Geography
Mastery

Geography Mastery Secondary

Working hand in hand with schools to deliver immediate impact and sustained subject excellence



Ark Curriculum+

Hello!

Welcome to Geography Mastery Secondary.

At Ark Curriculum Plus, we believe all students deserve access to a rich, ambitious geography curriculum that helps them succeed, whatever their starting point.

As the next phase of curriculum reform takes shape, schools using Geography Mastery Secondary will be well placed to respond. The programme's focus on depth of knowledge, teacher expertise and disciplinary skills through fieldwork and GIS is underpinned by an inclusion-first approach, providing strong foundations for the changes ahead.

Supporting this is a subject excellence programme that provides a complete, fully coherent KS3 curriculum, aligned with expert implementation support from subject experts. Designed to support geography specialists and non-specialists alike, it includes regularly updated case studies and data, teacher guidance for developing geographical writing and oracy, and integrated assessment to help identify and address gaps in learning.

The programme repurposes teachers' time, enabling them to focus on the things that make great teaching and learning: co-planning, intellectual preparation, adaptive teaching and responsive use of formative assessment.

Informed by extensive research and practical insights into effective geography teaching, Geography Mastery Secondary is tested every day by teachers and subject leaders in Ark schools and continually refined through feedback from our partner schools.

How does it work?

Success starts with confident teachers consistently delivering brilliant geography lessons. That's why you'll have a dedicated subject expert guiding you through our 5-Step Improvement Process, alongside face-to-face induction, flexible CPD, and immediate access to practical planning, teaching and assessment resources.

At Ark Curriculum Plus we partner with hundreds of schools, including some of the largest MATs in the country, united by a shared mission to help all students make progress in geography and enjoy it.

I hope you will join us!

HANNAH SASSOON
HEAD OF GEOGRAPHY SECONDARY, ARK CURRICULUM PLUS



Put simply, what we do works!

Geography Mastery Secondary is a complete, fully coherent KS3 curriculum that supports ambitious and engaging geography teaching. We have received fantastic feedback from teachers and students, demonstrating the programme's positive impact.

OUR PARTNER SCHOOLS AGREED:

100%

Having a **dedicated Development lead** has helped them embed the programme effectively

93%

There's **greater consistency** in teaching and learning across department/MAT/ teaching team

93%

Students taught by Early Career Teachers or non-specialists benefit from **higher quality teaching**

WHAT PEOPLE SAY

"Geography Mastery provides us with a comprehensive narrative explaining the key themes students will study each year. I found this particularly useful as a non-subject specialist when we had a geography deep dive in our summer Ofsted – I could confidently articulate the rationale behind the subject."

FREDDIE REDFERN
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
DARWEN VALE HIGH SCHOOL

"It has particularly helped with student engagement and with supporting non-subject specialists to deliver engaging lessons! It has helped to improve my confidence."

TEACHER OF GEOGRAPHY MASTERY

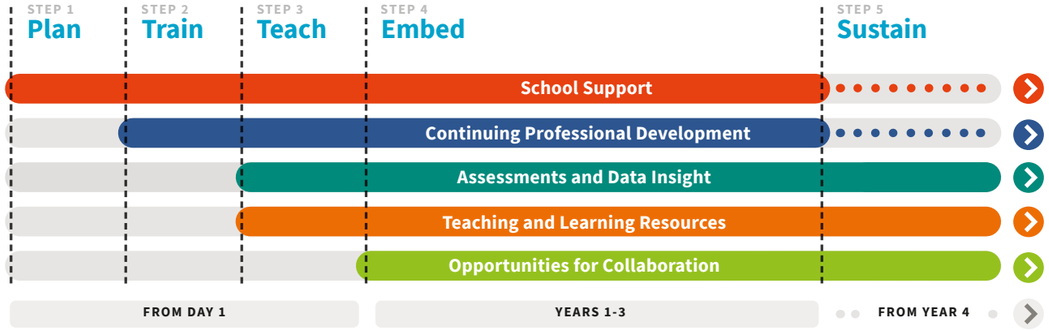


Framework for success

The 2021 EEF School Planning Guide** highlighted that 'the best available evidence indicates that **great teaching** is the **most important lever** schools have to **improve outcomes** for their pupils.'

To achieve powerful teaching that changes lives, teachers have told us they need to have strong subject knowledge, the best evidence-based pedagogies, rigorous assessment and effective planning, all working together.

Our Subject Excellence Programmes follow the AC+ 5-Step Improvement Process, which is based on over a decade's experience of transforming results in one of the most respected MATs and hundreds of schools nationwide. Improvement is a journey – that's why you will have a dedicated subject expert to guide you step by step, helping you achieve and sustain excellence.



STEP 1
Plan

You will receive a structured **diagnostic call** and your AC+ subject expert will help you to prepare an improvement plan to identify areas of focus to achieve the greatest impact with all your teachers.

OUTCOMES
SLT confidence | Clear plan agreed

STEP 2
Train

Your subject leads and teachers will receive face-to-face **induction training** and cutting-edge **online training**, getting everyone engaged and immediately building confidence.

OUTCOMES
Teacher confidence

STEP 3
Teach

Curriculum-integrated **subject-specific CPD**, **planning and teaching resources**, **assessments** and precise **diagnostic data** supports your teachers to repurpose their time into higher value activities. The best practice resources strengthen the quality of teaching and provide consistency across your school.

