

# Increasing the Effectiveness of 'Audience-centred' Teaching in Geography

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'Audience-centred' teaching seeks to involve children in writing to, or for, audiences different from the ones they would normally encounter in the geography classroom. The aim of this research was to explore the ways in which such teaching could be made more successful in terms of the quality of writing eventually produced by students. It suggests that the effectiveness of audience-centred teaching may be increased by using a range of 'intermediate' teaching strategies, such as card sorting exercises, structuring and prioritising tasks, before students attempt extended writing. The research methodology adopted is that of action research. The main findings appear to indicate that 'intermediate' tasks both aid the students' writing process and support their understandings of the geography they are studying.

Research into the effectiveness of 'audience-centred' teaching in supporting children's writing in geography has reached some tentative, but significant, conclusions about the ways in which they learn. For those children willing to adopt new styles of learning and experiment with writing to, or for, audiences different from the usual one of 'teacher as assessor' there is some evidence of geographical understanding being enhanced (Butt, 1991, 1993; Jones, 1996). None the less, some children will happily experiment with writing within a new genre *without* necessarily advancing their geographical learning, or will continue to write in the forms of transactional writing often demanded in the geography classroom.

With this in mind research was carried out with a Year 9 (14-year-old) group of students in an attempt to discover ways in which the effectiveness of audience-centred teaching might be enhanced. The aim of this research was to improve the quality of extended writing in geography and to increase the depth of students' understanding of the geographical themes taught. The students were all engaged in Key Stage 3 of the UK Geography National Curriculum (DFE, 1995) and were taught over 14 weeks, a total of some 980 minutes teaching. The geographical themes covered were 'Development' (seven weeks) and 'Ecosystems' (seven weeks).

## Current Research in the Context of Previous Findings

In establishing a research methodology to extend earlier work the author started by revisiting previous methods used in this field. Research into audience-centred geography teaching originally began in the late 1980s when Andy Buck, then a Post Graduate Certificate of Education (PGCE) student of Frances Slater at the Institute of Education in London, set some of his students

writing tasks aimed at a particular audience. One group of students were asked to write a radio programme based on a farming game (which included a simulated radio farming report), whilst the other group were asked simply to write notes on upland farming. Slater (1989) used samples of the writing produced with a group of geography educators who were asked to judge both the style of writing and the geographical understanding reflected within the two pieces of work. The first pieces revealed the largely positive influence of introducing a sense of audience in producing interesting and varied writing although for some readers the geographical understanding of the students appeared to have suffered. The second pieces of writing were often more geographical, but less lively and sometimes poorly structured and confused. Butt (1991, 1993) took the idea of audience-centred work further by setting his students the task of writing to, or for, different audiences, analysing the results against a simple matrix to determine the geographical attainment and appreciation of audience in each piece. He discovered that by setting audience-centred tasks the work-related discussion (both between students, and between student and teacher) increased; the students' personal values and attitudes were often clarified; and the perceived viewpoints and values of the audience the students wrote for/to were often appreciated more fully. However, each of these outcomes might also serve to mask the extent of the students' geographical attainment.

A series of pre-conditions for successful writing also seemed to exist. Trust had to be established between the student and teacher, with the latter regularly having to adopt the role of a 'consultant' or 'critical friend', rather than 'assessor'. Additionally audience-centred writing had to be embedded within a scheme of work, rather than 'bolted on', and had to present audiences which were realistic and plausible for students to write to/for (Butt 1991, 1993, 1996). The work of Jones (1996) extended this research specifically within physical geography, largely confirming earlier research findings and highlighting particular aspects of the motivational impact of specifying an audience for students to write to, or for. It also supported the belief that during audience-centred work 'the learning process is being extended by the nature of the task' (Jones, 1996: 17).

Given that there was already evidence that geographical attainment could rise for a proportion of children who undertook audience-centred writing a major concern was that some students still found it difficult to 'get into' this style of learning. These students either tended not to risk audience-centred writing, or chose to 'revert' to transactional or humorous styles as an easier option. Confusion also existed amongst students who had never been asked to write in such a way in geography lessons and for whom the 'teacher as assessor' was obviously still the main audience they should address. Most importantly:

... the teacher had to be aware of the stages through which audience-centred writing helped children develop their understanding of geography. There was some evidence that the writing that children undertook represented a transitional stage in their learning, where they were beginning to explore their own knowledge and understanding more closely. Here language and genre may have been used as tools to help conceptual development (Butt, 1996: 192).

