Place and Liveability - Year 7 Geography

WebQuest Description: This web-quest is designed around the concept of 'Place and Liveability' and provides students a chance to explore, engage and create their own vision of an idealistic city to live in. Particular focus is placed on sustainability practices and asking students to look beyond their own needs and wants to see the greater world around them with all its diversity and wonder.

Grade Level: 6-8
Curriculum: Social Studies
Keywords: Place, Space, Liveability, Geography, Sustainability, Society
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Introduction

"You can't see the forest for the trees" What an odd thing to start with! What could that possibly mean? This is just one of the points that we will explore throughout this Web-quest, but first, perhaps it is time to see just how perceptive you really are!

Tasks

Lets have another look at that title. What do you think it means? What you see right there is exactly what your teacher was provided and asked to learn about with you. Now that we are both on the same level, we will explore this title and expectation throughout this Web-quest and come to a conclusion together. Let's begin. There are two major tasks that need to be completed by the end of this topic and it is up to you to make sure that you use your time wisely and work through your own way. Resources have been provided below for you to explore. 1) Geography Journal The &nbsp;Geography &nbsp;Journal is a great way for you to record down what you are learning and how you have gone about the process. Any thoughts, feelings, new knowledge and methods for working can be included inside and is a good way to show me what you are learning and feeling about the topic. Some days will ask you to write down some answers to specific questions, this is done to help guide you in your final project. This is a personal assignment and it is to be done by yourself during appropriate writing sessions set out daily. Key Points Date What did you do today during the lesson New things learnt Interesting points Come up with a question to explore &nbsp;2) City Building Presentation This task gives you creative control of &nbsp;designing &nbsp;your very own city! The key focus on our web-quest journey is to discover what makes a place 'liveable' and to begin to understand why people choose to live where they do and what not only humans, but what all life requires. This is the key &nbsp;question &nbsp;that you will explore and be asked to find some answers to throughout your web-quest journey. You may work in pairs for this task, be sure to share work load evenly and always discuss your options. Using what you will learn and resources provided and ones you have found, your task is to come up with a design for a city and its surrounding environment. How you go about the design is up to you however there are some points you need to consider. Key points City name City residents Basic needs - Food + Water + Power Education Employment Safety Health Services Transport Nature Energy Source(s) &nbsp;Impact on wildlife Sustainability Looking at the future - Why is your city a desirable place to live? - Is your city sustainable? - What is the &nbsp;impact &nbsp;on the Earth and surrounding environments? You will need to use an 'A2' piece of paper to draw your city and any labels and information you wish to include. &nbsp;The only restriction is that drawings must be done and filled with colour pencils. Lead pencils can be used for the original design, pens can be used for the final written information such as labels. &nbsp;Before you continue to the PROCESS page, please have a look at the EVALUATION page.

Process

How are we going to do all of this? Good question! Our Geography journey is broken down into 3 different phases that will take a total of 8 &nbsp;lessons. Each different phase will give you a chance to work your own way through different tasks and resource gathering. We will discuss each phase when we enter them, working together to reach our final destination by completing the 'City Building Presentation' and 'Geography &nbsp;Journal'. Phase 1 - Exploration Phase Lessons 1 - 3 are part of the 'Exploration Phase'. These lessons are your chance to explore and research some of the concepts and topics we have been covering to a greater extent. Each lesson has a goal and it is up to you to work through each day in the way you feel works best for you. Resources have been provided and I believe you will start to connect the dots by exploring each of these and working through the activities. Phase 2 - Construction Phase Lessons 4 - 6 are part of the 'Construction Phase'. The Construction Phase lessons are your chance to finally start planning and developing your very own city! Please spend your time wisely so that you can get the most out of the activity and include everything you want to show the rest of the class. Remember to look over what you need to cover, keep up to date with you Geography Journal and most importantly be creative! Phase 3 - Presentation Phase The final two lessons (7 + Final) are part of the 'Presentation Phase'. It's come down to this! Your poster should be complete, your Geography Journal nearly finished and now it is time to present your wonderful new city to the class. &nbsp;The details for each individual lesson can be found below!

