

## *Lifelines: a new resource for integrating film into the classroom*

Jeana Kriewaldt and Jane Dyson



*Jeeps struggle along a nearly built dirt track to bring goods and passengers to the village. (Ross Harrison)*

**Geography teachers know well the power of using film to deepen students' knowledge and understanding of places and people. They draw from many sources including National Geographic, ABC, BBC and oft treasured David Attenborough documentaries. Full length films are also used. These can be fictional or biographical representations, like the recent film *Lion* (2016) in which Saroo Brierley's autobiographical book of his experiences, *A Long Way Home*, was adapted into the film and featured India and Tasmania.**

Students build impressions and develop geographical concepts through these sources and also through their personal viewing habits. Burgeoning sources of film clips are posted through video sharing websites, for example YouTube and TeacherTube, and are posted by people who have a range of motivations that extend from educational purposes, to sharing their local knowledge, their travel experiences, or to promoting business enterprises. As well as viewing clips, our students are increasingly making, transmitting and receiving film clips via social media, and they draw on all of these sources to build their views of the world.

Films, especially when integrated with other sources, provide insights into the characteristics of places and their inhabitants. Documentaries can prompt important questions about places, how they have changed and the implications of these changes. When the use of film is coupled with constructivist pedagogical approaches, there is significant potential to enhance geographical education by developing students' capabilities to analyse and synthesise data.

The use of film, then, offers opportunities to enhance student learning by providing implicit cultural, economic and political perspectives. Yet Geography

teachers are wisely cautious using geographical film media in relation to unfamiliar places as viewer perceptions will be influenced by what they see and this can have a strong emotional impact. Film images can endure in the viewer's memory as more "real" than other sources. Without reference to other data, film can also anchor views in which the viewer assumes that they now have deep knowledge, yet the depiction is partial. Importantly, the effects of viewing film are crafted by the film makers, and are also shaped by the viewer's prior knowledge, and how their viewing is guided. The teacher's role is to guide students to become discerning viewers of film.



*In the shadow of the Himalayas (Ross Harrison)*

# Lifelines: a new resource for integrating film into the classroom

The following two lesson plans offered here accompany and draw on a short documentary film, *Lifelines*, made by geographer Dr Jane Dyson ([www.lifelinesfilm.com](http://www.lifelinesfilm.com)). The film is based on Dr Dyson's research on youth and social change in a village in a remote part of the Indian Himalayas where she has worked since 2003. Narrated by a young man named Makar Singh, *Lifelines* explores the hopes and challenges faced by a community in transition. New opportunities in arenas of education, work, and basic communication and transport are beginning to change the aspirations of a generation of young people. *Lifelines* provides an intimate window onto one man's story of juggling responsibilities and fighting for dreams, both for himself and his community.

When used alongside the film, the specially designed lesson plans aim to spark student interest and build their understanding of life in a mountain community. They seek to encourage students to think critically about processes of social and economic change and their implications for people's everyday lives; issues that lie at the heart of geographical thought. The film has been used successfully in hundreds of schools in the UK and US, with similar lesson plans designed for their respective curricula. We are excited to be able to introduce these free resources now specifically tailored to the NSW Curriculum.

The first lesson plan, designed for the Level 7 NSW Curriculum by Tom Bourke-Finn, Kamtorn Kenny-Jones



*Hopes and dreams in the Indian Himalayas (Ross Harrison)*

and Merric Butler and adapted by Lorraine Chaffer for the Stage 4 NSW Geography Syllabus K–10, uses the shortened 10-minute version of the film as stimulus to explore liveability. The plans encourage students to explore how liveability can be altered rapidly by new infrastructural developments.

Anna Sonogan, Elizabeth Temple and Thomas Scudamore designed the second lesson plan for Level 8 of the Australian Curriculum (adapted for Stage 5 NSW), and, using the full 15-minute version of the film, invite students to consider issues of migration and urbanisation based on Makar Singh's decision to return from Delhi to his childhood home in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand. The lessons explore how recent urbanisation, even in relatively remote settings, has wide-ranging implications for individual people's everyday lives and hopes for the future. Both lesson plans build on the themes in the film by placing social and economic change at the centre of discussions.

The film and teaching resources are available for free on the Lifelines website: [www.lifelinesfilm.com](http://www.lifelinesfilm.com) and resources at: [www.lifelinesfilm.com/resources](http://www.lifelinesfilm.com/resources).

