

Geography

in the National Curriculum

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England



DEPARTMENT FOR
EDUCATION

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FOREWORD

This document sets out the revised National Curriculum for geography in England.

■ The structure of the National Curriculum

The National Curriculum applies to pupils of compulsory school age in maintained schools, including grant-maintained and grant-maintained special schools. It is organised on the basis of four **key stages**, which are broadly as follows*:

	Pupils' ages	Year groups
Key Stage 1	5-7	1-2
Key Stage 2	7-11	3-6
Key Stage 3	11-14	7-9
Key Stage 4	14-16	10-11

In England, the following **subjects** are included in the National Curriculum at the key stages shown:

Key Stages 1 and 2	English, mathematics, science, technology (design and technology, and information technology), history, geography, art, music, and physical education
Key Stage 3	as at Key Stages 1 and 2, plus a modern foreign language
Key Stage 4	English, mathematics and science; from August 1995, physical education; and, from August 1996, technology (design and technology, and information technology) and a modern foreign language.

For each subject and for each key stage, **programmes of study** set out what pupils should be taught and **attainment targets** set out the expected standards of pupils' performance.

At the end of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3, for all subjects except art, music and physical education, standards of pupils' performance are set out in eight **level descriptions** of increasing difficulty, with an additional description above level 8 to help teachers in differentiating exceptional performance. For art, music and physical education, **end of key stage descriptions** set out the standard of performance expected of the majority of pupils at the end of each key stage. Descriptions of exceptional performance are also provided in art and music at the end of Key Stage 3 and in physical education at the end of Key Stage 4.

At **Key Stage 4** public examinations are the main means of assessing attainment in the National Curriculum. New GCSE syllabuses which reflect the revised National Curriculum will be introduced for courses beginning in September 1996.

■ Special educational needs

The revised National Curriculum provides teachers with much greater flexibility to respond to the needs of pupils with identified special educational needs. The statement on access in the section on Common Requirements increases the scope for teachers to provide such pupils with appropriately challenging work at each key stage. This should help to reduce the instances where the requirements of the National Curriculum need to be modified or disapplied for a pupil, either temporarily by the head teacher's direction or through a statement of special educational needs.

* The key stages are defined precisely in section 3(3-6) of the Education Reform Act 1988, as amended by the Education Act 1993.

■ Implementation dates

The revised programmes of study and attainment target for geography become legal requirements by means of an Order made by the Secretary of State for Education and come into effect on 1 August 1995 for all year groups in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

From this date the existing National Curriculum for geography, and Department for Education Circulars 5/91 and 16/91, are superseded.

Department for Education

January 1995

COMMON REQUIREMENTS

■ Access

The programme of study for each key stage should be taught to all or the great majority of pupils in the key stage, in ways appropriate to their abilities.

For the small number of pupils who may need the provision, material may be selected from earlier or later key stages where this is necessary to enable individual pupils to progress and demonstrate achievement. Such material should be presented in contexts suitable to the pupil's age.

Appropriate provision should be made for pupils who need to use:

- means of communication other than speech, including computers, technological aids, signing, symbols or lip-reading;
- non-sighted methods of reading, such as Braille, or non-visual or non-aural ways of acquiring information;
- technological aids in practical and written work;
- aids or adapted equipment to allow access to practical activities within and beyond school.

Judgements made in relation to the level descriptions should allow for the provision above, where appropriate.

■ Use of language

Pupils should be taught to express themselves clearly in both speech and writing and to develop their reading skills. They should be taught to use grammatically correct sentences and to spell and punctuate accurately in order to communicate effectively in written English.

■ Information technology

Pupils should be given opportunities, where appropriate, to develop and apply their information technology (IT) capability in their study of geography.

■ Referencing

The numbers and letters throughout the programmes of study are for referencing purposes only and do not necessarily indicate a particular teaching sequence or hierarchy of knowledge, understanding and skills.

■ Examples

Examples printed in italics are non-statutory.

