

KS3 Geography. Maps and navigation.

What is geocaching?

JOE CROWLEY: The ability of GPS trackers and smartphones that can pinpoint exactly where you are has led to the development of a new hobby. It's called geocaching. It's like a hi-tech treasure hunt in which you have to go out and find caches hidden by people all over the country.

Typically clues to the hidden item's whereabouts will be placed on websites devoted to geocaching. Here you'll find the co-ordinates of the hiding place and often additional clues as to their precise position - for example, that the item is hidden in a wall. These additional clues may be cryptic or in code.

You then put the co-ordinates into your GPS tracker or smartphone and go looking for the cache. This will take you very close to your target. But even the best GPS tracker can only take you to within a few metres of the location you're looking for. So at that point you have to use your intuition and your eyes to find the hidden item.

YOUNG PERSON: Oh! What have we found?

YOUNG PERSON: Yeah, that's it!

JOE: The caches take various forms. Sometimes there's a small trinket to exchange; in others a simple log, that you add your details to. You should of course replace the cache after you've found it.

It's a growing hobby and there are now specialist apps that allow you to download the co-ordinates direct to your device instead of imputing them manually.

YOUNG PERSON: So it's just before the wall.

JOE: So geocaching is a brilliant way of blending hi-tech gadgets with the great outdoors.