Invitation for Papers and Notes for Contributors

An Invitation to Share
- Geographical Education is a refereed journal. Articles submitted to Geographical Education for consideration in the Refereed Articles section are reviewed anonymously by a minimum of two referees. Articles are selected by the Editor based on the outcome of the anonymous reviews and ratified by the Editor. Authors of accepted articles are sent guidelines for their final submission. Contributions to other sections such as Book Reviews and Reports are not refereed. The ISSN for Geographical Education is ISSN 2204-0242.

- We invite your participation in producing this journal. Geographical Education encourages school and university teachers and all others interested in geography to share their ideas and experiences in order to promote sound practice, innovative strategies, modern developments and reflection in geographical education.

- Contributions of varying length are invited, with a maximum of 5000 words for major articles and research reports. Shorter articles of 2000 words, featuring classroom strategies, reflections on particular issues and practices in geography teaching, in-service education workshops and comments on previous articles are especially welcome.

- Lesson plans, teaching units and how-to-do-it advice on classroom and field skills are also invited as long as they have relevance for a broad range of teachers across Australia.

Presenting your Article

Email: Please submit your article for review to the Editor (address below). Please send as a Rich Text file or Microsoft Word document.

Word processing: Manuscripts should be word processed and double spaced, with margins of 2.5 cm on all sides, using 12 point size of Times New Roman (or CG Times) font.

Title Page: The title of the article, the name, work position, address and email of the author, and an abstract of no more than 150 words should be provided on a title page.

Headings: Major and minor sub-headings should be used to guide the reader and to break up the text.

Paragraphs: Paragraphs should start without indentation and should be separated by blank lines. All text should be left justified.

Quotations: These should be kept to a minimum and where over 40 words should be indented. These must be appropriately referenced.

End/footnotes: These should be avoided if possible.

References: Authors are requested to use the APA (American Psychological Association) style as shown in the exemplar at http://www.apastyle.org/index.aspx. All references, including internet sources, should be provided in alphabetical order on a separate sheet. The titles of journals should not be abbreviated.

Tables and Figures: All tables and figures should be submitted on a separate sheet of paper but with their position indicated on the text by leaving a 3 cm space above and inserting words such as ‘Take in Figure X’ or ‘Take in table Y’. All tables and figures (including maps and diagrams) should be submitted with captions clearly numbered, typed and left-justified below the diagram.

Reproduction: Illustrations will be reproduced in black and white. Photographs and illustrations should be black and white. Electronic media such as jpeg and gif files should be emailed to the Editor.

Copyright: Copyright of all material published in the journal, Geographical Education, including digital publication in any form, is held by AGTA Ltd. AGTA Ltd may determine to make any or all material available to a third party for purposes that AGTA Ltd determines appropriate (such as online distribution of the journal). Authors are responsible for the accuracy of their papers and for obtaining permission to reproduce any material(s) from other publications. Authors may have a self-archived copy of their paper in an electronic repository. That copy should have a copyright notice including full publication details and a link to the URL for Geographical Education (http://agta.asn.au/Resources/GeographicalEducation/index.php).

Submitting your Article
- Geographical Education is published annually. As at least six months are needed for reviewing, editing, design, typesetting and printing, articles should reach the Editor by 30 July.

- The manuscript should be submitted to the Editor by email.

- Manuscripts for possible publication and all correspondence relating to articles should be sent to: Terri Bourke, Editor, Geographical Education, Email: theresa.bourke@qut.edu.au

- Reviews of books, kits, electronic and other media requested by the Reviews Editor should be sent to: Geoffrey Paterson, Reviews Editor, Geographical Education, c/- Geography Teachers’ Association of Victoria, PO Box 2066, Camberwell West, Victoria 3124. Email: reviews@agta.asn.au

Advice to Advertisers
Geographical Education welcomes advertisements for quality publications and services relevant to geography teaching. The page sizes and rates are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Page</td>
<td>180 mm horizontal x 260 mm vertical</td>
<td>A$540 plus GST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Half page</td>
<td>90 mm horizontal x 260 mm vertical or 180 mm horizontal x 130 mm vertical</td>
<td>A$285 plus GST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quarter Page</td>
<td>90 mm horizontal x 130 mm vertical or 180 mm horizontal x 65 mm vertical</td>
<td>A$195 plus GST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insert</td>
<td>Any size up to A4</td>
<td>A$340 plus GST</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please note: Advertising and insert prices are ex-GST and are subject to change without notice. Camera-ready artwork should be delivered by 30 July of the year of publication to the Editor.
For further information please visit the AGTA Website: www.agta.asn.au
Contents

Editorial
Terri Bourke and Rod Lane ................................................................. 4

Articles
Cross-Curriculum Priorities & Geography
Dr Peta Salter & Dr Jacinta Maxwell ............................................... 5

Introduction to the Australian Curriculum Sustainability
Cross-Curriculum Priority
Dr Allen Hill, Dr Sherridan Emery and Dr Janet Dyment ................ 8

Realising the Sustainability Cross-Curriculum Priority
Through Action-Oriented and Transformative Geography Education
Reece Mills and Louisa Tomas ........................................................ 11

Some Reflections on the Challenges and Opportunities of the CCP Asia and Australia’s Engagement With Asia in the Australian Curriculum
Dr Deborah Henderson .................................................................... 18

Space Given Meaning by Deep and Abiding Attachment to
Gweagal Country and the Grid-Like Space of
Lieutenant James Cook
Nick Hutchinson .............................................................................. 29

Book Reviews .................................................................................. 35

Editorial Review Panel
Mr Rob Berry, Australia
Dr Susan Bliss, Australia
Mr John Butler, Australia
Professor Simon Catling, United Kingdom
Dr Lam Chi-Chung, Hong Kong
Dr Grant Kleeman, Australia
Dr Jeana Kriewaldt, Australia
Associate Professor Tammy Kwan, Hong Kong
Professor David Lambert, United Kingdom
Dr Christine Lee, Singapore
Associate Professor Alaric Maude, Australia
Professor Bob Miles, Australia
Professor John Morgan, New Zealand
Professor Ken Purnell, Australia
Dr Lou Preston, Australia
Professor Bill Pritchard, Australia
Professor Margaret Robertson, Australia
Professor Stuart Semple, Canada

Journal Advisory Committee
Geoffrey Paterson
Ken Purnell
ISSN 2204-0242
Images provided by: dreamstime.com

Australian Geography Teachers Association
Chair: Trish Douglas
Deputy Chair: Joanne Wegener
Secretary: Anna Griffin
Treasurer: Grant Kleeman
Editor: Terri Bourke
Reviews Editor: Geoffrey Paterson
Correspondence: c/o GAWA, PO Box 1252, Subiaco, WA 6904.
Email: secretaryagta@gmail.com
Office Logistics

Design, typesetting & layout: Rob Berry http://www.agta.asn.au
Proofreading: Geoffrey Paterson
Welcome to the 2020 edition of Geographical Education which focuses on the Cross-Curriculum Priorities (CCPs), one aspect that makes up the Australian Curriculum. We think you would all agree that 2020 has not really panned out how many of us had planned. What seemed to be hope for the start of a new decade, instead has brought a major bushfire season followed by a global pandemic, mass protesting against racism, trade stand-offs, the biggest recession in the last thirty years and a closing of state borders. While the theme for this edition had been decided before any of these events, it is timely to remind ourselves that the CCPs are in their essence related to what sort of people we would like our students to become. Therefore, at no time have the CCPs been more important than in this new world as it is now so commonly referred to.

At the local level, the CCP of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Histories and Cultures highlights the First Nations peoples’ special connection to Country/Place, sea, sky and waterways. It celebrates unique belief systems, spirituality, language, ways of life, kinship and the significant contributions of the Aboriginal Peoples and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

At the regional level, the CCP of Asia and Australia’s Engagement With Asia illuminates the importance of the relationship between both places in terms of trade and economic prosperity. Equally important is understanding the diversity of the region and Australia’s shared history, where movements of peoples have contributed to development, socially, intellectually, and creatively.

At the global level, the CCP of Sustainability addresses the ongoing capacity of Earth to maintain all life; living to meet the needs of today without compromising the needs of future generations. Sustainability education is futures focused creating a more economically, socially and ecologically just planet for our collective wellbeing.

The papers in this volume highlight the views of Australian, New Zealand and Canadian educators about the CCPs.

The first paper by Salter and Maxwell provides a broad introduction to the CCPs but also highlights a contradiction. These writers, quite rightly, point out that these areas have been referred to as priorities, yet with no assessable element within the curriculum are quite often ignored. They stress how well Geography as a discipline and therefore geography teachers are positioned to deliver these priorities effectively.

The second paper is the first of two related to the global CCP of Sustainability. Allen, Emery and Dyment explain the key conceptual thinking behind this priority as sophisticated and theoretically robust, looking at sustainability well beyond the environment to economic, cultural, social, political, and ecological domains. However, they also point out that implementation in schools has been inconsistent because of time and space constraints as well as a lack of professional learning for teachers.

The third paper by Mills and Tomas, also related to Sustainability, is a deeper dive into the challenges and opportunities of this priority. The writers then present a learning progression to empower geography teachers to embed sustainability in their day-to-day teaching.

The fourth paper moves to the regional level and centres on the CCP of Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia. In this paper, Henderson outlines the challenges and opportunities that Geography teachers face in implementing this CCP before providing concrete examples of where inclusions could be made. We are also given a timely reminder of the synergies between the CCPs and the General Capabilities. Henderson encourages Australian educators to foster virtual partnerships with schools in Asia through the Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Growing Engagement (BRIDGE) program.

The final paper looks to the local level focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures. This paper specifically relates this CCP with the geographical concept of space. Hutchinson shows how space can be contested by contrasting relational space as occupied by the Gweagal inhabitants of Kamay/Botany Bay with absolute space as emphasised in the context of Cook’s expedition 250 years ago.

Many thanks to both the writers of the articles and the book reviews. Many thanks also to Geoffrey Paterson as proof-reader and Reviews Editor of the current volume. The book review titles reflect a range of topics in geography including water, tree hollows, Mallee country and the teaching of Geography. AGTA looks forward to contributions to the next edition of the journal Volume 34, 2021.
Cross-curriculum priorities

The three-dimensional design of the Australian Curriculum includes the cross-curriculum priorities (CCPs), learning areas and general capabilities (GCs). While learning areas are deemed ‘what students need to know’, the GCs and CCPs indicate ‘what sort of people students ought to become’ (Lingard, 2018). This aligns with their rationale, articulated in the national narrative and aspirational goals of the Melbourne Declaration of Educational Goals for Young Australians (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs [MCEETYA], 2008). With the release of the latest iteration, the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration (Council of Australian Governments Education Council [COAGEC], 2019), it is timely to revisit the rationale and application of the CCPs.

Encompassing the themes of Sustainability, Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, these priorities are identified in Goal 2 of the Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008) seeking ‘active and informed citizens’, that:

- understand and acknowledge the value of Indigenous cultures and possess the knowledge, skills and understanding to contribute to, and benefit from, reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians,
- are able to relate to and communicate across cultures, especially the cultures and countries of Asia, and
- work for the common good, in particular sustaining and improving natural and social environments. (p. 9)

While their futures orientation positions these priorities in relation to time, they are also situated in place and space:

- nationally, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures,
- regionally, Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia is a ‘regional’ priority, and
- globally, Sustainability.

In the curriculum the CCPs do not exist outside of learning areas. Instead, the priorities … add depth and richness to student learning in content elaborations. They will have a strong but varying presence depending on their relevance to the learning area. (ACARA, 2018, para. 2)

Nor do they exist as distinct dimensions of the achievement standards, or separately assessable elements of the curriculum.

Implications for implementation

This apparent contradiction, stated value in the future, but potential irrelevance regarding what is taught in the present, creates interesting conditions for the implementation of the CCPs, as does the absence of accountability via assessment or reporting. As Barry McGaw, previous Chair of ACARA notes ‘if you can’t define and measure, people won’t pay attention to things’ (Roth & McGaw, 2010, 0:40–1:50). While the measure is absent, the definition is not, though it is problematic.

The common thread across the CCPs is that they consist of ‘problems’ to be solved through implementation of the curriculum, as we ‘build’, to use the language of the Melbourne Declaration, our ideal society. And ideally, we agree. We agree that these phenomena are significant and want our students to be problem-solvers. However, ACARA present particular phenomena as problems alongside a particular way of thinking about them, implicitly suggesting that relevant content can be discretely identified and inserted into curriculum to neatly resolve such ‘problems’. This is common in policy; policy authors seek endorsement of policy as a ‘solution’ to a ‘problem’ (Bacchi, 1999). For example:

- nationally, nationally, we need to resolve discord and achievement gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians,
- regionally, we need to resolve our lack of Asia literacy which prohibits engagement with Asian countries and markets, and
• globally, we need to resolve a looming Sustainability crisis presented by phenomena such as global warming.

The construction of the priorities as (optional) solutions to problems, rather than intrinsically worthwhile phenomena, exposes them to distinct vulnerabilities. Their presence in curriculum suggests that significant phenomena are being addressed, and more significantly resolved, via curriculum content. Yet despite overwhelming resonance in teacher responses that these phenomena are important, research indicates variable implementation of the CCPs as distinct curriculum elaborations in everyday teaching practice. For example, Sustainability is cited as ‘neither a priority nor cross-curricular’ (Barnes et al., 2017) and some teachers were ‘unaware of its existence’ (Nicholls & Thorne, 2017). Elsewhere, the transformative potential of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures, and Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia, is identified, however teachers are not confident in their attempts to realise them (Salter & Maxwell, 2015). By contrast, there are also instances where the rich potential of a CCP is recognised (see Heaton, 2019).

How ‘relevance’ is perceived more widely also contributes to vulnerability. The Federal Government’s 2014 review of the Australian Curriculum framed the CCPs as requiring review, given concerns they were politically motivated inclusions, rather than pedagogically justified initiatives (Maude, 2014). Ultimately, this led to reduction of their documentation in learning area elaborations. The Mparntwe Declaration (COAGEC, 2019) may also signal further revision if, like its predecessor, it guides ACARA’s decisions. Of particular note is a shift in Goal 2. While the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures and Sustainability CCPs are still foregrounded, Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia is not. In fact, there is no mention of Asia at all in the entire declaration. There is, however, a call for students to ‘engage in the global community, particularly with our neighbours in the Indo-Pacific regions’ (p. 8). Perhaps ‘Asia’ is now irrelevant to Australia’s preferred future? To what extent this may be a statement of geography, or a geopolitical statement, may emerge more clearly in the next version of the curriculum.

Geography

Geography teachers are uniquely positioned to address the CCPs through the subject’s disciplinary focus on interrelationships between physical features of the earth with individual, social and political relationships. Unlike Science and Mathematics curricula, the Geography Curriculum is considered a ‘natural’ place for all three CCPs to be embedded, by academics as well as industry (AGTA, 2014; Australian Government, 2014; Casinader, 2016). Research suggests that teachers also view Geography as a discipline within which the topics related to the CCPs can be logically addressed (e.g. da Silva-Branco, 2019).

However, for some the challenge to the stability of Geography as a distinct discipline is the greater priority. For example, as Australian governments increasingly focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) in schools and industry, practitioners are contemplating benefits for the discipline and broader society of positioning Geography within STEM (Caldis & Kleeman, 2019). Given the potential for marginalisation of the subject in a context that suggests the humanities and social sciences are less lucrative than STEM subjects, it is germane to seriously consider Geography’s disciplinary strengths and position (Dolan, 2019). However, it is important to do so cognisant of the ways in which such debates, which potentially pit ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ sciences against one another and the subjective and regional against the purportedly unbiased and universal, may leave content such as CCPs vulnerable to exclusion (Barnes et al., 2017; Lambert, 2013; Moreton-Robinson, 2006).

The manner in which the CCPs have been conceptualised and constructed and the current context in which curriculum decisions are made mean that we need to reflect on our practice and ask to what degree are the CCPs vulnerable – in my classroom, in my school, in my profession – and what does this mean for our students?

