

FIELDWORK: YEAR 12 URBAN PLACES

MELBOURNE

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This year marks the 10th anniversary of running a Melbourne fieldtrip for my Year 12 students studying the topic Urban Places. I originally decided to focus on Melbourne as a point of difference as most schools study Sydney. It was also around that time Jetstar started offering \$49 dollar flights between Newcastle and Melbourne, so it made it cost effective.

I usually go at the beginning of Term 1 as there are not too many assessment tasks on for other subjects and there are good accommodation deals because after the January Tennis rush, Melbourne is less busy for tourists.

The focus of the trip is on the urban renewal projects occurring in the Docklands – which is the “suburb” we concentrate on as are our case study examining the urban dynamics of change.

A typical itinerary looks like this.....

	Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday
5am	Students meet at airport	8am	Breakfast	8am	Breakfast
6am	Flight departs	9am	The Dock – library tour	9am	Checkout of hotel
8am	Charter bus to hotel	10.30	Big Issue Classroom	10am	Melbourne Zoo
9am	Check in to hotel	12.30	Port Phillip EcoCentre		
10am	Docklands Tour (teacher directed fieldwork activities)	2.30	GIS workshop RMIT	2pm	Ceres Environment Park
12pm	Yarra River Cruise	4pm	Places Victoria Presentation	5pm	Charter bus to airport
2pm	Eureka Skydeck				
5pm	Return to hotel	5.30	Return to hotel		
7pm	Dinner Lygon St	7pm	Dinner Crown Casino		

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Source: <https://www.australiaday.vic.gov.au/whats-on/getting-around/>

Activities and Syllabus Links

Docklands tour – students observe and collect data in the Docklands, comparing such things as the flow of people and traffic in the different precincts. They also create their own maps and look at different aspects of culture of place.

This directly relates to these Learn to statements from the syllabus:

- collecting and analysing urban field data
- describing patterns, linkages, networks and change, using maps of large cities and other urban areas
- constructing and interpreting choropleth maps
- synthesising and evaluating fieldwork data about the dynamics of change in a country town or suburb



Yarra River Cruise

The cruise gives students a different perspective of the Docklands as gives some insight into the industrial and maritime history of the site. There is some evidence of urban decay here, but each year I see less and less.

Eureka Skydeck gives an excellent visual and spatial overview of the city, CBD and the Docklands. It is where I've often seen the "aha" moments when students can make the connection between urban theory and actual patterns.

Visual representations of these syllabus points are covered in detail at this site:

- spatial patterns of advantage and disadvantage, wealth and poverty, ethnicity
- changing economic character, nature and location of residential land, commercial and industrial development
- culture of place as expressed in the architecture, streetscape, heritage architecture, noise, colour, street life, energy, vitality and lifestyles

The Dock – Library

"The Library at The Dock is a community hub enabling people to come together to create, explore, connect, belong, learn and participate. The library is Australia's first 6-Star Green Star rated public building and is made from engineered timber and reclaimed hardwood. (from Places Victoria website)

Left: View of Melbourne overlooking Flinders Street Station, Federation Square and the city. Photo: L Chaffer

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This is an excellent example of sustainability and directly relates to the syllabus point:

- growth, development, future trends and ecological sustainability



Source: <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionImages/exterior-library-dock.jpg>

The Big Issue Classroom

An excellent and confronting experience for students who get to see first-hand the impacts of homelessness on individuals in the inner city. They participate in a practical workshop and then have the chance to listen to a homeless person about their experiences. This is one of the most powerful interactions I have witnessed as teacher and have often had students (and myself) been visibly upset by some horrendous stories of life on the streets.

This directly relates to:

- spatial patterns of advantage and disadvantage, wealth and poverty, ethnicity

Port Phillip Eco-Centre

At this site we investigate sustainability, have a tour of this retro fitted ecohouse and the opportunity to work with Neil Blake, founder of the BayKeepers Program, which is an additional case study for the Ecosystems at Risk topic. Neil is a true eco-warrior who has worked for many years to keep Port Phillip Bay in good health for current and future generations, by combining projects of practical action, advocacy and education. There is an excellent documentary "BayKeepers" available for sale which is essential pre-fieldwork viewing for students.



