

South African Social Sciences: God's World, His Story

(A Recreated Grade 5 Learner's Guide)

Term 1: Foundations – Mapping Our World & Meeting its First Peoples

GEOGRAPHY: Map Skills

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Unit 1.1: God's World on a Page

- **Content:** When God created the world, He made it with incredible order and detail. Geography is the exciting study of the Earth's surface, its features, and the people who live on it. It is a way for us to explore and understand the magnificent creation God has given us to care for. To help us on this journey, we use maps. A map is like a flat picture of our round world, and a globe is a small model of it. On these maps, we can see the huge areas of land called continents and the vast bodies of water called oceans. To find our way around, we use a compass, which always points North. From there, we can find all eight points: North, South, East, West, and the directions in between like North-East and South-West. These tools help us understand location and direction, reflecting the beautiful order of God's design.
- **Worldview Connection:** The command to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19) requires us to know where those nations are. Map skills are mission skills.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Compass Rose Creation:** Design and draw a colourful eight-point compass rose.
 2. **Globe Treasure Hunt:** Using a globe, find specific continents, oceans, and the Equator.
 3. **Classroom Mapping:** Use compass directions to describe the location of objects in the room from a central point.
 4. **(New Term-Long Project) My Personal Atlas:** Create a special notebook that will become your own atlas. Design a cover for it. For your first entry, draw a map of your bedroom, complete with a map key and a compass rose showing North. Then, draw a map of your house or garden.

Unit 1.2: Africa, Our Continent

- **Content:** This unit focuses on our home continent, Africa. We will locate Africa on a world map and identify the oceans surrounding it. Students will learn to identify the countries of Africa, distinguishing between those with a coastline and those that are landlocked. We will locate major cities like Cairo,

Lagos, and Johannesburg, and specifically identify South Africa's neighbours: Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia, Swaziland, and Zimbabwe.¹

- **Worldview Connection:** Every country is filled with people made in God's image. As we learn their names and locations, we can pray for the people and the spread of the Gospel in each nation.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Africa Puzzle:** Use a printable map of Africa to create a puzzle, cutting out the countries to be reassembled.
 2. **Neighbourly Research:** Choose one of South Africa's neighbouring countries and create a small fact file about its capital city, main language, and a significant landmark.
 3. **(Amplified Activity) Atlas Entry & Prayer Journal:** In your "Personal Atlas," paste a political map of Africa and label South Africa and all its neighbours. In a separate section of your notebook, start a "Prayer for the Nations" journal. For each of South Africa's neighbours, write down one specific prayer (e.g., for their leaders, for peace, for the church to grow).

Unit 1.3: Reading a Physical Map of Africa

- **Content:** We will learn to read a physical map, understanding how colours are used to show height above sea level (elevation). We will identify Africa's major physical features, including the highest mountains (Kilimanjaro, Mount Kenya), great rivers (Nile, Congo, Zambezi), large lakes (Victoria, Tanganyika), and great deserts (Sahara, Namib).¹
- **Worldview Connection:** The sheer scale and diversity of Africa's landscape—from the highest peaks to the longest rivers—declare the glory and power of God the Creator (Psalm 19:1).
- **Activities:**
 1. **Salt Dough Map:** Create a 3D salt dough map of Africa, sculpting the major mountain ranges and carving out the main rivers.
 2. **(Amplified Activity) Missionary Journey Plan:** Imagine you are a missionary planning a journey from Cairo in the north to Cape Town in the south. In your "Personal Atlas," trace your route on a physical map. Write a one-page report describing the major physical features you would cross (deserts, rivers, mountains, lakes), the different climates you would experience, and the geographical challenges you might face.