The importance of the steps through which students progressed in undertaking a piece of audience-centred work became the focus for the current research in an attempt to improve the effectiveness of audience-centred teaching.

Three influences helped to direct the ways in which this research developed. The writings of educational psychologists such as Adey and Shayer (1994) and Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987), the work of the 'Thinking Through Geography Group' under the direction of David Leat (1996, 1997), and the practical teaching ideas of the history educator Christine Counsell (1997).

## Audience-centred Writing and the Ways Children Think

In previous attempts to improve children's extended writing in geography it had become clear that many students could not make the journey from being taught some aspect of geography to producing their own advanced audience-centred writing in one straightforward step. Initial research had found that the teaching methods chosen were somewhat unsuccessful in achieving very high percentages of students who had *both* an advanced perception and appreciation of audience, *and* a clear and thorough grasp of geographical concepts. Only around 14% had achieved this combination, although some 38% had a 'medium' or 'high' level of understanding of geographical concepts combined with an advanced sense of audience (Butt, 1991). Would the 37% of students whose geographical attainment was assessed as being 'low' after undertaking audience-centred work *always* have performed at this level, despite the task set? Or were they experiencing difficulties in the transition from initial learning to writing? Alternatively was audience-centred writing simply not a very effective way of helping children to learn geography?

The research of educational psychologists into cognitive development and methods of intervention aimed at improving academic achievement was of relevance in trying to answer these questions. The theories of psychologists who had studied the developmental stages of children's thinking, and had sought techniques to 'teach thinking' and thus accelerate the learning process, might help in explaining why some students had difficulties in completing audience-centred writing tasks successfully. In particular Adey and Shayer (1994) had focused on the work of Reuven Feuerstein *et al.* (1980) whose 'Instrumental Enrichment' (IE) programme had been designed to *intervene* in the learning process (rather than merely to *instruct*) and so help children understand for themselves the stages of cognitive development they were passing through to acquire new learning. It was theorised that it was not *what* children learned, but *how* they learned, that was ultimately important and that students should engage in constructivist and metacognitive activities — simplistically, constructing their own knowledge and understanding, and 'thinking about thinking' — in the classroom.

The work of Leat (1996, 1997) both on cognitive acceleration and the development of thinking skills (with the 'Thinking Through Geography Group'), was also significant as it represented the efforts of a geography educationalist to transfer such ideas into a geographical context. Here, research has been based on the belief that intelligence is not fixed, but capable of being developed once the focus for teaching has been shifted more tangibly towards the needs of the

learner. The Cognitive Acceleration in Science Education (CASE) project, and other thinking skills projects, have also shown evidence of such teaching having beneficial results on students' educational attainment up to GCSE level (see Adey & Shayer, 1994). Aspects of this research were considered of interest when analysing audience-centred teaching, in particular the investigations into student and teacher talk; the debriefing of students after learning activities; and getting students to describe the thinking skills they had used (metacognition) in completing a task.

Counsell (1997) firmly believes that children of all abilities can be taught to engage in meaningful extended and analytical writing and she provides numerous examples of techniques which can be applied to achieve this. Importantly these techniques help to move students from narrative to analytical writing, often using a series of educational steps. She argues that:

The challenge of helping pupils to hold on to more than a couple of propositions in their heads at once and to do some 'joined-up thinking' is rarely addressed. Longer and more open-ended activities abound but pupils are expected to leap over the abyss of structure, organisation and genre. (Counsell, 1997: 7)

The importance of children's writing being well informed, structured, and purposeful is clearly stressed. The process of writing is thus not just an outcome, but a 'pedagogical tool' (Counsell, 1997: 9) in the same way that Barnes *et al.* (1969), Britton (1975), Barnes (1976) and Slater (1989) perceive the act of 'writing to learn'. The essential connections between talking, writing and learning are often missed and with them the crucial nature of the stages and structures through which children's thinking and writing must pass.

