

Enquiring Minds: A Local Geography Investigation by Ms. Toal's Class

Susan Pike @SusanJPike

Joanne Toal @joannetoal1

@MsToalsClass

Pupil profiles: 5th/6th Class in Scoil Fhursa, Kilmore West



Our Story

After spending a year on a global adventure through the use of @SkypeClassroom, we decided it was time to turn the geographical lens towards the locality in Kilmore West, North Dublin.



Children's lives are inherently geographical through

Where?

How?

When?

Why?

Who?

What?



Warrenmount GNS, Dublin 8

Ethnogeography

Everyone's Geographies

Fran Martin



Becoming aware of geography as a **universal activity** (Dewey)

Becoming aware of the **multilinear development** of geography

Being aware of geography and geographical education as **socio-cultural processes** (Bruner)

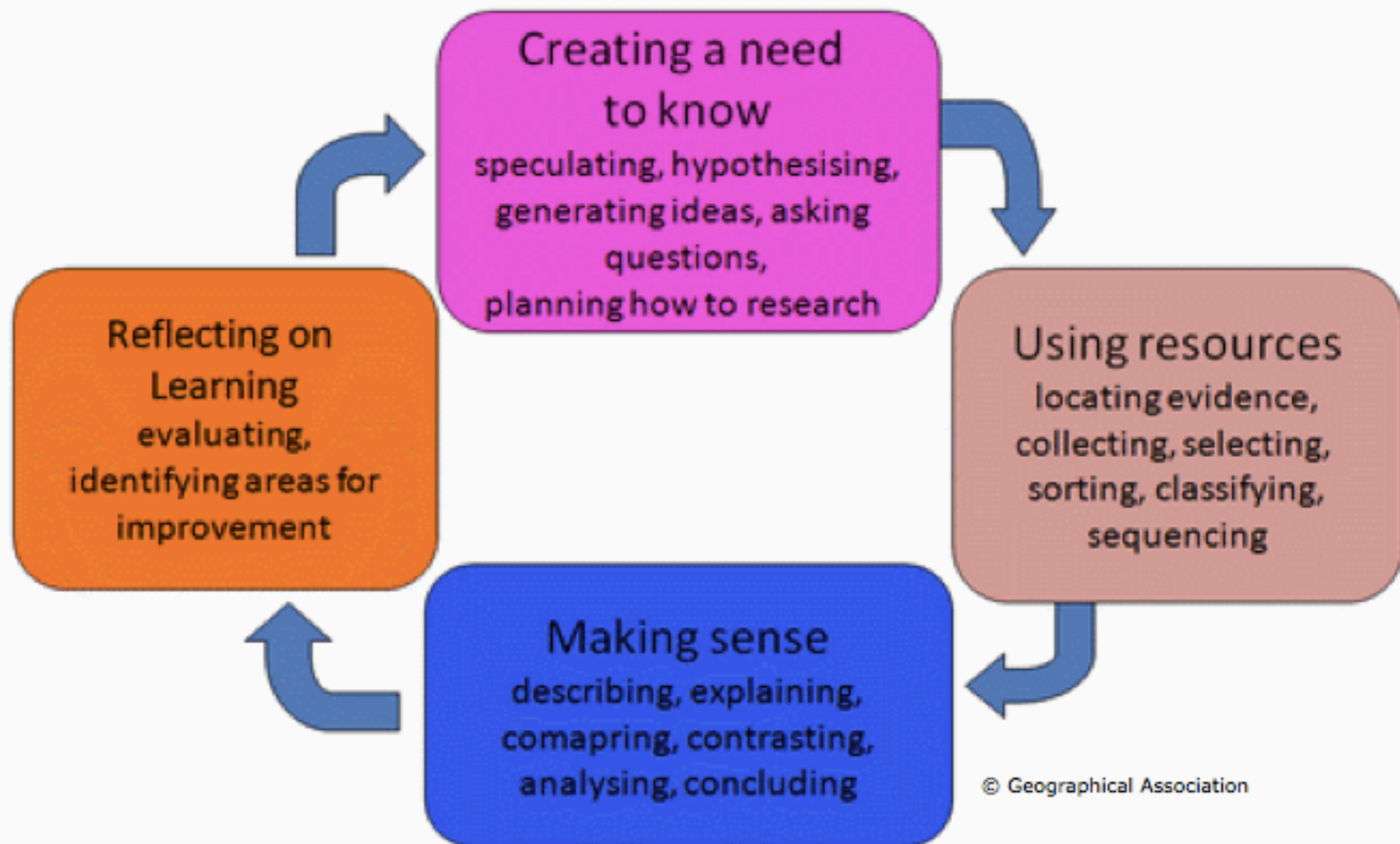
Developing among teachers an awareness of the **geographical potential** of their students

