Banks Road Primary School

Geography Assessment Grids

Purpose of the Geography Assessment Grids

The Geography assessment grids are designed to support teachers in making **accurate, consistent and curriculum-aligned** summative assessment judgements across the school. They set out clearly what pupils should *know* and *be able to do* by the end of each unit, ensuring that assessment reflects the **actual geography curriculum taught**, not generic skills or task-dependent performance. This approach is fully aligned with Ofsted's expectation that assessment in geography must be *"well-calibrated to the curriculum"* and should focus on the secure learning of substantive content and the disciplinary thinking appropriate to the subject.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, teachers use the grids to group pupils according to their formative assessments, including work scrutiny, oral responses, questioning, map-based tasks and observation of learning. Judgements focus on pupils' secure grasp of **substantive geographical knowledge**—places, features, vocabulary and locational awareness—and on early **disciplinary habits**, such as noticing diversity between places, comparing locations, and identifying simple human–environment interactions. These judgements identify whether pupils are **Working Towards**, **Working At**, or **Working at Greater Depth** within each unit, based on everyday classroom evidence.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, teachers use the grids alongside end-of-unit synoptic tasks to make secure overall judgements about attainment. The grids outline expectations for three strands of knowledge within each Opening Worlds unit:

1. **Substantive knowledge** – the specific geographical content taught (places, processes, themes, vocabulary).

2. **Disciplinary knowledge** – how geographers think, including concepts of *change*, *diversity* and *interaction*, and how pupils use these ideas to make sense of geographical phenomena.

3. **Geographical skills** – including mapwork, fieldwork, graphicacy and enquiry, embedded in the substantive content rather than treated as generic skills.

This ensures that assessment checks whether pupils can **retrieve, connect and apply knowledge cumulatively over time**, reflecting Ofsted's findings that strong geographical attainment depends on the long-term building of coherent locational frameworks and conceptual understanding.

Across the School

Across all year groups, teachers work from the principle that most pupils are likely to be working at the expected standard. Evidence from lessons, discussions, exercise books, mapwork and synoptic tasks is then used to move pupils backwards or forwards according to the **security, accuracy and depth** of their knowledge.

The assessment grids therefore:

- provide a **coherent progression model** from Year 1 to Year 6

- ensure **consistency and fairness** in teacher judgements

- support teachers in identifying whether pupils have *learned the intended curriculum*

- and help build a picture of each pupil's developing **geographical understanding**, including their ability to use knowledge across different contexts and scales.

They support a rigorous geographical education in which pupils build **secure substantive knowledge**, develop **increasingly mature disciplinary thinking**, and gain confidence in using maps, data and fieldwork to understand the world.

🌍 Year 1 – Living In Cities - (Autumn)

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge			
Disciplinary Knowledge			
Geographical Skills			

🌍 Year 1 – Where Are We in the World? - (Spring)

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Names a few places (e.g., "England") but cannot identify UK countries or capital cities accurately. Limited awareness of world geography.	Identifies the 4 UK countries and their capital cities. Locates the UK on a world map. Names the 7 continents and major oceans. Describes simple features of the local area (school, church, shops).	Explains differences between countries of the UK using simple features (land, cities, borders). Makes connections between local features and wider UK geography (e.g., "Garston is in England, near the coast"). Clearly describes continent/ocean locations in relation to the UK.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity & Comparison)	Notices simple differences but cannot articulate why places vary.	Describes simple similarities and differences between UK locations and their own local area. Understands that places look different because of buildings, land, or use.	Gives reasoned, evidence-based comparisons (e.g., "Scotland is north of England, so it is further from London"). Shows early awareness that different places have different landmarks, climates or landforms.
Geographical Skills	Uses maps with significant support; struggles to identify symbols or follow routes.	Uses world maps, atlases and globes to locate UK, continents, oceans. Draws a simple sketch map of the local area including landmarks. Uses simple compass directions (N/E/S/W).	Produces clearer, more detailed sketch maps with labelled features. Follows or describes a simple route using compass directions. Interprets aerial photos confidently and links them to map symbols.

