

Changing Places

Introduction:

This compulsory theme focuses on places and their dynamic characteristics. While the UK and especially the place(s) where the learner lives / lived and / or studies are the context for study, appropriate examples from different regional and national contexts may be used, both in class and in field studies. 'Place' is a portion of geographic space to which meaning has been given by people. Different places have distinct characteristics due to their natural features and the landscapes that people have created. Places change over time and develop layered history. This history helps to shape the identity and 'personality' of a place. The identity is also shaped by the relationship to other places at a range of scales. A place, such as London's Trafalgar Square or the Lake District, may symbolise different things for different people. Places can evoke feelings of nostalgia, pride, hope, adventure, tranquillity or fear. Places are a vital part of the learners' own lives and the lives of others.

Places are dynamic because the population, society, and the economy upon which they depend and the environment in which they are situated are in a constant state of flux. The changing economic environment impacts on employment structure with effects on the environment, the demography of the place and the consequent socio-economic characteristics. As places change there is often a need for government and society to respond through innovation, marketing and reinvention. This leads to the 'remaking' of rural and urban places. Economic restructuring drives change. This has major impacts on social inequalities, culture, and the environment in relation to learners' own lives and the lives of others.

Learners must begin by studying their 'home' place or the location of their studies. They should investigate how and why it has changed over time, both in reality and how it is represented (for instance in tourist literature or the media). These changes should be in a wider regional and national and global context as the characteristics and impacts of external forces operate at different scales (individuals, businesses, interest groups, government policies and the decisions of multinational corporations). Through this knowledge, learners will gain an understanding of the way in which their own lives and the lives of others are affected by continuity and change in the nature of places.

As an outcome of studying this theme, learners will gain an understanding of *specialised concepts*:

Adaptation – the ability to respond to changing events and to reduce current and future vulnerability to change

Attachment – the linkages between individuals and places

Globalisation – impact of world development on nations, regions and localities

Identity – how people view changing places from different perspectives and experiences

Inequality – social inequalities between people and places: income and wealth inequality as a threat to society

Interdependence – links between the economy and society: relations of mutual dependence and interdependence are worldwide and part of the world economy, trade, communications and production

Representation – how places are portrayed by formal and informal agencies: people represent what they see and experience; how people are represented in a political sense; how place is represented in literature, art and the media

Sustainability – linked to rebranding, marketing and place making

Thresholds – the minimum demand or population needed to support the provision of a good or service: the tipping point for change within places.

Content [NB not necessarily in order of teaching]:

1.3.1 Changing place; changing places – relationships and connections

The demographic, socio-economic and cultural characteristics of places as exemplified by the 'home' place (this may be a locality, neighbourhood or a small community) and at least one further contrasting place

Factors (shifting flows of and connections between people, resources, money and investment and ideas) that have shaped and continue to shape the characteristics of place at all scales from local to global, including MNC fast food chains

The way in which continuity and change of these local to global factors affect learner's own lives and the lives of others

1.3.2 Changing place; changing places – meaning and representation

Places are given meaning as a result of people's perceptions, engagement with and attachments to the place in question and are related to different identities, perspectives and experiences, for example the Lake District

Places are represented in a variety of different forms including advertising and promotional material through different media and publications, for example Birmingham Grand Central

Contrasting images portrayed by and between the formal statistical, media and popular images of places

The way in which place meanings have an effect on continuity and change in the nature of places

The way in which these meanings and attachments affect learners own lives and the lives of others

1.3.3 Changes over time in the economic characteristics of places

Economic change in places over time can lead to structural changes in employment shown by the Clark Fisher Model

External forces and factors influencing economic restructuring including changing technology and lifestyles, government strategy and globalisation

Examples of the decline in primary employment in rural areas and in secondary employment in urban places, using the home area where possible and the way in which these changes affect the learners' own lives and the lives of others

1.3.4 Economic change and social inequalities in deindustrialised urban places

Consequences of the loss of traditional industries in urban areas including the cycle of deprivation, social exclusion, and lower pollution levels

Consequences of loss of secondary industries in urban areas including unemployment

Government policies in deindustrialised places including retraining, economic (local to global), environmental policies and stimulating tertiary growth and investment by foreign MNCs

1.3.5 The service economy (tertiary) and its social and economic impacts

Retailing, commercial and entertainment expansion in some central areas and their demographic and economic drivers including rising affluence and technological change

Gentrification and associated social changes in central urban places experiencing re-urbanisation

The complexity of the changing service economy including the continuing decline for some central urban places, out-of-town retailing and office-parks, internet shopping and central entertainment and the impacts of these changes on learners' own lives and the lives of others

1.3.6 The 21st century knowledge economy (quaternary) and its social and economic impacts

Knowledge economy clusters including education, research, culture / creative industries, digital / IT companies, science and biotechnology

Locational factors encouraging cluster growth including proximity to universities and research institutes, government support, planning regulations and infrastructure

Impacts of quaternary industry clusters on people and places including place making and marketing, demographic change and global connectivity

1.3.7 The rebranding process and players in rural places

Diversification in the post-productive countryside is achieved through re-imaging and regenerating rural places through recreation, heritage, media and event management that have been driven by local groups and external agencies

The consequences of rebranding on the perceptions, actions and behaviours of people, including those in other places who choose to relocate there, changes to businesses and the local community

1.3.8 Rural management and the challenges of continuity and change

Managing rural change and inequality in diverse communities including issues of housing, transport and service provision, including Broadband provision

On-going challenges in rural places where regeneration / rebranding are absent or have failed or have created conflict

New challenges of managing change in some rural communities associated with counter-urbanisation and second home ownership, and possible actions

1.3.9 The rebranding process and players in urban places

Re-imaging and regenerating urban places through sport / music stadia, cultural quarters, festivals, industrial heritage and flagship developments

Re-imaging and regenerating urban places through external agencies including governments, corporate bodies and community groups

The way in which the urban place has been re-imaged and regenerated impacts on the actions and behaviours of individuals, groups, businesses and institutions

1.3.10 Urban management and the challenges of continuity and change

Re-imaging and regenerating affects the social and economic characteristics of urban places and may create conflicting perceptions

On-going challenges in urban places where regeneration /rebranding are absent