



CD-404173



EXPLORING

# AUSTRALIA

Grades  
5-8

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# Introduction to the Teacher

*Exploring Australia* is one of the seven books in Mark Twain Media's *Continents of the World Geography Series*. The books are a valuable resource for any classroom. The series can be used to supplement the middle-school geography and social studies curriculum. The books support the goal of the National Geography Standards to prepare students for life in a global community by strengthening geographical literacy.

The intent of the *Continents of the World Geography Series* is to help students better understand the world around them through the study of geography. Each book focuses on one continent. Information and facts are presented in an easy-to-read and easy-to-understand format that does not overwhelm the learner. The text presents only the most important information in small, organized bites to make it easier for students to comprehend. Vocabulary words are boldfaced in the text. For quick reference, these words are listed in a glossary at the back of the book.

The series is specifically designed to facilitate planning for the diverse learning styles and skill levels of middle-school students. Each book is divided into several units. Each unit provides the teacher with alternative methods of instruction.

## Unit Features

- Close-Up introduces facts and information as a reading exercise.
- Knowledge Check assesses student understanding of the reading exercise using selected response and constructed response questioning strategies.
- Map Follow-Up provides opportunities for students to report information from a spatial perspective.
- Explore allows students to expand learning by participating in high interest, hands-on activities.
- Glossary lists the boldfaced words with definitions.

## Online Resources

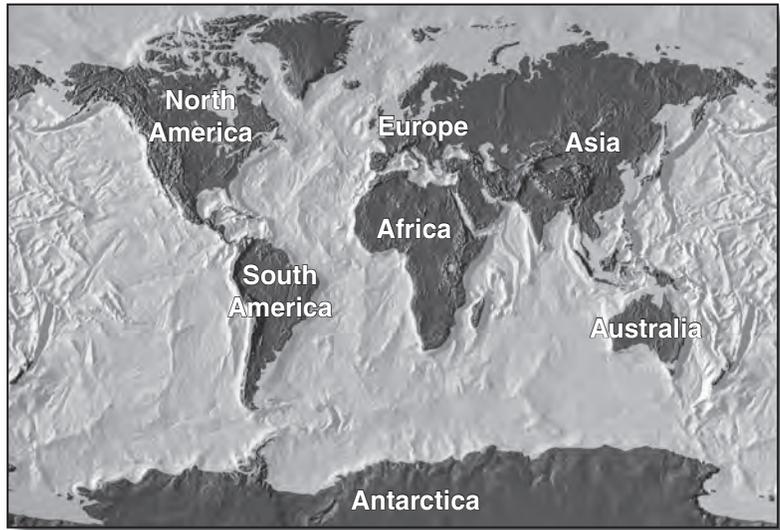
- Reluctant Reader Text: A modified version of the reading exercise pages can be downloaded from the website at [www.carsondellosa.com](http://www.carsondellosa.com). In the Search box, enter the product code CD-404173. When you reach the Exploring Australia product page, click the icon for the Reluctant Reader Text download.
- The readability level of the text has been modified to facilitate struggling readers. The Flesch-Kincaid Readability formula, which is built into Microsoft® Word™, was used to determine the readability level. The formula calculates the number of words, sentences, and paragraphs in each selection to produce a reading level.

## Additional Resources

Classroom Decoratives: The *Seven Continents of the World* and *World Landmarks and Locales Topper* bulletin board sets are available through Mark Twain Media/Carson-Dellosa Publishing LLC. These classroom decoratives visually reinforce geography lessons found in the *Continents of the World Geography Series* in an interesting and attention-grabbing way.

## The Continents: Close-Up

A **continent** is a large landmass completely or mostly surrounded by water. The continents make up just over 29 percent of the earth's surface. They occupy about 57,100,000 square miles (148,000,000 sq. km). More than 65 percent of the land area is in the Northern Hemisphere.



