

Geography Level 8

Chapter 6 — Concluding, deciding and communicating

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Weighing values, drawing conclusions: space, change, interconnection and environment

Geography 8 · Chapter 6 — Concluding, deciding and communicating · Section 6A

Curriculum focus: VC2HG8S05 (Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, Geography, Levels 7 and 8, VCAA).

This section draws on **VC2HG8S05.E01** to **VC2HG8S05.E06** for MCQ and coverage linking.

Elaborations drawn on:

- **VC2HG8S05.E01** — debating open geographical questions with the four concepts (section 6)
 - **VC2HG8S05.E02** — testing conclusions against opposing evidence (section 3, Worked demonstration 1 Step 3)
 - **VC2HG8S05.E03** — organising an answer around at least one concept (section 2, both demonstrations)
 - **VC2HG8S05.E04** — who feels an impact: individuals, communities, governments (section 5)
 - **VC2HG8S05.E05** — reasons behind decisions (section 5, Worked demonstration 2 Step 6)
 - **VC2HG8S05.E06** — ethical issues in deciding an answer (section 4, Worked demonstration 2 Step 4)
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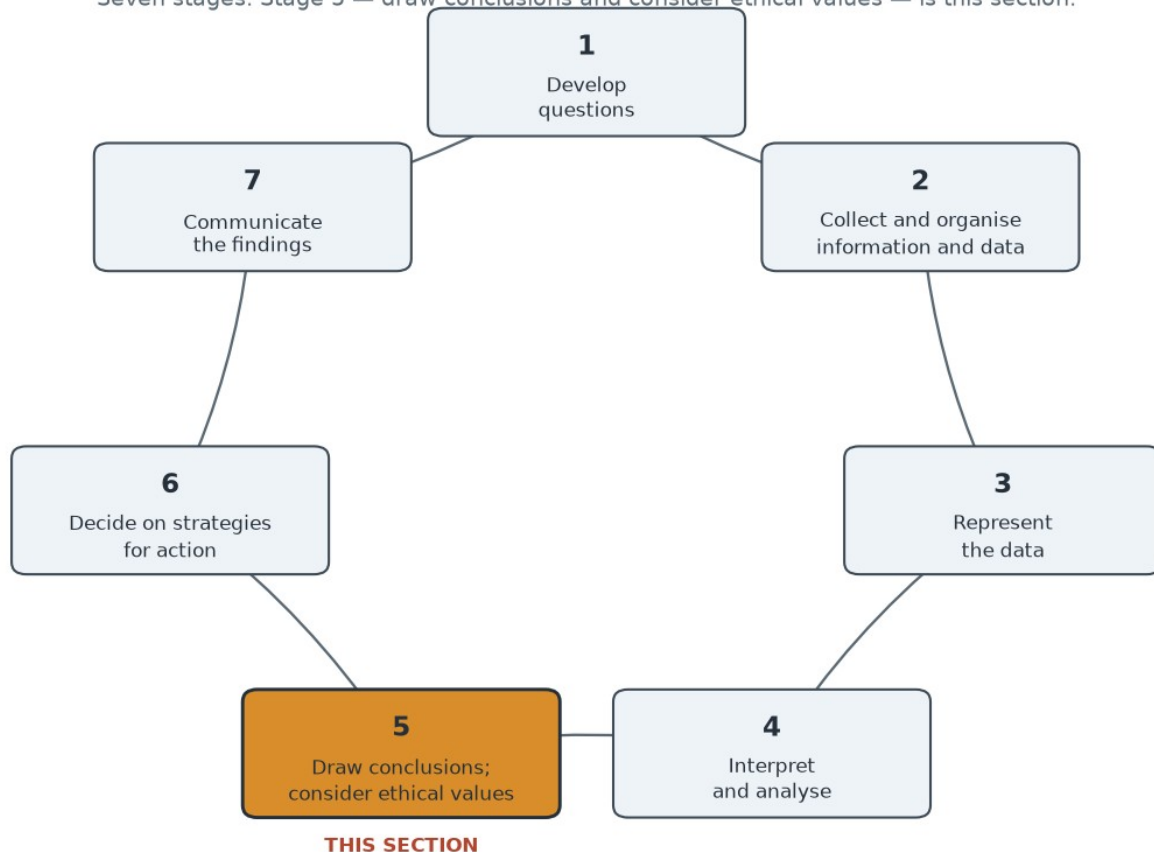
Theory

Where you are in the inquiry

Every geographical inquiry runs through the same stages. You start with a question (5A). You collect and organise information and data, including from fieldwork (5B). You represent the data in maps, graphs and tables (5C). You interpret and analyse it, looking for patterns, trends and relationships (5D). Then comes the stage this section owns: **drawing conclusions** — saying what the evidence shows, testing that conclusion against opposing evidence, and asking whether the answer is fair as well as true.

The geographical inquiry, and where this section sits

Seven stages. Stage 5 — draw conclusions and consider ethical values — is this section.



Original figure for Section 6A; the seven stages follow the Victorian Curriculum F-10 Version 2.0 Geography inquiry cycle.

A circular diagram of the seven stages of a geographical inquiry: develop questions, collect and organise information and data, represent the data, interpret and analyse, draw conclusions and consider ethical values, decide on strategies for action, communicate the findings. The fifth stage, draw conclusions and consider ethical values, is highlighted and marked this section

Conclusions are not the end of the story. Once you have drawn a conclusion you can decide on strategies for action (6B), and then communicate your whole response with sources (6C). But you cannot decide wisely on action before you know what the evidence shows — so the quality of everything after this stage depends on the quality of the conclusions drawn here. This is also where the band’s achievement standard speaks directly: its Level 8 expectation that students draw reasoned conclusions and weigh the ethical values at stake in the impact of the issue or challenge they studied.

This section is a skills section. It adds no new content of its own: all its working material comes from the knowledge you built in Chapters 1 to 4 — Chapter 1 (water in the world), Chapter 2 (place and liveability), Chapter 3 (landforms and landscapes), Chapter 4 (changing nations).

Defining the terms first

evidence-based conclusion — a final, reasoned answer to a question that is supported by facts and data you can point to, and that says where those facts came from. It is stronger than an opinion (“I think farms should get the water”) and different from a description (“farms use most of the water”): it takes a position and defends it with evidence.

evaluation — making a reasoned judgment about something against criteria. Section 2E defined it and used it on liveability; here you evaluate information and data before you conclude from them.

ethical values — the Victorian Curriculum uses the term *ethical values* but does not define it. This section therefore treats it as: *beliefs about what is right and fair in the way people treat one another and the places they live in*, and every question in this section is answerable on that definition alone. Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with this one. Ethics is a *contested* kind of term: reasonable people share the same facts and still weigh them in different ways, which is exactly why this section asks you to argue from reasoning, not from heat.

organisier — an idea used to sort and structure an answer. In this section the organisers are four of geography's seven concepts: space, change, interconnection and environment. A conclusion organised by a concept does not just list facts; it arranges them around one big question, such as *where?* (space) or *what is changing?* (change).

space — one of the seven geographical concepts: where things are, how far apart they are, how they are arranged across the land, and how that arrangement affects people. Its question is: *where, and how far?*

change — one of the seven geographical concepts: the ways places and environments are altered over time, by natural processes, by people, or by both at once. Its question is: *what is changing, how fast, and what comes next?*

interconnection — one of the seven geographical concepts: the links between people, places and environments, so that what happens in one place can shape what happens in another. Its question is: *what links this place to other places, and what moves along those links?*

environment — one of the seven geographical concepts: the surroundings of a place and their condition — the air, water, land, climate and living things, and the built surroundings people have added. Its question is: *what are the surroundings and conditions like?*

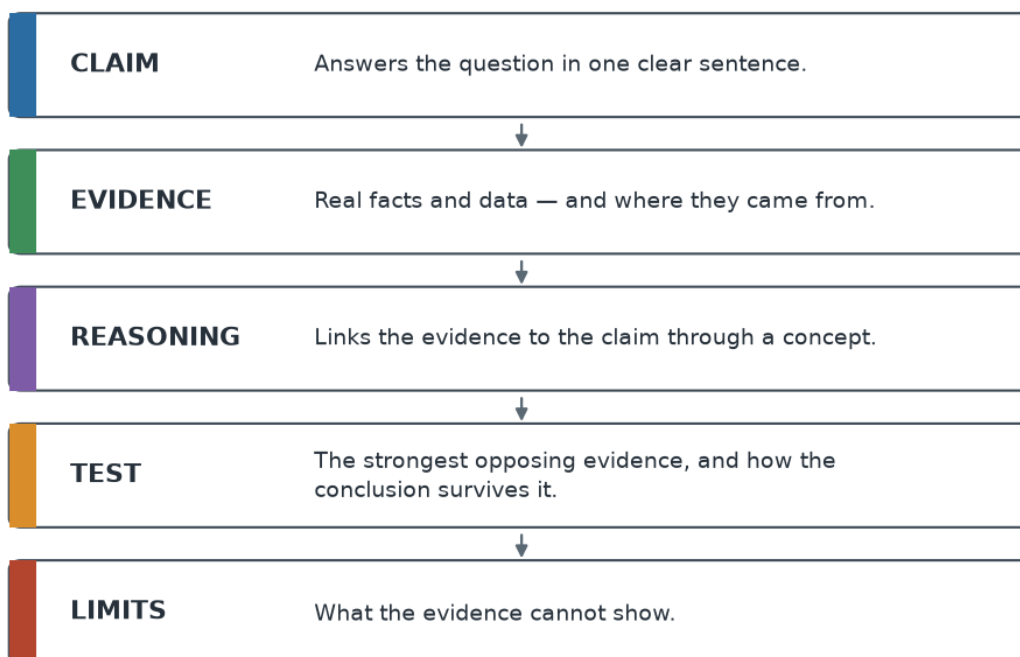
phenomenon, issue, challenge — the three words the curriculum uses for the things inquiries are about. Section 3F set a working definition of *phenomenon*: something that happens in the environment that we can observe and then try to explain. This section adds: an *issue* is a geographical question that affects people and where different answers are possible (who should get the water?), and a *challenge* is a hard problem that needs action (how can a growing city house its people?). One event can be all three at once.

1. The shape of an evidence-based conclusion

A conclusion that is worth drawing has five parts. The figure below shows them in order.

The five parts of an evidence-based conclusion

A checklist: a conclusion missing any part can be challenged.



Claim without evidence is opinion. Evidence without reasoning is a fact list.

A conclusion that never meets the other side has not been tested.

Original figure for Section 6A (no external data).

A diagram of the five parts of an evidence-based conclusion, stacked in order: claim, which answers the question; evidence, real facts and data with their sources; reasoning, which links the evidence to the claim through a concept; test, the strongest opposing evidence and how the conclusion survives it; and limits, what the evidence does not show

Read the parts as a checklist. A claim with no evidence is an opinion. Evidence with no reasoning is a fact list. A conclusion that never meets the other side has not been tested — and an untested conclusion is a guess wearing a suit. Notice the last part too: a strong conclusion says what its evidence *cannot* show. Naming a limit does not weaken a conclusion; it is one of the signs that the conclusion is honest.

2. Four concepts, four organisers (VC2HG8S05.E03)

The content description names four concepts: **space, change, interconnection and environment**. Each one can be used as an *organiser* — the idea your conclusion hangs on. Choosing an organiser decides which question your conclusion really answers.

Four concepts, four organisers

The organiser you choose decides which question your conclusion really answers.

Concept	Its key question	It organises conclusions about ...
SPACE	Where, and how far?	Distribution and distance — who and what is where.
CHANGE	What is changing, and how fast?	Trends over time — what comes next.
INTERCONNECTION	What is linked to what?	Flows between people, places and environments.
ENVIRONMENT	What are the surroundings and conditions like?	The state of the air, water, land and living things.

One question, four readings: can farming last in Australia's dry regions?

SPACE Where can farming stand? Beside rivers, storages, channels.	CHANGE What is changing for water? Climate puts pressure on supply.	INTERCONNECTION Who is linked? Farms, rivers, towns, cities — one system.	ENVIRONMENT What condition are the rivers and soils farming depends on?
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At least one organiser must shape every conclusion in this section (VC2HG8S05).

Original figure for Section 6A; concepts are the Victorian Curriculum F-10 Version 2.0 Geography concepts (VC2HG8S05).

A table of the four concept organisers used in this section: space asks where and how far, and organises conclusions about distribution and distance; change asks what is changing and how fast, and organises conclusions about trends over time; interconnection asks what is linked to what, and organises conclusions about flows between people, places and environments; environment asks what the surroundings and conditions are like, and organises conclusions about the state of air, water, land and living things. One row of worked examples applies all four to the one question: can farming last in Australia's dry regions?

The curriculum's own example for this skill (E03) looks at where water resources sit and asks whether farming can last — that is the space organiser at work, and Worked demonstration 1 below runs it in full on real Australian data. The same demonstration ends by re-reading the same question through the change organiser, so you can see how the organiser you choose shapes the conclusion you reach.

You do not need all four concepts in every conclusion. The content description sets the floor: **at least one** of the four — space, change, interconnection, environment — must organise your response. At Level 8, where the band's standard is stated, aim to name the organiser you are using — “through the space lens, ...”, “organised around change, ...” — so your reasoning can be followed and marked.

3. Testing your conclusion: the other side of the evidence (VC2HG8S05.E02)

Real geographical issues rarely split cleanly into true and false. More often, different parts of the evidence point in different directions. A strong conclusion is not the one that ignores that mess — it is the one that *meets* it.

Testing works like this. Once you have a conclusion, make a point of looking for **opposing evidence**: facts, data or cases that support a different view of the same issue. Then do one of three things, and say which you are doing:

- **absorb it** — the opposing evidence fits inside your conclusion (“yes, but only in these places, or these years”);
- **outweigh it** — there is stronger evidence on your side, and you show the comparison;
- **yield to it** — the opposing evidence is stronger, so you change or narrow your conclusion. Changing your mind when the evidence demands it is not failure. It is the skill.

This is the same steelman rule the book has used since 1B and 3F: put the opposing view in the strongest form its own supporters would recognise, then test it. A conclusion that only ever beats a weak version of the other side has not been tested at all.

4. Ethical values: three questions and one test (VC2HG8S05.E06)

Geography can tell you what *is* and what *will happen*. It cannot, by itself, tell you what is *right*. That is where ethical values enter: most geographical decisions also touch what people owe one another and the places they share. The content description asks you to **consider ethical values** before you finalise a conclusion — not as a decoration, but as a check on it.

This section works with three ethical questions, each aimed at any decision a conclusion points toward:

Three ethical questions — and the test that checks them

Apply all three to any action a conclusion points toward.

FAIRNESS

Who benefits, and who pays?

Name both groups: the people the choice helps, and the people who carry its cost.

RESPONSIBILITY

Who should act — and who cannot speak?

Some of those affected cannot argue for themselves: future generations, and the environment itself — rivers, forests, animals.

THE EVERYONE TEST

Would the choice still work if everyone made it?

The philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote about this test in 1785: act only on a rule you could will to become a rule for everyone. It has limits — the same act looks different in a dry region and a wet one — but it catches many unfair choices fast.

Values do not replace evidence — they check the conclusion the evidence has built.

Original figure for Section 6A; the everyone test after Immanuel Kant, Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals (1785), limits stated.

A diagram of the three ethical questions used in this section and the test that checks them: fairness asks who benefits and who pays; responsibility asks who should act and who is affected without a voice, including future generations and the environment itself; the everyone test asks whether the choice would still work if everyone made it, an idea the philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote about in 1785

1. **Fairness — who benefits, and who pays?** Almost every geographical decision gives advantages to some people and costs to others. Naming both groups is the first ethical move: water sent to a forest helps the forest and its birds but may cost a farm; a new suburb brings homes to buyers but may take farmland from growers.

2. **Responsibility — who should act, and who cannot speak?** Some of those affected cannot argue for themselves: future generations who will live with today's choices, and the environment itself — rivers, forests and animals that need their conditions defended in words by people.
3. **The everyone test — would it still work if everyone did it?** For a choice you plan to recommend, ask whether the choice would still hold if every person, farm or city made the same one. The philosopher Immanuel Kant wrote about this test in 1785: act only on a rule you could will to become a rule for everyone. The test has limits — the same act can look different for a dry region and a wet one — but as a quick check on a proposed action it catches many unfair choices. If a city took water from a neighbour every dry year, would the arrangement survive the day the neighbour needed the same?

Two honest notes, so the ethics stay honest. First, ethical values are not a substitute for evidence: a conclusion built only on values, with no data under it, is a speech, not a conclusion. Second, two students can weigh the same values in different order — fairness first or responsibility first — and both reason well. Marks in this section go to the quality of the reasoning: values named, groups identified, evidence used. They never go to the side reached.

5. Impacts: who feels a change, and why decisions are made (VC2HG8S05.E04, E05)

Most conclusions in this book end up saying something about **impacts** — what a phenomenon, issue or challenge does to people, places and environments. Two habits make impact statements sharp.

First habit: sort impacts by who feels them. The same event lands in different ways on an individual, a community and a government. Water scarcity — the challenge Chapter 1 studied — shows the three scales clearly:

The impacts of water scarcity, at three scales

The same challenge lands in different ways on an individual, a community and a government (modelled on Chapter 1).

INDIVIDUAL	Higher water bills. Permanent water-saving rules at home.
COMMUNITY	Sports grounds and parks go dry. Farm towns live on smaller water shares in dry years.
GOVERNMENT	Orders desalinated water: 50 GL ordered from the Victorian Desalination Plant for July to December 2025 (Melbourne Water). Sets water rules; invests in recycling and stormwater capture.

Water order fact: Melbourne Water, Victorian Desalination Plant (retrieved 2026-08-25). Figure text otherwise models Chapter 1 (VC2HG8K04).