References


The introduction of the Australian Curriculum in 2011 and 2012 brought with it a variety of responses, from consternation from some states less willing to give up their autonomous curriculum positioning through to significant optimism from educators and academics about the opportunities and benefits afforded by such a national curriculum framework. For environmental and sustainability educators, and indeed all those educators across Australia who valued the power of education to contribute to making the world a more just and sustainable place, there was eager anticipation for the inclusion of sustainability as one of three cross-curriculum priorities. Positioned within the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005–2014), and consistent with calls from many scholars and practitioners in the environmental and sustainability education field from the previous decade (see for example, Kennelly et al., 2011; Skamp, 2010), such a clear and seemingly important positioning of sustainability within the curriculum was welcomed. After existing on the margins of schooling for too long, finally sustainability appeared to have a priority place in the curriculum.

With enthusiasm, educators, especially those linked to environmental and sustainability education, set their minds to developing learning experiences that were informed by the sustainability cross-curriculum priority (S-CCP) or weaving the principles of the S-CCP into existing teaching and learning initiatives. At a similar time, researchers were curious about the way the S-CCP was being received, perceived and implemented by schools. A national survey was conducted by the Australia Education for Sustainability Alliance (Australian Education for Sustainability Alliance, 2014) which gathered the views of teachers who were already engaged with Education for Sustainability (EfS) and of those new to sustainability or unaware of how to implement the S-CCP into their practice. At a similar time we conducted a state-wide instrumental case study in Tasmania that investigated principals’ and school leaders’ understandings of sustainability, the extent to which the S-CCP was integrated into teaching and learning, and perceived issues related to receptivity and capability of teachers (Dyment et al., 2015; Hill & Dyment, 2016).

Almost a decade since the inception of the Australian Curriculum, this issue of Geographical Education focuses specifically on the cross-curriculum priorities. In this brief paper, we explain the key conceptual thinking behind the S-CCP, examine why it was included in the curriculum, and how it has been implemented in Australian schools since 2012.

The development of the Australian Curriculum, and therefore the cross-curriculum priorities, gained impetus from the Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians which considered contemporary issues of relevance to young Australians along with identifying key skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for learners in the 21st century (Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training, and Youth Affairs, 2008). This defining moment in Australia’s education landscape coincided with an increasing awareness of such global sustainability issues as climate change, social inequality and injustice, growing waste and pollution issues, deforestation, and species extinction. Within this context, it made good sense for sustainability to be included as one of three cross-curriculum priorities alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, and Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia.

The S-CCP supports students to develop ‘the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary to contribute to more sustainable patterns of living’ (Australian Curriculum,
All the cross-curriculum priorities were built around key concepts, and in the case of the S-CCP these were: recognising interdependent and dynamic systems; respecting diversity of worldviews, values and justice; and building capacity to think and act for a sustainable future. These three concepts and the related nine S-CCP organising ideas are sophisticated and theoretically robust. If analysed against a well-respected framework for the conceptualisation of sustainability, such as Christen and Schmidt (2010), the S-CCP meets conceptual criteria for sustainability including identifying problems sustainability seeks to address, establishing the importance of intra- and inter-generational justice, recognising the integration of human-nature systems, proposing criteria for sustainability, and valuing transformation into action. As noted in Hill and Dyment (2016), the organising ideas ‘unequivocally interpret sustainability well beyond the environmental . . . to embrace thinking and acting critically and systemically with regard to social, cultural, economic, political and ecological domains’ (p. 227).

The implementation of the S-CCP in schools across Australia has been inconsistent, and there is little apparent effort at coordinated systematic research or evaluation at a national level of the S-CCP specifically, or the cross-curriculum priorities more generally. Early research into the S-CCP by (Australian Education for Sustainability Alliance, 2014) and Dyment et al. (2015) and Hill and Dyment (2016) reported the following similar findings. Teachers and school leaders generally agreed that sustainability was important yet there was a lack of understanding or capability about how to implement the S-CCP in classroom practice. Many teachers and school leaders reported a conceptualisation of sustainability as environmental which meant that the more complex organising ideas of the S-CCP were not well understood and therefore difficult to implement. These issues appear to be shared across other CCPs which have been critiqued by issues, reported in research relating to both the S-CCP and other CCPs, which include differences between state syllabi and the online Australian Curriculum (Gauci & Curwood, 2017), teachers’ worries about tokenism or doing it incorrectly, and insufficient teacher resourcing and time.

Weaving the S-CCP, or indeed any other CCP, into teaching and learning across different subjects or learning areas, is a highly complex undertaking. As we discussed elsewhere (Hill & Dyment, 2016), the cross-curriculum priorities might be seen as an oxymoron or even strange objects in the curriculum, in that they are apparently priorities yet they are not assessable and they are not compulsory curriculum inclusions. Nevertheless, as we enter the third decade of the 21st century, recently so disrupted by the global COVID-19 pandemic, there has never been a more important or urgent moment to rethink how education, and specifically the sustainability CCP, can contribute towards a more equitable, just, and regenerative world. The time is now.

References


Abstract
Sustainability is an important cross-curriculum priority in Australian education that is not commonly realised in schools and classrooms. In this article, we discuss the challenges and opportunities to enacting sustainability, suggesting that both top-down (systemic school-wide leadership and support) and bottom-up (individual educator’s reflexivity) support for sustainability is needed. We postulate that an action-oriented and transformative geography education may support the realisation of sustainable world views for learners, and we present a simple learning progression for action-oriented education, adapted from the Australian Curriculum: Humanities and Social Sciences, for achieving this aim. In this way, geography teachers may be empowered to embed sustainability in their day-to-day teaching.

Keywords: Education for sustainability; cross-curriculum priorities; geography education; action-oriented education; transformative pedagogy.

Education for Sustainability
According to the Australian Curriculum, sustainability is one of three cross-curriculum priorities (CCP) that seek to ‘provide students with the tools and language to engage with, and better understand, their world at a range of levels’ (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority [ACARA], n.d.a, para. 2). In this context, sustainability refers to:

- sustainable patterns of living [that] meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Actions to improve sustainability are individual and collective endeavours shared across local and global communities. They necessitate a renewed and balanced approach to the way humans interact with each other and the environment (ACARA, n.d.a, para. 2).

This definition draws primarily upon the notion of intergenerational equity, which is concerned with the importance of establishing a positive relationship between people and the environment, to ensure that future generations inherit a world that is healthy and sustainable (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). The relevance of sustainability at the local and global scales is also considered. This definition, which acknowledges the importance of action on local and global scales, is largely commensurate with conceptualisations of sustainability and sustainable development offered in the research literature. According to Stevenson (2007), sustainability is about ‘socio-ecological relationships and connections’ (p. 267). At the same time, Fien and Tilbury (2002) recognise that these relationships must be considered alongside ‘economic, political, social, cultural, technological and environmental forces that foster or impede sustainable development’ (p. 10).

Education has been widely recognised as a key enabler of a sustainable future (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2018). The Agenda 21 action plan, that emerged from the 1992 Earth Summit (United Nations, 1993), called to educate people about sustainability and to encourage action on socio-ecological issues. International calls to educate and act were consolidated in the objectives of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, 2005–2014 (UNESCO, 2014). Australia responded quickly with a suite of national action plans, policies, and programs designed to realise education for sustainability in schools and classrooms (see Commonwealth of Australia, 2000, 2005, 2009). These policies aimed to ‘equip all Australians...
with the knowledge and skills required to live sustainably’ (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009, p. 4) by reorienting education systems to sustainability. This involved building individual and organisational capacity to make informed decisions about, and act upon, sustainability issues. Schools were encouraged to have whole-school approaches to sustainability, provide professional development for teachers, and embed sustainability in curricula (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009).

The notion of Education for Sustainability (EfS) has roots in environmental education (Stevenson, 2007). According to ACARA (n.d.a), EfS is concerned with developing ‘the knowledge, skills, values and world views necessary for people to act in ways that contribute to more sustainable patterns of living’ (para. 2). EfS definitions also recognise the importance of education that is futures-oriented and empowers students to take informed action that promotes ecological and social justice (ACARA, 2016; Tilbury & Cooke, 2005). These ideas are consistent with broader definitions of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), that also argue for action-oriented and transformative education: ‘[ESD] empowers learners to make informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations’ (UNESCO, 2018, para. 1).

Figure 1. Overview of the Sustainability CCP (taken from ACARA, n.d.a, para. 3)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Systems</th>
<th>Explore the interdependent and dynamic nature of systems that support all life on Earth and our collective wellbeing.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. The biosphere is a dynamic system providing conditions that sustain life on Earth.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. All life forms, including human life, are connected through ecosystems on which they depend for their wellbeing and survival.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Sustainable patterns of living rely on the interdependence of healthy social, economic and ecological systems.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>World views</th>
<th>Enable a diversity of world views on ecosystems, values and social justice to be discussed and recognised when determining individual and community actions for sustainability.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. World views that recognise the dependence of living things on healthy ecosystems, and value diversity and social justice, are essential for achieving sustainability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. World views are formed by experiences at personal, local, national and global levels, and are linked to individual and community actions for sustainability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Futures</th>
<th>Build capacities for thinking and acting in ways that are necessary to create a more sustainable future. Promote reflective thinking processes in young people and empowers them to design action that will lead to a more equitable and sustainable future.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. The sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community action that values local and global equity and fairness across generations into the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Actions for a more sustainable future reflect values of care, respect and responsibility, and require us to explore and understand environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Designing action for sustainability requires an evaluation of past practices, the assessment of scientific and technological developments, and balanced judgements based on projected future economic, social and environmental impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Sustainability cross-curriculum priority

The Sustainability CCP in the Australian Curriculum is underpinned by three Key Concepts (Systems, World Views and Futures) and nine Organising Ideas that align to the aforementioned features of sustainability and EIS (Figure 1). Of critical importance to EIS and the Sustainability CCP is the action-oriented and transformative notion of educating for sustainability. Peacock et al. (2015) tell us that the future is an inherent consideration in the Sustainability CCP – present living must not compromise future generations. These authors conducted a document analysis that shows the use of present tense verbs throughout the Organising Ideas (e.g., ‘living’, ‘engaging’, ‘creating’) and text with a high degree of moral obligation (e.g., actions for sustainability ‘necessitate’ a renewed and balanced approach; actions supporting sustainability ‘require’ a consideration of interdependent social and environmental processes). Sterling (2010) asserts that a sustainable education paradigm is required for this type of futures-orientation learning. This may include opportunities to empower students to actively envision and create alternative futures, and act upon local and global sustainability issues (Sterling, 2010; Tilbury & Cooke, 2005).

Challenges and opportunities

Despite strong international EIS policies, there is little evidence that EIS or the Sustainability CCP are being realised in Australian schools (Barnes et al., 2018). In their recent research article, aptly titled Sustaining education for sustainability in turbulent times, Smith and Stevenson (2017) note that, in recent years, state and federal policy support for EIS in Australia has waned, leading to a ‘hostile’ policy environment wherein EIS must compete with other educational policies that ‘(overtly or covertly) receive greater priority’ (p. 79). This means that in schools sustainability is ‘falling between the cracks’ in favour of such imperatives as literacy and numeracy (or other ‘back-to-basics’ rhetoric) that are tested and benchmarked across the country (Barnes et al., 2018, p. 390). While promising whole-school approaches to sustainability have been advocated for in the past (Australian Government, Department of the Environment and Heritage, 2005), it appears that the challenging and complex political and educational climate, in which schools currently operate, means that EIS is likely to be overlooked in favour of other priorities concerned with performativity and accountability. In this context, scholars agree the capacity to implement EIS with the aim of societal transformation is limited (Hursh et al., 2015; Smith & Watson, 2019).

Compounding these global challenges to realising sustainability in schools is the technical nature of curriculum in Australia, wherein important purposes of education like sustainable development tend to ‘fall by the wayside’ (Eisner, 1985, p. 81). The technical nature of curriculum emphasises well-defined, measurable learning objectives; carefully designed, sequential learning tasks that enable student achievement; and accountability upon teachers to provide evidence of their educational effectiveness through their maintaining of records of assessment scores. In doing so, greater attention is given to the processes in an education system, rather than to the substantive purposes of education. Researchers have cautioned that, in a process-oriented system driven by a technical orientation to curriculum, ESD is unlikely to receive any significant attention in the classroom (Tomas et al., 2020).

This is further complicated by the nature of CCPs that work across learning areas. While some authors believe the Sustainability CCP has the potential to position EIS more centrally and explicitly into teaching and learning in Australian schools (Dyment et al., 2015), Barnes et al. (2018) problematise this idea by pointing out that ‘there is no explicit requirement (or accountability) for whether and how to teach [the CCPs], nor are there specific metrics to determine how successfully teachers have implemented them’ (p. 380). This tension is evident in a study by Nicholls and Thorne (2017), who found that despite teachers’ strong support for the Sustainability CCP, few have the necessary support and time to actually enact EIS in the classroom. Kuzich et al. (2015) also assert that there is ‘a concerted lack of emphasis on a requirement for teachers to teach ‘about’ or ‘for’ sustainability’ (p. 185), even in dedicated sustainability schools. They maintain that this is due to a lack of explicit guidance within the curriculum about how to teach EIS.

Given the challenges confronting top-down whole-school approaches to sustainability, there are calls for a multifaceted systems approach that places renewed emphasis on the role of the individual teacher in realising the goals of EIS (Figure 2). Ferreira and Davis (2010) contend that it is through a systems approach to EIS that ‘small-scale changes . . . become a major change in the overall education effort that reaches across the system’ (p. 280). Such small-scale changes are dependent upon how teachers may choose to act in ways that transform existing structures and systems. If teachers’ actions are to be transformative, they must have the capacity to ‘examine and articulate their internal conversations’ so they can ‘reflexively mediate their subjective knowledges, beliefs and capabilities with[in] these objective conditions.
within which they work’ (Ryan & Bourke, 2013, p. 414). This involves asking such questions as: What is important to me? What options do I need to weigh-up? and What course of action will I take? One way forward is to support teachers to view their moment-to-moment decision-making as a form of individual agency through which they may come to enact EFs principles.

**Action-oriented and transformative geography education**

With a view to empower teachers to think reflexively about embedding EFs in their practice, we now examine how the futures Organising Idea of the Sustainability CPP can be embedded in the Humanities and Social Sciences (Years F-6/7) and Geography (Years 7-10) learning areas. In doing so, we have synthesised a simple learning progression for action-oriented thinking from the curriculum. This learning progression encourages students to suggest courses of action in response to an issue or problem; predict possible and preferred effects of their actions; and reflect on their learning. We then describe pedagogic approaches that may support this learning progression, and advocate for geographic inquiry as a means to realising the transformative potential of the Sustainability CCP.

A futures-orientation can be supported throughout the years of formal schooling in Geography as students learn to act for a sustainable future (Figure 3). Primary school students may begin to develop this world view by envisaging a positive future in relation to a place of significance to them (e.g., a local park or playground), and suggesting simple courses of action that may realise their vision. Building in complexity, older students may begin to understand how multiple perspectives can influence people’s actions, and the different outcomes that may arise when they take action. The feasibility of different courses of action may be considered. Secondary school students may examine how values inform people’s perspectives and actions on sustainability issues. They may ask questions, seek and analyse information (by using geographic information systems), and formally communicate preferred courses of action identified through careful consideration of the interconnectedness of biophysical and human systems. Students can also develop more global perspectives on sustainability issues as they first consider personal or local issues of significance, and how courses of action on a local scale may contribute to global issues. In this way, geography students are positioned as activists who can learn about geographical knowledge and skills by contributing to a sustainable future.

Geographical inquiry may be used to support the development of students’ action-oriented world views. Questions that may guide a geographical inquiry are:

- What and where are the issues being studied?
- How and why does this issue work?
- What are the economic, social and political impacts of this issue on relevant stakeholders?
- What is being done or should be done to mitigate negative impacts and contribute to an alternative future?

