

## AN AIMS AND OBJECTIVES APPROACH TO CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT A SCOTTISH PERSPECTIVE

Over the past twenty years history teachers in Scotland have had to come to terms with an aims and objectives approach to the management of young people's learning. Within this context they have had to defend the place of their subject in the Curriculum of both Primary and Secondary schools. This paper deals with some of the problems encountered and the solutions adopted. To understand what has been attempted it is important to be aware of the education system within which developments have been taking place.

### I The Context for Curriculum Development in Scotland

#### 1. National Agencies

Scotland has a school education system which is separate and different from that of England. At national level education is the immediate responsibility of an Under-Secretary of State at the Scottish Office who is in turn responsible to the Secretary of State for Scotland who is a Cabinet Minister. The detailed administration of education at national level is managed by the Scottish Education Department (SED) based at St Andrews House in Edinburgh. The SED supervises work in schools through Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools (HMIs) who carry out school inspections, make reports on their findings and have a seminal role in planning curricular strategy at national level.

In making their decisions the Secretary of State and the SED are advised by the Consultative Committee on the Curriculum (CCC) and by the Scottish Examination Board (SEB) which has the responsibility for national examinations. Both bodies have set up various committees. For example, the Scottish Central Committee on Social Subjects (SCCSS) operated under the auspices of the CCC from the late 1960s to the early 1980s. For each subject, the SEB appoints a panel comprising subject teachers, both a University and a College of Education representative and the senior HMI for the subject.

#### 2. Local Agencies

Although national agencies appear to exercise extensive influence, in fact considerable decision-making takes place at regional and school level. Scotland is divided into twelve regions, each with its own Department of Education which appoints a Director of Education with responsibility to it. Teachers are appointed by the region's Education Committee. In most regions it also appoints advisers either for single subjects or for curricular areas such as social subjects with a remit to advise teachers on curricular planning and assessment and to promote in-service training.

The Colleges of Education, which are financed directly by the Secretary of State and have traditionally provided pre-service training for both primary and secondary teachers, also contribute to in-service work and curriculum development at national and regional level.

## II The School System

### 1. Stages of Education

Scottish children attend Primary school from the age of five to eleven, moving automatically each year through to the next stage from Primary 1 (or P1) for 5 year olds to Primary 7 (P7) for 11 year olds. They then, regardless of their level of attainment, transfer to a Secondary school. Again they move automatically from S1 to S4 when, at the age of sixteen, compulsory schooling comes to an end although an increasing number of pupils are staying on to S5 to take the Scottish Certificate of Education at Higher level which gives access to a range of occupations and to University courses.

### 2. Extent of Schools and Teachers' Autonomy

In the Primary school and the first and second years of Secondary education, known as S1 and S2, schools have the right to decide their own curriculum although this is formulated with national and/or regional guidelines in mind. In practice, however, much of the work in Secondary schools is heavily influenced by the requirements of the national examination system. This applies even in S1 and S2, although specific preparation for examinations does not start until S3.

### 3. Place of History in Secondary Schools

Almost all Secondary schools have history as part of their curriculum in S1 and S2, although in some cases it is incorporated in an integrated or a multidisciplinary course. In planning work in S1 and S2 history teachers have to bear in mind that a proportion of their pupils - the number varies according to pupil choice - will encounter history in the Secondary school only in S1 and S2, and their experience of it in the various Primary schools from which they have come may have differed in extent and quality. Thus they must strive to promote historical consciousness among pupils of twelve and thirteen who bring a wide diversity of experience to their study and who within the same class may range from those who will ultimately take history to sixth year level and beyond to those who have difficulty with basic reading and writing. From the early 1990s Scottish pupils who continue with history beyond S3 will take the new Standard Grade examination designed to cater for pupils across the ability range in S4, in place of the Scottish 'O' grade examination. In dealing with curricular development within an aims and objectives format, reference will subsequently be made to the projected Standard grade examination and to work in history prior to S1, but most attention will be devoted to developments in S1 and S2 over the past twenty years.

## III Meeting the Challenge Presented by an Aims and Objectives Approach

### 1. The Challenge

During the 1970s many teachers of history became deeply concerned about the subject's acceptance as a constituent part of the

curriculum for 12 to 13 year old pupils in S1 and S2. Traditionally history and geography featured in the education of every pupil in these years and either history or geography was studied by 14 to 16 year olds in S3 and S4.

The danger appeared to emanate from two directions. On the one hand there was the claim of additional social subjects such as economics and modern studies (originally a multidisciplinary subject) to a share in the S1 to S4 social subjects timetable. In some cases this led to suggestions for an interdisciplinary or a multidisciplinary social subjects course. On the other hand, there was increasing emphasis at national level on an aims and objectives approach to planning the curriculum. At least initially history teachers had difficulty in applying this approach as compared with colleagues in other social subjects. In this paper attention will be focused mainly on the problems this created and attempts made to deal with them.

2. The Approach of the SCCSS to Aims and Objectives for Social Subjects

The Scottish Central Committee on Social Subjects (SCCSS) was set up to advise the CCC on the curriculum in social subjects for S1 to S6 in 1969. At an early stage, it decided to follow the prevailing trend towards an aims and objectives type of curricular planning. In working out its strategy it drew on the ideas of Bruner, Gagné, Piaget and Bloom(1). In particular, it was influenced by Bruner's idea that the vast majority of young people of 8 or 9 years of age and upwards could be introduced to the ideas and modes of procedure of a discipline provided that they encountered it in a context suited to their age and stage of development. To provide a context in which Bruner's ideas could be applied, the Committee sought to identify appropriate aims and objectives for all the social subjects likely to be taught in Scottish Secondary schools. The members of the Committee appointed to advise on history's contribution to the curriculum in S1 to S6 had little difficulty in working out aims likely to be acceptable to teachers of history. The statement which was compiled and published in Curriculum Paper 15 (CP15) [see Appendix 1], has been drawn upon and adopted in a succession of statements at national and regional level.

