

To Teachers of Grades 5, 6 and 7

Squatter is an exciting, fun game to play and is a valuable educational tool.

What is Squatter®?

- Squatter is a board game about Australian Sheep Farming.
- It was invented by my father in 1961 and has entertained hundreds of thousands of Australians for the last 45 years.
- It is suitable for adults and children (many children over 8 years old can play with moderate assistance; most children over the age of 10 can play with minimal assistance)
- Any number from 2 to 6 players can participate per game. (3 or 4 is ideal for children playing unassisted)

Why is Squatter® useful in the classroom

- Squatter is a farming game which simulates real farming practices. The squares around the playing board together with the 25 different "Tucker Bag" cards introduce many concepts.
- Some of these concepts include farming, land use, natural resources, natural disasters, business management, budgeting, financial planning, taxation and mathematics (including addition, subtraction, multiplication, percentages, profit, loss, estimating).
- When played as a social activity there are many opportunities to develop social skills and social awareness. The structure of Squatter creates **winner**s not losers, which encourages a spirit of co-operation emphasising rewards for successful farming practices.
- Squatter is a fantastic activity for primary school students level 4 upwards, (ie approximately grades 5 & 6) because it
 - Relates to Australian studies, including Australian history, language and culture
 - Embraces agriculture, animal husbandry and farm management
 - Creates awareness of natural disasters including fire, flood and drought
 - Cautions of the hazards of machinery
 - Introduces the complexity of the sheep and wool industry
 - Provides opportunity to explore budgeting and financial issues
 - Facilitates social interaction and co-operation between the players
 - Involves dice and the handling of money in denominations from \$1 to \$10,000
 - Utilizes "ready reckoner" tables to manage financial calculations
 - Can be played to a time limit
 - Maintains the interest of ALL players until the conclusion. (No players are eliminated from the game during play)
 - Relates well to VELs (see below)

VELs and Squatter

Playing Squatter can illustrate and reinforce a number of Victorian Essential Learning Standards (**VELs**) and these are naturally similar for the **various State-based**

curricula around Australia. Specific examples and the relevant Progression Points (P.P.) are listed below.

Geography - Geographic knowledge and understanding

P.P. 3.25 - "Identification of natural processes; for example, **rainfall and flood**, earth movements and earthquakes, **drought and bushfire**

[Squatter game includes "flood damage", "fire destroys haystacks and out buildings", "drought", "bore dries up", "general rain - breaks drought", "fire fighting equipment", "fire safety"]

P.P. 3.25 - "Identification and understanding of various types of land use and their distribution in Australia; for example; **farming, forest, towns, parks**

[Squatter game includes "visiting town", "pasture", "grazing", "landcare", "tree planting is helping our environment"]

P.P. 3.5 - "Identification of the impact of natural processes on the environment and population in the local area; for example erosion and landslip, high rainfall and flooding in the school yard and **firefighting techniques**

[Squatter game includes "soil conservation", "erosion control", "salinity reversal"]

P.P. 3.5 - "Identification of the impacts of various land uses on the environment for example, the effect of **land clearance on soil quality**

[Squatter game includes "soil conservation trophy for erosion control...", "...landcare and tree planting is helping our environment"]

P.P. 3.75 - "Reporting on the impact of a natural process on an area in Australia; for example, annual rainfall, **drought** and cyclones

[Squatter serves as a valuable introduction into the impact of annual rainfall and droughts because it creates an awareness of these topics in a 'play' environment". General discussion on these topics including 'reporting' would be a natural and logical step after playing Squatter as a class activity.]

P.P. 3.75 - "reporting of ways in which people **protect the environment**

[Squatter game introduces a number of environmental issues including landcare, tree planting, sustainable water management, sustainable grazing systems, soil conservation, erosion control. Squatter players learn that productivity can be improved by improving management of environmental issues.]

P.P. 4.25 - "Identification and analysis of an environmental issue and its impact on a community; for example, **forest use**

[Squatter game introduces environmental issues and serves as an excellent tool for investigating impact on land use]

P.P. 4.5 - "explanation of how human activities and physical processes interact in a region; for example, **the influence of weather patterns on farming in Australia**

[Squatter game includes results of weather patterns. Drought, floods, local rain, general rain, bore dries up. This naturally can lead to discussion and investigation of interaction of human activities and physical processes]

P.P. 4.5 - "Understanding of policies currently in place to manage an environmental issue; for example, **land degradation**, or urbanisation at a local or regional level

[Squatter game includes issues such as landcare & conservation policies to manage environmental issues such as land degradation by erosion and salinity]

History - Historical knowledge and understanding

"At level 4, students demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of significant events in Australian history including ... **the development of the wool industry**

[Squatter game is about sheep farming and the wool industry. The photo on the board is of a 5th generation farmer on horseback. The property "San Michelle" was established 5 years before Melbourne was established, and more than 20 years before Victoria became a self governing colony.]

P.P. 4.25 - "identification of change and continuity over time in a past society

[Squatter game includes a property "Coorumbene" which was a pioneering sheep farm in South Gippsland. The wool was transported by bullock wagon to the Loch railway station. Coorumbene still exists but is now primarily in a beef and dairy region and trucks are used to transport the produce.]