## Further reading

Sigler T, Albandoz R, (March 2014) "Beyond Representation: Film as a Pedagogical Tool in Urban Geography", *Journal of Geography*, vol. 113, no.2, pp.58–67



*Women and children watching a village ceremony after a long day in the fields (Jane Dyson)*

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**Dr Jane Dyson** is a Lecturer in Geography at the University of Melbourne. She has been working in the Indian Himalayas for over 14 years and is passionate about communicating stories from the village to broad audiences.

# *Lifelines* lesson plan 1 for Stage 4

Authors: Tom Bourke-Finn, Kamtorn Kenny-Jones and Merric Butler

Note: Amendments to accommodate the NSW Geography Syllabus by Lorraine Chaffer

<b>Subject:</b> Geography	<b>Year level:</b> Level 7
<b>Topic:</b> Place and Liveability	<b>Time required:</b> 60 mins.
<b>Lesson summary:</b> Students will watch the short version of the <i>Lifelines</i> video directed by Jane Dyson about life in the Himalayas and identify the factors that influence liveability in the Himalayas. Students will, by comparing and contrasting the liveability of their own location, be able to assess and evaluate the liveability of the Himalayas.	
<b>Curriculum links</b> Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>investigate factors influencing perceptions of the liveability of places.</li><li>Investigate the influence of accessibility to services and facilities on the liveability of places</li></ul> <p>Citation: from the NSW Geography Syllabus K-10, 2015 <a href="http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/geography-k10/">http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/geography-k10/</a></p>	
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b> <b>Knowledge</b> Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>identify factors that contribute to the liveability of places</li><li>explain what factors make their home liveable</li><li>explain what factors contribute to making the Himalayan mountain community liveable</li><li>compare and contrast the liveability of the Himalayan mountain community and their own home</li><li>identify what features might make this location more liveable.</li></ul> <b>Skills</b> Students will develop skills of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>listening to other students' ideas and opinions</li><li>communicating ideas as part of a collaborative learning group.</li></ul> <b>Values</b> Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>respect other students' opinions and ideas whilst participating in classroom discussion and group activity</li><li>respect the values and needs of another culture through the watching of the <i>Lifelines</i> video.</li></ul>	
Resources required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Atlas or access to Google Earth</li><li>Graphic Organiser worksheet</li><li><i>Lifelines</i> video – <a href="http://www.lifelinesfilm.com/">www.lifelinesfilm.com/</a></li></ul> (Optional) A transcript of the film is available to support students who will benefit by accessing the text as well as viewing the film.	



## LESSON OUTLINE

Teacher guidelines	Activities	Timing
<p><b>Introduction</b></p> <p>Teacher introduces the background to the Himalayas and asks the students to locate the Himalayas in their atlas – or using Google Earth – and describe the location.</p> <p>Teacher introduces the <i>Lifelines</i> video and asks students to think about what features contribute to liveability of this location.</p>	<p>Students listen to teacher instruction.</p> <p>Students locate the Himalayas and describe the location.</p>	5–10 mins
<p><b>Development</b></p> <p>Teacher show the <i>Lifelines</i> video.</p> <p>Teacher introduces the graphic organiser worksheet task.</p> <p>Differentiation: Teacher provides a selection of discussion cards to provide extra contextual information for students who will benefit from a greater challenge.</p>	<p>Students watch the video.</p> <p>Students complete the worksheet task. This can be completed individually or in pairs.</p>	<p>15 mins</p> <p>20 mins</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p> <p>Teacher conducts a class discussion with students exploring the liveability of the Himalayas compared to their own location based on their worksheet responses.</p> <p>Focus on the following questions:</p> <p>Explain why the film is called <i>Lifelines</i>?</p> <p>Which lifelines does the film refer to?</p> <p>Resources (road, electricity, water) – how do these represent lifelines?</p> <p>Are lifelines the key to liveability? What are your lifelines? And how are they different from those of a teenager living in an extreme mountain environment?</p> <p>What is at the heart of liveability?</p>	<p>Students will participate in a class discussion in which the teacher uses “cold calling”.</p>	10–15 mins



## Appendix A – Graphic organiser worksheet

Liveability features	Example/s in the Himalayas	Example/s in your local area
Roads	Evident in the Himalayas video. However, poorly constructed with limited connections with other facilities/accessibility to important towns and resources.	Evident in local area. Highly accessible/connected in local area allowing for efficient transport.  Roads are well maintained and constructed. For example, the main street in my town connects with a hospital facility and shopping precinct.
Access to food – own produce /supermarket/ shop/market		Multiple options to shop for produce. For example, supermarket, bakery and Sunday markets.
School/Education		
Hospitals/Healthcare		
Community support		
Transport		
Employment – paid jobs/ shared labour		
Infrastructure		

