TOPIC 8
How do we connect with places?

8.1 Overview
Numerous videos and interactivities are embedded just where you need them, at the point of learning, in your learnON title at www.jacplus.com.au. They will help you to learn the content and concepts covered in this topic.

8.1.1 Introduction
Geography is the study of people and their connections with places. The way we interact with places is dynamic: we change places and places change us. In a world of over seven billion people, we have many different perceptions of what a place is like, how it is used and how it could be improved. More people are on the move, too. Their journeys may be on foot or by plane as they visit and interact with new places. With rapid developments in ICT, some of those places may be imagined. What do our connections look like today, and how will they change tomorrow?
FIGURE 1 The Kaaba in Mecca — sacred, interesting or crowded?

Starter questions
1. How do we as individuals see or perceive places?
2. How do our perceptions differ from those of our friends, our neighbours or people on the other side of the world?
3. How do distance and time play a role in our perception of places?
4. Do we make assumptions about places and what they are like?
5. How do places change us?
6. Is ICT changing the way we look at places?

INQUIRY SEQUENCE
8.1 Overview
8.2 How do we ‘see’ places?
8.3 SkillBuilder: Interpreting topological maps
8.4 How do we move around our spaces?
8.5 What does our land mean to us?
8.6 How do places change?
8.7 How do we access places?
8.8 To walk or not to walk?
8.9 SkillBuilder: Constructing and describing isoline maps
8.10 Are we all on an equal footing?
8.11 How do we connect with the world?
8.12 Review

8.2 How do we ‘see’ places?
8.2.1 Perceptions of places

People’s perceptions of places are rarely the same. A person’s view of a particular place or region is coloured by their own culture, experiences and values. The characteristics and significance of a place will be viewed differently by each individual, and our mental maps of the world can change daily as we have new experiences and gain new knowledge.

The biggest influences on the way we perceive places are age, gender, class, language, ethnicity, race, religion and values. How important a place is to us may be determined by whether we feel that place belongs to us or not, whether it is part of our tradition or history, or whether the place is totally unfamiliar.

A place can seem exciting, scary, interesting or boring depending on our experience, expectations or mood on a particular day. Our perceptions of places may also change over time according to climatic changes, conflict or economic shifts.

It is important to understand the factors that influence our perceptions of places and regions, as well as the impact that other groups and cultures have on our perceptions. If we can understand those influences, we may be able to avoid the dangers of stereotypes and appreciate the diversity that exists around us.
8.2.2 How do we map places?

We all form an impression of our physical surroundings — even of places we have never actually been to. These are what geographers call our mental maps.

Mental maps tell us how we order the space around us. There is no such thing as an accurate mental map, but people’s mental maps of their immediate environment tend to be more realistic than those of places they have never visited. Think about some of the ways you use mental maps in your daily life. You may direct someone from point A to point B, telling them about landmarks they will see along the way. You may think about the quickest way to get to the city from a friend’s house, imagining your route in your mind.

Our mental maps can help document our influences. Those who walk a lot may be more connected with their neighbourhood and surrounding environment, whereas those who drive will have a very different perspective in their mental map. In the ‘Streets Ahead’ study by VicHealth, children who walked to school drew pictures that included street names and friends’ houses, and they were able to describe people and places in detail (see figure 2a). Children who were driven to school tended to separate items from their environment, displaying them in distinct windows (see figure 2b).

Mental maps of places we are unfamiliar with are heavily influenced by the media and stereotypical discussions. Travel helps to counteract the effects of the media and generally increases a person’s knowledge of an area, providing them with a better understanding of what a place is really like.

FIGURE 2 (a) Drawing by a child who walks to school (b) Drawing by a child who is driven to school

8.2 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive immediate feedback and sample responses for every question, go to your learnON title at www.jacplus.com.au. Note: Question numbers may vary slightly.

