

SATIPS

Support and training in Prep, Primary and Senior Schools

Geography

Editorial

Well it's a year into the teaching of the new syllabus and it's been seemingly quiet on the syllabus front. Whilst some teachers have been scrabbling for resources on new aspects of the course, there have been a number of textbooks published to complement the course, some of which are excellent. The textbooks provide enough hand holding to help less experienced teachers through new case studies etc and in time further case studies will become more readily available. My personal favourite is the book by John Widdowson because it's written in an accessible and non patronising way with good modern, up to date case studies, and with language suitable for KS3 candidates.

On another note, this term I published an article in Prep School magazine that might profitably be used to circulate to parents of pupils as it sets out clearly what exactly geography is now, and helps parents to see the immediacy and the relevance of the subject. I know that Nik Miller from time to time has "What is Geography?" sessions for parents at Brambletye, when he's not having Geography of Curry (nights), both of which are excellent ideas, but in the meantime some information to give to parents about the subject might be useful in the guise of a copy of the article from Prep School magazine.

Ten Ideas for Teaching Scholarship Geography

Andrew Lee

It was suggested to me some years ago by a colleague that teaching scholarship geography is less about teaching content and more about teaching candidates how to think, and I have kept this in mind ever since it was suggested. Of course pupils need to know some good geography, and this means knowing some 'stuff about stuff.' but knowing what to do with that material is central to the makeup of a good geographer.

Lambert and Kinder suggest that it is the knowing how information is useful that gives it its power and energy. This is especially true of scholarship candidates who need ultimately to

perform on their feet. Essay driven scholarship examinations require candidates to pull together disparate and to provide a geographical critique that is not only compelling, but done quickly. The examination is certainly a strong test of geographical thinking power. Examinations that contain stimulus response material too also requires pupils to be able to think quickly and effectively making sense of things that they haven't seen before.

I have argued before that one of the challenges facing geographical education, and particularly candidates being taught under the scholarship umbrella need to be taught, through a kind of apprenticeship model. This means they need to be shown how they might pull information together. They need to look at exemplars and even watch the teacher wrestle with ideas him or herself.

1) Eschew the Formulaic

Scholarship candidates moving in from Common Entrance streams sometimes find the move to the freer-form geography disorientating. Whilst some geographers like to give candidates formulae to work with, these are less likely to produce inspiring essays. There should be a kind of organicism to an essay, one that springs from the wording of the essay itself rather than deferring to a rigid set of rules. Some pupils like the rules, but it can often be better to equip them to weather the storm of a difficult question.

2) Encourage the diagram

There are diagrams and diagrams in essays. There are practical geographical diagrams that show phenomena such as a destructive plate boundary and there are conceptual diagrams that show a candidates' capacity for higher level thinking, for the clustering of ideas and concepts and the ordering of ideas. Well executed such devices can save time and can effectively demonstrate a mastery of a question.

3) Cards on the Table

Typically scholarship classes are small. Encourage pupils to learn from their mistakes and from the mistakes of others. Create a collaborative, supportive classroom 🍷

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environment as far as possible working away from the competitive propensity a class may have. Carefully talk through submitted and marked essays identifying successes, missed opportunities and errors in style.

4) Bold beginnings

Teach candidates to write good geography. Geographical writing should not be terse and boring. It is right to have a pupil write an interesting or even slightly provocative opening sentence. Teach a little wordsmithing. Pupils will overdo this in the first instance, writing purple prose or becoming causal, biased or too informal with their writing style. Encourage them to experiment advising them that you will be pointing out where they have gone too far.

5) Encourage Mistakes

Give candidates guidelines but tell them to stretch the boundaries. Correct them when they are wrong and explain the nature of their mistakes.

6) Encourage broad reading

“Stuff about stuff,” needs to come from somewhere. Teach candidates to ready quickly for meaning and geographically significant information. Provide candidates with journals such as the Geographical Magazine, Wide World, the Week etc and have them pull out micro geographical case studies. Teach them to write them up with little notes, perhaps in a book or even on 3x5” cards.

