

Reconciliation

Outcomes:

A student:

- 5.2** analyses, organises and synthesises geographical information
- 5.3** selects and uses appropriate written, oral and graphic forms to communicate geographical information
- 5.4** selects and applies appropriate geographical tools
- 5.7** analyses the impacts of different perspectives on geographical issues at local, national and global scales
- 5.8** accounts for differences within and between Australian communities
- 5.9** explains Australia's links with other countries and its role in the global community
- 5.10** applies geographical knowledge, understanding and skills with knowledge of civics to demonstrate informed and active citizenship.

Geographical Tools

Graphs and Statistics

- construct and interpret divided bar and column graphs, and composite line graphs
- recognise and account for change using statistical data

Photographs

collect and use digital images

ICT

- critically analyse a website, including the ethics of the site
- access, collect and interpret electronic information



Future Challenges – Reconciliation

Brainstorm what you know about the reconciliation movement.

Some questions to get you thinking:

- ★ Where do Indigenous people live?
- ★ What are some of the disadvantages Indigenous people experience?
- ★ What is being done to overcome the disadvantage?
- ★ What do people think about the changes that need to be made to overcome the disadvantage?
- ★ Who is responsible for making the changes?

Organise the brainstorm into a PMI chart about human rights in Australia.

P - Plus

M - Minus

I – Interesting

Write the questions on butcher's paper or cards and place them on the wall. Cross them out as you find the answers throughout the unit.



Fig 11.1 The Aboriginal and Australian flags.

Reconciliation Australia describes the challenges for reconciliation in this way:

'Building relationships for change between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians'.

The challenge is *how* we work towards building these relationships for change. It is a challenge for all Australians.

The obvious questions we should ask are

- ★ Why is there a need to change the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians?
- ★ Why is changing the relationship a challenge?

The answer to both questions is relatively simple. Since the invasion of their land in 1788 the Indigenous people of Australia have suffered dispossession (their land has been taken away), alienation and disadvantage. *All* Australians need to work together to overcome this injustice.

You will have learned about the dispossession, alienation and injustice experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) people in the Australian History section of this course. You will recall

- ★ that in the early years following the invasion of their country by the British the ATSI peoples were forced off their land and often brutally murdered.
- ★ that Aboriginal people were alienated from the wider community and were not allowed in many public places (such as swimming pools and cinemas). Many non-Indigenous people didn't want to socialise with ATSI people, and many were blatantly racist.
- ★ the Government's Assimilation Policies that led to the 'stolen generations'.
- ★ the historic 'sorry speech' (2008) by the former Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd.



Fig 11.2 Kevin Rudd giving the Sorry speech in 2008.

Kevin Rudd began his speech to parliament on February 13th, 2008 with the words *'As prime minister of Australia, I am sorry. On behalf of the government of Australia, I am sorry. On behalf of the parliament of Australia, I am sorry'*. More than 5 000 people gathered on the lawns of Parliament House to listen to the speech and it was broadcast live to schools and workplaces throughout the country. It was a very moving speech, which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples had waited a long time to hear. Many, including members of the stolen generations, wept. Kevin Rudd's 'sorry speech' (2008) was the **first** time Australia's Federal Government formally apologised for the past injustices suffered by our Indigenous peoples.

Many people thought an apology wasn't necessary because they felt as though they were being made to feel guilty for something they didn't do. An apology, in this context, is **not** an admission of *personal* guilt but an acknowledgement of the past injustices perpetrated by the nation as a whole (through Government policies etc...). Its purpose is not to demonise **all** Australians - many of whom thought they were acting in the best interests of the Indigenous people at the time. That said, we **now** agree that these policies caused ongoing pain and suffering that has led to the significant disadvantage experienced by Indigenous people *today*. The other issue that led to much debate was whether a formal apology made the Australian Government liable for financial compensation. Legally, it doesn't - this is a myth and as such, not a valid argument against saying 'sorry'.

The sorry speech was significant because it addressed the issue of past injustice. It was a first step in reconciling the Indigenous community with the wider community. But it was not enough. A lot more needs to be done to address the issue of Indigenous disadvantage.

Before we begin a detailed discussion about how this might be done, it is important to acknowledge that even amongst Indigenous communities there is a range of needs, desires, opinions and appropriate responses. Like any other group, Australia's ATSI peoples are diverse. There is a tendency for people to talk about "Aboriginal people" as if they were simply one, large group. This is not the case. Strategies that may appeal to the elders in a traditional desert community may be completely irrelevant to young Indigenous people in Sydney's western suburbs, or a mob in far north Queensland.

Be very careful not to fall into the trap of using the word 'they' when discussing these issues. A more appropriate way of talking about ATSI peoples when having to discuss these issues broadly is to say 'some' or 'many' Aboriginal people. And remember to think about this 'group' as diverse and varied – just like any other.

So, what do we mean when we use the term Indigenous disadvantage? Put simply, the Indigenous people of Australia have experienced a history of dispossession and alienation in the past. Importantly, Indigenous people *continue* to experience social, economic and political disadvantage **as a result of this history**.

The future challenges for Australia are to:

- ★ acknowledge the enormity of dispossession suffered by Indigenous people since invasion and to address this dispossession through appropriate 'land rights decisions' (enacted in law).
- ★ acknowledge the systemic alienation of our Indigenous communities in order to develop strategies that bring together Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- ★ develop effective strategies to overcome the ongoing economic, social and political disadvantage experienced by Indigenous people - the 'gap' between the life opportunities for Indigenous and non-Indigenous.



Fig 11.3 The crowd looks on to the Sorry speech.

The greatest challenge is in closing this gap. The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) commissioned the Productivity Commission to examine the scope of Indigenous Disadvantage. The Productivity Commission is the Australian Government's independent 'research and advisory body on a range of economic, social and environmental issues affecting the welfare of Australians'. In this instance they were commissioned to examine the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians in a number of key areas such as:

- life expectancy,
- infant mortality,
- education,
- employment, and
- imprisonment.