Goes beyond the **dominant discourse** of the powerful (Freire)

Primary School Curriculum - Geography

- ✓ to develop knowledge and understanding of **local, regional and wider environments** and their interrelationships;
- ✓ to encourage an understanding and appreciation of the variety of **natural and human conditions** on the Earth;
- ✓ to develop **empathy with people** from diverse environments and an understanding of human interdependence;
- ✓ to encourage the development of a **sense of place and spatial awareness**;
- ✓ to develop an understanding of appropriate **geographical concepts**.

What are the stages of enquiry?



Stages of Geographical Enquiry

Stage 0: Generating ideas

Stage 1/2: Generating questions

Stage 2/1: Developing smaller questions

Stage 3: Deciding on data

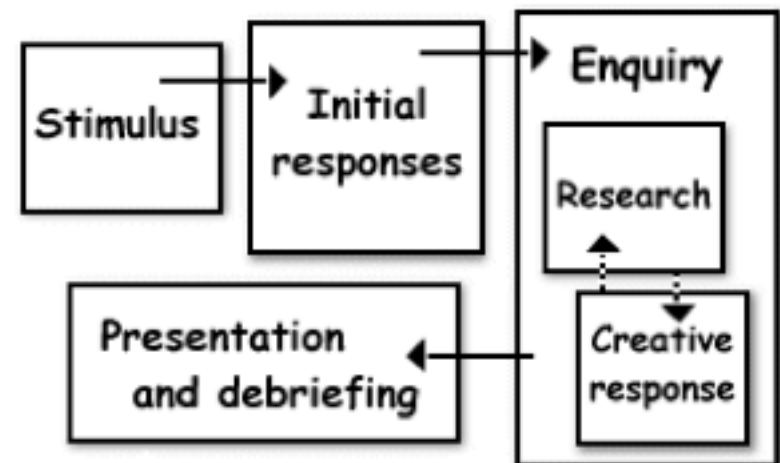
Stage 4: Collecting data

Stage 5: Presenting data

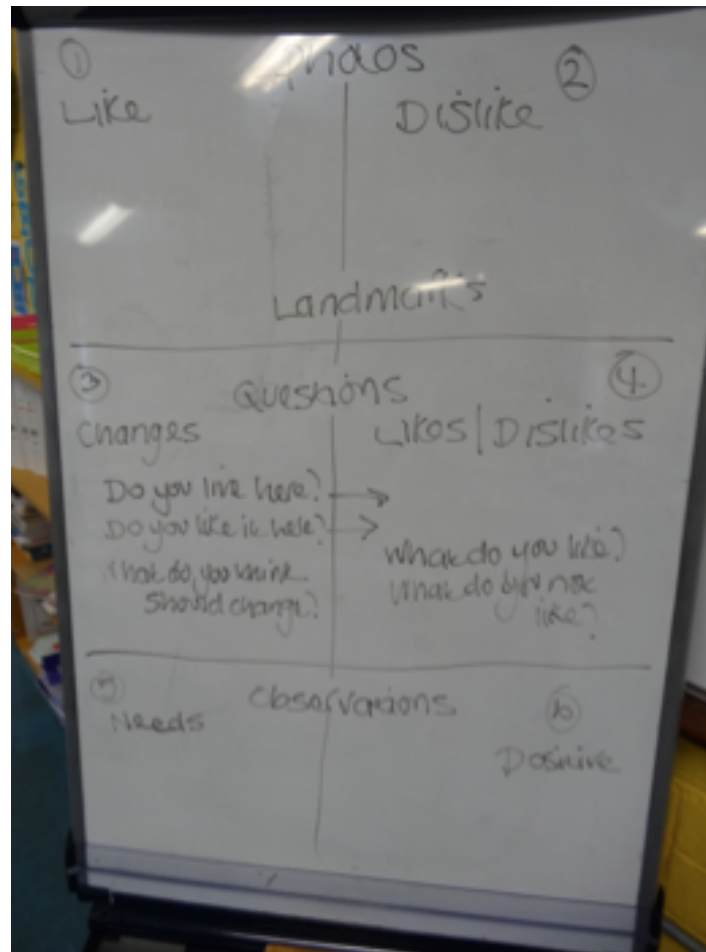
Stage 6: Writing conclusions

Stage 7: Evaluating your work

Dewey (Enquiry), PSC (NCCA/DES)



Enquiry Groups – Data Collection



We set out to collect data



We interviewed residents and took photos

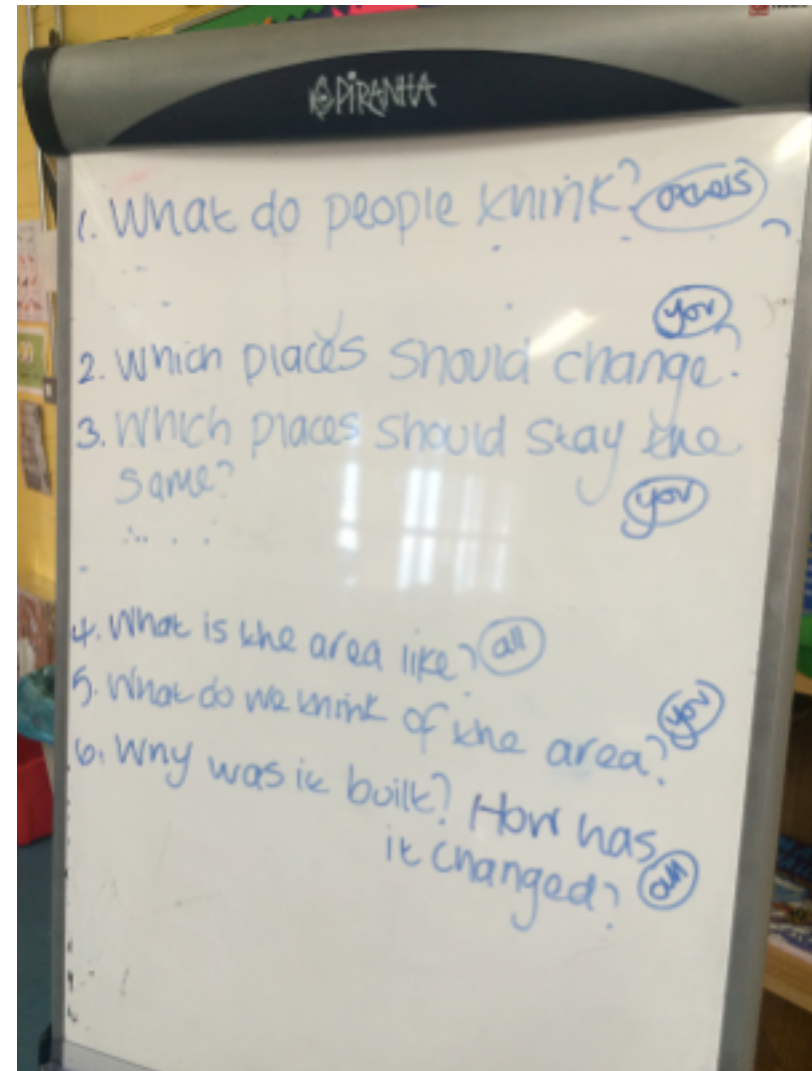


Graffiti and litter stood out as a problem in the Northside underpass



Enquiry Questions

- **Main enquiry question: How might our area change in the future?**
- Sub questions:
- What do people think of the area?
- Which places should change?
- Which places should stay the same?
- What is the area like?
- What do we think of the area?
- Why was the area built? How has it changed?



