





Wimmera Catchment Region

Introduction

'Water in the world focuses on water as an example of a renewable environmental resource. It develops students' understanding of the concept of environment, including the ideas that the environment is the product of a variety of processes, that it supports and enriches human and other life in different ways and that the environment has its specific hazards.' (Victorian Curriculum). In a semi-arid region such as the Wimmera, access to a reliable water supply has shaped the people and landscapes of the region for millennia.

The <u>Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (CMA)</u> is tasked with building 'a healthy Wimmera catchment where a resilient landscape supports a sustainable and profitable community.' A <u>key component</u> of this task is to work with indigenous peoples of the region in 'managing Country and contributing to the health and wellbeing of the environment and the community.'

The natural environment

The Wimmera region is characterised by the flatness of the landscape, broken in the south by the Grampians range which gives rise to many of the region's rivers and by Mount Arapiles, an outlier of the range. The Wimmera's waterways (Barringgi Gadyin) are oases in a relatively dry landscape. Major catchments include the Wimmera Basin and the eastern part of the Millicent Coast Basin. The Wimmera contains 25% of Victoria's wetlands which are predominantly in the southwest of the region. This <u>area</u> also contains a valuable groundwater resource, supporting a significant irrigation and grazing industry.



Figure 1. View from Mount Arapiles.





The human environment

The Wimmera is home to more than 60,000 people, a number that is slowly increasing. Several First Nations people groups, the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk Peoples (together known as the Wotjobaluk Peoples), maintain a deep and continuing connection to the landscapes of the region. In 2005, these people groups were successful in achieving a native title claim for the Wimmera region, the first such determination in Victoria. In the 2021 census, 1.8% of the population of the region (1,065 people) identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.



Figure 2. Silo Art at Sheep Hills, featuring elders Uncle Ron Marks and Aunty Regina Hood, along with a young boy and a young girl.





Year 7 Curriculum Links

'<u>Water in the world</u> focuses on water as an example of a renewable environmental resource. It develops students' understanding of the concept of environment, including the ideas that the environment is the product of a variety of processes, that it supports and enriches human and other life in different ways and that the environment has its specific hazards.' (Victorian Curriculum). This includes an examination of 'the spiritual, economic, cultural and aesthetic value of water for people, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples'.

Lesson number	1	2	3
Geographical concepts and skills			
Explain processes that influence the characteristics of places	•	•	•
Identify, analyse and explain spatial distributions and patterns and identify and			
explain their implications			
Identify, analyse and explain interconnections within places and between places			
and identify and explain changes resulting from these interconnections			
Collect and record relevant geographical data and information from useful primary			
and secondary sources, using ethical protocols			
Select and represent data and information in different forms, including by			
constructing appropriate maps at different scales that conform to cartographic			•
conventions, using digital and spatial technologies as appropriate			
Analyse maps and other geographical data and information using digital and spatial			
technologies as appropriate, to develop identifications, descriptions, explanations	•	•	
and conclusions that use geographical terminology			
Geographical knowledge			
Classification of environmental resources and the forms that water takes as a			
resource			
Ways that flows of water connect places as they move through the environment			
and the ways this affects places			
The quantity and variability of Australia's water resources compared with those in			
other continents and how water balance can be used to explain these differences			
Nature of water scarcity and the role of humans in creating and overcoming it,			
including studies drawn from Australia and West Asia and/or North Africa			
The spiritual, economic, cultural and aesthetic value of water for people, including			
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and peoples of the Asia region, that	•	•	•
influence the significance of places			
Causes of an atmospheric or hydrological hazard and its impacts on places, and			
human responses to it to minimise harmful effects on places in the future			





Lessons' objectives and outcomes

This unit is intended to follow on from the unit 'Liveability in the Wimmera region.' By the end of this third unit, students will understand the ways in which water is an integral part of both the natural and human environments. They will understand the various ways that the First Nations peoples of the Wimmera region of Northwest Victoria have used and managed the water resources in the past and the present.

Through a range of geographic activities, they will learn about the water resources of the Wimmera region. They will also develop an understanding of the ways in which the perception, use and management of these resources have changed over time.

Key skills

Throughout the lessons, specific step-by-step instructions are provided for particular geographic skills. These include:

- Using a GIS map
- Accessing historic images on Google Earth
- Using a GIS Story Map
- Accessing Steet View images on Google Earth
- Constructing a sketch map

Key literacy vocabulary

- Registered Aboriginal Party
- Barringgi Gadyin
- Semi-arid
- Arid
- Endorheic river system
- Renewable resource
- Non-renewable resource
- Billabong
- Missions
- Environmental watering
- Cultural Flows





