

Innovative Geography Teaching Grant Recipients

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and geographical learning

Year: 2009

Principal Investigator: Charlotte Hawkins

School: The King's School, Devon

Project Title: The Skeleton in the Sand

Abstract: In this project pupils assume the role of an archaeologist who is investigating the discovery of a body in a local garden. Using a range of geographical and historical sources they must analyse evidence to suggest reasons for settlement in the Ottery St Mary area, to find out about past landscapes and lifestyles, and to assess how sustainable past lifestyles were compared to the modern age. The activity explores the physical and human influences on settlement location and people's lifestyles, and involves the practical application of key geographical knowledge, skills and understanding.

Year: 2009

Principal Investigator: Helen Thorne

School: Chantry High School, Suffolk

Project Title: Geography Through Animation

Abstract: This project aims to involve animation making as a technique to aid motivation and learning in the study of plate tectonics. Students will study the Nevado Del Ruiz 1985 volcanic eruption and apply their knowledge to the production of an animated film, which would then be presented in class. They will use 'Inspirations' software to mindmap the event, focusing on causes, and the social, economic and environmental impacts of the eruption. The use of flip books, play dough and cameras will be used in the animation production. The Geography department will work closely with Media Studies in the development of the project in a cross-curricular way.

Year: 2009

Principal Investigator: Kathryn Southgate

School: Chantry High School, Suffolk

Project Title: Global Issues

Abstract: This project aims to aid the development of students understanding of Globalisation and enrich pupil's knowledge of current affairs and highlight issues raised in PSHE and Citizenship. Students will be given one lesson to research a number of themes including More Economically Developed Countries (MEDC) and Low Economically Developed Countries (LEDC), global fashions, fair-trade food and global sport, followed by an entire day to create the reports. After this lesson, pupils will either attend a visit to the local Co-Operative offices to learn about fair trade foods or receive a talk from the Fair Trade Organisation to enhance student engagement. There will then be a whole day where pupils will be told initially about a humanitarian disaster in an LEDC and will then be given time to write their reports. During the day there will be news flashes and updates whilst they are creating their reports. There will be five news stories touching on the five themes throughout the day. Other news story ideas include 'Ban Foreign Footballers in the Premiership' and 'Tesco's refuse to stock anything but Fair trade'. The project will conclude with a presentation of news articles to parents and governors to promote the community focus of the school.

Year: 2009

Principal Investigator: Rebecca Kitchen

School: Aylesbury High School, Buckinghamshire

Project Title: Geography Video Diaries

Abstract: This project will provide Geographers with video cameras to record their experiences during Geography fieldtrips, lessons and extracurricular activities. It will be used to promote Geography throughout the school, as discussion tools after fieldtrips, as evidence of good practice for both staff and student's portfolios and as methods of data presentation in enquiry and coursework. Video diaries will be filmed by students of all abilities and in every year group as well as by teachers. As well as a detailed digital record of Geography at the school it will also provide an insight into both students and teachers personal geographies.

Year: 2009

Principal Investigator: Anne Ridgway

School: Wheatley Park School Holton, Oxford

Project Title: Should the Naylor family go on holiday to Namibia?

Abstract: Namibia is becoming a popular tourist destination with a unique physical environment, yet it is an African country that few people know very much about. This project will enable pupils to develop their awareness of Namibia and to investigate the issues surrounding the growth of tourism in the country. The project is designed to develop resource enquiry learning and will address the question, Should the Naylor family go to Namibia on holiday? The project will provide innovative teaching resources which will enable pupils to carry out this enquiry, as well as materials that could be used to develop global citizenship objectives. A link will be made with three Namibian children to engage pupils on a personal level and provide real life perspectives on issues raised. The long term outcome will be teaching and learning resources available to teachers and pupils on the internet.

Year: 2009

Principal Investigator: Robert Lang

School: King Edward VI Five Ways School, Birmingham

Project Title: Guangzhou Beijing Geography/Art Project

Abstract: This project is a cross curricular project based around Geography and Art and a school's established International link with a school in Guangzhou. The project uses modern art and photography via Birmingham's Museum and art gallery and student's photographs and experiences to look at the growth, urbanisation and redevelopment of the cities of Guangzhou and Beijing in China.

