

# Blue Coat School Bridging the GCSE to A Level Geography Gap

Hoping to study Geography at A level? Or interested in just furthering your knowledge of Geography post the GCSEs?

There are a number of things you can do:

1. **Developing as a geographer** – through general reading around/ watching videos/listening to podcasts etc the geography subject to develop your geography knowledge and understanding.
2. **Become a News Buff**- Watch the news- BBC news between 6am-9am or at 6pm. Or get on the BBC news app? Other websites such as the Guardian, The Independent, The Times. Create a Geography in the News Diary of all things that are relevant to what you are studying?
3. **Preparing for the A Level Course**- Starting to explore the topics and their foundations in which they will be studied in the A Level Course.

To be a great geographer, you will need to develop the ability to think synoptically, being able to see the greater overview and how everything we study in Geography links together. Geography is not just about the studying people and landscapes, it is also the relationships that exists between people and their environment.

## How can I develop as a Geographer before September?

Below are some links to podcasts, websites, books and even films which provide a great way of staying inspired and engaging with Geography:

### PODCASTS:

- **Costing the Earth**- There are some great podcasts here to pick from on a wide variety of geographical issues. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r4wn/episodes/player> (many topics including climate change, carbon, urban greening, deforestation, alternative powers, plastics (etc)
- **Royal Geographical Society – ‘Ask the Geographer podcasts’**
- <https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/ask-the-expert-podcasts/> = a fantastic set of podcasts to keep A Level studies up to date with the latest geographical research = pick out some that interest you.
- **Links to general podcasts**
- <https://eternalexploration.wordpress.com/2016/01/04/top-10-podcasts-for-geography-students/> - this has a number of different links to geography podcast, specifically targeted to Geography students. Definitely recommend the TED talks.

### BOOKS:

If you are into reading both fiction and non fictions, why not try some Geographically themed books/magazines:

- **Prisoners of Geography** by Tim Marshall – an insightful book which helps understanding how the physical geography impacts on political reality and really helps to understand how decisions of world leaders have been shaped by geography- a good introduction to Geopolitics
- **Geography Review Magazines**: Subscribe for £40 and you will get 4 up to date magazines with articles that will be really relevant to the topics that you are studying.
- **Six Degrees** by Mark Lynas – a scary walkthrough of the impacts of Climate Change as world temperatures increase by 1 degree through to 6 degrees.
- **Divided** by Tim Marshall – his follow-up to Prisoners of Geography – a great book which explains how & why the world is becoming more divided and how countries are putting up barriers. Very relevant to events in Europe (Brexit), the US (Trump) and the Coronavirus situation.



## Geographical Documentaries:

There are some great geographical documentaries which will help develop your general geographical knowledge and understanding and help you see what an amazing world we live in.

The following are all available on IPLAYER:

- **David Attenborough Box Sets**- there are 9 amazing boxsets available on iplayer from David Attenborough exploring our amazing world. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06m42d9>
- **The Americas with Simon Reeve** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/m00095p0/the-americas-with-simon-reeve>  
The first episode in Alaska/Canada is particularly good for Resource Security looking at energy.
- **Simon Reeve around the World** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06rrnkm> The Russia series is really interesting.
- **Britain Underwater: Fighting the floods** <https://www.itv.com/hub/britain-underwater-fighting-the-floods/7a0157>
- **Joanna Lumley's Hidden Caribbean: Havana to Haiti** <https://www.itv.com/hub/joanna-lumleys-hidden-caribbean-havana-to-haiti/2a7578>
- **Race across the World** → <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m000g6nt/race-across-the-world-series-2-episode-1>
- **Andrew Marrs Megacities** → <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b011qmcl/episodes/guide>
- **Trumps War on the Border** → <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/trumps-war-on-the-border>
- **Dispatches** → <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches/on-demand/67256-001>
- **Earth from Space – episode 4 The Changing Planet (BBC iPlayer)** → <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/p072n8m0/earth-from-space-series-1-4-changing-planet>

## Geography on NETFLIX, DVD or YOUTUBE:

- **Before the Flood**- A film presented by Leonardo DiCaprio- exploring climate change and looking at what needs to be done today to prevent catastrophic disruption
- **Our Planet Netflix Series**- Explores how climate change impacts all living creatures
- **Blood Diamond** – looks at the diamond trade in Sierra Leone
- **An Inconvenient Truth** – follows Al Gore on the lecture circuit as he seeks to raise awareness about Climate Change.
- **+ An Inconvenient Sequel**

## What should I do with the News that I am Watching?

You should be regularly watching the news to keep you up to date with what is happening in relations to the inter-relationship between people and the environment. You will be really surprised how many of the news bulletins relate to what you are studying.

