REDBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

ENGLISH

HANDBOOK

OF REDBRIDGE ADVISORY SERVICE

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REDBRIDGE
HIGH
SCHOOL

ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

HANDBOOK

by

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& Alan Dickey

Redbridge High School is an imaginary school set in a real London Borough.

This English Department Handbook has been produced by the Redbridge Advisory Service and teachers in the borough to provide departments with ideas and a possible model for their own department.

The Handbook seeks to identify the main functions within the department, to set out a clear agreed framework within which individual teaching programmes may be developed, and to encourage teachers to try out and develop their own ideas, approaches and materials.

The document can therefore be accepted in its entirety, modified, used selectively or extended.

Note: We had hoped to include, at various points, the full text of poems which had proved helpful to us in preparing this handbook. Unfortunately, for reasons of cost we are unable to do this. We do, however, at appropriate points in the handbook indicate our selection of poems.
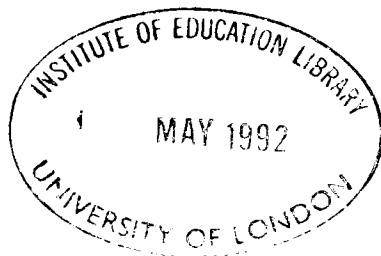
See
"Alphabets"
by Seamus Heaney.
In 'The Haw Lantern'
Faber 1987

COVER: Paul, p.7 *Becoming A Writer*, The National Writing Project (1989) Nelson.
Laurence Sterne, p.453 *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy* (1759-67; 1967) Penguin Books

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INTRODUCTION AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

These further comments about the **origins, scope, purpose** and **format** of the document may be helpful to teachers.

Origins: The RHS English Department Handbook is not an LEA policy document. It is an interim or draft statement initiated by the Redbridge Advisory Service and produced in collaboration with Redbridge teachers. The idea for the handbook arose from the course "Preparing for National Curriculum English " organised as a series of twilight sessions in the autumn term of 1989. Further work on it was done by teachers at a LINC residential weekend in Cambridge at the end of January 1990 and various sections have been trialled in a number of schools. Every secondary school in Redbridge has contributed in one form or another and there have also been important contributions from colleagues working in the Redbridge Advisory Service, the Redbridge Language Support Service and the North London Language Consortium. The handbook was widely distributed throughout Redbridge in June 1990. The present version incorporates a number of later suggestions and developments.

Scope: The scope of the Handbook is deliberately ambitious. The range of a secondary English department's work always was enormous and the new legislation has both complicated and enlarged it. Although NC English started in September 1990 with year 7, at the time of going to print there are important decisions still to be made, about assessment, for example. Non-statutory guidance for English key stages 2-4 appeared after the bulk of the work on the document was completed. Moreover, the implications of much of what has already appeared are by no means clear (cross-curricular dimensions, skills and themes). Because departments are having to plan now , it was decided to go ahead with producing the handbook, albeit in a state of incomplete knowledge.

The handbook seeks to incorporate the likely demands of the new legislation into what is known good practice in English department and curriculum organisation and management. The teachers with whom we have worked certainly expressed the desire for such a document. Within the context of a fictitious school, therefore, we have sought to set out what we think desirable and possible about every aspect of our work in the English department.

Another important feature of the National Curriculum legislation concerns the cross-curricular elements that are designed to integrate the curriculum. The details so far available of these cross-curricular dimensions, skills and themes are given in 1.9. Further work remains to be done in this area, but in the meantime, it is clear that a number of these cross-curricular elements already feature strongly in the work of the English department.

In preparing the handbook we have deliberately chosen to concentrate upon finding a framework or structure within which teachers could address the full range of tasks facing them in organising the work of an English department. Our assumption is that if the organisational and conceptual framework is reasonable the detail will follow fairly easily. Concentration upon the structure has led us to be selective in the treatment of detail. Although not all aspects are fully covered, we are confident that there is sufficient in each section for the thinking and practice to be clear.

The handbook is only concerned with secondary English but we have no wish to imply that life begins at 11+. Quite the reverse. We have drawn much from the work of primary colleagues and have tried to tease out the secondary implications of the best of such work as exemplified, for example, in the Primary Language Record published by the Centre for Language in Primary Education and the Planning and Assessment Framework produced by the North London Language Consortium.

In its present state the handbook largely confines itself to the English department's work in the 11-16 age range.

Purpose: The main purpose of the handbook is to try to help English departments at a time of considerable pressure and change. It seeks to enable departments to comply with the NC requirements. It does not, however, pretend to be neutral. It argues a particular view and a particular line, and tries to do so in as explicit a manner as possible. In our thinking about the work of the English department, concern with the implementation of National Curriculum English has been prominent, but not, we hope, to the exclusion of all other concerns. The legislation, quite properly, states that "both the objectives (attainment targets) and means of achieving them (programmes of study) should leave scope for teachers to use their professional talents and skills to develop their own schemes of work within a set framework which is known to all." Within the limitations of a fictional context we have tried to use that scope.

We are conscious that the debate about the nature and purpose of literacy in our society neither begins nor ends with the introduction of National Curriculum English and so the handbook tries to acknowledge that past and present debate and also to continue it. Whilst welcoming much of the Cox Report and the statutory orders, for example, we are by no means uncritical of those documents. We have tried to bear in mind a long view of the development of literacy in our society and to heed Raymond Williams' warning of "the dangers of making long term adjustments to short term problems". The handbook will enable colleagues to comply with the new legislation but it simultaneously offers an interpretation of it. A further purpose of the handbook, therefore, is to seek to enlarge the constituency of teachers who share a particular view of what is possible and desirable in education and to further informed professional debate. We hope that, either informally or in the context of a departmental INSET programme, the handbook provokes discussion, provides help and promotes a greater measure of clearly stated agreement amongst colleagues about the nature and direction of their work.

Format: The intended scope of the handbook explains the format, the contents of an A4 ringbinder. The sections, but not the pages, are numbered so that departments are able to adapt it as they think appropriate. There are two parts to the document. Part A contains Section One, an account of the thinking and policy from which departmental practice derives. Part B contains Sections Two - Six, and is an account of that practice. At the end of Part A there is a selective Further Reading list of relevant material.

At this point, however, it is worth drawing attention to the different characteristics of

the two parts and our view of the interactive relation between theory, policy and practice. Part A is largely theoretical; Part B is mainly concerned with practicalities. They required very different writing approaches, make quite different reading demands and will no doubt be used in very different ways. Whatever the starting point adopted by a reader, we see each part as incomplete without the other. The link between the two is the reader's reflection: what might this idea look like in classroom reality? How does reflection upon that classroom reality influence my thinking about their ideas?

Individual readings from cover to cover is one way for colleagues to use the handbook, but there are others. Some working groups might find Part A a useful source of material and ideas when preparing or reviewing departmental policy. Part B could be used to prepare termly curriculum plans, with the reader drawing variously from Sections 3, 4 and 5. Some further suggestions on using the handbook are given at the start of Parts A and B.

There are a few editorial notes in the handbook, generally at the start of a section. These appear in italic script.

Responses: When this handbook was distributed in Redbridge, we asked for teachers' responses to the document as a whole and to any particular sections. Others now are equally welcome to respond. As well as comments on how the handbook stands at present, we are interested in ideas for how it might develop through future updates.

* **Does the structure of the document provide a clear conceptual framework?**

* **Which sections seem most useful/successful?**

* **Which sections seem to need development? and in what ways?**

Please send any comments to:

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PART A

FROM THEORY TO POLICY

Theory is nothing more than the generalisation from recent and relevant experience.

Policy is the agreement by a group of people to act in common on essential matters.

There is only one section in Part A. The purpose of this section is to make as explicit as possible the general theoretical framework within which the English department in Redbridge High School operates. We hope it will be used for clarification, discussion material and general reference and INSET purposes.

Suggestions for using Part A:

* Part A is unashamedly lengthy. However, there is no editorial suggestion that any single department needs to produce something of this length. The only suggestion is that these topics are ones upon which a department have some view.

* Any section of Part A that meets with general agreement within a department could simply be incorporated into any already existing documentation .

* If any section meets with substantial disagreement within a department, then it would be sensible for the department to formulate what their view is on that issue.

* In order to help colleagues gain a swift overview of Part A the next 4 pages give the headlines for each of the sections that are discussed more fully in the main text which follows them.

FROM THEORY TO POLICY
AN OVERVIEW

1.1 Philosophy and Aims of the RHS English Department

The **philosophy** is discussed under 3 headings:

* an approach that recognises equality and difference

* a collaborative approach

* a democratic approach.

There are 3 interdependent aims :

* pleasure

* language development

* critical literacy.

1.2 A View of English

RHS English department takes a view of English as **critical literacy.**

English is concerned with the processes of language and with all aspects of the making of meaning.

Its business is the production, reproduction and critical interpretation of texts, both verbal and visual, spoken and written.

Its aim is to help students to achieve critical literacy. To do this it seeks to:

* enable students to make meaning

* develop students' understanding of the processes whereby meanings are made

* develop students' understanding of the processes whereby meanings conflict and change.

1.3 A View of Language

The RHS English department view of its work is based upon a number of assumptions about **language:**

* **Language is essentially interactive**

* **All language use is both creative and constrained at the same time**

* **Language is an essentially rule governed activity**

* **Language is essentially diverse**

* **Language, identity and culture are intimately related**

* **Language, values and ideology are intimately related**

* **Language, discourse and power are intimately related.**

1.4 A View of Learning

In planning and organising its work the department employs the following framework for the learning process:

* **starting with the student**

* **teacher as practitioner and learner**

* **balance and variety**

* **making, remaking and presentation**

* **reflection/evaluation**

* **assessment.**

1.5 A View of the Teacher

The RHS English department sees teachers playing a number of roles in their work:

* **teacher as learner**

* **teacher as practitioner**

* **teacher as agent**

* teacher as colleague

* teacher as researcher

* teacher as autobiographer.

1.6 Equal Opportunities

The RHS English department seeks to ensure equal opportunities by considering the ways in which:

* the role of language
* access
* representation
* assessment

affect issues of:

* gender inequality
* cultural diversity
* special educational needs
* social class.

1.7 A Statement on Bilingualism.

This statement contains:

* some principles of bilingual learning

* some reservations and anxieties concerning bilingual learning and the NC

* language diversity in Redbridge - the main findings from the Schools Language Survey.

1.8 A Note on National Curriculum Terminology

This section contains selections from recent National Curriculum Council materials arranged under the following headings

Curriculum Definitions

Why a National Curriculum?

The Organisation of the Curriculum: Cross-curricular elements

* cross curricular dimensions
* cross curricular skill
* cross curricular themes

The Curriculum

- progression and continuity
- differentiation
- continuity and transition
- progression

Schemes of Work

1.9   Some Views on Language, Learning and Literacy

A selection of quotations

1.10   Further Reading

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│              PART A:                      │
│     FROM THEORY TO POLICY                 │
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1.0   INTRODUCTION

All English teaching makes some kind of assumptions about the subjects listed above, even if those assumptions are rarely if ever spelled out fully. Underlying any classroom language activity that is set up by the teacher, there will be assumptions made, for example, about how students learn or what the reading process is like. There are good reasons for the department to be as clear as possible about what it thinks about such topics and the others dealt with in this section. Our contention is that English teachers cannot not have a view about the matters discussed in this section and that the more clearly people's positions are stated, the better.

The intention of Part A of the handbook, therefore, is to provide teachers in the department with some kind of theoretical map upon which to locate themselves and their work. This section offers a set of central tenets, statements of principle which underlie all the day to day business of our teaching. It should provide a range of starting points for colleagues to discover the extent to which they share ideas. It seeks to provide a coherent theoretical perspective on the daily realities of English classrooms so that we can think and talk about our practice with greater clarity. Some parts speak directly of classrooms, whilst others seek to set the work of English teachers in a wider social and cultural context. Some sections are deliberately theoretical or expository and others take a more personal or provocative stance. Although the various parts deal with a wide range of topics and are written about in a diversity of ways, we think that they share a great deal in their concerns and their standpoint. We have taken the view that our work will be strengthened if it is informed by insights from a diversity of perspectives and if we can talk about it in a range of differing ways. We think that engagement with the issues discussed in this section helps the department to formulate, give practical shape to and reflect upon our aspirations for our work with students.

In a document such as this, there is always a danger of offering token statements on these important matters at the outset only to ignore them thereafter. In the framework that we have used throughout the handbook we have tried to ensure that our concern with these topics is given due prominence.

Arguing out all of Part A in connected prose would fill a very big book, and so much of it is done by quotation or brief statement. The Further Reading list gives sources for the views expressed as well as alternative standpoints. Inevitably, given the nature of the subject matter, there is some overlap between sections.

"Theory is not the superego of practice but its self consciousness. The role of theory is not to lay down laws but to force us to be aware of what we are doing and why we are doing it." (Scholes 1989)

" 'Theoretical' does not, of course, mean abstract. From my point of view, it means reflexive, something that turns back upon itself: a discourse which turns back on itself is by virtue of this very fact, theoretical." (Barthes)

1.1

PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS

The **Philosophy** of the RHS English Department.

The National Curriculum legislation sets out clearly the **what** of the curriculum, leaving schools to determine for themselves the **how.** This entails making decisions as to the kind of social relations that are to exist within the classroom between teachers and learners. Moreover, any view of language that recognises language as a social phenomenon will inevitably be informed by some kind of social theory. In this section, therefore, we try to highlight the social features that we hope characterise classrooms in which our students are "learning to be literate in a democratic society" (NATE 1988). These characteristics derive from what we know about the social conditions that best promote students' learning in general and language learning in particular. We think them reasonable and desirable whilst recognising that they are not always easy to achieve because each, in its way, challenges what students may experience elsewhere through proposing a different set of power relations that does not always pertain elsewhere.

We have tried to sum up the philosophy of the department under 3 headings:

An Approach that recognises equality and difference

* We very much welcome the NCC statement in The Whole Curriculum that " the curriculum must aim to meet the needs of all pupils regardless of physical, sensory, intellectual, emotional/behavioural difficulties, gender, social and cultural background, religion or ethnic origins. All schools, whatever their location and intake, have a responsibility to promote good relationships and mutual respect. The ethos of a school should support the school's policy on equality of opportunity by countering stereotypes and prejudice, reducing the effects of discrimination and helping pupils to understand and accept social diversity." (NCC 1990) We also fully endorse the NCC statement urging the need "to remove some of the more subtle barriers which stand in the way of access to the curriculum" and to "promote positive attitudes to gender equality, cultural diversity and special needs of all kinds." We would wish, however, to include also some consideration of social class. In our view, neither the Cox report nor the NCC document pays adequate attention to social class which is a major element of language diversity in Britain, and a major factor concerning access to the curriculum, prejudice and discrimination.

* In the crucial matter of teacher expectation, therefore, the department wishes all who work within it to adopt the view that all students are entitled to equality of learning opportunities, and every student's learning process is of equal value.

As regards the National Curriculum, whilst we welcome the aim of equal access to "broadly the same good and relevant curriculum", we recognise the difficulties involved in achieving this and share some of Donald's anxiety "that this does not mean (students) will all have the same disposition towards it" and that for many students, "this proposal will mean access to a curriculum which is not only alien and exclusive, but one which obliterates the reality of their cultural formation and experience" (Donald 1989). We have also found the clear recognition of the relation between difference and equal opportunities particularly helpful in regard to language. The notion of difference in language is central to our understanding of our work in English. See also section 1.3.

A Collaborative Approach

*   Language is essentially a collaborative creation. Early language acquisition and development, and the adult/infant relationship in which it largely occurs, provides a good model for the kind of learning opportunities we try to provide. We are interested in the first instance in collaborative learning, in students learning from each other. This means the active involvement of all individual members of a group in making particular contributions to group aims. In this process students support each other's development by modifying and building on each other's contributions. What such a group achieves together on any particular occasion is likely to be beyond the current capacity of any individual member, although all members are enabled through that collaborative process to enlarge their own developing individual competence.   Collaborative approaches also enhance students' sense of control, ownership and responsibility for their own learning.   Collaborative learning is to be distinguished from those group activities which involve loosely collated individual efforts.

A Democratic Approach

*   If our business is, as we take it to be, helping students to become literate and fully articulate in a democratic society, there are clearly implications as to the kind of relationships we strive to achieve in our classrooms. Within the obvious constraints of compulsory schooling and some of our professional duties as 'graders', we try to work with a sense of students' language rights. We seek also to ensure that in some way the democratic process informs the language use and the activities that occur in the classroom.

*   In the first instance, this entails taking students seriously - not solemnly - as readers, writers and listeners and giving them the greatest possible degree of responsibility for their own learning.

*   It also entails establishing clear ground rules about the balance struck between the right to voice views and the right to protection from linguistic intimidation or abuse.

*   We hope that students gain insight into the democratic processes in which they participate, now and later, from the ways in which the classroom activities are organised.

*   Preparing students for their many different - and often difficult - roles as language users both now and in the future means that we have a responsibility for dealing with the range of contemporary, often contentious, issues that face parents, voters, employees and jurors, etc. Through engagement with such issues we hope that students learn the ways with words that are involved in democratic participation.

The **Aims** of the RHS English Department.

We view these aims as interdependent. Achieving the last is dependent upon succeeding in the others.

* **Pleasure**

Individual success in English is gained through clear thinking and hard work. At no time however does the subject need to become a chore. People work hard and think more positively when effort has been put into making it fun: varied, balanced, authentic, original. Without enjoyment, little learning.

We would not wish this handbook to give the impression, through having been at pains to spell out the complex and earnest ideas that underpin what and how we teach, that our classrooms are burdened with gloom. In our students' pleasure - when someone in a group says something wickedly funny and true, when someone reads about 'themselves' in someone else's story, or reads a brilliant adventure for the first time, or receives a reply to a letter to John Christopher that they had written as part of their coursework and shares it with the class - there is also a sense of their power as language users.

* **Language Development**

We are aiming to provide the conditions for all students to become more confident and competent in their growing capacity for different and increasingly complex kinds of talk, reading and writing. Students' language development is best promoted when language is being used for real purposes, in real contexts with real audiences in mind. It is in the course of this language development that we aim to help students develop a growing sense of personal and social identity as they think about themselves and about others around them and in the wider community.

* **Critical Literacy**

By literacy we intend a great deal more than the acquisition of the technical skills of reading and writing. "We take the term 'literacy' to refer to all those uses of language in which its symbolic potential is deliberately exploited as a tool for thinking" (NATE 1988). In making literacy our aim, we do not intend to suggest any diminution in the importance of spoken language: literacy has to include a notion of being fully articulate. We would wish also to extend the term to include some notion of visual literacy.

The phrase "critical literacy" comes from Paolo Freire in whose work there is a constant emphasis upon the connections between literacy and power. It deliberately contrasts with the commonsensical view of literacy as something merely technical to be acquired, a neutral set of skills that remains the same irrespective of the manner or the context in which it has been learned or the uses to which it has been put. For the individual, all manner of cognitive and emotional benefits - rationality, empathy, logical thought - are held to be dependent upon the acquisition of literacy and for society all manner of benefits -progress, individual liberty, economic prosperity, social mobility - are thought to stem from its development. The evidence, however, suggests otherwise (Street 1984). Literacy per se is no guarantee of either freedom for the individual or economic prosperity for the nation (Graff 1987); and people living in purely oral cultures are not deprived of rationality. In fact, literacy is highly variable and entirely dependent upon the social and cultural contexts in which it is acquired and used. Thus what literacy means to those who acquire it is determined by such things as: who taught them, how they learned or were taught, the uses to which literacy is put in that society and the extent to which society is shaped by literacy. Because it is simply not possible to

separate literacy out from the contexts in which it occurs, it makes more sense to think of literacies rather than literacy.

It is the idea of literacy as a neutral set of skills that remains fixed and stable over time whatever the context that so bedevils much current discussion over standards. No satisfactory answer can be given to the question as to whether standards have risen or fallen, precisely because the meaning of literacy changes so much across time and between contexts. Enormous changes in what we mean by literacy are now underway, for example, as a consequence of tv, video and computer technology. What literacy means and what counts as literacy is very different now from what was the case ten or twenty years ago and will continue to change in ways that we cannot wholly predict in the lifetime of our students. The only apposite question can be: are standards sufficient for our students to meet both the present and future demands that are likely to be placed upon them and also those that they are likely to make themselves? In a period of profound social change we need to constantly review our notions of what literacy means in our society. We refer here to critical literacy in order to distinguish what we are seeking to achieve from other more limiting and fixed conceptions.

Our aim is to increase the power and control students exercise over their lives through language. This means increasing their capacity to use language as participants in the world to influence and to effect change by articulating their own intentions adequately and also by understanding the intentions of others. It is not a question of their exercising that power later, once they are 'literate'. We hope rather that they apprehend the power of literacy as they learn, in and through their learning. Unless we enable them to do so, what they are likely to learn is that literacy is something set up by others which exercises power over them. Critical literacy is more than just the ability to read and write. It involves the motivation and capacity to question, probe and see that language has consequences in the world of action. It enables people to take some part in determining and shaping the world in which they live. It seeks to go beyond those narrower views of literacy that are restricted to enabling the majority of people to comply with the demands placed upon them.

"We want them to have the pleasure whilst retaining the capacity to resist the power. Literacy should not just mean that you are available to be worked on by a text. The ability to slip out from under the control of a text must be part of what we mean by access." (Medway 1988)

"Literacy becomes a means of access, a way of getting to know what counts..... To be literate nowadays is to be aware of differences - to know how how they are constituted, both historically and socially, and to be determined to surmount the barriers and boundaries which they produce." (Meek 1991)

To as great an extent as is possible, the philosophy and aims of the department should be made explicit to students - discussed, recorded in English journals, periodically evaluated.

A NOTE ON THE CLASSROOM
If we could succeed in realising the philosophy and aims outlined above, and exemplify them in our practice, then our classrooms might come to resemble the ideal classroom described by Boomer (1985) in the following extract.

The ideal classroom will be:

* active and interactive

language is learned in use through interaction

* collaborative

we learn language in communities which ideally cohere and co-operate

* functional and purposive

language is learned because it serves human purposes

* exploratory

language and thinking are dynamically interdependent; language serves thinking

* reflective

language learners are language theory builders, accumulating metalinguistic capabilities to explain what is happening

* multi-modal

reading, writing, speaking and listening interpenetrate and feed each other; they also relate to other modes of communication

* negotiated

meaning must be continually negotiated; the message interpreted is never exactly equivalent to the message sent; failure to negotiate will tend to increase alienation in the classroom

* contextually supportive

the richer the supporting and encouraging context, the more likely that language will be learned

* observed and tracked

just as parents track and celebrate the unfolding language potential of young children, so teachers must observe, track and support the unfolding capacities of their students

* experience-based

in moving towards the new, the students need to activate what they already know from experience which relates to the current challenge

* conceptually demanding

because language development goes hand in hand with cognitive development, language learning is enhanced by

	conceptually challenging the learners
* unbounded	language is learned powerfully outside "language arts" lessons and outside schools; good programmes will seek to extend the boundaries of the classroom and open it to community influences
* cumulative	language resources are personal resources which grow organically in interaction with others; language is a growing reservoir, not a set of building blocks
* text conscious	language learning involves the capacity to pay close attention to texts - oral and written- and relate those texts to the context

A VIEW OF ENGLISH

This section describes the view of English in RHS English Department. It is very much a developing view which certainly copes with the requirements of the new legislation but which also tries to resolve some of the ambiguities and blurred areas in Cox.

SOME BACKGROUND HISTORY

The Cox Report identifies "within the English teaching profession a number of different views of the subject" and states that "they are not the only possible views, they are not sharply distinguishable, and they are certainly not mutually exclusive" (Cox 1989). The report describes five versions of English: a **personal growth** view; a **cross-curricular** view; an **adult needs** view; a **cultural heritage** view and a **cultural analysis** view. Of these five, the cultural analysis version is given least attention in the report.

The existence of so many competing versions of English is no surprise. Several contemporary classroom based studies have reported in similar terms and there is now ample historical evidence that English has always been a contentious subject ever since its invention in the last century. Since that time there have always been sharply differing views as to what English is or should be and different versions have been dominant at different times. Today probably it is the personal growth view of English that is the dominant mainstream approach. Changes have occurred in the past because of social or political imperatives and because teachers have wished to move beyond what they perceived as the limitations of their current practice. Such shifts are never neat and most of us have probably always operated with some amalgam of views of the subject. The variety described by Cox, however, underlines the need for the department to be as clear as possible in formulating its own definition.

This is easier said than done. It is not just that, in our view, the versions outlined by Cox are very unequal in merit and the assumptions underlying them, particularly as regards language, are radically different. They are also at very different stages of development. Whereas the first four are familiar, the cultural analysis view is an emergent one. The Cox Report has appeared at a time when the nature, purpose and definition of English is very much in dispute. One of the difficulties of the report is that, whilst acknowledging this debate, it does not engage in it and although a cultural analysis version of English is recorded, it scarcely features in the text.

We have to recognise that in practice each version leads to quite different classroom activities, expectations and notions of what counts as success and failure. They all make different assumptions about what is possible and desirable in an English classroom. We have to take account of the ambitions and achievements of these versions, and also of their limitations. The actual outcomes, for example, of some of the practices associated with some of the versions have proved positively damaging to students. The limitations of a skills based approach - narrowly functional and denying students' creativity - are well known, as are those of a cultural heritage approach, with its arbitrary imposition of a canon of literature. The achievements of the personal growth approach are widely acknowledged, the limitations less so but nonetheless real. We certainly need to retain the recognition of students' experience and their creativity and all that we have learned about language development, but the emphasis upon the personal and the individual has been at the cost of an adequate social dimension that takes account of history, culture and ideology.

ENGLISH AS CRITICAL LITERACY

The definition of English adopted by RHS, therefore, seeks to retain what is valuable in some earlier constructions of the subject whilst developing a view that looks to the future. In working on this definition we found some help in Cox's description of the cultural analysis view as one that "emphasises the role of English in helping children towards a critical understanding of the world and the cultural environment in which they live. Children should know about the processes by which meanings are conveyed, and about the ways in which print and other media carry values." (Cox 1989) Whilst we endorse this statement, it falls short of our expectations in two important respects. Meanings are made and contested as well as simply conveyed, and in a democratic society students are entitled to participate in as well as understand those processes. What is missing, here and elsewhere in the report, is an adequately detailed or explicit social dimension. Hence our preference for the term **critical literacy** (Freire 1987) which carries stronger suggestions of literacy as a form of empowerment. (See also 1.1.)

In formulating our definition we have tried to strike a balance between a statement that is so brief and bland that all implications remain unexamined and one that rivals an insurance policy in its complexity. In what follows we take English to include all those aspects of Media Education and Drama that are undertaken by the English department.

Our starting point is that

English is concerned with the processes of language and with all aspects of the making of meaning. Its business is the production, reproduction and critical interpretation of texts, both verbal and visual, spoken and written.

It requires activities which:

* **enable students to make meaning**

* **develop their understanding of the processes whereby meanings are made**

* **develop students' understanding of the processes whereby meanings conflict and change.**

This is the theoretical framework which we have used in Section 3 of the handbook which describes the entitlement activities of the English curriculum. In that section we have employed more homely and familiar terms :
making (production)
re-making (reproduction)
reflection/evaluation (critical interpretation).

1.3

A VIEW OF LANGUAGE

The view of English stated in 1.2 has the virtue of brevity, but some amplification seemed necessary. In the end we settled for something longer because this formulation remains at a headline stage: neither the theoretical justification for the statements is clear nor are the classroom processes to which they relate. Without further exploration we were unable to ascertain the extent of our shared understanding. Reformulation in greater detail produced something we found more helpful. Our final version, therefore, tries to flesh out the detail behind the headlines.

The statement is organised around a particular view of language because it is that which distinguishes our model of English. Underpinning most other versions of English is "an essentially aesthetic view of language" (Barnes 1984). Language, in this view, is an expressive medium which privileges subjective experience and individuals' capacity to make their own meanings. Individuals are seen as autonomous, free to choose and able to control the language they employ, subject only to the most general and weakest of constraints such as appropriateness. The individual is held to exist independently of language, as does the world of which he or she speaks. By contrast, our view of language derives from older traditions of rhetoric in which greater emphasis is placed upon its public usage.

We identify a number of features of language and try to indicate the way that each informs our view of English.

Language is essentially interactive

*   Meanings are made by speakers and listeners; readers and writers; producers / performers and audiences. The making of meaning is always a two way process, always a dialogue, whether between speaker and listener, reader and writer, performer and audience. Meaning is always the outcome of some kind of social process, whether between individuals or groups, either now or across time. Meanings are endlesssly renegotiated and re-defined in social processes and thus are always provisional rather than final. There can be no single meaning to any utterance or text because the meaning is always waiting to be realised by another participant and because there is always the possibility of a reply to any utterance which will transform any of its previous meanings. "The word in language is half someone else's." (Bakhtin 1981)

*   Language is also interactive at other levels. The relationships between Standard English and other dialects, between inner and outer speech, between one novel and others in a similar genre, or between the intended meaning of any word and previous meanings adhering to it, are all essentially interactive or dialogic.

*   **English aims to increase students' control over language** through activities that engage them in this dialogue in the classroom and draw their attention to this process in wider society. Hence the importance attached to collaborative learning and to questions of audience, purpose and context in students' work.

All language use is both creative and constrained at the same time

*   Every utterance is unique because "language" in general does not exist. "Language is

always this or that utterance in this or that situation." (Eagleton 1983)   Every utterance is shaped by its social, historical and cultural context. Meaning is therefore dependent upon context. It is a social context that both enables and provokes utterance and at the same time constrains and shapes it. Every utterance is likely to be both unique and a quotation or a reference.

*   **English aims to increase students' control over language** by providing them with an ever increasing range of contexts for language use with an ever increasing range of linguistic demands. On some occasions the emphasis is upon students' use of language for participation in the world, upon language in   "motivated use" (Medway 1988). On other occasions the emphasis is upon the pleasure derived from all kinds of language use.

*   Students' control over language is also enhanced by activities that draw attention to the ways in which "meanings change according to the positions held by those who employ them" (Pecheux 1982) both in classrooms and beyond.

Language is an essentially rule governed activity

*   Whether consciously or not, all utterances are shaped in accordance with rules and conventions of some kind. These rules and conventions relate to the structural features of any particular utterance and also to the genre to which that utterance belongs. This is as true of conversation, small group discussion, or National Curriculum legislation as it is of novels or poems. "A story only exists as a story by virtue of the existence of other stories." (Rosen 1984)

*   We do not learn such rules and conventions in isolation or by exercises; we learn them by using them, trying them out in real situations and by engaging in all the social practices of which they form a part. Learning the rules involved in any form of language use cannot be separated from learning what that language activity is good for and how it relates to the learner's purposes and intentions.

*   Language is a rule governed activity, but the rules - whether of grammar or genre - can and do change as the consequence of social processes.

*   Language is always shaped into some kind of text. By text we intend more than printed words on the page. We mean any sequence of signs that can be read and that enables a meaning to be produced from the shared knowledge of the signifying markers encoded in it. Thus a text may be verbal or visual, spoken or written. Social situations and institutional practices may also be read as texts in this way. "The text itself is no more than a series of 'cues' to the reader, invitations to the reader to construct a piece of language into meaning." (Eagleton 1983)

*   Texts contain possibilities for meaning but require another participant to produce it.The meanings produced are determined by the other participant's familiarity with the relevant codes and conventions and by their social, cultural and historical baggage. Such rules, codes and conventions - whether of grammar or genre - are learned primarily through engaging with them in real contexts; they are not learned in isolation.

*   **English seeks to increase students' control over language** by enlarging the repertoire of genres and conventions with which they are familiar and which they can employ. It increases the range of effects in language which they can produce and to which they can respond.

* English also seeks to develop students' understanding of rules and conventions, of how effects are produced upon themselves and upon others, by providing opportunities for reflection upon and analysis of their language practice. In this process competence always precedes analysis. Our purpose in developing students' understanding of such rules and conventions is to enable them to be more aware of the ways in which meanings are made and through this to enable students to employ them - or change them - to suit their own purposes and intentions.

Language is essentially diverse

* "Language diversity can mean something multi-dimensional. It can mean, for instance, varieties of English: dialects, group languages, slangs and jargons and styles, private languages, anti languages, non verbal languages, as well as the languages associated with sex and age and class and occupation. And it can mean, most especially, languages which are not English. In this way, diversity would include all the uses of language, in which all children, for most of the time , are skilled practitioners." (Rosen and Burgess 1981)

* Acknowledgement of the linguistic diversity in our classrooms and our society is essential if we are to consider our work from a learning perspective because diversity is the starting point of the learners in our class.

* Recognition of this diversity, however, brings with it an awareness of the tensions that surround the construction of the subject called "English" - the relation between English and other school subjects, between English and other languages and between varieties of English other than Standard.

* Recognition of the language diversity within our classrooms in no way reduces the importance we attach to enabling students to have effective access to and to gain control of Standard English.

* **English seeks to use diversity as productive and important in itself,** while encouraging a view of language as a system which, more than any other, unites human beings: something they most extraordinarily have in common." (Rosen and Burgess 1981)

Language, identity and culture are intimately related

* "The curriculum is a selection from the culture." (Williams 1961)   In the past the selection of culture offered in the curriculum has often been restricted to the dominant culture of our society - the cultural heritage. And often a selection from the culture has been used in the past in a normative way and classrooms have been places where a particular culture is simply transmitted or imposed with greater or lesser success. In rejecting this view, we seek to do more than welcome a diversity of cultures into the classroom. We prefer to view classrooms as places where culture is made and knowledge is produced: "classrooms as sites for cultural making" (Hardcastle 1985). We cannot do this from a position of neutrality for not all aspects of all cultures are universally desirable or even legal. We try, therefore, "to recognise the contradictory nature of student experience and voice and to establish the grounds whereby such experience can be interrogated and analysed with respect both to its strengths and weaknesses" (Giroux 1989). We try to look at the processes of cultures.