Remember

1. List the factors that may influence our perception of place.
8.3 SkillBuilder: Interpreting topological maps

WHAT IS A TOPOLOGICAL MAP?
Topological maps are very simple maps, with only the most vital information included. These maps generally use pictures to identify places, are not drawn to scale and give no sense of distance. However, everything is correct in its interconnection to other points.

Go online to access:
- a clear step-by-step explanation to help you master the skill
- a model of what you are aiming for
- a checklist of key aspects of the skill
- a series of questions to help you apply the skill and to check your understanding.

RESOURCES  — ONLINE ONLY
Try out this interactivity: My place: Use this interactivity to further your understanding of people’s perception of places
Searchlight ID: int-3332

FIGURE 1 A tourist map of Paris and its monuments

Think
6. How would the place in figure 1 be viewed by different groups? What kind of experiences or influences may affect their view? Try to provide at least three perceptions for the image.
7. The writer Henry Miller once said, ‘One’s destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things’. What does this quote mean to you, in light of your knowledge of various places, your own travels, and what you have learned about perception?

Explain
2. From your list in question 1, which factor do you think is most influential? Why?
3. Why do you think the two children’s maps shown in figure 2 are so different? What does it say about their interconnection with their environment?

Discover
4. With your class, make a list of the places or landmarks in your community that you use on a regular basis. Each student should rate the importance of each on a scale of 1 to 3, with 3 being most important. Collate the data to find out which places are most and least important to your class. Are the results as you expected? Do they match your own perceptions of how important places are, or do you have a different view from your classmates? Explain why there might be similarities or differences.
5. Create a mental map of your journey to school on a blank sheet of A3 or A4 paper. Include as many annotations as you can, such as street names, landmarks, shop names and so on. Once you have finished, compare and contrast the scale, size and accuracy of your mental map with a street directory or an ICT mapping tool. Write a paragraph that details some of the differences between your perception and reality.
8.5 What does our land mean to us?

8.5.1 Why is land so important?

Land means many things to different people. A farmer sees land as a means of production and a source of income. A conservationist sees land as a priceless natural resource that must be protected. A property developer sees land as an area that can be divided, built upon and sold for a profit. To Indigenous Australian peoples, land is something much, much more — it is a part of their being.

Indigenous Australian peoples have been in Australia since the beginning of the Dreamings (more than 50,000 years by European estimates), adapting to survive and thrive in a changing environment. For Indigenous Australian peoples, the land is at the core of their wellbeing — their relationship with the land is one of interconnectedness across the physical, spiritual and cultural worlds (see figure 1).

8.5.2 How do Indigenous Australian peoples perceive the land?

For Indigenous Australian peoples, land is much more than the soil, rocks, hills and trees. The land is where they come from, and to where they will return. The land, or country, represents a whole environment that sustains Indigenous Australian peoples and their culture and way of life. Indigenous Australian peoples are diverse, made up of over 500 different groups, each with its own separate language (or dialect), laws, beliefs and customs. Language groups are made up of a number of communities, with each community belonging to a territory or traditional land. These places include features of the natural environment such as waterholes and hills, as well as distinct geographical boundaries such as rivers or mountain ranges. Natural features are often represented in indigenous art (see figure 2).

It is the responsibility of each community to look after their country as it looked after them. The environment holds rich meaning for Indigenous Australian peoples, whose Dreaming Stories (for Aboriginal peoples) and Legends (for Torres Strait Islander peoples) are present throughout the landscape, along with many sacred places for special ceremonies — men’s and women’s sacred sites (see figure 3) — and resting places for ancestors that must be protected and conserved.

Each community has a totem that was a sign of its people’s spiritual link to the land. A totem could be an animal, plant or geographical feature such as a weather pattern or rock formation. It is from this totem or land feature that an individual draws their spirituality, and they would feel a special responsibility to protect it. Special ceremonies are performed at these sacred places to show respect for, replenish and celebrate each totem.