Attention to problems of structure and genre will ... increase pupils' understanding of what they are doing. Explicit attention to the mechanics of the communication process encourages pupils in meta-thinking, or 'thinking about thinking'. (Counsell, 1997: 9-10)

The degree to which students are supported in achieving greater conceptual understanding and moving towards an end point of extended, purposeful writing is obviously extremely important. It is often the lack of appropriate support received by students which means that they fail to produce the types of writing geography teachers want. This is not to suggest that teachers are unwilling, or unable, to give students the necessary guidance they require; it is more likely that teachers do not fully recognise the conceptual steps that students have to make to reach this goal. The process of turning 'thinking' into 'writing' is not an easy one for many students. As ever it is the less able who are most disadvantaged in this process, and therefore most likely to become labelled as students who are only capable of producing brief, poorly focused or unstructured writing.

## Research Methodology

In the research reported upon here the methodology is centred within the tradition of action research. Having been given the opportunity of teaching a year

9 (14-year-old) group of students for an entire term of 14 weeks — a total of 14 70-minute lessons — there were opportunities to firmly ‘embed’ the audience-centred writing tasks into the students’ overall scheme of work. This also meant that the teacher/researcher had a greater possibility of building up trust (an essential, given previous research findings) with one group, and could introduce a variety of ‘intermediate’ teaching strategies before any audience-centred writing tasks were undertaken. These strategies, which included card sorting exercises, prioritising pieces of information and analysing given texts (see ‘A range of techniques’, p. 208), were used because students had previously been expected to write convincingly in an audience-centred way having received little support.

It was felt that the students’ extended writing might be enhanced by consolidating their initial geographical learning through introducing ‘intermediate’ teaching strategies. Evidence from earlier work suggested that many students required more time, and more structured activities, to help them make the step to successful audience-centred writing. Thus in the lessons immediately before the extended writing tasks students were given ‘intermediate’ tasks to complete. Each of these were designed to help the students develop their conceptual understanding of the geography taught, and appreciate the kinds of information they would be required to use in their subsequent writing tasks.

The written work produced was analysed using a simple matrix to determine ‘sense of audience’ (from poor, to average, to advanced) and ‘level of geographical attainment’ (from low, to medium, to high). This technique is reported in full elsewhere (Butt, 1991, 1993; Jones, 1996). Although all the extended writing produced by the students was collected and analysed in this way — whether transactional or audience-centred in form — only a small number of illustrative examples of such writing are reported upon here. Some comparisons were made between the extended writing produced by students during this research and those pieces produced from previous research (Butt, 1991, 1993).

## The Research Lessons

The series of lessons were planned to culminate in the production of two larger extended pieces of writing at the end of each half term. Instead of leaving students to their own devices when producing audience-centred writing they were supported in developing their understanding of geographical concepts, taught to question and explore information, and helped towards completing their extended writing tasks. As Counsell (1997) states:

... pupils are rarely helped, in any systematic way, to organise a written response. It is too often assumed that the demands of selection and of synthesis are one and the same. The leap from information-gathering into extended prose still represents several moves that many activities fail to acknowledge. It is little wonder that many lower-attaining pupils habitually produce short, poorly developed, unstructured answers (Counsell, 1997: 10).

An overview was initially taken of the general geographical aptitude and attainment of the group through small group activities. This was not designed to

give an exact measure of individual student attainment, but an assessment of the potential within the group. In small groups (four or five students) the students were initially asked to brainstorm two broad questions at the start of each seven week block of teaching. For example in the second half term (Ecosystems) they were asked to consider the question 'What happens to the environment when an area of Tropical Rainforest is removed?' Students had done some work on this theme in their previous year at the school, the current teaching was thus designed to create an element of both continuity and progression.