Inquiry learning in this sense can encourage students to respond to their own concern or curiosity, and to investigate and act on a sustainability issue. This involves students in thinking through and solving problems associated with the issue. Students may collect and analyse data in order to reach their own conclusions, and decide on appropriate courses of action.

Drawing on work from preservice teacher education, we contend that transformative pedagogical approaches may be used within geographical inquiry. Evans and Ferreira (2020) define transformational learning as ‘going beyond [the] acquisition of knowledge and understanding of concepts’ and profoundly changing students’ world views ‘in ways that will ultimately lead to both personal and social transformation’ (p. 29). Such pedagogic approaches, which are inherently student-centred and experiential, include role play and simulations; group discussions and dialogue;
stimulus activities; debates; critical incidents; case studies; reflective accounts; personal development planning; critical reading and writing; problem-based learning; and fieldwork (Evans & Ferreira, 2020). The transformative potential of these approaches can be supported by engaging students in critical thinking, reflection, and values clarification and analysis, which encourages them to consider their own thoughts and feelings, as well as a range of perspectives, as they negotiate important socio-ecological challenges (Australian Government, Department of the Environment and Heritage, 2005).

### Summary and conclusions

In this article, we have explored notions of sustainability and EfS, as a timely reminder of the importance and value of engaging students in education for and about sustainability. We have also briefly examined the Sustainability CCP, and the challenges and opportunities to realising sustainability in schools. In particular, given the current political, educational and curricular context that risks EfS ‘falling through the cracks’, we suggest that a renewed focus on the role of the individual teacher as reflexive practitioner is needed to mobilise opportunities to enact EfS principles in the classroom in these challenging times. Finally, we have used the Futures Key Concept in the Sustainability CCP to illustrate how an action-oriented, inquiry approach to Geography can be enacted from Prep to Year 10, with consideration of transformative pedagogical approaches. In this way, geography teachers can be empowered to realise the transformative potential of both EfS and the Sustainability CCP in their day-to-day teaching.

### References


Evans, N., & Ferreira, J. (2020). What does the research evidence base tell us about the use and impact of sustainability pedagogies in initial teacher education? Environmental Education Research, 26, 27–42.


Some Reflections on the Challenges and Opportunities of the CCP Asia and Australia’s Engagement With Asia in the Australian Curriculum

Dr Deborah Henderson
Associate Professor in Education, Queensland University of Technology

Introduction

Three decades ago, Stephen Kemmis (1990) argued that curricula provide insights into how nations and states interpret themselves and how they want to be interpreted. He also noted that ‘debates about curriculum reveal fundamental concerns, uncertainties and tensions which preoccupy nations and states as they struggle to adapt to changing circumstances’ (Kemmis, 1990, p. 32). This empirical paper draws from the literature to review the inclusion of the Cross-Curriculum Priorities (CCP) as one of three basic dimensions of the Australian Curriculum. In doing so, this paper argues that the CCPs can be viewed as indicative of the curriculum challenges Kemmis canvassed and it raises questions about how particular approaches to curriculum can be integrated into subject-based curricula. In particular, the discussion focuses on the CCP of Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia as a contested form of knowledge in the current curriculum, together with some of the challenges and opportunities Geography teachers face in planning to implement this CCP.

The Context

The Melbourne Declaration (MCEETYA, 2008) made clear that young Australians need to engage with, and better understand, the world so they can navigate both major changes arising from global integration and challenges prompted by complex environmental, social and economic pressures that extend beyond national borders. It also noted that Asia literacy, that is, knowledge and understanding about Asia, was on the agenda for school education, and ‘engaging and building strong relationships with Asia’ (MCEETYA, 2008, p. 4) was significant for Australia’s future as a country located in the Asia region. This marked the first time an Asia priority was addressed in the national goals for schooling in Australia.

The Shape of the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2012), written to guide the development of the new curriculum, reiterated this focus. It also attended to the intercultural aspects of people-to-people connections and positioned the Asia priority as a reflection of the importance of young people knowing about Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia ‘because as they develop a better understanding of the countries and cultures of the Asia region, they will come to appreciate the economic, political and cultural interconnections that Australia has with the region’ (p. 22).

It must be noted that this focus was reiterated in slightly different terminology in the most recent statement of national education goals, released in December 2019. Goal 2 of the Alice Springs (Mparntwe) Education Declaration noted that all young Australians need to become ‘informed and responsible global and local members of the community who value and celebrate cultural and linguistic differences, and engage in the global community, particularly with our neighbours in the Indo-Pacific regions’ (Education Council, 2019, p. 6). The current wording reflects the Australian government’s shift to focus its diplomatic attention to what it terms the Indo-Pacific region. In this context, India is considered a future economic power and possible hedge against China. Moreover, in the face of an uncertain United States ally and a more assertive China, the Australian government now views partnerships with major Indo-Pacific democracies, such as those with India, Japan, Indonesia and South Korea, as a means of shaping the future regional order (see Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2017). It remains to be seen how the emphasis on the Indo-Pacific region, which is indicative of Kemmis’ (1990) reflection that curricula reflect a nation’s efforts to adapt to changing circumstances, will be incorporated into the review of the Foundation-Year 10 Australian Curriculum, announced by education ministers on 12 June 2020.

For the purposes of the discussion in this paper, attention is now focused on the current version of the Australian Curriculum. In an attempt to address the Melbourne Declaration’s goals, the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA, 2020a) adopted a three-dimensional design for the Australian...
Curriculum, incorporating discipline-based learning areas, and seven essential twenty-first century skills identified as general capabilities. As the third structural component, three key areas of importance, identified for their contemporary relevance, were selected for inclusion as Cross-Curriculum Priorities. These were Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures, Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia, and Sustainability. The assumption was that the three priorities would be dealt with, where relevant, through the learning areas across the years of schooling from Foundation to Year 10. It was also anticipated that the CCPs would contribute to the development of some of the general capabilities including intercultural understanding, critical and creative thinking, and ethical understanding. Yet because the Australian Curriculum did not specifically address how the listed content descriptions for each learning area could be achieved, this presented a challenging curriculum space for teachers to negotiate in practice. Indeed, something of the CCPs’ nebulous location can be gathered from the way they are described in the Australian Curriculum:

Cross-curriculum priorities are only addressed through learning areas and do not constitute curriculum on their own, as they do not exist outside of learning areas. Instead, the priorities are identified wherever they are developed or have been applied in content descriptions. They are also identified where they offer opportunities to add depth and richness to student learning in content elaborations. They will have a strong but varying presence depending on their relevance to the learning area (ACARA, 2020b).

Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia cross-curriculum priority in the curriculum

Currently, the Asia priority is positioned to provide a regional context for learning in all learning areas of the Australian Curriculum, and it has been developed around three key concepts that convey its essential knowledge, understandings and skills (ACARA, 2020c).

The first key concept highlights the diversity within and between the countries of the Asia region, from their cultures, societies and traditions through to their diverse environments and the effects of these on the lives of people. The second key concept examines the past and continuing achievements of the peoples of Asia, identifies their contribution to world history, and acknowledges the influences that the Asia region has on the world’s aesthetic and creative pursuits. The third key concept addresses the nature of past and ongoing links between Australia and Asia, and develops the knowledge, understanding and skills which make it possible to engage actively and effectively with people of the Asia region.

Each concept contains organising ideas that provide a scaffold for developing related knowledge, understanding and skills. These are embedded in the content of each learning area according to its relevance to the organising ideas. An organising idea may draw on content from more than one learning area. Taken as a set, the organising ideas provide a framework for the priority. In the Humanities and Social Sciences (HASS) learning area, students can investigate the diversity of cultures, values, beliefs, histories and environments that exist between and within the countries of the Asia region, and how this diversity influences the way people interact with each other, the places where they live, and the social, economic, political and cultural systems of the region as a whole. Teachers are also expected to link these ideas to the related general capability of intercultural understanding (ACARA, 2020d).

Yet despite these guidelines, the CCPs presented unchartered waters, for teachers in Australia had not engaged with this sort of curriculum structure before. With specific reference to the CCP of Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia, teachers also faced an assemblage of contradictions. The discussion now highlights some of the theoretical and epistemological issues concerned with knowing Asia as a CCP, prior to examining the curricula implications for decision-making in teaching Geography.

Confusions and Contradictions

What sort of curriculum knowledge?

Curriculum scholars such as Ivor Goodson (1988) remind us that the curriculum is made in a variety of arenas and at various levels, whilst others emphasise its different forms (Kennedy, 2019; Ross, 2000; van den Akker & Voogt, 1994). In this context, the ‘official’ planned or mandated curriculum can be envisaged as ‘formal and/or intended’ and composed of authoritative statements of rationales, aims, objectives or intended learning outcomes accompanied by itemised content and/or concepts to be known. The conceptual knowledge space the CCP Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia occupies in the official, or intended curriculum (Goodson, 1988), is indicative of the challenges facing all three CCPs. In terms of curriculum theory, the CCPs can be situated in ‘the domain of possibility’. That is, as emerging forms of knowledge, the CCPs are positioned to enhance the ‘powerful knowledge’ (Young, 2007, 2013) of the established disciplines identified as Key...
Learning areas, or ‘domain of certainty’ in the curriculum.

The notion of powerful knowledge has been discussed at length by the English sociologist of education Michael Young (2013, 2014), whose work calls for a return to the subject-based curriculum as the most important aspect of learning, rather than curriculum variations that emphasise other forms of knowledge. Examples of the latter include initiatives prompted by an emphasis on the general international developments of 21st-century skills, and by integrated approaches to curriculum (Young, 2007, 2011, 2012; Young & Muller, 2013, 2016). It must also be noted that Young’s criticisms address a number of aspects of recent educational thinking and practice. For example, he argues that there is an over-emphasis on constructivist approaches to students’ learning needs and what is meaningful to them through everyday knowledge, rather than on the intrinsic significance of specialist knowledge in the disciplines (Young, 2013, p. 106). Essentially, Young (2007) has called for a revived focus on knowledge in the curriculum, on ‘bringing knowledge back in’.

Other scholars critique aspects of Young’s arguments (Scott, 2014; Roberts, 2014; Zipin et al., 2015). White (2018) argues that most of the school subjects which Young views as providing powerful knowledge actually fall short on this requirement. White also suggests that the pursuit of powerful, or theoretical knowledge, has to be weighed up against those other goals of schooling which extend beyond the acquisition of discipline-based knowledge. He refers to the different forms of knowledge an individual applies and uses in various contexts, noting that ‘practical know-how of many sorts, the world of the arts, personal development, and learning to become a citizen of a democracy are examples’ (White, 2018, p. 329). Hence, the positioning of the CCPs in the Australian Curriculum also raises longstanding questions about what an education might entail, what knowledge is for, and what sort of knowledge is required in the national interest (Henderson, 2005; Kennedy, 2019).

In terms of the politics of knowledge in the curriculum, two often divergent positions can be ascertained in the literature. As noted above, one epistemological standpoint is that knowledge of traditional subject disciplines (Young, 2007, 2013) is emphasised in curricula aimed at establishing what young people ought to learn. By contrast, as suggested by White (2018), an emphasis on learning that shapes what young people ought to become is evident in curricula that address notions of building competencies and capabilities for the future (see Biesta, 2012; Biesta & Priestley, 2013). In this sense, the Melbourne Declaration’s (MCEETYA, 2008) goals, and subsequent tripartite structure of the Australian Curriculum, can be viewed as a winner takes all approach that aims to cover both epistemological standpoints (ACARA, 2020a).

**Knowing Asia?**

Another layer of complexity relates to the construct of Asia, a term that conflates a variety of places, spaces, cultures, histories, languages, societies and politics. Until recently, there has been little emphasis on Asia in Australian curriculum documents or school textbooks. Where content on Asia is offered, it often has an Australian or Western focus, or, more recently, it is encompassed within a broad regional emphasis as part of fostering global perspectives. A concern raised by educators is that many teachers have a limited personal knowledge base of the region’s diversity to draw upon. Research commissioned by the Asia Education Foundation (AEF) (Wilkinson et al., 2009) found that, in practice, teachers are not likely to select curriculum emphases and materials with which they themselves are unfamiliar or may have never studied. It is not surprising that teachers will tend to choose what they know about, and if their school and tertiary studies have not included a focus on Asian studies, they may be less likely to incorporate it into their own teaching.

This is one of the reasons why teachers have grappled with planning and implementing learning in this field and it prompts the following question. How might a Geography teacher make informed choices about what Asia is to be studied and ensure that integrating learning from and about the region’s diverse human and physical realm is both authentic and balanced? As Kriewaldt & Fahey (2018, p. 354) observe, ‘teachers may need support to improve their own knowledge and understanding of the Asia-Pacific to better incorporate relevant content in their teaching’.

A third factor arises from economic utility of the term Asia literacy and its invocation of conflicting emphases. On the one hand, the term’s instrumental inclusion in education policy as Asia-related knowledge and skills for the future workforce (Henderson, 2015), implies that teachers are expected to plan for learning about Asia in ways that deliver economically-driven learning outcomes. On the other hand, the notion of literacy as social practice, that is, the intercultural literacy of living and learning with others, invokes teachers being responsive to difference in multicultural classrooms and pursuing culturally-inclusive teaching practices. From this perspective, the CCP of Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia, presents...
Geography teachers with some ethical dilemmas. As Kostogriz (2015, p. 103) puts it, teachers are presented with ‘a quandary between the culture of educational accountability and the relational culture of everyday teaching practice’. The latter refers to teaching in culturally-inclusive ways whereby a Geography teacher’s pedagogical orientation responds to human differences and similarities as qualities to be valued and respected in teaching and learning about others (see Rizvi, 2008).

To further complicate matters, some conservative educators expressed concern that a focus on Asia undermines the British nature of Australian heritage. Elements of this standpoint were evidenced in the pre-emptive review of the Australian Curriculum (Henderson, 2018). For example, the final report of the Review of the Australian Curriculum (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014) contended that the CCPs emerged ‘as possibly the most complex, controversial, and confusing aspect of the Australian Curriculum’ (p. 134). Whilst some aspects of this critique were indicative of the uncertainty about how the CCPs could be implemented, it was, however, largely symbolic of the tensions identified in Kemmis’ (1990) observations about curricula debates. That is, Donnelly & Wiltshire’s critique of the CCPs reflected the worldviews of those conservatives preoccupied with cultural conflict (Hay, 2016).

Asia and Australia’s relationship with Asia

The geographical construct of Asia includes 70% of the world’s population, 30% of the land surface and is one of the seven continents on Earth. The countries of the Asia region encompass a rich diversity of environments, people and cultures. Three out of four of the largest economies in the world are located in Asia. It is predicted that by 2050 the Asian population will grow to more than five billion, Asia will produce half of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and China will become the largest and India the second largest economies in terms of GDP. Hence, it might be argued that Asia’s economic transformation cannot be ignored for it is reshaping the global distribution of power ‘with profound implications for war and peace in the twenty-first century’ (Lowy Institute, 2019).

For generations, Australian attitudes towards Asia and the Pacific were shaped by the European colonial age (Henderson, 2015). Edward Said (1979) demonstrated how, during this era, European explorers, intellectuals and settlers relied on their own cultural frames of reference to describe and interpret the ‘other’ cultures they encountered or imagined. The resultant scholarly misrepresentation of different cultures led to Orientalism; a western cultural phenomenon based upon ontological and epistemological distinctions that perceived those who lived in the ‘east’ or ‘Asia’ as not only inferior and backward, but also exotic and sensual. As Bliss (2005) notes, such Orientalist scholarship served both political goals and cultural beliefs. It distinguished the ‘superior Europeans’ from the ‘inferior others’, and it served to affirm the former’s right to civilise the ‘others’ during the colonial era for several centuries. Furthermore, such beliefs and assumptions were often perpetuated in colonial curricula materials so that the limited references to the peoples and cultures of the Asia-Pacific region were reduced to stereotypes. Resources, curriculum development, associated professional development and implementation processes within schools were subsequently foundationally aligned along colonial (British) traditions. These resources did little to challenge the fears amongst some members of the Australian community about Australia being overrun by the ‘yellow hordes’ of Asia (Walker, 2011).