8.5.3 Does the land belong to us or do we belong to the land?

Indigenous Australian peoples view themselves as custodians rather than owners of land, for the land will exist long after they have left this world. To them, land cannot be bought or sold. The concept of property or land ownership that arrived with the Europeans contrasted greatly with the indigenous view of place.
When the European colonies were established, many Indigenous Australian peoples were dispossessed of their land and cultural practices were forcibly disrupted. In many cases, indigenous communities were pushed onto marginal lands that were often not their own, not only creating conflict but severing their connection with the land from which they drew their sense of identity. However, even today among groups largely displaced from their traditional estates, that strong link to country is maintained through stories and a sense of place and spiritual connection.

8.5.4 How do you view this land?

To illustrate this difference in viewpoint, figure 3 shows James Price Point on Western Australia’s Kimberley coast. The following are three very different views of the same area of land.

• Unremarkable beach — Colin Barnett, Premier, Western Australia
• Major heritage site — WA Department of Aboriginal Sites (‘Major’ is the Department’s highest category.)
• Secret Aboriginal men’s business site — Goolarabooloo Aboriginal people

When different people have vastly different views about a place, it can make the management of that land challenging.
8.5.5 How did Indigenous Australian peoples move across the land?

Much like the international system of passports and visas to enter other countries, a similar process exists for Indigenous nations. Entry to another nation’s or community’s lands is by ceremony and negotiation, a practice still commonplace today, recognising the important relationship that Indigenous Australian peoples have with their country. The tradition of a ‘Welcome to Country’ for visitors issues a shared commitment to protect and preserve the land being visited. After being welcomed, those who walk on another’s lands are expected to respect the traditional owners’ rules and protocols.

8.5.6 What places do Indigenous Australian peoples connect with today?

In the twenty-first century, 78.6 per cent of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are interconnected with Australia’s urban environments; only 21.4 per cent live in remote or very remote areas. Many of those living in urban environments know the stories passed through generations, but not all have visited their traditional lands. AFL footballer and Australian of the Year 2014, Adam Goodes took time out from his career to return to his homeland, to find out more about himself and his people, and to help identify characteristics that made him different.

8.5 Activities

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Remember

1. How do Indigenous Australian peoples perceive the land?

Explain

2. What does land mean to you? Think about where you live or where you come from to help describe the interconnection you have with the land.

3. Brainstorm with other members of your class and construct a list of other examples of different cultural viewpoints to the same object, custom or place. Consider such things as music, religious customs and foods.

Discover

4. Refer to figure 3 and conduct internet research to find out more about James Price Point. Answer the following questions.

(a) What is involved in the conflict over James Price Point?
(b) Create a mind map that shows the various groups involved in the dispute. Beneath each group name, list their interests in the site.
8.6 How do places change?

8.6.1 A chequered history

Places can change very slowly over time and space, or undergo rapid transformations. Melbourne’s laneways are an excellent example of how a place once perceived as unsanitary and unsafe is now a thriving and popular part of a metropolis.

During the gold rushes of the 1850s, Melbourne’s laneways were well used by people from all walks of life. Then, at the turn of the twentieth century, they began to take a turn for the worse. Criss-crossing the city, their main function was as a place for rubbish disposal. They were dark and dingy, and riddled with disease, crime, gambling houses and brothels. After two World Wars, they became home to many immigrants who had nowhere else to live. The city had lost its shine.

Then, in the late twentieth century, something changed. Perhaps influenced by the potential for regeneration that they had seen in European cities on their travels, people began to see the potential of Melbourne’s neglected laneways. Small businesses such as art and craft galleries, fashion boutiques and music shops opened. Business owners leased cheap properties in the laneways, away from the main streets with their high rents. Public spaces were regenerated, adding to the city’s landscape. Music and entertainment became a reason to go into the city at night.

People are living in the city again, and the CBD is now perceived as a desirable address — its resident population is now approximately 30,000 compared with only 700 in the 1980s. The laneways have helped lead that revival.

