

The Mekong:

What's happening in and on the river? Do we know?



What is happening in and on the Mekong River?

The main focus in this Inquiry is to focus upon what lives in and on the Mekong river and it's tributaries.

The teachers will create a River mural where they will get opportunities to explore concepts, processes and materials so that they incubate ideas that they will take back to the students in their village classroom with their interpretation of what is happening in the Mekong river focusing upon in and on the river and all of it's parts.

The workshop content:

Teachers will complete 8/10 structured learning activities in Art/ Craft/ Science / geography connected to the Australian curriculum [Year 4] over the duration of the 2 day workshop.

The curriculum content:

Biological Science:

- Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them survive in their environment.
- Living things, including plants and animals, depend upon each other to survive.
- Living things have life cycles
- Natural and processed materials have a range of physical properties which influence their use

Science Inquiry skills:

- Science involves making predictions and describing patterns and relationships.
- Science knowledge helps people to understand the effect of their actions
- With guidance, identify questions in familiar contexts that can be investigated scientifically and predict what might happen based on prior knowledge
- Suggest ways to plan and conduct investigations to find answers to questions
- Safely use appropriate materials, tools or equipment to make and record observations, using formal measurements and digital technologies as appropriate.
- Use a range of methods including tables and simple column graphs to represent data and to identify patterns and trends
- Compare results with predictions, suggesting possible reasons for findings
- Represent and communicate ideas and findings in a variety of ways such as diagrams, physical representations and simple reports

Geography:

- The types of vegetation and the significance of that vegetation to the environment and the river.
 - The different perspectives on how this environment can be protected.
 - The natural resources in the local environment that need to be sustained.
 - An individual action that can be taken in response to a local geographical challenge in relation to the river
 - The natural resources provided by the environment, and different views on how they could be used sustainably
 - The sustainable management of waste from production and consumption
- Present findings in a range of communication forms, for example, written, oral, digital, graphic, tabular, and visual, and use geographical terminology
- Reflect on their learning to propose individual action in response to a contemporary geographical challenge and identify the expected effects of the proposal

Mathematics:

- Statistics and Probability:
- Identification of everyday events where one cannot happen if the other does.

- Measurement and size/ shape

Visual arts:

A set of tasks that support artistic investigation and exploration

- Use materials / techniques and processes to explore visual conventions when creating art works: Colour/ shape/ design/ texture and size.
- Manipulate and experiment with combination of various materials.
- Practice a variety of techniques and materials to interpret a theme: tie dyeing, Screen printing, collage, creating using marine debris collected from the river, using recycled products to make and create,

Literacy/ language:

- Build comprehension strategies to build literal and inferred meaning.
- Understand the language of opinion and feeling and the language of factual reporting



Tuning in: Use some video clips/ travel clips of the beautiful Mekong... for some time.

What is the life of the Mekong.. above and within?

Provide opportunities for discussion/ questions. Get the participants to tell us all what they know...

Create a Questioning space/ Provocation or Inquiry table:

On the table: place:

- Sand
- Water from the river
- Rocks
- Greenery from the edge of the river
- Greenery from the river:
- Mekong weed
- Shells
- Dried bugs
- Mud
- Dried fish....5/6 different sort

Introduce group to Scientific exploration tools: Dissectors and Magnifiers. Show how to use them

Break into small groups. Each group to have a Dissector and a Magnifier

Each group to choose one object from table:

Then describe what they are looking at:

