



Western Australian Curriculum

Humanities and Social Sciences

Year level descriptions | Pre-primary–Year 10

For implementation in 2026

Acknowledgement of Country

Kaya. The School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) acknowledges that our offices are on Whadjuk Noongar boodjar and that we deliver our services on the country of many traditional custodians and language groups throughout Western Australia. The Authority acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We offer our respect to Elders past and present.

Copyright

© School Curriculum and Standards Authority, 2025

This document – apart from any third-party copyright material contained in it – may be freely copied, or communicated on an intranet, for non-commercial purposes in educational institutions, provided that the School Curriculum and Standards Authority (the Authority) is acknowledged as the copyright owner, and that the Authority's moral rights are not infringed.

Copying or communication for any other purpose can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with prior written permission of the Authority. Copying or communication of any third-party copyright material can be done only within the terms of the *Copyright Act 1968* or with permission of the copyright owners.

Any content in this document that has been derived from the Australian Curriculum may be used under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International licence](#).

Disclaimer

Any resources such as texts, websites and so on that may be referred to in this document are provided as examples of resources that teachers can use to support their learning programs. Their inclusion does not imply that they are mandatory or that they are the only resources relevant to the course. Teachers must exercise their professional judgement as to the appropriateness of any they may wish to use.

Contents

Overview	1
Pre-primary	2
Year 1.....	3
Year 2.....	4
Year 3.....	5
Year 4.....	6
Year 5.....	7
Year 6.....	8
Year 7.....	9
Year 8.....	10
Year 9.....	11
Year 10.....	12

Overview

Year level descriptions provide an overview of the content being studied at that year level. The year level descriptions include reference to the phases of schooling to provide guidance about the sort of learning experiences that children and students are likely to engage with.

Pre-primary

In the early childhood phase of schooling, learning, development and wellbeing are connected and learning builds on the *Early Years Learning Framework* and each child's funds of knowledge. A holistic curriculum that integrates knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes across learning areas connects learning to children's lives and their natural curiosity about their world.

Humanities and Social Sciences provides opportunities for children to make sense of their world through experimentation and play.

In Pre-primary, children explore, play, investigate and communicate their understandings through a range of intentional learning experiences in creative ways. They have the opportunity to pose questions about and respond to their natural curiosities. Children collect, sort, represent and record information into categories.

Children gain a sense of location and learn about the globe as a representation of the Earth, on which Australia and other countries can be located. There is a focus on fostering their interest in their personal world, with connections made between the early childhood setting and the local community. In the context of children developing a sense of identity and belonging, children investigate the features of familiar places and explore what makes a place special, including its significance to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Children engage in stories of families and the past, which may include stories from different cultures and other parts of the world. They perceive that the past is different from the present and understand the many ways in which stories may differ, depending on who is telling them. In the early years, children have the opportunity to explore family structures, their heritage, culture, backgrounds and traditions.

Year 1

In the early childhood phase of schooling, learning, development and wellbeing are connected and learning experiences are informed by the Principles and Practices of the *Early Years Learning Framework*. A holistic curriculum that integrates knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes across learning areas connects learning to children's lives and their natural curiosity about their world.

Humanities and Social Sciences provides opportunities for children to make sense of their world through experimentation, exploration and play.

In Year 1, children have a natural curiosity about their physical, social and technological world. Children are provided with a holistic and integrated curriculum through which they build, design, problem-solve, represent and reflect on new learning in ways that are meaningful to them. Children have the opportunity to investigate different ways of collecting information and/or data through a range of intentional learning experiences, books, people and photos. They learn how narratives can be used to communicate and represent their changing understandings in multiple ways.

In the early years, children have the opportunity to develop an appreciation for both natural and constructed environments as they understand how places are cared for by different groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Children's understanding of place is further developed through investigating maps as a visual representation of Earth, as they begin to locate geographical divisions.

The concept of continuity and change is extended through exploring how family life has changed or remained the same over time and how the present is similar to, or different from, the past. The understanding of time as a sequence is developed in the context of the present, past and future.

Year 2

In the early childhood phase of schooling, learning, development and wellbeing are connected and learning experiences are informed by the Principles and Practices of the *Early Years Learning Framework*. A holistic curriculum that integrates knowledge, understandings, skills, values and attitudes across learning areas connects learning to children's lives and their natural curiosity about their world.