These are some of the most important and vast gaps that exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. The purpose of this report was to provide government with the information needed to plan and deliver more effective programs to close the gap.

The Council of Australian Governments (COAG) is the peak intergovernmental forum in Australia. COAG comprises the Prime Minister, State Premiers, Territory Chief Ministers and the President of the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA)

More effective programs are needed. According to the 2009 Productivity Commission report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009*, very little progress has been made in overcoming the disadvantage experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Indeed, this report concludes that in many areas the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians are actually increasing.

However, the report also makes it clear that Indigenous people (as well as non-Indigenous people) have shared in Australia's prosperity over the last couple of decades. As a result there has been an improvement in the employment and incomes of Indigenous people. This, in turn, has led to an increase in home ownership.

That said, the *gap* between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people has remained unchanged because there has also been an improvement in the incomes and employment opportunities for non-Indigenous people *at the same time*. Therefore, there is no *gain* made for the Indigenous community because *everyone* improves. The 2009 Productivity Commission Report states that the future challenge 'for governments and Indigenous people will be to preserve these gains and close the gaps in a more difficult economic climate'.

Worksheet 11.1 Future challenges for Australia in relation to Reconciliation

- The process of reconciliation is about building _____ for _____ between _____ and _____ people.
- When we reconcile with someone, we restore harmony in the relationship. Indigenous Australians have suffered many injustices since invasion in 1788. Identify and describe three of these significant injustices in the table below.

D _____ Indigenous people were _____ removed from their land and often brutally _____.	ALIENATION • • •	A _____ P _____ These led to the suffering of thousands of Indigenous families, creating what are now called the S _____ G _____
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- For and against – the ‘sorry speech’(2008)

Identify two reasons why some people didn’t agree with the ‘sorry speech’.	Provide reasons to counter these arguments (i.e. what would you say to these people to justify the ‘sorry speech’?)

- Why was this apology important for the reconciliation process?

- Why was this occasion seen as a significant historical event?

- In your own words, what does the term ‘Indigenous disadvantage’ refer to?

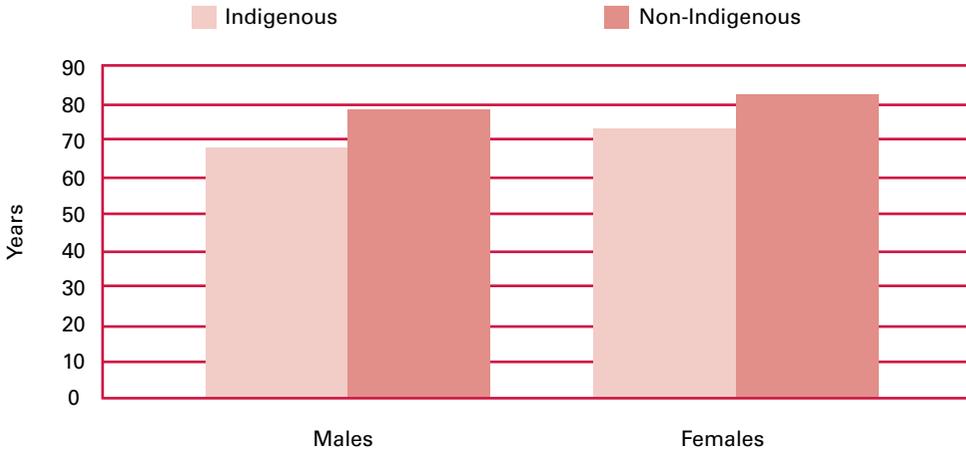
- Identify and describe the three future challenges for Australia in regards to reconciliation.

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Closing the gap – the COAG Targets

COAG set the following targets:

- ★ Life expectancy – the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is shown in the following column graph.



THINK, PAIR, SHARE

Work with your learning partner to calculate the gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous males and females. Do you think these gaps are significant? Can you think of any reasons why they might occur? What do you think needs to be done to reduce the gaps?

Fig 11.4 Life expectancy at birth 2005-2007

Source: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services Provision) 2009 Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009, Productivity Commission, Canberra Figure 4.1.1

A number of factors are responsible for the vast gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous life expectancy. The 2009 Productivity Commission Report shows some of these interrelationships in the following diagram.

