

# Teaching About Other Countries

A teaching model for primary and middle school teachers



Mark Wildy and Francine Smith



Global Education Centre (SA) Inc

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*Teaching About Other Countries* introduces teachers to an extended model designed to assist students to explore what they already know about countries and further develop their understanding of the concept of what a country is. The approach focuses on students discovering what countries have in common and ways in which countries are interdependent yet have their own identities.

*Teaching About Other Countries* looks at countries as political and economic entities offering a useful context for developing geographical skills and concepts. It involves designing and interpreting maps, looking at physical and built features, climate, land use, exploitation of resources, human and economic activity, culture, language, customs and traditions, tourism and symbols of nationalism.

*Teaching About Other Countries* adopts an integrated approach and giving teachers scope for incorporating literacy, art, drama, music, technology, health and mathematical activities.

A CD-ROM of photographs depicting physical and built features is included.

**Kelvin Sparks - Year Five teacher, St Andrew's Primary School 2005 says,**

*"The activities demonstrated in **Teaching About Other Countries** were excellent. Because of their hands-on nature students engaged immediately with the whole question of place. As they created their countries and chose the topographical features to include, many teachable moments arose, such as where rivers flow from and to. The relationships between the location and the development of agriculture, forestry, settlement and industry all emerged naturally as the project evolved. As we added the further overlay of the cultural symbols, of national emblems, language and myths, the activity tapped into the students' prior knowledge with a richness that I did not anticipate. The model provided an ideal springboard into the study of Indonesia, giving students a template of how to think about and inquire into a country."*

*"The Geography Teachers' Association of South Australia, is very encouraged by the geographical process embodied in **Teaching About Other Countries**. The activities provide students with a global perspective, which develops understanding and empathy for other countries and their peoples. Students must be helped to see beyond their local area so that they develop a connection with the diversity of physical, social and cultural environments making up our world. In a multicultural country such as Australia, such understandings are even more critical for a citizen to help develop a capacity to respond. We especially applaud the practical and relevant activities embedded throughout the resource and consider that not only will they enable students to develop their learning about the countries of the world but most importantly, actively engage them in some very good geography."*

**Malcolm McInerney GTASA President**



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# Teaching About Other Countries

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