# Stage 1 Geography

Local places and spaces

# Focus area – Features of places

## Content

* Features of places
* How places are organised

## Key inquiry questions

* What are the features of, and activities in, places?
* How can we care for places?
* How can spaces within a place be used for different purposes?

## Content focus

Students:

* investigate the natural and human features of places
* describe the reasons places change
* identify the active role of citizens in the care of places
* explore activities occurring in places
* explore how the spaces within places can be used for different purposes

## Outcomes

A student:

* describes features of places and the connections people have with places **GE1-1**
* identifies ways in which people interact with and care for places **GE1-2**
* communicates geographical information and uses geographical tools for inquiry **GE1-3**

Outcomes and other syllabus content referenced in this document are from:

* [Geography K-10 Syllabus](http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/geography-k10/) © NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for and on behalf of the Crown in right of the State of New South Wales, 2015

## Overview

In HSIE, inquiry involves a deliberate, structured approach where teachers employ explicit teaching strategies such as the gradual release of responsibility, chunking and sequencing of content, connecting new knowledge with prior learning, and using effective questioning. This structured approach contrasts with the more open-ended exploration typically associated with inquiry learning. Instead, our syllabuses adopt a disciplined inquiry process to deepen students’ understanding through carefully structured learning. Key inquiry questions from the history and geography syllabuses are thoughtfully incorporated into these resources, to further focus and guide student understanding. This approach ensures that foundational knowledge is clearly taught, preparing students for more complex, independent tasks. For further details, see our [statement on Explicit teaching in NSW Public Schools](https://aus01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Feducation.nsw.gov.au%2Fteaching-and-learning%2Fcurriculum%2Fexplicit-teaching%2Fabout-explicit-teaching%23%3A~%3Atext%3D%2527Explicit%2520teaching%2520in%2520NSW%2520Public%2520Schools%2527%2520(PDF%2520966%2520KB).&data=05%7C02%7CRuby.Kilroy%40det.nsw.edu.au%7C2b0c602a036943bd072708dc68c5d59b%7C05a0e69a418a47c19c259387261bf991%7C0%7C0%7C638500446136788745%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=sZHjyF9PtsZ8S2noNFhlf7o03O%2FLhzFccNREvpPEeQw%3D&reserved=0).

The geographical inquiry process will identify the natural and human features of the school grounds and local neighbourhood and explore their location, uses and organisation. Through investigation of a geographical issue, students will examine interconnections between features, users and organisation of spaces. The geographical issue proposed can be amended to fit the local context.

This learning is shaped by five small inquiries, which vary in length.

## Assessment

Many of the activities require students to demonstrate their learning. These activities can be used to assess student progress at various stages throughout the inquiry process.

## Inquiry 1 – Natural and human features

Students identify and describe the natural and human features of places.

### Content

#### Features of places

Students:

* investigate features of places and how they can be cared for, for example: (ACHGK005) 
	+ description of the natural and human features of places   
	+ consideration of how a place can be cared for eg a park, farm, beach, bushland   

#### How places are organised

Students:

* investigate activities that occur within places, for example: (ACHGK007, ACHGK008)
	+ examination of why various activities in an area are located where they are eg school, shops      

### Acquiring geographical information

#### Question:

* What are natural and human features of places?
* Can places be used for a variety of purposes?

### Acquire data and information:

* View a variety of **photographs** of places ranging from natural places, (e.g. wilderness area), a mix of natural and human, (e.g. marina), to human places, (e.g. city). With reference to the images create definitions of ‘human features’ and ‘natural features’.
* View a variety of **photographs** of places that students are familiar with that show a variety of human uses, e.g. Sydney Harbour, a waterway, a recreation area.

### Processing geographical information

* Students organise and classify **photographs** into ‘mainly natural features’, ‘a mix of natural and human features’ and ‘mainly human features’.
* Students add a **symbol** to categorise the human and natural features of the places depicted.
* Students work in groups to identify and label the variety of human uses in the **photographs**.
* Analyse and discuss the interconnections between the natural and human features. Consider:
	+ Why do you think it was built?
	+ What activities occur there, or could occur?
	+ What natural areas are used by people?
	+ Can the place be used for different purposes?
	+ Who might care for these places?