Unit 1.4: How We Know About the Past

- **Content:** History is not just a collection of dates and facts; it is the study of God's great story unfolding through time. But how do we know about people who lived thousands of years ago, long before books and computers? We become historical detectives! We look for clues they left behind. Some clues are the stories that parents told their children, which were passed down through many generations. Other clues are physical objects, called artifacts, that archaeologists dig up from the ground—things like pottery, tools, and jewellery. Sometimes, the biggest clues are the amazing paintings these people left on the walls of rock shelters. By studying these different sources, we can piece together a picture of the past. As Christians, we have the most important historical source of all for the events it describes: the Bible. It is God's own true record of the beginning of history.
- **Worldview Connection:** God is the author of history. While human sources can be biased or incomplete, we can trust the Bible as the ultimate true record of history's most important events.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Family Artifacts:** Bring an old object from home and discuss what it tells us about the past.
 2. **Oral History:** Interview a grandparent or older relative about what life was like when they were a child. Record their story.

Unit 1.5: The San Hunter-Gatherer Society

- **Content:** The very first people to live in Southern Africa were the San. For thousands of years, they lived a lifestyle known as hunting and gathering. This means they did not grow their own food or keep farm animals. Instead, they hunted wild animals for meat using skilfully made bows and arrows, and they gathered edible plants, roots, and berries from the land.¹ The San were nomadic, meaning they moved from place to place with the seasons to follow the animal herds and find ripe plants. They had an incredibly deep knowledge of the environment God had placed them in, knowing which plants could be used for food, which for medicine, and which were poisonous. They lived in small family groups, and one of their most important values was sharing everything, which ensured the whole group survived and was cared for.
- **Worldview Connection:** The San's ingenuity and deep understanding of creation show that all people are made in God's image with intelligence and creativity (Genesis 1:27). Their principle of sharing reflects the biblical call to care for one another within a community.
- **Activities:**

1. **Plant Medicine Chart:** Research a few indigenous South African plants and their traditional medicinal uses.
2. **(Amplified Activity) A Day in the Life Narrative:** After your research, write a detailed first-person story (at least one full page) describing a typical day as a San child. Include details about waking up, finding food with your family, social interactions, and your relationship with the environment.

Unit 1.6: The Khoikhoi Herder Society & Their Rock Art

- **Content:** Another group of early people in Southern Africa was the Khoikhoi. While they shared the landscape with the San, they lived in a different way. The Khoikhoi were pastoralists, or herders. This means their lives revolved around caring for herds of cattle and sheep, which provided them with milk and meat.¹ Because they needed to find fresh grass and water for their animals, they were also nomadic, but they often stayed in one place for longer than the San and lived in larger villages of dome-shaped huts. The most amazing window into the world of these early peoples is their rock art, created mostly by the San. Using paints made from ground-up rock, charcoal, and other natural materials, they painted detailed scenes of animals, hunts, and community life. These paintings are not just simple pictures; many of them tell us about their spiritual beliefs.
- **Worldview Integration (Principled Engagement):**
 1. **Acknowledge:** We will study the scenes in San art that historians believe depict shamans in a trance and part-human, part-animal figures (therianthropes). This shows they thought deeply about the spiritual world.
 2. **Define Biblically:** The desire to connect with a spiritual world is placed in all people by God. However, the Bible teaches that since the Fall, people who don't know God may worship the creation rather than the Creator (Romans 1:25).
 3. **Engage Critically:** We will discuss the difference between the San's spiritual beliefs (animism, trance states) and the biblical way to know God through His Word and through His Son, Jesus Christ. We can respect the San people while evaluating their beliefs against the truth of Scripture.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Venn Diagram:** Create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the lifestyles of the San and the Khoikhoi.
 2. **(New Activity) The Linton Panel and the Coat of Arms:** Research the famous Linton Panel of San rock art. Find an image of the figure from this panel that was chosen for the South African Coat of Arms. Write a paragraph explaining why this specific figure was chosen and

what the motto "!ke e: /xarra //ke" means. This is a direct CAPS link and a great critical thinking exercise.

