

OUR COMMUNITIES SOCIAL SCIENCE

TEACHER'S HANDBOOK FOR YEARS 1 to 6



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FOR YEARS 1 to 6**



Misistry of Education

Port Vila

Republic of Vanuatu

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Contents

General Introduction	5
The General Studies Programme	5
General and Specific Objectives	7
General Studies Scope and Sequence	8
Outline of Units for Years 1 to 6	9
Suggested weekly time allocation for General Studies in Primary Schools	15
Possible school timetable	15
The Classroom	16
Materials	17
Evaluation	17
Our Communities	19
Introduction	19
Conceptual Scheme	20
Activities - knowledge, skills and values	22
History / Geography / Civics	22
Skills	23
Methodology	24



General Introduction

The General Studies Programme

The General Studies course for Years One to Six of Vanuatu Primary Schools consists of four sections:

- Our Environment
- Our Communities
- Our Needs
- Religious Instruction

The General and Specific Objectives of the course are given on page 7. The broad details of the sections are set out in the “Scope and Sequence” table on page 8. The units for Years 1 to 6 of the sections on Our Environment and Our Communities are outlined on pages 9 to 14. The time allocation and a possible school timetable are given on page 15.

Details of what is covered at each Year level are set out in the Teacher’s Guide for each year. These are as follows:

Our Environment (Basic Science)

One Teacher’s Guide for Basic Science (Our Environment), containing details of the year’s course, is published for each year level. The Guides are set out term by term, to make it easy for teachers to plan their work. They also suggest a time allocation and give details of a range of possible activities. They are published under the title *Our Environment, Basic Science Teacher’s Guide*.

Our Communities (Social Science)

A Teacher’s Guide for Social Science (Our Communities) is published for each level, in the same way as the Teacher’s Guide for Basic Science. The Guides are published under the title *Our Communities, Social Science Teacher’s Guide*.

Our Needs (HNA)

Health, Nutrition and Agriculture books have been prepared and are distributed to schools as sets of separate materials. Each year level Teacher’s Guide gives information about objectives, topics and time allocation.

Religious Instruction

Religious Instruction materials are being re-written in conjunction with the Vanuatu Christian Council. They will consist of year level books with Bible stories and students' activities. These will also be available separately.

Integration

The different sections of the General Studies course should work together. They are not divided into "subjects" such as biology, physics, history, geography or civics. These aspects are all dealt with in the course through integrated topics. There may be some overlap between the different sections, where similar topics appear. This is seen positively, as topics can be approached from different points of view. Where this occurs, the teacher can treat these together – this will be apparent from the overviews in the Teacher's Guide. One example of this would be our physical environment, which can be approached as a scientific study, by examining society's interactions with the environment, and by considering the importance of a healthy environment. Children should be encouraged to see such interconnections.

Throughout the course teachers should encourage the integration of language and mathematics. The topics in the programme can become the focus for many language exercises and teachers should encourage the children to express their questions, opinions and ideas at all times. Similarly, the topics provide many opportunities for mathematical concepts to be reinforced and practised and teachers should use every opportunity to highlight the usefulness of mathematics.

Teachers should also look for integration with other subjects, such as the Arts and Physical Education. There will be many topics and lessons which can be treated in an integrated way and, as long as students gain knowledge and skills and develop values, the strict "discipline" approach is not seen as necessary.

Student's Books

For each year level there will be Student's Book to accompany the *Our Environment* and the *Our Communities* Teacher's Guides. These will have pictures, drawings, diagrams and other helpful material that will help students with the activities outlined in the Teacher's Guides. Teachers can reproduce material from the Student's Book if necessary.

General and Specific Objectives

General Objectives

General Studies in the Primary School should enable children to:

- become healthy, informed and contributing members of their families, communities and nation;
- develop an understanding of the past, present and future of the nation and the Pacific region;
- learn about the Vanuatu national Government, its democratic foundations, and become aware of their rights and duties as citizens;
- learn about local government at the village, islands and towns levels and about countries outside the Pacific region
- become aware of nature and science as it affects them in their daily lives;
- understand, develop and protect the environment in which they live;
- understand that Vanuatu is a nation based on Christian principles.

Specific Objectives

At the end of Year 6 children should be able to:

- recognise common animals and their habitats, and their relationship to the environment;
- recognise common flowers, plants and trees and their relationship to the environment;
- understand the factors that go towards maintaining and preserving the environment in which they live;
- understand the concepts of climate and weather;
- understand simple natural and physical science principles and facts which are part of their environment;
- understand the history of Vanuatu, and its relationship through time with its South Pacific neighbours;
- understand the geography of Vanuatu, the map of the nation, islands, towns and villages;
- understand and respect traditional and modern customs and social living in both urban and rural situations;
- understand the democratic process and the structure of national and local government;
- understand their role as global citizens;
- recognise the role of health and nutrition in making them physically and mentally fit;
- work productively in both traditional and modern gardens;
- apply Christian beliefs and principles in their everyday life.

