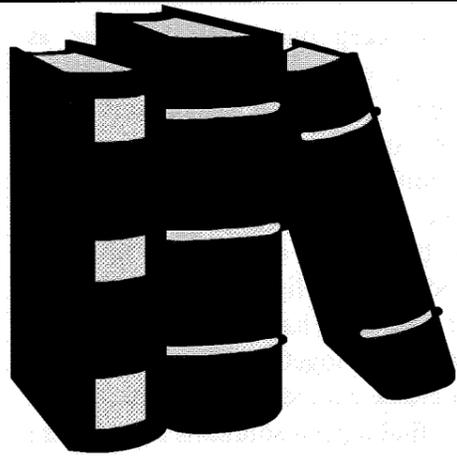


Humanities

Too





Book Review

“Write Your Own Roman Story” - A Keystage 3 European Study before 1914

Written by Beth Brooke, Dave Martin and Ian Dawson, this book is part of the SHP series “This is History.” It is intended to combine the study of Roman History with the skills of story writing. This link with literacy will be one that will appeal to many teachers.

The story is set during the reign of Emperor Vespasian. The reader chooses one of four towns to provide the setting for the tale. The characters are introduced and the task outlined: To write a piece of historical fiction set in the year A.D.78. The book is divided into 2 sections. In the first section, a variety of sources give the student the necessary information to start thinking about their story e.g., through the description of a typical Roman street and market, pupils learn about life in a Roman town. In addition pupils are encouraged to think about what they can “hear” and “smell” as well as what they can read and see in the extracts and pictures. The second section covers writing techniques, for example outlining five possible ways to end a story. At the end the pupil is helped to “pull everything together in a well-structured, readable story”

LITERACY

Many History teachers will be interested in this aspect of the book. It covers many of the important points such as references to verbs, adjectives and even clauses. The glossary at the back is simple but very useful, though this is an area where some extra work may need to be carried out, e.g., pupils are asked to write in paragraphs but it is not fully explained what a paragraph is. On the other hand, techniques such as “modelling” are used and the structure of the story is reinforced throughout, as the pupils work their way through the task.

There are one or two slightly confusing points such as the reference to the “gingerbread technique”, three pages before this is actually explained, but overall it is easy to follow the instructions. Activities accompany each section and the pupils gradually build up the knowledge and skills needed to

complete their tasks. It is up to date, using stills from the film “Gladiator”. The layout is eye catching and designed to appeal to pupils, though the coloured backgrounds made it difficult to read – a fact that probably has more to do with my failing eyesight than anything else! The book is excellent for learning about life in Roman times, but would not, of course, cover the whole of the content of “A European Study before 1914”. I am not sure how long it would take to complete the book, which may be an issue. Better pupils could work through it un-aided, but I feel that many pupils would need a great deal of support. Perhaps asking the English Department to adopt it as one of their texts could solve the time problem? This of course leads to other issues such as the need for specialist Historians to deliver the subject, but this collaboration between curriculum areas must be “the future”. Another answer could be that the book is used as an extension activity to be completed at home. In conclusion this is a very interesting approach to the study of History, and I am sure that it will appeal to pupils. I certainly enjoyed it, and felt that I had learnt much about the skills of writing stories. It is well worth considering.

Thea Tomlinson



Visit the new website on citizenship



www.citizenship-piece.org.uk
from Tower Hamlets

“An excellent site, easy to navigate and full of useful resources”

Gideon Lyons (School Councils UK)



Editorial

Contents

Holocaust Remembrance Day	2
Two GCSE's for the price of one	3
HAPPY - a new resource for citizenship for KS2 & KS3	6
Holocaust Memorial Day; an assembly that worked	7
Globalfootprints; steps to a sustainable future	8
News from Everywhere (No 161)	10
Book Review	12

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When this reaches you we will have got back on schedule. We are sending two issues out at once to bring us up to date. The covers problem was resolved when we got our money back from Parkway printers after much hassle and delay. New ones were ordered in Newcastle and ready in a week. This could be the last edition for some of you who joined at the 2000 conference and have not renewed. I have indicated if your subscriptions are due by putting an S after your name on the label. Please renew by sending me a cheque for £12.50 to the address below.

We still feel a need to obtain copy from our membership rather than using the executive. We are pleased that we have made some progress because you will find an article from David Lewis in this edition that explains how Maelor School tackled the WJEC GCSE Humanities course and a contribution from Andrew Bell the Global Footprints co-ordinator. Perhaps some more members will join him. All you need do is send us a few words about what you are doing in school.