A table of the impacts of water scarcity at three scales, modelled on the examples of Chapter 1: for an individual, higher water bills and permanent water-saving rules at home; for a community, sports grounds and parks going dry, and farm towns living on smaller water allocations in dry years; for government, ordering desalinated water — 50 GL ordered from the Victorian Desalination Plant for July to December 2025 — setting water rules, and investing in recycling and stormwater capture

Second habit: ask why the decision was made. Behind every managed place sits a decision — a dam built, a boundary drawn, a rule made — and decisions have reasons. Section 1D showed why governments mix strategies

against water scarcity; Section 4D’s city-management decisions mix costs, forecasts and climate risks. When you explain a decision’s reasons, you are doing exactly what VC2HG8S05.E05 asks: reflecting on the data to name and explain the impacts that matter most — on people, on places and on the environment.

6. Debating geographical questions (VC2HG8S05.E01)

Many of the questions in this book are genuinely open, and geography has a way of arguing about open questions: the debate. A geographical debate is not a shouting match; it has rules, and the rules are the same ones this section has been building:

- **Define your terms before you argue.** A debate about whether cities are “too big” must first say what *too big* means. Most debates that go nowhere are really two sides using one word with two meanings.
- **Give every claim a source.** Say where each fact comes from: a census table, a report card, a dated event, a checked observation.
- **Steelman both sides.** Each side states the other side’s case at full strength before attacking it.
- **Use the concepts.** Space, change, interconnection and environment are the debate’s shared language: *where is the pressure landing? what is changing? which places are linked? what is happening to the surroundings?*
- **Argue reasoning, not the result.** A debate is won by the side that defines, sources and reasons best — not necessarily the side you started on.

Worked examples

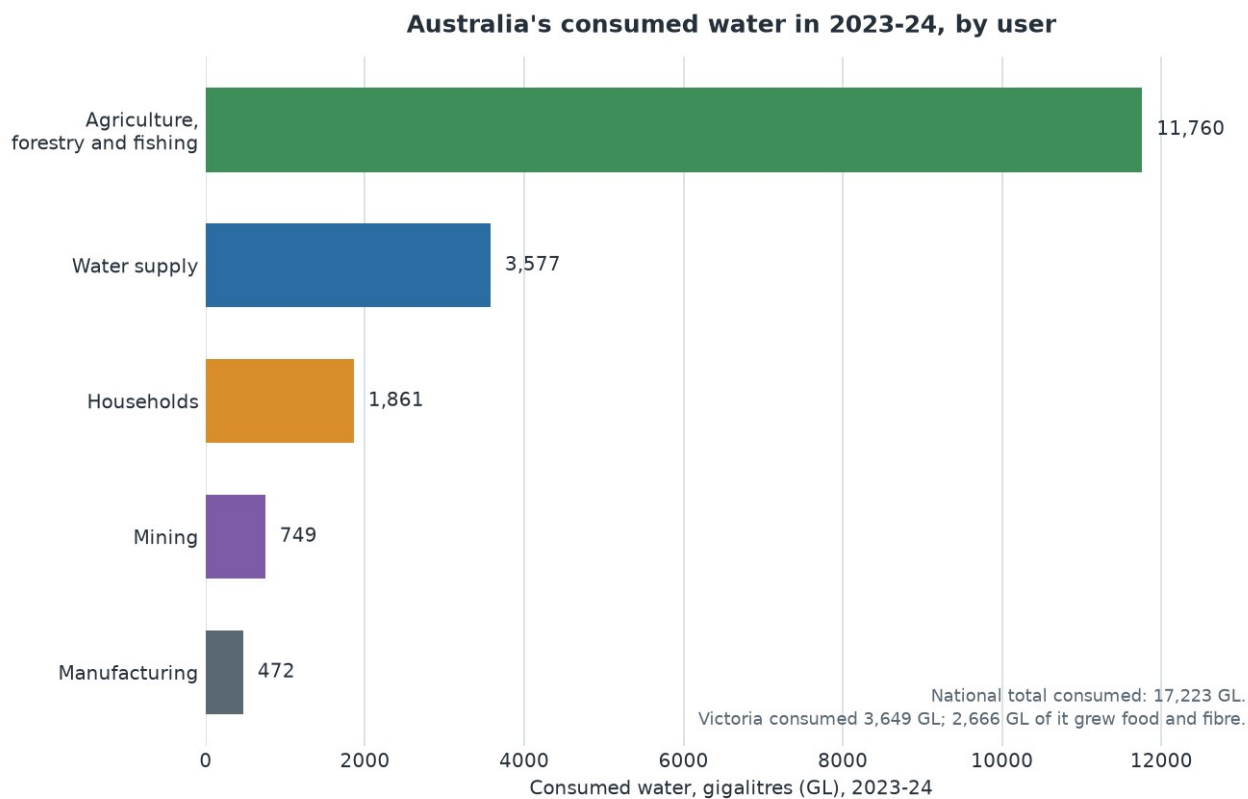
Worked demonstration 1 (scaffolded) — a conclusion organised by space: can farming last in Australia’s dry regions?

The question. Australia is the driest inhabited continent on Earth, yet it is a major food producer. *Is farming in Australia’s dry regions sustainable?* — in this demonstration, “sustainable” means able to keep going without running down the water, soil or communities it depends on.

Step 1 — Gather the evidence. All four facts below come from sources already met in Chapters 1 and 3 of this book.

Evidence	What it shows	Source
In 2023–24 Australia consumed 17,223 GL of water; agriculture, forestry and fishing consumed 11,760 GL — about two-thirds of the whole.	Farming is by far the biggest user of the water the country consumes.	ABS, <i>Water Account, Australia, 2023–24</i>
Victoria consumed 3,649 GL in 2023–24; 2,666 GL of it went to agriculture — about three-quarters.	In Victoria the pattern is even stronger: most consumed water grows food and fibre.	ABS, <i>Water Account, Australia, 2023–24</i>
Goulburn–Murray Water, Australia’s largest rural water corporation, runs 23 storages holding about 11,400 GL and 10,000 km of channels across a 68,000 km ² service area in northern Victoria, serving more than 26,000 customers.	In dry regions, farming clusters where people have built the works to store and move river water.	Goulburn–Murray Water, corporate facts
The Barmah–Millewa Forest, downstream of those diversions, scored A overall in its 2023–24 report card after 482 GL of water for the environment was delivered (85 GL used at the site; 397 GL returned to the river).	The river system farming depends on is itself a user of water, and it responds when that water is delivered.	MDBA, <i>Barmah–Millewa Forest Report Card 2023–24</i>

The first and second rows of that table, drawn as a chart:

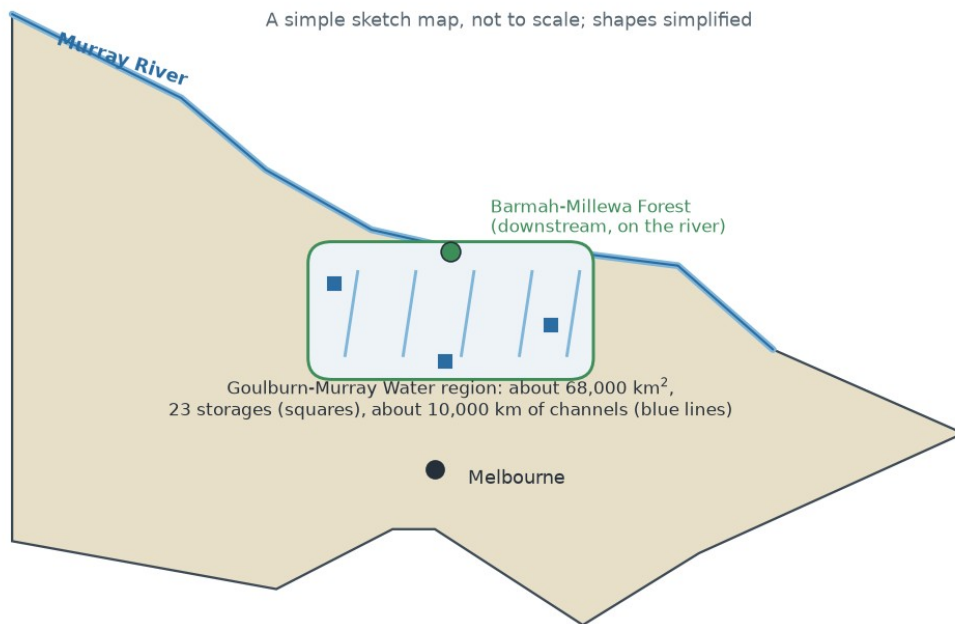


Source: ABS, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 (retrieved 2026-08-25).

A bar chart of Australia's consumed water in 2023-24 by user: agriculture, forestry and fishing at 11,760 gigalitres; water supply at 3,577; households at 1,861; mining at 749; and manufacturing at 472, against a national total of 17,223 gigalitres. Beside it, Victoria consumed 3,649 gigalitres, of which 2,666 went to agriculture. Source: ABS, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 (retrieved 2026-08-25).

Step 2 — Choose the organiser and reason. Through the **space** lens, the pattern is striking: farming in dry Australia does not sit wherever the soil is nice. It clusters where water can be delivered — along the Murray and its tributaries, behind the storages and beside the channels of systems such as Goulburn–Murray Water. The *distribution* of water resources, not just their amount, decides where farming can stand. That is the space organiser doing its work. The sketch below shows that pattern in northern Victoria (a simple schematic, not to scale):

Where farming clusters: water delivery in northern Victoria



Farming clusters beside the river, the storages and the channels — where water can be delivered. That is the space organiser at work.

Land shapes simplified and hand-drawn. Facts: Goulburn-Murray Water, corporate facts; MDBA, Barmah-Millewa Forest Report Card 2023-24 (retrieved 2026-08-25).

A simple sketch map of northern Victoria showing the Murray River along the northern border and the Goulburn-Murray Water region beside it: an irrigated district of about 68,000 square kilometres with 23 storages and about 10,000 kilometres of channels, and the Barmah-Millewa Forest on the river downstream. Farming clusters beside the river and the channels. Source: Goulburn-Murray Water, corporate facts (retrieved 2026-08-25).

Step 3 — Test the conclusion against opposing evidence. A first conclusion might be: *farming in dry regions cannot last — the climate is too dry*. But the evidence above opposes it: irrigation districts fed by 11,400 GL of storage grow food worth keeping, and Victoria’s farms alone consume 2,666 GL to do it. The honest conclusion is narrower and stronger:

Farming in Australia’s dry regions can continue, but only *in the places* where water is stored, shared and carefully managed — and only while enough water is left for the river systems that farms themselves depend on.

Notice what happened: the opposing evidence did not sink the concern — it moved the conclusion from “cannot last” to “can last, in these places, under these conditions”. That absorb-and-narrow move is the test working as designed.

Step 4 — Re-read the question through a second organiser: change. The same question through the **change** lens asks what is changing. Rain in Australia already arrives in bursts — flood one year, drought the next (1D) — and Chapter 1 found that climate change is forecast to put further pressure on Australia’s water resources. Through the change lens the conclusion adds a condition: what is sustainable *now* in a place may not stay so as the climate changes, so the answer depends on how well storage, rules and river health are managed over time. Two organisers, one question, two conclusions that fit together.

Step 5 — Consider the ethical values. Who benefits from the current arrangement, and who pays? Farms, farm towns and the food supply benefit; rivers and forests pay when too much is diverted — which is why water for the environment exists, and why Section 1B ended on the contested question of how the Murray’s water should be shared. Apply the everyone test to one proposed rule: *in dry years, farms may take all the river’s water*. If every basin, in every dry year, took everything, the rivers and the forests they support — and the report cards that score them — would not survive the arrangement. The test flags the rule as one no conclusion should recommend without limits.

The finished conclusion (all five parts, in one paragraph):

A model conclusion, with its parts labelled: farming in Australia's dry regions

CLAIM	Farming in Australia's dry regions can continue, but only in the places where water is stored, shared and carefully managed.
EVIDENCE	In 2023-24, agriculture consumed 11,760 GL of the 17,223 GL Australia consumed (ABS Water Account). Irrigation districts run on 23 storages holding about 11,400 GL and 10,000 km of channels (Goulburn-Murray Water).
REASONING (space)	Farming clusters where water can be delivered: beside rivers, storages and channels. The distribution of water, not just its amount, decides where farming can stand.
TEST	Opposing view: dry regions cannot farm at all. The irrigation data absorbs it: farming lasts where the water works are built — not everywhere. The claim is narrowed, not sunk.
LIMITS	One year's water account cannot show the years ahead, and Chapter 1 found climate change puts further pressure on Australia's water resources.

Original figure for Section 6A; data as sourced in the section (ABS Water Account 2023-24; Goulburn-Murray Water).

A model conclusion, labelled with the five parts from the section's checklist: claim, evidence with sources, reasoning organised by the concept of space, the test against opposing evidence, and limits. The worked conclusion is about farming in Australia's dry regions

Worked demonstration 2 (scaffolded) — a conclusion organised by change: how should Australia's cities take their growth?

The question. Chapter 4 studied urbanisation — the rise in the share of people living in cities, and the growth of cities themselves. *How should Australia's cities take their growth?* This demonstration draws its conclusions from the chapter's data.

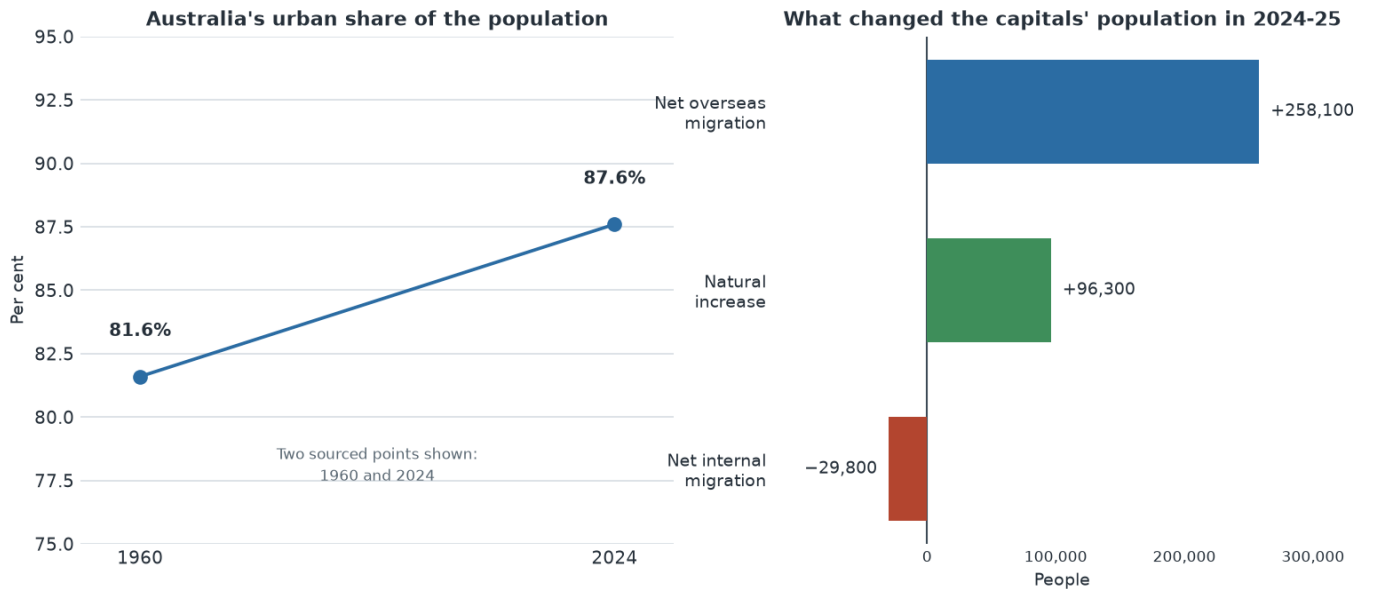
Step 1 — Gather the evidence.

Evidence	What it shows	Source
Australia's urban share of the population rose from 81.6 per cent in 1960 to 87.6 per cent in 2024.	Australia was already one of the world's most urbanised countries, and it is still urbanising.	World Bank, World Development Indicators
At 30 June 2025, 18.8 million people — 67.9 per cent of all Australians — lived in the eight capital cities.	Growth is not only urban; it is concentrated in a small number of very large places.	ABS, <i>Regional Population, Australia, 2025</i>
In 2024–25 the capitals grew through net overseas migration (+258,100 people) and natural increase (+96,300), while losing 29,800 people to the rest of Australia; regional Australia gained 94,700.	The engine of capital-city growth is arrival from overseas, not movement from the bush.	ABS, <i>Regional Population, Australia, 2025</i>
Victoria in Future 2023 projects Victoria's population to grow from about 6.7 million in 2022 to about	The growth is not a guess about if; official projections say <i>when</i> and <i>how much</i> .	Department of Transport and Planning, <i>Victoria in Future 2023</i>

10.3 million by 2051, and Greater Melbourne from about 5.2 million to about 7.5 million.

