

Unit 5 Exploring England

About the unit

In this short unit pupils learn how England fits into the wider context of the UK and the British Isles. They examine their perceptions of England and those of people from other countries. They begin to investigate the geography of England by searching for thematic patterns and contrasts, using different types of maps, *eg weather, relief, settlement, population origins/composition*. Some of these themes are returned to in later units. The unit ends with a decision-making activity of planning a sightseeing trip for a group of tourists.

The unit builds on unit 1 'Making connections'. It is flexible and there is scope to vary the teaching activities so they more closely reflect the location and background of the pupils.

This unit is expected to take 4–7 hours.

Key aspect

Geographical enquiry and skills

Pupils will:

- ask geographical questions
- suggest investigation sequences
- collect/record/present evidence
- analyse evidence and draw conclusions
- use extended geographical vocabulary
- use atlases/globes/maps
- use secondary evidence
- experience decision making

Knowledge and understanding of places

Pupils will:

- locate places and environments
- describe scale contexts
- describe and explain physical and human features

Knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes

Explored through:

- weather and climate
- population distribution and change

Knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development

Not focused on

Expectations

At the end of this unit

most pupils will: know how England relates to the British Isles, the United Kingdom, Great Britain, the EU and the Commonwealth; draw out similarities and differences in the character of places and understand that people have different views about these; begin to understand the importance of location in understanding places; begin to recognise geographical patterns and some physical and human processes; suggest suitable geographical questions, a sequence of investigation and use a range of geographical skills to help them investigate England; use primary and secondary sources of evidence and communicate their findings using appropriate vocabulary

some pupils will not have made so much progress and will: have some knowledge of how England relates to other parts of the British Isles; make simple comparisons between places; describe and make comparisons between some physical and human features of England; demonstrate some place knowledge of the geography of England; use skills and sources of evidence to respond to a range of geographical questions about England, and begin to use appropriate vocabulary to communicate their findings

some pupils will have progressed further and will: place England in a variety of spatial contexts within the British Isles, Europe and beyond; recognise links between places and describe how physical and human processes may lead to similarities and differences between places; give instances of national stereotypes, explore different perceptions of England and compare these with their own; begin to suggest relevant geographical questions about England and to follow a sequence of investigation; select and use appropriate skills and ways of presenting information; select information and sources of evidence for their investigations, suggest plausible conclusions and present their findings both graphically and in writing

Prior learning

It is helpful if pupils have:

- some basic map and atlas skills, *eg can identify symbols, use grid references, use atlas index*
- learnt to work constructively in pairs and groups, and in the field; worked independently
- carried out research using a range of sources

Language for learning

Through the activities in this unit pupils will be able to understand, use and spell correctly words relating to:

- the British Isles, *eg England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Republic of Ireland, Isle of Man, Channel Isles, East Anglia, the South-West, the Midlands, United Kingdom, Great Britain*
- the landscape, *eg administrative boundary, country, region, place name, itinerary, highland, mountain, lowland, plateau*
- the weather, *eg synoptic chart, depression, front, isobar, precipitation, altitude, rain shadow*
- population changes, *eg immigrant, emigrant, migration, invader, settler, migrant, refugee, asylum seeker*

Speaking and listening – through the activities pupils could:

- organise, sequence and link what they say, so listeners can make sense of it

Reading – through the activities pupils could:

- spot connections and links between how information is presented in different forms

Writing – through the activities pupils could:

- make notes, summarise, etc, to clarify ideas and thinking which can be used later

Resources

Resources include:

- a set of atlases
- reproductions of paintings of English landscapes
- pictures from within and outside England
- video of a recent television weather forecast
- maps of national data – house prices or average income
- sets of weather maps from different newspapers
- statistics of the composition of England's population and place of residence

Future learning

Aspects introduced in this unit are returned to later, *eg weather and climate in a European context in year 8*. A better knowledge and understanding of their own country should enable pupils to make more pertinent and relevant comparisons when other countries are studied later, in years 8 and 9.