Term 2: The Lay of Our Land & The Arrival of Farmers

GEOGRAPHY: Physical Features of South Africa

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Unit 2.1: South Africa from Above

- **Content:** Imagine you are flying high above South Africa in an airplane. What would you see? You would notice that our country has a very special landscape. Along the edges, by the ocean, is a flat strip of land called the coastal plain. But this plain doesn't last for long. Soon, the land rises dramatically, like a giant step. This steep slope is called the escarpment. Once you are on top of the escarpment, you are on a huge, high, flat area that covers most of the country. This is called the central plateau.¹ On this plateau, you will find different regions, like the grassy Highveld where Johannesburg is, and the drier Great Karoo. Understanding these three main features—coastal plain, escarpment, and plateau—is the key to understanding the geography of our beautiful land.
- **Worldview Connection:** God prepared this specific land with its unique features as the "theater" for the story He would unfold in Southern Africa.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Cross-Section Drawing:** Draw a simple side-view diagram of South Africa, showing the coastal plain rising to the escarpment and then the plateau.
 2. **Atlas Entry:** In your "Personal Atlas," paste a physical map of South Africa and label the plateau, escarpment, coastal plain, Highveld, and Great Karoo.

Unit 2.2: Our Rivers and Mountains

- **Content:** We will trace the paths of South Africa's main rivers (Orange, Vaal, Limpopo), understanding that they flow from high areas to the sea. We will also locate the major mountain ranges, such as the uKhahlamba-Drakensberg and the Cape Fold Mountains.
- **Worldview Connection:** The Bible often uses mountains to represent God's strength and rivers to represent His life-giving provision (Psalm 36:8). Studying these features can be an act of worship.
- **Activities:**

1. **River System Model:** In a sand tray, create a model of a river system, showing how small tributaries join to form a major river that flows to a larger body of water.
2. **Landmark Research:** Choose one major South African river or mountain range and prepare a short oral report on its key features.

Unit 2.3: How Landforms Affect People

- **Content:** This unit explores the link between physical features and human activities. We will discuss why people choose to live in certain areas (e.g., near rivers for water) and how human activities, like building dams and roads, change the physical landscape.
- **Worldview Connection:** God gave humanity the mandate to be stewards of creation (Genesis 1:28). We will discuss our responsibility to use and develop the land wisely, caring for the environment and for the needs of people.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Case Study Debate:** Research the building of a major dam in South Africa. Debate the pros (water, electricity) and cons (environmental impact, displacement of people).
 2. **(Amplified Project) Design a New Town:** You are given a blank map showing a coastline, a mountain range, and a river. Your job is to design a new town. You must decide where to place the residential areas, the farms, the main roads, and a small port. You must then write a one-page "prospectus" explaining why your town is a great place to live, justifying your design choices based on the geography.

HISTORY: The First Farmers in Southern Africa

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Unit 2.4: A New Way of Life

- **Content:** About 2,000 years ago, a new group of people began to arrive in Southern Africa, migrating from Central and East Africa. These were Bantu-speaking peoples, and they brought a completely new way of life with them. Unlike the San and Khoikhoi, these people were farmers. They knew how to plant crops like sorghum and millet, and they brought their herds of cattle with them.¹ This meant they no longer needed to constantly move to find food. They could settle in one place and build permanent villages. They looked for areas with good rainfall and fertile soil for their crops, and plenty of grazing for their cattle. This arrival of agriculture marked a huge change in the history of Southern Africa.

- **Worldview Connection:** The shift to farming reflects the outworking of God's command to Adam to "work and keep" the garden (Genesis 2:15). Work is a good gift from God, designed for our provision and flourishing.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Migration Map:** On a map of Africa, draw the likely migration routes of the first farmers into Southern Africa.
 2. **Crop Comparison:** Research the difference between the crops grown by the first farmers and the indigenous plants gathered by the San.

