phenomena between places in terms of climate and types of settlements. In Years 4 and 5, students examine the influence of Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait peoples on the environmental characteristics of Australian places over time. In Year 6, students examine how the connections Australia has with other countries change people and places. |
| Sustainability | Sustainability addresses the ongoing capacity of the Earth to maintain all life. It is both a goal and a way of thinking about how to progress towards that goal. Sustainable patterns of living meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs (economic, social and environmental). Sustainability depends on the maintenance or restoration of the functions that sustain all life and human wellbeing. In Years 3–6, students examine different views on how to protect environments and how to use resources and manage waste sustainably. Students become aware of why the environment needs to be cared for and consider how they can contribute to this, laying foundations for active citizenship and the way of thinking about sustainability. |
| 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 Years 3–4, students compare places in locations at the local, regional and national scale. In Year 6, the scale of study shifts to the global, with a study of the world’s cultural, economic, demographic and social diversity. |

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)