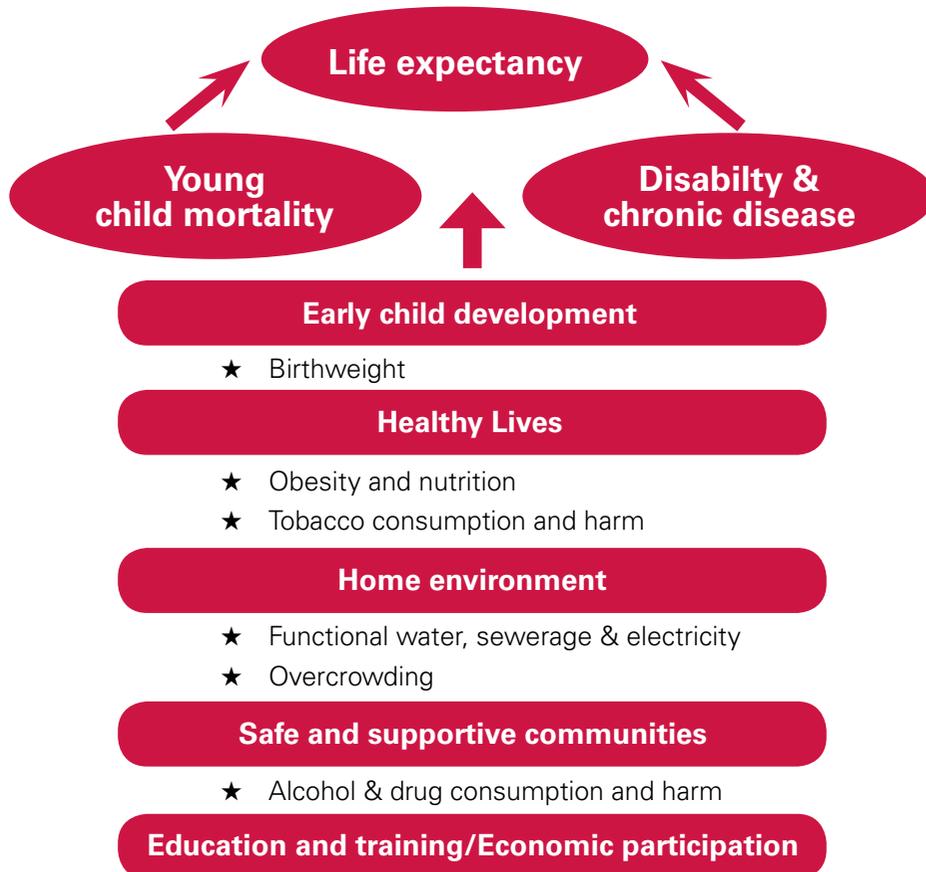


Fig 11.5 Disadvantage can have multiple causes.

Source: SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services Provision) 2009 Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009, Productivity Commission, Canberra

Former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd described the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people as an '*obscenity*' in '*this prosperous nation*'. What does he mean by this? Do you agree?

- ★ Young child mortality – the COAG target is to halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within the next ten years. Young child mortality (particularly the mortality of 0-1 year olds) is an indicator of the health and wellbeing of a population. While the mortality rate of Indigenous Australian babies is declining, it remains at more than 12 for every 1000 live births—a rate nearly three times that of non-Indigenous infants.

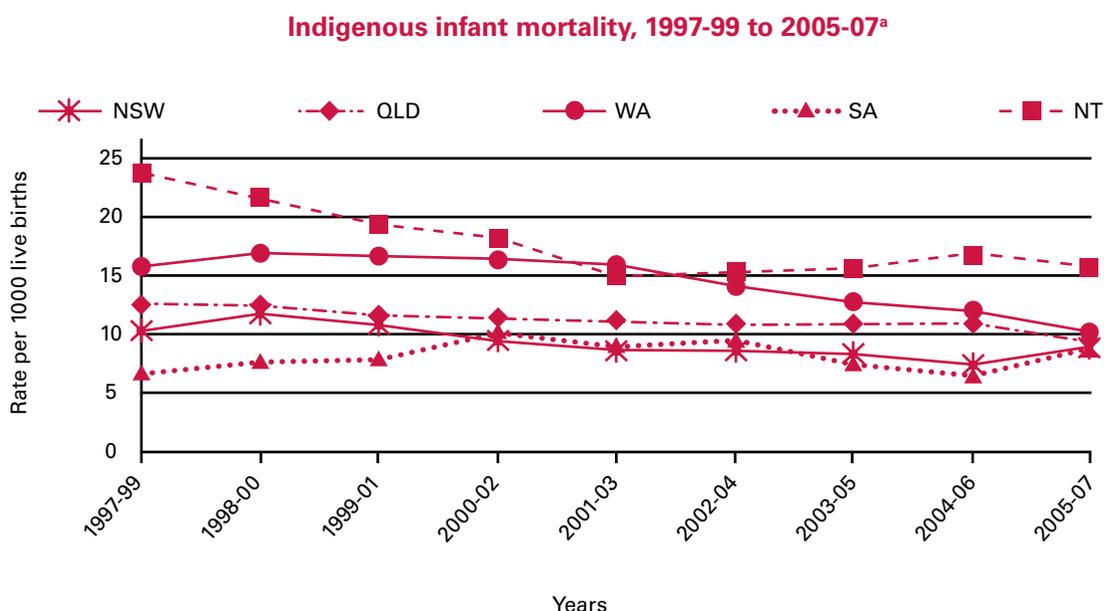


Fig 11.6. Indigenous infant mortality 1997-99 to 2005-07.
 Source: Figure 4.2.3. SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services Provision) 2009
 Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009, Productivity Commission, Canberra.

^aSmall numbers of indigenous infant deaths contribute to variability in the reported rates.

- ★ Early childhood education – the COAG target is to provide all Indigenous four year old children with access to quality early childhood education within five years.



THINK, PAIR, SHARE

Why do you think the Productivity Commission considers that early childhood education is important?
 Do you agree?

- ★ Reading, writing and numeracy – the report states there had been no change in the performance of Indigenous students over the last ten years and there was no improvement in the gap between the performance of Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

- ★ Year 12 attainment – there was an improvement in the proportion of 19-year-old Indigenous students completing year 12 from 31 to 36%. But the proportion of non-Indigenous students who completed year 12 improved from 68 to 74%, so the gap remains.

Nineteen year olds who had completed year 12 and/or certificate level II

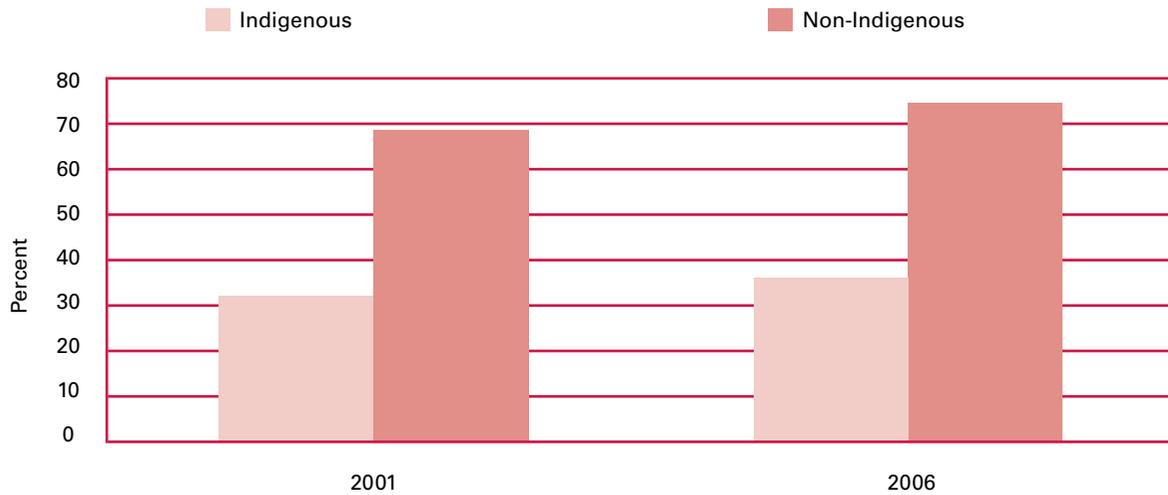


Fig 11.7 Nineteen year olds who had completed year 12 and/or certificate level II Source: Table 4.5.1 SCRGSP (Steering Committee for the Review of Government Services Provision) 2009 Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key Indicators 2009, Productivity Commission, Canberra

- ★ Employment – while there was an improvement in the employment-to-population ratio for Indigenous people, there remains a significant gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.



