

# geographia



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Measuring Wetlands. Photo: Lorraine Chaffer

## AGTA Geographia August 2018

*Welcome to the latest edition of Geographia, the national newsletter of the Australian Geography Teachers' Association.*

For further information about AGTA you can visit our [website](#).

### AGTA Membership.

The Australian Geography Teachers Association (AGTA) has seven members being the geography professional associations in each State and Northern Territory. Individuals, schools and other institutions, non-government organisations and businesses should join the relevant member association in each State or Territory (NT). AGTA's 15 directors consist of two directors from

each member affiliate, one being the President of the Affiliate Association and the other being nominated by the member. Individuals can only make representation to AGTA through their association to bring issues to the national attention.

AGTA exists as a national body representing the interests of Geography Teachers across Australia. If you have an issue that you believe would merit national attention you can raise it through your local state Geography Association.

You can inquire about membership and connect with your local associations.

[New South Wales](#)

[Northern Territory](#)

[Queensland](#)

[South Australia](#)

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## AGTA Conference 2019

Don't forget to save the date for our upcoming 2019 conference. We'll be convening in the Gold Coast to discuss the theme *The innovative geographer*.



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## GEOGSPACE



**GEOGSPACE** is a website created by AGTA offering quality primary and secondary geography resource materials for all teachers of geography, including those that are very experienced and those just commencing their involvement. The materials will support teachers to develop their knowledge, skills and pedagogical capacity to teach geography of the highest quality.

### Featured Resource:

#### *Assessing the Liveability of Places (Year 7)*

**Theme:** Place and liveability

This unit of work ties into ACARA Unit 2: Place and Liveability Unit. It supports Year 7 students to be able to identify and assess the elements of liveability that inform people's decisions about where to live. It gives your students the opportunity to collect and analyse survey data.

Visit the Geogspace website [here](#) to download the full resource and take your students through an artistic journey of Australian landscapes.

Extract from student resources available for download with this unit.



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## Geography Literacy Unlocked Textbook

Geography can make an important contribution to your school's literacy enrichment program. To help promote literacy in secondary schools, AGTA has released a new resource Geography Literacy Unlocked.

The text incorporates a wealth of material covering written, visual and oral literacy.

The written literacy section includes instructions on how to construct the text types commonly used in geography.

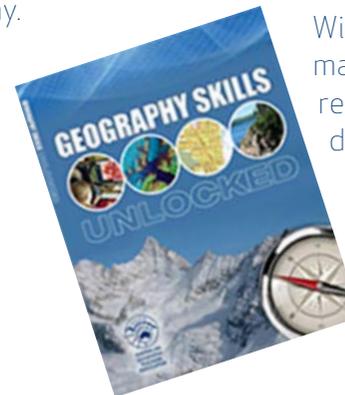
These are also accompanying exemplars of

these text types that teachers can use as models. The literacy section also includes advice on spelling, punctuation, tense, referencing and directive terminology.

The visual literacy section looks at the interpretive skills used when using photographs, graphs, illustrations, specialist maps, infographics and cartoons. It also provides advice on the evaluation of website content, mind mapping and multimedia presentations.

The section dealing with oral literacy includes advice on oral presentations and debates. More details are available [here](#).

Contact your state or territory affiliate to order an inspection copy, or class set, today.



## Geography Skills Unlocked: Textbook

Looking for a current textbook to support the teaching of geography skills in your classroom? Geography Skills Unlocked is written by teachers for teachers. This exciting new skills book is up-to-date with the demands and requirements of teaching geography today.

Written with the Australian Curriculum and contemporary student in mind, the book covers the range of skills young geographers require to dive deeply and successfully into the study of geography. It contains step-by-step explanations, descriptions and worked examples.

With a wealth of stimulus material, it is also a great reference for teachers. More details are available [here](#).

Contact your state or territory affiliate to order an inspection copy, or class set, today.

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## Affiliate Contribution

*The following article, by Louise Swanson and Darika Pose, first appeared as part of a GTANSW publication. We thank them for their generosity in sharing it with all AGTA members.*

### Differentiating geography fieldwork to address students' needs

A challenge in conducting fieldwork can be catering for all of the members of the class. Over time organising excursions has become increasingly difficult due to risk assessments, staff training requirements, increasing costs, medical and

health plans, and student allergies. In many cases schools are opting for regular, school-based fieldwork over whole day fieldwork excursions to avoid some of the administrative tasks. Differentiation of fieldwork can be quite challenging compared to differentiating a classroom activity. In class based activities teachers are required to develop more focused and personalised learning for students by providing different approaches and resources, or graduated tasks where everyone is expected to complete different sections. Most teachers do this regularly, but trying to apply the same concepts can be quite daunting when trying to apply it to fieldwork.



