



Geography Vertical Curriculum

As the child's world expands, so should the curriculum

(David Sobel, Map Making with Children)

Geography: Introduction

Geography is an understanding of the earth as a physical space. Long before we learned to map it, humanity dwelled on the land, found its sustenance there and explored the places, moods, climate and weather of the land of which they were a part. Human cultures have been shaped by the places people lived, and whole landscapes have been shaped by human actions. In the modern world, human behaviour is impacting on the earth in ways that are having catastrophic effects on the climate and by polluting or destroying whole regions. Steiner Waldorf education believes that if this is to change, children and young people need to form a relationship to the earth, its oceans and atmosphere, climate and the space we are all part of through experience, empathy, knowledge and understanding.

This relationship begins by exploring the world before our doors, beneath our feet and that rains on our heads. Children, both urban and rural, need to discover the land around them, how it has shaped our culture (housing, clothing, food) and how we are connected to other places (rivers, pathways and transport routes).

The geography curriculum has the logic of space: it expands radially outwards from where we are to places near and then far, describing as we go the landscapes we pass through, the agriculture and industries that grew there and have often now gone silent. We learn to orientate ourselves in space and how to represent it in abstract but useful maps.

As the curriculum expands, it leads to other continents, other landscapes and life forms, to climate zones hotter, colder, wetter and drier than ours and the people who were indigenous to those places. The water cycle follows a precious resource from dense mist on the mountainside to slow, fat, heavy estuaries dumping their silt in wide deltas, to the ocean and back again to the sky. Beneath the soil we come to rock that breaks through the surface in evocative peaks and cliffs, revealing a whole history of deep time, slow inexorable change, the vast, transformative forces of pressure and sometimes the threat of explosive outbreaks of geo-revolution.

Climate leads us to look up at the atmosphere, its vast movements of air that transport water, warmth and dust across oceans and continents, making the Sahara dead and dry and the Amazon fertile. And beyond the atmosphere we follow the sun and moon, gradually turning our geocentric experience of the earth into an understanding of a complex model of spheres spinning in empty space.

Geography is also the foundation for economics which, at heart, is the process of creating value through the transformation of raw materials to meet human needs and trading them. Where these resources come from, how we get them and what impact that has, who profits and who loses are important lessons to be learned.

Geography: Purpose of study

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people as an integrated living system, and the earth in its context in space, that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. This engagement with geography should engender a sense of adventure, wonder and responsibility. Through an appreciation of the complexity of natural phenomena and processes, pupils should develop a profound understanding of the intimate connection between physical landscapes and the evolution of human societies, cultures, and cultural understandings of the relationship of human beings to the world as expressed in myth, art, religion and science. Geographical knowledge, understanding and skills provide the framework and approaches that explain how the Earth's features at different scales are shaped, interconnected and change over time. Pupils should have a growing understanding of the changing impact of human activity on the environment over time.

Geography: Aims

The Waldorf curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop contextual knowledge of the earth as an integrated whole, including providing a geographical context for key physical characteristics and human activities
- Understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and have changed over different time scales
- Develop geographical skills that allow them to:
 - Interpret and communicate geographical information through maps, diagrams, globes, narrative, images and numerical data.
 - Learn effectively and experientially through fieldwork

Long Term Curriculum Intents

Language and communication

- Communicate information, thoughts and ideas about geographical phenomena through a variety of media, e.g. words, text, diagrams, pictures, maps

Health and well-being

- Have a sense of place, space, scale and community

Senses

- Observe, absorb and process information about the environment obtained through sensory perception

Imagination and play

- Use models, maps, diagrams and globes to create mental images and representations of landscapes and environments, translating between 2D and 3D
- Imagine oneself in a different place, space, landscape and environment

Empathy

- Imagine different cultures, communities and people who live in other places, and their ways of being in different environments
- Understand the similarities and differences of people and places

Aesthetics

- Appreciate and represent the aesthetic qualities of places, spaces, landscapes and environments

Inquiry

- Ask and answer questions about geographical phenomena
- Investigate the interaction of humans and their geographical environment
- Use cartography as a way of both representing and navigating environments and landscapes.

Democratic participation and society

- Understand the relationships between geographical location and culture
- Understand the impact of geography on power and politics

Lifelong learning

- Develop a sense of adventure; be inspired to explore the world

Future thinking

- Imagine the physical, political and cultural world that future generations will live in, and how this could be affected by one's actions
- Have an awareness of sustainability and the need to protect nature and the natural world,
- Act out of an ecological understanding

Holistic thinking / Spirituality

- Understand the complexity of interrelationships between geographical features and processes and human beings
- Experience the earth as a living organism
- Have a spiritual sense of place

Judgement

- Make judgements about the veracity of geographical theories based on understanding and critical thinking

Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C1

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To have practical, physical experiences of exploring the school grounds and local area on foot.	<p>Beginning Geography: Place</p> <p>Children can talk about places that are important to them, e.g. school and home</p> <p>Beginning Geography: Space</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To learn simple geographical terms for local physical and human features ● To draw and write about their experiences of the local environment. ● To have practical experiences of the changing seasons. 	<p>Children discuss elements of the local environment. They talk about the boundaries of the spaces they live and play in. Children draw pictures and/or write about what they have seen and experienced, using the geographical term for and name of some local features, e.g. local river, town/street name.</p> <p>Beginning Geography: Time</p> <p>Children talk about the changing seasons, the weather and the effect on the local environment.</p>
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Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C2

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To have practical, physical experiences of exploring the wider local area on foot. ● To learn additional simple geographical terms for and names of local physical and human features ● To draw and write about their experiences of the local environment. ● To have practical experiences of the changing seasons. 	<p>Early Geography: Place</p> <p>Children can compare and contrast several places that are important to them, e.g. school and home, holidays, families and visits. They can show that they know the difference between, for example, public and private land by talking about where they can and can't go.</p> <p>Early Geography: Space</p> <p>Children discuss, compare and contrast elements of the wider local environment. They explain the boundaries of the spaces they live and play in. Children draw pictures and/or write about what they have seen and experienced, using the geographical term for and name of some local features, e.g. local river, town, street name, and talking about comparative sizes (e.g. stream/river, village/town/city etc).</p> <p>Early Geography: Time</p> <p>Children talk about the changing seasons, the weather and the effect on the local environment in some detail. They make some connections</p>
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	between sun, warmth, light and dark, day and night, the seasons and months of the year.
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Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C3

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To have practical, physical experiences of exploring the wider local area on foot. ● To explore the possible uses of local raw materials in local archetypal trades, crafts and occupations. ● To explore ways of meeting basic human needs of shelter, warmth and food in the local natural environment. ● To explore technical vocabulary around local trades, crafts and occupations, e.g. tools, materials, etc ● To draw and write about their experiences of the local environment. ● To experience and talk about a range of weather conditions. 	<p>Developing Geography: Place</p> <p>Children can talk about aspects of human interaction with the local environment, including identifying land that has been farmed, materials that have been used for building, the use of different buildings, and trades that are dependent on local resources.</p> <p>Developing Geography: Space</p> <p>Children discuss elements of the wider local environment and places they have visited, e.g. on school trips and visits. Children write about what they have seen and experienced, using the geographical term for landscape features e.g. hill/valley, plains/mountains, village/town/city, port/harbour etc. They talk about how the land is used, e.g. farming, boat building, forestry.</p> <p>Developing Geography: Time</p> <p>Children can describe the seasons, the weather and length of the day in the context of the archetypal farming year, e.g. harvest time. They talk about the impact of weather conditions on land and at sea, making connections to human activity (e. high winds, rough seas and fishing)</p>
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Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C4

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To physically explore the local environment, e.g. on foot, by bicycle, from high vantage points (church tower, viewpoint) etc • To explore the origins and connections to the local physical geography of local industries, transport routes (roads, railways, canals, airports, harbours) and settlements. • To explore local legend and history. • To encounter and use appropriate geographical vocabulary for local features. • To explore geographical connections between the local area and other places. • To draw and write about their experiences. • To explore the construction of maps from simple imaginative portrayals to more accurate scaled representations showing different topographical and human geographical features. • To explore cardinal directions and the use of a compass. • To experience and record local weather throughout the year and its impact on everyday local life (e.g. clothing, road gritting, vernacular architecture etc) 	<p>Progressing Geography</p> <p>Children can talk and write about the origins and character of the place they live in, using appropriate geographical vocabulary. They can describe the origins of local traditional industries and their connection to the availability of natural resources.</p> <p>Children can represent their concrete and experiential geographical understanding of the local environment by making simple maps, using legends and cardinal compass directions.</p>
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Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C5

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To experience long walks (5-10km) through the local county landscape or urban equivalent • To explore the larger physical context and political borders, e.g. the country or landmass, and its prominent physical features, e.g. mountains, plains, estuaries, bays, major lakes. 	<p>Competent Geography</p> <p>Children can talk and/or write about and represent the salient physical and human geographical features of their national context. They can describe historic economic connections between the land and its use, within and between the regions.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To explore different land usage, e.g. upland, moorland, forest, arable and pastoral land, urban areas, major historical industries, particularly those connected to the environment, e.g. mining, fishing etc ● To explore major transport links - road, rail, sea routes, location of airports etc. ● To explore economic connections between the regions, e.g. transport of resources, land use ● To explore reading maps of different scales ● To explore the water cycle 	<p>Children can apply their prior knowledge, understanding and practical experience of physical environment to the reading of maps, photographs, simple graphics, and the visualisation of landscapes. They can characterise the prominent features using appropriate geographical terminology, e.g. tidal zone, estuary. Children can make three dimensional models which illustrate salient features.</p> <p>Children can talk about and illustrate the water cycle and describe some sources of fresh water.</p>
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Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C6