Source: <http://www.ecocentre.com/>

Syllabus links:

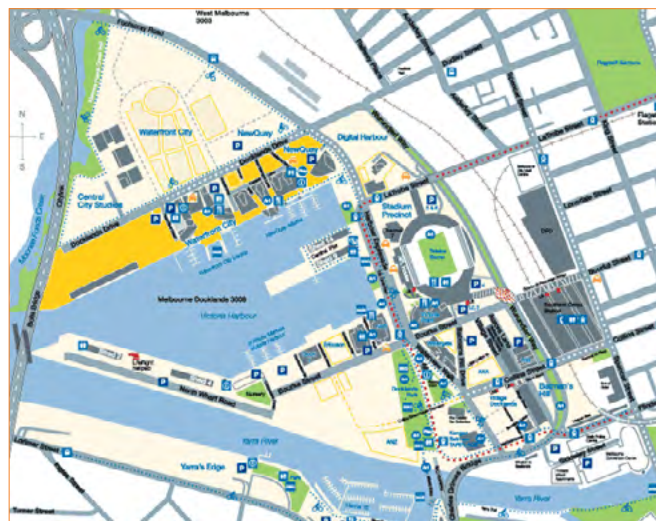
- future trends and ecological sustainability
- evaluates environmental management strategies in terms of ecological sustainability
- evaluates the impacts of, and responses of people to, environmental change

RMIT – GIS Workshops

The school of Geospatial Science offers free workshops for senior students. This is an excellent opportunity for students to see the vocational relevance of Geography in the workplace and also an opportunity to use the sophisticated equipment and computer programs that we don't generally have access to in schools.

Syllabus links:

- identify geographical methods applicable to and useful in the workplace such as urban planning
- using GIS, satellite imagery and aerial photography
- analysing maps including topographic, cadastral and land use maps
- collecting and analysing urban field data



https://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/Documents/Maps/Docklands_map.pdf

Places Victoria (now called Development Victoria)

Urban planners give students a detailed overview of the Docklands project, looking at all aspects of planning and implementation of such a large project. A highlight of this is the fantastic timber scale model which shows what has been built so far and what projects are still to be implemented.

Syllabus links:

- describing patterns, linkages, networks and change, using maps of large cities and other urban areas
- synthesising and evaluating fieldwork data about the dynamics of change in a country town or suburb

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- the relevance of a geographical understanding of urban places to a particular vocation such as: urban and regional planning etc.

Ceres Community Environment Park

Ceres is a sustainability centre and urban farm located in Brunswick – a 20 minute tram ride for the city. It operates like a NSW EEC whereby staff run a variety of incursions and excursions. We have participated in a number of their workshops relating to sustainability, waste management, energy, water and biodiversity. These programs are very hands on and engaging for students.

Syllabus links:

- The relevance of a geographical understanding of urban places to a particular vocation such as: urban and regional planning, designing effective city infrastructure, planning the delivery of social services, monitoring environmental quality and sustainability, preserving heritage sites.
- growth, development, future trends and ecological sustainability

Map of the Ceres Community Environment Park



https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g3250505-d3333821-i115039885-CERES_Community_Environment_Park-Brunswick_East_Moreland_Greater_Melbou.html



Melbourne Zoo

This is always one of the favourite activities of the trip. We have a one hour structured presentation by staff on endangered species programs and then students get to spend some free time in the zoo. This year we were lucky enough to witness the first ever surviving batch of newly spawned Southern Corroboree Tree Frogs bred in captivity.

Syllabus links:

- evaluates environmental management strategies in terms of ecological sustainability H6 evaluates the impacts of, and responses of people to, environmental change
- impacts due to human induced modifications to energy flows, nutrient cycling, and relationships between biophysical components
- human impacts (both positive and negative) – traditional and contemporary management practices.

It is a huge effort in terms of planning and covering classes, but a fieldwork trip such as this is invaluable to help students see the link between theory and practice and to develop their spatial skills and love of geography.



Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/eb/Melbourne_Zoo%2C_Victoria%2C_Australia_-22Jan2011.jpg