KEY STAGE 1 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

- 1. Pupils should be given opportunities to:
 - a investigate the physical and human features of their surroundings;
 - b undertake studies that focus on geographical questions, *eg 'What / Where is it?', 'What is it like?', 'How did it get like this?'*, and that are based on direct experience, practical activities and fieldwork in the locality of the school; studies should involve the development of skills, and the development of knowledge and understanding about places and themes;
 - c become aware that the world extends beyond their own locality, both within and outside the United Kingdom, and that the places they study exist within this broader geographical context, *eg within a town, a region, a country*.

GEOGRAPHICAL SKILLS

- 2. In investigating places and a theme, pupils should be given opportunities to observe, question and record, and to communicate ideas and information.
- 3. Pupils should be taught to:
 - a use geographical terms, *eg hill, river, road*, in exploring their surroundings;
 - b undertake fieldwork activities in the locality of the school, *eg observing housing types, mapping the school playground*;
 - c follow directions, including the terms up, down, on, under, behind, in front of, near, far, left, right, north, south, east, west;
 - d make maps and plans of real and imaginary places, using pictures and symbols, *eg a pictorial map of a place featured in a story, a plan of their route from home to school*;
 - e use globes, maps and plans at a variety of scales; the work should include identifying major geographical features, *eg seas, rivers, cities*, locating and naming on a map the constituent countries of the United Kingdom, marking on a map approximately where they live, and following a route;
 - f use secondary sources, *eg pictures, photographs (including aerial photographs), books, videos, CD-ROM encyclopaedia*, to obtain geographical information.

PLACES

- 4. Two localities should be studied: the locality of the school and a locality, either in the United Kingdom or overseas, in which the physical and/or human features contrast with those in the locality of the school. The locality of the school is its immediate vicinity; it includes the school buildings and grounds and the surrounding area within easy access. The contrasting locality should be an area of similar size.
- 5. In these studies, pupils should be taught:
 - a about the main physical and human features, *eg rivers, hills, factories, shops*, that give the localities their character;
 - b how localities may be similar and how they may differ, *eg both areas may have farmland, but animals may be kept on the farms in one area, while in the other crops may be grown*;
 - c about the effects of weather on people and their surroundings, *eg the effect of seasonal variations in temperature on the clothes people wear*;
 - d how land and buildings, *eg farms, parks, factories, houses*, are used.

THEMATIC STUDY

- 6. The quality of the environment in any locality, either in the United Kingdom or overseas, should be investigated.

In this study, pupils should be taught:

- a to express views on the attractive and unattractive features, *eg tidiness, noise*, of the environment concerned, *eg a play area, a street, a small area of woodland*;
- b how that environment is changing, *eg increasing traffic*;
- c how the quality of that environment can be sustained and improved, *eg creating cycle lanes, excluding cars from an area*.

KEY STAGE 2 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

- 1. Pupils should be given opportunities to:
- a** investigate places and themes across a widening range of scales;
 - b** undertake studies that focus on geographical questions, *eg 'What / where is it?', 'What is it like?', 'How did it get like this?', 'How and why is it changing?'*, and that involve fieldwork and classroom activities; studies should involve the development of skills, and the development of knowledge and understanding about places and themes;
 - c** develop the ability to recognise patterns, *eg variations in rainfall between places, patterns of land use in a settlement*, and to apply their knowledge and understanding to explain them;
 - d** become aware of how places fit into a wider geographical context, *eg links within a town, a rural area, a region*.

