

Odd one out

Students have to pick the odd one out from a list of words. This activity is to help students learn the fundamental concept of *classification*. It helps them to see similarities and differences and can be useful to familiarize students with key vocabulary related to a topic. The words can be written on cards for groups to discuss; this gives the teacher the opportunity to listen to students and get ideas about how they think. It can also be a whole-class activity with the words on the board. A useful revision activity.

Card sorting activities are an effective way to provide a focus and structure for small group discussions in geography classrooms. The cards are often seen as a puzzle to be solved and this creates a relaxed atmosphere where students can make mistakes and correct them after talking about possible solutions. The teacher can monitor the learning and intervene as necessary to support learners. It is an activity that can lead on to writing about what has been discussed.

Two example Odd one out activities, based on the geography of rivers and coasts, are provided at the end of this document.

An adapted and updated version of *Odd one out* is described in Cannell, J., Hopkin, J. and Kitchen, B. (2018) [*Critical thinking in practice*](#), Geographical Association page 27 for an outline of how it works and an activity idea.

Reference

- Leat, D. (1998) *Thinking through geography*. Cambridge: Chris Kington Publishing

Case studies to illustrate some odd one out activities

- Leat's example: river basins and flooding, traffic management, population and migration
- Lambert, D. and Balderstone, D. (2010) *Learning to teach geography in the secondary school: A Companion to School Experience*, 2nd edition. London: Routledge – p 154 has an example of *River basins and flooding*

(Last updated May 2017)

Odd one out: Rivers

(Source: Alan Jeanes at Simon Langton Boys School Canterbury. Staffordshire Learning Net website.)

1. meander	2. long profile	3. cross-profile
4. attrition	5. solution	6. potholes
7. waterfall	8. meander belt	9. river terrace
10. saltation	11. bedload	12. flood plain
13. levee	14. discharge	15. velocity
16. wetted perimeter	17. hydraulic radius	18. V-shaped valley
19. erosion	20. deposition	21. transportation

Instructions

Look at the sets below. The numbers in each set refer to items in the table above.

In each set:

1. circle the odd one out
2. write in the link between the other two items
3. add a fourth number, to match the other two.

Note: There may be more than one correct answer.

Set 1

14	15	18	
What's the link?			

Set 2

4	5	6	
What's the link?			

Set 3

1	12	11	
What's the link?			

Set 4

2	3	7	
What's the link?			

Set 5

20	12	13	
What's the link?			

Set 6

18	1	12	
What's the link?			

Set 7

10	20	21	
What's the link?			

Set 8

16	6	17	
What's the link?			

Set 9

13	19	15	
What's the link?			

Set 10

1	12	2	
What's the link?			

Now make up some of your own

What's the link?			

What's the link?			

What's the link?			

Odd one out: Coasts

(Source: Alison Bowers, Le Bocage International School, Mauritius. Staffordshire Learning Net website.)

1. backwash	2. longshore drift	3. wave
4. hydraulic action	5. beach	6. corrasion
7. headland	8. cave	9. bay
10. deposition	11. swash	12. erosion
13. wave-cut platform	14. corrosion	15. groyne
16. cliff	17. wave-cut notch	18. spit
19. attrition	20. arch	21. stack

Instructions

Look at the sets below. The numbers in each set refer to items in the table above.

In each set:

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3. add a fourth number, to match the other two.

Note: There may be more than one correct answer.

Set 1

4	15	14	
What's the link?			

Set 2

1	21	8	
What's the link?			

Set 3

7	8	12	
What's the link?			

Set 4

15	5	20	
What's the link?			

Set 5

18	21	10	
What's the link?			

Set 6

2	7	16	
What's the link?			

Set 7

3	18	1	
What's the link?			

Now make up some of your own

What's the link?			

What's the link?			

What's the link?			

(Last updated February 2019)