



## GEOGRAPHY – A LEVEL PREPARATION TASKS

Complete the tasks outlined below to the best of your ability. You can do this either by hand on paper or typed on a computer. Remember to keep your completed work safe and ready to show your teacher at the start of your A level studies.

You should use the resource suggestions provided to complete the work, as well as using your own wider reading and research.

### Task 1: The A Level Specification

Before you begin your A level studies, it is important to familiarise yourself with the key content, geographical skills and assessment style of our chosen exam board.

We follow the AQA Geography specification. Your first task is to go to the AQA website (click on the link below) and read the information provided. This gives you an excellent insight into the geographical topics, terminology and skills you will be covering, as well as the style of exam questions.

<https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/geography/as-and-a-level/geography-7037>

The specification includes all the possible topics different schools can select to teach. The topics we study in year 12 and 13 are outlined below:

Year 12	Year 13
Coastal Systems & Landscapes	Carbon and Water Cycles
Contemporary Urban Environments	Hazards
Changing Places	Global Systems and Governance
Skills, Statistics and Fieldwork	Coursework (NEA)

### Task 2: A Wider Reading Record

Geography is a dynamic subject that reflects the ever-changing world around us. A key part of studying A level Geography is keeping up to date with current affairs and reading widely around the content covered in class on a weekly basis.

To help you prepare for your A level studies, your next task is to start reading books & articles, watching documentaries, listening to podcasts etc.

**This should form a main part of your studies each week.**

Keep a summary record of what you have read, watched and listened to (a blank example template has been provided on page 8-10 of this document). It is important to evaluate the information you are accessing. Reflect on its usefulness, reliability and bias – how will you determine this? Do you prefer certain news channels, websites over others? Be aware of your own bias when selecting and reading information.

On page 7 of this document are a range of recommended resources to help you get started. **Bring your wider reading record with a minimum of 4-5 articles, documentaries, podcasts etc. that you found the most interesting (a minimum of one page).**

### **Task 3: Critical Thinking Task**

Critical thinking is a key skill used by geographers and is a key part of 'thinking like a geographer'.

Critical thinking involves:

- 1) **Making better sense of information, knowledge and ideas.** This involves examining evidence, considering alternative solutions and learning to distinguish fact from opinion. Thus, building better geographical understanding and the ability to reach informed conclusions through practicing the three Rs: Rigor, Rationality and Reasoning.
- 2) **Becoming a more open thinker.** This involves challenging assumptions through debate and considering the ethical issues underpinning geographical change, to become a more autonomous learner.

**Choose TWO questions to answer from the 9 below.** Before doing so we recommend that you conduct research related to the questions before formulating an answer. You can use the resources on page 7 to help as a starting point to gather information to answer the questions in depth. Find evidence, facts and research from reputable institutions that support your viewpoints and/or a counterview.

**Use the following paragraph structure to answer your chosen question(s):**

- 1) Introduction – Define key terms and state your initial viewpoint/judgement/response to the question.
- 2) Explain your opinion. Remember to use a PEEL paragraph structure to state a point, provide detailed evidence and explanation and to link your writing back to the question asked. You may want to PEEL more than once for several points.
- 3) Explain an alternative viewpoint/counterargument. Use a PEEL paragraph structure (see step 2).
- 4) Conclusion – Complete your answer by reaching an informed conclusion that clearly answers the question. Justify why your opinion outweighs an alternative or how the answer may change from short term to long term timescales. Does it depend upon location in the world or whether it is being considered on a local/national/global scale?

#### Questions

- 1) Should LICs/NEEs be allowed to pollute the atmosphere in order to advance their economies?
- 2) Is debt cancellation an effective solution to the development gap?
- 3) Can the world continue to support an increasing population?
- 4) Will the development gap ever cease to exist?
- 5) Is erosion the most important process influencing the coastal landscape?
- 6) The UK should use managed retreat as its main coastal management strategy. To what extent do you agree?
- 7) How and why does vulnerability to natural hazards change from place to place and over time?
- 8) What do you think the biggest impact the human race has had on the planet is?
- 9) Should we be trying to prepare for climate change or mitigate against it?

## Photo Analysis

A key concept within Geography is understanding that places can be different and have different meanings to different people. This can vary based upon factors such as their own experience of the place, whether they feel like an insider or outsider in the place and what they have learnt about the place in the media/from others.

Use this concept to analyse **ONE** photo on the next page and answer the questions.

Figure 1: Photograph of the 9/11 Memorial & Museum site in New York City, USA.



How and why would this place have different meanings to different people if:

- 1) They were in New York on September 11<sup>th</sup>?
- 2) They are an American?
- 3) They lost someone that day?
- 4) They watched the event unfold on TV or read about the event in a book?
- 5) They are visiting on holiday?
- 6) They were born in the last 10 years?

Figure 2: Photograph of the Sicilian coast, Italy.



How and why would this place have different meanings to different people if:

- 7) They were a local resident?
- 8) They are a tourist?
- 9) They are a Syrian refugee?

#### **Task 4: Core Geographical Knowledge and Skills**

Geography is a broad and dynamic subject that requires a solid grasp of a breadth of physical and human geography concepts, the interconnections between these as well as the ability to critically engage with core issues using a range of research, analytical and mathematical skills.

It is important to cement your GCSE studies, creating a solid foundation of geographical knowledge, understanding and skills that you can build on when you commence your A level studies.

For each of the topics you studied at GCSE (outlined in the table below), use BBC Bitesize to ensure you have a thorough understanding of the core content. The A level course assumes a certain level of understanding, building on top of GCSE content.