We set about presenting the data



The 'History of the Local Area' Group

- <https://vimeo.com/122570154>

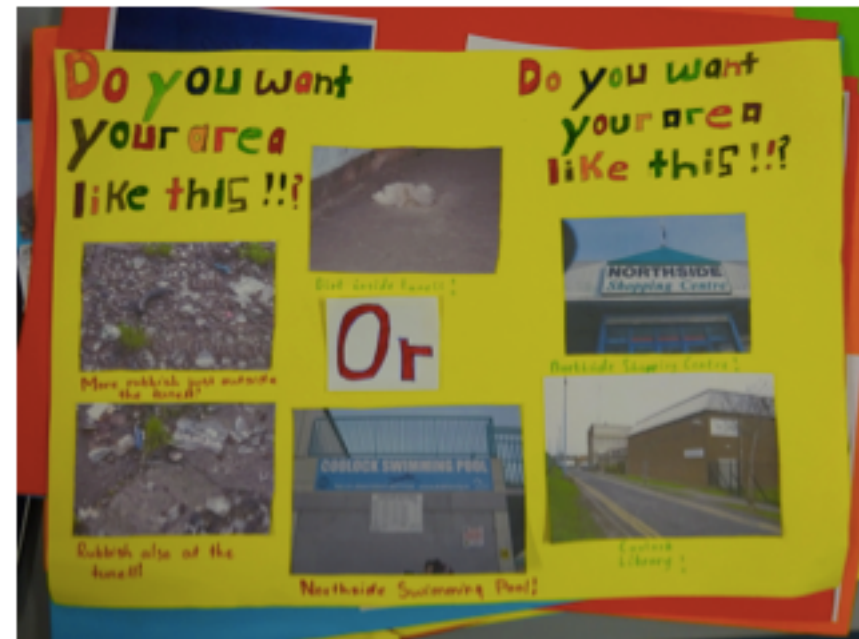
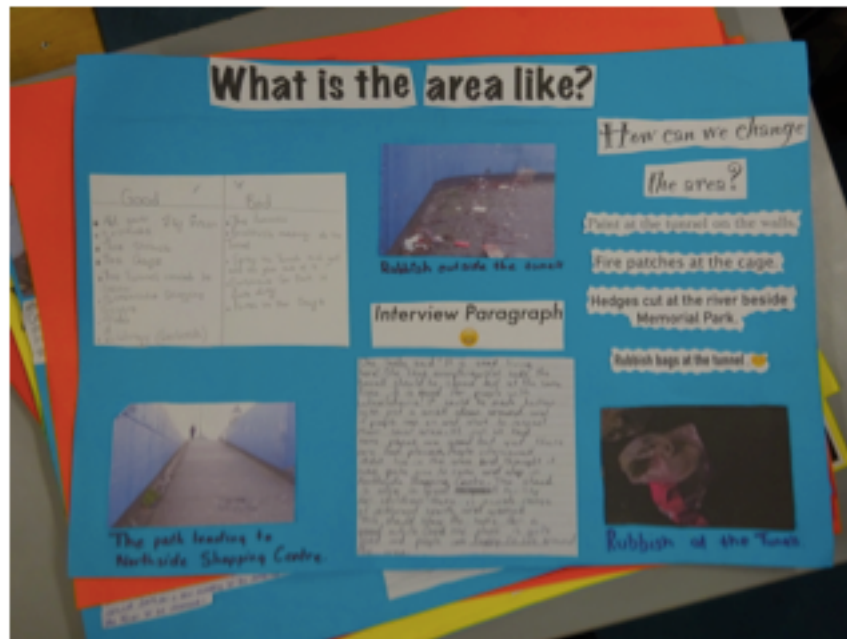
The Presentation