7) Show them what you can (and can't) do

Teach by example. Tell candidates that you will write an essay - even one they choose and write it for them in 30 minutes on the electronic whiteboard connected to your computer. Think aloud. Let them hear what you're thinking, what you're considering, what mistakes you make along the way and how you fix it. At the end tell them what you think the weaknesses and strengths of your essay are. Get them to write notes, not about the material, but about they way you do the essay. Tell them it's not necessarily the right way, but just a way of writing the essay. Then, print your essay out and give it to them. Pupils like this and it's quite exciting to do!

8) Essay Plans

Teach pupils how to plan fast. Give them question after question in a lesson and get them to make 3 minute plans. Get different pupils to speak to their plans and let the others troubleshoot them. Discuss why some might be stronger than others.

9) Handwriting

Tell candidates that their handwriting needs to be legible. Spend one lesson looking at exemplars of writing that cannot be easily read. Provide

some clues for improvement such as: a) write a little larger; b) spread out your work more; c) when you're reviewing your work at the end of the essay, review the legibility too; d) encourage joined up writing it is always faster (although some pupils are reluctant to do so).

10) You have to be cruel to be kind

The scholarship group is brighter than the others and they are intellectually robust. Tell them you are taking them forward but that you will only reward them when they properly deliver. You don't want to discourage them, but encourage them to consider it a challenge. Give marks out sparingly and they will become hungry for improving their own abilities. Nurture them and watch the egos but they are capable of being driven hard and you will undoubtedly find something of a competitive spirit amongst them - but keep it friendly.

Teaching Transport & Industry

Transport returns to CE as a topic at a time when there are lots of interesting transport projects happening. Here are a few for consideration:

Crossrail

Crossrail is a 118-kilometre (73-mile) railway line that is under construction in England due to begin operation in 2018. Its aim is to provide a high-frequency passenger service linking parts of Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, via central London, to Essex and South East London. It will relieve the pressure on several London Underground lines such as the Central and District lines which are the main east-west tube passenger routes and the Heathrow branch of the Piccadilly line.

As a project that is currently underway there is relatively little debate about the environmental impact making news at present other than the potential impact on housing prices. The planning process involved stringent adherence to creating a project that was highly energy efficient and minimised broader environmental impact. There had been concerns about disruption to London, destruction of various buildings of architectural merit and the increased complexity of freight transport through the capital.

HS1

High Speed 1 (HS1), officially known as the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) and originally as the Union Railway or Continental Main Line (CML), is a 108-kilometre (67 mi) high-speed railway between London and the United Kingdom end of the Channel Tunnel, through Kent.

HS1 Section I was opened in 2003 and Section II in 2007. Current concerns surround the profitability of the line.

HS2

High Speed 2 (HS2) is a planned high-speed railway between London Euston, the English Midlands, North West England, Yorkshire, and potentially North East England and the Central Belt of Scotland.

Whilst HS2 is planned, and construction is scheduled to begin in 2017 opening in 2026. In January 2013 the phase 2 route was announced planned for completion in 2032. There have been recent changes to the plan with a decision to tunnel rather than to demolish through west London near Perivale Wood an ancient wood, bird sanctuary and Britain's second oldest nature reserve. HS2 has been much more controversial than HS1 and with this in mind and that it relates to areas outside and within London, makes this an excellent case study. Moreover, there is a good deal of online material that looks at some of the environmental impact of the proposals along with documentation about the political processes that have occurred to effect change.

The Cycle Superhighway and Cycling in London 12 new bicycle routes, dubbed Cycle Superhighways, were announced in 2008 by Mayor Ken Livingstone, with the aim of creating continuous routes into central London by the end of 2012. As of 2012 only four such routes, CS3 (Barking to Tower Gateway), CS7 (Merton to the City), CS2 (Stratford to Aldgate) and CS8 (Wandsworth to Westminster) are operational; the others are now scheduled to be completed by 2015.

This programme along with the Barclays Bicycle Hire Scheme are important recent developments. Ken Livingstone began the Cycle Superhighway programme and Boris Johnson has worked with the Barclays Bicycle Hire Scheme. Recently the Mayor has proposed a London Bike Grid and a “CrossRail for bikes.” Whilst the environmental impact of these programmes would be likely to be largely assessed in terms of carbon emissions transport geographers are keen that school geography look carefully at lol no energy transport such as cycle and pedestrian paths in cities.

