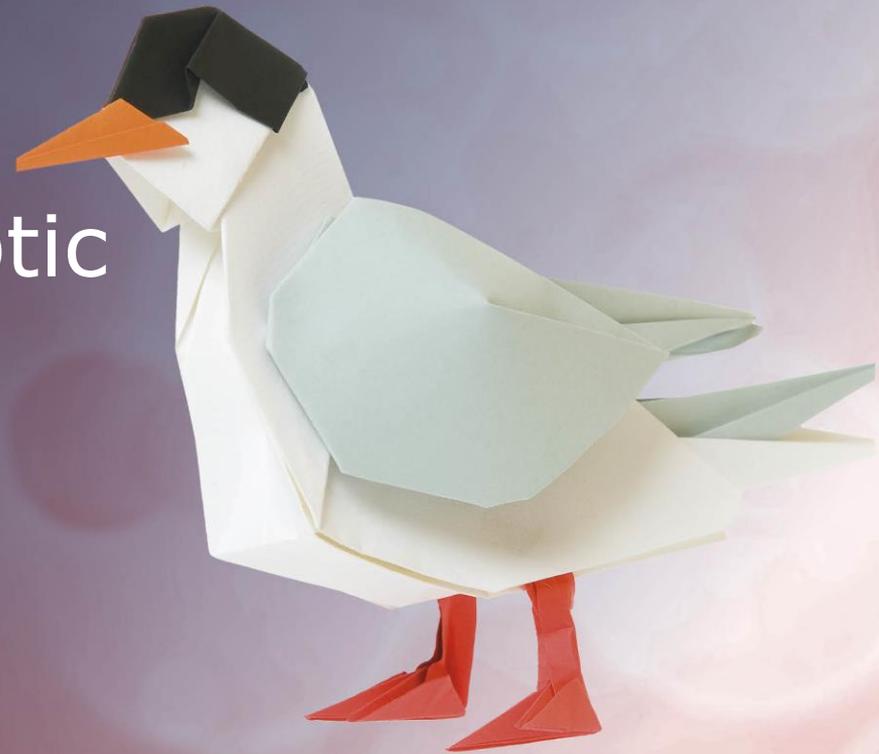
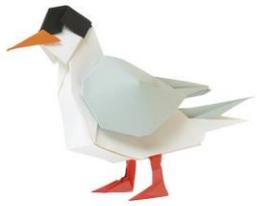


# AS and A level 2016 Geography

Managing the synoptic  
Paper 3

Bob Digby  
1:30-2:15pm





# Today's session

- Paper 3 in a nutshell
- Understanding the approach & rationale of Paper 3
- The synoptic themes – what they mean, and the implications for teaching
- Preparing for Paper 3 in the second year of the A level course
- Managing and preparing for the demands of the examination.

Examiner marked student responses for A level Paper 3 are available to download from our [website](#).



## Paper 3 in a nutshell

- An issues-based approach to A level Geography
- An unseen synoptic paper based on synoptic themes in the specification from the **compulsory** content
- Students assessed on their knowledge, understanding, skills and ability in applying the themes to an unseen situation
- 2 hour 15-minute exam, worth 70 marks, contributing 20% of marks towards the final A level grade
- Important to stress the degree of extended writing – 2 x 8 mark (with an 'Analyse' command), an 18- and 24-mark questions = 58 marks out of a total of 70.
- Geographical skills integrated into the questions – but manipulation of data likely to be low tariff (4 marks)



# Overview of compulsory topics at A-level

Content overview – compulsory topics in red

## Dynamic Landscapes

1. Tectonic Processes and Hazards
2. Landscape Systems, Processes and Change  
(**Either** 2A: Glaciated Landscapes **or** 2B: Coastal Landscapes)

## Dynamic Places

3. Globalisation
4. Shaping Places  
(**Either** 4A: Regenerating Places **or** 4B: Diverse Places)

## Physical Systems and Sustainability

5. The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity
6. The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security

## Global development and connections

7. Superpowers
8. Global Development and Connections  
(**Either** 8A: Health, Human Rights and Intervention **or** 8B: Migration, Identity and Sovereignty)



# Allowing time for Paper 3

## Teacher A

## Teacher B

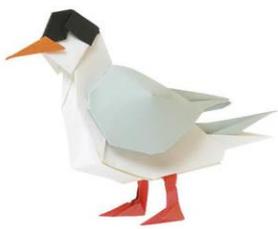
Dynamic Landscapes	Key Ideas	Dynamic Places	Key Ideas
1. Tectonic Processes and Hazards 2. Landscape Systems, Processes & Change ( <b>Either</b> Glaciated <b>or</b> Coastal) <b>Total 21 weeks</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>12</b>	3. Globalisation 4. Shaping Places ( <b>Either</b> Regenerating <b>or</b> Diverse Places) <b>Total 21 weeks (from a 36-week year)</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>12</b>