OUTCOMES
Consistency | Repurposed time | Ambitious curriculum

STEP 4
Embed

Once the foundations are set, we work with you to attain excellence in subject teaching. We provide **in-school leadership and teacher coaching** and offer support through **school visits**, **joint learning walks** and an **intensive programme leadership course**. Teachers access a **programme of subject pedagogy** and **on-demand videos**. This approach ensures outstanding subject teaching in your school.

OUTCOMES
Pupil progress | Pedagogical expertise

STEP 5
Sustain

Longer term, we collaborate to build sustained impact. **Induction** and **CPD** support new staff. Regular **teaching resources** and **CPD** updates keep your offerings current and informed. **Benchmarked assessments** provide ongoing confidence. You'll remain part of a **network** of similar schools, staying up-to-date on new research. Together, we'll annually evaluate programme success, maintaining maximum impact for your pupils.

OUTCOMES
Consistency | Pedagogical expertise | Pupil progress

** *Access the 2021 EEF School Planning Guide: https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/news/introducing-eef-school-planning-guide-2020-21*

A fully integrated programme

All the components of Geography Mastery Secondary work together to ensure your school, staff and students get real impact from the evidence-led subject excellence programme.



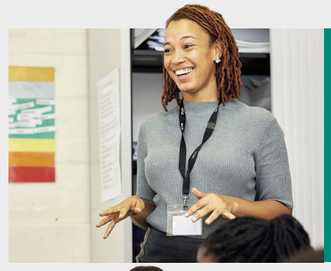
SCHOOL SUPPORT

From day one, your dedicated subject expert collaborates with teachers to create a tailored improvement plan for your school. They'll then support you to success through the five steps over multiple years.



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Teachers and leaders get immediately actionable CPD at point of need. It supports subject knowledge, pedagogic delivery, curriculum design and more. Flexibility is key, with online or in-person sessions.



ASSESSMENTS AND DATA INSIGHT

Formative assessments for data-led instruction are available in each lesson, unit, term and year. Standardised assessments, directly linked to the curriculum, identify pupil learning gaps for targeted intervention.



TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES

Curriculum-integrated planning tools and resources ensure successful programme delivery. From day one, you access carefully sequenced support for consistent, impactful, engaging lessons, built on best-practice pedagogies.



OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION

You join a subject teaching network, fostering the exchange of best practices. Teachers and leaders connect at in-person CPD events, including induction, creating a community of practice.

Dedicated school support

From day one, you'll have a dedicated Geography Mastery Secondary subject expert from our team of educators. They each have a background in, or currently teach, secondary geography. They'll collaborate with your leaders and teachers to create a tailored improvement plan for your school. Then they'll help to **introduce**, **embed** and **sustain** the programme over multiple years, ensuring a lasting positive impact on your students.

M360 diagnostic call

After a thorough review, a diagnostic call with your subject expert helps to identify key focus areas for maximum impact. You'll build an improvement plan to achieve these goals consistently with all teachers.

School visits

Your subject expert will regularly visit your school for joint learning walks with the Mastery Lead, to observe programme delivery. You can also involve them in co-planning or they can run customised CPD workshops.

Online development sessions

Our regular one-to-one sessions offer coaching and mentoring for your Mastery Lead. These are carefully designed to work for each stage of your implementation journey.

Support for you

Get in touch with your subject expert by phone or email, whenever you need advice or have questions. No query is too small and no problem too big. We are here to help!

Meet some of our team on page 22

"The impact of the school support has enabled our department to create bespoke CPD and co-planning sessions and really refine our practice."

NICHOLAS BAINES
MASTERY LEAD
ARK BLAKE ACADEMY



100%

of Mastery Leads say that their AC+ subject expert provides tailored, responsive support that **meets the specific needs of their school**.

Actionable CPD
at point of need

CPD that is relevant and immediately actionable

Geography Mastery Secondary provides targeted continuing professional development that's **immediately actionable**, covering subject knowledge, pedagogy, curriculum design, assessment and more. It's **flexible** – accessible online just when you need it or through inspiring and practical in-person sessions that foster a **community of practice**.

> *My subject knowledge has developed. I have been pushed to present different information in new ways."*
>
> **TEACHER OF GEOGRAPHY MASTERY**



Induction training

Everyone joining the programme takes part in **induction training**. New schools have **four in-person places**, and **everyone can attend online**. It's a wonderful way to get your team excited and prepared for their journey on the programme and to set them up for success. Plus, all modules are available on-demand (in our bespoke MyMastery platform) to revisit when required.

'Teaching Mastery' badging

Teachers enjoy online, **CPD that builds subject and pedagogical expertise**. For each completed module they gain a badge – a great way to evidence their professional development as steps towards further qualifications like NPQs.



Termly 'Preparing to Teach' webinars

Strengthening teachers' **topic-specific subject knowledge** for the upcoming term, our webinars support teachers in effective programme delivery. Breakouts focus on common challenges within similar year groups. It's a chance to share good practice and collaborate with other partner schools.

Leadership certification

Your Mastery Lead receives online CPD and ongoing mentoring from their subject expert. They will earn the ***Ark Curriculum Plus Certificate in Programme Leadership***, providing recognition for both them and your school.



In-school visits

Your subject expert can deliver some of the above CPD sessions during one of their visits, providing more **bespoke training** to meet your school's needs.

