



Preparing for A Level Geography



Hoping to study Geography at A Level? **Or** maybe you are simply interested in taking some time to further your understanding of the geography you have studied at GCSE?

There are number of things you can do:

1. Developing as a geographer – through general reading around / watching videos / listening to podcasts etc. to develop your geographical knowledge and understanding

2. Preparing for the A Level Course Starting to explore the topics and their foundations which will be studied in the A Level course.

To be a great geographer you need to develop the ability to think **synoptically**, being able to see the greater overview and how everything begins to link together. Geography is not just about studying people and landscapes; it is also the relationships that exist between people and their environment.

At GCSE you have covered a lot of the foundations of the underpinning concepts; physical processes and how they have shaped the landscape and the key human processes that shape our society. GCSE has provided a breadth of study, whereas A Level will now enable you to gain greater depth by exploring topics in greater detail but also encouraging you to see and explore the links between topics.

The best geographers at A Level keep reading the news and generally seek to improve their geographical understanding by engaging with geographical discussions regarding key issues.

This guide has been designed for you to be able to dip in and out of, from looking at general geographical issues and developing your ability to think like a geographer, through to starting to explore some of the topics we will be looking at in Year 12 and 13 so you can do some valuable background reading.

DEVELOPING AS A GEOGRAPHER

The below includes, websites, books, podcasts, documentaries and even films which provide a great way of staying inspired and engaging with geography.

1. ONLINE NEWS ARTICLES

THE CONVERSATION.COM

<http://theconversation.com/uk>

I can highly recommend you use this! This you will find is really useful to support many of your A Levels. It provides up to date articles from academics and specialists in the field written in a way that is accessible to all, summarising key points in short but insightful articles.

BBC NEWS

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

An excellent source of up to date articles – explore the key headings such as Science, as well as the UK, World and other stories.

THE GUARDIAN

<https://www.theguardian.com/uk>

Again many useful articles and logically ordered – keep an eye on the Environment, Science, Society, Global Development stories in particular!

2. PODCASTS

Now is the time to broaden your geographical understanding! Stick your headphones in and listen to some of the following...

Costing the Earth – There are some great podcasts here to pick from on a wide variety of geographical issues

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r4wn/episodes/player>

(many topics, including amongst others.. climate change, carbon, urban greening, deforestation, alternative power, plastics etc.)

Royal Geographical Society – “Ask the Geographer podcasts” –

<https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/ask-the-expert-podcasts/>

Aa fantastic set of podcasts to keep A Level studies up-to-date with the latest geographical research – pick out some that interest you and give them a go!

3. Books to read

Remember you can make use of the local libraries digital library service for books – you don't have to access hard copies. However, these are really good books and well worth a read. They will really prepare you well for A Level.

Prisoners of Geography (Marshall, T) – an insightful book which helps understand how physical geography impacts on political reality and really helps to understand how decisions of world leaders have been shaped by geography – a great introduction to geopolitics.

Factfulness: Ten reasons we're wrong about the world – and why things are better than you think (Rosling, H 2019) – this is a must-read book from a geography perspective – this takes a more realistic view of the world, presenting issues in fact-based context. It is a rational look at actually how far the world has measurably improved and what's left to be done.

Adventures in the Anthropocene (Vince, G) (2016) – this looks at the effects that humans are having on the surface and structure of the planet with a balanced view on recognising threats and dangers whilst also look for practical answers and solutions.

The Almighty Dollar (David D, 2018) – a really excellent book that cleverly explains the globalised world and the interdependency of different economies. Great for globalisation.



4. GEOGRAPHICAL DOCUMENTARIES

There are some great geographical documentaries which will help develop your general geographical knowledge and understanding and help you see what an amazing world we live in.

The following are all available on **iPlayer**.

- **David Attenborough Box Sets** – there are 9 amazing boxsets available on iplayer from David Attenborough exploring our amazing world <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06m42d9>
- **The Americas with Simon Reeve** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/m00095p0/the-americas-with-simon-reeve>
- **Simon Reeve around the world** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06rrnkm>
- **Mediterranean with Simon Reeve** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b0bnb6tt/mediterranean-with-simon-reeve>
- **The Ganges with Sue Perkins** - not on iPlayer at the moment but most can be seen on Youtube <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b09blcw9>

The following are all available on **ITV Hub**

- **Britain Underwater: Fighting the Floods** <https://www.itv.com/hub/britain-underwater-fighting-the-floods/7a0157>
- **Joanna Lumley's Hidden Caribbean: Havana to Haiti** <https://www.itv.com/hub/joanna-lumleys-hidden-caribbean-havana-to-haiti/2a7578>

The following are all available on **Channel 4 – On Demand**

- **When the Immigrants Leave** (Dispatches) <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches/on-demand/69555-001>
- **China's Lonely Hearts** (Unreported World) <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/56011-011>
- **The world's dirtiest river** (Unreported world) <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/58399-001>
- **Forests of Fear** (Unreported World) - <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/69224-006>
- **Hurricane Hell (Unreported World)** <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/69224-007>
- **The World's Dirtiest Air (Unreported World)** <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/67193-002>
- **The week Britain Froze (Dispatches)** <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches/on-demand/66548-007>

5. GEOGRAPHICAL FILMS

(some are available online free – others may be available on providers such as Amazon Prime / Netflix etc.)

