

# GEOGRAPHY TIPS FOR STUDENTS

## UNPACKING THE JARGON AT LEVEL 3

Many words are used in externals that may be 'foreign' to you. Unfortunately these are the words you need to know the meaning of as they are the words in the standards themselves. So as much as you may say 'why can they not put it in English' there is no way around this except to learn them. This sheet has been written to unpack these for you.

*(KEY: 3.2 = Cultural Process standard)*

### **ANALYSE**

All questions at this level will include the word 'analyse'. Analyse means that you must both 'describe' and 'explain'. Therefore go beyond saying what happens by filling your answer with words like 'because', 'due to', and 'as a result of'. If you do not provide a reason you will not achieve.

### **DETAIL**

All questions require some detail if you are to gain higher grades. This detail refers to the depth in which you answer a question. You must remember this – if asked to analyse the processes that produce a feature you may be able to mention about 10 processes involved. However, you will only gain a Merit or Excellence by being able to expand on at least two of these to give depth. Therefore you are best to concentrate on using on a few processes you can write extensively on. In the same way in the 3.2 if asked to analyse the impacts of your cultural process choose around 3-4 you can write extensively about.

### **ELEMENT /PROCESS/ FEATURE**

It is useful to think of an environment like a system. The inputs or actual 'things' are your elements, which will be nouns. The actions that happen are the 'processes' through the system. The outcomes or results of the actions are the features. It is more difficult in a cultural environment. Tourists and Attractions (elements) interact in Tourism Development (a process). However the results of this are not so easy to see as 'features'. Instead think of the outcomes as specific patterns and impacts. This approach is useful as it allows you to see how these all relate to each other.

### **WHAT IS A PROCESS?**

The Level 3 externals are all based around processes so it is vital you understand what these mean. These are actions or verbs so are always doing things. Because of the action involved they occur as a series of related steps. First this happens which leads to this and then that ... Always make sure you mention processes in your answers. For the 3.2 check you are naming a cultural process. Tourism is not an action but by adding 'development' on the end it becomes an action.

### **INTERACTION VERSUS INTERACTING**

Interaction is the way 2 things are connected. It has always been taken in geography at this level to be a 2- way action. A affects B and B affects A. However, while many processes can be looked at in this way, there are a few that act one way only.

The term 'interacting' simply means how processes work together. The idea is that no process acts alone but either directly or indirectly influences another. In the 3.2 standard the same principle applies to the elements. Each element depends on the others in order for the cultural process to work. Investigating this relationship is what will gain you high marks in this standard.

## **SIGNIFICANT /SIGNIFICANCE**

The relationship between different processes or elements can be evaluated. This means saying how important this relationship is – if one of the variables were removed would the relationship still happen? In Tourism Development the elements of ‘tourists’ and ‘attractions’ is much more significant than the relationship between ‘tourists’ and ‘facilities’ as without the former two the process cannot happen. If there were not facilities tourism development would still occur but on a much reduced scale.

## **CHARACTERISTICS**

You are often asked to identify characteristics of an environment. This simply means to say what it is like that makes this environment ‘unique’ or stands out from others. This can relate to elements or features. In the 3.2 if you are doing Tourism Development in Rotorua it would relate to the main attractions connected to geothermal activity or Maori culture, the proximity to major markets like Auckland, the large number of international tourists and the domination of accommodation along Fenton Street.

## **SPATIAL VERSUS TEMPORAL**

For the word ‘spatial’ insert ‘space’. It simply refers to where something is on the earth’s surface in relation to other ‘things’. For ‘temporal’ insert ‘time’. This refers to how one particular place/feature/characteristic changes over a period of time.

## **PATTERN**

A pattern means how things are arranged in space. Sometimes you can see definite arrangements that you can name such as when all hotels occur along a main road we term it a linear pattern. However, you can also apply this by saying that this feature/ characteristic is like this here but not over there. Most patterns are identified horizontally using a map. You can show it is like this here and like that over there. Zonation is this type of pattern. You can also show this vertically such as how a headland shows different types of erosion at the top compared to the bottom. In this case a cross section is the best method. Stratification is a type of this pattern.