> *The CPD that we're have from the Ark team has been brilliant... I'm not a geography specialist but I feel a lot more comfortable now in my role as Head of Humanities."*
>
> **CRAIG DEWHURST**
> HEAD OF HUMANITIES
>
> **ST AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC ACADEMY**

> *It was useful to learn practical strategies I can take away today and implement tomorrow for adaptation for LPAs, and how to take mastery resources and edit my teaching approach for specific groups."*
>
> **TEACHER OF GEOGRAPHY MASTERY**

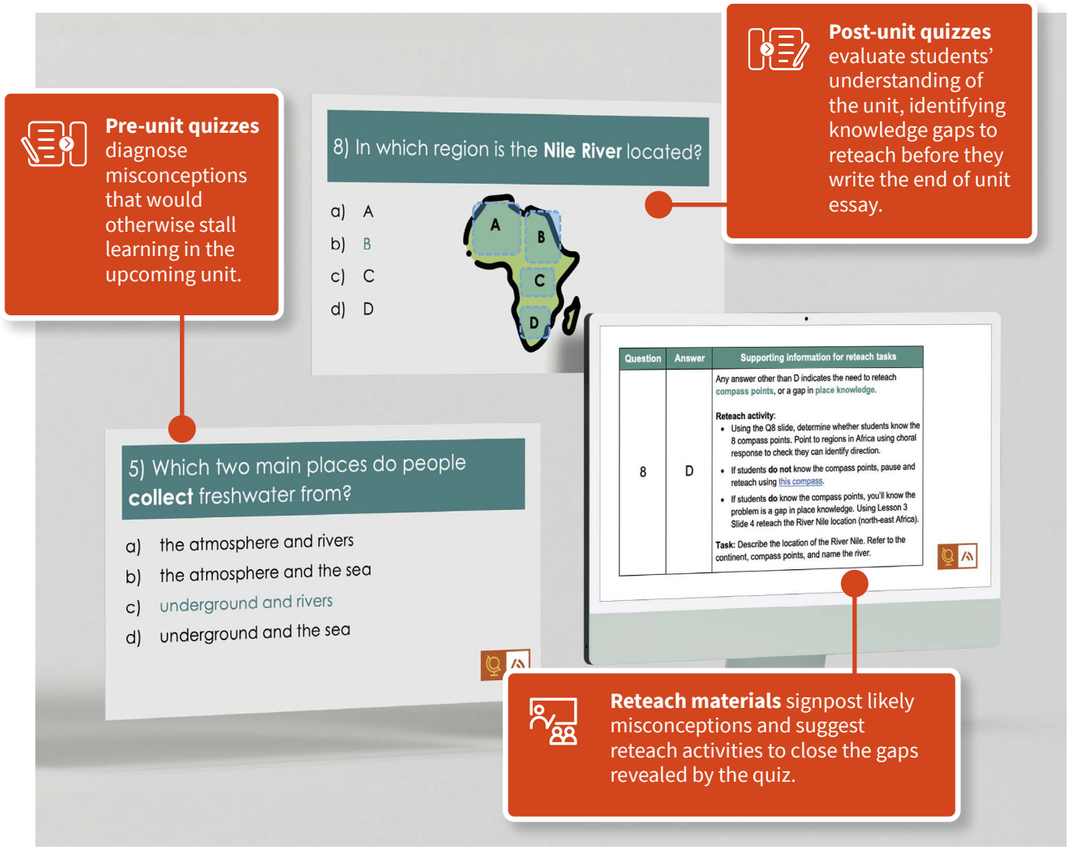
Assessment to inform teaching

Geography Mastery Secondary includes formative assessments within lessons, units and at the end of term, along with curriculum-aligned standardised assessments. They help pinpoint student learning gaps and guide effective interventions.

Formative assessments

Our unique curriculum-integrated formative assessments focus on one concept per question, helping teachers understand areas needing support. They **test what students have learned**, **reveal knowledge gaps**, and **uncover misconceptions**, helping teachers identify learning barriers.

> *"More regular checks for understanding have allowed us to address misconceptions quicker and speed up progress."*
>
> **TOM ROBINSON**
> MASTERY LEAD
>
> **REDDISH VALE HIGH SCHOOL**



Standardised assessments

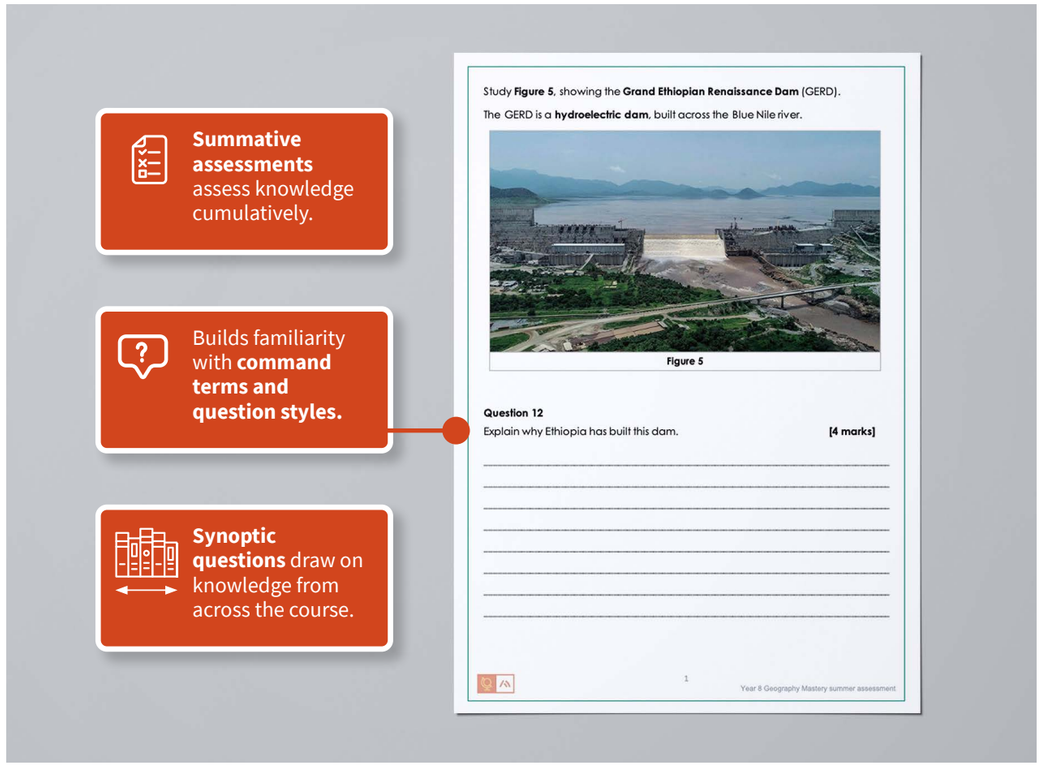
SMART GRADE

Geography Mastery Secondary presents a picture of your school's progress compared to **national data samples**, providing reassurance and a clear view on how and what to improve. You can also analyse by student, class and cohort.

Summative assessments on Smartgrade (our partner platform, included when you join) are **standardised yearly** and provide a large, nationally representative data sample.

UNIQUELY, THE PROGRAMME PROVIDES:

- An asssessment pool of **tens of thousands of students** so you can be confident in the age-related grade boundaries we provide.
- Comparison to **current attainment data** rather than historic – crucial for identifying pandemic-related gaps.
- School **benchmarking** to identify areas of strength and development.
- Targeted **reteach planning and support** to guide improvement.



Best-practice teaching and learning resources

We provide all the resources so you can focus on your students!

The **best-practice planning tools and comprehensive lesson resources** provide everything your school needs to deliver the programme successfully. From day one, your staff will have access and support to deliver consistent, impactful, engaging and pedagogically strong geography lessons, sequenced to build students' **substantive, procedural and disciplinary knowledge** as they become successful young geographers.

THE TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCES:

- Promote oracy in flexible, practical ways that build competence and confidence in 'talking geography'.
- Provide structure and support so that you own the curriculum, with an at-a-glance planning guide.
- Are created with early career teachers (ECTs), non-specialists and specialists in mind, giving the relevant level of guidance for each.
- Include practical tips to adapt your delivery to suit your students' and school's needs.
- Are regularly updated with current examples and data, reducing the time teachers spend sourcing and refreshing content.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

Planning

Curriculum framework
Programme of study
Teacher guidance
Unit overviews
Skills map

Teaching

Student booklets
Task sheets
Lesson slides
Exemplar resources
Essay support
Geography Meetings
Fieldwork
GIS

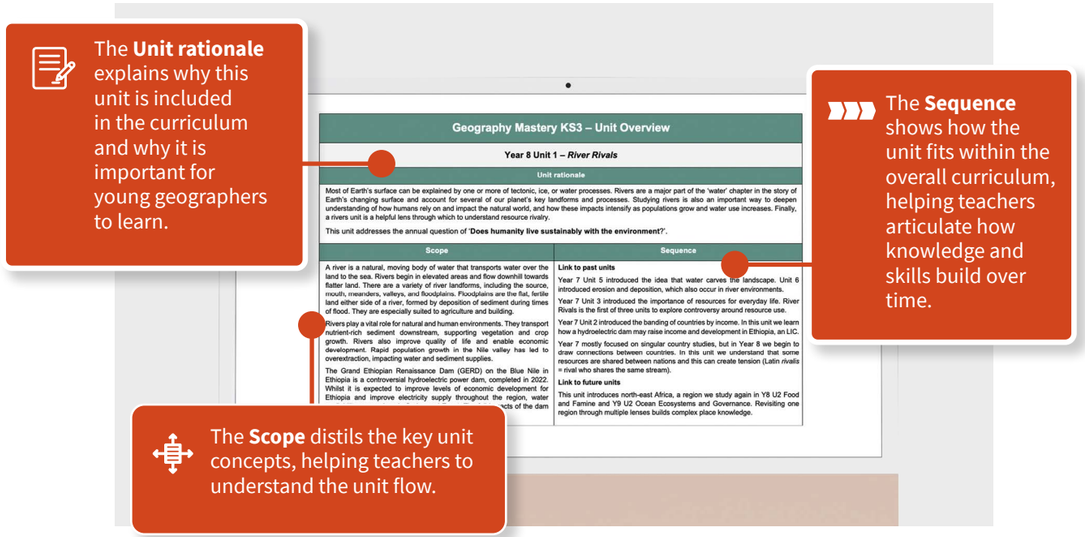
Click here to access a free **Programme Preview** and see examples of these resources.



Unit overview

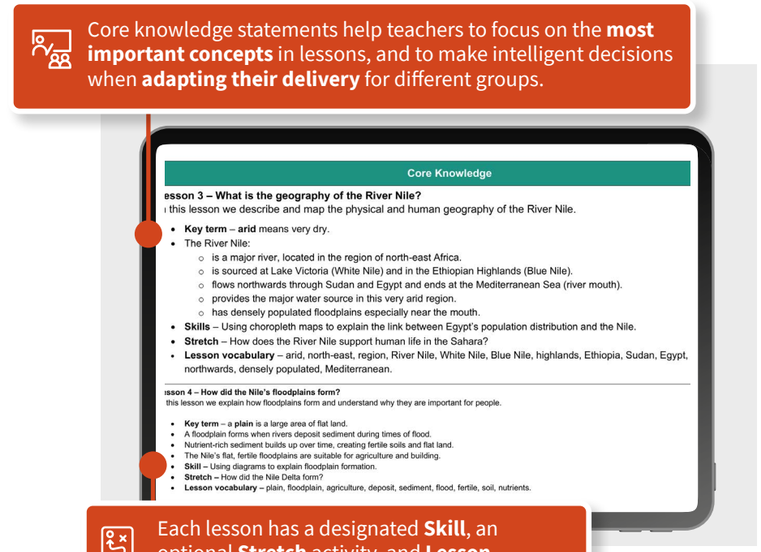
Teachers at our partner schools appreciate this key document and its unique guidance. It helps them to understand the **context and goals of the unit** they are about to teach, ensuring that their daily teaching fits a larger purpose. Each one also gives teachers guidance on the **sequence of lessons, possible adaptations and signposts to relevant CPD** videos and research articles.

> *"The Unit overview is the most important document for us. When I didn't have anyone to fill in the KS3 role, the Unit overview was really helpful for making our own learning objectives and guiding us when we adapt the Mastery booklet."*
>
> **LUCIA TAMBURELLO**
> HEAD OF GEOGRAPHY
> **ARK ACADEMY**



Core knowledge

The Unit overview also includes the **core knowledge** for each lesson in a unit. Identifying the most important knowledge lesson by lesson helps ensure all students make substantial progress over time and that no student is left behind.



Teacher guidance

A **Teacher guidance** booklet is provided for each unit.

This includes practical lesson-by-lesson guidance to ensure that all teachers, regardless of experience, feel prepared to teach brilliant geography lessons.

As a result, **100% of users say that students taught by Early Career Teachers or non-specialists benefit from higher quality teaching** as a result of Geography Mastery.

> *Ensures that all students – regardless of the experience of their teacher – have access to a good quality curriculum. Thus, Geography Mastery 'raises the bar' from the bottom for all students."*
>
> **TEACHER OF GEOGRAPHY MASTERY**

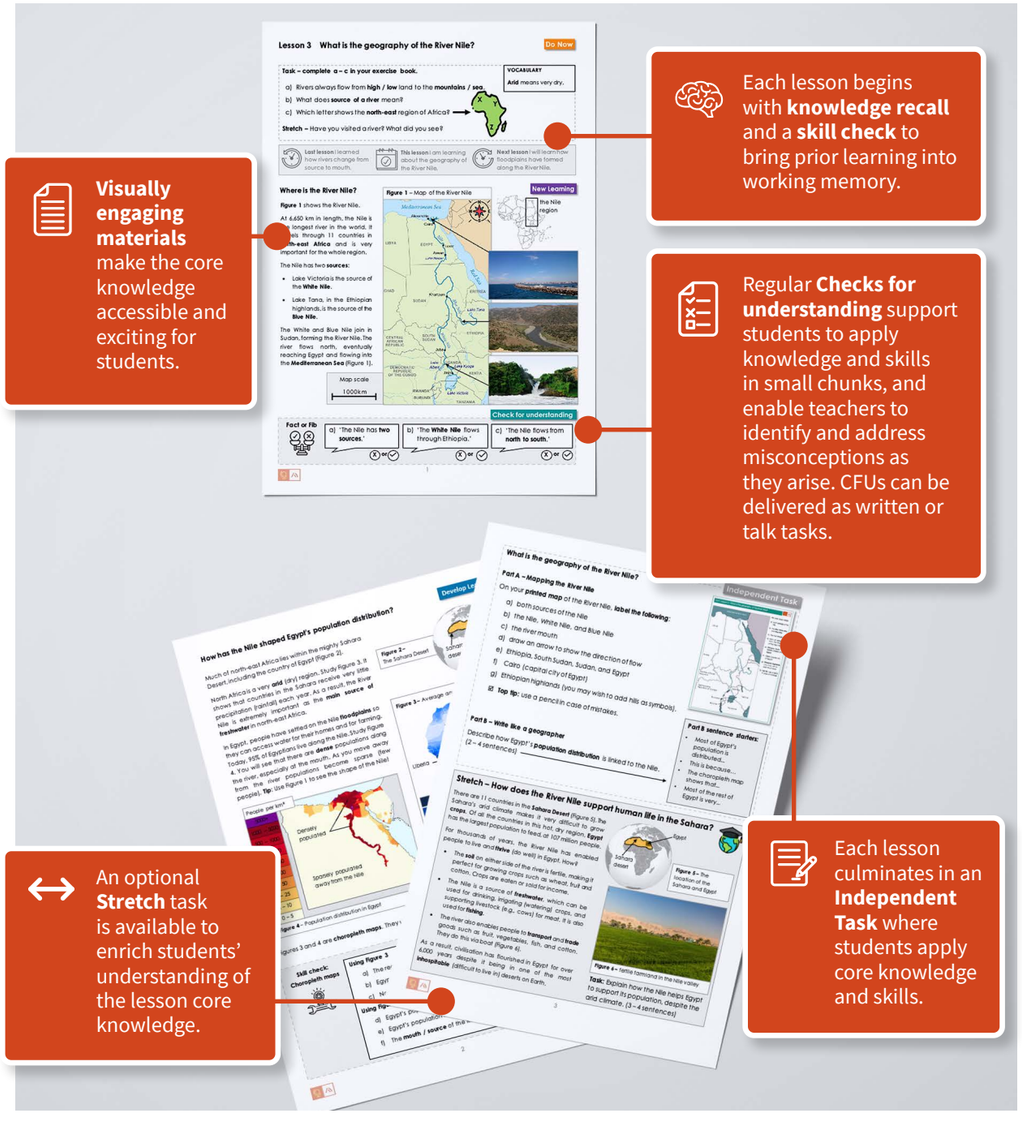


Mastery booklets

Our student-facing Mastery booklets are unique in their quality, rich content and built-in knowledge checks. Full of visual stimuli, they bring abstract concepts and far-flung places to life.

They're available as ready-to-use pdfs or editable versions for teachers who wish to tailor for their students. By minimising the time they spend researching and designing materials, the booklets enable teachers to focus on adaptation and classroom practice.

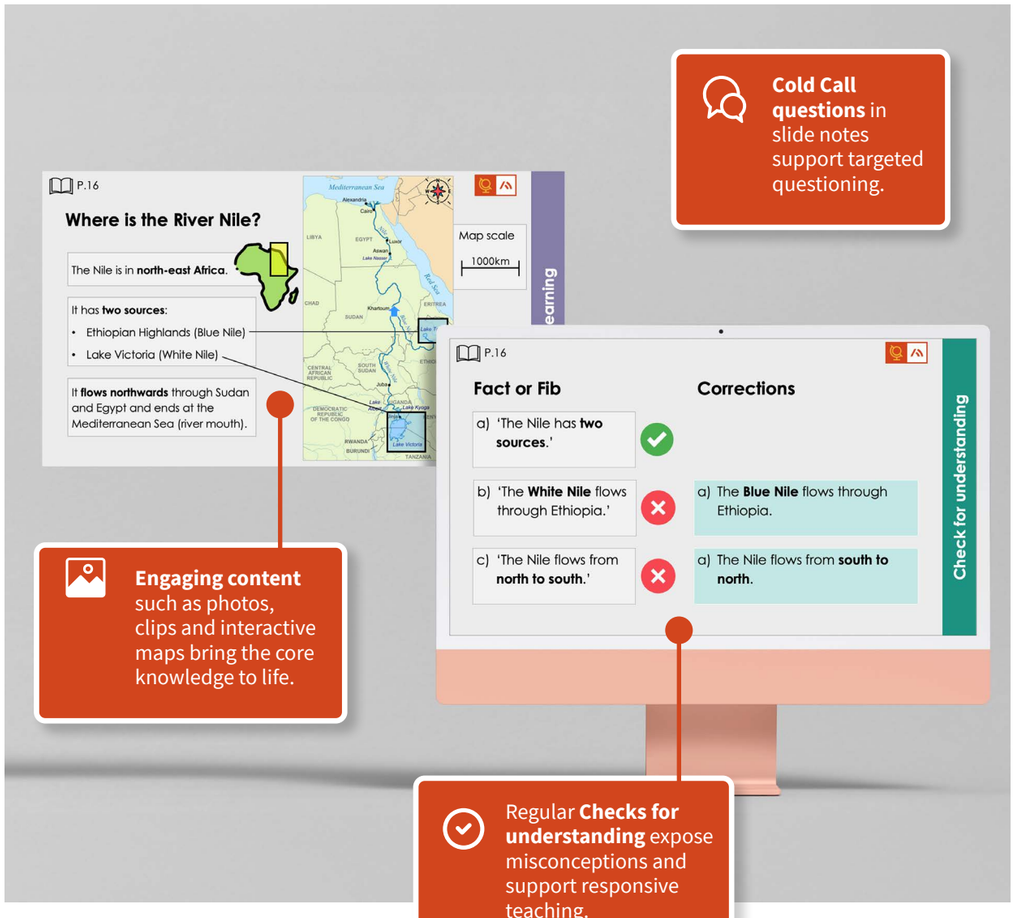
> *This programme has had a significant positive impact on my teaching. …instead of researching content, I can focus on my teaching pedagogy, plan for misconceptions, scaffold activities for specific classes as required."*
>
> **ROSE DAVIS**
> GEOGRAPHY TEACHER
>
> **TRINITY ACADEMY LEEDS**