- Looks like / feels like/ smells like on the outside

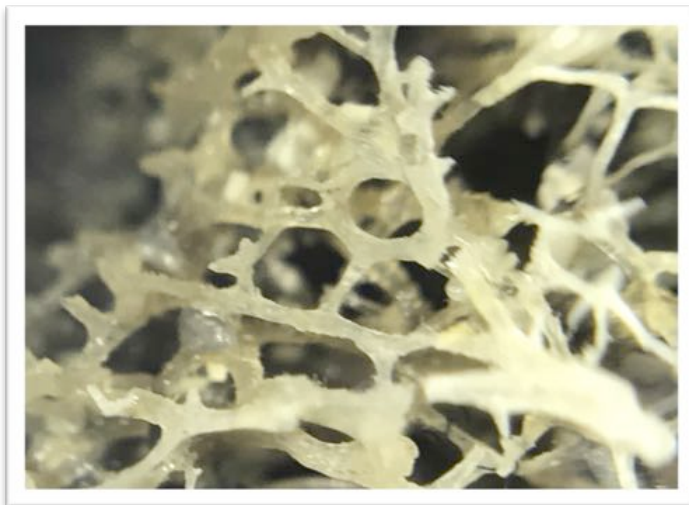
Then, using Dissector, cut

- Same thing on inside?
- What would help you 'look' closer?

10 magnifiers

Symbols to stimulate conversation.

Look at the object on the outside then get closer and closer.



Then:

Looking like a Scientist drawing like an artist.

Drawing what they see...as small as small as they can....

Maybe into a bottle top or a milk bottle lid.

Watch and listen for the language of exploration/ curiosity:



Collect all the small lid drawings. Shuffle them up and hand them around to each other. See if they can guess what they are seeing in front of them. Cells? Hairs? Is it the water? Is it the sand? Have fun with this!

Finding out: A. Discuss what is happening at the:

bottom

middle

top of river?

What is actually **IN** the river? What have you seen?

B. Divide a length of white sheeting into 4 sections lengthwise.[like a folded up blind.]

Leave the top section white.

C. Brainstorm in small groups together on the back at the top of the white sheeting they will be working on. Create a little table and divide into the 3 areas

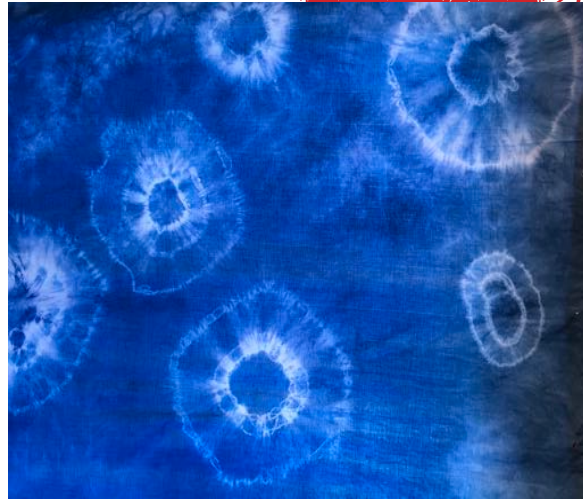
Fill each space...

What is happening??? This process is very important for the successful completing of the Mekong mural.

Pencils.

D. In the bottom three sections of the sheeting using elastic bands tie to create circles or patterns as in water When completed dye the tied sheet in blue dye and hang outside to dry.



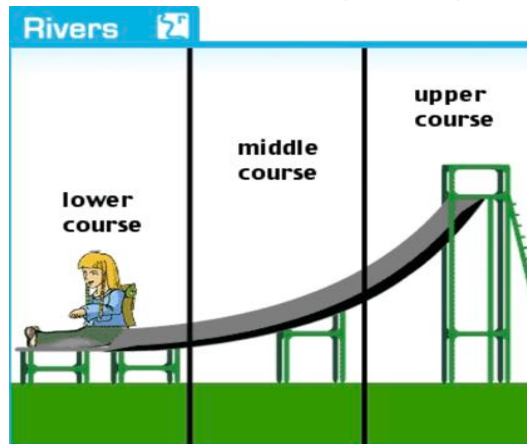


Thread a bamboo stick through the top of the hanging so that it can be hung in the classroom. Fold sheeting into 4.

