

Introduction

The Essentials Curriculum follows a simple model:

- 1) Breadth of study – the topics students will study.
- 2) Threshold concepts – the ‘big ideas’ in history that students will explore through every topic.
- 3) Milestones – the goals students should reach to show that they are meeting the expectations of the curriculum.

Reaching the Milestones

Milestones are the goals that students are aiming for. However the route to the goals is not as simple as stating the goal. Students need a lot of background knowledge in order to meet the Milestones.

The aims of this curriculum companion

The aims of this curriculum companion for geography are to provide teachers with three ways in which they can help students meet the milestones:

- 1) By providing the knowledge that they need to understand geographical concepts.
- 2) By providing the vocabulary they need to articulate their understanding of geography.
- 3) By providing ‘deliberate practise’ activities that will help them to make progress towards the Milestones.

In addition, to help with the leadership of the subject, the curriculum companion provides:

- 4) An example subject policy.
- 5) A subject leadership framework.
- 6) Questions you may wish to think about in preparation for school inspection.

Concepts are built on knowledge



Milestones are the goal, not the route

Look at this example from the concept 'Investigate patterns' at Milestone 1.

Investigate patterns

- Understand geographical similarities and differences through studying the human and physical geography of a small area of the United Kingdom and of 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.
- Identify land use around the school.

Students do not know how to do the things stated in the milestone goals and so they need to have a range of background knowledge, vocabulary and activities to help them. They also need to explore the knowledge, vocabulary and activities in a range of topics to help them to fully understand the milestone goals. **We recommend that the milestone goals are not used in short-term planning but as a description of the destination.** Instead we recommend that teachers plan a route to the destination by:

- 1) helping students to form knowledge webs
- 2) providing vocabulary so that students can express their knowledge
- 3) providing 'deliberate practice' activities that will, over time, embed and deepen knowledge.

A model of this can be seen on the following page.

Milestone 2

Investigate places

- Ask and answer geographical questions about the physical and human characteristics of a location.
- Explain own views about locations, giving reasons.
- Use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features.
- Use fieldwork to observe and record the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods including sketch maps, plans and graphs and digital technologies.
- Use a range of resources to identify the key physical and human features of a location.
- Name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, including hills, mountains, cities, rivers, key topographical features and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time.
- Name and locate the countries of Europe and identify their main physical and human characteristics.



Investigate patterns

- Name and locate the Equator, northern hemisphere, southern hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle and date time zones.
- Describe some of the characteristics of these geographical areas.
- Describe geographical similarities and differences between countries.
- Describe how the locality of the school has changed over time.



Communicate geographically

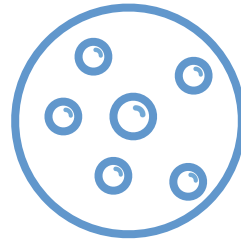
- Describe key aspects of:
 - physical geography, including: rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes and the water cycle
 - human geography, including: settlements and land use.
- Use the eight points of a compass, four-figure grid references, symbols and key to communicate knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.



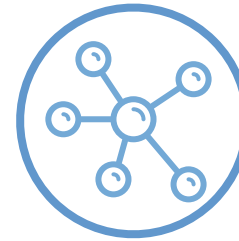
What is a knowledge web?

What is knowledge?

Models of long-term memory (learning) describe two types of knowledge: procedural (sometimes called skills) and semantic. Semantic knowledge involves learning facts, their meaning, their application and their relationship to other facts. It is a common misconception that to teach facts is to teach knowledge. In fact, teaching facts is teaching information not knowledge – a bit like filling in a database on a computer: although the computer has the information it does not understand it or how it relates to anything else.



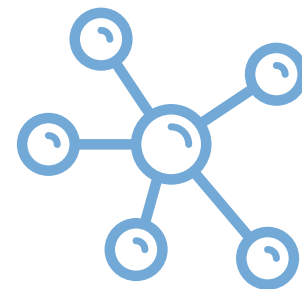
Information



Knowledge

Knowledge webs

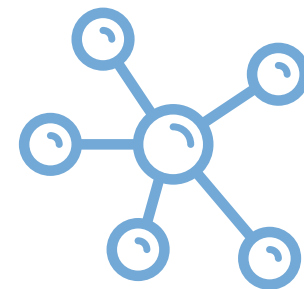
By presenting facts in a structured, sequenced and coherent way students form webs of meaningful knowledge. To create a knowledge web involves categorising knowledge so that it helps to build conceptual understanding. By using The Essentials Curriculum Threshold Concepts and milestone goals for history we have defined a set of knowledge categories that may be used to help students build meaningful knowledge.



