Which capital city in Australia has the highest cost of living in 2011?

INTRODUCTION
A cost of living is the cost of maintaining a certain standard of living. The cost varies over time, and is calculated based on a number of factors, in particular, the cost of housing, food and transport—the basis of life in urban regions. By comparing the average prices across these main topics, city by city, we can determine how each rank in terms of their affordability.

PLANNING AND DATA COLLECTION
Our research question is "Which capital city in Australia has the highest cost of living (Transport, House Prices and Food prices) in 2011?" The data we used to make our graphs was collected from the website http://www.numbeo.com/cost-of-living/country_result.jsp?country=Australia. This source was used because it contains statistics on the costs of food, transport and housing taken from the same source, in the same year, and was therefore would give us the most accurate comparisons. The website's source of their data is from the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the food prices are from Woolworths, a chain supermarket with stores nationally, which makes it a reliable site.

GRAPHS AND ANALYSIS

FOOD PRICES
The graph of the 'Cost of Groceries' shows quite a distinction between the costs of groceries by capital city. Darwin, at which a general grocery bag of milk, bread, rice, eggs, cheese and chicken would cost around $35, pays over 15% more than it would cost to buy the equivalent in Canberra in which city, groceries are most affordable ($29.67). Perth is shown to have the second highest cost ($34.73), followed closely by Melbourne ($33.90), Hobart ($32.50), and then Sydney ($32.45). Besides Canberra, the most affordable cities were Brisbane

PUBLIC TRANSPORT PRICES
The cost of public transport had the greatest variations of all the areas we analysed. The cost of a monthly pass in Perth ($150) was more than double that in Darwin and Hobart ($80). Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney were the next most expensive, with monthly tickets each averaging $120, and were tailed by Canberra, in which city monthly passes cost $85 in 2011.

HOUSE PRICES
The capital city in Australia with the most expensive house price is Sydney, costing about $80000 per square metre. This price is significantly higher, costing more than double the price of Hobart, Adelaide and Brisbane, which only cost $3500, $3100 and $3625 per square metre respectively. It is evident that the capital city with the most affordable house price is Adelaide. It can be seen from the graph that Melbourne has the second highest house price among all the capital cities in Australia, with a price of $7750 per square metre.

GASOLINE PRICES
The average gasoline price per litre varied very little from city to city in 2011. The range covered ten cents, and the mode price, also the least expensive, was $1.42 per litre (Melbourne and Adelaide). The cheapest fuel prices per litre were in Darwin ($1.52), Hobart ($1.50) and Canberra ($1.48), and were followed closely by Brisbane ($1.47), Sydney ($1.46) and Perth ($1. 46).

RENT PRICES
The range of the rent prices in Australian capital cities is more narrow compared to the cost of house prices. Sydney has the highest rent prices, costing $2602.25 per month. Darwin's rent prices is the second highest, costing $2316.63 per month. Hobart has the lowest rent price, only costing $1349 per month. This cost is just over half of the cost of rent in Sydney. The rent prices for Canberra, Melbourne and Perth are relatively close, costing $2038.75, $2023 and $2131.25 per month respectively.

CONCLUSION
From the information we observed from our graphs, we have determined that in 2011 Sydney has the highest house prices and renting prices. The city with the most expensive public transport cost is Perth, and the city with the highest gasoline price is Darwin. Darwin also has the highest food prices. Overall we found that Sydney and Darwin has the highest cost of living.

To improve this project, more data could be gathered in a wider range of areas that would have affected the cost of living in the different capital cities, for example, Health costs. The cost of living could also be compared to the average income of the people living in the cities to give more accurate comparisons and conclusions.