GEOGRAPHICAL SKILLS

- 2. In investigating places and themes, pupils should be given opportunities to:
- a** observe and ask questions about geographical features and issues;
 - b** collect and record evidence to answer the questions;
 - c** analyse the evidence, draw conclusions and communicate findings.
- 3. Pupils should be taught to:
- a** use appropriate geographical vocabulary, *eg temperature, transport, industry, agriculture*, to describe and interpret their surroundings;
 - b** undertake fieldwork, including the use of instruments to make measurements, *eg rain gauges*, and appropriate techniques, *eg questionnaires*;
 - c** make plans and maps at a variety of scales, using symbols and keys, *eg drawing a sketch map of a housing estate*;
 - d** use and interpret globes, and maps and plans at a variety of scales; the work should include using co-ordinates and four-figure grid references, measuring direction and distance, following routes, using the contents pages and index of an atlas, and identifying the points of reference specified on Maps A, B and C (pages 7–9);
 - e** use secondary sources of evidence – pictures, photographs (including aerial photographs) and other sources, *eg television and radio programmes, books, newspapers, visitors to the school* – to inform their studies;
 - f** use IT to gain access to additional information sources and to assist in handling, classifying and presenting evidence, *eg recording fieldwork evidence on spreadsheets, using newspapers on CD-ROM, using word-processing and mapping packages*.

PLACES

- 4. Three localities should be studied. One study should focus on the locality of the school, which, at this key stage, should cover an area larger than the school's immediate vicinity. It will normally contain the homes of the majority of pupils in the school. The two contrasting localities should be similar in size to the locality of the school. One locality should be in the United Kingdom and the other in a country in Africa, Asia (excluding Japan), South America or Central America (including the Caribbean).
- 5. In these studies, pupils should be taught:
 - a about the main physical and human features, *eg cliffs, valleys, housing estates, reservoirs*, and environmental issues, *eg water pollution, proposals for a new supermarket*, that give the localities their character;
 - b how the localities may be similar and how they may differ, *eg two localities may both be in valleys, but one valley is narrow and steep-sided, while the other is wide and gently sloping*;
 - c how the features of the localities influence the nature and location of human activities within them, *eg roads following valleys, multi-storey car parks near city centres*;
 - d about recent or proposed changes in the localities, *eg closure of a corner shop*;
 - e how the localities are set within a broader geographical context, *eg within a town, a region, a country*, and are linked with other places, *eg through the supply of goods, movement of people*.

Geography
Key Stage 2

THEMATIC STUDIES

- 6. The four geographical themes below should be investigated. These may be studied separately, in combination with other themes, or as part of the studies of places. Whichever approach is followed, these studies should be set within the context of actual places and some should use topical examples. Taken together, the studies should involve work at a range of scales from local to national, and should be set in a range of contexts in different parts of the world. Contexts should include the United Kingdom and the European Union.

■ 7. Rivers

In studying rivers and their effects on the landscape, pupils should be taught:

- a that rivers have sources, channels, tributaries and mouths, that they receive water from a wide area, and that most eventually flow into a lake or the sea;
- b how rivers erode, transport and deposit materials, producing particular landscape features, *eg valleys, waterfalls*.

■ 8. Weather

In studying how weather varies between places and over time, pupils should be taught:

- a** how site conditions can influence the weather, *eg temperatures in the shade and in the sun, wind speed in sheltered and exposed sites;*
- b** about seasonal weather patterns;
- c** about weather conditions in different parts of the world, *eg temperatures, rainfall and sunshine conditions in the localities studied, extremes of weather in other parts of the world.*

■ 9. Settlement

In studying how settlements differ and change, pupils should be taught:

- a** that settlements, *eg villages, towns, cities*, vary in size and that their characteristics and locations reflect the types of economic activities in the settlement, *eg market towns, ports, seaside resorts;*
- b** how land in settlements is used in different ways, *eg for housing, transport, industry;*
- c** about a particular issue arising from the way land is used, *eg different groups of residents in a settlement have conflicting views on the construction of a by-pass across farmland.*