Unit 2.5: Life in a Chieftdom

- **Content:** The first farmers lived in organised communities called chieftdoms. A village was made up of many family homesteads, which were groups of huts often built around a central area for their precious cattle, called a kraal. Everyone in the village had a role. Men often cleared the land and looked after the cattle, while women planted and harvested the crops and cared for the home.¹ The whole community was led by a chief, who was responsible for making important decisions, settling disputes, and leading the people. Cattle were extremely important, not just for food, but as a sign of wealth and status. This settled, structured way of life was very different from the small, nomadic bands of the hunter-gatherers.
- **Worldview Connection:** The structure of the chieftdom, with its emphasis on family, authority, and community, provides an opportunity to discuss God's design for society. We can explore the biblical model of leadership as service and the importance of justice and order.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Village Diorama:** Build a model of an early African farming village, including huts, cattle kraals, and crop fields.
 2. **(New Activity) The Importance of Cattle:** Research the various roles cattle played in a chieftdom (food, wealth, social status, religious significance, 'lobola'). Prepare a short oral presentation (3-5 minutes) for the family explaining why cattle were much more than just farm animals to the first farmers.

Term 3: Climate, Creation, and a Kingdom on the Nile

GEOGRAPHY: Weather, Climate, and Vegetation of South Africa

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Unit 3.1: Understanding Weather

- **Content:** Have you ever wondered what the difference is between "weather" and "climate"? Weather is what is happening in the atmosphere right now or over a short time—is it sunny, windy, cold, or rainy today? Climate, on the other hand, is the average weather pattern a place has over many years. For example, the weather in Cape Town today might be sunny, but its climate is Mediterranean, which means it generally has wet winters and dry summers. To understand weather, we measure its different elements. We use a thermometer to measure temperature, a rain gauge to measure precipitation (rain, hail, or snow), and we observe the clouds and the wind to get a full picture of the day's weather.
- **Worldview Connection:** The consistency of weather patterns points to God's faithfulness in upholding His creation (Genesis 8:22). He is in control of every drop of rain and every gust of wind.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Build a Rain Gauge:** Construct a simple rain gauge from a plastic bottle and use it to measure local rainfall.
 2. **Weather Report:** Watch a weather forecast on television or online and explain what the different symbols on the map mean.

Unit 3.2: South Africa's Climate and Plants

- **Content:** We will explore South Africa's diverse climate zones (e.g., Mediterranean in the Western Cape, subtropical on the east coast) and see how rainfall patterns differ across the country. We will then study the link between climate and natural vegetation, learning about biomes like fynbos, savanna, and forest.
- **Worldview Connection:** The incredible diversity of plant life, each perfectly adapted to its climate, showcases the infinite creativity of our God.
- **Activities:**
 1. **(Amplified Project) Weather Analyst Report:** For two weeks, observe and record the daily weather (temperature, wind, cloud cover, rain).¹ At the end of the two weeks, create a bar graph of the daily high temperatures and a pie chart showing the number of sunny vs. cloudy days. Write a one-page summary report analyzing the weather patterns you observed and how they affected your family's activities.
 2. **Biome Collage:** Create a collage for a specific South African biome, showing its typical climate, plants, and animals.

HISTORY: An Ancient African Society – Egypt

Unit 3.3: The Gift of the Nile

- **Content:** More than two thousand years ago, a Greek historian named Herodotus visited the incredible land of Egypt. He saw its giant pyramids, its magnificent temples, and its bustling cities, all surrounded by a vast, dry desert. After his visit, he wrote something very wise: "Egypt is the gift of the Nile." He was right. Without the Nile River, there would have been no pharaohs, no mummies, and no pyramids. The entire civilization was a gift from this one mighty river, a powerful reminder of God's provision in even the harshest of places. The Nile is the longest river in the world, flowing north through the Sahara Desert to the Mediterranean Sea. Every year, the river would gently flood its banks, leaving behind a thick layer of rich, dark mud called silt.⁴ This fertile "Black Land" was perfect for farming, allowing the Egyptians to grow so much food that they became known as the "breadbasket" of the ancient world. This surplus of food meant that not everyone had to be a farmer, allowing some people to become builders, priests, and scribes, which is how a great civilization grows.⁵ The river was also Egypt's main highway, making it easy to travel and transport goods, like the giant stones for the pyramids.
- **Worldview Connection:** The story of Joseph in Genesis shows God's sovereign hand using the abundance of the Nile to save a nation and fulfill His promises to His people.⁶
- **Activities:**
 1. **Nile River Model:** Create a model showing how the annual flood would cover the land and leave behind fertile soil.
 2. **Timeline:** Create a timeline that places key events in Egyptian history alongside key events in the lives of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses.