*   "My model of the child........ was very much one in the tradition of the sole child mastering the world by representing it to himself in his own terms. In the intervening years, I have come increasingly to recognise that most learning in most settings is a communal activity, a sharing of the culture." (Bruner 1986)

*   **English seeks to make our classrooms places where culture is made.** In doing this, we do not imply any ignoring of the dominant culture of our society. There is an analogy with Standard English. Our aim must be to ensure that students have effective access to the cultural heritage because that way lies empowerment. Effective access entails enabling students to understand the pleasure and power of that culture and to appropriate it for their own purposes and intentions. We reject both an uncritical acceptance of our students' culture and any attempt to impose an alien culture.

Language, values and ideology are intimately related

*   Language is never neutral. All language conveys and embodies (or contests) values and views of the world. Often we are aware of this, as when we recognise bias or special interest in particular language use. But common sense assumptions - ideologies- habitually pervade our linguistic behaviour in ways that we often remain unconscious of. Our unawareness of the ideologies embedded in language can lead us to accept as inevitable particular views and situations which are anything but normal or natural. In recent years, our awareness of the ideological nature of language has become much sharper as we have made the connections between language use and the social disadvantages and injustices experienced by women, for example, or members of various minority groups.

*   Ideologies may be systematically embedded in our language but they are neither permanent nor immune to change. We have much greater understanding and awareness of the ideologies of racism and sexism now than we did 20 or even 10 years ago. The same is true of many other ideologies - of progressive education, for example. Every ideology has its distinctive linguistic markers and patterns of usage and is associated with particular social practices.

*   **English seeks to increase students' control over language** by drawing attention to the ways in which language is inevitably tied to values in spoken and written language. It does so by questioning the assumptions that underlie language use. This is an extension of work that focuses upon audience, purpose and context. In seeking to make ideological assumptions explicit our aim is to increase students' control over their language by increasing their awareness of the connections between language and the exercise of power. Much of this work is of an uncontroversial, often entertaining kind. But on occasions it will involve questioning and combatting those ideologies, such as racism and sexism, which serve to disadvantage groups and individuals.

*   English also seeks to develop students' awareness of the way that ideology pervades a text by providing opportunities to adopt a voice, perspective or ideology other than their own when working with a text - for example, in role play or in rewriting a narrative with the gender of the main characters reversed. Such "an ideological bias can lead a critical reader to make a given text say more than it apparently says, that is, to find out what in that text is ideologically presupposed, untold." (Eco 1979)

Language, discourse and power are intimately related

*   In linguistics, the term discourse is traditionally taken to mean the organisation

of units of language larger than the sentence. In recent years this meaning has been extended to describe the connections that exist between language, knowledge and power as they are seen in various social and institutional practices. For example, when medicine is described as a discourse, more is intended than the fact that people in the medical profession share a specialised vocabulary. Discourse in this extended sense acknowledges the way that a particular field of knowledge has been defined and organised fairly systematically around a number of key terms and contrasts: sickness/ health or madness / reason. A discourse is more than just shared professional jargon because it also has an institutional base and a range of behaviour and practices which gives considerable social power to those who are familiar with the language. "Discourses reflect relations of power and the purposes of social control. Developed within specific historical circumstances, they serve to organise and order what it is possible to think." (Burgess 1984) There are all manner of accepted procedures, routines, practices and relationships which the patient or the lawyer's client (or the child at school?) has little choice but to accept because that is the way that that part of the social world appears to be organised. "Truth is the unrecognised fiction of a successful discourse." (Fowler 1987) Within its field, a discourse controls what it is possible to say and who is able to speak. Those outside a discourse are obliged, seemingly inevitably, to adopt a subordinate position if they wish or have to participate - as patient, for example, or juror. Discourses come (alternative medicine) and go (astrology?) and some like medicine or law are long lived.

* Recent critical theory has made the connections between language and power very much more visible. It has developed a powerful "language of critique", but as Aronowitz and Giroux (1986) argue, power is both a positive and negative force, and we need a "language of possibility" as well as of critique.

* **English seeks to increase students' control over language** by drawing attention to the workings of discourse both in society at large and more immediately around them and indicating how language connects with and organises our social lives. But the idea of discourse also has relevance for "understanding classroom processes. Classrooms are related in their objectives to discourses of varying kinds; not only academic discourses, but also politically and educationally oriented discourses through which culture is constituted. In addition, discourses are *created* in classrooms, related to discourses in the culture more widely, but constructed by the central participants, pupils and teachers." (Burgess 1984) It is in this process of the creation of a discourse in the classroom that we seek to empower students.

1.4

A VIEW OF LEARNING

INTRODUCTION

When planning our curriculum and setting up classroom activities and experiences, we all make some kind of assumptions about the learning process. The pressures of the day to day business of teaching, however, make it all too easy to lose track of the various insights that we have gathered about how students learn.

The Cox Report does not spell out a view of learning in much detail. It does, however, in chapter 3 cite a recent NAAE pamphlet that lists the characteristics of successful language teaching and learning as:

- a very high expectation of success for the learner

- an apprenticeship approach to acquiring written and oral language, in which the adult represents the success the child seeks and yet offers endless help

- maximum encouragement and support whilst errors are mastered

- motivation for the learner to make sense of and acquire control over language and the power which it can have

- a constant respect for the child's language

And the pamphlet goes on to argue that the learner needs:

- expectation of success

- the confidence to take risks and make mistakes

- a willingness to share and to engage

- an acceptance of the need to readjust. (NAAE 1988)

There is certainly nothing there with which we would wish to disagree - although we might prefer to talk of developing competences rather than mastering errors. But we felt that something more was needed to help us in planning the English curriculum. Throughout Cox, despite all the recommendations and examples of classroom practice, the pedagogy remains largely implicit. This may be because of constraints of time or space, in the interests of consensus or because such matters remain the proper concern of schools. In any event the details of the Programmes of Study seem to us to presuppose that classrooms are organised in particular ways, without the underlying view of learning ever being fully articulated. This section, therefore, lists some of the precepts about learning which we hope inform our work and which certainly accord with Cox.

CONDITIONS FOR LEARNING

We start with an extract from an article which we have found useful in preparing this

section. (Boomer 1985)

" First some conditions or principles about human life and learning. (This is a package deal. No conditions may be omitted.)

* Human beings learn by being in the company of people who are doing "it" (where "it" represents what is to be learned).

* Human beings learn by being in the company of people who take pleasure in "it" and /or use it to effect and expect young humans to learn it too (so that the young begin to imagine doing it).

* Human beings learn by interacting with those who are doing it, asking questions of those who are doing it and beginning to induce rules about how it is done.

* Human beings learn by trying it, or aspects of it, under practice conditions where errors can be used to indicate modification.

* Human beings learn by seeking evaluations and advice from others (or from themselves).

* Human beings learn by testing it out and reflecting upon consequences.

* Human beings learn by confirming and celebrating achievement.

These conditions need to be welded to a number of beliefs and assumptions.

About learners:

human beings are born scientists (i.e. they are theory builders)

human intention is necessary for human learning

human training is distinct from human education."

(Further extracts from this article appear in 1.1 and 1.5.)

A PROPOSED FRAMEWORK FOR THE LEARNING PROCESS

The headings employed below represent an attempt to describe in a fairly analytical and sequential way the stages, processes and elements that characterise successful learning. Whilst they appear here separately we recognise that in practice they often merge into each other. They are the basis for the headings used in Section Three to describe the activities and experiences of the English curriculum. We have tried also to ensure that the view of learning proposed here matches the suggestions made in Section Five for the Planning, Assessment, Recording and Reporting Framework.In preparing this section we have drawn extensively upon Reid, Forrestal and Cook (1989) and Shreeve (1989).

Starting with the student

* There is no other place to begin than where the learner is. We have to avoid being tempted by what Margaret Meek calls the theory of regressive blame, whereby teachers have fixed notions of where their students should be at and

blame previous teachers or parents for their students not being where they have decided they should be.

* Our starting point is the students' culture. We have to tease out the implications of the statement in Cox (citing Bullock) "that no child should be expected to cast off the language and culture of the home as he or she crosses the school threshold... the curiculum should reflect many elements of that part of his or her life which a child lives outside school." Acceptance of the students' culture, knowledge, language is the necessary starting point. This entails, for example, enabling students to articulate their initial understandings and views prior to any input/activity that is designed to modify or enlarge their understandings.

* Acceptance alone is not sufficient, however. The teacher has to acknowledge that diversity does not necessarily mean harmony and that the attitudes and experiences voiced by students can often be contradictory and a potential source of tension or conflict. The teacher's delicate task is to seek to negotiate such differences, not by imposing some judgment on them, but by providing opportunities and activities in which all the assumptions and attitudes may be questioned and analysed in respect to both their strengths and weaknesses.

Teacher as practitioner and learner

* If we take an apprenticeship view of learning, the role of the teacher as practitioner is crucial in the student's learning process. Students will learn something about the nature of literacy simply from judgments and observations they make about their teachers' enactment of what being literate means. Students learn to be "better" readers, writers and talkers at least in part through seeing what more developed readers, writers and talkers actually do and through being involved in joint activities with them. Fundamental to this aspect of learning are insights about the roles of teachers and learners in children's acquisition of spoken language. These are well described by Frank Smith (1988).

Balance and variety

* To provide the basis or content of their ensuing learning, students require a balance and variety of activities that involve them in acquiring information or engaging in experiences. This range of activities should be as integrated as possible and sufficiently planned to ensure students engage in the range to which they are entitled. The idea of balance and variety underlies the Programmes of Study. Although the list of activities and experiences in the PoS is generous, there are important questions regarding how often and how much students should experience the listed activities which the PoS do not address. Section 3 of the handbook suggests ways in which the RHS department plans for balance and variety in the English curriculum.

Making, remaking and presentation

* Learners need opportunities to make an initial exploration of the information or experience with which they engage, to bring past experiences and understandings to bear as they endeavour to come to terms with it.

* After this initial process of exploration, learners are brought to a fuller

understanding through the process of re-shaping the material or experience.

* The material or experience is re-shaped bearing in mind as far as possible the notion that language development occurs when language is used for real purposes in real contexts for real audiences. Learners are therefore placed in a situation where they are required to present what has been learnt to a critical audience in order to further help the learning process. Such presentation can take a variety of forms.

* We have chosen to group together the processes of making, re-making and presentation because the separation between them or the emphasis placed upon them varies considerably according to language mode or the nature of the starting point.

* In theoretical terms we take this stage of the learning process to be what we referred to in 1.2 as the **production** and **reproduction** of meaning.

Reflection/evaluation

* Opportunities for reflection are an important part of the learning process. Reflection helps the learner to understand what has been learned and how it has been learned. The form in which it occurs varies greatly, but the retrospective process of evaluating what has been achieved is a crucial part of determining the future stages of learning. It sets the learning process within a wider and forward looking context.

* It is also at this stage that the student is most likely to engage in fruitful consideration of "rules", whether grammatical or generic. Understanding of the general rule or tendency emerges from reflection upon the specific and particular. In theoretical terms we take this stage of the learning process to be what is referred to as **critical interpretation** in 1.2.

Assessment

* Assessment is of two kinds: day to day practical intervention and periodic review.

* Day to day assessment of students' work may occur at any point in the stages outlined above. It tends to be informal, practical and task/context specific. It is also crucial in sustaining or furthering students' learning.

* Periodic assessment is likely to occur after or as part of the reflection / evaluation stage of the learning process. What distinguishes it from that stage is its forward looking nature. Its concern is with setting future learning aims or tasks.

A NOTE ON PUPIL EXPECTATATION AND MOTIVATION

In preparing this section on learning we found it helpful to return to the account of the four aspects of achievement proposed in the Hargreaves Report on ILEA secondary schools, Improving Secondary Schools. This was published in 1984 before the invention of GCSE and the National Curriculum. In the report pupil achievement is defined by Hargreaves in terms of four aspects.

Achievement aspect I

This aspect is strongly represented in in the current 16+ examinations. It involves most of all the capacity to express oneself in a written form. It requires the capacity to retain propositional knowledge, to select from such knowledge appropriately in response to a specified request and to do so quickly without reference to possible sources of information. The capacity to memorise and organise material is particularly important.

Achievement aspect II

This aspect of achievement is concerned with the capacity to apply knowledge rather than knowledge itself, with the practical rather than the theoretical, with the oral rather than the written. Problem solving and investigational skills are more important than the retention of knowledge. This aspect is to some degree measured in public examinations, but it it is often seen as secondary and less important than aspect I.

Achievement aspect III

This aspect is concerned with personal and social skills: the capacity to communicate with others in face to face relationships; the ability to co-operate with others in the interests of the group as well as of the individual; initiative, self-reliance and the ability to work alone without close supervision; and the skills of leadership. This aspect of achievement remains virtually untapped by the 16+ examinations.

Achievement aspect IV

This aspect of achievement involves motivation and commitment; the willingness to accept failure without destructive consequences; the readiness to persevere; the self confidence to learn in spite of the difficulty of the task. Such motivation is often regarded as a prerequisite to achievement rather than as an achievement in itself. We do not deny that motivation is a prerequisite to the other three aspects of achievement, but we also believe that it can be regarded as an achievement in its own right. For some pupils come to their schools without such motivation, yet the school succeeds in generating it in them and, in such circumstances, both the school and the pupils have made an important achievement. By contrast, some schools actively reduce the motivation and commitment of pupils, thereby causing further underachievement in aspects I-III. In one sense, aspect IV is the most important of all, since without it achievement in the other three aspects is likely to be very limited, both at school and in the future. Working class pupils are particularly vulnerable here, since some of them, because of disadvantaged (material) circumstances, come to school with already low levels of aspect IV achievement; they rely upon teachers, in a way that most middle class pupils do not, for immediate and basic help with aspect IV. If the school does not attend to

aspect IV as a central feature of its work, then achievement in the other three aspects becomes improbable. When the school believes it is not within its powers to influence aspect IV, the teachers begin to explain the lack of achievement in terms of the pupils' background, and these low teacher expectations become self fulfilling. And when pupils experience their schooling as a threat to their aspect IV achievement, it becomes rational for them to play truant or to protect themselves by classroom misbehaviour.

1.5   A VIEW OF THE TEACHER

"Teachers should be as explicit as possible about what they intend and how they intend to do it.

Those in power should continually strive to empower others.

The aim of teaching is to make students progressively more independent of teachers."
(Boomer 1985)

INTRODUCTION

This section tries to draw together some of our thoughts about the role and function of the teacher. Nobody in the English department was ever tempted to think of teaching as a simple activity, but as with all the subjects dealt with in this section, we have tried to make explicit what we think is involved in the business of being a teacher because our daily practice inevitably entails acting upon a good many unexamined assumptions. There are plenty of academic studies which offer various typologies of the teacher (e.g. as lion tamer, entertainer or new romantic) but we have chosen to try to highlight some of the roles of the teacher which seem to us important. We do not intend to suggest that these roles are either sharply distinguished in practice or that it is possible to fulfil all of them at any one time. It is simply that we have found it helpful in thinking about our work to separate out some of those elements in our practice which seem to promote students' learning. What we have in mind is the reflexive practitioner. Whilst trying to indicate these different roles, we do not intend to deny the truth of the observation that "teachers teach most profoundly what they are at the core. The lasting lesson is the demonstration of the self as it handles its authority and those under its authority."
(Boomer 1982)

Teacher as learner

*   The teacher can be seen as an instructor of how to do things, as a transmitter of a body of knowledge and information, as the holder and validator of meanings and as the monitor of success or otherwise. All of these views involve assumptions about the nature of knowledge and human learning which we would wish to dispute.

*   Knowledge like language is a co-operative social enterprise. It "is not produced in the intentions of those who believe they hold it whether in the pen or the voice. It is produced in the process of interaction, between reader and writer at the moment of reading and between teacher and learner at the moment of classroom engagement. Knowledge is not so much the matter that is offered as the matter that is understood." (Lusted, cited in Giroux 1989)

*   The view of learning derived from Vygotsky suggests a much more participative role for the teacher. "Human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the the intellectual life of those around them."
(Vygotsky 1978)

* Therefore it is important that students see their teachers in one way as co-learners - people who respond to new ideas, information and activities, who are aware that whatever they think there's always more, who anticipate and structure their learning but who are also ready to try things out and take risks.

Teacher as practitioner

* To avoid misunderstanding, it may be helpful to think about the idea of teacher as practitioner on some kind of continuum. At one undesirable end is the teacher who exhorts students to acquire and practice skills which they themselves never demonstrate or employ with their students. Their rhetoric says literacy - or some aspect of it - is important but their classroom practice gives no indication to their students that it plays any meaningful part in their lives. At the other equally undesirable end is the teacher who puts themself forward as a model to be replicated.

* What we have in mind is a view of the teacher who exemplifies those things s/he hopes their students learn, who enables their students to form some idea of what it is to be a writer, a reader, a talker in a range of discourses, who opens up for their students some of the possibilities of what being literate might mean, and who places places greater emphasis upon the giving of help than the correction of error.

Teacher as agent in the world

* Action, like language, is both enabled and constrained by context. In their dealings with students, colleagues, parents and others, teachers have to strike a fine balance between over and under estimating their capacity to act and the extent of their influence. They have to steer a realistic course between for example overblown claims that poetry will save the individual soul or the world and deflated or overdeterministic views that at the end of the day schools and individual teachers change nothing in society.

* English teachers inhabit "Neither Bleak House nor Liberty Hall." "Schools do not offer infinite space for manouevre limited only by the supposed abilities of the pupils and the extent to which teachers are prepared to espouse up to date ideas. Schools are sorting mechanisms which in a very rough and ready way supply different kinds of cohorts to the work force. They are also, inevitably, one powerful agency which in visible and invisible ways transmits the dominant ideas and attitudes in our society...... (But) within schools there is movement, conflict,imperfect control which makes it possible, inside limits which are always shifting and therefore to be discovered in practice, to contest the terrain... (Such) spaces do not simply exist in the system, they have to be won, defended and extended." (Rosen 1981)

* Teachers are inevitably constrained actions both by the institutions in which they work and by the expectations and requirements placed upon them by parents, governors, employers and others beyond the school. But it is those very constraints which provoke and enable action whilst at the same time setting limits to to it. As well as the curriculum we need to successfully negotiate the system we inhabit professionally if we are to achieve our aims.

Teacher as colleague

* Every institution has its culture and this is likely to be more influential upon the student than any individual teacher. The evidence is clear that departments whose members work together with common policies and a shared view as to what is

desirable in their curriculum area are more successful in achieving their aims with students than are those departments which have little common ground ground. By the same token the school that implements commonly agreed whole school policies is more likely to achieve its aims than is one that operates a system of conflicting baronies. We take the view that an important part of the teacher's work involves building those common approaches within and across departments, creating the culture of the school. This curtails unaccountable individualism, but does not imply that the individual has no voice or scope for action.

* The process of discussion, negotiation and decision making involved in this view of the teacher as colleague is one way in which the cross-curricular theme of education for citizenship and the department's espousal of a democratic approach are exemplified in the workings of the department and school.

Teacher as researcher

* The teacher teaches and the researcher researches. This damaging divorce between theory and practice means that often teachers do not feel they own the theory which underpins their practice in that it has been developed elsewhere by others. But this does not have to be the case. Much of the strength of the Primary Language Record, for example, derives from the resistance to this separation of teaching and research and the successful mobilisation of teachers' skills as researchers. We need to remind ourselves that it was secondary English teachers who developed coursework based assessment and its supporting theoretical framework.

* Teachers are in the best place to develop theory.

* "It is the continual reformulation of what we know in the light of what we perceive that matters; and the hardening of what we know into a formula that we apply ready made instead of reformulating - that is the danger. Thus our most powerful ideas are relatively general, relatively unformulated starting points from which we constantly reformulate." (Britton 1982)

Teacher as autobiographer/historian

* People hold the views that they do for a whole variety of reasons. Intellectual conviction, habit, professional training. Perhaps because those are the views held in the place where they happen to be or because of some exploration and evaluation of past experience. There is no reason to suppose that teachers' views on language, learning or literacy follow any different pattern. Most professional discussion, training or inservice work, quite properly, does not intrude too far upon the privacy of past experience. The price of such discretion, however, is that many of our earliest and most formative assumptions about language, learning and literacy remain unexamined.

* Everyone is an expert on their own learning history. That learning history can be a powerful aid to teachers' practice. Memories of learning to read or write are potent and worth exploration. What helped or hindered us then as learners? What kind of readers are we now? As we piece together our own histories as readers or writers, patterns and changes emerge. How do we account for ourselves and others? What differences and continuities can we see from our own early memories of literacy? And what light does this throw upon our present practice? Those with whom we have shared this kind of exercise have invariably found it enjoyable but have also found their understanding of learning and literacy subtly transformed.

*   "Begin with yourself. Try to put together your autobiography in reading. (If you don't want to do it now, save it for a ruminant moment, a walk, or a way of escaping into your head in a boring meeting.) What can you remember of learning to read? Who was with with you, where did it happen, what did you do? Summon up your best recollections and you'll probably remember two things above all others - the difficulties and successes you had on your way, and the important turning points in your understanding of what reading was all about. Ask yourself why you are interested in reading. Scan your present reading habits. (No guilt, please, about the pile of unread books beside your bed.) Then ask yourself what you think these recollections will tell you that you think you don't know about reading. The only necessary condition for this exercise is that you should tell yourself what you already know, as if you were thinking it for the first time.   What comes clearly and easily to mind?" (Meek 1988)

*   Our own learning history is also part of something larger which repays exploration. It is scarcely a century since we set ourselves the goal of universal literacy, but still today the nature and purpose of literacy in our society remains very uncertain, however different from what it was a hundred years ago. We need to make sense of our work against such a historical backdrop as well as in autobiographical terms. There is no shortage of good historical studies (Williams 1961; Graff 1987) which tell that story. But there is also fruitful material nearer to hand for all of us in the history of our family's relation to literacy.   To what extent were others in the family literate?   How and to what extent has literacy affected the lives of others in our family?   And in earlier generations? There are few uninteresting answers to such questions.

See
"The Choosing"
b y
Liz Lochhead
i n
"Dreaming Frankenstein"
Polygon Press 1987

1.6
EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

"The first thing that I want to say to you who are students here, is that you cannot afford to think of being here to *receive* an education; you will do much better to think of being here to *claim* one." (Rich 1980)

INTRODUCTION

Redbridge High School English Department recognises that wider society operates in a way that, directly or indirectly, reduces the opportunities available, for example, to women, black people, children of working class families, children with special educational needs, and minority groups. The three factors in society, or in particular institutions or organisations, which account for the persistence of such inequalities are well expressed by Richardson (1990). They are:
* the structures and relations of power
* the beliefs and attitudes, and the cultural encounters and interchanges in which beliefs and attitudes are daily constructed and reconstructed
* the procedures, conventions, written and unwritten rules.
We seek actively to promote equal opportunities by looking critically at how these three factors impinge upon all aspects of the department's work and practices. This includes, for example, how we organise learning groups, the kind of curriculum we offer in terms of content, process and resources, and the assessment procedures we use.

Policies which support the aim of providing equal opportunities for all students and raising their awareness of equal opportunities issues in wider society are needed in all schools, not merely those which are co-educational or have multi-ethnic populations. The department's programme for equal opportunities forms a distinct but integral part of whole school and borough policies.

An effective approach to the provision of equal opportunities in the English programme involves detailed attention to four things: the role of language; access; representation; and assessment. All of these bear crucially upon issues of gender inequality; cultural diversity; special educational needs and social class.

The role of language

*   The issues of access and representation in regard to equal opportunities apply to all curriculum areas. The English department, however, has a quite distinctive opportunity and responsibility in this area because of the major role that language plays in the creation, transmission and perpetuation of attitudes, values and ideologies. Racism, sexism and other socially damaging ideologies are embedded in language. It is always in part through language that the disadvantage of particular groups is made to appear natural and inevitable. Language predates the individual and determines what it is possible to say. It "speaks" us to at least as great an extent as we speak and produce it. In order to speak the individual has to take up a subject position within the language system which already exists and is already defined for him or her. The view that language constructs reality rather than merely reflecting it extends our task as teachers of English to something more than helping students develop their language competence. It implies also a role for questioning, challenging and changing usage and the values embedded in language.

Access

*   The students are entitled to the full range of activities and experiences offered within the English programme.   But students' dispositions towards that programme will be very diverse depending upon a range of social and cultural factors. To ensure equal opportunities our task therefore is to arrange effective access. In addition to offering opportunities to all, we have to ensure that they are offered in such a way that all students have a realistic and effective chance of taking up the offer and do participate fully in all aspects of the programme . This entails, for example, a sensitive and systematic approach to the formation of groups within the class to ensure that particular groups are not allowed either to dominate or to be excluded. Careful differentiation is also required in the planning and structuring of tasks in order to ensure that all children experience success.

Representation

*   All the materials and resources used in the classroom   contain representations of particular groups. So too does the talk and writing produced in the classroom. We have to ensure that neither resources employed nor the classroom products contain stereotypes that are offensive to particular groups on grounds of race, class, gender or disability. Such care to avoid materials containing such stereotypes should be taken irrespective of whether there are members of such groups in the teaching group or school.   One of the criteria for the selection of departmental resources is that they contain positive images of groups that are frequently the subject of negative stereotyping. Some materials will be discarded because they are racist or sexist. Whilst there is no necessity for extensive bookburning, there is a need for commonly agreed approaches to those texts which teachers wish to use but which contain offensive language or representations. Common approaches are also required in our responses to students' work that raises such issues. Establishing and maintaining boundaries in such ways are important aspects of our work but they are not enough on their own.

*   If our approach extends only to policing infringements, our interventions are likely to be perceived by our students as arbitrary and addressed at the level of the personal and individual. Therefore we look together at the processes of representation in order to develop our students' understanding that all representation - of any group -
*   is inevitably partial and incomplete, selecting some and excluding other features
*   is always from a particular person or group's perspective
*   is connected in some kind of way to social, cultural or economic advantages and disadvantages
*   changes over time as a consequence of social processes
*   may have socially damaging consequences that are registered more often by their effect upon the victim than by the intentions of those employing that representation.

Awareness of the constructedness of personal or cultural identities and differences moves discussion to more impersonal ground and leaves open the possibility of change.

Assessment

*   Traditional forms of assessment have concerned themselves with normative measurement rather than a developmental approach, and have used criteria in which those being assessed have had no say. Any form of assessment which does not

involve those being assessed in the establishing of criteria for assessment is of necessity discriminatory.

Gender inequality

*   We know that language plays a crucial part in the persistence of gender inequality and that English itself remains a significantly gendered subject at all levels within the education system. In seeking to challenge gender inequality in all aspects of our work - content, methods, teacher attitudes - we endorse the approach recommended in the Primary Language Record. "Changing the book stock is not an adequate response; much more fundamental work will need to be done, involving a consideration of the hidden curriculum as well as the Programmes of Study." We take this to mean that our work will include the exploration and challenging of gender attitudes to and assumptions about reading, writing and talk. Nor is the focus of our approach simply upon the girls in our classes. An important part of our work in questioning the patriarchal nature of language is concerned with the consideration of how both masculinity and femininity are constructed and represented in language.

Cultural diversity

*   All individuals belong to a number of cultural groups. Language and personal identity is intimately bound up with cultural affiliation. We try to encourage dialogue and mutual understanding between individuals and groups, to develop openmindedness and to challenge prejudice and stereotyping at every level. In acknowledging the cultural diversity within our classrooms, we seek to celebrate plurality and difference. We recognise, however, that we cannot do this from a position of neutrality, for not all aspects of all cultures are universally desirable or free from conflict. Nor are all cultures equal in respect of their status and power and such inequalities have to be opened up for discussion and analysis. We try, therefore, not just to challenge those negative assumptions in the dominant culture which disadvantage others, but also to examine the assumptions underlying other cultures and the ways in which they work.

*   The literature read in class provides several excellent means of looking at the processes of culture. Discussion can focus, for example, upon how particular groups or individuals are represented and the assumptions underlying their representation; upon the ways in which individual characters are seen to be the product of their cultures; or upon the cultural assumptions which the students bring to the text and how that shapes the meaning they make from it.

*   Using the cultural expertise of our students offers different possibilities for developing students' awareness of culture as process. All of the many youth cultures or sub cultures - musical or linguistic, sporting or fashion - to which our students belong have ways of marking differences from others in fairly systematic ways. We seek to provide students with opportunities to articulate and reflect upon these systems of differences. The study of particular texts, practices or artefacts from popular, dominant or minority cultures should provide students with opportunities to explain and/or learn about:

> * the meanings which those texts etc. carry within the cultures
> and communities which created them;

> * the uses to which those texts etc. are put within those cultures

4 1

and communities, and the social contexts in which they are mostly
used;

* the alternative meanings which are constructed for those same
texts etc by other groups in society;

* the ways in which those alternative meanings are constructed
and negotiated by such other groups and the perceptions
upon which their meanings are founded.

*   Such a process of articulation and reflection is perhaps best set up by having
students teach us or others in the group - as an exercise of induction into the culture.
This entails not just spelling out the rules of how a particular text or culture goes, but
also - if the task is induction - taking account of its particular social practices and
consequences and its strengths and weaknesses. The students are thus put in the position
of experts, but equally importantly, the exercise provides the necessary detachment
from their cultural affiliation in a way that does not involve rejection but does enable
their evaluation of that culture.   This seems perhaps an overcomplex theorising of
classroom activities that we envisage might entail students working on such familiar
texts as, for example, their recollections of primary school playground rhymes and
jingles; rap or house music; trainers or designer jackets; soft drink adverts; or a tv
soap opera, as well as texts of a more conventional nature. It is important, however, if
we are to acknowledge cultural diversity in a manner that does advance our students'
learning, that we are clear as to our aims.   Without such clarity there is likely to be
little empowerment for our students.

*   The central aim has to be to enlarge our students' understanding of the processes
of culture and the social and historical contexts in which they are embedded. The aim is
not, as sometimes in the past, to demonstrate the superiority of whatever the dominant
culture happens to be over anything with which the student happens to express
affiliation. We are seeking to develop approaches which students can bring to all cultures
(including the dominant one), and which will enable them to understand the meanings
and the social consequences of those cultures. The extent of their participation in and
appropriation of any one of the cultures or cultural forms which students encounter in
their education is not for us to determine. Our responsibility is to ensure that they have
both the opportunity and the wherewithal to make meaningful choices and decisions.
Hornbrook (1989) argues that "if we are really concerned to make equal opportunities
for all our pupils a reality, whatever their racial or social identity, then we surely have
a responsibility to equip them with the means to interpret and appropriate the world in
which they live in the widest possible context." This requires more than reliance upon
the implicit knowledge of that with which the students are familiar. There has to be
reflection, analysis, comparison and "reference to the lexicon of the culture" if we are to
make the process of culture explicit.

*   In our approach to the question of cultural diversity, we try to "start
from the principle that it is not communities that produce culture, but culture
(understood as a complex history of symbolic and institutional practices and relations)
that produces and reproduces cultural identities and cultural differences." (Donald
1989)

*   "The true crisis in cultural theory in our time is between a view of art as
object and the alternative view of art as practice." (Williams 1980) We need to develop
the alternative view.

Special educational needs

*	Students who have been formally identified as having Special Educational Needs ought never to feel assessed as in some way deficient. The principles which inform their learning are no different from those laid out elsewhere in this part of the handbook: the centrality of motivation; the importance of collaborative processes; the taking on of progressively more responsibility for decisions about their learning.

*	It is not just those students who are statemented, however, who may experience learning difficulties in our groups. We work closely with the SEN department which co-ordinates provision across the curriculum, advising on content and classroom management and suggesting ways of making the curriculum more accessible to all students at all levels.

*	All students have the same full range of entitlements in English. Differentiation is by outcome and not by task.

*	The system of formative assessment employed by the department, with its stress on identifying individual achievements and targeting future areas for development, is especially important for students who have not yet gained confidence and full control over their learning.

*	Writing should not be allowed to become an obstacle in the learning process. When a written record is important, we aim to scribe for students whose writing will not communicate the ideas and information they can express orally. For students who are developing writers, it is important for their writing confidence that their desire to communicate does not become dominated by the fear of getting spellings wrong or of the piece being badly received.

Social class

*	It is no accident that this section of the handbook is the last to be completed and likely to prove the most difficult to write. The relationships between social class, language (or subject English) and education are complex and contentious. All that is attempted here is an inevitably partial and incomplete rehearsal of some of the issues and concerns. Those who wish to investigate the area further are recommended to consult "Language and Literacy" ed. Mercer (1989) as a starting point.

*	"Always historicise!" It helps to remember that "each time the question of language comes to the fore, that signifies that a series of other problems is about to emerge, the formation and enlarging of the ruling class, the necessity to establish more intimate and sure relations between the ruling groups and the popular masses, that is, the re-organisation of cultural hegemony." (Gramsci 1971)

Consider some of the injunctions to the English teacher from the writers of the Newbolt Report on the Teaching of English in 1922:
* "the ambassadors of poetry must be humble, they must learn to call nothing unclean, not even the local dialect, the smoky pall of industrial centres"
* (the English teacher's task) is "to fight against the powerful habits of speech contracted in the home and street. The teacher's struggle is thus not with ignorance but with a perverted power"

* (advancing this argument for the importance of literature) "Deny to the working class children any share in the immaterial and they will presently grow into the men who demand with menaces a communism of the material."

The teaching of Standard English and the role and function of literature within education have a long history. Both the intentions underlying the relevant legislation and the actual consequences of it are the subject of great dispute because the political and educational implications are so far reaching.

Nor are these issues simply a matter of past history. Whilst the tones of the Kingman and Cox Reports reveal a considerable change from Newbolt, there are also persistent continuities. These later documents do not in our view go far enough in promoting equal opportunities and adequately addressing what Barnes (1975) refers to as "the major educational issue of our time {which} is our failure to achieve an education which is equally available to members of the various sub cultures which inhabit our society." Past attitudes linger on both in what is said in the reports (and in the considerable pressures put upon the working groups) in regard to spoken Standard English, to bilingual students in England as opposed to those in Wales, and to literature. They are also apparent in the assumptions about the nature of democracy.

