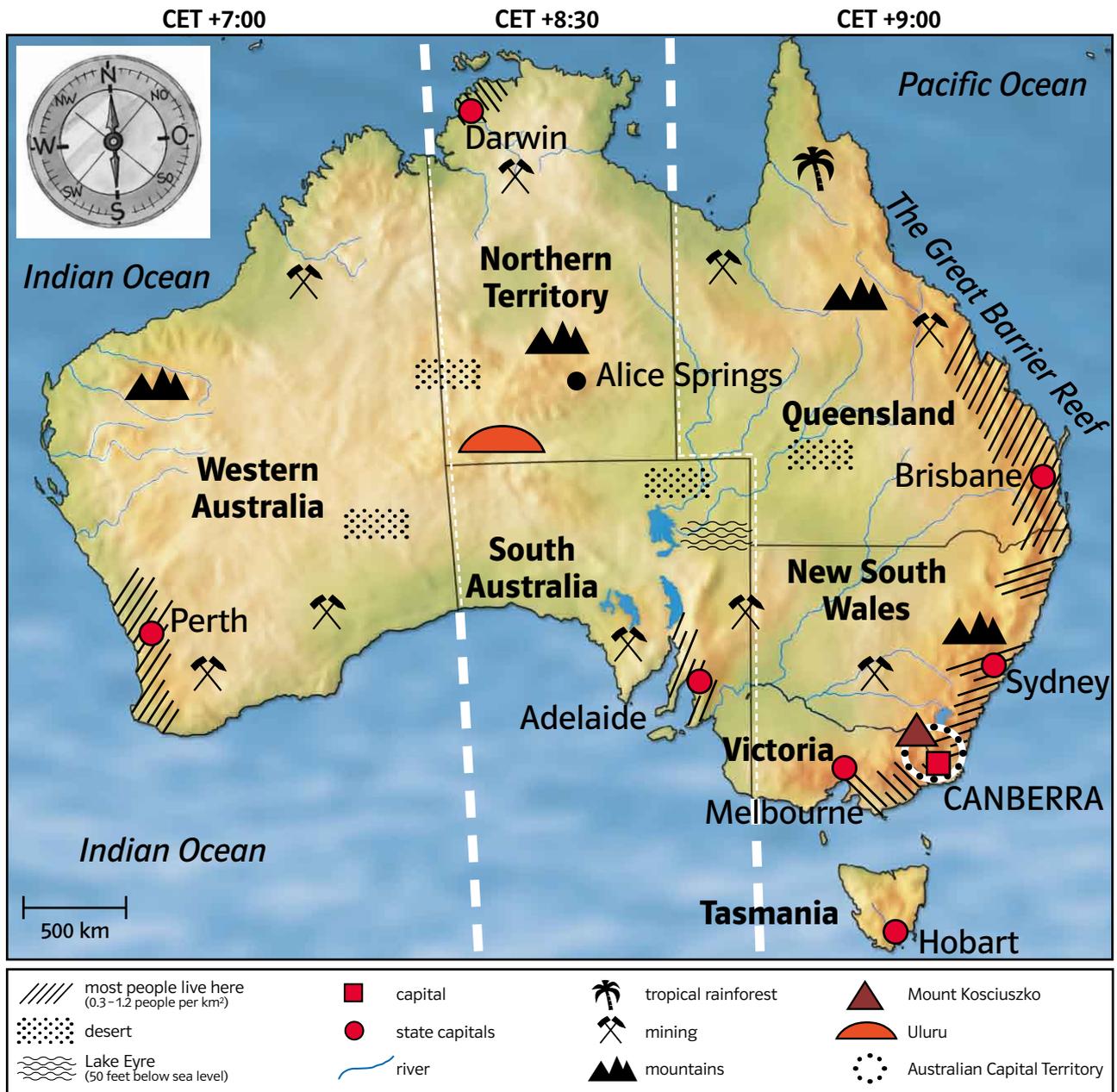


The land Down Under



1 Ask and answer

Work with a partner: One of you has the map, the other asks the questions under A. Then change over and ask and answer the questions under B.

A

1. Where do most people in Australia live?
2. What is the capital of Australia?
3. How many states and territories are there in Australia?
4. Where are there areas with mountains in Australia?
5. It is 9 a.m. in Perth. What time is it in Sydney?
6. Which town is in the middle of Australia?

B

1. Where are most of the deserts?
2. What are the capitals of the states and territories?
3. Which state is the capital in?
4. Mount Kosciuszko is the highest mountain in Australia. Where is it?
5. It is 4:30 in Darwin. What time is it in Brisbane?
6. Near which coast is the Great Barrier Reef?