🌍 **Year 1 – Living by the Sea - (Summer)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recognises the sea but cannot describe coastal features accurately. Limited vocabulary (e.g., "sand", "water").	Identifies and describes key coastal features: beach, cliff, coast, waves, harbour, port, bay. Knows the UK is an island and can locate the coastline on a UK map. Describes simple human activities linked to the coast (fishing, visiting).	Gives clear, connected explanations (e.g., "A port is where ships bring goods"). Distinguishes accurately between different coastal types (rocky vs sandy). Connects coastal location to jobs/settlement patterns. Uses vocabulary precisely.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity & Interaction)	Makes simple statements ("the beach has sand") with no comparison.	Describes simple similarities/differences between inland and coastal places (features, jobs, buildings). Explains how people use the coast (fishing, tourism).	Explains why coastal places differ from inland ones (transport, trade, land shape). Shows early awareness of how human activity affects coasts (e.g., need for safety, erosion signs). Provides well-reasoned comparisons using evidence from maps/photos.
Geographical Skills	Interprets maps/photos with support; struggles to identify features on images.	Uses maps, atlases and photos to identify UK coastal locations and features. Locates Liverpool and nearby coasts. Interprets simple diagrams (high tide/low tide).	Makes detailed observations from photos and aerial images. Accurately labels coastal sketches. Explains how map symbols show coastal features. Uses compass directions confidently when describing the coastline.

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls a few simple ideas (e.g., "mountains are big") but cannot name Snowdon or describe key features accurately.	Identifies Snowdon on a UK map; describes simple mountain features (hill, valley, snow, steep slopes); understands weather is colder higher up; describes basic human and physical features of mountain settlements (e.g., roads, buildings, farms).	Explains how mountain height affects weather, transport and life. Gives clear examples of human and physical features using correct vocabulary (valley, landscape, settlement). Makes simple but accurate comparisons between Snowdonia and a contrasting non-European mountain region (e.g., Himalayas).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity & Interaction)	Notices single differences (e.g., "there is snow") without clear reasoning.	Describes similarities and differences between places (Snowdon vs Himalayan location shown in pictures). Explains how people use mountain areas (walking, farming, visiting).	Gives simple but reasoned explanations for differences (e.g., climate, height, remoteness). Explains interactions such as how weather affects what people do or how settlements develop in mountain valleys.
Geographical Skills	Uses maps or photos only with heavy support; struggles with compass directions.	Uses simple maps to locate Snowdon and the UK; uses N/E/S/W to describe locations. Identifies human/physical features in photos. Labels a simple mountain drawing accurately.	Confidently uses maps, atlases and photos to compare two mountain locations. Describes routes or locations using compass directions. Gives detailed observations from aerial and ground photos.

🌍 **Year 2 – Visiting New Places - (Spring)**

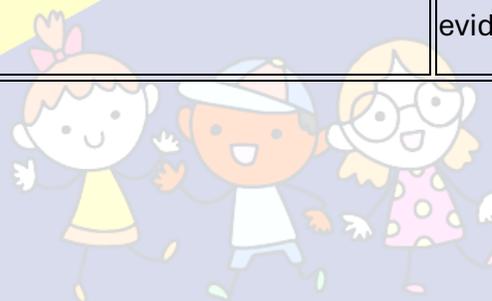| Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recognises a few transport types but cannot link them to journey purposes or places.	Identifies suitable transport for different journeys (local, seaside, abroad). Describes key features of Southport (beach, promenade, transport links). Explains simple things people need to know before visiting a place (weather, route, ticket, map).	Explains why certain transport types suit particular journeys (distance, speed, cost). Gives detailed reasons why places differ (Southport vs Mediterranean location). Uses correct vocabulary (airport, tourist map, station, coast).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity & Interaction)	Gives simple descriptive comments ("Southport has a beach").	Explains simple differences between two places: Southport vs a Mediterranean city (weather, attractions, getting there). Explains how people interact with places when they travel or visit.	Gives thoughtful explanations of why places vary (climate, language, landscape). Explains interactions such as how tourism affects what places are like or why people choose to visit one place instead of another.
Geographical Skills	Needs support to read maps or identify symbols; limited route-finding.	Uses simple maps, tourist leaflets and atlases to find Southport and identify features. Follows a simple route using directional language. Interprets photos of seaside and city locations.	Confidently uses maps, keys and photos together to plan journeys and compare places. Describes routes using compass directions. Evaluates different sources of information (maps, leaflets, photos) to support a visit plan.

