



Teignmouth Community School

A Level Geography (Edexcel)

Course Leader: Mr Johns

## Student Guide



***"Geography is the subject that holds the key to our future"***  
*Michael Palin.*

***“The study of geography is about more than just memorising places on a map. It is about understanding the complexities of the world, appreciating the diversity of cultures that exist across continents. And in the end, it is about using all that knowledge to help bridge divides and bring people together.”***

*Barack Obama.*

### **10 reasons for studying geography!**

1. Geographers are extremely employable.
2. Geography combines well with other subjects.
3. Geographers develop key skills.
4. Geography relates to real life problems.
5. Geography helps develop an understanding of current events.
6. Geography tackles the big issues:
  - Environmental change
  - Global Interdependence
  - Sustainability
  - Cultural Understanding
7. Geography is a good general subject and keeps your options open.
8. Geography stimulates an interest in, and wonder of, the world around us.
9. Geography is a fun and interesting subject.
10. You get days out on fieldwork.

Can't decide which way to go? Already got a clear career path? Whether you've studied it at GCSE or not, Geography is the right direction for you!

Statistics show that compared with other subjects Geography graduates are amongst the most employable. This is because they possess the skills that employers are looking for. Geography develops the ability to combine scientific principles with economic awareness, environmental concern and an appreciation and tolerance of people's attitudes and values.

When you take Geography you will study a wide range of interesting topics. It offers the opportunity to look in more detail at issues such as global warming, the impacts of volcanoes and earthquakes, the population explosion, the consequences of urban growth or the fate of the rainforests.

We study coasts, tourism, the weather and settlement, all of these with a lot of local studies, building on your knowledge and interest of your local area.

It is a subject that is very much alive and which changes rapidly.

Geography's subject matter ranges right across the width of the Sciences and Humanities, which means that it combines well with a wide range of other subjects. The skills you develop during the course will help you with all your studies and are directly relevant to the world beyond education.

Geography is open to any well-motivated student with AS Level potential who has met the entrance requirements. Now might be an opportunity to take up the subject again if you dropped it at the end of Year 9. The course is divided into two very distinct halves, each being taught by a different teacher:

In the classroom we provide a variety of learning experiences; there will be opportunities for I.T., group work and investigation. We expect students to complete essential reading and note taking in their own time; and we will encourage you to keep an eye on newspapers and relevant T.V. programmes, as well as searching the web for relevant and up-to-date information.

Fieldwork and investigation are important parts of the course. We use local studies and day excursions to help students understand the theory of what is being taught, and to provide the inspiration for coursework. We undertake residential fieldwork in the UK. Geographical skills are continually developed assessed at A Level.

Many of our students continue their studies at Higher Education. Some study Geography by itself or combine it with another subject as a Joint Honours degree. Others study a Geography related course, such as Environmental Management, American Studies or Town Planning. The list is almost endless.

Whatever your chosen path after A Levels, Geography will provide you with opportunities to develop those all-important key skills that are appreciated by universities and employers.

**Without Geography....you're nowhere!**

# Geography A-Level Expectations

## **1. Lessons**

There are 5 lessons of geography per week. You are expected to attend all lessons, as noted in your learning contract. If you know of an absence in advance you must give your teacher enough notice, so that work can be caught up with by an agreed date.

## **2. Homework**

You will be set homework at least once a week by your teachers. Homework will consist of a range of task such as: research, exam questions, structured exercises, preparation for presentations, revision and note taking. When your homework is set, you will be given a deadline for completion. If you cannot meet the deadline you must see your teacher at least 24 hours before the work is due, so you can renegotiate completion. Due the various demands of A Level Geography; no upper limit is set on the amount of time to be spent on homework. At a minimum, it is expected that you should do two and a half hours per week, per teacher.

## **3. Personal Research**

In addition, it is expected that you should read around the topic that you are studying. This may include: articles in newspapers or magazines, reference books, use of the internet and watching relevant TV programmes.

## **4. Fieldwork**

You are expected to participate fully in fieldwork, whether on day trips or on the residential trip. We do have a residential trip to Slapton FSC (cost approximately £250). You will be notified of additional trips well in advance.

## **5. Equipment**

You are expected to provide a ring binder and dividers to keep your work in. you will need to bring all the relevant equipment to every lesson. Textbooks will be provided.