Results/Outcomes

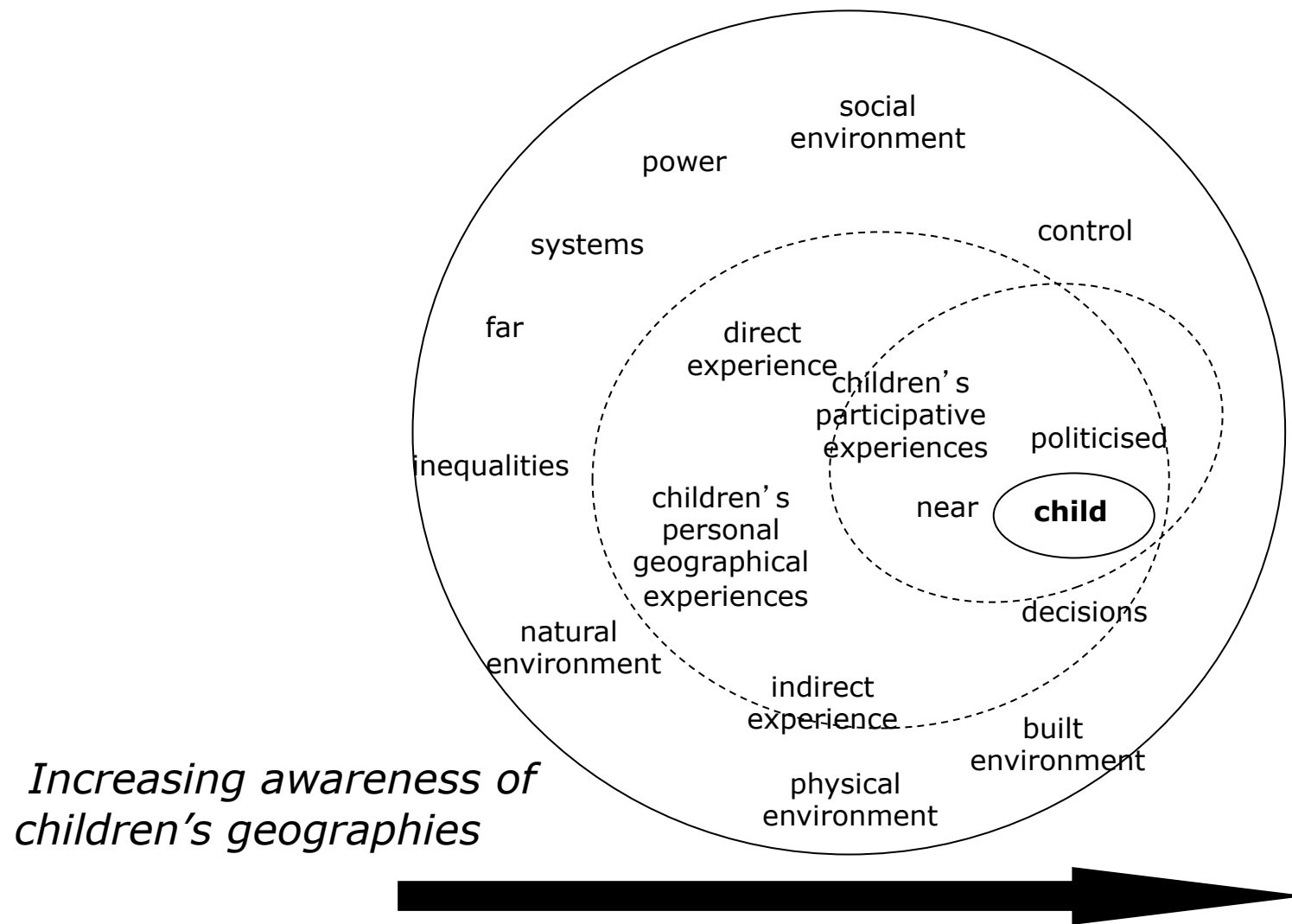
- Pupil autonomy
- Empowerment of pupils
- Sense of responsibility/civic duty
- Pupil understanding of their local environment
- Experience working as geographers/conducting an enquiry/collecting and interpreting data
- Integration of ICT
- Reflection/evaluation: Blogging their thoughts and experiences

Results/Outcomes









Children's inhibited geographies
Children as submissive citizens
Children disempowered
Children as not-yet-people

Children's dynamic geographies
Children as active citizens
Children empowered
Children as people

Thanks for listening!

