

13+ PAST PAPER PACK

Tonbridge School 13+ Geography 2025

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Tonbridge School 13+ Geography. Work through this paper first.
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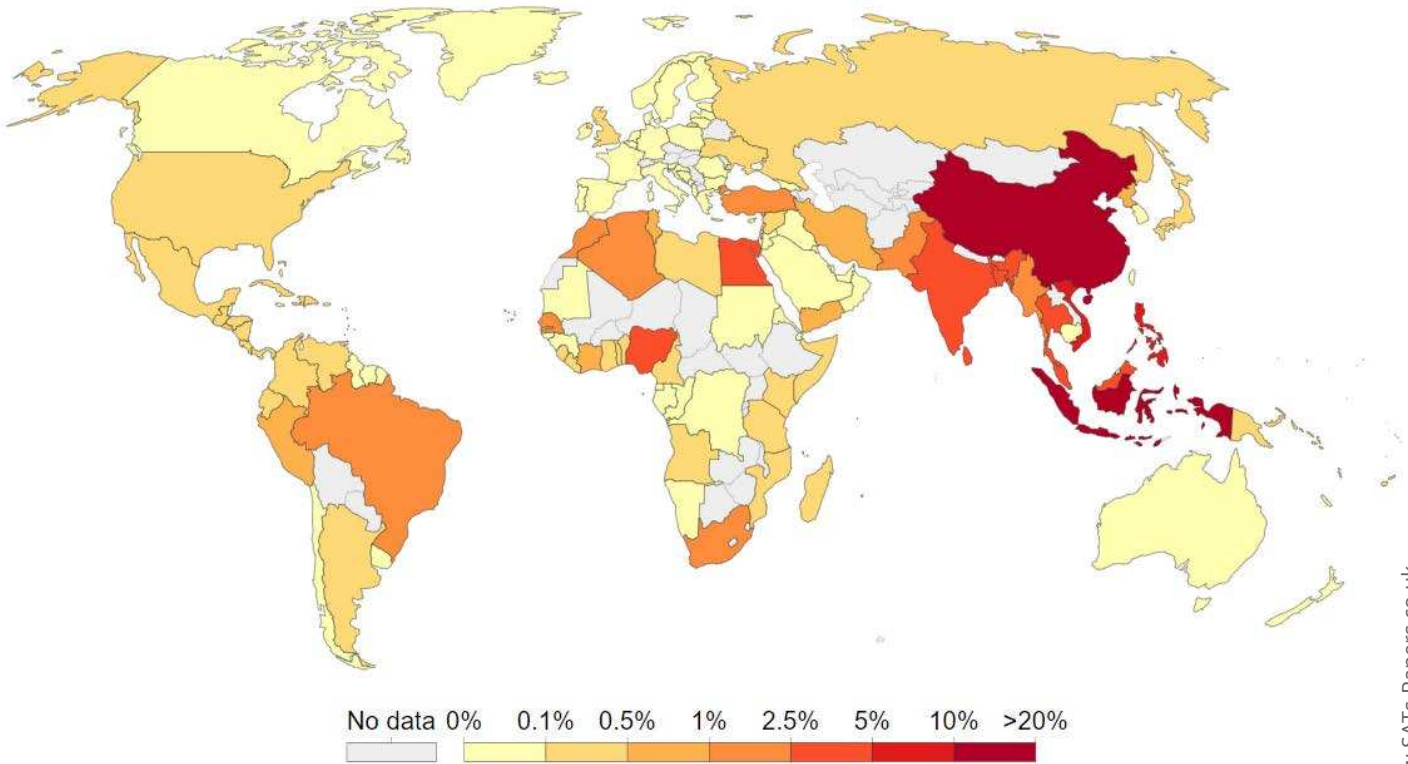
02 Sample Paper

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PRACTISE THE REAL THING

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Resource A: Projected share of global mismanaged plastic waste in 2025.



Resource B: The nature of plastic waste found in the world's oceans.



Resource C: Plastic waste washed up on the Pacific Island of Fiji after a tropical storm.