## **VARIATION**

Often when asked to identify a pattern it is followed by a question asking you to explain the variations. This means to give reasons why it is like this here but is totally different there. Processes rarely occur equally in all parts of an environment because the elements they involve vary from place to place. Tourism Development happens most in the centre or core as this is where most tourists, attractions, facilities and accessibility is found. Away from the core in the periphery the process operates less effectively as it is less accessible, has fewer tourists going there and has fewer attractions. Variations also occur over time (temporal). The process of TD happens slowly in the beginning (because of few tourists and few attractions) while it happens fast in the mature phase (lots of tourists and attractions).

## **CHANGE**

If you are ever asked to show change it is important you identify what something was like in the first instance and how and why this is now different at a later stage.

## **CASE STUDY EVIDENCE / ENVIRONMENT**

If you look at the title of the external standards they all have the term ‘geographic environment’ in them. This means you MUST relate your answers to a specific place by using names, dates or statistics connected to that place. Learn not to use general answers. If you are discussing the relationship between tourists and attractions write it as “40% of the 1.5 million tourists that go to Rotorua are from overseas who demand attractions based on the geothermal activity found there such as a Wai-O-Tapu”. All standards will look at how well you apply your knowledge to these environments. You must mention a specific once for Achieved, at least three times for a Merit and throughout an answer (what they term integrated) for Excellence. It is why you must learn some specifics for your environments.

## **SHAPE**

Both externals discuss how environments are shaped by a process(es). Shape means produced and changed. Just saying how they are formed gives the impression they have been formed and nothing is now happening. By saying

shaped it means you should include all the actions that continue to shape it today and could shape it further in the future.

### **INSIGHT**

This is the requirement for excellence. It is the wow factor or how you make your answer look academic. Include lots of good geographic terms and concepts. Don't say 'this occurs over there' but 'this feature is located there' or 'this is a popular resort because it possesses the necessary infrastructure required'. Think of terms you may have put together in a glossary for this topic and use them. Concepts here refer to any geographic idea so you do not need to limit yourself to the 7 key ones. Another way to make your answer look good is to give it good structure so plan it first! This kind of answer does not waffle on but answers the set question.

### **CAUSE AND EFFECT/ IMPACT**

When you see terms like this try to categorise them. Geographers love putting things into neat categories to make it easier to work with. The real world is complex so it is a way of making it simpler. Causes lead to the effects or impacts, so if you are not sure which is which then think which happens first. If we were to apply this to a temporal variation in Tourism Development the causes would be what makes the change in the process happen. We can categorise causes into:

**Social:** Caused by what people do or say (A negative attitude of people can put tourists off coming)

**Economic:** Caused by the presence or lack of money or infrastructure (high costs of an attraction will put tourists off)

**Environmental:** Caused by nature (a volcanic eruption or earthquake will scare tourists off)

**Technological:** Caused by new inventions (the airplane enabled tourists to travel further)

**Political:** Caused by laws or actions by governments (security measures at airports put some tourists off travelling).

You can categorise these further by those that start within the effected region (internal) and those generated beyond it such as trends (external).

In the same way you can break down the results of these causes or the impacts. For example:

**Social:** Effects on people's well being (tourism causes crowds and queues that frustrate people)

**Cultural:** Effects on the way of life of groups of people (tourism can debase cultures by commercialism)

**Economic:** Effects on money and business (tourism brings in wealth and jobs to a region)

**Environmental:** Effects on the natural world (tourism creates pollution)

**Political:** Effects on governments and planners (tourism creates the need for zoning or regulations)

This can get confusing as some impacts can then become causes. The commercialism of a culture can put more tourists off going to a place. It shows the delicate balance in the relationship between the elements. You can also break these down further into those that have a positive effect and those that have a negative effect.

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