

WHAT'S NEW?

Communication Objectives: Ss will be able to:
 - use expressions for asserting and signposting phrases for sequencing.
 - use vocabulary, phrases and idioms related to school curriculum.

Educational Objectives: Ss will address curriculum planning, theory and implementation.

Connected Topics:

- Student needs, parental wishes and the demands of the state	- Primary education
- Favourite subjects	- Single-sex schools
- Academic versus career-oriented education	- Physical education
- Budget constraints	- Experiential learning
- History: Who tells the story	- Literature
- State of UK schools	- Well-rounded education
- Evolution versus creationism	- Testing
	- Life-long learning

Grammar: Gerunds and infinitives

Key Vocabulary:

adolescent	echo	literate
allocate	gap	manipulate
apartheid	gender bias	neglect
autonomy	gender-stereotyping	reconciliation
Bantu	hail	reiterate
brains	heritage	scholar
co-educational	hands-on	specialist
condemn	inclusive	standardised testing
creationism	inherit	unmask
diversity	kayak	
dyslexic	literacy	

***The BIG question:* ARE STUDENTS LEARNING THE RIGHT THINGS?**

The idea is to ask the students to think about what they learn / learnt at school.

VIEWPOINT

Facts: This information comes from the same Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) study produced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. The study looked at 41 countries in 2003, testing more than 4,500 15-year-old students in each country.

EQ: *What can this graph tell us and not tell us? Why do you think Italy has three times fewer university graduates than the USA? Does it matter? How common and how important is a university education in your country? Do you think there is a*

connection between higher education and economic growth?

Quote: This anonymous quote presents what might seem an odd dichotomy, but what many academics would probably agree with.

EQ: *Is this statement true? Why / Why not? Do you think you know enough? Or will ever know enough? Is it better to be ignorant?*

1 WORD POWER

A gets students to consider some of the key criteria that teachers consider in preparing courses. As this activity is opinion-based, the following are only suggested answers. If time allows, you may ask students to expand on the reason for their choices.

1 WORD POWER A**Sample answers**

I'd put student needs first. The next most important is standardised testing. Equally important is the subject matter. And again the curriculum has to follow government policy. Then I'd put the amount of budget available to allocate, and the classroom resources would come next. And finally, the need to understand adolescent psychology.

B This activity gives practice in using vocabulary from A and the phrases from **Language Bank 16**.

1 WORD POWER B**Sample answers**

1 I would put forward the idea that the teacher would need to give extra lessons for the dyslexic student.

2 I am confident that a newly arrived immigrant student would get English / ESL lessons to allow them keep up with regular classes.

3 We should realise that a pregnant student is still a student. She should be treated with the same respect and given the same opportunities to learn as others.

4 It can be argued that a new teacher might try many new activities until they find a formula that works.

5 I can confirm that excessive budget cuts would make it difficult for teachers to include as many activities as they would like.

C More practice in using vocabulary and **Language Bank 16** phrases while discussing what is taught in schools.

ARTICLES**Teary Asmal Hails New History of South Africa**

This article discusses South Africa's educational system. From 1948 to 1990, South Africa had a system of racial segregation called apartheid (Afrikaans word meaning 'separateness'). Although the country is today about 60 per cent black, the white minority had established itself through the colonial rule of first the Dutch and later the British. During apartheid, the South African education system spent about ten per cent on each black child compared to each white child. Moreover, it was nearly impossible for blacks to get a university education.

Similarly, textbooks were written to maintain white supremacy. For instance, it was often wrongly suggested that South Africa was largely uninhabited until the Dutch settlers arrived, but the San and Khoekhoe people lived here at the time of the first Dutch arrivals. Some archaeological evidence shows modern human presence there from 100,000 years ago. Another important issue was the language of classroom instruction. Black students had to be taught in Afrikaans, English and Bantu. Later, it was only English and Afrikaans. It should be noted to students that the use of textbooks and the education system to promote political ends is not isolated to South Africa or the past.

EQ: *Do you think your country's textbooks are written well? How can you tell?*

If people are taught incorrect information in school or textbooks, how would people learn about the truth?

