

Oceania

Throughout this Lent term in Geography and History, we will be learning about Oceania. As part of learning about Oceania we will learn about the countries within Oceania, its geography and the importance of the Pacific Ocean. Our main focus will be on the Geography of Australia and the History of indigenous settlers in Australia and New Zealand. Fun activities will be planned around this topic and the children will have the opportunity to create their own art and design their own DT project.

Where is Oceania?



Oceania is a geographic region that includes Australasia, Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia. Spanning the eastern and western hemispheres, Oceania has a population of 42 million. The continent of Oceania includes 14 countries that include the islands of Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, Tasmania, Samoa, Fiji, Tonga and a number of others. The most diverse landscape is in Australia and New Zealand due to its varied climatic regions.

Timeline of Key events

40,000 BC	The first Aborigines arrive from south-east Asia. By 20,000 BC they have spread throughout mainland Australia and Tasmania.
900 AD-1000 AD	Ancestors of the Maoris from the Cook Islands reached South Island, New Zealand and settle throughout New Zealand.
1770	Captain James Cook landed on east coast of Australia, claimed it for Britain.
1815	British missionaries arrived in New Zealand.
1829	Colony of Western Australia established at Perth by Captain James Stirling.

Maritime history of Oceania

The first true ocean-going boats were invented by the Austronesian peoples, using novel technologies like multihulls, outriggers, crab claw sails, and tanja sails. This enabled the rapid spread of Austronesians into the islands of both the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. This is known as the Austronesian expansion.

Key Vocabulary	Definition
Australia	A sovereign country comprising the mainland of the Australian continent, the island of Tasmania, and numerous smaller islands.
Australasia	Comprises of Australia, New Zealand, and some neighbouring islands.
Polynesia	Is a subregion of Oceania, made up of more than 1,000 islands scattered over the central and southern Pacific Ocean.
Haka	A type of ancient Māori war dance traditionally used on the battlefield, as well as when groups came together in peace.
Aboriginal	A member of a race of people who were the first people to live in a country, before any colonists arrived. The native people of Australia are known as Aborigines.
Maori	The indigenous Polynesian people of New Zealand. Māori originated with settlers from eastern Polynesia.