

Skills Exercises

AO4 Evaluation

Cambridge International AS & A Level Geography 9696

For examination from 2023



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Introduction

Cambridge AS & A Level Geography attracts a variety of learners from many different backgrounds. For some learners Geography is a new subject and an opportunity to explore an area of study that interests them, while developing a set of transferable skills. Other learners have previously studied Geography and are looking to continue developing their knowledge of the subject. Either way, the study of Geography allows learners to experience the diverse and dynamic interactions between humans and the environment and gain the knowledge needed to understand how both physical and human systems work and apply this understanding to real world situations.

Skills and why they are important?

Skills are the key to success. The performance of candidates in Cambridge AS & A Level exams have shown a range of areas where improvement would be helpful. These areas of improvement tend to centre around the assessment objectives (AOs) of the course and we have addressed these AOs in a series of exercises and activities.

- AO1 Knowledge
- AO2 Understanding and application
- AO3 Skills
- AO4 Evaluation

Skills Exercises make use of examination questions and include exercises, activities and worksheets to help skills development and incorporate suggested teaching approaches, such as group work, discussion, structured support and writing in sequence. They do not attempt to cover all possible aspects of the examinations, only those problem areas which have presented consistently over time.

How will these skills be developed?

Skills Exercises aim to help learners develop skills in:

- Using geographical terminology confidently.
- Understanding, applying and interpreting geographical models.
- Describing and interpreting patterns in various forms of data.
- Understanding what a judgement is and how to construct an evaluative answer.

Skills Exercises provide suggestions so you can have confidence that the materials you prepare and use in the classroom are building skills and resilience in your learners. This document should be used alongside the other teaching and learning resources provided on the [School Support Hub](#).

AO4 Evaluation

To demonstrate evaluation skills, learners need to be able to do the following in their exam answers:

- assess the effects of geographical processes and change on physical and human environments
- evaluate the relative success or failure of initiatives
- assess how the viewpoints of different groups of people, potential conflicts of interest and other factors interact in the management of physical and human environments
- critically evaluate geographical principles, theories and models.

Exercise 1: Evaluative skills in geography

This exercise looks at breaking down the evaluation part of the course into component parts. These component parts are then all pieced together to make an essay. Activity 1 gives learners an opportunity to make a judgement based on an essay title. Activities 2 and 3 will give learners some practice in developing opening sentences to paragraphs and making mini conclusions based on the evidence provided.

Activity 1: Evaluation or not?

Give learners **Worksheet 1: Evaluation or not?** The activity asks learners to identify the evaluative sentence from the two given. This is a straightforward task but serves to highlight what the term evaluation means – essentially, a judgement is being made. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners may work individually or in pairs.

Use **Worksheet 1: Evaluation or not? answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through the answers. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Extension activity: learners come up with other factors that could be included in each sentence, and possible alternative evaluative statements based upon these factors.

Activity 2: Making judgements

Give learners **Worksheet 2: Making judgements**. Learners identify what the question is asking and try to make an immediate judgement about what they think their answer will be. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. For this activity learners should work in pairs, allowing learners to debate what they think the answer should be, and then come up with the opening line to their conclusion.

Use **Worksheet 2: Making judgements answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through the answers. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

In the exam, learners will be expected to assess or evaluate a range of factors and the extent to which they are important. They should not just stick to the factor given in the title. This idea of extent is extremely important as it allows learners to say not just that a factor is important, but HOW it is important and relative to the other factors. This is a very important evaluative skill that examiners will want to see.

Extension activity: learners apply case study/theoretical knowledge or make a comprehensive list of the possible answers and other factors involved, rather than just one.

Activity 3: Writing mini conclusions

Explain to learners that the best evaluative essays have 'effective and sustained' evaluation. This means not just evaluating in the conclusion, but making judgements and evaluative comments as they write. Seeing each paragraph as a mini essay is a very good way of ensuring that evaluation is ongoing and sustained throughout the essay.

Give learners **Worksheet 3: Writing mini conclusions**. This activity gives learners several paragraphs from within essays and asks them to produce a mini conclusion for the information given in the paragraph. An example is given to show learners what is required. This activity could be completed individually and then learners could present to the class.

Use **Worksheet 3: Writing mini conclusions answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through the responses and refine learners' writing. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Exercise 2: Evaluating initiatives

This exercise involves evaluating one of the most important concepts in geography – sustainability. The first activity looks at the concept of sustainability in general, and then the following activities look at applying sustainability to physical and human environments and enables learners to evaluate the level of sustainability in certain areas.

These skills build on the previous exercise, looking at making judgements and coming to conclusions.

Activity 1: Evaluating sustainability models

Sustainability is a key factor in AS and A Level Geography and the concept often appears in the 20 mark essay questions in Paper 3 and Paper 4. There are many ways that sustainability can be modelled, but discussion almost always revolves around the three pillars of sustainability – economic, social and environmental.