Evaluation
In this section you will find just how your work will be looked over by me and more importantly, yourself! Below is a rubric, a tool used to help both of us see how your work will be assessed. The rubric shows you what level of understanding and effort you need to put in to pass the topic and explains what is needed from both you and your partner to succeed. Remember, two pieces of work are being assessed, the Geography Journal and the ‘City Building Project’ as well your participation, teamwork and overall engagement. Looking at what the rubric details is very important, as it shows you not only what you need to achieve but what different marking levels mean. Remember the title in our original introduction? “The factors that influence the decisions people make about where to live and their perceptions of the liveability of places.” This is the primary topic we are going to explore and as such is important that you work to understand what this means and is asking of you. What are the factors? What does ‘liveability’ mean? How do I find out? These questions and more, along with your own, will make up the web-quest and the answers you discover will help shape what your final mark will be. Look over the rubric, look at what the main points are and do your best to work to the best of your ability. If you have any questions, I am more than happy to assist you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category and Score</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City Building Poster - Understandings</td>
<td>Student appears to have insufficient knowledge about the facts the reasoning behind their choices.</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer about 75% of questions related to facts in the poster and the reasoning behind their choices.</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer most questions related to facts in the poster and the reasoning behind their choices.</td>
<td>Student can accurately answer all questions related to facts in the poster and the reasoning behind their choices.</td>
<td>/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Building Poster - Finished Product</td>
<td>No graphics made by the student are included.</td>
<td>The graphics are made by the student, but are based on the designs or ideas of others.</td>
<td>Most of the graphics used on the poster reflect student creativity in their creation and/or display.</td>
<td>The majority of graphics used on the poster reflect an exceptional degree of student creativity in their creation and/or display.</td>
<td>/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography Journal</td>
<td>One or more topics were not addressed. Little to no evidence of detailed reflection and engagement.</td>
<td>All topics are addressed, and most questions answered with 2 sentence about each. Beginning evidence of detailed reflection and engagement.</td>
<td>All topics are addressed, and most questions answered with at least 2 or more sentences about each. Good evidence of detailed reflection and engagement.</td>
<td>All topics are addressed and all questions answered with at least 2 or more sentences about each. Strong evidence of detailed reflection and engagement.</td>
<td>/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement</td>
<td>Did not use class time to focus on the projects OR often distracted others. Little to no engagement with IT resources.</td>
<td>Used some of the time well during each class period. There was some focus on getting the projects done but occasionally distracted others. Partial engagement with IT resources.</td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Usually focused on getting the projects done and never distracted others. Good engagement with IT resources.</td>
<td>Used time well during each class period. Focused on getting the projects done. Never distracted others. Excellent engagement with IT resources.</td>
<td>/4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Score</td>
<td>/16</td>
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**Conclusion**

“You can’t see the forest for the trees.” We said we would come back to this and now here we are at the end! Now that you have finished your poster and presented your city to the rest of the class, take a moment to think about this statement again. Take a look at everything around you, both here and at home and discuss the statement with your housemates. We will come together tomorrow to share our thoughts. From the very beginning we explored the world around us by first challenging our perceptions and began to open our eyes to the greater world around us. We explored what different factors contribute to why people choose to live where they do, and what different factors influence why they choose to stay or sometimes leave. Think about your own city. Who’s interests did you have in mind? It is easy to miss what is happening in the world around us, right in front of our own eyes! (Remember the moon-walking bear?) I hope you have begun to start thinking a little differently about the world and it’s societies, and feel happy enough to discuss any issues or questions with your classmates, teacher and your friends and family. This topic is only the beginning of a life long journey into perception and accountability, in future lessons (and on your own!) we will look even deeper into these geography topics, but what can we do now? First things first, this is now your chance to finish off your Geography Journal. You will be asked to answer the following questions and to record down any closing statements you wish to share. Looking back over the whole topic... Have any of your feelings about ‘Place and Liveability’ changed? What are some of the biggest new facts you have discovered? Do you look at your own lifestyle differently now? If you could change the way that people live, what would be the most important ones that need to change? Do things need to change? Can the school become more sustainable and if so, how? These are just some additional points for you to keep in your journal, many of them you have looked at and addressed before, however, the most important thing to take from this activity is the chance to reflect on our learning. Read back on your first few pages, do you think any different now that the topic is finished? Taking Action! Down below are some resources that provide some very interesting ideas and suggestions for student action. Have a look through them and discuss any options you have seen or have come up with on your own with the rest of the class. All ideas are welcome and I hope that we can all work together to make our bright, positive vision of the future a reality! When you are finished, head back to the FINAL LESSON part of the PROCESS page and check out the last activity.
This web-quest serves primarily as an introduction to the concepts presented in the 'Standards' section below. Many of the activities are able to be modified and changed to suit the needs of the learner and complement an existing unit on 'Place and Liveability'. Working with the History ACARA standards of year 7 students can be combined, particularly the exploration of ancient cultures, and help to expand on this web-quest and offer a greater level of connection and relevance to students.

Rationale
Concepts of 'Place-based education' and 'Sustainability' are some of the cornerstones of the Humanities subject strand and as such should underpin any topic that seeks to expand students minds to the world around them. This is of course a very standard statement and can easily become a very token lesson approach if not implemented wholeheartedly. It is precisely this issue of complacency that drives the creation of this web-quest and seeks to get both student and teacher alike out of their comfort zone, if you will, and open their eyes to the world around them to a much deeper level than simply just meeting some written expectations and moving on to the next topic. A theme throughout this whole web-quest is the idea of changing perspectives. Asking students to really engage with the material they are presented and reflecting on previous notions they hold on the place they live, study and interact with, is a key element found in all constructionist pedagogical approaches, seeking to leave students feeling more connected with not only their local environment but the world outside of their level of direct influence.

