GTIP Think Piece – Citizenship (David Lambert)

David Lambert (Chief Executive, Geographical Association 2002-12) outlines the ways in which aspects of citizenship can be delivered to trainee teachers.

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Introduction
Geography is concerned with ‘making sense of the world’. It seems obvious that school geography should help ‘deliver’ citizenship education, for making sense of the world is what informed, educated citizens try to do. Indeed, this argument is often taken as a way to justify geography’s place in the curriculum.

However, it is important to question such a claim:
- What is citizenship education?
- Can citizenship really be ‘delivered’ through the school curriculum?
- In what specific ways can geography contribute to citizenship education?
- What aspects of citizenship education are not easily addressed by geography?

To find ‘answers’ to these questions you could start by looking at a summary of citizenship, which became a mandatory element of the curriculum for secondary students from 2002, and its relationship with the geography curriculum, e.g. Grimwade et al. (2000). For a short discussion of opportunities and some difficulties read Machon and Walkington (2000).

Lambert and Machon (2001) provides a more extensive discussion. In particular, Bill Marsden’s chapter raises significant issues about the danger inherent in the State trying to ‘educate for citizenship... a terrifying idea’ (Marsden, 2001). Bill also discusses the importance of subject disciplines like geography in protecting students from indoctrination.

Suggestions for a PGCE session
This ‘model session’ could be used when planning geography and citizenship education at key stage 3, but it is not intended to be prescriptive! It shows how the questions above can be raised and explored with trainee teachers.

Divide the group into three teams of two or three.

Team A – the permeationists – must identify a sequence of key stage 3 geography lessons on one or more of the following themes or topics: migration; international trade; global warming; tourism.

Their task is to summarise the geographical learning outcomes of such a sequence, then show how each outcome can contribute to citizenship. This is done under three headings:
- Knowledge and understanding about becoming informed citizens
- Skills of enquiry, argument and effective communication
- Skills of participation and responsible action.
**Team B – the separatists** - take an aspect of citizenship from each of the three lists below and plan a sequence of lessons that enable key stage 3 students to develop the concept, value or skill.

They are to plan citizenship lessons using geography as the main ‘resource’ or source of content.

- **Concepts**: democracy; diversity; community; identity.
- **Values**: honesty; tolerance; respect; equality; fairness.
- **Skills**: listening and argument; investigation and communication; decision-making; participation and negotiation.

**Team C – the assessors** - explore the statutory responsibility for teachers to assess students’ attainment in citizenship at the end of key stage 3.

For each of the concepts, values and skills given to Team B, Team C must:

- attempt to sketch out how ‘most’ students may be expected to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills from years 7 to 9 (11-14 years).
- discuss how a teacher of geography may be able to make judgements about progress of students in these areas. What evidence would the teacher use?

All teams should refer to the national curriculum documentation for their tasks - see [QCA examples of assessments](#).

However, you should encourage them not to be constrained by the national frameworks and guidance. For example, one group may wish to focus on the idea of ‘eco-citizenship’ (see Huckle, 2001). Another may be committed to developing the concept of ‘global citizenship’ (see DEA/GA, 2004). The national curriculum does not prevent this - although such concepts are not explicitly included, nor are they excluded.

**Plenary**: The debriefing of the activity is most important. After sharing their work, trainee teachers can discuss issues that arise under the four questions introduced at the beginning of this Think Piece.

**Bibliography**


education. Essential for tutors to dip into. A useful reference for trainee teachers, particularly those writing assignments on citizenship.)
Oxfam (1997) A Curriculum for Global Citizenship, Oxford: Oxfam. (Clearly argued ‘position statement’ on the idea of global citizenship, resting very heavily on principles of fairness and justice.)

Links
Association of Citizenship Teaching - is a little frustrating for the non-member, but if your school is not a member, it has excellent links to, e.g. Global Eye, development agencies.
Institute for Citizenship - useful material and projects on active citizenship, democracy and community involvement
Citizenship Foundation has advice on teaching controversial issues and political literacy. It has papers on ‘race’, the Euro debate and advice on handling money – for your beginning teachers who find themselves teaching ‘citizenship’ outside of the geography disciplinary context.
Global Dimension - as the name suggest this features global themes such as inequality and development, very important themes for geography lessons.

Find out more about the UK Citizenship Test.

Articles from other TDA support sites for ITE

In this article Paula Bradley-Smith (University of Exeter) presents evidence from a series of KS3 and KS4 geography lessons on global issues to illustrate some of the challenges which can arise in teaching citizenship through geography.