

Top tips to help your child be a brilliant geographer

- Know your local area - explore it with your children
- Talk to your child about people, places and environments have time to answer their questions.
- Walk to school / play group if possible - rather than go by car - touch the outdoor world - keep a record of what you see on the way. Select a different topic each time - for example - Day 1 How many red objects can we see? - Day 2 - What different types of vehicles did we observe?
- Play 1 - 10 on the way to school, or on another journey. (1 street sign, 2 red cars 3 mummies with buggies etc).
- Play I Spy on the way to school. What a way to investigate the features of places! A for Archway B for Bus etc
- Make up do it yourself jigsaw puzzles of places using calendar pictures - with a cardboard backing. Help your child(ren) to make jigsaws
- Point out the range of maps that we can use to help us unravel the mystery of places. Be map collectors - in places that you visit that give out free maps - shopping centres - country parks town centres - museums etc. Read and explore them with your children - that's where we went.
- Let children plan the route they want to follow to school.
- Let older children investigate route maps and help them to plan the route places that you visit. If you use public transport talk about types of transport - where they might be going.
- Play with your child with their small world lay outs - farm sets, train sets, dolls houses etc - talk about the layouts and rooms etc - what belongs where - where the tractors go etc.
- board games, many of which have a geographical context, with them - Snakes and Ladders - Maze Games

- Join the public library with your child - go regularly - choose exciting books about people and places - sometimes you can meet the author and listen to them tell stories.
- Go to the art gallery to really look at paintings of places, people and environments such as the work of Lowry and of Monet. The work of contemporary painters.
- Sculpt local features with play dough, plasticine or modelling clay etc.
- Collect postcards and calendar pictures of places - make a place picture scrapbook.
- Take pictures of the view from your back window once each month at the end of the year can we order them together? How has the view changed through the months/seasons?
- When on holidays, help your child to make holiday diaries - artefacts, drawings, postcards and tickets etc.
- Talk about places in films that you watch together - Jungle Book, Lion King, Over the Hedge, Ben Ten, Happy Feet and Ice Age 3 etc.
- Hunt for different signs, signals and logos while on shopping trips. What do they mean? - Which shops are they outside of?
- Look at the food items that you are purchasing - note where they come from - look for the countries together in an atlas at home, or on Internet maps.
- Look at the labels in clothes items - where are the items made?
- On route talk about the landscapes you travel through. Be car plate, and lorry spotters - company and where they come from in the UK or abroad.
- When at relatives such as the grandparents go for a short walk- talk about how the area is similar and different to the area that your home is in. Getting your child to begin to observe similarities and differences between places.
- Go for a walk in a local wood or forest - at different times of the year - spring time or autumn (leaf kicking time). Seasonality is a very important pattern in their lives.

- Watch the weather forecast - even better listen to different radio channel forecasts. Did they get it right? Watch items on dramatic world weather events.
- Give your child a small patch of the garden to plant and tend - the magic of growing their own items.
- Be mini beast or habitat detectives in your back garden. Create your own garden eco tour. Star watch at night from homemade den
- Collect stamps or coins from different countries - you can get really cheap selection packs of stamps in many of the charity shops.
- Talk about topic issues highlighted by news programmes such as News Round.

The list is endless - You will have many ideas of your own. In a nutshell you can help your children learn by offering them exciting activities and by encouraging them to ask and to try to answer questions about the world in which we live.

And I Say to Myself What a Wonderful World!