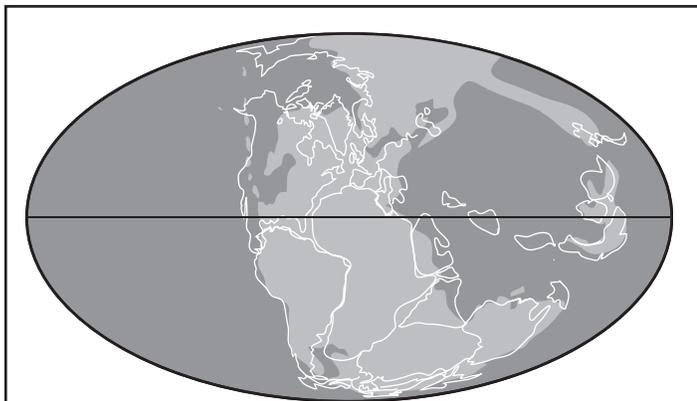
The Continents Today

### Landmasses

- **Continents:** Geographers list North America, South America, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and Antarctica as continents.
- **Subcontinents:** Greenland and the India-Pakistan area are sometimes referred to as “subcontinents.”
- **Microcontinents:** Madagascar and the Seychelles Islands are often called “microcontinents.”
- **Oceania:** The island groups in the Pacific Ocean are called Oceania, but they are not considered a continent.

### How Were the Continents Formed?

For many years, Europeans believed the continents were formed by a catastrophe or series of catastrophes, such as floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes. In 1596, a Dutch mapmaker, Abraham Ortelius, noted that the Americas' eastern coasts and the western coasts of Europe and Africa looked as if they fit together. He proposed that once they had been joined but later were torn apart.



Wegener's theoretical continent, Pangaea, during the Permian Age (white outlines indicate current continents)

Many years later, a German named Alfred Lothar Wegener published a book in which he explained his theory of the “**Continental Drift.**” Wegener, like Ortelius, believed that the earth originally had one supercontinent. He named it **Pangaea** from the Greek word meaning “all lands.” He believed that the large landmass was a lighter rock that floated on a heavier rock, like ice floats on water.

Wegener's theory stated that the landmasses were still moving at a rate of about one yard each century. Wegener believed that Pangaea existed in the Permian Age. Then Pangaea slowly divided into two continents,

the upper part, **Laurasia**, and the lower, **Gondwanaland**, during the Triassic Age.

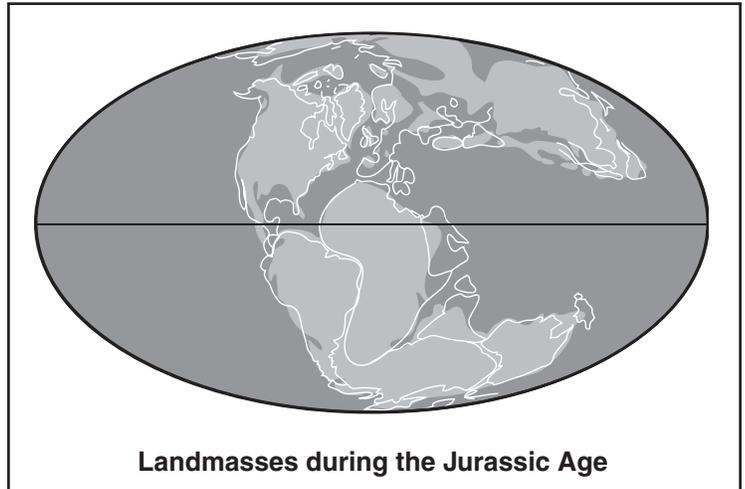
By the Jurassic Age, the landmasses had moved into what we could recognize as the seven continents, although they were still located near each other. Eventually, the continents “drifted” to their present locations.

Most scientists had been in agreement on the continental drift theory until researchers in the 1960s discovered several major mountain ranges on the ocean floor.

