



Teacher Resource

# Fire and Floods

## 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. What impact have the floods had on communities in North Queensland?
2. How have people in Western Victoria been affected by the recent bushfires?
3. Why is it not uncommon to see fires and floods happening at the same time in Australia?
4. If you had to evacuate your home at short notice, what three items would you take with you? Give reasons for your answer.
5. How have communities responded to the recent floods and fires?

**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 bushfires and floods and upsetting news.

- UNICEF has created a [guide about how to talk to children about natural disasters](#).
- [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 Fire and Floods 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?



### EPISODE 2

11<sup>th</sup> February 2025

#### KEY LEARNING

Students will learn more about floods and bushfires and how they impact on people and places in Australia.

#### CURRICULUM

##### Geography – Year 5

The impact of bushfires or floods on environments and communities, and how people can respond.

##### Geography – Year 7

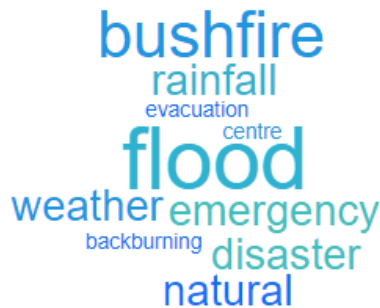
Causes, impacts and responses to an atmospheric or hydrological hazard.

##### Science – Year 5 & 6

Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions.

## Activity: Fire and Floods Word Cloud

Students will brainstorm a list of key words that relate to the BTN Fire and Floods story and create a word cloud. A word cloud is a visual made up of important/key words relating to a topic. Ask students to think of words they associate with bushfires and floods. Create a word cloud using a free online word cloud creator such as [Word It Out](#). Working in pairs, students can clarify the meanings of the words included in their word clouds.



## Activity: Bushfire and Flood Research

Discuss the information raised in the BTN Fire and Floods 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.

### Flood research questions

- What are floods? Investigate what flash floods and riverine floods are and what causes them.
- What damage can floods cause?
- How can people prepare for and reduce the impact of floods?
- How do floods affect people? Divide your response into the following categories: houses, services, and emotions. What are the immediate and long-term needs of people?
- What can people do before a flood to stay safe?
- Which areas in Australia do you think would be most at risk of flooding? Find a map of your local area and identify waterways near where you live and highlight the areas that would be most at risk of flooding.

### Bushfire research questions

- Investigate the factors that create bushfire risk.
- How can people prepare for and reduce the impact of bushfires?
- How does terrain (topography) affect the way a fire behaves?
- What is the fire danger rating system? How is the fire danger rating determined? Why is it important to have a fire danger rating?
- Investigate the three elements of the fire triangle. Draw a diagram of the fire triangle labelling each of the elements and then explain how each of the elements might affect a fire. Predict what might happen if one of the elements is removed from the fire triangle.

## Activity: Cause and effect

This cause-and-effect diagram (also known as a fishbone diagram) is an effective tool which can help students identify causes for an effect or problem. The tool can be used during brainstorming sessions to record student's ideas. It also helps to sort student's ideas into useful categories.

### Categories

As a class brainstorm the major categories of causes of the problem. Useful categories for a cause-and-effect diagram about 'Flooding' or 'Bushfires' could include:

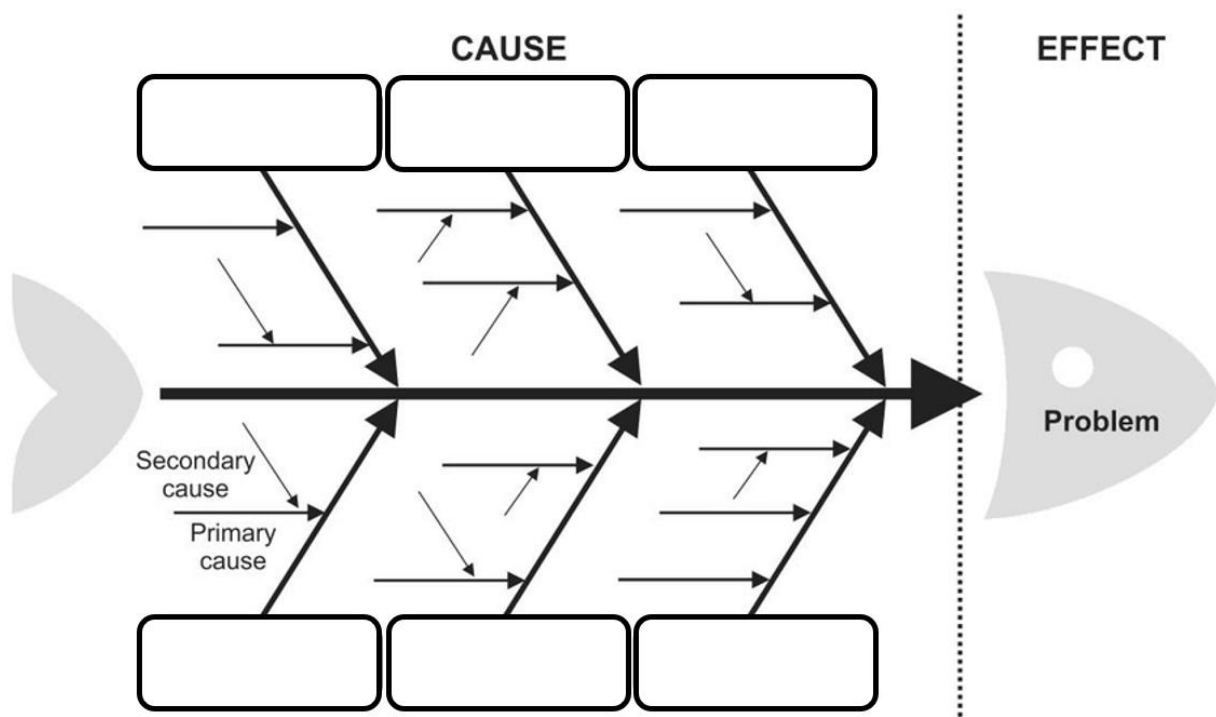
- People
- Environment
- Animals
- Housing
- Roads
- Businesses

### Effects

In small groups, students will then brainstorm the effects that flooding or bushfires has had on these categories, for example, damage to homes and businesses, loss of human and animal life.

### Solutions

How can we protect our community from floods and bushfires? Visit the Australian Museum website to learn more about what communities can do to protect themselves, their homes and businesses from [floods](#) and [bushfires](#). Find some examples of Indigenous knowledge practices that are useful for flood and bushfire management.



## Useful Websites

- [Queensland Floods](#) – Newsbreak
- [Understanding Floods](#) – BoM
- [Big Weather](#) – ABC Education
- [Bushfire Science](#) – BTN