General Studies Scope and Sequence

	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4	YEAR 5	YEAR 6	
OUR ENVIRONMENT	LIVING THINGS	• Recognition of familiar plants and animals	• Useful plants and animals	• Recognition and simple classification of plants and animals	• Simple structure of plants and animals	• Growth development and reproduction of plants and animals	• Adaptation of plants and animals to their surroundings
	MATTER	• Solid, liquid and gas	• Soil, air and water are needed for the growing of plants	• Water-cycle and weathering of rocks	• Rocks and soil	• Volcanoes and earthquakes	• Stars and planets
	ENERGY	• The weather	• The sun keeps us warm and healthy	• People and energy	• Wood and gas as fuels	• Different forms of energy	• Conservation of energy
	INTERDEPENDENCE	• People need food, water, air, shelter and energy	• Plants use sunlight to grow	• Simple food chain	• Living things need resources	• Population and pollution	• Conservation of environment
COMMUNITY	HOW COMMUNITIES WORK	• Me, my family and my home	• My class, my school and my village	• Towns, islands and people of Vanuatu	• Melanesian countries, peoples and customs	• Other Pacific countries and peoples	• People of other countries
	OUR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES	• Before going to school	• Community responsibilities	• Our roles as Ni-Vanuatu citizens	• Making a living in Vanuatu	• Building a nation within a Pacific community	• The global community
OUR NEEDS	Health, Nutrition and Agriculture (See booklets for details)						
RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION	Stories from the Bible and relevant activities						

Outline of Units for Years 1 to 6

GENERAL STUDIES YEAR 1 (7 lessons each week)

OUR COMMUNITIES: 3 lessons per week		WEEKS	OUR ENVIRONMENT: 4 lessons per week			
TERM ONE						
Unit 1. Topic	1A	Me, the individual I am special	1 2	Unit 1. Topic	1A	Plants Plants for eating
	1B	Ways in which people are alike and different	3 4		1B	Parts of a plant
	1C	Emotions and change	5 6		1C	Growing plants
	1D 2A	Caring for myself Village animals	7 8	Unit 2.		Animals
Unit 2.	2A	Others around me Parents and relatives	9 10		2B	Sea animals
	2B	Family roles and responsibilities	11 12		2C	Other animals
TERM TWO						
Unit 2.	2C	(Continued) Our friends and helpers	1 2	Unit 3.	3A	Air, water and solids Air exists
	2D	Responsibilities with friends	3 4		3B	Working with water
Unit 3.	3A	Play and leisure Play and leisure activities	5 6 7		3C	Comparing solids
				Unit 4.		The sky and the weather
Unit 4.	4A	Our surroundings Things around me	8 9 10		4A	Sunlight and shadow
					4B	Clouds and rain
	4B	Caring for our environment	11 12		4C	Wind and storms
TERM THREE						
Unit 5.		Our food and clothes	1	Unit 5.		Food, water & clothing from the environment
	5A	Our food	2 3		5A	Food for health
	5B	Our Clothes	4 5 6		5B	Water and us
					5C	Traditional and modern clothing
Unit 6.	6A	Our homes Our houses	7 8	Unit 6.		Materials and energy from the environment
					6A	Local and imported materials
	6B	Responsibilities at home	9 10		6B	Energy comes from the environment
	6C	Rules at home	11 12		6C	Energy for moving about

GENERAL STUDIES YEAR 2 (7 lessons each week)

OUR COMMUNITIES: 3 lessons per week		WEEKS	OUR ENVIRONMENT: 4 lessons per week			
TERM ONE						
Unit 1. Topic	1A	The classroom Topology - physical characteristics	1 2	Unit 1. Topic	1A	Soil and plants What soil is like
	1B	Students	3 4		1B	Plants need good soil
	1C	Classroom activities	5 6	Unit 2.	2A	Sun and heat The effects of heat
	1D	Working with others	7 & 8		2B	Touching and feeling
	1E	Rules in class	9 10	Unit 3.	3A	Living and non-living things The differences between living and non-living things
	1F	Helping	11 & 12		3B	Kinds of living things
TERM TWO						
Unit 2.	2A	The school Topology, physical characteristics	1 2	Unit 4.	4A	Recognizing plants The variety of plants
	2B	People around school	3 4		4B	Parts of a plant
	2C	School activities	5 6	Unit 5.	5A	Sea and reef environments Animals of the sea
	2D	Friendships at school	7 & 8		5B	Animals and plants of the reef
	2E	Rules at school	9 10	Unit 6.	6A	Our senses Eyes and ears
	2F	Helping at school	11 & 12		6B	Nose and mouth
TERM THREE						
Unit 3.	3A	The village environment Topology, physical characteristics	1 2	Unit 7.	7A	Coastal plain & village Animals of the local environment
	3B	Buildings and materials	3 4		7B	Plants of the local environment
	3C	People and occupations	5 6	Unit 8.	8A	Recognizing animals The variety of animals
	3D	Life in the village	7 & 8		8B	Characteristics of animals
	3E	Rules and responsibilities	9 10	Unit 9.	9A	Air, water & energy for growth Growth and development of plants
	3F	Helpers in the village	11 & 12		9B	Growth and development of animals