## *Lifelines* lesson plan 2 for Stage 5

Authors: Anna Sonogan, Elizabeth Temple and Thomas Scudamore

Note: Amendments to accommodate the NSW Geography Syllabus by Lorraine Chaffer

<b>Subject:</b> Geography	<b>Year Level:</b> Stage 5
<b>Topic:</b> Changing Places	<b>Time required:</b> 60 min
<b>Differentiation:</b> The transcript of this film can be provided to students who will benefit from accessing written text as well as viewing the film.	
<b>Rationale</b> This lesson plan uses the film <i>Lifelines</i> as a stimulus for students to consider the social and economic opportunities offered by urbanisation. Students will consider push and pull factors of rural-urban migration, particularly those faced by Makar Singh.	
<b>Curriculum link</b> Students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>investigate the causes and consequences of urbanisation with reference to ONE Asian country</li></ul> Citation: from the NSW Geography Syllabus K-10, 2015 <a href="http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/geography-k10/">http://syllabus.nesa.nsw.edu.au/hsie/geography-k10/</a>	
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b> <b>Knowledge</b> Students will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>identify the connections between urbanisation and economic and social opportunities</li><li>consider how urbanisation has affected Makar and his family</li><li>evaluate push and pull factors that have influenced Makar and his family's decision as to where, how and why they live where they do.</li></ul> <b>Skills</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communication skills in class discussion / think-pair-share activity</li><li>Analysing of the <i>Lifelines</i> video in relation to urbanisation.</li></ul> <b>Values</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Respect for diversity of values and perceptions of urbanisation.</li></ul>	
<b>Focus Question</b> How does the film <i>Lifelines</i> show the social and economic influences of urbanisation on Makar and his family?	
<b>Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Atlas</li><li>Lifelines video clip <a href="http://www.lifelinesfilm.com/">www.lifelinesfilm.com/</a> (use the long version of the film)</li></ul>	

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Structure	Groupings	Activities
Context (10 min)	Individually	Have students locate India and the Himalayan mountain range. Mark Indian state of Uttarakhand on a simple sketch map of India.
Film (15 min)	Whole class	Show the film Lifelines to the class. Watch the full version. Pause after key moments (every 5 mins) to draw attention to where Makar lives now, where he has lived in the past.
Think – pair – share (10 min)	Pairs	How has urbanisation affected Makar?
Push and pull factors (15 min)	Pairs / individually	Define push and pull factors. Identify push and pull examples from Lifelines.  What are the social and economic opportunities offered by urban areas?  List Makar's personal push/pull factors. What drew Makar to live in the city? Why did he return?
Reflection (10 min)	Whole class	<b>Discussion</b>  What economic opportunities were offered to Makar as a result of urbanisation?  What social opportunities were offered to Makar as a result of urbanisation?  What were examples of the push and pull factors influencing Makar?  What does the future hold for rural places? For example, how might improvements in roads, Internet connectivity and mobile phone technology bring the perceived benefits of urban places to rural places?

## Assessment / Feedback

Informal:

- participation in class discussion
- completion of class activities in student's workbooks
- participation in think-pair-share group activities.

