

Teacher Resource

Episode 6 14th March 2017

Platypus Census



FOCUS QUESTIONS

- 1. Briefly summarise the *Platypus Census* story.
- 2. Platypuses are not native to Australia. True or false?
- 3. What are some unique features of the platypus?
- 4. Why are scientists conducting a platypus census?
- 5. Where in Australia do platypuses live?
- 6. Platypuses are nocturnal. What does that mean?
- 7. Mammals that lay eggs are called _____
- 8. What feature does the male platypus have?
- 9. How did Indigenous Australians describe the platypus?
- 10. Name three things you learnt watching the Platypus Census story.



After watching the BTN story, respond to the following questions:

- What did you SEE in this video?
- What do you THINK about what you saw in this video?
- What does this video make your WONDER?
- What did you LEARN from this story?
- How did this story make you FEEL?
- What was SURPRISING about this story?

Class Discussion

Hold a class discussion to find out what students know about platypuses. Using sticky notes, students write down a piece of information about platypuses. Collect and place all the notes on a wall in the classroom. The following questions may help generate discussion:

- Are platypuses a native or introduced species?
- What are monotremes?
- The platypus is said to have features of which animals?
- What feature does the male platypus have?
- Why is the platypus well adapted to a semi-aquatic lifestyle?



KFY I FARNING

Students will research and create an information report about platypuses.



Science - Year 4

Living things have life cycles (ACSSU072)

Living things depend on each other and the environment to survive (ACSSU073)

Science - Year 5

Living things have structural features and adaptations that help them to survive in their environment (ACSSU043)

Science - Year 6

The growth and survival of living things are affected by physical conditions of their environment (ACSSU094)

Geography - Year 4

The importance of environments, including <u>natural vegetation</u>, to animals and people (<u>ACHASSK088</u>)



Key Words

Students develop a glossary of words and terms that relate to the platypuses. Below are some words to get them started.

monotreme	burrow	venomous	species
habitat	mammal	nocturnal	native



Information report

Students will create an information report about platypuses. The following may help guide students' research:

- Description of a platypus
- Diet, habitat
- The life cycle of a platypus
- Adaptations
- Threats to platypuses
- Interesting facts about platypuses

Structure and features of an information report

Information reports are factual texts written to inform and provide detailed facts about a topic. Discuss with students what they already know about the purpose, structure and features of an information report. Use the following as a guide to use with students.

- Purpose An information report provides information to the reader by stating facts.
- Structure see table below.
- Language features write in the present tense, use technical or scientific words and write in the third person.

Students can then use the following plan to help write their report. They can present their reports using publishing software or as a brochure.

Information report – structure		
Title	States a topic	
Introduction	The opening statement explains the subject of the report, and includes a definition or short description.	
Body	Facts grouped into paragraphs. Starts with a topic sentence. Include subject specific language. Text features such as sub-headings, labelled diagrams, charts and captioned photographs may be included.	
Conclusion	A summary of what the topic is about and end with an interesting fact.	



ACTIVITY

Students create a labelled diagram of a platypus. Include:

- A title
- An accurate drawing
- · A scale to show the size
- Labels to show the main features

Body parts to include: Webbed feet, venomous spur (males only), flat tail, bill



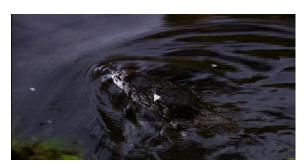
Source: National Geographic



ACTIVITY

Watch the ABC Splash videos <u>Platypus: The young</u> <u>male leaves the burrow</u> and <u>Platypus at Play</u> to get an insight into platypuses behaviour and adaptations. Ask students to respond to the following questions:

- How do you think `Big Foot' knows how to find food?
- Why will he have to leave the pool?
- What makes a platypus `custom made for the water'?
- How does a platypus find its food?
- What interesting facts did you learn watching the videos?
- What was surprising?







ACTIVITY

Create a Quiz

Use <u>Kahoot!</u> to test students' knowledge about platypuses. Quizzes can be created to recap learning or test personal knowledge. There is also the option to connect with classrooms around the world and play kahoot in real time.





Live Science – Platypus http://www.livescience.com/27572-platypus.html

National Geographic - Platypus http://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/mammals/p/platypus/

Australian Museum – Animal Species: Platypus https://australianmuseum.net.au/platypus

Office of Environment and Heritage - Platypus http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/animals/ThePlatypus.htm

ABC Splash – Platypus at Play http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1436230/platypus-at-play

ABC Splash – Platypus: The young male leaves the burrow http://splash.abc.net.au/home#!/media/1771908/platypus-the-young-male-leaves-the-burrow

ABC News – Scouring river beds and history books to discover if the platypus is under threat http://www.abc.net.au/news/2017-03-05/is-the-future-of-the-platypus-under-threat/8314602