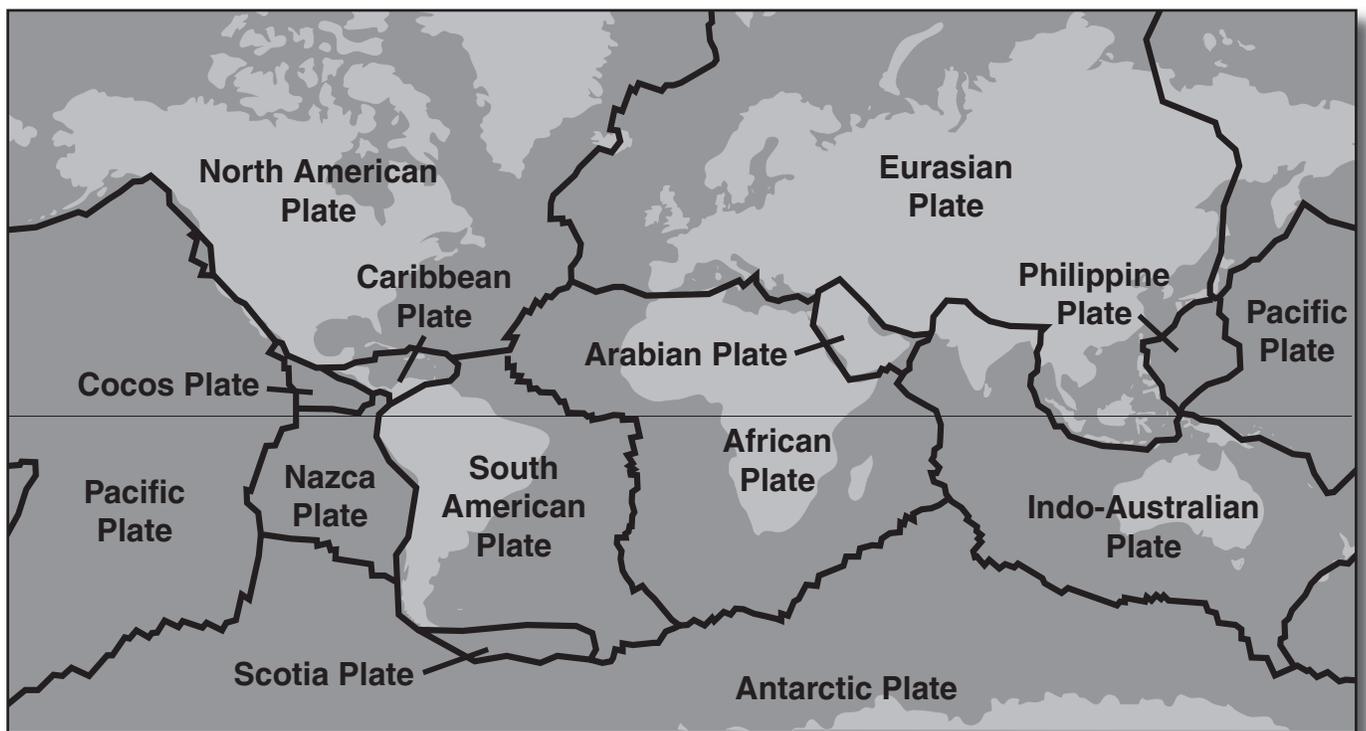
These mountains suggested that the earth’s crust consists of about 20 slabs or **plates**.

These discoveries led to a new theory, “**Plate Tectonics**,” which has become more popular. This theory suggests that these plates move a few inches each year. In some places the plates are moving apart, while in others, the plates are colliding or scraping against each other.

Scientists also discovered that most volcanoes and earthquakes occur along the boundaries of the various plates. Recent earthquakes near Indonesia and Japan along the boundaries of the Indo-Australian, Eurasian, Philippine, and Pacific Plates have triggered devastating tsunamis that killed hundreds of thousands of people. Scientists hope that further study will help them increase their understanding of Earth’s story.



**Landmasses during the Jurassic Age**



The earth’s crust consists of about 20 plates. Plate tectonics suggest that these plates move a few inches each year.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Knowledge Check

### Matching

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. Plate Tectonics | a. lower part of Pangaea                                     |
| _____ 2. Laurasia        | b. Greek word meaning "all lands"                            |
| _____ 3. continent       | c. theory suggesting that plates move a few inches each year |
| _____ 4. Gondwanaland    | d. upper part of Pangaea                                     |
| _____ 5. Pangaea         | e. a large landmass completely or mostly surrounded by water |

### Multiple Choice

6. He explained his theory of the Continental Drift.
- a. Abraham Ortelius
  - b. Alfred Lothar Wegener
  - c. Pangaea
  - d. Laurasia
7. The earth's crust consists of \_\_\_\_\_ plates.
- a. about 20
  - b. about 10
  - c. about 5
  - d. about 50

### Did You Know?

Earth is thought to be the only planet in our solar system that has plate tectonics.



