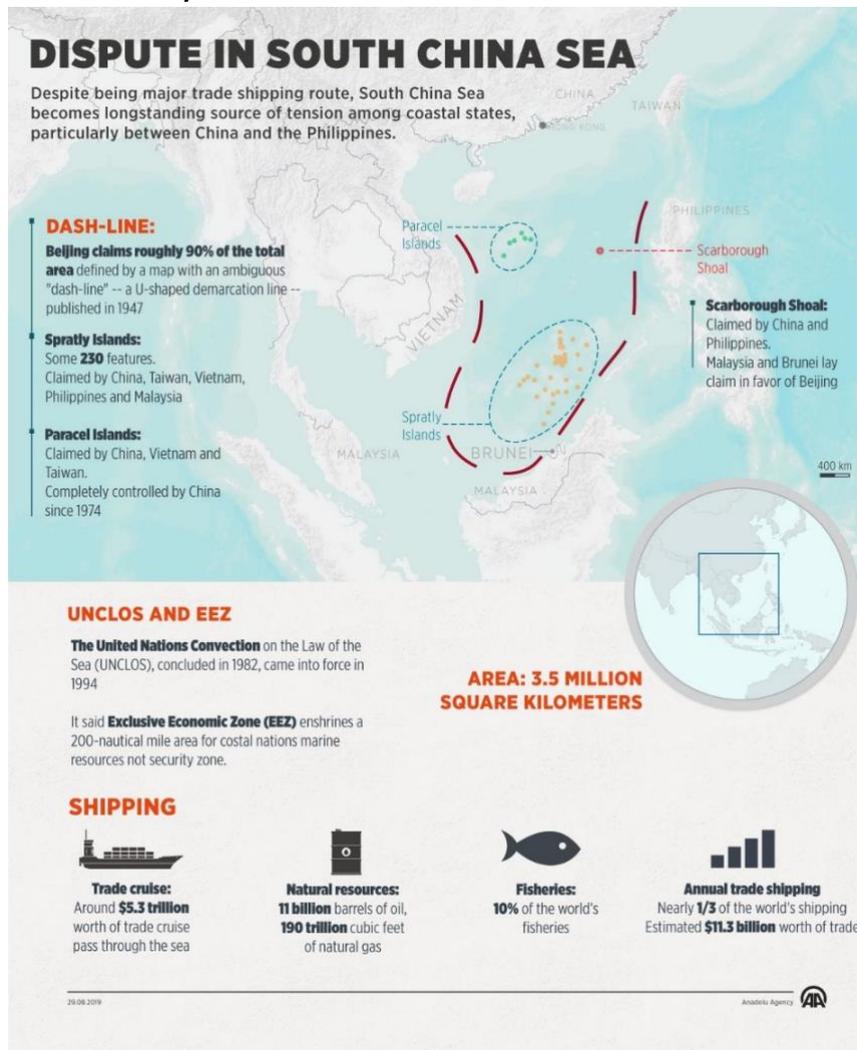


Geography Research Task for Year 11's

Geography is about studying the world and understanding how it works both physically and in terms of human behaviors and impacts.

At A Level at college you will do some topics that are familiar to you and some that are completely new. You are expected to read around the subject for some topics and this is particularly useful when learning about real things that have happened in the world. We would normally call these case studies. We have decided that certain examples are useful for many areas of the course and for your growth as a geographer. Some of these include the hydrology of California, the reasons for the EU existing, the South China Sea and looking at individual countries such as Rwanda.

Case Study 1 - The South China Sea



Some borders, like the ones between England and Wales or Canada and the USA are peaceful ones. Others are places of conflict caused by rivalries between countries or peoples, disputes over national resources, or disagreements about the past. These are called 'contested borders'.

In the South China Sea (*look on Google maps*) there are some islands which the Chinese claim are theirs. On maps they put 9 lines around them showing them to be part of China. This means they have come to be known as the 'Nine Dash Islands' and include the Paracel and Spratley Islands. These islands are

very small and mostly uninhabited (although this is changing). International law states that each country has an Exclusive Economic Zone of 200 nautical miles from their coastline into the sea within which they can exploit the resources. The issue here is that many other countries also claim those islands.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luTPMHC7zHY>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-pacific-13748349>

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/asia-pacific/dispute-in-south-china-sea-/1566897>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/resources/idt-1446c419-fc55-4a07-9527-a6199f5dc0e2>

<https://dredgingandports.com/news/2019/south-china-sea-island-building-impact-on-marine-life/>

Activity 1 – Use the links (and anything else you find) above to answer these questions

1. Which countries are involved in the dispute?
2. Why does China want control over South China Sea?
3. How are China trying to dominate the area and ensure that they control the islands and the sea?
4. What are the impacts of this tension? Think social, economic, political and environmental.
5. How are the rest of the world trying to solve the problem? Is it working? How big is the problem?

Activity 2

Can you find any other areas of the world with a contested border? YouTube Vox is a good start – although simply googling ‘Contested borders’ will also get you a long way!

Do some research and make some notes/ powerpoint/poster showing the causes and effects of the tensions around border.

Then have a go at these ‘big’ questions

1. Why do countries have borders? What are the advantages of them?
2. What are the problems with them? Do you think we should live in a ‘borderless world’?
3. Are there any reasons why border conflicts may get worse in the future?

Case Study 2 - Rwanda

We use the country of Rwanda and its genocide in 1994 to further our understanding of lots of the content across the two-year course. Your task is to deepen your understanding of the country and try to understand what contributed to the genocide (in terms of history, politics, actions of foreign countries, human geography and anything else you think may be relevant). We can also look at what impact it had on the environment, the locals and on how the rest of the world behaved to similar events that have occurred since.