Since the 1950s, Australian scholars, educators and policy advisors have contested this legacy and advocated prioritising Asian languages and studies in the education system in order to broaden Australia’s conceptual framework about the region. Collectively, more recent advocacy stressed the value of broad intellectual and cultural understandings about Asia and noted that those utilitarian benefits, which might accompany such knowledge, were in the national interest (Henderson, 2003, 2015). Significant amongst these were the 1970 Auchmuty Report, which identified the need for Asian studies to be accorded ‘parity of esteem’ (Auchmuty, 1970, p. 90) with the study of European languages and cultures in the Australian education system; the FitzGerald Report (FitzGerald, 1988) on immigration, which noted the potential of Asia as a source of skilled immigrants; and the Garnaut Report’s (Garnaut, 1989) focus on the need to acknowledge north-east Asia as a core region for Australia in terms of both its economic, political and strategic relationships, and its links through migration and education. Meanwhile, the Rudd Report, (Rudd, 1994), advanced an ambitious Asian languages and cultures strategy for Australian schools. Thus, a range of interests prompted attention to Asia in Australian education (Walker & Sobocińska, 2012).

Further, the Australia in the Asian century White Paper (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012), acknowledged that, as Australia’s interactions with the countries of Asia have intensified in response to globalisation and regionalisation, young Australians need to understand the cultural diversity of the region and its peoples, not only as a source of migrants but also as a site of critical significance for Australia’s economic and strategic
future (Henderson, 2008, 2015). The White Paper’s rationale for Australia’s engagement was clearly instrumental, as evident in the foreword by (then) Prime Minster Julia Gillard:

> In this century, the [Asian] region in which we live will become home to most of the world’s middle class. Our region will be the world’s largest producer of goods and services and the largest consumer of them (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012, p. ii).

In the Paper’s set of National Objectives and pathways to guide Australia to the year 2025, Objective 10 made clear that ‘every Australian student will have significant exposure to studies of Asia across the curriculum to increase their cultural knowledge and skills and enable them to be active in the region’ (Commonwealth of Australia, 2012, p. 170).

However, despite the instrumentalism of many policy documents, the inclusion of Asia and Australia’s Engagement with Asia as a cross-curriculum priority in the Australian Curriculum (ACARA, 2020b) was seen by some educators as an opportunity to build students’ capabilities to engage with Asia in a post-Orientalist way. For example, Iwabuchi (2015) contended that studying the societies and cultures of Asia could contribute to the ‘de-Westernisation of knowledge formation and the cultivation of a cosmopolitan worldview’ (p. xiv). Similarly, others viewed the CCP as an opportunity to achieve education ‘governed by principles of cultural coexistence and intercultural awareness’ (Kostogriz, 2015, p. 113). Such scholarship also reflected a move away from the focus on Asia literacy to an emphasis on Asia capability.

**What do we know about teacher practice?**

It could be argued that developing young people’s Asia-relevant knowledge, capabilities and dispositions, so they are able to interpret and negotiate ‘the possibilities of intercultural relations’ (Rizvi, 2012, p. 77), is necessary for understanding what it means to be Australian in an ethnically-diverse world community. Indeed, the Asia Education Foundation (2013) encourages including a future focus on the Asia priority in the Australian Curriculum in ways that authentically develops the general capability of intercultural understanding. However, the literature indicates that meaningful intercultural education requires ‘deep shifts in consciousness’ among teachers ‘rather than the simple pragmatic and programmatic shifts that too often are described as intercultural education’ (Gorski, 2008, p. 517). As with teaching Asia-related content, teachers need an intercultural knowledge base and skills to effectively achieve this in classrooms with their students (Walton et al., 2013; Walton et al., 2014).

There are few studies of teacher practice in this endeavour. In a systematised review of the research literature on Asia literacy in Australian schools over the past 25 years, Halse and Cairns (2018) found that few studies met the inclusion criteria of empirical or theoretical research. Of those studies that met the criteria, the largest proportion relate to Asia literacy policy. Notably, the areas of least research concerned curriculum, pedagogy, and student learning. The only large-scale study, Asia Literacy and the Australian Teaching Workforce (Halse et al., 2013), was commissioned by the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Workforce Relations, and managed by the Asia Education Foundation.

The study sought to identify the characteristics, capacities and practices of teachers in teaching the Asia priority in the Australian Curriculum. Data included a national survey, narrative data collected from teachers and principals, as well as case studies of Asia-literate teachers at different points on the career continuum from different schools in Australia. As might be expected, one of the findings was that local practices of building Asia literacy in schools were influenced by teachers’ personal histories and experiences of becoming Asia literate. One of the survey questions asked teachers about their motivators for becoming Asia literate. Analysis of the 800 responses identified seven key motivators. These included:

- Asia experiences via work, study, travel or family;
- Desire to address prejudice and racism;
- Local or overseas school connections to Asia;
- Substantial tertiary and/or professional learning;
- Commitment to Asia in the curriculum;
- Need to prepare students for a global world;
- Personal inspiration and change (Halse et al., 2013, p. 10).

Many of the teachers participating in the study have rich experience travelling, living and working in various Asian countries. Such experiences appear to be instrumental in forming attitudes and beliefs about Asia, its diversity, what constitutes Asia literacy, and how teachers teach and respond to their students. Teachers participating in the study also emphasised the value of professional education and ongoing professional learning, so that their pedagogy effectively impacts on student learning.
The study identified five enablers that support teachers to deliver the Asia priority in the Australian Curriculum. These included:

- Experience of Asia from work, study, travel, or family connections;
- Substantial, ongoing tertiary study and/or professional learning;
- School connections to the countries of Asia;
- Support from their school and school system;
- Asian language taught in school (Halse et al., 2013, p. 13).

The authors also suggested that the professional and personal connections many schools have with Asian countries represent pedagogic resources that could be better utilised. These findings offer hope that teachers can embed the CCP of Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia beyond an instrumental understanding of Asia and Australia-Asia relations.

Relatedly, students need opportunities to consider how knowledge about Asia and Asia-Australia relations is constructed and represented; that is, the ways in which content is selected and pedagogically organised to develop particular attitudes towards Asian places, people, cultures and societies. To achieve this, locating learning about Asia within ‘a broader commitment to intercultural understanding, both within Australia and throughout the region’ (Rizvi, 2017, p. 68) is required. In this regard, the AEF increasingly refers to ‘Asia capability’ as a way of developing intercultural understanding and cohesion in Australian society and in school communities as they become more culturally diverse in response to Australia’s changing demography. In 2019, 28 per cent of the population was born overseas, a further 20 per cent have at least one overseas-born parent, and Asian-Australians now constitute an increasing presence in Australian society (see Evans, 2019). Given these demographics, Asia capability can be viewed as a proactive response to the growing diversity of students in multicultural classrooms (Kostogriz, 2015). It must also be noted that the terms ‘Asia’ and ‘Asia-Pacific’ and, most recently, ‘Indo-Pacific’, are increasingly used interchangeably in the literature and curriculum documents in this regard.

Opportunities for teaching and learning in Geography

As noted, a strong argument can be made that an emphasis on learning about Asia, and recognising the significance of Australia’s location in the Asia-Pacific region in the curriculum for all students, is long overdue. Geography teachers are uniquely placed to engage students in understanding the nature of our connections to the region. The Shape of the Australian Curriculum: Geography (ACARA, 2011, p. 3) encapsulated the discipline’s capacity to achieve this:

Geography teaching nurtures students’ curiosity about places and the differences between them. It responds to their wonder about the world and its diversity, and teaches them how to explore this world directly through field work and indirectly through other types of investigation. It develops a geographical imagination that enables students to relate to other places and people, and to appreciate the cultures and perspectives of others.

Developing students’ understanding of the diversity of Asia and Australia’s engagement with the people of the region can be deepened in Geography as it provides a structured way of exploring, analysing and understanding the characteristics of the places that constitute the region. As the Australian Curriculum version 8.4 makes clear, Geography ‘enables students to question why the world is the way it is, and reflect on their relationships with and responsibilities for that world’ and it helps them ‘to be regional and global citizens capable of active and ethical participation’ (ACARA, 2020e). Furthermore, the National Committee for Geographical Sciences, (2018, p. 43) observes:

The Asia-Pacific region is our regional neighbourhood and we have growing connections with its countries and peoples. Geographical research and teaching make a major contribution to educating and informing Australians about the region.

Chapter 7, The Asia-Pacific region, provides a rich discussion of recent geographical work on the region on a wide variety of topics that students will find rewarding to investigate (see National Committee for Geographical Sciences, 2018, pp. 43–47).

Learning explicit content

The Australian Curriculum for Geography provides authentic opportunities for students to learn explicit content about Asia through various geographical inquiries in the curriculum for F-6/7, and in the 7-10 curriculum topics. Critical to the two-strand model to organise the key learnings at each year level is that both strands are to be considered together to ensure learning is integrated and students develop the ability to ‘think geographically, using geographical concepts’ (ACARA, 2020e). In her review of the literature, Sorensen (2009, p. 13) noted there was strong support for a curriculum ‘shaped by the concepts that are distinctive to geography’.
As noted earlier, the curriculum also presents opportunities to foster geographical knowledge, understanding and skills through three key CCP concepts – Asia and its diversity, the achievements and contributions of the peoples of Asia, and Asia-Australia engagement. The following examples from the Geography Curriculum’s Sequence of content knowledge and understanding for Years 7-10 (ACARA, 2020e) indicate how students can build on their understanding of the geographic concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change and apply this understanding to investigate a wide range of places, environments and issues in the Asia-Pacific region.

**Water in the world** involves students investigating the economic, cultural, spiritual and aesthetic value of water for people, including peoples of the Asia region (ACHGK041).

Year 7 students can investigate the path of the Mekong River through six countries, examine the effect that damming has on the river and the livelihoods of those living on or near the river. In Year 7 or Year 8, students can investigate the controversy surrounding the construction of Three Gorges Dam and its impact on the Chinese people and environment. Students can use infographics, maps and websites to convey information and opinion and design their own infographic to communicate their understanding of the human and environmental impacts of the Three Gorges Dam.

**Changing nations** provides opportunities for students to study the causes and consequences of urbanisation, by drawing on a study from Indonesia, or another country of the Asia region (ACHGK054). Students in Year 8 can also investigate the rate of urbanisation, development and redevelopment that is occurring in many parts of China. They can explore the impact on rural migrants from the western provinces seeking employment in China’s mega-cities, the shortage of affordable accommodation, chronic pollution and displacement of many city dwellers due to rapid building development. In Year 9, students can investigate how Shanghai and its Pudong District have developed into an economic hub with a chronic shortage of affordable housing and how these factors impact on the livelihood of the local people.

**Geographies of interconnection** can include opportunities for students to learn about the effects of the production and consumption of goods on places and environments throughout the world and including a country from North-East Asia (ACHGK068). Students in Year 9 can examine the impact of industrialisation on South Korea’s natural environment, investigate the country’s progress towards sustainable development, and study recent efforts to safeguard the natural environment. Students can also investigate the production and manufacture of clothing in Bangladeshi factories, the living and working conditions of local people, and the sale of such goods in Australian department stores. Students can inquire into campaigns to prohibit goods produced by prisoners in some Asian countries, forced labor and children that are offered for sale in Australia and other parts of the region. In doing so, they can investigate matters relating to human rights.

**Geographies of human wellbeing** provide opportunities for students to examine the reasons for, and consequences of, spatial variations in human wellbeing on a regional scale within India or another country of the Asia region (ACHGK079) (ACARA, 2020e). This descriptor presents an opportunity for students in Year 10 to learn about differences in wellbeing across India, how to explain them and how to address stereotypical assumptions about poverty. In small groups, students can investigate case studies on the status of wellbeing in the Dharavi Slum in Mumbai, one of the most densely populated areas in the world. A recent example could refer to how the outbreak of COVID-19 has been managed by an intensive doorknocking and testing regime, despite overcrowding, poor sanitation and limited opportunities for hospital admission. Similarly, students can investigate how wellbeing does not necessarily correlate with the strength of the economy of each state, but is also related to governance. Accordingly, students can investigate what factors contribute to Kerala’s high levels of wellbeing in terms of material prosperity, education, health, housing and low levels of infant mortality despite the state’s modest levels of income. Students develop an understanding of how wellbeing indicators must reflect the cultural context of the people and countries they are measuring, and not rely on using income as a measure of welfare.

Such studies present opportunities for in-depth learning. Further, in each of the above options, students can also inquire into the role of Australian individuals, nonprofit organisations, and other non-government organisations that work with and alongside local people to perform a variety of services and humanitarian functions in the region. In this context, students can gain a more authentic understanding about the ways in which Australia and Asia are interconnected, both environmentally and socially, and how transnational collaboration supports the notion of shared and sustainable futures within the Asia region.
When designing teaching and learning sequences to develop Asia-relevant capabilities, Geography teachers need to be mindful of the synergies between this CCP and the general capabilities, with a particular focus on intercultural understanding, critical and creative thinking, ICT capability, personal and social capability, and ethical understanding. The AEF suggests that the capabilities are designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions, together with curriculum content in Geography, that will assist students to live and work successfully in the twenty-first century; and that classroom curriculum design should reflect these synergies (see AEF, 2014, 2015).

**An Asia capability approach to exploring natural disasters**

Of course, it is ultimately up to each Geography teacher to frame the focus of this learning. For example, with reference to the study of natural disasters, such as the 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami, an Asia priority perspective would objectify the phenomenon by investigating statistics, aid together with the who, what, when, where and how it occurred. However, an Asia capability approach aimed at developing intercultural understanding would develop this approach further. For example, it would provide opportunities for students to develop perspective, empathy, respect and reflection. Students could investigate the ways in which the Acehnese viewed the impact of the tsunami in different ways, which has since contributed to the peace process. Students could also study how the Australian government initially allocated minimal financial support but substantially increased its funding to assist with the recovery, as a result of overwhelming social action on the part of various Australian communities.

**Collaborations with schools in the region**

Some other approaches to fostering Asia capability include teachers and students forming virtual partnerships with fellow teachers and students in schools in the region to explore issues of mutual concern, including how to address ecological and climate challenges. The AEF's teacher professional development program, Building Relationships through Intercultural Dialogue and Growing Engagement (BRIDGE), is an example of how this sort of authentic learning can be successfully achieved. BRIDGE teachers and students at schools in Australia and countries in Asia use such synchronous online platforms as Skype, Zoom and Adobe Connect to collaborate on transnationally connected learning tasks (AEF, 2020). The program is designed to build sustainable partnerships involving curriculum and pedagogy redesign and foster intercultural mindsets and skillsets within the school communities. Such initiatives provide opportunities for teachers to devise authentic learning experiences, avoid stereotyping, and develop Asia capability.

**Conclusion**

Embedding the CCP of Asia and Australia’s engagement with Asia will help young people to understand and make connections between their own worlds and the worlds of others, to build on shared interests and commonalities, and to negotiate or mediate difference. As Iwabuchi (2015, p. xvi) observed, we need to re-imagine learning about Asia (and the Indo-Pacific) in Australia ‘in an inclusive way, in terms of its mutual engagement with other Asian countries and its own composition as a society’. Knowledge of and collaboration with Asia remains critical to understanding and managing the unprecedented challenges of living in the region in the 21st century – a time of pandemics, climate change, increased natural disasters and movements of people. To return to the epistemological debates raised earlier about what education is for and how curricula might best deliver it, this paper argues that both discipline-specific knowledge offered by Geography, together with knowledge of contemporary issues such as highlighted by the Asia priority, are required to help young people to engage with their present world, as well as to prepare them to live in a future complex world. By bringing together the natural and social sciences in a holistic approach, Geography is uniquely placed to help students better understand these issues and challenges and to develop young people’s knowledge, understanding and capabilities about the Asia-Pacific region. Fostering such knowledge requires sustained commitment and careful selection of resources – something Geography teachers are well-placed to do.