Links

The activities in this unit link with:

- other geography units – unit 1 'Making connections', unit 10 'Weather patterns over Europe', unit 24 'Passport to the world', units involving studies of other countries (units 11, 12, 17, 20)
- ICT – using spreadsheets and graphing software
- citizenship – diversity of the UK population, global community, role of EU and Commonwealth
- cultural development – investigating English paintings, cultural traditions
- art and design – investigating historical and cultural contexts

What do we mean by 'England'?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to respond to geographical questions • to use atlases and maps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a quiz to find out what pupils know and/or remember about the constituent parts of the British Isles, the UK and Great Britain. Ask them to mark and name these correctly on an outline map. • Provide pupils with a table showing the area and population of England, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Ask them to regroup the data under the headings 'British Isles', 'UK' and 'England'. • Provide a list of political/administrative divisions or features. With the help of an atlas showing the British Isles (countries, parts of the UK), ask pupils to arrange the list (about 40 items) in a series of sets, so that a major unit contains all the minor units, <i>eg England – Surrey, London, River Trent, East Anglia; Wales – Cardiff, Anglesey, Brecon Beacons</i>. Less able pupils may need fewer items to sort or be asked to locate and name 10 major cities and name the countries they are in. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the British Isles, Great Britain, the UK, the Republic of Ireland and England on an outline map • identify sub-regions and standard regions of the British Isles • locate and name major cities of the British Isles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It might be helpful to remind pupils about the different types of maps to be found in an atlas. |
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What images do we have of England?

- to use extended vocabulary
- to ask geographical questions
- to use secondary sources of evidence
- to describe physical/human features
- to describe and explain patterns
- to distinguish between weather and climate
- how and why aspects of weather vary from place to place

- As an introductory homework activity, ask pupils to find a postcard of a location in England and draw a simple photo-sketch of it on which they identify both natural and human features. In the lesson, supplement the postcards with other photographs/pictures of paintings, *eg by Constable, Lowry, Gainsborough*, including images which may challenge pupils' perceptions. Give pupils, in pairs, a selection of these pictures and ask them to sort them into four categories – definitely in England, definitely not in England, probably in England, unlikely to be in England – and to justify their decisions. Discuss as a class *What stereotypes/perceptions do we have of England?*
- Selecting from the 'definitely in England' group – one photo per pair – introduce pupils to a bi-polar semantic differential questionnaire exercise where characteristics are scored on a five-point scale of opposites, *eg clean, dirty; quiet, noisy; attractive, ugly; interesting, dull*. Ask pupils to decide where they think the place is and check to find out whether they are right or not. Ask them to place their picture on a wall display around a map of England. *What questions would they want answered to help them decide whether they would want to live there?* As a homework activity, ask pupils to check out their questions using a variety of sources in their school library, *eg CD-ROM*.

Can England be divided into opposites?

- Ask pupils to answer this question using thematic maps in the atlas and other relevant ones, such as a map showing average income or house prices. Help them to draw lines to separate highland from lowland, rural from urban, rich from poor, wet from dry, warm from cool (compare summer and winter), etc, and to look for patterns. Ask pupils to suggest questions about Britain's 'weather opposites', *eg What part of Britain is the coolest in summer/the warmest in winter/the windiest/the wettest?* Provide a range of suitable resources (including textbooks and thematic maps) for pupils (to research and make notes from) to answer these questions. Ask them to explain what links they notice, *eg height/rainfall totals and population*.
- Play a video of a recent television weather forecast and identify the weather symbols used. Use these to draw symbols for today's weather. Produce a set of weather maps, *eg featuring a depression*, from daily newspapers (maps from different newspapers provide a form of differentiation); check the weather locally and ask pupils to describe the conditions in another part of England. Establish whether there is a pattern of differences between the two over time. *How do these relate to the patterns identified on the thematic maps?*

- use appropriate vocabulary
- make a personal response to places using images
- show some understanding of stereotypes and perception
- identify, describe and offer explanations for patterns on thematic maps