Worksheet 4: Evaluating sustainability models allows learners to discuss the various advantages and disadvantages of the three models of sustainability. Go through the worksheet with learners to check they understand what is required of the task. The activity could be completed as a group discussion.

Use **Worksheet 4: Evaluating sustainability models answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion, coming up with ideas around each model. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Extension activity: a debate but where learners decide which model they think is the most useful/accurate.

Further extension activity: learners apply one or more models to their case studies to see if they are accurate, and work in real life situations.

Activity 2: Evaluating sustainability in physical geography

In Paper 1 and Paper 3 learners need to learn case studies of sustainable management in physical environments. One area that appears in both papers is the sustainable management of mass movements.

Worksheet 5: Evaluating sustainability in physical geography gives a range of management strategies used to reduce the effects of mass movements in a table. There are two columns to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the economic, social and environmental aspects of each strategy. Go through the worksheet with learners to make sure they understand what is required of the task. This activity could be completed individually or in groups and then assess the effectiveness of each strategy.

Use **Worksheet 5: Evaluating sustainability in physical geography answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through learners' responses. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Extension activity: learners apply these strategies to their case studies, and perhaps even rank them in terms of their effectiveness overall. They could also reflect on how these strategies fit in with the models in **Worksheet 4: Evaluating sustainability models**.

Activity 3: Evaluating sustainability in human geography

Similar to the previous activity, **Worksheet 6: Evaluating sustainability in human geography** gives a range of energy sources in a table. Go through the worksheet with learners to make sure they understand the task. There are two columns to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the economic, social and environmental aspects of each energy source. This activity could be completed individually or in groups, and then assess the sustainability of each energy source.

Use **Worksheet 6: Evaluating sustainability in human geography answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through learners' answers. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Extension activity: learners apply these strategies to their case studies, and perhaps even rank them in terms of their effectiveness overall. Learners could also reflect on how these strategies fit in with the models in **Worksheet 4: Evaluating sustainability models**.

Exercise 3: Assessing stakeholders

Stakeholders and their opinions and power are important factors to be considered when assessing the management of both human and physical environments. These stakeholders can take several different forms and depending upon the situation will have different levels of influence. Sometimes the opinions and needs of stakeholders can create conflicts.

Activity 1: Assessing the importance of stakeholders

The activity on **Worksheet 7: Assessing the importance of stakeholders** looks at the different dimensions of stakeholders in general. Go through the worksheet with learners to make sure they understand what is required of the task. Provide learners with the following information:

Stakeholders:

- have their own goals and objectives
- make important decisions that may affect physical and human geography
- have lives that may be affected by decisions made by other stakeholders
- are financially or physically better or worse off when things change
- are connected to a wider network of people who are, in turn, affected by any changes and decisions.

Learners should attempt to place each statement in the correct quadrant of the stakeholder diagram. This activity would work best as a group activity.

Use **Worksheet 7: Assessing the importance of stakeholders answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through learners' answers. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Extension activity: learners apply different stakeholder groups to each quadrant. Learners should think about the stakeholders they have come across in their studies and apply them to the diagram.

Further extension activity: learners explain their thinking as to why the stakeholders have been placed in that quadrant.

Activity 2: Stakeholders in physical geography

Conflict and agreement is inevitable when stakeholders interact. The activity on **Worksheet 8: Stakeholders in physical geography** looks at the stakeholders in a coastal environment, and the power they might hold within that environment. Learners begin trying to work out what the opinion of each group could be, and how they might feel about coastal management. They should then apply this to four of the groups in the conflict matrix. Go through the worksheet with learners to make sure they understand what is required of the task. This activity could then be discussed within a group setting.

Use **Worksheet 8: Stakeholders in physical geography answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through learners' answers. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Extension activity: learners think about how each group might fit into the quadrant on **Worksheet 7: Assessing the importance of stakeholders**. What role do they have, and what power do they hold within the decision-making process? This could also be applied to case studies that learners already use.

Further extension activity: learners have a class roleplay and debate about the issues.

Activity 3: Stakeholders in human geography

Worksheet 9: Stakeholders in human geography gives learners an example of the Three Gorges Dam, but a different case study and stakeholders involved could be used instead. The first part of the activity asks learners to decide whether stakeholders are for or against the scheme and to what extent they agree or disagree. The second part of the activity asks learners to discuss the views, both for and against, the scheme. Go through the worksheet with learners to make sure they understand what is required of the task. This activity would be best completed as a group exercise with the opportunity for discussion.

Use **Worksheet 9: Stakeholders in human geography answers** and ask learners to peer assess each other's work. Lead a class discussion to go through learners' answers. Ensure any misconceptions are addressed.

Extension activity: learners present the views of stakeholders as a roleplay, with different learners taking the part of the different stakeholders and debating the issues.

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