The laneways today

Better lighting, more cleaning and an increased number of people have all contributed to a change in the perception of Melbourne’s laneways. Street art tours abound, and many laneway bars, cafés and restaurants are desirable places to see and be seen in. There are laneway festivals, parties and even a ‘Love your Laneway’ project run by the City of Melbourne. The laneways are one of Melbourne’s biggest tourist drawcards, and are particularly famous for the vibrant and colourful street art that adorns their walls. Rather than simple graffiti or tagging, these are inspiring artworks from some of Australia’s (and occasionally the world’s) best street artists.

8.6.2. The laneway revival around Australia

The city of Brisbane has also undergone a transformation in the last few years. The Brisbane City Council’s Vibrant Laneways initiative, combined with the introduction of the state government’s small bar licence, has prompted many innovative venues to open their doors. In 2012, Adelaide also announced reduced liquor licensing fees for smaller venues. This initiative is aimed at revitalising the Adelaide CBD, creating a local version of laneway bars and culture akin to Melbourne’s CBD. In New South Wales, the City of Sydney’s Laneway Art Program has sought to encourage a city that buzzes with new art, new business and new life.
FIGURE 1 A map of Melbourne’s laneways (a) Centre place, one of Melbourne’s revitalised laneways (b) Duckboard place (c) ACDC lane (d) Graffiti in Hosier Lane
8.6 Activities

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**Explain**
1. Explain how the perception and uses of Melbourne’s laneways have changed over time.
2. How do laneways allow people to interconnect with the city?

**Discover**
3. What other areas in Melbourne, or your city, are now developing a laneway culture? How are they attempting to achieve this? In Melbourne, you may wish to investigate Richmond, the QV building or the Docklands precinct.

**Predict**
4. What other uses could you propose for laneway spaces in addition to those outlined above?

**Think**
5. Some aspects of laneways that can be improved are:
   - waste management and stormwater run-off
   - amenity and access
   - infrastructure, such as public lighting and road surfaces.
   (a) Can you think of any other ways in which laneways can be improved for public use?
   (b) Are there other spaces within a CBD environment that could be improved in order to provide new places for people to enjoy?
   (c) What would need to happen in order to make the places you identified in question 5b functional, safe and accessible?
6. If possible, conduct fieldwork in your city’s laneways or complete the Laneway Walk shown in the map in figure 1. Are laneways sustainable spaces for people? Give a detailed personal response.

8.7 How do we access places?

8.7.1 Connecting with public transport

Public transport provides a relatively low-cost way for people to interconnect with places, and can reduce traffic congestion and pollution. For students, it is often the only way to get around. Sometimes, however, it can seem like too much bother, perhaps because one service does not connect to another or because there are not enough services running, especially near your house.

Public transport use is considerably higher in capital cities than in other parts of Australia, partly because cities have relatively large populations and better public transport infrastructure.

8.7.2 Our changing needs

With any population growth, governments at all levels must consider how they will meet changing transport needs. ICT developments have allowed us to make better decisions for our use of public transport. For example, have you used the internet or an app to find the fastest way to get from A to B? Service quality, frequency and infrastructure are generally the biggest concerns in the provision of a public transport system. However, the affordability of public transport is equally important, because many low-income people depend upon public transport to access jobs, services, education and recreation.
8.7.3 Different forms of public transport have different uses

Public Transport Victoria aims to deliver quality customer service and provide enhanced access across the range of public transport services throughout Melbourne and Victoria via its website, apps and other forms of social media.

Trains move large numbers of people over long distances at high speed in and out of the Central Business District. Travellers’ access is heightened by the use of curving routes across the urban area with a minimum number of stops.

Trams operate only in areas of high population density, using high-speed and infrequent stops to maximise access for middle-distance commuters.

Buses provide access where trains and trams do not go and ‘infill’ access for people by using a range of road levels. Buses are the most flexible of the services able to change routes as there is no fixed rail system involved. Buses, and to some extent trams, ferry people to train stations, adjusting timetables and reorganising routes to match the train network, as seen with the opening of the Regional Rail Link in Melbourne’s outer west.

8.7.4 How satisfied are we with public transport?

The Transport Opinion Survey is conducted biannually across 1000 adult Australians. In 2015, 37 per cent of those surveyed said public transport was a top priority. Three in five Australians would prefer to see rail developments rather than more bus services, except in Queensland and South Australia, which already have well developed, fast bus systems. Only 9 per cent of those surveyed thought Australia’s transport systems would be better within a year; just 7 per cent felt that local public transport would be improved within a year. In five years’ time, 22 per cent of those surveyed thought the transport system they were using would be better.
A recent study in the Netherlands revealed that people perceive that their travel time on public transport takes 2.3 times as long as driving a car to make the same journey. People also perceive a continuous journey (involving, say, only one train) as taking less time than a journey that involves transfers and waiting times, even if the second journey is actually shorter. People estimate the waiting time to be about two to three times longer than the actual time. So, a wait of 10 minutes is perceived as 20 to 30 minutes. Factors that influence this perception include:

- uncertainty about when the next bus or train will arrive
- weather conditions
- familiarity with the journey.

Given that travellers tend to consider non-vehicle travel time (walking, waiting, transferring) to be more difficult than in-vehicle travel time, this has consequences when trying to attract people to public transport. If people think their travel time by car is 60 minutes, they perceive their travel time by public transport for that same trip to be almost double: 117 minutes.

### 8.7.5 Active travel

Cycling and walking to get to work, to visit friends and for the purpose of recreation have become mainstream modes of transport in the twenty-first century. In particular, in Melbourne’s inner suburbs 20 per cent of those going to work now choose to use active travel.

Melbourne’s bicycle paths and trails continue to grow in number providing increased access to places. Figure 5 maps the ‘spiderweb’ of pathways around the Melbourne region.

To encourage active travel, railway stations — both new and old — are installing secure bicycle storage areas (called parkiteers, see figure 6). Authorities are revising road layouts and regulations to provide a secure riding environment. Manufacturers are also designing electric bicycles to make access available to a wider range of people. Bicycles for hire, or free, can be picked up at points within the Central Business District of many capital cities.

The choice to access places by public transport, active travel or vehicle keeps people connected and strengthens interconnection in a community.
FIGURE 5 Melbourne's bike paths

Source: Map courtesy the Bike Paths and Rail Trail Guide (Victoria) http://www.bikepaths.com.au
8.7 Activities

To answer questions online and to receive immediate feedback and sample responses for every question, go to your learnON title at www.jacplus.com.au. Note: Question numbers may vary slightly.

Remember
1. Why is public transport perceived by governments as being very important?
2. Write a definition for the term ‘active travel’.

Explain
3. Do you use public transport? Why or why not?
4. (a) How interconnected is the place in which you live? What types of public transport are available to you? What distances do you need to travel to reach a bus stop or a train station?
   (b) What types of public transport are required for you to access your closest international airport?
   (c) How do you perceive the quality of your public transport? Consider accessibility, timeliness, cleanliness, comfort, ticketing, safety, convenience and information about the service. Explain your answer.
5. Explain how each form of public transport provides access for different groups in our community. Consider students, workers, senior citizens, those with a disability and tourists. Figures 1, 2 and 3 will provide some additional ideas.
6. One of the most significant aspects of public transport is the interconnection between the different forms of transport. Why is interconnection important?
7. See the Google maps weblink in the Resources tab for a satellite image of Melbourne’s bike paths. Go online and create figure 5. Use the scale tool to measure three distances between places that you are familiar with and three distances between places that you would like to visit. How do you perceive your ability to get to these places by bicycle?

Discover
8. (a) As a class, pick a location on the other side of town. Using your rail, bus or other public transport provider website, find out how long it would take you to travel from your school or home to this point on:
   • a Monday morning at 9 am
   • a Sunday evening at 6 pm.
8.8 To walk or not to walk

8.8.1 Introduction

Urban planners around the world are focusing on human wellbeing as a key to the structure of new suburbs and revitalisation of existing suburbs. People’s perceptions of what will make ‘life good’ and what makes a ‘good place’ to live in are being taken into account. Being connected to other places and people is a high priority.