The identification of the lists of knowledge, of skills and of affective objectives (the latter given under the heading of 'attitudes') also proved relatively easy to decide [see Appendix 2]. As with aims, these statements of objectives have subsequently been revised and expanded in regional statements and in ones emanating from the Scottish Examination Board (SEB); but those in CP15 provided a basis for subsequent development.

However the historians encountered serious difficulties when they attempted to identify the role of concepts in history. In CP15 the issue was virtually side-stepped by suggesting some time concepts and adding that, in the study of history, pupils should encounter a range of concepts, sociological, economic and political, some examples of which were given. Such uncertainty created difficulties for historians in dealing with the ideas of Gagné. They readily accepted his contention that conceptual

objectives should be broken down into their constituent parts to the level of complexity with which children could deal, and that the less able the child, the greater should be the breakdown of material. Problems arose when they considered how to exemplify this in practice. Similarly with Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. It offered a means of assessing the level of difficulty of tasks which pupils were asked to undertake, but did not necessarily help historians in deciding which objectives and related tasks were relevant to understanding past events and developments.

It proved easier to see the implications of Piaget's idea that abstract concepts should be encountered in a concrete context. History seemed especially suited to this, as it deals with people, their problems, attitudes, actions and values studied in the context of the time and place in which they lived(2).

3. The Practical Application of Aims and Objectives Appropriate to History in S1 and S2

Problems

The problems facing the historians became acute when the SCCSS decided to set up Working Parties in Geography and History respectively. Their remit was to advise on work suited to pupils of twelve and thirteen years of age to be undertaken in each subject in the context of an aims and objectives approach to curricular planning and assessment. An additional Working Party was asked to conduct a feasibility study on teaching economics to pupils in S1 and S2.

The members of the Geography and Economics Working Parties had comparatively little trouble in identifying appropriate concepts and skills, in selecting content to facilitate their development and in writing objectives and planning assessment based on them. They were able to draw on work already undertaken, particularly in the USA. The historians were in a much less advantageous position. The problem did not lie in identifying general aims, skills or attitudes: it proved comparatively easy to draw on early drafts of the statements in CP15 already mentioned. The difficulty lay in applying the work of Bloom and Gagne in selecting content, in writing objectives, in planning pupils' learning and in assessing it. The Working Party's difficulties were increased by the apparent lack of consensus among history teachers in Scotland on content to be studied in S1 and S2, by teachers' suspicion of an aims and objectives type of curricular planning and by the apparent paucity of work on an aims and objectives approach to history on which to draw in 1970.

The Compilation of Learning Materials to Illustrate an Aims and Objectives Approach

The six members of the History Working Party eventually decided to work out the possible application of an aims and objectives approach by planning work for a syllabus unit designed for thirteen year olds in S2. Within the topic 'Britain, with particular reference to Scotland, around 1800' they would prepare exemplars illustrating the application of the ideas of Bruner,

Gagne, Bloom and Piaget. The reasons for choosing the syllabus unit included:

It represented a key stage in the development of Britain, and of Scotland within it;

it demonstrated the impact of technological change on people's life and work and on the community in which they lived;

it introduced pupils to a range of social, economic and political ideas;

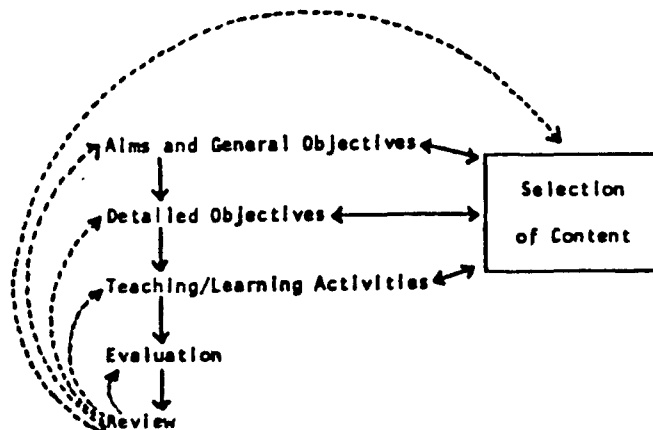
it provided a wealth of source material and secondary works which would facilitate pupils' exercise of skills required in a disciplined study of history.

The exemplars would focus on the life and work of people in the countryside, in a cotton town and in a mining community respectively.

For each of these topics the Working Party would prepare sets of materials setting out more specific aims and objectives and containing workguides designed to help pupils to attain the objectives. Different sets of materials would be produced for each topic to cater for pupils of average ability (approximately 60 to 70% of the age group), those of limited ability (about 15 to 20%) and very able pupils (about 15 to 20%). As a result of this work members of the Working Party gradually came to appreciate the advantages of an aims and objectives approach provided it was tailored to suit the structure of the subject and was not applied with a rigid adherence to the learning theories underpinning it.

#### The Model of Curriculum Development Adopted

The model of curriculum development used by the working party in its construction of teaching materials is illustrated in the following diagram:



## Outcomes from the Production of Materials

### 1. Writing Objectives

In constructing the materials compilers gradually worked out how to write objectives appropriate to history. Initially they wrote general objectives and then broke them down into more specific ones. An example of a general objective for one section of the average/mixed ability materials on the countryside reads:

To assume the role of a farmer or his wife in 18th century Scotland and explain and assess the run-rig system of land-holding.

One of the more specific objectives relating to this general one was:

To explain and criticise the methods of ploughing with oxen and horses, and of harrowing.

