

CHANGES IN OUR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT:

How is the UK changing?

Unit overview

In this unit, the children will find out about the regions of the UK, discovering how some of these areas have changed over time. The children will research how specific areas of the UK have been affected by change, before conducting a fieldwork activity on their own area, writing a magazine article and working towards the Big Finish.

Cross-curricular links

- **English:** creating a presentation on sustainable development (Week 2); writing a magazine article on change in the local area (Week 5).
- **Computing:** researching facts on the UK (Week 1).
- **History:** learning about regional effects of World War Two (Week 3); understanding that change is continual (Weeks 2–6).
- **PE:** learning about planning for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games (Week 2).
- **Art:** learning about Hockney, Lowry and Huntertwasser (Week 6).

Knowledge, skills and concepts

In this unit, the children will:

- name and locate counties and cities of the UK, geographical regions and their identifying human and physical characteristics, key topographical features (including hills, mountains, coasts and rivers), and land-use patterns; and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the UK
- use maps, atlases, globes and digital/computer mapping to locate countries and describe features
- use the eight points of a compass, four- and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of OS maps) to build their knowledge of the UK and the wider world
- use fieldwork to observe, measure, record and present the human and physical features in the local area using a range of methods, including sketch maps, plans and graphs and digital technologies.

Background information

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland lies in Europe, located north-west off the European mainland. It includes the island of Great Britain, the north-eastern part of the island of Ireland, and other smaller islands.

The UK is the world's 22nd most-populated country, with some 64 million inhabitants. London, the capital city, covers the third-largest urban area in Europe.

The UK has the sixth-largest national economy in the world. The service sector contributes around 78% of GDP; the financial services industry is particularly key and London is the world's largest financial centre, together with New York. Tourism is a vital industry, with the UK listed as the sixth top world tourist destination. The pharmaceutical and automotive industries are also major employers and exporters. There are significant regional variations in wealth: southeast England and south Scotland are the richest areas.

UK regions are usually listed as: *Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland; northeast England, northeast England, Yorkshire and the Humber, East Midlands, West Midlands, East of England, Greater London, southeast England, southwest England.*

The Big Finish

OUR AREA – PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The children will create three artworks of their area, based on their perceptions of the past, present and future. They will annotate their work on tracing paper fixed over each picture, explaining what they have included, the changes at each stage and their feelings over these. If possible, hold an art gallery event for the children to display their work to members of the local community, sharing their understanding of the past, thoughts on the present and hopes for the future.

Map work

During this topic, display maps of the local region in the classroom and Independent Learning Area. Use them each lesson to locate the region being studied. In Week 1, children will use maps on a range of scales, from a world map to UK and regional maps. In Week 4, children will use local area maps during fieldwork. In Week 5, children will study historical maps of the local area.

Fieldwork

In Week 4, the children will take part in fieldwork in their local area, investigating the question: Is our local area changing? They will observe changes, take photographs, draw field sketches, interview local people and form their own opinions on the changes occurring around them.

Independent learning area

Create a Local Area Planning Centre. Project a map on to a wall or board and trace features, such as main roads, to create a large-scale outline map of the area in which the children will complete fieldwork in Week 4. Invite children to annotate the map using sticky notes with facts, recollections and opinions (different colours for past, present and future), e.g. 'Where Grandma was born', 'I ride my bike here' or 'New houses are being built here'. A different colour could show changes children would like to see. Provide other local maps, books, aerial photos and other views, newspapers or parish magazines, old and new. Encourage children to create their own 3D area maps of past, present or future.

Assessment

All children can:

- describe where the UK is located, and that it consists of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- name and locate some key topographical features of the UK
- locate where they live within the UK
- describe changes that have happened in their local area
- share their hopes for the future of the area.

Most children can:

- describe how another region of the UK has changed over time
- understand that change is continual
- describe what their local area was like in the past
- understand that their local area will continue to change
- offer opinions on their local area at present and the changes underway
- use appropriate geographical vocabulary to describe change.

Some children can:

- describe how several UK regions have changed over time
- explain some of the ways in which development can be sustainable
- understand that people hold differing views about change in their region.