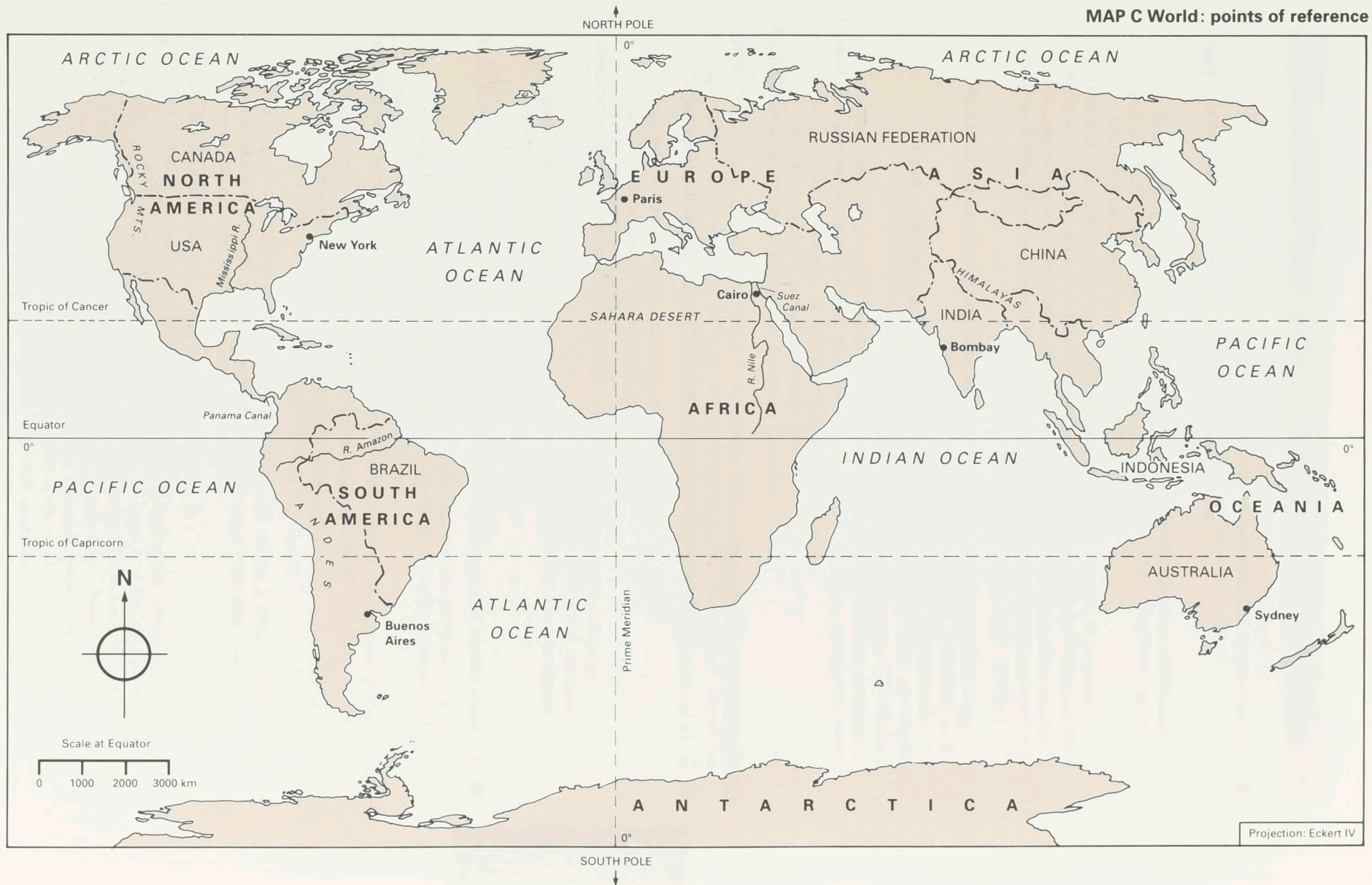
■ 10. Environmental change

In investigating how environments change, pupils should be taught:

- a** how people affect the environment, *eg by quarrying, building reservoirs, building motorways;*
- b** how and why people seek to manage and sustain their environment, *eg by combatting river pollution, by organic farming, conserving areas of beautiful landscape or of scientific value.*







KEY STAGE 3 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

- 1. Pupils should be given opportunities to:
- a** investigate places and themes across the whole range of scales;
 - b** undertake studies that focus on geographical questions, *eg 'What/where is it?', 'What is it like?', 'How did it get like this?', 'How and why is it changing?', 'What are the implications?'*, and that involve fieldwork and classroom activities; studies should involve the development of skills, and the development of knowledge and understanding about places and themes;
 - c** explain geographical patterns, and physical and human processes;
 - d** consider the issues that arise from people's interaction with their environments;
 - e** become aware of the global context within which places are set, how they are interdependent, and how they may be affected by processes operating at different scales, *eg how a locality is affected by a regional economic policy or a world trade agreement.*

GEOGRAPHICAL SKILLS

- 2. In investigating places and themes, pupils should be given opportunities to:
- a** identify geographical questions and issues and establish an appropriate sequence of investigation;
 - b** identify the evidence required and collect, record and present it;
 - c** analyse and evaluate the evidence, draw conclusions and communicate findings.
- 3. Pupils should be taught to:
- a** use an extended geographical vocabulary, *eg ecosystem, drainage basin, tertiary industry, sustainable development*, to explain geographical patterns and change, and to investigate relationships;
 - b** undertake fieldwork, selecting and using appropriate techniques and instruments to measure and record accurately, *eg land use survey, data logging*;
 - c** make maps and plans at a variety of scales, using symbols, keys and scales, *eg an annotated sketch map showing key features drawn from an OS map*;
 - d** use and interpret maps and plans at a variety of scales, including Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 maps, the work should include using six-figure grid references, following routes, identifying relief and landscape features, drawing cross-sections, and using maps in decision-making exercises;

Pupils should be taught to:

- e** make effective use of globes and atlases to find appropriate information, and to locate places studied, places that are in the news, and the points of reference specified on Maps D, E and F (pages 15–17);
- f** select and use appropriate graphical techniques to present evidence on maps and diagrams, *eg pie charts, choropleth maps*;
- g** select and use secondary sources of evidence – photographs (including vertical and oblique aerial photographs), satellite images and other sources, *eg census data, visits to school by representatives of local interest groups* – to inform their studies;
- h** use IT to gain access to additional information sources and to assist in handling, presenting and analysing geographical evidence, *eg automatic weather stations to collect weather data, spreadsheets to record environmental impact scores, CD-ROMs to obtain census data, desktop publishing packages to produce a leaflet on a local issue, simulation packages to investigate a flood hazard*.

PLACES

- **4.** Two countries, other than those in the **United Kingdom**, should be studied. They should be in significantly different states of development. One country should be selected from the areas in LIST A, the other from those in LIST B.

LIST A

Australia and New Zealand
Europe
Japan
North America
Russian Federation

LIST B

Africa
Asia (excluding Japan)
South and Central America
(including the Caribbean)

- **5.** For each of the two countries, pupils should be taught:
 - a** about the physical and human features that give rise to the country's distinctive characteristics and regional variety;
 - b** about the characteristics of two regions of the country and their similarities and differences;
 - c** about the ways in which the country may be judged to be more or less developed;
 - d** how the country is set within a global context and how it is interdependent with other countries.

THEMATIC STUDIES

- **6.** The nine geographical themes below should be investigated. These may be taught separately, in combination with other themes, or as part of the studies of places. Whichever approach is followed, thematic studies should be set within the context of actual places and some should have topical significance. Taken together, the studies should involve work at local, regional, national, international and global scales, and provide coverage of different parts of the world and different types of environments. Contexts should include the local area, the United Kingdom, the European Union and parts of the world in various states of development.

■ 7. Tectonic processes

In studying earthquakes or volcanoes and their effects on people, pupils should be taught:

- a** the global distribution of earthquakes and volcanoes and their relationship with the boundaries of the crustal plates;

—AND EITHER—

- b** the nature, causes and effects of earthquakes;
- c** about human responses to the earthquake hazard;

—OR—

- d** the nature, causes and effects of volcanic eruptions;
- e** about human responses to the volcanic hazard.