🌍 **Year 2 – Weather in Our World - (Summer)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls a few simple ideas ("the Equator is hot"; "the Poles are cold") but cannot locate these places accurately or explain why weather differs.	Identifies the world's continents and oceans on a map. Locates the Equator, North Pole and South Pole. Explains basic climate differences (polar = cold, equator = hot, more rainfall). Describes simple weather features using unit vocabulary (blizzard, heatwave, hot, cold).	Explains clearly *why* different parts of the world experience different weather (distance from Equator, sunshine, cold polar air). Makes accurate comparisons between Brazil, the Poles and the UK. Uses precise vocabulary (polar, tropical, equator).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity & Comparison)	Notices single differences but cannot explain them (e.g., "Brazil is hot").	Describes similarities and differences between polar regions, equatorial regions (e.g., Brazil), and local UK weather. Gives simple reasons (e.g., "closer to the Equator means more heat").	Gives thoughtful, reasoned comparisons drawing on multiple features: weather, clothing, wildlife, challenges for people. Explains interactions between climate and daily life (e.g., equipment needed; activities possible).
Geographical Skills	Uses maps with significant support; struggles to identify major world locations.	Uses world maps, globes and atlases to locate the Equator, Poles, continents and named places (Brazil). Labels maps accurately. Interprets photos of polar and equatorial regions and explains what the images show.	Confidently interprets maps, globes and images together to explain patterns (e.g., "Brazil is hot because it is near the Equator"). Gives detailed observations from photos and uses geographical vocabulary to support explanations.

🌍 **Year 3 – Rivers - (Autumn 1)**

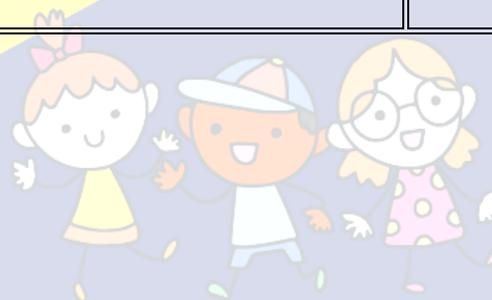| Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls simple terms (e.g., "river is water") but cannot describe features or processes.	Describes river features: source, channel, tributary, mouth. Explains simple river processes (erosion, transportation, deposition). Describes water cycle in basic terms.	Gives connected explanations of how rivers shape landscapes over time, using precise vocabulary (load, sediment, meander). Makes links to place studies (Indus, Severn) and explains why rivers differ.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Identifies basic human–river links with limited accuracy.	Explains interactions: how rivers support farming, settlement, transport; how human actions affect rivers (pollution, flood defences).	Analyses interactions at a deeper level (e.g., geography → farming type → settlement growth). Explains why interactions differ between Indus and Severn.
Geographical Skills	Reads simple river maps with support.	Locates major rivers on maps; interprets photos/diagrams of river stages; reads simple water cycle diagrams.	Gives detailed interpretations of maps and diagrams; explains spatial river patterns; compares two rivers using evidence.

🌍 **Year 3 – Mountains - (Autumn 2)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Names a few mountains but cannot describe features clearly.	Describes key features (summits, slopes, valleys). Identifies major UK ranges and the Andes. Explains simple weather–mountain relationships.	Explains how height, climate and relief influence ecosystems, farming and settlement. Makes accurate comparisons between UK and Andes.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Notices simple differences without explanation.	Explains interactions: how people adapt farming (terraces), live and work in mountains; how mountains influence weather.	Analyses interactions at multiple scales (e.g., altitude → climate → farming → population). Evaluates reasons why people choose to live in mountain regions.
Geographical Skills	Reads basic maps/photos with help.	Interprets mountain maps, photographs and relief diagrams. Identifies patterns in mountain ranges.	Gives precise interpretations of topographical maps; explains relief with technical vocabulary; compares multiple mountain landscapes using evidence.

🌍 **Year 3 – Settlements & Cities - (Spring 1)**

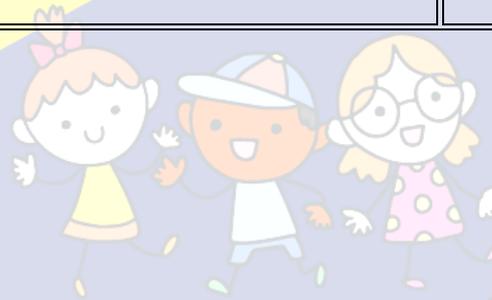| Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Identifies settlements but cannot classify or describe them accurately.	Describes settlement types (hamlet → city), land use, and why settlements form near rivers. Describes key features of London and Cardiff.	Explains how physical geography shapes urban growth. Compares cities using themes (transport, river location, land use). Connects learning to earlier River unit.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity)	Notices differences in cities but cannot explain them.	Describes how and why settlements differ (size, function, transport). Explains diversity within cities (boroughs, services).	Analyses settlement diversity with clear reasoning (economic roles, historic development, physical constraints). Shows early multi-scale thinking (local vs regional).
Geographical Skills	Reads simple maps with support.	Uses basic grid references, keys, and simple city maps. Interprets photos and diagrams to identify features.	Interprets complex city maps (boroughs, transport lines). Explains spatial patterns using evidence (river–transport–land use relationships).