The ACARA link below in 'Credits' offers a direct link to both the curriculum standards and their official rationale. Several resources that aided in the formulation of the web-quests generated ideas and direction are also found within. The time required to complete this web-quest can be adapted around your additional curriculum demands, by either increasing time spent researching and designing the city, or decreasing the time spent on the 'Electro-City' component of the unit. The Checklists found in the 'Exploration Phase' are able to be removed if you wish to grant your students a greater deal of responsibility for their own time management and reaching expected outcomes. The Checklist model is in itself modeled on the 'Moodle' system used by UNISA students and should be expressed as such to students ready to move on to high school and new challenges.

Google Earth Activity

Follow this link to give you everything you need in order to undertake a successful Google Earth session. Should the KMZ file not load or students are having difficulty locating an appropriate city, perhaps suggest the school as a starting point or cities well known and relevant to the students that they would be familiar with I.e. The city of Adelaide for South Australian students. Be aware that students may very well wish to explore their own neighbourhood, which of course should not be discouraged, however be mindful of students privacy and their giving away of personal information.

Electro-City Activity

Additional time can and should be spent on introducing this activity to students. A suggested introductory lesson could include a 'class play' with the teacher at the helm, using a projector to show the game, students discussing as a class what move to make next.

Geography Journal

The geography journal is a key assessment piece that will allow you to assess any developing ideas and thoughts the student has on the presented topic. Should time constraints be an issue, avoiding homework overload should be a priority, perhaps instead incorporating the writing period into an English lesson. Additional requirements and writing styles could be implemented to cater to your English curriculum demands of the time.

City Building Poster

Have all the resources ready in advance to avoid any students wasting time by having to seek out extra pieces of paper/pencils etc. An issue of space may arise, with one student waiting for another to finish before they can add their contribution. To circumvent this, have additional paper available for students to use when drawing, that way students can draw and detail segments of the poster and then cut and paste it on to the larger poster when able. This project provides a great opportunity to link other subject areas. Bring in economics by setting a budget, cover location and transformation by asking students to create and draw items to scale, or by presenting their final poster as an advertisement or news report etc.

Zunal Web-Quest

This web-quest has been completed using the free version of Zunal. The premium version allows for a more in-depth web-quest and should you have the full version, the implementation of quizzes and additional rubrics would only bolster the web-quest learning experience.

Standards

Australian Curriculum: Humanities and Social Sciences / Geography / Year 7

Unit 2 - Place and Liveability

Geographical Knowledge and Understanding

- The factors that influence the decisions people make about where to live and their perceptions of the liveability of places (ACHGK043)
- The influence of accessibility to services and facilities on the liveability of places (ACHGK044)
- The influence of environmental quality on the liveability of places (ACHGK045)

Elaborations

- Investigating their and others' interpretations of the concept of liveability and choices about where to live, for example, connections to cultural groups, adolescent 'bright lights' attraction, retiree tree-change and families with children locating near schools, and other facilities
- Discussing the concept of liveability and the ways it is measured and comparing subjective measures such as transportation infrastructure, with subjective measures such as people's perceptions
- Comparing student access to and use of places and spaces in their local area and evaluating how this affects perceptions of liveability
- Comparing accessibility to and availability of a range of services and facilities between different types of settlements (urban, rural and remote) in Australia and other countries, for example, access to clean water, sanitation, education and health services
- Examining the role transport plays in people's ability to access services and participate in activities in the local area
- Investigating the concept of environmental quality and surveying the environmental quality of their local area and its effect on liveability

Cross-Curriculum Priorities

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures
- Asia and Australia's engagement with Asia
- Sustainability

General Capabilities

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Critical and creative thinking
- Intercultural understanding

Values

- Democratic Processes
- Social Justice
- Ecological Sustainability

Credits

Australian Curriculum for ‘Standards’ and ‘Outcomes’ -

The three different phases in the process section are based off and incorporate the Inquiry Based Learning Model (Ministry of Education, 1987)
Exploration Phase - Tuning In, Deciding Direction, Organizing Ourselves, Finding Out
Construction Phase - Sorting Out, Drawing Conclusions
Presentation Phase - Considering Social Action, Reflection and Evaluation


Key resources for understanding the concepts of 'Place and Liveability', and 'Sustainability' are as follows:

McInerney, P, Smyth, J, & Down, B 2011, 'Coming to a place near you? The politics and possibilities of a critical pedagogy of place-based education', Asia-Pacific Journal Of Teacher Education, 39, 1, pp. 3-16

Google Image Search options for stock photos

Final thanks to my tutor, Mata and the ‘Years 6-9 Professional Pathways 1’ course for the knowledge and introduction to Web-quest based learning

Other

Developing an appreciation for learning and how the world is, works and could be is paramount for a students development as a future agent of change. Compliment the web-quest with numerous points of relevance and deeper connections to the world around students throughout your whole curriculum. Most of all, make it enjoyable and don't be afraid to try something new!