Human features

Human features are the things made by or altered by people. They include:

- urban and suburban settlements, e.g. cities and towns
- rural settlements, e.g. hamlets and villages
- leisure facilities
- manufacturing facilities, e.g. factories and workshops
- transport hubs, e.g. bus stops, stations, railway stations, airports and ferry ports
- transport infrastructure, e.g. roads, railways and canals
- commerce sites, e.g. offices
- financial institutions
- retail outlets
- farming and agriculture
- reservoirs and dams
- power stations and the power grid
- any aspects of an environment that have been put there by people, e.g. pavements, street furniture and signs.



The United Kingdom: England



Quick summary



England is the largest of the four countries of the United Kingdom (UK). It is also part of Great Britain, which includes Wales and Scotland. It has a population of around 55.5 million. Its flag is the St George's cross which is named after its patron saint St George. The national emblem is a rose. Unlike Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, England does not have a separate parliament or assembly.



Location

England borders Scotland to the north with the counties of Cumbria and Northumberland; it borders Wales with the counties of Cheshire, Shropshire, Herefordshire and Gloucestershire. To the south is the English Channel, in which the Isle of Wight is separated from the mainland by the Solent. The southernmost point in England is Lizard Point in the county of Cornwall, which is in the south west.



Physical features

The Pennines is a range of hills that runs roughly north to south and is sometimes called the backbone of England because it resembles a spine. The Lake District is in the north west of England in the county of Cumbria. It has mountains, such as Scafell Pike, England's highest peak, and lakes such as Windermere, England's largest lake. There are many more physical features including rivers, lakes, caves and



Human features

England has many cities, the largest of which is London. There are also many thousands of towns and villages with a range of roads and transport networks linking them together. Houses, shops, leisure centres, theatres, cinemas and restaurants occupy cities but most of the land in the country is used for



Diversity

England is home to people from all over the world, some of whom were born here, others who have migrated from other parts of the world, some who travel for work or tourism and and some who are refugees.



Vocabulary

population: all the people who live in a place
emblem: badge or symbol
resembles: looks like
peak: the pointed top of a mountain
migrated: moved from one place to another
tourism: providing services for people on holiday
refugees: people forced to leave their



Location



Physical features



Human features



Diversity



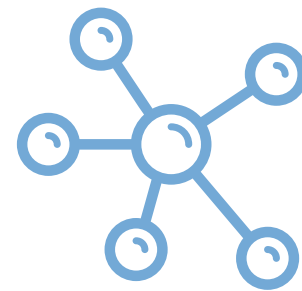
Physical processes



Human processes



Techniques



The Pacific Ocean



Quick summary



The Pacific is the largest and deepest of the world's oceans.



Location

The Pacific Ocean borders the Arctic Ocean to the north and the Southern Ocean to the south. It borders, in the west, the continents of Asia and Australia; in the east, the continents of North and South America. The Equator divides the Pacific into the North Pacific and South Pacific.



Human processes

South Pacific islands, such as Samoa, the Cook Islands, French Polynesia and Fiji, are popular tourist destinations. Plastic pollution is becoming a big problem in the Pacific Ocean. Small pieces of plastic from human litter are harming marine species. Many people around the world are trying to limit how much plastic they throw away to help stop this problem.



Physical features

The Pacific Ocean covers one-third of the Earth's surface and is larger than all of the land put together. The Mariana Trench, off the coast of Japan in the North Pacific is the deepest point on Earth. It is 10,911 metres (35,797 feet) – almost 7 miles – deep. If Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain, were placed at the bottom of the Mariana Trench, its peak would still be over 2000 metres (6,500 feet) below sea level. The first people to see the Sun every day are the inhabitants of the Pacific Island of Samoa, all of which have atolls.



Vocabulary

Equator: the imaginary line halfway between the North and South Poles
tourist destinations: places people visit on holiday
marine species: plants and animals in oceans and seas
inhabitants: the people who live in a place
atolls: ring-shaped coral reefs with a lagoon (an enclosed area of calm sea water) in the middle



Location



Physical features



Human features



Diversity



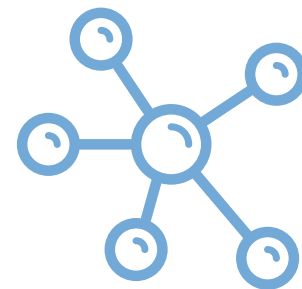
Physical processes



Human processes



Techniques



Australia: overview



Quick summary



Australia is the smallest continent of the seven continents and many consider it as the largest island in the world. Greenland, however, is the biggest island country. Australia is the sixth largest country in the world, after Russia, Canada, USA, China and Brazil. Its official name is the Commonwealth of Australia. It is part of the Commonwealth and sees Queen Elizabeth II as its queen. It has a democratic government and a population of around 25 million, 90 per cent of whom live in urban areas. Its capital city is Canberra and its official language is English. The currency is the Australian dollar. Its official national emblem is a golden wattle (a flower) but many use the kangaroo. It celebrates a national holiday on 26 January (Australia Day).



