

Year 3

GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT: China– Snapshots through time.



KEY VOCABULARY:

Yangtze River

The Yangtze or Yangzi is the longest river in Asia, the third-longest in the world, and the longest in the world to flow entirely within one

Asia

The continent that China is located in

Link School

Province of link school

WHAT?

Where in the world is China?

What is the Yangtze and what is its importance?



Locate the world's countries, using maps to focus on Europe (including the location of Russia) and North and South America, concentrating on their environmental regions, key physical and human characteristics, countries, and major cities.

Describe and understand key aspects of: □ physical geography, including: climate zones, biomes and vegetation belts, rivers, mountains, volcanoes and earthquakes, and the water cycle □ human geography, including: types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources including energy, food, minerals and water

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Session 1 Key Question: Where in the world is China?

How can we find out where China is?

**Why do we need to know where China is?
Why is it important to know?**

Encourage children to think about and discuss these questions in small groups. Collect their ideas non-judgementally as each group reports back. Children's geographical locational knowledge, what might be called geographical general knowledge, is often quite poor and needs building up whenever possible, to help develop their mental map of the globe. To assist their discussion, ask if they think they could do a topic on China without knowing where it is, and ask how knowing where it is will help them. Having considered these questions might encourage them to be more curious about the location of continents, countries, cities and other geographical features and help their placing and understanding of world events.

Ask children to consider how they can find out where China is? As they report back their ideas use Student activity sheet 2 (Titled: How can we find out where China is?) on the IWB to record them all, (or give each group of children their own recording sheet). This activity helps children to develop their own research skills as they have to think about what sources of information are available, rather than being told what to use.

Once a range of resources has been suggested ask children to select or prioritise from them – which would it be best to use? Ask them to identify and sequence 3 and then try to give reasons for the choices. Student activity sheet 2 can again be used for recording. An atlas would be the best place to start as it has an index.

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So, where is China?

Hopefully at the top of the list (previous activity) is an atlas as this has an index in which children can look up China and be directed to a specific map or page. Encourage children to use any atlases available (doesn't need to be a class set) to find China. As children do this check that they are using the atlas correctly.

Use different maps to discover both China's place in the world and detail about China. Ask them to look at a world map to locate China.

Encourage children to explain orally where China is, introducing if necessary, and using appropriate language about adjacent countries, the Himalayas, the continent of Asia, oceans, position with reference to the Tropic of Cancer, possibly also latitude, longitude and northern hemisphere.

(Depending on the age group of children being taught the concepts of north, south, east and west may need to be refreshed. Children may also be unfamiliar with 'Tropic of Cancer'. Explain that this is an imaginary line that stretches around the earth north of the 'Equator'.)

Encourage children to be inquisitive about China, noticing mountains, plains, rivers and settlements and using keys to decode the map including topography and scale.

Ask children to locate their own country on different maps, including a world map. Question them about which continent it is a part of, whether it has borders with other countries, whether it is an island, whether it is north or south of the equator, how far it is from China, how big it is compared to China (if smaller, how many times could it fit into China?).

Using student activity sheet 3 (Titled: Outline map of the world) on the IWB (or as a record sheet for individual or groups of pupils) locate and mark China and your own country, and annotate the map with any other detail the children wish to record.

Can you find China on the globe?

Using globes (3-D representations of the world) is vital to help children develop their own 3-D mental map of the world in which they live. They should work towards being able to manipulate this mental image, to rotate the globe, in their mind when they hear the name of a continent, country, place mentioned. If possible, provide both physical and political globes. Discuss the different ways they represent the world, by showing physical features like mountains, plains, river systems with colouring conventions related to height above sea level or by showing 'political' or human features/constructs like countries, each a 'flat' colour.

Ask children to find China and their own country. They should have little difficulty unless they find scale challenging. This is another oral activity, so encourage them to talk in 2s or 3s as they find the two countries and listen to the vocabulary being used, hoping to hear 'east', 'far east', 'Asia', 'the Himalayas'. Ask them how they set about the task, how they knew where to look, providing another opportunity to explain the location of China.

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Can you find China on these old maps from the Royal Geographical Society's archive?

This activity is a challenge to 'read' old maps from the RGS archive. Show children the 4 archive maps from the image gallery (these are the first 4 images on the gallery page). Analyse the maps as a class and ask children to locate China. Information about each of the maps is provided in the table on the following page.