🌍 **Year 3 – Agriculture – (Spring 2)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls some farming terms but misapplies them.	Describes arable, pastoral and mixed farming; explains how farming changes landscapes; understands links between food choices and farming.	Explains why farming varies by climate, relief and soil. Connects Snowdonia example to global farming patterns. Describes farming systems in terms of inputs, processes, outputs.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Gives simple observations without causal explanation.	Explains interactions: farming ↔ environment (soil, weather, relief); farming ↔ economy (local food, seasonal produce).	Analyses complex interactions: farming impacts ecosystems; economic choices influence land use; global supply chains affect farming decisions.
Geographical Skills	Reads simple diagrams/maps with help.	Interprets land-use maps, farm diagrams, photos of farming landscapes.	Compares farming landscapes using multiple data types. Explains spatial patterns of farming using physical/human factors.

🌍 **Year 3 – Volcanoes - (Summer 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Identifies volcanoes but cannot explain causes or differences between them.	Explains Earth structure, magma movement, eruption causes, types of volcanoes, and why people live near volcanoes. Describes Mount Etna accurately.	Connects volcanic processes to global plate boundaries; explains variation between volcanoes using precise vocabulary. Links volcano location to Mediterranean physical geography.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Gives simple cause/effect statements.	Explains interactions: how volcanoes affect people (danger, tourism, farming) and how people adapt to hazard.	Analyses multi-scale interactions (global plate movement → regional hazards → local choices). Compares human–volcano interactions across places.
Geographical Skills	Interprets simple diagrams/photos with help.	Reads volcanic cross-sections, distribution maps, and photos. Makes simple comparisons.	Makes sophisticated interpretations of tectonic maps; explains spatial patterns in volcanic distribution.

🌍 **Year 3 – Climate and Biomes - (Summer 2)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls simple weather facts but cannot explain climate zones or biomes.	Describes climate zones (temperate, Mediterranean), the role of latitude, basic ocean–climate relationships, and simple biome characteristics.	Explains climate patterns using multi-factor reasoning (latitude, oceans, altitude). Compares biomes across continents with precision. Links to prior learning (Y3 Rivers rainfall; Y3 Mountains weather).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity)	Notices simple differences in climates without explanation.	Explains diversity between climates and biomes across Europe and the world. Describes how climates influence vegetation and settlement.	Analyses global diversity using climate maps; evaluates causes of contrasts across wider world. Shows early abstraction (moving from local to global climate systems).
Geographical Skills	Reads simple world maps with support.	Interprets climate maps, biome maps, and world maps showing latitude.	Integrates maps and data to explain global patterns. Gives detailed explanations of spatial climate variation.

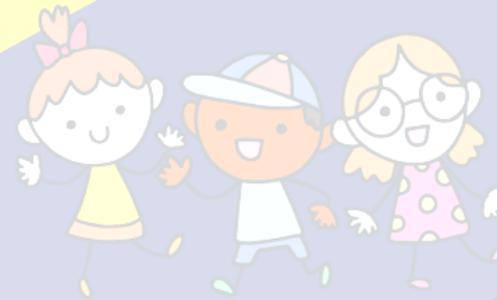🌍 **Year 4 – The Rhine and the Mediterranean - (Autumn 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls isolated facts (e.g., "The Rhine is a river") but cannot describe its course or link human and physical features.	Describes key features of the Rhine (source-mouth, cities, canals), the Mediterranean Sea, and human modifications to rivers. Explains why these locations are important for trade, travel and settlement.	Gives connected explanations of how physical geography (river course, deltas, climate) shapes human activity (ports, trade, tourism). Makes secure links to earlier Y3 units (Rivers, Settlements).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction & Diversity)	Makes simple observations about places without explanation.	Explains interactions: how people use/alter the Rhine; how the Mediterranean connects countries; how canals change river systems. Describes diversity within the region (climate, landscapes, settlements).	Analyses patterns of interaction at different scales (local–regional–global). Evaluates reasons for similarities and differences between Rhine regions and Mediterranean coasts.
Geographical Skills	Interprets simple maps with support.	Reads maps of the Rhine and Mediterranean; identifies major cities, ports, and routes. Interprets photographs and diagrams.	Makes detailed map interpretations (shipping routes, human adaptations, land use). Explains spatial patterns using knowledge of physical processes and economic geography.

