Literacy in Geography

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Literacy in Geography

• Literacy encompasses the knowledge and skills students need to access, understand, analyse and evaluate information, make meaning, express thoughts and emotions, present ideas and opinions, interact with others and participate in activities at school and in their lives beyond school. (ACARA, 2013, Australian Curriculum: Literacy)
Literacy – the Australian Curriculum

• The Australian Curriculum describes in detail the literary continuum through which students move, learning to comprehend and compose texts by listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing and creating.

• Geography can, and should, make a major contribution to student literacy.
Literacy

• **Texts** for a subject

• **Composing and Comprehending** Texts

• **Listening, reading, viewing, speaking, writing, creating**
Literacy continuum

• Comprehending texts
  • Listening
  • Reading
  • Viewing

• Composing texts
  • Speaking
  • Writing
  • Creating
Elements of Literacy

- **Text knowledge** – Use knowledge of text structures and cohesion
- **Grammar knowledge** – Use knowledge of sentence structures; Be able to express opinions
- **Word Knowledge** – Understand subject-specific and general vocabulary
- **Visual knowledge** – Understand how visual elements create meaning
Texts in Geography

- maps (paper and digital)
- three-dimensional models, including the globe of the world
- diagrams
- statistical tables and graphs (numerical data displays)
- photographs (paper and digital)
- factual descriptions
- explanations
- fictional stories (including geographical concepts)
- interviews
- field study reports
- persuasive texts and arguments.
Texts

• Maps – paper and digital
Texts

Mental (self composed) maps
Texts – picture maps
Texts

• Models and globes
Texts

• Diagrams
Climatic Graph for Albany

- Av. Precip (mm)
- Av. Temp (°C)

Month:
- Jan
- Feb
- Mar
- Apr
- May
- Jun
- Jul
- Aug
- Sep
- Oct
- Nov
- Dec

Y-Axis:
- 0
- 5
- 10
- 15
- 20
- 25

X-Axis:
- Jan
- Feb
- Mar
- Apr
- May
- Jun
- Jul
- Aug
- Sep
- Oct
- Nov
- Dec

Graph shows the average precipitation and temperature for each month in Albany.
Origin of Australian visitors to Byron Bay
2011 (source MacMillan Atlas)

- Queensland: 41%
- Sydney: 22%
- Regional NSW: 20%
- Victoria: 12%
- ACT: 1%
- Other places: 4%
Texts: photographs
Texts
Descriptions of places and travels
Graphic comics
Texts

- Fact
- Fiction
Texts

Fun books
Texts

• Field reports
Texts

- Interviews
Try to list some of the texts you would want your students to comprehend and create
Sorting relevance from irrelevance

• A sample of thought provokers from GeogSpace

• Thought provoker Question 1: Why did Sandy and Chris go to Bali for their holiday?
# Literacy continuum

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<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Expressing and developing geographical concepts</td>
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## Literacy continuum

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Key questions for developing language skills in Geographic Inquiry

- What is it? – naming – new vocabulary
- Where is it? – locating – prepositions of place
- What is it like? – describing and comparing
- How did it come to be like this? – sequencing an explanation
- How is it changing and what might happen next? – predicting, hypothesising, debating
Key questions for developing language skills in Geographic Inquiry (continued)

• How do I feel about it? – using expressive language to convey aesthetic responses
• What do I think should happen? – analysing, consulting, negotiating, recommending

• Source: Geographical Association UK (Liz Lewis)
Composing texts

- A range of genres

- Scaffolding writing, speaking, creating in a range of genres

(Example of scaffold for composing story, and a written story with prompts)
Composing a variety of genres in Geography

• Descriptions
• Explanations
• Field and inquiry reports
• Data representation on map (paper and GIS)
• Data representation with diagrams (paper and digital)
• Data representation using photographs (paper and digital)
• Travelogues
• Letters
• Newspaper articles
• Persuasive speaking and writing
• Videos
Literacy continuum - Geography

- Word knowledge – vocabulary
- Grammar knowledge – word groupings
- Text knowledge – writing
- Text knowledge – reading
- Text knowledge – speaking
- Text knowledge – listening
- Visual knowledge – maps
- Visual knowledge – photographs
Discussion

• List some examples of each of these texts in Geography

• Give an example of:
  • Comprehending that text
  • Composing that text
Literacy

- Vocabulary and Grammar
- Reading
- Listening
- Viewing
- Writing
- Speaking
- Creating
A small sample of the developing vocabulary through Geography:

