

Let's Investigate our Place

Notes for Teachers

Geography KS1



Geography KS1 - Let's Investigate our Place

Notes for Teachers

Rationale

Whether we live in a hamlet, village, town or city, the majority of Earth's population settle in a single place to make the most of the physical and human attributes on offer there. This unit of work is aimed at promoting an understanding of 'place'.

A powerful way for pupils to do this is through practical and investigative activities that connect them with the settlement that they know best: where they live. Abstract concepts and ideas can best be brought to life through the use of a local lens, where pupils use their senses to explore, compare and link places and spaces they know well with those that they have not had the opportunity to visit.

Hands-on activities will help pupils form memorable impressions of what the place they call home is like, why it is as it is and what impact future changes might have. Multiple viewpoints will be considered.

Aim

By the end of the unit of work, pupils will have further developed their knowledge about their locality. They will have an understanding of basic subject-specific vocabulary relating to human and physical geography and begin to use geographical skills, including first-hand observation, to enhance their locational awareness. (National Curriculum for England 2013).

Planning for impact

Every place, whether hamlet, village, town or city, is different and every school within it has a unique set of needs that is constantly changing as its community changes. Although the following steps are designed to work in any place, the following approach should be taken:

'adopt' 'adapt' 'embed'

Planning for progression

Every pupil will have a wealth of academic and personal experiences and interactions with the world. It is imperative to measure and build on these collectively and individually. It is also important to have a clear vision of how what is learned in each lesson will form the building blocks for future learning.

Geographical thinking and speaking

Have a roleplay area within the classroom (e.g. a town planning office) with maps and aerial photographs of the local area, a tablet with Google Earth, materials for creating their own maps, compasses, and key geographical language (human, physical and directional) displayed.

Enquiry

The formulation and investigation of questions is key to finding out about the world and its people. Closed questions allow the retrieval of facts and information, whilst more open-ended questions allow pupils to actively gather and explore information and perspectives, as well as inform their own thoughts and opinions.

Mapwork

Maps form an integral part of primary geography and pupils should be provided with opportunities to use, interrogate and create maps. This can include table maps such as Ordnance Survey maps, 3D maps (globes) or online versions which can be organised, viewed and created from different perspectives.

Sequencing

It is important to build the learning towards an end point that challenges the learners. This is the summative assessment (Step for Learning 7) with steps one to six providing opportunities to develop the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding. Step for Learning 8 is an extension.

Fieldwork

Many of the steps include working within the school grounds and extending out into the local neighbourhood. These are designed to develop observation and first hand experiences of place, space and environment. This makes the learning relevant, real and concrete.

Language and communication

Encouraging the development of language through the use of story and picture books as well as providing opportunities to discuss observations, emotional responses, opinions and perspectives of localities at different scales.

National Curriculum Coverage

Purpose and Aims

- inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people
- deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes
- enable understanding of the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time
- raise competency in the geographical skills needed to:
 - collect, analyse and communicate data gathered through experiences of fieldwork
 - interpret sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams and aerial photographs
- communicate geographical information, including through maps, data and writing

Key stage 1 Subject content

- **Locational knowledge**
 - name, locate and identify characteristics of our locality within the four countries of the UK
- **Place knowledge**
 - understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom

- **Human and physical geography**

- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
 - key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather
 - key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop

- **Geographical skills and fieldwork**

- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language, to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key
- use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

Geographical Concepts:

The Unit of Work will be underpinned by eight geographical '**Big Ideas**' as outlined by the Geographical Association in: '*Leading Primary Geography: The essential handbook for all teachers.*'



Place - what is it like here, what happens here, our emotional response



Space - location, layout and landuse patterns



Environment - physical and human features and processes, change



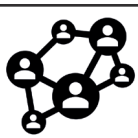
Scale - school grounds, local neighbourhood, wider settlement



Environmental impact - cause/effect, sustainability, emotional response



Cultural awareness - diversity, identity, values



Interconnections - features, places, events and people

Source: adapted from Leading Primary Geography: the essential handbook for teachers p17-27 Geographical Association

Broader concepts including form, pattern, contrast, perspective, movement, conflict, equity, change and sustainability might also provide lenses through which geographical learning can be explored through this unit of work.