**References**


Knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures presents opportunities for geography students to learn about holistic belief systems that are spiritually and intellectually connected to the land, sea, sky and waterways. One means that geographers use to examine these connections is through the notion of relational space. The space occupied by Gweagal inhabitants of Kamay/Botany Bay, circa 1770, is presented in relational terms. By way of contrast, absolute space is emphasised in the context of Cook’s expedition two hundred and fifty years ago. Of course, both absolute and relational space are co-present in both contexts.

A relational view of space sees space as a product of cultural, social, political and economic relations; space that is given meaning by myth, language and ritual (Hubbard et al., 2002, p. 14). Here, space is not fixed or innate but rather created and re-created through the actions and meanings of people (Gieseking et al., 2014, p. xxix) and spatial meaning is built up through people’s memories and attachments to space. Such a view of space accords with the knowledge and understanding of the interconnected elements of Country/Place, Culture and People expressed in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures cross-curriculum priority (ACARA, n.d. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures).

The absolute space of the Gweagal clan is centred on the Kurnell Peninsula and the clan is a subsection of the Dharawal language group (Attenbrow, 2010, pp. 22–3; Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 9). Dharawal country extends from the southern shores of Botany Bay and the Georges River, west to Appin then down to Goulburn and to Wreck Bay near Nowra (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 9).

The relational space of the Gweagal is not only constructed by social relations and material social practices but it is also given distinctive meaning through myth, language and ritual. ‘All the elements of the natural world, the earth, the sea and the sky are aspects of the unique relationship that all Aboriginal people have with the world. These parts all make up the idea of country’ (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 8). Country/Place has a complex of meanings for Indigenous people: their occupied space or homeland, the past, the ‘here-and-now and horizon’ (Howitt & Suchet-Pearson, 2003, p. 561). Moreover, ‘each country has its sacred origins, its sacred and dangerous places, its sources of life and its sites of death. Each has its own people, its own Law, its own way of life’ (Rose & Australian Heritage Commission 1996, p. 9). Country/Place is fundamental to the ‘everywhen’ of the Dreaming (Stanner, 1969, p. 24) ‘a sacred, heroic time of the indefinitely remote past’ (p. 24), where everything comes from, and will always come from, continuing relationships between people, their living space and other species and entities (Howitt & Suchet-Pearson, 2003, p. 561). Perhaps, in the context of relational space, the French phrase espaces de rêve (Glowczewski, 2016; Nicholls, 2014b, para. 11) is more apposite: dream spaces or spaces of dreams. Whichever term is used, and Gweagal use the term Garuwanga (Andrews et al., n.d.), it refers to a religion grounded in country incorporating ‘land-based narratives, social processes including kinship regulations, morality and ethics’ (Nicholls, 2014a, para. 6).

Gweagal social relations are somewhat typical of other nations in central and southern coastal New South Wales, from Awakabal, in the north to the Yuin in the south, but there are some distinctive relationships particular to the Dharawal language group. Gweagal clan membership is based on patrilinear descent (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 57). A Gweagal clan member attains social identity through the country of their father (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 9) and through ancestral beings who created the natural and social world (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 57). The Dharawal nation has a strong association with Biame, the sky spirit and creative being, (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 10). There is a possible rock engraving of Biame at Heathcote (p. 10) and there is a...
serpent overlaid with a kangaroo engraved at Waterfall (p. 10). Belief in the Rainbow Serpent is common throughout Southeast Australia, a hybrid creature with the head of an animal and body of a snake: *Yulungur* (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 10), a *Creator Serpent* being, that shaped the biophysical landscape as it slithered across the countryside, also ensuring that clans were in their proper place in the landscape (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 131).

In the evening sky, the rising of the Pleiades low above the horizon in May marks the onset of the cool season, and forms part of Dharawal *Garuwanga*. This is a time just after the Lilly Pilly fruit ripens and the time for gathering nectar for ceremony (Bodkin, n.d., p. 2). There are many Indigenous stories across the continent associated with this star cluster referred to worldwide as the Seven Sisters (Norris, 2008, p.22). The star cluster lies just below Orion and as the night sky unfolds the Seven Sisters appear to be pursued by Orion. In Dharawal stories, the Pleaides was where it was possible the *Djuwali* sisters came from to meet up with the Big Brothers (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p.10). Bodkin and Bodkin-Andrews (n.d., pp. 2–3) explained that stories should be approached on three levels: the secret knowledge that is only discussed with someone at the same level or higher than the story teller; as a means to discuss with the listeners the Law, or laws, to be obeyed; finally, the lessons to be learned introducing listeners to the means to live ‘in harmony with each other, and the land and its resources’ (p. 3).

The whale is an important Dharawal totem with seven depictions in Royal National Park (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 11). An important Dharawal story is recounted about the flowering of the Gymea Lily indicating the times of year when whales start to migrate south to return to their Antarctic feeding grounds (Bodkin, 2018). Further, Bursill and Jacobs (2012, chap. 25, para. 3) recount a story about Warumbal, in Royal National Park, where there are life-size engravings of Orcas shown hunting seals, and where *Luma Luma* the whale spirit came ashore to direct people in their singing of the Law, and assists in payback ceremonies, marriages and other cultural events (chap. 26, para. 1).

Warumbul was a traditional gathering place for large groups of Aboriginal people who lived around the bay. Sometimes it would be reported that the Gweagal from Kurnell would come down to the bay to join in with *Noron Geeragal* (past Woronora) and *Dharganigal* (Bundeena) for feasts of dolphin or whale brought into the bay by the Killer Whales (Totem) that hunted around the entrance to the bay (Bursill & Jacobs, 2012, chap. 25, para. 6).

Gweagal also accumulated totems, frequently animals and plants, associated with other sorts of relationships such as conception or birthplace (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 58). Two totemic names were conferred to boys at initiation ceremonies performed in neighbouring Yuin country. One was inherited from the father and another was given by the *gommnera* (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 129), or *carradhy* (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 44) in Dharawal language, powerful men who led ceremonies and carried out healing procedures (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 60). In Dharawal culture, children were assigned their adult name at initiation ceremonies. In southeast Australia another totem was assigned along gender lines involving bats and emu wrens for men and treecreepers/nightjars for women (p. 129). Indeed, there was a Dharawal belief that encouraged children not to throw sticks or stones at bats (p. 129).

A classification system with moieties and sections, which affects who one may marry and the conduct of initiation ceremonies, did not exist for Gweagal, nor for other clans in the Sydney, central coast and south coast regions (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 58). However, a Gweagal skin name, similar to a surname, is the key to relationships. It conveys information about how generations are linked and how they should interact, whom they may marry and whom to avoid, avert their eyes from and not talk with. (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 58). Skin name and totemic affiliations were the basis on which marriages were arranged with wives coming from a separate clan group, but marriage partners could reside with the woman’s family for some parts of their life cycle (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 58).

Gweagal material culture allowed the clan to travel outside their country in search of resources whereas their identification with country was very much aligned with *Garuwanga*. Clans could, with permission, cross boundaries, often defined by a river or a marked tree, to gather food and take part in social gatherings or spiritual or religious ceremonies (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007 p. 30). These, and other ceremonies, drew people from many clans and from different nations. In 1824, the French explorer d’Urville witnessed a ritual combat ceremony on high ground somewhere between Sydney and Botany Bay, about three kilometres inland from the coastline. Aboriginal people came as far afield as Liverpool, Emu Plains, Wollongong, and Newcastle. ‘All were distinguished by the design of their body painting’ (Attenbrow, 2010, pp. 137–138).
Gweagal were said to be the guardians of the sacred white clay pits on their country and they adopted the geometric designs in their body paintings typical of the Dharawal nation (Bursill & Kurranulla Aboriginal Corporation, 2007, p. 20). Their material culture depended on the aquatic resources of Botany Bay, the saltwater bays and estuaries of Port Hacking, and the freshwater resources of the upper Hacking River, Heathcote Creek and the Woronora River. Although Gweagal were a saltwater people they also relied on a great variety of land-based plant and animal resources. There was some seasonal movement involving access to food resources, with more reliance on terrestrial resources in winter (Attenbrow, 2010, p. 81), though whale beaching also occurred in winter months. However, daily movements in search of resources was more common rather than large-scale movements. In rough weather, shell-fishing took precedence over hook and line fishing from a nuwi, or bark canoe; when mutton birds migrated to the coast between September and January people gravitated towards the coastline (p. 80) to resume their daily peregrinations.

Apart from ceremonial and other ritual occasions, Gweagal, and other coastal clans, did not travel far from their own country, or the countries where they were linked by marriage or kinship relations (p. 79). Trading relationships were established through intermediaries so that materials could travel along established trading pathways. Although trading networks for flaked stone tools tended to be quite extensive across the Sydney region, Gweagal tended to trade for these raw materials across Dharawal country rather than with the inland nations of the Cumberland Plain (p. 124). Another line of distinction is apparent in the configuration of kangaroo rock engravings where there are slightly different designs to the north and south of Botany Bay. Again, these largely conform with the language boundaries between the Dharawal and coastal Darug language group (p. 149).

Rather than view material culture as being separate from social and spiritual connections, relational space is here conjointly assembled. Material culture should be viewed as a fusion of natural resources, the atmosphere and land, stories and songs, kinship and cosmology (Głowczewski, 2016, p. 60). In short, looking after Country/Place is paramount. It provided the strongest and deepest purposes in life (Rose and Australian Heritage Commission, 1996, p. 10) where, for the Gweagal, every animal, tree, stream, and rock had a dreaming spirit; where, the spiritual and the corporeal world are wedded (Pascoe, 2014, p. 114).

**Cook’s preoccupation with absolute space**

Reading James Cook’s journals there is an apparent preoccupation with absolute space. Naming Point Hicks on the 19 April 1770 he recorded,

> The Southermost point of land we had in sight, which bore from us West 1/4 South, I judged to lay in the latitude of 38 degrees 0 minutes South and in the longitude of 211 degrees 7 minutes West from the Meridian of Greenwich (Cook, n.d., Wharton, 1893, & Libraries Board of South Australia, 1968 & 2015, Chapter 8, para. 1).

Absolute space is based on a system of organisation that saw a universal and mathematically describable grid where objects could be precisely located, an abstract container where things could be measured and modelled by geographers with inclinations towards spatial science (Cresswell, 2013, p. 220). Cook’s fixation with absolute space was based on a mariner’s respect for the sea. The North and Baltic Seas, where he learned his trade during his apprenticeship years, was a dangerous place. The Pacific Ocean was even more daunting. The North Sea had a treacherous, poorly illuminated coast, devoid of buoys, with the offshore full of sunken rocks and shoals. Stormy skies prevailed as did the all too common ‘thick weather from England to the Baltic’ (Beaglehole, 1974, p. 8). As far as the Pacific is concerned, it has been suggested that, over the course of the 18th century, more than 40 per cent of the European mariners that sailed into these waters never returned home (Dening, 1992, p. 106, quoted in Phillips, 2016, p. 36).

Cook learned the art of pilotage, or ‘the knowledge by sight of capes, rivers and ports’ (Livingstone, 1992, p. 40) in the North Sea. Volunteering for the navy in 1755 his appreciation of the nuances of absolute space deepened. Appointed master in 1757, Cook was responsible for the ship’s navigation as well as responsibility for pilotage, taking soundings and bearings and correcting or adding to charts. He was also responsible for the ship’s log (Beaglehole, 1974, p. 26). During the Seven Years’ War, his ship was ordered to Canada where he learned to use a plane table and how to survey and chart coastlines. Following French defeat in Canada, he was given responsibility for charting and surveying the rivers and coastlines of Newfoundland, described as ‘an infinite mass of indentations, bays, harbours, arms of the sea, which give it six thousand miles of coastline’ (Beaglehole, 1974, p. 68). Using the theodolite on land and a modified plane table
Cook’s navigational prowess with Tupaia’s.

Robson (2012, para. 17) implicitly compares

align a selected course.

of backsight from their destination to successfully

stars to determine latitude, and, the establishment

as the product of complex interactions with the

islands on the map radially arranged around Tahiti

chart was something of a topological one, with the

away from Tahiti (Thompson, 2019, p. 83). His

fringed by reefs or navigable, and how many days

astonishing, distinguishing between high volcanic

these on a chart. The details Tupaia imparted were

master, of some 130 islands, locating seventy of

voyage, Tupaia told Cook and Molyneux, the ship’s

Endeavour

radial quadrant (an earlier variant of the sextant) at sea they laid the foundation for

his considerable skill in surveying of the New

South Wales shoreline in 1770. The Endeavour’s
course was carefully noted and plotted as it

sailed along the eastern coast of New Holland

‘the outstanding coastal features equally carefully

plotted from cross-bearings taken from the ship;

the outline would be filled in by careful sketching’

(Beaglehole, 1974, p. 69).

Cook also developed skills in astronomy. Using

a brass telescopic quadrant, he observed the

1766 eclipse of the sun from an island off the

Newfoundland coast. The longitude of this island

was accurately determined by comparison with

the same eclipse observed in Oxford. When a

paper concerning these achievements was read at

the Royal Society in London, Cook was described

as ‘a good mathematician, and very expert at his

business’ (Frame & Walker, 2018, p. 17).

As Thomas (2018, p. 8) poetically observes, ‘This

surveyor had spent the better part of his thirties

engaged in exercises in measurement and applied

geometry, working magic on rugged and intricate

coastlines, reducing shoreline as torn as an awful

wound to points and lines on paper’.

Cook was much more than a painstakingly

accurate mathematical geographer. He was

also an intuitive and perceptive mariner open

to the counsel of others. Tupaia, described as a

‘high priest, artist, scholar, warrior, linguist and

navigator’ (Salmond, 2012, p. 57) joined the

Endeavour expedition in Tahiti and piloted the

vessel through the Society Islands. During the

voyage, Tupaia told Cook and Molyneux, the ship’s

master, of some 130 islands, locating seventy of

these on a chart. The details Tupaia imparted were

astonishing, distinguishing between high volcanic

islands and low necklaces of coral islets, whether

they were inhabited or not, and by whom, whether

fringed by reefs or navigable, and how many days

away from Tahiti (Thompson, 2019, p. 83). His

chart was something of a topological one, with the

islands on the map radially arranged around Tahiti

with the arithmetic distances among the islands

not accurately portrayed. Pacific navigators, such

as Tupaia, saw the relational space of the ocean

as the product of complex interactions with the

stars to determine latitude, and, the establishment

of backsight from their destination to successfully

align a selected course.

Robson (2012, para. 17) implicitly compares

Cook’s navigational prowess with Tupaia’s.

he blended scientific navigation with

intuitive methods, similar to those used

by the Pacific peoples he was sailing

amongst. Cook found his way to new

islands by recognising the tell-tale signs

of the proximity of land such as cloud

formations, land birds flying around the

ship, and flotsam on the water. His work

was significant not only for the islands

he located but for the large swathes of

open water that he determined from ocean

swells and currents.

Nevertheless, it must be emphasised that Cook

was very precise about absolute location. To do

otherwise would be catastrophic for those to

follow in his footsteps. On January 25, 1769, in

the waters off Tierra del Fuego Cook and Green,

the astronomer, took pains to correct former

charts that were found to be incorrect, ‘not only

in laying down the land but in the latitude and

longitude of the places they contain’ (Grenfell

Price, 1971, p. 23). They both determined

accurate location by several observations of

latitude and longitude. This marked a distinct

break with the experience of past European

Pacific sailors. As White (1970, p. 52) puts

it, ‘The uncertainty of the past is gone, and

Cook proceeds with the confidence of a skilled

navigator always aware of his ship’s position

and taking many observations for the benefit of

others’. And Richardson observes, in more florid

prose, that the ability to determine longitude

reliably marks a significant shift in how Europeans

could know the world.

Throughout his voyages, Cook

demonstrates first to himself and his crew

and then to his readers the existence or

non-existence of places; he locates every

place in a single, fixed grid of coordinates; he

moves away from the continental

coastlines into the fragmented plane of the

Pacific Ocean; and he travels along watery

tracks that prior European navigators could

only dream of (Richardson, 2005, p. 6).