Fig 11.7 Young Indigenous boys from Condobolin.

Worksheet 11.2 Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Productivity Commission Report

1. Vast gaps exist between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in a number of key areas, including:

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2. What was the purpose of the 2009 Productivity Commission report?

3. Why are more effective programs needed to 'close the gap'?

Closing the gap – the COAG targets

Life Expectancy: refer to Fig 11.8

1. Complete the table below

	Life Expectancy (years)
Indigenous males	
Non-Indigenous males	
Indigenous females	
Non-Indigenous females	

2. Calculate the difference in life expectancy (in years) between

- a) Indigenous and non-Indigenous males _____ years
- b) Indigenous and non-Indigenous females _____ years

3. In your opinion, are these gaps significant?

4. Suggest reasons why these gaps might occur.

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Worksheet 11.2: Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Productivity Commission Report (cont'd)

Disadvantage can have multiple causes: Refer to Fig 11.5

1. Identify the 2 main factors that lead to lower life expectancy for Indigenous people.

2. List some of the additional factors that lead to lower life expectancy for Indigenous people above.

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Indigenous Infant Mortality: refer to Fig 11.6

1. a) In which state or territory was there the greatest improvement in the Indigenous infant mortality rate in the period 1997 - 2007? _____

b) Calculate the difference in the infant mortality rate for this state or territory in this period _____ deaths per 1000 live births.

2. a) In which state or territory was there an increase in the Indigenous Infant Mortality rate in the period 1997 - 2007? _____

b) Calculate the difference in the infant mortality rate for this state or territory in this period _____ deaths per 1000 live births.

3. Describe the trends in the Indigenous infant mortality rate for the period 1997–2007 in:

a) the Northern Territory _____

b) New South Wales _____

Year 12 attainment: refer to Fig 11.7

1. Calculate the percentage change in completion rates for Indigenous students. _____%
2. Calculate the percentage change in completion rates for non-Indigenous students. _____%
3. Has there been a change in the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students? _____
4. In your opinion, why is completing year 12 and/or certificate level III an advantage?

Employment: Using the information that you have gathered above, why would there remain a significant gap between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous employment to population ratio?

Responses of individuals, groups and governments in Australia to the challenge of Reconciliation

Many individual Australians have responded to the challenge of reconciliation by turning 'good intentions into action'. The actions might be things like joining marches for reconciliation such as the Harbour Bridge March – on 28 March 2010, more than 300 000 people joined a reconciliation march for a 'fresh beginning'. Other individuals lobby all levels of government to improve the wellbeing of Indigenous people. In many rural towns individuals have provided the opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to get jobs and the mentoring to help them learn the skills needed to do the jobs well.

A large number of groups have responded to the challenge of reconciliation. The most important group response is Reconciliation Australia. It is the 'peak national organisation building and promoting reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians for the wellbeing of the nation'. Reconciliation Australia is an independent, not-for-profit organisation.

Reconciliation Australia encourages all organisations in Australia to do whatever they can in their own sphere of influence to close the 17-year gap in life expectancy. There are thousands of these organisations. They include organisations as diverse as the Bangarra Dance Company and the Australian Indigenous Leadership Centre.

The Australian Government has responded to the disadvantage in a variety of ways designed to improve Aboriginal health, housing, education and job prospects. Perhaps the most obvious example is the Northern Territory 'intervention'.

In 2007 a report called *The Little Children are Sacred* was published. This report addressed the issue of child abuse in Northern Territory Indigenous communities. The report exposed the violence, drugs, pornography and alcohol abuse that were features of community life and it shocked the wider community and the Australian Government.

The Australian Government set restrictions on welfare payments so parents had to spend a percentage of their money on food and necessities rather than alcohol. Family welfare payments were linked to their children's school attendance. The possession and sale of hardcore pornography was banned. The report had claimed pornography was 'rife in Aboriginal communities'. Some 11 000 children were medically examined for things like ear infections which had not been treated in the past and had led to hearing impairment in many children. More police were made available to investigate the sexual abuse.

Of course not all Australians agreed with this approach. There was significant protest at the intervention because many Australians believed it undermined self-determination for ATSIs people and it was simply not right to discriminate against one section of the population.

Another major challenge was to address disadvantage in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders' housing. There was significant overcrowding and sanitation problems were significant. Housing conditions are generally so poor in some of the communities it is very difficult for children to have any privacy.

The strategies to address the future challenges for Australia focus on improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, living conditions and employment.

The health challenge is to develop strategies that will provide more effective income and financial management practices and provide access to healthy and more affordable foods. It is important to understand the degree of nutrition-related diseases in Indigenous communities. They include heart disease, diabetes, heart attacks and strokes. One example of the current problem is that the prevalence of diabetes in the 24–44 age group is eight times higher among urban Indigenous people than among non-Indigenous people.

Another difficulty is that the major source of income for Indigenous people is government benefits. Fresh fruit, vegetables and meat tend to be available for only three or four days after the welfare payment is made. For the remainder of the period people tend to rely on foods such as bread. In the rural communities perishable items such as dairy food, fruit and vegetables are often in short supply and twice the price of similar products in major towns.