The first row of that table (the long trend) and the third row (the 2024–25 components), drawn together:

Australia's city growth: the long trend, and one year's components

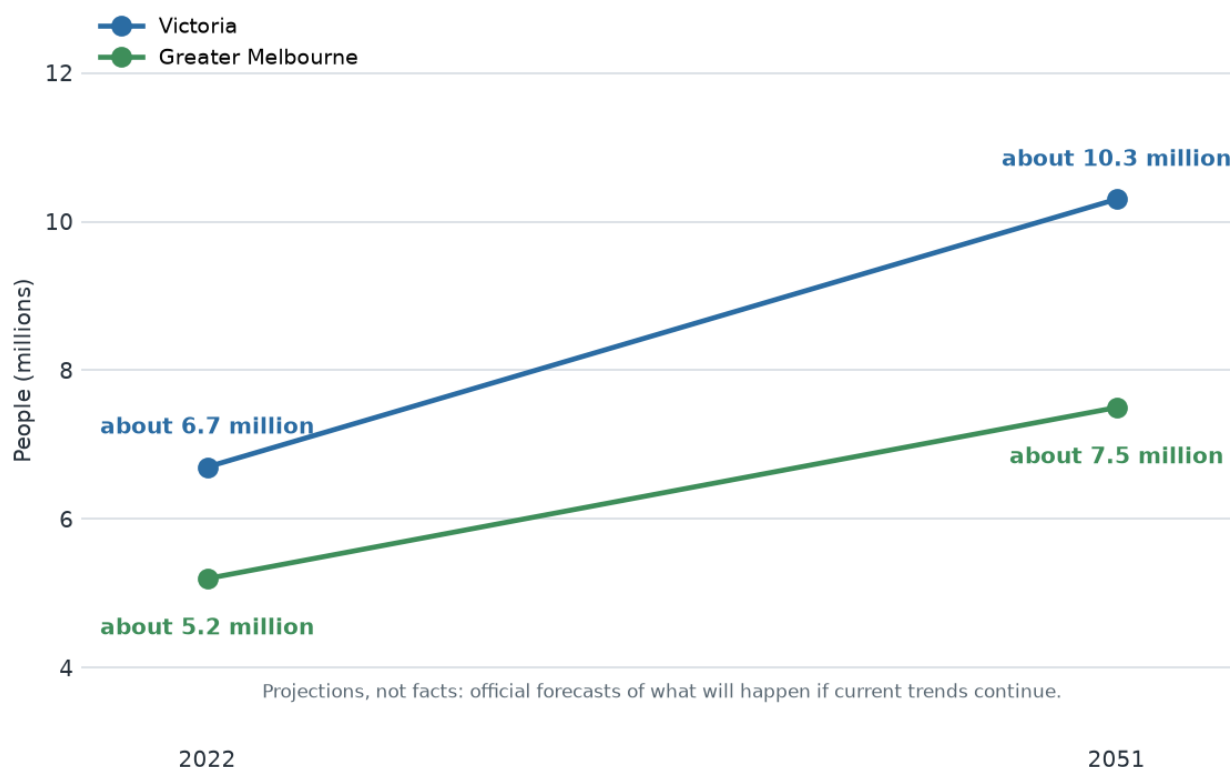


Sources: World Bank, World Development Indicators; ABS, Regional Population, Australia, 2025 (retrieved 2026-08-25).

Two panels. Left: Australia's urban share of the population rising from 81.6 per cent in 1960 to 87.6 per cent in 2024. Right: what changed the capital cities' population in 2024-25: net overseas migration +258,100 people, natural increase +96,300, and net internal migration -29,800. Sources: World Bank, World Development Indicators; ABS, Regional Population, Australia, 2025 (retrieved 2026-08-25).

Step 2 — Choose the organiser and reason. Through the **change** lens, the trend is the story: six decades of rising urban share, and a capital-city population still climbing on overseas arrivals. If the trend continues as projected, Melbourne alone adds more than two million people by 2051:

Projected population growth: Victoria and Greater Melbourne, 2022 to 2051



Source: Department of Transport and Planning, *Victoria in Future 2023* (retrieved 2026-08-25).

A projection chart of population growth to 2051: Greater Melbourne from about 5.2 million people in 2022 to about 7.5 million in 2051, and Victoria from about 6.7 million to about 10.3 million. Source: Department of Transport and Planning, *Victoria in Future 2023* (retrieved 2026-08-25).

Through the **space** lens the question sharpens to *where* that growth lands: outward on the city fringe, where suburbs meet farmland and bushland, or inward, into suburbs that already have roads, trains and pipes. Through the **interconnection** lens, a city is a web of flows — food from farms, water from catchments, energy from power plants — and every hectare the city spreads over changes those flows (4E).

Step 3 — Test against opposing evidence. The obvious conclusion — *cities should stop spreading outward* — meets immediate opposing evidence: people need homes, and fringe land is often the cheapest land first homes can be built on. The tested conclusion keeps both truths: outward growth will happen because demand is real; the open question is how much of it happens on good farmland and habitat, and how much is absorbed inside the existing city.

Step 4 — The ethical debate (VC2HG8S05.E06). This is where the issue becomes ethical, and both sides deserve their strongest form.

Steelman both sides: how should Melbourne take its growth?

Each side at full strength, before anyone judges (Rule 4).

The case FOR outward growth

People need homes: Melbourne is projected to add about 2.3 million people by 2051 (Victoria in Future 2023).

Fringe land is often the cheapest land first homes can be built on.

New suburbs give families more space than middle suburbs can offer.

(strongest form)

The case FOR protecting the fringe

Fringe land includes good farmland and habitat; once built over, it cannot be moved back.

Inside growth reuses roads, trains and pipes that already exist.

The city runs on flows from beyond it — food, water, open land (4E).

(strongest form)

What is really being weighed: not facts against facts — both sides use the same projections — but values against values:

fairness to people who need a home now · responsibility to growers and future generations
care for farmland, habitat and water catchments

Data as sourced in the section: ABS, Regional Population 2025; Department of Transport and Planning, Victoria in Future 2023 (retrieved 2026-08-25).

Two panels giving the strongest case on each side of the urban growth debate: the case for outward growth, and the case for protecting the fringe, each with three reasoned claims, and a strip below naming the values at stake: fairness between home buyers and growers, responsibility to future generations, and care for farmland, habitat and climate

Read the two panels, then notice what is really being weighed: not facts against facts — both sides use the same population projections — but **values** against values: fairness to people who need a home now, against responsibility to growers, to future generations, and to the farmland and habitat themselves. A good conclusion says so plainly, and then takes a weighed position.

Step 5 — A weighed conclusion. A model, in the section's five parts:

Claim: Melbourne should take most of its projected growth inside the urban growth boundary it already has, and treat fringe expansion as the smaller, carefully chosen share. *Evidence:* Victoria is projected to reach about 10.3 million people by 2051 and Melbourne about 7.5 million (Victoria in Future 2023); already 67.9 per cent of Australians live in the eight capitals (ABS, 2025). *Reasoning (change + space):* the change is certain and large, but the space question is open — the same households can be housed at different densities and in different places, and inside growth reuses roads, rails and pipes that already exist. *Test:* the opposing case is real — fringe homes are often the cheapest first homes — so any inward-first plan must also build homes people can afford, or it fails the fairness question. *Ethical values:* the conclusion weighs fairness to new households against responsibility for the farmland, habitat and water catchments on the fringe, which cannot argue for themselves. *Limit:* this conclusion rests on population projections, which are forecasts, not facts, and on housing costs that change year by year.

Step 6 — Reasons behind a real decision (VC2HG8S05.E05). Victoria has in fact made this decision before. Melbourne's **urban growth boundary** was first drawn in 2005 under the plan *Melbourne 2030* and is kept under *Plan Melbourne*: city building is meant to happen mostly inside the line, while farmland and green space outside it are protected. Whether you think the line has been held well or badly, the decision's reasons are exactly the ones this demonstration walked through — a projected change in population, a choice in space about where growth lands, and a judgment about what is fair to the people and places on both sides of the line.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. The inquiry cycle figure shows seven stages. (a) Name the stage this section owns. (b) Name the two stages that come after it, in order. (c) Give one reason why an inquiry should not jump from collected data straight to action without the stage this section owns.

Q2. Match each sentence to the part of a conclusion it belongs to: *claim, evidence, reasoning, test, limits*. (a) “The census shows 67.9 per cent of Australians live in the eight capital cities.” (b) “So the pressure of population growth lands on a small number of large places.” (c) “On the other hand, fringe land is often the cheapest place to build first homes.” (d) “Australia’s cities will keep growing, and the question is where.” (e) “This answer rests on population projections, which are forecasts, not facts.”

Q3. Using the four organisers figure, choose the organiser (space, change, interconnection or environment) that best fits each question: (a) Where does farming cluster in northern Victoria, and why there? (b) How much has Australia’s urban share risen since 1960, and how fast is it still rising? (c) What flows of food, water and energy keep a city running, and where do they come from? (d) What condition are the river, the forest and the air that a town depends on?

Q4. Use the water-users chart from Worked demonstration 1. (a) Which user consumed the most water in Australia in 2023–24, and how much? (b) Roughly what share of the national total did that user consume? Show your working. (c) In one sentence: why does that fact make water sharing a genuine issue, not just a technical one?

Q5. Use the city growth figure from Worked demonstration 2. (a) What was Australia’s urban share of the population in 1960, and what was it in 2024? (b) In 2024–25, which component added the most people to the capital cities, and which component removed people from them? (c) Name the organiser you used for (a) and for (b).

Q6. Copy the three ethical questions (fairness, responsibility, the everyone test) into your notes. Apply all three to this decision: *a town votes to take more water from its river to keep its sports grounds green through a dry summer*. For each question, write one sentence.

Un scaffolded

Q7. Choose one geographical issue you have studied in this book (for example, water scarcity in Australia, the sharing of the Murray’s water, or the growth of Australian cities). Write a conclusion of four or five sentences that is organised by **one named concept** — say which organiser you are using — and that includes at least one piece of evidence with its source.

Q8. Take the conclusion you wrote in Q7 and test it. Find one piece of **opposing evidence** and say honestly whether your conclusion absorbs it, is outweighed by it, or should yield to it. If you yield, rewrite the conclusion.

Q9. “*In dry years, cities should come first, farms second, and the environment last.*” Put that view in its strongest form. Then put the opposing view in its strongest form. Apply the **everyone test** to the first view and say what it reveals. Marks are for the quality of your reasoning and your use of evidence — not for which side you land on.

Q10. A geographical debate is set on this motion: *Melbourne should take most of its growth inside its existing urban growth boundary*. Prepare notes for one side (your teacher may assign the side). Your notes must contain: the two terms you will define before arguing; three claims, each with a source; the other side’s strongest claim, set out in full; and one ethical value your side appeals to.

Extended response — evidence-based written task (capstone)

Q11. Draw an evidence-based conclusion about one geographical phenomenon, issue or challenge studied in this book, and consider the ethical values involved.

Write about one page, or make an equivalent multimodal piece (a short video, a poster, a narrated slide deck). Your response must:

1. state the question you are answering, in one sentence;
2. give a **claim** that answers it;
3. support the claim with at least **two pieces of evidence** from this section, from Chapters 1–4, or from a source you check yourself — each with its source named;
4. organise your reasoning with **at least one** of the four concepts — space, change, interconnection or environment — and name the organiser you are using;
5. **test** your conclusion against at least one piece of opposing evidence, and say how it survives (absorb, outweigh or yield);
6. consider the **ethical values** at stake: who benefits, who pays, and what the everyone test shows for any action your conclusion points toward;
7. name one **limit** of your evidence;
8. list your sources with the date you checked them.

How it is marked. Marks are awarded for the reasoning steps above — a claim defended by sourced evidence, a named concept organiser, a genuine test against opposing evidence, ethical values considered rather than waved at, and an honest limit — not for which conclusion you reach. Two students may reach opposite conclusions on the same issue and both earn full marks, if both reason well from defined terms and stated evidence.

Answers

Q1. (a) Drawing conclusions and considering ethical values. (b) Deciding on strategies for action, then communicating the findings. (c) Without a tested conclusion, an action may aim at the wrong cause, help one group while quietly harming another, or spend money on a problem the evidence does not support.

Q2. (a) Evidence. (b) Reasoning. (c) Test. (d) Claim. (e) Limits.

Q3. (a) Space (where farming sits, and why). (b) Change (a trend over time). (c) Interconnection (flows between places). (d) Environment (the condition of surroundings).

Q4. (a) Agriculture, forestry and fishing: 11,760 GL. (b) 11,760 out of 17,223, which is about two-thirds (roughly 68 per cent). (c) Sample: when one use takes two-thirds of the water a country consumes, every decision about sharing it takes water from someone — farms, households or the rivers themselves — so the question becomes about fairness, not only about pipes.

Q5. (a) 81.6 per cent in 1960; 87.6 per cent in 2024. (b) Net overseas migration added the most (+258,100); net internal migration removed people (−29,800). (c) Change for both — both read trends and components over time.

Q6. Fairness: who benefits (sport players, families using the grounds) and who pays (the river and the people downstream who get less water). Responsibility: the town decides for a river that cannot speak for itself, and for people later in the season who may need the water more. Everyone test: if every town took extra river water to keep grounds green in every dry summer, some rivers would not keep flowing — so the choice needs limits, such as using recycled water instead.

Q7–Q10. See the fully-worked solutions for what a good answer contains.

Q11. Marked against the eight required moves listed in the task.

Fully-worked solutions

Q7. Model answer (water scarcity, space organiser): Through the space lens, water scarcity in Australia is not one problem but a pattern: the south-east and the inland depend on stored river water, while some regions have little to store. The evidence shows how much is at stake — agriculture, forestry and fishing consumed 11,760 GL of the 17,223 GL Australia consumed in 2023–24 (ABS, Water Account 2023–24) — and that demand sits exactly where supply is least certain. So scarcity is managed place by place: storages, channels and rules where the water is; different answers where it is not.

Q8. Model continuation: Opposing evidence: nationally Australia takes only about 2.4 per cent of its renewable water each year (World Bank, FAO AQUASTAT data), which suggests there is plenty of water overall. This conclusion **absorbs** it: the national percentage is true, but it hides the spatial pattern — scarcity is about where the water is and where the demand is, and the two do not sit in the same places. The conclusion stands, narrowed: Australia is not short of water as a whole; particular regions are short in particular years.

Q9. Strongest form of the first view: in a dry year, drinking water for millions of people must come before anything else, farms feed the country and employ whole towns, and a river that is running low can recover in a wet year in a way a failed town cannot. Strongest form of the opposing view: the environment is not a luxury that waits its turn — it is the system the other two depend on; Chapter 1 showed what dry years do to forests and fish when the environment goes last, and a river system damaged in a drought may not return what was taken. The everyone test on the first view: if every city, in every dry year, in every basin, took its full share before the environment received any, the rivers, wetlands and the water they store for future dry years would decline — and with them the supply cities and farms themselves rely on. The test does not settle the debate, but it shows the first view cannot be applied without limit: a floor of water for the environment is what lets the arrangement survive everyone making it. Marks are for both sides at strength, the test applied honestly, and evidence used — not for the side reached.

Q10. Check for: two defined terms (for example, “urban growth boundary” and what “most of its growth” means in numbers); three sourced claims — on either side, candidates include the Victoria in Future 2023 projections (about 7.5 million in Melbourne by 2051), the 67.9 per cent of Australians in the eight capitals (ABS, 2025), the 2024–25 growth

components (ABS), or the purpose of the boundary drawn in 2005 (Melbourne 2030, kept under Plan Melbourne); the other side's strongest claim set out in full (not a weak version); and one named ethical value (fairness to first-home buyers; responsibility to growers and future residents; care for the farmland and habitat beyond the line).

Q11. Model structure: Sentence 1 states the question (for example: “How should Melbourne take the growth projected for it by 2051?”). The claim takes a position. Evidence comes from the section's demonstrations or checked sources, each named (for example, Victoria in Future 2023; ABS Regional Population 2025; ABS Water Account 2023–24; the MDBA Barmah–Millewa report card). The reasoning names its organiser — change (the size and speed of the growth), space (where the growth lands), interconnection (the flows the city depends on) or environment (the condition the growth leaves behind). The test meets real opposing evidence and says absorb, outweigh or yield. The ethical paragraph names who benefits and who pays, speaks for those without a voice (future residents, farmland, habitat, rivers), and runs the everyone test on any proposed action. The limit is honest (projections are forecasts; one census year can be unusual; straight-line distances are not travel times). Sources are listed with retrieval dates. The conclusion reached is not marked; the reasoning is.

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 - Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (1785) — the source of the “everyone test” used in this section, presented here as an attributed ethical test with its limits stated, per the house contested-terms rules.
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Teaching sequence (teacher note — not student-facing)

1. **The stage and its stakes (1 lesson).** Open on the inquiry cycle figure: place 6A as stage five, with 6B and 6C ahead of it. Land the distinction between claim, evidence and reasoning with Q2 before anything else — most weak “conclusions” are claims wearing an evidence costume. Definition boxes first, especially the contested-term treatment of *ethical values* (the curriculum leaves it undefined; the section states its working definition per house rules).

2. **The four organisers (1 lesson).** Work the organisers figure aloud on a fresh class example (a local planning question works well). Q3. Stress the floor set by the content description: at least one organiser, named. At Level 8 — the band's destination year — naming the organiser is expected in assessed work.
3. **Worked demonstration 1 (1–2 lessons).** Run the water-and-farming demonstration slowly: the evidence table first (students read the chart themselves), then the space organiser, then the test. The absorb-and-narrow move is the skill — pause on it. The re-read through change shows organisers composing. Q4, Q7, Q8. The ethical step lands the everyone test on a concrete rule.
4. **Worked demonstration 2 (1–2 lessons).** Urban growth: the trend evidence, the steelman panels, the weighed conclusion, then the real decision (the urban growth boundary) as the E05 moment — a decision whose reasons students can now name. Q5, Q9, Q10. If running Q10 as a live debate, assign sides, require the defined terms up front, and mark reasoning, not the side (house contested-terms rules: steelman before evaluating; symmetry applies).
5. **Ethics and impacts (1 lesson).** The three ethical questions and the everyone test (attributed to Kant, 1785, with its limits stated — philosophy, not settled science, per house rules). The impacts-at-three-scales figure models E04's water-scarcity example directly. Q6.
6. **The capstone task (in class + homework).** Q11 is the assessed response: the band standard's sentence on drawing reasoned conclusions and weighing ethical values, made visible. Mark against the eight required moves; the conclusion reached is not marked. Pair it forward to 6B, which turns a tested conclusion into strategies for action.

Links: the concept capstones 2E, 3F and 4E supplied the concept practice this section assesses; 1B's contested water-sharing question, 1D's scarcity strategies and 4E's urbanisation evidence are this section's working material (D11 — skills sections own their CDs but draw content from Chapters 1–4). **§2A:** no exclusions apply to VC2HG8S05; no First Nations material is used or required — note that the water-sharing debate is framed strictly as environment-versus-irrigation-versus-urban use, as 1B frames it. **Coverage keys:** VC2HG8S05.E01, VC2HG8S05.E02, VC2HG8S05.E03, VC2HG8S05.E04, VC2HG8S05.E05, VC2HG8S05.E06.