**This provides time in Year 1 for assessment, fieldwork, synoptic work & skills**

Physical Systems & Sustainability	Key Ideas	Global Development & Connections	Key Ideas
5. The Water Cycle and Water Insecurity 6. The Carbon Cycle and Energy Security <b>Total 18 weeks</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>9</b>	7. Superpowers 8. Global Development & Connections ( <b>Either</b> Health, Human Rights, etc. <b>or</b> Migration, Identity, etc.) <b>Total 21 weeks (in a 30-week year)</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>12</b>

**Allows time for synoptic paper, fieldwork, skills & writing the NEA**



# What makes Paper 3 different?

A level Geography 2016

PAPER	Assessment Objectives			Total for all Assessment Objectives
	AO1 %	AO2 %	AO3 %	
Paper 1	13	15.75	1.25	30%
Paper 2	13	15.75	1.25	30%
<b>Paper 3</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8.5</b>	<b>20%</b>
Paper 4 (NEA)	2.5	2.5	15	20%
<b>Total for A-Level</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>100%</b>



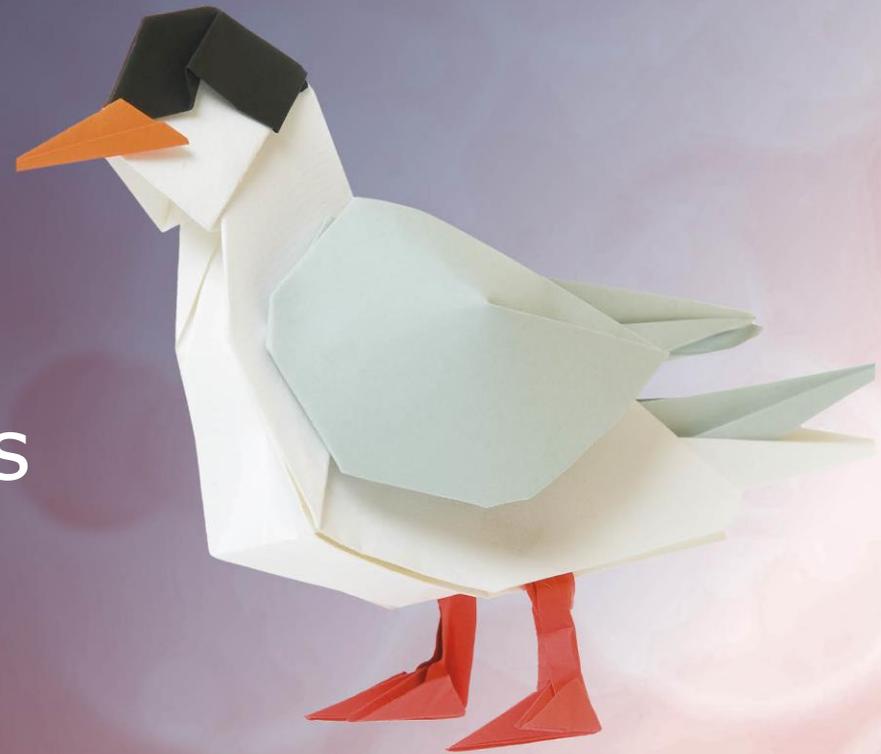
# Essential pointers

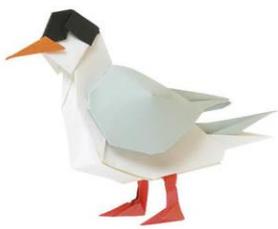
A level Geography 2016

- The 18- and 24-mark 'Evaluate' questions will always set students up to have a debate – like the legacy Unit 4 Research report questions. Students need to be taught how to engage with **and take on** a title through evidenced argument.
- The geographical 'location' of the unseen resources won't be known in advance! **But** it will need to be somewhere where issues concerning Globalisation and Superpowers are evident
- Any carbon and water cycle material is likely to be woven into 'places' that map into Globalisation and Superpowers.
- It's unlikely that the scale can be local given the constraints imposed by the breadth and focus of these two topics.
- In teaching these topics, be aware of the 'issues' that arise – these are not too hard to find.