■ 8. Geomorphological processes

In studying geomorphological processes and their effects on landscapes and people, pupils should be taught:

—EITHER—

- a** about the landforms associated with river channels, river valleys and drainage basins and the processes that form them, and about the role of rock type and weathering in landform development;
- b** the causes and effects of river floods and how people respond to and seek to control the flood hazard;

—OR—

- c** about coastal landforms, and the processes that form them, and about the role of rock type and weathering in landform development;
- d** the causes and effects of **either** cliff collapse **or** coastal flooding and how people respond to and seek to control the hazard.

■ 9. Weather and climate

In studying how and why weather and climate vary, pupils should be taught:

- a** how weather and climate differ;
- b** about the components and links in the water cycle;
- c** how and why aspects of weather and climate vary from place to place.

■ 10. Ecosystems

In investigating how physical and human processes influence the character of vegetation, pupils should be taught:

- a** the characteristics and distribution of one type of vegetation, *eg savanna grassland, tropical rain forest*;
- b** how this type of vegetation is related to climate, soil and human activity.

■ 11. Population

In studying population distribution and change, pupils should be taught:

- a** about the global distribution of population;
- b** about the causes and effects of changes in the population sizes of regions and countries;
- c** how population and resources are interrelated;
- d** about the causes and effects of migration.

■ 12. Settlement

In investigating the characteristics of settlements and the impact of change, pupils should be taught:

- a** the reasons for the location, growth and nature of individual settlements;
- b** how the types and variety of goods and services provided in settlements of different sizes vary;
- c** how changes in function of settlements occur and how these changes affect different groups of people, *eg how a decline in village services affects car owners and non-car owners*;
- d** about types and patterns of urban land use, how conflicts can arise over the use of land, and how they can be addressed.

■ 13. Economic activities

In studying the distribution of economic activity and the impact of change, pupils should be taught:

- a** the differences between primary, secondary and tertiary industries;
- b** about the geographical distribution of one economic activity, *eg a type of farming, the car industry, a form of transport*;
- c** how the distribution of this economic activity has changed and is changing, and the effects of such changes.

■ 14. Development

In investigating development, pupils should be taught:

- a** about ways of identifying differences in development;
- b** about differences in development and their effect on the quality of life of different groups of people;
- c** how the interdependence of countries influences development.

■ 15. Environmental issues

In investigating environmental issues, pupils should be taught:

- a** why some areas are viewed as being of great scenic attraction, and how conflicting demands on the areas can arise;
- b** how attempts are made to plan and manage such environments and how these can have unintended effects;
- c** how considerations of sustainable development, stewardship and conservation affect environmental planning and management;