From conclusion to action: strategies, impacts and the steps to take

Curriculum focus — Victorian Curriculum 2.0, Geography, Levels 7 and 8 band, strand *Geographical Skills*, sub-strand *Concluding and decision-making*. This section owns content description VC2HG8S06. It draws on all six elaborations: VC2HG8S06.E01 (using criteria to explain potential impacts and propose appropriate actions), VC2HG8S06.E02 (presenting a response as a management plan for one chosen place), VC2HG8S06.E03 (proposing individual actions; cross-curriculum priority: Sustainability), VC2HG8S06.E04 (proposing collective actions; cross-curriculum priority: Sustainability), VC2HG8S06.E05 (judging how well a strategy works) and VC2HG8S06.E06 (reflecting on values and attitudes; cross-curriculum priority: Sustainability). Per the series rule for skills sections, the working material comes from Chapters 1–4: water (Chapter 1), place and liveability (Chapter 2), landforms and landscapes (Chapter 3), and changing nations (Chapter 4).

In this section

In section 6A you learned to weigh ethical values and draw conclusions from evidence. A conclusion tells you *what is happening*. This section asks the next question: *so what are we going to do about it?*

A good response to a geographical issue is not a wish. It is a plan: a strategy chosen for stated reasons, its potential impacts explained *before* it is tried, and actions that fit the place and the people involved. That is what geographers mean by **decision-making**, and it is the closing stage of the inquiry cycle.

In this section you will learn to:

- use **criteria** — environmental, economic, social and other — to explain the potential impacts of strategies and to propose **appropriate actions** in response to an issue (VC2HG8S06.E01);
- present a response to an issue as a **management plan** for one chosen place, including individual and/or collective actions (VC2HG8S06.E02);
- propose an **individual action** in response to an issue and support it with reasons (VC2HG8S06.E03);
- propose a **collective action** in response to an issue and support it with reasons (VC2HG8S06.E04);
- judge how well a strategy works, weighing environmental, economic and social factors (VC2HG8S06.E05);
- reflect on how your own values and attitudes influence the way you explain potential outcomes (VC2HG8S06.E06).

Key words to learn: strategy, criteria (singular: criterion), potential impact, appropriate action, management plan, individual action, collective action, water footprint, virtual water, e-waste, urban footprint, peri-urban, ecopolis, effectiveness, sustainability, values.

Defining our terms: the words this section argues with

Several of this section's key words are used in different ways by different people. Where a term is contested, this section states the meaning it will use, so you always know what is being argued about.

Strategy — a planned way of reaching a goal, made up of the actions people choose to take. A strategy answers *how*, not just *what*.

Appropriate action. The word “appropriate” carries values: two people can agree about an issue and still disagree about which response fits it, because they give different weight to different things. In this section an action counts as **appropriate** when it passes the criteria you have stated, *and* it is something the people involved can actually carry out. You will always be asked to say which criteria you used — that is what keeps the word honest.

Effectiveness — how well a strategy achieves the change it set out to achieve. A strategy can be well meant and still not work. Evaluating effectiveness means comparing the outcome with the aim, using evidence rather than hope.

Sustainability. This term is contested: governments, businesses and scientists use it to mean overlapping but different things, and their meanings are not interchangeable. The most widely used definition comes from the World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission) in 1987: development that meets today’s needs in ways that do not stop future generations from meeting their own needs. Where this section says *sustainability*, it means that idea unless it says otherwise.

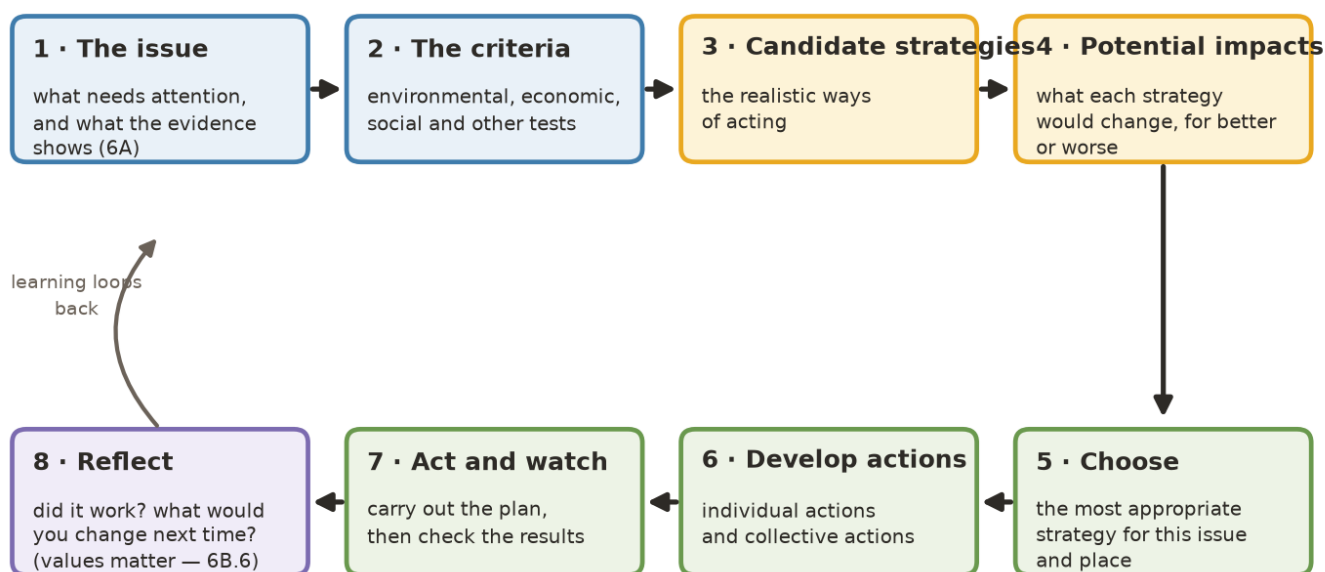
Ecopolis. The curriculum names the “ecopolis” as an example (VC2HG8S06 .E04) but does not define it. We therefore state the meaning used here: a city planned so that everyday life — housing, travel, energy, food and waste — keeps its demands on nature low while staying a good place to live. In short: a city designed to be both kind to the environment and liveable.

1. From conclusion to action

The inquiry cycle has a shape, and you have already walked most of it: section 5B showed how questions, data and fieldwork build the evidence, and section 6A showed how evidence becomes conclusions. This section closes the cycle. The content description for this section, VC2HG8S06, is a path in three moves: choose a strategy with the right factors in view, say what impacts it could have, and build actions that fit the place.

That is a path of eight steps, and it loops:

From issue to action: the strategy path



Steps 2 to 4 are the heart of this section: judging potential impacts against criteria is what makes an action appropriate, not just popular.

Original diagram for this section (Geography 8), after VC2HG8S06

Flow diagram of the eight steps from conclusion to action: identify the issue, choose the criteria, list candidate strategies, explain the potential impacts, choose a strategy, develop appropriate actions, act and watch what happens, and reflect — with an arrow looping from reflect back to the start, labelled the learning loop

Two things make this path geographical rather than just practical:

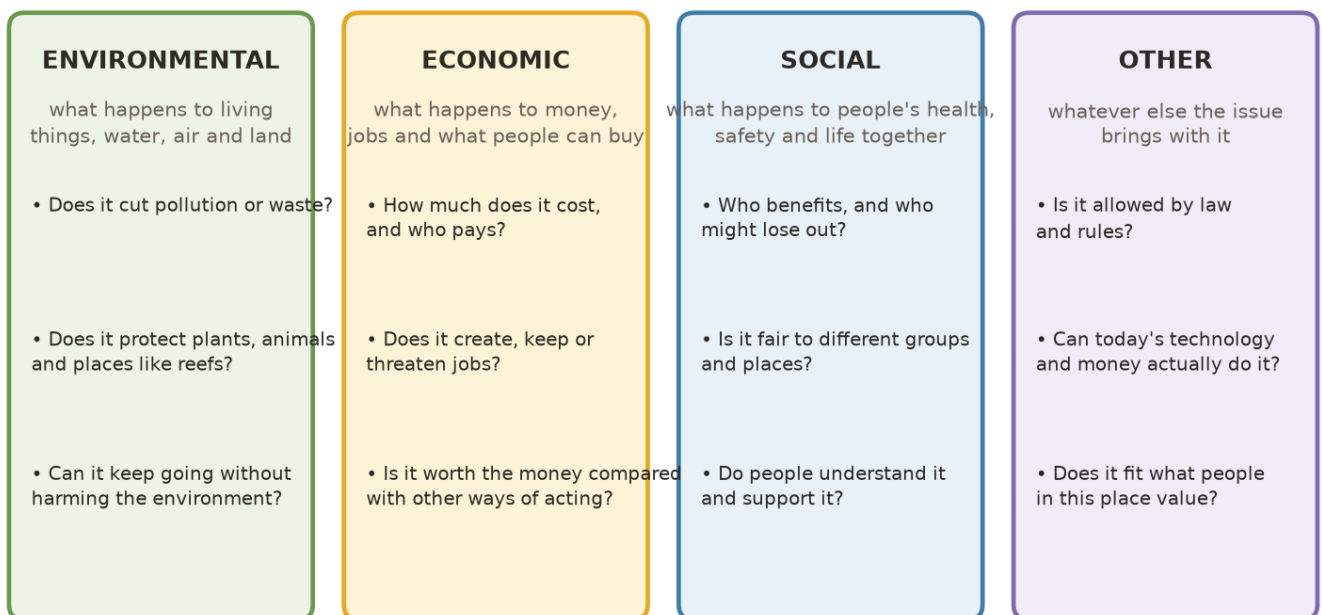
- **The factors can be environmental, economic, social, or other.** Real issues never sit in one box. A decision about a reef is about biology *and* jobs *and* the people who live along the coast. The “other” category is there for whatever else the issue brings — law, culture, safety, time.
- **Impacts are explained *before* the action is chosen.** Anyone can list what they hope will happen. The geographer’s job is to say what is *likely* to happen — including the effects nobody wants — and to choose with eyes open.

2. Criteria: the tests a strategy must pass

A **criterion** (plural: **criteria**) is a standard you judge against. Before you can say whether a strategy is a good one, you need to say what “good” will mean. The curriculum names three families of criteria and leaves room for more (VC2HG8S06.E01, VC2HG8S06.E05):

Criteria: the tests a strategy must pass

A criterion (plural: criteria) is a standard you judge against.
Each family asks a different kind of question about the same strategy.



Original diagram for this section (Geography 8), after VC2HG8S06.E01 and VC2HG8S06.E05

Four columns of criteria, environmental, economic, social and other, each with a definition and three test questions a strategy must answer

Notice that the three main families match the factors in the content description exactly. That is not an accident: the same words appear in the band’s achievement standard, so by the end of Year 8 you are expected to reason with them by habit.

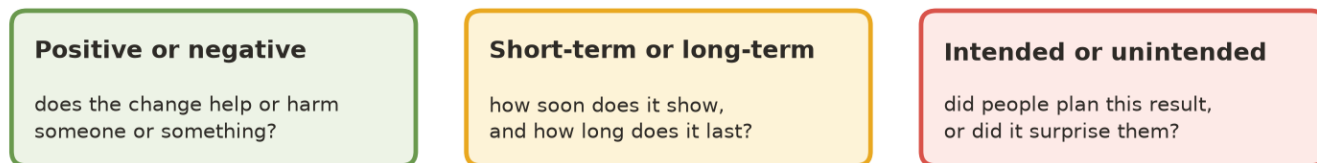
Criteria do two jobs. First, they let you **compare** strategies: two strategies can both look sensible until you score them against the same tests. Second, they let other people **check your reasoning**: when you state your criteria, anyone can see where a disagreement is really about values (the tests you chose) rather than facts.

One habit to build: write your criteria down *before* you fall in love with a strategy. People who pick a favourite first tend to choose tests that their favourite passes.

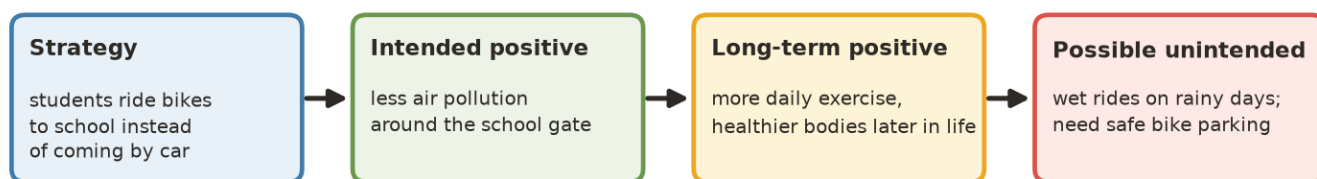
3. Explaining potential impacts

The content description asks you to explain potential impacts — and explaining is more than listing. Potential impacts come in pairs, and a strong explanation checks both sides of every pair:

Potential impacts come in pairs — always check both sides



One action sends ripples in every direction — follow the chain:



Explaining potential impacts means naming the change, then asking: good or bad, for whom, how soon, for how long — and what might happen that nobody planned?

Original diagram for this section (Geography 8), after the VC2HG8S06 content description

Diagram of the three pairs of potential impacts — positive or negative, short-term or long-term, intended or unintended — and a worked chain showing students riding bikes to school and the ripples that follow

A reliable method is to name the change, then ask five questions:

1. **Good or bad?** For whom — people, other species, water, air, soil?
2. **How soon?** Some impacts arrive in weeks; some take a generation.
3. **For how long?** A short-term gain can hide a long-term cost.
4. **Who planned it?** Intended impacts were the point of the strategy; unintended ones are the surprises — and surprises are where strategies most often fail.
5. **Can it be undone?** Some damage repairs itself; some does not.

Notice that the content description asks for potential impacts *twice*: once when choosing between strategies (VC2HG8S06.E01) and again in the achievement standard when deciding on actions. You are expected to forecast before you choose, and to keep forecasting as you act — because the world answers back.

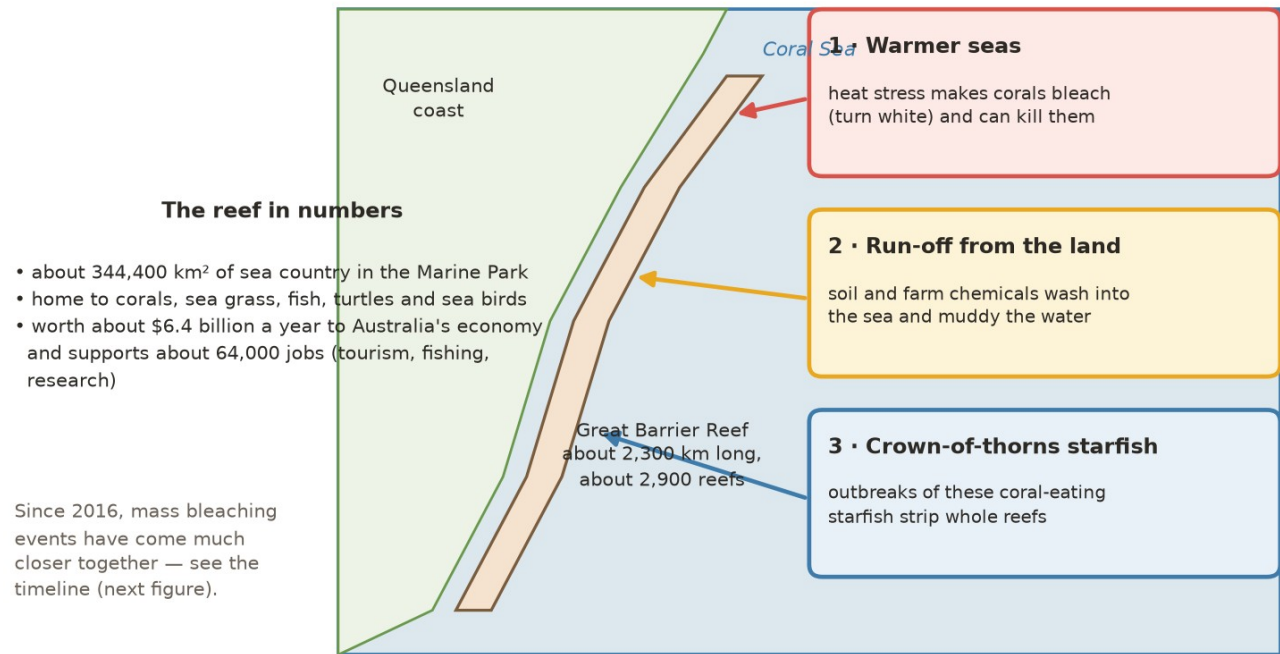
Worked demonstration 1 — Choosing strategies to protect the Great Barrier Reef

Here is the whole method of topics 1–3 applied to a real Australian place. Follow the reasoning, not just the answer — the scorecard at the end is a *model* for you to test, not an answer to copy.

Step 1 — State the issue and the evidence. The Great Barrier Reef is the largest coral reef system on Earth: about 2,300 km long, made up of roughly 2,900 reefs, with the Marine Park covering about 344,400 km² of sea (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority). It is also big in human terms: a study for the Marine Park authority valued the

reef at about \$6.4 billion a year to Australia’s economy, supporting about 64,000 jobs in tourism, fishing and research (Deloitte Access Economics, 2013). The issue: human-induced environmental change is damaging the reef. Three pressures dominate:

The Great Barrier Reef: three pressures from human-induced change



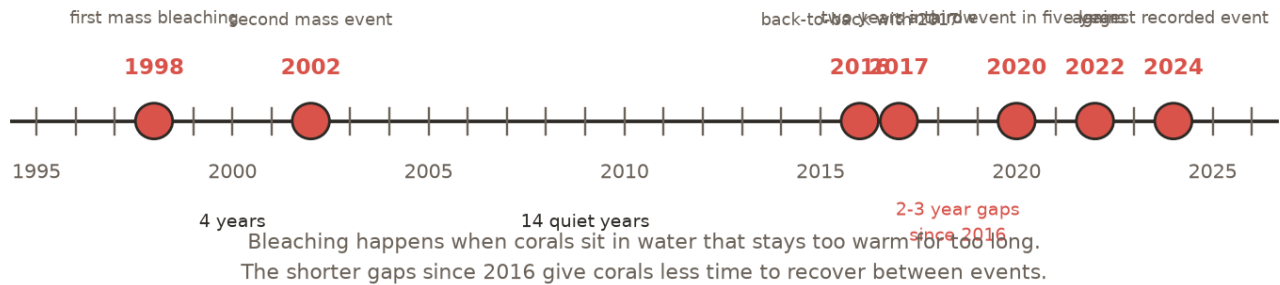
Original diagram for this section (Geography 8), after the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority; values are approximate and carry the source in the section's source list

Diagram of the Great Barrier Reef with its three main pressures from human-induced change: warmer seas causing coral bleaching, run-off of soil and farm chemicals from the land, and outbreaks of crown-of-thorns starfish that eat coral, with the reef’s size and economic value shown beside

Source: Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, reef size and pressures; Deloitte Access Economics (2013) economic value, via the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority. Values are approximate; retrieved 25 August 2026.

