Prep Year unit overview — Australian Curriculum: Geography

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

| Unit no. | Unit title | Duration of unit |
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| 2 | Caring for special places | 10 hours |

| Unit outline |
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| The Prep Year curriculum focuses on developing children’s understanding of place. Learning about their own place and building a connection with it contributes to children’s sense of identity and belonging, and an understanding of why and how they care for places. Children start to explore their feelings about places by talking about their own special places, and what makes them special. Children develop an understanding of the Countries/Places that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples belong to in the local area and why they are important to them.Children explore the places in which they live, but also investigate more distant places of similar size that are familiar to them or that they are curious about. Children use the geographical concepts of place and space to develop geographical understandings and geographical skills by observing, collecting, recording and representing geographical data and information to answer inquiry questions. This unit provides opportunities for guided fieldwork in the school grounds using data collection techniques of observing, taking photographs, drawing pictures and creating story maps. Opportunities exist for the use of spatial technologies such as Google Earth. Learning opportunities in this unit are collaboratively developed between children and adults. Contexts for learning include play, real-life situations, routines and teachable moments. The inquiry questions for the unit are: * What makes a place special?
* How can we look after the places we live in?
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| Identify curriculum |
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| Content descriptions to be taught | General capabilities and cross‑curriculum priorities |
| Geographical Knowledge and Understanding | Geographical Inquiry and Skills |
| * The places people live in and belong to, their familiar [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) and why they are important to people [(ACHGK002)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK002)
* The Countries/Places that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples belong to in the [local](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Local) area and why they are important to them [(ACHGK003)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK003)
* The reasons why some places are special to people, and how they can be looked after [(ACHGK004)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK004)
 | Observing, questioning and planning* Make observations about familiar places and pose questions about them [(ACHGS001)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS001)

Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing* Record geographical [data](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Data) and information collected by observation [(ACHGS002](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS002))
* Represent the location of [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) of a familiar [place](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Place) on pictorial maps and models [(ACHGS003)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS003)

Interpreting, analysing and concluding* Draw conclusions based on discussions of observations [(ACHGS004)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS004)

Communicating* Present information using everyday language to describe location and direction [(ACHGS005)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS005)

Reflecting and responding* Reflect on their learning to suggest ways that they can look after a familiar [place](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Place) [(ACHGS006)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS006)
 | The application of the general capabilities and cross-curriculum priorities in this include may include:Description: Description: gc_literacy LiteracyDescribe the location and features of familiar placesDescription: Description: gc_numeracy NumeracyGive directions to familiar locations Description: Description: gc_ict **ICT capability**Use Google Earth to explore familiar placesDescription: Description: gc_critical Critical and creative thinkingPose questions about familiar and more distant placesDescription: Description: gc_personal_social **Personal and social capability**Identify places that are important to the school communityDescription: Description: gc_ethical Ethical understandingIdentify rules for using special places in the school Description: Description: gc_intercultural Intercultural understandingLocate and describe places in more distant places that children have visited Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and culturesIdentify the name of the local Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander Language Group |
|  |  | Description: Description: cc_asia Asia and Australia’s engagement with AsiaIdentify places in the Asian region on a globeDescription: Description: cc_sust SustainabilitySuggest ways to care for important places in the school |
| Geographical understandings |
| This unit provides opportunities for children to develop geographical understandings that are particularly focused on the following concepts.  |
| ☒ Place | ☒ Space | ☐ Environment | ☐ Interconnection | ☒ Scale |
| Explanations of these geographical concepts for Prep to Year 2 are provided in the QSA Year level plans, available at [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/prep-geography-resources.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/prep-geography-resources.html) > Curriculum > Planning templates and exemplars > Year level plans, and in the Appendix. |
| Achievement standard |
| By the end Foundation Year, students describe the features of familiar places and recognise why some places are special to people. They recognise that places can be represented on maps and a globe and why places are important to people.Students observe the familiar features of places and represent these features and their location on pictorial maps and models. They share observations in a range of texts and use everyday language to describe direction and location. Students reflect on their learning to suggest ways they can care for a familiar place. |

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| Relevant prior curriculum | Curriculum working towards |
| Early Years Curriculum Guidelines * Social and personal learning:
* Social learning
* Personal learning
* Active learning processes:
* Thinking
* Investigating
* Imagining and responding

Queensland kindergarten learning guidelineConnectedness key focus: Showing increasing respect for environmentsKnowledge, skills and dispositions Teachers promote the following aspects of children’s learning: * caring for and respecting environments
* ways to investigate and understand natural and built environments
* exploring interactions between people and environments.
 | Year 1 Australian Curriculum: Geography Geographical Knowledge and Understanding * The natural, managed and constructed [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) of places, their location, how they [change](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Change) and how they can be cared for [(ACHGK005)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK005)
* The ways the activities located in a [place](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Place) create its distinctive [features](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=G&t=Features) [(ACHGK007)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK007)

Geographical Inquiry and Skills Observing, questioning and planning * Pose questions about familiar and unfamiliar places [(ACHGS007)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS007)

