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From: Geographical Association, Sheffield
Date: 3 November 2011
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Primary Geography Teaching Boosted by Famous Champions

Anita Ganeri, author of the *Horrible Geography* book series, and Alastair Humphreys, the British adventurer and author, are among the latest 16 Geography Champions appointed by the Geographical Association to promote quality geography in primary schools. Professor Iain Stewart, presenter of the BBC series *How the Earth Made Us*, has also been appointed as an honorary Champion.

They make up a total of 50 Champions which include a mix of teachers, head teachers, Local Authority advisors, and experts from Higher Education and NGOs. The Geography Champions are working with rapidly growing, local networks of more than 1500 teachers to enthuse pupils in learning about the world we live in and aiming to raise achievement in this 21st century subject.

Newly appointed Champion Alastair Humphreys:

It is a pleasure to act as a Geography Champion. If I can play a part in bringing geography to life for young people I will be delighted. This spring I conducted a live Twitter interview from near the magnetic North Pole with a school in Glasgow: that's my vision of modern Geography!

Primary education is in a period of exciting change and development following the recent curriculum reviews. While the curriculum has yet to be changed by the new coalition government it is refreshing to see teachers drawing on their own expertise and taking ownership of what they refer to as 'our curriculum'.

The GA supports teachers developing their own curriculum and believes that geography forms an essential part of any primary curriculum. It helps children learn about the rapidly changing, interdependent world we live in and how they fit in. Geography explains connections between local and global aspects of our everyday lives; asks difficult questions about patterns of inequality; underpins sustainability and evokes a sense of wonder.

Geography has so much to offer young people but there still many teachers who would like to feel more confident about teaching geography. This is why the work of the Geography Champions is vital for helping teachers develop their knowledge and passion for the subject. The project has received excellent feedback and is, most importantly, beginning to impact positively on pupils in the classroom.

Chief Executive at the GA, Professor David Lambert says:

Geography education is very relevant to a 21st century curriculum as it draws on the pedagogy of everyday experiences and local contexts yet demands knowledge and understanding of a wider, interconnected world. We intend to do all we can to support teachers in providing quality geographical experiences for all learners.

Ends

Notes to Editors

For further information contact Paula Owens, GA Curriculum Development Leader (Primary), email powens@geography.org.uk, phone 01795 511246.

Further information is available at www.geography.org.uk/champs

For GA or Geography Champions logos contact agreaves@geography.org.uk.

The *Horrible Geography* series, written by Anita Ganeri, is published by Scholastic Ltd.

The Geographical Association

The Geographical Association (GA) is a subject association with a mission to further the teaching of geography and to communicate the value of learning geography for all. The GA was founded in 1893 and has around 6,000 memberships including teachers in primary and secondary schools and further education, academic geographers, universities and teacher educators and trainers. For more information visit www.geography.org.uk

The Action Plan for Geography

The Geography Champions scheme is part of the Action Plan for Geography (APG). The APG began as a two-year programme of support and development for school geography led jointly and equally by the Geographical Association and the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers). Funding for a further three years was announced in April 2008. The APG's goal is:

To provide everyone - opinion formers, policy makers, parents and pupils - with a clear vision of geography as a relevant, powerful 21st century subject; and to equip teachers with the professional skills and support they need so that pupils enjoy and succeed in geography.