Level 5 Geography - Introducing Antarctica Using Visual Stimuli

PEEL in Practice: 1300 ideas for quality teaching
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- As an introductory activity, students are presented with a map of Antarctica.
- In groups of two or three, they are asked to use the map to list as many facts as they can about Antarctica. Any facts that they can determine from the map are to be included.
- The students are encouraged to use all the information on the map.
- Students could also ask questions to clarify items on the map (if they were observant enough to realise that the key did not give them information on everything on the map). For example: What are dry valleys? What is the outer line surrounding the continent?
- Students are encouraged to brainstorm this activity within a given time - perhaps ten minutes. By brainstorming, students write down everything that comes to mind without judging. At the end of the ten minutes they discuss which comments are relevant and which should be removed. Each group is able to read out their best ten responses.
- This was made into a game with prizes for the longest list of facts from the map AND the most creative response - e.g., The winter ice shelf is less than 500 km from South America.

This open-ended task was an effective way to allow students to work at their own ability level and to challenge each student individually. By working in small groups, students were able to express their own ideas and piggy-back the ideas of others to extend their thinking. Many aspects of thinking were drawn upon:

- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Analysis
- Synthesis.
Students came up with very lengthy and creative lists including distances between locations, distinguishing summer and winter sea ice, longitude readings, highest mountains and more. This activity could easily be adapted to any map or diagram.

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