



GA Secondary Phase Committee

Top Tips

What we learned from the first exams

1. Make fieldwork teaching explicit and keep fieldwork titles simple – teach an explicit separate taught unit *about* fieldwork to highlight to students where it connects with their other work, and what skills they need, along with how to answer exam questions. Make sure students know which is their human and physical title (and their human-physical interaction one)
2. Pre-release planning – meet with local school(s) wherever possible, and share brain power to create resources and write practice exam-style questions.
3. Use old exam resources to write new-style questions to enable more effective practice papers
4. If you have a DME on your chosen specification, weave that style of question into topics you are teaching throughout the course, and not just towards the end
5. Teach exam technique strategies e.g. with very weak students and on longer questions, some schools taught them to cross out all the words in the question they didn't understand and write about the keywords they have left – this enabled them to write something rather than nothing – in addition it meant they could access the SPaG marks.
6. Teach to the specification not the textbooks – many of the books available are excellent, but were often written prior to approval of the specifications, and may not all have made the necessary last-minute adjustments to fully match the wording of the specification
7. Encourage students to buy revision guides / skills guides as they start their GCSE course to have as a learning tool throughout rather than as an aid at the end. *Could these be built into the cost of fieldtrips so all students have them?*
8. Use a range of sources in lessons to familiarize students with exam style resources e.g. graphs, cartoons, images, maps, GIS, Twitter polls etc.
9. Embed skills techniques throughout KS3 and GCSE e.g. use acronyms such as TEAM (Trends, Examples, Anomalies, Manipulation), GCSE (General Comment, Specific Examples) etc.
10. Make KS3 assessments look more like GCSE ones and use similar style mark schemes to familiarize students with the structure and look of GCSE papers to help make them less threatening.