Fieldwork activity. Photo: L Swanson

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All students are entitled to reasonable adjustments to ensure access to the curriculum and participation

A range of student needs need to be taken into consideration when planning your excursion. This includes the needs of gifted and talented students, lower ability students, EAL/D students (formerly ESL), students with mobility issues, those hearing or sight impaired and students on the autism spectrum. These students should be given the opportunity to enjoy the many benefits of planned fieldwork. The Commonwealth Disability Standards for Education 2005, Standards for participation, mandate that all students are entitled to reasonable adjustments to ensure access to the curriculum and participation.

**Lower ability students**

Adjustment can take the form of using simplified language, relatively simple vocabulary, short, simple sentences, extra scaffolding or giving different tasks to different groups of students.

Consider –

- prompting for student answers in the form of sentence stems or cues
- reduce the amount of text on the fieldwork handout
- include white space on the page and enlarge images and text font to build student confidence
- use a plain, lower case font, and avoid italics or words in capital letters to enhance students’ ability to recognise words
- allow students to just focus on one or two sources of information at a time
- allow lower ability students to complete fewer questions than more able students
- and if these strategies still don’t provide enough structure, prompt cards could be provided for students to copy from.



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## EAL/D

For EAL/D students the key is to ensure that they recognise and understand the key terms used on the fieldtrip. Depending on their level of English proficiency, allow students to write some of the information in their first language and to then translate it into English, which should result in the information that they record being more accurate and enable them to focus on the geographical information as opposed to grappling with language proficiency. This can be encouraged by providing simplistic definitions of metalanguage and directing students to underline key terms and defining them themselves. Alternatively, choose to assist the student by using Google translate to incorporate their first language into the handout. It is always best to check these translations with a speaker of the language.



*Fieldwork activity. Photo: L Swanson*

### Mobility issues

Students with a physical impairment or disability that may hinder their movement need appropriate alternatives which meet the same outcomes. This may be replicating the fieldwork

technique in a more accessible area or completing virtual activities that model the same technique and replicate similar results. As a last resort a student may watch a video or listen to a sound

recording of the technique, but this is not ideal and does not actively involve the student. As much as possible the student should be given the opportunity to actively engage in all activities.

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### Gifted and Talented

Fieldwork resources designed for Gifted and Talented students should have more complex text, advanced language and reference to a greater number of sources. Questions should require greater breadth and depth of understanding and knowledge and higher levels of skills. Students may enjoy being involved in the planning of the day's activities and should be encouraged to shape the fieldwork activities that will take place.

Some fieldwork providers actually offer different types of experiences for different students allowing more gifted and talented students greater flexibility, choice and challenge in how the fieldwork operates.

Students may be provided with extension cards to complete throughout the day. Twice exceptional

students (students who are gifted and talented and have a disability for example a sensory processing disorder, ASD or OCD) may also benefit from some of the strategies outlined in other sections.

### Autism Spectrum Disorder

Teachers should plan in collaboration with parents/ caregivers and students about adjustments can be made for the individual student in the form of an Individual Education Plan (IEP). This would include considerations such as how the students are getting to the excursion, if there needs to be a School Learning Support Officer who needs to support the student, whether there is medication that needs to be given to the student, if there are any sensory issues which need to be taken into consideration and if a buddy system would work.

Teachers and parents create a "count down" until the trip both in class and at home. Provide parents with information about the trip so that they can talk to their child and help prepare them for what will happen in the excursion, if there are people who are not teachers, what their role is during the excursion, behaviours expected from the student, who will be there to assist the student. Parents can assist by planning for lunches and snack breaks by adding favourite snacks and lunches and plenty of water for the student.

Talking about what will happen on the trip far ahead of time will prepare all students not just the ones with ASD. Many excursion sites have websites with virtual tours and other information to help the student to become orientated with the area. This may occur in the form of a project to learn about the excursion and what they are expected to learn during the excursion. Try to ensure that your information is as accurate as possible so the student develops realistic expectations about what will happen on the day.

Some fieldwork providers offer different types of experiences for different students allowing more gifted and talented students greater flexibility, choice and challenge in how the fieldwork operates.

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Teachers can create a written or picture schedule of the day of the field trip for your child. This way your child can know which parts of the regular school day will be disrupted or altered. Depending on the excursion itself and the student needs, the schedule needs to be quite detailed. The schedule should include breaks and how time will be spent during this time, include how the student will get home after the excursion and that the next day will be as usual.

Students with high level ASD will need to have the activities of the day clearly explained and an itinerary of the day, which includes a list of equipment and clothing that might be needed for their safety. A social story might be created to assist the student with activities for the day and behaviours which are expected to keep them safe. For example, "Victor will attend the excursion with all

members of the class. Victor will get on the bus and sit with Tom. Victor will stay with Ms X who will help him during the excursion." Also include visuals to assist the student understand what the excursion entails. The story needs to use words like 'wait', 'take turns', and the 'need to be flexible if the plan gets disrupted'.

It is advisable to gain the attendance of the School Learning Support Officer (SLSO) for assistance with the student on the day of the fieldwork. Ask the SLSO who ordinarily assists the student to attend, as they would be able to identify signs of anxiety and assist the teacher in alleviating behaviours. Have a plan in place if the student has a meltdown, this should be included in your Risk Assessment for the excursion. Be sure to review safety rules and take safety precautions.

Special Education teachers or Learning and Support Teacher can assist with modifying activities, fieldwork handouts and follow up activities. Teachers can create worksheets, targeted to each student's level, to help students prepare for the trip. The worksheets can include pictures and words which can be eliminated if applicable or not applicable to activities.

## Vision & hearing impairment

In many cases students with vision or hearing impairments will still be able to participate in fieldwork activities. Students with hearing impairment should be placed as close as possible to the presenter, or the presenter should be given a transmitter microphone which feeds to the students' headset. Written material



Fieldwork activity. Photo: L Swanson

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and instructions should be given to supplement verbal instructions and information, and the opportunity to record the information given verbally.

Vision impairment may result in students having difficulties scanning and tracking, with depth perception, peripheral vision, difficulty discerning fine detail or narrowed field of vision. From a fieldwork perspective this may result in issues with orientating maps, writing notes, perceiving features of the landscape, trip hazards and uneven ground and recording field data. Activities like landscape sketching are not really possible for vision impaired students and often the instructions to use fieldwork equipment can be too small.

Safety issues can come into play if students are expected to climb or cross a river. Barriers can be placed around any dangerous sites, or choose sites with fencing. Student handouts should be enlarged, or the student

may be given a copy of the handouts on a tablet so that they can zoom in to enlarge details. Modifications to activities can be made, for example “observations” can be replaced with “nearby considerations” which may be made by smelling, hearing, tasting and feeling the environment, rather than looking at it. The students have experienced the site by walking through it so you may ask questions regarding the slope they have walked over, whether it is even, rocky, rising, falling. If high levels of support or funding is available, consider braille labelling of objects, tactile maps, embossed worksheets and braille compasses.

Students should be provided with magnification devices and additional time to read text.

Tactile experiences are encouraged. Maps for visually impaired students can be very hard to come by, but creating your own tactile map or 3D map of the site is possible:

1. Create a basic map outline of fieldwork site
2. Colour map using high contrasting colours
3. Using an embossing tool (or pen and mouse pad) trace the reverse side of the map to create a raised, embossed map for the student to run their fingers over
4. Use layered stickers, adhesive dots or jewels to identify key or significant features and an idea to investigate could be to create your own 3D maps of the site



Photos: L Swanson



### Resources:

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/media/downloads/about-us/how-we-operate/national-partnerships-program/every-student-every-school/learning-and-support.pdf>

<http://techloversblog.com/blind-now-3d-printed-maps/>

<http://cityminded.org/4-ideas-from-4-continent-helping-the-blind-navigate-cities-14771>

<https://www.carautismroadmap.org/supporting-students-with-asd-on-field-trips/>

<http://www.perkinselearning.org/scout/tactile-maps-and-teaching-maps-skills-blind-visually-impaired>

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## Around the Affiliates:

### GAWA

#### Membership

As of May 2018 we have 167 members.

#### GAWA Executive Officers

##### President:

Anna Griffin

##### Vice Presidents:

Melissa Balfus

Sarah McGill

##### Treasurer:

Cheryl O'Connell

##### Secretary:

Lidia Di Giuseppe

##### Immediate Past President:

Darryl Michie

GAWA were excited about their inaugural teacher's trip to New York City in the July 2018 holidays.

This trip included 19 teachers visiting NYC to explore the city and develop their knowledge and understanding of the planning processes. This trip was directly linked to the Western Australian Year 12 ATAR Unit 4 syllabus; Planning Sustainable Places.

