

PREPARING FOR A LEVEL GEOGRAPHY



Your A Level Starts here...

What is the purpose of this guide?

This guide has been designed to help you 'get ahead' and prepare for the transition to advanced level. More importantly, it provides hundreds of opportunities to further engage with the subject of geography! You are not expected to complete everything in here, but look through it and use it to further your knowledge for A-Level.

Geography at Home

There are so many ways to stay engaged with geography between now and your return to school in September. We have compiled a list of our top websites, online newsrooms, podcasts, online courses, journals documentaries, films and even Netflix shows to keep you engaged with geography and develop your geographical understanding ahead of YOUR A Level.

1. ONLINE NEWS ARTICLES AND JOURNALS



Geographical <https://exacteditions.com/login>

Established in 1935, Geographical is the official magazine of the Royal Geographical Society and one of the leading magazines in its field with stunning photography, great writing and first-class design. Keep up to date with the world, its people and places through the fascinating articles. As a Geography student, you have exclusive, unlimited access to the online archive which dates back to 1935. Access it by following the link above, select library card and then enter with your school code. Enjoy!

THE CONVERSATION.COM <http://theconversation.com/uk>

You will find this really useful to support many of your A Levels. It provides UpToDate articles from academics and specialists in the field written in a way that is accessible to all, summarising key points in short but insightful articles.



BBC NEWS <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news>

An excellent source of UpToDate articles – explore the key headings such as Science, Business, as well as the UK, World and other stories.



THE GUARDIAN <https://www.theguardian.com/uk>

Again, many useful articles and logically ordered – keep an eye on the Environment, Science, Society, Global Development stories in particular.

2. Podcasts



Costing the Earth – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006r4wn/episodes/player>

There are some great podcasts here to pick from on a wide variety of geographical issues including climate change, carbon, urban greening, deforestation, alternative power, plastics etc.



Royal Geographical Society – “Ask the Geographer podcasts”

<https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/ask-the-expert-podcasts/>

A fantastic set of podcasts to keep A Level studies up-to-date with the latest geographical research – pick out some that interest you and give them a go!



The DOCUMENTARY podcast – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02nq0lx/episodes/downloads>

From the BBC, these podcasts investigate global development issues and affairs.



The INQUIRY – <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p029399x/episodes/downloads>

BBC podcasts exploring the trends, forces and ideas shaping the world beyond the headlines.



Podcasts from Oxford University School of Geography and the

Environment – <https://podcasts.ox.ac.uk/series/school-geography-and-environment-podcasts>

These online audio resources consist of lectures, seminars and interviews from the School of Geography and the Environment at the University of Oxford.



Talks from the Royal Geographical Society

https://www.rgs.org/all/?categories=FreeToView&utm_source=Twitter&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=SocialSignIn

From microplastics to microfinance, the RGS have released over 50 free geographical talks for you to watch and listen to.

3. Online courses



The Royal Geographical Online LECTURES -

https://www.rgs.org/schools/teaching-resources/?categories=OnlineLecture&utm_source=School+Members&utm_campaign=e21185bae0-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2020_03_25_09_19&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_bd6329754a-e21185bae0-

This is a comprehensive catalogue of online lectures facilitated by the Royal Geographical Society. Delivered by academics from leading universities in the UK, you will be spoilt for choice. Titles include: Feeding 9 billion, Digital Technology in Africa, Mobile Middle Classes and Air Quality for all?



The Open University – [https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-](https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue)

[catalogue](https://www.open.edu/openlearn/free-courses/full-catalogue) The Open University is the leading university for flexible, distance teaching. As part of their OpenLearn programme, more than 1,000 free courses are available online for you to boost your

brain. Courses accommodate a range of expertise and time required for study. Most also come with a free statement of participation on completion. Here are some of our suggestions for the geographically minded.

Ecosystems, Biofuels, Earthquakes, The Frozen Planet, Introduction to Geology, and Water and Human Health.



FUTURE Learn – <https://www.futurelearn.com/>

Future Learn is a convenient online hub for free online courses. They collate loads of courses from top UK and European universities. You can filter your course search by subject, the amount of time you'd like to spend studying a week, and the duration of your course. Most courses have a set start date, but don't worry, you can join and work your way through it after it starts. Future Learn is powered by cutting edge research in education, favouring micro-learning principles and interactivity in education. Top picks: *Ecology and Wildlife Conservation – University of Leeds*, *Come Rain or Shine: Understanding the Weather – University of Reading*, *Exploring Our Ocean – University of Southampton*.



Open Yale COURSES – <https://oyc.yale.edu/>

Yale provide free and open access to a selection of introductory courses taught by the university's highly esteemed scholars. Each course comes with high-quality, downloadable lecture videos, as well as suggested readings and problem sets. Here's some that will certainly appeal to A Level:

Geographers: The Atmosphere, the Ocean and Environmental Change – Professor Ronald Smith,

Philosophy and the Science of Human Nature – Professor Tamar Gendler,

Global Problems of Population Growth – Professor Robert Wyman.