🌍 Year 4 – Population - (Autumn 2)

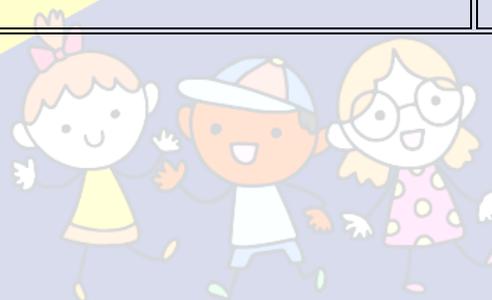| Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls simple facts (e.g., "Some places are busy") but cannot explain population patterns or diversity.	Explains population distribution and diversity using examples from London and Cardiff. Describes migration and simple reasons for movement. Uses vocabulary such as "density", "distribution", "diversity", "census".	Gives connected explanations of why populations vary (jobs, history, transport, physical geography). Shows nuanced understanding of diversity within cities and compares with other places studied.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity & Change)	Identifies differences without explaining causes.	Explains diversity across and within cities, and how population changes over time. Connects migration to population patterns.	Analyses demographic change (growth, decline, ethnic and cultural diversity) and its implications. Explains multi-scale diversity (neighbourhood–city–region).
Geographical Skills	Struggles to interpret simple data.	Interprets census data, thematic maps and simple graphs to describe population patterns.	Synthesises multiple data types (census tables, maps, charts). Explains patterns and anomalies using geographic reasoning.

🌍 **Year 4 – Coastal Processes and Landforms - (Spring 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls coastal vocabulary but cannot explain processes accurately.	Describes erosion, transportation and deposition. Identifies features (headlands, bays, beaches, cliffs). Explains formation of simple landforms.	Explains processes in connected sequences. Describes how coastal landscapes evolve over time. Makes accurate links with Y3 Rivers (similar processes).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Change)	Identifies coastline features but not how they change.	Explains how coastlines change through processes and why some locations change faster than others.	Analyses coastline change over time using evidence (photos, diagrams). Explains interactions (storms, geology, human activity) with geographical insight.
Geographical Skills	Interprets photos or diagrams with support.	Reads labelled diagrams and coastal maps; interprets photos of landforms.	Makes sophisticated use of diagrams, maps and aerial photos. Explains spatial patterns (why bays/headlands alternate).

🌍 **Year 4 – Tourism - (Spring 2)**

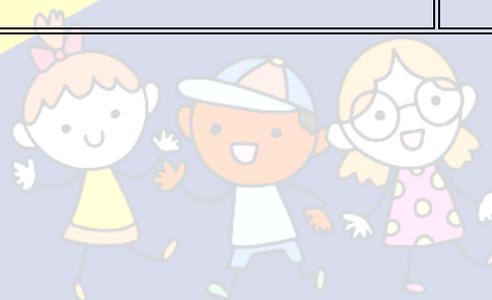| Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Gives simple examples of holidays but cannot explain tourism patterns.	Describes types of tourism (seaside, ski, sunshine) and why certain places attract visitors. Explains basic impacts (jobs, pollution, infrastructure).	Gives comparative explanations across tourism locations (Alps vs Llandudno vs Spain). Connects climatic, economic and physical factors.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction & Diversity)	Identifies impacts with limited accuracy.	Explains interactions between tourists, environment and local communities. Describes diversity in tourism destinations.	Analyses sustainability challenges and competing interests (economic vs environmental). Explains multi-scale interactions (local jobs ↔ global travel).
Geographical Skills	Reads basic maps/photos with support.	Interprets tourist maps, climate graphs and photos. Makes simple comparisons.	Interprets multiple data sources (visitor numbers, climate maps). Justifies conclusions with geographic evidence.

🌍 **Year 4 – Earthquakes - (Summer 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Knows basic facts ("earthquakes shake") but cannot explain tectonic processes.	Explains tectonic plates, fault lines, causes of earthquakes, global distribution, and human adaptations. Uses correct vocabulary (plates, boundary, magnitude).	Gives detailed, connected explanations of tectonic processes and interactions. Compares global examples (Japan vs California). Makes links to volcanoes (Y3) and mountains (Y3).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Identifies effects but not why they vary by place.	Explains interactions: how physical processes affect people, and how people adapt (building design, planning).	Analyses why impacts differ (wealth, building quality, population density). Predicts plausible future outcomes with justified reasoning.
Geographical Skills	Interprets simple distribution maps with support.	Reads global tectonic maps; identifies patterns along plate boundaries. Interprets diagrams of plate movement.	Provides multi-layered interpretations of hazard maps, ground-shaking diagrams, and population overlays. Explains spatial patterns in detail.