— AND EITHER —

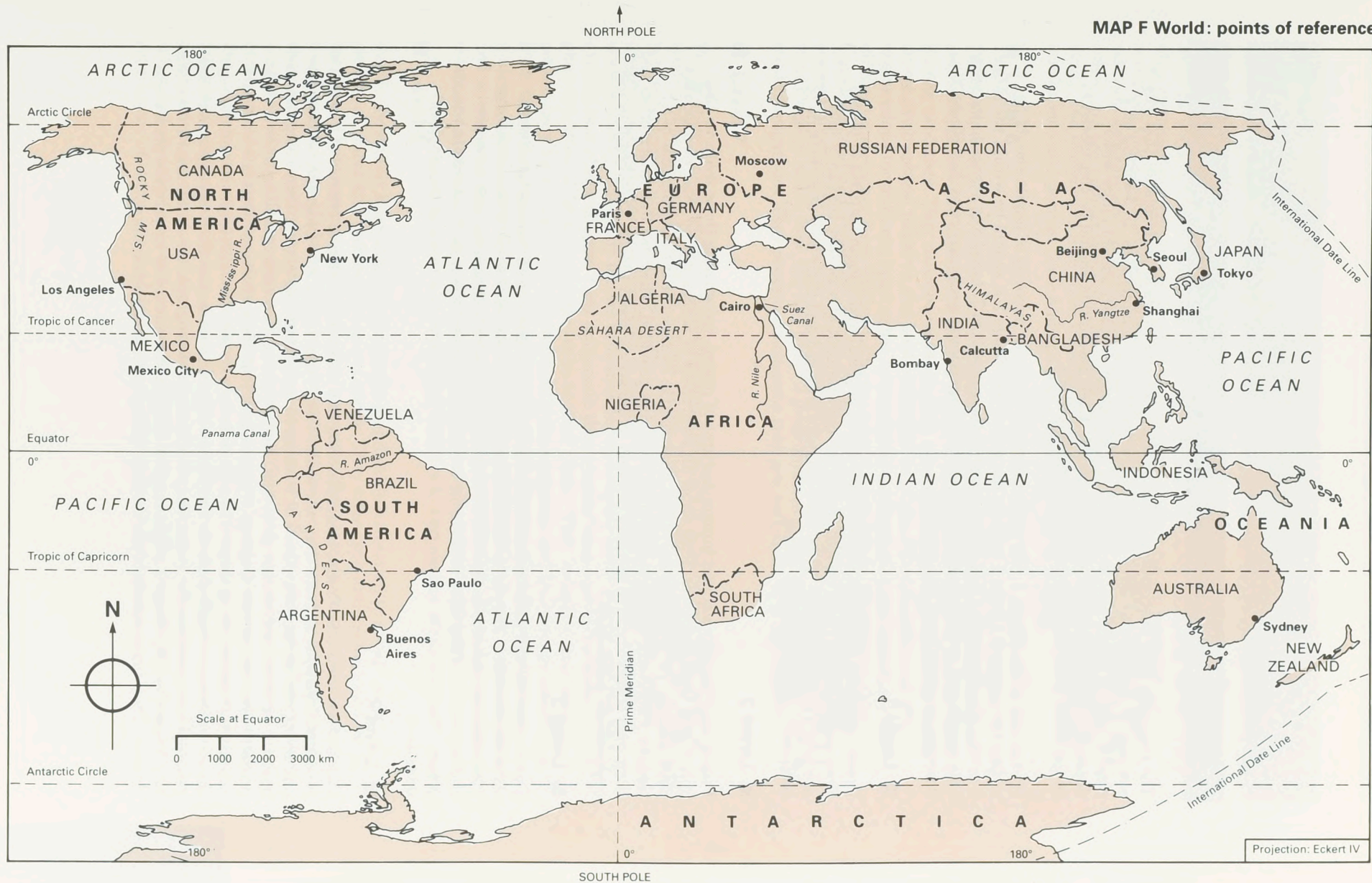
- d** about provision of a reliable supply of fresh water and the causes, effects and prevention of water pollution;

— OR —

- e** about provision of a reliable supply of energy and the effect on the environment of the development of **two** different energy sources.







ATTAINMENT TARGET

LEVEL DESCRIPTIONS

The following level descriptions describe the types and range of performance that pupils working at a particular level should characteristically demonstrate. In deciding on a pupil's level of attainment at the end of a key stage, teachers should judge which description best fits the pupil's performance. Each description should be considered in conjunction with the descriptions for adjacent levels.

By the end of Key Stage 1, the performance of the great majority of pupils should be within the range of Levels 1 to 3, by the end of Key Stage 2 it should be within the range 2 to 5 and by the end of Key Stage 3 within the range 3 to 7. Level 8 is available for very able pupils and, to help teachers differentiate exceptional performance at Key Stage 3, a description above Level 8 is provided.

■ Level 1

Pupils recognise and make observations about physical and human features of places. They express their views on features of the environment of a locality that they find attractive or unattractive. They use resources provided and their own observations to respond to questions about places.

■ Level 2

Pupils describe physical and human features of places, recognising those features that give places their character. They show an awareness of places beyond their own locality. They express views on attractive and unattractive features of the environment of a locality. Pupils select information from resources provided. They use this information and their own observations to ask and respond to questions about places. They begin to use appropriate vocabulary.