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

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

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

Reflecting and responding* Reflect on their learning and suggest responses to their findings [(ACHGS012](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGS012))
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| Bridging content |
| Programs need to provide opportunities for children to develop an understanding of the idea of location (as part of the concept of space) through drawing story maps and creating models to show where places and features are located, and by learning about the globe as a representation of the Earth on which places can be located.  |
| Links to other learning areas |
| Geography is a subject in the Humanities and Social Sciences learning area and has connections to History, Civics and Citizenship, and Economics and Business. There are opportunities to connect learning experiences in Geography to other learning areas. Australian Curriculum: History * Explore a range of sources about the past [(ACHHS018)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS018)
* Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written, role play) and digital technologies [(ACHHS022)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHHS022)

Australian Curriculum: Mathematics * Answer yes/no questions to collect information [(ACMSP011)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACHGK007)

Australian Curriculum: Science * Explore and make observations by using the [senses](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=S&t=Senses) [(ACSIS011)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACSIS011)
* Engage in discussions about observations and use methods such as drawing to represent ideas [(ACSIS233)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACSIS233)

Australian Curriculum: English* Construct [texts](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Glossary?a=E&t=text) using software including word processing programs [(ACELY1654)](http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/ACELY1654)
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| Assessment | Make judgments |
| Describe the assessment | Teachers gather evidence to make judgments about the following characteristics of children’s work:Understanding* Recognise why some places are special to people

Skills* Observe the familiar features of places
* Draw conclusions based on observations in texts
* Reflect on ways familiar places can be cared for

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

For further advice and guidelines on constructing task-specific standards, refer to the standards elaborations: [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/26025.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/26025.html) > select the Year level > choose the Resources tab > Standards elaborations. |
| Guided research (Spoken and multimodal)The purpose of this assessment is to make judgments about children’s ability to observe, collect, record and represent geographical data and draw conclusions about a place special to the child/children and make suggestions on how they can care for it. Research in a P–2 context is guided and involves children and teachers collaborating to gather and record information. They follow an inquiry approach that aligns to the Geographical Inquiry and Skills strand for the Prep Year level. Assessment for this inquiry occurs, and is built upon, through the sequenced learning experiences in Sessions 3, 7, 9.Children:* use collected photos to create their own pictorial map of the features of their school
* draw a picture of their own special place and present a spoken description of the drawing in response to the inquiry question: What makes this place special?
* play a Go Fish game, where two cards are chosen to present a spoken description of caring or not caring for special places.

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

| Teaching and learning |
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| Teaching strategies and learning experiences | Supportive learning environment[[1]](#footnote-1) | Resources  |
| Across Prep–Year 2, there are several contexts for learning. The Focused teaching and learning and investigations contexts for learning are an explicit focus in Geography. | Adjustments for needs of learners | Children would benefit from access to:* a range of literary and non‑literary texts related to special places and care for places
* paper, pencils, clipboards for field drawings
* cards, paperclips, magnets
* crayons and paint materials
* resources that cater for diversity, such a range of texts to develop geographical understanding about the concepts of place and space
* a range of games and puzzles
* digital resources about places
* spatial technologies such as Google Earth and Google Maps
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| Context: Play* In socio-dramatic play spaces, provide opportunities for children to explore an understanding of special places by, for example, changing the home area into a special place for Prep.
* In exploratory play, provide source materials (e.g. photos of the features of places and how to care for them) for children to explore and discuss.
* In manipulative play, provide blocks and manipulative materials for children to construct imaginative and real places and ways of caring for those places.
* Play games with rules that have a sustainability focus.
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| Context: Routines* Provide opportunities for the children to share their own view of place through dialogue circles in morning session times.
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| Context: Real-life situations* Invite guests (e.g. a grandparent or overseas visitor) into the classroom to talk about how to care for special places.
* Lead a class discussion on the places that the children know that are special and mark these on a map for display.
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| Context: Teachable moment* Take opportunities to respond to the interests and experiences of individual children, small groups or the whole class in relation to their understanding of the features of places and caring for places.
 |  | * simple maps, a globe, charts and diagrams to develop spatial awareness.
* digital cameras
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| Context: Focused teaching and learning and investigationsThe focused teaching and learning and investigations experience allows children opportunities to build, revisit and contextualise their understandings of the special places that are connected to their lives and how to care for these places.  |  |  |
| Session 1: A favourite place |  |  |
| * Complete a shared focus reading of a story book about a favourite place, such as a bedroom.
* Collaborate with the children to create a story map of the place in the story.
* Have the children identify the items in their bedroom to create a class list.
* Show photos of children’s bedrooms

