

## My Wetland - Local History

An oral history research activity to discover how your local area - and local wetland in particular- has changed and how it is still the same as it was two generations ago.

Curriculum Links:     S&E           (ICP, Place & Space, TC&C)  
                              Science       (Communicating Scientifically, Life & Living)  
                              English       (Listening & Speaking, Writing)

Outcomes:             (Levels 3 - 5)

- Students formulate questions as a focus for investigation, predict possible answers and gather and record information in an organised manner.
- Students identify sources of information, collect and evaluate the information, compare / identify bias and perspective, and consider means of filling gaps in the information collected.
- Students interpret new information, analyse information by distinguishing between fact and opinion, make judgements as to credibility and relevance of information. Synthesise information to make conclusions and decide best how to communicate these.
- Students communicate findings according to audience and purpose, predict questions arising from their conclusions as well as areas requiring further research.
- Students understand that the interdependence of people and places is shaped by the way people interact with their environment.
- Students understand that over time communities experience lasting and changing aspects of events, people and ideas.
- Students understand that there are many versions of history based on varied socio-cultural perspectives over time which inform and influence people's actions.
- Students demonstrate strategies for listening and participating in small group discussions.
- Students demonstrate use of technology in recording and/or presenting research.

### Preparation:

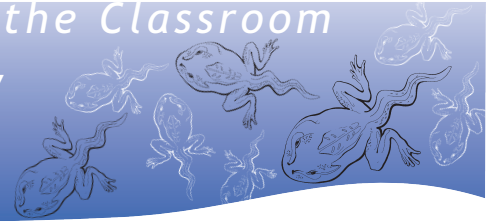
- Students could be required to find their own interview subjects or the teacher could make contact with a local retirement village, pension group, Probus club, Rotary club or similar.
- In this case, arrange for five or six elderly residents to visit the classroom to tell their stories about the river, wetland, estuary or creek in your area. The lesson steps to follow are based on this format.
- Sufficient comfortable chairs for the story tellers (and shade, if working outdoors).

### Class Activity:

#### Prior to date of elderly folk's visit

1. Students map local area and identify current land use, population areas, wetland areas and wetland use. (See Defining Your Catchment activity in Section 3 of the file).
2. Form groups for the day of the visit and in those groups, students predict what they might learn, discuss what specific questions they need answered - through questioning if not covered in the story - and decide how stories / information will be recorded and by whom. (Different group members





may use different methods and combine for follow up). Try to avoid note taking during the story telling. If written notes are to be made, students should have headings/questions prepared and fill in answers following the session. Audio or visual recording requires prior permission of storyteller and should be obtained prior to the visit. One student from each group could write and request this permission from their allocated speakers.

3. If 'Thank You' cards are to be presented on the day, these need to be designed and made prior to the visit.

### Day of visit

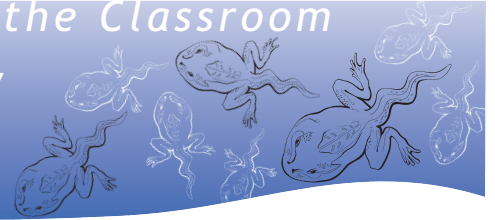
4. When the visitors arrive, conduct a brief introduction, outlining students' research and each visitor's name and association with the area.
5. Allocate one group per speaker. Provide a comfortable chair for each of the guest story tellers. Students sit in a semi circle on the floor with means to record if permission has been granted and papers and pencils.
6. Guest speakers tell the stories of their lives in the area and in particular their memories/associations with the relevant wetland area. Students listen politely - displaying positive listening skills and body language. Students should not attempt to write down what is being said, but may note down a question or point to be queried while listening.
7. Following the story, students ask relevant questions as necessary.
8. Some of the students who were making audio/visual records should now provide the speakers with a light morning/afternoon tea (juice and biscuits or whatever is appropriate), or involve the school's senior students/prefects in this, while group members discuss the story they have heard, make notes, and check that all areas have been covered.
9. Re-convene and groups all rotate to a new storyteller. Repeat steps 5 and 6.
10. At the end of the stories, students return to mat area or desks, and guests form a panel along the front. An open question session follows.
11. Thank guests (present cards made by students, perhaps) and farewell them.
12. Students repeat group discussion and recording as in step 7.

### Follow up task

- From the two stories (or two interviews you conducted), find out how your local area and in particular, your local wetland, has both changed and stayed the same.
- Compare the two accounts and note any similarities and differences. (Students could use a T chart for this).
- Try to explain why there are differences and similarities in the two accounts (e.g. such factors as age, sex, race or occupation may be relevant).
- You can present your report as an audio, audiovisual, computer slide show or written assignment. Visual mediums such as video tape or power point will require further research to obtain relevant photos/illustrations.
- The role / contribution of each group member must be clearly listed and enclosed with submitted assignment. **Rubric p.5**

Remember to have one student per group (or whole class) write letters of thanks to the guest speakers.

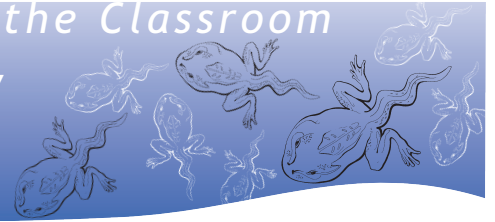




**Oral History Assessment** (Society and Environment - ICP)

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Planning:	Contributes relevant ideas and suggestions.	Given a focus, identifies some of the factors to be considered.	With guidance, plans an investigation by devising questions and identifying possible sources of information.	Identifies the types of observations, data and sources appropriate to topic and how they will be used.
Conducting	Assembles, collects and identifies relevant information.	Makes literal, factual observations and limited records of data collected. (attempts grid)	Gathers information from more than one source and records useful information. (uses grid efficiently)	Applies social science data-gathering techniques to collect and record accurate information from a variety of perspectives.
Processing & translating	Sorts information into simple categories. (paragraphs)	Selects, categorises and compares relevant information.	Recognises key ideas, discards irrelevant information Presents information in structured form for display.	Identifies, selects and combines information from a variety of resources and perspectives, connecting similar ideas and making generalisations.
Applying & communicating findings	Expresses a personal view of the information.	Makes comparisons between own interpretation & those of others when presenting information.	Justifies decisions from a personal perspective, using some evidence & begins to review original understandings when presenting findings.	Develops an informed opinion & communicates this with a particular purpose or audience in mind.

General:	Presentation:
Submitted notes and drafts Planning & editing obvious Note-taking uses key words & phrases Used resources other than the two interviews/ stories Used grid or some other organised manner to record information	Diagrams/maps used as relevant Punctuation & spelling correct Paragraphs used accurately Sub heading used Work is neat, attractive & on time
Comment	



N.B. The students' interview questions should try to answer questions such as these:

- What are your first memories of the local area?
- What sort of industries and occupations existed here at that time?
- What type of housing did you (people) live in?
- How did people obtain their needs-(food, clothing, medical assistance etc)?
- What transport and communication systems did you have?
- What did you do for recreation?
- At what age did kids start / finish school?
- How did they get to school?
- Did you visit the local wetland?
- How often for what purpose?
- Is the creek / river /estuary etc different today?
- How?
- How have things in the local community changed? Which are "good"? Which are "bad" changes?
- Why do you think these changes have occurred?

These questions or similar ones phrased by the students could be sent to the guest speakers to guide them in what their stories need to encompass. I would also suggest a time limit probably about 30 minutes for the story telling with a further 15 -30 mins for general questions and discussion.

Teacher/students should adapt/add to this list to suit the particular circumstances in your area.

