

Introduction

Connections are ties that link one thing to another thing, or one person to another person. They are made every day by the **media**, people, politicians and businesses. Technology now allows daily interactions by anyone anywhere in the world.

Types of Connections

Connections can be found everywhere – they occur nationally and globally but also within communities and families.

Connections can be made through food, fashion, and sport, and through cultural, religious and trade activities.

As communication technology and global transport have developed, international connections have improved. Now all nations can react to natural disasters, provide military support and contribute together to combat environmental issues. The globe continues to become increasingly connected.



The world is made up of different countries, cultures, environments and peoples, which are connected through relationships, beliefs, trade and culture.

How Do We Connect?

Communication is an important part of establishing and maintaining connections. Historically, connections were made through communicating in person orally or through letters. Australia is a great distance from the rest of the world, and letters to and from Australia had to come by ship, which often took months. By the time information was received, it was already very out of date.

Today, many methods of communication are quicker than before, and in some cases, almost instantaneous. We can communicate with people across the globe through telephone, instant messaging, video conferencing or email. Media communications enable people to access information through radio, television, newspapers, magazines, blogs, social media and forums. All of these forms of communication keep us globally connected. Physical distance is now less of a barrier.

Did You Know?

In 1914, British World War I soldier Private Thomas Hughes wrote a letter to his wife, sealed it in a ginger ale bottle, and tossed it into the English Channel. He died two days later fighting in France. Fast forward to 1999 when a fisherman found the bottle in the River Thames. It was too late to deliver the letter to Mrs Hughes, who died in 1979, but not too late for Hughes's 86-year-old daughter, who was only one year old when her father died. The message was delivered to her at home in New Zealand.

Global Relationships

Connections are made daily through interactions in the media and between people, political groups, businesses and technology. Australia has benefitted from modern communication technology. People, businesses and governments can stay connected even though Australia is far from many other countries.

Trade is a way that Australia makes global connections with other countries. China is a good example. In 2012, the top two types of products imported from China to Australia were smart phones and technology accessories. Australia imports this communications technology because the cost of making phones and other technology is much lower in China. These items are then sold at a higher price in Australia allowing for a greater profit. It is also quicker and easier to transport **goods** from one

country to another than ever before. Planes and boats move around the world more quickly and efficiently than they did 100 or even 50 years ago.



In Australia, the smart phone is a business and entertainment tool. What devices do you use? Where were they made?



Electronic devices provide employment and income for people in China.

Connecting People and Places

At a local level, we often connect to our community through the sports we play or the shops from which we buy our food. National connections are made when relationships are established within a country. In Australia, this can occur when we buy fruit or vegetables grown in another state.

Global connections are made when countries relate to one another. For example, when students from India study in Australia or when Australia sends foreign aid to help build a water pipeline in Vietnam.

Who Makes Connections?

The Media

The media plays an important role in creating and maintaining connections. It does this by keeping us informed about what is happening in our own community, across the country and around the world.

Advances in communications mean more people have access to the global media instantaneously. The media can influence opinion. It has the power to change people's ideas about anything from food and fashion, to political and religious beliefs. The global media can also provide cultural awareness – we can visit and experience places, people and history around the world without leaving home.

Governments

Government leaders make connections. Today, they meet with each other more than ever before, which gives them opportunities to solve problems affecting their own or other countries.

Non-government Organisations

Non-government organisations also make connections. These are organisations that are set up specifically to help with an issue or a cause. Examples are organisations that work on solving environmental issues or providing people living in poverty with food and water.



The Red Cross is one of the largest non-government organisations in the world. Here, volunteers are delivering food and water to families in Africa.

Significant Events

Connections are made on a local, national or global level through significant events. A significant event is an occurrence that has an important economic, social or environmental impact. Significant events include wars, natural disasters or sporting or cultural events.

The Olympic Games

The Olympic Games is a significant sporting event for the country in which the Games are held and also for many countries and people around the world. On a local level, the country that hosts the Games must build sporting facilities and provide accommodation for the sporting teams who come from around the world.

The host country is advertised around the world by people watching the games, which increases tourism to the country both during and after the Games.

The 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami

In December 2004, a major earthquake, followed by a massive **tsunami** occurred in the Indian Ocean. This large scale natural disaster caused destruction and flooding in a number of surrounding Asian countries. Indonesia was the country most affected by the tsunami, followed by Sri Lanka, India and Thailand.

Its impact was social, economic and environmental. More than 200 000 people lost their lives. Local and national communities were affected economically due to loss of homes and businesses.

Many people around the world who saw the impact of the tsunami in the media gave donations to charities. Australia was among the countries providing Indonesia with aid to rebuild homes and re-establish basic **services**.



Around the world, countries connect globally as people watch athletes compete in significant sporting events, such as the Olympic Games. What are other sporting events that people around the world enjoy watching?



The 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami had a huge impact on the countries affected.