THINK, PAIR, SHARE

Some people suggest the government should buy perishable items and make them available in the Indigenous communities very cheaply. They argue this is no different to the government helping farmers during droughts. Other people believe Indigenous and non-Indigenous people should be treated exactly the same.

Jot down your responses to these opinions. In your groups share your responses. If you disagree, is it because you need more information? Or do you disagree because you are bringing different value systems to the question?

Improving the living conditions in many of the rural communities is a major challenge. For example, a study of 14 000 Aboriginal people in remote and rural communities in Western Australia claimed that more than a third of the communities had major problems with waste water disposal, water supply, sanitation, substandard housing and extensive overcrowding (Rousham & Gracey 1997).

The Australian Government strategy is to make available privately-owned housing leases and build housing suited to the needs of the Indigenous people. The strategy is often criticised not only because of the slow building rate, but also because of the difficulty in providing jobs in communities which are often so isolated. But ATSI people have a deep relationship with the land and many do not support individual, as opposed to community, ownership of the land, and they do not want to move away from the land their people have a connection with.

Another important challenge is to provide jobs for Indigenous people. There is a vicious circle. Living conditions and educational levels are so poor that Aboriginal people often do not have the skills needed for paid work. Because they do not have paid work, living conditions are poor and, as a consequence, children often have poor school attendance. But there are strategies that work. An interesting example is the Aboriginal Employment Strategy (AES). Dick Esten, a Moree cotton farmer, started the AES to provide Aboriginal employment in the town. The scheme was remarkably successful and Moree is now a leader in reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. You will remember from your history the 'freedom bus rides' by activist Charlie Perkins to Moree in the 1960s, and you will be aware of the enormous contrast between then and now.

Worksheet 11.3 Responses of individuals, groups and governments in Australia to the challenge of Reconciliation

1. In the table below, identify and describe individual and group responses to the challenges of reconciliation:

Individual Responses	Group Responses

2. What is Reconciliation Australia?

3. Identify three government responses that were part of the 2007 Northern Territory Intervention.

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-
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4. In what ways was this response different to the 2009 Productivity Commission report?

5. List 4 nutrition related diseases that are widespread in Indigenous communities.

- | | |
|---|---|
| • | • |
| • | • |

6. How will the promotion of money management strategies lead to improvements in Indigenous health?

Worksheet 11.3 Responses of individuals, groups and governments in Australia to the challenge of Reconciliation (cont'd)

8. Identify the other key challenge in regards to Indigenous health.

9. Identify some of the major problems that contribute to the poor living conditions in rural and remote Indigenous communities:

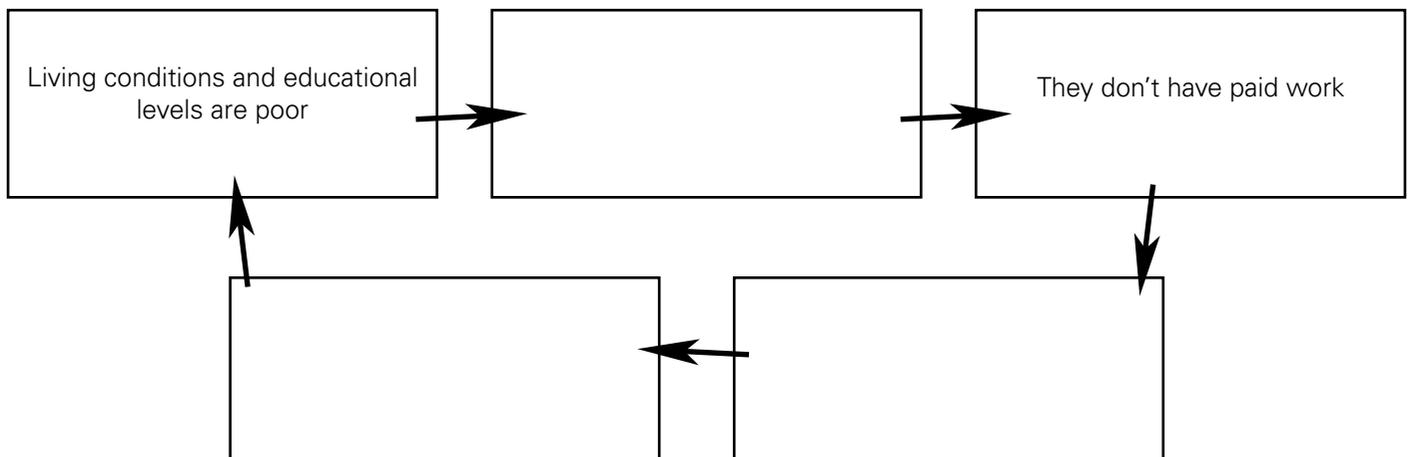
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10. How has the Australian Government responded to this issue?

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11. These strategies have not always been successful because.... (provide two reasons)

12. Using the information in the text, complete the flow chart below to illustrate the 'vicious cycle' that exists in regard to Indigenous employment.



Worksheet 11.3 Responses of individuals, groups and governments in Australia to the challenge of Reconciliation (cont'd)

13. Complete the table below to summarise the ways in which individuals, groups and government have responded to the challenge of Indigenous employment.

	RESPONSE	How does this response help to address Indigenous disadvantage (i.e. reconciliation)?
Individual:		
Group:		
Government:		

Activities

One of ANTaR's (Australians for Native Title and Reconciliation) most popular and visually compelling campaigns was the Sea of Hands (1997). This project continues today. Find out what it is.

Extension Activity:

1. Many people opposed the Northern Territory Intervention, believing it was simply not right to discriminate against one section of the population. This issue was mentioned earlier in the text (in the human rights chapter). One of the key challenges in regards to human rights was to ensure that all Australian citizens had these rights.

Do you think it is acceptable to deny the rights of an individual, as was the case in the Northern Territory Intervention? Can you justify your position?

2. Find out more about Generation One. Start with the website www.generationone.org.au.

In your opinion, will Generation One make a significant contribution to fixing Indigenous disadvantage?

