

Textbooks: everyone's guilty pleasure

Textbook Ten

'We should be clear that we have no doubts that textbooks have a key place in teaching and learning'

Widdowson and Lambert, Secondary Geography Handbook, GA

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1. Localise case studies. Textbook used for planning.

Example using Geog.1: Football stadium enquiry

Use the textbook activities but adapt the resources. Textbook provides a list of resources needed, local OS map (Anquet 1:25,000 single sheets available of local area £30ish www.anquet.co.uk), use the local paper for gathering opinions and ideas about local news stories (www.portsmouth.co.uk/frattonlatest/Pompey-announce-new-stadium-plan.5091447.jp). Textbook example can then be compared with local example. Are there similar issues? What is different? What was the approach used?

Is the textbook correct for our local area?

geography@work: Do you really know where you live?, pp 8–9 'Why do settlements change?'

The spread explores one village and how it has changed. Challenge pupils to spot evidence of change around their local community. What does change look like? How can change be classified? How can we present evidence of change?

Notes:

2. Twitter to make case studies. 'Living Geography'

GCSE Tropical Rainforest example – Tomorrow's Geography

Stephen Fry comments on Twitter (www.twitter.com): 'Borneo is so gorgeous. But what a pity the monoculture of palm oil blights so much of the countryside. X'

What on earth does he mean? Pupils then use the textbook to explain the comment. Is there any other information needed? Use Enquiry Process.

Pupils create 'Tweets' in order to reply to Stephen. They must contain case study information and facts.

Notes:

3. Transforming text

geography@work: Is your dream holiday a nightmare in reality?, pp 16–19 'Should you take coral home from a diving holiday?'

- Use Google Maps to locate and explore coral reef destinations using map c in the textbook.
- Using CIA Factbook or Atlas Development Information, compare three countries. Why might they encourage tourism?
- Transform the text into a story. Create a comic strip using images from the CD-ROM and GoogleMaps. Split into before, during and after. What are the features of a comic strip: get over the message in a few words. Pupils must select good information but also prioritise information. (Comic Life (<http://plasq.com/comiclife>), Comic Brush (www.comicbrush.com), Comic Touch)

Notes:

4. Supporting

geography@work: Why does the weather change?, pp 26–27 ‘Why does weather change over short distances?’

Micro-climate enquiry using school grounds. Testing a hypothesis: ‘Priory School will show the same pattern as Sir John Nelthorpe School’. Textbook provides a guide for pupils to follow; a ready made template.

How can we get the same information for our school? What will we need? Use the enquiry process to design and carry out the fieldwork. ‘I want an exact copy of this page for our school.’ Pupils use the textbook as a reference resource.

Multi-sensory fieldwork. Using map a, is the hypothesis true or false? Allowing pupils to use their own knowledge. Using the data in table b, can pupils predict the pattern at Priory School?

Notes:

5. Stretching

geography@work: Why are parts of the world rich and parts of the world poor?, pp 40–43 ‘Can we carry on developing forever?’, Challenge 4

Challenge pupils to find out what it is like to reduce their own impact on the world. How easy is it? Pupils explore sustainability through the textbook activities. Developed into the Carbon Footprint Challenge.

- Pupils use Challenge 4 to calculate their carbon footprint
- Research enquiry: ‘How can I reduce my impact?’
- Create an eco-pledge: get the students to commit to reducing their carbon footprint. For example, turning off electrical equipment instead of leaving it on standby or taking fewer baths.
- Keep a weblog or diary. How easy was the experience?
- Pupils apply this knowledge to the textbook case study

Notes:

6. Spotting bias and writing/presenting an alternative point of view. Prove It!

geography@work: Why do humans migrate? Is the grass always greener?, pp 14–17
'Why do Mexicans want to migrate to the USA?'

Two strategies linked to PLTS. Learning objective is to explore information, identify bias and to use data to make conclusions.

Prove it!: Pupils investigate the information presented in the textbook. What is the general feel – positive or negative? Why has the information been selected? Pupils identify the claims and search for evidence that supports the claim from the World Bank, CIA Factbook, Atlases etc. Is there a different point of view available? What message does the photograph give? Why? Pupils get used to exploring information and questioning facts.

Claim	Positive or Negative about Mexicans migrating to the USA? Prove it!	My extra information
The average American earns eight times more money than the average Mexican each year.		
Photo b	Photo suggests that US border police use force to stop Mexicans crossing the border. Mexican illegal immigration is a bad thing.	www.newser.com/archive-us-news/1G1-162490255/border-patrol-agent-who-shot-illegal-entrant-charged-with-murder.html

With older textbooks the change in data can be explored and reliability questioned. For example, is Mexico developing? (Give evidence from old Atlas / Connections and compare with current.) Why isn't this situation getting better?

Strategy also develops pupils' use of internet searching to find specific information.

Notes:

7. Look for updated information

geography@work: How Sustainable is our coastline? Will we be ready for a rise in sea level?, pp 16–19 'How do coastal processes affect people? Is it all nature's fault?'

- Use source i to update the case study. For example visit <http://gowersos.keyframe.net>. Has Gower SoS been successful? Can we find a government response?
- Use news websites to update Skipsea information. Investigate what has been done about the situation.
- Class could create a news story to present: 'Gower Revisited'.

Notes:

8. Creating a sense of place using GoogleMaps

geography@work: How Sustainable is our coastline? Will we be ready for a rise in sea level?, pp 8–11 'Do people use Britain's coastline sustainably?'

Textbooks have limited space to fully develop a sense of place. For example, the Pembrokeshire Coast National Park.

- Challenge 2: pupils can use the photo, video, terrain and satellite layers of Google Maps to explore the area.
- The video of the area plus photos of St Govan's Head can be used to support the textbook activity.
- Use the textbook to provide a contrasting area linked to local fieldwork. Landforms and OS maps used in the textbook can be used to provide information. Pupils use their own geographical imaginations and knowledge to compare their local area with Pembrokeshire.

Notes:

9. So what?

geography@work: Why do humans migrate? Is the grass always greener?, pp 14–17
'Why do Mexicans want to migrate to the USA?'

So what?: Pupils use data presented in a textbook to reach conclusions. This is a good strategy for developing evaluation and analysis. Also assists pupils to interpret data. Pupils have to use supplementary data. Textbook supplies information.

Development Indicator	Mexico	USA	So what? Use connectives ('because', 'so', therefore). Be specific about the group of people you are referring to.
Infant Mortality Rate (www.worldbank.org)	22/1000 live births	6/1000 live births	More babies die in Mexico so health care facilities may be poor. This may be because there is a high level of unemployment so less money is collected in tax. Mexicans want to migrate to the USA to have a better chance of their future families surviving.
Infant Mortality Rate (www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook)	18/1000 live births	6/1000 live births	

Notes:

10. Textbook Transformation

Key Geography: New Connections (2001), pp 72–73 'Why does the Antarctic need protecting?'

- Starter: when was this textbook published? Get pupils to find the publication information. What issues are there? How reliable is the information contained on pages 72–73?
- Geography Orders challenge pupils to assess the reliability of information. Media literacy: when were books published?
- Then design an enquiry in order to:
 - write a new textbook page
 - produce a blog or podcast update
 - give a progress report.
- What information do we need? Where can we find it?
- Use resources like www.discoveringantarctica.org.uk to allow pupils to update the textbook.
- Get pupils to keep a scrapbook (either virtual or real) of Antarctica New Stories for homework. What information supports the textbook? Is there any information that contradicts the textbook?

Notes: