

Megafauna, Deep Time

History, Deep time history of Australia

Year 7

Content Description

How First Nations Australians are the world's oldest continuing cultures, displaying evidence of both continuity and change over deep time. ([AC9HH7K03](#))

VR Learning Activities

Listening and Understanding: Students will explore the ancient world of Australian megafauna and the deep connection First Nations Australians have with these creatures. Through narration and immersive storytelling, students will learn about animals like Diprotodon, Megalania, and Genyornis, while uncovering how First Nations Australians have passed down knowledge of these creatures through oral traditions, rock art, and ancient stories. They will understand how studying megafauna helps reveal changes in ecosystems and the role humans played in their extinction.

Interactive Exploration: In VR, students will enter environments that recreate the time of the megafauna. They can explore 3D models of extinct creatures like the Diprotodon and Megalania, walk through prehistoric landscapes, and examine rock art depicting these animals. Students can also engage with virtual artifacts, such as tools used by First Nations Australians, to better understand how these communities interacted with the megafauna and how their stories and knowledge have shaped modern scientific understanding.

Questioning and Critical Thinking: Students will be prompted with open-ended questions that guide deeper reflection and exploration, such as:

- "How did the megafauna influence the ecosystem in which they lived?"
- "What does the extinction of megafauna tell us about climate change and human impact on the environment?"
- "How do First Nations oral traditions and rock art contribute to our understanding of Australia's ancient wildlife?" These questions encourage students to critically evaluate the evidence for megafauna extinction, as well as the ways in which First Nations Australians have preserved and shared this knowledge.

Reflection and Connection: Students will be invited to consider how First Nations Australians' relationship with the environment, including the megafauna, provides lessons on sustainability and the long-term effects of human activity on ecosystems. They will reflect on the importance of preserving both cultural knowledge and environmental history for future generations.

Key Learning Areas

Megafauna and Ancient Ecosystems: Understanding the role of large, extinct animals in Australia's ancient ecosystems and how they interacted with their environment.

Extinction of Megafauna: Investigating the causes behind the extinction of megafauna, including climate change, human impact, and the consequences for ecosystems.

First Nations Australians and Megafauna: Exploring how First Nations Australians documented and shared knowledge about megafauna through oral traditions, rock art, and cultural practices.

Scientific and Cultural Evidence: Analyzing the different sources of evidence used to learn about megafauna, including fossils, rock art, and oral stories, and how these sources complement each other.

Human Impact on Ancient Environments: Examining the impact of early human activity on megafauna populations, and the broader implications for understanding human-environment interactions.

Cultural Preservation and Knowledge Sharing: Understanding the importance of oral traditions and other cultural practices in preserving knowledge about the natural world, and how these can contribute to modern scientific research.