Resource D: The threat of plastic to marine life.



Paper Notes: 13+ Geography Sample Paper (13+ Geography Sample Paper (2025))

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Overview

This is a **13+ Geography sample paper** published by **Tonbridge School** for candidates preparing for Year 9 entrance in **2025**. The paper focuses on **global plastic waste** and its environmental impact, using a range of visual and textual resources to test geographical analysis, interpretation of data, and evaluation skills.

The paper presents four distinct resources (A through D) covering projected mismanaged plastic waste distribution, ocean pollution statistics, photographic evidence from Fiji, and marine life impacts. Students must demonstrate their ability to read maps, interpret infographics, analyse photographs, and draw connections between human activity and environmental consequences.

This sample paper is designed for students in Year 8 preparing for 13+ entrance examinations at independent schools. It reflects the expectation that candidates can work with multiple sources, synthesise information, and construct reasoned geographical arguments about contemporary environmental issues.

How this paper is organised

The paper is structured around **four resources** labelled A, B, C, and D, each presenting information about plastic pollution from a different perspective. **Resource A** is a world map showing the projected share of global mismanaged plastic waste by country in 2025, with a graduated colour scale ranging from 0% to over 20%. **Resource B** is an infographic from the Ocean Conservancy detailing that 2.5 billion metric tons of solid waste are produced globally, with 275 million metric tons being plastic and 8 million metric tons entering the ocean annually.

Resource C is a black and white photograph documenting extensive plastic waste washed up on a beach in Fiji following a tropical storm. **Resource D** shows a whale shark swimming among visible plastic debris underwater, illustrating the direct threat to marine life. The resources are designed to be analysed both individually and in combination, requiring students to extract data, compare sources, and evaluate the scale and consequences of plastic pollution.

No explicit time limit or mark allocation is visible in the extracted pages, suggesting these resources form the stimulus material for a separate question booklet.

Topics covered

- Interpretation of choropleth maps showing global distribution patterns of environmental data
- Analysis of infographic data including quantities, proportions, and waste management statistics
- Evaluation of photographic evidence documenting environmental degradation in Pacific island contexts
- Understanding the relationship between coastal populations and marine pollution
- Assessment of human impacts on ocean ecosystems and marine biodiversity
- Recognition of regional variations in plastic waste mismanagement between developed and developing nations
- Consideration of extreme weather events (tropical storms) as mechanisms for plastic distribution
- Evaluation of scale in environmental issues, from local coastal impacts to global waste production

How to use this paper for revision

- Practise reading graduated colour scales on choropleth maps carefully, noting which countries fall into the highest categories (over 20%, 10-20%) and which regions show minimal contribution.
- When working with infographics, extract the key figures first and check you understand the relationships between them (e.g. how 8 million relates to 275 million).
- Look for geographical patterns in map data: are high-waste countries clustered by region, development level, or population density?
- Consider multiple causes and consequences for environmental issues rather than single explanations. Plastic pollution has economic, social, and environmental dimensions.
- Link photographic evidence to the quantitative data in other resources to build comprehensive answers that combine different types of source material.
- Revise current environmental case studies, particularly in island nations and developing countries where waste management infrastructure may be limited.

Common mistakes to avoid

- Misreading the map scale and confusing percentages with absolute quantities. A small percentage in China still represents enormous volumes given the population size.
- Failing to reference specific figures from Resource B when making claims about ocean pollution, leading to vague statements rather than precise analysis.
- Describing what is visible in photographs without interpreting the geographical significance or connecting the image to broader themes of waste management.
- Overlooking the role of coastal populations mentioned in Resource B (2 billion people within 30 miles of the coast) when explaining how plastic reaches the ocean.
- Assuming all plastic waste is equally problematic without distinguishing between different types, sources, or impacts on various marine species.

Exam technique

Begin by spending time carefully examining each resource before attempting any questions. Note the scale, units, and source of each piece of data. For **Resource A**, identify which countries are in the darkest categories and consider what geographical factors might explain this pattern. For **Resource B**, trace the flow of information from global waste production down to the 8 million metric tons entering oceans.