Should it be a crime to provide false information in schools or textbooks? Why / Why not?

Can education solve social or racial problems? Has education contributed to these problems?

Call for 'Fairer' Schools System

This article discusses a number of issues in the UK school system. The first point to be addressed was more findings from the OECD's 2003 PISA study (see **Viewpoint**). UK students had a very poor showing compared to other OECD countries. As the article discusses, the British government wants to create more specialist schools, which are often centred around a particular skill. These schools are required to meet certain UK curriculum standards, but are given flexibility in how they achieve these goals and how much each subject is taught. Critics say that these schools force disadvantaged students into vocational areas when they could be better served by attending an ordinary school.

Similarly, many critics are worried by the increasing number of specialist religious schools and the information taught at them. Among these are the schools run by the Emmanuel Schools Foundation sponsored by multimillionaire car dealer and evangelical Christian, Sir Peter Vardy. These schools teach creationism over the dominant UK curriculum which mandates the teaching of evolution. (See **4 Listen**.)

EQ: *Is it useful or fair to compare different countries' education systems? What might be some reasons for differences in educational levels?*

2 READING

A is a skimming activity that will help students with the Reading section of the CAE exam.

2 READING A

Answers

1 transformation 2 reconciliation 3 inclusive
4 manipulated 5 neglected

B requires students to identify specific information, but also to provide the supporting arguments to these ideas.

2 READING B

Answers

1 He talks about hunters and lion to describe history, natural history / cultural connection with traditional way of life.
2 Generally negative – gives statistics plus doesn't have what Finland does, but minister is optimistic at end.
3 Up to the students to decide: (Suggested answers) South Africa: government policy, subject matter, student needs. UK: student needs, government policy, adolescent psychology.

C 1 This question relates to a type of question in the Trinity exam which requires students to speculate on issues that are not explicitly stated. You may want to help the students by directing them to think about concrete examples.

EQ: *Who would you not want to write textbooks on ethics, science, religion, or language?*

C 2 This question requires students to speculate on the students' own education system compared to the UK's. This is highly speculative so there is no definite answer. You could of course ask students to research the matter at PISA's website, but the question is more oriented toward looking critically at their own schools.

3 SPEAK YOUR MIND

This section covers the topics of favourite school subjects, practical / vocational versus academic education, budgetary concerns, and re-writing history.

A EQ: *Why are some classes interesting and others boring? Is it the teacher, the subject, the students, personal taste or something else? Can all subjects be interesting or boring? Why are some students better in some subjects than others? How much is determined by their abilities?*

B EQ: *Are vocational or other practical subjects seen positively in your country? Many countries have a shortage of skilled labour. Why do you think this is? Should governments try to meet the needs of industry when they plan a curriculum? Why / Why not?*

C EQ: *Are any subjects expendable? US schools often cut art or music rather than sports. Is this fair? Who should finance schools: the government, parents, industry or someone else? Of the different departments in your country's government, how important is education? Should schools be allowed to go bankrupt? Whose fault is underfunding for schools?*

D EQ: *Do you believe everything you read? How would your country's history be different if it were written by other countries? Some historians argue that history is simply storytelling. The story tends to change with the teller. Do you agree? Is history about facts or interpretation of facts? How are we able to tell whether something is an historical fact?*

4 LISTEN

DVD

This audio clip comes from an Arizona correspondent for the US National Public Radio (NPR). The debate over creationism and evolution has persisted in the United States since Charles Darwin published his 1859 book, *The Origin of Species*. Although widely accepted in much of the Western world and by many different religions, evolution has been passionately resisted especially in the US Bible Belt – the highly religious area in the Southern United States.

Creationism is the belief that humans and the world were created exactly as was written in the Book of Genesis in the Bible. Many southern states had laws which made it illegal to teach evolution. These laws proved unworkable after the 1925 Scopes 'Monkey' Trial overturned an

anti-evolution Tennessee law. By 1958, the National Science Foundation created the Biological Sciences Curriculum Study, which stressed the teaching of evolution in biology classes. Since the 1968 'Epperson versus Arkansas' Supreme Court case, the US Federal Government repealed all creationist laws. Today most US proponents of creationism defend their case on grounds of religious freedom.