- Foundation: place, earth, globe, map, plan
- Year 1: weather, seasons, natural, managed, constructed
- Year 2: continents, ocean, equator, north and south poles, tropics, hemispheres
- Year 3: state, territory, border, capital city, mountain range, plain, river valley, desert
- Year 4: coastal, river basin, alpine, raw materials, wastes, rainforest, savannah
- Year 5: topography, relief, environmental change, residential, retail, industrial, hazard
- Year 6: diversity, life expectancy, per capita income, South Asia, indigenous
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<td>Using geographical terminology. Spelling terms correctly. Expressing and developing ideas clearly.</td>
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<td>Knowing and using the elements of maps. Recognizing and using statistical data forms. Knowing and using the elements of photography.</td>
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<td>Interpreting, analysing, evaluating, concluding within the inquiry approach. Creating texts – explanations, reports, recommendations</td>
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<td>Expressing opinions and points of view.</td>
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Text knowledge - Writing

• Types of writing in Geography
  – Observational (fieldwork, photographs, video etc)
  – Descriptive
  – Explanatory
  – Interpreting
  – Analysing
  – Evaluating
Text knowledge - Reading

• Examples of different types of reading used in Geography
  – Factual
  – Descriptive (eg travel)
  – Fiction (using geographical concepts)
  – Graphic books
  – Diagrams
Text knowledge - Speaking

• Examples used in Geography
  – Group discussion
  – Presentations to class
Extracting information from fictional stories

• Extract from GeogSpace Year 5 Story “The GeoSix and the bushfire”
Developing analytical skills

• Analysing written factual information

• Read through the information about latitude and longitude.
Text knowledge - Listening

• Examples used in Geography:
  – Other children
  – Presentations to class
  – Videos/clips
  – Stories
Visual Knowledge - Maps

• Types of visual knowledge for maps:
  – Map conventions
    • Colours
    • Symbols
    • Lettering and labels
    • Scales
    • Grids and location
  – Types of Patterns
Speaking and listening in a ‘literacy centre’

- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00krIB6iyGY
Maps from models
Maps – 3D
Texts:
more complex maps
Transforming information

• *Instructions from a pirate*

• Draw a map based on this letter, making sure all the instructions are used accurately
Visual knowledge - Photographs

• Comprehending
• Analysing
• Discriminating
• Predicting
• Empathising
Geography experiences that are useful for language development:

• maps (on paper)
• digital interactive maps
• atlases (both print and digital)
• photographs
• globes of the world
• field trips to new locations
• guest speakers
• websites
• email contact with distant children
• story books (imaginative and informative)
• films and videos
• websites with interactive games
• interviews and surveys
• inquiries into issues
• reports of findings.
Discussion

• Developing Literacy in Geography
  – What ways will you use ‘geographical texts’ to develop literacy?
  – What ‘texts’ will your students comprehend and create?
The early years – conversations and play

• Using play as a tool to encourage talking about place and space.
• Tapping into children's direct experience of new and familiar places
• Imagining places in stories, drawing them and modeling them
• Developing mental maps of the local area and the rest of the world
Middle and Upper Primary

• Geography uses not only written factual material, but much visual filmed material, photographs, maps (including digital interactive maps on the computer), globes of the world, field trips to new locations, guest speakers, websites with interactive games, interviews and surveys, inquiries into issues and reports of the findings.
Comprehending texts
Reading for understanding (SQ3R)

- **Survey** – title, headings, introduction
- **Question** – think about the survey; turn them into questions
- **Read** – with questions in mind
- **Recite** – answer questions, rereading where necessary
- **Review** – Which questions have been answered? What new questions?
Teaching comprehension

• Engaging – questioning, brainstorming
• Advance organisers – templates, focus
• Active reading – composing headings, underlining, developing questions, paraphrasing, linking ideas, representing diagrammatically, making predictions.
• Processing ideas – summarise, tabulate, connect
• Monitor – self-evaluation, new ideas, next.
IMSCI approach to teaching genres

- **Inquiry** – teacher focuses on particular genres
- **Modelling** - teacher models the construction from planning to drafting, revising, editing
- **Shared writing or construction** – teacher and students share
- **Collaborative writing or construction** – students work in pairs
- **Independence** – students refine knowledge and skills
  - Read (2010)
SA Education Dept guide

• 6 levels of Literacy from Foundation to Year 10

• Description
• Explanation
• Data representation
• Persuasive
• Inquiry report
• Oral reflections
• Proposals for action