

Lesson Three: Getting to know the British Isles (Year three)

Lesson Plan

This lesson is aimed at Year three pupils. They develop a sense of where the school is located within the wider world. Pupils use eight compass points to describe the location of capital cities within the British Isles and develop knowledge of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland through hands- (or feet-) on activities.

Key Questions

- How can we use maps to develop our knowledge of the British Isles?
- Which countries make up the British Isles?
- What are their capital cities and where are these located?
- How can we describe the location of different parts of the British Isles?

Key Ideas:

- Great Britain, the United Kingdom and the British Isles cannot be used interchangeably, as they refer to different boundaries and include different land masses.
- To get a more accurate direction, an eight-point compass can be used.
- The UK's capital cities are: England (London), Scotland (Edinburgh), Wales (Cardiff) and Northern Ireland (Belfast).
- England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are the countries within the United Kingdom.

Subject Content Areas

- Locational knowledge: Discover of the location the school and the local area. Name and locate counties and cities of the United Kingdom.
- Place knowledge: Interpret a range of sources of geographical information, including maps, diagrams, globes, aerial photographs.
- Human and physical geography: Use basic geographical vocabulary to describe features in the local area and on a map of the British Isles.
- Geographical Skills and Fieldwork: Communicate geographical information in a variety of ways, including through maps. KS2 - Use the eight points of a compass, four and six-figure grid references, symbols and key (including the use of Ordnance Survey maps) to build their knowledge of the United Kingdom and the wider world.

Downloads

The British Isles (PPT)

Lesson Plan PDF | MSWORD

Outline map of BI (PDF)

British Isles, United Kingdom or Great Britain? PDF | MS WORD

Web links:

To view a large map of the British Isles go to <http://www.maximap.net/>

To download Digimap for Schools go to <http://digimapforschools.edina.ac.uk/>

For the plenary activity game go to the BBC and/or MapZone websites

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/barnabybear/games/where_in_britain.shtml

<http://mapzone.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapzone/gamespages/EnglandGame.htm>

For more detail on the difference between the UK, British Isles and Great Britain go to <http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/blog/2011/08/whats-the-difference-between-uk-britain-and-british-isles/>

Learning objective

To create a map of the British Isles

Starter

Play *Geography Hangman*. Ask pupils to write down as many geographical words as they know. They might need some prompting, or you may want to choose from the list below:

Map, globe, key, symbols, cliff, valley, coast, hill, scale, mountain, soil, sea, weather, climate, equator, city, town, village, and harbour. Select a pupil to come up to the front and play hangman with their word. It is a good idea to check the word first to make sure it is geographical and spelled correctly!

Main Teaching

Show the class large map of British Isles. The biggest ones can be obtained from the Maxi Map website at: <http://www.maximap.net/>, but other companies do large ones as well. Alternatively an outline could be drawn in chalk on the school playground. Use slide three of the British Isles PowerPoint presentation to show the countries that make up the British Isles. Alternatively, print out the downloadable resource *British Isles, United Kingdom or Great Britain?*

Explain to the class the different definitions:

Great Britain

This is the official collective name of England, Scotland and Wales and their associated islands. It does not include Northern Ireland and therefore should not be used interchangeably with 'UK.'

The United Kingdom

The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (to give its full name) refers to the political union between England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. The UK is a sovereign state, but the nations that make it up are also countries in their own right. Teachers note: the Channel Islands and Isle of Man are not part of the UK, but are Crown Dependencies.

The British Isles

This refers to the islands of Great Britain and Ireland – including the Republic of Ireland – and the 5000 or so smaller islands scattered around our coasts, such as the Channel Isles and Isle of Mann. This only refers to geography, not nationality, and while the Republic of Ireland is part of the British Isles, it is a separate and independent country and its people are not British.

Now ask what is meant by the term: *capital city*? Do they know any capital cities? Explain that each country has its own capital city.

Pose the question:

- Does anyone know the Capital cities of England, Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland?

England (London), Scotland (Edinburgh), Wales (Cardiff) and Northern Ireland (Belfast). Once all cities have been named, then show them labels. Ask pupils: where are they located on the map? Ask different children to put these labels on the map outline. Tell them when they are 'warm' (i.e. close to where the city is located, until they are at the exact spot).

Now, either using compass points on map or labels review North, South, East and West and introduce pupils to the two rhymes on the PowerPoint to help them remember compass directions. Reinforce by asking questions such as: which is furthest south, London or Edinburgh? Introduce North East, South East, South West and North West. Ask children to describe location of cities using compass points. E.g. London is in the South East. This could be extended to include all 16 compass points.

Main Activity

Pupils label the *Outline of the British Isles* (see downloadable resources) with country names and capital cities. To support less able pupils you could give them an outline map with borders on and dots to mark capital cities as a guide.

Plenary

Play the online MapZone game by clicking on the link within the *Getting to know the British Isles* PowerPoint or on the lesson plan web link.

This activity requires the class to place English counties in the right place on the map, like jigsaw pieces. There are easy, medium and hard versions. There is also a version for Scotland and Wales. You may want to give pupils a map showing where the counties are when you begin.

As an alternative play Barnaby Bear's 'Where in Britain' on the BBC website (see web links)

Further study

This could be a starting point for study of the local area. You could follow this up by finding where the school is located in relation to other large cities. It could also be used as a starting point for study of a contrasting locality. Alternatively, it could be extended to include knowledge of Europe and perhaps knowledge of the whole world, including learning what Latitude, Longitude, Tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, Arctic and Antarctic Circles and the Equator are.