4 LISTEN B

Answers

B 1 B 2 A 3 A 4 C

5 TEAMWORK

This activity is an attempt to discuss the practicality of basic education. While most people have an understanding about the need for education, the basic knowledge and skills learnt in school are often so fundamental and useful that they are often overlooked as important.

EQ: *Do you think most people are aware of how or how often they use their school education? Do you think people would be able to learn this basic knowledge and these basic skills without a school education? How do you use your school education? How has your school education changed you as a person? How important are teachers in society?*

6 CONTROVERSY

Although co-educational classes have existed since medieval times due to the practicality of educating in small communities, these examples were often limited to primary education. Single-sex education has been a staple of the primary, secondary and - post-secondary education systems in the UK and many other countries.

An important early factor was the Victorian-era assumption that the genders had considerably different educational requirements according to their societal gender roles. Beyond the primary education of reading writing and arithmetic, women's education was largely geared toward domestic tasks such as preparing food, sewing and taking care of babies. Men were accordingly taught much of everything else. However, as the women's rights

movement developed through the later 1800s and early 1900s, women showed they had both the interest and talent for the many different fields of study. School systems begrudgingly had to admit women to secondary and post-secondary schools.

Today, however, much debate centres around how the different sexes may or may not benefit from having members of the opposite sex present. Recent studies out of the United States seem to indicate that there is no statistically significant difference in test performance between pupils in co-ed or single-sex schools. That aside, this does little to change the reality that many students and parents simply prefer single-sex schools for their lack of distraction and freedom from gender stereotypes.

Sources:

Beyond the Great Divide: Co-education or Single-sex?, Judith Gill

Going Co-ed: Women's Experiences in Formerly Men's Colleges and Universities, 1950–2000, Leslie Miller-Bernal
Same, Different, Equal: Rethinking Single-Sex Schooling, Rosemary C. Salomone

EQ: *Which kind of school did you attend? What do you think it would have been like to attend the other type? Do you think the opposite sex is a distraction in your studies? Do you think there is gender-stereotyping of certain school subjects?*

7 PORTFOLIO WRITING

See the Introduction to the Teacher's Guide.

A Sources:

Transformative Learning: Educational Vision for the 21st Century, Thomas Berry

The End of Homework, Etta Kralovec

Does Education Matter?: Myths about Education and Economic Growth, Alison Wolf

B Sources:

www.travelcanada.ca

www.australia.com

www.southafrica.net

8 PHYSICAL EDUCATION in English [CLIL]

'Tell me, and I will forget. Show me, and I may remember. Involve me, and I will understand.'

With this advice, Chinese philosopher Confucius illuminates one of the fundamental debates in educational theory and epistemology (philosophy of knowledge).

Some argue that people learn best through abstract conceptualising. Others believe that we need concrete experiences to learn concepts fully. Outward Bound and the Danmark Tall Ship Maritime School follow this idea. By immersing the learners in the experience, the participants are shown how things work and must develop the necessary skills themselves by completing these tasks themselves. Both programmes have a long track record of success and safety.

EQ: *Would you like to take a course like this? Would you learn as much if you read about the experience in ordinary classes? How might these courses benefit you later in life?*

Although both programmes have exceptional safety records, there always remains a small possibility of injury or loss of life. Do you think teenagers are capable of handling the dangers? Should education contain any risk?

Sources:

Principles and Practice of Informal Education: Learning through Life, Linda Deer Richardson
The Outward Bound Earthbook, L. Crenshaw
www.outwardbound-uk.org
<http://soefart.inforce.dk/sw232.asp>
www.fuldskruefrem.dk/eng.htm

9 FURTHER DISCUSSION

This section covers the influence of literature, balance of subjects at school, value of tests and exams, and life-long learning.

