Geography Skills Progression Map

Early Years Foundation Stage

Understanding the World	People, Culture and Communities	• Describe their immediate environment using knowledge from observation, discussion, stories, non-fiction texts and maps. • Explain some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries, drawing on knowledge from stories, non-fiction texts and (when appropriate) maps. • Draw information from a simple map. • Recognise some similarities and differences between life in this country and life in other countries.
	The Natural World	• Explore the natural world around them. • Recognise some environments that are different to the one in which they live. • Know some similarities and differences between the natural world around them and contrasting environments, drawing on their experiences and what has been read in class. • Understand some important processes and changes in the natural world around them, including the seasons.

Key Stage 1

Year group	Locational Knowledge	Place Knowledge	Human and Physical Geography	Geography Skills and Fieldwork
1	Name, locate and identify characteristics of the four countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas.	Name, describe and compare familiar places Link their homes with other places in their local community	Describe seasonal weather changes in the United Kingdom. Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to physical features and human features	Use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries. Use simple fieldwork and observational skills to study the geography of their school and its grounds and the key human and physical features of its surrounding environment
2	Name and locate the world's seven continents and five oceans	Understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of the local area, and that of a small area in a contrasting non-European country	Identify seasonal and daily weather patterns in the United Kingdom and the location of hot and cold areas of the world in relation to the Equator and the North and South Poles Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to key physical features and human features	Use aerial photographs and plan perspectives to recognise landmarks and basic human and physical features; devise a simple map; and use and construct basic symbols in a key. Use simple compass directions (North, South, East and West) and locational and directional language [for example, near and far; left and right], to describe the location of features and routes

Lower Key Stage 2

Year group	Locational Knowledge	Place Knowledge	Human and Physical Geography	Geography Skills and Fieldwork
3	Locate the main countries of Europe Identify the position and significance of Equator, North and South Hemisphere, Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn Identify longest rivers in the world, largest deserts, highest mountains	Understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom and that of a small area in a contrasting European country	Describe and understand key aspects of physical geography including: Earthquakes and volcanoes and human geography including types of settlements in Early Britain	Use maps, atlases, globes and digital mapping to **locate countries and describe features** Learn the eight points of a compass, 2 figure grid reference, some basic symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world Use fieldwork to observe and record the human and physical features in the local area using sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies
4	On a world map, locate areas of similar environmental regions, either desert, rainforest or temperate regions. Identify capital cities of Europe. Locate and name the countries making up the British Isles, with their capital cities. Locate and name the main counties and cities in each country.	Understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom and a region in a European country	Describe and understand key aspects of: Physical geography, including the water cycle and types of settlements in modern Britain	Use maps, (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps), atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to **locate countries and describe features** Learn the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references. Use fieldwork to observe, measure and record the human and physical features in the local area using sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies

Upper Key Stage 2

Year group	Locational Knowledge	Place Knowledge	Human and Physical Geography	Geography Skills and Fieldwork
5	Locate the main countries in Europe and North or South America. Locate and name principal cities. Compare 2 different regions in UK Locate and name the main counties and cities in England. Compare land use maps of UK from past with the present Map how land use has changed in local area over time	Compare a region in UK with a region in North or South America with significant differences and similarities.	Describe and understand key aspects of physical geography including coasts and the water cycle and human geography including trade between UK and Europe	Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features studied Use the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to **build their knowledge of the United Kingdom in the past and present.** Use fieldwork to observe, measure and record the human and physical features in the local area using sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies
6	Locate the main countries in Africa, Asia and Oceania and identify their main environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, and major cities. Name and locate the key topographical features including coast, features of erosion, hills, mountains and rivers. Understand how these features have changed over time. Identify the position and significance of latitude/longitude and the Greenwich Meridian.	Compare a region in UK with a region in North or South. America Understand some of the reasons for significant similarities and differences	Describe and understand key aspects of physical geography including volcanoes and earthquakes, and distribution of natural resources focussing on energy	Use maps (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps), atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping (Google Earth) **to locate countries and describe features studied** Extend to 6 figure grid references with teaching of latitude and longitude in depth. Expand map skills to include non-UK countries. Use fieldwork to observe, measure and record the human and physical features in the local area using sketch maps, plans and graphs, and digital technologies.

