

geografilärare i alla länder...¹

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I am at the “chalk face” of geography in the classroom. And geography is a fantastic subject to teach. But whilst young people (especially in their final school years) are passionate about travel and politics, why is every student not in the queue for geography?

It is very easy to suck the life out of the subject in the classroom. Don't get me wrong – there are many excellent practitioners, but there are also many for whom students walk out the door thinking “that was so tedious.” I know, because I've heard it many times and it makes me cringe. One can teach the subject with enormous energy and spark, or badly even, at times disrupting the relevance and interest of personal experience.

There are many geography teachers who are not geography specialists, so, many schools end up saying to teachers of other subjects, “Well, you can teach a little geography to make teaching load up,” and

this is so wrong. Despite its everyday utility, the geographical paradigm and way of conceptualising are learnt and it takes an experienced practitioner to be able to instil this in students, and to inspire them, so that they can share the pleasure in the geographical “Eureka” moments.

So whilst there may be less corduroy in the classroom nowadays, there needs to be more widespread and consistently good classroom delivery. The Geography Teaching Today website (www.geographyteachingtoday.org.uk) is starting to address this problem in a systematic and peer-approved kind of way, and of course there are many excellent sites elsewhere. But there is also much dross on the Internet.

So, in part it boils down to Heads of Departments to lift the profile of their subject and to challenge their teachers with new, innovative, relevant and compelling ways to operate in the classroom.

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