Planning for Geographical Enquiry

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A beginner’s guide!
a Beginner’s Guide to Geographical Enquiry

DON'T PANIC
Enquiry is an integral part of Good Geography
What is ‘Good Geography’?

Identify patterns in the world around us and then investigate what processes created them.

- Good Geography
- Patterns
- Places
- Processes

Extrapolate from what has happened in one place and time to help predict what might happen elsewhere.
‘Good Geography’ encourages Enquiry?

“It is not the answer that enlightens, but the questions”

Eugène Ionesco (1909-1994)

‘Good Geography’ makes pupils ask questions

Pupils discover things for themselves
Geographical enquiry is clearly outlined as an active, questioning approach to teaching and learning which includes values enquiry, and is integrated with the development of geographical skills.

It is also explained that enquiry and skills are developed and used when studying the required content and not separately. All work in geography should include an element of geographical enquiry.

Eleanor Rawling (2000)
Enquiry is ... ?

A much more interactive way to learn

Facts

Ideas

Out-of-date

Relevant

Passive

Active

Dull

Exciting

accepted

Pupils’ values voiced

Disconnected

Continuity
Enquiry is ... ?

Children learn through ... … actively engaging with their environment

They construct new knowledge by ... … relating it to what they already know

They ask questions!
Enquiry encourages ‘understanding’

Enquiry is ... ?

Experiences

Understanding

Idea & Concepts

Thinking & Reflection

Ask questions

Ask questions

Ask questions

Ask questions

(creates hypotheses)
Enquiry is ... ?

Enquiry encourages learning with geographical significance ...

Country area proportional to number of births

http://www.worldmapper.org/
What is ‘Geographical Significance’?

Enquiry is ... ?

Real Issues

Geographical Significance

Real Places

Real people

Relevant to pupils
Planning for Enquiry: How?

You all use enquiry to some degree already.

The aims of most geography lessons are led by questions...

How was Old Harry formed?

Where do volcanoes occur?

Why does it rain?

Where is the best place to build a settlement?

Is Italy a rich country?

How does a river change along its long profile?

Why is there a hosepipe ban in the Southeast?
But which questions?

Questions should be **not be too open** ...

What types of weathering can we find around the school?  

... *rather than* ...

What is chemical weathering?  

but **not too specific** either
But which questions?

“The riddle does not exist. If a question can be put at all, then it can also be answered”

Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951)

What is life like in Kenya?

... rather ...

How does life in Nairobi differ from yours?
But which questions?

Questions should be *Geographically Significant*...

Are there too many people living in the UK?

... *rather than* ...

What is the population density of the UK?
Structuring an Enquiry

Geographical enquiry should follow the stages of learning ...

Engagement → Construction → Reflection
Geographical enquiry could follow a similar form as scientific investigations ...

- Hypothesis
  - Your question or a statement that can be proved true or false
- Research
  - How are you going to get the information (this can be given)
- Method
  - Present the information that you have found
- Results
  - Have you proved your hypothesis?
  - Have you answered your question?
- Conclusion
  - How good was your information? How could you have got better information?
- Evaluation
How long should it take?

As long as you like ...

... some can be done in one lesson ...

... others might take a couple of weeks!
What do we need to buy?

Nothing!

Do not throw your schemes of work out of the window!

Do not throw your resources out of the window!

It is just a different approach!
How would you plan an Enquiry?

Task:

• What do you want the outcomes to be?
• What questions would you ask?
• What other resources would you use?
• How long would it take?
Feedback: Land-use in East Grinstead

• What do you want the outcomes to be?
  – Y7/8: An ‘answer’
  – Extension: Their own land use model (compare two or three towns)
  – Y5/6: A Land Use Map of the town
  – A greater understanding of maps: map interpretation

• What questions would you ask?
  – Which landuse model best fits East Grinstead?

• What other resources would you use?
  – Google Earth
  – notes on LU models
  – OS Get-a-map; Bing OS maps

• How long would it take?
  – 3 weeks!
  – 3 lessons
Feedback: Llandudno Tourism

• What do you want the outcomes to be?
  – Y7/8: a PPT showing the best site
    • (NOTE: Limit the number of sites to three or four)
  – Y5/6: Debate
    • impacts on the locals
    • Benefits of the site

• What questions would you ask?
  – Which site is the best?
  – Would you like to visit Llandudno?
  – What would the impacts of the park be on the local people and area? (Positive and negative)

• What other resources would you use?
  – Video clips from the tourist board
  – Worksheets with tables to score characteristics of each site (transport; distance from workforce; room for expansion; flatness of site; etc.)

• How long would it take?
  – 3 weeks!
Feedback: Widgets in Mansfield

• What do you want the outcomes to be?
  – Y5 or 7: PPT presentation to show which site the y would choose and why.

• What questions would you ask?
  – Where is the best site for the factory?

• What other resources would you use
  – Streetview;

• How long would it take?
  – ? 4 lessons?
Why should we use an Enquiry approach?

Pupils own the information

Facilitates differentiation

Geographical Significance

Suits decision-making exercises and group work

Choice of question

Sources provided

Outcomes

Extension questions

It is ‘Good Geography’

Exciting and fun
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