

Unit overview

All living things have basic needs that must be met in order to survive – food, water, shelter and air.

Students will all know what it feels like to be hungry and thirsty, but may not be able to identify air as a ‘need’ without guidance. Students also may be more aware of these basic needs if they have experience caring for a younger sibling or relative, pet or plants.

This lesson has been developed as an extension opportunity for an existing unit of work prepared by the Australian Science Teachers Association (ASTA) in partnership with Education Services Australia (ESA) – [Needs of living things](#).

The following lesson can be taught as a stand-alone lesson or incorporated into the full unit of work mentioned above.

By allowing students to investigate the needs of sheep kept for wool production, this lesson aims to help students be more consciously aware of the basic needs of animals that rely on humans for survival, such as livestock, and the way humans support these needs.

By exploring a range of resources students will learn how farmers look after sheep to meet their basic needs. Students use what they have learned to create a paddock on a sheep farm and identify how they would meet the needs of their sheep.

Cross-curriculum priority:

Sustainability

Early lessons about the interdependence of animals, plants and people.

Links with the Australian Curriculum

This *Needs of living things* lesson links to all three strands of the Australian Curriculum: Science.

The table below outlines the sub-strands covered in this unit of work.

Achievement standard

The sequence of the lessons in this unit of work provides opportunities to gather information about students’ understanding related to the sections in bold in the achievement statement below:

By the end of the Foundation year, students describe the properties and behaviour of familiar objects. They suggest how the environment affects them and other living things.

Students share observations of familiar objects and events.

Source: [Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority \(ACARA\)](#)

Strand	Sub-strand	Code	Content descriptions
Science understanding	Chemical sciences	ACSSU002	Living things have basic needs, including food and water.
Science as a human endeavour	Nature and development of science	ACSHE013	Science involves exploring and observing the world using the senses
Science inquiry skills	Questioning and predicting	AC SIS014	Respond to questions about familiar objects and events
	Planning and conducting	AC SIS011	Explore and make observations by using the senses
	Processing and analysing data and information	AC SIS233	Engage in discussions about observations and use methods such as drawing to represent ideas
	Communicating	AC SIS012	Share observations and ideas

Background Information

The needs of sheep

Like all other living things sheep need food water shelter and air to survive and thrive. Like pets, sheep are domesticated animals that rely on people to meet these basic needs.

Sheep are herbivores, which means they feed only on plants and can spend up to seven hours a day grazing (eating plant material). They mostly graze during the early morning and the evening and can walk many kilometres as they graze.

When there is not enough pasture (plants grown specifically to feed animals such as sheep and cattle) in a paddock, wool producers provide extra feed for sheep in the form of hay, silage, grain or processed feed mixes that have been specially prepared to meet their nutritional requirements.

Sheep can drink up to 1.5 litres of water each day, but this varies with the type of pasture and feed they eat, their size, and also the time of year (summer or winter) and weather conditions.

More background information on the needs of sheep and how they are met by Australian wool producers can be found in the LEARN ABOUT WOOL [online Resource library](#).

More general information about teaching young students about the needs of living things can be found in the [background material for the full unit of work on the ScienceWeb website](#)