EMP5124

PASSPORT SERIES

Australia, Oceania and Antarctica

Author: Heather Knowles
Contributors: Nancy Klepper (Australia)
Editor: Bonnie Krueger
Original Illustrations: Larry Nolte
Design and Layout: Kati Baker

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 978-1-4291-2258-0

BRIDGING the Gaps in Education™
Lorenz Educational Press
P.O. Box 802 • Dayton, OH 45401-0802

for other LEP products visit our website
www.LorenzEducationalPress.com

*All statistics are based on information from 2010.
** For further information on pronunciations, research foreign language dictionaries and/or the Internet.

Metric Conversions

The purpose of this page is to aid in the conversion of measurements in this book from the English system to the metric system. Note that the tables below show two types of ounces. Liquid ounces measure the volume of liquids and have therefore been converted into milliliters. Dry ounces measure weight and have been converted into grams. Because dry substances such as sugar and flour may have different densities, it is advisable to measure them according to weight rather than volume. The measurement unit of the cup has been reserved solely for liquid, or volume, conversions.

Conversion Formulas				
when you know	**formula**	**to find**		
		when you know	**formula**	**to find**
teaspoons	× 5	milliliters	× .20	teaspoons
tablespoons	× 15	milliliters	× .60	tablespoons
fluid ounces	× 29.57	milliliters	× .03	fluid ounces
liquid cups	× 240	milliliters	× .004	liquid cups
U.S. gallons	× 3.78	liters	× .26	U.S. gallons
dry ounces	× 28.35	grams	× .035	dry ounces
inches	× 2.54	centimeters	× .39	inches
square inches	× 6.45	square centimeters	× .15	square inches
feet	× .30	meters	× 3.28	feet
square feet	× .09	square meters	× 10.76	square feet
yards	× .91	meters	× 1.09	yards
miles	× 1.61	kilometers	× .62	miles
square miles	× 2.59	square kilometers	× .40	square miles
Fahrenheit	(°F – 32) × $^5/_9$	Celsius	(°C × $^9/_5$) + 32	Fahrenheit

Equivalent Temperatures

32°F = 0°C (water freezes)
212°F = 100°C (water boils)
350°F = 177°C
375°F = 191°C
400°F = 204°C
425°F = 218°C
450°F = 232°C

Common Cooking Conversions

$^1/_2$ cup = 120 milliliters
12 fluid ounces = 354.88 milliliters
1 quart (32 ounces) = 950 milliliters
$^1/_2$ gallon = 1.89 liters
1 Canadian gallon = 4.55 liters
8 dry ounces ($^1/_2$ pound) = 227 grams
16 dry ounces (1 pound) = 454 grams

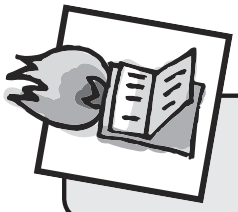
Table of Contents

Australia


Indian Ocean
South Pacific Ocean
Darwin
Gulf of Carpentaria
Great Barrier Reef
Lake Argyle
Northern Territory
Queensland
Western Australia
Brisbane
South Australia
New South Wales
Perth
Sydney
Adelaide
Canberra
Great Australian Bight
Victoria
Melbourne
Indian Ocean
Tasmania

Welcome to Australia!

The first Australians were the *Aborigines* (first settlers) who came to this island continent many thousands of years ago. The European settlement of Australia was established over 200 years ago, primarily by the British. Australia is similar to many European cultures, but due to its remote geographical location, it is sufficiently different to be considered another culture—a culture to which children can readily relate.



FAST FACTS

Official Name: Commonwealth of Australia

Location: Oceania, between the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific Ocean

Population: 21,515,754 (2010 estimate)

Capital City: Canberra

Area: 2,967,741 square miles; Australia is the sixth largest country in the world.

Major Language: English is the most widely spoken and is the official language. Aborigines have their own languages. People in the many immigrant communities also speak their native languages, such as Italian, Greek, and Vietnamese. 90 different languages are heard in Australia today.

Major Religion: Australia is predominately Christian, but a variety of other religions were brought to Australia by the diverse peoples who migrated there. Approximately 80 different religious groups exist in the country.

