

PARK EXPLORERS

The Park Explorers program supports Year 5/6 students to learn in and about Victoria's protected places. Park Explorers is a curriculum-aligned program which fosters strong environmental values and a love of nature by encouraging students to learn outdoors and give back to their local environment.

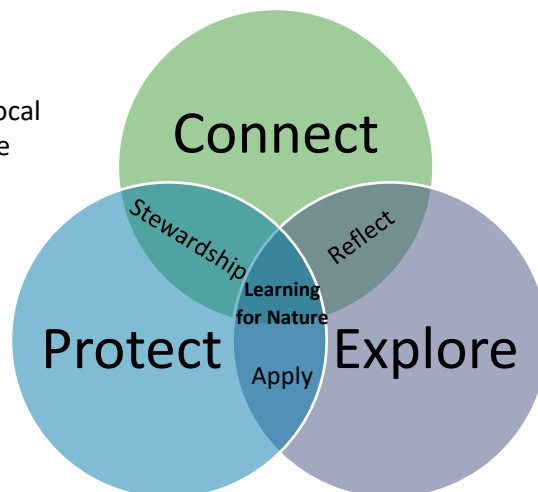
The inquiry-based program is flexible and can fit in with a unit of work based on Science, Geography, the Capabilities and the cross-curriculum priority, Sustainability. Resources such as maps, videos and Teaching and Learning packs are provided to support the implementation of the program.

The program and its accompanying resources are based on Parks Victoria's Learning for Nature Education philosophy; Connect, Explore, Protect. This structure is designed to:

- Develop stronger connections between students and nature
- Establish and build upon students' knowledge of their unique local environment through inquiry learning and exploration of nature
- Empower students to protect and help safeguard Victoria's protected places

Teachers can use the Park Explorers resources as a full unit of work but are encouraged to adapt and use the activity ideas to suit their students' needs, inquiries and interests.

If you would like for your students to be Park Explorers please email education@parks.vic.gov.au to register your interest.



Year 5/6 Park Explorers Science and Geography Unit Overview

Overarching Inquiry Question: Why does Victoria have protected places?

Unit focus: What makes Victoria's protected places special?

Connect & Explore

- What is a Victorian protected place?
- How do Victoria's protected places support the survival of living things?
- Why is it important that Victoria's protected places contain different ecosystems?
- Why is it important to protect the health of protected places?
- How have Victorian landscapes changed over time?
- How do we learn about the uniqueness of Victoria's protected places?

The Teaching and Learning Resources contain curriculum linked activities that help students unpack these questions. Visual thinking tools are used to enable students to explore, organise or reflect on their learning. Biodiversity audits are encouraged through the use of apps such as ClimateWatch, iNaturalist, or OzAtlas. A Parks Victoria ranger or expert may be available to support student outdoor inquiry. Contact education@parks.vic.gov.au for more information.

Protect

Potential ideas depending on student interest:

- ParkConnect: join local Parks Victoria activities such as working bees or tree planting days.

- Promote the importance of your local park to your community. Use digital technology to create a campaign for the importance of natural spaces and the wildlife they contain and positive behaviours to engage in when visiting them.
- Organise clean up events, wildlife monitoring activities, or nest box/insect hotel building to support local habitats.
- Regularly contribute to citizen science projects such as ClimateWatch, SeaSearch, Tangaroa Blue.
- Sustainability Victoria: Become a Resource Smart Schools and complete activities to gain accreditation.
- Become a Fighting Extinction school through Zoos Victoria.

Year 5/6 Victorian Curriculum links

Science

- Scientific understandings, discoveries and inventions are used to inform personal and community decisions and to solve problems that directly affect people's lives (VCSSU073)
- Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment (VCSSU074)
- The growth and survival of living things are affected by the physical conditions of their environment (VCSSU075)
- Sudden geological changes or extreme weather conditions can affect Earth's surface (VCSSU079)
- With guidance, pose questions to clarify practical problems or inform a scientific investigation, and predict what the findings of an investigation might be based on previous experiences or general rules (VCSIS082)
- With guidance, plan appropriate investigation types to answer questions or solve problems and use equipment, technologies and materials safely, identifying potential risks (VCSIS083)
- Construct and use a range of representations, including tables and graphs, to record, represent and describe observations, patterns or relationships in data (VCSIS085)
- Communicate ideas and processes using evidence to develop explanations of events and phenomena and to identify simple cause-and-effect relationships (VCSIS088)

Geography

- Describe and explain interconnections within places and between places, and the effects of these interconnections (VCGGC087)
- Influence of people, including the influence of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, on the environmental characteristics of Australian places (VCGGK094)
- Impacts of bushfires or floods on environments and communities, and how people can respond (VCGGK095)
- Environmental and human influences on the location and characteristics of places and the management of spaces within them (VCGGK096)

Critical and Creative thinking

- Examine how different kinds of questions can be used to identify and clarify information, ideas and possibilities (VCCCTQ021)
- Investigate thinking processes using visual models and language strategies (VCCCTM029)

Ethical Capabilities

- Discuss how ethical principles can be used as the basis for action, considering the influence of cultural norms, religion, world views and philosophical thought on these principles (VCECU010)
- Examine how problems may contain more than one ethical issue (VCECU011)

Digital Technologies

- Acquire, store and validate different types of data and use a range of software to interpret and visualise data to create information (VCDTDI028)
- Plan, create and communicate ideas, information and online collaborative projects, applying agreed ethical, social and technical protocols (VCDTDI029)