How other nations have responded to the challenges of Reconciliation

Arguably, New Zealand has responded to the challenge of reconciliation more effectively than Australia. Reconciliation in New Zealand is based on a treaty between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The Treaty was agreed to and signed between the British colonisers and the Maori leaders in 1840. The treaty was called the Treaty of Waitangi. In this treaty the colonisers agreed to preserve Maori self-determination, Maori customs and ensure that Maori people had all the rights of other citizens. In other words the Treaty of Waitangi happened as part of the colonisation process. However, in Australia the concept of *terra nullius* denied the rights and existence of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from the very beginning. It is really only in the last twenty years (since the Mabo high court ruling) that Australians have begun to respond to the challenge of ensuring the land rights of Indigenous people.

The really important thing about the Treaty of Waitangi is not just the fact it set out the principles for a just reconciliation, but also the fact that it made reconciliation the obligation of the national government. Australia, on the other hand, left Indigenous affairs and welfare largely to the state governments and in fact the initial policies sought to eliminate the population altogether.

Canada has also responded more effectively to the reconciliation challenge. Canada also conducted a number of treaties with the indigenous people. In addition Section 35 of the Canadian Constitution formally recognises indigenous rights.

A series of Canadian governments have tried very hard to meet the challenge of reconciliation. Mainly they have sought to negotiate change and to improve the land rights and sea rights of the indigenous people. In addition indigenous people have been offered a great deal of self-government. Self-government has allowed the indigenous people to develop their own strategies for modernisation and development.

The circumstances in Canada appear to be very different to Australia but there is a great deal of similarity. In Canada there were many different groups, or tribes and when the country was first invaded it was assumed in law that the people who were there at the time did not own the land. For this reason the Canadian government believes separate treaties should be conducted with each of the separate tribes.

In Australia there was a similar situation. There were hundreds of Indigenous communities but the invaders did not acknowledge them. However the important difference between the Australian and Canadian situation is that the Australian government has never considered the need for a formal agreement or treaty with the Indigenous communities.



Fig 11.8 Maori men in traditional dress.



Fig 11.9 Inuit woman in traditional dress.



THINK, PAIR, SHARE

What do you think about sitting down with Indigenous communities and trying to come to an agreement or treaty? Jot down your thoughts and discuss them with your learning partner.

Worksheet 11.4 How other nations have responded to the challenges of Reconciliation

1. Complete the table below to summarise the ways in which other nations have responded to the challenges of reconciliation.

	Response/s	Advantages	Disadvantages
NEW ZEALAND Maori			
CANADA Inuit			
AUSTRALIA (when compared to New Zealand and Canada)			

2. Predict how the reconciliation process might be different if the first Australian government/s had signed treaties with our Indigenous communities in 1788.

3. Why didn't Australia's first governments sign treaties with our Indigenous communities?

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-
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4.  **THINK, PAIR, SHARE** What responsibilities does the international community have in relation to the ongoing processes of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples around the world?

Activity: Listen to the song Treaty by Yothu Yindi. Select the lyrics that describe the way in which the concept of *terra nullius* was used to deny the rights of Indigenous people in 1788.

Strategies to address the challenges of Reconciliation

The Productivity Commission is the Australian Government's independent 'research and advisory body on a range of economic, social and environmental issues affecting the welfare of Australians'. Its role is to help the government make better policies. One of the issues the Productivity Commission has been working on is Indigenous disadvantage. The Productivity Commission work is important because it has identified the areas and ideas that may form the basis of strategic action. They are:

1 Early child development

There needs to be strategies put in place that will improve the health of Indigenous mothers, reduce the teenage birth rate and increase the birth weight of Indigenous babies.

2 Education and Training

The most important aspect of education and training is to increase the proportion of Indigenous children enrolling in school, as well as improve their attendance at school. In addition we need to work out ways of improving the proportion of Indigenous children who finish year 9, year 10 and year 12. If these goals can be achieved then the transition from school to work will be easier.

3 Healthy lives

Indigenous health, particularly in the inland communities, is very poor and is the main reason there is such a gap between the life expectancy of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. The strategy to improve Indigenous health should be based on providing easier access to primary health care. Good primary care will prevent excessive rates of hospitalisation. Education programs need to be developed to reduce obesity and tooth decay. Strategies also need to be developed to improve mental health and reduce the rate of suicide and self-harm.

4 Economic participation

The key to Indigenous modernisation and development is jobs. Indigenous people must be given the opportunity to participate in the full range of occupations and have the capacity to own or control their land and business. This goal needs to also consider home ownership and income support.



Fig 11.10 Celebrating Aboriginal culture in Condobolin's 150th year anniversary street parade.

5 Home environment

The key to improving the home environment of Indigenous people is to work out ways of overcoming the current overcrowding in housing and improving infrastructure such as access to clean water, sewerage and electricity services. The 2009 Productivity Commission report argues that overcrowding in housing has multiple effects. The report illustrates these effects in this diagram.

