

# Using **web-based resources** in Primary Geography



# Web-based resources for Primary Geography

There are many resources on the web that can be used to improve the quality of geography teaching in the primary school. Some resources can be used directly by pupils, whilst others assist the teacher in producing resources to suit specific needs. The lessons and examples here have been selected to illustrate the variety of types of web-based resources and the ways in which they can be used effectively to support the teaching of geography in Key Stages 1 and 2. They can be bookmarked, downloaded and used offline or adapted for specific requirements. There may be other sites which could serve a similar purpose – using a searchable database such as Curriculum Online or The Teacher Resource Exchange will help you to find them.

All web addresses have been checked and were correct at time of printing.



## CBeebies Stories: Red Riding Hood and Blue Cow in the Playground – Early Years

These stories are interactive in nature stimulating an interest for younger pupils. The words are read to pupils meaning that younger pupils can use them easily. Both stories have a geographical aspect which encourages use of geographical concepts and vocabulary.

URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/stories/index2.shtm>

Relevant to the following:

*Used for Early Years pupils*

*...experience a wider environment and become aware of some differences in other times and places.*

## Barnaby Bear (BBC Schools) and OS Mapzone – KS1

The Barnaby Bear activities support many of the strands of the Barnaby Bear work. They relate to the weather, what can be seen at various locations and activities that can be done at those locations.

Mapzone includes many geographical and mapping activities and can be used to support many units of work.

URL: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/barnabybear/>  
and

<http://www.mapzone.co.uk/pagesourfavouriteplaces/gateway.cfm>

Relevant to the following:

*KS1 Knowledge and Understanding of Places, 3a, d and e*

*KS1 QCA Primary Geography Unit 5: Where in the World is Barnaby Bear?*

*Section 3 and 4: What will it be like when Barnaby is there?  
and How did Barnaby travel to these places?*

In planning lessons in geography, you will probably start with the National Curriculum statements or learning objectives, and the DfES/QCA schemes of work, and you can then look for opportunities where ICT could help to fulfil those objectives. ICT can be particularly useful in geography, because it helps to demonstrate situations which may be difficult to visualise. For instance, animations may help pupils to understand complicated concepts such as the water cycle. Sound can be used to read text which younger pupils may have found an obstacle. Videos can bring a locality or geographical event alive.



A Year 2 class were starting a series of activities with Barnaby Bear. They looked at Barnaby's Photo Album to give them ideas for their own collection. In the following lessons they then looked at Barnaby's Day Trip to Paris and discussed what he needed to take with him and how he travelled. They noticed the similarities and differences between their home and Paris. This provided a format for reports on their own Barnaby Bear visits. Later in their work they submitted some of their favourite places to the Mapzone Favourite Places section. Their teacher helped them to enter their data and add pictures.

The interactive nature of many web-based geography resources means that they are lively and captivating, making learning a pleasure. Frequently, activities give feedback on the pupil's progress. They may even give a chance for pupils to correct errors. Some activities seem like games and yet have clear geographical objectives. For some activities, pupils would be best working in pairs or groups, some suit individual work, and others are suitable for class discussion. If the discussion is the most important part of an activity, an interactive whiteboard and/or digital projector means that all pupils can have equal access to the experience. ICT can be used just as effectively in a plenary session where it can be used to 'model' what children/pupils have been engaged in, allowing them to explain what they have learned and how they worked out their answers.

The role of the teacher, or a teaching assistant, is paramount in raising standards in geography, as in all subjects. As both a tool and a resource, ICT can enhance learning by helping teachers to demonstrate, explain and question, stimulate discussion and invite interpretations of what is displayed.

Early Years pupils worked with a Nursery Nurse listening to the story of Red Riding Hood. They had a worksheet with pictures of different locations. As they saw these locations in the story they ticked them.

Whilst watching and listening to the stories, the children were encouraged to discuss where Red Riding Hood was and what it was like there. Questions included:

*Have you been in a wood? What did you see there?  
How do you get to your grandma's house?*

The Blue Cow in the Playground story was also used in a similar way.