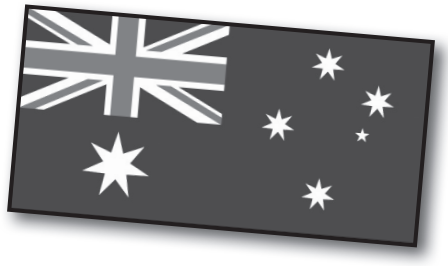
Currency: The Australian dollar 1 Australian dollar = 100 cents

Climate: Generally arid to semiarid; temperate in south and east; tropical in north

The Land: Mostly low plateau with deserts; fertile plain in southeast

Type of Government: Federal parliamentary democracy and a Commonwealth realm

Flag: The Australian flag is blue, with the flag of the United Kingdom in the upper hoist-side quadrant and a large seven-pointed star in the lower hoist-side quadrant. The star, known as the Commonwealth or Federation Star, represents the federation of the colonies of Australia in 1901. It depicts one point for each of the six original states and one representing all of Australia's internal and external territories. On the fly half of the flag is a representation of the Southern Cross constellation in white, with one small five-pointed star and four larger, seven-pointed stars.



Coat of Arms: In the center of the Australian coat of arms is a shield containing the badge of each Australian state. In the top half, from left to right, the states represented are New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland, and in the bottom half, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania. Above the shield is the seven-pointed Commonwealth Star above a blue and gold wreath. Six of the points on the star represent the original six states, while the seventh point represents the combined territories and any future states of Australia. The red kangaroo and emu, both native to Australia, are the unofficial animal emblems of the country.

National Flower: Golden wattle

National Animals: Kangaroo and emu (unofficial)

Natural Environment

Australia is unique in many ways. It is the only country that occupies an entire continent. The country is completely surrounded by water and could be considered the world's largest island. In fact, Australia is referred to as the "Island Continent." The land masses of Australia and Antarctica were once connected as indicated by the common fossil records of both continents. Australia is an old land; it is heavily eroded and has no significant mountains.

Australia is located in the Southern Hemisphere. Therefore, the stars in the night sky appear in different positions than the stars seen in North America. Some stars seen in North America can't be seen in Australia, such as Polaris, the North Star. Some stars seen in Australia can't be seen in North America, such as those found in a constellation called the Southern Cross, which has been incorporated into the design of the Australian flag.

Australia's location in the Southern Hemisphere also has an effect on the seasons. While countries in the Northern Hemisphere are experiencing winter, Australia is experiencing its summer; thus, Christmas in Australia is in the middle of summer. The Australian winter months are June, July, and August.

While the southern part of Australia has a temperate climate with distinct winters and summers, the northern part of Australia is semitropical or tropical, like the Caribbean. Much of the Australian interior is desert or semiarid. The largest reef in the world, the Great Barrier Reef, stretches more than 1,500 miles along the northeast coast of Australia.

Australia is on the east side of the International Date Line that stretches from north to south across the Pacific Ocean. Sydney and Melbourne, the two largest cities in Australia, are about 15 hours ahead of Toronto, making Australia almost a day ahead of North American countries. When travelers go from North America to Australia, they lose a day as they cross the International Date Line. Of course, they gain a day when they return.

Australia is sometimes referred to as being "down under," which means that it is below Europe and North America. Of course the earth is round and can be viewed from any perspective. Europeans historically thought of themselves as being "on top." So when they drew maps of the world they put Europe at the top of the map and Africa, South America, and Australia at the bottom of the map.

Animal and Plant Life

Kangaroo

Because Australia has been separated from other lands for millions of years, its plants and animals have evolved differently from plants and animals elsewhere on the earth. As a result, Australia has several unique species of plants and animals.

The *marsupials*, the most familiar of these unique species, have 170 subspecies. Marsupials keep their newborns in a pouch on the mother's body until they are old enough to care for themselves. Kangaroos, wallabies, and koalas are the best-known marsupials.

Kookaburra

Australia has the only egg-laying mammals—the duck-billed platypus and the *echidna*, or spiny anteater! They belong to a group called *monotremes*, which lay eggs covered with soft, leathery shells like those of reptiles.

Australia also has birds found nowhere else in the world, such as the emu, lyrebird, and bowerbird. The best known Australian bird is the kookaburra, famous for its call that fills the air with a sound like laughter.

Almost 24,000 plants are unique to this continent. Unfortunately, many of Australia's plants and animals have become extinct since the arrival of the first European settlers. The Australian government now places a high priority on the conservation of this land's unique natural resources. Government rangers and scientists are working together to keep Australia's plants and animals safe. School children and adults join the Australian Trust for Conservation Volunteers and work to protect the natural environment. They plant trees and build fences to protect wildlife.

In Your Classroom

Bring a world map and a globe to the classroom and let the children explore them. Introduce basic geographical concepts—equator, Northern and Southern Hemispheres, International Date Line, oceans, and landforms. Try putting south at the top and viewing the world from this perspective.

Discuss the issue of extinct and endangered species. *World* magazine from the National Geographic Society and *Ranger Rick* and *Your Big Backyard* magazines from the National Wildlife Federation are good resources for this purpose. Let the children explore ways they can act to protect their environment.