

Lesson two: Australia's Diverse Landscape

Lesson Plan

In this lesson pupils learn about the varied landscape of Australia. They discover there are different landform regions in Australia, all with different characteristics of physical geography. The main activity involves using overlay maps and pupils explore how the landforms and climate relate to each other through answering questions.

Please note- this lesson focuses upon three specific overlay maps. However, a larger range of overlay maps showing different geographical features of Australia is available to download: Overlay Maps (Lesson Two downloadable resources), with accompanying questions. This range of maps can be explored by pupils in extensions or at other suitable points throughout the unit if the teacher chooses to do so.

Key Questions

- What are the four main landform regions of Australia?
- Which oceans surround the island Australia?
- What physical processes have created these landform regions?

Key Ideas

- Australia is an island country and continent.
- There are four main landform regions in Australia which have been formed through the physical processes of movements in the Earth's crust, river erosion and changes in climate and sea level.
- Australia is relatively low-lying compared with other continents of the world.

Subject content areas

- Locational knowledge: Locate Australia in relation to the world's oceans and seas.
- Place knowledge: Understand the physical geography of different locations in Australia and the key landforms of these places.
- Physical Geography: Focusing on the four major landform regions of Australia, discovering their key geographical features (island, plateau, lake, gorge, desert, mountain ranges).
- Geographical Skills and Fieldwork: Using overlay maps to locate physical features and landform regions.

Downloads

Lesson Plan PDF | MSWORD

Australia's Diverse Landscape (PPT)

Australia's Diverse Landscape Map Activity PDF | MSWORD

Activity Answers PDF | MSWORD

Overlay Maps (PDF)

Base Map (PDF)

Map 1 Areas of high rainfall (PDF)

Map 2 Areas of high land (PDF)

Map 3 Bodies of water (PDF)

Additional resources

Transparent film/ overhead projector acetate
Coloured dry wipe pens or thin coloured markers

Starter

Ask pupils to examine the map shown on the Australia's Diverse Landscape PowerPoint presentation (see downloadable resources) and ask which oceans and seas surround Australia.

Pupils brainstorm the different landscapes and physical features there may be present in the natural environment and create a spider diagram on the interactive whiteboard. Using the images on slides three and four of the *Australia's Diverse Landscape* PowerPoint presentation, ask the pupils: which of these landscapes could you find in Australia?

Explain to pupils that Australia has a 'diverse' landscape. This means the landscape is varied with a large range of different geographical landforms and physical features. Explain to pupils they will discover more about the physical geography of Australia and highlight that it is a fascinating country to study geographically because of its diverse landscape and striking physical features which attract visitors from all over the world.

Main teaching

Explain to pupils this lesson looks at the landform regions (physical) rather than states (political boundaries introduced by humans). Return to slide one of the *Australia's Diverse landscape* PowerPoint presentation to show the straight political state boundaries created by humans, and compare these with the natural divides of different landform and climate regions.

If you compare the Australian continent to others in the world, it is relatively flat, low-lying and dry. It can be divided into four major landform regions: the Coastal Plains, the Eastern Highlands, the Central Lowlands and the Western Plateau.

(Teachers' note: A plateau is a large area of flat and level land.)

These landform regions have been created by physical processes: movements in the Earth's crust, river erosion and changes in climate and sea level.

Display the map of Australia's landform regions on slide six of the PowerPoint presentation and use the key to discover where each region is located. Ask the following questions to encourage pupils' thinking and engagement:

- Which landform region covers the largest area of Australia? (The Western Plateau)
- Which landform region do you think is the lowest? Which is the highest? (Central Lowlands and Eastern Highlands).
- Tasmania is the small island to the south of the mainland, which landform region is Tasmania in? (Eastern Highlands).

Use the *Australia's Diverse Landscape* PowerPoint presentation slides to highlight the key geographical features of each of the four landform regions of Australia.

Use slide thirteen to compare the height of the highlands in Australia with those in other continents of the world and compare the height of Australia's highest peak (Mount Kosciuszko in southern New South Wales) to the highest mountain in the world (Mount

Everest), and Europe's highest mountain (Mont Blanc, Alps). Remind pupils that Australia is relatively flat compared to other continents of the world.

Main activity

This activity can be adapted depending upon ability level and/or age of the pupils. Younger pupils may be more suited to working in groups of three, tracing one map each (*maps 1, 2 and 3* - see downloadable resources) and simply comparing the overlay maps with one another and discussing where the areas of highest rainfall etc. are.

Older/more able pupils can follow the instructions on the *Australia's Diverse Landscape Map Activity sheet* (see downloadable resources). They need a copy of *Maps 1, 2, 3* (see downloadable resources) to trace and also the *base map* (see downloadable resources). The activity is split into 'rounds', each round is more challenging and requires a higher level of knowledge and understanding than the previous.

Plenary

Ask pupils to show their traced overlay maps and ask what they discovered from the questions about the landform regions of Australia and key physical features of the country.

Initiate a closing class discussion with the ending question: would you like to visit Australia? Which landform region would you like to visit most and why?