🌍 **Year 4 – Deserts - (Summer 2)**

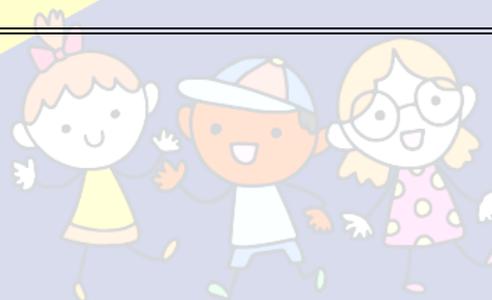| Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls simple ideas (e.g., "deserts are hot") with misconceptions.	Explains characteristics of hot and cold deserts, desert formation, climate, flora & fauna adaptations, and human survival strategies.	Gives connected explanations linking atmospheric circulation, climate zones and landforms. Compares deserts across continents and explains causes with precision.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity & Interaction)	Notices differences but cannot explain them.	Describes diversity between deserts (Sahara vs Antarctica) and interactions between climate, plants, animals and people.	Analyses desert diversity at global scale. Explains multi-cause interactions (e.g., desertification, climate change). Makes cross-unit links (Y3 climates; Y5 Amazon).
Geographical Skills	Reads simple climate graphs with support.	Interprets climate graphs, thematic maps and photos to identify patterns.	Integrates multiple data types (climate graphs + distribution maps + imagery). Explains spatial and climatic patterns with clear reasoning.

🌍 **Year 5 – Why is California so thirsty? - (Autumn 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls simple ideas (e.g., "California is dry") but cannot explain causes of drought or how water is supplied.	Explains causes of drought (climate, rainfall, heat), role of reservoirs, aqueducts and farming. Describes the water cycle accurately using taught vocabulary.	Gives connected explanations of how physical processes (atmospheric circulation, climate patterns) interact with human actions (farming, urban growth). Draws comparisons with earlier units (Y3 Rivers; Y4 Earthquakes).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Identifies basic human–environment links but with gaps or misconceptions.	Explains interactions: how climate affects farming; how farming and population increase pressure on water; how drought affects people and landscapes.	Analyses interactions at multiple scales (local, regional, global). Explains inequalities in water access and evaluates possible future scenarios.
Geographical Skills	Interprets maps/diagrams with support; errors in explaining trends.	Reads maps and diagrams (e.g., rainfall, aqueduct routes). Uses appropriate vocabulary to describe patterns.	Interprets climatic and water-use data with precision. Explains anomalies, evaluates data sources and links spatial patterns to processes.

🌍 **Year 5 – Oceans - (Autumn 2)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls some ocean names but cannot describe characteristics or processes.	Identifies major oceans, explains currents, ocean–climate links, and human impacts (pollution, fishing). Describes hurricanes and temperature regulation.	Explains oceans as complex systems (heat transfer, atmospheric interactions). Connects knowledge to earlier and later units (Y3 Rivers; Y6 Energy & Climate Change).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction & Diversity)	Gives simple cause/effect statements without explanation.	Explains interactions: oceans affect people (climate, storms, trade); people affect oceans (pollution, overfishing). Describes diversity within and between oceans.	Analyses multi-layered interactions (climate change, biodiversity loss, trade networks). Evaluates global inequalities in ocean use and protection.
Geographical Skills	Struggles with map interpretation or graph reading.	Interprets climate/temperature maps and global current diagrams. Gives clear comparisons.	Synthesises maps, diagrams and textual information. Explains spatial patterns using climate and circulation knowledge.

🌍 **Year 5 – Migration - (Spring 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Knows some terms (e.g., "refugee") but cannot apply them accurately or consistently.	Explains different migration types (voluntary, forced), push/pull factors, and how migration changes places (growth, depopulation).	Makes sophisticated connections between migration causes and global patterns. Links migration to physical geography, economic change and cultural diversity.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Change & Interaction)	Identifies change but cannot explain how or why it happens.	Explains how migration changes places (services, housing, population). Shows understanding of scale (local vs global).	Analyses migration as a multi-cause, multi-effect geographical process. Explains interactions between migration and identity, place attachment and economic systems.
Geographical Skills	Describes maps/data at a surface level.	Interprets maps showing migration routes; reads simple population data tables.	Evaluates data reliability, identifies patterns and anomalies, and draws reasoned conclusions.