*   A further concern relates to the relationship between social class and educational attainment - and the role played by language in that relationship. There is a remarkable consistency over many years in this country and elsewhere that children from the more powerful, economically successful social groups tend to achieve higher standards than do those poorer less powerful groups in society. Two broad categories of explanation are advanced to account for this: deficit and difference theories. They are clearly described in the study guide acompanying Mercer (1980).

deficit theories "are explanations that suggest that children from some social backgrounds are more or less deprived of some of the social and linguistic experiences that underpin certain kinds of cognitive development, with the result that these children are less able to participate in the educational process."

difference theories "are those that argue there is no evidence for the intrinsic superiority of the linguistic (or other culturally based) habits of any particular social group, though there may well be differences in ways of communicating and/or attitudes to styles of language use that are more or less compatible with the demands of the curriculum and the organisation of schools."

"Thus deficit explanations tend to attribute educational failure to intrinsic inadequacies of the cultural experiences of disadvantaged groups, while the difference explanantions are usually more critical of the education system itself, suggesting that it is inherently biased towards the cultural norms of the more privileged social groups in ways that favour middle class children but cannot be educationally justified."

Reference to deficit or difference explanations permeate educational discussion to an extraordinary degree and at all levels, from informal accounts of classroom actuality to policy making at the highest level. Because these theories are so influential upon teacher expectations as regards what is possible and desirable in education, it is important to clarify our own position in regard to them and to be as explicit about their relevance to our classrooms as we are able.

We can see no evidence to support deficit theories and are well aware of the negative consequences that have derived from actions based upon them. This is apparent at the micro level of a teacher commenting that a beginner bilingual student "has no language" as well as in larger approaches and schemes that conceive education as damage limitation or replacement exercises. Whilst we are more sympathetic to accounts that lie within the difference theory framework, we are conscious that unnecessarily pessimistic conclusions have been drawn here. Differences certainly exist and the pattern of their effects in education has certainly, in general, been to the disadvantage of particular social groups and the advantage of others. Uncritical acceptance of those facts tends to have led all too often to depressed teacher expectations of their students. That conclusion is by no means necessary.

The real question at issue is the extent to which schools have the capacity or will to change themselves in ways that will minimise these disadvantages in the future. The central accusation in Bourdieu's account of cultural reproduction, for example, is that "by not giving explicitly to everyone what it demands of everyone, the education system demands of everyone alike that they have what it does not give." Our work in RHS is predicated on the assumption that the necessary changes can be made. We are encouraged in this by more recent ethnographic studies which pay greater attention to the culture of school and the ways in which those cultures are made, challenged and changed (see, for example, Medway 1980; Heath 1983; Mercer 1987; Grugeon and Woods 1991)

A note finally upon evaluating the effectiveness of equal opportunities policies and strategies in regard to social class. Such an exercise is relatively more straightforward in respect of gender, bilingualism and special needs in that the students concerned are readily identified. Moreover, monitoring in this area is generally regarded as necessary and desirable. The situation is entirely different as regards social class. At national level, little explicit attention is paid to social class differences in educational attainment and at the individual school level it is regarded as a difficult and contentious area. What is likely to be the most important factor in educational attainment is thus left to the province of formal educational research. In these circumstances the most important things that the individual school can do are:

> to make explicitly available to all pupils what is needed to give them
> access to the curriculum;
> to ensure, through appropriate discussions, that there is an adequate
> understanding in the school of the role of literacy within the family.

CONCLUSION

* In a recent essay, Richardson (1990) argues that " those of us who are involved in the practical educational politics associated with embodying the precept that 'all learners are of equal value' wish to ask and need satisfactory answers to (a number of) questions ". In preparing this section we have found one of the the questions which he proposes particularly thought provoking. It is this:

> "A historic task of education is to develop literacy and articulacy - the capacity to
> use words in order not merely to "communicate" and not merely to shape and
> create meaning, but also to compose and unfold personal identity and power.
> Therefore, further, to assert and to protect identity, and to help fashion and
> control social institutions and situations. For the benefit hopefully of, but to the
> possible disadvantage, alas of, other people. Articulacy and literacy - are you
> confident that you are developing these, particularly in children and communities

who historically have been tongueless?"

*   The equal opportunities programme should be inherent in all aspects of the department's work, as well as presented explicitly as a focus of study.   We hope that we have integrated strategies enabling teachers to ensure equal opportunities throughout the rest of the English Handbook.   It is important that the principles of equal opportunity are implemented. The monitoring and review of the process of implementation is regarded as a senior responsibility within the department.

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         See
"Dreaming  Black  Boy"
          by
     James  Berry
          in
"  Wordlife"  ed.  Knott
     Nelson  1988
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A STATEMENT ON BILINGUALISM

SOME PRINCIPLES

The term 'bilingual' refers to any user of more than one language. Users can vary from those who understand several languages but prefer to speak one of them, to those who are fully fluent and literate in more than one language, and move naturally and unconsciously from one language to another (code-switching). The majority of people in the world are bilingual, and one in three of Redbridge High School students is bilingual.

Bilingual learners already have competence in one language and are adding to the repertoire. They already have a full range of cognitive abilities.

Children in the early stages of learning English need the opportunity to talk and read and write in their home language to maintain their conceptual development and to help their understanding and acquisition of English. Research has shown that maintaining and developing the first language, far from interfering with the acquisition of English, helps students to become more competent and confident in its use.

Bilingual students have the same rights as monolinguals to have access to the curriculum and to conceptual development. They do not need activities or approaches that are different from their monolingual peers. The definition of good English teaching which the department aims for is valid for all learners, whether mono or bilingual. Learning, for all, is most successful where motivation is high and stress low. The ethos of the classroom, therefore, needs to be one which maintains high expectations of bilingual students and acknowledges their knowledge and experience and which combats racism in organisation, behaviour and resources.

SOME RESERVATIONS AND ANXIETIES REGARDING BILINGUAL STUDENTS AND THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM

We cannot pretend that we are entirely happy in the department with the treatment of bi-lingual issues in the new legislation. It may be that some modifications are to be introduced at later date. For the moment we share some of the anxieties expressed in a recent lecture by Professor Michael Stubbs, a member of the Cox Committee. Reviewing current changes in the British education system, particularly as regards language issues, he concludes:

*   "that basic attitudes are unchanged and that there are major attempts to further strengthen the dominant position of Standard English, rather than to attempt a more balanced relationship between English and other languages." and that "there is no actual promotion or financial support (for bilingual education). There is no explicit right even to use such languages in education. There is only weakly supported co-existence in very narrow domains."

*   "Bilingual children do not anywhere (in the NC requirements) get credit for their knowledge of two or more languages."

*   "The guidance to the Cox working group stated that 'the group should take account of the ethnic diversity of the school population and society at large, bearing in mind the cardinal point that English should be the first language and medium of instruction for all pupils in England.' The assumption appears to be that bilingual education in Britain is

ruled out and that English should become(?) the 'first language' of the children themselves. Language loss appears to be recommended. Given that the paragraph is about 'equal opportunities', it is just double speak." (Stubbs 1989)

LANGUAGE DIVERSITY IN REDBRIDGE

The Schools Language Survey was conducted in Redbridge in 1988. A summary of the findings is given below to enable colleagues to have an accurate picture of the extent of language diversity within the borough.

Main survey findings

1.   Every Redbridge school has bilingual pupils and several languages are represented in each school.

2.   29,317 pupils were involved in the survey. This represents 94.4% of the total school population on roll including Nursery and Sixth Form. Of this total 7951 pupils (27.1% of the total population on roll) are bilingual or multilingual in the sense that they use one or more languages other than English for conversational purposes. In the primary sector 29.3 % are bilingual and in the secondary sector the figure is 24.5%.

3.   1433 pupils reported that they used a language other than English exclusively for religious purposes. Of these, 1023 reported that they used only English in conversation. In all cases the languages involved were either Arabic or Hebrew. If these pupils are included with the bilingual pupils, then 31% (9074) of Redbridge pupils have skills in one or more languages other than English.

4.   128 language varieties were mentioned. This count retains the distinction between different dialects or regional variations, e.g. Italian and Neapolitan are counted separately, as are Spanish and Mexican Spanish. Much of the survey analysis, however, has been conducted by combining such closely related languages.

5.   The most commonly reported languages recorded in the survey were: Panjabi; Urdu; Gujerati; Hebrew; Hindi; Arabic; Bengali; Greek; Turkish; Chinese languages; French; Italian; Spanish; Tamil and Mauritian Creole. More than 90% of the bilingual pupils spoke one of these languages. By contrast, 15 languages were recorded as being spoken by only 1 speaker, and 58 languages had 10 or fewer speakers.

6.   3185 pupils (10.86 %) of the total school population have literacy skills in one or more languages other than English. In the primary sector10.84% (1747) of the total population have literacy skills in a language other than English, whilst in the secondary sector 11.69% (1438) have these skills.

7.   Within the 5-16 age range, in general terms, there is a greater proportion of bilingual pupils in the primary sector than in the secondary sector.

8.   The overall incidence of bilingualism in the school population is 27%, but this conceals considerable variation between different parts of the borough.

9.   Almost every teacher is therefore likely to be teaching one or more bilingual pupils in the normal course of events. Every pupil is likely to be learning in a multi-lingual classroom.

A prompt sheet for bilingual concerns

The prompt sheet below was developed by Redbridge teachers as an aid to planning. It is in the form of questions that might be asked of any piece of curriculum work that is being prepared.

*   Does what we are learning apply to all languages?

*   Has use been made of students' implicit knowledge about language?

*   What resources can we provide to support a wider view?

*   Are the languages spoken in the borough represented both in the resources (audio/ visual/text) and in the outcomes of the curriculum?

*   Are the groupings and activities geared to promoting confidence in using home languages in the classroom?

*   Are we aware of the implications, and prepared with strategies with which to respond to controversial issues?

*   Are we prepared to address the injustices that may be revealed?

*   Are our activities going to instil confidence in bilingual pupils, or make them feel exploited?

> **See also**
> **"Listen Mr Oxford Don"**
> **by**
> **John Agard**
> **in**
> **'The New British Poetry:**
> **1968-88'**
> **ed. Allnutt, D'Aguiar, Edwards**
> **& Mottram.   Paladin 1988**

1.8

A NOTE ON NATIONAL CURRICULUM TERMINOLOGY

There is a potentially very interesting assignment awaiting development which would deal with the cultural implications of the kind of linguistic changes involved in how the curriculum is now described. In the meantime, teachers have to get to grips with a range of possibly unfamiliar terms which will certainly be employed by those who evaluate their work irrespective of whether teachers use the terms or not. There is a danger of classroom work being described in quite different ways, using quite different terminology, the differences being dependent upon one's position within an educational hierarchy. The purpose of this section is to list those terms with which it is important for teachers to be familiar and to cite the official definition of them. The section will also provide some kind of gloss upon the terms which locates them in more familiar classroom experiences.

The numbers in bold type refer to OHP sheets in the National Curriculum Information Pack No. 2 produced by the NCC (1990).

Curriculum Definitions   (NCC   C5,   C6)

> * **key stages (KS)** -   the periods in each pupil's education to which the elements of the National Curriculum will apply. There are four key stages, normally related to the age of the majority of the pupils in a teaching group. They are: the beginning of compulsory education to 7; 7 - 11; 11- 14; and 14 to the end of compulsory education.

> * **programmes of study (PoS)** - the matters, skills and processes which must be taught to pupils during each key stage in order for them to meet the objectives set out in the attainment targets.

> * **attainment targets (AT)** - objectives for each foundation subject, setting out the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils of different abilities and maturities are expected to develop within each subject area. They are further defined at ten levels of attainment by means of appropriate statements of attainment.

> * **profile components** -   groups of attainment targets brought together for the purposes of assessment and reporting.

> * **statements of attainment** - more precise objectives than the broader attainment targets, which will be defined within statutory orders. They are related to one of ten levels of attainment on a single continuous scale, covering all four key stages.

> * **levels of attainment** - these are ten different levels of achievement defined within each attainment target, reflecting differences in ability and in progress according to age.

* **Relationship between attainment targets and programmes of study (NCC D1)**

attainment targets	programmes of study
ends	means
what	what and how
information for:	information for:
teachers pupils parents and governors	teachers, relating to progression and differentiation
recording and reporting pupils' levels of attainment	planning the next steps in pupils' learning.

Why a National Curriculum?

The National Curriculum will:

* give a clear incentive for all schools to catch up with the best and the best will be challenged to do even better

* provide teachers with detailed and precise objectives

* provide parents with clear, accurate information

* ensure continuity and progression from one year to another, from one school to another

* help teachers concentrate on the task of getting the best possible results from each individual child.

(adapted from the Secretary of State's speech, 6/1/89)

We have reservations about the tone, assumptions and implications of this statement. We would prefer to express the rationale for a common curriculum in a more positive way.

The Organisation of the Curriculum (NCC A7)

It will be for schools to decide how to organise and timetable work in the subjects of the National Curriculum and RE. It will be for them to decide what other possibilities should be available and how they should be timetabled.
In doing so, it is important that they should consider the curriculum as a whole. This will allow them to make the most of links between subjects.

Cross-curricular elements (NCC A8, A9, A10, A11)

Cross curricular elements help to integrate the curriculum. NCC uses three terms as an aid to whole curriculum planning and review:

* cross curricular dimensions
* cross curricular skills
* cross curricular themes.

Cross curricular **dimensions** :

* are concerned with the intentional promotion of pupils' personal and social development through the curriculum as a whole, not just through courses of personal and social education

* need to be an explicit part of every school's whole curriculum policy

* include all aspects of equal opportunities and education for life in a multicultural society

* are the responsibility of all teachers and all schools.

Cross curricular **skills** can be developed through all subjects and areas of the curriculum. Examples include:

communication skills	numeracy
study skills	problem solving
personal and social skills	information technology.

Cross - curricular **themes** extend pupils' knowledge and understanding, and help them develop new concepts and skills. All involve questions of values and belief and encourage pupils to examine their own and others' attitudes. Examples include:

economic and industrial understanding	careers education and guidance
health education	education for citizenship
environmental education.	

The Curriculum (NCC B1)

The curriculum should have:

breadth	balance
relevance	differentiation
progression	continuity

(from The Curriculum 5-16
HMSO 1985)

Differentiation (NCC B2, B3)

The curriculum has to satisfy two seemingly contrary requirements. On the one hand it has to reflect the broad aims of education which hold good for all children, whatever their capabilities and whatever the schools they attend. On the other hand it has to allow for differences in the abilities, aptitudes and needs of children, even of the same age. If it is to be effective, the school curriculum must allow for differences.

(from A View of the Curriculum, HMSO 1980)

The National Curriculum will help teachers to:

*   assess what each pupil knows, understands and can do

*   use their assessments and the programmes of study to identify the learning needs of individual pupils

*   plan programmes of work which take account of their pupils' attainments and allow them to work at different levels

*   ensure that all pupils achieve their maximum potential.

Progression and Continuity   (NCC B4, B5)

Progression and continuity are concerned with the ways in which pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills build and develop over time through:

*   the sequencing and organisation of experiences, activities, topics and themes encountered by pupils

*   the compatibility and coherence of the organisation and approaches adopted by different teachers and different schools, as pupils move through their time in school.

(adapted from Mathematics Non Statutory Guidance, NCC, June 1989)

The National Curriculum provides a framework which will help pupils, teachers and schools to :

*   build on pupils' earliest learning experiences from age 5

*   prepare for the next stages of pupils' development through continuing education, training and work

*   communicate such information more effectively within and between schools and to parents, employers and others.

Continuity and transition   (NCC B6)

The transfer of pupils from primary to secondary schools can be helped by:

* regular meetings of teachers from a secondary school and the primary schools which send pupils to it to review teaching styles, learning experiences and teaching materials

* curriculum guidelines which span primary and secondary phases

* joint use of facilities and resources

* continuation in the secondary school of a theme or project begun in the primary school

* visits by teachers to each other's schools and classrooms and joint participation in the teaching.

(adapted from Education Observed 10 - Curriculum Continuity at 11+, HMI 1989)

Progression   (NCC B7, B8, B9, B11, B12)

B 7   Pupils learn in different ways and progress at different rates, even within aspects of the same subject.

"It is not necessary to presume that the progression defined by SoA indicates some inescapable order in the way children learn."

It is not necessary to insist that:
* pupils should always achieve the previous level before going on to the next
* pupils must achieve the same level in all ATs before progressing to the next.

B 8   Good assessment promotes and enhances learning. It allows teachers to:
* gain insight into how an individual pupil learns
* diagnose particular learning difficulties
* plan subsequent experiences for pupils in order to secure progression
* evaluate the effectiveness of their teaching
* report clearly on what pupils know and can do.

B 9   It is important that curriculum planning and assessment should take account of strands (e.g. drama or knowledge about language) within attainment targets.

B11 Strands and SoA in English AT2: Reading level 5

strand	statement of attainment
range of literature read	demonstrate in talking and writing about a range of stories and poems which they have read, an ability to explain preferences.
responses to literature	demonstrate in talking or writing about fiction, poetry, non-fiction and other texts that they are developing their own views and can support them by reference to some details in the text.
understanding and inter-preting non-literary and media texts	show in discussion that they can recognise whether matter in non-literary and media texts is presented as fact or opinion
study skills and methods of finding information	select reference books and other information materials and use organisational devices to find answers to their own questions and those of others.
knowledge about language	show through discussion an awareness of a writer's choice of particular words and phrases and the effect on the reader.

B12 Example of progression in one strand in English AT2

Strand: study skills and methods of finding information

level	statement of attainment
5	select reference books and other information materials and use organisational devices to find answers to their own questions and those of others
6	select from a range of reference materials, using appropriate methods to identify key points
7	select, retrieve and combine information independently from a wide range of reference materials
8	select, retrieve, evaluate and combine information independently and with discrimination, from a comprehensive range of reference materials.

N.B. NCC points out the need for flexibility in interpreting any grouping of skills into broad strands. They cite Cox: "we recognise that language development is not linear but recursive." We have real difficulty in reconciling these views with the notion of levels of attainment contained at its heart by the Statutory Orders. What really *is* the difference between 5 and 8?

Schemes of Work - English (NCC F10, F11)

In preparing schemes of work teachers will need to identify:

*   a range of activities, experiences and materials which involve speaking and listening, reading and writing in an integrated approach

*   opportunities for relating work in English to the rest of the curriculum

*   the needs of individual children, including those with special needs

*   the needs of bilingual children

*   a range of teaching and learning styles, including opportunities for pupils to work as individuals, in pairs and small groups

*   methods available to monitor work in progress and children's achievements

*   ways of reviewing and evaluating the scheme of work and its effectiveness.

(Adapted from English Key Stage 1, Non-statutory Guidance, NCC 1989)

Planning needs to take account of:

*   programmes of study, attainment targets and non statutory guidance

*   links between subjects or areas of learning and experience

*   cross curricular skills, themes and dimensions

*   each pupil's previous learning experiences and needs, capablilities, pace and styles of learning

*   differentiation so that pupils working towards different levels can experience success

*   agreed policies within the school on assessment, record keeping and curriculum review and evaluation.

1.9
SOME VIEWS ON LANGUAGE, LEARNING AND LITERACY

This section acknowledges that none of what has appeared in the preceding pages is particularly original. We have been influenced by a number of thinkers and this representative selection of quotations is intended partly to indicate some of the thinking behind our views and partly to pay our dues.

1. Putting our work in a historical perspective...

*   Even today, after more than a century of general literacy, it would be wrong to say that there is effectively equal access to written and printed material or anything like effectively equal opportunities to contribute to it. There are important individual differences in this but there are also basic social differences.   (Williams 1983)

*   There is a process which I call " the selective tradition": that which, within the terms of the effective dominant culture, is always passed off as "the tradition", "the significant past". But always the selectivity is the point: the way in which from a whole possible area of past and present, certain meanings and practices are chosen for emphasis, certain other meanings and practices are neglected and excluded. Even more crucially, some of those meanings and practices are re-interpreted, diluted, or put into forms which support or at least do not contradict other elements in the dominant culture.   (Williams 1980)

2. ...and a social perspective.

*   Language is never simply the purveyor of fixed and permanently established meanings. In society, in history, it is always the site of dialectic process, continuously reconstructed and remade... Once teaching is seen as inserted into these wider cultural processes, it cannot be right to see classrooms as simply and necessarily the means by which culture is reproduced... Classrooms may be part of the production of culture; and it becomes possible to see this when notions of language and society as merely fixed and static sytems are overturned. (Burgess 1984)

3. Education - to what end ?

*   Literacy becomes a meaningful construct to the degree that is viewed as a set of practices that function to either empower or disempower people. (Freire 1987)

*   Education is the means whereby individuals deal critically and creatively with reality and in so doing discover how to participate in the transformation of their world. (Freire) ·

*   Not all social power is literary, but all literary power is social. The literary act is a social act. (Lentricchia 1985)

*   You have to train people to become doctors or engineers or professors, and at the same time to train them in questioning all that - not only in a critical way, but in a deconstructive way. This is a double responsibility: two responsibilities which sometimes are not compatible. In my own teaching, in my own responsibilities, I think I have to make two gestures simultaneously: to train people, to teach them, to give them a profession; and at the same time to make them as conscious as possible of the problems of profession-alisation. (Derrida in Salusinszky 1987)

*   There cannot be wholeness in individuals independently of strenuous attempts to heal rifts and contradictions in wider society and in the education system. Conversely, political struggle to create wholeness in society - that is, equality and justice in dealings and relationships between social classes, between countries, between ethnic groups, between women and men - is doomed to no more than partial success and hollow victories, at best, if it does not in its turn strengthen and and sustain the search for wholeness and integration in individuals. (Richardson 1990)

4.   Everyone is entitled to an intellectual life - the student as intellectual

*   Although one can speak of intellectuals, one cannot speak of nonintellectuals, because non intellectuals do not exist...   Each man (sic) finally, outside his professional activity, carries on some form of intellectual activity, that is, he is a 'philosopher', an artist, a man of tastes, he participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought. (Gramsci 1971)

5. Winning support

*   To reverse (the bureaucracy of tests that have overtaken American teachers) requires acting outside the classroom...   In the end teachers can defend successfully the enclaves they have constructed only if they have won the parents and community to their methods and can invoke their support in sustaining them.   And those are ways with words which have to be learned too.   They constitute the language of political participation. (Rosen 1988)

6. Re-building the apparatus

*   The way I am provisionally seeing English, then, is in terms of separate starting points and converging activities............First, there are the purposes of social and personal participation. Curiosity about the world and the urge to get stuck into it will give rise to the production of texts and the reading of texts. Some of these texts will yield a high degree of textual pleasure. Examining the texts as discourse, for the way they construct pictures of the world, will be an aspect of the pursuit of social understanding - a logical continuation of social inquiry.
        On the other side there are purposes of pleasure. These will lead to the reading of texts , many of them literary, and the production of texts, in a playful, disinterested, irresponsible, exuberant sort of way. The texts produced, and the texts read will be enjoyed and their textuality studied: sometimes they will be played with and experimentallly altered. It will often happen that these texts turn out to say interesting things, to offer insights and perspectives which are illumunating: social and personal

learning may result.

I see access as being at the same time access to understanding, to pleasure and to control over the texts one produces and is exposed to, and I see the separately originating pursuits as mutually confirming. (Medway 1988)

* Everyone reads life and the world like a book. Even the so-called 'illiterate'. But especially the 'leaders' of our society, the most 'responsible' nondreamers: the politicians, the businessmen, the ones who make plans. Without the reading of the world as a book, there is no prediction, no planning, no taxes, no laws, no welfare, no war. Yet these leaders read the world in terms of rationality and averages, as if it were a text-book. The world actually writes itself with the many levelled, unfixable intricacy and openness of a work of literature. If, through our study of literature, we can ourselves learn and teach others to read the world in the 'proper' risky way, and to act upon that lesson, perhaps we literary people would not forever be such helpless victims. (Spivak 1987)

* Reading and writing are important because we read and write our world as well as our texts, and are read and written by them in turn. Texts are places where power and weakness becomes visible and discussable, where learning and ignorance manifest themselves, where the structures that enable and constrain our thoughts and actions become palpable...

...We must stop teaching literature and start studying texts. Our rebuilt apparatus must be devoted to textual studies, with the production and consumption of texts thoroughly intermingled...

...All kinds of texts, verbal as well as visual, polemical as well as seductive, must be taken for the occasions for further textuality. And textual studies must be pushed beyond the discrete boundaries of the page and book and into the institutional practices and social structures that can themselves be usefully studied as codes and texts. (Scholes 1985)

* The philologists whose task is to fix the meaning of words tend to forget that ...sayings, proverbs, aphorisms, sometimes proper names...are an object of permanent conflict; and I believe that, if a certain verse of Simonides survived through the entire history of Greece, this is precisely because it was so important for the group, that by appropriating it for oneself, one was appropriating for oneself power over the group. The interpreter who imposes his or her interpretation is not only the one who has the last word in a philological quarrel; he or she is also, quite frequently, the one who has the last word in a political struggle, who by appropriating the word, puts *common sense* on his or her side. One need only think of the slogans - such as democracy, liberty, liberalism - which politicians [appropriate] in order to give meaning to the world, in particular the social world, and create a consensus as to the meaning of this world." (Bourdieu 1990)

1.10

FURTHER READING

In the preparation of this handbook we have found many of the publications from the English and Media Centre, The National Association for the Teaching of English and the National Association of Advisers in English to be invaluable. These include:

From the English
and Media Centre:

> The English Magazine
> The English Department Handbook
> The English Curriculum: Writing
> The English Curriculum: Gender
> The English Curriculum: Race
> The English Curriculum: Poetry
> The English Curriculum: Reading 1 Comprehension
> The English Curriculum: Reading 2 Slow Readers
> Bilingual Learners: Support Material
> Shared Reading
> Making Stories
> Changing Stories
> Reading Stories
> Mass Media Bibliography

From The National Association for the Teaching of English:

> Learning to be Literate in a Democratic Society
> Alice in Genderland
> Stories and Meanings
> Expanding Horizons
> IT's English: accessing English with computers
> Exploring Poetry 5-8
> Moving on-continuity and liaison in action
> Responding in Writing

From The National Association of Advisers in English:

> Understanding Language - Perera
> English Whose English - Allen
> Words not Numbers: assessment in English - Barrs.

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PART B:
FROM POLICY TO PRACTICE

Policy is the agreement by a group of people to act in common on essential matters.

Practice is the collective entirety of what they actually do.

The purpose of this part of the handbook is to lay out the agreed practices and procedures of RHS English Department. We hope that this part will be used by colleagues to reflect upon and refine their approaches, and as a curriculum planning aid. Part B contains the following sections:

SECTION TWO   DEPARTMENTAL ORGANISATION
SECTION THREE   STUDENT ENTITLEMENTS
SECTION FOUR   TEACHING STRATEGIES
SECTION FIVE   PLANNING, ASSESSING,RECORDING,REPORTING:
                                A FRAMEWORK
SECTION SIX   THE DEPARTMENTAL DEVELOPMENTAL PLAN

Suggestions for Using Part B to plan a year's work with a class are given overleaf.

Using Part B to plan a year's work with a class:

*   *We suggest three documents for planning:*

> ** Minimum Requirements List* - *the departmentally agreed set of activities to which all students are entitled in the course of a year.*
>
> ** The Scheme of Work* *-a broad outline of the sequence of actual activities etc selected and planned by the teacher for the class. The Scheme of Work is also a record.*
>
> ** The Class Plan* - *the detailed planning sheet used to prepare (and record) an individual activity or unit.*

*   *Consult Section 3.01. This gives our suggested set of requirements for a year group . If this matches with your agreed department policy, then teachers can proceed to construct , individually or collaboratively, an outline Scheme of Work for the year's work with their classes. If, however, our set of requirements does not meet with agreeement , then the first task for the department is to agree their own list of activities to which they think all students in any year group are entitled.*

*   *Section Three gives guidance on how to create a varied and structured sequence of activities. Section 5.2 gives our suggested format for the Scheme of Work.*

*   *Section 5.2 also contains a suggested format for a Class Plan to help teachers with the detailed planning of a sequence of work or unit. This section also contains detailed consideration of how the Class Plan fits into the overall framework of planning and assessment.*

*   *Section 4.4 gives examples of completed Class Plans.*

SECTION TWO

DEPARTMENTAL ORGANISATION

2.0   DEPARTMENTAL ORGANISATION

2.1   THE DEPARTMENT TEAM: RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROUTINES

2.2   THE ORGANISATION OF TEACHING GROUPS

2.3   SUPPORT

2.4   THE DEPARTMENT'S RESOURCES

2.5   THE LIBRARY/RESOURCES CENTRE

2.6   ENGLISH AND OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

2.7   COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

2.8   HOMEWORK POLICY

2.9   EXAMINATION COURSES

2.10   THE ADVISORY SERVICE

2.0   DEPARTMENTAL ORGANISATION

This part of the handbook reflects the belief that the success of individual English teachers' work depends greatly on the strength of team approaches in the department and in the school as a whole. Our work in our 'own' classrooms connects us with colleagues in the department, in other areas of the school, in other schools, in the advisory services, and with parents. From working collaboratively with each other, and from the attempt to establish common goals and a measure of consensus on issues related to teaching and learning, we can become more confident in what we do and develop a deeper understanding of the processes we work with.

2.1

THE DEPARTMENT TEAM:
RESPONSIBILITIES AND ROUTINES

2.11   The role of the Head of Department
2.12   The role of Second in Department
2.13   All teachers in the Department
2.14   Meetings
2.15   INSET
2.16   Monitoring
2.17   Liaison with other schools

This section would also contain a full list of all those teaching within the department, whether full or part time, together with the details of their individual responsibilities.

It may be helpful to think about responsibilities within the department as falling into one of three broad categories so that as far as is possible each full time member of department has some responsibility in each category:
* ***curriculum*** *- responsibility for a particular part of the English curriculum, however that is divided up: horizontally (lower, middle and upper school) or vertically (talk, media, reading, etc.)*
* ***administration*** *- exam entries, stock orders, checking there is work for absent colleagues' classes, etc.*
* ***curriculum innovation or projects*** *- whether within the department, like piloting records of achievement, or keeping up to date with developments in a particular area like Kingman and the LINC project.*

It is important that the details of what is involved in these responsibilities are agreed and clearly stated , perhaps in the handbook or in the relevant person's job description.

These responsibilities - curriculum, administration, projects- are regularly reviewed and , as far as possible , are rotated amongst department members so that each teacher has the opportunity to develop their expertise and broaden their experience.

[The following two sections are largely based on Talking Together, Waters 86.]

2.11 THE ROLE OF THE HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

No single individual can define a management role. Roles are defined variously by the different people with whom the HOD has professional contact. The HOD needs to be aware that the perception of his/her role will vary according to context, and that these perceptions should influence behaviour.

By the department the HOD is likely to be seen as:

*   initiator
*   facilitator
*   evaluator
*   promoting colleagues' job satisfaction and career development
*   overseeing a unity

* organising a clearly defined system of delegated responsibilities.

By senior management in the school the HoD is likely to be seen as:

* responsible for curriculum design
* voicing departmental concerns
* liaising with others
* advisory role in whole school affairs
* pivot between management and staff
* taking objective views of interdepartmental conflict

Likely tasks include:

Organising INSET	Implementing whole school policies
Delegating	Administering
Leading by example	Negotiating - resources, rooms, time-table
Ordering and controlling stock	Counselling
Supporting	Monitoring
Initiating	Maintaining morale
Curriculum development	Setting work for absent colleagues, if need be
Supervising staff development	Developing whole school policies

2.12 THE ROLE OF SECOND IN DEPARTMENT

This role is defined by negotiation within the department. Three main areas for negotiation are:

* Deputising
* Assuming specific areas of administrative and curricular responsibility
* Career development.

2.13 ALL TEACHERS IN THE DEPARTMENT (including HOD and 2i/c)

It is a departmental aim that each teacher of English, whether a junior member of staff, a member of the management team, part-time, or teaching other subjects, will feel able to contribute to the policy and practice of the English team. Ideally individual teachers or working groups will welcome the opportunity to take responsibility for a variety of departmental areas: leading teams, promoting cross-curricular links, undertaking curricular projects.

While consideration must be given to individual commitments and preferences, there is an expectation that in the course of three to four years a teacher will have gained experience of all areas of the department's work and be ready to take responsibility for it.

Constraints on the roles taken by members of the department are acknowledged to include:

Whole school policy
Staffing
Facilities
Stress
Time.

Probationers' Entitlements

In addition to any induction programme centrally organised by RHS, the English department views probationary teachers as entitled to:

* a permanent teaching base. In the event of there not being one room per teacher, then priority should be given to providing a permanent base for those new to teaching rather than senior staff;

* a regular weekly opportunity to talk through their work with the HoD or another experienced teacher;

* opportunities to observe and teach with other colleagues in the department.

There is a particular concern that teachers new to the profession are given real responsibility to match their growing sense of confidence and expertise, and a system of task 'shadowing' is instituted: observing a procedure one year, taking responsibility for it the next.

Timetabling and Rooming

The allocation of teaching groups and rooms is inevitably subject to a range of constraints. The burden of such constraints is shared to ensure that all staff have the opportunity to develop their professional expertise and have equal access to the department's rooming resources. Thus within a 2/3 year period all members will have the opportunity to teach across the full age and ability range; and where there are insufficient permanent teaching bases, rooms are rotated on an annual basis to ensure all staff experience teaching in an appropriate base.

2.14 MEETINGS

A desire to encourage the sharing of ideas and practice within and across departments must be at the heart of school management concerns; we expect the calendar to have a weekly Teams slot, and for training days to be weighted towards departmental time. Teams meetings focus on a particular part of the curriculum divided horizontally by Year, or vertically (e.g. oracy, media, equal opportunities). The meetings will vary in character and personnel, and be chaired by different people. Not all Teams slots need be used - generally there are lots at the start of term as each team meets to review and to plan, fewer later.

This leaves Departmental meetings (2 or 3 a term) free for discussion of wider departmental and school issues.

Meetings are regularly attended by colleagues from the Language Support Service and the Special Educational Needs department, and from time to time by colleagues from other departments, the school librarian or by visitors to the school.

