



What's in a Name - **Teacher's Notes**

These notes accompany the Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia's (CGNA) **What's in a Name** CD-rom/video and E-Learning Place Names Package - see <http://www.icsm.gov.au/icsm/cgna/index.html>.

For further information and copies of the CD-rom or video contact the Committee for Geographical Names of Australasia by email cgna@dga.gov.au or by telephone on 02 6249 9677.



Introduction

This CD-ROM has been designed to explain the importance, provenance and formal recognition processes of place names.

Where do names come from? Who determines what name should be given? What can we learn from the names of places all around us? How would we manage if there were no place names?

These notes have been designed to support educators by offering ideas for classroom discussion and suggestions for further activities.

For easy reference the text of the narration, presented in the CD_ROM by Ernie Dingo, has been reproduced as the central text of this booklet with ideas linked to the video's content in the appropriate places.

Before using the CD-ROM

Some general discussion of the topic may usefully set the scene for viewing the program. Points that could be introduced include:

- Where do you think names come from?
- Why are place names important?
- What can we learn from place names?
- Who do you think is responsible for deciding the names of places?

In the narration column you will see **bolded** numerals from nought to ten; these are the elapsed minutes of the video and, using the counter that forms part of the CD-ROM display, will help you to locate particular segments of the program.

The text of these notes contains design features to help you:

- Discussion questions have the word **QUESTION** printed in red as a heading;
- **ACTIVITIES** have that word, printed in purple, as a heading;
- web links are printed in blue; and
- The CD-ROM comprises part of a co-ordinated educational resource with substantial teaching materials, including lesson plans and activities, downloadable from the website; words in the narration printed in green alert teachers to material in this resource which links to or develops themes in the narrative.

	NARRATION	
<p>QUESTION: The need for places names arises from this opening question – where are we? To answer, the simplest (and probably earliest) places names described places: Big Hill, Dry Plain, Tall Tree. Are there any such names close to you? And can you give some Australian examples of such place names? (The Great Barrier Reef, The Great Sandy Desert, The Great Australian Bight)</p>	<p>00.00</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BOB: Where are we Dave?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DAVE: Well, I dunno mate:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BOB: Hey mate , any idea where we are?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SWAGGIE: This is Kurri Kurri, that way's Coober Pedy, that way's Broome, and that's Goondiwindi.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">DAVE: Sounds like you've been everywhere mate</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SWAGGIE: Yeah! (sings) "I've been everywhere man – "</p> <p>01.10</p> <p style="text-align: center;">ERNIE DINGO: In this great country of ours, red headed people are called blue.</p> <p>Oi bluey!</p>	<p>ACTIVITY: Look at a map, look at the directions in which the man points – has he been everywhere, or is he lying?</p> <p>QUESTION: Can you match these pairs? Kurri Kurri Opals Coober Pedy Pearls BroomeCoal</p>

QUESTION:

Some children are named for members of their family, some for people their parents admire, some because their parents simply like the name, others after a quality (peace or beauty for example) that their parents hope they will have. How did you get your name? How much do you think a person's name affects how that person behaves?

See SOSE Level 2

QUESTION:

Why might a place be called "Nowhere Else"? Do you know of any other Australian place names that perhaps express an explorer's disappointment?

We go to the races and some punters have more luck betting on a horse because they like the sound of its name, not by following its form – Go captain chieftain, go boy, go! – and then you have parents. How many of us have been through the dramas of **what to call our children** – I like Susan; no, I like Gertrude. What about Cynthia or Fiona? – and then the baby comes out a boy.

You reckon that can cause headaches? Well, just imagine being responsible for geographical naming all over Australia.

01.45

How did Woolloomooloo in Sydney get its name? Richmond in Melbourne? Subiaco in Perth. Canberra, Tingalpa, Albury, Broome, Darwin, Alice Springs? And what about a little place in the Eyre Peninsula in South Australia called **Nowhere Else**.

02.05

Imagine that – you're sitting at home with the family wondering what to do on the weekend. One kid complains "there's nothing to do". Another one says "hang on a minute, I've got an idea, there's **Nowhere Else** to go." Confused?