### Communicating geographical information

#### Communicate:

Students draw an **illustration** or simple **photo sketch** of one of the places depicted in the photographs. They add themselves and their family to the sketch showing their predicted use of the area. Students label the natural and human features and write a statement describing how they could use the area.

#### Respond:

Students add a statement on how they could care for the area.

## Inquiry 2 – Mapping features of our school

Students draw a detailed map of the school as a pre-test, construct a map following their fieldwork and draw a map as the communication task (post-test).

### Content

#### Features of places

Students:

* investigate features of places and how they can be cared for, for example: (ACHGK005) 
	+ description of the natural and human features of places   
	+ discussion of the natural features of places identified in Aboriginal Dreaming stories and/or Legends of the Torres Strait 

### Acquiring geographical information

#### Question:

* What does our school like from an aerial view?
* How is an aerial photograph and satellite image different to a map?
* How are natural and human features represented on a map?
* What symbols are used on maps and what is a legend?
* How do Aboriginal people represent natural and human features?
* How do Aboriginal people use symbols to tell complex stories about place and convey spiritual knowledge associated with places?

### Acquire data and information:

Examine maps and satellite imagery:

* View a **satellite image** of the local area and locate the school. Identify the natural and human features of the school.
* Change the satellite image to **map view** and make comparisons between them.
* Analyse students’ current knowledge and understanding of mapping and mapping terminology, e.g. plan view (looking down), map title, map key, map symbols, direction, scale, specific names of natural and human features.
* Reference a **junior atlas** for specific examples to support students’ learning. Discuss features of maps including title, key, symbols to represent physical or human features, colours and compass symbol.

Fieldwork:

* Provide students with a blank **outline map** of the school. In the school grounds, guide students in orienting themselves on the map and identifying familiar features.
* On a walk around the school, students observe and take **photographs** of natural and human features that are important to them.
* With guidance, students mark on their outline map their location when taking each image. Number for later reference.

Explore Aboriginal use of **symbols**:

* Examine Aboriginal **artworks** that use **symbols** to depict features in their environment.
* Note: Background information can be accessed using search terms such as ‘Aboriginal art’ and ‘use of symbols’. Some artwork can be viewed as a plan map, showing a range of people and places. The significance of what is depicted will vary according to access to the appropriate local Aboriginal community knowledge. This is sometimes referred to as the ‘outside’ story for the general public, and the ‘inside’ story accessible only to those with the appropriate level of knowledge.
* Consider: What do you see? What is being represented? What do the symbols mean, individually and in combination?
* Liaise with local Aboriginal community or AECG to learn appropriate local stories associated with specific places.
* Participate in a **cultural walk** and **art making**.

### Processing geographical information

Construct a **large-scale map** of the school:

* Students place **photographs** of the features in their correct location on the **outline map** of the school, digitally or by pasting printed images. Guide students to include a border and title.
* Students explain their selection of **photographs**, e.g. ‘we chose the toilets because everyone uses them so we think they are important’.
* Identify and discuss reasons for the patterns of location of specific places in the school.
* With reflection on Aboriginal use of symbols, students create and add a personal **symbol** to indicate places of importance to them.
* Guide students in creating a legend to identify natural and human features e.g. colour code buildings according to use, grass area is green, gardens are brown, asphalt areas are grey, dotted line for walking ‘path’ and personal symbols for important places.

### Communicating geographical information

#### Communicate:

Students draw their map of the school for a third time as a **large-scale map** applying and demonstrating their understandings.

Students include a border, legend and title.

Students verbally explain how they knew where to place each feature and the reasons for their selection of symbols in the key.

#### Respond:

Where appropriate, work with the local Aboriginal community to participate in the stories associated with drawing a **map** or creating an **artwork** for a specific place.

## Inquiry 3 – Organisation of our classroom

Students investigate why and how spaces within the school and classroom can be rearranged for different purposes.

### Content

#### How places are organised

Students:

* investigate activities that occur within places, for example: (ACHGK007, ACHGK008)
	+ discussion of why and how the spaces within places can be rearranged for different purposes eg street fair, school hall 

### Acquiring geographical information

#### Question:

* Does the organisation of our classroom suit what it is used for?
* Can spaces in the school be used differently to the way they are now.
* How can our classroom be rearranged for different purposes?
* Can the classroom be reorganised to be a better learning space?