Attached is the sheet we give to our students with the basic information on (we wrote it using stuff we found on the internet), use this as the starting point for your research. Below are some possible questions / themes you could explore. They are deliberately a bit vague because at A level the big scoring exam questions are not straight forward and often require you to consider everything you have learned in order to answer the exam questions well.

Some possible questions to answer / themes to explore

This is not a list of questions you have to answer but is a selection of starting points for you to explore.

What did the Belgians want with what is now Rwanda? How come the Germans had it before them?

How come they could just take it? If it was useful why didn't we (Britain) just take it from them?

How did a colonial power so far away rule a whole country before modern technology?

Did the 'divide and rule' strategy make problems worse for the future? Anywhere else in the world where something similar is/ was done?

Why did the civil war start? Why hadn't it started earlier? Did anyone / any other country have anything to gain from war?

Why did the UN not do much? What other examples are there in the world where they did more? Why? How come it was left largely to the Belgians? When has the UK been involved with similar (if less deadly) events?

How did the Genocide stop? Who brokered the deal? What role did the surrounding countries play? What were the environmental, social, economic, and demographic impacts of the genocide?

What is Rwanda like now? Does it face any new challenges?

Below are a non-exhaustive (meaning you should find more of your own) list of some sources that I have found on the Internet (tip: if I don't really know what I am looking for I start with Wikipedia and look at the headings and I also like to follow some of the source links at the bottom of the Wikipedia page).

Some of the stuff is quite upsetting and you can avoid these bits if you want, as the idea of this task is not to collect facts about brutality (I think some of you may have seen 'Hotel Rwanda' in RE lesson already so will already have idea about what happened).

A mind map format might be the best as you don't know which themes you will explore the most.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rwanda>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iGxre5G3_k and the following clip

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/sep/17/un-united-nations-peacekeepers-rwanda-bosnia>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13431486>

<https://www.visitrwanda.com/>

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2009/nov/02/aid-trade-rwanda-china-west>

Rwanda

Points from the specification

- **Failed State**
- **Colonial Borders**
- **Failed UN intervention**
- **Impacts of Post-Colonial Conflicts**



Rwanda is a small state in central Africa near the Great Lakes. In the 19th Century the area was a loosely controlled Kingdom without clear borders. In 1884 it became a German colony during the scramble for Africa. This formalized the borders with surrounding countries.

The Belgians took over in 1916 and took greater control over the country. During this time the Belgians issued identity cards gave each person a fixed ethnic identity (which until this time had been more fluid). The population were mostly Hutu (85%) with smaller number

of Tutsi (14%) and other groups. Having separate ethnic groups which can be played against each other (Divide and Rule) was a common method of exerting control by colonial powers.

The Belgians initially supported the minority Tutsi and as a result they had the better jobs more power within the country.

The Belgians started to withdraw in 1959 and switched support to the Hutu majority in 1961.

In 1962 Rwanda became independent but was riven by ethnic differences and tensions between the Hutu and Tutsi. Inter-ethnic violence was common and many Tutsi fled to Uganda.

Population growth was high, growing from 1.6 million in 1934 to 7.1 million in 1989, this growth put pressure on land which increased tensions between groups.

In 1990 Tutsi from Uganda invaded Rwanda starting an on/ off civil war with the Hutu. During this period the country suffered from a collapse in inward investment and became a failed state. The UN intervened in 1993 with a ceasefire and power sharing agreement which was meant to stop the violence. A peacekeeping force of 2500 UN troops was installed in the country mainly from Belgium, France, Bangladesh, Ghana and Tunisia.

The Hutu President's plane was shot down in April 1994 killing him and everyone on board. This was blamed on the Tutsi. Almost immediately (a probably pre-planned) genocide began with extreme Hutu groups beginning to murder and mutilate (mostly with machetes) all the Tutsi and moderate Hutu they could find. In the following six weeks, 800 000 Rwandans were murdered with countless more suffering from amputations and rape.



The UN peacekeepers (known as the Blue Berets) were near powerless to stop the genocide as they did not have the mandate (permission from the UN) to shoot anyone other than in self-defence. Whilst they did save thousands the UN mission essentially collapsed and after less than a week the Belgians withdrew from the country. This was a massive failure of UN military intervention and was blamed on party on the geopolitical atmosphere of the time, the recent failure of the US intervention in Somalia and the growing more Eurocentric war in the former Yugoslavia.



The Tutsi forces in Uganda launched a full-scale invasion in order to stop the genocide and by July had control of the whole country. Fear of reprisal led to massive outflows of Hutu to neighbouring Zaire (now the DRC) and Tanzania.

40% of the Rwanda's population was either killed or displaced during 1994.

Sporadic reprisal took place in Rwanda by the now dominant Tutsi forces but largely the country became peaceful. The new Tutsi led government reinstated the UN power sharing agreement of 1993, UN peacekeepers returned and ethnic divisions downplayed. Since 2000 Rwanda has seen strong economic growth and rising prosperity.

Impact of the war/ genocide

The economy of Rwanda shrunk 40% in 1994 and took many years to recover.

800000 + dead many more suffering from amputations and rape.

The 2.1 million displaced Hutu stayed in vast refugee camps in Zaire (DRC) and Tanzania for several years. During this time thousands more died in outbreaks of cholera and dysentery. Whilst in the camps food aid was supplied but firewood was major issue. This led to the deforestation / degradation of vast areas of rainforest. The Virunga national park (home to protected mountain gorillas) lost 2/5 of its forest cover totalling 113km².