On this tour participants explored Downtown NYC, Brooklyn's changing neighbourhood, Manhattan's West side including The High

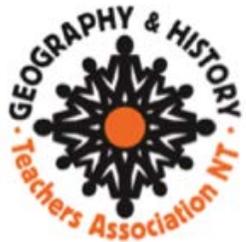
Line and the Hudson Yards Redevelopment. There was a walking tour from Brooklyn to Manhattan, a visit to Columbia University with guest speakers, a visit to the NYC Public Library map room and time for individuals to explore the tourist sights the New York has to offer.

Anna Griffin, President

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## GHTANT

### Membership

As of May 2018 we have 29 members.

A major initiative of GHTANT this year is the provision of a lecture series for senior Geography students. Those studying Year 12 Geography in Northern Territory schools can find the cost and time associated with travelling for lecture series' prohibitive.

We believe that providing funding for experienced lecturers to come to the NT opens our students up to a broader range of support and expertise. It is hoped that this levels the playing field for students studying Geography across the Territory.

In addition, GHTANT has joined forces with the English Teacher's Association of the NT to host our first joint conference. This reflects the reality of secondary educators teaching across multiple subject areas. The Darwin conference is to be replicated in Alice Springs later in the year.

GHTANT has also proudly launched our new look [website](#).

Anna Hind, Vice-President

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## GTANSW

The Geography Alive website is free to all NSW primary teachers, irrespective of their membership status with GTANSW.

The units in the website are to support the implementation of the NSW Geography Syllabus for the Australian Curriculum in Primary years of schooling. GTANSW commissioned a team of experienced Primary school teachers to develop exemplar units of work aligned to the K-6 requirements of the syllabus. Each unit consists of six to eight lessons complete with the resources required for their successful implementation in the classroom.

Geography Alive is an evolving repository of resources. Additional units are being added to the website as they are developed. The overall structure of the Geography Alive website is shown on the next page. Links in the table on the website are used to access each unit.

With other support, including the Webinar program, Facebook Group for Primary Geography Teachers, the Geography Bulletin, professional learning events and low cost membership, it is hoped that the primary teacher membership of GTANSW will grow over time.

Lorraine Chaffer, President

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The following units are currently available on the [Geography Alive website](#)

Stage	Topic	Unit
Early Stage 1 (YEAR K)	Topic 1: People Live in Places	Unit 1: People live in Places
		Unit 2: Maps and Mapping
		Unit 3: Investigating Sydney's Q Station as an Important Place
Stage 1 (YEARS 1 & 2)	Topic 1: Features of Places	Unit 1: Natural and Human Features of Places
		Unit 2: Weather and the Seasons of Places
	Topic 2: People and Places	Unit 3:
		Unit 1: People, Places and Connections
Stage 2 (YEARS 3 & 4)	Topic 1: Places are Similar and Different	Unit 2: Tourism: Connecting People and Places
		Unit 3:
		Unit 1:
	Topic 2: The Earth's Environment	Unit 2: My Place: Picture Book Study
		Unit 3:
		Unit 1:
Stage 3 (YEARS 5 & 6)	Topic 1: Factors that Shape Places	Unit 2:
		Unit 3: Bushfire Hazards in Australia
		Unit 1:
	Topic 2: A Diverse and Connected World	Unit 2: Investigating Asia
		Unit 3:
		Unit 1:

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## GTAQ

**President:** Jamie Clothier  
(Brisbane State High)

**Vice President:** Julie Davis  
(QCAA)

**Secretary:** Shane Albertson  
(Brisbane State High School)

**Treasurer:** Kaye Schwede  
(Wynnum SHS)

**Archivist:** Margaret McIvor

### **Elected Council Members:**

Anne-Marie Gerlach  
(Canterbury College)

Julie Davis (QUT and QCAA)

Alice Constantine (Brisbane  
State High)

Dr Elin Charles-Edwards  
(University of Queensland)

Mick Law (DNRME)

### **Co-opted Council Members:**

Wendy Bolton (Stuartholme  
School)

Jackie Dunk (QCAA)

Lerece Roberts (Brisbane  
School of Distance Education)

Jenny Knight (All Hallows'  
School)

Congratulations to Julie Davis on her appointment as Vice President. Thank you to Sam Cowley for his time in this role during 2017. Welcome to Dr Elin Charles-Edwards who is replacing Laurel Johnson as our University of Queensland representative this year. Thank you to Laurel for her work with us in 2017. Welcome back Mick Law, who has re-joined the GTAQ Council this year.

