Learning the Landscape through Language

RESOURCE SHEET 3 – MEDIEVAL HUMAN GEOGRAPHY: PLACE-NAMES AND WORK IN SHROPSHIRE

This resource sheet combines aspects of English (language), History, Geography, Design and Technology, Art and Design, and Cooking and Nutrition to recreate and analyse the human geography of medieval Shropshire by looking at Anglo-Saxon and later medieval place-names, and what they can tell us about work in Shropshire's medieval past. Place-names often reveal aspects of medieval economic activity (e.g. Selattyn – 'plough settlement', Cheswardine 'cheese-producing settlement). Using the map, the appendix and two sets of flashcards (modern occupations / Shrewsbury street-names) associated with this resource sheet, children can explore these aspects of the human geography of medieval Shropshire. These resources are aimed at Key Stage Two, but could be adapted for Key Stage One.

Exercise one

Begin by thinking about how things are produced, either using physical objects or the 'goods' flashcards. Ask the children to think about where these goods came from. Choose one or two of these goods and try and plot the route each item took before it was in the hands of the customer (e.g. flour might be: kitchen cupboard – shop – mill – farm – field; cheese might be: fridge – shop/milkman – dairy/farm – cow/sheep/goat). Think about what sorts of jobs might be involved in the production of these goods.

Exercise two

Leading on from exercise one, ask the children to think about jobs. First of all use the 'modern occupations' flashcards to help them think about what an economic activity might be. Ask them to guess what job each of the people on the cards does (e.g. postman, farmer, policewoman, shopkeeper, baker, teacher, construction worker, doctor, farrier, miner, soldier, vicar). Perhaps ask them to think about a job that someone in their family does.

Now think about jobs in Shropshire. Ask the children to think about what sorts of jobs people living in Shropshire do today, and make a list.

<u>Exercise three</u>

This exercise focuses on jobs in the past. What sort of jobs do you think people in medieval Shropshire did? Write a list of the children's answers. Have another look at the flashcards. Ask the children to create two piles:

1. Jobs that were also undertaken in medieval Shropshire
2. Jobs that were not undertaken in medieval Shropshire (i.e. modern jobs)

Think about: Which jobs do people still do now? Which jobs are quite rare now, or perhaps no-one does any more? Which jobs do people do now, for which there is no medieval equivalent?

<u>Exercise four</u>

Show the children RS Map 3, 'Human Geography: medieval jobs in Shropshire'. The map shows several place-names alongside their original meanings. Ask the children to look at the names, and try to decide which of the jobs on the flashcards might be represented within the place-names. Some are quite obvious (like Cheswardine 'cheese-producing settlement / cheese-maker, cheesemonger), whereas others might need further thought (like Newport 'new market town', which you might want to match with shopkeeper, market trader, waiter/café owner, baker and butcher, and perhaps some additional trades, for example).

<u>Exercise five</u>

Ensure that you have the appendix for this exercise to hand, and both sets of flashcards ('modern occupations' and 'Shrewsbury street-names'). Ask the children to look at the 'Shrewsbury street-names' flashcards. Each street sign shown features a medieval street-name that has been modernised (note that not all these names have survived in modern Shrewsbury – your appendix will indicate where that is the case). As you did in exercise four, ask the children to look at these names, and try to decide which of the jobs on the first set of flashcards might be represented by the street-names. Again, some names might need further thought, so you could think about whether the street-name Archery Place (medieval Shoplatch) might be matched with 'soldier', and the various 'market' names might be matched with 'market trader', for example.

You may want to have a more detailed think about these street-names. Names like Butcher Row, Shoemakers' Row and Glovers' Row suggest that these streets were dominated by these particular trades. This helps us to visualise how medieval Shrewsbury may have looked. Tanneries were very often on the outskirts of towns, because they were quite smelly operations. Some markets seem to

have specialised in particular goods. This may help you to think about how medieval towns were organised. You may wish to ask the children to create their own map of a medieval town, in which each occupation has its own place.

Exercise Six

Using either Map 3 'Human Geography: medieval jobs in Shropshire', and/or the 'Shrewsbury street-names' flashcards, ask the children to design a Monopoly board, based on medieval jobs in Shropshire.

General notes

Overall, some of the occupations captured within the place-names do not necessarily have modern parallels. Some could potentially be grouped together under one term (e.g. Bitterley 'butter pasture'/dairyman; Stottesdon 'herdsman hill' / herdsman; and Shipton 'sheep settlement'/shepherd – all might be usefully termed 'farmer' today). Others may have been industrialised (e.g. Melverley 'clearing by a mill-ford'/miller; Shoemakers' Row in Shrewsbury).

These exercises are designed to help children to think about different ways in which they might consider human geography. Place-name evidence can help to recreate aspects of Shropshire's human geography for a period for which no physical maps survive.

National Curriculum

These exercises support the following aspects of the National Curriculum for Key Stage 2:

Geography

- Use maps to describe features studied
- Name and locate…geographical regions [of the UK] and their identifying human and physical characteristics … and land-use patterns, and understand how some of these aspects have changed over time
- Understand geographical similarities and differences through the study of human and physical geography of a region of the United Kingdom
- Describe and understand key aspects of physical and human geography (including types of settlement and land use, economic activity including trade links, and the distribution of natural resources)

History

- Understand Britain's settlement by the Anglo-Saxons (Anglo-Saxon invasions, settlements and kingdoms: place-names and village life)
- A local history study

English

- Retrieving and recording information from non-fiction sources
- Provide opportunities to discuss language, including vocabulary, extending their interest in the meaning and origin of words

Design and Technology

- Use research and develop design criteria to inform the design of innovate, functional, appealing products that are fit for purpose, aimed at particular individuals or groups
- Select from and use a wider range of tools and equipment to perform practical tasks (for example, cutting, shaping, joining and finishing).
- Select from and use a wider range of materials and components, including construction materials, textiles and ingredients, according to their functional properties and aesthetic qualities.

Art and Design

- Use a range of materials creatively to design and make products

Cooking and Nutrition

- Understand where food comes from.
- Know where and how a variety of ingredients are grown, reared, caught and processed.