GENERAL STUDIES YEAR 3 (7 lessons each week)

OUR COMMUNITIES: 3 lessons per week		WEEKS	OUR ENVIRONMENT: 4 lessons per week	
TERM ONE				
Unit 1. Topic	1A	Introduction to mapping Drawing plans	1 2	Unit 1. Topic
	1B	Simple maps and keys	3 4	1A
	2A	Living on our islands Our island : Location, topography	5 6	1C
	2B	Other islands in Vanuatu	7 8	1D
	2C	The sea around our island	9 10	Unit 2. 2A
	2D	Food and water on our island	11 12	2B
TERM TWO				
Unit 3. 3A		Island travel and transport Local travel	1 2	2C
	3B	Inter-island travel	3 4	Unit 3. 3A
	3C	International travel and transport	5 6	3B
Unit 4. 4A		People on our islands Different people on our islands	7 8	3C
	4B	Different types of families	9 10	3D
	4C	Children from other lands in Vanuatu	11 12	Unit 4. 4A
TERM THREE				
Unit 5. 5A		Towns Living in Port Vila	1 2	4B
	5B	Employment and commerce in towns	3 4	4C
	5C	Town families and schooling	5 6	4D
Unit 6. 6A		Working together as citizens Traditional and modern life	7 8 9	4E
	6B	Public and community services	10 11 12	4F 4G

GENERAL STUDIES YEAR 4 (7 lessons each week)

OUR COMMUNITIES: 3 lessons per week		WEEKS	OUR ENVIRONMENT: 4 lessons per week	
TERM ONE				
Unit 1. Topic	1A	History Origins of our earth	1 2	Unit 1. Topic
	1B	Islands of Vanuatu	3 4	1A 1B
				Movement How animals move
				How things move
Unit 2.	2A	Civics Economy of Vanuatu - trade	5 6	1C
	2B	Economy of Vanuatu - tourism	7 8	1D
				Coal and oil as fossil fuels Gas and petrol as fuels
Unit 3.	3A	Vanuatu and the world The Pacific - an overview	9 10	Unit 2. 2A
			11 12	2B
				Substances Rocks and soil Wood
TERM TWO				
Unit 4.	4A	History People on the earth	1 2	2C
Unit 5.	5A	Civics Economy of Vanuatu- business and co-operatives	3 4	2D
	5B	Economy of Vanuatu - transport and travel	5 6	Unit 3. 3A
				How living things work A Structure of plants
Unit 6.	6A	Vanuatu and the world Melanesia - an overview	7 8	3B
	6B	New Caledonia	9 10	3C
	6C	Papua New Guinea	11 12	3D
				Skeletons and muscles Digestion, breathing and blood circulation Support in animals without backbones
TERM THREE				
Unit 7.	7A	History People in the Pacific	1 2	Unit 4. 4A
	7B	People in Vanuatu	3 4	4B
			5 6	4C
				Resources for living Food Water (including the sea) Shelter and clothing
Unit 8.	8A	Civics Population of Vanuatu	7 8	4D
Unit 9.	9A	Vanuatu and the world The Solomons	9 10	4E
	9B	Fiji	11 12	4F
				Agriculture Forestry

GENERAL STUDIES YEAR 5 (7 lessons each week)

