

Investigating Place



This handout is for you to complete before the Fieldwork Live Lesson but you should make sure you have it with you during the live session as well in case you want to refer to any of the ideas. In this sheet, we will look at the concept of Place, then use a Story Map to complete the planning and background research sections of our investigation. Your teacher can give you the list of learning objectives if you want and, if you have any questions after this pre-lesson work, you can submit those to us via your teacher too. We will try to address these questions live or post-lesson.



Task 1: What is Place?

This concept is complex and contested by geographers but some definitions include...

“Place, at a basic level, is space invested with meaning” (Cresswell, 2004)

Place is defined as a location with meaning. The meaning could come from personal experience or a wider, social or cultural meaning.

Defining place can be thought of with 3 academic approaches. These are listed and described below. Thinking of a familiar place, e.g. your school or town, can you give some of your own examples of each type of approach to place and factors that might influence it?

Descriptive approach	Social-constructivist approach	Phenomenological approach
This means when a place is defined by measurable characteristics	This means when a place is defined by or given a meaning by wider society	This means when a place is defined by a person’s experience (real or imagined)
e.g. a school’s number of pupils	e.g. Manchester seen as busy, hard-working, industrial from its bee emblem	e.g. exciting (tourist in New York), peaceful (an elderly person in their town park)

Key terms hint: we call factors that shape a place **endogenous factors** (factors within a place that shape it, e.g. the demographic structure) and **exogenous factors** (factors from outside, e.g. inward investment from a Transnational Corporation).





Task 2: Exploring a place

Now we know what we mean by the idea of Place, we can start looking at this in context, as geographers using the three approaches. Our investigation aim is:

Investigate how a location is experienced and perceived by different people.

To start investigating a place, we need to research using some background information about a place.

Using the ArcGIS Storymap <https://bit.ly/fieldworklivePlace>, we are going to explore Dedham. Click through the Story Map, completing tasks as you go. We will think about why we have chosen Dedham shortly, but as you go, take notice of the sources of data we are using to explore a place. This could be useful in your future studies!

- (a) Using facts from the different map data layers, select and describe 3 characteristics to describe Dedham

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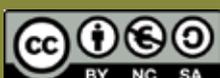
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- (b) Select one of John Constable’s paintings of the area from the Storymap. Fill in this Image Analysis template to define how this famous representation of Dedham might shape people’s perceptions of it.

Painting chosen:

Identify a main feature of the image	What perception might people have of Dedham, looking at this image? Explain this if you can and link to your wider geographical knowledge.
e.g. Rural/ farm workers	Agriculture is a primary industry. On the Clark-Fisher model, a reliance on primary industries, which is all that is shown in the painting, suggests a pre-industrial, more basic way of life. This might make people think of Dedham as a traditional area.



- (c) Gilbert's 8 way thinking helps us to explore different ways of understanding and experiencing place. On the Storymap, there are a number of views of the village. Select one and, using any 3 of Gilbert's 8 'intelligences' (ways of thinking), describe Dedham as a place from your perception:

Intelligence	Your description of Dedham
Linguistic intelligence – words and language. Adjectives, adverbs, similes to describe Dedham?	
Logical-mathematical intelligence – numbers and logic. Can you describe this place with any numbers? E.g. number of cars/people? Percentage of green space?	
Spatial intelligence – images and space. What are the key things you can see? What stands out?	
Bodily-kinaesthetic intelligence – body movement, control. What types of actions can you see here? Could be done here?	
Musical intelligence – music, sound, rhythm. What might you hear in this space? Are sounds loud, quiet? Would they have a positive or a negative impact?	
Interpersonal intelligence – other people's feelings/ what people are doing/ how they're interacting?	
Intrapersonal intelligence – self-awareness. How would you feel here?	
Naturalist intelligence – natural environment. What signs of nature are there? Habitats? Green spaces to use? Impacts of climate change?	

- Why do you think Dedham might be a good place to study this investigation aim?