

## GA Awards 2010

The GA Awards are given for materials associated with geography in schools and colleges which are considered to make a significant contribution to geographical education and professional development. This year's Awards go to:

### Gold

**Living Geography**  
**Edited by David Mitchell**  
**Chris Kington Publishing, 2009**

*Living Geography* explains clearly the rationale behind the concept of 'living geography' and the significance of its approach for teachers. The ideas in the book are rooted in insights gained from research, from innovative curriculum development projects and from practice. Complex ideas are presented clearly, and practitioners will welcome the detailed examples of how the ideas have been developed in local contexts, both in the classroom and in the field.

Accompanying the book is a CD which includes pdf files of the text as well as PowerPoint presentations and links to the Urban Earth project.

This book stimulates thinking about what kind of geographical education young people growing up in the twenty-first century need, and provides a vision of a challenging, exciting, involving and relevant subject. *Living Geography* is an excellent resource for teachers' professional development. PGCE students will find it very useful, as will teachers working as a department, or in wider networks, to enhance their curriculum making. The suggestions for further reading in each chapter, together with the excellent bibliography, enable teachers to pursue the ideas further, providing valuable support for those studying for higher degrees. This book takes our thinking about geographical education forward. There should be a copy in every teacher education library and in every geography department.

### Silver

**Coastal Conflicts: A geographical enquiry along the Jurassic Coast**  
**David Weatherly and Anjana Ford**  
**Devon Learning and Development Partnership, 2009**

*Coastal Conflicts* has been given this award for its high quality content, flexibility, relevance and ease of use. It provides primary pupils with engaging and challenging geographical enquiry based on real events and processes. Its content is well suited to the new primary curriculum because it includes cross-curricular links between geography, science, literacy, citizenship and ICT.

*Coastal Conflicts* will help pupils understand the processes at work in coastal erosion and how these create particular landforms. It introduces them to the ways in which humans attempt to manage coastal erosion and the impact this has on the environment. The clear video and computer graphics encourage them to think about how conservationists, home-owners and engineers have to negotiate in order to find sustainable solutions to the effects of coastal erosion. It also introduces them to the story fossils can tell us and what we can learn from them about environments in the past.

The two DVDs include a decision-making exercise on the creation of a sustainable management plan for part of the Devon coast. This software is an excellent resource for introducing pupils to a part of the British coast they may not have visited but which represents many of the processes and issues that are found around our shores. The software also includes detailed, up-to-date and easy to understand background information for teachers and ideas for planning within the primary curriculum.

*Coastal Conflicts* is a rare example of high quality geographical software designed for use in primary schools which involves pupils in real and relevant geographical enquiry.

**Discovering the Arctic**  
**RGS-IBG, 2009**

The judges decided that the *Discovering the Arctic* website ([www.discoveringthearctic.org.uk](http://www.discoveringthearctic.org.uk)), developed by the Royal Geographical Society with IBG in partnership with the British Antarctic Survey and the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Scottish Association for Marine Science, fully deserved the Silver Award in recognition of its range of high quality resources and learning activities.

Students can use the rich array of up-to-date resources and learning activities on their own, in pairs or in group work. The stunning images, video and sound recordings, maps, documents, games, activities and web links will encourage them to explore and think more deeply about the issues and challenges facing this important region, its peoples and wildlife.

Many of the resources can be used on the interactive whiteboard allowing the teacher to set up planned learning from the front of the classroom. All the material is current and relevant, and the web links provide ideas and opportunities for further research. The recordings of facts and opinions from different indigenous peoples who inhabit the area are of particular value.

**GCSE Geography OCR A Students' Book**  
**Edited by John Widdowson**  
**Oxford University Press, 2009**

While books written for many of the GCSE specifications focus on course content and 'training' for examination, this book, written for the innovative OCR A specification, does much more. The fact that the specification itself is radically different in terms of content and approach inevitably means the book starts with an advantage, one that allows it to cover themes that are fresh, exciting and relevant and provides the scope to include completely new content and resources.

One excellent aspect of the book is how it encourages students to make connections: between one theme and another; between the themes and their own experiences; between their everyday choices and local and global implications of these choices. Students are invited to make these connections through discussion, through their own geographical enquiries, and through some original activities. There are suggestions for investigating geographical issues in a range of refreshingly diverse ways.

The book's structure and presentation encourage an enquiry approach. Each section is introduced with some key questions, while activities require students to study the wide range of secondary data – maps, adverts, photographs, statistics and extracts from newspaper and books. Teachers are actively encouraged to adapt the resources and ideas presented to suit their own local contexts.

This textbook helps students to make sense of their world and to understand current issues that affect their lives. As well as 'covering' the syllabus and the demands of assessment, this book is educational in that it stimulates, excites and informs. It introduces young people to geographical ways of thinking which could transform the way they see and understand the world long after they have been assessed for the course.

**Rainforests iPoster**  
**Catherine Slade**  
**BBC Active, 2009**

The *Rainforests iPoster* received the Silver Award in recognition of the high quality resources for both teacher planning and pupil research.

The teacher's area provides information about the contents of the software as well as suggesting a logical order in which to approach the topic. The background information is extremely informative and provides teachers with knowledge about all the issues addressed. The project information shows how the package links with the geography national curriculum and also with QCA schemes of work.

[www.geography.org.uk/gaawards](http://www.geography.org.uk/gaawards)

Planning information is provided in detail. For example, from a selected 'hot spot' there are suggestions about how class discussion can be led, video material that will provide interest that will stimulate debate and relevant pupil activities. Links to other areas are suggested so that the topic can also be covered in a cross-curricular manner.

The pupil materials include photographs, videos, maps and interactive activities. The videos are of high quality, and are well scripted and very informative. The package can be loaded on to individual pupil computers and thus can be used by either individuals or small groups.

This is a well thought-out package that deals with a very important world issue. It has strong cross-curricular links and contains excellent material for pupils to view and interact with. It also provides quality planning aids for the teacher.

## **Highly Commended**

### **Climate Through Time – Our rocks reveal the story of change**

**Elaine Johnston, David Bailey, Alan Smith, Mark Cooper and Brian McConnell  
British Geological Survey, 2009**

The judges were most impressed by the free *Climate Through Time* poster and resources produced by the British Geological Survey (BGS). Schools can order up to five maps free of charge, which enables the teacher to set up a range of activities and investigations in the classroom. The accompanying downloadable, free web resources, available at [www.bgs.ac.uk/climatethroughtime](http://www.bgs.ac.uk/climatethroughtime), can provide stand-alone lessons and/or sequences of activities to explore the mysteries of the past revealed in the stories of rocks.

The judges felt that the wealth of information about rocks and the story of climate change was arranged in a most appealing way. The central map shows the rocks of Britain and Ireland grouped and coloured according to the environment under which they were formed. Coloured ovals surrounding the map provide an easy to follow key to past environments and there is an illustration of a modern-day rock-forming environment alongside a picture of a typical rock-type laid down under past environmental conditions. The accompanying tables, images and text all combine well to explain how evidence for past climates – including the extreme conditions linked to mass extinctions – can be found in the rocks around us. Students can make discoveries and explore links guided by the teacher and the additional downloadable resources. A must for all rock detectives.