

# Phase 2: What's in our own backyard?

*For this phase, we highly recommend connecting with a local Traditional Owner and/or Traditional Owners' group to learn more about local First Nations' knowledges, practices, and responsibilities. If possible, spend time on Country with a local Traditional Owner. If you are in a government or Catholic school, your Koorie Education Support Officer/Koorie Education Worker should be able to help you organise this. Allow plenty of time to organise this connection and ensure that funds are available to remunerate the Traditional Owner/s appropriately.*

**Learning intentions**

- I can connect and interact with natural and outdoor environments
- I can appreciate and learn from First Nations Australians' knowledges about understanding and caring for Country/Place
- I can identify and analyse local environmental problems, needs, and opportunities

## Key vocabulary

- Country/Place
- Rewilding
- Interspecies empathy
- Passive architecture

## Resources

- ❖ A local natural environment
- ❖ Photography medium (cameras or students' phones)
- ❖ Media/materials to alter photographs (digitally or by hand)
- ❖ Journals
- ❖ Phase 2 PowerPoint

<b>Outcomes (Interdisciplinary, Multi-Curriculum)</b>			
	Levels 5 and 6	Levels 7 and 8	Levels 9 and 10
<b>Investigating, connecting, and interacting with natural and outdoor environments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participate in outdoor activities</li> <li>• Create connections to the natural environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore physical, social, emotional, and spiritual benefits to health and wellbeing of being outdoors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creatively and sustainably connect to the environment as an individual and as part of a community</li> </ul>
<b>Appreciating First Nations knowledges about understanding and caring for Country/Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and care for local species and places</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Map and predict phases of the moon, connections between lunar cycles and ocean tides, calendars, and seasonal changes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reflect on responsibilities to Country and ways of managing these responsibilities (e.g., fire management practices)</li> </ul>
<b>Identifying and analysing problems, needs, and opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify current and future community and sustainability needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Define and analyse real-world problems, needs, and opportunities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critique problems, needs, and opportunities</li> <li>• Predict outcomes</li> </ul>
<b>Considering futures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate and consider possible futures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine and prioritise preferred futures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Critically analyse factors for preferred futures</li> </ul>

## Outcomes (Learning Areas, Victorian Curriculum)

LEARNING AREA	Strand	Levels 5 and 6	Levels 7 and 8	Levels 9 and 10
<b>THE ARTS</b> <i>Although these descriptors are based in the Visual Arts Curriculum, they are similar to other Arts learning areas</i>	<b>Explore and Express Ideas</b>  <b>Present and Perform</b>  <b>Respond and Interpret</b>	Create and display artworks that express different ideas and beliefs <a href="#">(VCAVAE029)</a> <a href="#">(VCAVAP031)</a>  Identify and describe how ideas are expressed in different artworks <a href="#">(VCAVAR032)</a>	Explore, develop, and express themes, concepts, and ideas through artworks <a href="#">(VCAVAE033)</a> <a href="#">(VCAVAP037)</a>  Analyse how artists' ideas and viewpoints are expressed and viewed by audiences <a href="#">(VCAVAR038)</a>	Conceptualise, plan and design artworks that express ideas, concepts, and artistic intentions <a href="#">(VCAVAV043)</a> <a href="#">(VCAVAP044)</a>  Analyse and interpret different artists' forms of expression, intentions, and viewpoints <a href="#">(VCAVAR045)</a>
<b>SCIENCE</b>	<b>Science Understanding</b>	Observe local living things, including their growth, survival, structural features, and adaptations <a href="#">(VCSSU075)</a> <a href="#">(VCSSU074)</a>	Investigate local phenomena and resources, such as seasons, water, and rocks <a href="#">(VCSSU099)</a> <a href="#">(VCSSU100)</a> <a href="#">(VCSSU101)</a> <a href="#">(VCSSU102)</a>	Investigate local interactions of global systems, including the atmosphere, biosphere, hydrosphere, and lithosphere <a href="#">(VCSSU128)</a>
<b>THE HUMANITIES: Geography</b>	<b>Geographical Knowledge</b>	Describe the influence of First Nations peoples on local environments <a href="#">(VCGGK094)</a>	Understand the multilayered significance of water, seasons, and other phenomena for local First Nations peoples <a href="#">(VCGGK109)</a>	Analyse how local First Nations peoples have managed land and resources over time <a href="#">(VCGGK137)</a>
<b>TECHNOLOGIES</b>	<b>Technologies and Society</b>	Identify current and future community and sustainability needs <a href="#">(VCDTCD034)</a>  Investigate and consider possible futures <a href="#">(VCDSTS033)</a>	Define and analyse real-world problems, needs, and opportunities <a href="#">(VCDTCD040)</a>  Examine and prioritise preferred futures <a href="#">(VCDSTS043)</a>	Critique problems, needs, and opportunities, and predict outcomes <a href="#">(VCDTCD054)</a>  Critically analyse factors for preferred futures <a href="#">(VCDSTS054)</a>
<b>HEALTH AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>Personal, Social, and Community Health</b>	Participate in outdoor activities and create connections to the natural environment <a href="#">(VCHPEP113)</a>	Explore physical, social, emotional, and spiritual benefits to health and wellbeing of being outdoors <a href="#">(VCHPEP131)</a>	Creatively and sustainably connect to the environment as an individual and as part of a community <a href="#">(VCHPEP150)</a>

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# Activities

## Acknowledging Country

- If you are with a Traditional Owner, be guided by their practices of Acknowledging Country. Otherwise, spend time mindfully engaging with the environment:
  - On your own, observe and connect with the environment around you. Pay attention to:
    - Your five senses – what can you see? Hear? Smell? Touch? (Safely) taste?
    - Your emotional and spiritual responses to nature.
  - As a class, discuss:
    - The difference between ‘country’ and ‘**Country**’.
    - Why we acknowledge Traditional Owners.
    - What it means to pay respects to Elders past, present, and future.
    - The responsibilities we all have to look after Country.