These activities produced interesting results. Examples of some of the most

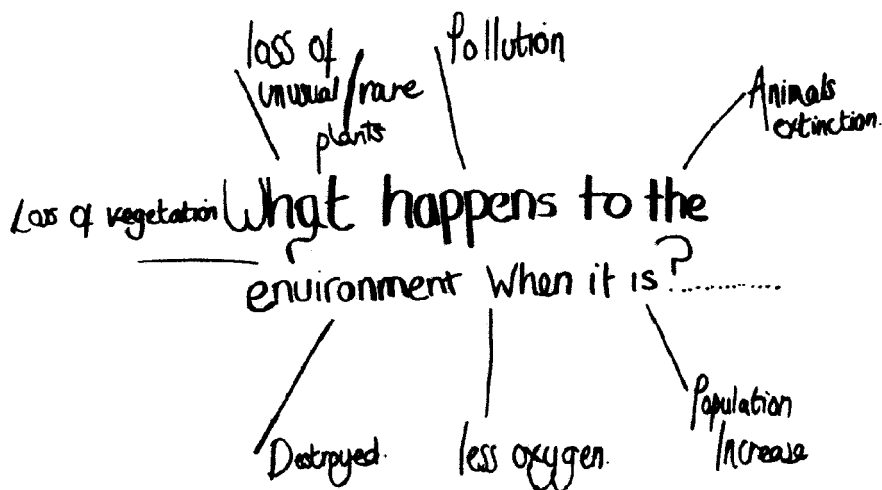


**Figure 1** Responses from some of the most assured students to the question 'What happens to the environment when an area of Tropical Rainforest is removed?'

and least assured work are reproduced in Figure 1 and Figure 2, respectively.

### A range of techniques

Students routinely undertook a variety of exercises in which geographical information supplied by the teacher was to be sorted, analysed or (re) structured. These, so-called, 'intermediate' activities were designed to help students achieve a fuller comprehension of their geographical learning (see Figures 3, 4 and 5)



**Figure 2** Responses from some of the least assured students to the question 'What happens to the environment when an area of Tropical Rainforest is removed?'

before attempting extended writing tasks. On occasions another source of information — such as a newspaper article, a section from a textbook, or a picture — might be introduced to enhance these exercises. More detailed activities involving the creation of systems diagrams with given cards, for example when trying to outline the causes and consequences of rainforest removal, were also attempted (for a range of similar approaches see Counsell, 1997 or Scardamalia *et al.*, 1981).

The aim was not to swamp the students with new information but to get them away from 'low order' activities such as copying text, or engaging in simple comprehension exercises. The act of re-forming existing information was essential. Some of these activities, which could be carried out in groups, pairs or individually, have obvious overlap with the DART (Directed Activities Related to Text) exercises often carried out within English teaching.

The more formal 'end of unit' tasks gave opportunities for audience-centred writing, but did not make this type of writing obligatory. For example at the end of the Ecosystems work students were given the choice of either writing a 'traditional' essay (see Figure 6 (a)), or completing one of two pieces of audience-centred writing (see Figure 6 (b) and (c)). The latter contained a series of structuring 'clues' similar to those present within some of the intermediate tasks to suggest ways in which the students might organise their thoughts. In this way examples of students' extended writing, in both audience-centred and transactional form, could be analysed.

The students were given one homework for general research before attempting the assignment, and two lessons of 70 minutes to prepare and then write the assignment itself. During this time the teacher/researcher talked to as many students as possible about the ways they were approaching the task. This was an attempt to get students to 'think about their thinking'.

Place each of these cards in order to show the effects that often occur when tropical rainforests in the Amazon basin are destroyed. The first card (1) and the last card (7) are already marked for you.

1. Tropical rainforest is inhabited and used by Amazonian Indians.

7. Lands abandoned after 15 to 20 years. Soil is now infertile, nutrients have been washed away, topsoil has been washed into rivers by rapid runoff. Scrub takes over from weeds and grasses.

Crop yields fall. Settlers abandon their cleared plots. In some areas up to 50% of the settlers move within 5 years of arrival. Often settlers clear new plots for cultivation.

Ranching lands become extended. Weeds take over from grasses. Ranchers begin to clear new lands for ranching from the remaining forests.

New settlers clear plots of land. Ranchers also move in to remove larger areas of forest for cattle ranching.

Roads built into the rainforest to allow access for new settlers and commercial projects (such as ranching, logging and mining).  
Indians often move further into the forest.

Ranchers start to take over even more land — often including plots left by settlers who have moved now that their crops have failed. Many remaining Indians have died from diseases introduced by new settlers and ranchers.

**Figure 3** An ordering activity. After Bishop and Prosser (1990)

## Data Collection and Analysis

One illustrative example of the data collected is given here. Analysis of other examples of extended writing produced after students had engaged in intermediate activities gave rise to broadly similar results.

The number of students who chose to complete each of the activities shown in Figure 6 was as follows:

Essay (a) = 15 students

Letter to MP (b) = 7 students

Television script (c) = 4 students (Total 26 students).