■ Level 3

Pupils describe and make comparisons between the physical and human features of different localities. They offer explanations for the locations of some of those features. They show an awareness that different places may have both similar and different characteristics. They offer reasons for some of their observations and judgements about places. They use skills and sources of evidence to respond to a range of geographical questions.

■ Level 4

Pupils show their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to studies of a range of places and themes, at more than one scale. They begin to describe geographical patterns and to appreciate the importance of location in understanding places. They recognise and describe physical and human processes. They begin to show understanding of how these processes can change the features of places, and that these changes affect the lives and activities of people living there. They describe how people can both improve and damage the environment. Pupils draw on their knowledge and understanding to suggest suitable geographical questions for study. They use a range of geographical skills, drawn from the Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 3 programme of study, and evidence to investigate places and themes. They communicate their findings using appropriate vocabulary.

■ Level 5

Pupils show their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to studies of a range of places and themes, at more than one scale. They describe and begin to offer explanations for geographical patterns and for a range of physical and human processes. They describe how these processes can lead to similarities and differences between places. Pupils describe ways in which places are linked through movements of goods and people. They offer explanations for ways in which human activities affect the environment and recognise that people attempt to manage and improve environments. Pupils identify relevant geographical questions. Drawing on their knowledge and understanding, they select and use appropriate skills, from the Key Stage 2 or Key Stage 3 programme of study, and evidence to help them investigate places and themes. They reach plausible conclusions and present their findings both graphically and in writing.

■ Level 6

Pupils show their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to a wide range of studies of places and themes, at various scales. They explain a range of physical and human processes. They describe ways in which processes operating at different scales create geographical patterns and lead to changes in places. They describe and offer explanations for different approaches to managing environments and appreciate that different approaches have different effects on people and places. Drawing on their knowledge and understanding, pupils identify relevant geographical questions and suggest appropriate sequences of investigation. They select and make effective use of a wide range of skills, from the Key Stage 3 programme of study, and evidence in carrying out investigations. They present conclusions that are consistent with the evidence.

■ Level 7

Pupils show their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to a wide range of studies of places and themes, at various scales. They describe the interactions within and between physical and human processes. They show how these interactions create geographical patterns and contribute to change in places and patterns. They show understanding that many factors influence decisions made about places, and use this to explain how places change. They appreciate that peoples' lives and environment in one place are affected by actions and events in other places. They recognise that human actions may have unintended environmental consequences and that change sometimes leads to conflict. With growing independence, pupils draw on their knowledge and understanding to identify geographical questions, establish a sequence of investigation, and select and use accurately a wide range of skills, from the Key Stage 3 programme of study, and evidence. They are beginning to reach substantiated conclusions.

■ Level 8

Pupils show their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to a wide range of studies of places and themes, at various scales. They offer explanations for interactions within and between physical and human processes. They explain changes over time in the characteristics of places. They begin to account for disparities in development and show some understanding of the range and complexity of factors that contribute to the quality of life in different places. Pupils recognise the causes and consequences of environmental issues and show understanding of different approaches to tackling them. They understand and apply the concept of sustainable development. Drawing on their knowledge and understanding, pupils show independence in identifying appropriate geographical questions and implementing an effective sequence of investigation. They select and use effectively and accurately a wide range of skills, from the Key Stage 3 programme of study, and evidence, to reach substantiated conclusions.

■ Exceptional performance

Pupils show their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to studies of places and themes across the full range of scales. They explain complex interactions within and between physical and human processes. They explain and predict change over time in the characteristics of places. Pupils show understanding of alternative approaches to development and the implications for the quality of life in different places. They assess the relative merits of different ways in which environmental issues are tackled and justify their own views about the different approaches. They understand and apply the concept of sustainable development in a range of contexts. Pupils draw selectively on geographical ideas and theories, and use accurately a wide range of skills, from the Key Stage 3 programme of study, and evidence to undertake geographical enquiries independently at different scales. They reach substantiated conclusions, which they present effectively and accurately. They evaluate their work by suggesting improvements in approach and further lines of enquiry.

Geography in the National Curriculum



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