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🌎 **Year 5 – North and South America - (Spring 2)**

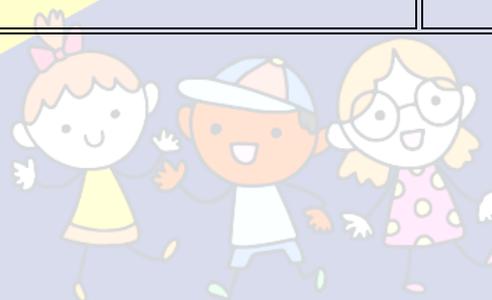| Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls some country names but cannot locate major regions or describe key features accurately.	Identifies major physical and human features across North & South America. Describes megacities, climate zones, and rural-to-urban migration. Explains stereotypes accurately.	Gives connected explanations showing how physical geography shapes human geography across the Americas. Makes links between climate, population, landforms, trade and urban growth.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Diversity)	Notices differences without explanation.	Describes diversity within and between regions (e.g., Andes vs Amazon; New York vs Lima). Explains reasons for population patterns.	Analyses diversity using multi-scale reasoning. Explains how natural and human processes produce contrasting environments and inequalities.
Geographical Skills	Interprets maps/photos with support.	Accurately interprets climate maps, distribution maps and urban land-use diagrams.	Integrates multiple data types (maps, images, charts) to explain spatial and economic patterns with precision.

🌍 **Year 5 – The Amazon - (Summer 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls simple features (e.g., "it is hot") but cannot explain ecosystem processes.	Describes the Amazon's climate, ecosystem structure (canopy, emergents), food chains, nutrient cycle and interactions within the ecosystem.	Explains the rainforest as a complex interdependent system. Shows deep understanding of interactions (water cycle, carbon cycle) using precise vocabulary. Connects to earlier learning (Y4 Deserts; Y3 Biomes).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction & Change)	States changes without reasons.	Explains how and why the ecosystem changes (deforestation, climate change). Describes interactions between people and rainforest.	Analyses multiple interactions and feedback loops (e.g., deforestation → climate change → rainfall decline). Evaluates sustainability challenges using evidence.
Geographical Skills	Reads diagrams with support; limited accuracy.	Interprets maps, diagrams and satellite photos of the Amazon. Draws clear conclusions.	Makes high-level interpretations of satellite imagery and diagrams. Explains spatial patterns (deforestation zones, river distribution).

🌍 **Year 5 – Interconnected Amazon - (Summer 2)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls basic facts (e.g., "soy is grown") but cannot explain global links.	Describes farming in the Bolivian Amazon, soy production, trade connections, environmental impacts and globalisation in simple terms.	Explains global interdependence: how farming, trade, TNCs and environmental systems (carbon cycle) link local places to global markets. Makes links back to *The Amazon* and *Oceans*.
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Identifies connections but not causes or consequences.	Explains interactions at different scales: local farming ↔ global markets; biodiversity ↔ human activity; carbon cycle ↔ deforestation.	Analyses complex global interactions with clarity. Explains inequalities, power relationships and sustainability challenges using well-reasoned evidence.
Geographical Skills	Handles graphs/questionnaires with support.	Conducts simple enquiry tasks (questionnaires, bar graphs). Interprets maps and data about trade and land use.	Designs a rigorous mini-enquiry; collects, analyses and evaluates data. Synthesises multiple data sources to explain global interconnections.

🌍 Year 6 – Energy and Climate Change - (Autumn 1)

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls isolated facts (e.g., "fossil fuels cause pollution") but cannot explain how energy use links to climate change. Limited recall of global examples.	Explains renewable/non-renewable energy, the greenhouse effect, causes of enhanced greenhouse effect, and key global impacts (Pacific Islands, Antarctica, Great Barrier Reef). Gives accurate definitions using taught vocabulary.	Gives connected explanations of energy systems, climate processes and global inequalities. Explains multi-step chains of causation (e.g., albedo effect; ocean warming). Makes secure links to prior learning (Year 5 oceans; Year 3 climate).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Identifies simple human–environment links but with inaccuracies or gaps.	Explains clear interactions: how energy choices affect climate; how climate change affects places. Uses examples from taught case studies.	Analyses interactions at multiple scales (local–global). Explains why impacts differ between places (diversity). Predicts plausible future scenarios using secure reasoning.
Geographical Skills	Reads graphs/maps with support; misinterprets trends.	Interprets line graphs accurately (temperature, CO2). Reads world maps to locate regions studied. Draws simple comparisons across locations.	Gives sophisticated graph interpretations (e.g., anomalies, rate of change). Evaluates data reliability and links patterns to processes. Can explain map patterns (latitude, ocean currents).