OUR COMMUNITIES: 3 lessons per week		WEEKS	OUR ENVIRONMENT: 4 lessons per week	
TERM ONE				
Unit 1. Topic	1A	History Early European exploration of the Pacific	1 2	Unit 1. Topic
			3 4	1A Maps and mapping
				1B Islands, continents and oceans
Unit 2.	2A	Civics The constitution and Parliament of Vanuatu	5 6	1C Volcanoes and earthquakes
			7 8	1D Fossils and dinosaurs
Unit 3.	3A	Vanuatu and the world The Pacific - Polynesia	9 10	1E Chemicals in our lives
			11 12	Unit 2. 2A Energy Electricity and magnets
TERM TWO				
Unit 4.	4A	History Traders, missionaries and blackbirders	1 2	2B Light
			3 4	2C Sound
Unit 5.	5A	Civics The President and Prime Minister of Vanuatu	5 6	2D Heat
			7 8	Unit 3. 3A Populations and pollution Food chains and food pyramids
Unit 6.	6A	Vanuatu and the world The Pacific - Micronesia	9 10	3B Ecology and interdependence
			11 12	3C Pollution and wastes
TERM THREE				
Unit 7.	7A	History The impact of European settlement in Vanuatu	1 2	3D Cycles on the earth
	7B	The condominium in Vanuatu	3 4	Unit 4. 4A Growth, development and reproduction in living things Animal growth and development
Unit 8.	8A	Civics Ministries of government	5 6	4B Animal reproduction
			7 & 8	4C Human reproduction
Unit 9.	9A	Vanuatu and the world Pacific organizations and Vanuatu's role.	9 10	4D Plant growth and development
			11 12	4E Plant reproduction

GENERAL STUDIES YEAR 6 (7 lessons each week)

OUR COMMUNITIES: 3 lessons per week		WEEKS	OUR ENVIRONMENT: 4 lessons per week	
TERM ONE				
Unit 1. Topic	1A	History The gaining of Vanuatu's independence	1 2	Unit 1. Topic
				1A Making and using electricity
Unit 2.	2A	Civics Ministries of Government	3 4	1B Producing heat and light
			5 6	1C Transportation - motors and engines
Unit 3.	3A	Vanuatu and the world The World - introduction	7 8	1D Communication - radio, TV, telephone
	3B	The World - peoples	9 10	Unit 2. 2A Adaptation to the environment Coordination in animals
	3C	The World - trade	11 12	2B Diseases and their prevention
TERM TWO				
Unit 4.	4A	History Developments since independence	1 2 3 4	2C Animal adaptations 2D Plant adaptations
Unit 5.	5A	Civics Other government organizations	5 6	Unit 5. 3A Conserving the environment Endangered species
			7 8	3B Ecology and biodiversity
Unit 6.	6A	Vanuatu and the world Australia	9 10	3C Personal conservation - reduce, reuse, recycle
	6B	New Zealand	11 12	3D National conservation - a strategy
TERM THREE				
Unit 7.	7A	History Our changing society	1 2	3E Impact of population, agriculture, mining
Unit 8.	8A	Civics Other non-government organizations	3 4	3F Changes over time - greenhouse effect and ice ages
Unit 9.	9A	Vanuatu and the world Examples of Africa, Europe, America, Asia.	5 6	Unit 4. 4A Looking beyond earth Rockets, satellites and space
			7 8 9 10	4B Earth and moon system 4C Gravity and tides
	9B	World organizations and Vanuatu's role	11 12	4D Planets and stars

Suggested weekly time allocation for General Studies in Primary Schools

		No. of Lessons x minutes	Hours
Our Environment	Living Things	4 x 25	1.40
	Matter		
	Energy		
	Interdependence		
Our Communities	How communities work together	2 x 25	1.15
	Our roles and responsibilities	1 x 25	
Our Needs	Health	1 x 20	1.00
	Nutrition	1 x 20	
	Agriculture	1 x 20	
Religious Instruction		1 x 25	0.25
Total			4.20

Possible school timetable

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
50 min	50 min	50 min	50 min	60 min
Our Communities	Our Environment	Our Communities (1x25 min)	Our Environment	Our Needs
Double Lesson (2x25 min)	Double Lesson (2x25 min)	Religious Instruction (1x25 min)	Double Lesson (2x25 min)	HNA (3x20 min)

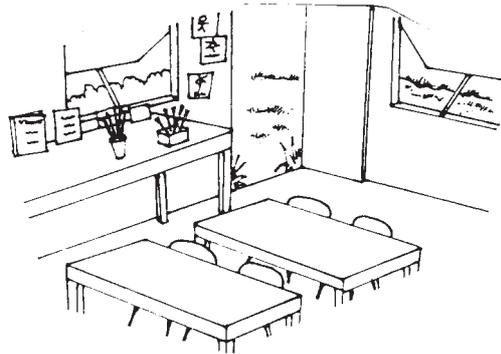
Note: This indicates one way of allocating the times during a school week.

Schools can vary this according to their own situations.