Step 2 — Track the change. The clearest signal is mass bleaching: when water stays too warm for too long, corals turn white and can die. The record shows bleaching events in 1998, 2002, 2016, 2017, 2020, 2022 and 2024, with the 2024 event the largest recorded — and the gaps between events shrinking (Australian Institute of Marine Science; Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority). Shorter gaps mean less recovery time. That trend shapes every judgement below.

Mass bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef is coming faster



Original chart for this section (Geography 8), after reef monitoring records (AIMS and the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority)

Timeline of mass coral bleaching on the Great Barrier Reef from 1998 to 2024, showing events in 1998, 2002, 2016, 2017, 2020, 2022 and 2024, with the gaps between events getting shorter since 2016

Source: Australian Institute of Marine Science and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority monitoring records; retrieved 25 August 2026.

Step 3 — List candidate strategies and score them against the criteria. Four strategies do most of the real work on the reef. The table scores each against the environmental, economic and social tests from topic 2:

Worked scorecard: judging four reef strategies against the criteria

Strategy	Environmental test	Economic test	Social test	Pick?
A · Cut run-off from the land (work with farmers; restore wetlands)	clearer water helps coral and sea grass recover	costs money; can change how farms work	keeps fishing and tourism healthy for local towns	yes
B · Control crown-of-thorns starfish (trained divers remove them)	protects coral quickly before outbreaks strike	ongoing cost; pays for dive jobs on the reef	keeps reef sites open for visitors	yes
C · Manage visitors (moorings, limits, education)	less damage from anchors, foot traffic and litter	tourism keeps earning, so rules must hold	visitors learn why the reef needs care	yes
D · Cut greenhouse gas emissions (Australia's share of a global job)	treats the root cause of bleaching: warming seas	slow to show results; changes energy and industry	needs every country to act, so agreement is hard	yes

Verdict: bleaching is now the biggest pressure, so the plan needs D (the root cause) and A, B, C together (the local pressures) — no single strategy is enough. These judgements are a model: your job is to test them with evidence.

Original table for this section (Geography 8), after VC2HG8S06.E01 and VC2HG8S06.E05

Worked scorecard judging four reef strategies — cutting land run-off, controlling crown-of-thorns starfish, managing visitors, and cutting greenhouse gas emissions — against environmental, economic and social criteria

Step 4 — Decide, and explain the decision. Bleaching is now the biggest pressure, and bleaching comes from warming seas, so any plan that leaves out strategy D (cutting greenhouse gas emissions) ignores the root cause. But D works slowly and needs every country's help, so local strategies A, B and C still matter now: clearer water, fewer starfish and careful visitors all give the reef a better chance while the world works on emissions. The judged answer is a **mix**, with each strategy carrying the pressure it is best at. This is how VC2HG8S06.E05 works in practice: the judgement is only as good as the criteria and evidence behind it — so test them.

The Australian and Queensland governments' long-term plan for the reef, the Reef 2050 Plan, reasons in the same shape: local pressures managed now, emissions treated as the underlying cause (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority).

4. Strategies for action: individual and collective

When it comes to proposing actions, the curriculum sorts them into two kinds, and asks for each to be supported with reasons: **individual actions** (VC2HG8S06.E03) and **collective actions** (VC2HG8S06.E04). Both carry the Sustainability cross-curriculum priority.

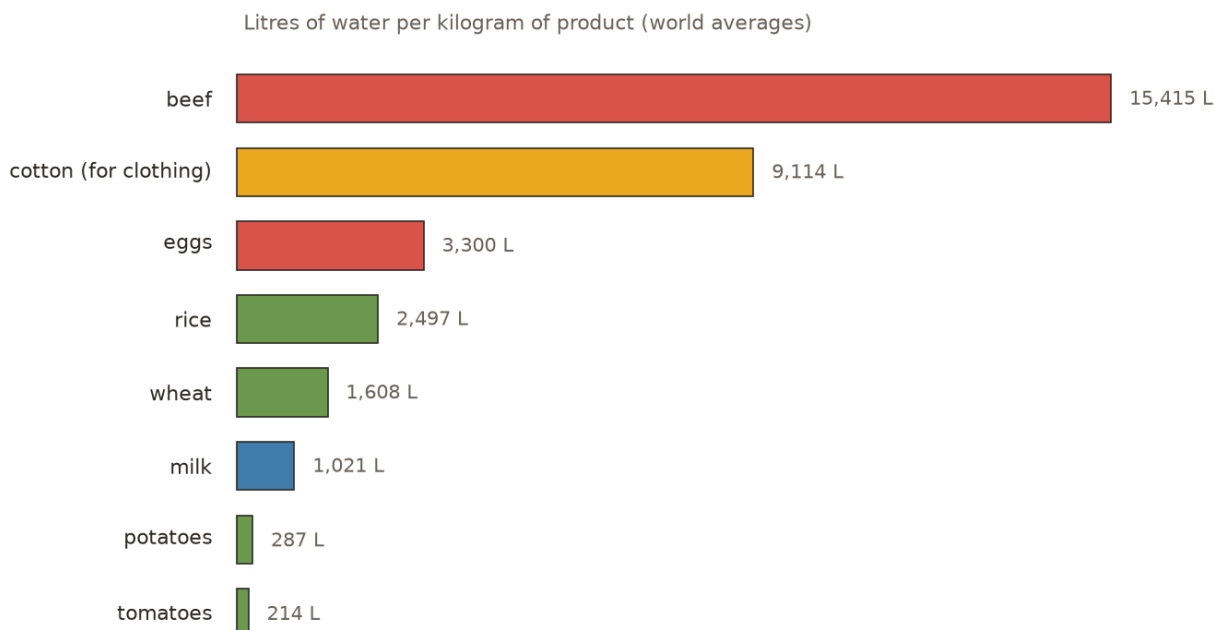
- An **individual action** is what one person chooses to do.
- A **collective action** is what people organise to do together — a class, a school, a local council, or a whole country.

Individual actions you can propose (from VC2HG8S06.E03):

1. **Reduce your water footprint.** Your **water footprint** is all the water you use directly, plus the **virtual water** hidden in what you eat and buy. The chart shows how uneven that hidden water is:



Virtual water: the water used to grow or make what we buy



Reading it: one kilogram of beef carries about 60 times the virtual water of one kilogram of tomatoes. None of this means "stop eating beef" — it means knowing the water cost hidden in our choices is the first step in planning how to use less.

Original chart for this section (Geography 8), after Water Footprint Network global averages (Mekonnen and Hoekstra); values are rounded

Bar chart of virtual water in common products in litres per kilogram: beef 15,415, cotton 9,114, eggs 3,300, rice 2,497, wheat 1,608, milk 1,021, potatoes 287 and tomatoes 214

Source: Water Footprint Network global averages, retrieved 25 August 2026.

The action is not “never eat beef” — it is knowing the numbers and choosing where less water is wasted, for example by not throwing away food, since wasted food wastes all the water that grew it.

2. **Walk, cycle or use public transport.** Cleaner air, quieter streets and more liveable neighbourhoods — this connects directly to Chapter 2’s work on liveability.
3. **Keep waste out of landfill, especially e-waste.** E-waste is any unwanted electrical device — phones, computers, televisions, batteries. Buried e-waste can release harmful substances into soil and water, and it throws away materials that can be recovered. Victoria banned e-waste from landfill from 1 July 2019, and the state produces about 250,000 tonnes of e-waste each year (Sustainability Victoria). The individual action: take old devices to a collection point instead of a bin.
4. **Shrink the urban footprint.** A city’s **urban footprint** is the land and resources its way of life uses. Using less energy, eating, working and buying closer to home all shrink it (VC2HG8S06.E03).

Collective actions you can propose (from VC2HG8S06.E04):

1. **Guidelines for saving water at school** — worked out in full in Worked demonstration 2 below.
2. **Planning cities that are sustainable and liveable — the ecopolis idea** — see the Defining our terms block for the working meaning: a city designed from the start to keep its demands on nature low.
3. **Promoting community awareness** of how human-caused environmental change affects well-known Australian landforms — the Great Barrier Reef and Uluru are the curriculum’s two named examples, and the focus of topic 5.
4. **Encouraging farming in and around cities** (peri-urban agriculture). *Peri-urban* means the fringe where city and country meet. Growing food near the city that eats it cuts transport and keeps farmland working: on

Melbourne's western edge at Werribee South, market gardens by Port Phillip Bay grow vegetables for the city's shops (a Victorian example of peri-urban agriculture in action).

The honest debate: which kind of action matters more? People disagree, and each side has a strong case:

Individual or collective action? The strongest case for each

Individual action: what one person chooses to do

Its strongest case

- can start today — no vote or meeting needed
- one visible change can spread to friends and family
- many green habits also save money and build health (like riding a bike)

Its honest weak side

- one person's share of a big problem is tiny
- not everyone can do the same: money, distance and local services matter
- habits fade unless rules and facilities support them

Collective action: what people organise to do together

Its strongest case

- big problems need many people: school rules, laws and shared money work at a size one person cannot reach
- can be designed to be fair to everyone, not just those who can afford to act

Its honest weak side

- slow to start: agreement takes time
- the final plan is often weaker than the best plan, because people compromise
- rules only work if most people follow them

The joined answer

Individual action builds the habits and shows what is possible; collective action turns good choices into rules, money and shared things everyone can use. The most effective strategies in this section use both — and say clearly which is which.

Original diagram for this section (Geography 8), after VC2HG8S06.E03, VC2HG8S06.E04 and VC2HG8S06.E06

Two panels comparing the strongest case and the honest weak side of individual action and collective action, with a joined answer below: the most effective strategies use both

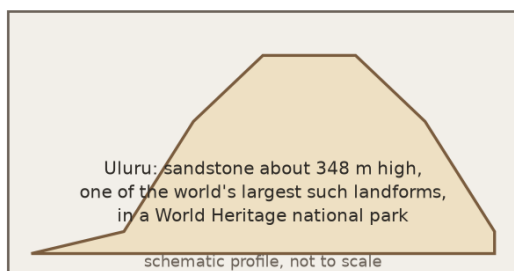
The joined answer is reasoning, not a slogan: individual action builds habits and shows what is possible; collective action turns good choices into rules, money and shared services. When you propose an action in this section, say which kind it is — and what the other kind would need to add.

5. Awareness as a strategy: protecting significant places

One of the collective actions named in VC2HG8S06.E04 deserves its own topic: *building community awareness of how human-caused environmental change affects well-known Australian landforms* — the Great Barrier Reef and Uluru are the curriculum's two named examples. This section treats both places strictly as examples of environmental change and its management.

Uluru — many feet change a place. Uluru is a sandstone landform about 348 m high in a World Heritage national park in central Australia — one of the largest landforms of its kind on Earth (Parks Australia). For decades, large numbers of visitors climbed it. Thousands of boots wore the rock: the track eroded, loose sandstone crumbled, and the path widened as walkers went around the damaged sections. More visitors also meant more litter, more facilities and more disturbance around the rock's base. In 2019 the park's managers closed the climb (it closed on 26 October 2019), and visitor management shifted to marked walking paths around the base, rangers, signage, limits in the busiest seasons, and monitoring so damaged ground can recover:

Many visitors change a place: managing foot traffic at Uluru



The pressure: what many feet do to rock and soil

- decades of climbing wore a deep, eroded track into the rock face
- loose sandstone crumbled; the path widened as walkers skirted damage
- more visitors mean more litter, more toilets, more water brought in, and more habitat disturbed around the rock's base

The response: managing visitors so the landform can recover

Close the worn route

the climb closed on 26 October 2019 by park management decision; erosion stops growing

Move feet to one path

visitors now walk marked base paths; one managed track harms less than many scattered ones

Limit and guide

rangers, signs and parking limits keep numbers and behaviour in check in the busiest seasons

Watch and repair

track condition is monitored; damaged ground is closed off and allowed to regrow

For geographers the point is transferable: any famous place faces the same question — how do visitors see it without wearing it away?

Original diagram for this section (Geography 8), after VC2HG8S06.E04; facts from Parks Australia and public park records

Diagram showing visitor pressure at Uluru, where decades of climbing eroded a track into the rock, and the management response: closing the climb in October 2019, moving visitors to marked base paths, limiting and guiding numbers, and watching the ground so it can recover

Source: Parks Australia, Uluru facts and visitor management; retrieved 25 August 2026.

The Great Barrier Reef — knowing the reef is the first defence. Awareness works the same way under water: people protect what they understand. The Marine Park authority runs education and visitor programs so that tourists, fishers and coastal communities see the pressures of topic 4's Worked demonstration for themselves, and the Reef 2050 Plan sets the long-term management direction (Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority). Visitors learn the rules that keep a reef healthy — moorings instead of anchors, no touching coral, sun creams that do not harm coral — and many become witnesses who carry the story home.

Notice the pattern in both places: awareness alone never carries the whole load. It works alongside rules (the closed climb, the moorings) and money (rangers, monitoring). That is the criteria test from topic 2 again: a strategy that depends on goodwill alone is rarely effective for long.

Worked demonstration 2 — A management plan: conserving water at school

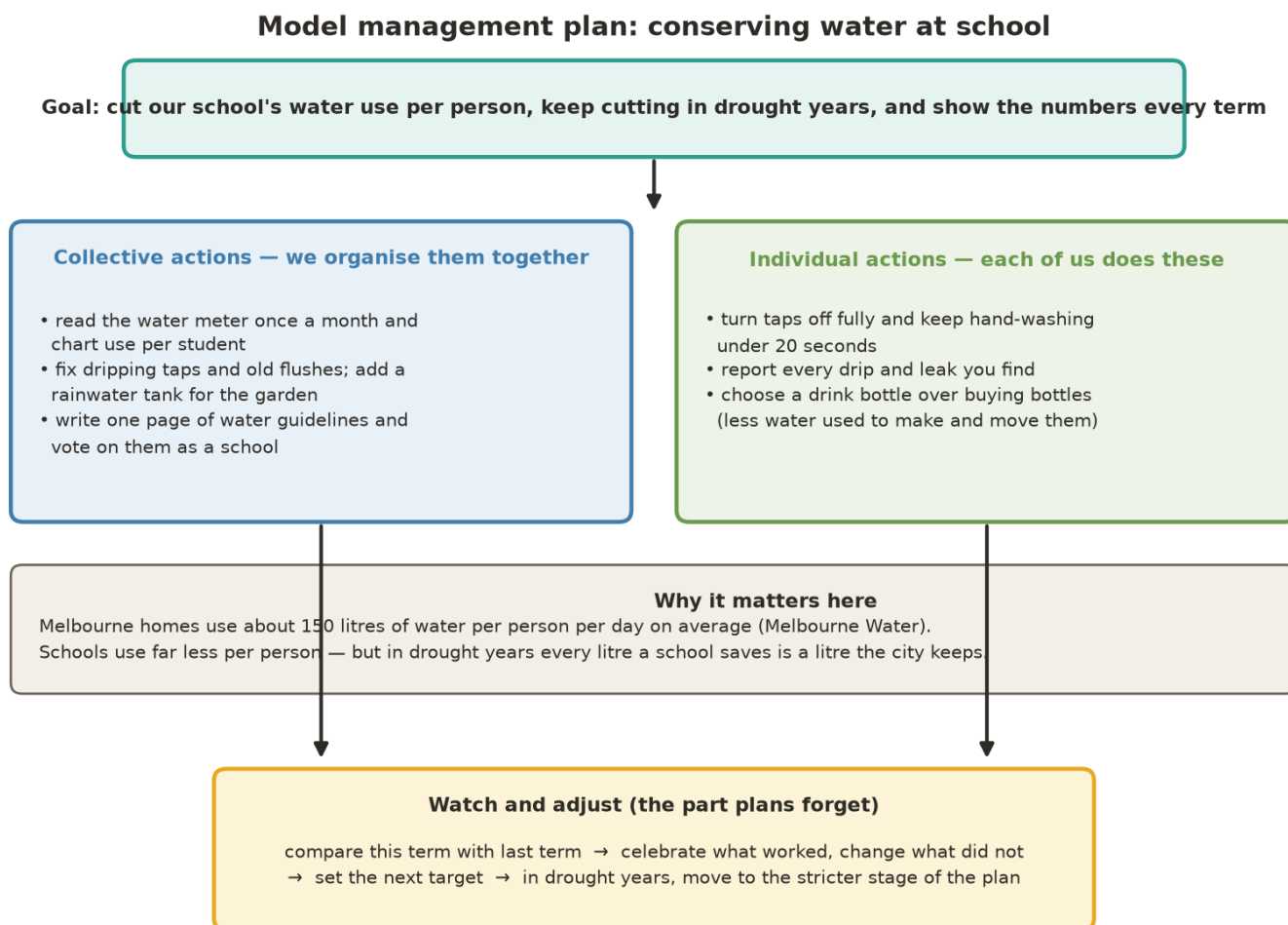
Section VC2HG8S06.E02 asks you to set out your response to an issue *as a management plan for one place you choose*. Here is the full shape of such a plan, with the chosen location being the school itself. Adapt the same shape to any place you choose in the practice tasks.

1. The issue. Water in southern Australia is a variable resource. Melbourne's supply comes from ten reservoirs with a combined capacity of up to about 1,812 GL, backed by the Victorian Desalination Plant at Wonthaggi, which can make up to 150 GL a year (Melbourne Water). In the Millennium Drought the storages fell below a third of capacity, and the state has ordered desalinated water in dry years since — including 50 GL for July to December 2025

(Melbourne Water). Homes in Melbourne use about 150 L per person per day on average (Melbourne Water). Schools use far less per person — but every litre a school saves in a wet year is a litre the city keeps for a dry one.