When questions ask you to compare resources, have a clear plan: identify one point from each source, then explain the connection or contrast. Avoid simply describing each resource separately. Use the **specific data provided** (the 8 million tons, the 100 million tons of coastal waste) rather than general statements about 'lots of plastic'.

Allocate time to consider the reliability and perspective of each source. Resource B comes from a conservation charity, which has expertise but also a campaigning purpose. Resource C shows one location after an extreme weather event, which may not represent typical conditions. Strong geographical analysis acknowledges these nuances while still drawing valid conclusions from the evidence presented.

What to revise alongside this paper

Students should revise broader themes of **global resource management**, including recycling systems, circular economy principles, and international differences in waste infrastructure. Understanding why certain countries generate more mismanaged waste requires knowledge of economic development, urbanisation rates, and governance systems.

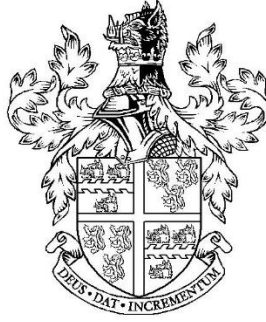
The paper connects to **ocean geography and marine ecosystems**, so revising ocean currents (which transport plastic debris), food chains affected by plastic ingestion, and the concept of oceanic gyres and garbage patches will provide useful context. Case studies of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch or pollution in the Mediterranean would complement this material.

Climate and weather topics are relevant too, particularly how **tropical storms redistribute debris** and how low-lying island nations face compound environmental challenges from both waste accumulation and sea-level rise. Broader study of Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States will help contextualise the Fiji photograph in Resource C.

Key terms

Mismanaged waste, Choropleth map, Metric tons, Coastal population, Marine debris, Infographic, Ocean Conservancy, Solid waste stream, Environmental degradation, Biodiversity threat, Waste management infrastructure, Tropical storm, Pacific island states, Global distribution pattern

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TONBRIDGE SCHOOL

Scholarship Examination Sample Paper

GEOGRAPHY

Time allowed: 1 hour

Attempt BOTH sections, taking care to read the instructions for each section.

Begin each section on a separate sheet of paper, with your name at the top.

Section A is worth 50 marks and section B is worth 50 marks.

You should spend 30 minutes on each section.

Total marks: 100

Section A

Read the information provided and answer **ALL** of the questions in Section A

The questions in section A relate to the geography of plastic pollution. Although there is no expectation that you would have been specifically taught this topic, you should try to use your broader geographical knowledge to answer the questions. Mismanaged plastic waste is defined as:

Plastic that is either littered or inadequately disposed. Inadequately disposed waste is not formally managed and includes disposal in dumps, or uncontrolled open landfills, where it is not fully contained. Mismanaged waste could eventually enter the ocean via inland waterways, wastewater outflows, and transport by wind or tides.

Resource A shows the projected share of global mismanaged waste produced in 2025. This is measured as the total mismanaged waste by populations within 50km of the coastline, and therefore defined as high risk of entering the oceans.

Resource B shows the nature of plastic waste found in the world's oceans.

Resource C shows plastic waste washed on to a beach on the Pacific island of Fiji after a tropical storm.

Resource D shows the threat of plastic waste to marine life.

Questions:

1. Using Resource A, describe the pattern of distribution of those countries that mismanage their plastic waste. [10]
2. Attempt to explain, with reference to human geography, the likely causes of the pattern you described in question 1. [20]
3. Using all the resources alongside your own knowledge, evaluate the extent to which you agree with the statement, 'Ocean plastics are the most challenging environmental threat posed to humankind'. [20]

[Total 50 marks]

Section B

*Only answer **ONE** of the following 5 questions.*

1. Earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are both tectonic events. Using examples that you have studied; argue to what extent you think the impacts of tectonic events are mainly determined by their physical characteristics.
2. 'Floods are entirely man-made.' Using at least one detailed case study, show how much truth you think there is in this statement?
3. 'Geography as a subject should be divided in physical and human topics'. To what extent do you agree with this statement?
4. You are in charge of a tertiary sector business about to launch in the UK in 2020. Describe where you would locate your business and explain why this would be a good location.
5. Boris Johnson has promised £100 billion to fund infrastructure projects in the North of England. Using examples that you have studied, alongside your own knowledge, explain why infrastructure investment is crucial today.