Humanities and Social Sciences provides opportunities for children to make sense of their world through experimentation, exploration and play.

In Year 2, children have a natural curiosity about their physical, social and technological world. Children are provided with a holistic and integrated curriculum through which they build, design, problem-solve, represent and reflect on new learning in ways that are meaningful to them. Children engage in a range of intentional learning experiences to investigate different ways of collecting information and/or data from sources such as observations, books, people and photos. They learn how narratives can be used to communicate and represent their changing understandings in multiple ways.

The concepts of place, space and interconnection are expanded through exploring the links with people and places. The ways that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples maintain connections to Country/Place, and Australia's interconnections with Asia and the world, allow children to explore the hierarchy of geographical scale. They further develop a mental map of the world and of where they are located in relation to other places.

Children are given the opportunity to develop their historical understanding through the key concepts of continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance. These concepts are investigated within the context of exploring the history of their local area and why the past is important to the local community, and therefore worthy of preservation.

Year 3

In the middle to late childhood phase of schooling, students develop a sense of self, their world expands, and they begin to see themselves as members of larger communities. Learning experiences emphasise and lead to an appreciation of both the commonality and diversity of human experience and concerns.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students develop their social skills and ability to work collaboratively. The ability of students to draw on a wider range of sources of information is enhanced by introducing them to experiences beyond their immediate environment, including those of people from other times, places and cultures.

In Year 3, students develop their understanding and application of skills, including questioning and researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to their daily learning experiences and investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students build on their understanding of civics and citizenship through the concepts of democracy and participation. Using familiar contexts, they consider how and why community groups create rules and make decisions. Students consider their own participation in the local community and how this contributes to society.

The concepts of place, space, environment and interconnection continue to be developed as a way of thinking. Students examine the similarities and differences between places, with the opportunity to inquire into the natural and human characteristics of places in various locations on the local, regional and national scale. The development of the students' mental map of the world is extended through a study of the location and characteristics of places in the Southern Hemisphere, including Australia and its near neighbours.

Students develop their historical understanding through the key concepts of sources, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance. These concepts are investigated within the context of exploring the historical features and diversity of their community as represented in symbols and emblems of significance, and celebrations and commemorations, both locally and in other places around the world.

Year 4

In the middle to late childhood phase of schooling, students develop a sense of self, their world expands, and they begin to see themselves as members of larger communities. Learning experiences emphasise and lead to an appreciation of both the commonality and diversity of human experience and concerns.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students develop their social skills and ability to work collaboratively. The ability of students to draw on a wider range of sources of information is enhanced by introducing them to experiences beyond their immediate environment, including those of people from other times, places and cultures.

In Year 4, students develop their understanding and application of skills, including questioning and researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to their daily learning experiences and investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue to build on their understanding of civics and citizenship through the concepts of democratic values, rights and responsibilities, and participation. They explore the purpose and services of local government and how these contribute to community life. The notions of belonging and personal identity are further developed to encompass laws, the importance of laws in society and cultural diversity.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection and sustainability continue to be developed as a way of thinking. Students have the opportunity to inquire into how the environment supports the lives of people and all other living things, and recognise that people have differing views on how sustainability can be achieved. The development of the students' mental map of the world is extended through a study of the location and characteristics of Africa and Europe.

Students develop their historical understanding through the key concepts of sources, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance. These concepts are investigated within the context of exploring the history of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples before the arrival of Europeans, and European exploration and colonisation up to the early 1800s. They explore interactions between groups and determine how these experiences contributed to cultural diversity.

Year 5

In the middle to late childhood phase of schooling, students develop a sense of self, their world expands, and they begin to see themselves as members of larger communities. Learning experiences emphasise and lead to an appreciation of both the commonality and diversity of human experience and concerns.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students begin to understand and appreciate different points of view, develop the ability to think in more abstract terms and undertake sustained activities for longer periods of time. The investigation of their world becomes more refined and includes relationships, structures, systems and processes. Students' ability to draw on a wider range of sources of information is enhanced by introducing them to experiences beyond their immediate environment, including those of people from other times, places and cultures.

