

Distance illustrated in Australia

12

Very approximate grade level

R/1

2 a big geographic idea
(and a good place to study it)

Distance

is important in Australia with its size, sparse population, and changing distance from world economic centers.

Compare income and cost of producing different things at different distances (von Thünen model)

Generalize about distance from equator to major desert regions on different continents

Measure distance on a globe in NYLAs (New York to Los Angeles)

Learn position words: Distance. Measure rooms and make maps to scale (1 paperclip = 1 scholar)

(clearly identified as geography)

History: superpowers of the world in 1000, 1500, 1800, 2010

Science: approximate speed of walking, car, ship, airplane, rocket

(previous classes or collaboration with other disciplines)

Map skill: measure latitude

Map skill: Use a bar scale

(map skills)

1 a scaffold of thinking skills and background knowledge that supports the big idea

3 some important consequences of the big idea

Australia's position in the world economy is changing as Asian economies grow.

Distance raises the cost of both imports and exports (von Thünen).

Overcoming distance is especially hard in areas with few people (to pay for roads).

One "use" of remote Australia during the colonial era was as a prison.

Due to its remoteness, Australia has many "unusual" plants and animals.

Humans migrated out of Africa to Eurasia, Australia, and America.

(positioned where appropriate in the curriculum)

Australia is farther away from the U.S. than any other continent.

A discussion question:

What are some implications if the rapidly expanding economies of East and South Asia start buying more resources from Australia and migrating to Australia? (They are, after all, closer than England!)