[Total 50 marks]

END OF PAPER

Paper Notes: 13+ Geography Sample Paper (13+ Geography Sample Paper (2025))

Compiled by [SATs-Papers.co.uk](https://www.SATs-Papers.co.uk) to help you get the most from this paper.

Overview

This is a **scholarship examination sample paper in Geography** published by **Tonbridge School** for candidates preparing for **13+ entrance**. It is designed to assess not only factual recall but also the ability to analyse geographical data, apply concepts to unfamiliar contexts, and construct evaluative arguments using evidence.

The paper is divided into two sections of equal weight. **Section A** focuses on the geography of plastic pollution, providing four resources (maps, photographs, and data) that candidates must interpret and synthesise. The questions progress from description through explanation to evaluation, testing resource analysis skills alongside broader geographical understanding. **Section B** is an essay section offering five diverse questions spanning physical geography (tectonic hazards, flooding), human geography (business location, infrastructure investment), and the philosophy of geographical study itself.

This paper is particularly suited to able students in **Year 8** preparing for competitive scholarship or entrance examinations. The absence of pre-taught knowledge in Section A and the essay format in Section B both favour candidates who can think independently, structure arguments clearly, and draw on a wide range of geographical knowledge. The one-hour time limit demands efficiency and good exam technique.

How this paper is organised

The paper is divided into **two sections, each worth 50 marks**, with candidates instructed to spend **30 minutes on each section**. The total examination time is one hour and the overall paper is worth 100 marks.

Section A is compulsory and contains three questions on plastic pollution. Question 1 (10 marks) asks for description of a pattern from Resource A; Question 2 (20 marks) requires explanation with reference to human geography; and Question 3 (20 marks) is an evaluative essay using all resources plus own knowledge. Four resources are provided: a map showing projected mismanaged waste in 2025, information on ocean plastic types, a photograph from Fiji, and data on marine life threats.

Section B requires candidates to answer **only one question from a choice of five**. The five questions cover tectonic hazards, flooding, the nature of geography as a discipline,

business location, and infrastructure investment. Each is worth 50 marks. Candidates must begin each section on a separate sheet and write their name at the top.

Topics covered

- Resource interpretation and description, focusing on patterns of distribution shown in maps and graphical data about global mismanaged plastic waste
- Human geography explanations for environmental issues, including economic development, waste management infrastructure, urbanisation, and coastal population density
- Evaluative writing on environmental challenges, requiring candidates to weigh ocean plastics against other threats such as climate change, biodiversity loss, or resource depletion
- Tectonic hazards, including earthquake and volcanic eruption case studies, and the distinction between physical characteristics (magnitude, location, type) and human factors (preparedness, building standards, wealth) in determining impact
- Flooding as a hazard, examining the relative contributions of natural causes (heavy rainfall, topography, soil saturation) and human factors (deforestation, urbanisation, river management, climate change)
- The epistemology of geography, debating whether the subject should be divided into physical and human branches or studied holistically through integrated themes
- Location theory and tertiary sector business geography, considering factors such as accessibility, labour supply, market proximity, digital infrastructure, and agglomeration economies in the UK context
- Infrastructure investment and regional development, exploring transport links, digital connectivity, education and health provision, and their role in reducing spatial inequalities in northern England