Cook’s voyages offer answers to ‘the problems

of our earth’s shape, its size, its character, its

products, its inhabitants’ (Conrad, 1924, p. 1).
In effect, absolute ‘space comes into meaningful

existence through measuring, writing, drawing,

and printing’ (Richardson, 2005, p. 10).

Contested space

The contested space of the shores of Botany

Bay was amplified by two distinctly different

worldviews, different ways of being, knowing,

thinking and doing (ACARA, n.d. Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures).

For Gweagal, it was Country/Place and its spatial

existence through measuring, writing, drawing,

and printing’ (Richardson, 2005, p. 10).
meaning was built up through people’s memories and deep and abiding attachments to this part of the Dharawal nation. For the voyagers on the *Endeavour*, it was essentially a place to refurbish supplies, to fill water casks and to fish the waters with seine nets; it was a stopping place to somewhere else (Dening, 1980, p. 23, cited in Nugent, 2005, p. 33). It was an inscribed point on the vast page of the *Endeavour’s* voyage. But, of course, it was more than this.

Karskens maintained that Cook botched his first encounter with Gweagal, on April 28, 1770, when an initial show of strength from two armed warriors ‘was probably a ritual prelude to meetings and exchanges of names and gifts’ (2010, p. 35). This worldview is supported by Nugent (2005) drawing from the work of Hallam (1983) whereby meetings between different Aboriginal communities were and are, ‘highly structured affairs, with elements of ceremonial preparedness for conflict, formal peacemaking, reciprocal exchange of gifts, and sometimes actual conflict and resolution of conflict’ (Hallam, 1983, p. 134). Williams (n.d., para. 6) argues that ‘the two Gweagal men were assiduously carrying out their spiritual duty to Country by protecting Country from the presence of persons not authorised to be there’. However, Thomas (2018, p. xvi) points out the morality of cross-cultural contact was much debated when the voyage journals were first printed and continued in the many decades after Cook’s death. Molony (2012, p. 2) evaluates Cook’s conduct in a more forgiving manner arguing that the accounts gleaned from the journals of Cook, Banks, Parkinson and Matra ‘by the then prevailing standards of conduct among many Europeans to natives, seems to have been exemplary’!

Whatever the case, it would be presumptive to attribute the differences in worldview solely to different conceptions of space/Country between those of the voyagers and Gweagal. Nevertheless, a deeper and more all-encompassing conception of space may assist in our understanding of absolute space lies at the bedrock of our discipline but geography is much richer, much more relevant and more open to enhanced intellectual enquiry through an understanding of relational space. In so doing, it may better enable all students to reconcile with respect and recognise the world’s oldest continuous living culture.

References


**A hollow is a home.**

By Abbie Mitchell (Astred Hicks, Illustrator). CSIRO Publishing, 2019,

104 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781486308057
https://www.publish.csiro.au

_A hollow is a home_ is an excellent addition to the primary classroom reference library. It explores why tree hollows are the home for more than 340 Australian species including birds, frogs, bats, possums, gliders, rodents, snakes, small and large lizards and invertebrates, as well as thousands of other reptiles, mammals and amphibians and birds around the world.

The book contains detailed information about this vital habitat, how it forms and the array of creatures who depend on this particular home, as well as the natural and human-induced threats to this habitat type. Mitchell also explores the science of monitoring biodiversity, how to observe and predict which trees contain hollows and what creatures may live in them, with practical tips for increasing the number of hollows within the local neighbourhood.

The colourful layout and varied use of illustrations, photographs, diagrams and maps will appeal to the target audience in Years 3 to 6. Detailed _Creature feature_ profiles of Australian fauna, and a section highlighting hollow-dependent species from around the world, will engage all animal lovers. At times, frequent background colour changes and the _Creature feature_ profiles can make it difficult to follow the chapter narrative. The book presents and explains relevant scientific concepts in an accessible way, including a glossary of key terms.

While primarily framed through a science lens and linking closely to the biological sciences and Science as a Human Endeavour curriculum, the book also addresses geographical concepts such as characteristics of place, space (especially distributions and habitat connectivity), environment, interconnection and sustainability. Students will also draw on geographical skills when interpreting distribution maps and diagrams. Detailed teacher notes, available from the above website, contain lesson ideas targeting the Years 3 to 6 Science, Mathematics, English and HASS Geography curriculum, which could easily be modified to form a cross-disciplinary sustainability investigation.

_A hollow is a home_ will help children develop a sense of wonder and respect about tree hollows, as well as stimulate their curiosity about the creatures that depend on them and the ways that human actions can affect them. Its visually appealing style and comprehensive nature makes it eminently suitable as a primary classroom reference.

Dr Lucy Robertson
The University of Melbourne, Victoria

---

**A water story: Learning from the past, planning for the future.**

By Geoff Beeson. CSIRO Publishing, 2020,

289 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781486311293
https://www.publish.csiro.au

_A water story_ is an exemplary publication demonstrating the inclusion of all of Australia’s 60-thousand-year history of people.

We are all aware that access to fresh water is a significant worldwide issue. Indeed, Australia has its own challenges as the driest inhabited continent.

This well-written, authoritative publication describes the evolving use of Australia’s water resources and its impact on the natural and social environment over the past 60,000-plus years.

Each of the 17 chapter covers one topic although it is possible to read a chapter of interest without reading the preceding chapters.

The first six chapters cover early water use. There is a nice summary of early civilisations moving water to grow crops and later to cities. We find out about Aboriginal water use and the resources and cultural connections they provide. There is a chapter on the basics of climate and the water cycle. The...
chapters on colonialism explain the many challenges new arrivals had and how it impacted on First Nations people. Chapters 7 to 16 explore topics including groundwater and Australia’s enormous artesian basins, the Murray Darling Basin, irrigation, water for cities, changing policies, changing management programs and the many conflicting issues policymakers try successfully or unsuccessfully to navigate. Chapter 16 explains urban water projects. Where relevant, the Aboriginal story is included. The final chapters discuss potential future solutions.

This type of in-depth, unbiased, but critical material about Australia’s water resources cannot be found on the internet. It is all here in this one publication.

However, A water story does not have a chapter about the impact of climate change nor the issues generated by increasing evaporation rates. There are only a few fleeting sentences about climate change in the book. You will need to find additional references to make this book complete.

This book has an excellent index, glossary and extensive references for each chapter.

A water story is relevant to Geography and environmental teachers investigating water resources and issues. The index makes it very easy to find what you need and pull out engaging stories for your students. Australian history teachers will find this book provides a more complete approach to our 60,000 years of history.

It will help update all geography teachers. Year 7 teachers, teaching Water in the World and Year 9 Food Security, can extract relevant information and stories for their students. Years 9 and 10 students can use the index to locate information they need to answer their investigation question.

I would highly recommend this book as it will bring the reader up to date with water resources in Australia. However, teachers will probably want to know more about the impact of climate change.

Bob Winters
Environmental Curriculum Writer, Author and Photographer
Melbourne, Victoria

As I write this review, reports of gas bubbling to the sea surface in Siberia raise questions about melting permafrost releasing methane – a potent greenhouse gas (Osborne, 2019). What do geography students need to know to understand this? Relevant facts include Siberian location, climate, nature of permafrost, reasons for its thawing beneath the ocean, and is this a normal occurrence. In addition, the nature of methane and its contribution to climate change is relevant to this understanding.

How to teach this in ways that matter to young people is forefront in my mind as I turn to review this book which interrogates the role, purpose and value of Geography as a school subject in education. It is drawn from the author’s doctoral study and is aimed at an academic audience.

The book starts with Young and Muller’s (2010) three futures or curriculum scenarios – F1, F2 and F3. Future 1 takes knowledge as given, facts to be imparted. Future 2 views knowledge that is drawn on is flexible as the purpose of schooling is driven by the experiences and everyday lives of the learners themselves while the teacher’s role is to facilitate learning. Future 3 presents a deeper challenge by asking what curriculum can foster the development of powerful knowledge.

The concept of powerful knowledge is aligned with disciplinary knowledge or specialist, formal knowledge and it must consider knowledge of, knowledge of how to, and knowledge of so what. So, for geographers in the above context, it is knowledge of the features and processes of the Arctic, knowledge of how people measure this, and understanding what is discovered, that is powerful as it enables us to understand and influence climate change. Geographers use key concepts including place, space, interconnection, scale and environment to develop powerful knowledge.

This volume reports on research on the Geocapabilities Project (Solem, Lambert, & Tani, 2013; Geocapabilities, www.geocapabilities.org). Geocapabilities seeks to promote a Future 3 curriculum thinking that builds powerful knowledge. Bustin’s research shows that developing F3 curriculum makes challenging demands on teachers as they need to deeply engage with the subject, its knowledge construction, and how this can be brought to life in the classroom to develop sophisticated pedagogic practices to foster powerful knowledge.

This book asks the reader to think about the aims of schools, the relative importance of knowledge and skills, what happens when teachers are not subject specialists, and the potential of school geography through the capabilities approach. It draws out a fascinating account of how Geography is conceived as an academic discipline and a school subject. It makes a significant contribution to explain the development of Geocapabilities and concludes by offering a vision for both a school and a geography curriculum that promotes powerful knowledge and acknowledges the practical challenges that need to be addressed to achieve this vision.

The book provides curriculum perspectives mainly from England, supplemented by the United States and Finland, and these parallels and contrasts enable the reader to consider their own curriculum. It is an impressively theorised exploration that will be of interest to leading teachers, researchers and academics in the field of geography education and curriculum studies.
Leaving the final eloquent summation to the author, Bustin argues that ‘what the capabilities approach does enable is a means for teachers to realise the academic potential of their subjects. By focussing on the powerful knowledge of their subjects, young people from all backgrounds can develop capabilities to think about the world and make positive choices about how to live. This has the potential to envisage a world class education’ (p.188). Here, here.

Dr Jeana Kriewaldt
The University of Melbourne, Victoria

References


---

Geospatial technologies in geography education.

Edited by Rafael De Miguel, Karl Donert, and Karl Koutsopoulos. Springer, 2019,

219 pages, soft cover,
ISBN 9783030177850

Geospatial technologies in geography education is part of the Key Challenges in Geography initiative of the European Association of Geographers. The book is a compilation of 12 scholarly articles by different authors, grouped together in three parts: Part 1, Spatial thinking and Web-GIS; Part 2, Geospatial technologies for education in non-formal contexts; and Part 3, Geospatial technologies for education: practices and case studies.

This book is academic reading for someone who is interested in a more philosophical consideration of the value of geospatial technologies in geography education. It is written by a range of predominantly European authors and therefore provides a global perspective to the Australian reader. It is not specific to a particular region or curriculum level and, although there are many examples of resources and teaching practices referenced, I don’t think this text was designed as a practical teaching resource.

Since each article has different authors, the chapters in this book vary greatly. Aside from the themes given by the book’s title and sections, I didn’t see a strong thread between each piece. Being a bit rusty on my academic reading, I found the formal style of European scholarly writing heavy going to read, and in some of the more philosophical pieces the discussion became esoteric. The most accessible article was the opening paper on ‘Infusing educational practice with Web GIS’ by Joseph J. Kerski and Thomas R. Baker. They introduce Web GIS and bring the reader up-to-date with the current scene.

There were some thought-provoking moments in reading this book and I have noted a few new ideas that I would like to investigate further. Chapter 5 outlines the creation of the Youthmetre project which uses a GIS platform and open data to empower young people to engage in democracy. Chapter 3 provides an interesting discussion on the ‘learning lines’ of spatial thinking with a table looking at how skills in spatial technologies are developed with increasing complexity over senior school years. Chapter 9 describes a study that showed how using the computer game Minecraft increased student engagement. Finally, chapter 10 discusses how, with the right ‘technological pedagogical content knowledge (TPACK)’, geography teachers can enable students with powerful knowledge, rather than just skills.

The third section of this book contains four case studies. They are not, however, all readily applicable to Australian classrooms and are not presented with the aim to provide an exemplar to copy. For a teacher who is interested in expanding their use of geospatial technologies, I would recommend looking for other resources or training that focus on practical classroom strategies and implementation.

My personal preference is to investigate new GIS software or platforms through a hands-on approach and learn ‘on the job’. In the meantime, this book has reaffirmed my belief that Geography has a critical role in equipping students with skills and knowledge in geospatial technologies that can inform sustainable decision-making now and into the future.

Julian Woolhouse
Ivanhoe Girls’ Grammar School, Victoria

---

Leading primary geography: The essential handbook for all teachers.

Edited by Tessa Willy. Geographical Association, 2019,

167 pages, soft cover,
ISBN 9781843774501
https://www.geography.org.uk/

When thinking about the importance of learning geography, Michal Palin’s (2018) words spring to mind:

Geography is no longer just something which you learn from a book and a map and that’s it . . . [Geography] helps us to understand how other countries are the way they are, and this is really very important in just helping
Leading primary geography is a teacher reference book which aims to assist primary teachers to move beyond teaching Geography with only maps and books. It provides fresh and insightful resources designed to inspire teachers and their students. In this way, the book affirms the purpose of teaching Geography with passion and rigour. It is a book that will both reinvigorate experienced teachers and provide accessible explanations of key concepts for novice teachers.

The book is divided into the following seven sections – Introduction (Section 1), Key concepts (Section 2), Key skills (Section 3), Teaching approaches (Section 4), Geography in your curriculum (Section 5), Integrating geography (Section 6) and Effective subject leadership (Section 7). All sections have been written by contributors with years of experience in the geographer and geography education space.

Leading primary geography is written with reference to the United Kingdom education system, but its audience is not limited to UK teachers. This is because it is not a book of what to teach but rather a structured outline of key ideas about how to approach teaching and learning Geography.

The book provides useful background theory, questions to ask when planning your own units of work, and creative tips. For example, in the Key concepts (Section 2) there is information about the use of maps. There are clear theoretical explanations of how maps expand young learners’ sense of the world, and there are creative tips on how to use such children’s stories as the picture book Meerkat mail to stimulate learner interest and purpose.

Leading primary geography will be a useful companion text if your school is using pre-made lesson resources (such as those available from the AGTA’s Primary Geography Alive web resource). It is an essential text if your school is looking to improve and promote its geography teaching and learning.

Caroline Heath
Elsternwick, Victoria

Reference

Making every lesson count: Six principles to support great geography teaching.

By Mark Enser. Crown House Publishing, 2019,
138 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781785833397
https://www.crownhouse.co.uk/

This book is a pedagogical resource aimed at Geography teachers of students aged 11–18 years. It is written by a geography teacher for geography teachers, in a series of subject-specific books based on the original Making every lesson count by Shaun Allison and Andy Tharby. It is written for the General Certificate of Secondary Education curriculum in the United Kingdom but it is easy to realise the similarities with the Australian Curriculum, and the principles of teaching, according to this book, are applicable anyway. In fact, it is even a little inspiring to read due to the strength and depth of the Geography taught in the UK.

Mark Enser aims to equip teachers to ensure that each lesson ‘leads to students learning more, understanding the world better and developing their geographical skills’ (p. 127). The book is organised into chapters according to six simple pedagogical principles – challenge, explanation, modelling, practice, feedback and questioning. Each chapter contains key strategies and techniques associated with implementing these principles; teacher/student case studies, examples, and everyday analogies demonstrate how the principles can shape classroom teaching and learning.

The appeal of the book is that it is very much bite-sized (small). Also, the ‘geographer’s voice’ of the author is strong and will resonate with many passionate geography teachers. Whilst some of the principles, such as modelling, are not particularly new, it is certainly appealing to read such short, sharp explanations with tangible examples. It is easy to make the connections between pedagogical theory and real-life practice of teaching geographical content, concepts and skills.