Unit 3.4: Life in Ancient Egypt

- **Content:** Egyptian society was structured like a pyramid. At the very top was the pharaoh, the king who was worshipped as a god on Earth. Below him were the powerful nobles and priests, who helped him govern. Then came the scribes, the educated men who could read and write the complicated Egyptian script called hieroglyphics. Further down were the skilled craftsmen and the soldiers, and at the very bottom was the largest group of all: the farmers, whose work fed the entire nation.⁷ Most Egyptians lived in simple mud-brick houses and ate a diet of bread, vegetables, and fish. They wore light linen clothing to stay cool in the heat. Family life was very important to them. Their greatest achievements, the pyramids and temples, were built with incredible skill and show us their advanced knowledge of mathematics and engineering.

- **Worldview Connection:** The pyramids stand as a testament to human ingenuity but also to the pride of pharaohs who saw themselves as gods. This contrasts with the biblical teaching of humility before the one true God. The story of the Exodus is the ultimate demonstration of God's power over the false gods and powerful rulers of Egypt.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Social Pyramid:** Draw and label a social pyramid of ancient Egypt.
 2. **Write in Hieroglyphs:** Use a hieroglyphic alphabet chart to write your name or a short message.
 3. **(New Activity) Living History: An Egyptian Meal:** Research the diet of an average ancient Egyptian farmer. With parental help, plan and prepare a simple meal using authentic ingredients (e.g., flatbread, lentils, dates, cucumbers, fish). Present the meal to the family, explaining what each food is and why it was common.

Unit 3.5: Egyptian Beliefs and the Tomb of Tutankhamen

- **Content:** The ancient Egyptians were polytheistic, meaning they worshipped many gods and goddesses. They believed these gods controlled everything, from the rising of the sun (the god Ra) to the flooding of the Nile.⁷ A central part of their religion was a strong belief in an afterlife. They believed that after death, a person's spirit would journey to another world, but to do so, their body had to be preserved. This led to the practice of mummification, a careful process of drying and wrapping the body to protect it from decay. The tombs of the pharaohs were filled with treasures, furniture, food, and everything else they thought they would need in the next life. The discovery of the tomb of the boy-king Tutankhamen in 1922 gave us an amazing, undisturbed look at these incredible treasures and beliefs.
- **Worldview Integration (Principled Engagement):**
 1. **Acknowledge:** Present the Egyptian pantheon of gods (Ra, Osiris, Isis, etc.) and their complex beliefs about the afterlife.
 2. **Define Biblically:** Contrast this with the first commandment: "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). Discuss the biblical view of death and resurrection through faith in Jesus Christ.
 3. **Engage Critically:** Ask questions like, "Why did the Egyptians go to such great lengths to preserve the body for the afterlife? How is the Christian's hope for eternal life different?"
- **Activities:**
 1. **God and Goddess Cards:** Create trading cards for several key Egyptian gods, describing their roles.
 2. **(New Activity) Debate: The Archaeologist's Dilemma:** Prepare for a debate on the topic: "Should archaeologists remove treasures from ancient tombs to put them in museums?" Prepare arguments for both

sides (For: preservation, education for the world; Against: respecting the dead, cultural ownership). This is a fantastic critical thinking activity.

