

Geographical Ideas in Practice
Staff tutorial plan: Exploratory reading and discussion activity 1

Use this when students are reading to start to find out more about an area in general, rather than reading with a clear goal or topic in mind - good for early on in the semester, or early in a theme. N.B. For this activity, all students need to read the same article. It also works best with one article at a time until students are familiar with the activity structure.

Goal: To introduce students to a field/theme, to find the main ideas in the article, and to identify something to comment on both in discussion and in writing.

The general idea is to get them to have a sense of the content of the article and find something in it that they can have an opinion about and respond to in some way. It should also give them a chance to practice referencing.

To prepare:

In the week before you want to set the activity (i.e. at least two weeks before using it in class):

- Identify a key reading from the list linked to the theme/idea you want to explore.
- Pair students - give each pair one or more tasks to do for homework (use Exploratory reading worksheet 1).

Running the activity:

1. Ask students to list all the key terms that have emerged from the article – choose one or two and ask for definitions (useful to check understanding generally, and to get students using the terminology of the discipline)
2. Get students to swap worksheets and check that they have the citation and the reference in the correct form – it should match the example on the worksheet and on the referencing resource sheet in their course handbook book (use this to explain the importance of referencing correctly...)
3. Ask/discuss which sentence(s)/paragraph(s) they chose, and why they chose it (use this as a starting point for discussing the theme generally and this text specifically; also use as a way in to discussing any difficulties they may have had in reading the article)
4. If you have asked the students to summarise/paraphrase the section they have chosen, get them to review each others' work. Good opportunity for discussing peer review and feedback (see advice/activity sheet on this).