### Constructed Response

Explain how the movement of the earth's plates formed the seven continents. Use two details from the selection to support your answer.

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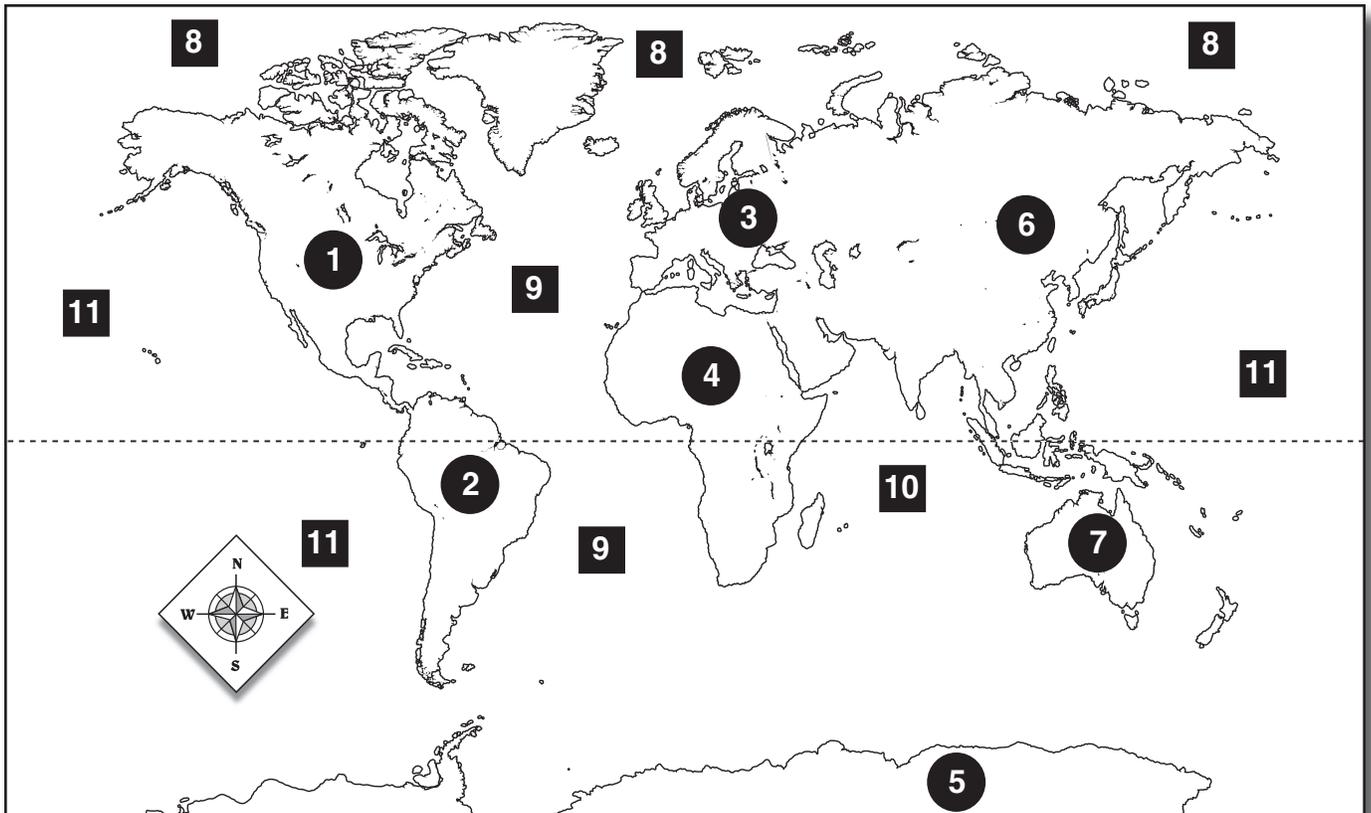
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Map Follow-Up

**Directions:** There are seven continents and four oceans. Match the numbers on the map with the names of the continents and oceans.