The National Curriculum from Reception to Year 6 makes specific reference to how ICT can be used to support teaching and motivate children's learning. Schools do not need to buy a large amount of software to support the teaching and learning of geography. What they do need to do is make sure that they have a range of targeted applications available that can be used by different year groups as part of the geography lesson.

Care should be taken that the level of ICT should not be so high as to prevent learning in geography. The ICT should support the geography learning, not be the learning objective in itself. Whilst it is not statutory at Key Stage 1 to use ICT, it is clear that pupils will learn from and enjoy activities which incorporate use of ICT. In Key Stage 2 there is a statutory requirement for pupils to use ICT 'to help in geographical investigations'. As with any resources on the web, you will need to familiarise yourself with the content in order to gain the full benefits from their use.

Some children will benefit from using the computer to practise and consolidate their geographical knowledge and understanding and this can usefully be done during a break time, after school or at home. Use of ICT during the daily lesson should focus on modelling geographical concepts and strategies for the whole class or smaller groups and should aim to raise standards in geography.

You can view all of the web-based resources online at:

[www.ictadvice.org.uk/webbasedresources](http://www.ictadvice.org.uk/webbasedresources)

## Snaith School's 'Beside the Seaside' – KS1

The many activities in this section of the site support work in both history and geography. Carefully constructed, they motivate pupils in their geographical work. Activities include map work, what people do at the seaside and holidays abroad.

URL: <http://home.freeuk.net/elloughton13/seaconte.htm>

Relevant to the following:

*KS1 Geographical Enquiry and Skills, 2a*

*QCA Primary Geography Unit 4: Going to the Seaside*

*Section 2: What is the seaside like? Why do we go there?*

*Section 3: How is the seaside different from our locality?*

*Section 5: Where else in the world can we have a seaside holiday?*



Various sections of this website were used by a Year 2 teacher to support the 'Going to the seaside' unit. They were planned into the various weeks of the unit of work.

The seaside towns section was used to discuss what a seaside was, how it was on the coast, and to relate it to their own locality. Pupils then explored the various seascides, and added their own information if they had visited the place. As a group they filled in an enlarged version of the impression sheet from this web page.

Pupils built their own ideal seaside experience using the DIY Seaside Kit, arranging the beach items to make an appropriate scene.

Using Dream Holiday, pupils looked at holidays abroad. After investigating and discussing the various locations, the pupils selected one to write about. They typed a few words about the location in the box provided. The supporting vocabulary at the bottom of the screen was pointed out to the pupils.





## Environmental Agency Kids Page – KS2

Although the pupils are using the 'K-zone' section of this site, there are other useful sections for teachers. The pupils' activities are lively and carefully related to environmental issues of interest to primary pupils.

URL: <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/>

Relevant to the following:

*KS2 ...environmental change and sustainable development, 5a*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 8: Improving the environment*

*Section 4: What is this place like and why? How can it be improved?*

A Year 4 teacher asked pupils to explore the Kids section of this website. They looked in the K-zone, Animations and Games sections, investigating the themes of air pollution, litter and recycling. This fitted in well with the 'Improving the Environment' topic.

The teacher used the Pressure Point section to supplement information for this unit. The teacher also used the drop-down section list to search for any regional information which might be of relevance to this unit.

The animations were discussed at the end of the lesson to see if pupils had got the point, as the website often leaves the pupils to work this out themselves. Most pupils understood that travelling by car to escape the roadside air pollution was not a satisfactory solution!

In a later session pupils used the What's in your Backyard? database to find out about flooding, river quality and landfill sites in their area.

## Musical Instruments of the World: South Asia – KS2

This site covers musical instruments from round the world. Although it was not devised for primary school pupils, the added interest of sound makes it well worth using.

URL: <http://www.eyeneer.com/World/Sa/Instruments/>

Relevant to the following:

*KS2 Localities, 6b*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 10: A village in India*

*Section 8: What are the main similarities and differences between our locality and Chebakolli?*

Tambura  
(INDIA)



This resource for UKS2 was created by the UKS2 team at...

Pupils from a Year 4 class worked in small groups to investigate musical instruments from India. They listened to the sounds and drew pictures of the various instruments.