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● To compare and contrast the various landscapes of Europe from the Atlantic Seaboard to the Urals (e.g. uplands, mountains, plains, estuaries, river systems etc). ● To explore the impact of tides and ocean currents on the coastal waters, coast lines (Atlantic, Baltic, Mediterranean, Black Sea) weather systems and agricultures and fisheries of Europe. ● To explore the shapes of the continents, the major mountain chains, deserts, steppes, forests, temperate regions and river systems. ● To explore the oceans of the world, ocean currents and their associated weather systems. ● To explore the locations of important sources of natural resources (oil, coal, gas, metals, timber etc) and the effects of their exploitation. ● To map out the main trade routes and transport systems by land, sea and air. 	<p>Experienced Geography</p> <p>Pupils can describe the similarities and differences of major landscape forms, locate several geographically, and describe the economic activities associated with them. Pupils can talk and/or write about the weather and economic impact of ocean systems in coastal regions. They can describe the kinds of industries that thrive in these regions, and why. Pupils can portray the overall shape of the surface of the earth, showing and labelling continents and oceans, including major mountain and river systems, and identifying major vegetation zones (e.g. deserts, rainforests, temperate regions, arctic zones etc). Pupils can explain, in broad terms, the relationships between oceans, climate and weather systems, and describe an example of this, e.g. the trade winds, El Niño, maritime vs continental climates etc. They can describe the sources and uses of the main mineral resources, and discuss the benefits and risks of their exploitation, including human influenced climate change. Pupils know the main trade routes of the globe, and can demonstrate this understanding using maps.</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore the economic significance of mining, quarrying and extraction of stone, minerals, metals, coal, oil and gas, and the environmental issues associated with this. • To compare the three main types of rocks (igneous, metamorphic, sedimentary), their origins and characteristics, and the typical landscapes they are associated with. • To explore the qualities of common rocks such as granite, gneiss, feldspar, quartz, mica, basalt, volcanic lava, slate, sandstone, limestone, precious stones • To explore the landscapes created and shaped by geological processes and forces, such as erosion, vulcanism, etc • To explore the effects of erosion, e.g. through observations and experimentation • To experience geological fieldwork, collecting samples, e.g. rock types and fossils 	<p>Pupils can identify the three main rock types and recognise and describe some specific examples of these, including samples that they have collected in the field. They can describe typical landscapes associated with the different types of rock, and how these landscapes are shaped by geological processes. Pupils can talk and/or write about the processes of erosion, and the observable effects of this on the environment. Pupils can create and interpret diagrams and pictures illustrating geological processes, e.g. the formation of coal, sedimentary rock etc.</p>
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Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C7

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore astronomical features in the outdoors, which are observable with basic equipment, from a phenomenological perspective of the observer on earth. • To explore the deductible science of the relationship between the earth, moon and sun, the tilt of the earth's axis, and its consequences for us • To encounter historical approaches to understanding astronomy • To discuss the risks and benefits of space travel • To explore in detail the major physical geographical features of two continents and their impact on land use, cultures, transport systems and trade links 	<p>Mature/Independent Geography</p> <p>Pupils can observe, record and account for visible astronomical phenomena involving earth, moon, sun and stars. They can talk and/or write about how people at different times around the world have understood and explained these relationships.</p> <p>Pupils can describe the major physical geographical features of two particular continents, and explain the relationship of these to human activities in the area using a range of techniques and media. Using specific examples, they can show how traditional human societies are shaped in their culture and activities by the environments they are situated in, and</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To hear, read about and see examples of indigenous communities, their relationships to the environment, and how this has shaped their cultures, economies and world view. • To explore how these traditional cultures have been affected by colonisation, modernisation, urbanisation and globalisation, including the spread of world religions. • To work in groups, researching different aspects of continents and presenting their findings to the rest of the class 	<p>how this has changed over time. Pupils can interpret data in different forms, e.g. narrative, numerical, topographical etc.</p>
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Geography Age-related Learning Opportunities for C8

Relevant Learning Descriptors

<p>Children should have the opportunity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore in detail the major physical geographical features of two further continents and their impact on land use, cultures, transport systems and trade links • To hear, read about and see examples of indigenous communities, their relationships to the environment, and how this has shaped their cultures, economies and world view. • To explore how these traditional cultures have been affected by colonisation, modernisation, urbanisation and globalisation, including the spread of world religions. • To work in groups, researching different aspects of continents and presenting their findings to the rest of the class 	<p>Mature/Independent Geography</p> <p>Pupils can describe the major physical geographical features of a particular continent, and explain the relationship of these to human activities in the area using a range of techniques and media. Using specific examples, they can show how traditional human societies are shaped in their culture and activities by the environments they are situated in, and how this has changed over time. Pupils can interpret data in different forms, e.g. narrative, numerical, topographical etc</p>
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