Framework for progression in geographical vocabulary

Being able to understand, use and apply key vocabulary is an essential part of children's developing knowledge of geographical places and concepts. It is therefore important that the use of these words is contextualised in the places and topics that children are learning about, rather than simply learned as a word list.

The vocabulary list for each year group and topic is based around three essential elements of geographical vocabulary. We also offer a brief selected glossary for each year group.

- place names (including familiar places);
- geographical terms and processes;
- locational terms.

Progression in Vocabulary - Year 1

Place names	Geographical terms and processes	Locational terms
Antarctica	autumn	across
Belfast	building	Arctic
Ben Nevis	capital city	east
Cardiff	castle	inside
Earth	city	local
Edinburgh	cloud	north
England	country	northern
English Channel	countryside	outside
Europe	freezing	polar
Ireland	frosty	south
Irish Sea	ground	west
London	island	Prepositions and direction-finding terms such as, above, around, below, left, right, forward, near, inside, opposite, outside
North Atlantic Ocean	map	
Northern Ireland	misty	
River Thames	month	
Scotland	office	
Wales	rain	
	route	
The following terms are to be amended by the teacher:	season	
	shop	
	snow	
My county	spring	
My neighbourhood	street	
My school	summer	
My town or local area	sunshine	
	symbol	
	temperature	
	thunderstorm	
	town	
	village	
	warm	
	wind	
	windy	
	winter	
	The months of the year	

Glossary

capital city: *the city where a country's government is located such as London or Edinburgh*
country: *an area of land that has its own government, such as the UK or France*
feature: *something you would find in a place that is usually there (such as a hill or a house)*
map symbol: *a small picture on a map that shows you where different things are (such as a bus station or a school)*
rain gauge: *a tool you can use to show how much it has rained*
route: *how you get from one place to another (for example, "you walk up the hill and turn towards the school when you get to the top)"*
rural: *a rural area has fewer people living there. Rural areas include the countryside, villages and hamlets.*
season: *a time of the year with a particular type of weather*
settlement: *a place where people live*
temperature: *how hot or cold it is*
urban: *an urban area has lots of people living there. Towns, cities and suburbs are all urban areas.*

Progression in Vocabulary - Year 2

Place names	Geographical terms and processes	Locational terms
Amazon Rainforest	adapt	Antarctic Circle
Atacama Desert	atlas	Arctic Circle
Australia	cargo	eastern
Brazil	continent	The Equator
Canada	coral reef	hemisphere
China	crop	North Pole
Egypt	desert	South Pole
France	farm	southern
India	field	western
Kenya	flood	
Lusaka	globe	
Madagascar	habitat	
Mexico	hibernate	
Norway	human	
Peru	iceberg	
River Zambezi	market	
Sahara Desert	mining	
South Africa	national park	
Southern Africa	ocean	
Spain	physical	
United States of America	population	
Victoria Falls	rainforest	
Zambia	recycling	
The continents: Antarctica, Africa, Asia, Europe, North America, Oceania and South America	savanna	
	soil	
	waterfall	
The oceans: Arctic, Atlantic, Indian, Pacific and Southern	wildlife	

Glossary

adapt: *find ways to survive in a place (such as using less water in a desert or keeping warm near the North Pole)*
continent: *a very large area of land*
crops: *plants that are grown to be used or sold (such as rice, corn or fruit)*
The Equator: *an invisible line that runs around the centre of the Earth, halfway between the North and South Poles*
habitat: *the natural home of an animal or plant*
hemisphere: *half of the globe*
ocean: *a huge area of salty water*
population: *the number of people living in a place*
wildlife: *the wild animals and plants in an area*