How to use this paper for revision

- Practise interpreting a range of geographical resources under time pressure: maps, graphs, photographs, and data tables. Focus on identifying patterns, anomalies, and trends quickly and accurately.
- Develop a bank of detailed case studies across physical and human geography. Each should include specific place names, dates, figures, and named processes or policies, as depth is rewarded in scholarship papers.
- For evaluative questions, plan a two-sided argument before you write. Allocate roughly equal space to supporting and challenging the statement, then reach a justified conclusion based on the weight of evidence.
- Read contemporary geographical issues in the news, such as climate policy, migration, natural disasters, or urban change. Section B essay questions often link to current events and reward informed engagement.
- When using resources in Section A, refer to them explicitly by name and integrate evidence into your sentences. Avoid simply listing observations; explain what the resource shows and why it matters.
- In Section B, choose the question you can answer with the most specific detail and relevant examples. Avoid questions where you can only speak in generalities, as scholarship examiners reward precision.
- Check that your answers address the command words: 'describe' requires observation without explanation; 'explain' requires reasons and processes; 'evaluate' requires judgement supported by evidence from multiple perspectives.

Common mistakes to avoid

- In descriptive questions, offering explanations rather than observations. Question 1 of Section A asks only for a description of distribution, so avoid discussing reasons why the pattern exists until Question 2.
- Writing vague or generic explanations in Question 2, such as 'countries are poor' or 'lack of education', without linking to specific geographical concepts like infrastructure investment, GDP per capita, or urbanisation rates.
- Producing one-sided evaluations in Question 3 that agree or disagree entirely with the statement. Strong answers consider multiple perspectives, acknowledge complexity, and weigh competing evidence before concluding.
- Choosing a Section B question on a topic you have not studied in detail, then writing in generalities. Essay questions reward case study depth, so select the question where you can deploy the most precise knowledge.
- Failing to manage time equally between sections. Spending 40 minutes on Section A and 20 on Section B, or vice versa, will cost marks. Stick to 30 minutes per section and move on even if an answer feels incomplete.
- Ignoring the word 'extent' in questions like 'to what extent'. These questions require you to explore a spectrum of views, not simply argue for one extreme position throughout your answer.

Exam technique

Start by reading both sections fully and choosing your Section B question immediately. This allows your subconscious to organise ideas while you work on Section A. Allocate your time strictly: **30 minutes per section**, checking your watch after 15 minutes to ensure steady progress.

In **Section A**, read all four resources carefully before attempting the questions. Annotate Resource A to identify patterns (clusters, outliers, regional trends) and jot brief notes on the other resources. Answer Question 1 in pure description, Question 2 by linking human geography concepts to the observed pattern, and Question 3 by building a balanced argument that draws on all resources and your own wider knowledge. Aim for roughly 10 minutes on Question 1, 12 minutes on Question 2, and 18 minutes on Question 3, reflecting the mark weightings.

In **Section B**, spend five minutes planning your chosen essay. Outline your introduction, two or three main paragraphs with supporting case studies, and a conclusion. Write in structured paragraphs, using subject-specific terminology and integrating named

examples throughout. Scholarship examiners reward depth, originality, and the ability to construct and sustain an argument, so prioritise quality and precision over length.

What to revise alongside this paper

Candidates should revise **globalisation and development geography**, as understanding disparities in wealth, governance, and infrastructure underpins explanations of mismanaged waste patterns. Topics such as urbanisation, megacities, and waste management in emerging economies are particularly relevant.

For Section B, strengthen your knowledge of **case studies across physical hazards** (earthquakes in Haiti, Japan, or Nepal; volcanic eruptions in Iceland or Montserrat; floods in Bangladesh, Somerset, or Pakistan) and **economic geography** (the location of tech clusters, financial services, or logistics hubs; regional policy in the UK; the Northern Powerhouse and HS2). Familiarity with geographical theory, such as **Weber's least cost theory** or **core-periphery models**, will deepen essay answers.

Broader reading on contemporary issues such as climate change, biodiversity loss, ocean acidification, and circular economy initiatives will enrich evaluative answers. Engage with geographical journals, documentaries, or podcasts to develop the wider perspective that scholarship papers reward.

Key terms

Mismanaged waste, Coastal populations, Human geography, Resource interpretation, Evaluation, Tectonic hazards, Physical characteristics, Case study, Tertiary sector, Location factors, Infrastructure investment, Spatial inequality, Urbanisation, Environmental threat, Integrated geography

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