

Top tips to help your child be a brilliant geographer

- Know your local area and explore it with your children
- Talk to your child about people, places and environments and take time to answer their questions.
- Walk to school if possible (rather than go by car) touch the outdoor world and keep a record of what you see on the way. Select a different topic each time. For example; Day 1: How many red objects can we see? Day 2: What different types of vehicles did we observe?
- Play 1 - 10 on the way to school or on another journey. (1 street sign, 2 red cars, 3 mummies with buggies, etc.)
- Play I Spy on the way to school. What a way to investigate the features of places! (A for Archway, B for Bus, etc.)
- Make some do-it-yourself jigsaw puzzles of places using calendar pictures with a cardboard backing.
- Point out the range of maps that we can use to help us unravel the mystery of places. Be map collectors - in places that you visit that give out free maps, shopping centres, country parks town centres, museums etc. Read and explore them with your children - look at the places you went.
- Let children plan the route they want to follow to school.
- Let older children investigate route maps and help them to plan the route places that you visit. If you use public transport talk about types of transport and where they might be going.
- Play with small world lay outs - farm sets, train sets, dolls houses, etc. Talk about the layouts and rooms - what belongs where, where the tractors go, etc.
- Play board games, many of which have a geographical context, with them - Snakes and Ladders, Maze Games, etc.

- Join the public library with your child. Go regularly and choose exciting books about people and places. Attend library events at which you can meet the author and listen to them tell stories.
- Go to an art gallery to really look at paintings of places, people and environments such as the work of Lowry and of Monet. The work of contemporary painters.
- Sculpt local features with play dough, plasticine or modelling clay etc.
- Collect postcards and calendar pictures of places - make a place picture scrapbook.
- Take pictures of the view from your back window once each month. At the end of the year can you order them from January to December? How has the view changed through the months/seasons?
- When on holidays, help your child to make holiday diaries or scrapbooks - include artefacts, drawings, postcards and tickets etc.
- Talk about places in films that you watch together - Jungle Book, Lion King, Over the Hedge, Ben Ten, Happy Feet and Ice Age 3 etc.
- Hunt for different signs, signals and logos while on shopping trips. What do they mean? Which shops are they outside of?
- Look at the food items that you are purchasing and note where they come from. Look for the countries together in an atlas at home or on Internet maps.
- Look at the labels in clothes items to see where they are made. Look up these countries on a map.
- On route to places in the car, talk about the landscapes you travel through. Be car and lorry plate spotters. What is the company and where do they come from? Is it in the UK or abroad?
- When at relatives homes, such as the grandparents, go for a short walk and talk about how the area is similar and different to the area that your home is in. Get your child to begin to observe similarities and differences between places.
- Go for a walk in a local wood or forest at different times of the year. Seasonality is a very important pattern in their lives.

- Watch the weather forecast or listen to different radio channel forecasts. Did they get it right? Watch items on dramatic world weather events.
- Give your child a small patch of the garden to plant and tend - observe the magic of growing their own items.
- Be mini beast or habitat detectives in your back garden. Create your own garden eco tour. Star watch at night from homemade den.
- Collect stamps or coins from different countries - you can get really cheap selection packs of stamps in many charity shops.
- Talk about topic issues highlighted by news programmes such as News Round.

The list is endless - You will have many ideas of your own.
In a nutshell you can help your children learn by offering them exciting activities and by encouraging them to ask and to try to answer questions about the world in which we live.

And I Say to Myself What a Wonderful World!