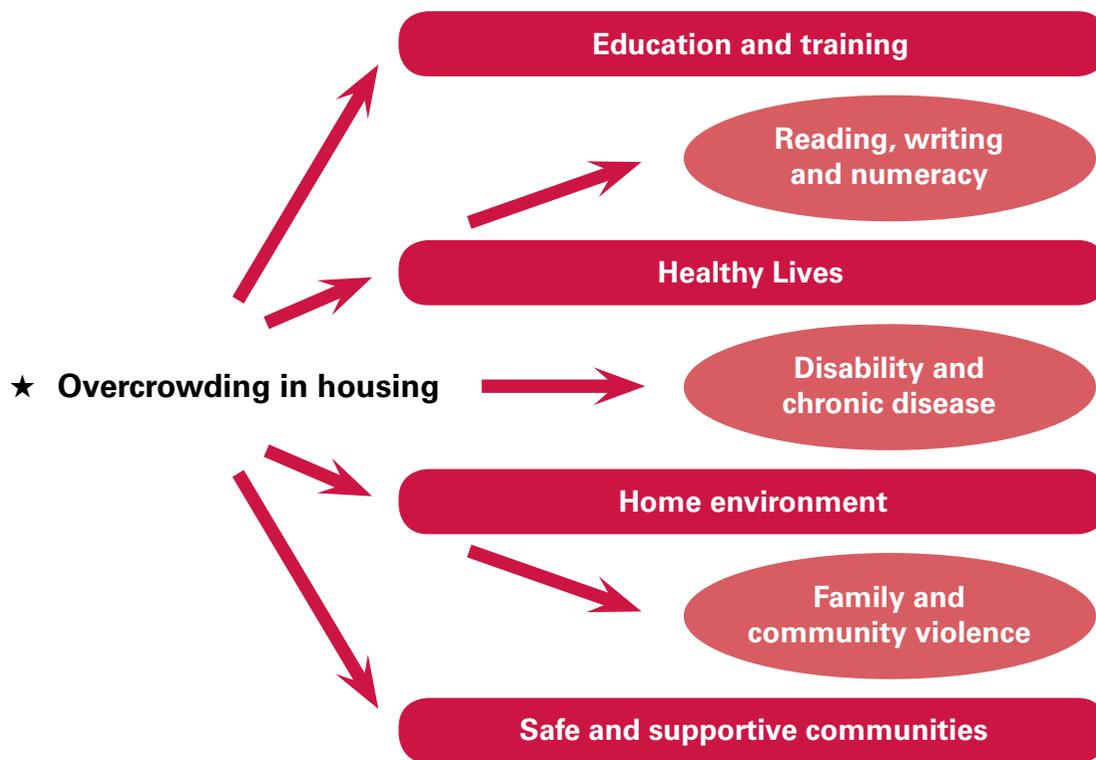


Fig 11.11 Some actions can have multiple effects. Source: Page 9 2009 Productivity Commission Report Overview

6 Safe and supportive communities

In 2009 many Indigenous communities were not safe. There was a great deal of alcohol consumption and harm, as well as drug and other substance use and harm. The 2009 Productivity Report made a number of suggestions to improve the situation. These suggestions included a greater degree of participation in sport, art and community group activities. The report also stressed the importance of developing programs to divert young people from crime.

Worksheet 11.5 Strategies to address the challenges of Reconciliation

Research the Productivity Commission report *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key indicators 2009*. The easiest way to gain access to the report is to do an Internet search for *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage: Key indicators 2009* (or go to the following web address www.pc.gov.au/gsp/reports/indigenous/keyindicators2009). From this page, download the overview booklet.

Refer to the section that outlines the Strategic Areas For Action (pp26-61). In each section, a number of examples are given under the heading 'things that work' (look for the blue shaded box). These are programs, activities or initiatives that are currently working to address these areas for action. Write down one example of each in the table below.

Strategic Area for Action	"Things that work"
Early child development	Name: State/territory: Details:
Education and training	Name: State/territory: Details:
Healthy Lives	Name: State/territory: Details:
Economic participation	Name: State/territory: Details:
Home environment	Name: State/territory: Details:
Safe and supportive communities	Name: State/territory: Details:
Governance and leadership	Name: State/territory: Details:

Worksheet 11.5 Strategies to address the challenges of Reconciliation (cont'd)

2. Strategic Area for Action: Early Childhood Development

Tooth decay is a major health problem for many Indigenous children.
Design a poster that promotes good oral hygiene for kids.

OR

3. Strategic Area for Action: Education and Training

One of the major challenges in education is ensuring that Indigenous children go to school.
Design a poster that shows why it's important to go to school every day.

OR

4. Strategic Area for Action: Healthy Lives

Hearing impediments, if left untreated, often lead to permanent hearing loss in young Indigenous children.
Find out about Otitis media. How can these infections be prevented and/or treated.
Design a poster that informs parents about this condition and how early treatment can prevent permanent hearing loss.

Extension Activity:

Scan the overview of the report. It is well set out and easy to read. Complete a PMI Chart. There is a blank PMI Chart on p 316. Identify:

- five things you consider will most likely work to close the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.
- three things that you consider to be essential in closing the gap but will be the most difficult to achieve.
- three things you found to be most interesting.

Activities:

1. Create a role-play that uses non-verbal communication to portray an example of reconciliation between two or more people/groups. (No dialogue allowed).
2.
 - a) Listen to 'Beds are Burning' by Midnight Oil. This was a protest song written during the 1980s by non-Indigenous people to bring awareness to the need for reconciliation. Another good example is 'Solid Rock' by Goanna. Both songs were hits when they were released and remain hugely popular today.
 - b) Find examples of other songs that promote reconciliation. (e.g. 'From little things, big things grow'). This song was originally recorded by Paul Kelly (Maltese) and Kev Carmody (Indigenous) but has since become a popular anthem for reconciliation. 'I am/We are Australian' is another good example.
 - c) Listen to contemporary music by Indigenous musicians. Although the topics are wide and varied, many write and sing about the need to build positive relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (i.e. reconciliation) based on an acknowledgement of past injustice (e.g. 'I still call Australia Home' by Last Kinection – you can find the YouTube version posted by tidda7 – the video clip is also a helpful learning tool).
3. Based on your new understanding of Indigenous disadvantage, develop your own definition of reconciliation.
4. Read/watch/listen to a personal story told by a member of the Stolen Generation. Imagine you are one of these people. Write a journal entry in which you describe your response to Kevin Rudd's 'sorry speech' and explain why this event was an important step forward in the reconciliation process.
5. Design a poster or visual display that raises awareness of the importance of reconciliation.

Wiradjuri Study Centre Case Study

Reconciliation is all about working out new ways to reconcile the broader community with ATSI people and it hasn't worked too well in the past. But change is happening and the Wiradjuri Study Centre is an example of that change. Very simply the Wiradjuri Study Centre (due to open in early 2011) is an example of how important infrastructure can be adapted to meet the specific needs of the ATSI people living in Condobolin in central NSW.

On the surface the Wiradjuri Study Centre appears to be the sort of community centre associated with every town in NSW. It will provide education facilities, childcare, a community health facility and a place to meet people.

