

## **Geography Year 1: Writing About Places**

### **Introduction**

Barnaby Bear as a concept encourages pupils to take Barnaby Bear on holiday with them. This activity helps pupils to develop an appreciation that other places can have similar features as well as different ones, and encourages them to ask geographical questions. It also provides a context for pupils to express their views about places.

Pupils use a word bank to create reports on what they have found out about a place from looking at pictures and photographs. As well as learning about places, children learn to use a word processor to assemble text held in a word bank and develop their familiarity with the computer keyboard and mouse.

### **Skills involved**

#### **What will the children learn?**

- That information about some human and physical features can be conveyed by images of locations
- How to recognise similarities and differences between places
- How to identify certain words and understand that they communicate information
- How to use a word bank on a computer.

#### **What prior experience will the children need?**

Pupils will need to know about loading a simple word processing program on a computer and have some knowledge of printing from the computer. For some pupils this will be a gradual learning process, with the pupils receiving help to start with.

The children will need to have some experience of generating text by the pressing of the keys or clicking on a word bank. They need to have sufficient dexterity to control the mouse to enable the selection of suitable text.

### **Equipment**

- Large pictures for group discussion and smaller pictures for working at the computer; an interactive whiteboard or digital projector would be useful for showing the large pictures to the whole class
- A number of files with words in a word bank so the children can select the words they require
- A computer with software such as Clicker, TextEase or Firstword.

### **The Lesson**

- Introduce the activity by using a photograph or set of photographs as a basis for discussion – pupils could also bring in photos of their holidays. Alternatively, photographs may be of particular localities or themes being covered in geography work alongside the Barnaby Bear unit

- Talk about the pictures: what geographical features can pupils identify? Think how to comment on them in a sentence
- If necessary, show pupils how to switch on the computer and gain access to the desktop, and how to use the word bank. If the children are new to word processing, give them time to practise manipulating the mouse and keyboard to enter text
- Using the word bank, pupils should create sentences describing what they can see from the pictures. Some may need considerable support with reading and/or ICT skills. If your word processor has a speech facility, pupils may also find it helpful for the computer to 'read aloud' what they have typed, to help them identify mistakes
- Save and print out the text, which could be displayed alongside the images.

### **Why are we using ICT?**

This activity could be carried out without ICT, with pupils handwriting their reports and selecting from word lists on a whiteboard. However, by using ICT, pupils are able to concentrate on the choice of words and the geographical concepts rather than their handwriting.

### **References**

#### **QCA Schemes of Work ICT Unit 1B: Using a word bank**

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/it/?view=get>

#### **QCA Schemes of Work Geography Unit 5: Where in the World is Barnaby Bear?**

<http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/schemes2/geography/?view=get>

### **Where do we go next?**

- Pupils could generate text on real places they have been to, supported by scanned photographs of these places
- Pupils could add their own words using the keyboard. What words would they need to describe the local area to Barnaby Bear?

### **Differentiating the activity**

- Those pupils who need more help may benefit from working in a pair or with an adult
- Pupils who are able to complete this activity easily may be asked to use the keyboard to add in words of their own choosing.

### **Reflecting on their work**

- Are the places they looked at different from where they live? How are they different?
- Are some things the same?
- Have they learned some special words to describe places?
- Did the computer make it easier for them to write their reports? Is it easier to select a word rather than type it? What if you want to use words that are not in the list?

## **Supporting links**

### **Supporting assets**

- Banks of suitable words in Word format, which can then be cut and pasted into other applications which have a word bank option
- Illustrated word banks in Clicker4 format

### **Useful URLs**

- The Where is Barnaby Bear? Website  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/barnabybear/> and Mapzone  
<http://www.mapzone.co.uk/pagesourfavouriteplaces/gateway.cfm>