



Department
for Education

Geography

Programmes of study for Key Stages 1-3

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Purpose of study

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives.

Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, resources and environments, together with a deep understanding of the Earth's key physical and human processes. As pupils progress, their growing knowledge about the world helps them to deepen their understanding of the interaction between physical and human processes, and of the formation of landscapes and environments. Geographical knowledge provides the tools and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time.

Aims

The National Curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop knowledge of the location of places of global significance, their defining physical and human characteristics and how they relate to one another; this place knowledge should provide a sound context for understanding geographical processes
- understand 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
- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
 - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
 - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
 - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps and writing at length.

Attainment targets

By the end of each key stage, pupils are expected to know, apply and understand the matters, skills and processes specified in the relevant programme of study.

Subject content

Key Stage 1

Pupils should develop knowledge about the world, the United Kingdom and their locality. They should understand 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.

Pupils should be taught to:

- name and locate the world's continents and oceans
- name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas
- understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a contrasting non-European country
- identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles
- use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:
 - key physical features, including: beach, coast, forest, hill, mountain, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, and weather
 - key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, and shop
- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational language (e.g. near and far) to describe the location of features and routes on a map
- use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic 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 the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment.

Key Stage 2

Pupils should extend their knowledge and understanding beyond the local area and the United Kingdom to include Europe, North and South America. This will include the location and characteristics of a range of the world's most significant human and physical features. They should develop their use of geographical tools and skills to enhance their locational and place knowledge.

Pupils should be taught to:

- locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe and North and South America and concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities
- name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, including hills, mountains, cities, rivers, key topographical features and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- identify the position and significance of latitude, longitude, Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle, and time zones (including day and night)
- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region or area of the United Kingdom (different from that taught at Key Stage 1), a region or area in a European country, and a region or area within North or South America
- describe and understand key aspects of:
 - physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle
 - human geography, including: settlements, land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals, and water supplies
- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied
- use the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world
- use fieldwork to observe, measure and record the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

Key Stage 3

Pupils should consolidate and extend their knowledge of the world's major countries and their physical and human features. They should understand how geographical processes interact to create distinctive human and physical landscapes that change over time. In doing so, they should become aware of increasingly complex geographical systems in the world around them. They should develop greater competence in using geographical tools and skills, including analysing and interpreting different data sources, and so continue to enrich their locational knowledge and spatial awareness.

Pupils should be taught to:

- extend their locational knowledge and deepen their spatial awareness of the world's countries using maps of the world to focus on Africa, South and East Asia (including China and India), the Middle East and Russia, focusing on their environmental regions, including polar and hot deserts, key physical and human characteristics, countries and major cities
- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region or area within Africa and a region or area within Asia
- understand, through the use of detailed place-based exemplars at a variety of scales, the key processes in:
 - physical geography relating to: glaciation, plate tectonics, rocks, soils, weathering, geological timescales, weather and climate, rivers and coasts
 - human geography relating to: population, international development, economic activity in the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary sectors, urbanisation, and the use of natural resources
- understand how human and physical processes interact to have an impact on and form distinctive landscapes
- build on their knowledge of globes, maps and atlases and use these geographical tools routinely in the classroom and in the field
- interpret Ordnance Survey maps in the classroom and the field, including using six-figure coordinates and scale, topographical and other thematic mapping, and aerial and satellite photographs
- use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to view, analyse and interpret places and data
- use fieldwork to collect, analyse and draw conclusions from geographical data, using multiple sources of increasingly complex information.



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