Assessment

Formative assessment

Thinking, talking and recording like a geographer can be defined as observing, recognising, describing and explaining geographical information. Throughout this unit there will be opportunities to assess the following:

- **Observe:** Can pupils make first hand observations to enhance their locational awareness?
- **Name:** Can pupils name and identify human and physical characteristics of their locality using basic geographical vocabulary? For example, physical features such as hills and slopes, rivers and streams, vegetation and green spaces. Human features such as: houses, roads, shops and restaurants, offices, street furniture (benches, bus stops, litter bins, post boxes etc.), transport and services such as places of worship, health care etc.
- **Use and construct:** Can pupils use and construct basic symbols in a key for a map?
- **Compare:** Can pupils begin to notice similarities and differences of human and physical geography within their locality?
- **Personal Development:** Can pupils develop, share and justify their opinions and values around geographical issues?

Summative assessment: The culmination of this unit will be for pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding to decide on, and offer justification for, an appropriate place within their locality for a new development. For example, this might be a park, cinema, café, housing, school or any other service which would be relevant and meaningful for children of their age.

- **Identify:** Can pupils identify a location, based on its human and physical features, which make it suitable for a new development?
- **Justify:** Can pupils identify simple environmental impacts of their proposed development and possible mitigations for these? (e.g. extra litter creation and the need for more bins; increased congestion and the resultant changes needed to the transport infrastructure - including a possible new bus route or extra crossing points etc.)
- **Explain:** Can pupils use basic geographical vocabulary to explain their thinking? (e.g. 'The 'park' needs to be built near our houses, as this is where we live, but not close to the main road/motorway as this could be dangerous and have high levels of pollution.')

Key Questions	Core Subject knowledge	Geographical thinking
What is this place like?	What jobs are carried out?	Where do people get their water, food, shelter, electricity and other services?
What happens here?	Are people treated fairly?	What kinds of human features can be found?
Who lives here?	How do people travel around?	What kinds of physical features can be found?
How is this place changing?	Where are these places in relation to other places?	How did this place get to be like it is?
What might it be like in the future?	Who decides and manages the changes?	What is a settlement?

Key Vocabulary

Map	Valley	East
Scale	Vegetation	West
Symbol	Season	Landmarks
Key	Weather	Fieldwork
Plot	City	Place
Physical Geography	Town	Observation
Human Geography	Village	Observe
Features	Business	Environment
Forest	Farm	Sustainable
Hill	House	Population
Mountain	Office	Location
Connections	Harbour	Soundscape
Soil	Shop	Stream
River	North	
Slope	South	

These are provided as flashcards at the end of this PDF, and as posters on the accompanying word document. Each individual Step for Learning also provides its respective keywords as flashcards and posters for the learning wall.

Subject Knowledge for teachers

Sense of place: A good geography curriculum should be both broader and deeper than the National Curriculum. So, although the National Curriculum subject content for geography makes little reference to the importance of pupils developing a sense of place, it is a central tenet of quality teaching and learning. Ofsted recognise the importance of sense of place within geography's disciplinary knowledge and describe building a sense of place as:

'...the geography content that children learn can allow greater awareness of people, the environment, the relationships between them and the child's place in this relationship. This sense of belonging is recognised as being significant in children's social and emotional development and in preparing them for more formal learning.'

Research review series: geography, Ofsted, 17 June 2021

Maps and mapping: the unit of work focuses on the school grounds and local area. Detailed maps of the UK are available from Ordnance Survey in both paper and electronic format. Online mapping programmes, such as Google Earth and Google Maps, as well as those that use Ordnance survey as a base map (Digimaps - you can route plan and annotate, add text, images and symbols and print off OS maps) are great tools for classroom use. App Spot allows you to simultaneously view the Ordnance Survey and satellite map of an area side by side.

Settlements: this learning sequence is building towards work on and around settlements in KS2. Teachers might find it beneficial to include elements of the information below within discussions across the unit of work:

- Settlements are places where groups of people live and work.
- Settlements are usually shaped by the physical landscape and their change overspace and time is influenced by human as well as physical factors.