# AS and A level 2016 Geography

The synoptic themes





# The three synoptic themes

A level Geography 2016

- 1. Players
- 2. Attitudes and actions
- 3. Futures and uncertainties

<p><b>7.8</b> Developing nations have changing relationships with superpowers with consequences for people and the physical environment.</p>	<p>a. Developing economic ties between emerging powers and the developing world (China and African nations) increase interdependence, generate environmental impacts and bring opportunities and challenges. <b>(P: role of emerging powers)</b></p>
	<p>b. The rising economic importance of certain Asian countries (☉ China, India) on the global stage increases the geopolitical influence of the region but also creates economic and political tensions within the region. (5)</p>
	<p>c. Cultural, political, economic and environmental tensions in the Middle East represent an ongoing challenge to superpowers and emerging powers due to complex geopolitical relations combined with the supply of vital energy resources. <b>(A: contrasting cultural ideologies)</b></p>
<p><b>7.9</b> Existing superpowers face ongoing economic restructuring, which challenges their power.</p>	<p>a. Economic problems (debt, unemployment, economic restructuring, social costs) represent an ongoing challenge to the USA and EU.</p>
	<p>b. The economic costs of maintaining global military power (naval, nuclear, air power, intelligence services) and space exploration are questioned in some existing powers.</p>
	<p>c. The future balance of global power in 2030 and 2050 is uncertain and there are a range of possible outcomes (continued USA dominance, bi-polar and multi-polar structures). <b>(F: uncertainty over future power structures)</b> (6)</p>



# The DfE specialist concepts

Students must:

- gain understanding of specialised concepts relevant to the core and non-core content. These must include the concepts of causality, systems, equilibrium, feedback, inequality, representation, identity, globalisation, interdependence, mitigation and adaptation, sustainability, risk, resilience and thresholds
- Important for students to know and recognise these concepts
- The wording may be used in question construction as well as forming a key part of student knowledge and understanding e.g. vulnerability in Tectonic Hazards



# Compulsory topics

A level Geography 2016

The unseen synoptic material will be based on compulsory content from these topics:

- Tectonic Hazards
- Globalisation
- The water cycle and water insecurity
- The carbon cycle and energy security
- Superpowers

However, students may use content from any topic to inform their ideas, e.g.

- Landscape Systems, Processes and Change
- Shaping Places
- Global Development and Connections



# 1. Players

A level Geography 2016

- **Players** – those responsible for making decisions about people and the use of space, and how these decisions are implemented
- Not to be confused with **stakeholders**
- Linked closely to political plans and strategies (e.g. the UK's economic transformation - Globalisation), specific plans (e.g. managing energy resources), or a long-term programme (e.g. responses to climate change)
- Players may be categorised into three sectors: public, private, and voluntary.



# Private sector players

A level Geography 2016

- Include private businesses, ranging from small local companies to large transnational corporations (TNCs).
- TNCs are fundamental to the concept of 'players'.
- Corporations are also bound only by limited liability – i.e. that shareholders share in profits, but are not personally liable for any debts.
- With profit as a key motive, it is easy to understand how companies become significant players in decisions made about people and space.



# Public sector players

A level Geography 2016

- Refers to organisations financed by public sources (e.g. taxation), including government functions (e.g. education, health, social services, defence)
- **Within** a country, governments range from small-scale (e.g. parish) to regional (e.g. county councils), to national.
- **Beyond** – e.g. global governance (IGOs, or economic unions)
- Accountability varies, between **full** democracy to **limited** (single party states e.g. China) to **dictatorship**, with no accountability.
- The interaction between private and public sector players is critical in decision-making.



# Third sector players

A level Geography 2016

Much more important than you might think. Includes:

- **pressure groups** (e.g. Greenpeace) – campaigning on environmental or social issues. Income derived from memberships and donations.
- **NGOs** are involved in e.g. development work or aid. Revenue includes voluntary donations and government-funded programmes (e.g. Oxfam).
- political **think tanks** – highly significant players in researching and promoting particular philosophies.



# Stepping up

A level Geography 2016

- Students (and teachers) have to engage with political decision-making
- Essential to avoid the global 'we' or 'they' or 'the country decided'
- Student success in this paper will depend on awareness about how countries are run (by governments!) and how decision making may favour some specific groups but not others
- For example – the statement 'Canada benefits from the exploitation of tar sands' raises several issues as follows:
  - How do we measure benefits?
  - What is 'Canada'? The physical environment of this territory? Canadians?
  - Do they all benefit e.g. those dying from cancers attributable to the polluted Athabasca River or the homeless in Toronto?
  - So **which** Canadians benefit and how? A better health service? Improved educational systems? Higher pensions?
- The ability to link specific decisions to specific players is essential.



