

GEOGRAPHICAL CONCEPTS – Place, Space and Scale

A concept is a classifier that helps to organise thinking. It is a generalised idea about a class of objects, situations, actions, processes, relationships, qualities or whatever. As Margaret Roberts (2013) explains, *implicit in every concept in geography is a complex cluster of knowledge and understanding*.

We know that Geography is a content-rich subject and concepts provide an underlying structure on which to make decisions about how our curriculum is planned to make sense to our children. We believe that an effective curriculum builds children's' understanding of concepts so that geography becomes accessible to them and they can progress. It is important for our children as learners to understand concepts so that they do not see geography as an accumulation of 'content' and 'facts'.

Within our planned curriculum, children will acquire concepts in geography so they can relate information and ideas to each other and make sense of them. They also need concepts in order to develop higher order thinking, such as to give explanations and to think abstractly.

Using guidance derived from the *Geographical Association*, we have used David Lambert's definition of key concepts of **place, space and scale**. These big ideas and smaller concepts underpin our curriculum and provide our children with the basic 'grammar' of geography. The aspects of each concept is illustrated below and thread through all of our children's geography units.

Please see our Key Stage planning documents to see how these concepts are revisited time and time again throughout the school.

Place	Space	Scale
<p>Unique: Children learn that real places, with all their similarities and differences are unique. No two places are exactly the same. For example, this is represented in the EYFS through our different homes and between our village of Tilstock and our town of Whitchurch.</p> <p>Represented: Places can be represented in certain ways for specific purposes.</p> <p>In KS1 for example, children will learn the purpose of Capital Cities</p> <p>Dynamic:</p> <p>Through their study of the Industrial Revolution, children will learn that places change. They have not always been like this. Geography has a role to play in teaching pupils to understand the potential of places to be different in the future.</p> <p>Geographical imaginations:</p> <p>the ways individuals think about places depends to a large extent on the knowledge and understanding they have at their disposal – but also what they make of the images they see and what they associate with the new, the strange, etc.</p>	<p>The dynamic character of environments Throughout the year, through learning about the weather and the seasons, children will learn that environments change over time. Children in the EYFS and KS1 will learn that our environment will experience a natural cyclic change – illustrated by the four the seasons, and also by our local farming environment.</p> <p>More drastic changes, whether slow or fast, can alter environments in irreversible ways. The built environments created by human beings, especially large urban settlements, can be subjected to a rapid pace of change. Children in KS1, for example, will learn about how London has changed over the years</p> <p>Human impact on environments Human societies use land and water in a great variety of ways. This helps to create many more types of environment. In KS1, children will learn about the development of Belfast and Liverpool in relation to transport and industry through their study of the Titanic.</p> <p>Quality of environments Our town, our county of Shropshire, our capital city and holiday desitantions. Children will explore the qualities attributed to environments as a consequence of the values held by individuals, groups or societies. These are illustrated in the KS1 units through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• the capacity of environments to support human life (the most basic of requirements) Our town• the suitability or potential productivity of different environments for particular purposes (e.g. farming) Shropshire• the satisfaction, pleasure or excitement offered by an environment (e.g. for leisure activities). Our capital cities and seaside desinations. <p>Settlements</p> <p>In LKS2 through their study of the Industrial Revolution, famous explorers and Tudor Britain during The Great Fire of London children will learn how settlements can expand or decline; and their internal morphology can be reshaped in response to economic and social developments, changing lifestyles and changes in the architecture as well as the use of buildings.</p> <p>In KS2, through their study of volcanoes, mountains, hills and Rainforests, children will learn that some types of environment are more vulnerable to human impact than others, in the sense that they are less able to recover from damage.</p> <p>Environmental hazards These are events closely associated with environmental conditions, which present a severe threat to homes and other structures, economic activities, and lives. The phrase is often restricted to natural processes, although the level of risk which they carry is often influenced by human activities. Through their study of natural disasters, children will learn about the Environmental hazards that are present in a wide variety of forms.</p> <p>Through their study of British history, children will also learn about environmental hazards which can be produced or greatly facilitated by human activities include pollution, fire, soil erosion and the spread of diseases. Hazard events vary greatly in their intensity, scale (with respect to space and time), frequency and regularity. Some places are much more vulnerable to hazards than are other places; while different communities vary in how effectively they can respond to hazards. This is further illustrated by the plague and The great Fire of London units.</p> <p>Resources Resources are selected elements or attributes of environments which are perceived as being of use or of value to satisfy human needs, improve the quality of life, or achieve particular economic, social or political goals. Through their study on Fairtrade and the Rainforests, children will learn people having the means to exploit or develop them effectively and how the overuse or misuse of resources can result in the exhaustion or destruction of sources of supply.</p> <p>Sustainability Through their study on the Arctic and Antarctic children will learn how global warming adds urgency to the challenge of tackling the serious threats posed for many environments.</p> <p>Environmental and resource management Children will learn about the practical steps that organisations can take to protect or conserve environments and resources, and to promote sustainable development.</p>	<p>Personal: The personal scale refers to personal space, the 'bubble' in which people are sometimes said to live – the world they inhabit in their person, and how they perceive the world.</p> <p>Local: this is sometimes expressed as the scale of experience, and has given rise to 'locality studies' which focus on the daily lives of people – where they live, work, shop and play.</p> <p>Regional: this is strongly associated with identity and linked to landscape or heritage.</p> <p>National: this is the political context in which people live as citizens in a relationship with the state. In KS1 children will learn about the borders of nations of England, Ireland, Wales and Scotland in our United Kingdom. Children will learn that although 'British' may be on their passports, they may think of themselves (for example) as , English, Irish, Scottish or Welsh.</p> <p>Global:</p> <p>The global scale has become ever more present in people's minds since the Apollo photographs of 1969 – and now with Google Earth. The global scale has been dubbed the 'scale of reality', in the sense that economic, environmental, political and social processes operate on a global scale. We cannot fully understand High Street shopping in your locality, or industrial change in a region or country, without comprehending the global context.</p>