1 Try to get students to discuss concrete examples of books they have read.

EQ: *What can literature tell you about your culture or your country? How does your country's literature differ from other countries? Have you read literature in other languages?*

2 Try to get students to think about how ideas can come from other areas.

EQ: *What ideas could a scientist get from studying English, Anthropology, Music, History or Law? How*

might studying Astronomy, History, Religion, Psychology or Political Science affect someone studying English at university? Do you agree that people need a well-rounded education? Are there any problems associated with too much specialisation?

3 Try to get students to think about the types of tests (government or final exams) they have done at school.

EQ: *Is standardised testing fair? Do tests like the IQ test serve any real purpose? IQ tests and other standardised tests are often criticised for having a cultural or racial bias. What do you think? Is it possible to create a standard test for everyone?*

4 Try to get students to think about whether they see finishing school or university as the end of their education.

EQ: *What would people in older age groups (for example, in their thirties or fifties) want to study? Of the older people you know, are they still trying to learn new things?*

10 **Your answer:** ARE STUDENTS LEARNING THE RIGHT THINGS?

This question tries to get students to think about the essential value of their education. While - students are acutely aware that the law requires them to go to school, not all of them appear to appreciate the need for it. Students should be encouraged to critically analyse what they get from their studies. With either positive or negative opinions, students should be asked to justify their opinions with relevant arguments and examples.

WORKBOOK

1 WORD POWER

This activity will get students practising the signposting phrases for sequencing from **Language Bank 16**. These are suggested answers as the list can differ with different opinions.

1 WORD POWER**Sample answers**

I'd put 'gather information about different universities' **first**. The next most important would be 'take a tour or look at web pages of prospective universities'. **Then** I would 'send an application to the university'. **Equally important is** 'apply for a loan and scholarships'. **This would be followed by** 'apply for accommodation if the university is away from where you live'. **Also**, I would 'see an advisor to discuss which classes you should take'. **And finally**, I would 'register for classes'.

2 USE OF LANGUAGE: Gerund and infinitive

This activity introduces the issue of university tuition fees. The activity is based on an authentic test activity used by the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate in the CAE and CPE.

2 USE OF LANGUAGE**Answers**

1 to lead	2 continuing	3 to pay
4 raising	5 being excluded	6 to learn
7 to end up	8 ensuring	9 to decide
10 to live		

3 WRITING**A Sources:**

Fair Wind and Plenty of It: A Modern-Day Tall Ship Adventure, Rigel Crockett

Jolie Brise: A Tall Ship's Tale, Robin Bryer

Tall Ship (video), James Lipscomb, director

B Sources:

Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American

History Textbook Got Wrong, James W. Loewen

Archeology of Knowledge, Michel Foucault

www.csulb.edu/~ttl

4 IDIOMS

See the Introduction to the Teacher's Guide.

4 IDIOMS**Answers**

1 f 2 a 3 d 4 e 5 b 6 d

1 to speak your mind = to say what you think openly

2 to broaden your mind = to increase your experience through travel, education, contact with other people, etc.

3 to pick up (a language, a skill) = to acquire / learn (a language, etc.)

4 to set the bar high = to have high standards

5 to have a memory like a sieve = to have a very bad memory, forget everything

6 to pass with flying colours = to succeed with very good mark

Ask students to use the idioms when answering these questions orally. This can be done as pair work or as a class.

- *Should students be allowed to voice all opinions in class?*

- I think it's important for students to *speak their minds*. It motivates them to participate.

- I think people can help *broaden their minds* by listening to other opinions.

- You can *pick up* new information if everyone can honestly give their opinions.

- *Should learning be about memorising things?*

- Some students like me *have a memory like a sieve*, so it's not fair.

- Say you take a test based on memorising information, what does it prove? If you *pass it with flying colours*, you only prove you have a good memory, not that you understand.

- If you want to *set the bar high*, you should know everything. Memorising helps.

- *If you could do your studies again, what would you do differently?*

- I would study more to *pass everything with flying colours*.

- I might have taken many different classes, to *broaden my mind* more.

- I would have *set my bar* a little higher to get better grades.