

Planning for progression in geography: an approach to Changing Places and geographical enquiry at key stage 3

Susan and Ashleigh describe how their geography department has started planning for progression to A level by introducing a new scheme of work for year 8.

In 2016, our geography department developed an approach to building enquiry skills for the non-examined assessment (NEA) at A level through local fieldwork in Borehamwood. We then decided to adapt this approach to key stage 3 as part of a whole school focus on 'Teaching Excellence' in 2018. This required us to choose an area or areas in which to develop approaches to teaching and learning and provided us with the time and steer to work on our ideas.

Our aim was to plan for progression to the A level Changing Places scheme of work (SoW) by providing a foundation in year 8 which would act as a point of reference when introducing concepts in year 12. The department's experience of Changing Places at A level thus far was that

students found the work challenging: it was so different to any of the geography they had experienced at key stage 3 and GCSE (Cooper *et al.*, 2017). In particular, they found it difficult to apply these new and abstract concepts to specific places and to the demands of the exam questions. So we created a new Changing Places SoW for year 8 students (Figure 1) to begin to develop the skills and understanding they would need at A level.

The idea of planning for progression links closely with Jerome Bruner's 'spiral curriculum' concept. Bruner argues that 'any subject can be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development' (1960, p. 33). Although the Changing Places SoW

Weeks	Topic	Objectives
1 and 2	What is place?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain that place is location plus meaning; it can be applied at any scale; it is dynamic and subject to constant change. 2. Define different types of places and illustrate using examples. 3. Understand that different people will ascribe different meanings to place. 4. Describe the difference between insiders and outsiders. 5. Identify endogenous and exogenous factors from a list.
3 and 4	Meaning and representation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand that places are represented through different media, including films, books, social media and the news. 2. Interpret different representations of place and describe how places are represented. 3. Recognise that representations of places are partial and selective and explain the reasons why, using examples.
5 and 6	Regeneration in Stratford	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand that places change over time because of a range of factors. 2. Understand the changes that occurred in Stratford prior to and subsequent to the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics. 3. Define the term regeneration. 4. Understand the impacts of regeneration in Stratford.
7 and 8	Changing Places fieldwork: Introduction	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Begin to understand the geographical enquiry process. 2. Start to become familiar with the changing geography of Watford. 3. Use different information about Watford to ask geographical questions and formulate hypotheses.
9 and 10	Changing Places fieldwork: Data collection methods	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand that data can be collected to answer questions and accept or reject hypotheses. 2. Think of ways in which data can be collected to accept or reject the hypotheses about Watford. 3. Understand how different data collection methods can be used including questionnaires, EQIs (Environmental Quality Investigations), land-use mapping, clone town surveys and 8-way thinking. 4. Create data capture sheets.
11 and 12	Post-field trip: Data presentation and conclusions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand that data can be presented in different ways. 2. Use data to present findings, including bar charts, pie-charts and word clouds (Figure 3). 3. Interpret the data and reach valid conclusions (Figure 4).

Figure 1: Year 8 Changing Places scheme of work.

students' secondary years. We also embedded enquiry skills into the SoW, through local fieldwork in Watford (Figures 3 and 4). This provided a further opportunity for planning for progression to the A level NEA, for which many of our students currently select a Changing Places theme.

Figure 2: An example of a student's work showing their understanding of different types of places, using examples.

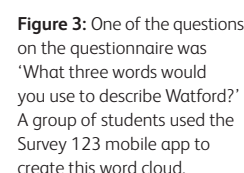


Figure 4: The conclusion to one student's write-up of the Watford enquiry, referring to key concepts.

Figure 5: Part of a student's essay evaluating the positive and negative impacts of regeneration in Stratford, applying the concepts of insiders and outsiders to this context.

A focal, long-term benefit following the regeneration of Stratford is jobs created. Opened on the 13th September 2011, Westfield Stratford City is a shopping mall possessing around 350 stores, all ranging from high-end retail stores such as Louis Vuitton and Prada to affordable restaurants such as KFC and Subway. During its first year of opening, Westfield secured 10,000 permanent jobs, with more being created every day. Not only does it provide pleasure and entertainment for insiders and outsiders alike, it allows local Londoners (insiders) to provide for their families,

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Reflections on the scheme of work

Everyone in the department agreed that the new SoW was a success; most students' written responses showed a good understanding and application of the concepts covered (Figure 5). Although the concepts were unfamiliar and challenging, the ability to apply them to places with which they were familiar (either through media representations or their local neighbourhoods) meant they were able to relate to them and understand them better.

Moving forward, our aim is to integrate more specific examples in teaching these concepts. This helps to 'ground' these abstract ideas. For example, instead of a lesson which asks students to define exogenous and endogenous factors and differentiate between the two, we will choose a specific place and show how that place is shaped by a variety of internal and external forces.

References

- Bruner, J. (1960) *The process of education*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.
Cooper, R., McGrath, A. and Fielden, N. (2017) 'Changing places: Elstree and Port Talbot', *Teaching Geography*, 43, 2, pp. 110–12.

Reflections on the fieldwork

Equally, as a result of the departmental evaluation, there are some changes to be made to the fieldwork. This year we will build in more time to work on the stages of enquiry following data collection: data presentation, analysis, conclusions and evaluation. We want students to spend more time thinking critically about their investigations, and how they can be improved. Last year, we trialled the use of Survey123 for ArcGIS. We will be making greater use of data collected in this way to carry out data analysis using GIS.

At this stage, it is difficult to measure the success of the Changing Places fieldwork. As with any SoW, it does not exist in isolation and supports the fieldwork we do with our students throughout school. We begin with 'Microclimate investigations' in year 7; 'River, coasts and settlement fieldwork' at GCSE, and 'Changing Places' and 'Coasts' fieldwork at A level. We may be better able to assess the success of this spiral curriculum approach in years to come. We are going to issue all year 7 students with a fieldwork folder which they will use throughout their secondary years; this will help us evaluate the quality of students' NEAs and their confidence with the Changing Places SoW in year 12. | **TG**

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