Other programmes such as the Emirates Airline might be considered as innovative transport projects which may be evaluated. Criticism of that project included the rationale for constructing an expensive system that was likely to not move large numbers of commuters.

Welcome back to Transport!

The teaching of transport returns after having left it many years ago. The topic has new life because of the range of transport initiatives that have been taken in the UK and the number that are being devised and considered. Moreover, the technology associated with transport is increasingly appealing

to young people, in part because of its technology and because it often serves to help young people become more independent. Schemes such as the Barclay Cycle Hire and new Routemasters etc in London are appealing to young people as are other similar cycle programmes in Liverpool, Belfast and Glasgow (forthcoming).

The syllabus for transport includes:

- Transport routes for people and industry (transport and freight)
- Linkages of places and impact on quality of life.
- Road, rail, sea and air transport including advantages and disadvantages.
- Case study of transport programme where costs/benefits and environmental impact might be assessed.

A study of routes includes the rationale for routes and the various factors that might impact upon routes taking different directions. For example recent changes to HS2 have been made to ensure that the line does not compromise Perivale Wood. Looking at examples of routes and route diversions might be useful down to even the redirection of air traffic around the Ukraine. In terms of road traffic this might also include bypasses and alternative routes for tourism and or low emissions. The impact of the congestion charge in London might also be considered here along with other such schemes.

Transport needs also to be considered. Containerisation is an essential part of this. It would be worthwhile to look at YouTube material that shows containerisation. There is an excellent BBC documentary that sadly is not currently available, although you may be able to find some clips available on YouTube. Check in the links to see what I have been able to find at the time of going to press. The documentary is an excellent social history of containerisation and ties in neatly with Trade Unions and Industry.

See also Britain From Above excellent documentary showing transport and nodes. This DVD is available for purchase and thoroughly recommended, and useful for two units of work. Watch in class or during end of terms etc. Pupils find it quite inspiring. BBC Andrew Maher.

There are opportunities here too to link the topic with the environment and sustainability.

It would also be worthwhile looking at low emission zones and emissions testing in the UK and abroad.

Consider the impact of transport and pollution on quality of life. Pollution causes premature deaths. 🍷

Look at the advantages and disadvantages of individual transport in the car, cycling, walking (pedestrianisation and focus on personal fitness) and other new types of transport such as the Segway. These may also be considered in terms of sustainability and energy efficiency.

Industry

Industry is a topic that some geographers find challenging. Some find it challenging because they feel that the topic is rather dry and disconnected from the lives of the children they are teaching. However, nothing is further from the truth if the topic is taught in such a way that connects the economy both local and global with issues to do with daily life. The stories of Billy Elliot (UK) and October Skies (USA) are about the challenges facing individuals during times of economic change. This takes geography into patterns of inequality, global connectedness, patterns of distribution of capitalist exploitation, global inequalities, poverty, social malaise, family breakdown, drug abuse and social suffering. This is a far cry from being a dry and dusty subject.

Links referred to here can be found on this webpage.

tinyurl.com/satips2015geo

Otherwise you can type them in directly:

Links for Transport and Industry

The Box that Changed Britain BBC website for the documentary BBC (Film not currently available but excerpts might be found).

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b00scpzn>

The Box that Changed Britain
BBC Excerpt 5 mins

<http://vimeo.com/21395880>

Containerisation Video 7mins USA

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGfjJm_R6lM

Britain From Above (excerpt) BBC 2mins

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LV6l8AvjtqE>

Britain From Above (excerpt) BBC 2mins
Taxi Traffic

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6_0cqx0Npo0

Britain From Above (Excerpt) BBC 2mins

Airspace over the UK

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEZcBeE33wc>

Britain From Above (DVD) (There is also a book)
Excellent resource making clear the dynamics of population and settlement

http://www.amazon.co.uk/Britain-From-Above-Andrew-Marr/dp/B001DA9UHK/ref=sr_1_2?ie=UTF8&qid=1415697931&sr=8-2&keywords=britain+from+above

Information about car pollution in the UK
<http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/committees/air-quality/air-pollution-and-transport/car-pollution/>
<http://www.environmental-protection.org.uk/committees/air-quality/air-pollution-and-transport/>

Pollution Causes Premature Death BBC 2014
News article

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-26973783>

Excellent interview of Richard Burton talking about his coal mining family (USA interview)
Watch from 11.15

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D49O5obqhiA>

Comments on the Common Entrance Specimen Paper 2015

This article should be read with the Common Entrance 2015 Geography Specimen Paper which may be downloaded from the ISEB website.

