**GEOGRAPHY**

EXAM BOARD: Edexcel COURSE TITLE: GCSE Geography Edexcel B

EDEXCEL STUDENT SUPPORT WEBLINK:

(*Includes access to the exam specification and past exam papers*)

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-b-2009.html#tab-Studying>

**Skills / qualities of A/A\* students…**

* Good understanding of subject knowledge, including solid understanding of case study examples
* Being able to ‘unpick’ questions to ensure answers are clear, focussed and where necessary linked to case study examples
* Being able to utilise and interpret information, graphs, figures etc and apply geographical understanding
* Being organised to ensure you have your lesson notes and practice questions to help support your revision
* Time management to ensure you have enough time to effectively revise all the topics and case studies learnt

**Examples of how this looks in real life…**

* You need to make sure you can explain each of the elements on the specification for each topic within unit 1 and 2. This will include understanding and application of geographical terms and knowing information linked to real world examples (case studies).
* Use any information provided to help you with your answers, that is why they have been included.
* Your class notes need to be legible and make sense…that includes clear headings and writing out questions as well as the answers, otherwise when you come to revise your notes won’t help you.
* There is a lot to learn…12 topics in total, including numerous case studies. To effectively manage your time create a revision timetable. Also remember if you can recall the overview of a case study and then 5 specific facts, that is enough to get you through a 6 or 8 mark question.

**What will the exam paper look like?**

* There are 3 exams...Unit 1, 2 and 3, each worth 25%
* Unit 1 and 2:
  + These exam papers are both 1 hour 15 minutes and are worth a total of 78 marks
  + They assess all the topics learnt in year 10 and 11
  + They contain 2 sections;
    - Section A – answer all questions. Each question is worth 12 marks with a maximum of 6 marks for question (c)
    - Section B – select 2 topics from 4. Make sure you select the correct topics that we have studied! Each question is worth 15 marks (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar), with a maximum of 8 marks for question (b) in the higher paper\* and 6 marks in the foundation paper\*
* Unit 3:
  + This exam paper is 1 hour 30 minutes and is worth a total of 53 marks
  + This exam assesses your geographical decision making, which basically means can you interpret information from a resource booklet, apply it to the questions and then use it to make decisions. For example, which option is the best for sustainable development?
  + This exam paper is broken down into 5 or 6 questions, with a maximum of 12 marks being awarded on the last question (including 3 marks for spelling, punctuation and grammar)

\* There are 2 levels of exam paper, higher or foundation. Your teacher will have assessed and determined which paper is most suitable for you. In the higher paper you can achieve a grade A\*-E, whereas the foundation paper is C-G. The higher paper generally uses more complex language than the foundation paper, which has some multiple choice questions.

**Key exam language…**

* **Identify** – this usually refers to a figure (map/graph etc) where you need to pick out some information
* **Describe** – say what you see. Absolutely no why’s or because’s here!
* **Explain/Give reasons** – say why/because/how
* **Justify** – support your answer with some facts from a figure or understanding learnt from a case study. This is most commonly used in the unit 3 exam.
* **Using examples** – make links to your case studies. You should do this in all questions worth 6+ marks on the unit 1 and 2 exams, whether it tells you to or not.

**Timing…**

*This will have been drilled into you, but here is a reminder anyway!*

* **Unit 1 and 2** – you have a total of 78 marks in 1 hour 15 minutes. Therefore you need to work on **1 mark a minute**. Keep this in mind and try to make sure you can complete all the questions required in the time.
* **Unit 3** – you have a total of 53 marks in 1 hour 30 minutes. You have longer in this exam because you will need to read and interpret information from the resource booklet. This basically means that you will have to work on **1 mark for each 1 ½ minutes**.

**What are the common mistakes?**

* First and most importantly read the question carefully and make sure you are actually giving them what they asked for!
* In section B of the unit 1 and 2 exams you need to choose 2 questions from 4. Do **not** answer all the questions (you won’t have time) and make sure you answer the ones we have studied!
* For questions worth 6+ marks you must include some links and understanding to the appropriate case study examples, whether they ask for it or not. Geography is all about people and places so if you don’t include it then you won’t get full marks.

**Useful websites and resources…**

* Obviously the **Edexcel website** is a good place to start as it has the exam specification (which tells you exactly what you need to know), past exam papers to practice on and also some resources and videos etc.

<http://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-gcses/geography-b-2009.html#tab-Studying>

* **BBC Bitesize** – has a lot of useful resources but just make sure you are revising the relevant topics

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/geography/>

* **Revision guide** – Edexcel GCSE Geography B Evolving Planet Revision Guide, Pearsons (available from Mr Radcliffe or Mr Needham)
* **Internet research** – brush up or add any additional information about your case studies by researching these on the Internet. Geography is a very topical subject and therefore there is a wealth of information to be accessed via the Internet which will link to sites like BBC news, newspaper articles, large organisations, governments and charities etc.
* All the lessons and supporting resources are available on the school’s VLE.