

Intro to Australia



Grades
4-6

Objective

This activity will introduce students to Australia and help them summarize the main points, record questions they want to investigate, and develop related vocabulary.

Materials

- NatGeo Kids article "Australia"
- Graphic Organizer



AUSTRALIA

Australia is the only country in the world that covers an entire continent. It is one of the largest countries on Earth. Although it is rich in natural resources and has a lot of fertile land, more than one-third of Australia is desert.

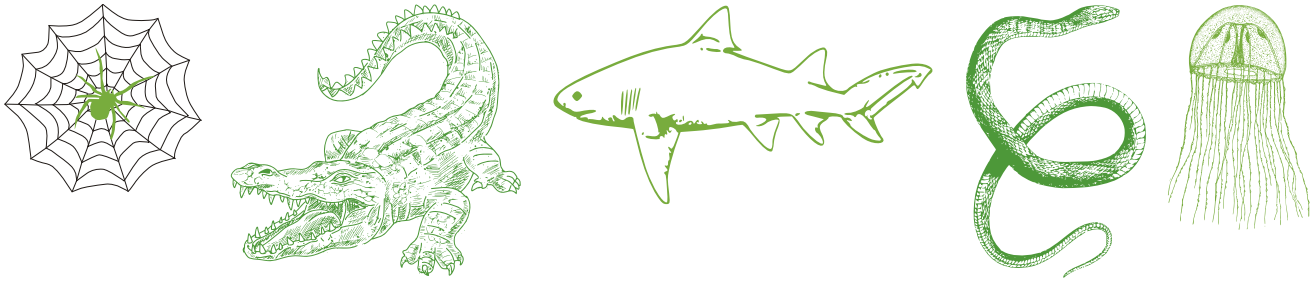
Most Australian cities and farms are located in the southwest and southeast, where the climate is more comfortable. There are dense rain forests in the northeast. The famous outback (remote rural areas) contains the country's largest deserts, where there are scorching temperatures, little water, and almost no vegetation.

Running around the eastern and southeastern edge of Australia is the Great Dividing Range. This 2,300-mile (3,700-kilometer) stretch of mountain sends water down into Australia's most important rivers and the Great Artesian Basin, the largest groundwater source in the world.

Compare the Sizes: Australia & the United States



Source: <https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/australia>. Retrieved 02.15.22



NATURE

Australia's ecosystem is an unusual one because of its remote location. As a result, there are many animal species that occur here and nowhere else in the world, such as the platypus, kangaroo, echidna, and koala. Australia has 516 national parks to protect its unique plants and animals.

One of Australia's most amazing sites rises like an enormous whale's back from a flat red-soil desert called the Red Center. This site is called Uluru, and it is a sacred natural formation at the heart of the country. Rising 1,100 feet (335 meters) tall, it is the largest rock in the world!

Australia is home to many of the deadliest species of animals on the planet. There are 36 species of poisonous funnel-web spiders in eastern Australia. There are also 20 types of venomous snakes, including the taipan, which attacks without warning and bites repeatedly, killing its victim in minutes.

There are several types of rain forests in Australia. Tropical rain forests, mainly found in the northeast, are the richest in plant and animal species. Subtropical rain forests are found near the mid-eastern coast, and broadleaf rain forests grow in the southeast and on the island of Tasmania.

Name _____

Taking Notes

Directions: Use this organizer to take notes on the essay.

list of key words

words I need to define

summary of main points

interesting facts

questions I have