



Australian Stamps Teacher Guide

Years 5 and 6

The **Australia Post Stamp** guide is a trusted and engaging resource for teaching about stamps and stamp collecting, a popular hobby in Australia and around the world.

Developed by Australia Post, this curriculum-aligned resource for Years 5 and 6 will help you and your students discover the rich history and meaning behind stamps.



User Notes

Background

Stamp collecting is a popular hobby in Australia and around the world. It encourages self-directed learning and can foster essential skills, behaviours and dispositions such as; reasoning, logic, resourcefulness and goal setting. Stamp collecting encourages students to question, compare, analyse, sequence and be inquisitive all while having fun. Every stamp tells a story and Australia Post's stamp series, releases and collections are a rich and engaging way to learn about Australian history and culture.

What does stamp collecting involve?

One of the best things about stamp collecting is that starting out is easy. Most stamp collections are built around a certain theme or subject. Stamps are collected from envelopes or purchased as mint (unused). They can then be stored and displayed in a stamp album, separated by plastic sheets and viewed with a magnifying glass!

Lesson structure

Each lesson has been designed for teachers to pick and choose the activities most suitable for your current programming requirements and student ability levels. There is no set duration for the experiences, some tasks will take longer than a single lesson and we encourage you to adapt it to suit your environment.

History

Each year several hundred million stamps are printed. Designs are commissioned with great care to maintain the high quality and reputation of Australian stamps. Stamps tell us about current and historical events as well as the world around us. Since 1993, Australia Post has celebrated Stamp Collecting Month. Each year a Stamp Collecting Month topic that is part of student learning is chosen. Learning through stamps is fun and interesting. Check out the current Stamp Collecting Month stamps and teacher resource material at: auspost.com.au/scm



Curriculum Links

	Lesson	Subject	
1	Stamps and Meaning	English - Language Explain sequences of images in print texts and compare these to the ways hyperlinked digital texts are organised, explaining their effect on viewers' interpretations ACELA1511	Arts - Media Arts Explain how the elements of media arts and story principles communicate meaning ACAMAR065
2	Stamp Production	Design & Technologies Investigate characteristics and properties of a range of materials, systems, components, tools and equipment and evaluate the impact of their use ACTDEK023	Science Scientific knowledge is used to solve problems and inform personal and community decisions ACSH100
3	Stamps and the Postal Service	Design & Technologies Examine how people in design and technologies occupations address competing considerations, including sustainability in the design of products, services, and environments for current and future use ACTDEK019	HASS - Economics & Business The reasons businesses exist and the different ways they provide goods and services ACHASSK151
4	Pen Pals Philatelists	English - Literacy Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive print and multimodal texts, choosing text structures, language features, images and sound appropriate to purpose and audience ACELY1704	Health & Physical Education - Personal, Social & Community Health Practise skills to establish and manage relationships ACPPS055

Lesson Information



Assessment

- Monitoring understanding in class discussions and questioning (teacher observations)
- Collecting work samples
- Student self-assessment
- Peer assessment
- Teacher feedback
- Collaborative activities
- Practical activities
- Presentations



Differentiation

Support

Research is conducted as a whole class.

Structured

Use small group instruction to help support students construct an infographic.

Extension

Students investigate philatelics clubs in their local area.



Connecting Home and School

Encourage students to deepen their understanding of their own heritage and family history.

Discover if anyone in their family is a stamp collector and if possible, view their collections.

Invite families to review the Australia Post stamp collections online and identify each person's favourites.

Lesson 1

Stamps and Meaning



Fun Fact

Sir Rowland Hill invented the first adhesive stamp in 1837. He was knighted for his efforts.

Stamps and Meaning

Lesson Overview

Students will learn how to identify a credible source of visual meaning, why stamps are issued in series, explore different themes in various Australian series, and select an issue of stamps as a visual prompt to write an explanatory text on the key topic related to that series.

Learning Intention

In this lesson students will:

- Research Australian stamp issues
- Understand the importance and value of stamp series
- Understand that history can be communicated through photographs and drawings on stamps
- Write an explanatory text involving one selected series of stamps over the past 100 years.

