

a different view

a manifesto from the Geographical Association



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Wish you were here! (key stages 2, 3, 4 and 5)



What the photos say

These images (West Vigne Glacier, Northern Areas, Pakistan; Stromboli, Aeolian Islands; and Niagara Falls) give us a fantastic opportunity to introduce our students to a deep exploration of environments and places. They are so rich and thought-provoking that we can use them not only to investigate the more obvious physical processes and mechanisms of change, but also to look beyond the pictures and explore their interconnections with other places and times, and with human activities.

We can use them to introduce topics, and again in plenaries. We can also revisit them throughout a unit of study; a 'golden thread' running through a topic, allowing us to investigate a range of geographical concepts, from place and scale to physical and human processes and environmental interactions. Children can observe, question and use both their personal experiences and geographical imaginations.

Lesson idea

Context: The images could be used in a study of human and physical processes. Used creatively, they can reinvigorate 'crusty old favourites' like *volcanoes* and *rivers*, making them relevant to today's world and geographical thinking. Try using the waterfall image at the start of a study of rivers, or the glacier image to introduce a rivers topic, to emphasise the importance of process and change. These ideas can be used right through primary and secondary – just expect varying depths of exploration.

Other sources

- Internet access, PC, speakers, digital projector and board
- Hard copies of image (small and poster size)
- Paper and pens

Suggested activities

Choose an image. To start a unit of physical processes and environmental change, ask students to sit in silence, eyes closed, and listen to the sound of a volcanic eruption/river rushing/glacier creaking (see e.g. www.soundsnap.com, www.partnersinrhyme.com, <http://amillionkeys.com/glacial-sounds>, <http://www.antarctica2000.net/sounds/other.html>, <http://www.audiosparx.com/>). Ask them to open their eyes and observe the appropriate image (on whiteboard) while listening. Give them thinking time and then get their personal response and questions about the image and sound through discussion.

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Ask students where this place might be and to imagine the journey to get there and what it might feel like to be there. You could put an X on the image to mark the spot where you want them to 'be'. Ask them what they see, taste and hear; what they do and wear. Students could then share their thoughts with a partner or write a postcard.

Top tip: Always ask if anyone has been to this or a similar place, you may find a resident expert and a great opportunity for peer teaching and using personal experience!

You could ask students to formulate questions about the image, then use these in an opening Q & A session and to plan follow-up lessons. They could annotate a copy of the image with these questions. These could be displayed and 'ticked off' as students find the answers in lessons.

Ask students to use Google Earth to find the place (or a similar one) in the image and then plan a journey between it and their home, or create a sequence of five saved images that starts with a satellite image, then zooms in and ends with a landscape (like the opening credits in 'Match of the Day'!)

Keep a poster version of the image on the wall and ask students to place post-its with explanations or questions onto appropriate areas of the poster to help them show what they know and what they need to know. You could circle key areas of the image (crater, slope, steam, peak, slope, moraine) and ask groups of students to research, describe and explain what is happening in one of the circles. Groups could then mix and explain their circles to each other and discuss how they might be linked. Students could mime, role play or dramatise the processes.

Give students coloured pens and blank paper and ask them to recreate the image as a 'wordscape' using appropriate geographical vocabulary and colours. This could also be done with tracing paper and overlaid on the image.

Ask students to place humans, and the impacts of human activity, in the image. They could use PowerPoint or similar to manipulate the image and present their slide to the class. You could give them a checklist of vocabulary and ideas to aid their thinking: climate change, tourism, water supply, energy, skiing, resources, uncontrolled development, population growth ...

Towards the end of the unit, ask students to sketch a future version of the landscape in the image to show how it might change. You could allocate scenarios, e.g. a warmer world, continued erosion, post-eruption, possible future, likely future, preferred future... To end the unit you could ask students to annotate a copy of the image, showing their understanding of the landforms and processes, and why the place is important. This could then be compared to earlier annotations and so help assess progress.

Curriculum opportunities

Personal, learning and thinking skills: Students will apply and develop these as they explore the images and formulate their own questions and responses.

Sustainable development and citizenship: In exploring the potential impacts of humans on these places and the links between these places and our/their lives, students will build a greater understanding of sustainable developments and their role as global citizens.

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