

Unit 3 An island home

ABOUT THE UNIT

This is a 'short' unit. It shows how a storybook can be used to develop children's understanding of geographical features and ideas while at the same time developing their literacy skills. This story is about an imaginary Scottish island but any book set in a different place could be used. It also offers opportunities for children to express their own views about people, places and environments.

This unit could also be used as a 'continuous' unit over a longer period of time.

The unit offers links with literacy.

Geographical enquiry and skills

ask geographical questions
express own views
communicate in different ways
use geographical vocabulary
use globes, maps and plans
use secondary sources
make maps and plans

Knowledge and understanding of places

describe what places are like
compare places

Knowledge and understanding of patterns and processes

observe features

Knowledge and understanding of environmental change and sustainable development

recognise environmental change

VOCABULARY

In this unit, children are likely to use:

- island, sea, ocean, beach, mountain, farm, field, tractor, fishing, boats, weather, post office, shop, show

They may also use:

- tide, croft, pier, storm, peat, hillside, mainland, bay

RESOURCES

- *Katie Morag and the two grandmothers* by Mairi Hedderwick (Bodley Head (hardback), Red Fox (paperback and big book))
- atlas
- pictures and photographs of Coll in the Inner Hebrides, on which the island of Struay is based, or a similar island
- materials for making a collage

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES

CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN

Where is Struay and what is it like?

- to identify the physical and human features of a place
 - how an island is different from the mainland
- After reading *Katie Morag and the two grandmothers* to the children, use an atlas to show the children the location of Scotland and the Western Isles.
 - With the help of pictures and photographs, ask the children to identify suitable words to do with physical and human landscapes in Struay and to put the words into two columns – one for physical and one for human.
 - Help the children to draw a map of Struay, and mark on the places mentioned in the story, eg *Grannie Island's home, the show field, Boggy Loch*.

What type of transport is used to get to, and move around, Struay?

- to identify types of transport
 - how an environment changes
- Ask the children to draw or list the main types of transport used in Struay eg *boat, tractor, lorry, walking*.
 - Discuss with the children why these types of transport are found on the island.

Who lives on Struay and what work do they do?

- how land and buildings are used
- Ask the children to identify the characters in the book and the work they do.
 - Ask the children to list the uses of land and buildings.
 - Ask the children to draw a family tree for the people who live on Struay and one for their own family, if they wish to.

How is Struay similar to, and different from, our locality?

- that the world extends outside their locality
 - to recognise similarities and differences and communicate them
- Divide the children into groups to make a collage or panoramic picture of Struay and their locality and label the main features of both places.
 - Ask the children to make a list of the similarities and differences between Struay and their locality under headings such as houses, physical landscape, people and traffic.

What do I like and dislike about Struay? Would I like to live there?

- to identify likes and dislikes about a place
- Discuss with the children what they would like about living on a small island, what they would miss most and what things it would be difficult to do.
 - Encourage the children to express personal preferences.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

POINTS TO NOTE

CHILDREN

- locate Scotland and the Western Isles on a map
- are aware of the nature and character of an environment different from their own
- identify main features and places of interest and construct a map to record them

Literacy: children could use words about landscape when they are discussing how words and pictures are used to suggest the island setting.

Literacy: there are opportunities to highlight with questions how the setting of the story influences the events and characters, *eg Do the places where the two grandmothers live influence the way they behave?* Children could also collect interesting vocabulary used in the book and discuss meanings of words and phrases.

- know about various types of transport
- know how the environment of the island is changing

- recognise how land and buildings are used in different ways

Literacy: children could think how to represent visually the relationships between the characters and the work they do. Discuss with the children different sorts of formats, *eg family trees, flow charts* and their usefulness for the purpose.

- recognise and understand similar and different features of two contrasting places

- use reasoned arguments and discussion to make an informed personal choice
- express their views about Struay

Literacy: the work on the setting could be extended to include children writing about the island from a visitor's point of view. They could use the map in the book to plan, and then describe, a route around the island.

It is a good idea to review the school's fiction and non-fiction books to identify potential links with geography.

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if the children have:

- studied their local environment, which will act as a starting point for making comparisons with another place, as in Unit 1, for example
- developed the skills of using photographs and maps
- done work on aspects of geography, eg *transport, jobs, physical and human features*

EXPECTATIONS

at the end of this unit

most children will:

be familiar with a contrasting environment in the UK;
recognise the main similarities and differences between their local area and a contrasting place;
extract information from secondary sources

some children will not have made so much progress and will:

have a more limited understanding of the main similarities and differences between their local area and a contrasting place

some children will have progressed further and will also:

be able to follow a route on a map from their home area to the main Scottish islands

FUTURE LEARNING

The unit should enable children to use other books to gain an insight into lifestyles in contrasting regions, eg *The day of Ahmed's secret* by Florence Parry Heide and Judith Heide Gilliland (Puffin Books, Orion Children's Books).

It should also help children to study other localities like the seaside, as in Unit 4, for example.