Guiding Questions

Comprehend

What makes an image source 'credible' and how can you tell?

Analyse

How can Australian stamps help in learning about topics of interest?

Synthesise

How can you structure your writing to explain the meaning behind your stamp series?

Resources

- Internet access for students
- Workbooks for recording research
- Example of a stamp album or [online version](#)
- Examples of postage stamps brought in from home (can be pre-used)
- Printed pictures of stamps or access for students to view [online](#)

Vocabulary (found in bold throughout the guide)

Stamp	Themes
Collect / collection	Features
Source	Convey
Visual	Trustworthy
Credible	Meaning
Portray	Images
Series	Explanatory

Step 1: Explore

Watch / Listen / Read - Learn

- Brainstorm a list of **images** we see on a regular basis and the locations we might find them e.g through social media, signposts, books etc.
- Explore the guiding question: *What makes an image source 'credible' and how can you tell?*
- Introduce the concept that stamps are print images, and a way of **conveying** visual meaning - as well as fulfilling a practical purpose.
- Create a class checklist of things to assess before deciding whether an image is a trusted **source**.
- Compare and contrast how the information observed on some image sources might be more **trustworthy** than others.
- Provide examples of trusted and non-trusted image sources and ask students to use the checklist to evaluate and categorise them and provide reasons for their decision.

Step 2: Analyse

Solve a Problem - Think

- Recap that Australian postage stamps are a trusted source of **visual** information and ask students to complete their checklist against an issue of stamps [online](#).
- They then select only one stamp issue that inspires them the most and use each stamp image to spark an investigation into what is being **portrayed**.
- Ask the guiding question: *How can Australian stamps help in learning about topics of interest?*
- Ask students to select 2-3 different issues of Australian stamps and run the credible source checklist exercise.
- Ask them to consider how the visual meaning is being delivered. Exploratory questions include:
 - What medium is this image in?
 - Who/what does the image show?
 - Where, when and why is this happening?
 - How has the artist used semiotic techniques for expressing and developing ideas (symbols, colors, shape, lines etc.)

Step 3: Create

Try Something New - Do

- Using the information and analysis they applied in Step 2, students write an explanatory text involving their chosen series of stamps over the past 100 years.
- The purpose of their explanatory text is to convey that history and information can be communicated through photographs and drawings on stamps.
- To generate creativity and add an extra challenge, students can use the stamp images to replace any appropriate words in their explanation.
- Pose the guiding question:
How can you structure your writing to explain the meaning behind your stamp series?
- To conclude their writing, ask students to create a rebus picture puzzle about the topic of their series - using only stamps found on the Australia Post website. Swap with a friend and solve.

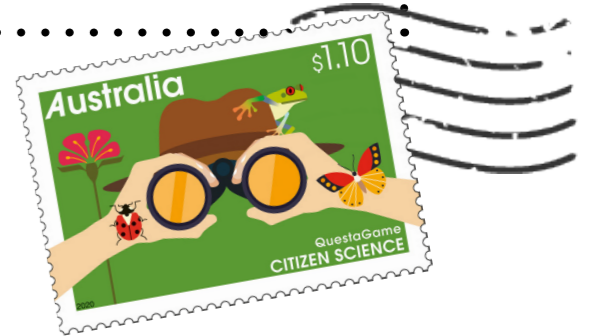


Lesson 2

Stamp Production

Fun Fact

Australian stamps are printed using a process called offset lithography. If you look closely, you can see that the picture is made up of a pattern of tiny coloured dots.



Stamp Production

Lesson Overview

Students will investigate how stamp production has changed over time, the new technologies used in the manufacturing process, the types of jobs that are involved in the process, and will culminate in a design thinking process to determine if they can invent a new type of stamp with a unique feature.

Learning Intention

In this lesson students will:

- Research historical and current stamp production processes
- Investigate the technologies that go into stamp production
- Identify jobs that are created from stamp production
- Use design thinking to create a unique stamp

Guiding Questions

Comprehend

Has changing technologies in stamp production affected jobs in the industry? How and why?