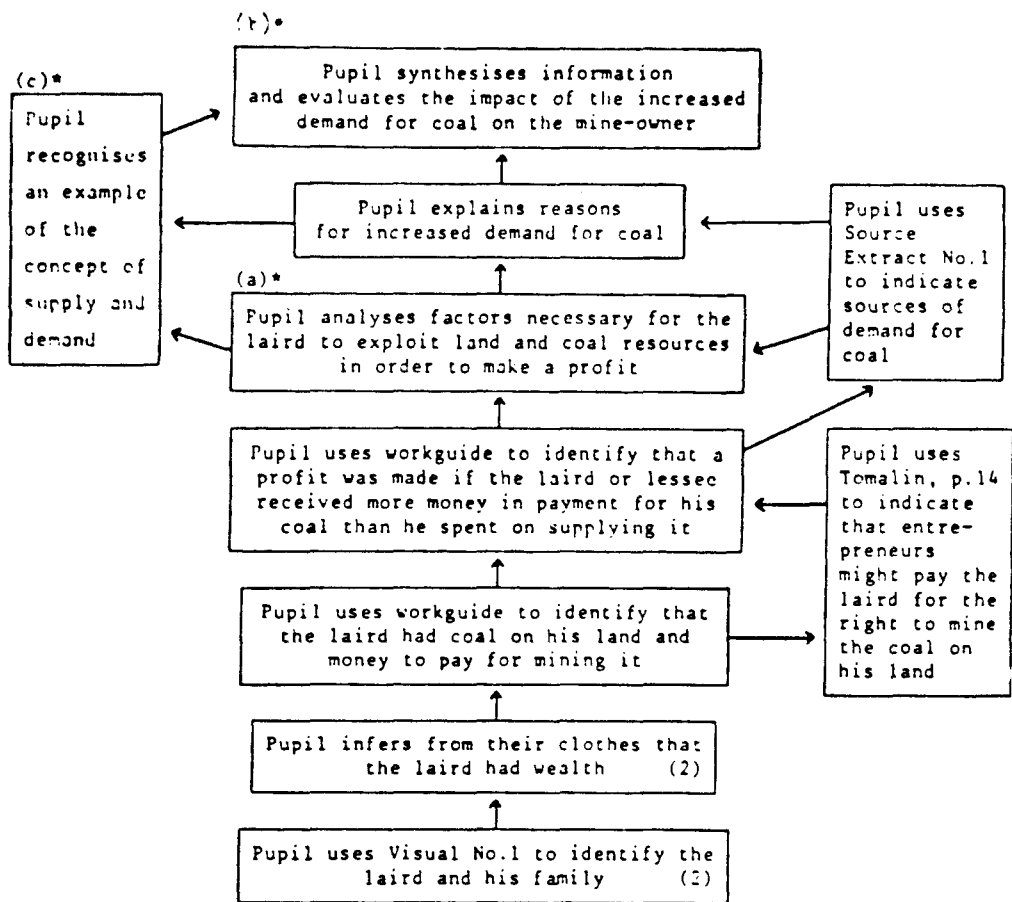
If pupils completed all the workguides and attained the more specific objectives in the section they should be able to attempt the high level objective.

That objective illustrates how compilers worked out the integration of knowledge and skills objectives with conceptual ones. Pupils are asked to draw on conceptual knowledge, built up over a series of workguides, to role-play as a farmer or his wife and as if in that role to apply the skills of explanation and evaluation. By this means they may demonstrate the level of their conceptual understanding of the run-rig system of land-holding. The more able pupils may be able to bring out some of the attitudes of a farmer or his wife in the course of their response.

### 2. Illustrating Gagné's Application to History

From this type of work the Working Party was able in its final report to demonstrate how a Gagnean breakdown of a learning path could be applied to history. It was exemplified by setting out a series of objectives building to a higher level objective drawn from the materials on a mining community designed for able pupils(3). The compiler selected the final objective as an appropriate historical one.

Learning Sequence:



\*At three points (a), (b), (c) in this learning sequence pupils are expected to move swiftly to a higher cognitive level (such conceptual leaps are characteristic of historical thinking). It is recognised that even some of the abler pupils may not attain the level implied in (c).

Use is made of the learning achieved through these tasks in subsequent workguides, in particular in Workguide No.3 on 'The Life of the Collier' and Workguide No.8 on 'Life in a Mining Village', to help the pupil to explain social animosity in a mining community.

The success of this compiler in adapting Gagné to the structure of history rather than trying to force the discipline to fit the ideas of Gagné was illustrated when other non-historian members of the SCCSS had an opportunity to comment on this exemplar. An economist contended that it was not a true interpretation of Gagné's ideas. The compiler had not identified a concept, in this instance the law of supply and demand, and broken it down: rather he had

identified the attitude of the mine-owner and his reactions to a situation in which he was influenced by the law of supply and demand. Explanation of the operation of supply and demand would have been the economist's ultimate objective in the learning sequence: it was not that of the historian.

This example proved very useful in alerting history teachers to the need to apply an aims and objectives approach in a way which was consistent with the structure of their discipline. It illustrated the importance of identifying objectives appropriate to history even if this meant adapting theory to suit the structure of history rather than forcing history to fit a learning theory. Thus the compiler had adapted Gagné's ideas to suit the structure of the subject. This appeared consistent with Bruner's approach to curriculum development.

### 3. Adapting Aims and Objectives to Suit Pupils of Differing Levels of Ability

The workguides also enabled the Working Party to analyse means of adapting aims and objectives to cater for the needs of pupils of different ability levels. For example, the compiler of the cotton materials originally tried to include in both the 'average/mixed ability' and the 'less able' sets of materials a section on the domestic system. When the materials were tried out it became obvious that those for the less able would require a further breakdown of the information provided. It proved necessary to break it down to the point where the compiler explained what cotton was and how cloth was made. He had also to reduce the number of variables with which pupils were required to deal. As a result he had to delete the section on the domestic system for the less able and, after introducing them to the nature of cotton and of cloth, take them straight into the factory system if they were to deal with life in a cotton town within the same time-span as more able children, a requirement considered necessary since Scottish children by the 1970s were being taught in mixed ability classes. As a result of this change, the compiler was deleting a section of the materials necessary to illustrate the impact of technological change on people's lives. In this way, an important aim of the Working Party in selecting the topic was being removed. If teachers using the materials wanted to demonstrate this idea to their less able pupils they would have to look for another opportunity to do it. They might show how technological changes affected factory towns as services such as street lighting and paving were introduced, or how travel by coach or canal was overtaken by travel by railways.