## **6. Organisation of notes**

It is essential that your notes and other work is organised, clear and thorough. For each unit covered you need to: keep a list of contents, have a list of key terms and keep your work in order.

## **7. To conclude**

You are all capable of achieving at A Level Geography. If you: work hard, participate fully and meet the expectation noted above; you will pass with a good grade. You may even enjoy yourself!

# A Level Geography

The course contains 4 units over 2 years:

## Paper 1 - Written examination

2 hours and 15 minutes - 30% of the qualification

- Tectonic Processes and Hazards
- Landscape Systems, Processes and Change
- The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity
- The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security
- Climate Change Futures

Assessment overview:

An externally-assessed written examination

## Paper 2 - Written examination:

2 hours and 15 minutes - 30% of the qualification

- Globalisation
- Regenerating Places
- Superpowers
- Global Development and Connections

Assessment overview

An externally-assessed written examination.

## Paper 3 - Written examination:

2 hours and 15 minutes - 20% of the qualification

Content overview – There are three synoptic themes:

- Players
- Attitudes and actions
- Futures and uncertainties

The synoptic investigation will be based on a geographical issue within a place-based context that links to the three synoptic themes and is rooted in two or more of the compulsory content areas.

Assessment overview: An externally-assessed written examination comprising three sections, using a resource booklet.

## Paper 4 - Coursework: Independent Investigation

### Non-examined assessment - 20% of the qualification

Content overview:

The student defines a question or issue for investigation, relating to the course content.

The investigation will incorporate fieldwork data (collected individually or as part of a group) and own research and/or secondary data.

The fieldwork which forms the focus and context of the individual investigation may be either human, physical or integrated physical-human

The investigation report will evidence independent analysis and evaluation of data, presentation of data findings and extended writing. Students will be expected to show evidence that they have used both quantitative and qualitative data to support their independent investigation.

## Wider reading and summer tasks

- Task 1 - Scrapbook Challenge**  
**Task 2 - Review of article, documentary or place**  
**Task 3 - Topic based task – photograph analysis**  
**Task 4 - Topic based task – the big questions**

To be successful at A Level geography you must be aware of what is going on in the world. It may sound obvious, but if you don't watch the news or read a quality newspaper, your world view will be narrowed. As part of your preparation for A Levels, you must:

- Read a quality newspaper at least 3 times a week – this could be the Guardian, Independent, The Times, The Telegraph or i (only 20p!). I'm afraid that reading The Sun and the Teignmouth Post will not do!
- Watch the news – BBC or Channel 4 are recognized as the best for this.
- Watch relevant documentaries as they appear. BBC2, Channel 4 and the channel Eden are excellent for these. I recommend: panorama, unreported world, anything with Ian Stewart, Attenborough or Brian Cox.
- Buy an atlas – and look at it. Get a world map and put it on your wall.
- There are some excellent geography related books to read too – these will be provided as an additional 'wider reading list'.

### **Task 1**

**Over you're a Level geographical studies you will be expected to create 'Geographical Scrap Books'. You will create two separate books, one for human geography and one for physical geography. You will be expected to collect relevant news clips, photographs and articles, etc. Over the summer you need to start your scrap books. We will expect you to have at least three bits of information in each book on your return in September!**

## Other things to read or watch

Some good general geography sources:

Geography Review [www.philipallan.co.uk/geographyreview/index.html](http://www.philipallan.co.uk/geographyreview/index.html)

Geographical [www.geographical.co.uk/home/index.html](http://www.geographical.co.uk/home/index.html)

Useful websites:

[www.nationalgeographic.com](http://www.nationalgeographic.com)

[www.geographyalltheway.com](http://www.geographyalltheway.com)

[www.gatm.org.uk](http://www.gatm.org.uk)

More specific articles, lectures and documentaries that will broaden your geographical knowledge and understanding:

Don't Panic – Hans Rosling exploring the facts about population and development

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FACK2knC08E&t=1583s>

Interactive map of the UK coastline

<https://www.gov.uk/check-coastal-erosion-management-in-your-area>

What is happening to the plates?

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/mg22329843-000-earths-tectonic-plates-have-doubled-their-speed/>

How can technology improve a country's level of vulnerability?