Location

Australia is a continent and a country in the southern hemisphere. Australia is an island continent surrounded by the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.



Physical features

The country's interior, which covers two thirds of the country, consists of desert landscape which is referred to as 'outback'. The highest mountain of Australia is Mount Kosciuszko. Ayers Rock, also called Uluru, which is in the centre of the country, is the largest lone standing rock in the world. The longest river in Australia is the Murray River which is 1,558 miles long. The Great Barrier Reef in eastern Australia is the biggest coral reef in the world. The reef consists of more than 3000 reefs in which more than 350 species of corals and over 1,500 species of fish live.



Human features

The country is divided into six states (Southern Australia, Western Australia, New South Wales, Queensland, Victoria and Tasmania) and two self-governing territories: Northern Territory and Australian Capital Territory (which is around Canberra, the capital city). The main cities in Australia are: Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane, Darwin, Adelaide, Hobart and Canberra – the capital city. The cities are all located at the coast or close to the coast. The main city in the country's interior is Alice Springs.



Vocabulary

Commonwealth: the UK and a group of countries that, in the past, were ruled by the UK
democratic: relating to a form of government in which people choose the leaders by voting
urban: relating to a town or city
surrounded: all around somewhere



Location



Physical features



Human features



Diversity



Physical processes



Human processes



Techniques

Milestone 1 vocabulary (c)

Vocabulary	Definition
Surrounding	The conditions, scenery, etc, around a person, place, or thing; environment
Environment	External conditions or surroundings, esp those in which people live or work
Characteristic	A distinguishing quality, attribute, or trait
Locate	If you locate something or someone, you find out where they are.
Seasonal	Occurring at a certain season or certain seasons of the year
Daily	If something happens daily, it happens every day.
Weather	The weather is the condition of the atmosphere in one area at a particular time, for example if it is raining, hot, or windy.
Hot	Hot is used to describe the weather or the air in a room or building when the temperature is high.
Cold	If it is cold, or if a place is cold, the temperature of the air is very low.
Equator	The equator is an imaginary line around the middle of the Earth at an equal distance from the North Pole and the South Pole.

Vocabulary	Definition
North Pole	The North Pole is the place on the surface of the Earth which is farthest towards the north.
South Pole	The South Pole is the place on the surface of the Earth which is farthest towards the south.
Beach	A beach is an area of sand or stones beside the sea.
Coast	The coast is an area of land that is next to the sea.
Hill	A hill is an area of land that is higher than the land that surrounds it.
Mountain	A mountain is a very high area of land with steep sides.
River	A river is a large amount of fresh water flowing continuously in a long line across the land.
Soil	Soil is the substance on the surface of the Earth in which plants grow.
Valley	A valley is a low stretch of land between hills, especially one that has a river flowing through it.

An example subject policy

Basic Principles

1. Learning is a change to **long-term memory**.
2. Our aims are to ensure that our students experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an **ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge**.

Curriculum Intent model

1. **Curriculum drivers** shape our curriculum breadth. They are derived from an exploration of the backgrounds of our students, our beliefs about high quality education and our values. They are used to ensure we give our students appropriate and ambitious curriculum opportunities.
2. **Cultural capital** gives our students the vital background knowledge required to be informed and thoughtful members of our community who understand and believe in British values.
3. **Curriculum breadth** is shaped by our curriculum drivers, cultural capital, subject topics and our ambition for students to study the best of what has been thought and said by many generations of academics and scholars.
4. Our curriculum distinguishes between subject topics and 'threshold concepts'. **Subject topics** are the specific aspects of subjects that are studied.
5. **Threshold concepts** tie together the subject topics into meaningful schema. The same concepts are explored in a wide breadth of topics. Through this 'forwards-and-backwards engineering' of the curriculum, students return to the same concepts over and over and gradually build understanding of them.
6. For each of the threshold concepts three **Milestones**, each of which includes the procedural and semantic knowledge students need to understand the threshold concepts, provides a **progression model**.
7. **Knowledge categories** in each subject give students a way of expressing their understanding of the threshold concepts.