## 2. Attitudes and actions

A level Geography 2016

- **Attitudes** – the viewpoints that decision-makers and stakeholders have towards economic, social, environmental or political issues;
- Their **actions** – the ways in which they try to achieve what they want
- Linked closely to Players – it's critical that students understand how and why different players have different attitudes (reflecting their values)
- Attitudes are important, because players with certain attitudes towards one issue (*e.g. pro-globalisation*) may have similar views towards other issues (*e.g. anti-climate change*)
- The **media** play a huge role in establishing attitudinal 'norms'



### 3. Futures & uncertainties: The big questions

A level Geography 2016

- This is about 'big questions' for the future  
*e.g. Can the world provide people with safe water to drink or use in growing food?*  
*Can energy industries provide for all?*
- What will the global economy look like in 2050?
- How might geopolitics play out between the world's major superpowers?
- How far will climate change play a part in any 'futures' decision-making?



### 3. Futures & uncertainties

A level Geography 2016

Players approach questions about the future differently.

Visions include:

- '**Business as usual**', i.e. letting things function as they are – such as 'do nothing', or doing what's necessary when it's unavoidable. *For example – with energy, should private companies to decide on energy futures, by letting market forces (supply and demand) drive the energy market?*
- More **sustainable strategies**, e.g. radical action in managing climate change. *For example – with energy, such should governments play a bigger role in decision-making about energy futures, by encouraging pro-renewable energy policies?*

# AS and A level 2016 Geography

Preparing students for  
the synoptic themes





# The Resource Booklet

- Don't worry that it isn't pre-release. Pre-release often led to a great deal of 'question spotting' and pre-prepared answers
- Students are likely to write shorter, more focused and analytical answers
- The important factor is how students use the exam time with the Resource Booklet – students are recommended to use the first 10-15 minutes in reading.
- A 135-minute exam, worth 70 marks, allows for planning and thinking / preparation time. More time should NOT mean longer answers. 70-80 minutes of **actual writing time** should be plenty
- Students should come to the exam armed with geographical skills, rather than learned or pre-prepared knowledge.



# Preparing students 1

- The legacy pre-release booklets are similar in style and format to the unseen Resource Booklet
- Use legacy pre-release materials in teaching and in preparing students
- In resourcing and teaching about new themes (*e.g. on Arctic amplification and the carbon cycle from June 2015*)
- Having synoptic theme 'weeks' or 'moments' (*e.g. on a case study of China-India from June 2016*)
- Mini-Intensive periods *e.g. in exploring attitudes and futures in facing challenges relating to climate change*
- Maxi-Intensive periods (*e.g. in preparing for a mock exam*)



# The example of climate change

**6.9** Further planetary warming risks large-scale release of stored carbon, requiring responses from different players at different scales.

- a. Future emissions, atmospheric concentration levels and climate warming are uncertain owing to natural factors (the role of carbon sinks), human factors (economic growth, population, energy sources) and feedback mechanisms (carbon release from peatlands and permafrost, and tipping points, including forest die back and alterations to the thermohaline circulation). (8) (**F: uncertainty of global projections**)
- b. Adaptation strategies for a changed climate (water conservation and management, resilient agricultural systems, land-use planning, flood-risk management, solar radiation management) have different costs and risks.
- c. Re-balancing the carbon cycle could be achieved through mitigation (carbon taxation, renewable switching, energy efficiency, afforestation, carbon capture and storage) but this requires global scale agreement and national actions both of which have proved to be problematic. (**A: attitudes of different countries, TNCs and people**)



# Useful pre-release booklets from the legacy spec

<b>Date / topic</b>	<b>Legacy Theme</b>	<b>Useful now for teaching:</b>
Jan 2010 Small Gulf States	<i>Superpowers</i>	Superpowers
June 2010 Pacific SIDS	<i>Biodiversity</i>	Carbon cycle
Jan 2011 North America	<i>Energy</i>	Carbon Cycle
June 2011 Maghreb	<i>Development Gap</i>	Globalisation
June 2012 Asia	<i>Water</i>	Water Cycle
Jan 2013 Western Europe	<i>Energy</i>	Carbon Cycle
June 2013 East Asia	<i>Superpowers</i>	Superpowers
June 2014 East Africa	<i>Development Gap</i>	Globalisation
June 2015 Arctic	<i>Biodiversity</i>	Carbon cycle
June 2016 China / India	<i>Superpowers</i>	Superpowers
June 2017 Central America	<i>Development Gap</i>	Globalisation

Past exam papers, resource booklets and mark schemes can be downloaded from our [website](#).