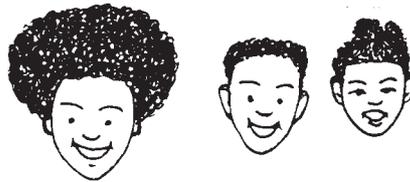
The Classroom

A successful classroom is:

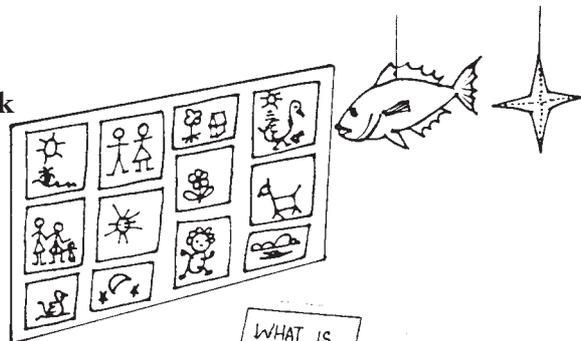
bright and airy



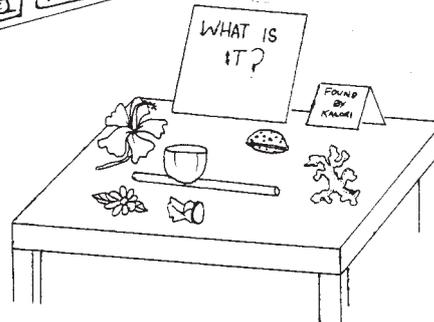
positive and cheerful



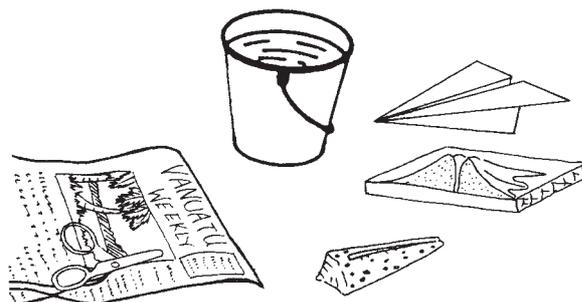
decorated
by children's work



interesting
and **challenging**



active
and **fun**



Materials

The focus of the General Studies curriculum begins with the child's surroundings. In schools, the familiar surroundings for children are those of their own classroom. All teachers should attempt to provide an attractive and interesting classroom. Many ways of achieving such a classroom are possible and thoughtful teachers can improvise at little or no cost.

Recycling of all kinds of materials can be interesting and useful. Old newspapers and magazines for cutting, old clothes for cleaning, empty containers for storage, empty packets for a class shop and broken appliances for interesting bits and pieces are all examples of recycling.

Local materials are all around us but sometimes we forget how useful they can be. Mats, baskets and fans all have their place, as do pieces of coral, shells, rocks and soil. Displays of leaves, flowers and fruit of local plants, with names attached, help to reinforce the language used in the classroom.

Other materials, often imported, should be collected and displayed. Off-cuts of corrugated iron, aluminium cans, used dry cells and pieces of different plastics are all materials that can be observed, experimented with and often usefully recycled.

A successful teacher is always thinking about and looking for ways to use the materials available to provide interesting learning situations for her or his students.

Evaluation

The practice of evaluation is the obtaining of information which is useful for making decisions and judgements. The most important judgements are those which help teachers to understand the progress of their students and how this can be improved. Assessment, the measuring of a student's ability in a particular area against a fixed standard, is one part of evaluation. Assessment of children may occur at particular times through a child's schooling, particularly in the formal process of selection to secondary school at the end of Year 6. However, evaluation will be taking place throughout the whole six years of primary school. The objectives of units will be evaluated at various points through the course. This can be done in a number of ways and should include an evaluation of the child's development of skills and social development, as well as the testing of knowledge.

The range of methods available include:

- objective written tests, e.g. multiple choice, questions, incomplete sentences;
- short answer written tests;
- essay tests;
- questionnaires;
- interviews by teacher;
- simulation and role plays;
- observation by teacher, including check lists, anecdotal records, work-samples, etc.
- group projects.

Our communities

Introduction

The section of the General Studies Curriculum dealing with *Our Communities* is divided into two themes:

- a) **How communities work together**
(Suggested time allocation, two lessons per week.) This deals with the various groups making up communities, their structures and how they work together. It also considers how communities interact with their environment. The theme starts in Year One with *Me, my family and my home* and gradually works from the child outwards until it finishes in Year Six with *People of other Countries*.
- b) **Our roles and responsibilities**
(Suggested time allocation, one lesson per week)
This theme accompanies the first and looks more closely at the roles and responsibilities we have as individuals and community members – how we can help, how we share, how we interrelate and what responsibilities we have to our environments.

There is obviously an overlap between the two themes and the activities may be dealt with together, rather than as separate streams. Where this is so, it is made clear in the Teacher's Guide.