Waves of admin./info. are dealt with by memo if necessary and not allowed to clog meetings. An agenda is prepared in advance for meetings and members of the team take responsibility in turn for keeping brief minutes of items dealt with and decisions made. In order to cut down on the time spent in meetings and avoid frustration we try to ensure that the purpose and task for each meeting is clearly stated.

2.15 INSET

INSET is seen as part of the departmental development plan (DDP) and also contributes to the school's Institutional Developmental Plan (IDP). The DDP is drawn up collaboratively by the team and involves identifying those aspects of the department's work that are felt to require change/development/improvement. Once the needs have been identified they are translated into tasks which are then prioritised. A timescale for each task is set, including a time for review, and the staff to be involved and responsible are identified. See Section 6 on The Department Development Plan.

Whatever the model of INSET in play, it is a common principle that department members' skills and interests can be valued by their being given opportunities both to develop a particular area on behalf of colleagues, and to share knowledge and experience they have gained.

A commitment to group INSET is made only when the focus is agreed by the department to have relevance to the department's work, and to be happening at an appropriate time.

Our training ought to reflect the pedagogic understandings reached by reflection on our own teaching: a variety of contexts with emphases on active learning, real purposes, and collaboration with other teachers within the department and from other schools. The monitoring, review and evaluation of INSET provision is regarded as a senior responsibility within the department.

The aims of INSET
* Exchange of ideas and good practice
* Opportunities to reflect on experience
* Introduction to curricular developments and trends, and ways of implementing curriculum innovation
* Making available current literature, resources, and materials
* Exploration of the skills needed to work with colleagues.

The range of INSET provision
* Cascade model.   Department representatives receive INSET centrally, on a borough, consortium or nation wide basis, and deliver same to department.

There are reservations about this model of training. It can become (like anything else) ineffective and burdensome through overuse. It can affirm an inappropriately hierarchical view of how decisions are made about departmental development.
It can be useful, however, when the focus of training is perceived as relevant to the department's needs, the central training is of good quality, and the training role is filled by a range of staff.

* Departmental INSET

The system most likely to encourage a natural self-managed form of development is one where different members of the department take responsibility for specific areas. 'Teams' and meetings are arranged around this division of departmental responsibilities. Small working groups can be established at a variety of levels of intensity with the aim of clarifying issues and identifying ways of moving on. Anyone following a relevant course is given an opportunity to link their studies with their departmental role.

*   Whole School INSET

The English department appreciates the contribution that other departments can make in areas where the department's and the whole school's development coincide, such as I.T. or assessment procedures; in turn English teachers will have important contributions to make towards a number of whole school discussions, especially those to do with language.

*   Externally run courses

While we welcome the opportunity to be in control of our own departmental development, we believe that teachers' in-school developments are supported by the experience of off site training, and that supply cover for such experiences needs to be a high priority in the school, with two days per year (excluding moderation meetings etc.) as a minimum expectation for each member of the department.   Participation in 'twilight' courses is voluntary, but it is the responsibility (which can be delegated) of HoD to keep abreast of current borough, consortium and national initiatives and developments.

*   Innovations and Projects

There is a crucial aspect of INSET which derives from participation in particular projects, either within the school (such as working with other departments on cross-curricular projects, or working with professional arts practitioners in the classroom), or looking beyond the school for involvement with regional and national initiatives such as the National Writing Project or the Language In The National Curriculum group.

*   Planning and Follow up

When planning INSET it is important to clarify the aims, methods, timescale, arrangements for review and anticipated outcomes at the very outset. Some kind of prompt sheet with appropriate questions helps this planning stage:
what is the purpose of the INSET?
what do we want to achieve?
what things will indicate if it has been successful?
what methods will be used for the INSET?
over what sort of timescale?
how will the INSET be reviewed - by whom, how and at what stages?

It is important also to think how the activity or course will be followed up. If teachers are to be supported in undertaking curriculum development there needs to be a strategy and systems for follow up and dissemination.

2.16 MONITORING

The new legislation places much greater emphasis than hitherto upon accountability and the management of educational provision. There is therefore much greater emphasis at both the LEA and school level upon monitoring the department's work. Under the new legislation, one function of the advisory service will be to monitor the quality of school's

work to help ensure that the National Curriculum is being delivered and to work in partnership on identification of the school's needs. Monitoring involves a celebration of good work and good practice and alerts those responsible to issues that need to be addressed. Much of the most effective monitoring, however, will be done by schools themselves. Clear procedures are required to ensure that the HoD knows what is going on in the department. The procedures employed in the English department include: regular occasions upon which to discuss samples of work from across a year group; collaborative planning, teaching and evaluation of units of work for a particular year group by all staff involved; regular sharing and discussion of class plans; central storing of class plans and records; classroom observations.

2.17 LIAISON WITH OTHER SCHOOLS

As part of the whole school policy on primary/secondary liaison, an important responsibility within the department is the establishing and maintaining of links with colleagues in local primary schools.

There are four main aspects of this work:

* **Curriculum continuity**   We need to be aware of and learn from each other's approach to language development. Primary language co-ordinators are given copies of relevant sections of the English Handbook. In return, we need to know what kinds of activities, working processes, and texts have been experienced by students coming to Redbridge High School.

* **Record transfer**   Students come to R.H.S. accompanied by a copy of Annual Reports and a portfolio of work exemplifying their achievements in language development.

* **Students as sources and audiences**   At different points in their careers, students will engage in activities which ask them to work with children in Infant or Junior schools - telling and writing stories for or with them, interviewing and being interviewed, making books for them, performing drama pieces, etc. Sometimes the initiative will be with the primary students, sometimes with the Redbridge High students, sometimes it will be a joint project. Visits will therefore be two-way.

* **Exchanges**   The best way to find out about each other's work is to do it! We look for opportunities to arrange exchanges where, for example, for a term or half-term one afternoon or morning a week is spent working with a primary colleague's class while they take lessons here.
    The department works also to create similar links, involving both staff and students, with community schools attended by RHS students, and with other secondary schools within the borough and beyond.

2.2
THE ORGANISATION OF TEACHING GROUPS

The department believes strongly in the practice of teaching mixed ability tutor groups Years 7 - 11. Mixed ability is seen as an organisational feature at the very heart of the school's philosophy and character. The relationships formed between people in tutor groups are nurtured not in registration periods but in lessons. English, with its emphases on the personal domain and on communication, can be seen to have a special part to play in this process.

The arguments for a mixed ability approach can be summarised as follows:

*	It reflects the breadth and diversity of social experiences beyond the school.

*	It encourages attitudes which value all children's experiences.

*	It motivates individuals to make progress in their learning; in a differentiated system, those not in high attainment groups risk being demoralised and some in top streams can become complacent.

*	Given the range of criteria in English it would not be possible in any case to make neat separations.

*	It creates high teacher expectations of individual performance.

Our support of mixed ability is tempered by an awareness that inappropriately managed mixed groups can create educational failure as easily as any selective system. We identify a number of factors which contribute to the success of our work with mixed ability groups:

*	Groupings which promote language development.

*	Teaching approaches which take group diversity as a starting point for planning, and which value students' existing knowledge and experience.

*	Approaches designed to challenge and extend all abilities.

*	Effective support systems.

*	Regroupings from time to time within the normal yearly timetable. This provides opportunities for students to work with new people and different teachers, and allows for more effective use of teacher specialisms.

*	Parental understanding of and support for what we do. (See Section 2.7.)

2.3

SUPPORT

English classes receive support from two distinct groups in the school: the Language Support Service, which focuses particularly on the needs of bilingual students, and the Special Educational Needs Department, which focuses on the needs of statemented students and others who experience difficulty in coping with the demands of the curriculum. Although these two groups have different objectives, the principles which underlie their work are the same.

The organization of support throughout the school and within the department is based on principles which derive from the last twenty or more years' research into language development. One expression of these findings is that: "Fluency is more likely to lead to accuracy than vice versa" (Mayor).

This principle explains the school support services' rejection of a style which taught those who were identified as needing support in a context where they were set apart from those who had not been so identified - the 'Main Stream'; and where the curricular focus, whatever the variety of activities undertaken, would always be perceived to be a student's acquisition of 'basic' literacy skills.

We recognise quite different factors in students' language development: the need for a rich language environment; the importance of positive student attitudes and teacher expectations. These factors do not operate in a withdrawal group; they are to be found in well managed mixed ability classrooms. The central role of support becomes a curricular one: that of helping staff and the school (not just the English department) offer a curriculum appropriate to all students.

The particular roles of support staff will thus involve:

*   planning
*   resourcing
*   team teaching
*   assessment
*   evaluation
*   INSET.

In order for the work of support teachers to be effective, it is important that the English class teachers with whom they work understand the principles behind what they do, and that class and support teachers collaborate at every stage of the curricular process.

2.4

THE DEPARTMENT'S RESOURCES

* A suite of comfortable spacious rooms.

* The department base is a separate office, adjacent to the English classrooms, with adequate storage and work space for all the department. In order to be clear about the purpose of the department base, the quickest and possibly best analogy is the reading corner in a primary classroom, which is where young children through a range of informal social activities learn what it is to be a reader. The function of the base is to provide a location for all the informal professional social contact that is the cement of a successful team.

* A list of texts.

* A list of videos, recordings, book tapes.
Membership of video library.

Stock is annually reviewed by the full department, and modified. Class sets of shared texts are purchased after trialling in reading groups. The department's stock includes a good range of mother tongue texts, bilingual texts, and translations. A minimum of two new class sets and one Kaleidoscope type box per year. Attention paid to balance and variety in terms of form, subject matter, genre, cultural location, gender representation, linguistic challenge.

* An encouragement to produce departmental resources.
Reprographic and photocopying facilities. Professional quality WP and DTP available. Teams produce material collaboratively.

* Coursebooks: one copy of each, held centrally.
Sourcebooks for departmental resources. Two or three sets of coursebooks, together with written guidance on how these might be used, are available for use with classes needing supply cover on occasions where it is not practicable to continue with the class teacher's work.

* Display materials
A range of posters and materials which reflect cultural and linguistic diversity.
Drawing paper - variety of sizes and qualities.
Sugar paper / Gridded flipcart sheets / Pritt; Markers; Staplegun; Guillotine.

* I.T.
TV, VTR, video camera, Autofocus SLR camera
Set of portable tape recorders, mains/battery option, headphones
One PC/WP per form entry. Software includes Asian Folio and European Folio.

* Library of teacher resource boxes; file of class plans.

2.5
USE OF LIBRARY / RESOURCES CENTRE

"The Library is not aside from, or a buttress to, the curriculum, but its skills are the very foundations of the curriculum" (School Libraries - The Foundation of the Curriculum. HMSO 1984). Thus the library is not seen as the sole province of the English Department, and there is a whole school library/resources policy. Nonetheless, the role of the library in providing students with the means to acquire and use information is central to the department's aim of critical literacy. Its use develops students' ability to pose questions, to seek sources of information, to select, arrange and present.

The library is a multi-media collection, centralized, staffed, and accessible to students at all times.

English library lessons in Y7 and Y8 provide teachers and students with an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the whole range of resources available and with the means of investigating them - catalogues, data bases, etc. The independent learning and group collaborations of later years will depend on the readiness and ability of students to make use of these facilities in and beyond the school. The department implements and informs the relevant whole school policies on reading, use of resources, study skills, etc.

Library use needs to have real contexts. 'Topic' work can provide opportunities for independent research and student choice. Other library activities relate to current classwork: for example, research on themes or genres relevant to a shared text, or its cultural and historical settings. Library research can relate to students' independent reading: students who have worked in pairs to interview each other about their reading tastes, then during the library lesson find three books for each other. Another example might be groups writing in collaboration being invited to research the settings of their stories.

The atmosphere in the library space will vary according to the activity taking place. Mostly it is a warm but quiet atmosphere; students who have chosen to or been directed to research or study will be looking for or working on resources. Timetabled or booked library lessons, when a whole class is brought to the library to make use of its resources, will be more active, more noisy, though there is an expectation that students are at all times purposefully engaged in what they are doing. The atmosphere at lunchtime and breaktime is bustling and friendly. These times, plus a short session after school, are when most books are borrowed; student librarians are recruited to help deal with the rush. After school, following a short borrowing period, the library provides a quiet study area for homework and for students' independent reading, browsing and research. During the school day, the library is not used as a room for silent reading lessons or for private study which does not make use of the library's resources.

The department makes regular programmed use of visits to and from the school library service, and other centrally provided facilities. It also works closely with the librarian, taking account of new acquisitions and recommending resources which match with curricular needs. The department's monitoring of personal reading tastes (see section 4.2) is fed through to the library's stock ordering.

We include in this section some selective quotations from chapter 7 of **School Libraries: the foundations of the curriculum** (HMSO 1984). See also **Better Libraries: good practice in schools** (DES 1989).

CHAPTER 7 : THE LIBRARY AND THE CURRICULUM

7.1   The most difficult learning task facing a child at school is the one least worried about, that is, how to be a pupil..... One key aspect of "the pupil role" is the pupil as learner. Indeed one major thread of a pupil's school life is that of gradually developing the ability to pose questions, to seek sources of information, and to select, arrange and present. The child who can manage these skills well is not only likely to be a successful pupil, but also is preparing her or himself for all aspects of adult life, in which personal, social and occupational power and satisfaction depend to a considerable extent on an individual's ability to handle information.

7.2   Thus learning to learn and learning to handle information are the key parts of the curriculum content of schooling, both for school and other study success and as preparation for adult life......

7.5   Learning to handle information, therefore, is at the centre of the school curriculum. The library is "a learning laboratory", contributing to the creation of successful students and resourceful adults.

7.6   If that is the function of the library, the role of the librarian is clear: "The librarian is a teacher whose major responsibility is facilitating each student's learning to learn with purpose, profit, challenge, and satisfaction"..........

The library is not aside from, or a buttress to, the curriculum, but its skills are the very foundations of the curriculum.

7.8   Just as Bullock argued: "Since reading is a major strategy for learning in virtually every aspect of education we believe it is the responsibility of every teacher to develop it". So every teacher has to be a teacher of information handling skills and library use.

7.12   If the library is to be part of the curriculum, the school librarian must be part of its planning.

7.13.   A school should therefore have a whole-school curriculum policy on information skills which underlies all other aspects of curriculum planning.

7.15   At the centre of all school "assignments" and virtually all adult jobs is a remarkably similar sequence of tasks. In some assigments certain tasks are more important or more difficult, and others less important, but there are few information-handling tasks from a seven-year-old's "topic" to, say, a marketing manager's investigations, via CSE projects and A-Level "special studies", which do not require the stages analysed by a recent Schools Council/British Library committee.

Each of the following steps can, of course, be expressed in diferent terminiology, but their basic function remains. Each needs to be learnt, as well as its interrelationships with its neighbours.

The Nine Question Steps

1.   WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?
(formulate and analyse need)

2.   WHERE COULD I GO?
(identify and appraise likely sources)

3.   HOW DO I GET TO THE INFORMATION?
(trace and locate individual resources)

4.   WHICH RESOURCES SHALL I USE?
(examine, select and reject individual resources)

5.   HOW SHALL I USE THE RESOURCES?
(interrogate resources)

6.   WHAT SHOULD I MAKE A RECORD OF?
(recording and sorting information)

7.   HAVE I GOT THE INFORMATION I NEED?
(interpreting, analysing, synthesising, evaluating?)

8.   HOW SHOULD I PRESENT IT?
(presenting, communicating)

9.   WHAT HAVE I ACHIEVED?
(evaluation)

7.16   The list is almost the essence of the core of any school's curriculum.   Its skills need to be taught in both a specialised and disseminated context.

See also
"Children Selecting Books in a Library"
by
Randall Jarrell
in
'Complete Poems' Faber 1971

CURRICULUM LINKS

No department in RHS exists in isolation. Whatever the specialism might be, departments aim to share a broad consensus of educational philosophy and practice in such matters as the organization of learning groups, the quality of inter-personal relationships at every level, the critical stance of the learner towards knowledge not as a given mass but as a changing set of constructs.

The other driving force behind the establishing and maintaining of links with other curricular areas is the school's need to present an image of knowledge which is not fragmented, which seeks constantly to encourage learners to reflect on the similarities and differences between institutionally disparate areas of learning, and the implications they have for each other.

There are three ways in which the English Department can contribute to the school's curricular coherence.

Co-ordination with whole school policy

The department implements and informs a number of important whole school policies in the fields of Equal Opportunities, Special Educational Needs, and Language (see below). English teachers make a contribution to National Curriculum assessment in other subjects, promoting evidence of attainment for National Curriculum moderation in cross-curricular areas, and contributing to Records of Achievement.

Collaboration with other departments

The department aims to undertake a variety of collaborative projects - one a year per year group.

SOME POSSIBLE EXAMPLES:

*   Expressive Arts: In collaboration with teachers of drama, dance, music, and visual arts, a half-term devoted to the exploration of conflict, based on <u>Children of the Siege</u> by Pauline Cuttings.

*   Humanities: A study of life in Victorian London which asks students to compare the treatments of the past to be found in literary and other texts.

*   Science/Technology   In collaboration with teachers of Science and Technology, an extended role play based on the theme of Survival in physical extremes - a sequence of practical, theoretical and imaginative activities.

*   Languages   A modern-languages based study of world languages (based on <u>World Languages Project</u>) hand in hand with an English based study of young children's acquisition of language.

Shaping of whole school language policies

The department has a specialist contribution to make to the development of the whole

school's language policies. In the model of language proposed to other areas in the school, we promote the following ideas:

* awareness of the closeness of children's language to their sense of identity. The linguistic and cultural backgrounds of personal experience need to be the starting points for learning. There is a particular need to acknowledge and encourage the use of languages of the classroom other than English.

* departmental audits of the language demands made by a particular area of learning.

* expectations and practices which bring out clear lines of progression for students' language development.

* awareness of differences in maturation in terms of language use which helps teachers to devise teaching strategies that promote development.

* continuous evaluation of the quality of collaborative learning.

* the provision of a wide variety of contexts in which language can be used purposefully and successfully. There is a special emphasis on the importance of oral work and on drama as a cross-curricular learning approach. The use of literature is encouraged. In the provision of resources it is recognised that students need support from a variety of systems of representation integrated with the reading of written text.

COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

EXPLAINING WHAT WE DO

The department is currently preparing a 'Guide To English' to send to parents of Y7 students. It explains in straightforward terms the aims of the English department's teaching and the scope of activities entailed. It outlines ways in which parents can continue to support their children's learning, and sets out the procedures for assessment, recording and reporting of individual progress. It contains an invitation to study the English handbook. A good current example of such a guide is the NATE model, "Learning 'Em Proper".

The 'GCSE English' booklet is sent to parents of students starting GCSE courses in Y10. It communicates the relevant course structures and requirements, and ways in which students' achievements can be encouraged.

Both are produced as multilingual booklets, and where any translation work is required of students communicating the booklets' information to parents, note is made of this as a recorded achievement.

In addition, from time to time it may be appropriate to inform parents through newsletters and meetings of any departmental innovations and to prepare them for these.

REPORTING INDIVIDUAL PROGRESS

*   Parents' Evenings

We have moved on from the traditional parental meeting limited to the transmission of information and judgements recorded by the teacher. The new element in meetings is the use of students' work and self-assessments - particularly what has been selected for the Folder (cf. 3.3 and 5) - as the basis for discussion between parents and teacher. The Folder is sent home for consideration before the meeting. Parents should feel encouraged to bring friends or relations, and students also are present at meetings.

A further development currently under consideration by the department is the creation of parents' evenings which concentrate on one or two subject areas rather than covering the whole curricular spectrum in one rushed go. The English evening would be based on an appointment system (five mins per student), but would take place in the classroom. Around the appointment, parents would work through current English folders with their child, and perhaps be able to see students engaged in a variety of forms of English work.

*   The Annual Report   (See Section 5 on "Planning...etc")

This fits in with the Whole School Policy on Assessment, Recording and Reporting. Reports are written in a style which is simple, direct, and jargon free.

The report concentrates on the progress made in the areas of Speaking and Listening, Reading, and Writing. It indicates primarily strengths and achievements in any of the English entitlement areas (see 3.0), identifies any areas of concern, and closes by identifying short and medium term goals which can then be referred to in future meetings and statements. There is a written contribution from the student. The whole school policy may in future require cross curricular skills and themes to be included in the report or RoA. The report is negotiated in the sense of being based partly on teacher and student comments recorded throughout the year on the Formative Assessment Sheets,

and also in the sense of being discussed with students at some point before being published to parents.

In the case of both parents' evenings and reports, and of individual cases considered below, interpreting and translation services are available, through the Language Support Service, to parents of bilingual students who wish to use them.

INDIVIDUAL CASES

Parents and classroom teachers should feel free to make contact with each other by telephone or letter. Translating and interpreting facilities are available through the Language Support Service. Sometimes it might be better to establish contact through the tutor. HoD and tutor are kept informed of any contacts.

INVOLVING PARENTS IN OTHER ASPECTS OF THE LEARNING PROCESS

In each of these forms of parental involvement, there is an encouragement to bring parents into the classroom.

* **As sources...**
Parents provide source material for English work such as "What I was like as a child" in a 'Myself'-type unit; a comparison between educational experiences and systems; a survey of adult reading behaviour and tastes. Parents' stories, in a variety of languages, can be told in the classroom, written up and displayed alongside the class's work. Many parents will use language in specialised forms in their daily lives through their work or personal interests.

* **As support / collaborative partners...**
Parents provide support in the development of independent reading tastes, in discussing drafts of written pieces, as 'testing' partners for students working on personal spelling lists, and more broadly as sympathetic partners in the process of reflection on learning. They are experts on their children's learning and need to be recognised as such. We can encourage students to communicate with parents about what has been done and so help them to become explicit about what they have been learning and achieving; e.g. students can be asked to show and talk about their English Journals or Folders.

* **As audiences for children's work...**
In addition to listening to and reading their own children's work, parents are sent copies of class or group story or poetry books, and invited to performances of students' work.

2.8

HOMEWORK POLICY

As part of a whole school homework policy and timetable, English teachers are expected to set two homeworks a week, and these are recorded in the students' homework logs. In Y7 these homeworks might last on average 20 minutes; in Y11 it is at least an hour. It is made clear to students and parents that homework can entail a whole range of different kinds of activities. It is no longer the case that 'homework' means 'writing'. A regular weekly homework, for example, would be time set aside for personal reading.

It is important that the homework set is an integral part of the classwork taking place at the time. Rather than being an isolated task set for the sake of setting, or a matter of 'finishing off' work started in class, it should relate centrally to the framework of the learning process and therefore ask students in some way to explore, reshape or reflect on what they have been doing.

The parents' **Guide To English** explains the range of possible homework tasks, and points out that 'surges' and 'lulls' can occur despite having this system.

2.9

EXAMINATION COURSES

All the purposes traditionally fulfilled by school examinations Y7 - Y11 are now covered by work completed under 'controlled conditions' as a part of normal classwork. 'Mock' exams are used as preparation for examined A Level courses. All courses opt for maximum coursework element available.

Courses offered by the English Department

GCSE DUAL CERTIFICATION	All students entered, though a decision may be reached at Christmas of Y11 to withdraw some candidates from the Literature qualification on the basis of insufficient coursework. Neither beginner bilinguals nor children with special educational needs are disapplied from GCSE courses either formally or informally.
GCSE MEDIA STUDIES	(option)
GCSE (MATURE)	(in connection with CPVE, and as re-sits)

'A' LEVEL LITERATURE
'A' LEVEL LANGUAGE/CREATIVE WRITING
'A' LEVEL MEDIA STUDIES

Courses offered by the Drama Department

GCSE DRAMA

'A' LEVEL THEATRE STUDIES
'A' LEVEL PERFORMING ARTS

We link with the Drama, Music and Art departments to provide:

GCSE EXPRESSIVE ARTS

Contribution to Y12 General Studies

This course involves both A Level and CPVE students in mixed groups.

There is an awareness of any exam courses in languages other than English being followed within or beyond the school, and a readiness to make use of any of the connections available.

Notes: 1.   Detailed syllabuses to be included in an appendix.
2.   We have still to decide about A/S Levels.

2. 10

THE ADVISORY SERVICE

In the light of the changes arising from the Education Reform Act, the Advisory Service in Redbridge, in common with most services in the country, is evaluating its work and operations and restructuring its internal organisation in order to meet its new responsibilities and the changing relationship with schools and establishments. Particular consideration is being given to the nature and the balance in role between "advisory" and "inspectorial" functions. Advisers currently undertake work in both areas.

There are specialist advisers for virtually all areas of the curriculum and these are supported by a team of advisory teachers. In practical terms, the English department in Redbridge High School is likely to be working with all or some of the following people: the English adviser, the advisory teacher for secondary English, the advisory team from the Drama Centre, the advisory teacher for Media Education and the school's pastoral adviser. The department also works closely with teachers from the Language Support Service (Section XI staff) and the Special Educational Needs Suppport Service.

In general terms, the main focus of advisers' work is the curriculum and the teaching and learning that is taking place in the various institutions maintained by the LEA. The principal task of the advisory service is the promotion of quality in education, there being three main strands to this work:

*   **The support of schools, colleges, units and services and the professional development of teachers.**
        The advisory service is involved in a range of activies in support of schools and teachers. This includes appointments, INSET activities of all kinds (whether school or centrally based), meetings for HoDs and coordinators, professional advice to teachers and headteachers, the production of materials (such as this handbook) for teachers and the distribution of other relevant materials (such as the National Writing Project materials). The advisory teacher for secondary English is school based and works in turn in each school to a negotiated agenda that is based on the department's development plan in relation to the National Curriculum. Materials that are produced in the course of this work are disseminated to all schools where appropriate.

*   **The inspection (monitoring and evaluation) of the quality of education being provided.**
        A systematic central programme has been developed within the advisory service to ensure more equitable coverage of LEA schools and an appropriate response to each school's needs. The appropriate subject adviser visits each secondary subject department at least once a term, working to an agenda negotiated with the HT or HoD. This usually results in a short written report to the HT. Visits are also made to each school on the same basis by the relevant pastoral adviser.

In addition to this, the Review and Support Programme enables a school to commission one or more members of the advisory service to work on a particular priority identified by the school in the Institutional Development Plan. This links external evaluation with internal school self evaluation. The Review and Support Programme usually results in the production of a formal written document which is considered by the school and its governors. Each review is followed up by support in some form or other.

Formal inspection reports, which are considered by governors and/or committee, are also produced by the advisory service. These reports may relate to a single school or deal with one aspect of several schools.

* **The implementation of national and local policy and initiatives.**

The major national initiative currently is the implementation of the National Curriculum. The centrally based borough INSET programme contains relevant courses and activities that are both subject - specific and general.

Closely related to the NC is the Language in the National Curriculum programme that was set up for three years with ESG funding on a regional consortium basis in order to implement the findings of the Kingman Report and to promote teachers' knowledge about language. Redbridge is a member of the North London Language Consortium (NLLC). To date there have been several residential weekends which have considered issues of curriculum planning and knowledge about language. A range of publications for teachers has been produced by the NLLC, some of which (the prompt sheets in section 5.4) feature in this handbook. The consortium has also produced teaching materials and initiated a number of classroom investigations of language. The planning and assessment framework that is suggested in this handbook largely derives from collaboration with primary colleagues in NLLC.

As regards local initiatives, RHS participates in the authority's Arts Projects which are joint funded by Greater London Arts. Already in past years, the borough's resident writer and the storyteller have worked on a number of projects in RHS English Department. Arrangements for funding arts work in schools have changed since the recent production of the Curriculum Statement on Arts Education 5-16. Schools now submit proposals to the Arts Advisers Group for funding to mount an arts project. The main criteria are that the project should involve:

* arts practitioners working with students on the basis of arts education entitlement and with teachers on the basis of INSET that builds on and extends their teaching expertise;
* arts development in more than one art form or the enlargment of a single artform;
* teachers working collaboratively with each other in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the project;
* plans to embed the work in the ordinary curriculum both during the life of the project and afterwards;
* a clearly identified coordinator in the school, a timescale, costings and indication as to the contribution made by the school to the overall cost.

A range of arts practitioners currently work in the borough's schools all of whom are flexible in their approaches to their work with schools.

SECTION THREE

STUDENT ENTITLEMENTS

3.0 STUDENT ENTITLEMENTS

This section sets out the range of activities and experiences to which the department has agreed all students are entitled in their English course. Suggestions as to how to set up these activities in the classroom are dealt with in Section 4, **TEACHING STRATEGIES.**

Student Entitlements represents an attempt to devise the English Curriculum from the student's point of view. The emphasis is upon the learning process. Accordingly, the activities are all presented within the framework defined in Section 1.4 **A VIEW OF LEARNING.** Each of the entitlements is described under the following headings:

> starting with the student
> teacher as practitioner and learner
> balance and variety
> making, remaking and presentation
> reflection/evaluation
> assessment

Moreover, these headings are retained in later sections that deal with planning and assessment., for example in the format for a Class Plan proposed in Section Four and also in the prompt sheets designed to help teachers observe and comment on their students' language use that feature in Section Five.

This section should enable a teacher to plan a year's work for a class and to describe to students, parents and others the content and processes of that year's course of work.

The activities and experiences are laid down by the National Curriculum as opportunities which teachers are required to provide, but there is no requirment for all of these to be assessed.

Students should be given a list of activities 3.1 - 3.8 to copy into their English Journals, along with the Aims of English,and the Scheme of Work proposed for the year.

3.01   ACTIVITIES

Minimum Requirements

This section sets out in summary form the agreed departmental framework of activities and experiences which are common to all classes across the year group. Within this framework, individual teachers are free to establish individual class programmes.

The activities given here are the Programmes of Study as laid down by the National Curriculum. However, this secton, unlike the Programmes of Study attempts to address issues of balance and frequency - 'How much?' and 'How often?' are the questions that have been asked of each activity.

In setting out the minimum requirements in this form the department has sought to strike a balance between prescription and autonomy in order to achieve the greatest measure of common approach without containing teachers' individuality.

In the list below, the term 'focus' denotes series of lessons, lasting usually several weeks, in which activities focus primarily (but not exclusively) upon one or more of the programmes of study. We take it for granted that any lesson or series of lessons will integrate several or all of the curricular areas defined by the NC; the determining beforehand of focus is to help with long-term planning and to identify opportunities for formative assessment.

When planning a Scheme of Work, the teaching group's previous years' class plans are consulted to ensure balance and variety over their whole school career.

Speaking & Listening		A wide variety of different kinds of talk, some of it structured, some of it unplanned, is a significant element of every learning experience. Talk - lively, diverse, collective, authentic - should be a feature of every lesson. The school and departmental ethos should be such as to encourage the use of languages in the classroom other than English.
		At least twice a year, sequences of work will focus on this area of learning.
Reading	Independent	Y7-9 20% of English curriculum Y10-11 See KS4 in Independent Reading, Section 4.1
	Class novel	One per year
	Group novel	One per year
	Class playscript	One per year
	Poetry (reading & writing)	One focus per year [in addition to sequences of work in which poems feature as part of a larger whole]

	Non-literary texts	One focus per year [in addition to sequences of work in which non-literary texts feature as part of a larger whole]
Writing		One focus (collaborative) per year
		One focus (individual) per year [in addition to sequences of work in which writing, often collaborative, features as part of a larger whole]
Drama	Student devised work	One per year
	Roleplay	Routine as a strategy for exploring, reshaping and presenting
Media Education		Common Y7 introduction to media study
		One focus per year
		One substantial media production per Key Stage [The concepts and principles of Media Education underpin the whole English curriculum, and will feature routinely in work which focusses on other areas.]
Knowledge About Language		Common Y7 unit on language diversity
		One focus per year
		[The concepts and principles of Knowledge About Language underpin the whole English curriculum, and will feature routinely in all kinds of work in English.]
Information Technology		One focus per year [in addition to regular experience as an integral part of the curriculum]
Independent Study		One half-term per Key Stage
Cross-curricular Project		Once per Key Stage
Regrouping within English		One experience per year of working with students and teachers of other classes in the year group.

3.0.2   CONCEPTS

If the notion of critical literacy is to have any force for our students in terms of empowerment, then they will need to be familiar with a number of concepts that will enable them engage in critical dialogue. These concepts will need to be made explicit by teachers, certainly in their planning and on occasions to their students. They relate to all aspects of our work in English, Media, and Drama and are sufficiently important to be regarded as entitlements. The importance which we attach to this aspect of our work is one of the clearest features which distinguishes it from other versions of English, such as the personal growth model with its emphasis upon individualism.

Many of the concepts that we have in mind underpin the classroom activities suggested in the English Centre books: Changing Stories; Making Stories ; and Reading Stories. All of the concepts bear equally upon the Ahlbergs' Jolly Postman as they do upon a novel by Henry James. Indeed, many of them are perhaps best explored - with colleagues or students - initially through children's picture books, particularly as there is such an excellent guide to hand in Margaret Meek's pamphlet How Texts Teach What Readers Learn (1988).

We are not advocating that students are baldly presented with a conceptual framework or even with instances of concepts which are then exemplified. Rather, we envisage them being introduced once activities are under way, or later as part of the reflective process. What we are seeking to do is to give to students the descriptive or analytical tools that will enable them to talk and think about their language work more effectively. We view these terms and concepts as ways of making articulate much of the knowledge that they already have implicitly and of thus increasing their control over their language use, both productive and receptive. The concepts have to be embedded in classroom activities and derived from them, not taught as a separate programme. In this respect, we see the concepts in much the same way as we view the use of linguistic terminology. As teachers we need to be familiar with the concepts in order to plan effectively and to have a clear theoretical understanding of the issues that emerge from classroom activities. Many of the terms, such as *audience* , or *narrator,* are both technical and familiar and unlikely to present any difficulty. *Ideology,* however, or *genre,* or *difference* are less familiar, certainly technical and nonetheless essential to any view of critical literacy. We have to develop ways in which these concepts can be raised in the classroom without intimidating our students. It is difficult to do so unless we have already explored them in our own reading, writing and talk. The extent to which the terms themselves are used with students- if at all - remains a question of individual teacher judgment. The key test has to be : will the introduction of a particular term at this point help or hinder the student's learning?

