Key Concepts or Big Ideas in Geography

**Environments**

May be natural and/or cultural. They have particular characteristics and features which can be the result of natural and/or cultural processes. The particular characteristics of an environment may be similar to and/or different from another.

**Perspectives**

Ways of seeing the world that help explain differences in decisions about, responses to, and interactions with environments. Perspectives are bodies of thought, theories or worldviews that shape people’s values and have built up over time. They involve people’s *perceptions* (how they view and interpret environments) and *viewpoints* (what they think) about geographic issues. Perceptions and viewpoints are influenced by people’s values (deeply held beliefs about what is important or desirable).

**Processes**

A sequence of actions, natural and/or cultural, that shape and change environments, places and societies. Some examples of geographic processes include erosion, migration, desertification and globalisation.

**Patterns**

May be spatial: the arrangement of features on the earth’s surface; or temporal: how characteristics differ over time in recognisable ways.

**Change**

Involves any alteration to the natural or cultural environment. Change can be spatial and/or temporal. Change is a normal process in both natural and cultural environments. It occurs at varying rates, at different times and in different places. Some changes are predictable, recurrent or cyclic, while others are unpredictable or erratic. Change can bring about further change.

**Sustainability**

Involves adopting ways of thinking and behaving that allow individuals, groups, and societies to meet their needs and aspirations without preventing future generations from meeting theirs. Sustainable interaction with the environment may be achieved by preventing, limiting, minimizing or correcting environmental damage to water, air and soil, as well as considering ecosystems and problems related to waste, noise, and visual pollution.