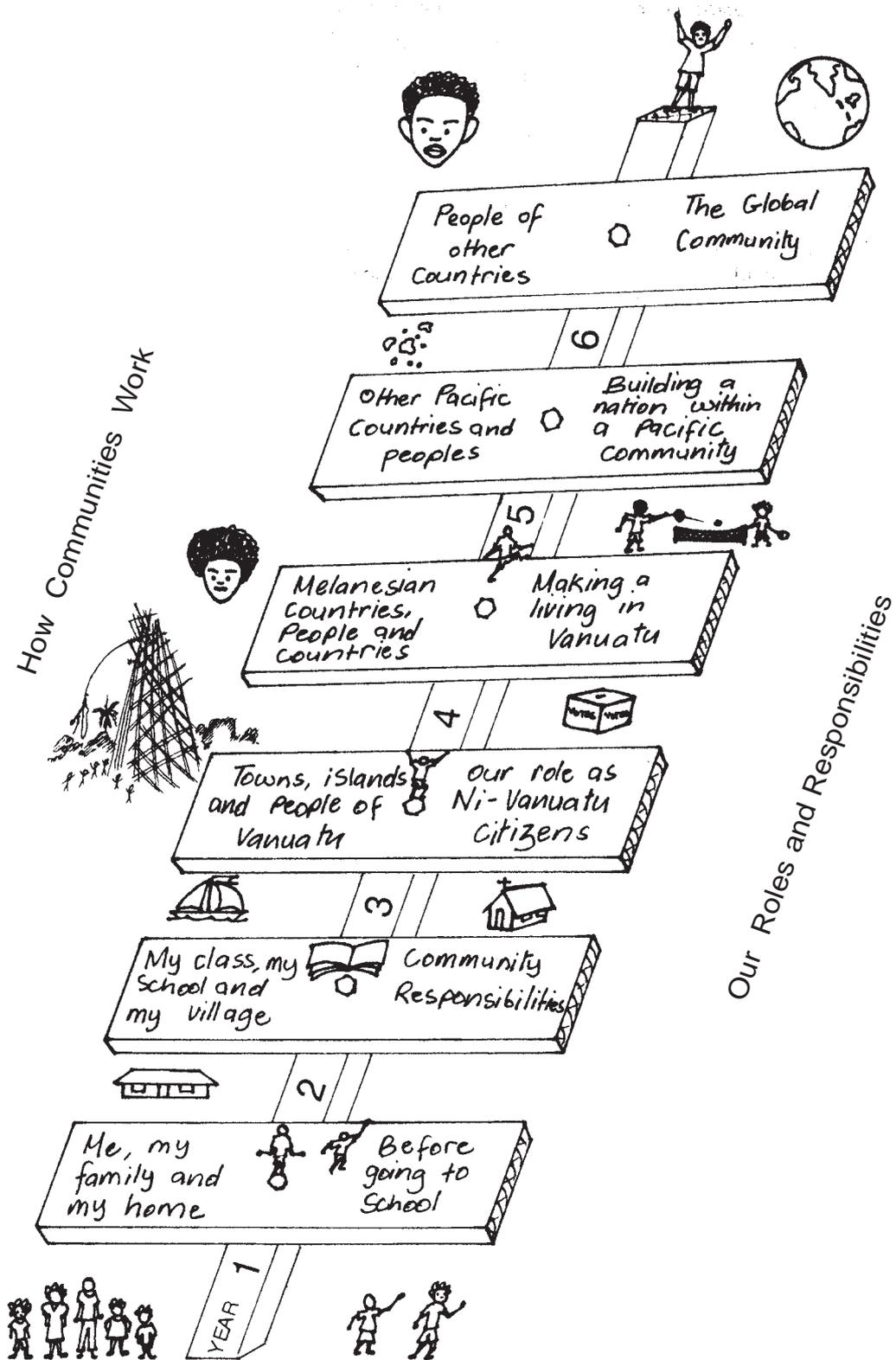
The course is not divided into sections such as **geography**, **history** or **environment**, but is treated as an integrated whole. What is seen as important in both themes is the relationship that exists between the individual and his/her environment. This includes the child's interactions with people, social structures and physical surroundings. It is important that children understand all these relationships, that their actions can affect other people and that the care of their environment will help to make for a better society. At times there may be some overlap with the *Our Environment* section. As mentioned earlier, teachers may treat such topics in an integrated way and children will begin to see the connections which make living in communities so complicated but interesting.

Conceptual Scheme

The scope and sequence of *Our Community* has been designed to follow through the two complementary themes from Years One to Six. It begins with a focus on the immediate local environment of the child and gradually builds on the child's experience. By Year 6, children will have progressed from learning about their own communities, to their own nation and finally to the world community. As the great majority of Vanuatu children do not proceed beyond primary school, it is important that by the end of Year 6 children not only know their own roles in their local and national community but also understand Vanuatu's role in the global community. The world is getting smaller because of modern technology and communications and children should have a global view as well as a local one. We are all world citizens as well as members of our local community.