8.8.2 What is ‘The 20-minute neighbourhood’?

Melbourne has been ranked the best city to live in since 2011. The city is unique, with access to coastal areas, a mild climate, a range of topography, distinctive suburbs or places, considerable tree cover and well-designed buildings and streets. As part of ‘Plan Melbourne 2016’, which aims to help retain that status and enhance the state’s capital, the concept of ‘The 20-minute neighbourhood’ is being applied.

As figure 1 shows, the 20-minute neighbourhood is about improving the liveability of a place. This means being able to walk around your neighbourhood and within 20 minutes being able to access your daily needs — for example transport, doctors, primary schools. Factors that make a good neighbourhood walkable are:

- a centre — either as a street or public space
- people — enough people for businesses to be successful and for public transport frequency
- mixed income and mixed use — a range of housing types
- parks and public space — for people to gather and to play
- pedestrian design — foot access (cars parked off street)
- schools and workplaces — close enough to walk
- complete streets — suited to bicycles and walking, and allowing easy movement across the place.

8.8.3 Why is walkability important?

Walkability provides a range of benefits to any community. People’s health has been shown to improve if they walk on a regular basis. In particular, the risk of heart disease and diabetes is reduced. People are often 2.5 to 4.5 kilograms lighter than they would otherwise be if they walk regularly. There is a reduced environmental
impact with fewer cars on the road, as feet produce zero per cent carbon dioxide emissions! Communities benefit when people have more time available for involvement in community activities. Up to 10 per cent of a person’s time spent in a community activity is lost when a car is used for just 10 minutes of commuting. Financially too families benefit as a car is often the second largest household expense and housing prices can increase by 20 per cent when located in places with a high walkability score.

In Eugene, Oregon, in the United States, areas closest to the centre of the city were shown to have a higher walkability rating than those on the rural urban fringe. Key elements considered in the mapping and overlaying (figure 2) were:

• density — the density of the population and the number of employees
• destinations — bus stops, shops, primary schools, corner stores, parks and other goods and services
• distance — intersection density, bicycle facilities, paths

Source: https://www.eugene-or.gov/1229/Full-Composite-Heat-Map
• aesthetics — tree cover, road width, condition of properties along routes
• safety and perceived safety — traffic speed, path condition, signalled crossings
• socioeconomics such as distribution of income, education, age and background.

8.8.4 How accessible are Melbourne’s neighbourhoods?

An American company developed a Walkability Index (table 1), which considers a range of features using the Eugene, Oregon experience. According to its scale, the following key assesses the rating of a neighbourhood.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walkability rating</th>
<th>Access to the neighbourhood</th>
<th>Tasks able to be completed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90–100</td>
<td>Walker’s paradise</td>
<td>Daily errands do not require a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70–89</td>
<td>Very walkable</td>
<td>Most errands done by foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50–69</td>
<td>Somewhat walkable</td>
<td>Some errands done by foot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25–49</td>
<td>Car dependent</td>
<td>Most errands require a car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0–24</td>
<td>Car dependent</td>
<td>Almost all errands require a car</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using this Walkability Index there are just 12 suburbs of Melbourne that currently fit the range of 90–100 as a walker’s paradise. These suburbs include Carlton, Fitzroy, Fitzroy North, Melbourne (central area), St Kilda, South Yarra, East Melbourne, South Melbourne, Collingwood, Windsor, Southbank and Richmond.

8.8.5 How accessible will neighbourhoods become?

Property developers across all major cities in Australia and the developed world have realised the importance of human wellbeing. New estates now focus on providing parklands (often with a water feature); local shopping centres; safe and sound surroundings; foot and bicycle paths; and peaceful, clean, green environments. Advertising for these estates centres around building communities, with young families living an active lifestyle.
FIGURE 4 Development of the Point Cook estate. Central Equity, Featherbrook Point Cook.