Historically these have varied and your area might fit with one of the following:

- > The Celts and Anglo Saxons built settlements where there was a good supply of fresh water, flat land for growing crops, a good defensive position and/or a crossing point for a river.
- > Romans created larger settlements, cities, which were organised in a grid with a large square or 'forum' in the centre for people to trade and socialise.
- Settlements can be categorised as below, although there are no hard and fast rules to this:
 - > **Hamlet** = population of fewer than 500 people. Often a group of houses dispersed in the countryside or running alongside a road. No services.
 - > **Village** = population of 500-3,000 people. Few services, e.g. a church, a post office, a pub, and a school, although there has been a decline in these over recent decades as more people have cars. Housing is often inhabited by people working in nearby towns.
 - > **Town** = population of between 10,000 and 100,000 people. They support a range of shops and services they offer (larger towns offer more).
 - > **City** = population of 100,000+. A city is a town that has been given a Royal Charter. This can be awarded based on population size, presence of an Anglican cathedral or its historical significance. However none of these are a guarantee of the award.
 - > **Megacity** = refers to metropolitan areas with a total population of more than 10 million people. Definitions again vary globally but usually it includes people living in the immediate suburbs outside of the established border of the city. London is regarded by many as a megacity and the only one in Europe.

Steps for Learning:

The unit of work has been carefully sequenced to support pupils build their understanding of place, focusing on the concrete understanding that they can develop through first hand experiences in their school, its grounds and the local neighbourhood. Each 'Step' builds on the previous one/s as well as providing opportunities for pupils to integrate this with their prior learning.

How to use the planning

The plans are organised as a sequence of 'Steps for Learning' (SfL) with each plan, in essence, forming a flight of steps, building the learning towards a predetermined, but open-ended exit point.

Key Questions

These guide the content of the steps and should be modelled by the teacher throughout.

Age Range (Years 1 and 2) Step Number

This Unit of Work is aimed at Years 1 and 2.

Learning Outcomes

These form the main learning threads through each 'step'. They state the main learning points for pupils to take away.

Curriculum Links

The six core elements of the English National Curriculum are:

- **Purpose and aims**
- **Locational knowledge**
- **Place knowledge**
- **Human and physical geography**
- **Geographical skills and fieldwork**
- **Big ideas**

The big ideas are not within the National Curriculum (although some are mentioned within the aims and purpose). They should, however, be part of the school curriculum.

The National Curriculum should always be considered as the minimum entitlement and the starting point for schools to design the content for their units of work. From a disciplinary perspective, the big ideas or key concepts are integral to how the National Curriculum can be delivered.

Each Step for Learning provides an overview of the core elements and the '**Big Ideas**' of geography within each one. These will be central to the Step for Learning but others might also be re-enforced or introduced through the completion of the activities or subsequent discussions.

Formative Assessment

Suggestions for how teachers might continuously monitor learning, to help inform them of any areas which require consolidation.

Summative Assessment

This Step for Learning provides an opportunity for pupils to connect their thinking and demonstrate their learning.

Resources

A list is provided of what needs to be organised ahead of each Step for Learning.

Activities

A range of practical, discursive, experiential and written tasks. These do not all have to be completed and are deliberately not allocated a time, to allow for adaption, as well as adoption from the start.

Let's Investigate our Place KS1: Keywords Flashcards



Map

Scale

Symbol

Key

**Physical
Geography**

**Human
Geography**

Features

Forest

Hill



Let's Investigate our Place KS1: Keywords Flashcards



Mountain

Connections

Soil

River

Slope

Valley

Vegetation

Season

Weather



Let's Investigate our Place KS1: Keywords Flashcards



City

Town

Village

Business

Farm

House

Office

Harbour

Shop



Let's Investigate our Place KS1: Keywords Flashcards



North

South

East

West

Landmarks

Fieldwork

Place

Observation

Environment



Let's Investigate our Place KS1: Keywords Flashcards



Sustainable

Population

Location

Soundscape

Stream

