



GEOGRAPHICAL TERMINOLOGY

National Curriculum links.

This document has several important geographical terms that you may find useful for the teaching of Geography. It also includes where the vocabulary meets the National Curriculum demand.

John Anthony



Geographical Terminology

| Geographical skill (NC Strands) | Vocabulary |
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| <p>Locational knowledge and Place knowledge</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • name and locate the world's 7 continents and 5 oceans • name, locate and identify characteristics of the 4 countries and capital cities of the United Kingdom and its surrounding seas • understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom, and of a small area in a contrasting non-European country | <p>Africa Asia Antarctica Europe North America South America Oceania and Ausrtalia Equator Britain United Kingdom England - London Ireland - Dublin Scotland - Edinburgh Wales - Cardiff Northern Ireland - Belfast North Pole South Pole</p> |
| <p>Physical Geography Use basic geographical vocabulary to refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ key physical features, including: beach, cliff, coast, forest, hill, mountain, sea, ocean, river, soil, valley, vegetation, season and weather | <p>Beach Forest Hill Cliff Ocean Mountain River Sea Season West Valley Weather Vegetation soil</p> |
| <p>Human Geography key human features, including: city, town, village, factory, farm, house, office, port, harbour and shop</p> | <p>City Town Village Harbor House Farm Factory Shop Town Office Port</p> |



Geographical Terminology

Geographical skills and fieldwork

- use world maps, atlases and globes to identify the United Kingdom and its countries, as well as the countries, continents and oceans studied at this key stage
- 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 on a map
- 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 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

Compass
Atlas
Globes
Maps
Near
Far
Left
Right
Observation
Environment



Geographical Terminology

| Keyword | Location in NC document | Definition 1 (Taken from Collins English Dictionary unless otherwise stated) | Definition 2 (Provided by RGS) |
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| Aerial photograph | Aims | A photograph taken from an aircraft or satellite in flight. (www.dictionary.com) | An image taken from an elevated position. |
| Arctic Circle | KS2 | The imaginary circle around the earth, parallel to the equator, at latitude 66° 33' north. | The line of latitude approximately 66° 33' north of the Equator |
| Atlas | KS1 and KS2 | A collection of maps, usually in book form . | Book/collection of maps. |
| Beach | KS1 | An area of sand or shingle sloping down to a sea or lake. | A depositional feature along a shoreline of a river, lake or the sea. |
| Biome | KS2 | A biome is a large area on the Earth's surface that is defined by the types of animals and plants living there (www.geographyforkids.com) | An area of the world whose flora and fauna is determined by climatic conditions. |
| Characteristics | KS2 | A distinguishing quality, attribution or trait. | Features of a place or process |
| City | KS1 and KS2 | Any populous place. In Britain a city is recognised as a town that has received the title from the crown. | A large settlement of people found within a country. |
| Climate | KS2 | The long term prevalent weather conditions of an area, determined by latitude, altitude etc. | Average weather conditions of a place, including rainfall and temperature. |
| Coast | KS1 | The line or zone where the land meets the sea. | The boundary between land and sea. |
| Compass | KS1 | Magnetic instrument used for finding direction, having a magnetic needle which points to the magnetic north. | A tool for showing direction. |
| Compass Rose | - | A decorative device printed on a map showing points of the compass. | A diagram on a map which shows direction |
| Continent | KS1 | One of the earths large land masses. | Large land masses which with the exception of Antarctica are made up of a group of countries. The seven continents are Africa, Antarctica, Asia, Europe, North America, Oceanica and South America. |
| Country | KS1 and KS2 | Any political unit or state on a national scale, regardless of whether it is dependent or independent. | An area of land with boundaries which fits within a continent. |



Geographical Terminology

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| Desert | KS2 | A region that is devoid or almost devoid of vegetation because of low rainfall. | A large area of land characterised by low levels of rainfall and aridity. |
| Distribution | KS2 | Arrangement or location of something. | A description of how something is spread out. |
| Earthquake | KS2 | A series of vibrations at the earth's | Tremors felt on the earth's |

