

Geography PGCE Pre-course reading

The following details some useful texts and resources that will be used to support the PGCE course. It is recommended to engage with as many of these texts as possible, in addition to your work on the pre-arrival tasks.

Subject knowledge Enhancement

Having a strong and secure foundation of subject knowledge is vital for success in your PGCE. We would strongly recommend taking stock, ahead of the course, of your own areas of subject knowledge strength, and areas for development.

- The [Geography National Curriculum](#) provides the framework by which secondary school geography departments are built around. Consider your own base knowledge against the requirements covered in the National Curriculum and note down your areas of strength and not so strength!

The following websites have fantastic short introductions to core areas of geography. Please take the time to familiarise yourself with these:

- The [Royal Geographical Society](#) offer a free subject knowledge programme covering a whole range of topics.
- [Time for Geography](#) have a series of curated videos, and knowledge boosters designed for geography teaching at secondary school.
- The Geographical Association have [a podcast series](#), with fascinating coverage of a whole host of geography-specific developments in education.
- A [Blog series](#) by Alan Parkinson. Updated daily by Primary Geography Specialist Alan, this series nevertheless has great applicability to Secondary Geography.

PGCE Geography Reading List

The following books are useful compendiums to the course, and we draw on these quite regularly throughout the year. It is recommended to get your hands on a copy of at least one of the following:

- Biddulph, M., Lambert, D. and Balderstone, D. (2021) Learning to Teach Geography in the Secondary School (4th edition). Routledge
- Jones, M. (2017) The Handbook of Secondary Geography. Geographical Association
- Lambert, D. and Morgan, J. (2010) Teaching Geography 11-18: A Conceptual Approach. McGrawHill
- Lambert, D. and Jones, M. (2018) Debates in Geography Education (2nd edition). Routledge
- Roberts, M. (2023) Geography Through Enquiry (2nd edition) Geographical Association.

Earlier editions of these books can be found at a reasonable price second-hand, so keep a look out for bargains.

Subject Association membership

We are fortunate in geography to have a strong, vibrant and active subject association – the Geographical Association (GA). The association is an invaluable source of Continued Professional Development (CPD); they host courses, conferences and workshops throughout the year.

We strongly recommend that you join the GA ahead of the course starting and subscribe the journal Teaching Geography and, if possible, Geography. As a full-time student, you are eligible for a discounted membership. Please see [here](#) for more information.

Exam specifications

Alongside the National Curriculum, exam specifications hold an awful lot of influence on what is taught at GCSE (and sometimes even KS3). If you get a moment, it would be worth familiarising yourself with the major exam specifications.

Consider whether there are similarities across the KS3 National Curriculum and the exam specs? Are topics covered across all exam boards?

The major exam boards:

- [AQA](#)
- [Edexcel](#)
- [OCR](#)
- [WJEC Eduqas](#)

Useful reading

The following are useful texts and articles that are intended to broaden your understanding of the nature of geography education. We will draw on each of these at various points throughout the year.

- The [GA's Curriculum Framework](#). A fantastic resource produced by the GA. Their intention is to present a coherent framework for the school geography curriculum; one that should underpin future government developments of the Geography National Curriculum. We use this regularly across the year. Take particular note of the notion of geographical knowledge, and the distinction between substantive and disciplinary knowledge.
- A paper by David Lambert on the notion of [Thinking Geographically](#). This provides a really handy overview of the importance of geographical knowledge and

concepts in the subject. It offers a great accompaniment to the National Curriculum.

- Dorreen Massey, '[The geographical mind](#)'. In this chapter from Balderstone's (2006) Secondary Geography Handbook, published by the GA, Massey considers the vital geographical concepts of place and space. It is a short, accessible piece that captures what it means to think like a geographer.
- [Ofsted research review series](#). It is hard to escape the influence Ofsted has had on education in this country. Their research review series is intended to clarify the research that underpins their inspection framework, and clarify what good geography 'should' look like in schools. A useful overview, although read with some large pinches of salt in hand.

A bit more fun... the following will also be useful preparation

The books listed below are English Literature texts for KS3 and GCSE students (you may have already read some of these when you were at school). Try reading 2-3 of these.

They will be helpful because:

1. You get some sense of the type of fiction students are reading at school.
2. They give you a feel for the language level of texts that students are expected to read.
3. They provide examples of 'rich description' of places, rarely found in geography text books and so can provide alternative sources of inspiration for teaching and learning about places.

- Holes by L. Sachar
- North of Beautiful by J.C. Hedley
- Of Mice and Men by J.Steinbeck
- Kiss the Dust by E. Laird
- Kakadu Calling by J.G. Christophersen
- Journey to the River Sea by E. Ibbotson
- Miraculous Journey of Edward Toulane by Kate Dicamillo
- Walkabout by J V Marshal.

Additional literature will be suggested once the course is underway.

Happy reading!

Alex