Year: 2009

Principal Investigator: Pat Frean

School: Plymouth High School for Girls, Plymouth

Project Title: Hot Geography

Abstract: With the emphasis on combating global warming this project aims to develop, in collaboration with Ahantaman secondary school in Ghana a decision-making exercise based at the Ahantaman school site to see whether it would be best suited to a wind turbine, solar panels, or a biomass generator. The project will also carry out a similar study at a nearby Plymouth school to install two wind turbines on their site as well as their energy efficient English block and their ground source heat pump. The project will study the before and after energy figures and the controversy caused with the neighbours over the planning application. The project aims to encourage a global perspective within a localised context, developing one of geography's key underpinning concepts: interconnectedness.

Year: 2008

Project Leader: David Rogers

School: Priory School, Southsea

Project Title: Geography on Tour

Abstract: This project aims to help pupils and educators to consider the wide range of relevant and exciting case studies available to engage and inspire pupils. The new Key Stage 3 orders demand that the curriculum is engaging and explores current issues. The project will aim to demonstrate the importance of geography in understanding issues around Britain and show how pupils can contribute. The outcome will be a series of podcasts, videos, Google Earth tours, lessons and unit ideas to inspire and support secondary geography colleagues across the country. The project will tour the country examining local issues that geographers can understand and contribute to. The aim is to link to the key concepts of geography as outlined in the 2008 National Curriculum and demonstrate how pupils can 'participate in informed responsible action' while exploring 'real and relevant contemporary contexts.'

Year: 2008

Project Leader: Teyfide Salih

School: Wilmington Enterprise College, Wilmington

Project Title: Geography Key Stage 3 Podcast Project

Abstract: The aim of the project is to improve the learning outcomes and motivation for Geography at Key Stage 3 and ultimately increase the student interest in Key Stage 4. Students will learn how to create visual and audio podcasts detailing their current subject area. Completed podcasts will be widely accessible via download from the school website, local cluster Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and iTunes. The podcasts will offer a fun and engaging way to reach an audience beyond teachers and follow recent research trends of increased student motivation.

Year: 2008

Project Leader: Christine Lloyd-Staples

School: Mandeville School, Ayelsbury

Project Title: Using GPS and Google Earth to Develop Virtual Fieldtrips

Abstract: This project aims to cascade the skills learnt at an RGS Google Earth training course to other secondary geography teachers within a local authority (Buckinghamshire). Free training would be offered to teachers, with details advertised in the termly geography newsletter and posted on www.bucksgfl.org.uk. The project will provide the opportunity for geography teachers within Buckinghamshire to develop their skills and confidence in how to combine use of the digital technologies available to them, to create "virtual fieldtrips" tailored to the needs of their own students.

Year: 2008

Project Leader: Gavin Sterry

School: Belvedere Academy, Liverpool

Project Title: The Belvedere Academy Fair Trade Fashion Show

Abstract: Geography at The Belvedere Academy plans to host a fashion show to promote awareness of fair trade. The fashion show, organised and run by Year 9 students will be unique, thought provoking and awe inspiring; taking influences from across the curriculum. All of the clothes worn by students will be fair trade; either made in our textiles department,

using fair trade materials or donated from local fair trade clothing retailers. Through fashion, a theme that is relevant to all our students, we will bring the geography of what is involved in the products we wear to life. The project objectives are to 1.) Inspire global citizenship by raising awareness of the disparity that exists between countries where clothes are manufactured, and where they are sold; 2.) To allow students, and the wider audience to question their own values and responsibilities in the global fashion industry and; 3.) To allow students to assess their part in the sustainability of global poverty through the production of the fashion show.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: Helen Gosnell

School: Sir John Lawes School, Harpenden

Project Title: Zambia: A Development Case Study for Key Stage 3 (DVD)

Abstract: This education project created a virtual fieldtrip to Zambia for Key Stage 3 Geography students in a UK school. Footage was shot in both Zambia and with experts in the UK. The results were edited in DVD format for use in classes on Development Studies. The resource was distributed to other schools in 2007. 30 UK students and 10 Zambian students were directly involved in the project. A further 180 pupils from Sir John Lawes School have benefited in the year following the project.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: John Ziltener

School: Morley High School, Leeds

Project Title: Exploring the Geography of Morley and its Community

Abstract: Morley is a small historic market town that has been absorbed into the urban structure of Leeds. Yet despite its obvious geographical links with the rest of the city it retains a strong traditional identity of its own. The population is predominantly white, working class and attitudes expressed by parents and children alike are often insular with a reluctance to explore the cultures and values of other groups of people within the wider urban area of Leeds and beyond. In May 2006 Christopher Beverley won the first British National Party seat on Leeds City Council when he polled 2,083 votes in Morley South. This project aimed to provide pupils with the opportunity to explore their locality, its community and values and reflect on how they would like to see their hometown develop and change in future years. Students from the schools Geography Club created films about the town after visiting locations including police and fire stations, the town hall and interviewing local people.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: Jennifer Brindley