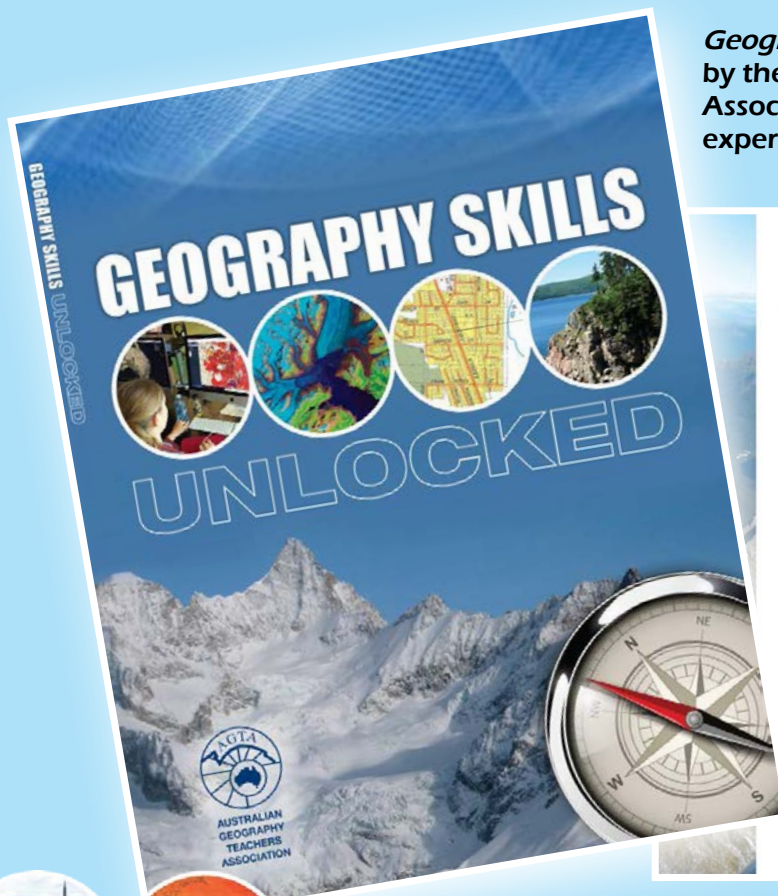




## AGTA ANNOUNCES AN ESSENTIAL NEW GEOGRAPHY RESOURCE

# Geography Skills Unlocked is an exciting new skills book for Australian secondary schools

*Geography Skills Unlocked* is published by the Australian Geography Teachers Association and written by a team of experienced Geography teachers.



## Contents

Preface

### 1 Inquiring, questioning, investigating

Inquiring  
Investigating in geography  
What kinds of inquiries do geographers make?  
The links between inquiries and skills

### 2 Geographic Inquiry – the stages

Choosing, questioning and planning  
Collecting, recording, evaluating and representing  
Interpreting, analysing and concluding  
Communicating  
Reflecting and responding  
Organising data in an inquiry  
Mind mapping  
Concept diagrams

### 3 Thinking Skills

A list of thinking skills  
A classification of skills  
A hierarchy of thinking skills  
Qualifies thinking  
Future thinking  
Thinking skills in inquiry

### 4 The elements of maps

Map symbols  
Direction and bearings  
Scale  
Distance  
Locating features with grid coordinates  
Latitude and longitude  
Time zones

### 5 The many types of maps

Maps around us  
Types of maps  
Maps of the world  
Physical maps  
Thematic maps  
Topographic maps  
Regional maps  
Political maps  
Geological maps

### 6 Digital Maps

Generalised techniques  
Processes of digital maps  
The future of digital maps

### 7 Working with topographic maps

Topographic maps as tools  
Representing topographic  
Relief and gradient  
Locating features  
Measuring distance and area  
Cross-sections  
Contours, elevation and spot  
Height – reading and  
Interpreting – working with  
Contours – at a glance  
Other topographic maps

### 8 Working with photographs

Reading the photo  
Ground photos  
Aerial photos  
Using your own digital photos

### 9 Working with statistics and graphs

Tables and graphs in text  
Bar charts  
Line graphs  
Complex bar charts  
Dispersed bar charts  
Histograms  
Line graphs  
Multiple line graphs  
Continuous line graphs

### 10 Working with diagrams

Diagrams as tools  
Bar charts  
Venn diagrams  
Flow charts  
Concept maps  
Change over time  
Flow diagrams

### 11 Using technology

Techniques as tools  
The internet  
Spatial technologies  
Applications of spatial technologies  
Network tools  
The future of geographic tools  
A technical action plan

### 12 Fieldwork

A technical action plan  
Importance of fieldwork

### 13 Using virtual field trips

Importance of fieldwork

### 14 Putting inquiry and skills together

Coaching and creating inquiry questions  
Using inquiry and skills  
Index of maps for topics in the Australian Curriculum: Geography  
Glossary  
Index

## KEY FEATURES:

- ➔ Contents aligned to the inquiry and skills-based requirements of *Australian Curriculum: Geography*
- ➔ An engaging, easy to navigate design
- ➔ A student friendly approach with step-by-step explanations, descriptions and worked examples
- ➔ A focus on emerging technologies used to gather, analyse and present geographical data
- ➔ *GeoSkills* and *GeoInquiry* activities that scaffold student learning
- ➔ A wealth of stimulus material including a diverse range of maps, graphs, aerial photographs, satellite images, diagrams and photographs
- ➔ Examples drawn from each Australian state and territory with additional international material
- ➔ Key terms explained in embedded glossary boxes

*Geography Skills Unlocked* will be published mid 2016 and will be available for purchase via the AGTA website: [www.agta.asn.au/Products](http://www.agta.asn.au/Products)