

Landcare!

Junior Landcare kids care for our future!

These teachers' notes should be used in conjunction with the Landcare! Project Pull-out #15 from DMAG. This pull-out will inspire your students and tie into curriculum units in HSIE, Mathematics, English and Science and Technology. It will also help you to make a *Learnscape* in your school.

See www.juniorlandcare.com for more ideas.



These activities encourage students to:

- Understand what biodiversity means
- Create a database of flora and fauna as part of an environmental audit
- Understand how human activities affect our environment
- Propose, analyse and enact changes in the environment
- Understand that changes should be monitored, assessed and improved
- Use a variety of mapping and measuring skills
- Develop talking and listening skills

HSIE Australian Environments: Biodiversity

Ask the class to imagine it is 300 years ago. What would their school grounds and the surrounding suburbs have looked like? Create a mind map on the board about what the area would have been like – would there have been creeks? What sort of plants? What sort of animals?

Brainstorm ideas of how the class can find out what was once there – are there patches of remnant vegetation? Are there locals who would know what the area was like? When was the school built and the area developed? Are there old pictures / maps / aerial photographs or descriptions of the local area?

Ask the class if they know what biodiversity means and discuss.

Mapping Skills
Read the section 'Plan your makeover' on page 54.

Decide on an area outside where the class can safely map eg: school grounds, or a local park. As a class, divide the section into equal smaller areas with chalk, flagging tape or stakes. Split the class into groups and assign one group the perimeter and the other groups the smaller areas.

Each group is to draw a 'mudmap'. This is a rough map drawn in the

field with sketches of things and measurements to show their position. Ask each group to mark on their mudmap the outline of things like buildings, trees, seats, pathways, patches of weeds etc.

Back in the classroom combine all the mudmaps on the board to form a larger map with all the dimensions.

Give each student a piece of graph paper and ask everyone to draw to scale, as neatly as they can, and in lead pencil, the mudmap that's on the board. They will do this as a plan drawing (ie bird's eye view). Do the exercise with the students. To start, use your largest dimension to work out what scale your map will be – eg will your map be 1:100 – that is, will 1cm on the map equal one metre outside?

Once the plans are drawn, add other elements - eg a key, labels, an arrow pointing north and colour-coded problem areas such as erosion. Give each map a date and a heading.

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Environmental audit

Discuss what a database is – a collection of things with a common link. At its simplest form it is a list. Ask the class to come up with a list of plants that they've found.

Explain that the next simplest form of database is a table and discuss columns, rows and how to read a table. Decide on columns you could add to your list to make it a table. Split into groups outside to fill in the table. See below for an example table.



they think the school should do eg. Build a frog pond. Ask each pair to prepare a presentation about their preferred project. After each presentation, discuss as a class the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed project. Eg, creating a frog pond might require more money than a lizard lounge. Make sure the same criteria are used to discuss each project and decide as a class what the

The below table can then be transposed to a computer database such as an Excel spreadsheet, so that it can be easily saved and updated.

English: Ask an expert

See if a representative from a local Landcare group, nursery or Aboriginal Land Council can talk to the class about what the region was like before it was developed. Before they come, ask the students what it is they want to find out from this person. Talk about some specific questions they might ask eg. Were there many tall trees around here? Was there a creek? What animals

did there use to be?

Ask the students to each prepare five questions they would ask. Pool the answers and decide on 10 questions to ask the person when they visit.

After the visit, discuss the main points. Ask each student to write a 'news' style article about the visit. Make it 400 words long. The first paragraph should include who (the person interviewed), when (the date), why (for a Landcare project), where (the school), what (what was the most interesting thing they said).

HSIE: Australian Environments Develop a plan

Ask the class to read the *Landcare! Project Pull-out*. Ask pairs of students to come up with a Landcare project

criteria could be. At the end of all the presentations, create a shortlist of three and ask everyone to vote on their preferred project in a silent ballot.

Put your plan into action!

Give your project a name and write a School Environment Management Plan by carrying out steps one to six in the *Plan Your Makeover* section of the project kit. Once the timing has been confirmed, discuss as a class how they will let the rest of the school and local community know about the project eg. they could write a piece for the school newsletter or local newspaper, put something on the website or create posters. Ask each student to do one of the above.

Plant	Description	Height	Species	Grows	Insects	Birds	Animals
Vine	Green vine with big leaves and purple flowers	n/a - it covers everything	Morning glory	Sunny position	Caterpillars and small spiders	None	None
Gum tree	Slender with white bark and scribbles on bark	15 metres	Scribbly bark	Sun and shade	Caterpillars, ants	Magpies	Maybe a possum
Bottlebrush							