School: St. Bede's Catholic School and Sixth Form College, Lanchester

Project Title: Geography Podcasts

Abstract: The use of ICT in Geography lessons enthuses and motivates pupils. Students and teachers alike are eager to expand the use of ICT in both their everyday lives and in their learning/ teaching. This project proposed to enhance the student's experience of both Geography and ICT by employing 'Podcast' technology. Podcasts are audio files which can be uploaded onto a website and then listened to directly by pupils, or downloaded onto their personal Mp3 players. The school already used a limited number of Podcasts on its website but this project aimed to expand the selection to record lessons, revision sessions, Geography based games and quizzes, mock radio shows based on case study topics etc.

The school also planned to develop 'vodcasts' (video teaching resources). This project helped to facilitate a variety of learning styles and independent learning objectives.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: Adam Lawson

School: Homewood School and Sixth Form Centre Kent, Tenterden

Project Title: Geodoc's: Opening the Classroom to Geography

Abstract: The aim of this project was for pupils to explain the complexities of a geographical topic to another set of pupils in a different school that would otherwise have no connection whatsoever. A "Geodoc" is a short 3-5 minute digital video documentary created by young people on a geographical subject. Digital videos are assembled using Microsoft Windows Movie Maker (WMM) and can include digital images, video, and voiceovers. A completed "Geodoc" can be uploaded onto an online server where it will be available for students and parents to view and could also be downloaded and used as a teaching resource. Topics of "Geodoc" can cover any aspects of geography that the students or teachers wish. This project not only helps to enthuse students about geography but also allows them to develop key ICT skills.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: Katherine Bone

School: Aylesbury High School, Aylesbury

Co Investigators: Iain Annat, Head of History, Aylesbury High School; Alex Langlands, Archaeologist

Project Title: Landscape Archaeology: The Vale of the White Horse

Abstract: This project aimed to give AS geography and history students the opportunity to develop their skills within the challenge of a new field and to raise awareness of the variety of careers available to those with a geography or history background. The project provided a basic introduction to the techniques of Landscape Archaeology through a series of lunchtime seminars. The project focused on an area of the Oxfordshire Ridgeway and the Vale of the White Horse. Students were encouraged to develop their knowledge and identify the links with AS geography and history. The seminars worked chronologically through the archaeology of the study area. The themes of the seminars were 'Continuity and Change' and they were designed to examine both temporal and spatial variations in the study area. The project culminated in a fieldtrip to the study area accompanied by a field archaeologist who the students worked with through the project. The fieldwork allowed students to place their findings and knowledge with the reality found on the ground.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: Andrew Lee

School: Westminster Under School, London

Project Title: DVD Film of the Thames

Abstract: This project made a short documentary DVD about flooding and the River Thames. The film aimed to make the river accessible to local students and to get them to 'revisit' the Thames seeing it as a local and significant natural feature. The DVD also provided a local, relevant and up to date case study for use in the classroom. Initially available to students at Westminster, the project aims to make the DVD available throughout the country to students studying for their GCSE's or Common Entrance exams. The film focuses on flood events along the course of the Thames. In addition it looks at the response

of the Environment Agency in the running and maintenance of the Thames Barrier, and the plans for future storm surge mitigation as the barrier ends its working life. The film was made to be carbon neutral.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: Darcy Gillie

School: Moray House School of Education (University of Edinburgh), Edinburgh

Project Title: What's in a Name?

Abstract: This project aimed to create a web-based place-name education resource aimed at teachers and students. Place names have a 'bad' name in geography. One does not have to search too much into the literature of geographical education for the phrase "geography is more than just place-names". However, this move away from place-names dismisses a rich, exciting, sometimes funny and always far from dull world. Who wouldn't wonder about the origins of Bunny (Leicestershire), why there is a California in Norfolk or who was the Crook of Devon and what did he steal? The purpose of this project was to develop a web resource which enhanced the place of place-names in teaching, promote integrated, cross-curricular learning and provide an opportunity for pupils to acquire a range of skills and knowledge. The first stage of the project involved a pilot workshop to consult teachers on the materials that they feel a successful, useful resource on place-names would need. The second stage of the project involved the development of the resource itself. The website comprised a collection of lesson plans, project ideas, maps, photographs and other resources related to place names.