Use Student activity sheet 4 (Titled: Can you find China on these archive maps?) either use on the IWB or provide a copy to groups of children, to record the children's observations. They should find China on the maps in the gallery and then transfer the information to the smaller (worksheet) or larger (IWB) maps, an exercise in scale.

What can you find out about China from a physical map of the country?

This activity uses an image of a physical relief map of China. Children can extract information from the map, perhaps helped by comparing it with the atlas map used earlier, and gradually become more familiar with the conventions used for colouring physical maps.

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Session 2: **Key Question: What is the Yangtze and what is its importance?**

What is the Yangtze?

Activities:

Elicit children's ideas about the Yangtze. You will probably find that some children know about the Yangtze but, if not, ask: 'How can we find out?' and follow their suggestions.

Check that children have discovered that the Yangtze (or Chang Jiang) is an important river, the third longest in the world, and can locate it in China.

Refer to the River Yangtze Fact sheet, on the IWB or provide small groups (2-3) of children with a printout from which to extract key information.

Introduce the children to Isabella Bird Bishop. See the Teacher Fact sheet: 'Biography of Isabella Bird Bishop' for information

What did Mrs Isabella Bird Bishop see and experience?

Isabella Bird Bishop not only wrote about her travels but also left a photographic archive which belongs to the RGS.

Many of these archive images of the Yangtze can be seen in the Gallery. Many of them were taken by Mrs Bishop (see each image for details of photographers).

Print a set of these photographs (either from the gallery or from the Pdf document labelled 'Images of Old Yangtze'). Arrange these around the classroom and let children study them all. While they are looking at the photographs, ask children to think about the following questions:

1	How did she travel? Encourage children to describe river transport.
2	What did she see? Children can comment on the gorges, the landscape, the river and the activities shown.
3	What did she experience? Mention rapids, dangers and trackers.

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See the captions that accompany the 'Old Yangtze' photographs in the gallery for further details to share with children. These have also been listed in table format below (numbered 7 – 16 as they appear in the gallery), should you wish to print and use them as part of a sorting activity with your class.

At this time boats were sail-, steam- or human-powered, as the photographs show. The river was treacherous in places, with submerged rocks, deadly whirlpools and rapids. In more recent times rock has been blasted away from the river bed to make river transport much safer. And although there are still small sailing craft, the larger river transport is now engine-powered.

When your pupils have seen the photographs, read the captions and explored the new geographical vocabulary in them, you may like to read this passage to the pupils, encouraging them to visualize the landscape. Provide them with a blank white card, about 10x15 cm. Repeat the reading, a phrase or sentence at a time as they create, and then colour, 'a postcard from the Yangtze gorges'.

The river-bed (below Wan Hsien), forty feet below its summer level, is an area of heaped, contorted rock fragments, sharp-edged through which one or more swirling streams or violent rapids pursue their course, the volume of water, even at that season, being tremendous. At its highest level these upper waters are practically non-navigable. Cliffs, mountain spurs and noble mountains rise from this chaotic river-bed, and every sharp turn reveals some new beauty. The dark green pine is but a foil to the feathery foliage of the golden bamboo on the steep terraced sides of tumbled heights; pleasant brown farmhouses are half seen among orange groves and orchards.

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Why was the Yangtze important?

Develop the concept of the river as the major, if not only, routeway from the coast to the interior, through difficult, often mountainous terrain, as a transport artery and as a trade route, both along and across the river, connecting communities. It linked Shanghai with Chongqing (Chung king) and beyond.

Refer to the maps on the Pupil Fact Sheet: 'River Yangtze'

Travelling on the return journey from Luchow to Chung King, Mrs Bishop describes a visit to a coal mine – coal is one of the many cargoes carried by the boats then and now.

Is it still important today?

Print a set of the images contained within the Pdf document titled 'Images of modern Yangtze', the same images are also within the gallery and can also be printed from there. They were taken on a trip from Chongqing to Yichang, on a local rather than tourist ferry, in 2001. Also print a set of the titles and captions to accompany the images (these are contained in the document titled: Modern Yangtze titles and captions) and cut into strips.

As pupils observe, describe and compare the photographs, encourage them to use appropriate geographical terminology for the river and landscape.

Ask: How is the river similar to / different from the river that Mrs Bishop saw?

How / why has the river transport changed since Mrs Bishop's time?