



Key Stage 3 – Sustainable Development Across the Curriculum

The concept of **sustainable development** as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" was first defined by the **Brundtland Commission** as long ago as 1987. We are currently part-way through a United Nations **Decade of Education for Sustainable Development** which runs from 2005 to 2014.

Although some people think that the term sustainable development has been overused and has therefore lost much of its credibility, the new secondary curriculum has retained the term as part of one of the seven key cross-curriculum-dimensions - **Global dimension and Sustainable Development**. The **QCA** website tells us that:

*“The global dimension incorporates global citizenship, conflict resolution, diversity, human rights, interdependence, social justice, **sustainable development** and values and perceptions.*

***Sustainable development** has been described as development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The goal of **sustainable development** is to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without transferring problems to people in other parts of the world or compromising the quality of life of future generations.*

*Global learning and education for **sustainability** address environmental, social and economic issues that are of importance to young people. This can make learning more relevant to their lives and have a positive impact on engagement and achievement. Working towards **sustainable development** goals can also increase the sense of purpose felt by young people as they develop into responsible citizens.”*

In the new KS3 Programme of Study for Geography, **sustainable development** is highlighted as one of the key concepts that underpin the study of the subject. Under Curriculum Opportunities, the document requires us to make links between Geography and the cross-curriculum-dimension ‘**Global dimension and Sustainable Development**’

The **GTT** website contains some specific sustainable development resources which you may also want to look at and use in your work:

Online CPD - Sustainable Development

<http://www.geographyteachingtoday.org.uk/ks3-resources/online-cpd/sustainable-development/>

The Global Challenge: Will we destroy the planet?

<http://www.geographyteachingtoday.org.uk/curriculum-making/teaching-ideas/the-global-challenge/>



Are you flood ready?

Looking at resilience, risk and management

Although it is not the main focus of the work, this teaching module is an excellent basis for showcasing the **sustainable development** concept and teachers could easily extend the suggested scheme of work to do more to develop student understanding. It could be argued that the UK examples of river flooding that have been very frequently in the news over the last couple of years are a perfect example of how **unsustainable** much of our development is in the UK. The high levels of demand for new housing and the particularly strong pressure to find new building land in southern England has led to a great deal of inappropriate house building on flood plains. Students could analyse these pressures and resulting actions and come up with some possible alternative scenarios that might provide a better example of sustainable development.



Photo credit: **David Rayner**



The geography of my stuff

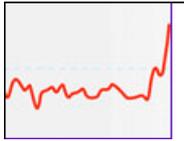
Exploring food miles, child labour and online purchasing

Although sustainable development is not flagged up as one of the key concepts to be showcased in this unit, there are clear links between the work and this concept. The question of whether as a country we can continue to draw on the resources of virtually any country in the world in order to satisfy our demand for products, is a very pertinent one. Students could make a comparison between the times when we were able (or forced as during WWII) to produce virtually all the food and goods we needed and the current situation when we simply import almost everything. Even food that we can grow in one part of the year, we insist on importing so that we can have at any time of the year e.g. strawberries in winter.

In relation to the packaging that accompanies much of the products that we consume, there is an even stronger argument that the current situation is **unsustainable**, particularly since we insist on re-exporting much of the waste to be recycled in countries where labour is cheap, creating ever more pollution in the process. Questions about the volume of waste materials we produce, whether we should take greater responsibility for recycling and processing the waste materials and about our responsibility to countries which are in the early stages of economic development provide a good focus for further work on sustainable development issues.



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Changing Climates

Discussing the facts about climate change and the predictions for the future

This teaching module already contains an emphasis on and lesson ideas for linking to and showcasing the **sustainable development** concept.

The section “**What can we do to develop sustainably?**” explores how we can live more sustainably to limit the impacts of global warming and asks the key questions:

Are different ways of life more or less sustainable?

What actions can be taken now to limit the impacts of global warming?

Who can effect the most change- individuals or Governments?



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China Today

Exploring the social, economic, environmental and political interdependence between China and the rest of the world.

Any scheme of work which attempts to study a whole country is ambitious and in the case of China, that is doubly so. However, there is an increasingly strong feeling amongst teachers that it is vital that students do attempt to develop some knowledge and understanding of this huge country. The impact of China’s growth and development on both the national and global environment will be key factors in determining whether the country’s rapid development is **sustainable** or not.



Photo credit: **David Rayner**

There are many who see development as being stifled in those countries where rapid economic growth has to be planned alongside vocal demands from those inside the more economically developed countries for more **sustainable development**. There is great scope for students to look at both the practical and moral aspects of **sustainable development** in a country where the majority of the people still survive on a meagre income. It is an uncomfortable thought that in the UK, in order to achieve our relatively high standard of living, we have had to chop down all our forests, concrete over much of the land, pollute our rivers and use up almost all our natural resources yet we expect countries such as China to develop using a different model – fair or unfair?

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Useful General Links:

Sustainable Schools Project:

<http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/sustainableschools/>

DEA - education for a just and sustainable world:

<http://www.dea.org.uk/index-440624>

DEA – Sustainable Development and Youth Work:

<http://www.dea.org.uk/sustainabledevelopment/index.html>

Global Dimension website:

<http://www.globaldimension.org.uk>

Renewable World website:

<http://www.renewableworld.org.uk>