



# GEOGRAPHY RESEARCH SUMMARY FOR PRIMARY LEADERS AND TEACHERS

(Based on Ofsted's Report)



The curriculum needs to specify the substantive knowledge to be taught. This includes **place** knowledge, **locational** knowledge, **human, physical and environmental** knowledge, and **geographical skills**.



Formal learning starts in **EYFS**: children should begin to acquire a wide range of **vocabulary** and develop a sense of place. They should learn to create and read simple plans.



**Carefully choose examples** and contexts to exemplify geographical concepts. By exploring different concepts in the same example, we can avoid telling a '**single story**' about a place and give a fuller picture which can avoid creating stereotypes.



Children are expected to **remember** the key content from their lessons. This can be achieved by breaking down learning into manageable chunks, and providing ample opportunities for **retrieval practice**, which strengthens their memories. Consider overlearning for key skills.



Schools should develop **disciplinary knowledge** alongside and between each strand of substantive knowledge so that children develop the habits of thinking geographically.



The **curriculum is the progression** model. The key knowledge should be considered carefully by leaders. Depending on school choices, knowledge may need to go beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum.



Children bring a range of **misconceptions** to their lessons which teachers need to be aware of and address. This can often involve misunderstandings they have gained from their experiences, such as views about immigration and over-generalisations about places.



**SEND pupils** are expected to access the same curriculum as others, but it might be that teaching methods need to be **adapted**. Breaking down the content into smaller chunks or components is one way of doing this. Approaches which benefit SEND children will also benefit the entire class.



**Map reading skills** should be taught to automaticity. Through being able to interpret a range of maps, children develop spatial thinking, and increase their understanding of how places are connected. Children should have access to a wide range of up-to-date maps and atlases..



**Fieldwork** is integral to the curriculum and should occur regularly and with purpose: it enables formal learning to occur outside of the classroom and immerses children in the key content of their learning, allowing them to think deeply and therefore make stronger memories.



The **pedagogy** of geography is important to translate the intended curriculum into reality. Careful choice of activities is important in developing children's geographical understanding and their development of the big concepts. .



Schools should invest in both **subject leaders** and the subject knowledge of **non-specialist** teachers. Subject knowledge and access to professional expertise makes a substantial difference to the quality of a geography curriculum.

The **big concepts** of geography are **place, space, scale, interdependence, physical and human processes, environmental impact, sustainable development, cultural awareness, and cultural diversity**.

For a more detailed summary, check out my blog post at [www.marchhayes.com](http://www.marchhayes.com)



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