P.P. 4.5 - "identification of legacies of past societies evident in contemporary societies

[Squatter game includes references to "Banjo" Patterson poems such as "Clancy of the Overflow", which mentions "The Lachlan", Australia's 3rd longest river, that figures in Australian history and geography. "Clancy of the Overflow" describes droving life and contrasts the country with the city life. The stud ram "Winton Boy II" is named after Winton where Waltzing Matilda was written and had its first public performance. Waltzing Matilda describes a time of the "swagman" and "sundowners" and homeless people.]

Economics - Economic knowledge and understanding

P.P. 3.25 - "awareness of the resources used for production; for example, **land, labour, minerals and equipment**

[Squatter game includes land, sheep, stud rams, fencing, drilling equipment, shearing sheds, shearing equipment, sheep dipping.]

P.P. 3.25 - "identification of reasons for personal **money management**

[Squatter game is intrinsically related to money management. Over investing in improvements leaves insufficient financial resources to fund seasonal and unexpected costs.]

P.P. 3.5 - "awareness of the **limited nature of resources** and the unlimited nature of wants

[Squatter is a game about utilisation of limited resources. If the resources were unlimited the game would end at the first throw of the dice.]

P.P. 3.5 - "understanding of production, distribution, and/or consumption of resources; for example, that **oranges grow on trees** and are sold in supermarkets. [**Wool grows on sheep, woollen garments are sold in clothing shops**]

[Squatter game focuses on wool production. The "Woolmark" logo commonly found on woollen apparel also appears on the playing board. Squatter is about the wool industry and demonstrates principles common to many other livestock raising industries.]

P.P. 3.75 - "understanding of fundamental links between the production, distribution and consumption of resources in basic contexts; for example, that **oranges are transported from farms to market, to retailers and then to households**

[Squatter game includes "Stock Sales" and "Wool Sales". These are identifiable events that are fundamentally linked to the chain of production.]

Interpersonal Development - Building social relationships

P.P. 3.25 - "awareness of another's feelings through observation, discussion and thoughtfulness

[Squatter game includes winning and losing a game, landing in drought, flood, bush fire. This provides opportunity to explore another's feelings when faced with bonuses and set-backs]

P.P. 3.25 - "knowledge of potential sources of conflict

[Squatter game provides opportunity to learn about sources of conflict. Examples include; rolling the dice through someone else's sheep; neglecting to pass the dice to the next player; cheating]

P.P. 3.5 - "awareness of perspective of others (walking in their shoes)

[Squatter game allows for changing fortunes. Any player winning can suffer adversity. A player faced with misfortune in Squatter gains an awareness of the perspective of others facing adversity in real life.]

P.P. 3.5 - "negotiating skills in discussions and/or for avoiding conflict in diverse social relationships

[Squatter game includes opportunity to avert conflict. Resolution of disputes by reference to the rules. Determining an alternative end point for the game such as a time limit also provides opportunity for discussion.]

P.P. 3.75 - "awareness of responses to actions that display empathy

[Squatter game includes misfortune based on natural disaster. An empathetic response to someone landing on the "drought" square might be "Bad luck, but it will be over soon..." or "I had drought too. It's tough in drought."]

P.P. 4.25 - "knowledge of events that cause suffering among other communities [farmers] and nations

[Squatter game includes events such as flood, drought, fire, injury, disease, pests, livestock losses. All these relate to real events causing widespread suffering across Australia and other nations]

Interpersonal Development - Working in teams

P.P. 3.25 - "personal and shared responsibility for achieving tasks

[Squatter game is a team effort. Enjoyment comes from co-operation. A disruptive individual makes playing a game within the allotted time difficult. Opportunity to assist and sharing responsibility with money handling, working out costs, change, bonuses and also with understanding "tucker bag" cards.

P.P. 3.5 - "flexibility when team roles are being allocated; for example, being prepared to take on a supportive role

[Squatter game includes the role for a banker. In a class room situation an experienced player may take on role of mentor or supporter for an inexperienced player.]

P.P. 3.5 - "problem solving strategies for overcoming difficulties to achieve tasks

[Squatter game includes many difficulties to be overcome. These include manipulating the money, use of tools such as the "ready reckoner", managing the spare sheep and temporary storing of sheep between stock sales.]

P.P. 3.75 - "adaptable behaviour for overcoming difficulties to achieve tasks

[Squatter game is amenable to a variety of solutions to problems. In one game it might be playing to a time limit, in another game it could be playing for three circuits. Limiting the number of players could solve a time constraint, or adding a "banker - guide" could be an alternative solution]

Mathematics

In addition to the specific relation to the VELs mentioned above, Squatter[®] is also a valuable tool to apply and reinforce mathematical concepts in a very practical way.

Concepts such as "price per pen", as well as "flat rates", percentages, multiplication, multiplication by 10, doubling, estimating, giving change, converting money into different denominations, use of tables in "ready reckoner" and wool sale charts.

Language

Considerable practice in reading is derived from the "tucker bag" cards and the various instructions on the playing board.

Regards,

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Squatter

www.squatter.com.au
www.funatical.com.au