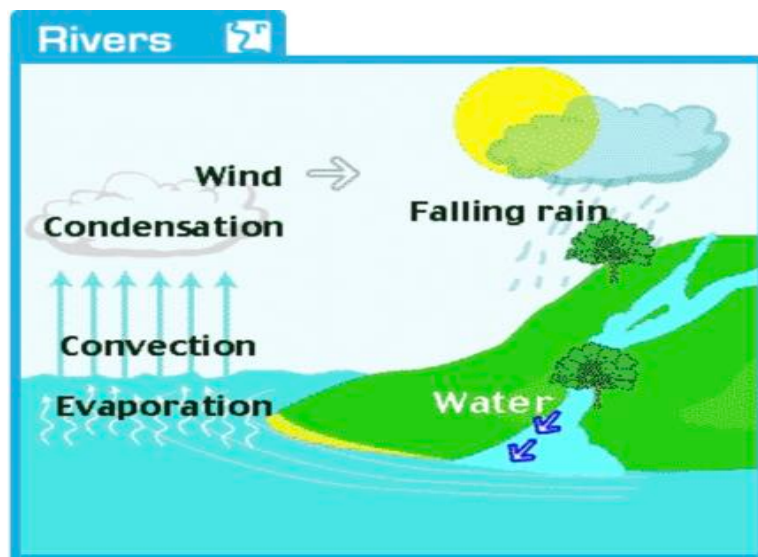
Using 3 bamboo sticks: Thread them through the sheeting to symbolize the bottom, middle and the top sections of the river

Finding out:

- A. Discuss the making of a river and the water cycle. Weather patterns, seasonal change and where the river originates and where it finishes and moves into the sea



- B. Discuss the Mekong water and it's qualities and the river's length and power in relation to the water cycle. Who looks after it?



C. Discuss the Mekong dams and hydro electricity.

Ask some questions about what is happening to the Mekong?

Do they know?

How many dams?

Where?

Why?



D. Transportation: Travelling on the river:



E. What lives in the river?

Everything: Discuss food chains and connections.

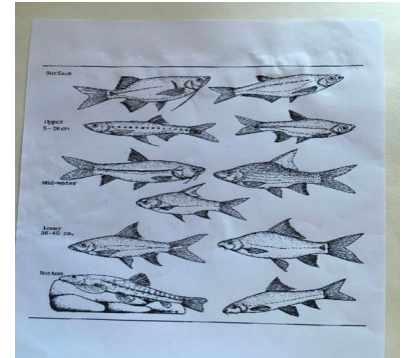
Then:

F. What makes a fish a fish?

List off the body parts of a fish: Chart these: Gills, tail, fins etc.,

Sorting out:

Discuss the largest fish/ catfish/ stingrays etc., at the bottom of the Mekong...
How big / how long and live where? Feed on?
WWWWH and W



Each group choose a photo of a large laminated fish to make and create.