Students will be introduced to the indigenous groups of the Wimmera region. They will learn about the importance of water importance of water importance of water importance of water introduced to the indigenous and the introduced to the introduce	au/explore australia tle
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importance of water students need to be Gadyin https://www.firstp	
to these groups. introduced to the The next step is to 'zoom into' the Wimmera region. The first tions.vic.gov.au/wo	
They will also be human and physical task in the lesson plan introduces students to the five people <u>jaadwa-jadawadjali</u>	
introduced to one landscapes of the groups of the Wimmera region and the correct language to and-jupagulk-peop	
of the creation Wimmera region. use when naming these groups. <u>wotjobaluk-nations</u>	
stories that link First recognition-settlem	<u>nent-</u>
Nations peoples to Lesson 2 in this The second task requires students to focus on the <u>agreement</u>	
the landscape. previous unit could importance of the water resources in the Wimmera to the	
be used for this First Nations peoples using Lake Hindmarsh as a case study. Biography of Aunty	/ Nancy
purpose. It can be difficult for students to understand the deep Harrison:	
connections that Indigenous Australians have with landscape https://www.firstp	
features such as rivers and wetlands. Task 3 invites students <u>tions.vic.gov.au/na</u>	ncy-
to use contemporary artwork to help them understand this connection. harrison	
Written version of	the
Task 4 focuses on a key creation story from this region. This creation story:	
could lead your class to further discussion about creation https://budjabudjabudjabudjabudjabudjabudjabudja	icoop.org.a
stories from other indigenous peoples in Australia or from u/about/gariwerdg	<u>grampians/</u>
around the world.	





Learning Intention/s	Prior Knowledge	Potential Classroom Activities	Key vocabulary	Resources					
Lesson 2: Indigenous use and management of water resources.									
Students develop an understanding of the deep connections that exist between First Nations peoples and water.	If the class has not completed the 'Liveability in the Wimmera' unit, it is suggested that you use part of Lesson 2 to introduce students to the water resources of the region during or prior to this lesson.	Begin with a general overview of the connections between First Nations peoples and water. You may like to consider the differences between the connections expressed in the three sources with the way in which is viewed by other cultures, including European explorers and farmers. This could lead to a discussion of the basis of historic conflict. Students are invited to produce artwork to help them explain the connections that exist. This is not really a geographic skill, but it will help some students come to a stronger understanding of this difficult concept. Some students may like to explore further the importance of water sources in many indigenous artworks including Figure 3 in Lesson 1. Task 2 introduces students to the Wimmera River as this will help them better understand the location of features in the Story Map in Task 3. There is more detail in Lesson 2 of the 'Liveability in the Wimmera' unit if needed. Task 3 uses a Story Map to explore important sites along the Wimmera River. As an extension of this, you may like to take your class on a walk along the Yanga Track near Horsham to complete some fieldwork activities. This walk would take students about an hour. There is a booklet on the indigenous significance of the plants seen along this track available from the Horsham and Grampians Information Centre. You could also contact the Wimmera Catchment Management Authority for copies of the booklet.	Semi-arid Arid Endorheic River system Renewable resource Non-renewable resource	State of the environment report that describes in clear terms the relationships between First Nations peoples and water: https://soe.dcceew.gov.au/inland-water/environment/indigenous-water Additional information on the Murnong or Yam Daisy: https://www.abc.net.au/gardening/how-to/plant-profile-murnong-(yam-daisy)/12297732					





Learning Intention/s	Prior Knowledge	Potential Classroom Activities	Key vocabulary	Resources						
Lesson 3: Ranch Billabong, a case study										
Students learn about an example of a local water feature with particular significance to First Nations peoples.	It is assumed that students have completed the first two lessons in this unit.	Begin with a Google Earth activity so that students can place Ranch Billabong in its correct geographic context. You may like to refer to Figure 2 in Lesson 2 for assistance. Students then complete a sketch map of the billabong and surrounding landscape. Sketch maps (sometimes called precis maps) require students to focus on a small area in some detail so that they learn more about this place as they find, locate and label each of the key features. This leads onto an exploration of the historic and cultural significance of this site. This is closely linked to the nearby Ebenezer Mission at Lake Hindmarsh. You could use this as a springboard to examine this part of Australia's history. There are some sources listed in the Resources column that may help. The final section in this lesson deals with the environmental watering program that regularly takes place at Ranch Billabong. Part of this section asks students to consider support and opposition to	Billabong Missions Environmental watering Cultural Flows	History of Missions in Victoria, including Ebenezer: https://deadlystory.com/page/ culture/history/Creation of re serve system Griffith University history of Ebenezer Mission: http://missionaries.griffith.edu .au/mission/ebenezer-1859- 1904 Photographs of Ebenezer Mission: https://vicscreen.vic.gov.au/ch oose- victoria/locations/ebenezer- mission-lake-hindmarsh Description of environmental watering in Victoria: https://www.vewh.vic.gov.au/						
		environmental watering. This will let you discuss the various ways in which water is used in Victoria.		data/assets/pdf file/0006/3 42528/4.2.01-FS01 What-is- enviromental- water SWP FS.pdf						