Andrew

I did ask for feedback on the Specimen Paper, but sadly received none, so here are my own reflections!

The new ISEB geography paper is organised into seven parts plus a space for a 20% mark which is for the geography enquiry. The paper is divided into three sections, the first (Section A) for locational knowledge, the second (Section B) for mapping skills and the third (Section C) for thematic studies. All that has changed here is that there is a new part for Population and Settlement a newly formulated one for Transport and Industry, for what was formerly Economic Activity. Population and Settlement seems to make sense but I do feel that Transport and Industry, should perhaps have been named Industry and Transport, but that is a very fine point of difference! It might be helpful if in the marking box on the first page, the parts where in some way sectionalised, A, B and C.

There is a new set of global locations (Section A) that pupils need to learn and the Location Knowledge section responds to this appropriately. There is the occasional foray into what might be called questions requiring understanding and thinking, such as the question asking: "During which calendar month will Antarctica experience the most days of 24-hour darkness?" Which is a good thing and that along with the trend to including more of these kinds of questions will gradually have an impact on the teaching of the subject.

In Section B, there is another question worth 2 marks that requires pupils to think a little in: "Using map evidence, describe how

Dorchester may be accessed by rail travellers to and from the town." Though this is still a largely straightforward question

In Section C in the first Earthquakes and Volcanoes part the Earth cross section is a little confusing. The diagram shows 5 zones in cross section., Geography for Common Entrance textbook there are 4 zones shown. At CE level, typically the crust, mantle, outer core and inner core are taught. In a more sophisticated lesson sometimes teachers might explain the asthenosphere or even the Mohorovic Discontinuity but even though I might refer to these in lessons, I would normally expect pupils to learn the 4 zones referred to in the syllabus document and in the textbook for examinations. Alternatively, pupils might be taught that there is an upper and a lower mantle but this again refers to the phase change that occurs throughout this discontinuity. So, I suspect that some pupils might be thrown by this question perhaps mislabelling B as the outer core, when technically it should be labelled the lower mantle.

The two mark question on the differences between continental and oceanic crust, worth 2 marks is probably a good one and will be a good differentiator as is question 1c, although this does mean that more challenging questions account for 4 out of the ten marks for this section meaning that candidates are more likely to score less than 50% in this section if they leave these two harder questions out and make another error. That said with 10 marks for a section and the need to let weaker candidates score modestly and stronger candidates score strongly continues to be a challenge as there is invariably a big tail in terms of levels of ability.

In the part on Weather and Climate the climate graph is a standard tool, although it is not quite formatted in the 'standard' way with a temperature graph that is rounded and columns that are adjacent. This is a small point, but for weaker candidates it would be more familiar if the graph were formatted in the conventional way. On the other hand it is also fair to say that in teaching pupils graphicacy, or what I prefer to call, somewhat inelegantly, geographicacy, they should be able to cope with variations in format!

The paper then moves on to a question on the North Atlantic Drift and assumes, reasonably, that teachers will have clearly made sure that they are familiar with this term, rather than the Gulf Stream which is perhaps more popularly used and yet is an important antecedent fact insofar as it is the source of the warmer water that transfers heat energy to air currents affecting temperatures in Western Europe and elsewhere.

The jet stream is a new inclusion into the syllabus and well worthy of inclusion although the process by which it affects or is affected by the movement

of cold and warm air is debatable (and somewhat complicated for CE candidates) and probably best understood as a synergy that affects weather along with temperature. I suspect some misguided pupils at this point might confuse the jet stream with the gulf stream, and perhaps this question could be posed in a way that encourages pupils to not fall into this trap. The subsequent question on explaining the impact of these forces on climate is also potentially challenging, although there would be a reasonable way of assessing this which would allow for the crediting of fair marks as well as providing an opportunity for differentiation.