Lesson slides

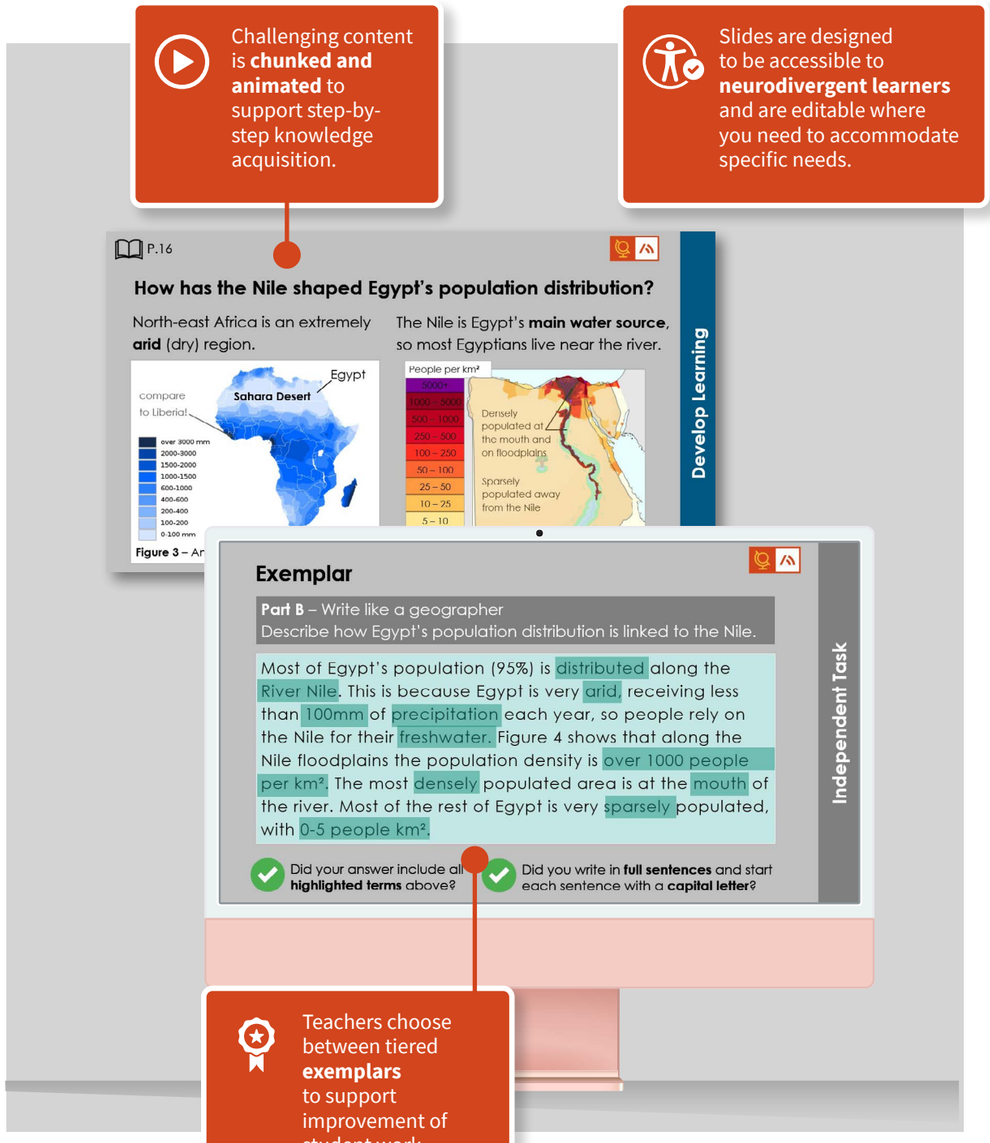
The Geeography Mastery six-part lesson structure is unique and allows teachers to take control of the learning, based on what is happening in the classroom that day. Assessment for learning opportunities are threaded throughout, constantly building upon what students are learning at every stage in the lesson.

Fully editable slide decks are provided for each lesson, including notes and guidance to support delivery and ownership. All resources are created to be Google-friendly. **Oracy is elevated** via Key Terms, Cold Call questions and regular Check for Understanding tasks which can be used as structured talk tasks – making geographical literacy a reality for all students.



"Students like the structure of the lesson (they know what to expect and do) which has allowed for greater enjoyment of the subject."

TEACHER OF GEOGRAPHY MASTERY



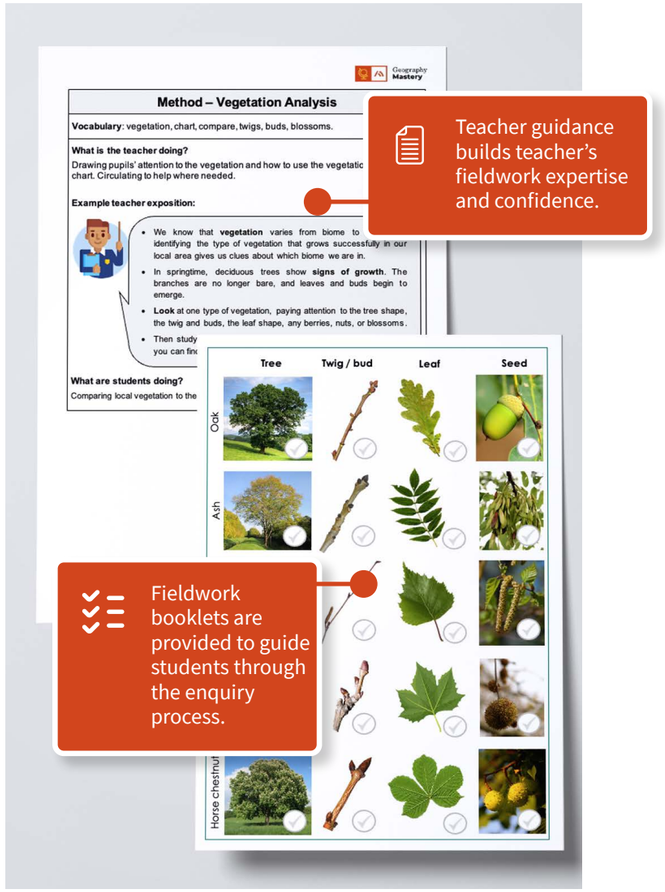
Fieldwork

The national curriculum requires fieldwork to be taught at Key Stage 3, yet many schools do not fulfill this due to lack of fieldwork expertise, or cost and logistics.

Geography Mastery helps by providing step-by-step fieldwork guidance to give teachers of all levels of experience the skills and confidence to deliver great fieldwork. Exemplars and exposition show teachers what to say and what their classes should be aiming for. And the materials are designed for use off-site or on the school grounds, depending on your needs.

The programme integrates multiple fieldwork opportunities, above and beyond national curriculum requirements.

