

Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning: evidence of impact on classroom practice

The [GA Enhanced Professional Award](#) recognises and rewards teachers of geography who can demonstrate that they have reflected and can evidence the impact of professional development on their practice. In Spring 2021, two successful awardees focused on their experiences with the Connecting Classrooms through Global Learning (CCGL) programme and the impact that it had had on themselves and others.

Emma Espley – CCGL accredited trainer

I have delivered CCGL training to many teachers, both within and beyond Gloucestershire. Moreover, we are not letting the current pandemic stop us from delivering further courses. Whilst this will be virtual, there will be plenty of opportunity for interaction via the ‘breakout room’ facility in Zoom, as well as the chat feed and open discussions; I am conscious that this is something teachers are really missing at present with many being forced to work from home/operate in small ‘bubbles’ within their school setting.

Delivering the training over two days was incredibly rewarding as I was able to witness how teachers had been motivated by the content of Day 1 and encouraged to apply what they had learnt in the classroom. Some were so enthused that they could not wait until Day 2 to tell me about their ‘experimenting’:

Hi Emma

We are getting on really well with our project also. I am finding that the questioning in my class, at least, has improved in just this short time. We have done some baseline observations in other classes and aim to do a further observation nearer to the 31st.

Looking forward to presenting.

Clare Tyler-Sell, Deputy Head Teacher and Year 1 Class Teacher'

Nailsworth C of E Primary School, Gloucestershire

Reporting back ten weeks later and reading their case studies really made me aware of the impact of my efforts. When writing the evaluation report for British Council Connecting Classrooms following Day 2 of the ‘critical thinking and problem solving through global learning’ course, it really struck me how much teachers and their pupils had gained from the experience. Whilst several teachers based their case study on an element of global learning/geography, others exemplified an approach/technique in another subject area. This illustrated that what they had learnt could be applied to many areas of the curriculum, as well as the importance of communicating their newly acquired knowledge, understanding and skills to all colleagues within their establishment.

For further information about Emma's experiences in leading the CCGL course see:

<https://create2inspire.co.uk/2019/11/09/british-council-connecting-classrooms-through-global-learning-critical-thinking-and-problem-solving-course-day-1/>

<https://create2inspire.co.uk/2020/02/01/british-council-connecting-classrooms-through-global-learning-critical-thinking-and-problem-solving-day-2/>

Hannah Owen – CCGL course delegate

This programme was a 3-part course on the methods to encourage students to think more critically in geography. Delivered virtually I developed a better understanding of the meaning of critical thinking, including the introduction of a critical thinking model to develop 3 strands. Each of these strands made me reflect if these could be adapted for talk within the classroom. For example, '*become better at thinking*' could change to '*become better at talking*', linking the concept of critical thought with effective talk. Many of the additional skills linked to the three strands were what I was asking the students to do through talking. Skills including considering value to opinion; problem solving; reasoning; asking questions; considering bias and evaluating arguments. As a result, I participated in the course with the idea of developing these strategies to use as group discussion-based activities. The course discussed methods to promote critical thinking including flat chat, exploring perspectives, true for who, asking 'better' questions and the question generator.

As part of the course, we were asked to develop a report on classroom-based practice. I chose to develop exploring perspectives within the GCSE topic of glaciers and coasts. The lessons encouraged students to think deeper about different stakeholders, develop engagement with topics and support them to complete an evaluative 9-mark question. I then delivered this information back to the department, where we further developed ideas to implement some of these strategies in our current curriculum alongside our successful methods of high-quality talk. Following from discussions within the department, I integrated a series of activities within the schemes of learning to be delivered to all year groups.

Project title: Exploring perspectives with GCSE students studying glaciers and coasts.