(A useful account of the jet stream and its processes can be found here: tinyurl.com/SATIPSGFEB15) [Meteorology is a fiendishly difficult topic once one branches from generalities and it is probably useful to provide some clarification and demarcation of these concepts, which I will aim to publish in SATIPS in the future. Ed]

Question 3 on Rivers and Coasts is a good question, although it is a little tricky to see a waterfall clearly in the image. A better image could have perhaps been sourced. Pupils do like colour pictures and in this day and age it is reasonable to expect that a paper might contain colour, though at the same time, one realises that this involves further expense, especially as the geography paper is perhaps already one of the most expensive to produce given its graphic element and inclusion of an OS map.

Section b of the question asking: "Briefly explain the main processes responsible for creating river valleys of this sort," would be good to answer and would provide candidates with a good opportunity to score 3 marks. Part d, asking "State two different flood protection methods which people can use to reduce the impact of flooding in their local area." is a good question, but perhaps the 'local area' part of the question is not necessary and might throw a candidate who has good knowledge of flood mitigation techniques elsewhere.

The questions in the Population and Settlement part seem to be fair, concentrating both on conceptual understanding/recall and explanation of a case study, all of which seems conventional, but the part does lack any 'further thinking' opportunities that occur in some of the other parts of the thematic section.

The first question about shipping is an interesting one and candidates should enjoy answering it. Whilst the join the box question can take a little longer to mark and sometimes rules out choosing the right answer after choosing the wrong answer it is probably worth inclusion. The answers are quite clear, although for the record Apple sends 🍏

all its iPads by Air! (The days on board ship are days when the boxes aren't being sold and the extra cost of air shipping per unit on high value items is small).

The next part of the question: "For any two of the journeys, explain why a business person would choose the same transport type as you, based on the type of goods and the length of journey," is perhaps a little confusing and might better be written as "For two of the forms of transport you have chosen, explain why your choice makes the best economic sense."

For part b, of this question which asks: "For an economic activity you have studied, explain the physical and human factors which account for the location of different parts of the production process or business. You should refer to named developed and developing countries in your extended answer" I think this is too wordy for less capable candidates and I suspect many will leave this question out altogether, including those who might know enough to score some marks. Moreover, for some case studies, answering this question might not be straightforward at all.

For example, pupils I teach look at a home county farm. The farm itself is self contained although of course it brings in seed etc and sells produce and various other outputs from and to other locations - but these are extramural. The farm is owned by the parent of a boy formerly in the school and it has been owned for many generations. The farm is there because it has effectively always been there and it has made use of the market opportunities it has available to it or that it has found. To name a developed or developing country is merely to say that the farm is in England and it sells its produce in England. This doesn't provide much scope, as far as I can see for a strong answer.

A better question might be:

Economic activities have inputs and outputs.

Its inputs (raw materials) and the sale of its outputs (market) may be near or far away.

For an economic activity you have studied:

- 1) explain how the closeness or distance from its raw materials or markets have been helpful OR a problem
- 2) explain how this has closeness or distance affected the way this economic activity works.

However, this does not deal with the problem that the syllabus indicates that it would be suitable to study a tertiary industry. If a candidate had used his or her school as a case study for example, or a local travel agency, it would be very difficult to even answer this question. It might be useful in future editions of the syllabus to insist upon primary or secondary industry case studies as inputs, throughputs and outputs of tertiary industry can be much more intangible for pupils at this stage of their education.

As ever delving into assessment tasks returns the teacher to first principles and this can lead to metaphysical questions without easy answers. Nevertheless, it is better that the implications of what we ask of candidates is asked of ourselves first before we expose them to questions that they might not be able to answer, or whose answers might be complicated by unresolved philosophical issues resting on geographical conceptual first principles. As ever the syllabus and its assessment is an ongoing process, it's a good thing we're geographers and we're good at unravelling, understanding and managing processes!