The scheme is illustrated on the following page.

CONCEPTUAL SCHEME



Activities - knowledge, skills and values

The activities that are suggested for use in Years 1 to 6 are designed to help children learn about their own families, villages and nation, and the place of Vanuatu in the Pacific and world communities. At the same time, they will be learning about their own roles and responsibilities. Children will gather knowledge but they will also develop a range of skills which will help them to become both well developed individuals and responsible citizens of Vanuatu. At the same time, they will be clarifying a set of values which will encourage them to care for others and work together co-operatively.

History / Geography / Civics

While these are not treated as separate subjects, they are covered in some detail throughout the course. Children are introduced to simple geographic concepts in Years 1 and 2 and begin to develop more formal mapping skills in Years 3 to 4. Concepts of climate and orientation are also introduced at Year 4. These are then extended in Years 5 and 6 to a more global view and more sophisticated mapping skills.

History is very much a part of the *Our Communities* course. Simple historical concepts are introduced in Years 3 and 4 in relation to peoples of Vanuatu and other Melanesian countries. The history of Vanuatu is dealt with more extensively in Year 5, in the context of Pacific history. The current book *The Story of Our Islands* has been revised and is the basis for this study.

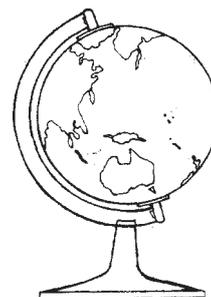
Civics is a constant theme throughout *Our roles and responsibilities*. Children are encouraged to examine the ways in which communities work and their place and role in this process. In the higher years of the primary school, this extends to a more detailed examination of people and government, and the three books entitled *People and Government* (one for each of Years 4 to 6) will be a basis for this. Teachers are encouraged to develop and extend children's knowledge of current events, particularly in upper primary classes. A period of time (10 minutes) may be allocated each week where particular children are given the task of providing a brief summary of local and some international news. Teachers should make use of major events that occur and alert children to their importance. If necessary, teachers can vary their timetables and course outlines to fit activities around such events - flexibility is important here.

Skills

Learning about our communities involves interacting with others on a range of levels. Many of the skills used in studying our local environment are also applicable to studying people and events. These skills fall generally into four categories.

1. Research skills

- reading
- interviewing
- mapping
- locating resources
- interpreting tables and graphs
- note taking
- listening
- surveying
- observing



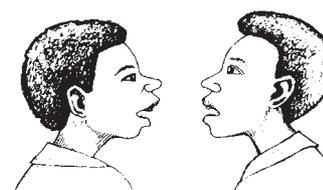
2. Organising

- sorting
- recording
- interpreting
- analysing
- generalising
- graphing
- mapping



3. Communicating

- discussing
- listening
- speaking
- writing
- dramatising
- responding
- role-playing
- motor skills
- singing
- arts skills
- drawing



4. Social Skills

- co-operating
- problem solving
- conflict resolution
- group work
- caring/sensitivity
- accepting responsibility
- valuing
- expressing feelings

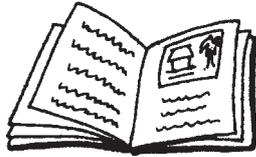


It is indicated at the start of each topic which particular skills are being focused on. Some skills are not to be developed until later in the primary school.

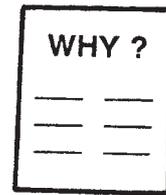
Methodology

Children are encouraged to:

investigate



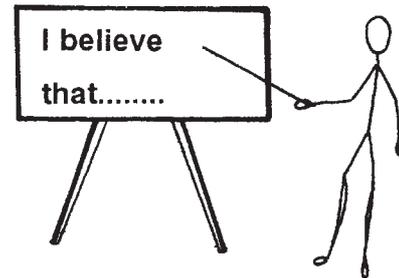
survey



work in groups



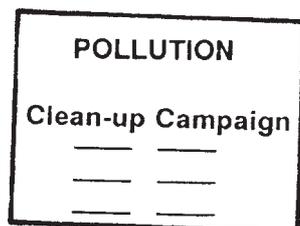
draw conclusions



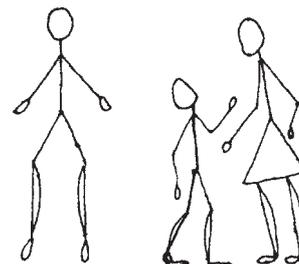
interact



act on Findings



role play



Children are encouraged to gather information from a wide range of sources and to interact with other members of the class and with members of school and local communities. Because the content includes studies of how people work together, students should work together in pairs and groups to discuss work and produce results.