We have set out some of these concepts below in the form of questions and prompts, because that is likely to be the way in which most of these concepts surface in the classroom. It is less a matter of new content to teach and more a matter of asking rather different questions. A different set of questions allows readers and writers to relate to texts in different ways and opens up a different kind of dialogue.

We envisage also that it is possible for teachers to identify at the planning stage of any unit the opportunities for concepts to be introduced.

* **Some questions to ask of (any) texts**

Where does this text come from?	The literary canon
Why do we have to read it?	Literature as an institution- what gets taught
Who is communicating, and why?	Producers and their intentions
Who speaks the text?	Voice, narrator
What type of text is it?	Medium; genre; other ways of categorising texts; how categorisation relates to understanding.
How is it produced?	What kinds of technologies are available to whom? Effects of these on product and process.
How do we know what it means?	How texts produce meanings - codes and conventions; narrative structures
What social function does it serve?	Texts do work in the world; they may serve some interests and harm others
Who receives, and what sense do they make of it?	How audiences are identified, constructed, addressed and reached how audiences find, choose, consume and respond to texts. The effects that texts have on audiences.
What different meanings have there been - or are there now- for this text?	How are different meanings possible? How have meanings changed and been argued over? what is at stake in the changes of meaning?
How does it present its subject?	Representation - the relation between media texts and actual places, people, events, ideas. Stereotyping and its consequences.
What is included in or excluded from the text?	gaps, absences, repressions as an indication of the ideological assumptions of the text
What pleasure does this text give? At what cost is the pleasure?	positioning the reader, accepting the ideology, reading against or with the text

What would alternative readings look like?
 What difference would it make if you changed:
 the ending, the gender of the protagonist   etc?

3.0.3   ISSUES

Students have an entitlement to open participation in the discussion of controversial issues, to knowing how to initiate and handle such discussion. The entitlement relates to the philosophy and aims of the department, and in the whole school curriculum to cross-curricular issues: Personal and Social Development Education for Citizenship, Health Education, Equal Opportunities.

The issues are likely to include questions of political and current affairs, race, gender, sexuality, and language. While these issues may from time to time become a focus for work in English, they are not to be seen as something taught in an isolated slot, but as a strand that will run throughout the curriculum. If an issue is raised, it is not steered away from.

Dealing with what is seen by some or has been seen as taboo is to expose it and examine it, not to flout it for its shock value. There is a danger of stopping at a point where the impression is given that a taboo is all right to use in any context, whereas the essential is to get the taboo on the dissecting table, to examine the forces of prejudice, violence and social control which usually inform it.

While this entitlement determines that English classrooms will be places where matters of grave personal and social importance will be discussed, there is a need to guard against being over solemn - contention can also be fun.

Because issues, or texts, from time to time can be the subject of parental inquiry or compaint, it is as well to be clear as to the distinctions between the approach of critical inquiry advocated here and indoctrination. The legal situation on this matter is as follows. In Part IV 44 - 1 of The Education (No 2) Act 1986, under the heading of "political indoctrination", it states

"The local education authority by whom any county, voluntary or special school is mainted, and the governing body and headteacher of the school shall forbid

    a)   the pusuit of partisan political activities by any of those registered pupils at the school who are junior pupils: and

    b)   the promotion of partisan political views in the teaching of any subject in the school."

Section 45, under the heading of "Duty of secure balanced treatment of political views", states that

"The local education authority by whom any county, voluntary or special school is maintained and the governing body and headteacher of the school shall take steps as are reasonably practicable to secure that, where political issues are brought to the attention of pupils while they are

    a)   at the school; or

    b)   taking part in extra-curricular activities which are provided or organised for registered pupils at the school or on behalf of the school;
         they are offered a balanced presentation of opposing views."

SPEAKING & LISTENING

"Idle discourse is the language of the powerless
who accept their position."   (Pateman)

STARTING WITH THE STUDENT

It is important to find out what students think about talk as means of learning. Do they see it as having the importance that it has, and are they thinking about how to develop the way they respond to the various speaking and listening demands made upon them? What awareness do they have of the diversity of spoken language, and what attitudes towards it? How conscious are they of the social forces shaping the ways they speak and are spoken to?

For students to feel comfortable enough to try out new things and take the risks that development will require, the ethos of the classroom needs to be supportive of what students say and the way they say it. There needs to be a shared explicit acceptance of linguistic diversity.

TEACHER AS PRACTITIONER AND LEARNER

The teacher will always be seen as a talker, but what kind of talker? Not, hopefully, as one who dominates from the front, an impersonal distributor of instructions, closed questions and closed judements, but rather as we want students to be: someone who speaks and listens to people in a variety of contexts, most often in a group of talkers or one to one; sometimes tentative sometimes assertive, ready to give way to other voices and to encourage other voices to speak. A teller of stories, a good discussion partner in conversations with students and other adults, exploratory, expressing a full emotional range.

There is a need also for providing a model of the confident presenter to the whole group of plans, suggestions, instructions and views. But this role works as a model only if these empowering positions are handed over systematically and explicitly to be shared by students.

BALANCE AND VARIETY

There are two main types of working classroom atmosphere. One is a place where there is one person being listened to by the rest of the group. The other is one where there will be a varying volume of noise within which there is talk and listening that is continually surprising, insightful, entertaining, important, and human. The well run classroom is one in which neither of these two styles is allowed to predominate, where there is balance - both within individual lessons, and over the course of a half-term unit or a whole year. An element common to the two styles is the emphasis on active listening, supported by the need to act or report in some form on what has been said.

One voice at a time

The voice might be the teacher's or a visitor's; or it might be a student's - reading, reporting back from groups, presenting to the class etc.; or it might arise in the context of a class discussion, e.g. one where each student is required to take an equal

brief share, or in impromptu or briefly prepared whole class discussion; or in a prepared discussion, chaired by the students.

Group Talk

Just as there is a balance between group talk and the individual voice, there is variety in the kinds of talk which take place in groups.

* Activities where speaking and listening take place as activities in themselves: telling stories, interviewing, drama work, discussion.

* Activities where talk supports other activities: collaborative planning, making, and remaking. reflection and evaluation.

There needs to be variety in the kinds of grouping in which talk occurs. Having groups that are always or mostly together is as limiting as always or mostly teaching to the whole class. The main aim of groupwork is for everyone in a class to experience relating on a practical working basis with everyone else. The choice of a particular grouping relates to the nature of the activity and to the need to extend the range of working partnerships. The Class Plan (see Section 5) is the place to record group composition and group dynamics.

Group Type	Appropriate Activities
Groups of 3-5, mixing gender and race from friendship pairs/threes combined by teacher	The most common form of grouping Long-term collaborative projects
Single race/gender groups	Providing a supportive environment in the first instance for discussion of controversial topics; or providing equal access to technology
Friendship groups [if the group is hardworking and supportive]	Reading groups; Editing
Random groups	Short activities lasting 1/2 lessons with classes which have established an open and sympathetic dynamic

In all decisions about group composition, a common factor will be whether the group is one which will support language development. All groups need a spread of language competencies, including fluency in languages of the classroom other than English.

Many Voices

Voices may usually be speaking in a variety of Englishes depending on speaker and context, and often they may be in Gujerati or Mauritian Creole or other languages of the classroom apart from English. There should be opportunities for bilingual students speaking the same language to work together.

For some individuals and groups, the range of talk that is felt to be appropriate for students and teacher may be different from the model given. While this does not exclude things such as 'universal participation' and 'using a full emotional range', we need to be sensitive to individual and cultural differences and varied expectations. Similar sensitivity is needed in respect to the interpretation of body language; this is relevant to our interactions with all students, but we need to be aware when cultural codes differ and avoid rash assumptions (e.g. reluctance to speak = lack of interest; smiling when criticised = insolence).

MAKING, REMAKING AND PRESENTATION

This section attempts to clarify typical features of the structure of any activity focussing as talk. It assumes that no new activity will have exactly the same structure as any other - different emphases framework for planning and reflection on measurement from lesson to lesson.

Starting Point	Being presented with or independently choosing a focus and context for talk.
Exploration	Opportunies to brainstorm, plan, discuss etc. in pairs or small groups.
Reshaping	Activities which involve being heard and responded to by others and/or hearing other models. Use of notes / visual aids, if appropriate. Teacher intervention. Rehearsing - use of tape recorders.

Presentation	To a small group
	To the whole class
	To students in other classes or other schools
	     (This is planned to take place at least once each year)
	To adults
	     (This is planned to take place at least once each Key Stage)
	Recorded in writing, or on tape or video

Presentations will be in a variety of languages.

REFLECTION/EVALUATION

It is important to confirm the importance of purposeful talk and active listening as central concerns of the department and of the school as a whole; reflecting on talk is a way of doing this. Students' views on their own and others' talk are useful in themselves as a means of assessing the effectiveness of our curriculum, aside from any considerations of student assessment. These views should be shared in discussions and recorded in English Journals.

There is a place here for reflection on language forms, as well as on content and performance.

ASSESSMENT

What follows is a list of some of the factors that students and teachers take into consideration when thinking about their own and others' performances and development.

* Confidence, pleasure
* Co-operativeness
* Assertiveness
* Listening skills
* Range of situations
* Authenticity - saying what is truly felt and thought
* Range of repertoires
* Willingness to experiment
* Critical awareness of own and others' talk
* Individuality
* Awareness of issues to do with talk

Performance does not need an absolute measurement isolated from the context of previous experiences, but is always seen in terms of what kinds of individual development it represents, and what aspects of future development it might suggest.

Assessment takes place in a variety of contexts - in discussion with other students or with the teacher, during or after an activity; it includes written self-assessments and negotiated teacher assessments.

Traditionally the most common criterion for assessment of talk at examination level is the range of vocabulary and structures employed by a speaker. This is the criterion most open to interference from cultural bias. There are those who could but choose not to use particular kinds of words and wordings because they feel they are not the kind of person who says them - not the right class, ethnicity, etc.

It is important to challenge prejudices, both in wider society beyond the school, and in the culture of the school itself: we need to avoid situations where the teacher may approve of a use of language which others in the class see as incongruous and to be laughed at or despised. The nature of people's attitudes to language diversity is something which should be a focus of study from time to time throughout the students' schooling. As teachers we provide models of response which reward a great diversity of language use.

See also NLLC Prompt Sheets Section 5.

> See
> **"National Trust"**
> **by**
> **Tony Harrison**
> **"Selected Poems" Penguin 1984**

READING

STARTING WITH THE STUDENT

We need to know what kind of readers our students are, and in a wider sense than the degree to which they can decode the various kinds of print that school presents them with. Through surveys, reading logs and reading interviews we can become aware of individual tastes and habits, and help to chart, support and guide development at all levels.

Students' preferences need to be taken into account in the teacher's choice of shared texts.

TEACHER AS PRACTITIONER AND LEARNER

When told that the Roald Dahl story they had just listened to on tape had been read by Roald Dahl himself, an Infant Reception class expressed general surprise: "I didn't know that he could read as well as write."

Ten years on they will smile at this for sure, but will they be ignorant in the same way that their English teachers are readers? Through our education and choice of profession we have in fact chosen to develop reading as a speciality. However, there are certainly aspects of our function as teachers which might prevent students seeing this and learning from our models.

> Is teachers' marking of their work seen by students to be the same as 'reading'? It can be - but it might also be seen as a process much more narrowly 'editorial' than as a function of a wider literacy.

> Does the presentation of shared texts count as teachers reading in students' minds? Again, it is perhaps too close to expected conventional professional duties.

To be seen as readers, the teacher -readers need to:

* talk about what we read, how our reading biography goes, what we like best and why, where and from whom we get our reading material. The reading lesson is one clear point where this talk can take place in a formal way.

* acknowledge the variety of genres we have read; not just novels and the quality press, but the rags also, like everyone else - and popular fiction, local press, comics, hobby magazines, adverts, letters from bank managers, et al.

* be seen to read and respond to reading: visible concentration, smiles and exclamations.

* be known to view texts as agents of influence and power, open to question, things that can be joked about or objected to as well as admired.

BALANCE AND VARIETY

For a detailed discussion of the implications of Reading entitlements for classroom practice, please refer to the sections on Independent Reading and The Class Novel (4.2).

A main point to emerge from these is the balance between developing students' independent reading interests and presenting students with shared experiences of texts in the contexts both of the whole class and of small collaborative groups. Equal weighting is central to the policy and practice of the department.

Within each of these categories there will be further shaping. In our approach to the independent reader, we look to encourage existing personal reading tastes and habits and at the same time introduce wider tastes and a greater range of reading strategies when it seems appropriate to development.

The same 'enlarging' aim is central to the selection of shared texts. Variety is planned for across the year, and against the wider background of previous reading experiences and the right to a critically literate adulthood.

Broadly the nature of reading variety is presented to students, implicitly and explicitly, as follows:

* A full range of literary and non-literary genres.

* Within and across these genres, account is taken of cultural perspective - gender, ethnicity, language, social and historical setting.

* A range of intended audiences, oriented to age, gender, class and race. At certain points it is useful to break the correlation: a Y12 group reads Funnybones and its Y2 readers' journal writing; Y7 a paragraph of Finegans Wake.

* A balance in terms of the linguistic demands made upon readers. Some books will be an easy read. Others will introduce students to vocabularies and styles of discourse which are new to them, though these 'challenging' books ought never to exclude any members of the class from the activity.

* A balance between pre-20th century canons, modern canons, contemporary and emerging authors. (It is interesting to note the slips through time and changing perspective in the membership of these categories. The logic emerges that no literary judgement is a safe one. The NATE publication Reading Stories is the first classroom material to support the teaching of this concept.)

* For bilingual students there should be an encouragement to use their knowledge of other literatures both in the recorded development of their personal reading tastes and where it can be with the whole class as a parallel to a shared text in English.

* It is important to encourage the developing reading of beginner bilinguals in English. To start with they may be working at a level very different to most others in the class but the speed of development in such readers is generally remarkable.

Use of extracts

Extracts are a helpful way of conveying the range of literary and non-literary reading available, without having to commit the curriculum to overemphasis on reading as an activity. The gaining of a broad perspective on literary variety will raise issues and features such as:

* The ideological factors which determine the literary canon
* The development of the linguistic system in English: standardisation
* The resistance to standardisation - writings in dialects
* Literary outcomes of the spread of English: modern and contemporary literature from commonwealth and other countries
* Writings in translation from other languages, cultures and times
* Continuities and change in literary concerns - kingship, power, love, liberation.

MAKING, REMAKING AND PRESENTATION

Starting Point   The individual, small group, or whole class is presented with or independently chooses and plans a reading activity.

Exploration /   The activities described in section 4.3.2 detail a variety of
Reshaping   ways in which these can happen.

At the exploration stage it will often be necessary to provide students with support material designed to engage readers in texts, e.g. sequencing, predicting, interrogating, cloze (as a group activity).

It is important that exploration and reshaping concern themselves not just with 'transparent' features of the text - what happens, what information is offered - but often look also at issues of the text's meanings in the widest sense: What does it intend? From whom to whom? By what means? Why should it take this position?

Another important point is the insistence upon encouraging authentic personal responses, including those which are negative or indifferent; the important thing is that the formulation of responses is reflected upon and becomes increasingly conscious and analytical. This does not prevent teachers presenting material that is not immediately accessible and popular; though it may well be true that a growing understanding of the previously remote is more likely to come from seeing positive responses elsewhere in the group than from a purely teacher centred assertion of quality.

Presentation   Sometimes this stage of the learning process might have minimal emphasis in a teacher's plan - entries in the reading log, a brief conversation with friends or with teachers.

Other presentations might be more formal and have more time spent on them - course work, display material, a drama or media presentation, a class reading of poems written in response to a text.

Some examples of a variety of forms of presentation can be seen in section 4.3.2.

REFLECTION/EVALUATION

The kinds of reflection which take place after the reading of a text share the same concerns as those which occur while the text is being explored. They are active and personal, and reflect on forms of language and on social forms; it is at this point more than anywhere else perhaps that the concepts with which English is concerned can be brought into play and the aim of critical literacy furthered.

There are four main kinds of opportunity for reflecting on texts:

* Private thought
* Discussions
* The reading log
* Presentations.

ASSESSMENT

Here is a list of some of the factors that students and teachers take into consideration when thinking about reading development.

* Confidence / pleasure
* Development of understanding and personal response
* Range of genres
* Range of contexts (individual/group/class)
* Self awareness as reader
* Authenticity - not afraid to say what s/he really feels
* Awareness of issues to do with reading

[See also NLLC Prompt Sheets Section 5]

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                        See
                        also
        "Literature  will  be  scrutinised"
                        by
                Bertolt  Brecht
        'Collected  Poems'    Methuen  1979
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3.3

WRITING

STARTING WITH THE STUDENT

With a new class it is helpful to ask students to record in their Journals what they think and feel about writing. This provides important individualised information which can be taken into account when planning and responding to written work: what kinds of previous writing experience they have gained; which writers lack confidence and need praise; which over-emphasise surface features; personal interests, enthusiasms, difficulties, et al.

TEACHER AS PRACTITIONER AND LEARNER

As with the other programmes of study, we need to avoid our particular expertise as writers being conceived narrowly as an instrument of judgement - markings, reports, instructions, official communications.

Hence the need to join in activities that students undertake, sometimes working to produce an independent piece, sometimes collaborating with students in the class. There is a need also to share writing that is done spontaneously by us - letters to the newspaper, poems, stories. Writing should be seen as something more than expressive, a notation of mental processes, but further as a way of organising and reflecting on ideas and experience and as a way of acting in the world.

Students should see teachers in engaging in all stages of the writing process - planning, drafting, and redrafting, presenting.

BALANCE AND VARIETY

It is helpful to make it clear to a teaching group that English is not just writing, that in their English lessons the focus shifts between different entitlements.

Sometimes the emphasis will be on other things: the class reader; an independent novel study; an extended role play exercise. Writing will play a part in these, but would not be seen as the main focus. It might take the form of notes in the Planning Book, entries in the Journal, poems sent to an author, or classroom displays.

At other times the focus will be on writing: stories; autobiographies; poetry; producing books for children; collaborative novel writing; making a magazine. When the focus is on writing there will always be an audience for what they do other than just the teacher.

Other study blocks again will involve a balance between entitlements. For example, novel study at GCSE level shifts the learning focus from reading to a pretty equal weighting between reading and written response.

The writing curriculum will have a balance between 'open' and 'closed' tasks. A 'closed' task is where everyone in a class does the same thing, something set by the teacher. The pure 'open' task involves a free choice being made by each individual about what they will do and how they will do it. Clearly a well managed writing programme will involve

variety. Teachers should be looking for opportunities to move children away from more guided closed tasks to more open ones. For example, a Y7 group magazine might be relatively closely guided; a Y9 group might have total autonomy - other than having to make a magazine!; individuals in a Y11 class might be allowed to work for a time as they wished on whatever they wanted to, providing that it met GCSE folder criteria. Another ground rule might be the more time there is to be spent on a piece of work, the more open it should be. (Also: see Section 3.8 on Independent Study.)

The contexts in which writing takes place will vary also. Some writing tasks are individual, though performed within the context of a supportive collaborative working group or pair. Others are co-operative: individual contributions will go to make up a larger whole produced by a group or by the whole class. Students will be expected to write with many different people in the class over the course of a year, and not just always with the same group.

Text will be produced by students in all the languages of the classroom. There is an encouragement also of bilingual texts produced by students and parents. Not all writing in languages other than English needs immediate translation: translation should be a choice exercised by bilingual students.

A list of writing contexts by genre

- diary - case study - instructions - journals - letter - profile - interview notes
- poem - note - petition - telegram - obituary - postcard - newspaper report
- message in a bottle - monologue - captioned photographs - diagram - cartoons
- storyboard - sketches - reconstructing - magazine cutting - headlining lesson stages
- flow chart - logbook - transcription - guidelines - observer - scripting - reportage
- key lines - subtext video - account of drama performance in the present tense
- posters - evaluations of self and others - argument - critical account of plot, character, theme - story

MAKING, REMAKING AND PRESENTATION

Starting Point

If writing is to be a significant activity of a series of lessons, it is important to make any written outcome, and its rationale, clear at the outset. We need to take care to avoid a fragmented approach - reading a text to students, leading an unprepared whole class discussion of it, and then springing a writing task on them - for it is less likely to generate thoughtful and committed writing.

Once a writing task has been determined (by the teacher or by the students themselves) there are of course a great many ways of preparing the ground: literary or non-literary texts as models or stimuli, and/or audio-visual material, provided by the teacher or researched by the students themselves. Other children's writing is a good starting point. The only ground rule would be to avoid a routine process, eg storywriting too often preceded by looking at a coursebook extract. It is not always necessary to provide source material: sometimes talk, drawing on students' existing knowledge and experience, is enough.

Exploration

Whatever the stimuli employed, writers must be given plenty of opportunities to talk and think before and during the writing process. These opportunities might include:

* whole class and group discussion of relevant personal knowledge and experience.

* pair or small group planning.

* brainstorming initial ideas (notes only), followed by discussion.

* working on one part of the piece (opening; conclusion; one descriptive paragraph), followed by reading round the class.

* finishing a first draft for homework, which is then marked by teacher and/or discussed in groups.

It is important not to allow a 'gap' to emerge between the talking and writing stages of the process, where for example the talk is presented as an opportunity for open exploratory discussion but is followed by a writing brief which closes down the range of opportunities revealed by the talk. There can also be a problem when talk is encouraged in bilinguals' first languages but followed by a writing task prescribed in English.

Reshaping: Improving drafts

It is difficult for students to proofread their own writing individually; familiar with the text as it stands, the mind avoids alternative possibilities and the eyes skim over technical errors. The fresh eye that is needed does not always need to be the teacher's.

It is worth establishing editing groups - pairs or threes who build up a working relationship through routinely reading through each other's writing, providing an audience that is real and unthreatening, and making suggestions as to how the writing might develop. This practice also strengthens students' individual editing skills.

Editing involves improving the composition as well as the technical aspects of a piece. Students need to be aware of what to talk about when responding to what their friends have written. They are implicitly aware of this anyway, but the model of the teacher as marker and the construction by the students themselves of 'response checklists' (e.g. "What makes a good story" ; "Useful comments on other people's writing"should ensure that groups are constructive, and do not limit themselves to checking spellings. The skills of group discussion to improve draft versions improve with practice. There is a place for whole class discussions of an OHP or handout in order to provide groups with a model.

It is important that exploration concerns itself not just with transparent features of written texts - clarity, correctness - but often also looks at issues of the texts' meanings and representations in the widest sense. The questions students ask of their own writing are the same they ask of texts. Students should be encouraged to experiment with writing from a variety of personal viewpoints other than their own - age, class, gender, race, religious faith, political views.

Presentation

Where do students *do* their writing, where does it end up? The department provides students with four specific contexts for English work which involves writing of any kind: the Planning Book, the English Folder, the English Journal and Publication. There is no suggestion that every piece of writing should go through all four stages: a good deal of writing will go no further than the planning book; some things might be written undrafted straight into the English Journal; long pieces for publication or display could be photocopied for the Folder rather than copied out again.

The Planning Book   Used for anything which they will not need to keep:

* Notes, unwanted drafts, games etc.

The English Folder   Used to store final versions of written pieces as a concrete record of achievement and providing a basis for teacher assessment, external moderation, and reporting to parents. It contains:

* copies of the scheme of work and class plans (cf. Section 5)
* individual student assessment sheets
* a selection of finished work, including some extended pieces which show evidence of having been planned, drafted, corrected, polished and redrafted.
* filled up English Journals.

The English Journal   Used for pieces of writing which are important enough to be kept permanently, but which would not be appropriate as 'portfolio' material for the English Folder, which needs to be kept trim and manageable. Possibilities include:

* Recording personal aims and expectations in English for the year
* Reading Weekly - a log of personal reading written up at home or during the reading lesson
* Brief responses to activities that are mainly Reading or mainly Talk [eg see Reading Log section in Approaches to Class Novel] Section 4.3.2
* Self-evaluations - these may become the basis of Assessment Sheets
* Language Development notes, based on responses from teacher and other students.
* Personal spelling list, wordlist
* Poems and short prose pieces
* Anything else student wishes to put in.

Publication   This can take the form of:

* Classroom displays
* Class booklets (poems, stories, autobiographies, etc) available during reading lessons
* Typed up or photocopied formats for distribution throughout school, to parents and wider community.

There ought to be no important piece of writing where the teacher is the only person to read the finished product. Other kinds of audience include:

* Classmates   - all pieces read aloud by authors, friends, teacher
                        - all pieces circulated in reading lessons

*	Wider school audiences	- all or selected pieces displayed around the school
		- parental response to Journal
		- magazines, class poetry books etc. sent round students' homes
*	Real audiences beyond school	- liaison with primary schools
		- poetry, story and drama evenings for parents etc.
		- letters to the media and to people with power

REFLECTION/EVALUATION

This section is concerned firstly with how teachers mark students' writing, but considers also that reflection and evaluation are things which students will do for themselves and for each other, given the opportunity. Teacher intervention has a crucial role to play not just in providing students with evaluations of their work, but also in providing students with a worthwhile model as they develop their own critical faculties.

There is a move in the department towards marking energies being concentrated on draft versions, when there is much more certainty of the writer responding actively to suggestions, and reducing the final marking to a teacher comment in the Journal or an Assessment sheet which acknowledges the piece as evidence of the student's language development.

The following statement of departmental marking policy puts forward principles which are at work not just when teachers write on students' work, but when we talk to them about what they are doing and when they support each other in groups.

* Useful comment praises achievement, encourages, challenges, and at all times communicates close reading and active response. It aims to build confidence and develop competence.

* It should praise individual qualities and indicate paths of future development.

* It never overemphasizes the surface features of writing over content. There should be reflection on more general forms of language, such as genre, narrative perspective, representation.

* Annotation, marginal and terminal, should be regarded as the main form of teacher response. We respond to the communicative content and (though not always) the technical poise of a piece in the context of the individual writer's development.

* It is counter-productive to use a grading system for individual pieces.

* In marking drafts or final work, when indicating technical errors, we employ a sign system which asks the writer to analyse the type of error or query and correct it independently. Not as much is learned by copying teacher corrections, and even less from a quick glance at them on the way into the folder.

* *Note that at GCSE it is against the spirit of the exam to proof-read drafts unless that draft is included along with any subsequent version submitted in a Coursework Folder.*

* If the work has been done by a developing writer who has yet to grasp many of the technical conventions of written language, rather than indicating all errors, we draw attention to one particular pattern of error at a time, and settle on this as a short-term target for improvement.

* Writing is routinely read aloud at the re-drafting stage, usually in small 'response groups', sometimes to the whole class, in the belief that this generates more concentrated engagement with the text being considered.
If a student's usual writing is syntactically inappropriate or minus sentence markers, and thus in many places doesn't "quite make sense" or "sound right", we suggest to student and parents that always reading aloud as a part of the drafting process is a sure way to make a start on improving this.

ASSESSMENT

What follows is a list of some of the factors that students and teachers take into consideration when thinking about their writing development.

* Confidence, pleasure
* Giving and receiving of collaborative assistance
* Range of contexts and genres
* Developing range of vocabulary and sentence structures
* Developing control over writing conventions
* Authenticity - a sense of personal 'voice'
* Awareness of issues to do with written language - e.g. appropriateness, standardisation, etc.

[See also NLLC Prompt Sheets Section 5.]

See also
"Writing a letter"
by
Garrison Keillor
in
'We are still married'
Faber 1989

3.4

DRAMA

STARTING WITH THE STUDENT

It is important to find out about students' previous experience of drama in school and outside school, and to explore their perceptions of it as a way of learning.

TEACHER AS PRACTITIONER AND LEARNER

The teacher's language, behaviour and signaling, in and out of role, offer students a clear and concrete model to work from in responding to the demands of the activity.

BALANCE AND VARIETY

"Drama is a practical artistic activity by and through which various areas of learning are made possible. This activity is rooted in ordinary human behaviour but also has its own codes and conventions, skills and techniques which can be learnt, developed and put to use in wide, complex and varying ways." (Redbridge Drama Centre)

There are a number of different contexts for drama in the English class; a balanced curriculum will ensure that students experience all of them. Drama activities should be related to all areas of learning in English; they grow out of, and feed, each other.

Three main contexts are:

*   A sequence of work is focussed on drama as an area of learning in itself. A variety of resources is used to develop the work, which requires students in action.

*   Drama work forms part of a sequence of work which contributes to a number of different areas of learning.

*   A playscript is enacted in groups as a shared text.

The Drama modes which will be relevant to any context include:

Warm-Ups /
Games / Exercises

Mime	pairs communicate to each other and then to a wider audience
Freezeframe	larger groups form an image
Improvisation	drama scenes constructed without writing down dialogue
Hot-seating	teacher or student(s) adopt a role and are questioned by the class
Teacher in role	teacher plays a key part in shaping the drama in order to make the learning more effective

Thought tracking   revealing publicly the private thoughts/reactions of
                          participants in role at specific moments in the action

Role play   students are assigned or develop identities round which they

Forum theatre   small group improvises the next stage in the drama so that the
                          class as a whole can discuss how a dilemma might be solved

Mantle of the   the group adopts a viewpoint endowed with specialist knowledge
expert   that is relevant to the situation

Interviews / Documentary / Meetings

Movement / Stillness; Sound / Silence

Ritual / Ceremony

Scripted scenes

Performances of texts, including those devised by students

It is important that drama work draws on the wide range of cultural traditions available.

The points made about bilingual students in previous sections apply equally here, and there is a commitment to encouraging the use of all the languages of the classroom.

To be successful, drama, like the other areas of learning, seeks to provide contexts where real demands are made on our use of language. The contexts are real in the sense that the problems faced and the outcomes which result matter to the participants.

MAKING, REMAKING AND PRESENTATION

Starting Point   Focus is directed at an issue or tension presented by the teacher or which students choose. The focus is developed through discussion, or by the teacher suggesting new viewpoints and/or working in role as a model - as appropriate to the context. Learning happens most when students care enough about the problem in the drama to try to meet the challenge it offers.

Exploration   Groups of students begin to work more independently at this stage, to develop what has been achieved so far. If it has not been a part of the first lessons, groups' main activity is spontaneous improvisation - an interpretation of the focus. Around this there will be planning and exploratory talk, reflective discussion, and work in role.

Reshaping   This involves reflection on the work being done, both in and out of role, and 'drafting'/rehearsal of the work in progress: a cyclical structure. It may also draw on teacher intervention, aimed to focus attention not only on the action but on what students are thinking and feeling, on why they do what they do and on possible consequences and implications of their actions. There is a place here, as there is in the other stages, for written activities - particularly for writing in role in a wide variety

of genres, but see also the activities suggested in 4.3.2.   At this stage work might be shown to groups before being performed to a wider audience.

Presentation   Performance is made to the same range of real audiences that students have for all their work: the class, other students, other schools, family, friends, teachers and other adults. The eventual audience can be planned at any stage of the drama process, decided by students or teacher.

REFLECTION/EVALUATION

"The knowledge and experience of the structures of dramatic art offer limitless scope to explore how and why social situations have come to mean what they do; it offers the possibility of taking us beyond ourselves and into situations where we explore how the world works and how it may be changed." (Redbridge Drama Centre)

Drama also provides opportunities for reflection on language forms.

ASSESSMENT

The following are factors taken into consideration by students and teachers when reflecting upon personal development in drama work in English.

* confidence/pleasure
* listening skills
* collaborative skills
* development of physical expressiveness
* investigation of actions, attitudes, values, relationships
* appropriate use of language
* skills in planning, organising, evaluating
* knowledge about content
* understanding of relationships between form and content
* self-awareness
* range of drama modes.

Some evaluative vocabulary
atmosphere - exploration - status - freeze frame - hot-seat - in role - language register - realism - flexibility - message - meaning - dominance - context - form - content - irony - role - inner conflict - understanding - resolution - negotiation - blocking ideas - accepting - narration - non-naturalism - stimulus - process - pace - spatial awareness - technique - stereotype - symbol - spotlighting - eye contact - text - subtext - genre - monologue - dialogue - plot - subplot - expression - theme - body language - representation.

THE DRAMA DEPARTMENT

The English Department works in close collaboration with the Drama Department, which provides drama lessons in the lower school core, drama courses at GCSE and A level and contributes to CPVE. Their work focuses on processes of collaborative making, re-making and evaluation which are at the heart of the core English curriculum, helps to inform the drama work done in English lessons, and provides opportunities for departmental INSET. There will be times when the work of the two departments is co-ordinated as a joint project. Drama teachers are invited to contribute regularly to the Speaking & Listening assessment component.

3.5

MEDIA EDUCATION

STARTING WITH THE STUDENT

Students come to English courses with much more experience of audio-visual media texts than of other written kinds of texts, and in many ways are extremely knowledgable and sophisticated viewers. It is important that we regard this experience as positive and beneficial to the acquisition of critical literacy. It makes sense that we find out in some detail what sort of spread of individual tastes, experiences and attitudes is to be found in our classes. People - from a very young age - naturally ask themselves the kind of questions that Media Education (and English in general) is concerned with; we need to acknowledge that Media Education is a way of drawing attention to and developing ways of seeing and interpreting that students already possess.

TEACHER AS PRACTITIONER AND LEARNER

This is less to do with the teacher as video camera operator - it is important to give this kind of practical experience to the students - and more with the way in which we present ourselves as being keenly and critically engaged in responding to the whole spectrum of media texts. It is important that students are aware of our personal enthusiasms, especially those that can be widely shared by people in the class, as well as knowing that there are things we question and challenge; and it is important that they know of our subjectivity, that we see things through a particular set of eyes.

BALANCE AND VARIETY

Media Education features in the English curriculum in three ways:

*   The questions it asks of texts are very much the ones that we believe are worth asking when students are engaged in more traditional English activities which centre on reading and writing, and indeed are at the root of the set of concepts to which students are entitled (see Section 3.0.2). In our age it is not so much that literacy includes media education as that media education encompasses literacy. In this sense, Media Education, like Knowledge About Language, functions as a curricular strand. In this section therefore, every question asked of or activity based on a text applies to the class novel or a set of war poems as much as to a newspaper report or a TV programme.

