In the company of pigeons; meaningful geographical connections.
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Welcome to the #pigeongeography workshop

1. Introductions
2. Why #pigeongeography? Exploring the connection between geography and pigeons
3. Three geographical activities in the company of pigeons –
4. Share a few other activities
Recording responses to the workshop

- What possibilities has this workshop for geographical thinking?

- Doodle words, thoughts, ideas etc. prompted by today

Continuing curriculum conversations
A character...

- Helps to connect children and teachers with their local place.
- Seeks to animate children’s real world encounters/geographic encounters.
- Pigeons offer teachers a way to (re)animate local geography and provide opportunities for lively spirited enquiry.
- Engage people directly with the intricacy of the physical world.
- Helps to develop alternative perspectives and take a different view.
- To develop children’s observation skills, attention to place and help children to look closely and notice clues, signs, symbols, features and patterns.

Turn up the colour of local environments

An approach that may help children to tune into primary geography experiences
• Pigeons have local wisdom – they know places.

• Pigeons know the best place to: stop, for food, to sleep, to avoid and they tend to congregate in places of geographical significance etc.

• They have ‘conquered urban spaces all around the globe’ (Packham, 2013).

• We seek to tap into their knowledge. They are accessible and available all year round.

• A pigeon has local and world knowledge and therefore can be a friend to the primary geographer as they nurture children’s ‘curiosity and fascination about the world and its people’ (DfE, 2013)

• Pigeons are special:
  – They offer such variety in the way they look.
  – They can fly very fast. In fact, some can fly 50 miles per hour!
  – Pigeons also have very strong "homing instincts" that help them find their way back from far away.
  – Pigeons are mysterious, complex and highly intelligent creatures

Why #pigeongeography?
Serious in intent- Playful in execution
Tate- Whitworth and Manchester Museum http://bit.ly/1Swf82O

National Curriculum Aims
The National Curriculum for geography aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop contextual knowledge of the location of globally significant places – both terrestrial and marine – including their defining physical and human characteristics and how these provide a geographical context for understanding the actions of processes

- understand the processes that give rise to key physical and human geographical features of the world, how these are interdependent and how they bring about spatial variation and change over time

- are competent in the geographical skills needed to:
  - collect, analyse and communicate with a range of data gathered through experiences of fieldwork that deepen their understanding of geographical processes
  - interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs and Geographical Information Systems (GIS)
  - communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps, numerical and quantitative skills and writing at length.

(DfE, 2013)

Pigeon Aims
- Working in the company of pigeons can fulfil many aims of National Curriculum Geography:
- development of contextual knowledge of significant places and their characteristics.
- Provide experiences as contexts making sense of human and physical features of a place, human/ non human relationships, interdependence, variation and change
- encourage engagement and curiosity in fieldwork – use sources, and collection, analysis and communication of geographical data.
A place in signs & symbols
Bishop’s Sutton, Hampshire
#Pigeongeography
Helen Clarke & Sharon Witt
Out and about in the company of pigeons
A birds eye view

• What would pigeons see if they flew over this map?

• What are the significant features of this place?

• Where might a pigeon like to stop to:
  – Interact with humans
  – Feed
  – Nest
  – Visit
  – Roost
Out and about in the company of pigeons
A local geographical enquiry

Use the local photograph packs and the maps to help you answer some of these questions:

- Where is this place?
- What is it like?
- What would you see, hear, feel, smell, taste in this place?
- How does this place make you feel?
- What are the human features of this place?
- What are the physical features of this place?
- How did this place get like that?
- How is this place connected to other places?
- How is this place changing?
- What will this place be like in the future?
- How could this place be improved?
Personalising to your place

• Take a local walk around your place; become a pigeon spotter. Where do pigeons ‘hang out’?
• Create your own trail in the company of a pigeon
  – Significant places around the local area
  – Key features
  – Use the photographs to
• Make a mini journal of a pigeon's journey around your place – record colours, textures, sights, route etc.
• Encourage the children to take photographs of pigeons in their back garden, in the town, on holiday etc.- you will soon build a flock of photographs
• Locate on a map where these photographs were taken
Travelling the globe in the company of pigeons

Pigeon puppets
Travelling the globe in the company of pigeons

Activity 2

- Promotes place knowledge
- Teacher supports children’s visualisation of a place
- Taking cognitive, imagined, embodied perspective to developing locational knowledge
- Use your pigeon puppet to explore the globe and introduce geographical terminology
- This is an opportunity to share key information with key stage 2 children and check their understanding of terms such as: Equator, Northern Hemisphere, Southern Hemisphere, the Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circle
Personalising to your practice

• The script can be adapted to meet the age and context for your class.
• The activity can be varied in scale and resources e.g. globe, atlas, floor map.
• Teacher’s role to model and guide the children
• Teacher’s can guide children to think about:
  – What countries are you flying over?
  – What do you see below?
  – The seasons, time zones etc.
  – Where would you like to fly to?
See the world according to a pigeon
Activity 3 – Asking geographical questions

Using the wisdom of pigeons to explore places of geographical significance

What questions might you ask a pigeon?

What aspects of local life would pigeons be experts in?

What local knowledge might pigeons possess?

Gather questions on cut out pigeon shape
They might also know ...

Where do people snack?
What’s the best place for picnic scraps?
Where are the flat open spots, good for ball games?
Where are the warm spots, windy spots etc.?
Where are the sheltered spots?
Where do people play?
Where are the best ledges and vantage points?
What places to avoid?
The possibilities of a Pigeon pal!

• Accompany trips around the school grounds, local area, visits.

• Draw maps of places your pigeon pal and you have visited

• Use maps to record journeys/flight paths

• Take photographs of your pigeon pal in places as a record of journey

• Build a record of fieldwork experiences

• To prompt children to describe fieldwork places to help with:
  – Sequencing journeys
  – Description and vocabulary and collecting data on geographical fieldwork

• Create a story of local place which feature your pigeon pal and their local wisdom
Pigeons and environmental issues

@pigeonair

Flock of racing pigeons equipped with pollution sensor and Twitter account take to the skies in bid to raise awareness of capital’s illegally dirty air
Thank you for engaging in #pigeon geography