2. The aim. A measurable aim, not a hope: *cut the school's water use per person, keep cutting in drought years, and report the numbers every term.*

3. The actions — collective and individual. The plan needs both kinds, because each reaches what the other cannot:



Original diagram for this section (Geography 8), after VC2HG8S06.E02 and VC2HG8S06.E04

Model management plan for conserving water at school, with a goal, a column of collective actions such as monthly meter readings and water guidelines, a column of individual actions such as turning taps off fully, and a watch-and-adjust loop comparing each term with the last

Source: Original plan; the Melbourne water-use figure is from Melbourne Water, retrieved 25 August 2026.

4. Watch and adjust. A management plan without checking is just a poster. The monthly meter readings make the trend visible; the termly report makes it everyone's business; in drought years the plan moves to its stricter stage. This is the “act and watch → reflect” loop of topic 1, built into the plan from day one.

That is the whole of VC2HG8S06.E02 in one shape: **issue → aim → actions (individual and collective) → monitoring → review**. Your job in the unscaffolded practice is to build one for a place of your own.

6. Values and attitudes: what shapes your judgement?

The last elaboration, VC2HG8S06.E06, asks you to reflect on your own values and attitudes — because they shape how you explain potential outcomes, often without you noticing. Three examples make the point:

Technology and services change what a place feels like. Imagine two students judging the same outer suburb. One has reliable public transport and fast internet; the other has neither. The first may call the suburb liveable and the second may call it stranded. Neither is wrong about the facts — their *values and circumstances* decide which facts matter most. When you say a place is liveable, ask yourself: liveable *given what you have*?

Water has competing uses. A farmer watering crops, a riverside town, and people who fish, swim or paddle all want different things from the same river — economic uses and cultural uses can point in opposite directions. Your view of what is *fair* depends on where you stand. A good decision-maker names the standpoints, including the ones they do not share.

Green space is a value, not just a fact. When a city renews an old industrial area, some people judge the project by how many homes it adds; others judge it by whether it keeps green, open space for people to breathe in. Projects that apply sustainable design principles try to do both. Which measure you reach for first says something about your values.

None of this means all judgements are equal. It means a strong geographer can say: *here is my judgement, here is the evidence for it, and here are the values I brought with me*. That last clause is what makes the judgement honest — and it is the bridge to section 6C, where you create and present your explanations and responses.

Practice — scaffolded

Q1. Classify the criteria. Sort each question below into environmental, economic, social or other: (a) Will this strategy keep jobs in the town? (b) Will it cut the waste going to landfill? (c) Do most residents understand and support it? (d) Is it allowed under current rules?

Q2. Use the impact pairs from topic 3. For the strategy “students ride bikes to school instead of coming by car”, identify: (a) one intended positive impact; (b) one long-term positive impact; (c) one possible unintended impact. Then write one question you would ask before proposing the strategy to the school.

Q3. Propose one individual action that would reduce your own water footprint (VC2HG8S06.E03). Support it with two reasons, and use at least one number from the virtual water chart to explain why the action saves water.

Q4. Propose one collective action to reduce water waste at your school or in your local area (VC2HG8S06.E04). Name who must agree for it to happen, and give one reason the action works better as a group than as one person.

Q5. Victoria banned e-waste from landfill from 1 July 2019 (Sustainability Victoria). (a) Give two environmental benefits of the ban. (b) Give one economic cost. (c) Using your answers, state whether you judge the ban to be effective overall, and name the criterion that decided you.

Q6. Two students argue about a new suburb: one says it is liveable because the buses are reliable; the other says it is not, because their family has no car and the nearest medical centre is far away. Using VC2HG8S06.E06, explain how values and circumstances can produce both judgements from the same facts.

Q7. *Fieldwork link (connects to 5B and feeds Worked demonstration 2):* for one week, keep a log of water use at home or school — taps, showers, flushing, drinking, garden. Mark each use as something you could cut without losing anything important, or something you could not cut. Bring your log to class and compare with a partner: whose cuts add up to more?

Practice — unscaffolded

Q8. Choose any two strategies from the reef scorecard in Worked demonstration 1. Compare them on all three families of criteria, then state which one you would fund first and why. Name one drawback of your choice and how you would manage it.

Q9. Set out a response to an issue as a management plan for one place you choose (VC2HG8S06.E02): your school, a local park, a sports ground or a shopping strip. Your plan must include: the issue, a measurable aim, at least two actions labelled individual and/or collective, how you will monitor progress, and how you will judge success.

Q10. “For a sustainable future, individual action matters more than collective action.” State each side of this claim as strongly as you can — the best case *and* the honest weak side for both — then reach your own judgement, supported by at least one example of each kind of action from this section.

Q11. A household of four wants to shrink its water footprint through what it eats and buys. Using the virtual water chart, design a one-week plan with two specific changes to the household’s habits. Justify each change with numbers from the chart, and name one likely unintended impact (good or bad) the household should watch for.

Extended response

Q12. “*The best way to protect significant places such as the Great Barrier Reef is to change what individuals do.*”

Evaluate this claim. Write about 250–300 words. Your response must:

- use at least **two** figures from this section as evidence, and name their sources;
- weigh **environmental, economic and social** factors;
- test the strongest case on **each side** of the claim before reaching your judgement;
- state clearly which kinds of action (individual, collective, or both) your judgement relies on, and why.

Marking guide. Marks are awarded for the reasoning steps below, not for the side you land on.

Marks	Reasoning shown
3–4	Claim tested on both sides with named evidence (figures and sources); environmental, economic and social factors each referred to; judgement justified with criteria and with the kinds of action it relies on; any limits of the claim stated
1–2	One side argued with some evidence; at least one factor referred to; a judgement stated but not fully justified
0	No evidence used, or the response states a conclusion without reasoning

Teaching notes (for the teacher)

Placement. This section delivers VC2HG8S06 at Level 8 depth. Chapter 6 is the inquiry cycle’s closing stage, and because the band’s achievement standard is stated at the end of Level 8, this chapter is the standard’s destination: the decide / develop / evaluate verbs are authored at full depth (decision D1). The chain runs 5B (collecting and processing) → 6A (conclusions and ethical values) → 6B (strategies for action) → 6C (creating and presenting responses). This section’s action-planning also pairs with 2F’s local liveability responses and 5B’s fieldwork methods.

Case choices. Working material is drawn from Chapters 1–4 per decision D11: water (Chapter 1: Melbourne’s supply, water footprints), liveability (Chapter 2: transport and liveability), landforms (Chapter 3: Uluru, the reef as a managed landscape), changing nations (Chapter 4: urban footprints, peri-urban growth). The Great Barrier Reef and Uluru are developed as worked cases; students transfer the method to any place in Q9.

Contested terms. *Sustainability* is defined at first use with attribution to the World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland Commission, 1987), per the series contested-terms policy. The curriculum names the *ecopolis* without defining it; the Defining our terms block states exactly that and gives the operational definition used here. *Criteria*, *effectiveness* and *appropriate* are each defined at first use.

Both sides at full strength. The individual-versus-collective debate is presented with each side argued as strongly as it can be, each honest weak side shown, and the joined verdict is marked as reasoning rather than as a required conclusion. The marking guides award reasoning, not position.

First Nations content. No Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content is included in this section, per Rule 1 of the series content policy. The Great Barrier Reef and Uluru appear strictly as examples of human-induced environmental

change and its management (the place-name trap recorded in §2A, decision D5): the climb's closure is framed as a park management decision, and no cultural or spiritual content is taught.

Volume. One teaching sequence; two worked demonstrations with real cited data; seven scaffolded tasks; four unscaffolded tasks; one evidence-based written response. Ten original figures; figures containing real-world values carry a source line, all retrieved 25 August 2026.

Fieldwork. Q7 is generic to any Victorian school locality per decision D6: the water log needs no specialist equipment and the comparison works at any scale.

Vocabulary. All student-facing text (including figure text, checked via the figure manifests) sits at or below Year 8 level, verified with the series vocabulary gate. Exempt words are curriculum terms taken from VC2HG8S06 and its elaborations, subject terms defined at first use, and proper nouns, per decision D4.

Sources and retrieval dates

All figures in this section are original drawings from the data below, retrieved 25 August 2026.

- Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority — reef length (about 2,300 km), number of reefs (about 2,900), Marine Park area (about 344,400 km²), the three main pressures on the reef, and the Reef 2050 Plan.
 - Deloitte Access Economics (2013), economic value of the Great Barrier Reef (about \$6.4 billion a year; about 64,000 jobs), as reported by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.
 - Australian Institute of Marine Science and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority — mass coral bleaching records, 1998–2024, including the 2024 event as the largest recorded.
 - Parks Australia — Uluru (height about 348 m; sandstone landform in a World Heritage national park), visitor management records, closure of the climb on 26 October 2019.
 - Water Footprint Network — global average water footprints of products (Mekonnen and Hoekstra): beef 15,415, cotton 9,114, eggs 3,300, rice 2,497, wheat 1,608, milk 1,021, potatoes 287, tomatoes 214 litres per kilogram.
 - Melbourne Water — average residential water use about 150 litres per person per day; ten reservoirs with a combined capacity of up to about 1,812 GL; Victorian Desalination Plant at Wonthaggi capable of up to 150 GL a year; storages below a third of capacity during the Millennium Drought; 50 GL desalination order for July–December 2025 via Cardinia Reservoir.
 - Sustainability Victoria — Victorian e-waste landfill ban from 1 July 2019; about 250,000 tonnes of e-waste generated in Victoria each year.
 - World Commission on Environment and Development (the Brundtland Commission, 1987) — the definition of sustainable development used in this section.
-

Glossary

Appropriate action — an action that passes the criteria you have stated and that the people involved can actually carry out. **Collective action** — an action people organise to do together, from a class to a whole country. **Criterion (plural: criteria)** — a standard you judge against. **Ecopolis** — a city planned to keep its demands on nature low while staying a good place to live (a working definition used in this section; the curriculum names the term without defining it). **E-waste** — unwanted electrical devices such as phones, computers, televisions and batteries. **Effectiveness** — how well a strategy achieves the change it set out to achieve. **Gigalitre (GL)** — one billion litres. **Individual action** — an action one person chooses to do. **Management plan** — a structured response to an issue: issue, aim, actions, monitoring and review, for a chosen location. **Peri-urban** — describing the fringe where city and country meet. **Potential impact** — a change that is likely to follow from an action, checked before the action is chosen. **Strategy** — a planned way of reaching a goal, made up of the actions people choose to take. **Sustainability** — meeting today's needs in ways that do not stop future generations from meeting their own needs (after the World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). **Urban footprint** — the land and resources a city's way of life uses. **Values** — what a person or group believes matters most; values shape how impacts are explained and judged. **Virtual water** —

the water used to grow or make a product. **Water footprint** — all the water a person uses directly, plus the virtual water hidden in what they eat and buy.

Presenting your findings: geographical responses backed by sources

Victorian Curriculum 2.0 · Geography · Levels 7 and 8 · Strand: Geographical Skills · Sub-strand: Communicating

Content description: **VC2HG8S07**

Draws on: **VC2HG8S07.E01** (fieldwork report) · **VC2HG8S07.E02** (video documentary) · **VC2HG8S07.E03** (editorial) · **VC2HG8S07.E04** (description of a strategy) · **VC2HG8S07.E05** (evidence-based explanation) · **VC2HG8S07.E06** (response with maps)

Section 6C is the book's exit standard. Everything it asks for is built from material the book has already taught: the fieldwork methods of 5B, the questions of 5A, the maps and graphs of 5C, the reading of data in 5D, the conclusions and values of 6A, and the strategies of 6B — and the knowledge of Chapters 1 to 4 (water, liveability, landforms and changing nations). The water-use log you kept in Section 1D (Q7) and the local landform study of Sections 3C and 3D are both raw material for a 6C report. A student who leaves Level 8 able to build a referenced geographical response — a report, a documentary, an editorial, a description, an explanation — has met the band's skills standard.

Teaching sequence (for the teacher)

1. **Start from the cycle, not the forms.** Show Figure 6C.1. Every earlier section of Chapters 5 and 6 produced material (questions, data, maps, conclusions, strategies); 6C turns that material into finished responses other people can read, watch, check and use. The section is the closing stage of one connected inquiry, not a new topic.
 2. **Four parts before six forms.** Work the four parts (Figure 6C.3) first — knowledge, concepts, methods, sources — because every form is just those four parts arranged for an audience. Then show the six forms (Figure 6C.2) as choices of purpose, audience and media.
 3. **Referencing as a habit, not a ritual.** Figure 6C.4 gives the two places a source appears. Drill the in-text citation until it is automatic: maker and year in brackets, full entry at the end with the retrieval date. The student's own fieldwork is a source too.
 4. **Demonstration 1 slowly.** Read the model fieldwork report (Figure 6C.8) part by part, with the structure figure (Figure 6C.7) beside it. Stress that the water readings are SAMPLE data: any school replaces them with its own measurements, including the 1D water-use log and the 3C/3D local landform study.
 5. **Demonstration 2 as the explanation model.** Use Figures 6C.9–6C.11 (all one ABS release) to model an evidence-based explanation with in-text citations, an interconnection argument, a tested other side and an honest limit.
 6. **Run the tasks, then the checklist.** Scaffolded to unscaffolded to capstone; the capstone may take any of the six forms on any Chapter 1–4 topic. Mark with the checklist (Figure 6C.12): marks reward the reasoning steps and the referencing, not which conclusion a student reaches.
-

Theory

The last stage of the inquiry cycle. In Section 5A you learned to ask geographical questions; in 5B to collect and organise evidence, including fieldwork; in 5C to represent it as maps, graphs and tables; in 5D to interpret and analyse it; in 6A and 6B to draw conclusions and choose strategies. One stage remains: **create and present** — turn everything the earlier stages produced into a response other people can read, watch, check and use. That is what geographers mean by *communicating*, and it is the skill this section teaches.

Where this section sits: the last stage of the inquiry cycle

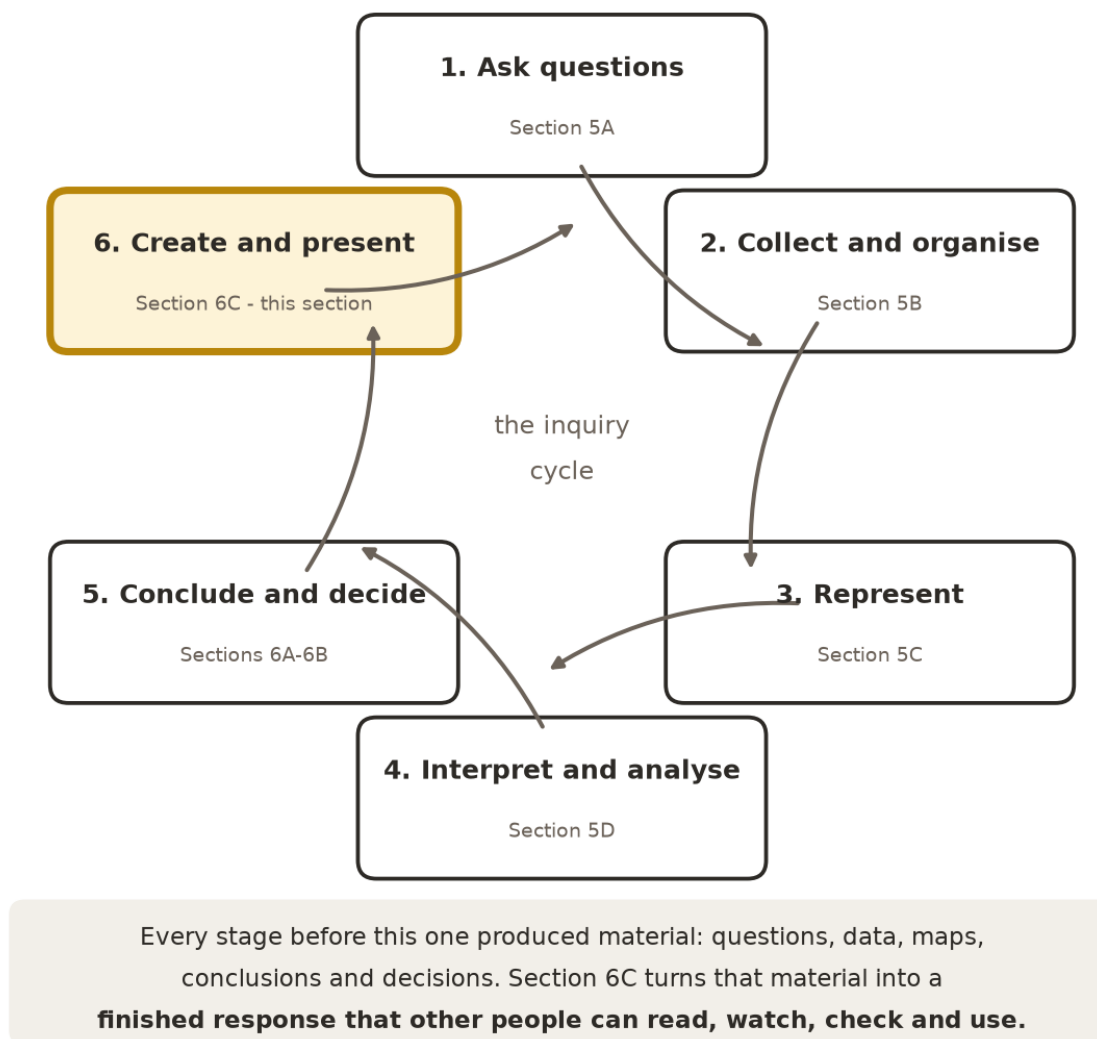


Figure 6C.1 — Where this section sits: the six-stage inquiry cycle (ask questions, collect and organise, represent, interpret and analyse, conclude and decide, create and present), with the final stage highlighted as Section 6C and a note that every earlier stage produced material that 6C turns into a finished response. Original figure for this workbook.