Year: 2007

Project Leader: Roger Tapping

School: Burgess Hill School for Girls, Burgess Hill

Project Title: Geography Roadshows

Abstract: This project aimed to offer two 90 minute geography roadshows for year 5 and year 8 students at primary and preparatory schools in Sussex. The roadshows were presented by members of schools staff with assistance from A Level students. The roadshows were designed to be multi-media and interactive and made use of SmartBoard digital projection technology as well as simple demonstrations and exercises for the students. The Year 5 show was entitled 'Why does the world have lumpy bits?'. It used PowerPoint prepared by A-level geographers to explore the earth and its environments. The Year 8 roadshow was entitled 'The human race- will we win?'. This explored the causes, results and implications of climate change and took the form of a 'UN' style conference, involving a number of different schools in the area. The project aimed to promote cross-curricular co-operation and understanding. It aimed to engage younger students in the subject of geography and to provide an opportunity for Sixth Form students to enhance their applications for geography and other earth science degree courses.

Year: 2006

Project Leader: Jamie Buchanan-Dunlop

School: Eastbury Comprehensive School

Project Title: Digital Explorer: Eastbury Comprehensive School Toubkal expedition

Abstract: In this project pupils from Eastbury Comprehensive School trialed the Digital Explorer methodology in the High Atlas Mountains and Marrakech. The highlights of the trip were interactive sessions between the students in the mountains and their peers in the

classroom, and the first successful testing of a satellite modem to update a website on a student expedition.

Year: 2006

Project Leader: Garry Atterton

School: The Castle School, Thornbury

Project Title: Bridging the Gap

Abstract: This project was designed to help the standard of geography teaching in the main feeders school (Crossway Junior School) The Castle School. Two projects were carried out with students. The first project was year 4 students looking at the enquiry 'should the High Street be closed to traffic?' The second and more extensive project involved secondary geography staff working with year 6 staff and students on the enquiry 'how can the environment of The Castle school grounds be improved?' The project as a success and the school hopes to repeat it in the future.

Year: 2006

Project Leader: Alan Parkinson

School: King Edward VII School, Kings Lynn

Project Title: Google Earth: A Users Guide

Abstract: This project aimed to produce teaching materials and strategies for using Google Earth in the classroom. The guide is now published on the web and is referenced by all the key websites for Geography and ICT developments.

Year: 2006

Project Leader: Michael Parker

School: Ravens Wood School, Bromley

Project Title: Windows on our World: Continued

Abstract: The aim of the Windows on Our World project was to provide images to enhance geography teaching. It provides virtual fieldwork opportunities to students online, in their classrooms and at home. Many students have learning styles that benefit from appropriate imagery. Lessons usually start with an image that encourages discussion. Often images are utilised as a background for theoretical work.

Year: 2005

Project Leader: Elizabeth Underwood

School: Leon School and Sports College, Milton Keynes

Project Title: The Leon Treasure Hunt Challenge

Abstract: The Leon Treasure Hunt Challenge aimed to improve significantly map reading/ interpretation skills by making the landscape come alive through the interaction of OS maps, 3D visuals and the real world outside. All year groups benefited from this new approach including GCSE and AS/A2 students. The project is ongoing but students can test their map skills through an interactive Treasure Hunt. The Challenge could be extended to include other schools in Great Britain or abroad in the future.

Year: 2005

Project Leader: Anthony Cheetham

School: Highfields Science Specialist School, Wolverhampton

Project Title: Who Killed G Joe Raphical?

Abstract: During this project 30 Year 8 students were taken to an OEC in North Wales where the pupils were briefed that a young geographer had been found stabbed to death in a river in N. Wales. Their task over the weekend was to work out who from the 6 suspects supplied did it, where the murder took place and the reasons for the murder. The background to the murder mystery weekend is conflict in Snowdonia National Park between tourism, economic activity and conservation. The students were taught various techniques and skills which they needed to employ to help them solve the mystery, including soil analysis, measurement of river velocity, map reading and orienteering.

Year: 2005

Project Leader: Michael Parker

Schools: Ravens Wood School, Bromley

Project Title: Windows on our World

Abstract: The aim of the Windows on Our World project was to provide images to enhance geography teaching. It provides virtual fieldwork opportunities to students online, in their classrooms and at home. Many students have learning styles that benefit from appropriate imagery. Lessons usually start with an image that encourages discussion. Often images are utilised as a background for theoretical work.

