

Naming and locating different types of natural land-use (woodland, fields, marsh and so on) provides pupils with yet more examples of ways in which people interact with the physical environment. Urban land-use and amenities can be added too: a leisure centre, car parks, park and playground, factories, shops, museum, places of worship and a railway station. Using their local and wider locational knowledge, pupils will often suggest extra features to add. This offers the opportunity to extend the discussion about the relationship of people within their environment and to focus on specific geographical terms.

A sheet location scenario

Creating a sheet location 'scenario' can offer a good starting point for considering interactions between natural and human environments, including the adaptations people seek to make to the environment and the perceptions and views different groups of people have of these changes. Once the sheet location has been established and pupils have invested in their 'lives' within the area (Figure 2), a new element can be introduced. The following teaching sequence centres on the scenario 'a new recycling centre is being planned for the area'. It offers pupils opportunities to think about the variety of viewpoints on and the challenges of planning for change in an area.

- First, discuss with the pupils what happens in a recycling centre, and consider both the positive and negative environmental aspects of such a centre.
- Explain that a recycling centre is being planned for the area and two possible locations have been considered. Then place blocks or pieces of paper representing the recycling centre on two locations. To fully engage the pupils, build up the suspense by asking how close to their home might the nearest recycling centre be? Will it even be over their house? Might they need to relocate?
- Give pupils different roles: the majority will act as residents, some will become the members of the local council planning department, and others will need to act as recycling centre representatives.
- Once the possible recycling centres are in place, pupils pair with a neighbour on the map and have an 'over the fence' conversation about the proposed location of the recycling centre. What impact will it have on them and why do they think it will have this impact?
- Following the conversations, views on the positives and the negatives of each location will have begun to appear.



Figure 2: The sheet location builds up as infrastructure, homes and jobs are added to the landscape. Photos © Janet Davies.

Group the residents into local neighbourhood groups. Each group must decide on the positive and negative aspects of each of the recycling centre locations in relation to their 'neighbourhood' area. Even without facilitation, pupils will recognise the potential impact not only on their way of life, but also on other aspects like the natural environment.

- Using their neighbourhood group's positive and negative points, the pupils write letters to the 'council' expressing their preference for the location to be chosen and giving reasons why.
- The council members hold a meeting with residents in response to these letters. The recycling representatives give presentations to show how they are prepared to mitigate for some of the issues raised in the letters from the residents. The pupils, in role as council members, can discuss the pros and cons of each proposal and take a vote with this further information in mind.
- The final activity – following the building of the recycling centre – could be a second 'over the fence' conversation – recorded perhaps for a local radio programme. In this residents could again give their views. Some of course may be very unhappy about the outcome!

This lesson sequence offers the chance to collect assessment evidence by listening to pupils talking, as well as through their written work. Pupils will use geographical terminology in conversation and in response to direct questioning. In addition, the lesson sequence helps to scaffold the

pupils' understanding of geographical issues and requires pupils to reason, explain and support their opinions with evidence.

Throughout the unit pupils are able to build on their prior knowledge and use the contributions of others in order to develop their knowledge and reasoning. Their understanding of the concept of place is developed through the scenario and role-play activities, and every new development will provide an opportunity for dealing with the emotions we have about the development of space around us.

Using a sheet location allows pupils to experience and visualise the geography of real and imaginary locations. Used purposefully, it offers the opportunity for pupils to move from the concrete to the abstract. It can contribute to planning for progression, and the interactive approach can link into other areas of the curriculum. The sheet location idea can be used in a variety of ways – to create a mythical 'quest' landscape complete with monsters, or an interpretation of a landscape in a children's book, or a forest journey location for writing adventure stories – but all will help pupils to develop their geographical vocabulary.

Reference

Catling, S. (2019) 'Key concepts' in Willy, T. (ed) *Leading Primary Geography*. Sheffield: Geographical Association, pp. 16–27.

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