UN CC: e-Learn – <https://unccelearn.org/>

UN CC: eLearn is the official United Nations learning partnership for all things related to climate change. They offer self-paced and downloadable courses, meaning you can dip in and out of them as and when you please. There's an abundance of information on climate change – you can learn about climate policy, green economies, sustainable diets and personal finance, and lots more with these interactive courses. Take a look at some of the examples:

Introduction to Green Economy, Climate Change and Cities.

4. Geographical literature

Evidence SUGGESTS that STUDENTS who read for enjoyment not only perform better in tests than those who don't, BUT also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better UNDERSTANDING of other CULTURES. In the Geography Department, we believe it is one of the most VALUABLE things YOU can do to enhance YOUR academic performance.

4.i Books

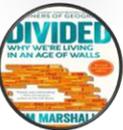


Prisoners of Geography (Tim Marshall) Factfulness: Ten reasons we're wrong about the world
An insightful book which helps understand how physical geography impacts on political reality and really helps to understand how decisions of world leaders have been shaped by geography – a great introduction to geopolitics.



Factfulness: Ten reasons we're wrong about the world: Hans Rosling

Hans Rosling has written what is a must-read book from a geography perspective – this takes a more realistic view of the world, presenting issues in fact-based context. It is a rational look at actually how far the world has measurably improved and what's left to be done.



Divided (Tim Marshall)

Author Tim Marshall attempts to explain why we are living in an age of walls by delving into our past and present to reveal the fault lines that will shape our world for years to come. Another Sunday Times Best Seller from the author.



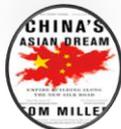
UNRULY Places (Alistair Bonnet)

At a time when Google Maps can take you on a virtual tour of most places on the planet, it's hard to imagine there's any uncharted ground left on the planet. Unruly Places goes to some of the most unexpected, offbeat places in the world to re-inspire our geographical imaginations.



Brick Lane (Monica Ali)

A fictional novel which explores the rich cultural heritage of East London's Brick Lane. A less academic approach to key urban issues and cultural tensions in inner-city London.



China's Asian Dream (Tom Miller)

Combining a concise overview of the situation with on-the-ground reportage from over seven countries, *China's Asian Dream* offers a fresh perspective on one of the most important questions of our time: what does China's rise mean for the future of Asia and of the world?



On the Map (Simon Garfield)

Maps fascinate us. They chart our understanding of the world and they log our progress, but above all they tell our stories. From the early sketches of philosophers and explorers through to Google Maps and beyond, Simon Garfield examines how maps both relate and realign our history.



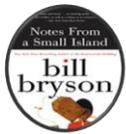
Landmarks (Robert Macfarlane)

Words are grained into our landscapes, and landscapes are grained into our words. *Landmarks* is about the power of language to shape our sense of place. It is a field guide to the literature of nature and a glossary containing thousands of remarkable words used in England, Scotland, Ireland, and Wales to describe land, nature, and weather.



Mountains of the Mind (Robert Macfarlane)

Combining accounts of legendary mountain ascents with vivid descriptions of his own forays into wild, high landscapes, Robert McFarlane reveals how the mystery of the world's highest places has come to grip the Western imagination—and perennially draws legions of adventurers up the most perilous slopes.



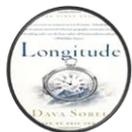
Notes from a Small Island (Bill Bryson)

Featuring an all-new cover, *New York Times* bestseller Bill Bryson's hilarious journey through the beloved island nation he called home for two decades. From Downing Street to Loch Ness, this is a delightful look at the United Kingdom.



A History of the World in 12 Maps (Jeremy Brotton)

Jerry Brotton examines the significance of 12 maps - from the almost mystical representations of ancient history to the satellite-derived imagery of today. He vividly recreates the environments and circumstances in which each of the maps was made, showing how each conveys a highly individual view of the world. Brotton shows how each of his maps both influenced and reflected contemporary events and how, by considering it in all its nuances and omissions, we can better understand the world that produced it.



Longitude (Dava Sobel)

Longitude is the dramatic human story of an epic scientific quest and of Harrison's forty-year obsession with building his perfect timekeeper, known today as the chronometer. Full of heroism and chicanery, it is also a fascinating brief history of astronomy, navigation, and clockmaking, and opens a new window on our world.

The Happy City (Charles Montgomery)



Charles Montgomery's *Happy City* is revolutionizing the way we think about urban life. After decades of unchecked sprawl, more people than ever are moving back to the city. Dense urban living has been prescribed as a panacea for the environmental and resource crises of our time. But is it better or worse for our happiness? Are subways, sidewalks, and condo towers an improvement on the car dependence of the suburbs?

Atlas of Improbable Places (Travis Elborough)

With beautiful maps and stunning photography illustrating each destination, *Atlas of Improbable Places* is a fascinating voyage to the world's most incredible destinations. As the Island of Dolls and the hauntingly titled Door to Hell — an inextinguishable fire pit - attest, mystery is never far away. The truths and myths behind their creation are as varied as the destinations themselves. Standing as symbols of worship, testaments to kingships or even the strange and wonderful traditions of old and new, these curious places are not just extraordinary sights but reflections on man's own relationship with the world around us.



