

## Physical Geography Special Interest Group (PGSIG)

### PGSIG at the GA Annual Conference



**A delegate tries their knowledge to crack the interactive physical landscape challenge on the PG SIG wall display at the GA conference in Guildford, 2014.**

Previous conference workshop highlights include:

### **2009            'Sweet Physical Geography'**

A workshop that explored how food (mainly sweet or sticky-stuff) can be used to model and help explain some key aspects of physical geography.



## **2010 Making the world come to life in the classroom**

The workshop active gave teachers ideas of how to make learning about physical geography landforms and processes in the classroom much more real. It introduced ideas for 'hands-on shoves brain into gear' physical geography activities, including 'Landform Happy Families (a different take on a card sort), DIY drumlins, using drama to model physical processes and experiments with fluvial processes in a gutter.

**Download**

[Making the world come to life in the classroom - activity ideas](#)  
[Fifteen websites for physical geography](#)  
[View 'Dramatic Longshore Drift' video on Vimeo](#)

## **2011 'Guest Lecture' - Teaching Physical Geography in Four Diagrams**

A lecture by Professor Bob Allison – aimed at upper school teaching explained how understanding about physical processes can be captured through four different types of diagram.

**Download**

[Summary by the Chair of this lecture session - Duncan Hawley](#)

## **2012 Exploding the 'one type fits all' model in physical geography**

The workshop focused on exploring the diversity and differences in the physical world, including volcanoes, waterfalls, rivers, earthquakes, coasts, soils and topography. The workshop looked at models and examples are taught in physical geography and asked if they sufficiently reflect the diversity of physical features in the real world and to develop effective student understanding .The workshop aimed to stimulate thinking about fresh ways of teaching familiar and unfamiliar physical features and topics.

**Download**

[Exploding the 'one type fits all' model in physical geography – session worksheets](#)

## **2013 Looking into the physical future**

This workshop explored approaches to interrogating photographs and images as a way of enabling deeper discovery of dynamic physical environments. The workshop aimed to make teachers (and students) think about future changes in the environment and in their teaching techniques.

**Download**

[Looking into the physical future – session worksheets](#)

## 2014 Notes and Queries about the Physical World

A workshop aimed at teachers who want to be more secure in teaching physical geography topics; it used suggestions by teachers to explore and develop subject knowledge and teaching approaches to 'tricky topics', using the expertise of the self-confessed enthusiasts from the Physical Geography SIG.

### Download

[PowerPoint Presentation slides/notes – \(i\) Climate Change, \(ii\) Lowland Glaciation, \(iii\) Missing in action – Air masses](#)

PGSIG members have also run workshops for primary teachers and teacher-to-teacher sessions for secondary teachers.

## What counts as Physical geography in schools? – surveys of educators' perceptions

1. At the **2012** GA conference in Manchester the PG SIG organised a debate: **'Is Physical Geography essential?'**.

The debate centred on the role of physical geography in the curriculum and arguments for physical geography as a strong and distinctive component of geography and counter-arguments for a more incidental, integrative or passive physical geography.

Delegates attending the debate were asked to

- (i) write down the topics in which they taught physical geography,
- (ii) list the topics in rank order of what was of most importance or value

The results were collated and can be viewed as Wordle images [here](#).

### Download

[PowerPoint Presentation - Duncan Hawley](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation - Charles Rawding](#)

[PowerPoint Presentation - Steve Brace](#)

2. At the October **2013** meeting of the Earth Science Education Forum (ESEF) a similar process was undertaken. Members of the forum represent a broad spectrum of the geoscience education community - not only formal education but also museums, adult education groups, amateur (geological) associations, earth science conservation groups, universities, the British Geological Survey and relevant learned societies. The ESEF members were asked to write down:

- (i) their definition of physical geography
- (ii) what topics they thought are/should be taught in physical geography

The results can be viewed as Wordle images [here](#).