Planners and developers in established suburbs are seeking to ‘infill’ the suburbs, creating and recreating to form ‘the 20-minute neighbourhood’ around activity hubs and avoid further encroachment on farming land for urban development. The challenge is to have about a 70 per cent increase in housing and population living in the local area hubs. Community and transport infrastructure will need to be revised to achieve this target. In Melbourne, activity hub development can be found at Box Hill, Broadmeadows, Dandenong, Epping, Footscray, Fountain Gate/Narre Warren, Frankston, Ringwood and Sunshine.

8.8 Activities
To answer questions online and to receive immediate feedback and sample responses for every question, go to your learnON title at www.jacplus.com.au. Note: Question numbers may vary slightly.

Remember
1. Draw a mind map (see section 8.2) of the distances you have to travel from your home to the bus stop or train station, to school, to the shopping centre, to the park where you meet your friends, to a place for sporting activities, and to any other significant locations in your life. Discuss in class how teenagers perceive the distances travelled.
2. Recall and list the features of ‘the 20-minute neighbourhood’.

Explain
3. Using figure 2, describe the distribution of the different levels of walkability in Eugene, Oregon.
4. Suggest factors that may influence the location of the high level of walkability in Eugene.
5. To avoid expansion of Eugene:
   (a) Suggest two areas of the city that the city planners and developers might be looking at to improve the level of access. Provide reasons for your choice.
   (b) Suggest a change that may be able to be implemented in the short term, medium term and long term within the city to improve access.

Discover
6. On a map of Melbourne, find the 12 suburbs with a high walkability rating. Describe the locations of these places.
7. Using the internet for ‘How Walk Score Works’ find:
   (a) the walkability rating for Australia’s major cities. Comment on their scores.
   (b) the walkability rating for your place/home. Can you explain why your place has been given its rating?
   (c) the walkability rating of a rural environment that you know. Explain why rural areas might be more car dependent.
Think
8. Many parents don’t allow their children to walk to school any more. Make a list of the safety issues that parents perceive about access to school.

Predict
9. In a small group, draw a plan for a 20-minute neighbourhood that you would like to access and live in. Discuss and consider each group member’s perception of which features make for wellbeing in a community.

8.9 SkillBuilder: Constructing and describing isoline maps

WHAT IS AN ISOLINE MAP?
An isoline map shows lines that join all the places with the same value. Isoline maps show gradual change in one type of data over a continuous area. Isolines show change in the trend of the data being mapped. Isoline maps are easy to understand, especially when coloured between the lines.

Go online to access:
• a clear step-by-step explanation to help you master the skill
• a model of what you are aiming for
• a checklist of key aspects of the skill
• a series of questions to help you apply the skill and to check your understanding.

FIGURE 1 A coloured isoline map showing travel time to Copenhagen airport by car

RESOURCES — ONLINE ONLY

Watch this eLesson: Watch this video to learn more about how to construct and describe isoline maps.
Searchlight ID: eles-1737

Try out this interactivity: Use this interactivity to learn more about how to construct and describe isoline maps.
Searchlight ID: int-3355
8.10 Are we all on an equal footing?

8.10.1 How accessible are our cities?

Many of us take it for granted that we can walk to the shops, hop on a bus and go to the city centre, or find out when the next train is departing. Accessibility should mean that people with disabilities have the same access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communication technologies, and other facilities and services. Everyone should feel connected with society, rather than separated from it.

Our cities can be a depressing obstacle course for millions of people. For those with a disability, negotiating a flight of stairs, opening a door or even reaching a lift button can be impossible. Have you ever considered how difficult our cities can be for some of their citizens and visitors?

8.10.2 Providing equal access

Almost one in five Australians (18.5 per cent) reported a disability in 2012. Four in 10 Australians over the age of 18 report having a disability or long-term health condition. Equal access, particularly to transport, is essential for equality. Limiting transport can mean limiting people’s opportunities.

