

Geography Plus: Australia Here We Come!

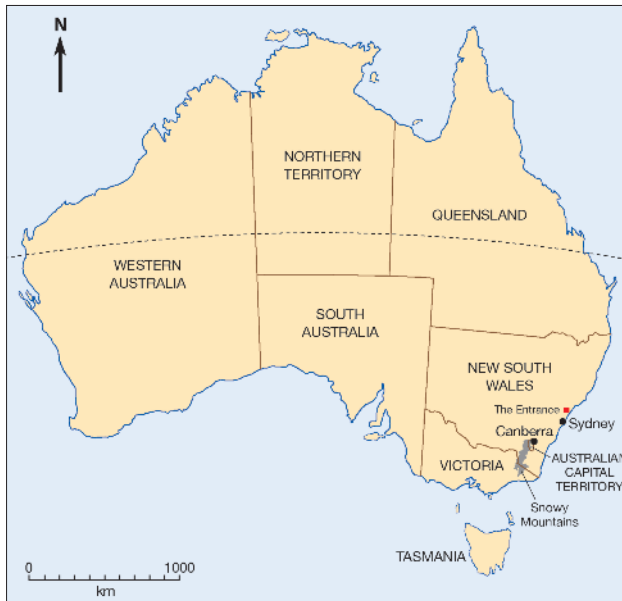
These knowledge boxes provide background information for teachers to help develop knowledge for teaching **Australia Here We Come!**



The Sun has got his hat on

Weather and climate in Australia

It is certainly not true that the sun always shines in Australia! A useful overview of the different climate zones of Australia can be found in 'Tips for Travellers' on the Australian Government Bureau



of Meteorology site: www.bom.gov.au/climate/enviro/travel/index.shtml. New South Wales (NSW) is classed as 'the Temperate Climate Zone' with warm summers and cool winters, although 'cool' does not mean quite the same thing as it does in the UK. While days can often be very pleasantly warm or even hot by UK standards, the temperature drops significantly once the sun goes down and those of us who are used to central heating certainly miss it when it isn't there. Winter, however, can be an ideal time to visit Uluru, where the lack of humidity and bright, starry nights make for a magical experience.

In **PowerPoint 3** the children go for a weekend holiday to the Snowy Mountain region of NSW, where the climate zone is 'Cool Temperate' with mild to warm summers and cool winters. This provides an opportunity to focus on a very different kind of weather: snow. Probably one of the last things that people think about when they imagine Australia.



Photo: © Tim / Keegan

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The Sun has got his hat on

Talk with your pupils about the way that the mountain environment and the higher ground in this cooler part of the Australian continent means that snow falls. The live webcam from Thredbo resort (www.thredbo.com.au) gives an idea of what the area is like. It also helps pupils to understand that when it is summer in the UK it is winter in Australia and that it is night there during our daytime.

Are we there yet?

Are we there yet? A journey around Australia is based on an actual journey undertaken by the author and illustrator, Alison Lester. The book, though not specifically about the weather, could be used to raise pupils' awareness of the very different weather conditions that the family encounter during the 'winter term' they spend travelling around Australia.

The children visit the Snowy Mountains and enjoy winter activities just like Ethan and Jaz, and travel north and into the Red Centre. As you read the story focus on the kinds of clothing the children wear in different places on the route. This story supports understanding that Australia is a vast

place, with lots of different kinds of landscapes and habitats and widely different weather and climatic zones.

Protection from the sun

From **PowerPoint 3**

pupils should be able to see how children on the Central Coast are



protected from the sun. All children have to wear hats at school and at nursery when they are out in the sun. Children are covered up; they wear body suits to swim in and take tents to the beach. Shade from the sun is often provided in the form of 'sails' suspended above the ground. These can be seen in the car park at the Bay Village supermarket, above the playground at the nursery and in the left of the photograph that shows the pelicans feeding at The Entrance. Here they form shade above the walkway and seating area. These shades provide not only relief from the heat of the sun but also protection from the damaging ultraviolet rays. Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world: each year more than 1850 Australians die from this almost entirely preventable disease.



Photo: © Wendy North