**Preparing for A Level Geography or want to just develop your Geography further?**

Hoping to study Geography at A Level? **Or** maybe you are simply interested in taking some time to further your understanding of the geography you have studied at GCSE?

**There are number of things you can do:**

1. **Developing as a geographer** – through general reading around / watching videos / listening to podcasts etc. to develop your geographical knowledge and understanding

2. **Preparing for the A Level Course** – by starting to explore the topics and their foundations which will be studied in the A Level course.

To be a great geographer you need to develop the ability to think synoptically, being able to see the greater overview and how everything begins to link together. Geography is not just about studying people and landscapes; it is also the relationships that exist between people and their environment.

At GCSE you have covered a lot of the foundations of the underpinning concepts; physical processes and how they have shaped the landscape and the key human processes that shape our society. GCSE has provided a breadth of study, whereas A Level will now enable you to gain greater depth by exploring topics in greater detail but also encouraging you to see and explore the links between topics.

The best geographers at A Level keep reading the news and generally seek to improve their geographical understanding by engaging with geographical discussions regarding key issues.

This guide has been designed for you to be able to dip in and out of, from looking at general geographical issues and developing your ability to think like a geographer, through to starting to explore some of the topics we will be looking at in Year 12 and 13 so you can do some valuable background reading.

**DEVELOPING AS A GEOGRAPHER**

**The below includes, websites, books, podcasts, documentaries and even films which provide a great way of staying inspired and engaging with geography.**

1. **ONLINE NEWS ARTICLES**

**THE CONVERSATION.COM** http://theconversation.com/uk *we highly recommend you use this!* This you will find is really useful to support many of your A Levels. It provides up-to-date articles from academics and specialists in the field written in a way that is accessible to all, summarising key points in short but insightful articles.

**BBC NEWS** https://www.bbc.co.uk/news **-** an excellent source of up-to-date articles – explore the key headings such as Science, as well as the UK, World and other stories.

**THE GUARDIAN** https://www.theguardian.com/uk - again many useful articles and logically ordered – keep an eye on the Environment, Science, Society, Global Development stories in particular!

**ii. PODCASTS**

Now is the time to broaden your geographical understanding! Stick your headphones in and listen to some of the following…

**Costing the Earth** – there are some great podcasts here to pick from on a wide variety of geographical issues https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r4wn/episodes/player (many topics, including amongst others.. climate change, carbon, urban greening, deforestation, alternative power, plastics etc.)

**Royal Geographical Society – “Ask the Geographer podcasts” -** https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/ask-the-expert-podcasts/ - a fantastic set of podcasts to keep A Level studies up-to-date with the latest geographical research – pick out some that interest you and give them a go!

**iii. ONLINE NEWS ARTICLES**

Remember you can make use of the local libraries digital library service for books – you don’t have to access hard copies.

**Prisoners of Geography** (Marshall, T) – an insightful book which helps understand how physical geography impacts on political reality and really helps to understand how decisions of world leaders have been shaped by geography – a great introduction to geopolitics.

**Factfulness: Ten reasons we’re wrong about the world – and why things are better than you think** (Rosling, H 2019) **–** this is a must-read book from a geography perspective – this takes a more realistic view of the world, presenting issues in fact-based context. It is a rational look at actually how far the world has measurably improved and what’s left to be done.

**Adventures in the Anthropocene** (Vince, G) (2016) – this looks at the effects that humans are having on the surface and structure of the planet with a balanced view on recognising threats and dangers whilst also look for practical answers and solutions.

**iv. GEOGRAPHICAL DOCUMENTARIES**

There are some great geographical documentaries which will help develop your general geographical knowledge and understanding and help you see what an amazing world we live in.

*The following are all available on* ![C:\Users\Jennifer.Brooksbank\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\1PDIIRV6\300px-BBC_iPlayer_logo.svg[1].png]()

* **David Attenborough** – there are many programmes from David Attenborough exploring our amazing world <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p03szck8>
* **Simon Reeve around the world** https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06rrnkm
* **Climate change: Ade on the Frontline** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/m000v4fb/climate-change-ade-on-the-frontline>
* **Our World Anarch in the Amazon** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000vl0d/our-world-anarchy-in-the-amazon>

*The following is available on* ![C:\Users\Jennifer.Brooksbank\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\SVE1YS5V\1200px-ITV_Hub_Logo.svg[1].png]()

* **Joanna Lumley’s Hidden Caribbean: Havana to Hait** https://www.itv.com/hub/joanna-lumleys-hidden-caribbean-havana-to-haiti/2a7578

*The following are all available on* 

* **China’s Lonely Hearts** (Unreported World) https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/56011-011
* **The world’s dirtiest river** (Unreported world) https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/58399-001
* **Forests of Fear** (Unreported World) - https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/69224-006
* Hurricane Hell (Unreported World) https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/69224-007
* **The World’s Dirtiest Air (Unreported World)** https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/67193-002

**v. GEOGRAPHICAL FILMS**

(some are available online for free – others may be available on providers such as Amazon Prime / Netflix etc.)