Although this reveals that given a free choice most students preferred to carry out transactional essay writing, which they were often asked to produce in geography lessons, the resultant quality of this work was stylistically and

Look at the cards which show some of the ways in which rainforests are being used. In your group arrange the cards to show which uses you think are the most damaging to the forest, and those which you think have least effect. Discuss why you think one type of land use may be more damaging than another. You may find it helpful to consider which uses of land roughly balance what they take *out* of the forest with what they put back *in*; which only take out *certain* things; and which totally *destroy* the forest.

### Shifting Cultivation

People live on the resources of the forest and only clear new plots of land every few years, leaving old plots fallow to recover fertility.

The forest is also used as a source of fuel, to supply food, clothing, medicines, etc. People rarely take out of the ecosystem more than they put back.

### Ranching

Large areas of rainforest are simply cleared to make way for large scale cattle ranching. Trees are replaced by grassland. Nutrient supplies to the soil are reduced and grasses become weaker and fail. New lands are then often cleared to provide additional ranching areas.

### Mining

Roads or railway links are built into the forest into areas that have minerals that can be mined. Minerals such as copper and iron ore are often quarried by mining companies. Trees are removed to create the routeways and over the area that is quarried.

### Farming

Settlers move into the rainforest, often attracted in by government schemes to develop these areas. The settlers clear land and set up farms in the hope of creating a 'new life' for themselves.

### Logging

Timber companies select the trees they want from the vast variety of trees in the rainforest. They may only take two or three trees per hectare, however in removing these trees they may also destroy or damage half of the other surrounding trees. Logging is a major use of the rainforest, second only to agriculture. Pulp mills are also set up to make paper.

### Plantations

Companies plant large areas with a particular species of tree which they want to harvest rather than using those trees currently growing in the rainforest. These plantations are often more productive than using existing trees because they contain only the trees the harvesters want, can be thinned out and used at various stages of their growth, can be sprayed to control disease, can be planted in phases to keep yields high.

**Figure 4** A selecting and sorting activity. After Bishop and Prosser (1990)

geographically somewhat variable (see Appendix 1). These students may have perceived the option of producing an audience-centred letter, or television script, as being either too difficult, or perhaps too 'unusual', for their (average to high ability) group. The essay may have been thought of as the 'easier' option by some

Complete each of the lines given below. You may write more than one line if you feel you have more information to give.

When the tropical rainforest is removed rain falls directly onto the bare soil. This causes the soil on the surface to

.....

The nutrients that are in the surface soil

.....

The leaves that used to fall onto the soil from the rainforest trees no longer do so. This effects the nutrients in the soil because

.....

Runoff from bare soil surfaces increases. The water that now flows into the rivers

.....

**Figure 5** Writing frames

students — interestingly these were often the students whose extended writing subsequently revealed copied or hastily analysed material. None the less the ‘intermediate’ activities did seem to improve the overall quality of the extended writing produced by the majority of students regardless of the task they chose to complete. Those students who had not performed particularly well on their intermediate tasks also seemed to perform poorly on the essay, if they chose this assignment.

The sense of audience witnessed within the work of those students who chose to produce a letter or script was, not surprisingly, generally high. In many cases this was also paralleled by a sound appreciation of the geography studied (see Appendix 1). There may have been some self selection whereby the more able students rose to the challenge of ‘audience-centred’ writing and performed well on this activity. Success in completing the intermediate tasks appears to have led on to success in completing audience-centred writing. This was particularly so for those students who were not initially identified as particularly strong academically in their previous classwork, but who nevertheless had succeeded in writing well balanced and geographically accurate pieces during their final assignment. It may therefore be possible to speculate that both the intermediate activities, and the audience-centred tasks, had enabled some students to express their geographical knowledge and understanding more fully than more conventional transactional writing tasks.

An example of this can be seen in one of the letters to the MP (task (b)) which included a brief introductory paragraph which set the genre correctly, and then a series of well-researched paragraphs under subheadings which conveyed a wealth of geographical information. The subheadings, which started each new paragraph, were as follows:

- ‘The tropical rainforests are important because ...’
- ‘The problems that the rainforests face are ...’

## Ecosystems — Tropical Rainforests

### EITHER:

(a) Write a structured essay to answer the following question; *'What are the main threats to the world's rainforests and why would their destruction be a serious loss to the global ecosystem?'*

### OR:

(b) You have recently discovered that your government has refused to support a motion by the United Nations that all rainforests should be protected. This appears to be due to the fact that the Government is unwilling to spend any money on projects that do not benefit its own people.