Year: 2004

Project Leader: Noel Jenkins

Schools: Courtfields School, Wellington

Project Title: Investigation into Rural Flood Deserts

Abstract: The project drew inspiration from recent work by Hilary Shaw (University of Leeds) who defines food deserts as "areas of relative exclusion where people experience physical and economic barriers to accessing healthy food" (website is www.fooddeserts.org). Using conventional approaches to fieldwork the project engaged students in the investigation of food deserts in the region of East Devon and W Somerset. The outcome was a digital map of food deserts, together with a series of video diaries of the fieldwork, and a website. In showcasing the use of new technologies for geographical investigation. It is to be hoped that other teachers will be inspired to develop similar work.

Year: 2004

Project Leader: Daniel Ellison

Schools: Little Heath School, Reading

Project Title: Windows on the World

Abstract: This project made full use of the resources (digital camera, laptop computer and data projector) of geography departments by providing the ideas and exploring the know-how to turn white boards into virtual windows and teachers into presenters: The project aims were to: 1) to produce a series of 3 minute (looping) still video shots of key processes (e.g. plunge pool, river cross section) that can be projected within a classroom, the video can then be used to describe processes to students; 2) to produce a series of short explanations of key words presented by the relevant teacher (in front of a feature explaining that feature) aimed at Key Stage 3. To develop a simple know-how format for educators to repeat when in the field; 3) to produce a series of short explanations of key word presented by relevant people (e.g. farmer explaining what an input is); 4) to encourage relevant expeditions and NGO's to contribute videos to the project; 5) to produce a short guide with ideas and know-how to

transfer the developed skills into the classroom, department and school; and 6) to view this project as the catalyst for a longer project.

Year: 2003

Project Leader: Melissa Gardner

Schools: Stanchester Community School, Stoke Sub Hamdon

Project Title: Team Teaching- The Third Way to Visualize Success

Abstract: This project was a challenging approach to teaching Geography throughout Key Stages 3 and 4. The aim was for all lessons to be taught through interactive education and University of the First age principles such as VAK (visual, auditory and kinaesthetics) learning styles. The department set out to prove that 'Team Teaching' Geography was key to stimulating continued and improved success throughout both key stages. The teachers' innovation was not only trialed in new lesson formats, but also in designing the team layout to enhance student participation and progress.

Year: 2003

Project Leader: Alan Parkinson

Schools: King Edward VII School, Kings Lynn

Project Title: Geo Bloggs

Abstract: 'Geo Bloggs' created a web page aimed to encourage students to post their own Geographical 'blogs' on current and daily events, encouraging the students to investigate how everyday activities and observations are examples of Geography in action. The aim was to encourage students to see the geographical nature behind their lives and post these on the website. It was hoped that this would help the students appreciate the relevance of Geography.

Year: 2002

Project Leader: Sally Hall

Schools: St George's College, Asslestone

Project Title: Geography Top Trumps

Abstract: This Geography teaching project was based on the popular children's card game 'Top Trumps'. A pack of trump cards displaying a variety of information on natural hazards was created. The objective was to engage students in classroom tasks that allowed them to access geographical information as well as to directly compare and contrast statistics and events relating to natural hazards.

Year: 2002

Project Leader: Keith James

Schools: University of Aberdeen/ Anderson High School, Shetland

Project Title: Whose Opinion is it Anyway? Environmental Stakeholders and Decision Makers

Abstract: This outreach project exposed pupils to key environmental issues through role-play and critical questioning. The initiative offered two projects: the genetic modification of food and the establishment of national parks. The aims of this project were to: expose pupils to issues of the genetic modification of food and the establishment of national parks; encourage the realisation that the decisions we make have a direct consequence on global scale environmental issues; develop critical thought and questioning skills and; provide PGCE and undergraduate students with valuable classroom experience.

Year: 2002

Project Leader: Ollie Bray

Schools: Knox Academy, Haddington

Project Title: Online International Weather Station

Abstract: The aim of the Knox Academy weather project was to teach students from Knox Academy, cluster primary schools and an international audience more about the local metrological environment of Knox Academy. The school collected data about the local weather with the aid of a Davis weather station. This information was then be uploaded to a live website to gain a complete synopsis of the current weather conditions at Knox Academy.

Year: 2002

Project Leader: Michelle Partridge

Schools: Longhill High School, Rottingdean

Project Title: Shanty Town Redevelopment

Abstract: This project provided students with a planning challenge and helped to developed thinking skills through Geography. The aim of the project was to redevelop a cleared and levelled shanty town site, with no infrastructure in place. This project was intended to enhance the education of pupils through development of the project, as pupils were encouraged to use more complex thinking. Students also had the opportunity to improve their ability to handle information.