- **BBC NEWS:** <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news-> an excellent source of up to date articles- explore the headings such as Science, UK, WORLD and other stores
- **THE GUARDIAN:** <https://www.theguardian.com/uk> - Again many useful articles and logically ordered – keep an eye on the Environment, Science, Society, Global Development Stories in particular.
- **THE CONVERSATION:** <https://theconversation.com/uk> - Really useful to support many of your A Levels. Up to date articles from academics and specialists in the field written in a way that is accessible to all, summarising the key points in a short but insightful articles.

Buy yourself a **Scrapbook** and either cut out the headline from a newspaper/print it off/ or just write it in your book and summarise the following:

- What are the key things that the article is telling you about- can you summarise in to 10 main points
- What part of Geography/what we study does this link to?
- Are there any keywords that you need to look into more or you feel would be useful for your studies.

**Bring this with you for your first lesson in the September.**

## What does the A Level Course look like at Blue Coat?

At A Level, we follow the AQA specification. You will have two exams; one physical exam and one human exam, and one Non-Examined Assessment- essentially a 3000-4000 word piece of coursework.

Physical Exam	Human Exam	NEA
This exam will be 2 hours and 30 minutes and is worth 120 marks	This exam will be 2 hours and 30 minutes and is worth 120 marks	This is an independent enquiry meaning that it is driven by you. You will be given a NEA mentor to support you but we will not be able to mark formally and give this back to you. It will be mentor meeting driven.
Water and Carbon (36 marks)	Global Governance (36 marks)	You will need to formulate a title and hypotheses from a topic that is studied on the AQA specification. You will then need to come up with methods to test your hypotheses, you will collect your own data and then present, analyse, conclude and evaluate your investigation.
Coastal Environments (36 marks)	Changing Places (36 marks)	The deadline for this will be in February Half Term of Year 13.
Hazards (48 marks)	Resource Security (48 marks)	You will be taken out on 3 days fieldwork work to prep you for this.

### Pre Reading:

#### Water and Carbon:

- **Physics and Maths Tutor- [Water and Carbon Revision](#)** – A really good overview of what the course is about and some of the information you will learn next year.
- **Physics and Maths Tutor- <https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-aqa/water-and-carbon-cycles/>** - some good links to other reading for the subject.
- **An introduction in to the [Water Cycle](#)**
- **An introduction in to the [Carbon Cycle](#)**
- **An introduction into the [Carbon Cycle](#)** - a good geofile which introduces you to the carbon cycle.
- **Water and Carbon [Overview](#)** – a piece of work from the Royal Geographical Society that summarises the course
- **Documentary on Climate change:**
  - o <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m0009drg/panorama-climate-change-what-can-we-do>
  - o <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episode/m00049b1/climate-change-the-facts>
- **[News Articles](#) on Climate Change**

#### Coasts:

- **Physics and Maths Tutor- [Coasts Revision](#)** – A really good overview of what the course is about and some of the information you will learn next year.
- **Physics and Maths Tutor- <https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-aqa/coastal-systems-landscapes/>**- some good links to other reading for the subject.
- **Geofile on [Sediment Cells, Waves Types and Tides](#)** – a good understanding of what the coastal system is made up of.
- **Geofile on different [Coastal processes](#)**- understanding the different processes that create different landforms
- **Geofile on [Mass Movement in the UK](#)** – a good link to different types of mass movement
- **Geofile on [Coastal Management](#)** – good comparison between different types of management strategies
- **Geofile on [Holderness Coast](#)** – A good look at a case study of a shore line management plan.