Term 4: God's Resources & Our Heritage

GEOGRAPHY: Minerals and Mining in South Africa

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Unit 4.1: Treasures in the Earth

- **Content:** Deep within the earth of South Africa, God has placed an incredible treasure chest of minerals. These are natural substances found in rocks, and our country is one of the richest sources of minerals in the world. We will learn about the most important ones, like gold, which is used for jewellery and money; diamonds, the hardest substance on earth; platinum, used in cars and technology; and coal, which we burn to create most of our electricity.¹ These resources are non-renewable, which means once we use them, they are gone forever. We will look at a map to see where these minerals are found and how huge cities, like Johannesburg, grew up right on top of the world's richest gold reef.
- **Worldview Connection:** God placed these resources in the earth for humanity to use. This is part of His provision and a demonstration of His common grace to all people.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Resource Map:** On a map of South Africa, mark the locations of major gold, diamond, and coal deposits.
 2. **"From Mine to Market":** Choose one mineral and create a flowchart showing its journey from being mined to its use in a final product.

Unit 4.2: The Impact of Mining

- **Content:** We will learn about the different methods of mining (open-pit and shaft mining) and examine the significant impact mining has on the environment (pollution, waste) and on people (health and safety risks for miners).
- **Worldview Connection:** This topic is a powerful lesson in stewardship. While using God's resources is good, we have a responsibility to do so in a way that cares for creation and protects the lives and dignity of workers, who are made in God's image. We will discuss issues of justice and responsibility.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Environmental Impact Report:** Write a short paragraph describing two negative environmental effects of mining.

2. **(New Activity) Stewardship Proposal:** Imagine you are a consultant hired by a mining company. Write a one-page proposal outlining three practical steps the company could take to better care for the environment and its workers. Explain how these steps align with the biblical principle of stewardship.

HISTORY: A Heritage Trail Through the Provinces of South Africa

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Unit 4.3: What is Heritage?

- **Content:** What is "heritage"? It is a special word for all the important things—places, objects, and stories—that are passed down to us from the people who lived before. It is the story of who we are and where we come from. Our heritage can be a beautiful building, an ancient piece of art, a famous person's story, or even the name of a river or a town. South Africa is divided into nine provinces, and each one is filled with its own unique heritage. As we learn about this heritage, we learn more about the rich and complex story of our nation.
- **Worldview Connection:** Our ultimate heritage as Christians is not in earthly things but in our identity as children of God and citizens of heaven (Ephesians 1:11). We can still appreciate our earthly heritage as a gift and a story that God has allowed us to be a part of.
- **Activities:**
 1. **Personal Heritage:** Create a small poster or "show and tell" about an object, story, or tradition that is part of your own family's heritage.
 2. **Province Quiz:** Practice naming the nine provinces and their capitals.

Unit 4.4: Exploring Our Heritage

- **Content:** We will take a virtual "heritage trail" through South Africa, exploring different examples of heritage as required by CAPS. This may include:
 1. **Sites of Significance:** The Cradle of Humankind (Gauteng).
 2. **Objects:** Golden objects at Mapungubwe (Limpopo).
 3. **People's Achievements:** The story of a significant figure like Frances Baard (Northern Cape).
 4. **Architecture:** The stone-walled town of Kaitshwene (North West).
 5. **Natural Heritage:** The Makhonjwa Mountains (Mpumalanga).
 6. **Art:** San Rock art in the Drakensberg (KwaZulu-Natal).
- **Worldview Connection:** As we study each heritage site or story, we will look for evidence of God's common grace, human creativity, and the effects of sin. We will learn to celebrate the good, beautiful, and true aspects of our nation's

heritage while also being willing to biblically critique the parts that are marked by injustice or idolatry.

- **Activities:**

1. **Heritage Trail Postcard:** Choose one of the heritage examples studied. Design and write a postcard from that location, describing what makes it significant.
2. **(Amplified Capstone Project) My South African Heritage Scrapbook:** This will be your main project for the term. For each of South Africa's nine provinces, you will create a two-page spread in a scrapbook. Each entry must include a map of the province, its capital city, its flag or coat of arms, and a detailed report on at least one significant heritage site, person, or event from that province. This project will be your final assessment for the term.