BBC Bitesize – Geography AQA Resources:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zy3ptyc>

The topics you studied at GCSE are outlined below:

Physical Geography	Human Geography
The Challenge of Natural Hazards	Urban Issues and Challenges
Physical Landscapes in the UK – Rivers and Coasts.	The Challenge of Resource Management
The Living World	Changing Economic World

## Optional Tasks: An Introduction to A Level Geography

This section seeks to introduce you to the first two topics you will study in year 12.

### Coastal Systems and Landscapes

1. Read the **GeoFile article** available at the link below and answer the questions on p.4.

GeoFile Online (2008) **COASTAL SYSTEMS: WAVES, TIDES, SEDIMENTS, CELLS**  
[https://www.thegeographeronline.net/uploads/2/6/6/2/26629356/geofile\\_575\\_coastal\\_systems.pdf](https://www.thegeographeronline.net/uploads/2/6/6/2/26629356/geofile_575_coastal_systems.pdf)

### Contemporary Urban Environments

3. Access the online version of **Dastrup, R.A (2019) Introduction to Human Geography** textbook by clicking the links below. Read each section of chapter 7 (including the embedded videos) and make your own summary notes. Then complete the tasks below.

7.1 Defining cities and urban areas:

<https://humangeography.pressbooks.com/chapter/7-1/>

- Why are urban areas difficult to define?
- Summarise why cities exist.
- How is the importance of cities determined?
- How do models and theories help geographers to understand urban areas?

7.2 Megacities and Urban Sprawl:

<https://humangeography.pressbooks.com/chapter/7-2/>

**NB: Please note** there are two documentaries embedded in this chapter (*Deliverance* and *Risky Business*, which have scenes that some viewers may find upsetting), as such you do not need to watch these to answer the questions below)

- What is the biggest challenge facing megacities? Justify your decision.
- Gentrification is an effective solution to the challenges facing urban areas. To what extent do you agree with this statement.
- Why do food deserts exist in urban areas and what is the best solution?
- How is urban sprawl creating new challenges for cities?

7.3 Cities as Cultural and Economic Centres:

<https://humangeography.pressbooks.com/chapter/7-3/>

- a) Cities are the result of range of complex socio-economic, political and cultural factors, creating unique places that reflect the community's values and identity. What evidence from this chapter is there to support this viewpoint?
- b) Explain why cities account for more than 80% of global GDP, despite only having 54% of the world's population.

#### 7.4 Cities as Environmental and Sustainable Centres:

<https://humangeography.pressbooks.com/chapter/7-4/>

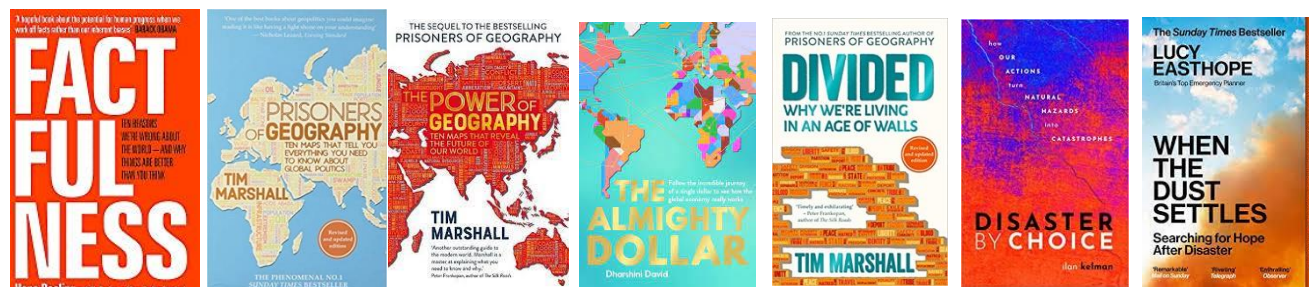
**NB: Please note**, there is a duplication of information from chapter 3 at the start of this chapter. Please scroll down to the section titled: Cities and Sustainability to begin reading the relevant information.

- a) What are the key characteristics of a sustainable city?
- b) Maintaining the balance between environmental protection and economic development is a core component of sustainable cities. Why does this present such a challenge?

## Wider Reading – Recommended Resources

Here is a list of recommended books, articles, documentaries etc. to help you get started (*click on the image or link below to go to the resource*). Remember, we want you to research around the core content we will be studying at A level and select your own resources to develop your knowledge too.

### Books:



### News:



### Podcasts:

- [Overheard – National Geographic Podcast](#)
- [Science Weekly – The Guardian Podcast](#)
- [Ask the geographer Podcasts](#)
- [The Development Podcast – World Bank](#)
- [The World Economic Forum Podcasts](#)
- [GeogPod - The GA's Podcast](#)
- [RGS Online Lectures](#)
- [BBC Costing the Earth](#)
- [BBC The Documentary Podcast](#)
- [Living Planet Podcast](#)

### Videos:

- [World economic forum videos](#)
- [Royal Geographical Society Youtube](#)
- [iPlayer Science and Nature Playlist](#)
- [iPlayer Climate Change Playlist](#)
- [BBC Earth](#)
- [iPlayer Earth from Space](#)
- [iPlayer Stacey Dooley on BBC Three](#)
- [iPlayer Race Across the World](#)
- [iPlayer Africa with Ade Adepitan](#)
- [iPlayer Fashion Conscious](#)

### Documentaries/Film:



Name \_\_\_\_\_

## GEOGRAPHY – A LEVEL PREPARATION READING RECORD

<b>Title</b> <i>(Add the title of the article, documentary or book)</i>	<b>Author/Website</b> <i>(Author(s) or website URL)</i>	<b>Date read/ accessed</b>	<b>Key points/summary</b> <i>(Bullet point the key information including useful facts and quotes)</i>	<b>Critical Evaluation</b> <i>(How reliable/useful/biased was this source?)</i>



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