

Editorial



Graphicacy

But what is 'graphicacy'? The Interim Report of the National Curriculum Geography Working Group referred to 'skills associated with geography, including mapwork and other aspects of graphicacy', but the term disappeared from later documentation. It's a word I'm particularly keen to see reintroduced into the language of primary geography.

The term 'graphicacy' was introduced in 1965 by W G V Balchin and A M Coleman (*Times Educational Supplement*, 5 November 1965) to denote the essentially pictorial communication of spatial information. They described it as 'the 4th "ace" in the pack', alongside literacy, numeracy and articlacy (or oracy). I think too often we forget that the communication of spatial relationships is not just about maps, but includes pictures, diagrams and aerial photographs. We could do more about using and making these with a geographical purpose.

Thirty years on, Professor Balchin and Professor Coleman have both contributed to this issue of *Primary Geographer*. I was delighted that Professor Balchin agreed to write our main feature, and then it gave me great pleasure to receive a letter from Professor Coleman about an environmental map competition in Japan. With plenty of notice, I hope British schools will be well represented in this year's entries. Any school considering entering please contact me - I'd like to include the 'story' of the project in a future issue and need a pictorial record for illustration.

Index update

Last January, the Ordnance Survey Education Team kindly agreed to sponsor an index of *Primary Geographer* issues 1-19, which enabled us to send it out free of charge. This issue includes an index to issues 20-23 - again, kindly sponsored by the Ordnance Survey, which you will find on pages 34-35 - and we hope to be able to include an annual update every January.

Future issues

Remember the foci for forthcoming issues? You still have time to write an article about your class's work on **Settlement** (deadline 1 March 1996) or **Environmental quality and change** (deadline 1 June 1996). I can send guidance notes to prospective authors, but would like to emphasise the importance of keeping examples of children's work and taking quality photographs of children doing fieldwork, and of geographical events or displays of work in school.

Action Week

Geography Action Week will take place from 11-17 November 1996. Watch this space!

Annual Conference (10-12 April 1996)

I'd like to take this opportunity to remind you that the next Annual Conference will be at Southampton. Admission is free to a strong programme of lectures, workshops and seminars, as well as to an invaluable exhibition of resources. On the first day there is the now established emphasis on primary geography, with the title 'Living Primary Geography'. If you are coming to Conference for the first time, please introduce yourself to a member of the Primary and Middle School Section Committee - we'll all be wearing appropriate badges. See you there!

The planet Earth wall

(*Primary Geographer* October 1995, pp 8-9)

Any reader wanting to commission a mural, or wishing for further information about geographical murals, should contact Alison Baxter at 72 Medway Court, Judd Street, London WC1H 9QZ.

Primary Geographer

The Geographical Association's magazine for Primary Teachers

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Cover: Children at Rainbow Nursery, St Joseph's RC Primary School, Exmouth, developing graphicacy skills from play.

Photo: Margaret Mackintosh

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Editorial

When I think of places that are important to me they are usually meaningful for a mixture of reasons for example childhood experiences (cycling around the lanes in Buckinghamshire, playing in the fields and woods around our farm), emotional experiences (the sunset over Uluru, Central Australia) and deep learning experiences (my visits with study groups to The Gambia), all of which

are memorable for one reason or another and each of which have a strong geographical dimension.

Developing an understanding of Places is a core objective of the geography National Curriculum and yet how often do we stop to think exactly what the concept of Place means and how (if) this differs from developing a Sense of Place? How often do we also aim to link pupils' personal experiences of places to the more formal objectives for learning?

This issue describes some of the outcomes of the Geographical Association project Valuing Places and shows how developing a sense of place is not just about what we know and understand but also the ways in which we attach value to places. There has been much debate about whether values has a place in the curriculum, but as the articles in this issue demonstrate, it is precisely the emotional response to places and experiences in places that help to make them memorable.

Diane Swift, co-ordinator of the Valuing Places Project, provides an excellent overview of the purpose of the project and Liz Taylor provides a readable and thoughtful theoretical perspective on the concept of place. The subsequent articles, all written by practicing teachers and head teachers, show how much participating in this initiative has given teachers and pupils a renewed energy and enthusiasm for their geography lessons.

My thanks to Diane Swift, who did a wonderful job of editing the articles before they arrived on my desk, making my first issue as editor much easier than it might have been. Also thanks to Anna Gunby who has gently inducted me into the process and given valuable advice. Finally, enormous thanks to Dr Margaret Mackintosh for staying on as a member of the editorial board in order to make the transition from one editor to the next as smooth as possible. Margaret has developed Primary Geographer during her 10-year stint into a journal that is respected and envied for its high quality both in content and production values. Over the next few issues I will be outlining the ways in which the editorial team hopes to build on this work.

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