*Write a detailed letter to your Member of Parliament (MP) — Mr Michael Williams — to complain about this short-sighted attitude. Clearly explain in your letter, under subheadings, what the problems are that the rainforests face and why you feel it is important that the Government takes action.*

### OR:

(c) Produce a script for a television programme in a series called 'This Fragile Earth'. This programme is on the subject of rainforest destruction and aims to give viewers a clear impression of the problems facing this global ecosystem.

*Your script should not only tell the viewer important information about the destruction of the rainforest; but also make suggestions for what things should be filmed; who might be interviewed; what these people would say; and whether titles or graphics would be used in the film. If possible add pictures to your script to show what television images you would want to show.*

**Figure 6** End of unit tasks

'When the rainforests are destroyed ...'

'The ways in which we can help ...'

'I feel that it is important that the government takes action because ...'

With a final plea to 'SAVE OUR RAINFORESTS!' in the last line of the assignment.

This student has successfully entered into audience-centred writing, and achieved a structuring activity on her letter which conveyed important geographical points, revealed her knowledge and understanding, and managed to include her own values and attitudes in the last section.

Another student undertaking the same activity created similar subheadings after a 'scene setting' introduction. These subheadings were:

'Why are the Rainforests under threat?'

'What are the Consequences?'

'The benefits of keeping the Rainforests'

'The Natural Habitat and its Protection'

'The Solution'

Of the four students who chose to produce a television script (task (c)) one

student's answer included the following section within a live television debate she had set up. Here a character called Joan, the leader of the Green Party, has been facing a barrage of points from a multinational businessman, who has claimed to be developing the rainforest in a sustainable way. The businessman is supported by an MP on the panel. Joan's response to this pair is as follows:

**Joan:** But do you realise, the trees you are cutting down have been growing for years, so it is going to take these new trees your (sic) planting ages to grow, and the soil will start to erode because when the rain comes down it comes down hard. The soil will become infertile, and so no trees will be able to grow. (She shows them all Diagram 1).

This is what happens every time you cut down part of the rainforest. Now you two tell me it won't!

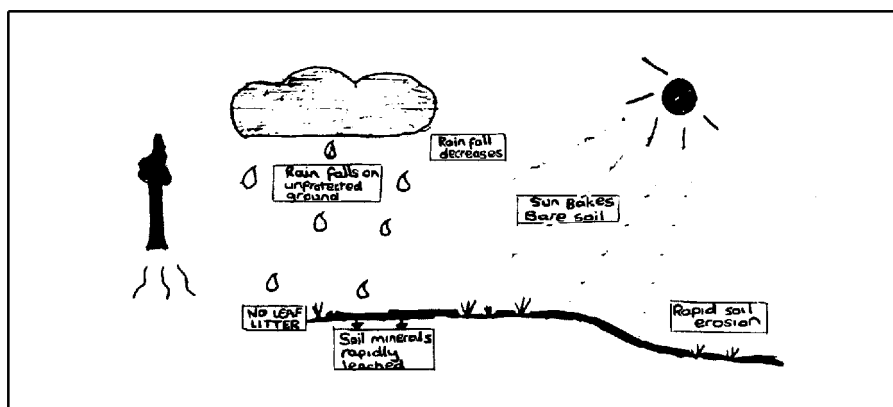


Diagram 1

This section of the student's answer reveals that in a heavily audience-centred piece of writing she has managed to convey important points about rainforest destruction and the unlikelihood of it being successfully replaced by the developers. The use of a diagram, which had been created by the student herself to illustrate these points, is significant.

## Conclusions

Many of the findings from previous research (Butt, 1991, 1993; Jones, 1996) into the effectiveness of audience-centred teaching in improving children's writing in geography have been largely confirmed by this research. However, new findings have also emerged about the ways in which students can be supported in their attempts to produce high quality extended and analytical writing. The proviso that students need to have a willingness to experiment and adopt new styles of learning still holds, with this process apparently being aided by the inclusion of intermediate activities. Such tasks appear to help many students pass through stages of understanding towards the eventual completion of high quality writing, be it audience-centred or transactional. These findings have some resonance with

the earlier work of the 'Language Across the Curriculum' group (see Barnes *et al.*, 1969; Martin *et al.*, 1976) who also recognised steps or stages in student learning, moving from exploratory and expressive writing (which often clarified thinking and conceptual understanding) through to transactional writing as the final stage. The research reported upon here suggests that 'intermediate activities' may similarly represent an important step in students' learning. This step will often involve 'talking and writing to learn' and supports the eventual production of audience-centred (or extended) writing as the end point in the process.