The need to explain to those pupils what cotton was and how cloth was made showed how we as teachers must be careful to build an appropriate context for learning. This would necessitate identifying underlying assumptions which we may not be justified in making about our pupils' level of knowledge. The compilers' experience also drew attention to



the possibility that the removal of a section of work could, in practice, mean abandoning an important aim in selecting an area of content.

4. Focus on Learning Outcomes

What the aims and objectives approach was doing was focusing compilers' attention on the outcomes they sought from pupils' learning. Pupils' responses to the tasks set in the workguides indicated whether they were attaining these outcomes. Where they were not, the compiler had to analyse the projected learning process to try to identify where pupils' difficulties lay. Thus the approach was, in fact, promoting the constructively critical approach to one's teaching which seeks to locate and deal with pupils' learning difficulties.

5. Assessing Pupils' Learning

Before conclusions were drawn from them the materials of the Working Party were subjected to a range of assessment procedures supervised by an experienced Assessor who was not a historian. A pilot trial was assessed by compilers themselves and the materials adapted where necessary. Following the main trial Working Party members who had not compiled the set of materials checked the work done by a sample of pupils using them. Questionnaires for pupils and teachers respectively elicited their opinions on workguides which they had used and follow up meetings with the teachers provided highly pertinent comments. This formative type of assessment proved very useful. In addition pupils were pre-tested and post-tested. The summative tests comprised objective test items, short answer responses and questions requiring extended writing in giving an account/explanation/judgement/justification of an explanation or judgement.

6. Potential Problems of an Aims and Objectives Approach

Producing the materials convinced compilers of the potential value of an aims and objectives approach in planning and assessing children's learning in history; it also alerted them to possible problems.

Problem of Conceptual Learning

Reference has already been made to the problems which this created. The Working Party came to the conclusion that vast concepts such as change and continuity over time and the nature of historical evidence provided the aims of history teachers. They underlay all the work compilers did. Content was selected to reflect these aims. When an area of content was chosen, it was likely that there would be concepts which children would have to understand to make sense of the content. However, as illustrated from the material on the mine-owner, the concepts would be encountered in a specific historical situation. Pupils would deal with them by simulating the situation in which the mine-owner was placed. An aims and objectives approach

can help teachers to explicitly identify the concepts which are implicit in an area of content they have selected for study and plan work in such a way that pupils will understand the concept in the particular context in which they are encountering it(4). If it is accepted that most young people of twelve or thirteen have difficulty in dealing with abstract concepts unless they encounter them in a concrete context, then the structure of history makes it particularly suited to promoting pupils' conceptual learning. As pupils revisit the same concept in new contexts they should be able to build up to a relatively complex level of conceptual understanding. As teachers select content covering social, economic and political aspects of life, they should, therefore, promote their pupils' conceptual learning.

#### Difficulty with Affective Objectives

The compilers considered the affective aspect of pupils' learning of great importance. The attitudes and values which the study of history may promote were seen as among the most significant outcomes to be sought in planning pupils' learning. The problem lay in writing objectives which could be reliably assessed. Yet the Working Party considered it important to seek to promote a) pupils' empathy for people of the past, their difficulties and attempts to deal with them, b) their realisation that people are influenced by the time and place in which they live, c) their appreciation of the importance of basing conclusions on evidence and d) their awareness that there may be no 'right' answer. Compilers were asked to bear in mind the need to try to engender these attitudes; but they were seen as aims underlying the compilation of the materials rather than objectives which could be adequately assessed. This approach resulted in questions such as:

Who do you think was most important to the mill - the workers or the owner?

This question followed consideration of the role of both the owner and workers and was intended to generate class debate which would bring out that there might be no 'right' answer to the question. But the extent to which that fact became explicit to the pupils would depend both on the extent to which the teacher effectively focused their attention on it and on the pupils' readiness to absorb such an idea. In fact, the illustration suggests that the compiler was attempting to include an affective element in a task relating to a cognitive objective.

#### The Danger of Overstructuring

Although compilers built in open-ended questions of the type illustrated above for class discussion the workguides did to a great extent direct pupils along a specific learning path. It could be argued that they programmed children's learning in too prescriptive a fashion and did not give the learners sufficient opportunity to work out for themselves what happened and why.

These are actually criticisms of the use of structured work-guides as the means of learning. They do not necessarily apply to an aims and objectives approach to teaching which can readily be pursued without using workguides of that type. The Working Party had compiled the workguides to provide exemplars of an aims and objectives approach. In the process they had taught themselves a great deal about that approach. But by the time their work was completed they were satisfied that they could apply it whatever the teaching technique used. In their final report they advocated the use of a range of teaching methods and pupil activities in promoting pupils' attainment of learning outcomes. While accepting that there was a place for work-guides, they all favoured a considerable element of oral teaching which would permit the teacher to generate an exciting interchange of ideas as the work proceeded. This is important in a subject such as history which thrives on academic debate.

The learning path to attaining objectives may be differently planned if oral teaching is used. With good interaction between teacher and pupils in an oral lesson the teacher can afford to initiate discussion with a general question relating to the anticipated learning outcome. The information needed to deal with the question may be broken down/built up in subsequent questioning to the extent that pupil responses indicate is necessary. For example in an oral lesson the teacher might begin with the question:

What would a factory owner (of the eighteenth century) need to open a factory?

This could lead into a wide-ranging discussion of the role of the owner and what he would require to do to fulfil it successfully. In a structured workguide it would be necessary to build in sections of information and reinforce pupils' understanding of each section by asking them to apply that information. Thus step by step the necessary information would be built up.

Whatever teaching methodology and learning strategies the teacher elects to employ, it was the considered opinion of the Working Party that teacher awareness of the ultimate objective of the work and of the pre-requisite knowledge/application of the knowledge needed to attain that objective, is likely to facilitate pupils' learning. In deciding on the objectives to be set, it is essential to have the overall aims of teaching a topic in mind since these should help the teacher to choose content and decide on learning outcomes appropriate to the ultimate purposes of the history course.