Geographical Reading Lists

Alongside the extensive list above, the Geographical Association (The GA) has very recently produced two reading lists; one human and one physical, separated by topics to give YOU a feel for the people, places and ISSUES YOU are STUDYING as part of YOUR A Level in Geography. YOU are not expected to read every title!



Human Geography Reading List:

https://www.geography.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Get%20involved/Reading_List_1_Human_Geography.pdf



Physical Geography Reading List:

[https://www.geography.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Get%20involved/Reading_List_2_Physical_Geography, Climate Change and Maps.pdf](https://www.geography.org.uk/write/MediaUploads/Get%20involved/Reading_List_2_Physical_Geography,_Climate_Change_and_Maps.pdf)

Geographical films and documentaries:

Netflix:

Into the Inferno: With stunning views of eruptions and lava flows it captures the raw power of volcanoes.

The Boy who harnessed the wind: About water shortage in Malawi and a boy who makes a windmill to pump water.

Cowspiracy: Investigate the food and meat industry Available on Netflix

Rotten: Docuseries travels deep into the heart of the food supply chain to reveal unsavoury truths

Africa: Documentary series about Africa. Narrated by David Attenborough

OUR Planet: Stunning Sir David Attenborough series investigating the different biomes and their varied flora and fauna.

Planet Earth and Planet Earth 2: The Irreplaceable Sir David Attenborough explores some of the world's different biomes

Blue Planet: More geographical joy from Sir David who takes us deep underwater to explore the world's oceans and seas.

Wild Caribbean: Explore the turbulent natural history and rich diversity of the Caribbean islands.

The Dark TOURIST: David Farrier's eight-part series looks at unconventional destinations across the world. From the radioactive villages of Japan following the 2013 tsunami to the voodoo villages of South Africa. Farrier explores tourist's dark desires for the 'never seen before'.

Dirty Money: Dirty Money is a Netflix original television series which tells stories of corporate corruption, securities fraud and creative accounting .Each episode focuses on one example of corporate corruption and includes interviews with key players in each story.

Explained: From YouTube sensations, VOX Creators, each episode is 16-18 minutes long with each focusing on a different topic. There are plenty of geographical based ones to choose from including the World's Water Crisis.

72 DANGEROUS Places to Live: Get up close and personal with avalanches, fiery volcanoes and other natural disasters and learn why some people choose to live in their destructive paths

Films



Before the Flood (2016): Before the Flood, presented by National Geographic, features Leonardo DiCaprio on a journey as a United Nations Messenger of Peace, travelling to five continents and the Arctic to witness climate change first-hand. He goes on expeditions with scientists uncovering the reality of climate change and meets with political leaders fighting against inaction.



An Inconvenient TRUTH and An Inconvenient SEQUEL (2006, 2016): These films follow Al Gore on the lecture circuit as the former presidential candidate campaigns to raise public awareness of the dangers of global warming and calls for immediate action to curb its destructive effects on the environment.



The Impossible (2012): The story of a tourist family caught in the destructive and chaotic aftermath of one of the world's most devastating natural disasters. Based on real life events of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami which killed 200,000 people.



Slumdog Millionaire (15): A Mumbai teenager reflects on his life after being accused of cheating on the Indian version of 'Who Wants to be a Millionaire'. Based on life in the slums of Mumbai and the realities of urban life in one of the world's largest megacities.



Hotel Rwanda (12): The true story of hotel manager who houses and protects Tutsi refugees – this is a hard-hitting film based on the Rwandan Conflict of the 1990s.



The Last King of Scotland (15): Based on the events of the brutal Ugandan dictator Idi Amin's regime as seen by his personal physician during the 1970s.



Lion (2016): An Indian man who was separated from his mother at the age of 5 and adopted by an Australian family return home determined to find his birth family. Highlights the realities of slum life.

DOCUMENTARIES

There are some great geographical documentaries, which will help develop your general geographical knowledge and understanding, and help you see what an amazing world we live in.



BBC iPlayer: bbc.co.uk/iplayer

David ATTENBOROUGH Box Sets

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06m42d9>

The Americas with Simon Reeve

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/m00095p0/the-americas-with-simon-reeve>

Simon Reeve AROUND the world

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/group/p06rrnkm>

Mediterranean with Simon Reeve

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b0bnb6tt/mediterranean-with-simon-reeve>



ITV Player: www.itv.com/hub/itv

Britain Underwater: Fighting the Floods

<https://www.itv.com/hub/britain-underwater-fighting-the-floods/7a0157>

Joanna LUMLEY's Hidden Caribbean: Havana to Haiti

<https://www.itv.com/hub/joanna-lumleys-hidden-caribbean-havana-to-haiti/2a7578>



Channel 4 On Demand: www.channel4.com

When the Immigrants Leave (Dispatches)

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/dispatches/on-demand/69555-001>

China's Lonely Hearts (Unreported World)

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/56011-011>

The world's dirtiest river (Unreported world)

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/58399-001>

Forests of Fear (Unreported World) -

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/69224-006>

HURricane Hell (Unreported World)

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/69224-007>

The World's Dirtiest Air (Unreported World)

<https://www.channel4.com/programmes/unreported-world/on-demand/6719>