The small sample of writing chosen to illustrate this research, all of which was completed after students had undertaken 'intermediate' activities, might be interpreted somewhat equivocally (see Appendix 1). However, it seems clear that the 'intermediate' activities are generally having a positive effect on the raising of geographical attainment, particularly when compared with earlier research (Butt, 1991, 1993). This occurs within *both* transactional essay writing *and* audience-centred work. Those students who performed well on the intermediate tasks also appeared to produce high quality written work, be it transactional or 'audience-centred'. Qualitatively the writing produced in audience-centred work is of a more interesting and lively nature, with the whole process of writing itself generating more student discussion than the essay.

Building upon a model of 'cognitive acceleration' in Science teaching used by Adey and Shayer (1994) one might tentatively theorise a similar model for the promotion of more effective audience-centred teaching and learning in geography (Figure 7). Here students are no longer expected to make an unsupported 'leap' from the initial stages of learning geography to the final goal of completing meaningful extended writing tasks, but are taken along a series of steps — each of which is designed to help develop their thinking skills — towards the ultimate point of producing better extended written work.

Despite reinforcing some of the observations from previous research a number of further questions have now arisen about 'audience-centred' writing and the techniques which might be used to make it a more effective method of learning. There are questions about the *extent* to which 'intermediate' activities support students' learning. It is suggested here that a tangible effect can be seen — but there are certainly other competing explanations for the improvements seen in the extended writing produced by students. How influential is the type of teacher support given to students during each of the steps towards audience-centred writing? To what extent does class and group discussion aid the process? What is the role of assessment both formatively at the learning stage, and of the final work produced? In a piece of research of this size inevitably some questions have to remain unanswered.

Further work is needed to explore the exact nature of 'cognitive conflict', metacognition and possible 'bridging' during, and after, the completion of particular intermediate tasks. It is hypothesised that once students become more fully involved in 'thinking about their thinking' their geographical attainment will also rise, as witnessed by the production of more assured writing and discussion work.

## Preparation

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (a) providing new geographical vocabulary and concepts to be used in lessons.   | (Predominantly by the <i>teacher</i> )  |
| (b) establishing confidence in using new vocabulary and concepts.   | (Predominantly by <i>teacher-student</i> interaction e.g. through oral question and answer, discussion, work, etc.) |
| (c) selecting relevant vocabulary and concepts for a writing task. Teacher use of a range of 'intermediate' techniques such as sorting, selecting, prioritising, and sequencing geographical information. | (Predominantly by the <i>student</i> after initial <i>teacher</i> guidance.)  |

### 'Cognitive Conflict'

In completing these 'intermediate' tasks students are encouraged to think about their understandings of geographical vocabulary and concepts. They re-order their thoughts.

### Construction

Students complete an 'audience-centred' writing task which again makes them think about the geographical vocabulary and concepts they have acquired. Students move beyond what they already know by 'repackaging' their geographical knowledge and understanding for a different audience.

### CONSTRUCTION ZONE

(In the 'Construction Zone' a wide range of 'intermediate' techniques can be used to help students make the steps from an initial contact with, and understanding of, new geographical vocabulary and concepts to completing an extended writing task. What is most important is that students have to work with what they already know and understand in geography.)

### Metacognition

Students challenged to 'think about their thinking'. Reflection on how they completed the writing task and what processes helped along the way. This can occur either during the construction phase or after it.

### Bridging

Extension of new ideas, concepts and understandings to other areas of geography. Generalising and consolidating so that these can be used in new contexts in the future.

**Figure 7** A possible model of how to increase the effectiveness of audience-centred writing in helping students learn geography (After Adey & Shayer, 1994.)

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## Appendix 1

The students' work produced for one of the writing exercises described in the text was analysed as follows:

### Essay

Geographical attainment	Sense of audience			
	Poor	Average	Advanced	Total
Low	4	0	0	4
Medium	4	1	0	5
High	3	2	1	6
Total	11	3	1	15

### Letter and TV Script

Geographical attainment 1	Sense of audience			
Medium	0	2	2	4
High	0	1	4	5
Total	1	4	6	11

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