*   Sequences of work will often contain media activities, particularly those which involve students reshaping what they are studying: posters to inform and persuade about an issue, as the form of presentation of a research project; a 'Book Programme' video made by students about each other's Independent Reading. When engaged in this kind of activity, it is important that students do not view what they do uncritically. They need to be aware of the choices they are making about audience, language and representation. The activities on their own, without some form of analytic reflection, do not represent the Media Education to which students are entitled.

*   -   For it to become a distinct curricular area within English it needs like the other entitlements to be presented formally as an aspect of English studies, and from time to time - at least once each year - Media Education should become the focus of a series of lessons.

Content of Media focused activities

<table>
<tr><td>Media Texts</td><td>Media Institutions</td></tr>
<tr><td>Television
Radio
Films
Video
Newspapers
Magazines
Periodicals
Photographs</td><td>State and commercial broadcasting
companies
Cinema
Advertising
Press

Variety of contexts - includes the
personal domain</td></tr>
<tr><td>Music recordings
Books
I.T.</td><td>Music business
Publishing
The New Technology</td></tr>
</table>

A possible programme

The suggested programme which follows is only one example from an infinity of possibilities for activities which focus on Media Education.

It is not based on any notion of fixed progression of content. All activities involve all concepts - so Children's TV (Y7 in the example) could be a Y11 study and could focus on genre rather than audience; the study of representation and stereotyping could contribute to a Y8 English course, etc.

Y7	Introduction to Media Education	(See Section 4.4)
Y7	Children's TV	Audience survey Representations of young people Storyboarding alternatives
Y8	The Press	Readership survey 'The Front Page' (English Centre) Desk Top Publishing groupwork
Y9	The Music Business	Simulation & Boardgame construction
Y10	Film Study	Film styles and techniques [Analysing a wide range of 3 minute extracts]
Y10	Representation and stereotyping	Guided Media Open Study
Y11	Television Drama Study	A study of distinctions commonly drawn between 'popular drama' and 'dramatic art'
Y11	Contemporary developments	Pop Video Design; The Graphic Novel

MAKING, REMAKING AND PRESENTATION

Starting Point

When a concept or activity is introduced, there needs to be an opportunity for students to show what they already know about 'reading' images and looking analytically at media texts. There will be occasions where students can negotiate or choose the set task.

Exploration / Reshaping

The main aim of activities which ask students to respond to and/or produce their own media texts is to develop their sense of texts as constructs, things which have been made by particular people in particular contexts for particular purposes. As such, they are open to question.

Working in groups independently of the teacher, students play with and extend current understandings. There will also be opportunties to work with media technologies. Part of this process involves groups showing their response to other groups or to the teacher; students will be thinking about what they might need to add, delete, re-order, or re-present from a different viewpoint.

Often the activity at this stage will encourage work which translates a text from one genre to another, e.g photo - poem - drama piece - video storyboard. This is a practical way in which Media Education becomes a part of all textual work in English.

Presentation

There are many kinds of media texts which it is practicable for students themselves to make and present. The range of audiences is the same as for other forms of expression.

A sequence of work on the media does not _have_ to be presented as a media text - any other form of presentation may be appropriate.

REFLECTION/EVALUATION

Discussions and other tasks which ask students to evaluate what they have done, whether that has been responding to or producing texts, need to focus on the development of an understanding of underlying concepts. As such, they will be discussions which explore how social situations have come to mean what they do.

* Media Languages
* Representation
* Genre
* Narrative
* Audience
* Agencies.

ASSESSMENT

Factors taken into account when assessing development include:

*   Confidence and enjoyment

*   Awareness of and competence in techniques and conventions used to produce meaning

*   Ability to interrogate texts, and to be aware of others' views of them

*   Awareness of media issues

MEDIA STUDIES

Media Studies courses at GCSE and 'A' Level help inform the Media Education element of the English syllabus Y7 - Y11: what kinds of expectations, concepts and experiences do these courses look for in those who wish to follow them?

Further Reading   Masterman,L: Teaching The Media
                               Hackman, :   Constructing TV. Hodder
                               Hackman, :   TV Studies. Hodder
                               Dutton,:   Media Studies: an introduction. Longman.
                               English Centre: Mass Media Bibliography

KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE

Concern about language is at the heart of the English curriculum that we offer and so we welcome the current attention to language as manifested in the ESG funded Language in the National Curriculum programme. What is meant by Knowledge about Language is still in the process of being defined and negotiated by the LINC project. This section depends heavily upon draft material published by LINC and also upon material produced by the North London Language Consortium. It is not appropriate, therefore, to structure this section in quite the same way as the previous entitlements, although we envisage that in future it will be presented in a similar manner.

It is already clear that LINC views Knowledge About Language as integral to all aspects of students' language learning and development, and not just as a bolt on body of content. There have been significant shifts in emphasis since the publication of the Kingman Report which indicate that the LINC project will substantially enrich the English curriculum. Whilst the original report was widely welcomed for its rejection of any suggestion of a return to formal grammar exercises, it was also much criticised for the model of language which it proposed as the basis for teachers' and students' knowledge about language. The model was static, little concerned with social context, culture and the construction of meaning and, above all, paid scant attention to learning. The original model was given in five boxes:

The Forms of the English Language

Communication

Comprehension - some processes of understanding

Acquisition and development

Historical and geographical variation.

The first of these was by far the most detailed and served to make the entire model seem lopsided in emphasis and to resemble an old fashioned primer in layout.

Later changes can perhaps best be conveyed by comparison of the original Kingman model with one that appeared in North Circular 1, the magazine of the North London Language Consortium. This diagram (see p.117) shows the relationship between knowledge about language and the rest of the language curriculum. It identifies three aspects of students' knowledge about language:

students' implicit knowledge about language,

their reflection on language use, and

the study of language itself.

These are shown in the overlapping circles at the top of the diagram.

Students' **implicit knowledge about language** is closely related to their developing competence in the various language modes. Students' "language competence is their implicit knowledge put to work." Language competence develops with use in a good language environment where they compose, communicate and comprehend meanings in a purposeful context. The development of this implicit knowledge through increased competence remains the core of the English curriculum and implicit knowledge remains the most important kind of knowledge about language.

Students' **reflective learning about language** follows upon their competence. It occurs in the context of their recent or current language use. Reflection upon language use may take many forms - discussion, analysis, response, criticism - and will vary according to the context and the stage of development in which the students find themselves. It contributes to their knowledge about language by helping them to make

INTERACTIONS BETWEEN PUPILS' AND TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE IN THE CLASSROOM DEPEND ON AND DERIVE FROM THEIR EXPERIENCE (JOINT OR DISTINCT) OF LANGUAGE IN THE WORLD

PUPILS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE

READING COMPETENCE AND IMPLICIT KNOWLEDGE
including
- encounters with media texts
- uses of IT

including reading about the experience of reading

reflective learning

WRITING ABOUT READING AND READING ABOUT WRITING

including writing about the experience of writing

reflective learning

WRITING COMPETENCE AND IMPLICIT KNOWLEDGE
including
- production of media texts
- uses of IT

The Study of Language Itself including:
- variety in and between languages
- history of languages
- language and power in society
- acquisition and development of language
- language as a system shared by its users

TALKING ABOUT READING AND READING ABOUT TALK

TALKING ABOUT WRITING AND WRITING ABOUT TALK

SPEAKING AND LISTENING COMPETENCE AND IMPLICIT KNOWLEGE
including
- encounters with and production of media texts
- drama
- uses of IT

including talk about spoken language

reflective learning

Knowledge which could be used as content in the curriculum

Knowledge of how and when to intervene in and respond to language use

Knowledge of how to provide contexts for language development

TEACHERS' KNOWLEDGE ABOUT LANGUAGE: THEIR WORKING THEORY OF LANGUAGE IN LEARNING

explicit what they know implicitly. It is during the process of reflection that the question of linguistic terminology is most likely to arise. There are some everyday technical terms with which students are likely to be familiar and there will be others which teachers will want to introduce once they are assured that the terms will serve students' learning in a meaningful way. Through our dialogue with students, individually or as groups, in discussion and in written comments, we give advice, offer formative assessment, suggest further lines of development, using terminology in a positive and practical way. Classroom activities that involve students in reflection upon their own and others' language use thus have an additional importance in that they provide valuable opportunities for assessing students' language competence and identifying their achievements and needs. Opportunities for reflective learning can and should be planned for on a regular basis. Thus the entitlements in Section Three of this handbook have been set out with this in mind.

The study of language itself is shown in the diagram in the central area of the overlapping circles. The Cox Report recommends Knowledge about Language as an integral part of all activities and also as a study in its own right. The new legislation only requires language study for students working at levels 5 - 10, although it is clear from the current work in the NLLC that students at all levels can benefit from such a programme. Five headings are suggested in the diagram for language study:

    variety in and between languages

    history of languages

    language and power in society

    acquisition and development of languages

    language as a system shared by its users.

Thes headings clearly indicate a continuity with those in the original Kingman model, although they suggest a much broader interpretation than do the earlier ones. There is an obvious overlap between the headings. We envisage that language study will draw on students' existing knowledge and experience of their languages as well as presenting new ideas and material. It will also encourage independent research and data gathering and should challenge prejudiced stereotypes of languages, accents and dialects. A class language survey and associated activities is a common experience for Y7 classes as part of their first half term's work in English. See the class plans on pp 149 - 152.

As regards **teachers' knowledge about language,** the lower half of the diagram indicates that there are three broad aspects:

    * knowledge of how to provide contexts for language development

    * knowledge of how and when to intervene in and respond to language use

    * knowledge which could be used as content in the classroom.

These constitute teachers' "working theory of language in learning" and "should continually develop in interactions with pupils' knowledge about language."

See also:

    North Circular 1 which contains What do we mean by Knowledge about Language by John Richmond

    North Circular 2 which contains reports of a number of classroom investigations of language by a range of writers.

3.7

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

English has a definite contribution to make to students' experience of I.T. in school, and I.T. is seen as something that enriches and supports the English curriculum. The department is properly equipped with one PCWP per form entry, plus access to a computer room and it is important that members of the department are familiarised with the range of possibilities. We do not need to be experts, but we do need at least to know what is available, and have the confidence to allow students to do things that we ourselves are still learning about. I.T is an area where support can provide small group teaching, or where student 'training chains' can be initiated.

As in other areas of learning, we need to start with the students, noting that most will have had a variety of I.T. experience in primary school and elsewhere. We ask students to outline their experience, knowledge and feelings about I.T. in order to create opportunities and groupings which meet individual needs.

WHERE I.T. FITS IN

Once a year English will focus on an I.T. experience of some kind. The rest of the time I.T. is something which is integrated into English work. This integration will sometimes involve the whole class making use of a facility; at other times individuals and groups within the class can choose or be directed to make use of I.T. resources in a way that fits naturally into classroom work.

* ### WORDPROCESSING / DESK TOP PUBLISHING

These provide opportunities at the drafting stage of the writing process for much greater experiment than is allowed by the practicalities of writing by hand.

It is a principle that much of this work takes place with pairs writing collaboratively onto the screen, so that the activity provides opportunities for discussion of the whole range of language forms and choices. Typing up of handwritten drafts is less usual, since it amounts to an unreflective keyboarding exercise.

As a means of presentation, they give students experience of a more professionally finished kind of document.

Resources are available in the languages of the classroom other than English.

For students whose writing confidence is undermined by difficulties in production, handwriting or control of technical conventions, word processing is a key support. The department encourages students to make use of a Concept Keyboard if they wish to.

*   SIMULATIONS

These provide excellent opprtunities for collaborative talk and decision making, and for investigation of narrative structures. They can be related to the full range of other English activities.

It is important that simulations are not regarded unthinkingly as neutral material. Students are encouraged to ask the same questions as they do of other texts, and to suggest alternatives and make their own models.

*   TRAY

Tray and other kinds of textual prediction programmes are good ways in which students can explore their knowledge about language and about texts.

*   DATABASES

A database provides an interesting and easily managed place where students can record their independent reading. As well as details of author/title and brief personal responses or ratings, the data prompts students to record genre, cultural source and settings, aspects of representation etc., and so supports the development of the English conceptual framework. The information recorded is passed on to the Library and used for ordering new texts.

Database programs can be used as a way of analysing and comparing a range of texts e.g character descriptions, genre characteristics.

There is also use by students of the Library database to locate and retrieve information.

*   E-MAIL

Electronic communications provide an opportunity for creating links between staff and students in different schools in perhaps very different places, and offer another kind of real audience for students' work.

In all the activities outlined above, students need to be allowed to learn by trial and error, by doing things rather than by being instructed about them.

Further Reading: 'IT's English, Accessing English With Computers' [NATE 1990]

3.8

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Independent Study is a curricular feature which emphasizes the importance attached by the department to independent, student-motivated approaches to learning and language development. It also encourages students to investigate the aims and scope of English teaching for themselves.

The idea is that for a period of time each year each student creates a programme of study, individually and/or collaboratively. There is a careful planning period beforehand, using the same procedures and criteria as teacher-led activities (See Section 5.2 on Planning). The programmes are negotiated through the teacher and remain flexible. Particular attention is paid to the provision of occasional whole class overview sessions, and there is an encouragement to look for real contexts in which to work.

Each year the students follow a similar procedure in preparing their independent study:

* Students review the aims and scope of the English curriculum.

* They decide roughly what they would like to do and with whom (if anyone) they wish to work.

* In working groups, detailed plans are created and presented to the class and to the teacher, and modified if need be. These plans specify activities which act as:

    Starting point
    Exploration
    Reshaping
    Presentation

* The activities chosen need to address:

    Learning aims
    Resources
    Equal opportunities
    Bilingualism

* During the project, there are opportunities for people to show work in progress to the teacher and to others in the class, and to be given feedback.

* Evaluation of this work focuses on students' ability to work independently.

Independent study is intended to develop students' self-reliance and confidence in their approaches to their work. Progression across the years is provided by ensuring that students are given a tightly structured framework within which to plan the activities in Year 7 and then increasing the extent of their responsibility in subsequent years. We try to set up situations, therefore, in which students are making choices that are real and meaningful. The decisions made by students should relate to concerns which they have articulated and should involve an awareness both of alternative courses of action

and their consequences.

Some examples of independent study which are currently used in years 7 and 8 include:

Leisure Fair: In groups, or individually, students select a subject/hobby/topic of their choice about which they are already well informed or wish to discover more. The task for the unit is to design and prepare a stall for a Leisure Fair. The Fair is set up in the school hall towards the end of the assignment and another class(es) are invited to visit it.

Campaign: In groups, or individually, students select a subject about which they hold strong views. The initial research task for this study is twofold: to ensure the greatest degree of factual accuracy and to investigate the effectiveness of the presentation of various other campaigns. The final task is to identify a particular audience for their campaign and then to design it.

Teaching Half Term: By the end of Year 7 we expect students to be familiar with the broad range of activities within the English Curriculum. The task for this independent study unit is for the students, individually or in groups, to prepare an English lesson or unit which they then teach to the rest of the class. Particular attention is paid to the learning aims and to the evaluation of the lessons.

We hope that such activities will develop in our students the capacity for self-reliance in their work that becomes increasingly important in later years.

TEACHING STRATEGIES

4.0 TEACHING STRATEGIES

The previous section, **Student Entitlements,** dealt with the scope and nature of the activities which students encounter in the English curriculum. It sought to describe those entitlements from a learning perspective and was, therefore, most relevant to long term planning and reflection on practice. By contrast, the present section, focuses upon the classroom practicalities of those activities. The general intention is to bring together the collective wisdom of the department about a repertoire of activities. It is not a prescriptive rulebook. Some general comments upon classroom organisation and teacher intervention are followed by more detailed practical guidance about the range of teaching strategies employed in the department. This is done in two ways: some strategies for one of the entitlements, Reading, are dealt with descriptively; others are treated more briefly in a selection of Class Plans. No attempt is made to cover all areas of the English curriculum because we are aware that most departments have already gathered a bank of teaching materials that will always be growing and changing. We hope that other parts of the handbook will serve some kind of reference function, we envisage this as the DIY section. It will be succesful if it provides colleagues with a ready format for sharing their expertise.

4.1

THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM: LAYOUT AND MANAGEMENT

Furniture is designed to be moved to suit the type of activity planned for.
Classes can be trained to know the different types of arrangement, and if need be to sort out the tables and chairs at the beginning and end of the lesson.

Individual and whole class activities

Layout	Appropriate Activities
Traditional rows.	Controlled conditions work only.
The U.	Orderly whole class work - students can see each other, and move without fuss into informal pair/group work. Layout provides a focal point for teacher and other speakers.
Wall-benching	Tables lined against the walls. Chairs tucked in to create space for drama work, used for bursts of individual writing within the lesson, or brought into the middle to create a desk-free reading circle.
Boardroom	Tables in large solid square. Prepared whole-class discussion.

Groupwork

Groups arrange themselves in the room in a way that is appropriate to what they are doing: in grouped chairs for discussion and reading activities, around a single table for various kinds of close collaboration, and around a group of tables for presentation work that needs space.

Display

The department's resources encourage teachers to make classrooms visually stimulating places: there will be a changing array of posters and photocopied texts and images chosen by teachers and students, as well as students' work. The display should reflect the personality of the teachers and students who use the rooms, the aims and philosophy of the department, and the range of cultural and linguistic diversity in the school and in the world beyond.

Accesss to resources

Students have controlled access to all books, stationery, and display material, and are encouraged to become responsibly independent in their use.

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4.2

TEACHER INTERVENTION

The principle underlying teacher intervention is that it aims to lessen the need for such intervention on future occasions; it is the 'handing over' not just of skills but of the control of learning.

A major element of teacher intervention is in the effective planning and organisation of a sequence of work. Clear instructions and guidelines, given to students who are experienced in working collaboratively and independently, minimise the need to intervene.

Some general principles

*   Give space and time for activities to develop. Sometimes DON'T intervene!

*   Be aware of the autonomy of an individual or group; teacher response needs as a matter of course to be supportive and encouraging...

*   BUT... question assumptions sometimes - play devil's advocate, or raise genuine issues of race, gender, appropriateness, etc.

*   AND ensure participation by all, not monopoly by some.

*   Remind groups occasionally of targets (time, outcome, purpose), while being ready to be flexible about timings if things are going very well or very badly, and to accept alternative outcomes.

*   Offer strategies to help groups organise themselves and to collaborate successfully. This becomes less necessary through time as students take on responsibility for organising themselves.

*   Be a facilitator! Provide opportunities and resources for groups to follow up ideas and interests.

Establishing Groundrules for a working atmosphere
(The following notes are taken from a draft document for probationary English teachers that is currently being prepared.)
How explicitly and emphatically these are laid down will depend on how much the group already implicitly understands and follows them. Some groups might not require anything to be said. Others may need a lot of groundwork. Particular groundrules are best talked about when the class is or will be engaged in a relevant activity.

1.   A whole class working atmosphere

This is one where one voice at a time is speaking and being listened to. Apart from the first few lessons, in which the English curriculum is introduced to the class, it will be a student's voice as often as the teacher's.

If a first attempt at whole class discussion between students is not working, despite having drawn attention to the nature and rationale of the necessary concentrated atmosphere:

-   if it is a whole class problem, stop the discussion and get them to work silently on a closely structured exercise from the coursebook. After half an hour, there will be another go at discussion.

-   if students in general do not accept writing task, seek assistance after the lesson. This is a departmental problem, not simply yours.

-   if it is an individual or small group problem, speak to those concerned after the lesson. Lines that might be taken are: Do they understand the purpose of having a whole class working atmosphere (exchange; mutual respect) - if so, what's the problem?

-   communicate with the students' tutor. Often the problem will be evident in most other classes. There may be a possibility of teacher support in class. If problems persist, ask for report procedures to be initiated according to the school's Code of Conduct.

Be patient with individuals who find if difficult to sustain concentration. Appreciate humour. Acknowledge and praise small but significant achievements in concentration and in the commitment of what they produce, stressing above all that others' working activities ought not be disturbed.

If an individual or group is disrupting an activity so that it cannot continue, and you have already spoken to them privately about the need for non-disruption, they need to be excluded from the classroom for part or all of the remaining lesson, according to the procedure set down by the school's Code of Conduct. Exclusion from the classroom needs to be followed up by continued dialogue aimed at defusing tension and inviting renewed engagement in learning.

It's worth pointing out that you are far more likely to discover the pleasures of children speaking their minds and hearing others, or presenting their own or others' work to the rest of the class, than to find yourself in some stressful confrontation over learning attitudes and behaviour.

2.   A collaborative small group working atmosphere

Distinguish between collaborative work and loosely collated individual efforts.

Propose the theory that the best class in two years' time is the one where a teacher finds that everyone can work productively with any other person in the class in some way or other, particularly when groups automatically cross 'barriers' of gender and ethnicity.

Ask students in groups to devise a checklist on what makes a good group. Return lists a couple of times throughout the year for development; create a display of results.

An attempt at summary
The chart on the following page is from Reid, Forrestal, Cook (1989) and usefully relates the range of possible teacher action and intervention to the model of the learning process which we have largely adopted form that book.

Engagement	Exploration	Transformation	Presentation	Reflection
. encourages reflection . reviews progress so far . points to further directions . poses organising questions . encourages prediction . presents new content material . links new material with old . provides structures overview . demonstrates or models new skills	. facilitates development of groups . provides time for students to make their own links with the information . may provide time for individual writing for this purpose . may provide direction through open-ended questioning . monitors small group talk closely - does not contribute . reflects on information gained from monitoring student talk	. recalls directions . sets Transformation activities . organises classroom appropriately . reviews constraints . facilitates development of writing, reading and through open-ended appropriate . directs students to best resource material . monitors students' progress and understanding . monitors quality of work produced . provides new information where necessary (by recyling the Engagement and Exploration Stages) . records progress of students	. provides sense of performance by explicitly valuing the work produced . ensures products have been shaped to suit given audience and purpose . organises classrooom appropriately . encourages audiences response and feedback . encourages sharing of products . facilitates development of presentation skills, such as: - handwriting - layout and design - editing/proofing - rehearsal - public speaking - oral reading - evaluates products of students in terms of goals (where necessary)	. reviews products and outcomes of learning . reviews the learning process . shows enthusiasm and disappointment . encourages students to evaluate their own progress in terms of curriculum aims . organises classroom appropriately for: - individual writing - small group talk - whole class discussion . re-establishes links between this activity and whole curriculum . solicits students ideas on follow-up activites, future directions and extension work . reflects upon all this for future planning

4.3   READING STRATEGIES

This section deals with strategies for three selected aspects of the reading curriculum: independent reading; the class novel; and poetry.

4.3.1
INDEPENDENT READING

Given the aims of English teaching as we understand them, provision for independent reading must be a core element of every student's experience.

KEY STAGE THREE - THE READING LESSON

The foundation of support for personal reading is time within school for students to read their own choice of book. The reading lesson should ideally be timetabled as such; management, staff and parents need to be aware that personal reading time is a requirement of the National Curriculum.

Students are broadly free to choose what they read in these lessons. Teacher judgements should be made on an individual basis, bearing in mind the reader's confidence and the need for appropriate development in terms of continuity, breadth and progression.

Bilingual students are encouraged to see personal reading in languages other than than English as a legitimate, important and desirable aspect of their reading development, and are given opportunities to bring this experience into the reading lesson.

This lesson also gives teachers an opportunity to speak with students individually about their reading, and so to to guide, encourage and monitor reading development.

There can of course be some flexibility. The reading lesson might be 'lost' for a week or two as the class read the final parts of a shared text or come to the performance / presentation finale of a series of lessons.

Variation
However well intentioned, the reading lesson on its own can for many students become a grind, an enforced and oppressive silence where they struggle to find interest or give up and pretend. The reading lesson can be invigorated by a number of activities which vary the format of the lesson or which are set up around the lesson to raise awareness of books and of reading tastes.

Launching the Reading Lesson in Y7: The Reading Survey
As their introduction to personal reading as an element of the curriculum, a class can be organised to:

*   talk about their best and worst experiences of reading so far

*   in groups, create questionnaires to find out as much as possible about a person's reading habits and tastes

* in pairs, students interview each other and fill in responses on the questionnaire

* a display can be created by students choosing the most interesting or unusual or cartoonable pieces of information and representing them in cartoon and caption form

* the completed questionnaire is a useful record in itself and can be used as the basis of teacher/student reading interviews.

OTHER ACTIVITIES TO SUPPORT INDEPENDENT READING

Reading Interviews

* can be conducted quietly during the reading lesson

* can focus on current reading, but should aim to get an accurate general picture

* end with a definite future plan: eg "keep it going", or "two 10-15 minute bedtime reading sessions before next week", or "one book outside preferred genre before Christmas"

* become part of the Individual Pupil Record , see Section Five.

Teacher Joining The Silent Reading Activity
As well as giving us time in a busy life to consider and pursue our own reading, this practice is highly motivating for developing readers in the class - see Section 3.2 on 'Teacher As Practitioner...'

The Last Five Minutes
* Students talk to each other informally about what they've been reading

* More structured paired reading (10-15 minutes)

* Teacher presents own current reading, or a new book for young people etc.

* Entries made in Journal.

Volunteer Reviewers
A good way of trying out prospective class novels, and a real sense of critical responsibility for the readers.

Presentations
* Informal discussion round the class: a quick dip into current reading.

* Pairs/groups working on 'Book Programmes' recorded on tape or video.

* Formal presentations, perhaps where students present first in groups and then to the whole class. Possible structure:
    - Introduction to the text (from notes only)
    - Short selected reading
    - Questions from the audience: the speaker chairs.

During the series of whole class presentations, the teacher can aim to guide class towards the better kind of question and eventually to withdraw totally from question sessions. Students might be asked to take brief notes from presentations towards a piece of folder work: "Six Of The Best".

Reading Records
A few minutes of each reading lesson is often spent keeping a log of books read and brief comments or ratings in journal, or elsewhere. Once or twice a year students can write recommendations for the Library/Resources Centre. This can also be done on computer database, if someone's backing up.

Occasions
*   Library visits - 2-way. Service visit to school preceding class pm outing to local Library with English teacher and form tutor.

*   School Library Booksearches - finding books for selves, each other, and/or for imaginary readers described by the teacher.

*   Adult Presentations - other teachers make 10 minute presentations of their current reading as part of the reading lesson.

*   Visiting authors. TV Book programmes. Bookclub. School Bookshop.

The Reading Homework
The department can build on developments in primary practice which seek close home involvement in this vital curricular area. Students and parents should be at least aware that homework time each week should be devoted to personal reading. Not spending at least 30 minutes a week on this should be seen as not doing English homework.

Reading support ·
An important test of the success of the department's reading policy. The teacher needs to have resources and strategies for supporting those who can't yet or won't develop autonomously.

Resources: Magazines, joke books (How to survive... series), comic annuals, pop and sport biographies, puzzle books, choose-your-own-adventure, poetry, Blighton/Blume/Dahl/, Pete Johnson, some Knockouts.

Approaches: Paired / small group reading
                     Y11/Y12 students support
                     Short term target setting

KEY STAGE FOUR - GCSE OPEN STUDY / WIDER READING

The approach to independent reading at KS4 will tend to be different from the Lower School approach. To begin with, the pressure of the GCSE syllabus militates against a continuation of the regular private reading slot. Instead, the expectation must be that, building on the success of the reading programme, private reading has established itself as routine activity outside the classroom. At the same time, to help to ensure this, it is important for the course Y10-Y11 to focus on occasions on Independent Reading.

*   Launch the Open Study / Wider Reading Unit early in the first half term. Students should start thinking about choosing not a book, but a projected series of texts. It is helpful if this kind of approach to choosing reading has been introduced in the previous year's reading lessons.

*   A possible first GCSE unit might be "A Personal History Of Reading and Writing", based on group and whole class talk and stories. As well as being a good unit of autobiographical writing, and raising interesting issues about the ways in which schools educate the young, it can provide teachers with an interesting insight into the context and attitudes with which individuals are beginning their examination course.

*   Issue an Open Study questionnaire, detailing areas of interest and proposed texts. This can of course be changed as time goes on and students develop or modify their ideas.

*   Independent Novel Study as a four week unit in Y10, complete with Reading Interviews and formal presentations.

*   Complementary study set over the summer holiday.

*   Final Open Study unit writing in Spring term Y11.

*   Throughout the Open Study, note-taking performs a crucial function for both student and supervising teacher. See note on 'Reading Logs' in Class Novel section.

Independent Reading To Support Class Novel Study

A good idea to give suggested complementary reading lists to a class that is enjoying a particular text, or keen to acquire background depth to their responses. In Y7-Y9, groups could be set a Booksearch task to find and read complementary texts independently.

4.3.2
APPROACHES TO THE CLASS NOVEL

INTRODUCTION

The class novel has long been a central feature of English in secondary schools. It offers:

*   the pleasure of audience, a shared experience of literature that is almost theatrical

*   whole class and group work alternated

*   presents a model for developing reflective reading

*   allows students to practice reading aloud

*   access to complex linguistic / conceptual levels.

It can be overused, in which case it risks crowding out other important features of the English curriculum.

Main issues and new developments in contemporary approaches to the class novel are:

*   Pace and variety in the methods of moving through a text

*   Freedom of student response.

CHOICE - Some factors:

Subject matter - does it challenge students, treat them as responsible thinking beings? Does it raise issues relevant to aims of English? Does it offer variety from novels previously studied by the class? Humour?

Length - can it be studied comfortably without having to straddle a half-term or a holiday?

Narrative structure - very long chapters or lack of definite progression in events can create difficulties.

Linguistic level - is the balance between accessibility and challenge appropriate to the group?

LEADING IN
It is useful to focus the class on a theme or situation from the novel before they even see a copy, spending anything from one lesson to a fortnight or more. Some methods are:
*   Brainstorming expectations aroused by the title
*   Research of historical background
*   Discussion of theme, personal experiences
*   Poetry writing on theme / situation
*   Roleplay
*   Introductory discussions of cover, dedication, epigraph etc.

MOVING THROUGH THE TEXT

Texts do suit serialisation: serial presentations of narrative fiction are all around. But it is crucial to create momentum and suspense in a serial reading. The quality of the text partly determines this, but the way in which a text is presented is equally important. All or almost all English lessons should be devoted to moving through the text; a session should aim to move through a significant chunk of text and end on a hook; written work should support rather than distract from the initial reading (see Reading Log); discussions during the initial reading are best concentrated in bursts at the beginning or end of longer (15 - 30 min) reading sessions. The structure of a reading session should be signalled clearly from the outset: eg "I'm going to read the next chapter, then we"ll stop for a short group discussion, then we do some reading in groups."

If shared reading and the opportunities it offers for collective exploration and response is the main point of this approach, it follows that books should remain in school until the reading through has been completed. Students who ask to take the text home can be directed to other books by the same author or on a similar theme or in a similar style.

FOUR METHODS OF MOVING THROUGH

Teacher reading aloud

Plus: A fluent expressive reading can make complex language accessible in a way that student reading or silent reading might not.

Minus: It is hard to keep up concentration on a single voice. Students may eventually feel that they are not really doing anything.

Note: Too much teacher intervention - lengthy explanations or digressions - can spoil the rhythm of the narrative.

Students reading aloud

Plus: Builds or consolidates confidence in 'going public'. Good to hear different voices.

Minus: Not everyone has the confidence to read aloud like this. Demoralising for poor readers forced to read, and deflates others' interest - so volunteers only.

Note: A variation: for sections where two or three characters engage in dialogue, different people take parts.

Group Readings (Groups of three, turns of an appropriate length)

Plus: Substantially more (and equal) opportunity for reading aloud, without the pressure of reading to the whole class. Chance for teacher assessment of reading skills in non-threatening context. Group members unselfconsciously help each other.

Minus: One person's distraction can impede a whole group. Back-up activities might be needed for groups which finish very early.

Note: This is an innovative reading method which sounds a lot harder than it actually is to people who haven't used it, but soon converts anyone who does.

Silent Reading

Plus: Readers reach their own active understandings. This is the normal adult method of reading.

Minus: This way of reading is hard for developing readers to sustain.

The Ideal Mix
Any reading session should make use of two or more of these methods, and a series of lessons should make use of all of them. Reading time should be interspersed by short bursts of whole class and/or group discussion or writing in the Reading Log.

GROUP READINGS

The teacher presents a class with five or six possible titles of varying subject matter and difficulty; individuals select the title(s) they feel are most appropriate, and groups are arranged. Constraints on choice would be the size of the group (maximum 5) and perhaps an insistence on mixed groups. Some groups might read a number of shorter texts. Sometimes the texts might be plays rather than prose works.

This approach has many particular virtues: a range of texts to suit the mixed attainment group, allowing for example sophisticated readers to tackle a really demanding text with the support of others rather than alone; a real opportunity for groups to decide independently how they will present their finished reading to the rest of the group, building on what they have learned from teacher initiated tasks and possibly creating original approaches; a chance for the department to try out potential class readers on a proper group readership before committing itself to the expense of a full class set.

As with a class novel, a groundrule for this approach must be that texts remain in school until the initial reading has been completed; it needs to be a genuinely shared reading.

THE READING LOG
The Reading Log, kept in the Journal, is a good way of supporting student's reflections on the unfolding of plot, character, theme, style and personal response as they move through a text. At the same time it does not distract from the Reading focus of the novel study. Most of the pieces would be the result of short sharp bursts of individual response to what has been read so far, though others might be suitable as homeworks, and some, in combination with role play and discussion, could come as the result of one or two 'breaks', taking a rest from the text if it's felt to be appropriate. There is no expectation that Reading Log work will be worked up to Folder status, though it is clear that a well kept log will produce the optimum conditions for such writing that takes place after the reading. Teachers respond purely to the content of Reading Log entries, rather than the level of language performance, and should be sensitive and non-judgemental, praising evidence of authentic personal response and of growing depth of such response.

Examples of pieces which might make up a Reading Log during a Class Novel study:

*   Expectations (of the class novel experience)

*   Writing associated with Leading In

* First Impressions - of the book and/or its characters (2 or 3 chapters in)

* Character pieces - a variety

* Description of role-play exercise & evaluation of own performance

* Response to reading methods - likes and dislikes, advantages/disadvantages

* Quotations - selection plus notes on reason for choice

* Tracing notes - systematic notes, every few chapters or so, on the development of theme, character, use of language etc.