Analyse

How would you design and make a unique stamp that will inspire Australians to learn more about stamp collecting?

Synthesise

How can you turn problems into questions to help you work through the design process?

Resources

- Internet access for students
- Workbooks for recording research
- Materials, tools and equipment used to create a stamp replica
- Printed pictures of stamps or access for students to view [online](#)

Vocabulary (found in bold throughout the guide)

Stamp	Unique
Collect / collection	Design
Value / valuable	Manufacture
Production	Technologies
Process	Efficient
Industry	Philatelist
Employment	Blueprint

Step 1: Explore

Watch / Listen / Read - Learn

- Brainstorm different **technologies** that students know have changed over time e.g. telephones, cars, etc.
- Explain that stamp **production** technology has evolved too.
- Research historical and current stamp production **processes**, how has the process become more **efficient**?
- Pose the following guiding question for discussion:

*Has changing technologies in stamp production affected jobs in the **industry**? How and why?*

- Identify jobs that are created from stamp production.
- If possible, organise to do a Q&A session with a **philatelist** from Australia Post to learn more about the production of stamps, or watch this video.

Step 2: Analyse

Solve a Problem - Think

- Investigate the technologies that go into stamp production. Consider the type of **equipment** used and how many can be produced at once.
- Use the design thinking process to plan the **prototype** for a **unique** stamp. Do this by framing your plan around the key guiding question and supporting questions for phase 1:

How would you design and make a unique stamp that will inspire Australians to learn more about stamp collecting?

Choose a driving question

- Collect inspiration
- Brainstorm your ideas
- Design a prototype

Step 3: Create

Try Something New - Do

- After completing the planning phase of the design thinking process, begin Phase 2, production.
- Encourage students to use their prototype blueprint to assemble a model of their unique stamp.
- Use materials found at school or brought in from home.
- Pose the guiding question for consideration throughout the production phase.
How can you turn problems into questions to help you work through the design process?
 - What medium is this image in?
 - Who/what does the image show?
 - Where, when and why is this happening?
 - How has the artist used semiotic techniques for expressing and developing ideas (symbols, colors, shape, lines etc.)
- Reflect on how the process could be refined and improvements made.



Lesson 3

The Journey of a Stamp

Fun Fact

The first ever non-royal person to appear on a stamp was William Shakespeare.



The Journey of a Stamp

Lesson Overview

Students will investigate the full life cycle of an Australian stamp from design, through to delivery. They will identify the phases in the postal service where stamps take centre stage, and who is responsible for each part of the journey. To culminate, students will create a 'Life of a Stamp' production cycle infographic to demonstrate their learning.

Learning Intention

In this lesson students will:

- Investigate the process a stamp goes through from design to delivery
- Understand how and where in the chain stamps need to be reviewed
- Identify the jobs involved in a stamp's journey
- Create an infographic to demonstrate the journey of a stamp

Guiding Questions

Comprehend

Describe in detail one phase of the 'journey of a stamp'.

Analyse

What types of jobs might people need to do to produce Australian stamps?

Synthesise

What important design features need to be included in an infographic to make the content easy to interpret?

Resources

- Internet access for students
- Printed pictures of stamps or access for students to view [online](#)
- A way of representing an infographic i.e. free software, or a word processing program, or paper and pencils
- Example of a stamp album or [online version](#)
- Examples of effective infographic posters

Vocabulary (found in bold throughout the guide)

Stamp	Delivery
Collection	Journey
Journey	Infographic
Series	Production
Process	Complex
Design	Destination

Step 1: Explore

Watch/Listen/Read - Learn

- Explain to the students that most items we use on a daily basis have been through a **complex process** to get to us. We call this a **production** process.
 - Delivered to the recipient
 - Disposed, recycled or collected by a philatelist
- As a class, investigate the **journey** in the life of a stamp.. Consider the basic phases of:
 - Concepting and design
 - Commissioning artists and creating the artworks
 - Printing the stamps
 - Distributing to post offices
 - Selling to the public
 - Affixing to an envelope or parcel and placed in a postbox
 - Being processed at a depot
 - Transported to a new destination
- Divide the students into 10 groups and ask them to research one phase.
- Pose the guiding question:
Can you describe in detail one phase of the 'journey of a stamp'?