🌍 **Year 6 – Ethiopia - (Autumn 2)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls a few facts (e.g., "Ethiopia is in Africa") but cannot locate key regions or describe climate/landscape accurately.	Describes Ethiopia's location, climate, landscapes (Rift Valley), major cities, rural life, and biomes. Explains sustainability challenges using taught examples.	Gives connected explanations of how Ethiopia's physical geography shapes settlement, agriculture and development. Makes clear comparisons with prior case studies (Wales, Jamaica, Amazon).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Interaction)	Gives simple statements about problems (e.g., "it is dry") without explaining causes or interactions.	Explains interactions between climate, landforms, farming, population and sustainability. Uses precise vocabulary from the unit.	Analyses complex interactions (e.g., climate variability → crop yields → migration; global markets → local land use). Explains diversity within Ethiopia across regions.
Geographical Skills	Interprets population pyramids/time-zone maps with support.	Interprets population pyramids to describe structure and trends. Uses time-zone maps accurately. Locates Ethiopian regions using atlas skills.	Draws inferences from demographic data (e.g., future pressures). Explains how geographic and demographic data combine to shape planning and sustainability decisions.

🌍 **Year 6 – Changing Birmingham - (Spring 1)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls simple facts about Birmingham but lacks accurate chronology or understanding of industrial change.	Describes Birmingham's growth, industrial past, deindustrialisation, regeneration projects and sustainability issues. Uses correct vocabulary (redevelopment, industry, migration).	Connects Birmingham's history with broader geographical processes: globalisation, economic shifts, migration flows, environmental policy. Compares to earlier city units (London, Cardiff).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Change)	Identifies change but cannot explain causes or consequences.	Explains causes and effects of changes in Birmingham over time (industry, jobs, migration, environment). Uses evidence from the unit.	Analyses multiple causes and consequences at different scales. Explains how change creates new interactions (e.g., transport improvements → economic growth). Predicts plausible future scenarios.
Geographical Skills	Describes data but with errors or vague statements.	Interprets graphs, charts and spatial data about Birmingham's population, land use and industry. Communicates findings clearly.	Synthesises multiple data types to explain patterns. Evaluates how data helps geographers understand urban change. Creates accurate, well-reasoned written or visual explanations.

🌍 **Year 6 – Jamaica - (Spring 2)**

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Recalls limited facts (e.g., "Jamaica is hot") and struggles to explain geographical features accurately.	Describes Jamaica's location, climate, landscapes, population history, economy and tourism industry. Explains environmental challenges and sustainability issues.	Gives connected explanations of how Jamaica's physical and human geography interact (e.g., coral reefs, hurricanes, tourism economy). Makes comparisons with other place studies (Mediterranean, Amazon, Ethiopia).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Change & Diversity)	Identifies simple differences but not their causes or implications.	Explains how tourism has changed Jamaica over time. Describes diversity within Jamaica's landscapes, settlements and communities.	Analyses inequalities and interactions (e.g., benefits vs environmental pressures). Evaluates preferable futures using clear geographic reasoning.
Geographical Skills	Reads maps/photos with help; limited interpretation.	Interprets maps, photographs and data about Jamaica's climate, coastlines and tourism. Draws basic conclusions.	Integrates multiple data types to make nuanced interpretations. Explains spatial patterns (e.g., tourist zones) and links them to physical processes and socio-economic factors.

🌍 Year 6 – Local Area Enquiry (Double Unit) - (Summer Term)

Assessment Area	Working Towards	Working At	Greater Depth
Substantive Knowledge	Remembers isolated features of the local area; limited understanding of land use or spatial patterns.	Describes key human and physical features of the local area, using correct terminology (land use, transport, services). Explains patterns observed in fieldwork.	Gives connected explanations of how physical and human processes shape the local area. Makes comparisons with earlier place studies (London, Cardiff, Birmingham).
Disciplinary Knowledge (Enquiry: Change / Diversity / Interaction)	Participates in enquiry steps with significant support; conclusions are general or unsubstantiated.	Designs and carries out a geographical enquiry with guidance. Explains findings using evidence from fieldwork and prior learning.	Designs a rigorous enquiry, justifies methods, evaluates reliability, and explains findings using multi-scale reasoning (local–regional–national). Shows insight into interactions shaping the local area.
Geographical Skills	Uses OS maps/grid refs inconsistently; limited accuracy in field sketches or data handling.	Uses OS maps confidently (4- and 6-figure grid references, symbols). Draws field sketches and collects/analyses data accurately. Presents findings clearly.	Demonstrates mastery of OS mapping, high-quality field sketches, precise data analysis, and multiple forms of presentation. Explains how geographers use these tools to answer questions.