• **Before the Flood (2016) (PG)** – National Geographic (presented by Leonardo DiCaprio – exploring climate change and looking at what needs to be done today to prevent catastrophic disruption of life on our planet.

• **The Impossible (2012) (12)** – movie based on real life events of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami which killed 200,000 people.

• **Slumdog Millionaire (15)** – based on life in the slums of Mumbai

• **Our Planet** (Netflix series) – explores how climate change impacts all living creatures.

• **Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom (12)** – an epic which celebrates the journey of Nelson Mandela from childhood in a rural village through to his election as President of South Africa. This explores what happened in South Africa with regards to apartheid and Black opposition through the eyes of Nelson Mandela.

• **Hotel Rwanda (12)** - the true story of hotel manager who houses and protects Tutsi refugees – this is a hard-hitting film based on the Rwandan Conflict of the 1990s.

• **The Last King of Scotland (15)** – another hard-hitting story, based on struggles faced by Uganda under the dictatorship of Idi Amin.

• **Into the Wild (2007) (15)** – based on the story of a university graduate who gives up all of his material possessions and journeys alone into the Alaskan Wilderness

**PREPARING FOR A LEVEL GEOGRAPHY AT SIXTH FORM**

At St Mary’s we follow the Edexcel A Level. You will have three examined units and one NEA (Non-Examined Assessment) i.e. an independent geographical investigation (the specification can be found here: <https://qualifications.pearson.com/content/dam/pdf/A%20Level/Geography/2016/specification-and-sample-assessments/Pearson-Edexcel-GCE-A-level-Geography-specification-issue-5-FINAL.pdf>)

We have put the following together for you for you to start doing some reading round the topics we will be covering across the two years. For each topic, we have given a brief overview and then some starting points, with examples of reading and video links for you to follow up.

Across your Sixth Form studies you will learn the following:

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| **Paper 1: Dynamic landscapes** |
| **Written examination:** 2 hours and 15 minutes 30% of the qualification 105 marksThe examination may include short open, open response and resource-linked questions. The examination includes 12-mark and 20-mark extended writing questions. Calculators may be used. |
| **Content overview:**Topic 1: Tectonic Processes and Hazards Topic 2: Landscape Systems, Processes and Change –: Coastal Landscapes and Change Topic 3 (Topic 5 in specification): The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity Topic 4 (Topic 6 in the specification): The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security |
| **Paper 2:Dynamic places** |
| **Written examination:** 2 hours and 15 minutes 30% of the qualification 105 marksThe examination may include short open, open response and resource-linked questions. The examination includes 12-mark and 20-mark extended writing questions. Calculators may be used. |
| **Content overview:**Topic 1 (Topic 3 in specification): Globalisation Topic 2 (Topic 4a in specification): Regenerating Places Topic 3 (Topic 7 in specification): Superpowers Topic 4 (Topic 8b in specification): Migration, Identity and Sovereignty |
| **Paper 3: Physical systems and sustainability**  |
| **Written examination:** 2 hours and 15 minutes 20% of the qualification 70 marksAn externally-assessed written examination. A resource booklet will contain information about the geographical issue. All questions in the examination draw synoptically on knowledge and understanding from compulsory content drawn from different parts of the course. The examination may include short open, open response and resource-linked questions. The examination includes 8-mark, 18-mark and 24-mark extended writing questions. Calculators may be used. |
| **Content overview:**The specification contains three synoptic themes within the compulsory1 content areas: ● Players ● Attitudes and actions ● Futures and uncertaintiesThe synoptic investigation will be based on a geographical issue within a place-based context that links to the three synoptic themes and is rooted in two or more of the compulsory content areas. |
| **Non-examination assessment: Independent Investigation** |
| **Non-examined assessment:**20% of the qualification 70 marks● The investigation report is internally assessed and externally moderated. ● The student will produce a written report of 3000–4000 words. |
| **Content overview:*** The student defines a question or issue for investigation, relating to the compulsory or optional content. The topic may relate to any aspect of geography contained within the specification
* The student’s investigation will incorporate fieldwork data (collected individually or as part of a group) and own research and/or secondary data
* The fieldwork, which forms the focus and context of the individual investigation, may be either human, physical or integrated physical-human
* The investigation report will evidence independent analysis and evaluation of data, presentation of data findings and extended writing
* Students will be expected to show evidence that they have used both quantitative and qualitative data to support their independent investigation as appropriate to the particular environment and/or location.
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If you have any questions whilst exploring the following please do not hesitate to contact us.