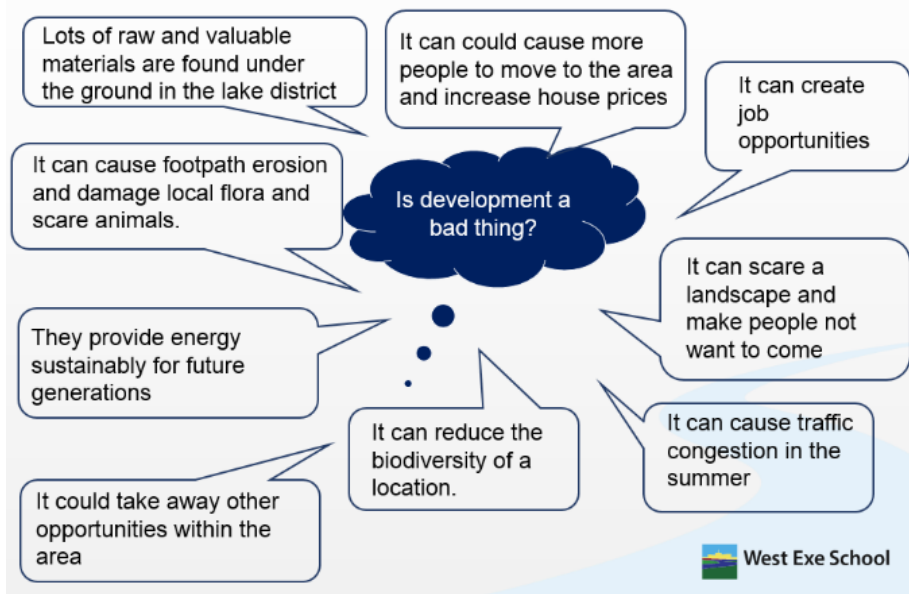
We wanted to: support students to think more deeply about different stakeholders' opinions; encourage engagement with topics and better support students to complete evaluation 9-mark questions.

How did we go about it?

We adapted our current glaciers scheme of learning to include 3 main activities followed by an exam question.

Activity 1: True for who activity. Students had various opinions and had to decide who this was true for (based on a stake holder from list from the power point).

True for who statements...



Activity 2: Based on the true for who activity students created questions. They highlighted in different colours those which relate to different stakeholders. They then swapped questions to see how many they could answer.

Question Generator

	is	did	was	could	if
What					What if the wind turbine broke?
Where					
Who	Who is going to get the best deal from quarrying?				
Why		Why did/do you think providing jobs is good?			
How				How could wind turbines help farmers?	

Activity 2a: Complete as much as you can of the grid in 2 minutes.

Activity 3: Conflict grid – this an original activity from the lesson which was previously poorly completed. Students completed it using the questions, stakeholder opinions and their own knowledge

Complete the conflict grid

	Quarrying	Forestry	Farming	Residents	Walkers	Tourists	Water supply	Turbines
Quarrying								
Forestry								
Farming								
Residents								
Walkers								
Tourists								
Water supply								
Wind turbines								

Activity 3: Which of these uses might cause conflict

Rate them 1 no conflict 10 worst conflict

Justify why you chose the conflict.

Use your true for who statements and questions.

Complete the exam question: To what extent is there conflict between stakeholders within a upland glaciated area of the UK you have studied.

This series of activities could be repeated for rivers and coasts. The more the students complete the activities the better they should become at it.

Within the Coasts lesson included a flat chat activity to promote recall and revisiting ideas around the advantages and disadvantages of coastal management techniques. This would encourage students to think about the techniques before having to evaluate them. It provides support for the lower ability who could use these as a tool to evaluate at the end of the lesson, with these displayed around the room during the rest of the lesson.

Recap Activity- Flat Chat



Impact on students

It is difficult to monitor progress in the current climate, however, I believe we have created a more supportive and thought through scheme of learning for students to create opinions. I worked with my department by thinking through ideas to plan to improve our schemes of learning together and we shared our resources and support. When we are back in school, we will evaluate these strategies together once we have taught our various classes, looking at how we can support PP, SEN and LA, and challenge HA. Further development is likely to involve developing these ideas within the KS3 schemes of learning to support the development of evaluative and critical thinking skills earlier in school life.