



## **PGCE Geography Pre-course task: “How I learnt Geography”**

**Submission Date: First day of the course**

**Length: 1000 words**

Before the start of the PGCE course we would like you to complete two pre-course tasks. The first is designed to encourage you to think carefully about your own learning experiences in geography and the second is designed to develop your subject knowledge in an area of subject knowledge weakness identified at interview.

### **Task 1: My learning in geography**

In this task we want you to begin to think about your own learning in geography. This thinking will be the first step in helping you to begin to understand other people’s learning, including school students. Personal reflection is often the best starting point from which to consider ‘learning’ and the complex issues around it.

The following questions are intended to act as prompts only. Each of you will have very different stories to tell. What we are looking for is a coherent piece of writing that is well structured, well presented, appropriately referenced and which portrays your geographical learning experiences to date.

- **What are your earliest recollections of learning geography, not just at school?**  
Did you enjoy learning geography/ what type of geography did you learn and how did you learn it?
- **How were you taught geography at secondary school?**  
What types of resources were used to help you learn? What type of learning activities do you recall taking part in and were they enjoyable/not enjoyable? What were your geography teachers like? What other factors in school helped or hindered your ability to learn geography? If you were a successful learner of geography what qualities did you bring to geography that assisted you in this. What kind of geographies did you learn?

#### **Learning at university**

- How did the transition from school to university effect/ influence your ability to learn? What new geographies did you learn in university that you had not encountered in school? Which elements of geography did you find interesting/difficult/ uninteresting? How were you taught geography at university level and how effective were some of the approaches used? Which texts/academic authors most influenced you appreciation of geography?

#### **Learning outside the formal context**

- How have you learned geography outside the formal context of schooling? What experiences have you had that have influenced your understanding of what geography is and what it means to you?
- What is the purpose of learning geography?
- How has this task helped you to think about *teaching* geography?

### **Recommended reading**

Lambert, D. and Morgan. J (2010) *Teaching Geography 11-18: A Conceptual Approach* Milton Keynes. OUP

Biddulph, Lambert, D and Balderstone, D (2015) *Learning to Teach Geography in the secondary School* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition). London. Routledge

Lambert. D and Jones. M (2013) *Debates in Geography Education (2 edition)*. London Routledge

### **Through this writing you will demonstrate:**

- an understanding of your own learning within geography and a capacity to integrate ideas from the education literature into your writing
- the ability present a coherent, well-structured carefully-presented piece of writing: logical and coherent, and care taken with spellings, punctuation and grammar

### **Task 2: Designing a subject knowledge webpage**

Developing your subject knowledge is an on-going professional responsibility and this process is not a question of simply accumulating a bank of geographical facts to transmit to students:

*Facts are not unimportant but they only really become knowledge, at least of any depth and lasting value, when they become connected and part of a system – when we can give them meaning.*

(Lambert. D and Kinder. A (2011) *Teaching Geography*. Autumn edition pp 93-95)

In order to teach young people geography which is of 'lasting value' it is essential that you attend to your own subject knowledge in order to do this. To support this process we are asking you to create a web page on an area of subject knowledge identified at interview as in need of some development. The intention here is that:

- you gain experience of developing such a resource,
- The process of developing a webpage provides the mechanism for engaging with the subject,
- you can access sites created by other students to support your own knowledge development and teaching throughout the year.

To complete this task you will use 'Google sites' or Weebly ( <http://weebly.com>) or another appropriate site that you may already know about.

Your webpage will need to be aimed at A level standard and include, maps, diagrams, real-world examples, animations (if you can find them) and have some supporting text to synthesise the key ideas you are communicating.

Think carefully about the presentation and organisation of the site – it needs to be attractive, engaging and accessible. Think about the key concepts that frame geography and consider how you are drawing on these to support your website development. Be sure to have a reference page s that all electronic sources are properly referenced.

You will upload links to your site in Moodle at the start of the course. The site will be peer-reviewed.