- |                     |                     |                      |
|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| _____ Pacific Ocean | _____ Arctic Ocean  | _____ Atlantic Ocean |
| _____ Indian Ocean  | _____ Africa        | _____ Antarctica     |
| _____ Asia          | _____ Australia     | _____ Europe         |
| _____ North America | _____ South America |                      |

### Continents and Oceans



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Explore: Continents Salt Dough Map

### Materials

sturdy cardboard or pizza box (12" X 12")	tempera paint (various colors)	toothpicks
2 medium-sized bowls	paint brushes	clear tape
3 cups flour	lead pencil	colored pencils
3 cups salt	copy of world map	markers
water	blue food coloring	labeling stickers

### Directions

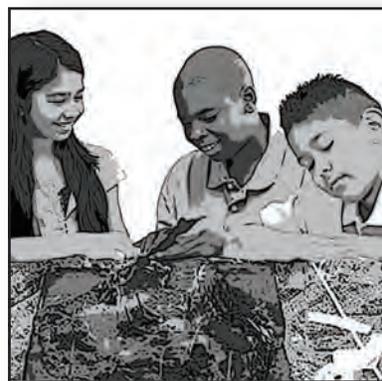
#### Day 1

- Step 1: Turn the copy of the world map over so the back of the paper is facing toward you.
- Step 2: Use a lead pencil to color all over the back of the map. This will make it easier to get the design on the cardboard.
- Step 3: Lightly tape the map (pencil colored side down) onto the cardboard.
- Step 4: Trace the outline of the map onto the cardboard, bearing down hard. The lead from your coloring should transfer onto the cardboard, creating the outline that you need.
- Step 5: Trace over the pencil lines on the cardboard with a marker so that it can be seen easily.
- Step 6: Prepare sticker labels for the continents and oceans. Write the names of the continents and oceans on small strips of paper.
- Step 7: Stick prepared labels on toothpicks.
- Step 8: Place flour and salt in a mixing bowl.
- Step 9: Add water a little at a time; stir thoroughly until you get a consistency like Play-Doh™.
- Step 10: Divide the dough mixture equally into 2 bowls.
- Step 11: Add blue food coloring to one bowl for the oceans and mix.
- Step 12: Spread the plain dough mixture on the continent areas of your outline.
- Step 13: Fill in the ocean areas with the blue dough mixture.
- Step 14: Once the dough is shaped to the contours you want, insert toothpick labels, and let it dry.

\*Optional: You can add deserts, valleys, and mountains using a topographical map as a guide.

#### Day 2

- Step 1: Paint the continents different colors. You may also use different colors to represent landforms and features of the map.
- Step 2: Let the map dry completely.



## The Continent of Australia: Close-Up

**Australia** is the smallest continent in the world. It is also the world's only single-nation continent. Australia and Antarctica are the only continents located entirely south of the Equator. Australia is a flat continent. The interior region of the continent is called the **outback** and contains large plains. It is dry and rugged.

Australia is about 2,500 miles (4,000 km) from east to west and 2,300 miles (3,700 km) from north to south. It covers 2,966,200 square miles (7,682,460 sq. km). It is about the same size as the continental United States.



### Location

- Australia is southeast of Asia.
- The north coast of Australia is on the Arafura Sea, the Timor Sea, and the Torres Strait. The Coral Sea and the Tasman Sea are to the east of Australia, and the Indian Ocean is on the west coast. The southern coast is on the Indian Ocean and Bass Strait.

### Land

- Australia has six states: New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia.
- It has two territories: the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory. Australia and the island of Tasmania form the Commonwealth of Australia.
- The Commonwealth also governs the Territory of Ashmore, Cartier Islands, Australian Antarctic Territory, Christmas Island, Cocos Islands (also named the Keeling Islands), Coral Sea Islands Territory, the Territory of Heard Island, McDonald Islands, and Norfolk Island.

### Four Major Geographical Regions

- The Great Dividing Range goes along the eastern coast. It includes a series of weathered mountains. One of these mountains, **Mount Kosciusko**, is Australia's highest point. It is only 7,310 feet (2,228 m) high.
- **Tasmania** is an island off the south coast of the mainland. It is considered to be a separate region. Actually, it is a continuation of the Great Dividing Range, but it is divided from the rest of the continent by a strait.
- The Central Lowlands are west of the Great Dividing Range. It contains grasslands and fertile river basins. The 1,600-mile-long (2,575 km) **Murray River** flows through this region.
- The Western Plateau includes the western two-thirds of the continent. The soil is rocky and of little use for agriculture. However, many minerals are mined in the region.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Outline Map of Australia