Lösungsvorschläge: Ex.: 1. A 1. on the coast, 2. Canberra, 3. eighth, 4. northwest, middle, northeast, southeast, 5. 11 a.m., 6. Alice Springs; B 1. south and middle, 2. Perth, Darwin, Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Sydney, Brisbane, Hobart, 3. Australian Capital Territory, 4. New South Wales, 5. 5 o'clock, 6. Queensland

Living and learning in the Bush

1. More than 90% of the population of Australia live on or near the coast. But there are people who live in remote parts of the country called the Outback or the Bush. When we say remote, we don't mean 50 to 60 miles from the nearest town. Australia is a huge country and some cattle stations and farms are thousands of miles from the nearest public facilities¹.
2. So what do kids do if they live so far from the nearest school? It's a big problem! Boarding schools² are expensive. But the kids have to learn, so what do they do? Well, they go to a school called the School of the Air. This is not a school in the sky! It's a school that uses radio to teach.
3. It was started in Alice Springs in the 1950s to help kids who live in the Outback. Today there are several Schools of the Air in Australia. The one in Alice Springs has almost 130 students who live in an area of more than one million square kilometres. For years lessons were given by two-way radio. But now students have a state-of-the-art³ broadband⁴ system.
4. Teachers have a video and webcam as well as a whiteboard. Students have webcams, too. So many, who had only heard their teachers in the past, can now see them. And what's more important, they can hear their classmates and take part in discussions with them.
5. The students have a timetable. Every week they have half-hour lessons with teachers from all subject areas. Materials like books, videos and equipment for Science are sent by post. Students must buy their own pencils and paper and they must do homework regularly. They send this to their teachers who give them a mark and send it back. Twice a year students are interviewed and a progress report is given to parents. All students are visited every year by a teacher. They also have a support teacher, who they can contact if they need help.



You can get more information here: www.cultureandrecreation.gov.au/articles/schoolofair/ - 31k
or www.australien-info.de/school-of-the-air.html - 29k

¹facilities [fə'sɪlɪtɪz] – *Einrichtungen*, ²boarding school ['bɔːdɪŋ ,sku:l] – *Internat*,

³state-of-the-art [ˌsteɪtəʊdʒiːɑ:t] – *hypermodern*, ⁴broadband ['brɔːdbænd] – *Breitband*-

1 Schools in the Outback

- a) Read the text and find a title for each paragraph. Collect 4–5 key words or phrases for each.
- b) Use the key words and compare a School of the Air with your school. What's the same and what's different?
- c) Which type of school do you think is better and why?

2 An interview

- a)  Click here to hear what she said.
- b) What other information about Australian schools do you get from the interview?

Radio broadcast from Adelaide, 7:30 pm on 14/09/2009

Hi! My name is Richard Downey. Tonight we're looking at how kids who live in the Outback, in the State of South Australia, learn on the School of the Air. We also want to know how technology is starting to help them. Our reporter, Kylie Bradshaw, went there herself to talk to the students and their families.

Text der Hördatei: Ex. 2 a) Radio reporter interviewing on farm in Australia
 Kylie (female): 'Day! Today I'm talking from a sheep and cattle station 700 kilometres north-west of Adelaide. Until a short time ago children were taught by two-way radio but this was not always easy. I discussed this with some children and parents on the station. First I spoke to one of the parents, Steve Burns, who is now 36. I learnt to use the two-way radio when I was very young. It was our only way to get help in an emergency. So it wasn't new to me when I started to have lessons on it. But it was sometimes difficult to hear our teachers. It was difficult to do some subjects on the radio, too! I had real problems with Maths, but luckily my mum could help me.
 Kylie: Then I talked to Cath and Nicole who are both 15. Cath, I know that you went to school in Adelaide before your parents moved out here. Is the School of the Air better or worse than your old school? Well, in some ways it's better. We had to travel for more than an hour to get to school in Adelaide. Here I just go up to my bedroom and switch on my computer. And there were some kids in Adelaide who just played around. Now we have really good lessons where you can really work. With the new broadband system we have a virtual classroom. But I still think lessons in a real classroom in a real school are better.
 Kylie: And what about you, Nicole? Do you think a real school is better?
 Nicole (female, 15): I don't really know, because I've never been to a real school. I was born here on the station and I've only been to Adelaide a few times to visit my family. I guess it's better to have more kids around. We can see our teachers and have phone discussions with other kids now, of course. My dad couldn't do that. But it's difficult when you can't see your classmates. And it's sometimes a bit too sensible. I mean, you can't be late for a lesson or play tricks on the teachers on April 1st.
 Kylie: My feeling is that technology can help these Outback children. But it can't be like a real school. And it can never prepare them for all the problems they could meet later in life.
 Ex. 2 b) 1. It was difficult to do some subjects like Maths on the radio.; 2. It's easy to get to the School of the Air lessons. Kids don't play around like they do in a real lesson.; 3. It's better to have more kids around. It's sometimes too sensible. You can't be late or play tricks on the teacher.

c) Individuelle Schülertlösung

Lösungsvorschläge: Ex. 1:
 a) 1. A huge country: population, coast, remote cattle stations, public facilities; 2. A school in the sky?: far from school, problem, School of the Air, radio; 3. School in Alice Springs: 1950's, 130 students, two-way radio, broadband; 4. New facilities: video, webcam, see teachers, hear classmates, discussions; 5. How they work: timetable, equipment, pens and pencils, homework, report;
 b) Germany isn't as big as Australia. The coast is much shorter. Most of the population live in big cities like Berlin, Hamburg and Cologne. There are no remote cattle stations here. There are public facilities for everyone.
 I don't live far from my school. It isn't a problem to get there. Sometimes I take my bike or catch a bus. So, I don't need a School of the Air or a radio.
 My school is only 10 years old. There wasn't a school there in the 1950's. It doesn't have 130 students, it has 1, 500. The teachers don't have two-way radio in their classrooms. They don't have to use their broadband system to speak to us.
 We have a lot of new equipment in our school, but we don't need videos and a webcam to see our teachers. We can always hear our classmates when we have discussions in class.
 We have a timetable, too but we are given all the equipment we need for Science. We have to buy our own pens and pencils, too and we often get homework. We get a report from our teachers at the end of each year.