- **Touching the Void (15)** (great for visualising glacial landscapes) – a powerful true story docudrama (strong language in parts)
- **Before the Flood (2016) (PG)** – National Geographic <https://www.filmsforaction.org/watch/before-the-flood-2016/> (presented by Leonardo DiCaprio – exploring climate change and looking at what needs to be done today to prevent catastrophic disruption of life on our planet.)
- **The Impossible (2012) (12)** – Movie based on real life events of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami which killed 200,000 people.
- **Slumdog Millionaire (15)** – based on life in the slums of Mumbai
- **Our Planet** (Netflix series) – explores how climate change impacts all living creatures.
- **Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom (12)** – an epic which celebrates the journey of Nelson Mandela from childhood in a rural village through to his election as President of South Africa. This explores what happened in South Africa with regards to apartheid and Black opposition through the eyes of Nelson Mandela.
- **Hotel Rwanda (12)** - the true story of hotel manager who houses and protects Tutsi refugees – this is a hard-hitting film based on the Rwandan Conflict of the 1990s.
- **The Last King of Scotland (15)** – another hard-hitting story, based on struggles faced by Uganda under the dictatorship of Idi Amin.
- **Into the Wild (2007) (15)** – based on the story of a university graduate who gives up all of his material possessions and journeys alone into the Alaskan Wilderness

PREPARING FOR A LEVEL GEOGRAPHY KENILWORTH SCHOOL

At Kenilworth we follow the Edexcel A Level. You will have three examined units and one NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) i.e. an independent geographical investigation.

We have put the following together for you for you to start doing some reading round the topics we will be covering across the two years. For each topic, we have given a brief overview and then some starting points, with examples of reading and video links for you to follow up.

To support wider reading throughout the course, we have put together a set of padlets with additional reading. These are articles that support your study. They are continually updated. You might want to dip into some of these that interest you.

A Level general: <https://padlet.com/RPL1/i1zdorlqltk9f24s>

Tectonics <https://padlet.com/RPL1/vc8uyeu1u3q979uc>

Coasts <https://padlet.com/RPL1/n5vrask2j6xhtve8>

Water Cycle <https://padlet.com/RPL1/l6ipzafhq0c9ru1>

Carbon cycle <https://padlet.com/RPL1/ty5rym1s2803lxy9>

Globalisation <https://padlet.com/RPL1/x4frqe8oyjchttnk>

Superpowers <https://padlet.com/RPL1/513lhpzsbei9jkxp>

Regeneration <https://padlet.com/RPL1/g946xmydb3x51xy2>

Health etc <https://padlet.com/RPL1/gh0m021fb9p9710g>

NEA <https://padlet.com/RPL1/hsgi6cwghgo3m2z9>

Paper 1 - PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY

At Kenilworth, we cover the following four topics for Paper 1.

Topic 1 – Tectonic Processes and Hazards

In this unit you will why some locations are more at risk from tectonic hazards than others, why dome tectonic hazards develop into disasters and how successful is the management of tectonic hazards and disasters.

Starting points...

Video: Power of the Planet

(volcanoes) <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5af4kg> - a GREAT introduction to the work we will be doing on plate tectonics and volcanoes in year 12.

Podcast: How do we predict earthquakes?

<https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/plate-tectonics-and-earthquake-prediction/> They're just like London buses, according to Rebecca Bell from Imperial College. In this podcast we discuss hazards, plate tectonics, and how they're studied.

Reading: Plate Tectonics (The Geological Society) – this will be a good step up from your GCSE work to A Level and is definitely worth reading / working through

<https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/Plate-Tectonics>

USGS Natural Hazards – FAQ <https://www.usgs.gov/faq/natural-hazards> – some excellent reading here in bitesize chunks – well worth exploring

Topic 2 - Coasts

Coastal zones are dynamic environments with distinctive landscapes formed by the interaction of a range of wind, marine and terrestrial processes. Coastal environments are important to us as people, with about half of the world's population living within 50km of the sea. This makes these environments a crucial part of our studies as future life depends so heavily on their management.

Starting points...

Reading: How does the geological structure of the coast influence the development of coastal landscapes?