* Continuing interests / Feelings about the book (midway through)

* Response to issues

* Feelings on finishing.

OVERVIEW - Looking back at the text as a whole

* Pair/group chapter displays - illustrations, quotations, character analyses, plot summaries

* Group chapter drama presentations

* Hot seating (very good for overviews of character)

* Role-plays: situations relevant to themes in the text

* Group discussions of theme. Present authorial opinions transactionally.

* Critical analysis: issues of authorship, style, representation. Different groups look at different things and report to whole class.

WRITTEN COURSEWORK

* Choice of written tasks & possibility of students' own ideas
(See section 3.3, 'Writing' under Balance and Variety.)

Main types of writing

* General personal response / Review

* Imaginative representation of plot, character, ideas, style, sometimes 'with' and sometimes 'against' it.

* Story / Poetry inspired by the text

* Analysis of particular features of character representation, ideas, style.

In all years there should be an appropriate balance between these four main types.

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POETRY

This section of the handbook is taken from a Redbridge Advisory Services booklet on Poetry in Secondary Schools by Dimitra Poli, to be published September 1990.

STATEMENTS ABOUT POETRY : A STARTING POINT

Poetry was the story telling medium long before the novel and is one of the first and favourite genres of childhood... but:

"I hate poetry."

and

"The evidence is that, in national terms, poetry is frequently neglected and poorly provided for; its treatment is inadequate and superficial. Many pupils spend more time completing language exercises of little value than they do reading, writing or talking about poetry."

"Teaching Poetry in the Secondary School" HMSO 1987.

So...

"... poetry needs to enjoy a much higher status in schools.......what is needed is a range of strategies for overcoming the apparent mystique of poetry, so that pupils and teachers are confident in their handling of it. Poetry needs to be seen, spoken performed, heard, played with and above all, enjoyed."

"The English Curriculum: Poetry" ILEA English Centre 1987.

Because...

"... poetry is not some inaccessible form of utterance, but it speaks directly to children, as to anyone else, and has something to say which is relevant to their living here and now..."

"A Language for Life" (Bullock Report) 1975

And...

"The educational advantages of creative, intellectual and emotional activity which children enjoy are clear. Writing poetry makes children feel happy, capable and creative. It makes tham feel more open to understanding and appeciating what others have written... It even makes them want to know how to spell and say things correctly.... of all these advantages the main one is how writing poetry makes children feel: creative; original; responsive, yet in command."

Kenneth Koch "Wishes, Lies and Dreams."

HOW TO EAT A POEM

Don't be polite
Bite in
Pick it up with your fingers and lick the juice that
may run down your chin.
It is ready and ripe now, whenever you are.

You do not need a knife or fork or spoon
or plate or napkin or tablecloth
For there is no core
or stem
or rind
or pit
or seed
or skin
to throw away.

Eve Merriam in "Earshot" ed D. Kitchen

RESOURCES

As well as stocking sets of poetry anthologies, the department buys single copies of new collections of poetry books for photocopying (within legal limits) and inclusion in class book boxes. We constantly update and review stock, improving access to new poetry, to poetry in translation, to ideas and poets and poems. As poetry is to enjoy equal status with other kinds of text, each English class must have attractive and interesting poetry books readily available for browsing and reference alongside novels for individual reading.

APPROACHES TO POETRY

The following is an attempt to help students grasp such concepts as meaning, form and style by a variety of routes involving all the processess of learning we have identified.

This list of strategies, which involves raising the status of poetry as well as ways of approaching particular texts, is taken from "The English Curriculum: Poetry. Material for Discussion" ILEA English Centre 1987.

*   Browsing.

*   Wall and Board Display

*   Poetry posters

*   Publishing poetry

*   Writers in schools

*   Students compare different translations of poems written by bilingual students in languages other than English

*   Competitions

*   Getting it taped

*   Reading aloud in a variety of ways

*   Cloze activities in groups

*   Sequencing cut up lines or verses

*   Story boarding

*   Students select photographs, pictures, clips from newspapers to illustrate/explain poem of their choice.

*   Students create their own anthologies, individually or in groups.

*   Rework poems (into prose if need be), getting into or out of stereotype of ideas or character. 'Dulce et Decorum Est' rewritten by a war 'hero'? Use of alternative narrators. What happens after the poem? Be one of minor characters.

*   Students collaborate in giving the setting, costume, make-up, cast for the dramatisation of the poem, as the starting point for analysing textual issues.

*   Exposure to different forms. Ask pupils to see where poetry occurs in their lives and bring in examples. Then "try it yourself" approach. This will span:

nursery rhymes   playground chants   advertising slogans   graffiti
acrostics   shape poems   ballads   popsongs   repetition
narrative   description   conversation   dialect   nonsense rhymes.

Drafting discussion checklist for students' own writing

*   How well does the arrangement, sound, beginning of poem get attention?

*   What is particularly wonderful or awful?   Why?

*   How did it end? Are there other ways to end?

*   Is time, place important in the poem?

*   Does it sound better/worse for rhyming/not rhyming?

*   Should detail be added or taken away?

*   How does the poem make its readers feel and think?

*   What did the writer intend?

*   Are other words or combinations of words worth considering?

*   What do readers like or dislike? What first reactions do readers have?

*   Are there unnecessary words to be cut?

*   Can the poem be arranged in different lines or in different shapes?

TEACHER RESPONSE

See Section 3.3. In addition to those general principles of a developmental approach to responding to writing, there are aspects of teacher response peculiar to poetry:

Encouraging the reworking of poems

First version need not be the only version. Giving students opportunities in this way to look closely at their own writing of poetry reinforces strategies that serve to support their other writing.

*   student translates poem written in English into another language, or vice versa

*   student tries using different forms or styles to see how original idea can change

*   look at examples of published poets' own redrafting of poetry

*   using word processor to experiment with alternatives wording and form

*   reworking poem for different audiences (junior school, display, anthology)

* children reading each other's poems: becoming own reciters and commentators.

Teacher's written comments

* praise explicitly what has been achieved and liked in the poem.

* suggest further writing which would involve practising aspects of form or meaning which are beginning to emerge, or experimenting with a fresh approach - e.g. nonsense rules for syllable counting to force a change from a habit of strict lines or rhythms.

* refer students to poems where similar techniques or ideas have been tried

* refer students to rhyming dictionaries, if appropriate, at the drafting stage

* encourage writers to be explicit about the ideas behind the poem, the effects the writer wanted to achieve and in what way. In this way a critical dialogue is set up.

4.4

CLASS PLANS

This section presents a selection of class plans covering a range of activities. The particular format of the class plan used here is dealt with in detail in Section 5, **Planning, assessing,recording and reporting: a framework.** On the first side of each plan is listed a number of considerations to bear in mind whilst planning, whilst the reverse side indicates the sequence of activities proposed in the unit of work. The class plan thus provides in convenient shorthand form an overview of the strategies adopted.

CLASS   TIMESPAN

UNIT

	Entitlements	Att.Targets	Cross-curric
FOCUS			

LEARNING AIMS
[Concepts   Experiences   Competencies   Attitudes   Language Use]

RESOURCES

GROUPINGS

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES
[Opportunities for collaboration;   bilingual students;   equal opportunities]

SEQUENCE OF WORK

Starting   Point

Exploration

Reshaping

Presentation

Opportunities   for   reflection/evaluation

Criteria   for   assessment

EVALUATION SHEET FOLLOWS

4.4.1

CLASS   Year 10   TIMESPAN   5 - 8 weeks

UNIT	Schooling and Education		

	Entitlements	Att.Targets	Cross-curric
FOCUS	Speaking and Listening	S & L	Citizenship
	Literature	Writing	Personal & Social

LEARNING AIMS
[Concepts   Experiences   Competencies   Attitudes   Language Use]

*   The unit encourages students to consider ways in which a range of styles of schooling have developed, including their own, and to formulate their own visions of what is desirable in education.

*   There is an emphasis on the personal, an encouragement to bring family history and views into the classroom.

*   The unit makes real demands on students' skills as storytellers, interviewers, reporters, debaters, actors.

RESOURCES

*   Extracts from Joyce's Portrait, To Sir With Love, Enid Blyton school story, 'Jennings', Grange Hill, Friedrich, Betsy Byars, Judy Blume, Faroukh Dhondy's 'Two Kinda Truth', Dickens' 'Gradgrind' and two poems by Roger McGough.

GROUPINGS

*   The initial activities focus on individual interviewing and storytelling to the whole class or to small groups.

*   Exploration and reshaping activities are suited to groups of 3-5 which combine friendship pairs and threes.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES
[Opportunities for collaboration; bilingual students; equal opportunities]

Bilingual students can use their language skills in the interviewing of family members and reporting their stories and views to the class.

There will be discussion of single sex and co-educational systems of schooling.

SEQUENCE OF WORK

Starting Point
*   Schoolday Stories - from teachers, students, and their families. From the stories, students are asked to establish and record a sense of development in education through time, and a list of the features that make for good and bad learning environments.

Exploration
*   Representations of school. In groups, students explore a range of literary and media uses   of the school story genre. As before, there is discussion of the diversity and limits of the kind of learning experiences encountered.

*   Drama activity. Warm-ups and exercises are based round the range of experiences and issues raised by the stories and the texts. In groups, students devise drama pieces which   enact an episode they have learned about.

Reshaping
*   Students are introduced to the debate about mixed ability teaching.

*   In groups, establish lists of arguments for and objections.

*   A prepared whole class discussion - open debate, chaired by students.

*   Headteacher plays devil's advocate. Students respond in writing.

*   Students design questionnaire to interview parents and others about their perceptions of mixed ability teaching, and report findings to the class.

Presentation
*   What makes the perfect teacher? A class checklist, sent to teacher training institutions.

*   GCSE Coursework Assignment - a choice from:
         Representations of school
         A discussion of the mixed ability debate
         The ideal school

Opportunities for reflection/evaluation
*   The unit asks students to reflect on the way institutional styles affect the lives of the people who experience them.
*   Students are asked to record in their Journals a series of evaluations relating to the different kinds of speaking and listening engaged in during the unit.

Criteria for assessment
*   Confidence/Pleasure in the range of contexts for speaking and listening.
*   Developing understanding of institutional diversity
*   General writing assessment criteria apply to the written assignment

4.4.2

CLASS   Year 7   TIMESPAN 4 - 6 weeks

UNIT	Introduction to Media Education

	Entitlements	Att.Targets	Cross-curric
FOCUS	Media Education		Citizenship

TEACHING AIMS
[Concepts Experiences Competencies Attitudes Language Use]

*   The unit will introduce students formally to media education as an area of learning , and will explore and develop students' understanding of the kind of questions to be asked of media texts.
*   The 'Developing Images' element focusses on media representations of developing nations.
*   Students demonstrate their understanding through making photographic records of the school, each of which takes a different perspective.

RESOURCES

*   A range of photographs: laminated selection from English stock is available
*   Developing Images
*   1 automatic SLR per group, plus 1 film (12 exp.) plus development costs.

GROUPINGS

*   Pairs for the initial activities.
*   Photo sequences are created by groups of 3 - 5, friendship pairs and threes combined to create groups of mixed race and gender, though there is one all girl and one all boy group in order for the class to reflect on the influence of gender on working processes and on perceptions.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES
[Opportunities for collaboration;   bilingual students;   equal opportunities]

This unit develops students' ability to study images, as an introduction to further study of the Media in English. Images will be seen increasingly as constructed - by themselves and by others.

Developing Images focusses directly on the prominence of negative images of black societies, and the need to challenge this with other sources of information.

The unit provides equal access to media technologies.

SEQUENCE OF WORK

Starting Point
* Presentation and discussion of the place of Media Education in English
* Gathering of class responses to the statement: 'The Camera Never Lies...'
An ongoing display created on this theme.

Exploration
* Study of a range of magazine photographs, with prompts which draw attention to issues of authorship, intention, technique, and representation. Further work on cropping and captioning.
* Sequence of work associated with Developing Images pack.
* Study of TV programming, and critical viewing for a week, focusing on representations of developing nations.

Reshaping
* Photographic project: different groups to present different perspectives of the school in a six frame sequence - some negative, some positive, some balanced. (The remaining six pictures on the film are determined by the group.) Two sets of prints are obtained from each film.
* This involves careful collaborative planning and storyboarding, and opportunities to revise first versions.

Presentation
* Groups make a selection of their own and others' photographs. In presenting the selection, groups aim to be as diverse as possible from each other.
* Suitable for presentation to a wide range of real audiences

Opportunities for reflection/evaluation
* The exploration activities provide opportunities for reflection on entitlement concepts
* The photographic project generates reflection on the subject as well as the processes of creation
* Students write a response to each of the presentations on display, and these responses are themselves displayed.
* Students are asked to discuss and record reflections in their Journals about the way that different group profiles may have affected the process and the product of the video exercise.

Criteria for assessment
* Confidence / Pleasure
* Developing awareness of image construction
* Developing competence in media production and technologies

EVALUATION SHEET FOLLOWS

4.4.3

CLASS   Year 9   TIMESPAN   5-6 weeks

UNIT	Writing a class novel

	Entitlements	Att.Targets	Cross -curric
FOCUS	Writing	Writing	Communication

LEARNING AIMS
[Concepts   Experiences   Competencies   Attitudes   Language Use]

*   Students work in pairs to contribute to an outcome that is shaped by the class as a whole
*   The unit provides developing writers with an opportunity to organise a full length novel, with due attention to choices of genre, narrative structure, and representation.

RESOURCES

*   The activity is based on a completed reading of a shared text, usually a novel.
*   As a unit which focusses on the drafting stages of the writing process, and which intends a highly polished final written outcome, this is particularly suited to whole class use of word processing facilities.

GROUPINGS

*   Friendship pairs form the basic grouping for this activity, though there are many opportunities for different pairs to collaborate at different times for a variety of purposes.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES
[Opportunities for collaboration;   bilingual students;   equal opportunities]

*   This unit provides many contexts for students to communicate effectively with each other in order to produce a successful outcome.
*   Bilingual students are encouraged to use their languages, to introduce them in some way into their chapters.
*   The unit may well raise issues of represention related to equal opportunities.

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SEQUENCE OF WORK
Starting Point
* The proposed activity is launched: a full length sequel to a novel the class has been reading. Each pair will contribute a chapter to the whole thing.
* Discussion of sequels: existing models, the notions of 'confirming' and 'resisting' the source.
* Pairs draft proposed sequels in outline and present to the rest of the class. The decision on which to choose is made by class vote.

Exploration
* Whole class discussion on overall shape of text.
* Pairs list two or three ideas for chapters they would like to contribute. A list of ideal first choices is collated. Pairs then create chapter sequences which will have some kind of satisfactory narrative form. Teacher chooses satisfactory suggestion out of a hat.
* Pairs research and draft their chosen chapter.

Reshaping
* First readthrough - all drafts read to the group in sequence
* Editing and redrafting - in pairs, and in fours with writers of adjacent chapters
* Second readthrough - to an outside audience for a sense of audience reaction.
* Final version produced

Presentation   The finished novel:
* is read to classes who know the source text
* is duplicated and distributed to home, other classes, the library
* is made available in reading lessons
* is sent to the author of the source text

Opportunities for reflection/evaluation
Students are asked to record in their Journals their feelings about the various aspects of book creation and collaborative writing presented by this unit. Comment could focus on the particular difficulties generated by the scope of the work, and on their developing sense of the need to respond to what others in the class have written.

Criteria for assessment
* Confidence / Pleasure ·
* Demonstration of knowledge about the novel as a medium
* Drafting skills
* Quality of collaboration

4.4.4

CLASS   Year 7 - first half term   TIMESPAN: about 3 weeks

UNIT	Introduction to language diversity

	Entitlements	Att.Targets	Cross-curric
FOCUS	KAL	Speaking and Listening	Citizenship Communication

LEARNING AIMS
[Concepts   Experiences   Competencies   Attitudes   Language Use]

* Students in the multilingual classroom find out about the languages in use in their own class and in wider society.
* This diversity is presented as a positive thing. Bilingualism and knowledge about languages others than English is a benefit to the individual and to society.
* There is an opportunity for bilingual speakers to use their languages with other users and with those who do not use it.

RESOURCES

* Students' knowledge and experience
* ILEA Language Survey
* A Bilingual Story

GROUPINGS

* Most activities require groups of mixed language use and gender.
* The bilingual storytelling activity requires as many groups as possibles to contain two people who speak the same language other than English.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES
[Opportunities for collaboration; bilingual students; equal opportunities]

* The unit forms part of the 'Ourselves' sequence which begins the Y7 Scheme of Work
* This unit provides many contexts for students to communicate effectively with each other in order to produce sucessful outcomes.
* As a unit which highlights students' bilingualism at a very early stage of their English programme, it is a key unit in the curricular provision of an ethos which encourages bilingual students to use their languages in school with pride and confidence.

SEQUENCE OF WORK

Starting Point
*   Discussion of the role of KAL in the English curriculum.
*   Discussion of the rationale of 'Starting With The Student'.
*   In groups of 5-6, students collate and display lists of the languages they use, the languages they have heard or seen, and the languages they know of. These are made attractive for display.

Exploration
*   In pairs, students study the ILEA Languages Survey. They record their reactions in English Journals, and the class' responses are shared and discussed. In addition, each individual has to sum up their reaction in one word, and to record this word on a poster display of the Survey, in English and in one other language of their choice.
*   Individually, students are given a class list on which, having spoken to everyone else in the class, they record the languages spoken, read and written by classmates.
This list is stuck into the English journal.

Reshaping
Having investigated the range of language use in the class, activities now concentrate on opportunites for bilingual students to use the languages they know.
*   In role play and then in writing, groups present forms of greetings in all the languages of the group. The forms include non-verbal aspects of communication such as body language, and take account of formal and informal social contexts. The languages used include varieties of English.
*   The teacher presents a story which makes use of two languages. Groups follow this   model or create a bilingual story of their own invention. The stories may mainly be in English, but they should contain three distinct and memorable words or phrases in the language other than English, and have at least one passage where the other language is allowed full rein. The stories can be told from notes, and then written up if appropriate.

Presentation
*   Stories are recorded on video and shared with other classes who have been engaged in the same work. They can also be lent to students, parents, primary schools etc.

Opportunities for reflection/evaluation
*   Students are asked to record in English Journals their feelings about the experience   this unit has given them to use their own languages and to find out about and hear other languages being used in the classroom.
*   They are asked to assess the effectiveness of their story-telling group and of their   own performance in it. This assessment relates to the quality of collaboration as well as to the performance that results.

Criteria for assessment
*   Confidence/pleasure
*   Quality of collaboration in the group storytelling
*   Range of language repertoire
*   Willingness to experiment

EVALUATION SHEET FOLLOWS

4.4.5

CLASS   Year 10   TIMESPAN   2-3 weeks

UNIT	Becoming a Writer

	Entitlements	Att.Targets	Cross-curric
FOCUS	Knowledge about Language	Writing	Communication

LEARNING AIMS
[Concepts   Experiences   Competencies   Attitudes   Language Use]

The unit is designed to promote students' understanding of their own and others' writing development. The emphasis is upon composition and expression rather than secretarial skills. The unit provides opportunities for students to reflect upon their own competence and achievements as writers through the study of younger children's

RESOURCES
1. NLLC Poster: **Four Become Writers.** This poster gives 9 samples of writing from each of 4 children in a 4-7 year old infant class. The samples range from first attempts at writing to pieces that are increasingly fluent, accurate and confident. There is also a description of the literacy environment, classroom activities and teacher intervention and collaboration. The chidldren's names are: Anna, John, Funda and Priya. The writing samples will need to be photocopied and cut up.
(Outside the North London Language Consortium, this poster is available through NATE.)

2. A questionnaire for the students on their writing histories.

3. **Becoming a Writer** published by the National Writing Project contains similar material.

4. younger siblings and samples of their work as appropriate

GROUPINGS
The groups for this unit are no more than 4 and are mixed in race and gender.

Presentation towards the end of the unit is in the form of individual written GCSE assignments.

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES
[Opportunities for collaboration;   bilingual students;   equal opportunities]
Group analysis of materials
Samples of bilingual learners' writing that showed the dual use of scripts would be needed for discussion.

SEQUENCE OF WORK

Starting Point
Class discussion of early memories of learning to write
Students bring in any samples of their writing when they were younger
Students bring in samples of early writing from younger siblings where possible

Exploration
Each group is given all the pieces of writing by Priya without any indication as to their order. Groups have to sequence the pieces and state what each piece shows of Priya's learning. Students are then given the commentary on her development from the poster and discuss it.

Reshaping
Groups are given the pieces of writing by Funda. As before, they are asked to sequence the pieces and evaluate the learning that has occurred. This time, however, they have to make their own minds up without benefit of the commentary from the poster.

Presentation
Each group produces a teacher's report to Funda's parents on her writing development. Some of these are read out to whole class and some are displayed.

Opportunities for reflection/evaluation
Students complete a questionnaire examining their own writing histories. This asks particularly about their early memories, about how they have changed as writers, about their attitudes to writing and what things they have found most helpful in their development as writers.

Further opportunities may exist for students to open up this area of discussion with others in their family. Other people's memories of learning to write. Changing approaches to literacy etc.

Criteria for assessment
Understanding of the different stages in acquisition and development of writing.

EVALUATION SHEET FOLLOWS

SECTION FIVE

PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING: A FRAMEWORK

5.0   INTRODUCTION
5.1   THE PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK
5.2   PLANNING
5.3   ASSESSING
5.4   RECORDING
5.5   REPORTING

5.0
INTRODUCTION

This section presents a crystallisation of the processes whereby we organise what we do as teachers. In doing so, it also serves as a ready summary of all the essential ideas contained in the handbook. If we were to pick out a single document which brought together in a practical way all that we have argued about the principles underlying our approach to student entitlements and to strategies for teaching, it would be the class plan/record.

The section is designed to co-ordinate with the individual school's Whole School Policy on Assessment, Recording and Reporting. In real Redbridge high schools, whole school policies (where they exist) are in draft form and will be finalised in the next couple of years. It is likely that departments will be required to assess, record and report through a process of "records of achievement", focusing not only on subject information but including also progress in cross curricular skills and themes.

*   *We are grateful to John Richmond and Dave Reedy for permission to use the prompt sheets for English Key Stages 3 and 4 which they developed for The North London Language Consortium and which are reproduced here in 5.4.*

5.1

THE PLANNING, ASSESSMENT, RECORDING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK

There is no single, simple solution to the processes of curriculum planning, assessing, recording and reporting and it is damaging to pretend that there is. We have to recognise both the complexity of each of these processes and also the fact that we engage in each of them in different ways, at different times, for different purposes. There are, however, some important general principles. The framework proposed in this section attempts to acknowledge these principles within common procedures which all members of the department can accept and yet which offer individual teachers ample scope to adapt to their own needs.

We take the view that planning, assessing, recording and reporting are a logically interrelated sequence of activities that are integral to the teaching and learning process. They are not bolt-on problems to be solved in isolation from the real business of teaching, but activities which support and inform each other. In this framework, recording and assessing, for example, are seen not only in terms of their function in guiding the development of individual learners. They also have a role in informing and developing the curriculum. Assessment is crucially to do with the match between expectation and reality; it is essential that it feeds back into class plans, teaching strategies, curricular content and ultimately any other area of this handbook. We deliberately stress the interrelated nature of the planning, assessing, recording and reporting processes, but their sequence is equally important. In preparing this handbook we have continually found that it is to planning that we return. That has to be the starting point, however urgent the immediate need for an assessment, recording or reporting system might appear to be.

There is no intention in this section to suggest that planning, asessment, recording or reporting are new inventions. Teachers have long been involved in all these processes. However, the implications of the new legislation are that they could, and should be, made more systematic, more explicit to ourselves and more explicable to others.
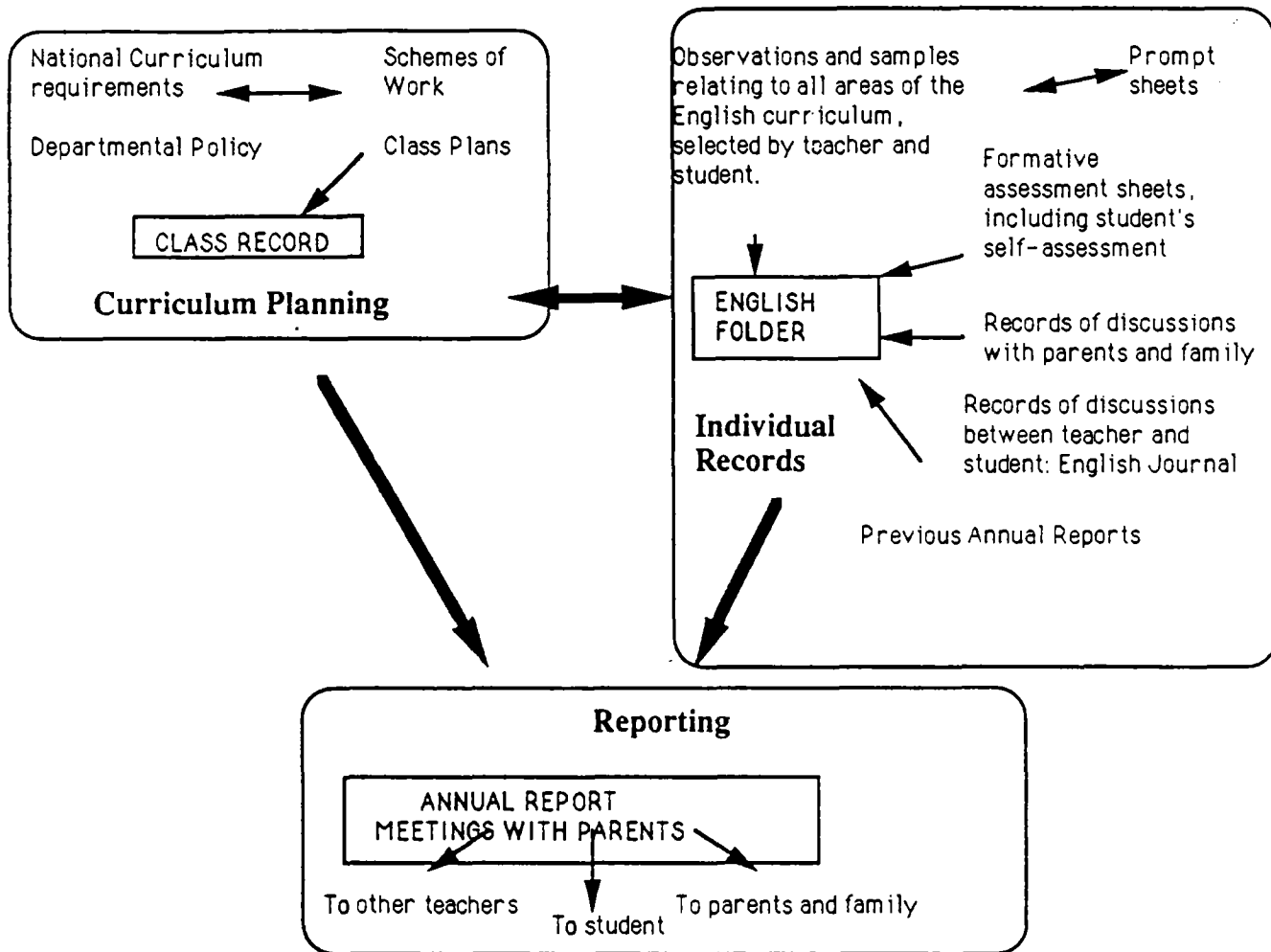
The North London Language Consortium Model
We are much indebted in our work to the North London Language Consortium (NLLC) whose Primary Curriculum Planning and Assessment Framework provided the model for this section of the handbook.

This consortium spans the 13 Outer North London boroughs and is one of some 25 such consortia which make up the Language in the National Curriculum (LINC) project whose brief is to promote teachers' knowledge about language. During 1989-90 the language advisory teachers in this consortium worked on the development of the NLLC Planning and Assessment Framework which was designed to meet the needs of curriculum planning, assessment and recording in primary schools. The Framework has been widely distributed throughout the consortium area and is available to colleagues elsewhere through NATE.

The NLLC Framework expresses the relationship between planning, assessment, recording and reporting in a diagram which we have found extremely helpful and sought to adapt for a secondary English context. Our revised version of this diagram is given overleaf.

PLANNING, ASSESSMENT RECORDING &REPORTING FRAMEWORK

Curriculum Planning

National Curriculum requirements ⟷ Schemes of Work

Departmental Policy → Class Plans

CLASS RECORD

Individual Records

Observations and samples relating to all areas of the English curriculum, selected by teacher and student. ⟷ Prompt sheets

ENGLISH FOLDER

Formative assessment sheets, including student's self-assessment

Records of discussions with parents and family

Records of discussions between teacher and student: English Journal

Previous Annual Reports

Reporting

ANNUAL REPORT MEETINGS WITH PARENTS

To other teachers   To student   To parents and family

Some reservations and problems

Before looking at the details of the framework itself, some general comments need to be made about the particular context in which it has been developed.

We are confident that the framework described in this section is in line with the best practice developed by primary and secondary teachers in recent years and that it will enable the department to comply with the legal requirements of the National Curriculum. However, we are also aware that there are inherent contradictions and tensions within this legislation which have not yet been resolved and which may not be

capable of resolution. We see little point in pretending that these problems do not exist and are anxious that colleagues are not tempted into self recrimination when they encounter difficulties for which they bear no responsibility .

Colleagues who wish to pursue the issues in detail are referred to:
> Barrs,M: Words not Numbers - assessment in English   (NAAE/ NATE 1990)
> Gipps,C: Assessment: a teacher's guide to the issues (Hodder & Stoughton 1990)

from whose work many of the points below derive.

The framework proposed in this section seeks to build upon our view of good practice, whilst recognising that the issues mentioned below are likely to remain problematic for English teachers and colleagues in other curricular areas for some time to come.

* **The fragmentary nature of the National Curriculum.** The NC was conceived as a collection of particular subjects rather than an integrated 5 - 16 curriculum, its formation being largely determined by the assessment requirements at the various keystages rather than by the needs of learners. The individual subject working groups operated in isolation from each other with little attention to the wider implications of their recommendations. An overcrowded curriculum is one obvious consequence. But internal contradictions within the NC are another more serious result of this fragmented approach to curriculum design. Broadly speaking, two approaches to learning co-exist uneasily within the legislation: an emphasis upon *content* (Maths, Science, Geography) and an emphasis upon *process* (English Technology). This internal contradiction has already posed considerable problems to the traditionally integrated primary curriculum, with teachers being left with the task of stitching the components together as meaningfully as they are able. Secondary schools are likely to find that their traditional subject based organisation is confirmed by the NC requirements and that the development of whole school approaches to learning are made that much more difficult.

* **The 10 level TGAT model of assessment.** The 10 level model was not negotiable and subject working groups were therefore constrained to describe progression within their areas in readily identifiable steps. The results are arbitrary and inappropriate, particularly so in regard to language. However benevolently intentioned, the 10 level model is likely to be crude in its effects and not particularly helpful to learners. A teacher who thinks, for example, that one of her students can
> *demonstrate, in talking or writing about fiction, poetry, non fiction and other texts that they are developing their own views and can support them by reference to some details in the text*

will assess the student at level 5 (AT2). If, however, she thinks the student, in talking *and* writing, is developing her own *insight* rather than *view,* and can *sustain* it rather than *support* it by reference to some details in the text, then she will assess her at level 6 - even though poetry appears to have slipped through the grid at the higher level.

To see this kind of semantic wriggling for the arbitrary silliness that it is, is not, of course, to say that assessment of reading is impossible. It is simply to insist upon what we know with confidence, namely that language development, being recursive, does not proceed in neat orderly steps.

Additional problems are caused by the attempt to operate the 10 level model independently of age or development. As Myra Barrs points out, this leads to the view

that a very able 7 year old is equivalent to an average 14 year old if their attainment levels are similar.

* **Criterion referenced testing** Criterion referenced testing which underpins the assessment arrangements inevitably focuses attention upon objectives rather than entitlements, learning needs or provision. The consequence of this for English may be seen in the considerable differences in style and content between the Programmes of Study and the Statements of Attainment. There is a danger that priority in curriculum planning will be given to what is specified for obligatory assessment, rather than to those activities and experiences to which students are said to be entitled.

In addition, "the need to specify criteria in detail can lead to a fragmentation of a subject into small assessable elements, and the consequent loss of what Desmond Nuttall has called "high level and integrating objectives" which are actually the aspects of achievement that it would be most important to assess." (Barrs 1990)

* **Formative and summative assessment procedures** are assumed by the TGAT model to be easily combined, although in practice their needs and purposes are very different. "The detailed, *formative* assessment information that makes up the the child's profile of attainment and will be used as the basis of communication about individual children to parents and other teachers...could be extremely valuable to all concerned. It is the *summative*, aggregated assessment information, that has to be published, which is of less use in professional terms. The aggregated summative information is there for accountability and political purposes; it is there to evaluate and monitior schools rather than to help directly in the education of individual children." (Gipps 1990)

* **Reporting the results** of criterion referenced assessments through some form of aggregation will prove difficult because " criteria are all different and in no way equivalent to one another..(and) cannot be added together, or summarised, without losing their meaning completely." (Barrs)

5.2

PLANNING

"Each teacher should have a plan which encompasses a year's work and development, but which will recognise the needs of the years ahead of the child, and the experiences, competencies and understanding which the child brings to the classroom. The primary school will probably have a framework for language development covering the ages from 4+ - 11+, and the secondary school will have a framework the ages of 11+ - 16+ and beyond. The year's work which the teacher plans must fit within these larger frameworks and be consistent with them, and should be   less general and more specific than the Language Policy or English Curriculum documents."
(NATE Learning to be literate in a democratic society.)