### Acquire data and information:

#### Fieldwork:

School spaces

* Visit and observe spaces in the school that are rearranged for varying purposes, e.g. school hall, school oval. Reference **photographs** showing different arrangements for different purposes, e.g. chairs out for performances, stalls out for market days.

Classroom:

* Observe and discuss the reasons for the organisation of the furniture and spaces in the classroom.
* Conduct a **survey** on the students’ favourite and least favourite spaces in the classroom and changes they would like.

### Processing geographical information

* Annotate **photograph collages** of the various rearrangements of school spaces, e.g. COLA at assembly, at Easter parade, on ANZAC Day, at Education Week.
* Construct a **pictograph** representing the most and least favourite spaces in the classroom. Interpret the data.
* Collate the classroom layout changes desired by students and represent using a **concept map** or **column graph**, depending on the breadth of suggestions. Interpret and discuss the results.

### Communicating geographical information

#### Communicate:

Students collaboratively plan and **map** a reorganisation of the classroom space so that it can be used for a different purpose, such as a shop, concert, museum, movie theatre, library, hospital.

Student present and describe their maps to the class.

#### Respond:

Students reflect on the graphed survey results and plan changes to their classroom as a learning space. They use 3D materials or mapping to propose a reorganisation of the spaces in their classroom.

## Inquiry 4 – Location of neighbourhood activities

Students examine of why various activities and facilities in the local neighbourhood are located where they are.

### Content

#### How places are organised

Students:

* investigate activities that occur within places, for example: (ACHGK007, ACHGK008)
	+ examination of why various activities in an area are located where they are eg school, shops     

### Acquiring geographical information

#### Question:

* What are the natural and human features of our neighbourhood?
* What activities occur within places in our neighbourhood?
* What are the effects of the school and local facilities being located where they are in the neighbourhood?

### Acquire data and information:

* View a **satellite image** and **virtual map** of the local neighbourhood and locate the school. Use Google street view imagery to observe the natural and human features of the local area.
* Use students’ knowledge to identify the uses of familiar places in the local neighbourhood.
* Use **virtual maps** to track the routes that are used by students to travel to school.
* Examine the location of the school and other facilities in the local neighbourhood.

### Processing geographical information

* Interpret interconnections and discuss why the school and other facilities are located they are, e.g. accessibility by foot and car, public transport. Discuss issues in accessing the school, e.g. busy roads to cross, lack of parking.
* Annotate a **satellite image** of the local neighbourhood indicating activities that occur in places.
* With guidance, students mark the route they take to travel to school and the other neighbourhood facilities on a virtual map.

### Communicating geographical information

#### Communicate and respond:

Students work collaboratively to plan and draw a **large-scale map** of an ideal neighbourhood design that has the school and facilities located in ideal locations.

Students present their maps to the class and explain the reasons for their decisions.

## Inquiry 5 – Case study of a local park

Students undertake a case study, examining the geographical issue of an imagined proposal for an extraordinary use of familiar local park or recreation area e.g. a dirt bike competition.

### Content

#### Australian places

Students:

* investigate places across a range of scales within Australia, for example: (ACHGK010)
	+ identification that places exist across a range of scales eg personal, local, national  

#### Features of places

Students:

* investigate features of places and how they can be cared for, for example: (ACHGK005) 
	+ description of the natural and human features of places   
	+ consideration of how a place can be cared for eg a park, farm, beach, bushland   

#### How places are organised

Students:

* investigate activities that occur within places, for example: (ACHGK007, ACHGK008)
	+ discussion of why and how the spaces within places can be rearranged for different purposes eg street fair, school hall 
	+ examination of why various activities in an area are located where they are eg school, shops     

### Acquiring geographical information

#### Question:

Sample question: Is it practical to hold of a dirt bike competition in our neighbourhood park?

* Where is the park located?
* What are its features?
* How is it use regularly and less regularly?
* Who uses it and how often is it used?
* How is the park cared for? Who looks after it?
* Why do you think it is important to take care of this place?

### Acquire data and information:

Locate the park:

* Use **Google maps** to locate the park. Locate it in relation to the school.
* Identify the inquiry as a study at a local scale.
* Reference images of the park through **photographs** and Google Street View imagery.

