



Core units: Inquiry and skills
Field and photo sketching – Years 1–4

Photo sketching: Teacher notes

The ability to construct photo sketches is a valuable geographical skill. It allows your students to make a quick summary of the information shown in a photographic image. It enables them to record and communicate information. In this instance, it enables them to highlight and annotate the key elements of the landscape or place photographed. Students can use their photo sketches to illustrate stories and reports. Older students can scan the images they produce for use in PowerPoint presentations and poster displays. The following points will help you to guide your students to photo sketching proficiency.

- Photo sketches should not seek to reproduce everything shown in the image. Students should be selective in what they show. Only the prominent features need to be included.
- Insist that students use a soft pencil (it makes it easier to erase errors) on blank paper.
- Before beginning their sketch students should construct a frame that is approximately the same proportions as the original image.
- Encourage your students to include only the main features of the photograph. They should then sketch in their shape, and if they want to, add colour.
- Older students should be encouraged to annotate their sketch to highlight its features, indicate a changing feature or indicate some important link between features.
- Older students should also be encouraged to give their sketch a title.

Stages involved in constructing a photo sketch

For ground-level photographs, your students might find it useful to divide their photograph into three areas – foreground, middle ground and background.

Before beginning their sketch they can lightly pencil these three areas into their frame. The features of the photograph can then be sketched in. They should begin with the background, followed by the middle ground and then the foreground.

The steps involved in constructing a photosketch are shown in the diagram below. The photo on the left shows the scene, the first sketch shows the division of the page into three sections and the second sketch shows the features of mountains in the background, a lake in the middle ground and grasses in the foreground.

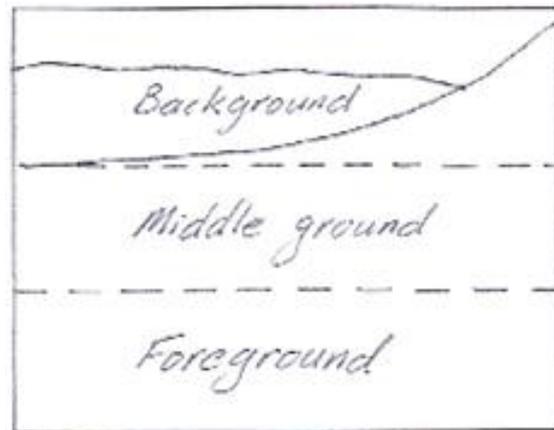
Scene



Lake Cootapatamba, Snowy Mountains, NSW.

Source: John Butler

Sketch 1



Sketch 2