Step 2: Analyse

Solve a Problem - Think

- Ask each group to report back to the class on their part of the process.
- Identify whether any stages were missing, or had sub-phases.
- Create a timeline of events in the journey and pinpoint the important steps where the stamp needs to be checked carefully by a postal worker.
- Pose the guiding question:
What types of jobs might people need to do to produce Australian stamps?
- As a class, students brainstorm and identify the types of jobs involved in a stamp's journey. Jointly construct a list of jobs and identify if anyone in the class has a friend or family member that does the job.

- If possible, invite the family member in to talk about their career in stamps.

Step 3: Create

Try Something New - Do

- Students create an infographic to demonstrate the life journey of a stamp, from design through to final destination.
- Use either free software online, a word processing program, or they can draw the design with paper and pencils.
- Consider the guiding question:
What important design features need to be included in an infographic to make the content easy to interpret?
- Once students have designed and created their infographic, they present to the class and deliver a short explanation and to why they chose their design elements .
- Peers provide constructive feedback on what worked well and what could be changed to improve the intended audience’s understanding of the process.



Lesson 4

Stamps in Action



Fun Fact

Part of every stamp is invisible to our eyes. It can only be seen by Australia Post’s sorting machines.

Stamps in Action

Lesson Overview

In the final lesson in this unit of work students will learn about pen pals. They will write and send a letter to a new pen pal describing the hobby of stamp collecting. To conclude, students will be encouraged by teachers and empowered by their learning to join a local philatelics club or start one at school.

Learning Intention

In this lesson students will:

- Write a letter to a new pen pal
- Visit a local post office or post box to send their first letter
- Join a local philatelics club or start one at school

Guiding Questions

Comprehend

How do you structure a letter and what features should it have?

Analyse

What inclusions do I need to have on an envelope to ensure it gets to the correct address?

Synthesise

Consider the learning you now have about the hobby of stamp collecting. How would you start a philatelics group at school?

Resources

- Internet access for students
- [Australia Post Pen Pal Club site](#)
- 2x self-adhesive \$1.10 stamps per student
- Writing paper and an envelope per student - students could create a nicely designed set

Vocabulary *(found in bold throughout the guide)*

Stamp	Pen pal
Collection	Club
Series	Philatelics
Trade	Hobby
Swap	Postmark
Fair/unfair	
Purchase	

Step 1: Explore

Watch/Listen/Read - Learn

- Before the unit commences, organise with another school to start a pen pal exchange between classes. write letters at the [Auspost Pen Pal Club site](#).
- Discuss why people send letters and inspire by providing a few examples of letters that changed the world.
- Pose the guiding question:
How do you structure a letter and what features should it have?
- You can find more lessons, videos and templates on how to
- After conducting a class brainstorm, model the key features of a letter and jointly construct an example.
 - Date and address of recipient
 - Salutation (greeting)
 - Body of content
 - Closing remarks
 - Signature
 - Postscript

Step 2: Analyse

Solve a Problem - Think

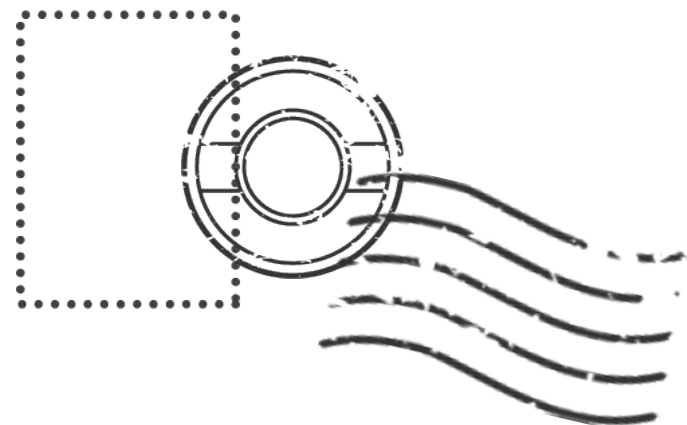
- Discuss the concept of a pen pal and distribute the [templates](#) from Australia Post. *What inclusions do I need to have on an envelope to ensure it gets to the correct address?*
- Explain that the students will be writing a letter to their very own pen pal to explain the hobby of stamp collecting.
- After [drafting and editing](#) their letters, students use the stationary to handwrite a letter to their new pen pal.
- Consider providing them with 2 stamps and an [envelope](#). Explain that the first stamp is to be affixed to the front with the recipient's address, but the second is a gift to kickstart their pen pal's stamp collection that would be placed inside the envelope.
- Pose the guiding question:

