



Teacher Resource

Drought and Algae

Focus Questions

Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion. Students will then respond to the following:

1. Discuss the BTN story as a class and record the main points of the discussion.
2. What impact has the drought had on the kids in the BTN story?
3. What has caused the recent algal bloom in South Australia?
4. How is the algal bloom affecting sea life?
5. Name three facts you learnt watching the story.

Please note: Talking about natural disasters may be upsetting for some children and may cause some discomfort, distress and/or anxiety. Here is some information on how to talk to children about natural disasters and upsetting news.

- [Kids Helpline](#) has some information to help children cope with natural disasters.
- BTN has a short video about [Upsetting News](#).

Activity: Comprehension

After watching the BTN Drought and Algae story students can answer one or more of the following comprehension questions, for example:

- What are some keywords from the BTN story?
- What did you learn from the story? Write a summary.
- What is the purpose of this news story? To entertain, persuade, inform, explain or describe?
- Why do you think BTN covered this story?



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KEY LEARNING

Students will learn more about what drought is and how it impacts people and places. They will also find out more about what an algal bloom is and the impact on sea life.

CURRICULUM

Geography – Year 4

The importance of environments, including natural vegetation and water sources, to people and animals in Australia and on another continent.

Geography – Year 5

The management of Australian environments, including managing severe weather events such as bushfires, floods, droughts or cyclones, and their consequences.

Geography – Year 7

The causes and impacts of an atmospheric or hydrological hazard, and responses from communities and governments.

Activity: Key words

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Drought and Algae story. Here are some words to get them started.



Ask students to write what they think is the meaning of each word (including unfamiliar words). They will swap definitions with a partner and ask them to add to or change the definition. Check these against the dictionary definition.

Activity: Research

Discuss the information raised in the BTN Drought and Algae story. What questions were raised in the discussion and what are the gaps in students' knowledge? Students will develop their own question/s to research or choose one or more of the questions below.

- What is a drought?
- What causes droughts?
- Who is affected by droughts? How are they affected?
- How can communities prepare for droughts?
- How is wildlife affected by drought? Consider food supply and habitats.
- How do you think climate change might affect future droughts in Australia?
- What are the direct and indirect impacts of droughts? For example, a direct impact of drought may be that there is less water for growing crops. An indirect impact may be that people may have to pay more for food.
- How can drought affect marine environments? Consider less freshwater flowing into the ocean, increased salinity, higher water temperatures.
- What is an algal bloom and what causes them to occur?
- How do algal blooms affect marine animals like fish and seabirds?
- What impact do algal blooms have on people, fishing industries and tourism?
- Australia has experienced droughts over the years. Choose a major drought in the country's history to research. Include the following – a map highlighting the location, when it occurred, a summary of the impact of the drought and images of the drought.

Activity: Images of Drought

In this activity students will look at a range of images that relate to drought. Students will choose one or more of the images below and respond to the following:

- What is happening in the image?
- What does it tell you about the effects of drought?
- How does the image make you feel?
- What questions would you like to ask about the image?
- Create a caption for each image.



[Source of image](#)



[Source of Image](#)



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Useful Websites

- [Drought](#) – BOM
- [Explainer: What is drought?](#) – BOM
- [SA's toxic algal bloom similar to size of Kangaroo Island, state government says](#) – ABC News
- [Drought Explained](#) - BTN
- [What you need to know about droughts: Why they happen and how they are defined](#) – ABC News