This book very much emphasises the expert role of the teacher as curriculum planner and its deliverer. This places the sequencing of the curriculum from start to end at the forefront and ensures that students have opportunity to achieve excellence and learn geographical ways of thinking. It is interesting to read about Mark’s perspectives on how to continue to develop expertise in a teaching team. At times perhaps, there were too many steps or strategies but ultimately there is no shortage of things to implement straight away. It is surprising that there is not much mention of fieldwork given its essential place in the discipline of Geography.

This book has a broad audience. To an experienced teacher and a geography specialist, this book is both affirming and inspiring. For some, it might encourage reconsidering what high quality teaching in Geography should and could look like. It would make an excellent read for pre-service and graduate teachers by providing guidance in those early years spent trying to build connections between university learning and theory and the little practical experience offered before stepping into a classroom as a graduate teacher. The case studies and very specific geography examples are powerful and could perhaps lend much needed insight and, hopefully inspiration, to non-geography-specialist teachers.

Karoline Walter
Head of Geography
Camberwell Girls Grammar School, Victoria
Mallee country offers excellent insights into the long history of people living in the Mallee. It is organised into four parts (time periods) over 13 chapters. Its early chapters tell the forgotten histories and cultures of First Nations peoples living in Mallee country. Whilst in later chapters, it discusses the challenges faced by Mallee settlers up to modern times when people have been aiming to preserve the Mallee.

The prologue in particular paints a vivid image of the harsh yet beautiful land that is the Mallee and all the resilient plants, animals and people living there. It is an excellent orientation to the geographic climate and landscape before the reader is introduced to the people who have lived in the Mallee.

Mallee country is a wonderful teaching resource for Victorian Years 7 and 8 geography teachers who are teaching students about the impact of humans on the natural environment and also how annual rainfall impacts the availability of water to communities. Many of the chapters are written in a storytelling style that makes it easy to read, and accessible for students to read in small chunks in class. The inclusion of maps of the areas described, and relevant photos of settlers and First Nations people, usefully orientate students to the areas and people discussed in the book.

Chapter 2 provides detailed accounts of the struggle for First Nations people and early explorers to find water. It makes reference to an account by explorer Alexander Magarey who describes First Nation people’s ingenuity of harvesting water from ‘water trees’ (p. 43) in the absence of water bodies in dry areas.

This book also has useful accounts to teach students about the deep spiritual connection that First Nations people have with the land where ‘each landform had a name and a story’ (p. 18), and how they performed certain rituals and dances to their country and the Great Ancestors. It also describes how First Nations people used their knowledge of the land to manipulate the flora and fauna around them as needed.

Chapter 7 in particular would be useful to teach students about the settler impact on the environment. It discusses how clearing the land for agriculture changed the natural landscape and liveability for the fauna living there and brought new problems such as locust plagues.

This book is also an excellent teaching resource for Victorian history teachers with Part 1 in particular offering excellent accounts of the people living in Lake Mungo, and includes the Rufus River incident.

As someone who has grown up in the Mildura area, this book struck a personal chord with me as there are not many books that tell the history of the Mallee country in a culturally inclusive way. Mallee country tells the history of the Mallee in an engaging and relatable way that was very enjoyable to read. As a teacher, I can’t wait to use some of these accounts in the classroom.

Rachel Slade
Irymple Secondary College, Victoria

Mastering primary geography.

By Anthony Barlow and Sarah Whitehouse. Bloomsbury Academic, 2019,

264 pages. soft cover, ISBN 9781474295512
https://www.bloomsbury.com/au/

Mastering primary geography is linked to the United Kingdom’s Primary National Curriculum. However, aspects of the text are applicable to Australian primary geography teaching.

The first chapter introduces the idea of ‘curiosity and fascination’ as an underlying principle of the UK National Curriculum. The authors’ zeal for geographic enquiry, as the tool with which teachers can make this a reality, is evident in this and subsequent chapters. The authors also discuss the constructivist approach in teaching primary geography, an idea that is promoted as a strength in creating successful learning.

The next chapter on current developments in Geography further explores the constructivist approach with discussion around personal geographies providing some good scaffolding for building knowledge of a student’s geographies and ‘everyday geography as a lived experience’.

Most relevant to the Australian context is discussion of key concepts in primary geography of place, space, scale, and environment.

Chapter 3 considers how we can harness creativity to make Geography ‘irresistible’. It builds on ideas around personal geographies, and teaching Geography in creative ways that allows students to be creative, original and imaginative. The section on ‘creativity though maps and map work’ offers some interesting ideas which could translate to the Australian context, with (dare I say it) a little imagination and creativity!

Games and activities using globes (or maps) provide fun, easy-to-implement and engaging, activities that build both student familiarity with such real-time maps as Google Maps, and their understanding of place and space. This chapter concludes with ideas for tactile mapping, including collages, shoebox places and sound mapping. These activities are the most relevant ideas
for the Australian context as they relate to geographical concepts rather than explicitly to the curriculum, although these links are identified.

Geography as a practical activity in Chapter 4 is very closely aligned with the UK Key Stages. However, there is a broad discussion about what constitutes outdoor learning and the link to geography, as well as the emergence of trends such as Forest Schools. A list of organisations and their web addresses may provide some inspiration for exploring the link between outdoor learning and Geography. The chapter also lists things to look for when exploring the outdoors with both urban and natural features considered.

Chapter 5 discusses geospatial enquiry with an ‘ overarching set of questions for enquiry’. With its focus on Place, it is applicable to both Australian primary curriculum and to all geography teaching. A useful table unpacks such key questions as: What is this place like? Why is this place like this? How is this place connected to other places? How is this place changing? and What would it feel like to live in this place? The two models for enquiry presented are not dissimilar to the inquiry and skills evident in the Australian Curriculum.

The final chapter, entitled Children’s Ideas: Promoting Curiosity, is dedicated to practical ideas that expand student thinking about places beyond their personal geographies. The Pause for Thought boxes encourage teachers to consider their own perspectives about distant places before embarking on teaching the idea to students. The ideas for teaching are still focussed on real places and people, like all good geography teaching, and ways of connecting students to the unfamiliar with a focus on virtual travel, famous places and landmarks.

Generally, with some thought about making the ideas and activities relevant to the Australian Curriculum, there is scope for this text to be useful in the Australian context. The theory behind the strategies provides a useful basis for pre-service teachers’ research and, for practising teachers, the lists of ideas are good reminders of approaches to teaching primary Geography.

Julie Davis
President, Geography Teachers’ Association of Queensland

**Powerful primary geography. A toolkit for 21st-century learning.**


*Powerful primary geography* is a very valuable resource for every primary school teacher. In this book, the author, a university lecturer in Ireland, describes and illustrates the concept of powerful primary Geography and provides recommendations to teachers for teaching Geography in a very meaningful way.

This book also reminds us why the teaching of Geography is so important for our learners, particularly in a world where the skills of curiosity, imagination, creativity, problem-solving and flexibility are prerequisites. The reality of an overloaded curriculum is acknowledged and suggestions for including the teaching of Geography, in a holistic manner, are offered. This book is based on the latest research into student learning.

The text is presented in eight chapters which focus on distinct areas of powerful Geography teaching in the primary school. These are: setting the scene; thinking: initiating investigations and enquiry-based learning; teaching through place; playful approaches: using games, artefacts and fun; teaching through topics: weather and climate change; teaching through graphicacy, map work and visual literacy; teaching through the arts; and teaching citizenship, global learning and sustainability development goals. After reading the first chapter, the reader can dip in and out of the resource and focus on areas that are of interest to them. This assists in immediately engaging with this book.

Throughout the book, the author provides case studies, illustrations, photos, exercises and further resources for educators to reference and use. The exercises, which are aimed at the teacher, provide the opportunity for reflection on their own experiences and the chance to participate in activities being asked of their students. These could easily be used to plan a professional learning experience for teams of teachers. It is disappointing that the illustrations in this reference book are not of a good, clear quality as they are important in learning more about the case studies being presented.

Practical, hands-on tasks are provided continually throughout this book. Reflections and feedback from students are also incorporated into each chapter. While this book is based on experiences of primary school students in Ireland, the strategies are very easily translated into the Australian context.

Student voice and agency are referenced and promoted throughout this text. The approach of powerful Geography is to fully engage students in their learning through a process of collaborative learning where concepts are examined, showcased and debated. Student agency is promoted through the use of well-designed action projects.

This text is overall a very useful reference for the teaching of geography in the primary school setting. It provides a wealth of interesting ideas and also highlights how important it is to engage and inspire our young students in the world around them, which will become even more important with the new age of the global pandemic.

Sue Young
Serpell Primary School, Templestowe, Victoria
Songspirals: Sharing women’s wisdom of Country through songlines.

By Gay’Wu Group of Women. Allen & Unwin, 2019,
336 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781760633219
https://www.allenandunwin.com/

This Stella Prize-nominated book, based in Arnhem Land, Northern Territory, is a love letter from the Yolŋu lifeworld to share with us the songspirals that ‘sing the actual land and sea’ (p. 6).

Songspirals ‘cycle out like the generations, like the family connection and kinship relationships that bind us all together, as Yolŋu with Country’ (p. 79). They are the ways of knowing a Yolŋu life. Geography scholarship, then, enters another realm of potential, as we become the recipients of songspiral learning with this book of beautiful im/possibilities from the collective authorship of the Gay’Wu women. These women, the mothers and daughters of Yolŋu and their kin, take us on a journey that encompasses the fields we know of as linguistics, mathematics, philosophy, law, geography and history and makes them a whole, through songspirals, to gift us a world of connections to place and each other.

Pages in Songspirals tremble with the weight of importance given to song and thus, the reader experience is transformed by the full senses of being engaged in finding an interior pitch and tone to match the heady words. ‘When we sing, everything exists’ (p. 177), the Gay’Wu women write, and the terror is real in knowing that the ‘songspirals can be destroyed. If Yolŋu all die, then the land dies with us’ (p. 197). Songspirals, then, is a potent and loving declaration of social justice: ‘This is Yolŋu, it belongs here. It is not yours to take away. We have songspirals, they are strong, our culture is strong, everything is strong’ (p. 146).

The art and craft of mapping is turned on its head when we understand that Yolŋu sing points of connection. Mapping becomes an exercise of more than three dimensions when it is sung; this gives rise to seemingly impossible worlds of multiple dimensions that include the spiritual and emotional as connective tissue to the tangible. But they are not unimaginable, as Songspirals’ complex and densely layered scholarship reveals their Yolŋu methodologies to us: ‘Songspirals are a university for us. They are a map of understandings. We have to learn how to walk on the land’ (p. 33). Thus, Yolŋu maps begin with centring kinship, the ‘pattern, the string, the raki, that binds us . . . [and] that places us in a network of relationship, of obligation and of care. It is our map’ (p. 81).

Family, Country and love connect the wisdom of the Gay’Wu women. Love underpins Songspirals and is the core to understanding Yolŋu ways of seeing geography – without love the maps cannot be sung and imbued with meaning – and is everywhere. Love ‘emerged and emerges, wherever we are, whatever we do. It spirals out and round, in our connection with each other and the land’ (p. 99). In showing and mapping and singing love through songspiral scholarship, the Gay’Wu women challenge the academy’s rational, objective and observer foundations that has caused great harms to Indigenous peoples.

Songspirals is an antidote that is unashamedly premised upon Yolŋu learning and with uncompromising female agency and power in the telling. It is now up to us to recognise that Songspirals has changed the landscape and language of Geography and for the better.

Dr Emma Lee
Centre for Social Impact, Swinburne University of Technology, Victoria

Superpower: Australia’s low-carbon opportunity.

By Ross Garnaut. La Trobe University Press, 2019,
224 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781760642099
https://www.blackincbooks.com.au

In his latest book, Ross Garnaut, Australia’s best-known economist, paints an optimistic picture of Australia’s future in an era of climate change anxiety and uncertainty. Building on his detailed reports to the federal government in 2008 and 2011, Garnaut gives a compelling argument that Australia can still lead the way to a 100% renewable energy future. According to Garnaut, the substantial and significant decreases in wholesale grid and electricity prices in the past decade gives Australia the unique opportunity and potential to flourish economically.

Garnaut presents this optimistic picture despite Australia’s current political policies and missed opportunities of the past, such as the emissions trading scheme and carbon tax. He puts forward a number of recommendations Australia needs to follow in order to achieve prosperity and success and includes detailed proposals for transforming the structure of the Australia economy within the policies that we currently have.

Superpower amalgamates a number of geographical concepts, namely sustainability, environment and place, shaping our thinking around what Australia’s future and national identity could be. With firm political support, Garnaut argues that not only could Australia have met targets of 100% renewables by 2030, he suggests Australia could lead the world in the domain of clean technology. Investment in such clean technologies as batteries, hydrogen, solar, wind and hydro-electricity will see Australia rise as a ‘global superpower in energy, low carbon industry and absorption of carbon in the landscape’ (p. 8). Not only can Australia meet its energy needs through renewables, but Australia can be a major exporter of energy to South-east Asia, to countries such as Indonesia as they transition from developing to developed countries with a high energy demand. Australia has the sun and wind expertise, and land to become
the energy superpower in our region, providing a massive boost to our economy.

Whilst this book provides an exciting and compelling prospect in an era when the narrative for hope is needed more than ever, Garnaut’s writing style remains relatively inaccessible to a general reader. For those who do not have a basic economics background, or do not already have a well-rounded knowledge and understanding of the intricacies and latest developments in clean energy technology, many details are likely to go over readers’ heads.

Many of the principles, data and statistics presented throughout the book would still be highly useful if presented in a very basic way to students and there are still a number of future projection graphs and statistics that are likely to interest any geography teacher or student. However, this information would be beneficial only if a basic revised edition of the book was released that helped deliver Garnaut’s very important message to the Australian public in a more accessible and student-friendly manner.

This book is critically important and should be considered compulsory reading for all politicians and for anyone who possesses good economic literacy and is concerned for our future. However, it is not recommended as an easy option for senior geography students, and could only be used if the content was stripped back and simplified.

Laura Robertson
Thornbury High School, Victoria

**The future we choose: Surviving the climate crisis.**

By Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett-Carnac. Manilla Press, 2020,

225 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781765580368
https://www.allenandunwin.com/

The future we choose is a powerful and compelling call to action in the face of the overwhelming threats posed to our survival by the climate emergency. Co-writers Christiana Figueres (former Executive Secretary of the UN Framework Convention for Climate Change and leader of the 2015 Paris Accord talks) and her UN political strategist, Tom Rivett-Carnac, begin by exploring two possible future scenarios for the year 2050.

The first scenario sets the scene for how the planet will be if we fail to meet the Paris Agreement climate targets. The scene presents us with unimaginable gloom and desolation, a world characterised by heavy air pollution, raging bushfires and unstoppable sea level rises. The second shows us an optimistic alternative for how the planet could look and feel if we live in a regenerative and carbon neutral society, with clean air, advanced smart technology and a renewable energy economy.

The message of the book is clear from the outset. We must confront the realities of the climate crisis head on, adopting the mindset of stubborn optimism, an ethos of shared winning, and regeneration to replenish what we use. According to the authors, ‘changing direction at this late hour is entirely possible, but only with collective intent and optimism that is so robust, we jolt ourselves out of the currently established default path’ (p. 64). The key message is not to dwell on what has already been lost due to the climate crisis or be overcome by hopelessness. Instead, we must organise ourselves efficiently and quickly.

The book outlines ten actions people must take, as the time for ‘doing what we can has passed’ and that we must now all ‘do what is necessary’. Some of these actions include letting go of the old world and our grief that goes with this loss, defending the truth, becoming ‘citizens, not consumers’, moving beyond a fossil fuel economy, and engaging more women in politics.

The future we choose is a practical and outstanding resource for geography teachers and students. The information and frameworks outlined for change are suitable for all ages and could be tailored as a P-12 Geography learning resource. The themes and concepts it touches on are accessible to all reading levels and abilities. The geographical concepts underpin the themes and motivations of the book, in particular interconnection, sustainability, scale, change and environment. Although applicable to any geography-related unit of study, it would be useful to dip into the messages of the book for the environmental change and management unit at Year 10 and Victorian Certificate of Education Unit 1 Hazards and Disasters.