Fieldwork becomes more complex throughout the course, incorporating virtual fieldwork techniques, GIS, onsite data gathering, and sophisticated write-ups.



GIS

GIS (Geographical Information Systems) is another area of the national curriculum teachers can find challenging to deliver. To address this, the easy-to-use platform Digimap for Schools is built into several Geography Mastery units. Crystal clear instructions in the student and teacher materials enable fantastic GIS lessons that students love.

> *Students are more confident with geographical knowledge and skills – which makes them more motivated to continue studying Geography at KS4. Students in particular like interactive lessons and Digimaps on laptops!"*
>
> **TEACHER OF GEOGRAPHY MASTERY**



Be inspired
by like-minded schools

Building a community of practice

Partner schools join a **subject teaching network**, sharing best practices and learning from each other. CPD includes in-person induction, termly webinars and subject panels. Plus, we host an exclusive annual conference to facilitate collaboration between our partner schools and offer access to new research and thinking. Your subject expert may connect you with local or similar context schools, helping you gain insights on delivery or simply see Geography Mastery Secondary in action in other settings.

A unique design

The Geography Mastery Secondary curriculum is organised through **three annual questions**:

YEAR 7

What are the key physical and human processes on our planet?

YEAR 8

Does humanity live sustainably with the environment?

YEAR 9

How globally connected is the world?

Careful and clear sequencing ensures that **substantive, procedural and disciplinary knowledge** build over time within these annual themes.

Our distinct approach connects physical processes and human interactions via contemporary case studies and exciting topics. Many topics are unique at KS3, for example ocean tectonics, glacial retreat, food security, shifting global connections, and personal geography.

> *Lessons have clear links throughout the years, with knowledge from year 7 linking to year 8 and to GCSE and beyond. Clear focus on the foundations of geography first and structure built upon that, with challenge and ambitious geography throughout."*
>
> **FATIMA ASMAL** HUMANITIES TEACHER
>
> **ARK ISAAC NEWTON**

Standing out from the crowd

The impact of our programmes is clear, but in case you need even more reasons to choose AC+...



Collaboratively designed and refined in classrooms

Grown in collaboration with Ark Schools, one of the highest achieving MATs in the UK, we continually learn and co-create together. Plus, we test what really works live in the classroom, to make improvements that will have the biggest positive impact.

Our programmes support disadvantaged students – Ark Schools pupils make nearly half a grade more progress than their peers nationally. We're here to help give all students the opportunities that an excellent education provides.

Recognised as an educational leader

We're proud to be recognised as a leader in subject improvement. We work with the Education Endowment Foundation, The Brilliant Club and the Fischer Family Foundation, whose research provides robust evidence of our impact. We collaborate with the subject associations, along with universities including Cambridge and UCL.

Accountable to you and your pupils

We are a non-profit organisation. Our full attention is on supporting our partner schools and making our already impressive programmes the best they can be. We're particularly passionate about helping disadvantaged children and we aim to level the playing field, so that every young person can succeed.

The schools that we work with are charged a financial contribution which goes right back into delivering and developing the programmes. We're not accountable to shareholders, we're accountable to you!

Aligned to Ofsted to support your quality of education

The Education Inspection Framework looks for consistency between the intent of schools' curricula, and the ways schools empower their team to realise these plans. We have supported many schools to be expertly prepared for an Ofsted visit by:

- Providing a powerfully sequenced, academically ambitious curriculum for all.
- Equipping subject leads with the confidence to articulate their curriculum intent, implementation and impact.
- Delivering immediately actionable teacher CPD at the point of need, supporting subject knowledge, pedagogic delivery, curriculum design and more.

Our expert team

We are both teachers with experience leading geography departments and working in school leadership roles. We love working with Geography Mastery Secondary schools because we truly believe in the power of evidence to inform practice and to narrow the attainment gap. We are members of the Chartered College for Teaching and the Geographical Association – meaning we engage with the latest research and the subject community directly.



Hannah Sassoon



Megan Setchell



Caroline Room



Nicola Joyce

“The key has been the support from the Geography Mastery team. We’ve been without a HoD in Geography and the team’s subject specialist support has been outstanding. It is invaluable due to my subject specialism being History.”

FREDDIE REDFERN
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
DARWEN VALE HIGH SCHOOL

It’s easy to join us

Let us know you’re interested by email, phone or by booking a meeting.

We’ll have a **virtual meeting or a call** with you to learn more about your school.

Agree you’re joining the Geography Mastery programme with your senior leadership and sign a contract.

Get set up with Smartgrade and have a **diagnostic call** to agree the plan for your school’s implementation.

Attend induction training and receive full support to introduce the programme in your school.

GET IN TOUCH

Speak to a member of our team about **partnering with AC+** today.

partnerships@arkcurriculumplus.org.uk

020 3116 6363

Or book a call online at a time that suits you: calendly.com/ark-curriculum-plus

OUR OTHER SUBJECT EXCELLENCE PROGRAMMES

PRIMARY

- English Mastery
- Geography Mastery
- History Mastery
- Mathematics Mastery
- Science Mastery

SECONDARY

- English Mastery
- Mathematics Mastery
- Science Mastery

We look forward to partnering with you!

We work with schools like yours nationwide to deliver immediate impact and sustained subject excellence.

So if you're looking for stronger student outcomes, more confident teachers and consistently high-quality teaching and learning across your school… Relax. With Ark Curriculum Plus, you're in safe hands.

Start your journey to subject excellence today!

Click here to access our **Programme Preview** and see more detail of what you get on the programme.

Ark Curriculum Plus

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