#### Dissemination of the Working Party's Ideas

The Working Party set out their findings in SED/SCSS, Bulletin No.4: An Aims and Objectives Approach to the Teaching of History, 1978. Further dissemination of their

ideas was sought through National Courses drawing on teachers from all parts of Scotland mounted by Aberdeen College of Education and through in-service meetings and development groups organised by various regional authorities. Initially many teachers were sceptical of the Working Party's work. However by the early 1980s a considerable number of Scottish teachers had become experienced in applying aims and objectives in planning the history curriculum for S1 and S2 and in organising work in S3 and beyond.

#### IV Solving the Problem of Content Selection

An important problem had still to be addressed after the Working Party had completed its work in 1978: no criteria for selecting content which would command widespread support among history teachers had been worked out. The matter was serious. Within the SCCSS in the 1970s the historians had found themselves under duress. Non-historians indicated that many of the skills which historians claimed as appropriate to their discipline, including those relating to the use of evidence, were also employed in other social subjects. If the historians had few skills or concepts distinctive to history which should inform syllabus planning and apparently no content which must be taught, did they have a valid claim to constitute an essential, distinct part of the social subjects part of the curriculum? This question was graphically cast at the Convener of the Working Party at one meeting.

The first indication of a possible way forward came through a survey of the content of the history curriculum in S1 and S2 carried out in 10% of Scottish schools. This revealed that a very high proportion of them included work on similar periods of history. The choice of periods and of topics within them implied that selection was closely related to the availability of a range of books and other teaching materials. At the National Course in History held in Aberdeen College of Education in 1981, at which every region on the Scottish mainland was represented, the findings of the survey provided a basis for discussion. The outcome was agreement that the following key stages of human development should be included in the history curriculum for S1 and S2 in Scottish schools:

Stone and/or Bronze and/or Iron Age Society  
an ancient civilisation  
the medieval period  
the early modern period  
the late 18th and/or early 19th century  
the 20th century.

Some members queried the inclusion of a compulsory 20th century unit, but a considerable number favoured at least one being studied. The late 18th/early 19th century was selected as a means of studying the effects of industrialisation. A number of participants also wanted inclusion of a unit on 'What is History?'

This approach to content selection had a number of advantages. It permitted teachers a wide choice within each key stage. If a 'stage' they considered important was not included they could add it to the ones proposed. It also permitted history teachers to contend that

they were making an essential contribution to children's learning experience: every child should have the 'map of reference' on the past which history would provide.

Within these key stages teachers could use a range of types of syllabus unit and could organise studies of varying depth including ones which would allow pupils time to apply a variety of skills in using a range of evidence. They could introduce pupils to people in past societies, explore and explain their problems, actions and attitudes and in this way encounter social, economic and political ideas in a concrete context suited to twelve and thirteen year olds. Pupils could also become aware of the importance of technology and of change and continuity in human affairs(5).

Subsequently various regional guidelines, together with those issued by the Scottish Association of Teachers of History (SATH) incorporated the idea of key stages of human experience as a basis for content selection and set out aims and objectives which would shape the teaching of that content.

The emergence of an apparent consensus showed that historians, trained to be contentious, were learning the value of presenting a united front in advocating the importance of their subject's contribution to young people's education. This came none too soon. During the 1980s two CCC Reports on the Curriculum in social subjects were drawn up(6). Each recommended work in geography, history and modern studies under the headings of 'People and Place', 'People in Time' and 'People in Society' respectively, together with suggestions for one integrated study drawing on all three areas towards the end of both S1 and S2.

Each Paper envisaged an aims and objectives approach to curricular planning drawing on CP15 and acknowledged the distinctive contribution history can make to pupils' education in S1 and S2. Both advocated outward-looking subject teaching and recommended an integrated study towards the end of both S1 and S2. Included in the purposes of historical study was:

Knowledge and understanding of the social, political and economic organisation of past societies, selected to illustrate the main stages of human development in local, national and global contexts.

## V The Problem of Progression from Primary to Secondary Education

### Progression in the Primary School

The work done in the 1970s has also been useful in working out a response to the growing concern about progression in children's learning throughout their Primary and Secondary education. In 1980, the SED published a report drawing attention to the lack of progression which HMI's had detected in many Primary schools which they visited(7). History and geography, encountered by children in the context of environmental studies, were singled out as in need of improvement in this respect.

In response to requests from advisers and teachers in Grampian Region the Convener of the former SCCSS History Working Party for S1 and S2 cooperated with people experienced in Primary teaching in drawing up a grid for progression. Given that the Primary teachers were accustomed

to working to an aims and objectives approach it was fortunate for the Convener that she also had experience of applying it in her own discipline. The grid which emerged from this cooperation formed part of the papers for the National Course in Environmental Studies held in Aberdeen College of Education in 1984(8).

This grid, reflecting Bruner's idea of a spiral curriculum, demonstrated how ideas important in the study of history could be encountered at increasing levels of difficulty as children progressed from P4 to P7. It was based on the idea that the context in which children were introduced to these ideas should become progressively more complex. For example, in P4 children would focus on one family living in a community where people had to provide everything for themselves whereas by P7 they could study families living at three different levels of income in a twentieth century industrial community. In P4 change would be dealt with by looking at examples of improvements in artefacts whereas in P7 children could work out the change which unemployment could bring to a family or could study the impact of extensive changes in industry or transport on people's way of life and work provided these were encountered in a context suited to their age and stage of development. Similarly children could be introduced to increasingly complex forms of evidence as they progressed from P4 to P7. In P4, for example, they might handle and discuss artefacts whereas in P7 they could be using extracts from memoirs and newspapers and contemporary photographs in dealing with the Jarrow Hunger March of 1936.

The grid provides a basis for progression in conceptual learning and in the exercise of skills in history based environmental studies from P4 to P7. Materials which could facilitate its use are now available through the National Primary Education Development Project (PEDP) in Scotland, which was initiated following the National Course of 1984.

#### Progression, 10 to 14

The increasing attention being given in Scotland to the problem of promoting progression from 10 to 14 - that is, from P6 and P7 to S1 and S2 - has given added significance to this kind of work. The Report by a CCC committee on the curriculum for ten to fourteen year olds stressed the need for continuity in methodology as well as in children's learning. The paper explaining the work done on the basis of the grid, published by Aberdeen College of Education, in fact deals with this issue(9).