Planning is the starting point. We have found it helpful to think in terms of three levels of curriculum planning, each level serving a different function and each requiring a different kind of planning aid. In each case the planning aid suggested here is a single sheet of A4 or A3. We view planning as a process of progressively focusing down from whole school or department concerns to quite particular activities in individual classrooms.
The three planning aids used in RHS are as follows:

minimum requirements list (see 3.01, pp 90-91)	* an agreed outline framework of activities for all pupils in a key stage or year
scheme of work (see 5.2, pp 162-163)	* an outline of activities for a class for a term
class plan (see 4.4, pp 140-152 and 5.2, pp 164-165)	* a detailed plan for a specific unit or assignment with a particular class

These three planning aids serve quite different planning needs and purposes, provide different forms of records and enable the department to be accountable in a variety of ways. More detailed accounts of how these are used appear below.

*   Whole Department Planning - Minimum Requirements List

The Minimum Requirements for RHS are given in 3.01. This is a list of all the activities and experiences to which the department has agreed that all students are entitled in the course of a year or a key stage. It is designed to ensure that all the requirements of the National Curriculum as laid down in the Programmes of Study are complied with. The list is expressed in terms of minimum requirements and in terms of activities and experiences rather than particular texts, titles, themes etc, so as to ensure that teachers have maximum scope for choice of materials, approaches and innovations whilst still acting in common with colleagues upon essential matters.

Drawing up the list is a crucial part of developing common approaches, coherence and

continuity within the department. Although the list is brief, its preparation is a lengthy task and adequate time needs to be set aside for it to allow for the necessary discussion. It provides teachers with a manageable frame of reference within which to plan their work with individual classes in more detail. It offers a brief overview of the department's work so that colleagues from other departments, parents or students are able to set a particular piece of work or student within a meaningful context.

* **Long term planning - Scheme of Work.**

The Scheme of Work is a planning sheet that gives an outline of the activities proposed for a class for the term. It indicates both the balance of activies over that period and also an approximate timescale.

A sample sheet appears in reduced form on pages 162-3. The format for the Scheme of Work is based upon a planning aid developed at the English Centre. It takes the form of an A3 sheet, around the edges of which is printed a series of prompts representing the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The diagram on page 162 indicates the overall layout for the Scheme of Work sheet, with the central space much reduced in the change from A3 to A4. On page 163 the central section of the Scheme of Work sheet is shown with an initial outline of proposed activities for a year 7 class.

This sheet is completed termly by all teachers for each of their classes. It is photocopied, circulated to everyone in the department, and a copy kept centrally. Schemes of Work are discussed at Teams meetings, where there is a chance to exchange further details. Time is made available on INSET days for staff to produce the schemes either individually or collaboratively. Completion of the scheme of work is not a lengthy task, because it is essentially a rough mapping exercise in which teachers set out their broad intentions for the term's work. For all sorts of reasons, those initial intentions are likely to change and the reverse side of the Scheme of Work sheet is used to annotate any changes made to the plan during the course of the term. The annotated copy thus becomes an invaluable part of the overall class record, handed on to the next teacher or used for reference at parents' evenings etc.

To complete the scheme of work sheet, teachers are likely to need to refer to the other two planning aids. Some brief check, for example, will be required as to how the term's proposed activities for a particular class relate to the broader context given in the minimum requirements list. This is particularly so in regard to the timing of activities: if we spend four weeks on this media focused activity will there be enough time to still do the unit on writing a class novel? On the other hand teachers at some stage are likely to need to turn to the Class Plan in order to do some detailed planning for a unit of work. This may be a question of referring on the Scheme to the relevant Class Plan in the bank of departmental materials or, with a new piece of work, it may involve producing a new Class Plan sheet.

Clearly, the intention is that the completed Schemes of Work accumulate and travel up the school with the class in the class record. Thus, when planning work with a class for a term or for the year, teachers refer to earlier schemes of work in order to ensure that balance and continuity are being provided throughout the curriculum Y7 - Y11.

The Scheme of Work meets requirements for the department's accountability to parents, management, governors and others. More importantly,however, it provides a means of everyone in the department knowing what everyone else is doing, and therefore generates opportunities for exchanges of information and ideas which might not otherwise arise.

* **Planning a sequence of work - the Class Plan / Record**

There is a need from time to time for class plans which offer an outline of activities and experiences that is sufficiently detailed to enable another teacher to launch their own version of a particular sequence of work. It needs to be precise about the general principles which inform decisions about the practical organisation of the work:

* Teaching aims - concepts, experiences, competencies, attitudes, language use
* Planned timespan
* Resources
* Groupings
* Opportunities for collaboration
* Opportunities for bilingual students
* Criteria for assessment
* Opportunities for reflection/assessment/recording
* Planned outcomes; Actual outcomes
* Evaluation

The format of the Class Plan is two sides of A4. See pages 164-5 format and 140-152 for examples. One side enables the teacher to detail some of the underlying concerns of planning a particular unit, such as the learning aims, resources required student groupings, continuity, the opportunies for collaboration, for bilingual students etc. On the reverse side is outlined the sequence of activities in the unit, the movement from lesson to lesson, which takes into account the view of the learning process outlined in Part A and used throughout the handbook

*	Starting Point:	Students acquire information and engage in an experience which provides the basis or content of their learning.
*	Exploration	The learner is given the opportunity to make an initial exploration of the information, to bring past experiences and understandings to bear as he/she endeavours to come to terms with the new information.
*	Reshaping	The learner is required to work with material in a way which enables him/her to develop further understanding
*	Presentation	The learner is placed in a situation where he/she is required to present in various forms what has been learnt to a constructively critical audience in order to further help the learning process.
*	Reflection	The students are asked to reflect upon what they have done, to help them to understand what they have learned and how they have learned.

At each stage of this framework, students should be based in small groups, working individually, with the group, with other groups, or the whole class as determined by the teacher, the nature of the task and the aims of the lesson or unit.

For any sequence of work to become something that colleagues can try out and develop, the plan needs to be detailed enough for other teachers to work from. Section Four

contains examples of such plans reflecting classroom experiences. Once written, class plans are stored centrally in the department's resource file. They can be updated, but there is no need for them to be written from scratch each time they are used. New plans can be produced retrospectively.

Section 1.7 contains a prompt sheet for bilingual concerns which is helpful to consult when drawing up a class plan.

* **Student involvement**
The termly scheme of work, or a version of it, should be given to pupils so that they too have an overview of what they are to be engaged in. The same will be true of some class plans, particularly for sequences which are lengthy or complex. Students should come to be given responsibility for negotiating the plan or parts of it.

* **From plan to record**
The plan will obviously be modified in most cases. It becomes a record of what actually happened simply by adding a loose sheet on which is briefly recorded the teacher's evaluation and observations of anything that might be relevant for other teachers to know, variations on the given plan, particular successes or disasters. Some things will be worth adding to the top copy in the department's central store.

The plans/records are stored by the teacher in the class planning folder so that at the end of the year they can go on the next teacher.

* **The class record or planning folder**
A class record or planning folder is kept by each teacher for each teaching group in their charge. This folder brings together in manageable form the various items listed below and forms the basis both for sharing ideas with colleagues at department meetings and also meets the requirements of professional responsibility to the headteacher, parents and others.

* a set list and register, to include all the functions previously served by a markbook-i.e. record of work completed, students interviewed etc.

* a summary of the class's previous English experiences in the form of schemes of work that have been modified retrospectively - i.e. plans that have become records

* a copy of the department's Minimum Requirements sheet

* current termly Scheme of Work and relevant Class Plans

* any further notes/plans relating to additional activities

* copies of all handouts, self-assessment sheets etc. distributed to pupils

* individual record sheets for teacher observations and comments: i.e. one piece of blank A4 paper per pupil.

We believe that all three profile components are equally important
and should therefore receive equal attention in the classroom. (1.8)

Speaking and Listening

1. Personal
express & justify
feelings & opinions

*present ideas,
experience &
understanding
in widening contexts

2. Information
*give/follow
instructions
*discriminate
fact/opinion
*assess argument
*ask/respond to
questions
*present factual
Information in a
relevant way

3. Performance
*recite & read
aloud
*listen & respond
to a range of
literature
*work with drama
scripts/dramatic
roles
*role play

4. Collaboration
*work in small/large
groups on increasingly
complex range of
issues
*report/summarise
*hypothesise/predict/
reflect
*negotiate a consensus
15.29

5. KAL
accent & dialect
know about
historical,
geographical
& social
variations &
attitudes to
this variation

*understand
forms &
functions of
spoken
Standard English
*focus on the
range of purposes
for spoken language
15.30

Reading

1. Fluency/Range
*read a variety of
genres
*read literature in
English from
different culture
*read pre 20th
century literature

2. Response
*Read independently
and discuss
favourite reading

3. Media/Non Literary
*read with critical
awareness a
range of information
and media texts
*awareness of audience

4. Study skills
*develop skills of
reading for Information,
skimming & scanning
16.30-16.34

Writing

1. Structure/Organisation
*structure & organise narrative
argument factual writing
(including paragraphs)

2. Variety/Audience
*write in a variety ways (notes,
diaries' adverts, poems, stories,
scripts)
*write appropriately
*write for a varietyof purposes
describing, explaining, giving
instructions, argument)
*write imaginatively,
aesthetically,reflectively

3. Style
*write with increasing control
over grammatical structure and
appropriate vocabulary
*use a range of poetic form &
features

4. Drafting
*draft, redraft, revise, proofread
17.48

Activity	Time	Tasks/Groupings	Comment
1. Introductions	1 lesson	Learning names and previous schools Giving out books	Needed to ensure mixed ability groups
2. What is 'English'?	1 lesson and homework	Group brainstorms Whole class discussion Blackboard dictation Individual written responses: Aims and expectations	Makes explicit the learning framework

5. KAL
focus on literary language
and how it conveys
meaning

changes in English over
time and social attitudes
to this

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES
race gender class

CROSS CURRICULAR ISSUES
e.g whole school language policy

PUPIL GROUPING
mixed ability

5. KAL
focus on the
differences between
speech and writing

range and purpose
of written language

ACTIVITY	TIME	TASKS / GROUPINGS	COMMENT
1. Introductions	1 lesson	Learning names + previous schools. ← Giving out books.	Needed is ensure mixed groupings when desired.
2. What is "English"?	1 lesson + HWK	Group brainstorms Whole class discussion Blackboard dictation Individual written responses: Aims and expectations.	Makes explicit the Learning framework.
3. ~~Myself~~ Ourselves (1 and 1?)	8 lessons 3-4 HWKs	Paired Interviews → Written Profiles for display Personal stories told, written and enacted Letter to Primary School.	← introduce 'response groups' for collaborative redrafting.
4. Language Diversity In the Class	4 lessons 4 mini-hwks	See RHS 4.4.4.	
— H A L F		T E R M —	
5. Launch Personal Reading Programme	3 lessons 2 HWK	Class survey of reading tastes and behaviours Reading Lessons	READING ASSESSMENT (R.O.A)
Gowie Corby Plays Chicken: Gene Kemp [THESE MIGHT OVERLAP]	~~7~~ lessons ~~3~~ HWKS	See RHS 4.3.2. LEAD IN: The Nightmare Pupil Reading Logs kept in English books.	[Time!!] Range of gender, class, ethnicity. ORAL ASSESSMENT. (R.OA)
7. Christmas Poetry	6 lessons 3 HWKS	What does Xmas mean to those in the class? Investigation of ~~diff~~ range of Xmas related verse. [SEE SCHEME OF WORK] Produce class booklets of writing as presents.	Important to involve and acknowledge other faiths and festivals. Do something at Eid? etc. Opportunity for I.T.? (Time?)
Term : WRITTEN ROA			
via : media / drama			

[Yr 7 Scheme of Work.]

CLASS   TIMESPAN

UNIT

	Entitlements	Att.Targets	Cross-curric
FOCUS			

LEARNING AIMS
[Concepts   Experiences   Competencies   Attitudes   Language Use]

RESOURCES

GROUPINGS

UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES
[Opportunities for collaboration;   bilingual students;   equal opportunities]

SEQUENCE OF WORK

Starting Point

.

Exploration

Reshaping

Presentation

Opportunities for reflection/evaluation

Criteria for assessment

EVALUATION SHEET FOLLOWS

5.3

ASSESSING

Assessing and recording are closely related and are separated here only to make explicit everyday operations that often occur simultaneously in the classroom. We are in full agreement with the principles of assessment and recording that have been succinctly expressed by the NLLC: " Any system should:

* relate directly to the curriculum in use
* be descriptive, making use as far as possible of words rather than scores, grades or checklists
* include evidence of students' work to support and illustrate judgements
* involve students in monitoring and describing their own development
* involve conversations between student(s), teacher and parent(s)
* make manageable demands - be straightforward to operate
* refer, as necessary, to aspects of the whole range of a student's language competence."

"There is a difference between assessment and measurement. Assessment might best be described as the having of conversations (spoken or written) and the making of judgments on which teachers and learners can then act. Measurement is the attempt to provide a score, grade or level for a learner which, in the briefest of terms, compares the learner either comparatively with other learners or against a set of benchmarks or criteria. Often when people talk about assessment they mean measurement. The National Curriculum requires both assessment and measurement (against criteria), as defined here."
(Introduction to NLLC Planning Framework)

Assessing involves identifying individual students' strengths and possible routes for future development. It occurs through familiar processes of dialogue, observation and marking work and it occurs at two levels of frequency: " day to day intervention and periodic review." The stuff of day to day assessment is the innumerable everyday actions and judgments made by teachers that are required to initiate and sustain learning activities. These are so frequent, taken for granted and integral to the teaching process as to be often overlooked as a form of assement. More formal, deliberate or structured assessment occurs less frequently but is essentially no different in kind from the others. The key word throughout these activities is "developmental". More detailed guidance on assessing particular areas of learning will be found under the heading **assessment** in each of the parts in **Section Three: STUDENT ENTITLEMENTS.**

By contrast, measuring is something we have to do briefly at the end of each Key Stage, and is done in an ironic and regretful spirit in the context of detailed dialogue and with particular care not to depress or to allow complacency.

Assessing involves:
* Celebrating students' achievements

* Giving students an opportunity to reflect on and talk about their own and each other's work in terms of the criteria by which development is assessed. To begin with,

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much of this discussion may be teacher led or teacher structured. The aim is that students provided with good models become increasingly independent and capable of self-development.

*   Encouraging students to assess their performance in the language they choose to use. Teacher intervention comes at the end of such discussion, the end determined by the people involved.

*   Giving students an opportunity to contribute to the criteria on which assessment will be based.

*   Asking students occasionally to record their thoughts and feeling about the progress they are making in a particular area (self-assessments) and about their experience of a particular activity (evaluations). These can be done informally in the Journal, or recorded on the Formative Assessment Sheets. These sheets are further discussed in section 5.4

*   Providing 'scaffolding' for student assessment. This might take the form of prompt sheets for discussions, or frameworks for written assessments. Sometimes the use of tape recorders will be appropriate. Sometimes it will be the teacher who records the outcome of assessment discussion. At all times it is important that the assessor acknowledges the value of a contribution, even if the student is not able to record it.

*   Setting short term achievable targets with and for individuals, so as to plan the next steps. This is the way in which assessment is used diagnostically.

Assessing is not something that has to happen during or immediately after the activity being assessed. A student may do something in October, choose not to present it for assessment, return to and perhaps rework the product in some way the following March, and choose then to have it assessed by others.

In the past, assessment in English has tended to reward uses of language which conform to notional and actual standardised forms. In order for the department to achieve its educational aims, we have decided to move to a model which rewards diverse and diverging language uses

RECORDING

Recording is essentially the process of gathering, selecting and organising evidence of individual students' progress in a way that provides a developing portrait of their achievements, needs and aspirations. Teachers have always kept records, but the new legislation requires recording, like planning, to be done in a more systematic way. A frequent weakness with recording systems in the past is that they have not served the interests of the students and teachers concerned in any direct way. This is usually because the system has been imposed upon them for other people's purposes; because what is recorded does not tap or include the really useful implicit knowledge of achievements that students and teachers have; or because it is not an integral part of the learning process. We seek to avoid these dangers in the system proposed here. We also view recording as an important aspect of promoting equal opportunities in that it helps to ensure all students' access to the curriculum and enables them all to see their progress clearly.

In gathering evidence we have to be clear about purposes and audiences which it serves. Because complex learning environments are so full of such varied evidence, recording has to be selective, manageable, purposeful and the shared responsibility of students and teachers. This section seeks to describe the range of evidence available in terms of audience and purpose. In each case we indicate where that evidence is most likely to be conveniently stored, either in the **class record** or the individual student's **English folder.**

The Scheme of Work & Class Plans
These planning aids records the activities intended for a particular group. Once they have been seasonally adjusted and modified to take account of what actually occurred when they were put into operation, the plans are extremely valuable records, stored in the class folder. They are likely to be accessible to outsiders (parents, other colleagues etc) and students may well copies in their own folders.

Teaching Notes, Mark Books, Registers
At the day to day level we record a wealth of information in all sorts of ways: an attendance register, lists of students who have been interviewed, or who are still waiting for their turn on the tape recorder, lists of completed assignments etc. All of these kinds of records are essentially private, often idiosyncratic, serving to maintain the system, often ephemeral. They are of little direct interest to anyone else, although we do rely upon this kind of record in order to make some kinds of judgments or provide information.

Teachers' observation and discussion notes
These are brief informal notes made by the teacher during or after some more considered periodic review. We seek to have, for example, one lengthy conversation about their reading with each students on a termly basis. Any rough notes made by the teacher are kept on **individual record sheets** in the class record, and brief informal notes by students in their **journals.**

Students' reading logs, journals, learning diaries etc
There is a range of ways in which students can be given the opportunity to reflect upon their learning or aspects of it. These are essentially private ehough we hope there is every encouragement for them to be shared. They are used by students as a source of

information when completing their **formative assessment sheets.**

Formative Assessment Sheets,
These are kept in the student folder. There is one of these for each of Speaking & Listening, Reading, and Writing, and one for Other Areas in English. The format for each of these is a blank sheet of A4 with the appropriate title and student's name etc at the head. They are filled in gradually over the course of a year, and the responsibility for recording statements is shared between teacher and student. Some entries will make general assessments of particular areas (e.g. My feelings about writing, age 14), others will focus on specific activities undertaken in class (e.g. My contribution to the drama project "7 Ages of Humanity"). In either case, the criteria for assessment will be made explicit to students before the activity begins, and there will be further support through discussion and exploratory writing in journals. Agreed general criteria can be found in the 'Assessment' subsections of Section Three and in the North London Language Consortium Prompt Sheets given at the end of this section.

In addition to these sheets there are some self assessment sheets that relate to particular units of work. These are completed and stored in a similar manner to the blank forms mentioned above. A sample of this kind of sheet that relates to the unit Introduction to Language Diversity is given on page 176.

Over the year the sheets will come to contain:

*   Teacher and/or student comment on two/three samples of Writing, normally one per term selected by the student.

*   Two accounts of experience in relation to Speaking & Listening criteria.

*   Two/three records of development in Reading - encompassing personal reading and shared class or group readings.

*   Accounts of other activities, related to the other English entitlements or to the range of cross-curricular activities on which English teachers may be asked to report.

The selection of work sampled in this way should over time reflect the increasing range of contexts, purposes, genres and audiences that are coming to be at the student's command. They are stored in the student's **English Folder.**

Samples of work
There needs to be periodic opportunities for students and/or teacher to review the contents of the Folder as a 'portfolio of evidence', selecting pieces to retain, replace, carry forward for moderation purposes, or for inclusion in the portfolio accompanying the Record Of Achievement 16+. These samples should include a range of work and should not be confined to best finished pieces. They are stored in the student's **English Folder.**

The contents of the **class record** and the individual **student's folder** provide the basis for reporting to parents at parents' meetings.

NLLC PROMPT SHEETS FOR ENGLISH: KEYSTAGES 3 & 4

1. SPEAKING AND LISTENING

This prompt sheet is to help teachers observe and comment on individual students' use of spoken language (in English and whichever other language(s) they know).

The development of individual competence

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* articulates ideas, experiences and information with clarity and concern for meaning

* takes account as a speaker of the varying needs of different listeners

* listens attentively and supportively to other people speaking

* as a listener, has a critical understanding of a speaker's stance or point of view?

To what extent can we say that the bilingual student......

* uses her or his preferred language confidently, both in informal talk and in more public presentation

* has an objective understanding of equivalence and difference between her or his languages

* is prepared to use her or his bilingualism in support of and in collaboration with the learning of other students?

The range of learning contexts

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* makes engaged and thoughtful spoken responses to the variety of literary, information and media texts he or she encounters.

* uses talk effectively in pursuing or sorting information and in collaborating in investigations

* makes use of the imaginative power of spoken language in storytelling, poetry and drama

* handles fact, argument and opinion accurately and cogently

* is confident and effective in those kinds of spoken language requiring presentation or performance

* uses talk effectively across the curriculum, and in school activities outside the classroom

* is confident in using equipment for recording and replaying spoken language?

The opportunities which groups provide

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* has experience of how groups work; knows the need for thoughtful listening, for allowing space for others' ideas, perseveres in a group even when tasks seem difficult or understanding elusive

* makes relevant contributions to a group; supports and extends the contributions of others

* can, when necessary, help to negotiate a consensus, or fairly represent disagreement

* can summarise a group's findings accurately and succinctly

* is effective and supportive in groups of different sizes; in single- and mixed-sex groups

Knowledge about language: reflecting on and studying spoken language

To what extent can we say that the student......

* understands something of the range of puposes which talk serves in society, and of the variety of forms and registers in which it appears

* knows about and respects the different languages spoken in the school, in the local community, and in the country more widely

* knows about and respects the differences of accent and dialect in English as revealed in spoken language

* understands the reasons behind positive or negative attitudes to different languages, accents and dialects

* is critically aware of her or his own and others' effectiveness in the use of spoken language?

What experiences or support does the student need to develop further as a speaker and listener?

2. READING

This prompt sheet is to help teachers observe and comment on individual children's reading (in English and whicever other language(s) they know).

How readers engage with texts to analyse and interpret them

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* responds to texts, in talk or in writing, in a way which shows understanding and engagement

* can discuss, in talk or in writing, the construction of texts

* confidently and skilfully searches out information he or she requires from texts: knows how to compare and combine information from more than one source

* uses evidence in a text to support judgements about it

* understands that, with many texts, various interpretations on the part of the reader are often possible; various intentions - conscious or unconscious - may have been present on the part of the writer

* conveys the fullness of the text's meaning when reading aloud

* confidently uses the organisational devices (eg. contents lists, indexes, chapter or section headings and breaks) which texts employ?

The range of resources for reading: the reading environment

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* reads a wide variety of literary texts, representing a range of cultures and social contexts

* is familiar with the range of informational and functional printed texts available to a mature reader; knows where to find them at need

* has encountered and discussed a range of media texts

* if bilingual, reads with understanding in languages in addition to English; if monolingual, is aware of and interested in texts in languages other than English

* uses library cataloguing and classification systems, and electronic databases?

Knowledge about language:
studying variety and change in language as revealed in texts

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* has a sense of personal history and development as a reader

* has an understanding of the nature of literary language, including the language of poetry

* understands something of the variety of rhetorical structures in contrasting kinds of text

* knows something about historical change in language, both long-term and ephemeral; about some of the reasons for it and attitudes to it?

What experiences or support does the student need to develop further as a reader?

3. WRITING

How writers compose
how they give structure and organisation to their thoughts through writing

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* has confident control of the planning and organisation of whole continuous pieces of writing, drawing when appropriate, on models provided by other writers

* redrafts, edits and presents writing in ways helpful to the reader

* makes regular use of transitional or ephemeral writing as an aid to thought (e.g. in early-draft notes)

* if bilingual, writes confidently in a language or languages in addition to English

* uses a word processor to compose and edit when the facility will help?

The range of kinds of writing students should experience

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* undertakes narrative, poetic, persuasive and informational writing drawn from the writer's personal experience or from the wider world, real or imagined

* uses writing as a tool of learning (e.g. in making observations, comments and hypotheses, or in summarising discussions)?

The classroom (and beyond) as a community of writers and readers

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* understands how to offer critical support to other writers

* takes part in collaborative writing ventures

* is able to adapt the tone and style of a piece of writing to meet the needs of particular audiences

* uses writing for purposes important to her or him outside the classroom?

Understanding and control of the writing system:
spelling, punctuation, layout

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* spells conventionally the words he or she uses in writing, and has an eye for misspellings in her or his own and other people's writing

* makes ready use of dictionaries and other souces of reference to check spellings

* uses the common conventions of punctuation - including full stops, commas, colons, semi-colons, speech marks, brackets, dashes - appropriately

* uses the devices of layout (e.g. paragraphs, chapters, section headings, columns, lists, displays) available to the writer to make meaning clear to the reader?

Knowledge about language: reflecting on and studying the nature writing

To what extent can we say that the student.....

* has a sense of personal history and development as a writer

* is developing an understanding of some of the characteristic differences between speech and writing?

What experiences or support does the student need to develop further as a writer?

REDBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Subject: English   **Year** 7
Teacher........

Unit: Introduction to Language Diversity

Learning Opportunities Offered:
* investigation of the range of languages used and known about in the class
* group presentation of that information in display to the class and others
* investigation of greetings in a range of languages
* bilingual storytelling and retelling in groups
* preparation of group presentation on video
* evaluation of presentation and reflection on audience

Student Comment:

Teacher Comment:

Aims for the Future

Student.....................   **Teacher...................**

Date...................

5.5

REPORTING

See Section 2.7 on Communicating With Parents for information about the nature of meetings with parents and of the Annual Report. The main points are that reporting is based on judgements formed by both teacher and student over the course of the previous year and recorded in Journals and in Formative Assessment sheets, and that those judgements are based on evidence and on achievements set in a context. The current format used is given on page 178 below.

Reporting at Key Stage 4 is already different, and eventually KS3 may be likewise, in that the system, in addition to any written account of development, requires an arbitrary hierarchical categorisation of students' abilities in the form of a level of attainment. Students are not, of course, informed officially of other students' results.

For GCSE, it is important that students become gradually aware of their likely levels of achievement in terms of examination grades. The course introduction should say what grades are awarded and why. During the course individual pieces of coursework are not given separate grades, but discussions about folders, once they are established, should indicate the kind of estimated grade that the teacher is required to put on Careers Service forms *and the thinking behind that estimation*, and the same grade would be reported to parents at the end of Y10 *in the context of a full written statement*.

[N.B. This aspect of school policy is currently being reviewed]

REDBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

English Department Record of Achievement

Name.............................   Class...........................
                                          Teacher........................

This sheet is to help you and your teacher to keep track of your progress in English over the year.
There is a section to complete for each area of English work. You may find the following questions helpful in thinking about each area of your work:

what was your best piece of work this year?
what aspects of this activity did you particularly enjoy?
indicate any areas of improvements you think you have made
how well do you think you have worked on this aspect this year?

You will need to refer also to your English folder.

Speaking and Listening Activities

Reading activities

Writing   activities

Other areas (drama, language study, media,
         independent   study,   IT.)

Student.............................   Teacher.......................

Parent/Guardian........................

SECTION SIX

THE DEPARTMENT DEVELOPMENT PLAN

6.1 PLANNING FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT (DES 1989)

6.2 DEPARTMENTAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

Departmental self-evaluation is the sign of a department having achieved a fully rounded development - the same spiral of development that is looked for in the students we teach. It shows confidence in and commitment to the policy and practice established so far, a willingness to identify strengths so as to consolidate them, and a desire to reflect carefully about where and how to move on.

Recent legislation has formalised many aspects of school and departmental development, and provided guidance, based on examples of good practice, on how to set about the process.

This section draws heavily from Planning for School Development (DES December 1989). We include it because, though dealing mostly with whole school development, it provides a clear and comprehensive guide to the structure of our department planning. The section ends with a brief account of how the department makes use of this model.

6.1

PLANNING FOR SCHOOL DEVELOPMENT   (DES 1989)

The distinctive feature of a development plan is that it brings together, in an overall plan, national and LEA policies and initiatives, the school's aims and values, its existing achievements and its need for development. By co-ordinating aspects of planning which are otherwise separate, the school acquires a shared sense of direction and is able to control and manage the tasks of development and change. Priorities for development are planned in detail for one year and are supported by action plans or working documents for staff. The priorities for later years are sketched in outline to provide the longer term programme.

There are four processes in such development planning:

audit   a school reviews its strengths and weaknesses

planning   priorities for development are selected and then turned into specific targets

implementation   of the planned priorities and targets

evaluation   the success of implementation is checked

AUDIT

Any of the following areas could be selected by the school for intensive audit in a single year. Curriculum provision and resources require an annual audit under the new legislation.

* pupils' diversity and achievements
* assessment and recording
* curriculum provision and access
* teaching styles and methods
* responsibilities of the teaching staff
* links with schools and colleges
* school management and organisation
* school, LEA and national documents
* relationship with parents
* resources
* partnership with the local community.

In **auditing the curriculum** schools need to :

* check whether the planned curriculum meets the statutory requirements

* identify possible gaps or overlap between subject areas

* ensure that where two or more subjects or activities are concerned with the same range of objectives, this is recognised and used positively

* analyse the curriculum for each year group in terms of curricular objectives within and outside the National Curriculum

* decide in which parts of the school curriculum to locate work leading to the National Curriculum and other school curricular objectives

* assess how much teaching time is available and how best to use it

* compare planned provision with actual provision

* judge whether curriculum issues need to be among the priorities for development.

In **auditing the resources**, account needs to be taken of:

* how and why the school used its resources during the previous year

* how the school judges and ensures efficient use of resources

* how development planning should fashion the use of resources rather than being fashioned by them at a late stage

* the use of the expertise and time of teachers and support staff

* expenditure on materials, consumables and equipment

* running costs such as heating, lighting, telephone bills

* the use of resources from outside the school's immediate budget eg TVEI, LEATGS

* resources or income the school has generated and may be able to generate for itself

* the use of accommodation.

PLANNING

Drawing up the the plan involves:

* **determining priorities for development**   The main task here is to decide which   issues should be priorities for the first year of the plan and which should be postponed to the second, third or even later years.

* **constructing and agreeing upon the plan**   Plan construction is easier if the consultation procedures, the assignment of roles and responsibilities and the means of decision making are clarified.

The plan might include:

* the aims of the school
* the proposed priorities and their time scale
* the justification of the priorities in the context of the school

- links with different aspects of school and departmental development
- the methods of reporting outcomes
- the broad financial implications of the plan
- publicising the plan, making it widely available.

Drawing up the action plans: targets, tasks, success criteria

Once the plan is agreed, it needs to be turned into more detailed action plans with specific targets for the following year. A target clarifies who is to do what and when. Targets must specify the criteria by which success in reaching each target can be judged at a later stage.

IMPLEMENTATION

This entails:
- sustaining commitment during implementation
- checking the progress of implementation
- overcoming any problems encountered
- checking the success of implementation
- taking stock
- reporting progress.

6.2
DEPARTMENTAL DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

The processes of audit, planning, implementation and evaluation identified by the literature are grouped together by the department in the umbrella term: **review**.

The department meets at the end of the school year to evaluate the current review, and to choose and draw up detailed plans for new areas to be reviewed in the year to come.

This kind of review has a set of characteristic features and a characteristic sequence of activities. The **features** are that it is:

cyclical The undertaking of a review, the reaching of conclusions, sets off in itself another cycle of evaluation. It would be unusual for the department not to look formally at any main element of its work for more than five years.

focussed While acknowledging that all aspects of our work are interrelated, our reviews try to look at one thing at a time, and the department does not review more than three aspects of its work at any one time. The choice might be a curricular area, or more broadly, the implementation of equal opportunities policies or the basis of student groupings - any of the areas suggested by the guidance on auditing.

participatory The teachers who undertake the review should aim to involve other members of staff, without making excessive demands on teacher time.

unthreatening The worth of any review is probably directly related to the openness with which people feel they can speak. It should not be something that makes us feel uncomfortable. For these reasons there needs to be a formal rule of individual confidentiality. Views and experiences will be represented in the final document, but they will not at any stage be attributed.

Evaluation is seen as a process over which the members of department have complete control. It has no 'teacher appraisal' role whatsoever. It is not looking at the work of individual teachers, it is appraising the general curricular experience of students following the department's courses.

an integral part of students' curricular experience

Students are made aware that review and development are part of our practice as teachers, and whenever possible contribute to the process.

purposeful The review aims to clarify issues and promote individual and departmental growth.

Who does it?

A **review group** is made up of two or three members of the department, including anyone with responsibility for the curricular feature under review. There is not necessarily a need for HoD involvement in all stages. An 'outside view' could be brought in - an advisory teacher or a teacher from another school. It provides an interesting opportunity for newer members of the department to examine and reflect upon aspects of educational policy and practice.

Characteristic sequence of activities

* Decision to review (what, when, who) is taken departmentally (Summer Term).

* Plans drafted by review group, disseminated, and discussed by department.

* Departmental interviews.

* Classwork based on themes relevant to the focus of the review.

* Interviews :   students by students
                        students by review group
                        parents by students and/or review group
                        management by both students and/or review group.

* Classroom observation: This concentrates variously on teacher, individual students, and groups, and often involves students in recording classroom situations.

* Feedback: A draft of a departmental statement on the focus of evaluation, based on evidence gathered from interviews and observation, is presented at a departmental meeting for discussion and revision.

* Departmental Statement: This records the agreed plan of future action, sets out a means of evaluating the success of future implementation, and becomes part of the departmental handbook, replacing or adding to what is already there.

Contributions to Review from department members

* Membership of a review group

* Reading and response to the planning document

* Interviews with one of the review group, based around the rationale for existing practice, key strengths, concerns, and areas thought to be worth exploring during the review.

* Classroom Observations: Like the interviews, these are aimed at identifying common factors in the success of the department's approach, and at exploring areas of concern. Classroom observation will be initiated by the class teacher, who should not be restricted as to choice of observer - it might be a member of the review group, another teacher, a student or group of students. The focus of observation might be some aspect of the range of teaching roles, or an individual student's experience, or a group activity etc. The means of observation may include use of video or tape. Whatever it is, it is again chosen by the class teacher.

* Response to draft of departmental statement produced by the review group.

* Implementation of agreed developments.