**Australia Study Guide I: Geography, Natural Resources, and Culture**

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| **SS6G12 The student will locate selected features of Australia.**1. *Locate on a world and regional political physical map: the Great Barrier Reef, Coral Sea, Ayers Rock, and Great Victoria Desert.*
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| **Questions** | **Answers** |
| 1. | Australia is the only country that is also a continent! It is also the world’s smallest continent, about the size of the United States. These facts make Australia unique. |
| 2. | Australia lies between the Indian and Pacific Oceans, and is part of the Pacific Region, along with New Zealand and thousands of small islands known as *Oceania*.Australia’s interior is a rugged wilderness surrounded by dry scrub, grasslands, and rainforests. Most Australians live in the southeastern part of the country, where the weather is mild.Australia is known as the “Land Down Under” because it lies completely south of the equator. |
| 3. | The **Great Barrier Reef** is an amazing underwater world! It extends more than 1,200 miles in the **Coral Sea** along Australia’s northeast coast.A **reef** is a ridge of rocks near the surface of a sea.More than 1,500 types of fishes live along the reef, along with sea turtles, starfish, and giant clams—to name just a few. The crystal-clear water with abundant sea life is a diver’s paradise.However, the GBR is threatened by runoff with sewage and pesticides. |
| 4. | **Ayers Rock** (Mount Uluru), is Australia’s most famous natural landmark. This massive red sandstone monolith is a rock formation located in the barren lands of central Australia. Rising 1,142 feet in the air, Ayers Rock is a sacred site of the local Aboriginal people. |
| 5. | The Great Victoria Desert is the largest desert in Australia. It was named after England’s Queen Victoria. The desert is a barren area of hills, salt lakes, and grasslands in southern and western Australia. |
| **SS6G13 The student will explain the impact of location, climate, distribution of natural resources, and population distribution on Australia.**1. *Describe how Australia’s location, climate, and natural resources have affected where people live.*
2. *Describe how Australia’s location, climate, and natural resources impact trade.*
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| 6. | Australia is the flattest continent in the world. Deserts cover two-thirds of the island. The interior of the island is mostly dry, flat land called the **outback**. The most fertile land on the island is near the coast which has access to plenty of rain and fresh water. |
| 7. | The average **climate** in Australia is temperate, which means there are plenty of sunny days with mild temperatures.Since Australia is located below the equator, its summer lasts from December to March while its winter is from June to August. |
| 8. | Australia’s coastline is home to many of the island’s **natural resources** including uranium, natural gas, and zinc. One of Australia’s largest natural resources is coal which is burned for energy.In the outback, farmers have huge ranches (stations) that can cover more than 50,000 acres. These ranchers raise hundreds of sheep to produce wool for Australia to sell to other countries. Australia raises cattle for beef also. |
| 9. | Most Australians live along the coast because of its fresh water, fertile land, and natural resources. Only small groups of indigenous Australians still inhabit the dry, flat outback. |
| 10. | Australia’s **trade** is determined by its **location, climate, and natural resources**. Its location determines its main trading partners while its climate and natural resources determine what products Australia can trade. |
| 11. | Coal, iron ore, and gold are Australia’s important natural resource exports.Coal is used for energy, and iron ore is used to make steel for buildings, vehicles, and industrial machines. Gold is primarily used to make coins and fine jewelry. |
| 12. | Because of Australia’s location in the southeast Pacific Ocean, its **main trading partners** are China, Japan, South Korea, and India.Australia imports most of its products from China and the United States. Australia’s biggest imports include computers, machinery, petroleum, and crude oil. |
| **SS6G14 The student will describe the cultural characteristics of people who live in Australia.**1. *Explain the impact of English colonization on the language and religion of Australia.*
2. *Evaluate how the literacy rate affects the standard of living.*
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| 13. | Australia shares many characteristics with British people because many Australians are descendants of English explorers, missionaries, and even prisoners who came to Australia in the 1600sand 1700s.When settlers arrived in Australia, over 750,000 Aborigines, or native Australians, lived on the continent. As the English established colonies, they forced the Aborigines toward the middle of the island where there is little rain and fresh water.Today, only 1% of Australia’s population is Aborigine. |
| 14. | Like the British, Australians speak the **English language**. Although it is similar to the English spoken in Great Britain, Australia’s language has its own unique accent and vocabulary. |
| 15. | The **religions in Australia** also reflect the country’s English heritage. Over 70% of Australians claim to be Christians (Catholic or Anglican/Protestant faiths). |
| 16. | Australia has a very successful economy that is enhanced by a highly literate population (99% literacy rate). The literacy rate is high because the country has very good schools. It supports a growing university system and technical training institutes. |
| 17. | Education helps increase the standard of living in Australia by teaching people how to contribute their ideas and innovations to society.These contributions help the economy, and a stronger economy means citizens make more money and can live better lives. **The more educated a society is, the better life will be, and it all starts with school!**  |

**Student Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Parent Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**