**Fieldwork**:

* Visit the park or recreation area being studied.
* Observe and record its features through **photographs** and a simple **field sketch**.
* List the different activities that occur at the place by referencing the students’ knowledge, signage and infrastructure, e.g. goal posts, play equipment, barbecues. Record through **photographs**.
* Organise the students to use the area, e.g. play soccer, eat lunch at the picnic tables, use the play equipment. Record through **photographs** and **video**.
* Observe and **photograph** ways the place is cared for, e.g. litter bins, signage, maintenance workers. Model caring for the area during the site visit.
* Observe then discuss what would need to be rearranged for the proposed dirt bike competition. Predict the potential impacts of it, e.g. soil brought in, grass churned up, dust everywhere.

**Survey** park users:

* Develop survey questions for students to ask of their family to establish patterns and extent of use of the place.
* Suggested survey questions: How often do you use the place? How is the place used differently according to time of year / seasons? How is the place rearranged for different activities? What special events are held at the place? What do you like about the place? What don’t you like about it? How can people care for the place?
* Collate **data** using a **tally chart** to record whole class responses from the family survey.

Secondary sources:

* Reference the local council web site to collect additional information about the park.

### Processing geographical information

* Construct a **pictograph** or **column graph** to represent the main uses of the area. Interpret the data.
* Examine and discuss the causes and effects of the different uses of the area, e.g. cricket pitch reinstated for summer cricket; stage, lighting and portable toilets for Christmas carols. Represent through **drawings** in a **cause and effect table**. Predict the effects of the proposed dirt bike competition.
* Construct a **‘Y’ chart** to analyse and record responses to the questions regarding caring for place.
* Summarise uses of the site by annotating **photographs** or constructing a **table** of features and their uses.
* Construct a **PMI chart** on the proposed dirt bike competition at the park. Students use the information to form a view on the proposal and state their conclusion.

### Communicating geographical information

#### Communicate:

Students write a **letter** to the organisers of the proposed dirt bike competition explaining whether they can or can’t use the park for that use. Students provide reasons for their decision and explain why and how the park needs to be looked after.

#### Respond:

Working collaboratively, students create an annotated **photographic collage** of the area to promote ways users can care for it. These could be displayed on school and neighbourhood noticeboards.

## Concepts, inquiry skills and tools

Geographical concepts

The following geographical concepts have been integrated into the teaching and learning sequence:

Place: the significance of places and what they are like e.g. location and features of local places and other places in the world.

Space: the significance of location and spatial distribution, and ways people organise and manage the spaces that we live in e.g. where activities are located and how spaces can be organised.

Environment: the significance of the environment in human life, and the important interrelationships between humans and the environment e.g. natural and human features of a place; daily and seasonal weather patterns of places.

Interconnection: no object of geographical study can be viewed in isolation e.g. local and global links people have with places and the special connection Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples maintain with Country/Place.

Scale:the way that geographical phenomena and problems can be examined at different spatial levels e.g. various scales by which places can be defined such as local suburbs, towns and large cities.

### Geographical inquiry skills

The following geographical inquiry skills have been integrated into the unit:

#### Acquiring geographical information

* pose geographical questions (ACHGS007, ACHGS013)
* collect and record geographical data and information, for example, by observing, by interviewing, or using visual representations (ACHGS008, ACHGS014)

#### Processing geographical information

* represent data by constructing tables, graphs or maps (ACHGS009, ACHGS015)
* draw conclusions based on the interpretation of geographical information sorted into categories (ACHGS010, ACHGS016)

#### Communicating geographical information

* present findings in a range of communication forms (ACHGS011, ACHGS017)
* reflect on their learning and suggest responses to their findings (ACHGS012, ACHGS018)

### Geographical tools

The following geographical tools have been integrated into the unit.

#### Maps Maps

* pictorial maps, large-scale maps, world map, globe

#### Fieldwork Fieldwork

* observing, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys

#### Graphs and statistics Graphs and statistics

* tally charts, pictographs, data tables, column graphs, weather data

#### Spatial technologies Spatial technologies

* virtual maps, satellite images

#### Visual representations Visual representations

* photographs, illustrations, diagrams, story books, multimedia, web tools