Year 7 Geography: World Knowledge and Map Skills

Learning Outcomes	This is the first unit in the Nonsuch Geography curriculum because it lays the foundation for all future geographical learning**.** Recognising that students join secondary school with varied experiences of geography at primary level, this unit is structured to ensure that all learners start from a common point of entry. The curriculum is designed to be fully inclusive, allowing every student to access core knowledge and develop key skills, irrespective of their prior exposure to geographical education. This unit is designed to establish a strong foundation in geographical knowledge and skills, ensuring that all students develop a clear understanding of the scope and significance of the discipline of Geography. Through this unit, students will be introduced to the fundamental distinctions between human and physical geography, as well as the key concepts, processes, and interactions that underpin both areas of study. Students will be supported in developing core geographical skills, including the interpretation and use of a range of visual and statistical sources. These include topographic and thematic maps, photographs, graphs, and statistical data. By engaging with these sources, students will learn to construct and communicate informed geographical responses, both in written tasks and in enquiry-based activities. The unit is structured to promote cumulative learning, with each lesson beginning with a review of previously acquired knowledge, followed by the introduction of new skills, terminology, and concepts. Activities are carefully sequenced to build understanding progressively and to enable the meaningful application of new knowledge. A central focus of this unit is the development of cartographic literacy. Students will learn how to interpret maps at a variety of scales, including 1:25,000 and 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey (OS) maps. They will acquire the ability to use four- and six-figure grid references, understand and interpret contour lines and elevation, and accurately identify and describe both human and physical features from maps. Additionally, students will learn how to infer information and draw conclusions from spatial data. Throughout the unit, regular opportunities for self-assessment and reflection will be embedded into lessons to ensure students can monitor their progress and become confident and secure in their geographical understanding and skills. By the end of the unit, students will have developed the foundational knowledge and practical competencies necessary to succeed in future geographical enquiry and analysis.
Key Questions	**World Knowledge** 1. What is geography? 2. What are the differences between human and physical geography? 3. What careers can I do with geography? 4. Can I identify the continents and oceans of the world? 5. How do I interpret geographical data?

NHSG Key Stage 3 Year 7 Autumn Unit Overview

	6. What are physical and landscape features? 7. What are longitude and latitude? 8. How can I use longitude and latitude? 9. What are the physical features of the British Isles? 10. What are the human features of the British Isles? 11. How do I revise for a geography assessment? 12. What are maps? 13. How do compass points help navigation? 14. What are map symbols? 15. How do I use 4 figure grid references? 16. How do I use 6 figure grid references? 17. What ways is height shown on a map? 18. Can I use these skills to interpret the real landscape? 19. How do I use scale to measure distance on a map? 20. How do I apply this knowledge to real life? OS Map of Cockermouth 21. How do I apply this knowledge to real life? OS Map of Lincoln 22. How do I revise for a geography assessment?
Knowledge	Concepts: • The study of geography can be divided into human and physical geographies • Studying geography can lead to a diverse range of careers • The world is divided into distinct continents and oceans that can be identified on a map • Geographical data can be interpreted to understand places and processes • Longitude and latitude allow us to locate places accurately on a map • Distinctive human and physical features exist and are the result of processes and interaction • The concept of compass directions • The concept of OS map symbols • The concept of 4 figure grid references • The concept of 6 figure grid references • The concept of height on a map and the ways height can be shown on maps • That landscape features can be presented in specific ways on maps • That scale represents a way of showing large distances on a map

NHSG Key Stage 3 Year 7 Autumn Unit Overview

- That scale can be used and interpreted to work out real life distances on a map
- That OS maps are distinctive and have specific symbols and features

Key Skills:

- Apply the knowledge of key processes
- Identify key landforms from photographs and OS maps
- Interpret statistics and data
- Annotate photographs
- Read from graphs to support their answers to exam questions
- Enquiry activities in class
- Use a range of maps to develop the core map skills listed above (grid references, using scale, measuring distance…)
- Identify key landforms from photographs and OS maps
- Enquiry activities in class

Key Words:

Human geography	Physical geography	Data	Longitude
Latitude	Continent	Ocean	Atlas
Equator	Tropic of Cancer	Tropic of Capricorn	Prime Meridian
Map	OS map	Contour line	Triangulation pillar
Scale	Map symbol	Landscape feature	Compass directions
1: 25,000	1:50,000	Grid reference	Colour shading

Ongoing Assessment

Assessment is a central component of every lesson and is embedded throughout the unit to support both teaching and learning. Each lesson incorporates a review of prior knowledge, the introduction and exploration of new concepts and subject-specific terminology, and the modelling of high-quality written responses.

Students are regularly given opportunities to practise and complete a range of short- and extended-response exam-style questions. These are carefully aligned with the learning objectives of each lesson and are designed to develop students' ability to apply knowledge, use evidence, and construct well-structured answers.

To support independent study and promote transparency, revision checklists and supporting activities are provided in student booklets at the start of each topic. These resources outline the key content and skills to be assessed at the end of the unit and often include guidance on how to approach and structure extended written responses.

