

St. Elphin's School

G E O G R A P H Y
'A' LEVEL

MAY 1989

An Outline of the 'A' level work in the
Geography Department for JMB Geography
Syllabus B.

There are 3 sections in the 'A' level course: Physical, Human and Practical Geography.

Physical Geography

1. GEOMORPHOLOGY - the emphasis is on the measurement and understanding of the processes involved in shaping landforms.
2. METEOROLOGY & CLIMATOLOGY - Meteorology involves the understanding of changes in temperature, humidity and pressure, and the relationships between these 3 variables. In Climatology we study the causes of regional variations in world climate.
3. BIOGEOGRAPHY - the major soil-forming processes are studied in relation to regional soil types. We also look at the nature and distribution of major types of vegetation. The principal factors affecting the distribution and functioning of ecosystems are also examined.

Human Geography

1. DEMOGRAPHY - we examine the world population explosion and the factors that affect population growth rates; the concept of overpopulation, and the role of migration.
2. SETTLEMENT - we study theories or "models" of settlement patterns, the functions of settlements of different sizes, and elementary Central Place Theory - the way in which cities "serve" surrounding areas. The processes of Urbanisation in developed and developing countries, patterns of urban land use, and the nature of Central Business Districts are examined.

3. **ECONOMIC ACTIVITY** - we look at different farming types (such as shifting cultivation and modern agribusinesses) and the factors affecting agriculture. The effect of raw materials, power resources and other factors on the location of industry are studied, together with the changes that have taken place in transportation.

4. **REGIONAL INTERRELATIONSHIPS** - we use regional examples to illustrate all the above themes.

Practical Geography

1. **MAPWORK** - Geographical features are studied on Ordnance Survey and other types of maps, and map interpretation skills are developed.

2. **FIELDWORK** - this is an integral part of the course, and a field trip within the United Kingdom will normally be held during the Easter holiday of the Lower VIth year. This gives experience of data collection.

3. **THE PRESENTATION OF DATA** - a variety of methods of presentation are studied, including statistical mapping and statistical techniques, for which G.C.S.E. level standard maths is useful.

Assessment of the Practical component of the syllabus is either by a Practical Examination, or by the submission of a piece of fieldwork.

INDIVIDUAL STUDY In addition to class-work, widespread background reading is essential, in order to provide the detailed knowledge needed for the successful completion of weekly essay and data-response assignments.