A main focus for GTAQ in 2018 is strategic planning. It has been some time since our last strategic meeting. We feel that we need to re-strengthen our focus as a Council. As a result of this re-strengthening we believe that will be able to work more effectively and with a crystal clear purpose and vision. This, we believe, is essential for all effective organisations. So, we are currently in the process of searching for an external facilitator to engage. Our hope is that an

external facilitator will push us outside of our comfort zone, encouraging us to think critically, think outside the box and be creative. Thinking in this manner will align well with the great deal of change that is facing Geography and all senior subjects in our state.

Jamie Clothier, President

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## GTASA

### Membership

As of May 2018 we have 92 members.

In October 2017 GTASA successfully hosted the Geography Big Week Out. Sixteen students from across the country were introduced to the sights & sounds of Adelaide and Kangaroo Island. A massive thank you to GBWO coordinator, Liam Sloan (GTASA Executive Committee member), who organised every aspect of GBWO 2017. Additional thanks is extended to James Howard (Trinity College Gawler) and Simon Freeman-Roos (Murray Bridge HS) who supported Liam in the running of this event. GTASA looks forward to hosting GBWO again in October 2018.

Our annual conference in May took on a slightly changed format this year. This years theme Improving Literacy through Geography gave us the perfect platform to launch Geography Literacy Unlocked, with all participants receiving a copy of this AGTA textbook as part of their registration. Day 1 had focused workshops on classroom pedagogy, and Day 2 was dedicated to fieldwork. It was great to see particular interest in the fieldwork day. We also introduced a spot into the program titled "Geography Slam" where any of the registrants could share a great teaching idea with the rest of the group. This was well received and will become a regular spot in our future program.

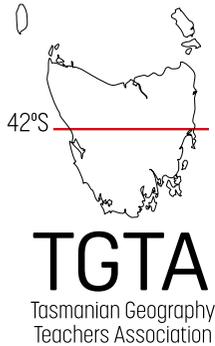
More recently GTASA has teamed with The Royal Geographical Society of SA (RGSSA) to develop an award for Geography students in Years 10 & 11. The purpose of the award is to encourage students to further their interest in Geography. The award will recognise excellence in geographical skills, particularly fieldwork. We are grateful for RGSSA's continued interest in our association, and look forward to the outcomes of this award.

Joanne Wegener, President

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## TGTA

### Humanities Conference May - Launceston

The TGTA joined with History teachers (THAT) and English teachers (TATE) to present this conference. The theme centred on the skills and concepts that are at the heart of the disciplines of: English, History and Geography;

What are the key skills and concepts we want our students to master?

When do these big ideas become cross-disciplinary?

The keynote presenters were Morris Gleitzman and Jackie French.

Strands of the conference were presented for each discipline.

Lorraine Chaffer and Sharon McLean presented workshops for Geography. A number of

local presenters also gave workshops as well.

Over 160 delegates attended.

### New website

Work on the new website has been completed, see [www.tgta.org.au](http://www.tgta.org.au)

### Geo Pathways Student Conference

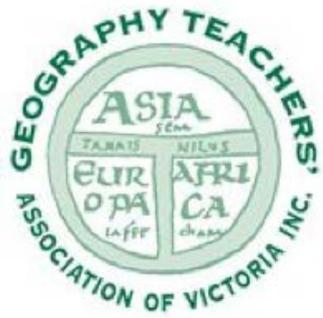
The TGTA is supporting Guilford Young College in Hobart, to conduct this event in August. It is aimed at Year 10, 11 & 12 students. It is focussing on climate change, sustainability, health & human development, tourism and has an emphasis on Asia- Pacific examples.

Dr Greg Calvert,  
Vice President

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## GTAV

A key initiative introduced by the GTAV this year is the Certificate of Geography Competency, an online course designed to equip out-of-field Geography teachers (or already experienced teachers hoping to upskill) with the necessary skills and knowledge to become engaging, effective teachers of Geography.

By the end of 2018 four modules will be available: Skills; Fieldwork; Concepts; and Spatial Technology. Both the Skills and Fieldwork modules are available now, while the Concepts module will be available from July and the Spatial Technology module will be rolled out in November.

Teachers can enrol in one module or all four, the modules themselves are formally assessed by the GTAV, and once successfully completed a certificate of achievement will be awarded to acknowledge the teacher's professional development.

The courses are available to all GTAs across Australia, please visit us [online](#) for pricing and further information.

Anna Blamey  
(Acting Co-President)

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