In the face of the most urgent and consequential issue ever faced by humankind, this is not a book that can be ignored. It is essential reading for all, geographers or not.

Laura Robertson
Thornbury High School, Victoria

**The weather machine: How we see into the future.**

By Andrew Blum. Bodley Head, 2019,

207 pages, soft cover, ISBN 9781784700980

Andrew Blum takes us on a journey which examines the historical background to weather forecasting from the first telegraph in 1844 through to today’s satellites and super computers.

Something we take for granted – checking the weather forecasts on our mobile app – he sees as akin to such a banal activity of flushing the toilet! His expose covers a wide range of geographical concepts.
The early telegraph operators soon learnt that it was possible to exchange weather information across distances – which created a space time continuum. It was possible to know the weather in many places at the same time thus potentially providing advance warnings of bad weather, or forecasts. In 1859, Robert Fitzroy coined the term ‘synoptic chart’ which led to forecasts with the first weather machine being over 15 telegraph stations. The work of Vilhelm Bjerknes in Norway (atmospheric circulation) and Lewis Fry Richardson in England (atmospheric structure) were important developments in the late 19th century. So, knowledge was not bounded by political boundaries, land or sea.

Very quickly it was realised that there can be no weather observations without infrastructure.

The Second World War saw technological developments which allowed a more expansive view of weather. But interestingly satellites tended to have both civilian and military missions. As Blum explains ‘human exploration . . . while also creating technologies that could destroy humanity’ (p. 99).

There are weather stations almost everywhere on Earth – the most important of which are managed by the UN World Meteorological Organization. These, in turn, are part of World Weather Watch. Ocean data buoys, aircraft, upper-air stations, automatic stations and satellites (geostationary and polar orbiters) all contribute.

The use of supercomputers meant that by 2015 the six-day forecast was as good as the two-day forecast of 1975. However, it’s a good reminder that a model is a model – not reality, nor its mirror, but a representation. By February 1991, we had the first weather forecast on the internet. Now, of course, we have weather apps on our phones keyed to our location. However, Professor Allan Murphy of Oregon State University is keen to remind us that ‘weather forecasts acquire value through their ability to influence decisions made by users of the forecast’ (p. 161).

In the weather community, the sharing of data and the giving of services is always free. As John Zillman (Australian Bureau of Meteorology) put it in 2015: ‘the World Meteorological Organization is the most successful international system yet devised for sustained global cooperation for the common good of science or any other field’ (p. 175). Andrew Blum concludes ‘the weather machine has to be a global system, and it won’t work any other way . . . we are many countries on one planet’ (p. 181).

There are reference notes for each chapter and a select bibliography for those interested in reading further. This is definitely a teacher reference, the knowledge from which could easily be used to further understand where we have come from and why weather forecasts can look so far into the future.

David Williams, Melbourne, Victoria

---

Transculturalism and teacher capacity: Professional readiness in the globalised age.


https://www.routledge.com

Why should a teacher, primarily a teacher of Geography, purchase this rather academic, not obviously geographic, though compact offering that demands an audience of teachers across all disciplines?

The first response is just that. The purpose and content of this volume is aimed at all educationalists, from tertiary scholars to educational leaders in bureaucracies and most pointedly class and subject teachers through the breadth of compulsory education, not exempting geographers.

Niranjan Casinader’s explicit premise is that, for a school that wishes to be an education provider of 21st century learning, the majority of its teachers must have a ‘transcultural disposition’. If, after reading this review, you find you have a gap in your time-budget and a desire to further advance your teaching skills by taking your ‘geographic nature’ to a different place, I would recommend that, as a fellow geographer cognisant of my global responsibility as a 21st century teacher in this cosmopolitan location we call Australia, I would be taking a serious read of this contribution to further my future-proof teaching.

Transculturalism, a way forward for the 21st century, is Casinader’s progression from the more recognisable terms ‘intercultural’ and ‘multicultural’. ‘Transcultural’ looks at the world and sees ‘difference’ as a ‘natural state of society’. To get to this point, Casinader takes the reader on an historical journey of teaching that starts at the primeval teaching by the parent/village as primary educators to the time the Church was the source of all teaching through to Imperial Britain and the coming of the ‘teacher’ as a professional where cosmopolitism is the environment. Curriculum moved from survival skills to faith and morals, to teaching for citizenship.

In order to achieve the aim of a profession embedded with transcultural awareness, the teacher’s initial and ongoing accreditation must take account of continuous and evolving understanding of ‘culturalism’ as it morphs through the teacher’s career, so that transculturalism is the new normality. In order to measure ‘teacher capacity’, Casinader developed the ‘Model of Cultural Dispositions of Thinking’ paradigm. Using a set of qualitative measures, he placed his respondents on a spectrum of ‘readiness’. From this dataset, teachers were classified as either ‘IS’ (independent action and self-focused) to the other extreme of ‘CC’ (collective action and community focused) with those occupying the middle being those teachers most likely to be equipped for transculturalism or ‘TC’.

Using this tool, Casinader conducted his research project accessing schools and teachers across the Anglo-US schools of the world. Most of these schools were already ones with
a ‘global’ or ‘intercultural’ profile. If one were to have some doubts as to the validity of the research it could be the (unavoidable) smallness of his sample, (but as someone who has also attempted to conduct research reliant on access to teachers, I am totally sympathetic).

Yes, read it, challenge yourself; read this contribution to wider education thought and be open to reflection on how being ‘transcultural’ could further enhance your geography teaching.

Les Mullins
Surrey Hills, Victoria

Upheaval: How nations cope with crisis and change.
By Jared Diamond. Penguin Books, 2019,
512 pages, soft cover,
ISBN 9780241003435
https://www.littlebrown.com/

Upheaval is Jared Diamond’s eighth book and follows on from some highly regarded works such as Guns, germs and steel for which he won the Pulitzer Prize, and Collapse that was a number one bestseller. Diamond, who is Professor of Geography at University of California, Los Angeles, has in this book created a 12 criteria framework to guide how individuals, groups and nations can deal with significant issues and resolve crises. A number of case studies are used to apply his framework where events have led to identity issues, civil conflict and severe consequences, including Australia, Finland, Chile and the United States.

Each case study provides an interesting summary to a complex set of events that has led to crises and, if anything, you get a comprehensive background into each of these nations with an examination of how resolution can be or might be made. Dealing with a crisis starts with self-recognition that there is a crisis and an acceptance that something needs to be done. In the study on Australia, a focus on the first 19 days of the Whitlam government is made and how the changes and decisions made in this three-week period resolved circumstances that had become increasingly controversial. Such decisions included revoking the White Australia Policy, reducing the voting age to 18, bringing back troops from Vietnam, equal pay for women, indigenous recognition, and abolishing University fees. Diamond contends these decisions led to a renewing of an Australian identity independent of colonial powers and embracing its geographic location.

The discussion of the crises facing the United States leads to an examination of declining political compromise and increasing political polarisation. Diamond contends that the issues facing the United States pre-Trump (Diamond deliberately avoids commenting on issues related to the current Trump administration) will beset other democracies as geopolitical factors reinforce deeper political divides. These divides spawn increased social nastiness and current events such as demonstrated by Black Lives Matter protests and disagreement concerning the COVID-19 pandemic.

The book concludes by looking at the crises that need to be resolved if global harm is to be avoided in the future. He contends that four sets of problems – global climate change, explosions of nuclear weapons, global resource depletion, and global living inequalities – present the greatest threats to shaping current and future civilisations. These problems are dissected using his framework, with some obvious conclusions that global resource consumption and global populations need to decline, and there needs to be a universal coordinated concentration on the many solutions that may ameliorate the big issues.

Diamond is hopeful for the future but not completely convinced that humanity has learnt from the lessons of the past. As all his books do, Diamond challenges your thinking and makes you realise that solutions to any crises are complex in nature and solutions need to be considered carefully as there is no silver bullet.

Year 12 geography teachers will find some aspects of the framework useful when looking at the effectiveness of responses in Victorian Certificate of Education Unit 3 and population issues in Unit 4.

Andrew Chisholm
John Monash Science School, Victoria

We are here: An atlas of Aotearoa.
By Chris McDowall and Tim Denee. Massey University Press, 2019,
239 pages, hard cover,
ISBN 9780994141538
https://www.masseypress.ac.nz/

We are here is not your average national atlas. It explores traditional themes and employs conventional cartographic techniques, but these are manipulated to produce engaging data visualisations that encourage the audience to see information in a new light, so promoting deeper understanding.

A different guest writer introduces each section bringing a personalised approach incorporating diverse perspectives. It is easy to navigate with both a textual and visual summary of the contents, including a snapshot of every map and corresponding page number. Most of the software used to create the maps is free and open source and can be referred to in the appendices along with technical notes and data sources for each map.

The striking colour palette highlights elevation contours with starkly contrasting shades. Maps depicting the physical shape of the North and South Islands are deep blood red and fiery orange and yellow. The landscape is akin to a living, breathing
body where everything is interconnected and nothing exists in isolation. This ideology is extended further and enshrined in world-first legislation bestowing legal personhood upon Te Urewera, formerly the largest National Park on the North Island and Whanganui, New Zealand’s third longest river. This is a significant acknowledgement that ancestral land has its own identity transcending Western concepts of property possession.

‘The Sinking City’ shows the extent of subsidence and uplift in eastern Christchurch resulting from the 2011 earthquake. ‘The Windy City’ shows wind zones in Wellington where the wind is often so severe that many buildings require special bracing. ‘The Secret Lives of Cats’ tracks movements of introduced domestic predators in urban Wellington. ‘Income Gaps’ exposes inequality with a calendar illustrating how long it takes various demographic groups and occupations to earn the median annual income for a Pacific Island female working full-time. Sobering truths like these are counterpointed with lighter themes like the musical timeline chronicling the evolution of popular music in New Zealand from the 1920s to the present.

We are here is suitable for use as both a teacher and student resource, particularly for the Humanities and Digital technologies targeted at Year 10 and Victorian Certificate of Education. For a generation who has grown up using Google Maps, it challenges them to critically analyse and contextualise what each map is telling them. It also allows for interesting comparisons to be drawn between New Zealand, Australia and other Commonwealth countries reconciling the grave impacts wrought by colonialism on First Peoples Nations.

Māori writer Nadine Anne Hura introduces the final section and says, ‘As with any story there are always gaps, with light and shade given to different events and characters, depending on who is doing the telling’ (page 199). Skilful cartography uses this inherently subjective process to strip back and reduce data, presenting it to the reader so that they can make sense of what they see without being overloaded by information. The story this atlas tells captures the richness and majesty of the landscape, places and people of Aotearoa.

Sarah Ryan
Senior Librarian, Victorian and Australian Collections, State Library Victoria

Lower primary and kindergarten children will be fascinated to learn that the short-tailed windcatcher birds have bodies the size of a pigeon but with wingspans as wide as a child’s outstretched arms (95–100 centimetres). The story follows the shearwater birds on their annual cycle of egg laying, hatching, feeding and migration.

Each year on Griffiths Island near Port Fairy Australia, tens of thousands of adult shearwater birds lay their eggs. Remarkably on the same day each year the adult birds leave the island for a journey of up to six weeks to the Arctic Circle in search of food. The birds incredibly fly up to 30,000 kilometres a year. Chicks leave the island two weeks after the parent birds to make the same extraordinary journey. It is fascinating to learn that the windcatcher birds return to Griffiths Island from the Arctic on the same day each year.

Challenges the birds face on their journey are mentioned, including mistaking floating plastic for food. This can eventually block the birds’ guts and often results in poison leaking into their bodies. The tragedy of some birds getting trapped in fishing nets is also addressed in the story.

Rangers are shown banding chicks to track and research the birds’ flight paths and lifespans. There are two pages of other interesting facts about the birds at the back of the book that could be a valuable resource for teachers, such as learning the Boon Wurrung local indigenous language names for the birds – Yolla and Biyadin. Numerous concepts are mentioned that young children could explore further – migration, banding research, flight paths, hazards, conservation, survival, Equator, annual, and lifecycles.

CSIRO Publishing has 12 pages of comprehensive teacher notes online at the above website that are also well worth looking at. They have ideas for key curriculum areas in Geography, Science, Literacy and Art for Foundation to Year 3 level. I think a lot of these ideas could be easily adapted for preschool children.

Rhonda Carrick Blasingame
Kindergarten teacher
Berwick, Victoria

Windcatcher: Migration of the short-tailed shearwater.

By Diane Jackson Hill and Craig Smith. CSIRO Publishing, 2019,

32 pages, hard cover, ISBN 9781486309870
https://www.publish.csiro.au/

Windcatcher: Migration of the short-tailed shearwater is a children’s picture book, with water colour illustrations, which tells the story of a species of small birds with some remarkable features and their migration flights between the southern and northern hemispheres.
Australian Geography Teachers Association Limited and its affiliated associations 2019

**Australian Geography Teachers Association Limited**

**Executive**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair</td>
<td>Trish Douglas</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tdouglas@elthamcollege.vic.edu.au">tdouglas@elthamcollege.vic.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy Chair</td>
<td>Joanne Wegener</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jwegener@concordia.sa.edu.au">jwegener@concordia.sa.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immediate Past Chair</td>
<td>Grant Kleeman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gkleeman27@gmail.com">gkleeman27@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Anna Griffin</td>
<td><a href="mailto:secretaryagta@gmail.com">secretaryagta@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Grant Kleeman</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gkleeman27@gmail.com">gkleeman27@gmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Directors**

- Leo Conti – GAWA President (Appointed Director) gavapresident@westnet.com.au
- Anna Griffin – GAWA Nominated Director gavapresident@westnet.com.au
- Steve Hawkins – GHTANT President (Appointed Director) steve.hawkins@ntschools.net
- Julie Hearnden – GHTANT Nominated Director Julie.hearnden@ntschools.net
- Susan Caldis – GTANSW President (Appointed Director) skcaldis@gmail.com
- Lorraine Chaffer – GTANSW Nominated Director lchaffer@tpg.com.au
- Julie Davis – GTAQ President (Appointed Director) j42.davis@qut.edu.au
- Shane Albertson – GTAQ Nominated Director shane.albertson@gmail.com
- Joanne Wegener – GTASA President (Appointed Director) jwegener@concordia.sa.edu.au
- Simon Miller – GTASA Nominated Director smiller@pembroke.sa.edu.au
- Dr Stephen Legg – GTAV President (Appointed Director) stephenlegg85@gmail.com
- Trish Douglas – GTAV Nominated Director tdoobles@elthamcollege.vic.edu.au
- Rowan Harris – TGTA President (Appointed Director) rowan.harris@education.tas.gov.au
- Karen Caporelli – TGTA Nominated Director kcaporelli@gyc.tas.edu.au

**Member Associations**

**Geographical Association of Western Australia**

- President: Leo Conti
- Correspondence: GAWA, PO Box 1252, Subiaco, WA 6904

**Geography and History Teachers’ Association of Northern Territory**

- President: Steve Hawkins
- Correspondence: GHTANT, PO Box 41306 Casuarina, NT 0810

**Geography Teachers’ Association of New South Wales**

- President: Susan Caldis
- Correspondence: GTANSW, PO Box 699, Lidcombe, NSW 1825

**Geography Teachers’ Association of Queensland**

- President: Julie Davis
- Correspondence: GTAQ, c/o Royal Geographical Society of Queensland (RGSQ), Level 1, 28 Fortescue Street, Spring Hill, QLD 4000

**Geography Teachers’ Association of South Australia**

- President: Joanne Wegener
- Correspondence: GTASA, 163A Greenhill Road, Parkside, SA 5063

**Geography Teachers’ Association of Victoria**

- President: Dr Stephen Legg
- Correspondence: GTAV, 503 Burke Road, Camberwell South VIC 3124, PO Box 2066 Camberwell West VIC, 3124

**Tasmanian Geography Teachers’ Association**

- President: Rowan Harris
- Correspondence: TGTA, c/o Debbie Claridge, St Mary’s College, GPO Box 1476, Hobart TAS 7001