



Year 3

YEAR 3 — The Rainforest (1 & 2)

Why are tropical rainforests where they are, and why are they changing?

Prior learning retrieved

Y2 Equator/climate and Kalahari comparison; KS1 human/physical features and maps.

Geographical concepts

Location; climate; biome; interconnection; land use; change; sustainability.

Key vocabulary

Equator, Tropics, climate zone, tropical, humid, rainforest, canopy, emergent, understory, forest floor, biome, vegetation belt, deforestation, land use, economic activity, Indigenous peoples, grid reference.

Careers link

Rainforest conservationist • ecologist • botanist • zoologist • sustainability officer • GIS technician. Gatsby BM4.

SMSC / climate & sustainability

SMSC: multiple perspectives on land use and Indigenous communities. Climate/sustainability: deforestation, carbon storage, biodiversity and responsible resource decisions.

Why this? Why now?

Year 3 begins KS2 by combining global location, climate and place comparison with more demanding explanations of land use and environmental change. It also introduces 4-figure grid references and systematic fieldwork, preparing pupils for regional, Arctic and river enquiries.

YEAR 3 — The Rainforest (1 & 2): Learning Sequence

1 Locate Equator, Tropics and major rainforest regions; explain significance of location.

2 Identify global climate zones and describe tropical climate.

3 Compare rainforest climate with the UK.

4 Describe rainforest structure/layers.

5 Describe rainforest structure/layers through retrieval/application.

6 Compare the Amazon Rainforest with a UK forest.

7 Explain settlement, land use and economic activity linked to deforestation.

8 Explain changes over time linked to deforestation.

9 Retrieval: locate country, continent and city; recall human/physical features.

10 Compare a UK region with a region in South America.

11 Use local fieldwork to observe, measure and record human/physical features.

12 Use 8-point compass and four-figure grid references.

YEAR 3 — The Rainforest (1 & 2): Fieldwork & Mapping

Fieldwork / geographical enquiry

Local woodland/green-space comparison; observe/measure; field sketch; table/graph.

Mapping / GIS progression

World thematic maps; digital mapping; 8-point compass; 4-figure grid references.

Fieldwork and mapping are taught as disciplinary knowledge: pupils become increasingly accurate, selective and independent in how they gather, represent and interpret geographical evidence.

YEAR 3 — Our Region

What makes the North East a distinctive region?

Prior learning retrieved

Y2 Sunderland/London; UK countries/cities; Y3 4-figure grid references.

Geographical concepts

Region; place; scale; spatial pattern; human/physical geography.

Key vocabulary

North East, Sunderland, Newcastle upon Tyne, Gateshead, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, County Durham, Northumberland, Teesside, region, county, population, OS map, grid reference.

Careers link

Urban planner • GIS technician • transport engineer • local government officer. Gatsby BM4/BM5.

SMSC / climate & sustainability

SMSC: regional identity, community and how places are represented. Sustainability: transport, land use and urban/green-space choices.

Why this? Why now?

After a global rainforest study, pupils return to their own wider region and apply new KS2 mapping skills to familiar places. This strengthens local identity while clarifying the nested scales of city, county and region. It prepares pupils for Year 4 counties and UK topography.

YEAR 3 — Our Region: Learning Sequence

1 Identify the region and relevant counties/areas.

2 Use aerial photographs of Sunderland, Durham, Middlesbrough and Newcastle to identify human/physical features.

3 Introduce OS maps, symbols and four-figure grid references.

4 Use maps to find geographical facts about four regional cities.

5 Repeat/apply map research to deepen comparison.

6 Produce fact files using maps and aerial photographs.

YEAR 3 — Our Region: Fieldwork & Mapping

Fieldwork / geographical enquiry

Regional/local survey where practical; photo/aerial comparison; mapped evidence.

Mapping / GIS progression

OS symbols; 4-figure references; aerial photos; digital maps.

Fieldwork and mapping are taught as disciplinary knowledge: pupils become increasingly accurate, selective and independent in how they gather, represent and interpret geographical evidence.