Six forms, one skill. A geographical response can take many forms. This section trains six, each drawn from the curriculum's own examples for this content description:

Six forms a geographical response can take

Form	Purpose: what it does	Audience: who for	Media: how made
Fieldwork report	Shows what you found in the field, and what it means	Teacher, class, local community	Written report with maps, graphs and photos
Video documentary	Tells the story of a place or issue and suggests responses	Class, school, online viewers	Video with footage, interviews, narration and maps
Editorial	Persuades readers to take action on a geographical issue	Newspaper readers	Short written opinion piece backed by evidence
Description of a strategy	Draws the audience into the topic and gives accurate information about a chosen strategy	Community and decision-makers	Written description with images and data
Evidence-based explanation	Explains a pattern or cause using research findings	Teacher and classmates	Written explanation built on cited data
Response with maps	Supports actions and conclusions with maps, graphs and tables	Class and local community	Maps and graphs with short supporting text

Choose the form that fits your purpose and your audience - one topic can be answered in any of the six.

Figure 6C.2 — Table of the six forms a geographical response can take (fieldwork report, video documentary, editorial, description of a strategy, evidence-based explanation, response with maps), with the purpose, audience and media of each. Original table for this workbook.

The six forms look different on the outside, but every strong one is built from the same four parts:

The four parts of every strong geographical response

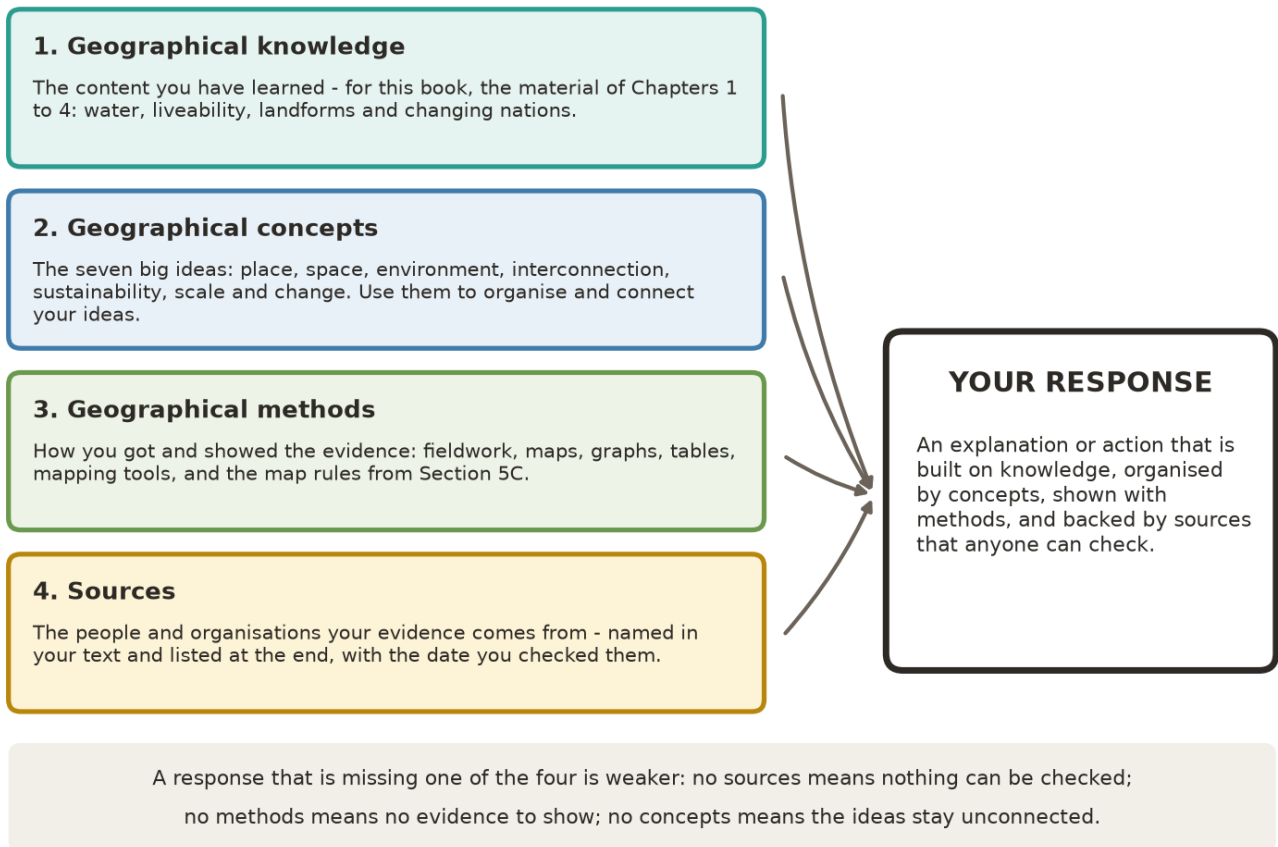


Figure 6C.3 — The four parts of every strong geographical response: geographical knowledge, geographical concepts, geographical methods and sources, combining into your response, with a note that a response missing one of the four is weaker. Original figure for this workbook.

Concepts are the connecting language. The seven concepts — place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale and change — are not extra content; they are the words that connect your evidence into an explanation. “Toilets used the most water” is a fact. “Toilets use the most water *because* every person in the building depends on them many times a day” is an **interconnection** argument. “Use is high *here* and low *there*” is a fact about **space**; “the dam fell in the same year homes used more” raises a **change** and **environment** question. A response that uses at least one concept as a connector, and names it, is doing what the content description asks.

Referring to sources. “Referring to sources” means a source appears in **two places**: a short citation in your text, and a full entry in your source list at the end.

Referring to sources: the two places a source must appear

Why refer to sources?

(1) Your evidence can be checked. (2) The makers of the data get credit. (3) Readers can see which words are facts and which are your ideas.

1. In your text - a short in-text citation

In 2023-24, Australian households used 1 868 GL of distributed water, 6.2 per cent more than the year before (ABS, 2025).

the maker's name and the year - that is all

2. At the end - the full entry in your source list

Australian Bureau of Statistics, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 financial year, released 11 December 2025, abs.gov.au, retrieved 25 August 2026.

WHO made it

WHAT it is called

WHEN it came out

WHEN YOU checked it

The retrieval date matters: web data can change, so say when you saw it.

Rule of thumb

Every number, map value and quoted fact in your response points to a source.
Your own fieldwork counts too - name it: (class fieldwork, 2026).

Figure 6C.4 — The two places a source must appear: a short in-text citation (the maker's name and the year) and a full entry in the source list (who made it, what it is called, when it came out, and when you checked it), with the reasons referencing matters. Original figure for this workbook.

The retrieval date matters because web data changes. And your own fieldwork — a water log, a street survey, a photo record — is a source too: list it the same way, for example (class fieldwork, 2026).

Choosing a form: purpose and audience first. Before you make anything, answer two questions: *what should this response do?* (describe, explain, argue, call to act) and *who is it for?* (your class, your school, your local community, readers of a local paper). The form follows. Three of the six forms deserve a closer look:

- **The editorial (E03)** argues one side of an issue and encourages action. A strong editorial is not a shout: it hooks the reader, makes one claim, backs it with sourced evidence, reasons from the evidence, names the other side at its strongest, and ends with one clear action.

Model editorial, with its moves labelled

Topic: household water use in Australia (an issue from Chapter 1). The moves are the ones your editorial needs.

HOOK - grab the reader	In 2023-24, Australia's big water storages fell by 8 per cent - and in that same year, households used more water, not less.
CLAIM - say what should happen	Rising house-by-house use in a year of falling storages is a warning. Cities need to act before the next dry spell, not during it.
EVIDENCE - real, sourced facts	Average household use rose from 168 to 174 kilolitres per household in one year (ABS, 2025). Every state and territory recorded an increase. In the same year, rainfall was down on the wet years before it, and storages fell.
REASONING - connect the ideas	Water interconnects every home with rivers, dams and farms. What one street uses affects what a river keeps. Small rises, repeated across millions of homes, become big numbers: 1 868 GL in a single year.
OTHER SIDE - say it at its strongest	Some will answer that households are only a small share next to farms, which used 11 760 GL in the same year (ABS, 2025). That is true - and farm water grows the food cities eat. But household use is the one share almost every person can change directly.
CALL TO ACTION - one clear step	So pick one habit this week: shorter showers, a leak fixed, a garden that needs less. Then ask your council where your town's water comes from - because knowing the source is the first step to protecting it.

Numbers in this model: ABS, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 (retrieved 25 August 2026).

An editorial argues one side - but a strong one names the other side at its best before answering it.

Figure 6C.5 — A model editorial on household water use with its moves labelled (hook, claim, evidence, reasoning, other side, call to action), using real ABS figures and a note that a strong editorial names the other side at its best before answering it. Original model for this workbook.

- **The video documentary (E02)** tells the story of a place or issue and suggests responses. Plan it as a storyboard before you film anything: six shots, each with what the viewer SEES and what the narration SAYS.

Storyboard scaffold: a two-minute video documentary

Six shots, in order. For each one, plan what the viewer SEES and what the narration SAYS.

SHOT 1 - HOOK	SHOT 2 - PLACE	SHOT 3 - EVIDENCE
SEE: one strong image of the place or problem. SAY: the question your documentary answers.	SEE: a map showing where and how big. SAY: describe the place - size, location, who lives there.	SEE: a graph, table or fieldwork photo. SAY: the facts, with the source named out loud.
SHOT 4 - OTHER SIDE	SHOT 5 - RESPONSE	SHOT 6 - CLOSE
SEE: a person or image for the other view. SAY: the strongest reason to disagree - and answer it.	SEE: the strategy or action in progress. SAY: what is being done, and what it could change.	SEE: your closing image and a source slide. SAY: your conclusion, and what the viewer can do.

Keep every claim in the narration short, and say where each fact comes from.
 End with a source slide: list each source's name and the date you checked it.
 If your school cannot film people, use maps, photos you took and your own voice-over.

Figure 6C.6 — A storyboard scaffold for a two-minute video documentary: six shots (hook, place, evidence, other side, response, close), each with a SEE plan and a SAY plan, plus rules to keep claims short, name sources out loud and end with a source slide. Original figure for this workbook.

- **The description of a strategy (E04)** draws the audience into the topic and tells them, accurately, about one strategy you prefer — for example, a plan for more liveable streets and greener, more sustainable cities, or a way to lessen the harm a geological hazard does. Its test is accuracy plus connection: the audience must finish caring *and* correctly informed.

The fieldwork report (E01). The report is the form that most completely shows all four parts, so it is the one this section works through in full. A fieldwork report has eight parts, in a fixed order:

A fieldwork report has eight parts, in this order

1. Title	Names the topic and the place.
2. Question and aim	The question your fieldwork set out to answer.
3. Background	What is already known about the topic - from your class learning, with sources.
4. Method	How the data was collected: where, when, what tools, how many measurements - so someone else could repeat it.
5. Results	What you found, shown in tables, graphs, maps and photos. No opinions here - just the evidence.
6. Discussion	What the results mean. Link them to geographical concepts and to other sources. Name anything that went wrong or is uncertain.
7. Conclusion	The answer to your question, plus one limit of your evidence and what could be done next.
8. References	Every source used, listed with the date you checked it. Your own fieldwork is listed too.

The order is the logic: question, then evidence, then meaning, then answer.

Figure 6C.7 — The eight parts of a fieldwork report in order (title; question and aim; background; method; results; discussion; conclusion; references), each with a one-line description, and the note that the order is the logic: question, then evidence, then meaning, then answer. Original figure for this workbook.

The same report serves any topic in this book: the water audit of Worked demonstration 1, the home water-use log you kept in Section 1D, or the local Victorian landform study of Sections 3C and 3D — where your background and method can reuse the Vicmap Topographic Maps skills (contours, waterways, place names) taught in 3C.

Worked demonstrations

Demonstration 1 — a model fieldwork report: the school water audit (E01)

Below is a complete report at the standard this section sets. Two warnings before you read it. First, its water readings are **SAMPLE data**, invented to show the form — your report uses your own measurements. Second, every other choice in it is real and deliberate, and the right-hand notes say why each part works.

Model fieldwork report: how much water does a school use?

SAMPLE data for demonstration - your report uses your own measurements. The right-hand notes say why each part works.

1. Title How much water does our school use in one week?	Why it works: Short, and it names the place: our school.
2. Question How much water does our school use in a normal week, and which use is the biggest?	Why it works: One question, small enough to answer in a week.
3. Background Water is a renewable resource that every building draws from the same local supply (Chapter 1). In 2023-24 the average Victorian household used 156 kL of water for the year (ABS, 2025).	Why it works: Uses earlier learning AND one sourced fact to set the scene.
4. Method For five school days we read the school water meter at 9 am each morning. We counted the taps and toilets, timed the garden sprinklers, and asked the canteen how it uses water (class fieldwork, 2026).	Why it works: Past tense; says where, when and how much. Another class could repeat it exactly.
5. Results Total use for the week: 24 300 litres (24.3 kL). Biggest uses: toilets 34 per cent, hand washing 27 per cent, canteen 19 per cent, garden 12 per cent, other 8 per cent.	Why it works: Evidence only, no opinions. In your report, put a table or a bar graph here.
6. Discussion Our 400-student school used 24.3 kL in one week - about one-sixth of what one average Victorian household uses in a whole year (ABS, 2025). Because toilets are the biggest single use, water-efficient fittings would save the most. One limit: we could not check for leaks in underground pipes.	Why it works: Meaning, not description: compares with outside data, links to sustainability, and names a limit honestly.
7. Conclusion Most of our school's water goes to toilets and hand washing, so the best next steps are efficient fittings and shorter sprinkler times.	Why it works: Answers the question in one or two sentences - no new facts here.
8. References Australian Bureau of Statistics, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24, retrieved 25 August 2026. Class fieldwork water log, week 6, 2026.	Why it works: Both kinds of source: an outside dataset AND your own fieldwork.

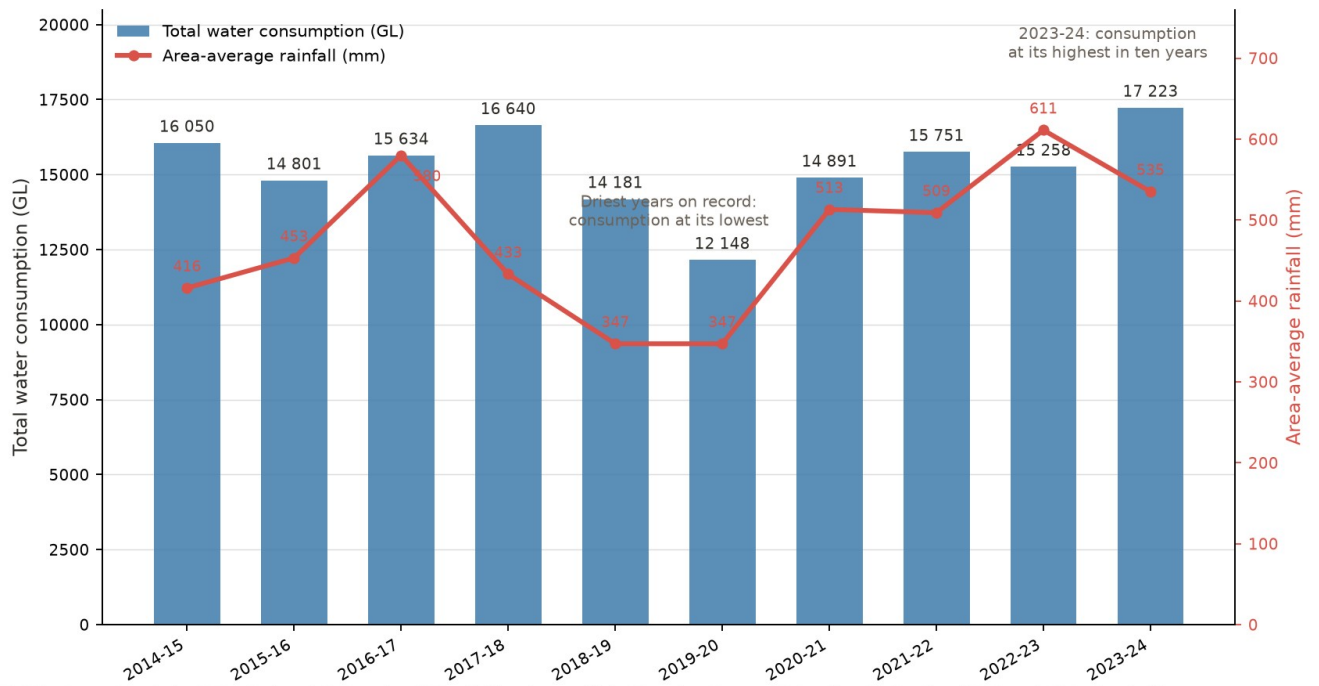
Figure 6C.8 — A model fieldwork report, “How much water does our school use in one week?”, with all eight parts written out (sample data labelled as such) and a right-hand note for each part explaining why it works; the background cites the real ABS figure of 156 kL per Victorian household in 2023-24. Original model for this workbook.

Read the demonstration against the four parts of Figure 6C.3. **Knowledge:** the renewable resource and supply ideas of Chapter 1. **Concepts:** sustainability in the discussion, interconnection in the link between the building and the local supply. **Methods:** a meter read at the same time each day, counts and timings — repeatable by another class. **Sources:** the ABS dataset *and* the class fieldwork log, both listed with dates. The same skeleton takes your 1D water-use log or your 3C/3D landform study unchanged: swap the question, the measurements and the sources, keep the logic.

Demonstration 2 — an evidence-based explanation: why did Australia’s water use jump in 2023-24? (E05, E06)

This demonstration builds an explanation from one real dataset: the ABS Water Account, Australia, 2023-24. Three representations come first, because in a response like this the maps and graphs are not decoration — they carry part of the argument (E06).