The teacher checked beforehand how the school's computer set-up would allow the pupils to play the sounds.

When a group of visiting musicians played Indian instruments for the year group, pupils already had some idea of what to expect. They were better prepared for the experience than they would otherwise have been.

## Mapzone - KS2

This site is owned by the Ordnance Survey.

Although the Flag Game teaches flags, its main point is to teach the location, shape and name of the countries. There are many more aspects of the site that would fit into other units of work.

URL: <http://www.mapzone.co.uk/>

Mapzone's Games Section

<http://www.mapzone.co.uk/pages/games/gateway.cfm>

Relevant to the following:

*KS1 & 2 National Curriculum requirements for map skills and knowledge and understanding of places, in particular KS2 2c*

*Those QCA schemes which are general research topics and include the use of maps*



## Graphic Maps, GeoResources and World Factbook 2002 (CIA) - KS1 & 2

Teachers can use these sites to access maps, flags and information for any geography or history topic. The free clipart section of the Graphic Maps site can be freely used, but not the World Atlas section materials. The outline maps on the Graphic Maps free clipart site are particularly useful.

The World Factbook 2002 CIA site is comprehensive and easy to access (and it really is the Central Intelligence Agency!).

URL: <http://www.graphicmaps.com/clipart.htm> and <http://www.georesources.co.uk/outlinemaps.htm>

and <http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>

Relevant to the following:

*Used as a resource for teachers*

*KS2 Geographical Enquiry and Skills, 2f*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 24: Passport to the world*

*Section 5: How can we find out about places?*



Year 5 pupils used the data on the World Atlas section of the Graphic Maps site to find information about other countries to support their work in Unit 24 on their 'adopted city' and its country. Pupils entered this data into a database prepared by the teacher. (You can also use this site to find information for the location quiz in the Unit's 'How can we find out about places?' section.)

At the end of the Tocuaro unit, a Year 2 teacher loaded a map of Mexico onto an interactive whiteboard. The outline map, obtained from the internet, had already been partly annotated. The class then worked as a group to add information to the map using the various annotating features of the whiteboard.

## Staffordshire School Weather Data Site and Weather Station - KS2

These two sites support a study of the weather by pupils in Key Stage 2. Both explain the different features of the weather and how they are measured. The Staffordshire site also explains in detail how to set up a weather station. This site also has links to sites which give weather data for around the world.

URL: <http://www.amingtonheath.staffs.sch.uk/intro.html> and <http://www.sutton.lincs.sch.uk/>

Relevant to the following:

*KS2 Geographical enquiry and skills, 2b, Knowledge and understanding of places, 3d (included in all locality studies)*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 7: Weather around the world*

*Section 2: Where are hot and cold places located on the world map?*

*Section 6: What will the weather be like? How will it affect what we do?*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 15: The Mountain environment*

*Section 3: How does the weather compare in each of these places?*

A Year 5 teacher used various activities in the Games section of this site to reinforce basic mapping skills. The Map Symbol Flashcard activity was used to give practice in OS map symbols. The European Flag Game and the Map Splat Europe activities were used in conjunction with QCA Unit 18, Connecting to the World, to learn the names and locations of European countries.

Some pupils enjoyed repeating the games several times to try to improve their scores.



## Friends of the Earth, Transport - KS2

This site is written from a particular viewpoint, which is made clear by the organisation's name. It is supported with carefully presented data and covers all the main issues concerning transport.

URL: <http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/transport/>

Relevant to the following:

*KS2 Themes, 6e*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 20:*

*Local Traffic - an environmental issue*

*Section 1: What are the issues involved in constructing the bypass?*



A Year 3 class used these sites to find out which places were hot and which were cold. They recorded their findings by writing the temperatures on a blank map of the world.

A Year 6 class used their school weather station to produce weather data from their own location. They followed the instructions for gathering weather data on the Staffordshire site. Pupils practised reading instruments by using the Quiz page. They then found the weather data for each mountain environment which they were researching. For this they used the links from the same site. This data was then entered onto a spreadsheet and graphed to help pupils interpret what they had discovered.