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Reading: What effect will sea level rise have on

coastlines? <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/sea-level>

Reading: Coastal erosion and its future

effects <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/climateChange/general/coastalErosion.html>

Reading: Why is Bangladesh so at risk from coastal

flooding? [http://coolgeography.co.uk/A-](http://coolgeography.co.uk/A-level/AQA/Year%2012/Rivers_Floods/Flooding/Bangladesh/Bangladesh.htm)

[level/AQA/Year%2012/Rivers_Floods/Flooding/Bangladesh/Bangladesh.htm](http://coolgeography.co.uk/A-level/AQA/Year%2012/Rivers_Floods/Flooding/Bangladesh/Bangladesh.htm)

Topics 3 & 4 - Water and Carbon cycles

Water and carbon are fundamental to supporting life on earth and are hence regarded as 'earth's life support systems. Water and carbon are cycled in both open and closed systems between the land, oceans and the atmosphere. The processes in the water and carbon cycles are interrelated. Human activity is increasingly threatening and altering water and carbon cycles for example through deforestation, ocean acidification, desertification etc. It is important that we look at global and national solutions to protect these.

Reading: Water and Carbon Cycling (Royal Geographical Society) – this is an excellent starting point / content overview for the water and carbon work that we will be looking at <https://www.rgs.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?nodeguid=6dc9f1c1-f92d-4c04-9f85-9985844a6a79&lang=en-GB>

Reading: Introduction to the Carbon Cycle
<https://www.khanacademy.org/science/biology/ecology/biogeochemical-cycles/a/the-carbon-cycle>

Reading: Introduction to the Water Cycle
<https://www.khanacademy.org/science/biology/ecology/biogeochemical-cycles/a/the-water-cycle>

Paper 2 Human Geography

At Kenilworth we cover 4 units on paper 2.

Topic 1: Globalisation

The world we live in is increasingly interconnected. We investigate why this is happening and why the process has sped up in recent years. We consider the implications of this for countries, different groups of people and cultures. Is it a wholly good or bad thing? We look at the consequences for globalisation and show how different people respond to these challenges including consideration of those who are against it.

Starting points...

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=agjGFwpTFaM> Why globalisation went wrong

Reading: A brief history of globalisation
<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/01/how-globalization-4-0-fits-into-the-history-of-globalization/>

Video: The real reason manufacturing jobs are disappearing:

https://www.ted.com/talks/augie_picado_the_real_reason_manufacturing_jobs_are_disappearing#t-206183

Topic 2: Superpowers

This unit focusses on geopolitics. We will consider what and who the world's superpowers are and how they have changed over time. We will investigate what impacts these superpowers have on the economic, political and environmental systems in the world. We will look at areas that these spheres of influence are contested and look at the implications of these conflicts.

Starting points...

Video: Understanding the rise of China

https://www.ted.com/talks/martin_jacques_understanding_the_rise_of_china#t-364820

Video: Global power shifts

https://www.ted.com/talks/joseph_nye_global_power_shifts#t-195148

Podcasts: What is the relationship between comic books and geopolitics?

<https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/what-is-the-relationship-between-comic-books-and-g/>

Topic 3 Urban Regeneration

We live in an urban world – cities matter. But they change over time. We look at how two places have changed as a result of globalisation and consider what Coventry is like and how it compares to a more rural town in Cornwall. What problems do they have in common and how are they different. We think about why regeneration might be needed, how it is managed and how successful regeneration projects are. Does everyone benefit?

Starting points...

Read: Regenerating Coventry's city centre

<https://www.coventrytelegraph.net/news/coventry-news/ambitious-120m-city-centre-regeneration-14374063>

Podcast: How is globalisation changing the countryside?

<https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/how-is-globalisation-changing-the-countryside/>

Podcast: Urban regeneration and belonging

<https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/urban-transformation-and-belonging/>

Topic 4 Health, Human Rights and Intervention

This unit looks at what we mean by human development and why it varies from place to place. We will also look at human rights, both within and between countries and consider how they vary. We will go on to look at how human rights are used for arguments for political and military intervention and think about the outcomes of interventions on both human development and human rights.

Starting points...

Reading: Human Rights - a good starting point read

<https://pmt.physicsandmathstutor.com/download/Geography/A-level/Notes/OCR/Human-Rights/Set-A/Notes%20on%20Human%20Rights%20-%20OCR%20Geography%20A-level.pdf>

Video: World's worst place to be a woman? (Stacey Dooley

Investigates) <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/b06mvwhb/stacey-dooley-investigates-worlds-worst-place-to-be-a-woman>

Video: Why climate change is a threat to Human Rights (TED Talk)

https://www.ted.com/talks/mary_robinson_why_climate_change_is_a_threat_to_human_rights

Video: What if a single human right could change the world? (TED TALK)

https://www.ted.com/talks/kristen_wenz_what_if_a_single_human_right_could_change_the_world

Video: Hans Rosling on population growth

https://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_global_population_growth_box_by_box?language=en

Video: Chris Packham's 7.7 billion people and counting

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/m000dl6q>