- Art and design: this activity provides the opportunity for pupils to investigate art, craft and design in a variety of genres, styles and traditions from a range of historical, social and cultural contexts.
- Select images which may challenge pupils' perceptions of England; include some from their own locality.
- Bi-polar semantic differential questionnaire: the five-point scale could read ugly/quite ugly/neither ugly nor attractive/quite attractive/attractive. Joining the 'scores' builds up a place profile.
- ICT: this activity provides pupils with the opportunity to use spreadsheets (or specific graphing software) to present large quantities of information effectively, *eg graphs to show links between amount of rainfall and height above sea level*.
- Language for learning: the 'opposites' activity provides an opportunity for pupils to make notes, summaries, etc, to clarify ideas and thinking which can be used later, and to see relationships between information presented in different forms.
- Homework activity: ask pupils to draw a 'mental map' of England. Back in class ask them to compare their map with those of other pupils and maps in the atlas.
- There is an opportunity here to link physical patterns with main types of farming.

Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note**Where are we in England and where did we come from?**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to ask geographical questions • to suggest appropriate sequences of investigation • to collect, record and present evidence • to analyse evidence and draw conclusions • to investigate the composition of England's population • about the causes and effects of migration | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask pupils whether they were born in the area or elsewhere. Help them to plan and carry out a survey of how far away they were born and to graph the results. Discussing the results of the survey will introduce the ideas of in-migration and out-migration and their effect on population change. The birthplaces of pupils may also be mapped. • Discuss with pupils the composition of the English population during the twentieth century. Ask them, in groups, to select one group of in-migrants to investigate. Encourage them to generate their own questions, <i>eg When did they come and why? Where did they settle and why? What contribution did they make? Where did they come from?</i> • More able pupils could be asked to investigate earlier invasions, <i>eg Roman, Saxon, Norse, Norman</i>. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relate the study of England to their own lives • connect their local area to the wider world using fieldwork and secondary data • identify the cosmopolitan nature of the English population, its origins and where most people now live | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Geography in the news' displays on corridors leading to subject rooms – at different scales, regional, national and global – are useful ways of extending pupils' place knowledge. • Homework activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ask pupils to find out where their household pays bills for water, and what area is covered by local newspapers, telephone directory, yellow pages, television channels, etc. Ask pupils to plot these on a map – ask pupils to note and locate all English places mentioned in the daily newspaper. Where are these places and where were they reported? • Citizenship and pupils' cultural development: this activity provides pupils with an opportunity to appreciate the diversity of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK and the need for mutual respect and understanding. |
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What route for a tour would give a fair view of England?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to apply the geographical skills they have learnt in different contexts • about decision making • about place location and what makes places attractive to tourists • to organise, sequence and link what they say, so listeners can make sense of it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide groups of pupils with a set of resources – maps, guides, timetables – to plan a sightseeing tour of England for a group of European visitors arriving at their nearest airport on a Monday morning and departing from London on the following Friday afternoon. The aim is to give the visitors a feel of England and visit some important places. Discuss with pupils what might be considered important and why. The internet can provide access to a range of sites for route planning and rail and bus timetables which are interactive and enable pupils to search for options more quickly. Ask pupils to write up the itinerary, to show it in map form and to justify their choices. Pupils may then compare their tour plans, which may be marked on a class map to identify any similarities/patterns. (The presentations to the class could be staged as a competition to be judged by a visitor/panel to discover the most interesting/imaginative tour.) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • produce an appropriate five-day tour itinerary • extend their knowledge and understanding of places in England 'on the tourist trail' • present an itinerary to members of the class so they can follow, compare and judge it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language for learning: pupils could take the role of travel agent/tour guide to present their suggested route to others. |
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Learning objectives

Pupils should learn:

Possible teaching activities**Learning outcomes**

Pupils:

Points to note**What links England with the rest of the world?**

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to use atlas maps • to describe the geographical contexts of England | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present pupils with a series of maps to establish some of England's links with the rest of the world, <i>eg links with the European Union, links with the Commonwealth, air destinations of a British airline, main holiday destinations of English holidaymakers, etc.</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • extend their knowledge of places and England's links abroad • accurately identify selected English context links | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizenship: this activity provides pupils with the opportunity to view the world as a global community and understand the role of the European Union and the Commonwealth. |
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