In Year 5, students further develop their understanding and application of skills, including questioning and researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to their daily learning experiences and investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue to build on their understanding of the concepts of democratic values, justice and rights and responsibilities as they further develop their understanding of laws, including how they affect the lives of citizens. Students are introduced to the concept of the Westminster system as they explore the key features of Australia's electoral process.

The importance of informed consumer decision-making is introduced through the concept of making choices. Students focus on the factors that impact upon the allocation of resources, and this is underpinned by the concept of scarcity. They relate this to a personal or community context, questioning what influences their own decision-making.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking. Students have the opportunity to inquire into the connections between people and the environment, and how these interactions influence one another. The development of the students' mental map of the world is extended through a study of the location and characteristics of North America and South America.

Students develop their historical understanding through the key concepts of sources, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of colonial Australia in the 1800s, and the significant events and people who shaped the political and social structures at that time are considered.

Year 6

In the middle to late childhood phase of schooling, students develop a sense of self, their world expands, and they begin to see themselves as members of larger communities. Learning experiences emphasise and lead to an appreciation of both the commonality and diversity of human experience and concerns.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students begin to understand and appreciate different points of view, develop the ability to think in more abstract terms and undertake sustained activities for longer periods of time. The investigation of their world becomes more refined and includes relationships, structures, systems and processes. Students' ability to draw on a wider range of sources of information is enhanced by introducing them to experiences beyond their immediate environment, including those of people from other times, places and cultures.

In Year 6, students further develop their understanding and application of skills, including questioning and researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to their daily learning experiences and investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue building on their understanding of the concepts of justice, rights and responsibilities, and the Westminster system. They investigate Australia's democratic system of government, including state/territory and federal parliaments, and the court system.

Students further develop their understanding of economics and business concepts, such as scarcity and making choices, as they explore the ways resources are allocated to meet needs and wants in their community. They consider the effect of consumer and financial decisions on individuals, the community and the environment. Students focus on community or regional issues, with opportunities for concepts to also be considered in national or global contexts where appropriate.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking. Students inquire into the factors that shape the diverse characteristics of different places and how people, places and environments are interconnected, including a study of the world's cultural, economic, demographic and social diversity. The development of the students' mental map of the world is extended through a study of the location of countries in the Asia region.

Students develop their historical understanding through the key concepts of sources, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy and significance. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of the development of Australia as a nation, particularly after 1900; the factors that led to Federation; and how Australian society changed throughout the 20th century.

Year 7

In the early adolescence phase of schooling, students align with their peer group and begin to question established conventions, practices and values. Learning and teaching programs assist students to develop a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the contexts of their lives and the world in which they live.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students assume increased responsibility and engage in important decision-making within the class and school to support their growing independence and collaborative skills. Exploration of alternative ideas, perspectives and world views allows students to see themselves as active participants in their own continuing development and that of their society.

In Year 7, students develop increasing independence in critical thinking and skill application, which includes questioning, researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue to build on their understanding of the concepts of the Westminster system and democracy by examining the key features of Australia's democracy and how it is shaped through the Australian Constitution and constitutional change. The concepts of justice, rights and responsibilities are further developed through a focus on Australia's legal system.

An understanding of the concepts of making choices and allocation is further developed through a focus on the interdependence of consumers and producers in the market, and the characteristics of successful businesses, including how innovation and entrepreneurial behaviour contribute to business success.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking and enable students to inquire into the nature of water as a natural resource. The concept of place is expanded through students' investigation of the liveability of their own locality. They apply this understanding to a wide range of places and environments on the full range of scales, from local to global, and in a range of locations.

Students develop their historical understanding through key concepts, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of how we know about the Deep Time History of Australia and the world's oldest continuous cultures, and the development of ancient societies.

Year 8

In the early adolescence phase of schooling, students align with their peer group and begin to question established conventions, practices and values. Learning and teaching programs assist students to develop a broader and more comprehensive understanding of the contexts of their lives and the world in which they live.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students assume increased responsibility and engage in important decision-making within the class and school to support their growing independence and collaborative skills. Exploration of alternative ideas, perspectives and world views allows students to see themselves as active participants in their own continuing development and that of their society.