NHSG Key Stage 3 Year 7 Autumn Unit Overview

	Assessment for learning is embedded within classroom practice and is typically completed during lessons. Teachers use formative marking strategies—such as the use of a contrasting coloured pen—to identify gaps in understanding, address misconceptions, and inform future teaching. This continuous feedback loop ensures that all students are supported in making progress and developing confidence in their geographical thinking and communication.
Key Assessment	**Key Assessment 1-** This assessment is a formal written examination with a total of 47 marks, to be completed within a 40-minute time frame. The paper includes a range of question types designed to assess both knowledge recall and the application of geographical understanding. These include multiple-choice questions, short-answer responses, and extended 4-mark questions that require structured written explanations. **Key Assessment 2-** This assessment consists of a 30-minute written examination, with a total of 40 marks available. Similar to Key Assessment 1, the paper features a variety of question formats, including multiple-choice items, short-answer tasks, and extended responses of up to 4 marks. The assessment is designed to consolidate learning from the unit and evaluate students' ability to apply key concepts and skills in a time-constrained setting.
Sequencing	The course content is carefully sequenced to ensure a coherent and progressive development of geographical knowledge, understanding, and skills. Each lesson is designed to build upon prior learning, beginning with a structured recap of key facts and concepts from previous sessions. This approach reinforces retention and provides a solid foundation for the introduction of new material. Students are introduced to a new geographical focus in each lesson, with content and skills scaffolded to promote both accessibility and challenge. New geographical concepts, skills, and subject-specific terminology are explicitly taught, with clear opportunities for students to apply and consolidate their understanding through a range of activities. Vocabulary development is systematically embedded throughout the unit. New terms are introduced in context, clearly defined, and discussed during lessons. These are revisited and assessed in subsequent sessions to reinforce understanding and ensure long-term retention of key disciplinary language.
Links to Careers	A key aim of this course is to introduce students to the breadth and relevance of geography as a discipline, helping them to understand what the study of geography entails in both academic and real-world contexts. Throughout the unit, students explore examples of geographers from a range of diverse backgrounds and disciplines, which supports meaningful discussion around the wide variety of career pathways that geographical knowledge and skills can lead to. In studying **world geography**, students gain insight into global patterns, processes, and interconnections. This naturally leads to the exploration of careers that rely on an understanding of the physical and human world, such as international development, marine biology, environmental consultancy, sustainability management, disaster response, and seismology.

NHSG Key Stage 3 Year 7 Autumn Unit Overview

	The development of **core map skills**—including the interpretation of Ordnance Survey maps at a variety of scales, grid referencing, and understanding contour lines—also allows students to make clear connections between classroom learning and professional applications. These skills are directly relevant to careers in town and regional planning, environmental management, civil engineering, logistics, transport planning, tourism, and the growing field of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and data science. By explicitly linking curriculum content to real-world applications and future opportunities, the course supports students in developing an awareness of how geography can inform, shape, and inspire future study and career aspirations.
Diversity and Inclusion	A key aim of this course is to introduce students to the breadth, relevance, and inclusivity of geography as a discipline, highlighting both its academic foundations and its real-world applications. Through the study of **world geography** and **map skills**, students explore diverse perspectives, cultures, and environments, while also developing a strong sense of spatial awareness and global citizenship.
Support	This course is carefully planned and resourced to ensure equitable and open access for all students, regardless of their individual learning needs. Teaching and learning materials—including detailed lesson-by-lesson PowerPoint presentations and accompanying student work booklets—are centrally stored on SharePoint and can be accessed via MS Teams. These resources are designed to provide consistent support and structure for all learners. To promote inclusivity, the materials offer differentiated support, with scaffolding and guided activities to assist students who may require additional help in accessing the content. At the same time, lessons incorporate embedded challenge and "super challenge" tasks to extend and engage more able students, ensuring that all learners are appropriately stretched and motivated. This comprehensive approach to curriculum resourcing underpins a flexible learning environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed and develop confidence in their geographical knowledge and skills.
Challenge	To support the development of higher-order thinking and independent learning, blue and purple challenge activities are embedded in all Geography lessons to stretch more able students. Additionally, a wide range of extension activities are provided throughout the course, including wider reading, engagement with current news reports and articles, films and documentaries, and targeted research assignments. These activities are shared with students through comprehensive lesson resource packs. For further enrichment, the following online resources offer valuable opportunities to deepen understanding in both **world knowledge** and **map skills**: • **Ordnance Survey – Map Skills Resources** • https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/education/ A range of educational materials to support understanding of OS maps, grid references, and contour interpretation. • **National Geographic Education – Map Skills**

	• https://education.nationalgeographic.org/resource/map-skills Resources designed to develop core cartographic skills through interactive maps and activities. • **Wider reading and resources** can also be accessed via the Geography SharePoint Page, including topics for Urban Studies in Years 7 and 10. • **Wide World Magazine** – Copies are available in the school library and on the Geography SharePoint Page. This publication offers up-to-date geographical insights and articles: Geography - Wide World Magazine - All Documents *(insert actual SharePoint link)* Students are also encouraged to regularly watch, read, or listen to news broadcasts to bring current and real-world examples into their learning. Furthermore, Year 7 students are invited to join **The Geographical Society**, led by Year 12 Geography students. This group provides opportunities for students to contribute articles to our school magazine, *Nonsuch Geographic*, and to participate in geography-themed games and competitions, fostering a collaborative and enriching extracurricular environment.