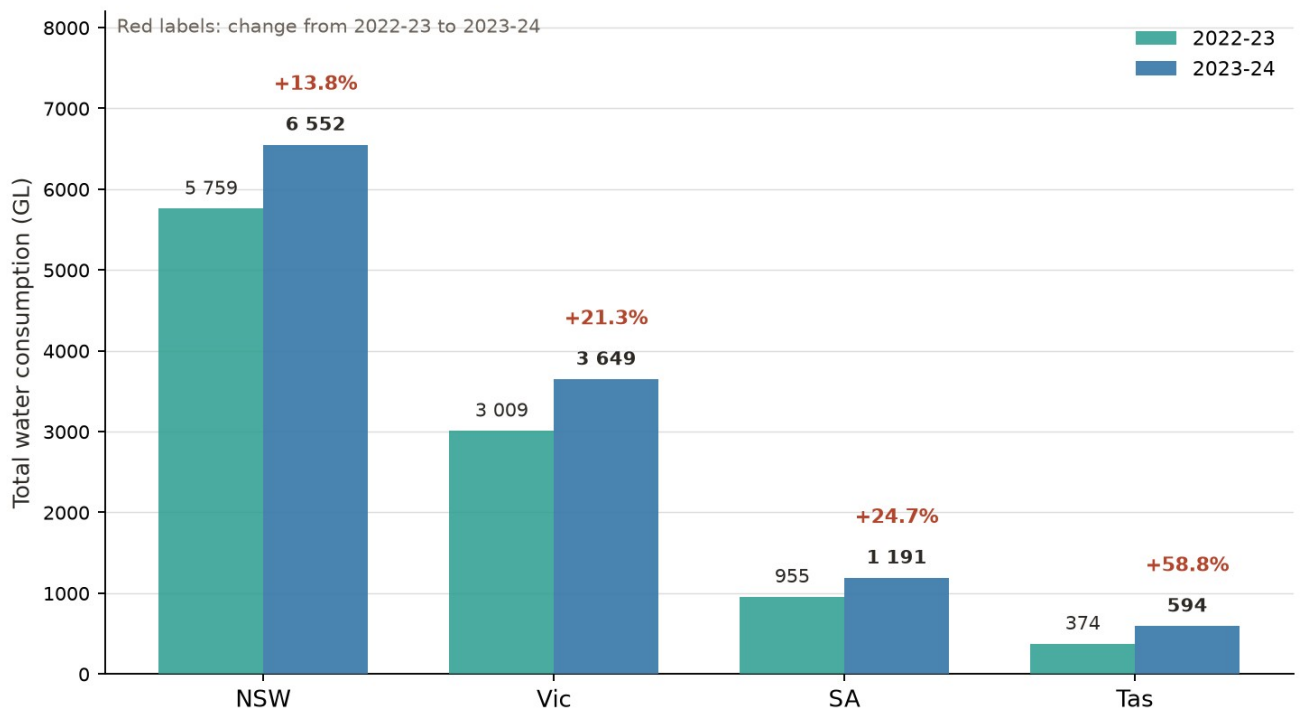
Australia: water used and rain fallen, 2014-15 to 2023-24



Source: ABS, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 (released 11 December 2025; rainfall series as published there from Bureau of Meteorology data), retrieved 25 August 2026. GL = gigalitre.

Figure 6C.9 — Bar and line chart for Australia, 2014-15 to 2023-24: bars show total water consumption in gigalitres each year and a line shows area-average rainfall in millimetres, with every value labelled, noting the driest years had the lowest consumption and 2023-24 the highest consumption in ten years. Drawn by the authors from ABS data (Water Account, Australia, 2023-24; rainfall series as published there from Bureau of Meteorology data), retrieved 25 August 2026.

One dry year: four states' water consumption, GL

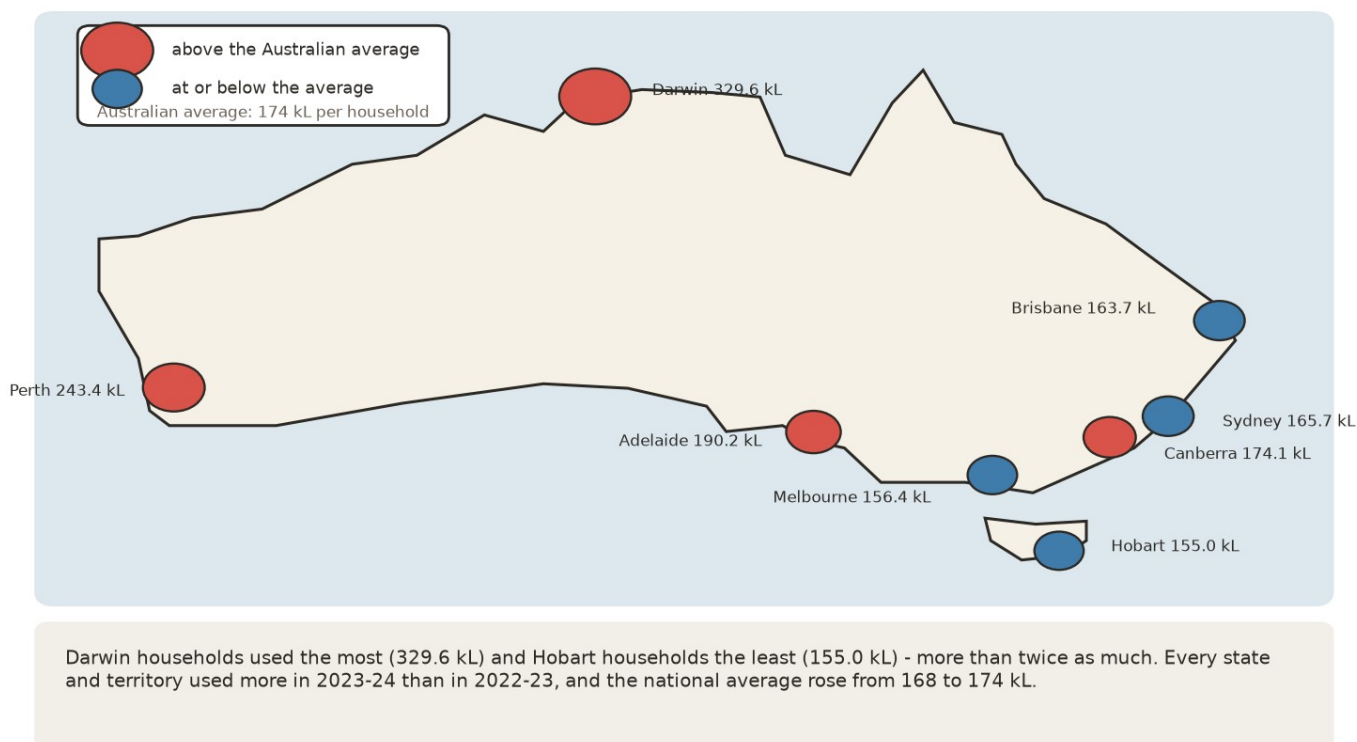


Source: ABS, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 (released 11 December 2025), retrieved 25 August 2026. GL = gigalitre.

Figure 6C.10 — Grouped bar chart of total water consumption in gigalitres for NSW, Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania, 2022-23 against 2023-24, with every value labelled and the change marked: +13.8, +21.3, +24.7 and +58.8 per cent. Drawn by the authors from ABS data (Water Account, Australia, 2023-24), retrieved 25 August 2026.

Water used per household, by state, 2023-24

Each circle sits on a state capital. A bigger circle means more kilolitres (kL) per household for the year.



Data: ABS, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 (released 11 December 2025), retrieved 25 August 2026.
The coastline is simplified and circles sit near each capital. Not for navigation.

Figure 6C.11 — Schematic map of Australia with a circle at each state and territory capital sized by the kilolitres of water used per household in 2023-24, coloured above or at/below the Australian average of 174 kL, every value printed, and a note that Darwin households used the most (329.6 kL) and Hobart the least (155.0 kL). Drawn by the authors from ABS data (Water Account, Australia, 2023-24), retrieved 25 August 2026. Simplified coastline, not for navigation.

The model explanation.

In 2023-24, Australia used 17 223 GL of water in total — 12.9 per cent more than the year before (ABS, 2025). The largest share went to agriculture: 11 760 GL, or 68.3 per cent of all water consumed, up 14.6 per cent (ABS, 2025). Households used 1 868 GL of distributed water, 6.2 per cent more than the year before, and the average household rose from 168 to 174 kilolitres (ABS, 2025).

The pattern is one of interconnection between climate and use. Area-average rainfall fell from 611 mm to 535 mm in the same year (ABS, 2025, rainfall series from Bureau of Meteorology data), and the country's big water storages fell by 8 per cent (ABS, 2025). Every state and territory recorded higher total use — Tasmania up 58.8 per cent, Victoria up 21.3 per cent (ABS, 2025) — and higher use per household (Figure 6C.11). When rain eases after wet years, farms draw more water to grow the same food, and homes in drying cities water gardens and shower off heat: what the sky withholds, the river and the dam must supply.

The other side must be heard at its strongest. A drier year and a higher water bill do not prove one caused the other; the data shows patterns moving together, and 2023-24 followed two very wet years, so part of the rise is a return to drier-year normal rather than a new habit. The honest reading is: climate and water use are linked in the pattern, and the link is worth checking year by year.

Conclusion: Australia's 2023-24 water jump is best explained as a drying year meeting a country whose farms and homes still draw heavily on supplied water — a sustainability question as much as a weather one, because storages fell while use rose (ABS, 2025). One limit: this account uses one year of national data; state-by-state reasons (Tasmania's hydro-electricity water, for example) need their own check.

Notice the moves: every fact carries a citation; the two concepts (**interconnection, sustainability**) do the connecting; the other side is stated at its strongest; the limit is named; and the conclusion answers the question. That is the exit standard for this book.

Before you submit anything in this section, run the checklist. It is the four parts of Figure 6C.3, turned into ticks.

Before you submit: the four-part checklist

Tick every box. If one is unticked, you know exactly what to fix before you hand in.

KNOWLEDGE	CONCEPTS	METHODS	SOURCES
☐ My facts come from Chapters 1-4 and are right	☐ I use at least one geographical concept	☐ I made at least one map, graph or table	☐ At least three sources are listed
☐ My response names real places and data	☐ The concept links ideas - it is not just named	☐ It has a title, labels and units	☐ Each has the date I checked it
☐ I answered the exact question I was set	☐ Where a pattern shows on a map, I explain it	☐ Someone else could repeat my method	☐ Every fact in my text names its source
☐ I said what my evidence does NOT show	☐ Debatable claims are marked as views, not facts	☐ I named one limit of my evidence	☐ My own fieldwork is listed as a source too

Sixteen ticks = the four parts of a referenced geographical response are all in place (Figure 6C.3).

Figure 6C.12 — Before-you-submit checklist in four columns (knowledge, concepts, methods, sources), four ticks each: facts from Chapters 1-4 and named places; at least one concept used as a connector; at least one titled, labelled, unit-bearing map, graph or table you made; at least three sources listed with the date checked, including your own fieldwork. Original figure for this workbook.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Use Figure 6C.2. Match each task to its best form and give one reason: (a) show your class what your week of water-log data says about your school; (b) persuade readers of a local paper to act on a water issue; (c) help your council explain a chosen plan for a more liveable street.

Q2. A student's response has accurate facts from Chapter 1 and a neat bar graph, but no source list and no concept used as a connector. Use Figure 6C.3: which two parts are missing, and what is lost without each?

Q3. Fact: in 2023-24 the average Victorian household used 156 kL of water for the year. Maker: the Australian Bureau of Statistics, in *Water Account, Australia, 2023-24*, released 11 December 2025, abs.gov.au; you checked it on 25 August 2026. (a) Write the in-text citation version of the fact. (b) Write the full source-list entry.

Q4. Use the storyboard scaffold (Figure 6C.6). For a documentary about water use in *your* town, write the SEE and SAY lines for Shot 1 (hook) and Shot 3 (evidence).

Q5. These five sentences belong to a fieldwork report on a local landform. Put each one in the correct part (Figure 6C.7): (a) "We read the contour spacing on the Vicmap topographic map and timed our walk on 12 May 2026." (b) "The ridge above our town is formed from a harder sandstone that wears down more slowly than the clay around it." (c) "How was the ridge above our town formed?" (d) "Our evidence cannot show how fast the ridge is changing — one visit shows shape, not speed." (e) "The ridge is a sandstone outcrop 2 km north of the town centre."

Q6. Read Figure 6C.9. (a) In which two years was total consumption lowest? (b) What was area-average rainfall in those years? (c) In one sentence using the word *interconnection*, link rainfall and water use in those two years.

Unscaffolded

Q7. Read Figure 6C.10. Describe the pattern across the four states and offer one explanation for it, using at least one geographical concept by name. Finish with one honest limit of reading causes from this chart.

Q8. Using Figure 6C.11 and one other figure from this section, write the EVIDENCE and REASONING moves (Figure 6C.5) of an editorial about household water use. Each move: two or three sentences, with at least one in-text citation.

Q9. Plan the METHOD part of a fieldwork report based on either your 1D water-use log or your 3C/3D local landform study. Write it so that another class, in another school, could repeat it exactly: what you measured or observed, where, when, how many times, with what tools.

Q10. Choose any issue from Chapters 1–4. In three or four sentences, say which of the six forms (Figure 6C.2) you would choose to respond to it, who the audience would be, and what one sourced fact and one concept your response would use.

Evidence-based response task (capstone)

This task reaches the band's achievement standard, stated at the end of Level 8: making a geographical response of your own — built from knowledge, concepts and methods — and backing it with sources you name.

Task. Create and present a geographical response, in **any one of the six forms** of Figure 6C.2, on **any topic from Chapters 1 to 4** (water, liveability, landforms or changing nations). Write 300–450 words, or make an equivalent multimodal piece (storyboard plus script, report plus graph sheet, editorial plus map).

Your response must:

1. use accurate knowledge from Chapters 1–4 and name real places and real data;
2. use at least one geographical concept (place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale, change) as a connector, named in your text;
3. include at least one map, graph or table **you have made**, with a title, labels and units (the map rules of Section 5C apply);
4. refer to at least **three sources**, each cited in the text and listed at the end with the date you checked it — your own fieldwork counts as one source;
5. name the other side of any claim you argue, at its strongest, and one limit of your evidence.

How it is marked. Marks are awarded for the reasoning steps above — accurate knowledge, concept-linked reasoning, made-and-labelled representations, correct referencing, the tested other side, the named limit — not for which conclusion you reach. Two students may answer the same question in opposite ways and both earn full marks, if both build and reference their response well. The checklist (Figure 6C.12) is the marking sheet: sixteen ticks.

Answers

Q1. (a) Fieldwork report — it shows your own data and what it means. (b) Editorial — it persuades readers to act. (c) Description of a strategy — it gives a community accurate information about a chosen plan.

Q2. Missing sources and missing concepts. Without sources, nothing can be checked and no maker gets credit; without a concept, the facts stay unconnected — a list, not an explanation.

Q3. (a) Sample: “In 2023-24 the average Victorian household used 156 kL of water for the year (ABS, 2025).” (b) Sample: “Australian Bureau of Statistics, Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 financial year, released 11 December 2025, abs.gov.au, retrieved 25 August 2026.”

Q4. Check for: a Shot 1 SEE that is one strong local image and a SAY that asks the question; a Shot 3 SEE that is a graph, table or photo from the log and a SAY that gives the fact with the source named out loud.

Q5. (a) Method. (b) Conclusion (or Discussion leading to it). (c) Question and aim. (d) Conclusion’s named limit (Discussion also acceptable). (e) Background.

Q6. (a) 2018-19 and 2019-20. (b) 347 mm in both years. (c) Sample: in the driest years the water people and farms could draw was at its lowest, which shows how closely water use is interconnected with the climate that supplies it.

Q7. Check for: the pattern (all four states rose; the smaller the state’s usual use, the bigger the percentage jump) plus one concept used by name (for example change — a one-year swing after wet years — or interconnection — climate, farms and homes drawing on the same supply) plus an honest limit (a chart shows patterns together, not proof of cause).

Q8. Check for: an EVIDENCE move with real figures and an in-text citation (for example the 168-to-174 kL rise, or Darwin 329.6 kL versus Hobart 155.0 kL), and a REASONING move that connects the figures through a concept rather than restating them.

Q9. Check for the repeat-test: what was measured or observed, where, when, how many times, with what tools — written in the past tense, so another class could do the same.

Q10. Check for: a form matched to a stated audience and purpose, one sourced fact and one named concept that suit the chosen issue.

Capstone. Mark against the five required moves with the checklist (Figure 6C.12): knowledge, concepts, a made representation, three dated sources, the tested other side and the named limit. The conclusion reached is not marked.

Sources for this section

- Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Water Account, Australia, 2023-24 financial year* (released 11 December 2025), abs.gov.au — total and sector consumption, state and territory totals, household use per household, storage change and the ten-year consumption series; the rainfall series as published there from Bureau of Meteorology data. Retrieved 2026-08-25.
 - All charts, maps and tables in this section are original drawings by the authors: charts and tables from the data above, the household map on a simplified coastline outline drawn from primitives (au_shape.py). Generators in src/gen_6c_fig01_cycle.py to src/gen_6c_fig12_checklist.py. Not for navigation.
 - Vicmap Topographic Maps (Victorian Government topographic mapping) — mapping skills reused from Section 3C for local landform reports; referenced here as a skills source only. Retrieved 2026-08-25.
 - The model fieldwork report’s water readings and the storyboard are SAMPLE material written for this workbook (class fieldwork style, dated 2026); the one external figure inside the model (156 kL per Victorian household) is from the ABS source above.
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Glossary

Audience — the people a response is made for. **Concept** — one of the seven organising ideas of geography: place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability, scale and change. **Editorial** — a short written opinion piece that

argues one side of an issue and encourages action, backed by evidence. **Fieldwork report** — a written account of what you found in the field and what it means, in the eight-part order of Figure 6C.7. **In-text citation** — the maker's name and the year, in brackets, placed after a fact in your text. **Kilolitre (kL)** — one thousand litres. **Media (of a response)** — how a response is made and shared: writing, video, poster, map. **Purpose** — what a response should do: describe, explain, argue or call to act. **Retrieval date** — the date you checked a source; written in every source-list entry. **Sample data** — invented readings used to show a method, labelled as such, that your own measurements replace. **Source list** — the list at the end of a response of every source used, each with who made it, what it is called, when it came out and when you checked it. **Storyboard** — a shot-by-shot plan of a video, saying what the viewer sees and what the narration says.