

## **Using OS Resources - A fieldwork activity for Key Stage 2**

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### **Outline of the fieldwork project:**

This series of activities was designed to illustrate how Primary School teachers and pupils can use resources provided by the Ordnance Survey (OS), and was filmed by Teacher's TV for a programme in a series on 'Using Institutions'. The main focus of the fieldwork was on 'symbols', but it could be adapted to work on other elements of using maps.

A class of 35 Year 6 children was given the challenge of surveying their village to produce their own version of an OS 'Explorer' map, using the appropriate symbols for each feature identified. In addition, they took digital images of the features in order to create an interactive map using mapping software in our ICT suite. Some of the photos were also uploaded to the 'Geograph' website, which endeavours to collect images representing each OS Grid Reference in the British Isles.

### **Key Learning Outcomes:**

The objectives of the activities in terms of outcomes were as follows:

1. Preparation in the classroom. The pupils would be able to:

- **identify common Ordnance Survey symbols**
- **use the Mapzone website**

2. On the field trip. Pupils would be able to:

- **understand the link between symbols and real places on a field trip.**
- **develop skills of geographical enquiry in relation to features of the local environment**
- **identify and record significant local features**

3. Follow-up from the field trip. Pupils would be able to:

- **compare maps**
- **use ICT to create a map of our fieldwork route.**
- **hyperlink photos, symbols and text onto a base map.**
- **add photos to a national database.**

### **Links with the KS2 Curriculum:**

At KS2 children:

- **develop and use geographical enquiry skills, including fieldwork and IT skills, geographical terms, making and using maps, and using photographs;**

- study places and themes at different scales from local to national in the United Kingdom and overseas, and investigate how people and places are linked and how they relate to the wider world;
- use geographical language and draw maps and diagrams to communicate geographical information;
- work with others, listen to each other's ideas, and treat them with respect;
- undertake geographical investigations by asking and responding to questions and using a range of geographical enquiry skills, resources and their own observations.

(QCA – Teaching Geography at KS2)

### **Preparing the pupils for their fieldwork:**

We started with a very basic discussion about maps – what they are, why we need them, how they can help us, how we can make them, what they show and so on. This led onto a more focussed discussion about the elements which make up maps, and was followed by an investigation using our interactive whiteboard and in the computer suite into the Mapzone website ([www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapzone](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapzone)). Designed principally for KS3, Mapzone can be used effectively with older KS2 children and is a good way of finding out about and practising the skills of map reading. We carried out some of the activities and played some of the games connected with 'symbols'. We thought about features of our local area which could be represented by those symbols.

From the Mapzone website, we connected to the 'Geograph' website ([www.geograph.org.uk](http://www.geograph.org.uk)), which is sponsored by the OS and is trying to collect geographical images from across the British Isles. We looked at some of the images representing our local area. Then we discussed the information on the site about 'what makes a good geograph'. In groups, the children tried to think of features in our village which they could take photos of to upload to the website as geographers representing our grid references. We used 'symbols' resource sheets printed from the Mapzone website as a prompt for possible features to consider.

### **Step by step guide to the fieldwork activities:**

The aims of our fieldwork were:

1. To identify features of our local area and add symbols of them to our blank maps of Saltford.
2. To take photos of people holding OS symbols in front of those features.
3. To collect other photographs of significant local features that we could use for our own projects and for 'Geograph'.

We spent an afternoon walking around our village in groups of four– each group with a 'blank' local map, a digital camera and a booklet of enlarged OS symbols. When they spotted features they felt were significant, the children plotted them on their maps and took photos of them. Effectively the children were acting as surveyors of their local area. Features visited included the Post Office, the railway footbridge, a pub, the River Avon, St. Mary's Church and a public convenience. Many of these the children would have visited many times, but they may not have been aware of some before the trip.

On our return to school we uploaded each group's photos to a designated folder on the school's network, then compared the maps they had produced with the published OS Explorer maps.