# Preparing students 2

Nonetheless, legacy pre-release booklets & exams need some work to replicate the demands of the new Paper 3, for example:

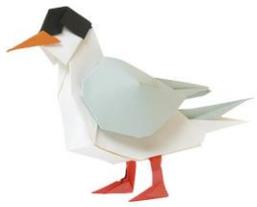
- In extending the **total** exam marks (*from 40 to 70*)
- In developing a step in **level of demand** through the paper (*Legacy exams were more equal in demand e.g. 12-14-14*)
- In developing **skills** questions (*Paper 3 is data-rich compared to Papers 1 and 2*)
- In adapting to new command words (*e.g. analyse*)
- In re-working questions to take account of new demands (*e.g. 14-mark questions from legacy Paper 3 exams to meet the requirements of the new 18- and 24-mark questions*)
- In re-working the new Assessment Objectives



# Command words and mark tariffs used in Paper 3

Mark tariff	AO	4	8	18	24
Calculate	A03	*			
Draw/Plot	A03	*			
Explain	A01,3	*	*		
Analyse (Paper 3)	A01,3		*		
Evaluate	A01,2,3			*	*

Boxed area = Level-based marking



# Question types used in Paper 3

Section	Mks	Qu Type	Question	Notes
A	12	Short open response	Q1 – Q3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 K and U based 'Explain..' question – usually 4 marks</li><li>• 1 question examining quantitative skills – usually 4 marks</li><li>• 1 question requiring some analysis – may use the command words 'Explain' or 'Suggest'. – usually 4 marks</li></ul>
B	16	Shorter 'mini-essays'	Q4 & Q5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2 8 mark mini-essays using command 'Analyse' based on data in the Resource Booklet</li></ul>
C	42	Longer essays	Q6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 18 mark essay based on AO3 'reading' of Resource Booklet but also AO1 and AO2</li></ul>
			Q7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 1 24 mark essay based on AO3 'reading' of Resource Booklet but also AO1 and AO2</li></ul>



# Finally, exam skills

- Get to know the Resource Booklet – lots can be done by reading carefully.
- Focus on the challenges within the exam questions: focus on what questions ask rather than irrelevant case studies.
- Plan all answers and get an overview of what the question is about and what the answer should be
- Evaluation, assessment, discussion = decision / judgement is required for Level 3 and Level 4.
- Synoptic '*snippets*' of understanding – do NOT shoe-horn in major case studies
- How long is a 18 and 24 mark answer? About 3-3.5 and 4-4.5 sides respectively – with brief intros and conclusions.



# Supporting your Geography teaching

Please visit the Pearson qualifications [website](#) where you can download over 50 support materials written specifically for Edexcel AS and A level Geography

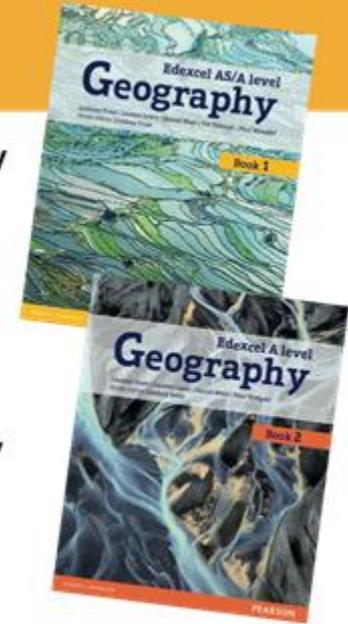
- **New** Maths for Geographers guide - available now
- AS and A level specimen papers
- Examiner marked student exemplars including Paper 3: Synoptic Investigation
- Detailed topic booklets and editable schemes of work for every topic
- Fieldwork planner and guide
- Assessment guide
- Independent Investigation support and training materials
- Expert support every step of the way from our Subject Advisor, Jon Wolton

Find out more about the [published resources](#) available to support teaching Edexcel AS and A level Geography.



## The top things to know about Pearson's new resources

- Packed with contemporary and engaging content to bring geography to life
- Guiding students to think synoptically and see the 'bigger picture'
- Focused on the new fieldwork requirements
- Targeted and practical support to help students think geographically
- Expert support for exam preparation and practice



Endorsed resources are available from a range of publishers. Find out more at [www.edexcel.com/resources](http://www.edexcel.com/resources). You do not need to purchase resources to deliver our qualifications.



# Thank you

For further support:

- e-mail Jon Wolton on [teachinggeography@pearson.com](mailto:teachinggeography@pearson.com)
- phone Jon on 020 7010 2185
- follow Jon on Twitter [@GeogAdvisor](https://twitter.com/GeogAdvisor)