Term 3 Inquiry Question
How have Australians used, affected and sustained the environment?

What affect do humans have on natural eco-systems?

We have learnt that humans have both positive and negative effects on natural eco-systems. When humans burn fossil fuels, gas rises into the air and affects the ozone layer. As the hole in the ozone layer gets bigger, air temperature rise causing a hole in the ozone layer to be created. This hole allows more of the sun’s energy to reach the earth. The energy produces over twice as much heat as we have now. The ozone layer is like a greenhouse, so we should treat it with respect. This energy from the sun can melt Antarctica’s ice and destroy the polar bears homes. Also, when ice melts, the sea’s water level rises up because of the water that has been melted. This causes destructive erosions and floods. This means that we are destroying animals’ eco-systems.

Humans can also have a positive impact on the environment. For example, when we replant trees to replace the trees that have been cut down, we help to re-establish lost habitats for the animals. Sometimes bird nests are cut down from old trees, but if we replant new trees we are giving birds a new place to settle as their home. Newly planted trees help our atmosphere by generating oxygen into the air. The leaves on a tree uses photosynthesis to inhale carbon dioxide. The trees then release the carbon dioxide and change it into oxygen. This is a good thing as humans need oxygen to breathe. Trees also take in more carbon dioxide, which is transferred into oxygen. We humans have positive or negative effects to natural eco-systems depending on the choices we make and ourselves.
What connections do Aborigines have to the land?
The Aborigines are ancestors of the original population of Australia. The Aborigines live off what the land provides for them and they do not waste any of it. For example if they killed a kangaroo they would eat the meat, use the fur as clothing and use the bones to make tools. The Aborigines would tell stories about the land that they called secret. They passed these stories on from generation to generation. The Aborigines used the land in a very sustainable way by not taking too much of one thing and by moving from place to place.

How do Australians use and sustain the land?
Australians use the land for many reasons depending on what type of stakeholder they are. For example, agriculture uses the land to grow crops, fruit and vegetables, to supply Australia with the goods they need to survive. Industry uses the land to produce goods and services that people want, such as computers, electricity. The government uses the land by searching for natural gas reserves to provide power to the continent.

Learning Contracts

The learning contract is a new way of learning in Grade 5. It is divided into different subject areas that every student must complete before the end of the week. We get a new contract on a weekly basis. With the learning contract, a timetable is included of what will happen during the week so students can plan their week. Although students choose the activities they want to complete during the week, there are whole class activities as well that relate to an activity on the contract, or is a revision of things that we have learned earlier in the year.

Edmodo

Edmodo is a web-space we use to connect students and teachers through the Internet. Edmodo allows teachers to make groups that can be accessed by specific students using group codes. In these groups, teachers can post assignments, files, websites and daily quizzes that are suited to the learning needs of that small group. Edmodo is fun and helps students learn a variety of subjects through the one web-space.