Less work has been done on progression in S1 and S2, although sets of materials designed for use at the different stages have been produced by, for example, Jordanhill College of Education in Glasgow where some work on concept development has also been done. Some attempt to deal with the problem was made in Grampian Region's Guidelines for Syllabus Construction and Assessment in History in S1 and S2, published in 1982(10). In the section on assessment, for example, the following advice is given:

### III The Basis of Assessment

#### 1. Objectives

Assessment should be based on objectives which relate to specific areas of content within the course. Such objectives will indicate:

- (a) the pupils' knowledge/understanding of specific content and the vocabulary/ideas contained in it
- (b) their ability to apply a wide range of skills in using this content.

## 2. Progression

In constructing objectives teachers should take into account the need to assess pupils' progress in conceptual learning and in the use of skills in dealing with historical content. As they advance through S1 and S2, pupils should be able to:

- (a) show an understanding of increasingly complex ideas and more difficult vocabulary
- (b) exercise skills at an increasingly demanding level.

Assessment items should reflect the following levels of achievement towards the end of S2 as compared with the beginning of S1.

Pupils should be able to:

1.
  - (a) correctly use a wider range of vocabulary in dealing with past social, economic and political events or developments
  - (b) correctly place a greater number of historical events/periods in correct sequence
  - (c) pick out more, and more complex, similarities and differences in people's way of providing for their needs in at least two different societies
  - (d) describe at a more complex level the ideas, beliefs and values of people living in particular societies at particular points in time;
2. locate, select and organise information:
  - (a) under more generalised headings/questions
  - (b) using books/other sources of information of an increasingly demanding reading level
  - (c) with an increasing number of items of information to be placed in a logical sequence;
3. makes inferences from information which suggest:
  - (a) more reasons for an historical event taking place
  - (b) more results of people's actions
  - (c) the ability to make such inferences from more, and more complex sources of information;
4. undertake pieces of extended writing of the following kinds:
  - (a) an account of a series of events dealing with at least five incidents or stages
  - (b) an explanation for an event containing at least two points which are adequately developed
  - (c) the construction of a piece of writing which a person involved in a given historical situation or event might have produced.

In each case, the pupils should be able to achieve this type of writing with fewer cues, the use of more complex language and the inclusion of more complex information than in S1.

5. In dealing with primary source materials
  - (a) explain the difference between primary sources and secondary works
  - (b) suggest the purposes of the writer of a source
  - (c) pick out words intended to influence the reader
  - (d) detect bias
  - (e) identify gaps and inconsistencies in evidence
  - (f) distinguish between fact and opinion.

#### IV Adapting Assessment to a Mixed Ability Situation

1. In the mixed ability situation of S1/S2 some differentiation of content should be considered. Such differentiation is a question of breadth and depth of coverage and of the level of abstraction required. It is therefore essential that a core of content be established - such a core to be the minimum of content with which every pupil must deal. To assess the pupils' mastery of the core it is necessary to construct appropriate assessment items. Such items require agreed criteria and therefore criteria related items are needed to assess the core.

Extension work should incorporate content which relates to the core but is at a more demanding level than in core work. Assessment of extension work should be based on the extent to which it has been successfully undertaken.

Less able pupils require more break down and slower build-up of information in a context which they can understand. When the basic core of information has been mastered, they should be asked to deal with more complex ideas in spite of the difficulties. Content requiring this level of conceptual learning should also find a place as far as assessment for the less able is concerned in order to promote their learning.

2. There will also have to be some differentiation in the assessment of skills. This should not be a question of allocating certain skills to certain ability ranges. Obviously the level of difficulty at which skills are operated will vary according to the ability level of the pupils; but the level at which any skill is operated will be influenced by the level of difficulty of sources of information (eg of a source/extract), the vocabulary used and the concepts and degree of abstraction encountered.
3. It is important that the modes of response expected in any mixed ability assessment in S1/S2 should be related to the abilities of the candidates and to the aims of the course. All of the means of assessment in V below should be applied across the whole ability range.

However, much more work is needed in working out criteria for progression in S1 and S2 and in exemplifying their application at a practical level.



Implications of the new Standard Grade Examination for Progression in S1 and S2

Efforts to promote progression in S1 and S2 are receiving a strong impetus from the impending introduction of the new examination for sixteen year olds in Scotland. This is based on explicitly stated criteria for content selection and for assessment of conceptual learning and skills. For thirty years the Scottish National Examination for sixteen year olds, normally taken at the end of S4, has been the Ordinary ('O') grade one conducted by the SEB. This was originally designed for approximately the top 20% to 30% of the year group, but over the years a much greater proportion of pupils has been attempting it. In some regions pupils considered unlikely to attain 'O' grade passes have been presented for the English CSE examination. The new Standard Grade examination is gradually being introduced for all subjects in the curriculum and the history examination will be offered from 1990. Standard grade can be taken in all subjects at three levels, namely Credit (designed for the most able 15 to 20% of the year group), General (for approximately 60 to 70%) and Foundation (for the less able 15 to 20%). This 'division' coincides with that identified by the History Working Party in the 1970s.

The criteria for assessment have been worked out on three levels of difficulty corresponding to the three levels at which the examination may be taken. [See Appendix 3 for a sample of the Criteria](11)

The examination lays heavy emphasis on pupils' ability to interpret sources, draw conclusions from them and justify those conclusions. It also includes an historical investigation to be undertaken by each candidate. In planning work for the entire course teachers are expected to take into account heritage, change and continuity, and cause and effect as three of the characteristics essential to historical study, together with evidence, debate and imaginative understanding as important characteristics of historical methodology. This new examination will put even more pressure on teachers of S1 and S2 history to adopt the type of approach to curricular management presaged by the work of the S1 and S2 Working Party in the 1970s. Teachers of S1 and S2 history will be encouraged to evolve clear goals to which they attempt to guide their pupils through the learning strategies which pupils will need to deal with Standard grade work. Already teachers are reviewing their curriculum for S1 and S2; although many have for long been emphasising problem solving, debate, the use of evidence and imaginative understanding in promoting pupils' learning.