But it is very different because this project was designed with extensive consultation with the Indigenous community to find out very specifically what would be the best way to deliver their services. So, not only will it be able to provide culturally appropriate learning, more importantly, it will create an environment that is culturally sensitive to the learning needs and aspirations of the local aboriginal people.

The consultation is evident in the building itself. It is circular with an open courtyard in the centre to replicate the idea of sitting around a campfire. The building, currently being constructed by teams of local Aboriginal people, uses compressed earth bricks they have made or local cypress timber to symbolise the connection with the earth. There is a focus on sustainability in the use of cheap earth bricks, locally sourced material and water tanks.

The education program is designed to complement mainstream education. The educational programs have been developed in partnership with TAFE, Charles Sturt University and Central West Community College.

The Wiradjuri Study Centre will perform a number of functions besides education. It will incorporate an art gallery to display the work of Indigenous artists while at the same time it will have a program to help them develop the business skills they need. It will contain a commercial kitchen so programs can be developed to teach people how to prepare and eat nutritionally balanced meals. In a community with rates of diabetes well above the national average this program aims to meet an important local need.

And there is a focus on Indigenous culture. Although the building recognises that Indigenous people live in a modern world and is appropriately equipped with the latest computers and broadband it seeks to invigorate traditional language, art and dance. There is a blending of the traditional with the modern.

The project focuses on the future but recognizes the past. There is a pathway of trees between two of the early 'missions' where Aboriginal children 'were taught to be white'. The trees are planted in the memory of deceased people.

The Wiradjuri Study Centre shows the progress that can be made when the Indigenous and broader community consult and there is good will between the communities.

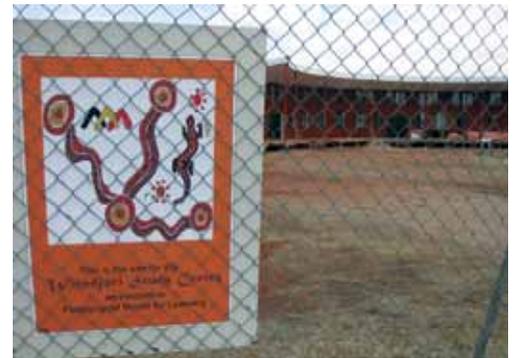


Fig 11.12 The Wiradjuri Study Centre in Condobolin NSW.



Fig 11.13 The study centre is built by the local Aboriginal people for the Aboriginal community.



Fig 11.14 The circular design of the building uses many symbolic features from the local Aboriginal culture.



Fig 11.15 The building has been built using compressed earth bricks made on site by members of the local Aboriginal community.

Describe the responses of individuals, groups and governments to these challenges

Individuals	Groups	Government
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ turn 'good intentions into actions' eg Harbour Bridge March – 300 000 people join reconciliation march for a 'fresh beginning' ★ lobby levels of government to improve wellbeing of Indigenous people ★ provide opportunities for jobs and mentoring for Indigenous people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ form groups such as Reconciliation Australia to build and promote reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ following Little Children are Sacred report government set restrictions on welfare payments for Northern Territory Indigenous people ★ overcome economic disadvantage by improving housing ★ provide access to healthy more affordable foods ★ provide jobs for Indigenous people

Reconciliation – Future Challenges

- ★ building relationships for change between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians
- ★ future challenge is acknowledge the dispossession and, through appropriate 'land rights decisions, address the dispossession
- ★ acknowledge the alienation and develop strategies to bring the wider community and Indigenous people together
- ★ develop strategies to overcome the economic, social and political disadvantage

Suggest strategies Australia can adopt to address the challenges better in the future

- ★ improve early child development
- ★ improve education and training
- ★ improve Indigenous health
- ★ accept that the key to Indigenous modernisation and development is jobs
- ★ improve the home environment of Indigenous people
- ★ improve the safety of Indigenous communities and provide more support

New Zealand

- ★ reconciliation based on a formal treaty between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people
- ★ treaty called Treaty of Waitangi
- ★ treaty ensured Maori self-determination, Maori customs and ensure Maori people had all the rights of other people

How other nations have responded to these challenges

Canada

- ★ Canada also negotiated series of treaties with Indigenous peoples
- ★ Government sought to negotiate change and improve the land and sea rights of the Indigenous people
- ★ Indigenous people offered a great deal of self-government

Worksheet 11.6 Writing Activity – Extended Response

In order to effectively answer extended response questions in exams, you need to have a good understanding of how the question relates to the syllabus. You can find a copy on the Board of Studies website www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au.

Extended response questions in the School Certificate examinations in Geography will be either 1 ½ A4 pages or 2 ½ A4 pages in length. When answering these questions you should plan your response BEFORE you begin writing.

- Brainstorm a list of all the key points you will use to answer the question.
- Use these notes to create a logical order of information – this may be as simple as writing a number next to each idea in the right order.
- If you are running out of time, list the rest of these ideas in point form at the end of your response (you may be awarded marks for this).

Below is an example of an extended response question, as it will appear in your exam. In an exam this question would be followed by 1 ½ blank lined pages for you to complete your answer. Use your own paper to practise this example.

Question 1 (15 marks)

In your answer you will be assessed on your ability to:

- organise and communicate your knowledge and understanding effectively
 - support your ideas with relevant examples
 - use geographical terms appropriately
-

Australia faces challenges in relation to human rights and reconciliation.

Describe the responses of individuals, groups and governments in Australia to ONE of these challenges.

REMEMBER: An **analysis** involves higher order thinking. You must identify the various components and the relationship between them and think through the implications of these relationships.

Some key things to include in your answer are to:

- **identify** some of the challenges that are related to your chosen topic.
- separate the responses of individuals, groups and governments into one or two paragraphs each.
- don't forget to include the different levels of government if they apply.
- include examples of what policies, agreements or programs are relevant to your chosen topic.

To **describe** you not only need to identify responses of each of the three categories but you also need to provide characteristics and features of the responses in relation to the chosen topic.