See English Level 2

ACTIVITY:

This brief paragraph lists fifteen Australian place names. List them. Now, find out which are named from Aboriginal sources, which after places in other countries, which after explorers, which after geographical characteristics.

QUESTION:

What about names around your home? Have you given your room, or any of your possessions, or the family car a pet name? If so, what is the history of that name.

QUESTION:

Why was it called Botany Bay?

QUESTION:

Why, when and by whom was the name changed (back) from Ayers Rock to Uluru?

Well thank goodness we've got people all around Australia who can tell us about all the wonderful names we have down under.

Now, unlike **most of us** who have got a swing or a sandpit or a tomato vine in the backyard, these blokes are involved in the creation and preservation of names for the whole country.

Crikey. I reckon these blokes have got a bigger job than a city street sweeper on New Year's Day. Let's have a look.

02.45

Down Under, there are more than 250 000 names recorded. They may be rivers, mountains, plains, towns, cities **and much more.** From **Botany** Bay, where Captain Cook first found his feet in 1770, to Ayers Rock – **Uluru** – the heart beat of life and spirit for so many Aborigines, every name in some big or small way leaves its mark on history, the culture and the people of this land.

03.20

Some names have obvious national and international importance, such as Sydney. How can we forget the 2000 Olympic Games when Australia's biggest city was the capital of the world?

See English Level 3, Science Level 1-4, etc

ACTIVITY:

"...and much more" – let us compile a list (bays, forests, suburbs, deserts, shopping malls) of other places with names. And then give one example of every type of place on the list.

<p>QUESTION: What is missing from this list? Why? (towns, suburbs, cities)</p>	<p>There are also countless names and places that are known by only small handfuls of people but are very important to the local community.</p> <p>03.35 And none more significant than those of Aboriginal origin that stretch back thousands and thousands of years. They may refer to land features such as the mighty rock, or they may honour historical events, people or animals. These are the founding stones of place names in Australia that were laid long before white settlement had begun. As a result they represent a critical part of our society today. It's through these that we claim a long standing and ongoing relationship with our land and also continue priceless indigenous traditions.</p> <p>04.15 BILL KITSON: The Aborigines of course were in this continent for thousands and thousands of years. They had their names fixed. They had their bays, they knew what they called that bay, what cape, what river, what plants, the flowers, the people, bees, so they were quite</p>	<p>See Arts Levels 1 & 2</p> <p>As above</p>
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QUESTION:

Find one place named AFTER Cook and one named AFTER Flinders

QUESTION:

What do you think was the purpose of the historical piece of equipment behind the person speaking?

happy with their naming system.

But along came the **early marine explorers** – the French, the Dutch, the Portuguese – and **they put the names** around the coastlines.

Along came **the English – Cook, and Flinders** – filling in the rest of the circuit around Australia giving English names to things.

04.40

Land explorers came through, giving names to features: rivers, mountains, that sort of thing. tablelands – named them after their benefactors, the people that were paying for their expedition. And then **the formal settlement of Australia**, the pastoral development, the agricultural development came along, and the **surveyors** came along and that's of course when things really got official. The **surveyor generals** would instruct the **surveyors** to ascertain from the Aboriginals their correct names.

05.05

So the Aboriginals didn't get their names placed on the map till the surveyors came along. Surveyors went out and ascertained the names from the Aboriginals of these features and put them on their plans.

See SOSE Level 2-3 for here and the following

QUESTION:

Give one example each of places named by French, Dutch and Portuguese explorers

See Science all levels (mapping)

ACTIVITY:

Conduct a "survey" – mapping part of the school or its grounds, even just your classroom. Map and name all of the features – you could, for example, name the windows, door(s), even light switch. Have a reason for all of the names.

QUESTION:

Why do you think that more than two hundred years after European settlement, and more than one hundred years after Federation, we still have to come up with new names?

ERNIE DINGO

There are just so many names, ancient and modern: Gunnedah, Aboriginal for “place of white stone”, and where we are right now, Mount Cootha – place of wild honey.

And what of non aboriginal names such as Port Douglas, a gateway to the Great Barrier Reef.

But once something has a name, how does it become known officially?

05.35

Each year committees and naming boards in every State receive **thousands of applications**, and depending on the cause, grant them official status.