**Paper 1 Dynamic landscapes**

**Tectonic Processes and Hazards**

**Video:** Power of the Planet (Volcanoes) <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5af4kg> - a great introduction to the work we will be doing on volcanoes.

**Reading:** Plate Tectonics (The Geological Society) – this will be a good step up from your GCSE work to A Level and is definitely worth reading / working through <https://www.geolsoc.org.uk/Plate-Tectonics>

**USGS Natural Hazards – FAQ** <https://www.usgs.gov/faq/natural-hazards> – some excellent reading here in bitesize chunks – well worth exploring

**Coastal Landscapes and change Reading: Coastal landforms and deposition**

<https://www.alevelgeography.com/landforms-of-deposition/>

**Reading: Coastal protection and management**

<https://www.alevelgeography.com/coastal-protection-and-management-hard-engineering/>

**Water and the Carbon Cycle** *Water and carbon are fundamental to supporting life on earth and are hence regarded as ‘earth’s life support systems. Water and carbon are cycled in both open and closed systems between the land, oceans and the atmosphere. The processes in the water and carbon cycles are inter-related. Human activity is increasingly threatening and altering water and carbon cycles for example through deforestation, ocean acidification, desertification etc. It is important that we look at global and national solutions to protect these.*

**Reading: Water and Carbon Cycling (Royal Geographical Society)** – this is an excellent starting point /content overview for the water and carbon work that we will be looking at <https://www.rgs.org/CMSPages/GetFile.aspx?nodeguid=6dc9f1c1-f92d-4c04-9f85-9985844a6a79&lang=en-GB>

**Reading: An introduction to the water and carbon cycle**

<https://www.alevelgeography.com/introduction-to-water-and-carbon-cycles/>

**Reading: How important are water and carbon to life on earth**

<https://www.alevelgeography.com/how-important-are-water-and-carbon-to-life-on-earth/>

**Reading: Introduction to the Carbon Cycle** <https://www.khanacademy.org/science/biology/ecology/biogeochemical-cycles/a/the-carbon-cycle>

**Reading: Introduction to the Water Cycle** <https://www.khanacademy.org/science/biology/ecology/biogeochemical-cycles/a/the-water-cycle>

**Paper 2 Dynamic places**

**Globalisation**

**Reading: Topic notes**

<https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-edexcel/globalisation/>

**Reading: The rise and fall of an idea that swept the world**

 <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jul/14/globalisation-the-rise-and-fall-of-an-idea-that-swept-the-world>

**Watch: Edexcel globalisation**

 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNxVubRxtGc>

**Regenerating Places**

**Interactive: Changing Spaces, Making Places –** a good story map introduction – work your way through <https://focusschoolwilto.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=f10c512164d0498d8f3bcfad8ae61d39>

**Reading: Topic notes**

<https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-edexcel/regenerating-places/>

**Superpowers**

**Reading: Topic notes**

<https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-edexcel/superpowers/>

**Reading: China poses greatest threat to the UK as a superpower**

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/01/04/china-poses-greatest-threat-uk-global-super-power-claims-new/>

**Reading: Superpowers**

<https://mygeographybsb.weebly.com/superpowers.html>

**Migration, Identity and Sovereignty**

**Reading:** Introduction to Migration short notes https://www.tutor2u.net/geography/reference/introduction-to-migration

**Video:** Escape to Europe: The migrant’s story – BBC Newsnight https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZqdUBpHmhM

**Video:** The truth about immigration in the UK 2014 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MHplEJgevqM

**Video**: Immigration: Is Britain Getting Full? https://www.channel4.com/programmes/jon-snow-explains/on-demand/61877-004

**Video:** Between Borders – America’s migrant crisis https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxF0t-SMEXA

**Video:** Fleeing Climate Change – The real environmental disaster (forced migration due to climate change) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cl4Uv9\_7KJE