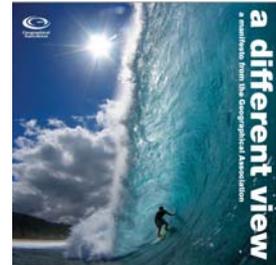


A whole world of learning

Nicola Donkin from the Geographical Association updates on the work the GA is currently undertaking to promote learning outside the classroom and the many resources available to teachers.

“Fieldwork – that is, learning directly in the untidy real world outside the classroom – is an essential component of geography education.”

This statement is taken from *A different view*, the Geographical Association’s new manifesto for school geography. In it we argue that there is no substitute for ‘real world learning’ - giving children the opportunity to get out of the classroom to see and experience the world for themselves. You can read the full section on ‘geography and the real world’ and whole manifesto by visiting www.geography.org.uk/adifferentview



The GA provides a range of support and guidance to aid teachers with learning outside the classroom.

a. Resources for teachers

We publish a wide range of resources with publications specifically dedicated to this topic, including the GA/FSC fieldwork series, which comprises *Managing Safe and Successful Fieldwork*, *Fieldwork File: For the primary years* and *Fieldwork File: For the secondary years*. The *Fieldwork Files* are based on the premise on that all fieldwork should be enjoyable and inspirational whilst *Managing Safe and Successful Fieldwork* provides clear, comprehensive and practical guidance about learning outside the classroom, aimed at addressing teachers’ concerns.

For younger pupils, *Caring for our world* is the GA’s award-winning guide to Education for Sustainable Development. It contains real school examples of how using the outdoors in lessons can help pupils to connect with the world they live in, through topics such as growing plants, farming and forests.

b. CPD for teachers

The GA also has its own working group dedicated to learning outside the classroom. It brings together members with an interest in the pursuit of geography in the field and seeks to promote learning outside the classroom as an essential part of geographical education. As part of its mission, the group contributes articles to the GA’s journals, leads seminars and workshops at the GA’s Annual Conference and monitors fieldwork issues.

c. Working with students



Worldwise, the GA's branch of pupil-orientated activities, offers the opportunity for students to take part in a free-of-charge weekend of fieldwork activities. Aimed at Years 9-11, up to 10 schools are invited to send a team of three pupils and a teacher to take part in a broad range of enjoyable and competitive fieldwork activities at a Field Studies Centre in the UK. There are a number of prizes to be won and the weekend is also used to select the pupils who will compete in the

National Geographic World Championships and the International Geography Olympiad. This year's competition takes place in Mexico! To find out more about getting involved visit

<http://worldwise.geography.org.uk>

d. Innovative practice

Changing technologies offer new opportunities for undertaking fieldwork exercises. A recent project in which the GA has been involved is located in the Dearne Valley in Yorkshire. The brief given to a class of Y7 students at St Pius X School in Rotherham was to try their hands at planning a mixed-use development that will have a sustainable future. The site earmarked was a derelict coalfield area covering 115 hectares around Manvers Lake, Rotherham. After discussions with expert planners the pupils went on site and used GIS in conjunction with hand held devices to record their work 'on-location'. Back in the classroom the pupils used Google Earth layers to plan their own development and compare theirs with those of a professional developer. By engaging students with their own place, and putting decision making and planning into a real context, the students were both highly motivated and interested.



Details of other innovative projects and resources are online including a Living Geography Project for primary schools (<http://www.geography.org.uk/projects/younggeographers/>) and Spatially Speaking – a GIS project for secondary schools (<http://www.geography.org.uk/projects/spatiallyspeaking/>).

Further information about the GA's wealth of fieldwork resources can be found at <http://www.geography.org.uk/resources/fieldwork>



Learning outside the classroom offers an opportunity to engage pupils with the world around them and make their education exciting, practical and relevant.