VI Using Aims and Objectives in Demonstrating History's Importance in the Curriculum

The emergence of clearer goals to be pursued in the study of history at school level has increased the confidence of history teachers. With growing certainty about the role which the subject may play in schools has come a readiness to take ever more positive steps to publicise what history offers as a constituent part of a young adolescent's education. For example, when in 1987 the Central Committee for the Curriculum (CCC) invited schools to submit their views on the curriculum in Secondary schools, the Historical Association in Scotland, drawing on the experience of teachers of history at school, college and university level, drew up a submission

setting out the role which history should play in the school curriculum. This was sent to the CCC and the SED and copies of an abridged version went to people regarded as likely to influence educational decisions at national or regional level. The statement of aims and objectives owed much to the ones issued over recent years by CCC Committees and the Scottish Examination Board.

Further efforts to persuade the wider community, including parents, of the importance of the subject in the education of all young people in Scottish schools are under active discussion between the Historical Association in Scotland and the Scottish Secondary Teachers Association. The outlook is already decidedly improved compared with fifteen years ago when historians on the SCCSS were reeling under their apparent inability to demonstrate clearly the role of history in a social subjects curriculum based on an aims and objectives approach to planning and assessment. Much remains to be done in exploring means of planning for and promoting progression in children's learning through history and in adapting teaching methods to stimulate and maintain the interest of young people who have an increasingly sophisticated knowledge of information technology. But history teachers in Scotland are seeing the need to respond positively to those challenges and to work together with academics and with people experienced in the wider field of curriculum development in demonstrating the value of their subject as an integral part of a young person's education.

MARY B GAULD  
January 1989

Footnotes

1. Works consulted included:

- Bloom B S and Krathwohl D R, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Handbook 1 The Cognitive Domain*, 1956  
Bruner J S, *The Process of Education*, 1960;  
*Towards a Theory of Instruction*, 1968  
Gagné R M, *The Conditions of Learning*, 2nd edition, 1970  
Hallam R N, *Piaget and Thinking in History*, in Ballard M, ed, *New Movements in the Study and Teaching of History*, 1970

2. Works consulted included:

- Collingwood R G, *The Idea of History*, 1946  
Phenix P H, *Realms of Meaning*, 1964  
Hirst P H, *Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge* in Archambault R D, ed, *Philosophical Analysis and Education*, 1972

3. SED, CCC, Scottish Central Committee for Social Subjects: *The Social Subjects in Secondary Schools, Curriculum Paper 15*, 1976

4. The Working Party found the chapter on Colligation by Thompson D In Burston W H and Thompson D, eds, *Studies in the Nature and Teaching of History*, 1967, helpful on organising work in history.

5. Hirst's idea of history as the chronology of human events is reflected here.

6. CCC, *The S1/S2 Social Subjects Curriculum*, 1982, and CCC, *Curriculum Guidelines for S1/S2 Social Subjects*, 1986

7. SED, *Learning and Teaching in P4 and P7*, 1980

8. Gauld M B, Pascoe H T, eds, *Environmental Studies in the Primary Schools Proceedings of the Scottish National In-service Course*, Aberdeen College of Education, 1984

9. Gauld M B, *Seeking Progression in the Historical Strand of Environmental Studies*, Aberdeen College of Education Department of History Occasional Paper No. 2, 1986

10. Grampian Regional Council Education Department, *Guidelines for Syllabus Construction and Assessment in History in S1 and S2*. 1983

11. For the thinking underlying the Standard Grade examination in Scotland see SED, CCC, *The Structure of the Curriculum in the Third and Fourth Years of the Scottish Secondary School* (the 'Munn Report'), 1977, and SED, *Assessment for All, Report of the Committee to Review Assessment in the Third and Fourth Years of Secondary Education in Scotland* (the 'Dunning Report'), 1977. Information on the Standard Grade History examination to be introduced in and after 1990 should be available from the Scottish Examination Board, Dalkeith, Midlothian, Scotland.

**Aims**

a) To provide an understanding of human development in the perspective of time

- (i) to make pupils aware of continuity, of change and development in an historical context, and of the impact of change on individuals and society, and their response to it;
- (ii) to provide pupils with knowledge of the past which will give them a framework of reference in time;
- (iii) to make pupils aware of the influence of the physical environment on human development in the past;
- (iv) to make pupils aware of the potential consequences of actions and the possible significance of events through the study of cause and effect in relation to human actions and developments in the past.

b) To introduce pupils to a knowledge of their cultural heritage

This may be achieved by examining the evidence of a selection of the achievements, ideas and institutions of the past which are important to our society and culture. In this way pupils will be provided with a sense of belonging to a community.

c) To develop an understanding of contemporary society and of the pupil's relationship to it

This may be achieved

- (i) by comparing contemporary society with societies of the past, and with particular reference to
  - (a) different aspects of these societies (social, economic, political, cultural and technological) and the relationships between them;
  - (b) the people living in these societies (their problems, attitudes, values and actions);
- (ii) by studying contemporary problems in their historical context.

d) To enable pupils to develop awareness of themselves and of their attitudes

This may be achieved by

- (i) studying the actions of people in the past;
- (ii) relating these actions to the values and attitudes prevalent at that time;
- (iii) comparing these past values and attitudes with those of the pupil's own time.

e) To arouse interest in the past that will give pleasure to the pupil and that can continue into adult life

f) To provide a disciplined method of study

This may be done by introducing the pupil to the distinctive use of historical evidence in all its forms in the process of investigation, interpretation, reconstruction and explanation.

g) To develop a tolerant and yet critical attitude of mind

This implies a readiness to form opinions based on analysis of evidence, and an appreciation that varying opinions on the interpretation of evidence and events may exist. It is important that pupils should be aware of prejudice and bias, and know that opinions may be distorted by these factors. The study of History should attempt to develop a critical judgement of historical events.

