

GCSE GEOGRAPHY

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WHAT IS THE SUBJECT ABOUT?

Geography is relevant and current. Every day it is visible in the news that geographical patterns, processes and issues are shaping the 21st Century. Geography would therefore appeal to you if you are eager to achieve, with an enquiring mind and a broad general knowledge. The skills a Geography student develops include: enquiring, manipulating data, statistics and using visual resources such as maps and photographs. It therefore appeals to colleges, universities and employers, to whom a student with a Geography GCSE has amply demonstrated a range of skills, knowledge and understanding.

"Geography is the subject which holds the key to our future" - Michael Palin

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The current exam board is AQA and you will sit three exam papers at the end of Year 11. Paper 1 (Living with the physical environment) and Paper 2 (Challenges in the human environment) are both worth 35% of the GCSE. Paper 3 (Geographical applications) is worth 30% of the GCSE and assesses fieldwork, geographical skills and applying geographical knowledge to a real world issue.

WHAT WILL I DO IN LESSONS?

As Geography encompasses the world, its topics are diverse. The GCSE course chosen will lead you through six areas of study:

- Living with the physical environment: The challenge of natural hazards (tectonic hazards, weather hazards, climate change); The living world (ecosystems, tropical rainforests, cold environments); and Physical landscapes of the UK (costal and glacial landscapes)
- Living in the human environment: Urban issues and challenges (cities, urban living); The changing economic world (world development, industry, UK economy); and The challenge of resource management (food, water, energy)

As with the subject, Geography lessons are dynamic and engaging. There is a balance between delivering factual information through multimedia, discussion based tasks, individual research and then application to exam technique. Geography lessons aim to meet both the requirements of the exam specification but also equip students as global citizens.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO CONSIDER?

An interest in Geography is vital. You will need to broaden your general knowledge and vocabulary to succeed at GCSE. You also need an excellent memory due to the large number of facts needed for exams. Geographers should always be enquiring into current affairs and reading beyond the classroom teaching. You will be required to read complicated texts (the exam and textbook have a reading age of 16!) and also work with numbers, graphs and statistics. You should be an active learner and will need to take responsibility for completing independent homework, revisiting your notes and revising on a regular basis to be fully prepared for exams.

WHAT DO STUDENTS THINK OF THE SUBJECT?

"I think geography is very important, it really helps you explain what is going on in the news."
"It's helped me to think about other peoples' points of view and make decisions."