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Knowledge Check

## Matching

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| _____ 1. outback         | a. island off the south coast of Australia             |
| _____ 2. Tasmania        | b. world's smallest continent                          |
| _____ 3. Mount Kosciusko | c. interior region of the continent                    |
| _____ 4. Australia       | d. major river that flows through the Central Lowlands |
| _____ 5. Murray          | e. Australia's highest mountain                        |

## Multiple Choice

6. How much of Australia does the Western Plateau occupy?
- one-half
  - three-fourths
  - one-third
  - two-thirds
7. How many major geographical regions are found in Australia?
- 4
  - 7
  - 5
  - 6

## Did You Know?

Australia is the world's smallest continent and the sixth largest country.



## Constructed Response

Australia is surrounded by several bodies of water. Describe the location of these in relation to Australia. Use details from the selection to support your answer.

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## Answer Keys

### The Continents

#### Knowledge Check (p. 4)

##### Matching

1. c    2. d    3. e    4. a    5. b

##### Multiple Choice

6. b    7. a

##### Constructed Response

The earth's crust consists of about 20 plates. Plate Tectonics suggest that these plates move a few inches each year.

#### Map Follow-Up (p. 5)

1. North America    2. South America    3. Europe  
 4. Africa    5. Antarctica    6. Asia  
 7. Australia    8. Arctic Ocean    9. Atlantic Ocean  
 10. Indian Ocean    11. Pacific Ocean

### The Continent of Australia

#### Knowledge Check (p. 9)

##### Matching

1. c    2. a    3. e    4. b    5. d

##### Multiple Choice

6. d    7. a

##### Constructed Response

The north coast of Australia is on the Arafura Sea, the Timor Sea, and the Torres Strait. The Coral Sea and the Tasman Sea are to the east of Australia, and the Indian Ocean is on the west coast. The southern coast is on the Indian Ocean and Bass Strait.

#### Map Follow-Up (p. 10)

1. Indian Ocean    2. Western Australia  
 3. Arafura Sea    4. Northern Territory  
 5. South Australia    6. Queensland  
 7. Coral Sea    8. Pacific Ocean  
 9. New South Wales    10. Victoria  
 11. Tasman Sea    12. Tasmania

### Australia at a Glance

#### Knowledge Check (p. 14)

##### Matching

1. c    2. b    3. e    4. a    5. d

##### Multiple Choice

6. c    7. d

##### Constructed Response

Australia's coat of arms has a shield containing the badges of the six states. Two native animals, a kangaroo and an emu, and the native wattle plant also appear on the emblem.

### Australia's Climate

#### Knowledge Check (p. 17)

##### Matching

1. e    2. c    3. a    4. d    5. b

##### Multiple Choice

6. b    7. a

##### Constructed Response

A tropical climate has a hot, wet period during the monsoon season of February and March. Then, there is a dry, warm period when the winds change from a northerly direction to southeasterly. In a temperate climate, there are four distinct seasons. Winters are cool and summers are warm. Hot, dry summer winds blow from the continent's interior.

### Australia's Resources and Industries

#### Knowledge Check (p. 20)

##### Matching

1. d    2. e    3. b    4. c    5. a

##### Multiple Choice

6. c    7. a

##### Constructed Response

During World War I, Australia was cut off from Britain and had to produce many of its own manufactured goods. Since then, Australia's manufacturing industry has continued to grow. Today, Australia's factories produce machinery, equipment, textiles, chemical, paper products, and wine.

### Australia's Animal Life

#### Knowledge Check (p. 23)

##### Matching

1. e    2. c    3. a    4. d    5. b

##### Multiple Choice

6. d    7. b

##### Constructed Response

Many of these species became overpopulated and have endangered Australia's ecology and native species. Destructive non-native animals include foxes, horses, rabbits, and pigs.

### Australia's Plant Life

#### Knowledge Check (p. 26)

##### Matching

1. d    2. c    3. a    4. b    5. e

##### Multiple Choice

6. c    7. a

##### Constructed Response

Several varieties of eucalyptus are harvested for timber and material to make fiberboard and paper products. Oil distilled from the leaves is used to make medicine.