(From SED, CCC, Scottish Central Committee for Social Subjects: The Social Subjects in Secondary Schools, Curriculum Paper 15, 1976.)

## Objectives

### KNOWLEDGE

#### Knowledge of

- (a) past events, a series of past events in a sequence in time, situations in the past, particular periods in history;
- (b) information relevant and specific to an historical event, situation or period studied (eg time sequence, individual people involved, actions taken by individuals and groups, and the consequences of these actions);
- (c) the terminology and ideas used in the study of History (eg cabinet, renaissance, medieval, puritan);
- (d) types of evidence used in History (eg documentary, secondary, archaeological);
- (e) views and interpretations derived from secondary authorities (eg contrasting views of an event by two historians);
- (f) the nature of historical study, the methodology employed by the historian, the criteria used for assessing evidence, the problem of bias.

#### Skills

In History it is particularly difficult to separate the cognitive processes and the acquisition of skills. The major categories of skills used in historical studies are:

#### (a) Enquiry skills:

##### (i) Reference: Pupils should be able to

- a use index and alphabetic systems to locate evidence;
- b use books and other documentary evidence;
- c use maps, diagrams, and other graphic material to locate information;
- d use interviewing and other verbal techniques.

##### (ii) Selection and classification: Pupils should be able to

- a identify and select relevant data from written or spoken sources;
- b record and classify data;
- c distinguish between primary, secondary and other sources.

##### (iii) Question framing: Pupils should be able to compose questions relating to evidence.

- (b) Interpretation skills: Pupils should be able to
- a analyse information into its constituent parts;
  - b identify the main points of an argument or source;
  - c identify inconsistencies between one piece of data and another;
  - d recognise errors or omissions in an account or argument;
  - e detect and identify bias;
  - f make inferences from information.
- (c) Reconstruction skills: Pupils should be able to
- a assemble and present data in various forms (eg by a continuous narrative, by written and verbal accounts, graphs, maps, diagrams);
  - b place themselves imaginatively in specific historical situations and select information to reconstruct events and ways of life at particular points in time;
  - c synthesise information;
  - d postulate and evaluate hypotheses;
  - e offer a coherent explanation of events.

### Attitudes

#### Pupils should

- (a) have developed an interest in the past;
- (b) have an interest in and sympathy towards the historical heritage;
- (c) have sympathy with people in different historical situations;
- (d) have empathy towards people in different historical situations;
- (e) have a sympathetic understanding of the points of view of people with different interests and attitudes from their own;
- (f) have an appreciation that there may be, with justification, different opinions on problems and events and a sense of the elusiveness of single 'right' answers;
- (g) have a sense of 'rootedness in the past' and an enriched imagination.

(Also from CP15)

Illustration of Grade Related Criteria for the Standard Grade, Scottish Examination Board, 1988

Knowledge and Understanding - Extended GRC

Foundation Level  
(grades 6 and 5)

General Level  
(grades 4 and 3)

Credit Level  
(grades 2 and 1)

KU Applying knowledge to an idea or concept in a historical context.

The candidate can apply relevant information, selected from one or more historical sources and/or recalled knowledge, to a given idea or concept in a specific historical context.

The candidate can give an account applying relevant information, selected from one or more historical sources and/or recalled knowledge, to a given idea or concept in a specific historical context.

The candidate can give a full account applying detailed and relevant information, selected from one or more historical sources and from recalled knowledge, to a given idea or concept in a specific historical context.

Differentiating factors between grades:

Differentiating factors between grades:

Differentiating factors between grades:

the quality of the statement made;  
the amount and relevance of the information;  
the knowledge of context displayed.

the quality of the account;  
the amount and relevance of the information;  
the knowledge of context displayed.

the detail and relevance of the information selected from the source(s);  
the amount and relevance of the recalled knowledge;  
the way the information and knowledge is applied;  
the quality of the account;  
the knowledge of context displayed.

**Performance Example**

Given a straightforward set of figures showing the number of ships built in Scotland and the number of men working in shipyards in the period from 1830 to the First World War, choose from a number of statements those which best describe the rise of the shipbuilding industry in Scotland.

**Performance Example**

Given a source describing the growth in the number of shipyards on the Clyde and a graph showing the output of Clyde shipyards up to 1914, give an account of the rise of the Clyde shipbuilding industry.

**Performance Example**

Given sources relating to the Clyde shipbuilding industry and using recalled knowledge, give a detailed account of the rise of the Clyde shipbuilding industry.



Evaluating - Extended GRC

Foundation Level  
(grades 6 and 5)

General Level  
(grades 4 and 3)

Credit Level  
(grades 2 and 1)

E1 Evaluating one or more historical sources which relate to an idea or concept

Given a source which relates to a given idea or concept and a statement of its value, the candidate can support the statement by reference to features such as accuracy, purpose, authorship, contemporaneity, bias, exaggeration or consistency.

The candidate can state a view on the value of one or more given sources which relate to a given idea or concept and can support the statement by reference to features such as accuracy, purpose, authorship, contemporaneity, bias, exaggeration or consistency.

The candidate can make a balanced evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of one or more sources in relation to a given idea or concept and can support this by reference to features such as accuracy, purpose, authorship, contemporaneity, bias, exaggeration or consistency.

Differentiating factor between grades:

the number of features.

Differentiating factors between grades:

the number of features; the quality of the statement.

Differentiating factors between grades:

the number of features; the quality of the evaluation in terms of scope and balance.

Performance Example

Given an extract from a speech by Hitler attacking the Versailles Treaty and the view that the speech is one-sided, support this view by identifying references in the speech such as "Diktat" and "Stab in the back".

Performance Example

Given an extract from a speech by Hitler attacking the Versailles Treaty, state that the speech is unreliable as a generally held view of the Treaty since it contains identified examples of emotive language.

Performance Example

Given an extract from a speech by Hitler attacking the Versailles Treaty, make a balanced assessment of the value of the speech recognising that it is an authentic statement of the Nazi view while giving a one-sided account of events in Germany since 1918.