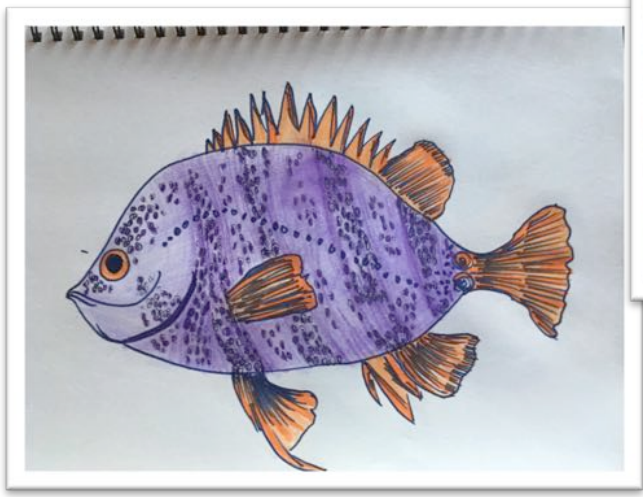
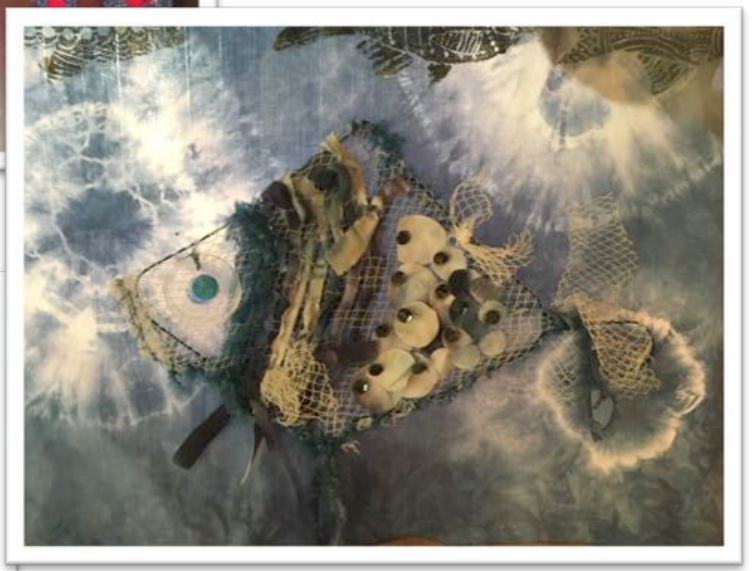
Draw it on a sheet of butcher's paper first.

Make it large.

Then

Layout netting/ coat hangers/wool/ sheeting / lids/ scraps/ string/ recycled products, into the fish shape and put it together with wire/ string/ rope.

Drawing to Learn: 2018
Leith Hogan



Hang the large fish from the bamboo at the bottom section of the river mural
Create rocks and holes at the bottom of the river.

See if they can make several large fish

Then:

2. Look at the fish in the middle of the river. Use images again.

What are they?

Discuss: How endangered are they?

WWWW and H

Create fish using at least 2 or 3 different printing techniques:

- Printing using foam cut outs.
- String printing



Print these fish in the middle section of the mural



3: Make smaller or little fish at the top of the river using a variety of collage materials: Once again: demonstrate a few different techniques. Coloured card and string, little fish stuffed with paper and stapled together, netting fish stuffed with material etc.,
WWWWH

How endangered are these fish?

Hang these from the bamboo at the surface of the river mural.



4. Create a mountain scene at the top of the river mural with coloured paint/ crayons: sandbanks, trees and mountains, sky and sun etc.,.



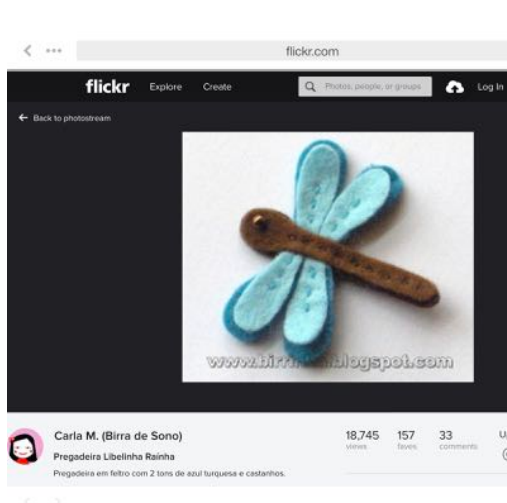
5. Then using plastic bottles and a variety of art and craft materials, tissue papers/ cellophane and crepe papers create dragon flies nymphs/ mosquitoes/ butterflies/ birds, more that live and feed on the surface of the river..... What is their food web? What are the dependent upon?

What body parts do these creatures have?

Look at microscopes and insects and flies collected on the Inquiry table again:

What do they have to have if we are looking like a scientist and creating like an artist?
What else?

How endangered are these creatures? What is affecting them?



Glue these or pin/ staple to the water surface at the top.

Going further: Exhibiting:

What do they know now about the Mekong?

Share your River murals....

What have they learnt?

Share new discoveries.

How will you talk to your students about the Mighty Mekong now?

What new information will you tell them?