#### Hazards:

- **Physics and Maths Tutor- [Hazards Revision](#)** – A really good overview of what the course is about and some of the information you will learn next year.
- **Physics and Maths Tutor- <https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-aqa/hazards/>** some good links to other reading for the subject.
- **Reading on [Vulnerability and Hazards](#)** – something that is different with the A Level is you need to be more aware of why people are vulnerable to Natural Hazards
- **Geofile on [Hazard Hotspots and Response](#)** – a A Level concept new to you on different ways to respond to Hazards
- **Haiti- [A multi-hazard Environment](#)**
- **Video: Power of the Planet (Volcanoes) <https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x5af4kg>** - a great introduction to the work on volcanoes we will be doing
- **Reading: [Plate Tectonics \(The Geological Society\)](#)** – This will be a good set up from your GCSE work to A Level and definitely worth navigating around the site <https://www.geolosc.org.uk/Plate-Tectonics>

## Global Governance

- **Physics and Maths Tutor- [Global Governance](#)** – A really good overview of what the course is about and some of the information you will learn next year.
- **Physics and Maths Tutor- <https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-aqa/global-systems-and-governance/>** some good links to other reading for the subject.
- **A RGS summary of [Global Governance](#)** – A good overview of the course
- **[Antarctica Case Study](#)**
- **The [Effects of Globalisation on the movement of people](#)**
- Really interesting **Antarctica Websites:** <https://www.coolantarctica.com/index.php> AND <https://discoveringantarctica.org.uk/>
- Tracking the **Coronavirus Pandemic:** <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/> and <https://ourworldindata.org/> and <https://www.who.int/>
- Governing Climate Change – World Agreements: <https://www.ipcc.ch/> and <https://unfccc.int/>

## Changing Places

- **Physics and Maths Tutor- [Changing Places](#)** – A really good overview of what the course is about and some of the information you will learn next year.
- **Physics and Maths Tutor- <https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-aqa/resource-security/>** some good links to other reading for the subject.
- **A RGS summary of [Changing Places](#)** – A good overview of the course
- **Geofile on the [Occupy Movement](#)**
- **Interesting article by [Doreen Massey](#)**- A human geography looking at The Sense of Place
- **[Changing Spaces –Making Places](#)** = A good powerpoint going through some of the content of the topic.

## Resource Security

- **Physics and Maths Tutor- [Resource Security](#)** – A really good overview of what the course is about and some of the information you will learn next year.
- **Physics and Maths Tutor- <https://www.physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-aqa/global-systems-and-governance/>** some good links to other reading for the subject.
- **Geofile on [Global Patterns of Energy Security](#)**- find out some of the constraints to energy security around the world.
- **Geofile on the [Growth of Energy in NEEs](#)** – look to see how NEEs are influencing the energy demand
- **Geofile on [Wind Power](#)** – Looking at the role of renewables in Germany
- **Geofile on [Fracking](#)** – Is the use of Shale Gas really the future?
- **Geofile on [Water Conflict in USA](#)**- look how conflicting demands for water can cause conflict on the Colorado
- **Good [Website](#)** looking at different competing demands for water – variety of videos and resources to use.
- **Geofile on the [Three Gorges Dam](#)**- look at how China has attempted to solve its water security.
- **Reading on [China's role in Africa](#)** – looking at how China is influencing the mineral trade in Africa

Complete three of the tasks from the grid below based on the reading you have done.

Create a personal geography map of your own area- include photographs, personal reflections and places of importance (Changing Places)	Watch one documentary on Climate Change- Create 20 questions that people could answer if they were to watch the documentary. (Water and Carbon)	Read 'China's Role in Africa in the Mineral Trade'- Can you categorise their role in to positives and negatives for China. Can you consider what might be the issue for Africa? (Resource Security)
Read 'Changing Cities'- produce a case study summary on one of the cities. (Changing Places)	In 300 words, explain what 'geography' means to you  Give three ways in which the World Health Organisation (WHO) are helping to control the spread of Coronavirus	Produce a mind map of the multi- hazard area of Haiti (Hazards)
Read the Antarctica Case Study. Write a letter to the prime minister explaining three threats faced by Antarctica- which do you think is the most important one? (Global Governance)	Read the Geofile 'Coastal Systems, waves, sediments and cells) and summarise on 1 side of A4 paper. (Coasts)	Water as a resource is the most fought over commodity. To what extent do you agree with this statement?  Read some reading on the Water Cycle and Water Conflicts from resource security to help your answer