In Year 8, students develop increasing independence in critical thinking and skill application, which includes questioning, researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue to build on their understanding of the concepts of the Westminster system, democracy and participation. They investigate the types of law in Australia and how they are made. They consider the responsibilities and freedoms of citizens, and how Australians can actively participate in their democracy, including the election process.

The concept of markets is introduced to further develop students' understanding of the concepts of interdependence, making choices and allocation. They consider how markets work and the rights, responsibilities and opportunities that arise for businesses, consumers and governments. Students consider the influences on the way people work and explore the factors that influence people's financial decision-making.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking and provide students with the opportunity to inquire into the significance of landscapes to people and the spatial change in the distribution of populations. They apply this understanding to a wide range of places and environments at the full range of scales, from local to global, and in a range of locations.

Students develop their historical understanding through key concepts, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of the medieval period into the modern period. They consider how societies changed, what key beliefs and values emerged, and the causes and effects of conflict, revolution and technological advancement.

Year 9

In the middle adolescence phase of schooling, teaching and learning programs encourage students to develop an open and questioning view of themselves as active participants in their society and the world.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students build on their understanding of important concepts and continue to develop their awareness of the complexity of the natural environment, social issues and the impact of technological advances. Students consider how the relationship between knowledge, technology and values influences their own role within society.

In Year 9, students develop increasing independence in critical thinking and skill application, which includes questioning, researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue to build on their understanding of the concepts of the Westminster system, democracy, democratic values, justice and participation. They examine the role of political parties and independent representatives, and the way citizens' decisions are shaped during an election campaign. Students investigate how Australia's court system works in support of a democratic and just society.

Students are introduced to the concepts of specialisation and trade while continuing to further their understanding of the key concepts of scarcity, making choices, interdependence, and allocation and markets. They examine the connections between households and businesses, and the financial, government and overseas sectors through the flow of goods, services and resources in a global economy. Students develop an understanding of the risks and rewards involved in investing money and explore ways to practise financial management.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking, which enable students to inquire into the production of food and fibre, the role of the biotic environment and to explore how people, through their choices and actions, are connected to places in a variety of ways. Students apply this understanding to a wide range of places and environments at a range of scales, from local to global and in a range of locations.

Students develop their historical understanding through key concepts, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of Australia's colonial history and World War I. They consider how the experiences of people and groups reflected the attitudes of these time periods, and the significance of both colonisation and World War I.

Year 10

In the middle adolescence phase of schooling, teaching and learning programs encourage students to develop an open and questioning view of themselves as active participants in their society and the world.

In Humanities and Social Sciences, students build on their understanding of important concepts and continue to develop their awareness of the complexity of the natural environment, social issues and the impact of technological advances. Students consider how the relationship between knowledge, technology and values influences their own role within society.

In Year 10, students develop increasing independence in critical thinking and skill application, which includes questioning, researching, analysing, evaluating, communicating and reflecting. They apply these skills to investigate events, developments, issues and phenomena, both historical and contemporary.

Students continue to build on their understanding of the concepts of democracy, democratic values, justice, and rights and responsibilities by exploring Australia's roles and responsibilities at a global level and its international legal obligations. They inquire into the values and practices that enable a resilient democracy to be sustained.

Students are introduced to the concept of economic performance and living standards while continuing to further their understanding of the concepts of making choices, interdependence, specialisation, and allocation and markets through examining contemporary issues, events and/or case studies. They explore the nature of externalities and investigate the role of governments in managing economic performance to improve living standards. They inquire into the ways businesses can manage their workforces to improve productivity and adapt to future conditions.

The concepts of place, space, environment, interconnection, sustainability and change continue to be developed as a way of thinking, through an applied focus on the management of environmental change on the full range of scales, from local to global and in a range of locations. The geography of human wellbeing is investigated through comparison between Australia and less economically developed countries.

Students develop their historical understanding through key concepts, including evidence, continuity and change, cause and effect, perspectives, empathy, significance and contestability. These concepts are investigated within the historical context of the modern world and Australia from the lead-up to World War II to the present, with an emphasis on Australia in its global context. They consider the impacts of world events on human rights and freedom of different groups of people.