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| Environment | Purpose of Study | External conditions or surroundings. | The natural surroundings of a place. |
| Equator | KS1 | The great circle of the earth, equidistant from the poles, dividing the Northern and Southern hemispheres. | An imaginary line around the centre of the earth at 0° latitude. |
| Factory | KS1 | A building or group of buildings containing a plant assembly for the manufacture of goods. | A place of work that produces goods to be sold. |
| Farm | KS1 | A tract of land, usually with house and buildings, cultivated as a unit or used to rear livestock. | A place where livestock is reared or crops grown. |
| Fieldwork | Aims KS1 | An investigation or search for material or data, made in the field opposed to the classroom. | Looking at geography outdoors or in real life context. |
| Forest | KS1 | A large wooded area having a thick growth of trees and plants. | A large group of trees e.g. coniferous, deciduous or tropical. |
| GIS Geographical Information Systems | Aims | A system for storing and manipulating geographical information on computer. (www.merriam-webster.com) | The acronym for Geographical Information Systems, a computer based system for mapping and analyzing data and features for a location in the world. |
| Global | Aims | Covering or relating to the whole world. | Relating to something which is happening on a world scale. |
| Hemisphere | KS2 | Half of the terrestrial globe, dividing into northern and southern hemispheres by the equator and eastern and western hemispheres by some meridians, usually 0° and 180° | A half of the earth e.g. the Northern and Southern hemispheres |
| Hill | KS1 | A natural elevation of the earth's surface, less high or craggy than a mountain. | A mound of earth with an increasing gradient. |
| House | KS1 | A building used as a home or dwelling. | A place where someone lives. |



Geographical Terminology

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| Human processes | Purpose of study | A process in which human beings are involved (www.thefreedictionary.com) | Things created/affected by people. These processes would not occur without human involvement. |
| Interaction | Purpose of study | A mutual or reciprocal action. | The links and connections between people, places or processes. |
| Interdependent | Aims | When two or more things are dependent on each other. | Where people, places and processes rely on other people, places and processes in order to work. |
| Landmark | KS1 | A prominent or well known object in or feature of a particular landscape. | A human or physical feature which is well known in an area and can represent that place. |
| Land use | KS2 | Function of the land – what it is used | The purpose given or the |
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| Latitude | KS2 | An angular distance measured in degrees north and south of the equator. | An imaginary circle drawn parallel to the equator. |
| Locality | KS1 | A neighbourhood or area. The site or scene of an event. The fact or consideration of having a location or position in space. | An area and its surroundings. |
| Location | KS1 and KS2 | A site or position; situation. | The description of where something is in relation to its surroundings. |
| Longitude | KS2 | Distance in degrees east or west of the Prime Meridian at 0° measured by the angle between the plane of the prime meridian and that of the meridian through the point in question, or by time difference. | Distance measured in degrees east and west of the Prime Meridian. |
| Map | Aims | A diagrammatic representation of the earth's surface or part of it, showing the geographical distribution of features. | Diagram to show where places are located and features of places. |
| Minerals | KS2 | Any of a class of naturally occurring solid inorganic substances with a characteristic crystalline form | A naturally occurring material found in the earth. |