A disability can take many forms, including:

- walking disabilities — cannot use stairs easily, moves slowly, needs wider spaces (due to crutches, for example)
- manipulatory disabilities — has difficulty in operating handles and ticket machines, for example
- vision impairment — has trouble distinguishing between road and pavement, identifying platform edges, knowing whether a lift has arrived at the correct floor, seeing signs or directions
- hearing problems — has difficulty hearing announcements about delays, cancellations or emergencies, or hearing an approaching vehicle
- intellectual disabilities — is challenged by being in an unfamiliar setting, or coping with cancellations or complex timetables
- psychiatric disabilities — experiences stress, anxiety or confusion in crowded situations or encounters with other travellers
- wheelchair disabilities — difficulty moving about when no ramps are available, when there are insufficient or badly designed parking spaces, or when there is not enough room to manoeuvre equipment.

There are also additional (and sometimes less obvious) disabilities to consider, such as asthma, epilepsy, obesity and diabetes, and temporary disabilities that result from injuries that are rarely classified as disabilities. When considering transport disadvantage, we must also include elderly people, low-income earners, children and outer-urban dwellers, who experience this to some degree as well. Parents with prams or strollers may also be affected.

8.10.3 A city for everyone

In 2015, the Swedish city of Borås won the European Union’s Access City award — a prize for the European city that is most accessible for people with disabilities. The annual honour aims to award efforts to improve accessibility in the urban environment and to foster equal participation of people with disabilities.
People with disabilities and their representative organisations were heavily involved in the planning process. Some of the improvements are that:

- a database has been established of all public buildings with adequate access
- route markers have been laid both indoors and outdoors
- public transport is free on easily accessible buses
- digital ‘locks without keys’ have been provided for easy access, especially for support services.

All these measures benefit the entire community as well as the economy, because when everyone has access to places of work, people feel included and government social support systems are not overloaded.

### 8.10.4 Accessing cities

The city of Melbourne is keen to have an inclusive environment for all. Its ‘Melbourne for All People Strategy Street 2014–2017’ has six key points:

**FIGURE 2** Providing mobility within the central business district of Ballarat
Regional cities in Victoria are also conscious of the need to cater for the disabled. The Rural Access Program undertook work in Ballarat to develop a mobility map that showed safe, accessible, easy and enjoyable ways to move and connect with the city.

8.10 Activities
To answer questions online and to receive immediate feedback and sample responses for every question, go to your learnON title at www.jacplus.com.au. Note: Question numbers may vary slightly.

Remember
1. What are the various disabilities that may affect someone’s access to public transport?

Explain
2. Explain what you understand by the term accessibility regarding people with a disability.
3. Refer to Figure 1. Approximately what percentage of people with disabilities are the same age as:
   (a) you
   (b) your parents
   (c) your grandparents?
   Use figures and percentages in your answer.

Discover
4. Do you know someone with a disability? Explain what types of difficulties they encounter while using public transport.
5. Using the map of the CBD of Ballarat, describe:
   - the accessibility level of Bridge Mall
   - movement around Centrelink
   - travel along Mair Street.
   How would you rank access in the Docklands area?

Think
6. In small groups, devise a trail in a local environment for people with disabilities. You might choose your school or a local park, for example. You might also decide what types of disabilities you are planning for, and travel around the site considering the potential needs of the visitor. Where are hazards located? Which areas might the visitor find difficult to navigate? What places might be of interest to them? Draw an annotated trail map (only for users who are not sight-impaired) to highlight these various features. To empathise more fully with the needs of others, students could take it in turns to navigate their way around the designated site on crutches, in a wheelchair or blindfolded.
8.11 How do we connect with the world?


8.12 Review

8.12.1 Review
The Review section contains a range of different questions and activities to help you revise and recall what you have learned, especially prior to a topic test.

8.12.2 Reflect
The Reflect section provides you with an opportunity to apply and extend your learning.