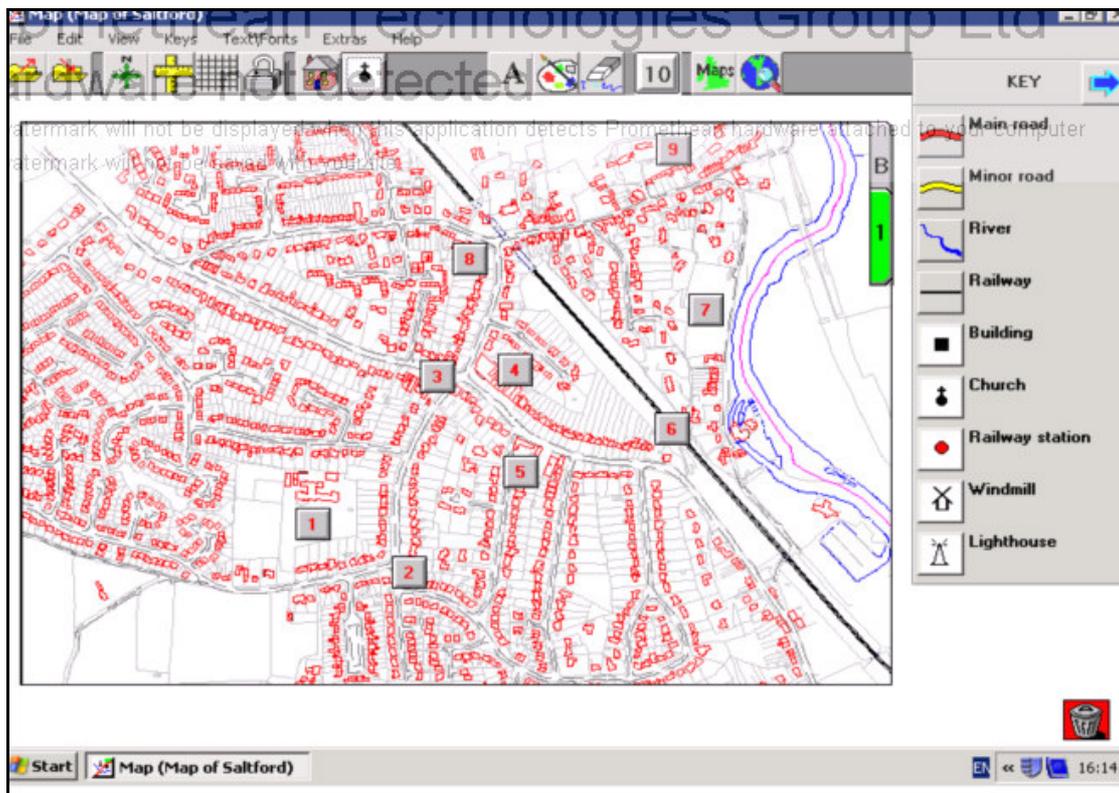
The children selected views they thought would make good 'Geographs' to represent our village. All these photos were taken by the pupils with digital cameras and some were later uploaded to the 'Geograph' website.



### **Back in the classroom - follow-up to the fieldwork activity:**

Having compared their own maps with the OS Explorer version, the children then set about creating their own interactive mapping projects of our village, using some software called 'Local Studies'. The class was told that we would be producing pieces of work which would allow other children in the school to see how we matched OS symbols to local features. The software allows you to import a map and (amongst other things) annotate it with symbols and a route. You can also add 'hotspots', which create hyperlinks to images and text (in our case, the photos we took on our trip, with a brief description of each feature). Each group also selected one of its images to contribute to

the Geograph site and then uploaded it. This involved a discussion about the validity of the image and whether it met the requirements of the site, followed by going through the online process of identifying its position in the appropriate grid reference and adding a simple description.



The pupils created their own interactive mapping projects using the 'Local Studies' software. Some included OS symbols for key features of the local area. Others outlined the route. Most children included 'hotspots' (grey squares with numbers) which represent hyperlinks to photographs of and text about places in the village we visited.

### **Evaluation of the fieldwork activity:**

I was really pleased with the outcomes of the fieldwork. It brought the children's learning about symbols and geographical features to life, and was much more effective than if we'd just done this in the classroom. The use of the digital cameras meant that each child's work was personalised, not only with photos they had taken, but also with images of themselves holding map symbols representing the geographical features they were standing by. They were shown how to add comments to support these images, and this helped to consolidate the learning of the symbols and features in a fun and enduring way.

The children were as enthusiastic as the staff and parents about the activities. Getting out of the classroom was a treat for the pupils, and they really enjoyed the challenge of spotting local features and recording them with the cameras. Being able to use their own images in the production of their interactive maps made the whole experience very real and personal and many commented on the fun they'd had. All of them were very familiar with map symbols by the end of the exercise, and were able to discuss our photos of geographical features using appropriate vocabulary and with a genuine interest in their validity. Having their photos 'published' on the 'Geograph' website, which they could show their family at home and they knew others would see, was fantastic.

### **Possible future changes:**

It would have been great to have produced some annotated field sketches which could have been added to the Local Studies work. We could also have extended the activities to include work on other areas of mapping (direction, distance, scale) had we wished.

### **Top tips for recreating this fieldwork activity:**

- Allow students to personalise their work by using the digital camera.
- Get plenty of adult help and make sure helpers know what you expect from them.
- The symbols booklets took a bit of time to produce, but helped create very effective images and can be used again by other classes.

### **Equipment list**

#### **For the preparation:**

- Interactive whiteboard/ICT suite with internet access for Mapzone.
- Print-outs of the Explorer series symbols.

#### **For the fieldwork:**

- Large colour copies of symbols found in local area.
- 'Blank' maps (without symbols) of local area to mark on during fieldwork exercise.
- Digital cameras.
- Adult help for each group.
- Coloured pencils for each group to use to draw the symbols.
- Blank paper for field sketches if appropriate. (Sketch books?)
- Prepared folders (for digital photos) on the school network.
- Copies of the local 1:25 000 Explorer series map (for reference on our return).
- Risk assessment.
- First aid kit.

#### **For the follow-up:**

- Annotated maps produced during fieldwork.
- Digital photos from fieldwork for each group.
- 'Local Studies' software.
- Access to ICT suite.

### **References and weblinks**

- OS Mapzone: [www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapzone/](http://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/mapzone/)
- Geograph website: [www.geograph.org.uk/](http://www.geograph.org.uk/)
- 'Local Studies' software - Soft Teach Educational ([www.soft-teach.co.uk](http://www.soft-teach.co.uk))
- Copies of the local 1:25 000 Explorer series map.
- Large colour copies of symbols found in Saltford.
- 'Blank' copies (without symbols) of local area to mark on during fieldwork exercise.