

Geography is on the move

In 2011 Ofsted reported that, 'Developing a deeper understanding of people and places, and of the need to live in balance with an increasingly fragile environment, is more important than ever in today's world' (Ofsted, 2011, p. 2). I would argue that since that time, it has become even more important to develop such understanding. People of all ages are joining forces to stand up to climate change, plastic pollution and the extinction of wildlife around the globe, inspired by the work of Greta Thunberg and groups such as Extinction Rebellion. At the same time, rates of migration around the world are ever increasing as a key consequence of global injustice and inequality; and a movement away from many traditional industries such as the petrol engine to alternative technologies is having a huge impact – both positive and negative – on local and global communities. The world is dynamic, and peering into the future can be a frightening thing without the empowerment that understanding brings. The Geographical Association argues that good teaching of geography necessitates three considerations:

- 1) the lives and curiosities of learners
- 2) the geographical content of lessons
- 3) choices and decisions about how to teach

(GA response to Ofsted EIF, April 2019).

This issue tackles all three of these key elements through a broad range of articles based around the theme of 'moving geography'. It demonstrates how the impact of geography can be strong when implemented with the right focus, or intent, and with support from the GA and its members. The authors include seasoned academics, specialist and non-specialist geographers, Head teachers, teachers and students. Fresh voices bring fresh ideas so if you have an idea for an article that you think will move people, and will support teachers and pupils, then please contact us.

The lives and curiosities of learners

Movement can be physical, emotional, future-oriented, potential: the range of interpretations is broad. Charlotte Knight investigates how music, which in itself has the power to move people, can influence pupils' understanding of places and people. Advent calendars are given a re-boot by Richard Hatwood as he takes

pupils on a cultural journey around the world. Stories feature strongly in Pridie Tiernan's article with an examination of storytelling as a vehicle to learning geography. Ben Steel and Claire Williams describe how natural curiosity can be an effective vehicle to learning geography, with a focus on learning outdoors in urban areas.

The geographical content of lessons

It appears that geographical content is going to remain a major focus of any UK-based curricula. Who decides what constitutes the correct geographical content for our primary aged pupils, and on what basis? There is a strong argument for the development of applied knowledge rather than pure factual detail (Scoffham, 2011), and for this content to be memorable for pupils then applied knowledge should be engaging and pupil-focused. Chris Moon's pupils had to develop effective strategic trading skills as they learned to travel around the world as leaders of various world regions, reflecting later on some of the causes and consequences of economics and migration on an international scale. Verity Jones's article empowers children to discover the journeys made by the clothes they wear in a celebration of ethical fashion.

Geographical processes are full of movement and rivers are perhaps some of the most accessible features for children to explore and discover; Anna Grandfield and Ben Steel describe how rivers are 'the veins of our living, breathing Earth', and offer fun ways for pupils to investigate river processes.

Choices and decisions about how to teach

Sometimes teachers can feel as if their hands are tied as they wrestle with various dictates from above. Alan Kinder and Paula Owens tackle the new Ofsted framework and how we can move geography forwards in positive response. Geoff Rutherford argues that geography, which seems to have slipped down the curriculum subject ladder of late, ought really to take centre stage in a more equitable school curriculum that values all subjects and ways of learning. His school has gained many plaudits for its creative and dynamic curriculum and his ideas are picked up by Joy Carroll, Dan Hughes and Lorna Williams, who take a practical approach to developing geographical understanding in the Early Years.



Guest editor, Stephen Pickering.

As ever, I am so very grateful to the writers and all the people who work behind the scenes to help create, design and distribute *Primary Geography*. I feel honoured, indeed moved, to edit this one hundredth issue, and I look forward to the next hundred *Primary Geography* journals landing on my doorstep.

References

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