- If possible, conduct a class excursion to the local post office or postbox to mail the letters. [Australia Post](#) can provide support with this.

Step 3: Create

Try Something New - Do

- Pose the guiding question:
Consider the learning you now have about the hobby of stamp collecting. How would you start a philatelics group at school?
- Divide the class into two groups and task them with creating a club. They must consider their club name, charter, where and how often they will meet, what volunteer positions need to be filled (president, secretary etc.), its purpose, and if they will have a niche.
- Once they have established their club, allow enthusiastic members to meet weekly and grow their stamp collections.
- If there are any very keen students, encourage them to explore philatelic groups (with parent / guardian permission and supervision).



Independent Learning

This matrix provides extra student-led activities that can be completed independently, in small groups, or as homework tasks. The activities with a star ★ are more challenging or will take longer to complete. Some will require teacher scaffolding.

English	STEM	The Arts	Critical Thinking (Research)
<p>★ Write a letter to a family member, friend or ask your teacher to help you find a penpal. Address the envelope and affix a stamp, then take it to your local post office and watch the process of how it is sent.</p> <p>Find a series of stamps that inspire you. Use each stamp in the series to create a series of comic strip cells.</p>	<p>Different stamp values are needed to mail letters and packages to different places. Using a set of scales, weigh different items and decide which stamp value should be placed on them. Use this calculator to help you.</p> <p>★ Create your own stamp stickers using this recipe to make the backing adhesive.</p> <p>Mix 4 tblsp hot water and 2 tblsp gelatin in a bowl. Use a paintbrush to spread the mix onto the back of your homemade stamps. Let dry for 30 minutes. Dampen the back with a paper towel and your stamps are ready to stick!</p>	<p>Create a wall artwork by collecting used stamps and making a collage of them in your favourite shape. If you want an extra challenge, try to make a mandala using them.</p> <p>★ Find a used food tin (ask an adult to clean it and ensure it doesn't have any sharp edges). Collect used stamps and apply the art of decoupage to cover the outside of the tin. You have now made a beautiful container for holding pencils or other items.</p> <p>Create a memory card game by drawing and colouring pictures of your favourite stamps. Create 2 copies of each stamp until you get about 20 pairs. Play the game with a partner.</p>	<p>Investigate the process that posties take to deliver letters in Australia. Research the different modes of transport they use, and how deliveries differ depending on where you live.</p> <p>The world's largest stamp is almost 6m and was made by Saudi Post on 14th February, 2022. Research some other 'world's biggest' postage items like envelopes, mail boxes, packages etc. and compare their dimensions. What would need to be considered to actually use these items?</p> <p>Research all the words you know connected to stamp collecting (philatelics) and create a word glossary explaining what each of them mean.</p>

Resources & Links

Resources

[Australia Post Pen Pal Club](#)

[Cool stuff about stamps](#) (pdf download)

[Stamp collecting tips for beginners – part 1](#)

[Stamp collecting tips for beginners – part 2](#)

[Australian Curriculum](#)

[Stamp Collecting Month](#)

[Kids stamp album](#)

[Stamp issues](#)

[Why collect stamps?](#)

[Meet some stamp designers](#)

[Pop culture stamps](#)

[MyStamps and personalised stamps](#)

[Australia Post Education Hub](#)

Australian Territories - Stamp Issues

[Australian Antarctic Territory](#)

[Christmas Island](#)

[Norfolk Island](#)

[Cocos \(Keeling\) Islands](#)

