

Geography

LESSON OBJECTIVE	In this lesson, students focus on how global warming is leading to increasingly extreme weather conditions in Australia.
LANGUAGE REFERENCE	Unit 5: popular; Comparatives and superlatives, less ... than, (not) enough Unit 6: climate change, definitely, desert, drought, flood, get worse, global warming, impact, island, level, probably, rainforest, sea; be going to and will; First conditional

WARMER

Write the following words related to Australia on the board.

Canberra • didgeridoo • Hugh Jackman
desert • Great Barrier Reef • Sydney • kangaroo
Aborigine • Nicole Kidman • Uluru
Captain James Cook • koala

Tell students they are the answers to a quiz that they are going to do to find out how much they know about Australia. Divide the class into teams of three or four and read out the quiz questions. Students confer in their teams and write down the answers. They can always guess if they are not sure. The winning team is the one with the most correct answers.

To make the make quiz shorter, reduce to six or eight questions and answers instead.

- 1 What is the largest city in Australia?
- 2 Which Australian animal can jump high?
- 3 What is the most common geographical feature in Australia?
- 4 Who explored Australia in the 18th century?
- 5 What is the capital of Australia?
- 6 What is a native Australian called?
- 7 Which Australian actor is known for his role in the *Wolverine* films?
- 8 Which Australian animal eats the leaves of the eucalyptus tree?
- 9 What is a famous Australian musical instrument?
- 10 Which famous Australian landmark is off the north east coast of the country?
- 11 Which Australian actor has won an Oscar?
- 12 Which famous Australian landmark is in the middle of the desert?

Answers

- 1 Sydney 2 kangaroo 3 desert
- 4 Captain James Cook 5 Canberra
- 6 Aborigine 7 Hugh Jackman 8 koala
- 9 didgeridoo 10 Great Barrier Reef
- 11 Nicole Kidman 12 Uluru

- 1 Students look at the photos relating to Australia and discuss what they see. Ask if any students have been to Australia or would like to go.

Answers

- 1 Photo A is Uluru, a famous rock formation in the desert region of central Australia.
Photo B shows Sydney harbour with the city's famous Opera House and Harbour Bridge.
- 2 Photo C shows a drought, which is caused by a period of hot weather with little or no rainfall.
Photo D shows a bushfire, which is caused by a period of hot, dry weather often followed by a storm where lightning can strike the trees and high winds can cause fires to spread.
Photo E shows a storm with heavy rainfall and very windy conditions. It is probably a cyclone, which is a storm that develops over the ocean in tropical areas in the southern hemisphere.
- 2 Students read the text and discuss the geography of Australia and how its features can result in very different climatic conditions for the country.

Answers

Australia is a land of extremes with inland desert regions, a large area of coastline and tropical rainforests in the north. Temperatures can be very hot in the desert, and sometimes very cold in the most southern parts of the country. In the northern tropical regions, there can be a lot of rainfall. So the country experiences both very dry and very wet and very hot and very cold conditions.

Before reading the text again, write the words in the *Vocabulary focus* box on the board and ask students to find them in the text. Pre-teach some of the more complex words if necessary.

- 3 Students read the text again and choose the correct answers.

Answers

- 1 a tropical 2 temperatures 3 droughts
- 4 high winds 5 sea level

- 4 Focus the students' attention on the dates in the timeline and ask them to scan the text to find the correct answers.

Answers

- 1 drought 2 rainfall 3 bushfire 4 cyclone
- 5 heatwave

- 5 In pairs, students discuss the questions. Elicit answers from the class. Explain to students that Australia is currently taking the following steps to help reduce the impact of climate change on the country:
- monitoring and reducing greenhouse gas emissions
 - using more renewable energy, e.g. solar, wind, geothermal and wave energy
 - adapting to climate change, e.g. planting more trees, saving water, etc.

?? DID YOU KNOW?

Direct the students' attention to the *Did you know?* box. Read the interesting facts about Australia. Ask students to name other countries they know of that have summer when countries in the northern hemisphere are having winter. Do students know the population of their country, and perhaps whether there may be more of a species of animal living there than humans? Finally, discuss any natural disasters that their country may be prone to. What is the worst natural disaster the country has seen? Was it the result of extreme weather or other natural events, such as an earthquake?

PROJECT

- 1 Divide the class into groups of six. Each group should choose a region of Australia from the list to research. Explain that the continent of Australia is divided into one territory – Northern Territory – and six states. In the list, Victoria and Tasmania are grouped together as these are the two smallest states and are both in the southeast of the country and so represent a similar geographic area. If possible, show students where these regions of Australia are on a map. The purpose of this project is to gather information about Australia as a whole to find out how the different regions compare and contrast in terms of climate and extreme weather conditions.
- 2 Each group researches the information about their region using books or the Internet. Students should gather as much information as possible and collect photos or illustrations where possible to support their findings. They should also include any other information they consider relevant to the project.
- 3 The group decides how to present their information to the rest of the class. Allow some time for class preparation and set deadlines for the presentations. After hearing all the information about the different regions of Australia, have a class discussion about which parts of the country experience the most extreme weather conditions. Why is this? Is it a direct result of the climate and/or geographical features of the region?