Progression in Vocabulary - Year 3

Place names	Geographical terms and processes	Locational terms
'ABC' islands	architecture	Eastern Hemisphere
Amazon River	arid	latitude
The Andes	axis	longitude
Angel Falls	bay	map index
Antarctic	biome	North Pole
Arctic	climate	northeast
Argentina	climate change	Northern Hemisphere
Bolivia	equatorial	northwest
Brasilia	export	southeast
Cairo (Egypt)	favela	Southern Hemisphere
The Caribbean	glacier	southwest
Central America	grassland	time zone
Cerro Aconcagua	human feature	Tropic of Cancer
Chile	ice-field	Tropic of Capricorn
Columbia	industry	Western Hemisphere
Costa Rica	landscape	
Denali	location	
Dominican Republic	manufacturing	
Ecuador	Mediterranean	
Falkland Islands (Malvinas)	meteorologist	
French Guiana	mineral	
Great Lakes	mountain range	
Greenland	orbit	
Guatemala	physical feature	
Guyana	plantation	
Isthmus of Panama	polar	
Jamaica	precipitation *(KS1 snow, rain)*	
Lake Titicaca	recreation	
London (UK)	region	
Louisiana	retail	
Manaus (Brazil)	season	
Mississippi River	service industry	
New York	skyline	
Niagara Falls	sphere	
Nuuk (Greenland)	state	
Paraguay	temperature	
Rio de Janeiro	tilt	
Rocky Mountains	trade	
Sandwich Islands	tropical	
Santiago (Chile)	volcano	
Santos	weather station	
São Paulo	wilderness	
Seville (Spain)		
South Georgia		
St Kitts and Nevis		
St Lucia		
Suriname		
Uruguay		
Venezuela		

Glossary

climate: *long-term weather patterns*
climate zone: *a part of the world where places have a similar climate (i.e. arid, Mediterranean, temperate, tropical, polar)*
culture: *how a group of people does things as part of their way of life*
human features: *features of a place that are a result of human activity, such as shops, farms, homes and roads*
landscape: *what you can see when you look across an area of land*
latitude: *distance from the Equator*
longitude: *distance from the Prime Meridian*
manufacturing: *making things, for example, in factories*
physical features: *natural features of a place, such as mountains, rivers and seas*
Precipitation: *rain, hail, fog, sleet and snow*
recreation: *enjoyable activities, such as swimming or listening to music*
state: *an area of land with its own government. There are 50 states in the USA*
tourism: *travelling as a holidaymaker or sightseer*
trade: *exchanging goods or services, usually for money*

Progression in Vocabulary - Year 4

Place names	Geographical terms and processes	Locational terms
Amazon Basin	acid rain	altitude
Amur River	agriculture	equatorial
Congo Forest	biodiversity	estuary
Congo River	biome	International Date Line
Democratic Republic of the Congo	canal	lower course
Ethiopia	canopy	middle course
Indonesia	channel	Prime Meridian
Lake Tanganyika	condensation	upper course
Ob-Irtysh River	confluence	
Paraná River	dam	
River Niger	deforestation	
River Nile	drainage	
River Thames	drinking water	
South Sudan	ecosystem	
Sudan	embankment	
Uganda	emergent layer	
Yangtze River	environment	
Yellow River	environmentalist	
Yenisei River	erosion	
	evaporation	
	fertile	
	flooding	
	flood management	
	flood plain	
	flood prevention	
	forest floor	
	freshwater	
	groundwater	
	humidity	
	hydro-electric power	
	indigenous	
	irrigation	
	logging	
	meander	
	mouth	
	pollution	
	poverty	
	river bank	
	river basin	
	source	
	transportation	
	tributary	
	understory	
	valley	
	vegetation	
	water cycle	
	watershed	

