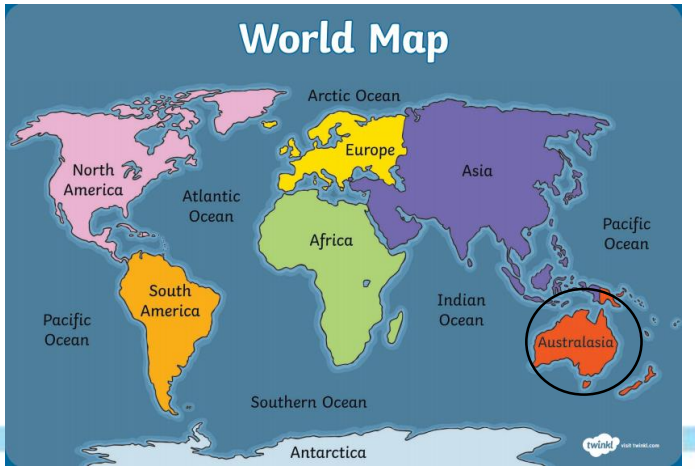
Hello Year 5 and welcome to English week beginning 13th July 2020
Our journey across the continents of the world takes us from Africa to Australia!



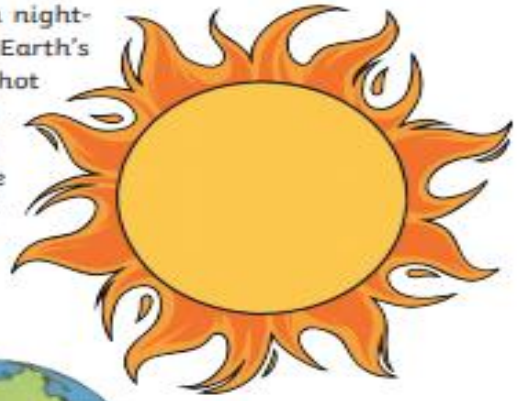
Summer in Australia

Seasons in Australia

Most people in Australia refer to the European four seasons: summer, autumn, winter and spring. Each season lasts for three months. In the tropical areas of Australia, many people refer to the wet and dry season, each lasting about six months. Indigenous communities have their own descriptions of seasons based on the weather and the impact this has on the animals, plants and land. These descriptions vary for different communities based on location. Some communities have five or six seasons. Overall, the number of seasons an area has depends on where a person lives in Australia.

The Weather in Summer

During summer, there is more daylight than night-time hours. This is because of the tilt of the Earth's axis. In summer, the weather is generally hot and dry. However, it can be humid closer to the equator. The sun is extremely strong in the southern hemisphere compared to the northern hemisphere during summer so the risk of getting sunburnt is much higher. Australia is also prone to natural disasters like bushfires and cyclones during summer. As a result, the weather can be hostile during the summertime.



Why Do We Have Seasons?

Seasons occur because when the Earth orbits the Sun, it is tilted 23.5° on its axis. For six months of the year, the South Pole is tilted towards the Sun. As a result, the days are longer and the weather is warmer in the southern hemisphere. During the Australian summer, the southern hemisphere is tilted towards the Sun. When the North Pole is tilted towards the Sun, the days are shorter in the southern hemisphere. The temperature will be cooler as well. This explains the changes between the seasons.

Animals in Summer

Native Australian animals have adapted to survive the warm summertime temperatures in Australia. Koalas stay still in the shade of a tree and wait for the heat to pass. Sugar gliders are nocturnal so they are active during the cooler nights and avoid being active during the day by curling up in the shade of the tree. The kangaroo, another native Australian animal, does not sweat and instead licks itself to maintain a regular body temperature. Finally, snakes living in Australia are active in summer because they are cold-blooded animals. Therefore, they need to be outside in order to warm their bodies.

Plants in Summer

Australian native plants have adapted to the weather conditions during summer. Plants with smaller leaves or spikes lose less water through evaporation. Some plants have adapted by growing spikes, which prevents them being eaten by primary consumers. Some plants cease growing during summer and, in some instances, appear to be dead; however, they are just in dormant state so that they save energy in the heat. Soft fruits, such peaches, tomatoes and strawberries, are ripe and ready to eat in summer.

Task 1: Answer the questions in detail – please answer in full.

1. How long is summer?
2. Thinking about where you live, which way of describing seasons suits your home best? Why?
3. Describe the weather in summer.
4. Explain why the seasons occur.
5. What are two ways an animal might keep cool in summer?
6. Why do you think a plant may stop growing in the summer?
7. Animals and plants change to stay cool in the summer.
8. How do people stay cool in summer?
9. Why do some plants grow spikes?
10. Why are soft fruits eaten widely during the summer?
11. Using information given in the text, which plant or animal adaptation do you think is the most effective?