

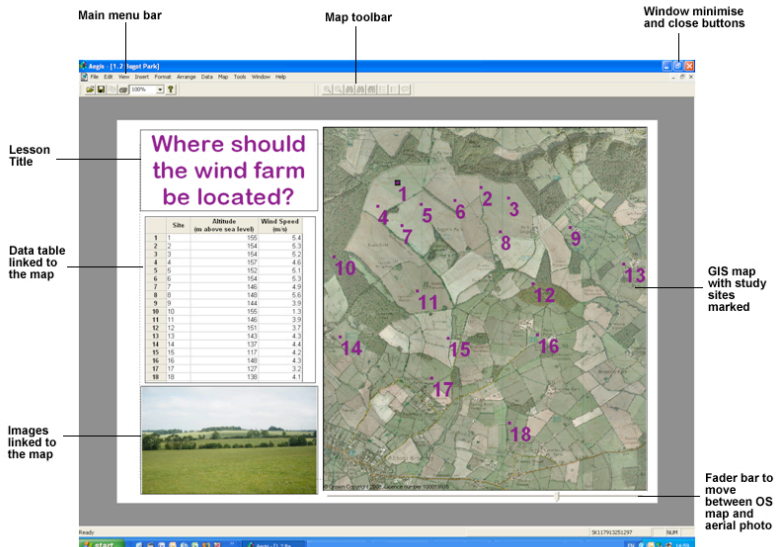
# What is a GIS?

A GIS (Geographical Information System) is a software package that allows the user to combine a digital map with associated data. GIS maps have been used in commerce, the service industries and government for many years, with applications like Multimap, Google Maps and Google Earth being the more commonly recognised examples amongst the general public.

More recently the use of GIS has become a requirement in schools, through the geography national curriculum and all geography GCSE and A level specifications. GIS packages for schools are straightforward and easy to navigate. Teachers frequently comment that GIS programs are much easier to use than they had anticipated and are particularly enjoyable for students to interact with.

GIS programs use digital maps in a variety of formats. These can be digital images of maps (raster maps), such as Ordnance Survey maps which may be geo-referenced, that is, incorporate grid referencing information. Maps may also have a series of layers that make up a map (vector maps). Vector maps can display point, line or area data, using methods such as area shading or located graph overlays to represent spatial information.

AEGIS 3 is a GIS program that has been specifically designed for use in schools. The program allows users to import maps and add data and layers to create activities for use in lessons across the age and ability spectrum. AEGIS 3 is the lead GIS product for schools. The Geographical Association gave AEGIS a Highly Commended award for 'an excellent and innovative resource'.



AEGIS screen