 Why live where?

Focus area – factors that shape places

Content

* Factors that change environments
* Environments shape places

Key inquiry questions

* How do people and environments influence one another?

Content focus

Students:

* explore how the environment influences the human characteristics of places.

Outcomes

A student:

* describes the diverse features and characteristics of places and environments GE3-1
* explains interactions and connections between people, places and environments GE3-2
* acquires, processes and communicates geographical information using geographical tools for inquiry GE3-4

Outcomes and other syllabus material 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

Students work in small groups to investigate a variety of homes around the world. They consider how geographic and environmental factors, such as landscape, climate, and/or landforms influence the way homes are designed, the building materials used and what is inside.

Students create a ten slide pictorial overview of various examples of homes that are built around the world. They will then select one place in the world with significant and differentiating natural environmental influences and their task is to design their own house labelling how these factors have influenced their design.

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.

Student-centred inquiry into children’s homes throughout the contemporary world

Students investigate homes throughout the contemporary world, how they are different, and how the natural environment influences where and how people live. They design a home using influences of the natural environment.

Selection of a land use or planning issue

Note – this learning and teaching sequence will evolve into a pictorial journey, which demonstrates different examples of how the natural environment has influenced people and places around the world.

Content

Environments shape places

Students:

* investigate how the natural environment influences people and places, for example: (ACHGK028)
	+ discussion of how climate influences the distribution of where people live    
	+ comparison of how landforms influence where and how people live in Australia and another country   

Acquiring geographical information

Question:

Clearly articulate the aim or purpose of the geographical investigation, e.g. How does the natural environment influence people and places around the world?

Generate geographical questions to investigate and plan the inquiry, to answer the question.

* What are examples of environmental factors that influence people and places?
* Why might some people’s homes be different from those where we live?
* Where are the homes? (e.g. country or city, mountainous area, desert, river)
* What are houses around the world built from? Why do you think these materials were used?
* What different shapes are houses? Why are the houses shaped like this? (e.g. climate)

Acquire data and information:

Decide what sort of information is needed to support the geographical inquiry and where the information can be sourced, e.g. internet, picture books.

Identify the geographical tools required to access information such referencing a variety of maps, accessing data, and using spatial technologies and visual representations to locate homes from around the world.

Develop a system for recording information collected during the research process.

Examples of data and information sources:

* Source a range of maps to describe the location. Use appropriate spatial technologies and visual representations to describe where the home is located.
* Collect ten photographs of houses around the world and label the natural environmental influences that surround the home which have influenced the people who live there.
* Select one place in the world to complete an in-depth study of the effect of natural environment influences on their lifestyle, especially the housing of the area. (Note: The places chosen should have distinct climatic, landform and/or landscape features for the students to research, such as Alaska, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Dubai.) Students may select a place from the information they already have attained using the photographs.

Processing geographical information

Use geographical tools to collate and review the data and information collected, for example:

* On a topographic map or satellite image as a base map, locate the location of the home in the picture and identify surrounding natural environmental features.
* Use collated photographs and information researched to construct a table to outline examples of natural environmental influences.

House location:

House description:

| Parts of the house | Describe or draw | What is it made of? | Where are the materials from? | Why would we use this (shape, strength)? |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| roof |  |  |  |  |
| walls |  |  |  |  |
| other features |  |  |  |  |

* Students collate data from their in-depth study into a table to summarise their findings.
* Create flowcharts to demonstrate understandings of the ways the environment influences people and places.
* Discuss:
	+ Does the information relate to the inquiry questions used to shape the investigation?
	+ Has sustainability been considered?

Communicating geographical information

Communicate:

* Design a home using influences of the features of the natural environment of their allocated area as a focus. Students’ designs should convey their understandings of the inquiry questions and put forward arguments and opinions about why they have chosen the material, shape and place where they will build.
* The design should include a clear explanation and justification of a specific point of view of how the environment has influences their house design.

Respond:

Describe and justify a specific point of view when answering peer questions related to the design.

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 eg characteristics of places.

Space – the significance of location and spatial distribution, and ways people organise and manage the spaces that we live in e.g. how people organise and manage spaces in their local environment.

Environment – the significance of the environment in human life, and the important interrelationships between humans and the environment e.g. how the environment influences people and places; how people influence the environment; the effect of natural disasters on the environment.

Interconnection – no object of geographical study can be viewed in isolation eg how environments influence where people live; ways people influence the characteristics of their environments.

Scale – the way that geographical phenomena and problems can be examined at different spatial levels eg environmental and human characteristics of places on local and regional scales; the effect of events on people and places locally and regionally.

Sustainability – the capacity of the environment to continue to support our lives and the lives of other living creatures into the future eg extent of environmental change; environmental management practices; sustainability initiatives.

Change – explaining geographical phenomena by investigating how they have developed over time eg changes to environmental and human characteristics of places.

Geographical inquiry skills

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

Acquiring geographical information

* develop geographical questions to investigate and plan an inquiry (ACHGS033, ACHGS040)
* collect and record relevant geographical data and information, using ethical protocols, from primary data and secondary information sources, for example, by observing, by interviewing, conducting surveys, or using maps, visual representations, statistical sources and reports, the media or the internet (ACHGS034, ACHGS041)

Processing geographical information

* evaluate sources for their usefulness (ACHGS035, ACHGS042)
* represent data in different forms, for example plans, graphs, tables, sketches and diagrams (ACHGS035, ACHGS042)
* represent different types of geographical information by constructing maps that conform to cartographic conventions using spatial technologies as appropriate (ACHGS036, ACHGS043)
* interpret geographical data and information, using digital and spatial technologies as appropriate, and identify spatial distributions, patterns and trends, and infer relationships to draw conclusions (ACHGS037, ACHGS044)

Communicating geographical information

* present findings and ideas in a range of communication forms as appropriate (ACHGS038, ACHGS045)
* reflect on their learning to propose individual and collective action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge and describe the expected effects of their proposal on different groups of people (ACHGS039, ACHGS046)

Geographical tools

The following geographical tools have been integrated into the unit.

Maps 

* large-scale maps, small-scale maps, topographic maps, flowline maps
* maps to identify location, latitude, direction, distance, map references, spatial distributions and patterns

Fieldwork 

* observing, measuring, collecting and recording data, conducting surveys and interviews
* fieldwork instruments such as measuring devices, maps, photographs, compasses, GPS

Graphs and statistics 

* pictographs, data tables, column graphs, line graphs, climate graphs
* multiple graphs on a geographical theme
* statistics to find patterns

Spatial technologies 

* virtual maps, satellite images, global positioning systems (GPS)

Visual representations 

* photographs, aerial photographs, illustrations, flow diagrams, annotated diagrams, multimedia, web tools.