Geographical Terminology

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| | | and a homogenous chemical composition. | |
| Mountains | KS2 | A natural upward projection of the earth's surface, higher and steeper than a hill. | A natural elevation of the earth's surface – higher than a hill. |
| Observational skills | KS1 | The ability of looking at something and describing its features | The ability of looking at something and describing its features. |
| Ocean | KS1 | A very large stretch of sea, one of five oceans of the world – Pacific, Atlantic, Indian, Arctic and Southern. | An expanse of sea water. |
| Office | KS1 | A room or rooms in which business, professional duties, clerical work, etc. are carried out. | A place of work. |
| Pattern | KS1 | An arrangement of repeated or corresponding parts. | A sequence that can be identified, described and explained. |
| Physical processes | Purpose of study | - | An event or sequence of events that occur naturally due to the power of the planet. |
| Plan perspective | KS1 | An outline or sketch | A simple diagram, which can show a bird's eye view or a cross section of an area/feature. |
| Region | KS2 | An area considered as a unit for geographical reasons. | A named area within a country. |
| Resource | Purpose of study | A source of economic wealth, especially of a country or business enterprise. A supply or source of aid or support; something resorted to in a time of need. | Something that people can make use of. |
| River | KS1 KS2 | A large natural stream of fresh water flowing a long a definite course, usually into the sea. | A natural channel of water flowing from source to mouth. |
| Scale | Purpose of study | The ratio between the size of something real and that of a representation of it. | A measurement of the size of something; can allow actual size to be represented on a smaller level e.g. maps. Can also be used to look at different contexts – local, national and global. |
| Seasonal | KS1 | Of, relating to, or occurring at a certain season or seasons of the year. | A process or pattern which can be identified at a certain time of the year. |
| Shop | KS1 | A place for the retail sale of goods and services. | A place where goods are bought and sold. |



Geographical Terminology

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| Significance | KS2 | The consequence or importance of something | How important and relevant something is. |
| Spatial variation | Aims | A difference of or relating to a space | Differences which occur within or between areas. |
| Soil | KS1 | The top layer of the land surface of the earth that is composed of disintegrated rock particles, humus, water and air. | The layer of the earth's land surface composed of a variety of natural materials such as organic materials, rocks and minerals. |
| Symbol | KS1 | Something that represents or stands for something else. | An image used to represent a word, often seen on maps. |
| Time zone | KS2 | A region throughout which the same standard time is used. There are 24 time zones in the world, demarcated approximately by meridians at 15° intervals, an hour apart. | These are determined by lines of longitude and distance east or west of the prime meridian. |
| Topographical | KS2 | Detailed description of the surface features of a region. | Pertaining to the height, relief or surface features of an area. |
| Trade | KS2 | The act or instance of buying and selling goods and services. | The exchange of goods and services between two or more parties. |
| Tropic of Capricorn | KS2 | Line of latitude at 23.5°S of the equator. | Line of latitude 23.5° S of the equator. Between the tropics tropical rainforests are common. |
| Tropic of Cancer | KS2 | Line of latitude 23.5°N of the equator. | Line of latitude 23.5 ° N of the equator. Between the tropics tropical rainforests are common. Along the tropic of Cancer a number of the world's largest hot deserts are located due to high pressure. |
| Variation | Aims | The act, process, condition, or result of changing or varying . Something that differs from a standard or convention. | Differences which can exist between places (spatial variation) or over time (temporal variation). |
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Geographical Terminology

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| Vegetation belt | KS2 | Plant life as a whole within a certain area. | An area of the planet characterised by certain flora (plants) due to climatic conditions. |
| Valley | KS1 | A long depression in the land surface , usually containing a river, formed by erosion or movements in the earth's crust. | A depression in the landscape, found in areas of hilly or mountainous relief. Usually formed by erosion;– rivers or glaciers , or tectonic processes. |
| Village | KS1 | A small group of houses in a country area, larger than a hamlet. | A small settlement, including a number of houses and possibly some services such as a shop. |
| Volcano | KS2 | An opening in the earth's crust from which molten lava, rock fragments, ashes, dust and gases are ejected from below the earth's surface. | A point of the earth's surface where magma escapes, becomes lava and solidifies due to tectonic movement in the earth's crust. |
| Water cycle | KS2 | The circulation of the earth's water, in which water evaporates from the sea into the atmosphere where it condenses and falls as rain or snow. | The continual movement of water both on the earth and in the atmosphere due to the processes of evaporation, condensation, evection, precipitation, infiltration and surface run-off |
| Weather | KS1 | The day to day meteorological conditions, especially temperature, cloudiness and rain fall, affecting a specific place. | Conditions created by day to day changes in the earth's atmosphere. |