

Security blanket or straitjacket? (key stage 3)



What the photo says

This photograph, taken in Victoria Station in London in December 2005, is an eloquent testimony to the extent of CCTV surveillance in the United Kingdom. Concern is increasing about the development of a surveillance society, especially in urban areas.

But how effective is CCTV in influencing our perceptions of safety within urban areas? This image can be used as a springboard for a local enquiry.

Lesson idea

Context: Settlement

Other resources

Google Maps (<http://maps.google.co.uk/>) could be used to map CCTV locations.

Suggested activities

Show the image to the students. What do they feel about it? Ask whether they feel that CCTV is effective in reassuring them of their safety in urban areas.

As part of an enquiry, students could use Google Maps to map the location of CCTV cameras in the local community. They could also conduct a survey of local people's perceptions of different areas and map these. Then they could decide whether CCTV in an area has a positive impact on our perception of it. Students could send their findings to local planners, to inform their decisions about the most effective locations for CCTV cameras in urban spaces.

Curriculum opportunities

Citizenship: Discuss the implications of a surveillance society for our civil liberties.

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