Glossary

agriculture: *farming*
biodiversity: *the number of different types of plants and animals found in a particular environment*
biome: *a community of plants and animals that is suited to a particular climate*
drainage: *how water flows away from an area through rivers and streams*
ecosystem: *a community of plants and animals that affect each other and the area around them*
equatorial: *the hot, wet climate in areas close to the Equator*
erosion: *how wind, water and waves break down and remove rock and soil*
flood management: *stopping or controlling floods*
flood prevention: *stopping floods*
irrigation: *the supply of water, especially for growing crops*
Prime Meridian: *the line of longitude from which time is measured*
rainforests: *forests that are home to many different types of plants and animals. They are located close to the Equator in places with a tropical climate, which is warm and wet all year round.*
river basin: *the area of land drained by a river and all its tributaries*

Progression in Vocabulary - Year 5

Place names	Geographical terms and processes	Locational terms
Athens	aftershock	altitude
Austria	alpine	epicentre
Belgium	ash cloud	height above sea level
Ben Nevis	avalanche	map reference
Berlin	border	plate boundary
Bucharest	cliff face	
Carstensz Pyramid (Puncak Jaya)	core	
Caucasus	crater	
Croatia	crust	
Czech Republic (Czechia)	currency	
Etna	disaster	
European Union	dome mountains	
Everest	dormant	
Eyjafjallajökull	eruption	
Germany	fault line	
Greece	fault-block mountains	
Haiti	fire mountains (volcanoes)	
Hawaii	fold mountains	
Himalayas	geothermal	
Iceland	hill	
Japan	international	
Kilimanjaro	landform	
Lisbon	landslide	
Macedonia	lava	
Malta	magma	
Madrid	mantle	
Mauna Loa	massif	
Mediterranean Sea	migrant	
Mount Elbrus	peak	
Mount Snowdon	plate	
Mount St Helens	refugee	
Nepal	retail	
The Netherlands	Richter Scale	
Pacific Ring of Fire	ridge	
Pakistan	scree	
Paris	service industry	
Pennines	slope	
Popocatépetl	summit	
Poland	tectonic	
Portugal	tremor	
Romania	tsunami	
Rome	vegetation belt	
Scafell Pike	vent	
Scottish Highlands		
Sicily		
Slieve Donard		
Somalia		
Soufrière		
Syria		
Tanzania		
Ukraine		
Vesuvius		
Vinson Massif		

Warsaw		

Glossary

border: *A line that separates two countries. You may need a passport to pass from one country to the other*
dome mountains: *mountains formed by magma pushing upwards, but without a volcanic eruption*
dormant: *a dormant volcano is one, like Kilimanjaro, that has not erupted for a long time*
epicentre: *where an earthquake starts and is felt most strongly*
European Union: *a group of countries in Europe that co-operate on trade and many other aspects of life*
fault-block mountains: *mountains formed by parts of a broken plate being forced upwards*
fire mountains: *mountains formed by volcanic eruptions*
fold mountains: *mountains formed by the earth's plates pushing together*
scale bar: *a line that shows how many kilometres there would be in the real world for every centimetre on a map*
tsunami: *a huge, powerful wave caused by an earthquake*

Progression in Vocabulary - Year 6

Place names	Geographical terms and processes	Locational terms
Birmingham Bristol East of England East Midlands Great Britain Greater London Inverness Leeds Liverpool London Array Manchester North East England North West England Oxford Sheffield South East England South West England West Midlands Yorkshire and the Humber UK – the main cities, counties and regions	administrative centre aerial view built environment coastline congestion consultation developer development economy energy source finance global warming green belt greenhouse gases hydroelectric power key landmark land use national nuclear power planning power station renewable energy solar power suburb sustainable development tidal power warehouse wind farm wind power wind turbine	grid reference offshore onshore 16-point compass terms (e.g. North-North-West, West-North-West, etc.)

Glossary

development: *how places and communities change*
economy: *the wealth and resources of a place*
grid reference: *a set of numbers used to find particular places on a map*
industry: *the production of goods (such as cars) or services (such as tourism or entertainment)*
land use: *what land is used for (such as housing, recreation, farming, etc.)*
sustainable development: *change that respects the natural environment and doesn't harm future generations*