Ask the children to observe and identify what they see: How is this bedroom the same or different from their bedroom? (Substitute an alternative context or different place familiar to the children). * Create a wall gallery of the children’s drawings of their favourite rooms. Annotate or label the features.
 | Paint programs can be used instead of paints or crayons to create drawings. | Wild, M 1985, *There’s a sea in my bedroom*, Puffin, Sydney.Russell, E 2000, *A is for Aunty*, ABC Books, Sydney. |
| Session 2: Features of places in our school  |  |  |
| * In small groups, have the children take a school walk (field study) with an adult to identify the features of the school. Take photos and initiate discussions about the places that children identify to be:
* safe (look for signs of safety, such as gates or a first aid station)
* favourite (places that provide a sense of belonging)
* well-cared for (look for signs of care, such as rubbish bins or garden beds).
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| Session 3: Mapping our school |  |  |
| * Ask the children to use the collected photos to create their own pictorial map of the school and identify the features.
* Have the children use everyday language to describe direction and location, in pairs or small groups.
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| Session 4: Tracking journeys |  | Lester, A 2009, *The Journey Home*, Lothian Children’s Books Australia. |
| * Read the story *The Journey Home*.
* Demonstrate how Google maps can be used to track journeys between home and school. Model several journey scenarios. Ask the children to identify the longest and the shortest distance to school.
* Using Google maps, have the children track their journey between home and a special place, for example their grandparents’ home, a holiday destination etc.
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| Session 5: Tracking journeys  |  |  |
| * Invite an Aboriginal elder or Torres Strait Islander elder to the classroom to discuss traditional ways of tracking journeys from one place to another and how they communicate this to one another. Alternatively, read the book *My Mob goes to the beach* by Sylvia Emmerton to the children.
* Ask the children to create a story map of how they travel from home to school.
 |  | QSA, *Building relationships with local communities*, [www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3035.html](http://www.qsa.qld.edu.au/3035.html) Emmerton, S 2004, *My Mob goes to the beach*, Black Inc Press, Sydney.  |
| Session 6: Using the globe as a geographic source |  |  |
| * Introduce the children to the YouTube video *Global Wonders: Hello Song with Sing-a-long*.
* Use a globe to locate the countries where the languages originate from within the Hello Song.

Ask the children to observe teacher-generated photos of different places of the countries to create a I see/I wonder chart as a class with the children, e.g.:  I see I wonderLots of mountains Is it cold?Lots of sand Is it dry? |  | *Global Wonders: Hello Song with Sing-a-long*[www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjwkMmdqmH4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kjwkMmdqmH4)  |
| Session 7: What makes this place special? |  |  |
| * Discuss different places that are special to the children. Record the data of children’s responses to their special places in a graph to show the range of places, such as their grandparents’ place, an eating place, a playground place and a holiday place.

Describe the pattern shown in the graph.* Ask the children to draw their special place, annotate it and then present a spoken description on the drawing in response to the inquiry question: What makes this place special?
* Paste their responses on the word gallery.
 | The annotations could be teacher- or child-generated, using an audio recording or a digital or handwritten script (modelled for children).  |   |
| Session 8: Thinking and caring about places |  |  |
| * Use an interactive whiteboard or data projector to engage children in the Ollie’s Worldsorting game, highlighting that each item has a special place.
* Explain how the word “sustainability” is used in the game as a way of thinking about caring for places.
* Discuss how school rules are used help the school community to care for the environment and each other.
* Discuss how the classroom rules help the children to take care of their classroom.
 |  | Ollie’s World, *Sorting game*, [www.olliesworld.com/adventure/onlinegames/sorting-game.htm](http://www.olliesworld.com/adventure/onlinegames/sorting-game.htm)  |
| Session 9: Assessment |  |  |
| * Prepare visual cues on cards that express both how to care and not care for special places. Attach paper clips to individual cards for a magnetic Go Fish game.

The children play a Go Fish game and present a description of two cards on how the cards could represent caring or not caring for special places. Provide the children with opportunities to play the game and also to engage with it as an assessment response. * Record their responses for assessment.
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| Session 10: Reflecting on what makes a place special  |  |  |
| * As a whole group, ask the children to reflect on their learning using the following questions:
* What makes your place special?
* How can we look after this place?
* Record their responses in class reflection journal.
 |  |

| Use feedback |
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| Ways to monitor learning and assessment | Teachers meet to collaboratively plan the teaching, learning and assessment to meet the needs of all learners in each unit.Teachers create opportunities for discussion about levels of achievement to develop shared understandings; co-mark or cross mark at key points to ensure consistency of judgments; and participate in moderating samples of student work at school or cluster level to reach consensus and consistency. |
| Feedback to children | Teachers strategically plan opportunities and ways to provide ongoing feedback (both written and informal) and encouragement to children on their strengths and areas for improvement.Children reflect on and discuss, with their teachers or peers, what they can do well and what they need to improve.Teachers reflect on and review learning opportunities to incorporate specific learning experiences and provide multiple opportunities for children to experience, practise and improve. |
| Reflection on the unit plan | Identify what worked well during and at the end of the unit, including:* activities that worked well and why
* activities that could be improved and how
* assessment that worked well and why
* assessment that could be improved and how
* common misconceptions of children that need, or needed, to be clarified.
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## Appendix

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

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

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