## The Visible Earth from NASA and Dundee Satellite Receiving Station - KS2

The satellite images from the NASA website are sorted in a variety of ways to make it easy to find suitable resources. You can look under categories such as Atmosphere, Land Surface and Locations. There is also a search facility which helps to find specific images for particular topics. The most interesting current news-type items are also highlighted on the home page. There is a clear explanation of each image and many images are annotated.

The Dundee site requires the user to register. This is worthwhile as it gives up-to-date images and can provide a sequence of images, for instance a series to show the moving clouds.

It also provides excellent resources to incorporate into lessons.

URL: <http://visibleearth.nasa.gov/> and <http://www.sat.dundee.ac.uk/>

Relevant to the following:

*KS2 Geographical Enquiry and Skills, 2d*

*Supports any investigation including:*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 7: Weather round the world and  
KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 16: What's in the news?*

*Section 4: What's in the Local, National or International news today?  
Where are these places? What is happening there?*

## Investigating Rivers and The River Trent - KS2

There may be opportunities to select different sites to enable differentiation in a topic. This is possible in the study of rivers described.

URL: <http://www.naturegrid.org.uk/rivers/index.html>  
and  
<http://www.sln.org.uk/trentweb/>

Relevant to the following:

*KS1 & 2 Geographical Enquiry and Skills, 2a*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 14:  
Investigating Rivers*

*Section 1: Where does water come from?*

*Section 4: What is this river like? How does it affect the landscape? How is it changing and why?*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 11: Water  
Section 2: How does water get to where it is needed?*

After looking at the virtual tour of the River Stour on the Investigating Rivers site, Year 6 pupils were asked to produce their own description of the river, source to mouth. They word processed their work, copying and pasting pictures from the maps and photographs section of the site. In a later lesson pupils used the water cycle simulation to label a blank diagram worksheet. They used the information from the site to write definitions of each stage of the water cycle.

One group of pupils worked with a learning assistant to investigate rivers using The River Trent site. They used the Take a Trip option and listed all of the parts of a river they saw. The learning assistant gave them clues to what to look at to find information:

*Look at the picture. How wide is the river?*

*The red arrow shows you where the picture was taken.*

In preparation for looking into the building of a bypass in their local area, Year 5 pupils used this site to familiarise themselves with some of the questions they might ask. The teacher pointed out that this website had been constructed by people with a different point of view. Although they would be trying to be objective, they held certain ideas that not everybody might agree with.

Pupils devised a checklist of points to think about during the project. The teacher asked:

*What are the disadvantages of building more roads? What are the possible alternatives to building more roads?*

The pupils used maps which they found on other websites to look at the location of the development and to see what areas would be affected by the development.





Dundee Satellite Receiving Station, Dundee University, U.K. maintains an up-to-date archive of images from NOAA satellites. Users and those who prefer satellite imagery from governmental satellites according to which each are available. To view the images please complete the on-line registration form. Registration is free and the images are free.

Information about us: ?  
 Register for this service:   
 Register for this service:

Year 4 pupils working on 'Weather Round the World' looked at a series of satellite images. They observed the cloud cover and recorded their findings on a series of outline maps of the area. In this case they used images of Europe.

Pupils working in Year 6 on the 'What's in the news?' topic used this site to follow up any extreme weather events. They looked at the area concerned at the time of the event and searched for evidence. They printed out their findings and included it with their work.

## FreeFoto.com and Google Images - KS1 & 2

The FreeFoto searchable database of images is available for use according to the restrictions described on the site. Users can browse the categories or search for a particular related word. The images are very clear. The Image search on Google is also useful for teachers.

URL: <http://www.freefoto.com/index.jsp>  
 and  
<http://images.google.com/>

These are a resource for teachers and pupils of both key stages.

## Canon Webview World - KS2

This site indexes webcams round the world, but particularly in Japan. Strongly recommended is the Hudson River webcam, where the user can take control of the camera. Warning - live webcams don't always show what you expect them to!

This site could be used in the study of many topics such as contrasting localities, weather, environmental studies, river or mountain studies.