[https://www.ted.com/talks/paul\\_conneally\\_digital\\_humanitarianism](https://www.ted.com/talks/paul_conneally_digital_humanitarianism)

What is a 'global sense of place'? Why is this important to the understanding of 'place' as a concept?

[http://banmarchive.org.uk/collections/mt/pdf/91\\_06\\_24.pdf](http://banmarchive.org.uk/collections/mt/pdf/91_06_24.pdf)

Places to go

If you visit any interesting places over the holidays take geographical photographs of the area. Build up a photographic record for the area. It does not have to be a place far from home – it could be in your local area. Consider, what is the physical geography of the area? How is the physical environment influenced by human activity? What geographical investigation could be carried out in this area?

### **Task 2**

**You will be expected to report back to your new class on one of the areas listed above. So, when you read an article or watch a documentary, remember to jot down a few notes on what you learned from it. If you visit a place, take some photographs and be ready to explain the geography that you have experienced.**

## Topic based task – photograph analysis

In Geography it is vital that you learn to use photographs and images effectively.

### **Task 3**

**Study the images provided and annotate them to show your knowledge and understanding. Use the prompts to help you.**

#### Physical Geography: Hazards

**Prompts.** Think about; tectonic processes, threats, impacts, risks and management.

Mt Agnu,  
Bali.



#### Physical Geography: Coasts

**Prompts.** Think about; coastal processes, coastal features, threats, management, human uses and what might happen in the future?

A beach in  
the Algarve,  
Portugal.



### **Human Geography: Globalisation**

**Prompts.** Think about; the differences between this place and where you are from, how might this place link to the global market? How is this place linked to globalisation? Where does this place fit into global governance?

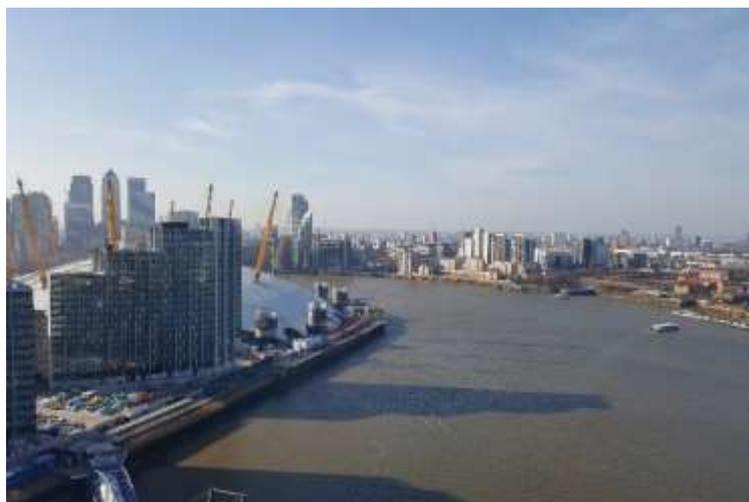
A market place  
on Mahe, in  
the Seychelles.



### **Human Geography: Regenerating Places**

**Prompts.** Think about; character of place, media representation of place, how and why this area developed, how it has changed over time, the reasons for this change and who was affected?

London  
Docklands,  
London.



## Topic based task – the ‘big questions’

When studying Geography it is important to be aware of the ‘big questions; that impact upon our world today. Below is a set of ‘big questions’ for you to consider.

**Question 1.** ‘Do you think that it is a country’s level of development that determines how well it copes with natural hazards?’

**Question 2.** ‘Will wars in the future be fought over water, rather than oil or territory?’

**Question 3.** ‘Does Globalisation bring positive outcomes to all?’

**Question 4.** ‘Doreen Massey’s work revolves around the concept of “*a sense of place*”. What do you consider this to mean?’

**Question 5.** ‘Are coastal areas in developing countries more at risk than those in developed countries?’

**Question 6.** ‘Are urban areas better places to live than rural areas?’

**Question 7.** ‘How should Antarctica be used in the future?’

### **Task 4**

**Read through these seven ‘big questions’. For each one briefly outline what your opinion is on the ‘big question’.**

**Choose one of these big questions and expand upon your brief opinion and write your key arguments linked to this issue, where appropriate use evidence to back up your opinions.**