

Year 2

The British Isles

Key end points of this unit, The British Isles, are:

- To name locations within the British Isles on a map.
- To use maps and atlases to identify locations within the British Isles.
- To answer geographical questions such as 'What is it like to live in this place?'

Prior to this unit children will have begun to use **maps to find information** and will have looked at world maps, maps of the UK and maps of the local area where they live. This unit builds on the knowledge from Year 1 The UK when children learned about the United Kingdom and the countries within it. During this unit children will have an opportunity to consolidate their understanding of the geography of the UK and should be able to **use maps to identify** the locations of the countries within the British Isles. As children journey through the curriculum they will learn more and remember more about the British Isles as they study both local and UK geography units of work.

Throughout this unit children will look at the link between the **geography of a place** and its **human features**. They will learn about the countries of the British Isles, focusing on key terminology such as **port, harbour, coastline, and island**. They will become familiar with key geographical features of the British Isles including mountains and valleys in Wales and The Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland. In Year 3, 4 and 5 children will learn about specific regions of the UK, building their knowledge and understanding over time.

The National Curriculum requires children to study a small area of a non-European country and compare this location with a small area of the United Kingdom. In this unit we have chosen to compare London and the South African city of Cape Town. Cape Town was chosen for its interesting geography including Table Mountain, The Cape of Good Hope and False Bay. It also links to a text studied in English within our trust, offering children a deeper understanding of the region. We encourage schools to consider which locations they will study and adapt these plans to suit the context of the school.

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Lesson Sequencing:

The sequence of lessons in this unit has been designed to build on prior knowledge and introduce new material in small manageable steps. In lesson 1 children are reconnecting to their prior learning about the United Kingdom. If there is time, it is possible to split this lesson into two; one lesson focusing on the British Isles and re-teaching any content that children are not secure on, then one lesson on England. If not, try to ensure children have a chance to reconnect to their prior learning before teaching the new content about England. When children learn about the British Isles in this lesson they will look at islands, coastlines, beaches and cliffs. These are geographical features that will feature again later in the curriculum as children learn about places around the world. When looking at England, children will learn about rural and urban areas to ensure a misconception is not created that all places in England look the same. Children will begin annotating an A3 map of the British Isles.

In lesson 2 children will learn about Scotland. They will look at a map of the British Isles and locate Scotland. They will learn about urban and rural areas of Scotland including the capital city of Edinburgh and Munros (Scottish mountains). They will learn about harbours and ports and will learn that Aberdeen Harbour is a port that receives cargo ships. Children will continue to label their A3 map of the British Isles, adding annotations to Scotland.

In lesson 3 children will learn about Wales. They will look at maps of Wales, including, if possible, a relief map. They will learn that some areas of Wales have mountains and valleys. They will also begin to understand that weather can be different in regions of the British Isles. They will learn about light houses on the Welsh coastline and the sinking of the Royal Charter in 1859. This lesson is deepening children's understanding of coastlines and their features.

In lesson 4 children will learn about Ireland. Children may be confused by the distinction between Ireland and island, explaining this clearly will help their understanding over time. Children study a unit of geography focused on Northern Ireland in Year 4, knowledge from this lesson will be a foundation for that. At this point in the curriculum, children may find it difficult to understand that Ireland is part of the British Isles but not part of the UK.

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In lesson 5 children will compare an area of the UK they are familiar with, for example London, with Cape Town in South Africa. We recommend you consider if this is the right location for your class to study, it can be changed for another non-European location. Children will use their knowledge to compare locations as they work through the geography curriculum. In this lesson, it is important to model the language of comparison e.g. 'X also has similar physical features to Y', 'In contrast X has...' and children will benefit from oral rehearsal before they are expected to write.

The assessment task for this unit involves writing to answer this question:

What is it like to live in the British Isles?

We recommend you include a scaffold such as a structure strip with pictures and key words for children to write about the British Isles, e.g. Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and England. It is important to explain to children that geographers might think about what life is like in places around the world. Describing places is something a geographer would be good at.

To include their knowledge of Cape Town in this task, children could include a paragraph about how their local area compares and contrasts with Cape Town.

This task has been designed to give children an opportunity to show what they remember and what they understand about the British Isles.

The key substantive concepts focused on in this unit include place and space.

The key disciplinary understanding in this unit is that geographers describe places.