A useful model for teachers to follow is the MISA model set out below. Although the Teacher's Guide is not set out formally like this, teachers should keep these four basic steps in mind when teaching a topic or unit of work.

Motivating

Getting students interested and involved in introductory activities.

Investigation

Researching, reading, listening, finding out.

Sorting

Writing, graphing, drawing, tabling, recording information.

Acting

Coming to conclusions, making generalisations, applying findings, seeing how things work in action.

These do not necessarily always follow in sequence. It may be that, while teaching a unit, teachers may move back and forward between various steps. Any topic or unit of work should end with the **Acting** step.

A simple example of this is set out below for the topic *Family* (Year 1).

Motivating

Discussion of families protection, shelter, food. Pictures of families.



Investigation

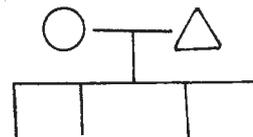
Who is in our family?
How many brothers and sisters do I have?
Aunts? Uncles?

Sorting

Teacher helps children to draw simple family tree.

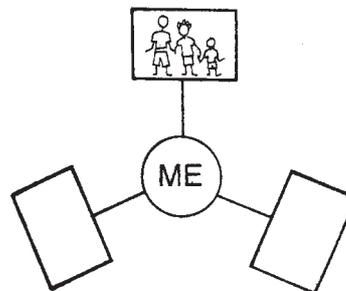
Investigation

Who does the work in our family?
How do I help at home?
Keeping a simple diary.



Sorting

Drawing a picture of a child helping in the family.
A simple chart for display.



Acting

Families are
Children have a Family Day when members of their family can visit the school. Children make a present/card to take home to their parents.

Brainstorming /Role playing

Two particular activities that are useful in the teaching of Social Studies are brainstorming and role playing. As these may be unfamiliar to teachers in Vanuatu schools, it is advisable that teachers read carefully the brief notes below. These activities can be used at all levels, if the teacher adapts to the age level.

Brainstorming

Teachers do this with students on many occasions. It is simply the gathering of information by asking students in a class to volunteer verbal answers to a general question. The following are important aspects of brain-storming.

- The question in the topic heading is usually fairly general, allowing students to give a wide range of answers.
- Children are allowed to call out answers without restriction. The teacher does not suggest that any answers are “right” or “wrong” to encourage children to answer.
- Children are encouraged to build on existing answers. One idea might give rise to other ideas.
- The teacher keeps a record of all ideas on the blackboard. This may be a formal list but can also be a series of quickly jotted words or phrases, anywhere on the board.
- It is important to note ideas quickly, so that children’s ideas, can be collected rapidly and so that they are further encouraged.
- Having collected a lot of ideas, the teacher can use these in a number of ways, for example, by:
 - selecting one or two for further investigation;
 - grouping ideas into categories;
 - prioritising ideas;
 - forming the class into groups to research into particular ideas;
 - or groups of ideas.

The advantage of brainstorming is that children can contribute to the gathering of ideas and all have their contributions recognised. Sometimes ideas may arise that the teacher has not considered. The grouping or prioritising that takes place is also good practice for the pupils in categorising and analysing. The teacher can always guide this stage of the process to ensure that the correct ideas or groups of ideas are selected. This is a particularly good way of introducing a topic.

Role-playing

This is a form of acting/dramatisation in the classroom which is intended to lead to a deeper understanding of other people, by acting out real life situations. In role playing students take on the role of another person and pretend to feel like, think like and act like that person. This gives them the opportunity to begin to understand why other human beings behave as they do and to begin to understand how certain kinds of behaviour affect others.

Role-playing enables the child to express ideas and feelings that they may normally keep hidden. It also enables the teacher to find out what the students really feel and think about certain situations. This is in contrast to the formal class situation where the students simply say what they think their teacher wants to hear. In role-playing as well as in the discussion which precedes and follows it, members of the class teach and help each other.

Role-plays may range from the very simple (for example, in Year 1, role-playing jobs around the house) to the more complex (for example, in Year 6, role-playing a situation in Parliament).

It is very important to observe the following guidelines:

- Never use role-playing simply to fill in time. Consider carefully which topics lend themselves to role-playing, and that role-plays are in their proper context.
- Always discuss carefully beforehand the purpose of the role-play, and give firm guide-lines as to how it is to be carried out; for example, how many people in the group, how long it should take, etc.
- Be very careful of role-plays that may involve emotional situations, e.g. role-plays about families where some children have personal family difficulties. When children do get emotional or excited about a role-play, it is very important to spend time afterwards discussing the role-play, emphasising that these are unreal situations, and restoring the class to order.