



# Royal Holloway Geography for Schools Lecture Series

## Changing Places

### Suggested activity

The talk suggests five distinctive ways of thinking about places. For each of these, think of a place known to you, either through direct experience or your studies and write a short summary of how you would think of that place in that way. You can choose different places for each, or perhaps choose the same place and think about how these different ways of thinking might apply.

As a class or group activity, these could be given to different groups and then used as the basis for a class discussion.

The places you choose can be small (a house or a street) or larger (a neighbourhood, town or city).

1. Place as **experienced** through senses, emotions, or memories.

Discuss a place that is really well-known to you. Discuss how your view of that place is shaped by different senses (sounds, smells) and what kinds of emotions and memories that place gives you. Is this experience of place very personal to you, or do you think that others would share some of these feelings.

2. Places as **representations**.

Now, perhaps think a place that you know only through representations (films, TV, books, etc.) What aspects of that place are emphasised in these representations, and what aspects are neglected?

3. Places as strongly associated with **belonging** and **rootedness**

Discuss a place where people seem to have a strong sense of belonging and rootedness. What characteristics of that place encourage these feelings? What kinds of place are not associated with strong senses of belonging.

4. Places as **contested** and **exclusionary**

Identify a place that is a site of conflict between different groups. What different understandings of the place do the different groups hold? How do different senses of the history of the place influence understandings of the place held by different groups? Are there inequalities of power that allow one group to change the place to suit their ideas and interests? Does conflict lead to some people being excluded from the place.

5. Places as being made through **connections** and **flows** that link them with other places

Finally, take a place and discuss all of the connections and flows that make it the place it is. Where have people come from? How is it positioned in networks of commuting and other forms of travel? How is it dependent on flows of goods, communications and culture? How do wider economic and political processes shape it?

For more information about Geography at Royal Holloway visit: [www.royalholloway.ac.uk/geography](http://www.royalholloway.ac.uk/geography)

Follow us: @RHULGeography     YouTube