**Country/Place**  
*First Nations  
ancestral areas  
(including lands,  
waters, and sky)  
and all the values,  
places, resources,  
stories, and  
cultural  
obligations  
associated with  
that area and its  
features.*

## Warming-up

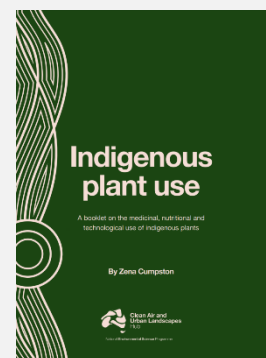
- Check out the [warm-ups](#) for a suitable activity depending on your chosen Caring for Country task. *Collective Action (Keepie-uppie)* is a simple but effective activity that will suit most contexts.

## Caring for Country

- Complete some or all of the following activities, or develop your own ideas as a class to help care for the Country that you are on.
  - Learn from First Nations’ knowledges about understanding and caring for Country/Place. This might include:
    - A local species of plant or animal
    - A specific place
    - Cyclical changes (e.g., phases of the moon, connections between lunar cycles and ocean tides, local calendars, seasonal changes)
    - Ways of managing Country (e.g., fire management practices)
  - Help to take care of Country. This might include:
    - Cleaning up rubbish
    - Planting trees
    - Removing exotic weeds
  - In small groups, create a sustainable artwork using materials found lying on the ground.
    - Don’t plan your artwork or talk during the creative process. Instead, have one person make an ‘offer’, then add onto this offer one at a time. Interact through facial expressions and gestures rather than words.

Many First Nations people have published resources sharing their knowledges about understanding and caring for Country/Place. For example, Zena Cumpston's free booklet *Indigenous Plant Use* which provides invaluable information on the medicinal, nutritional, and technological use of indigenous plants. Click on the image to the right to access a copy.

## Caring for Country



This sustainable sand artwork was created by members of the Centre for Regenerating Futures, Deakin University, during an on Country day with Nyul Nyul artist Lowell Hunter on Wadawurrung Country.

What connections to the environment are represented? What knowledges about Country/Place?



Photo credit: Hunter (2024)

- When your group is satisfied with your artwork (shown through silent agreement), verbally share your artistic ideas and intentions.
- Observe other groups' artworks. What connections to the environment are represented? What knowledges about Country/Place?
- Afterwards, dismantle your artworks and return everything to how you found it. If your artworks contained found non-natural materials, dispose of these appropriately.

### Embodying relationships

- As a class, brainstorm words to describe the place where you live and the values that shape it.
- In pairs, create a freeze-frame showing this relationship between place and values. One person embodies a word that describes the place. The other person embodies a value word. Use your bodies to show how the physical world and human values interconnect. What do you notice about this relationship?
- As a class, brainstorm values, concepts, and practices associated with sustainability.
- In pairs, return to your freeze-frame. Consider futures of this place and human influences on those futures.
  - What human values might negatively influence the place? How might the place change?
  - What would change about the place in a more sustainable future? How would the human values change?
  - Embody these changes. You should now have three freeze-frames: one of the place as it is now, one of a future where humans negatively affect place, and one of a sustainable future.
  - Share these freeze-frames with another group. What problems, needs, and opportunities do you observe in their performance?

### Visually representing futures

- Choose one of the photos that you took outdoors. Using digital or physical media, alter the photograph to represent two possible futures, one showing negative anthropogenic change, the other a more sustainable relationship.
  - Sustainable possibilities you might like to consider and/or learn more about include:
 

▪ Rewilding	▪ Interspecies empathy
▪ Community connections	▪ Sustainable transport
▪ Collaborative action	▪ Passive architecture

### Reflecting

- Individually, reflect in your journals on your experiences in Phase 2 using the prompts from Phase 1. What has changed in your reflections? What has stayed the same?

## Embodying relationships

In this photo, Dr Jo Raphael and comedian Geraldine Hickey are embodying the relationship between a human value and the environment. Which one is the value? Which is the environment? Is the relationship positive or negative? What problems, needs, and opportunities do you observe?



Photo credit: ResourceSmart Schools Awards (2024)

## Visually representing futures

In this artefact of the future, a student has painted the night sky in 2050 showing more stars than in 2024. In this more sustainable future, governments around the world legislated in 2030 that all unnecessary lighting had to be off by 11pm. The world realised that light pollution was affecting bird migratory patterns and was affecting their populations, and thus the rest of the ecosystems.



2024



2050

*Starry Night*. Student artefact (2024)