URL: <http://www.x-zone.canon.co.jp/WebViewE/webcam/index.htm>

Relevant to the following:

*KS2 Geographical Enquiry and Skills, 1a, b and c*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 24: Passport to the world and KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 23: Investigating coasts*



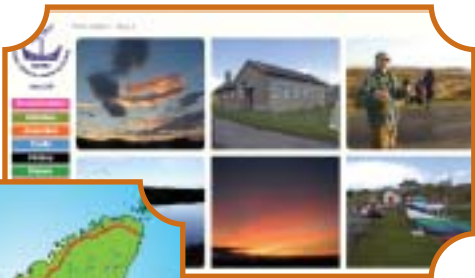
A geography co-ordinator produced a hyperlinked map to show the route the pupils would take when they went on a day trip. The images were gathered from various sources. Pupils explored the map before they went and took a print-out of the map with them so they could record their observations.

By using these views around the world pupils could find out where it is day and where it is night. They could also look into the weather in different countries.

Pupils in a Year 3 class were working on the 'Passport to the World' unit. They searched for webcams showing places they had found out about in their work. They looked up places their food had come from, places they had been on holiday to and places they had received postcards from. They made notes about these places.

Pupils in a Year 5 class were working on the 'Investigating Coasts' unit. They used webcams to find out about coastal locations and to investigate what people did at their chosen resorts. They used the information they found in the images to supplement their resort brochures.





## Isle of Coll and Tony Oliver's website - KS1

The Isle of Coll site has excellent images which fit in well with a geographical study. They cover many aspects of a locality study and will promote meaningful discussions.

Tony Oliver works on the Isle of Coll and has produced an excellent interactive map to support his own website. Although not intended for school use, its careful construction will help pupils in particular to understand the communications on the Isle of Coll.

URL: <http://www.isleofcoll.org/> and <http://www.tonyoliver.co.uk/>

Relevant to the following:

*KS1 Geographical Enquiry and Skills, 2d*

*KS1 QCA Primary Geography Unit 3: An Island Home*

*All Sections*

## Multimap, Map24 and OS Old Maps - KS1 & 2

Teachers in all key stages use these sources to get maps and aerial photographs to support geography and history. Whatever contrasting UK locality is studied, both these sites help to provide resources. Map24 can be used to zoom in and out quickly using a special slider which helps to give an idea of scale. Maps of any locality in the 1880s can be got from the OS Old Maps site and used for comparison.

URL: <http://www.multimap.com/>

and

<http://www.map24.co.uk/>

and

<http://www.oldmaps.co.uk/gazetteer.htm>

Relevant to the following:

*These can be used as a resource for teachers, to support the study of rivers, environmental issues, land use and settlements.*

*KS2 Geographical Enquiry and Skills, 2c and d*

*They could help to support most units, but in particular:*

*KS1 QCA Unit 1: Around our School – the local area*

*KS2 QCA Unit 6: Investigating our local area*

*KS2 QCA Primary Geography Unit 13 A: Contrasting UK locality*

A Year 1 teacher used Multimap to get maps of the local area. Pupils were able to discuss what the lines and colours on the map meant, and to see their own school and the roads around it. They used this to record their own local study observations throughout the unit.

A Year 3 teacher showed her pupils how to enter the postcode of the school on the Multimap Map page and get a map of the local area. She then demonstrated how to switch between the map and the aerial photograph. Pupils made notes about the land use in the area, switching between map and aerial view to help them understand what they were seeing.

A Year 2 teacher used these and other sites to gain resources to put together a simple presentation for her class. It gave more specific details about life on a Scottish Island to support the facts gleaned from Mairi Hedderwick's book.

Using the teacher's presentation, children filled in a grid worksheet to record details of transport on Coll and what people did for a living. They had previously filled this in for their own location.

In another session, and with help from the teacher and a learning assistant, the pupils investigated the splendid interactive map on Tony Oliver's site. They zoomed in, looked at the ferry routes and discussed the key by using the tabs at the side of the map. They added information they discovered to their large display map on the classroom wall.



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