Think about it: **thousands of places with thousands of names, all over Australia. So who provides the coordinating role for place naming activity in Australia?**

The Committee of Geographical Names of Australasia.

Check out www.cgna.gov.au

06.00

The **CGNA** for short, was established in 1984 to keep the naming processes similar in each State. It operates under the Intergovernmental Committee of Surveying and Mapping.

They may sound a mouthful, but it is their responsibility to ensure that our mouths will never be unfamiliar with Indooroopilly, Moorabin, or any other place name that rolls mystically or magically across our tongues, and through our culture.

The States and Territories, using guidelines established with the assistance of the CGNA, determine these applications. The CGNA then lifts the profile and understanding of these names by including them in the [Gazetteer of Australia](#).

06.45

This **information is used** by a vast cross section of organizations and individuals. From Government departments to historians, cartographers to publishers, even the search and rescue groups use the Gazetteer as a valuable resource.

Check out www.ga.gov.au

QUESTION:

Can you think of other groups that would rely on Gazetteer information?
(travel and tourism operators; telecommunications companies; law enforcement and security agencies)

ACTIVITY:

How would you make people more aware of the importance of place names?
Design a poster making the general public more aware that there is a story behind every name

As time moves on, the CGNA aims to lift the public's awareness by developing an **educational program** that will give us all a better understanding of the historical, social, and cultural significance of names. **They are involved in our everyday lives**, yet how many of us stop to think about it?

07.20

History tells us how important the roles of names have been and how important it is that we acknowledge them in the future. As a result the CGNA is on a rescue mission to stop some names being lost forever.

Most of these are of Aboriginal origin, that over the years have been victims of misinformation, and mispronunciation.

Nowadays, two thirds of the Aboriginal languages and dialects have either died, or are slowly fading away.

In 1992, the CGNA implemented guidelines for the recording and use of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander names. States and

See ARTS, all levels

See SOSE, particularly Level 4 (explorers)

QUESTION:

Why and how has this happened?

<p>ACTIVITY: Offer a new name for your town, suburb or school; back-up your suggestion with a researched explanation of the why the name would be appropriate and deserves to be preserved as a place name.</p> <p>QUESTION/ACTIVITY: The Great Barrier Reef is so descriptive that it seems to be a very obvious name. But which place names seem strange to you? Ernie goes on to say that “every name across Australia has a fascinating origin and stories to go with it” but some seem more fascinating than others. Which names seem strangest to you? Make a list and try to find out where they came from.</p>	<p>Territories are also developing policies on dual names, giving preference to Aboriginal origins where possible. Although the State and naming authorities are in charge of naming processes, it’s important to realize that the public is a vital contributor. Any of us can suggest new names, and we can also offer historical insights into old ones.</p> <p>08.15 Nearly every one of us has family stories that have been passed down through the generations.</p> <p>How did the Great Barrier Reef get its name? Or King Island? The Kimberly in WA? Or the Victorian city of Bendigo.</p> <p>Every name across Australia has a fascinating origin and stories to go with it. It’s our job to ensure these are never forgotten. The CGNA encourages our input. So there you have it.</p>	<p>ACTIVITY: (allocate a local place name to each member of the group) Make a presentation to the group explain the origin and meaning of the (street/town, landmark, natural feature) that you have been allocated.</p>
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Next time you're asked, "what's in a name?" you'll be able to say "where do I start?".

Now the people at CGNA – now don't forget, that stands for the Committee of Geographical Names of Australasia – you see they have a very big job, and they're part of a very big and very good team. They're helped by State and Territory, and of course, you and me.

09.05

Now if you reckon you can **help** in any way, don't be frightened to pick up the 'phone and have a chat, or email someone at the CGNA or any of their naming boards or committees around the country.

Mountains, rivers, towns, cities, beaches, plains, are all calling out for your help. It's time for you to leave your mark for generations to come. I'm Ernie Dingo – what's your name? See you later.

DAVE

Beats walkin'

BOB:

Woo!

ACTIVITY:

Can you help? Is there a story about a local place name – or a local place without a name or with a name that you don't think is best for the job?

	<p>SWAGGIE: (sings) "I've been everywhere man – " 09.55</p>	
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