We are in the process of tackling the politicians about the marginalizing of the Humanities subjects. We feel we must get involved in the Citizenship courses to maintain our status.

Peter

Holocaust Remembrance Day

Teaching the Holocaust is not something that any of us can enjoy. Year 9 students can often find it hard to engage with the sheer scale of the horrors to which we introduce them; they can find it hard to respond appropriately to the material covered. In turn we as professionals, but human beings, have difficulty responding appropriately to the differing reactions of some of our students. How can we even begin to create an empathic response from our pupils? How can we make them feel as we feel? Most importantly, how can we, in the limited time we have, give the Holocaust some contemporary relevance and meaning? This is perhaps the key for us as Humanities teachers: to enable lessons to be learned that can enable us to create more active citizens who might learn from the inaction of many German citizens in the 1930's.

It was with these aims that we set about the development of a series of workshops to take place in the college on the 29th January (Saturday 26th January was the first International Holocaust Remembrance day). Through a great deal of support from the wider college staff we managed to take all year 9's off normal timetable for the day in question. In groups of 60 they then rotated between three different activities.

Through the Humanities Association we had learned about the "Another Time Another Place" exhibition: a 20 board step by step chronology of the Holocaust available for delivery to schools by Beth Shalom of the national Holocaust centre based near Nottingham. This colourful, informative series of stories and pictures guided students through the deepening persecution of the Jews in 1930's Germany. Perhaps better than the exhibition itself was the suitcase of resources sent to us by Beth Shalom several weeks earlier. Flashcards, videos and photographic stimuli all served to greatly improve our own teaching through a re-written scheme of work produced as a build up to the day itself.

The second activity grew and developed through links with the local ethnic minority pupil service. Via the Refugee Council, we secured the services

of John Morrison - head of the Body Shop's international campaigns and a leading expert in the field of contemporary asylum seekers. Through an excellent powerpoint presentation, the experience of Jews attempting to seek asylum ("so called refugees" - Daily Mail, 1936) was paralleled with the reality of life for asylum seekers in this country today. The aim was to counter the waves of anti-asylum seeker hostility currently being whipped up by the media with a healthy dose of reality.

Finally, and perhaps most memorably for our students we were able to secure the presence of two Holocaust survivors to talk to groups of students. This was achieved through the help of the Spiro Institute (the London Jewish Cultural centre). My own concern that our year 9's could not possibly manage to listen to one person for a whole hour was shown to be mistaken when the bell rang for the end of the school day. The speaker had not quite finished and I had expected a Pavlovian rush for bags and coats. Instead, after a long and in many ways gruelling day, the most difficult of our students remained still until the talk was concluded. Several stayed behind to thank the survivors for coming to speak to them.

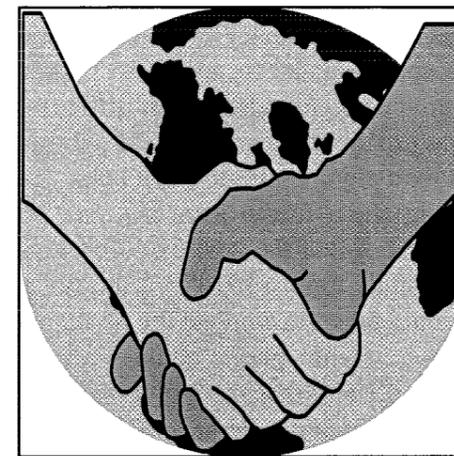
Subsequent letters written to the speakers have enabled us to gauge the deep impact that the day had had on our students. Comments such as "I never really understood what it was all about before" were commonplace. Several students made quite heartfelt pledges that it would change how they behaved and how they viewed modern day "outsiders". Others promised the speakers that they would make sure that they taught their children and grandchildren what they had learned on this day. It was clear to us that we had, in some small way, achieved our aims.

N.B. If any further contemporary relevance was required it is notable that the Holocaust survivors did not want their photographs taken by the local press. Other speakers have subsequently faced physical attacks, in the streets of civilised, 21st century, Britain.

James Parker
Eastbourne Technology College

in the process. The law says that the tunnel operator - like airlines - is responsible for seeing that no 'illegal' immigrants get through. If they do, the operator - or the airline - is fined £2000 per person. The operators strongly object to being used as frontier police.

France is not too worried, since the refugees become Britain's responsibility if they escape. Many members of the British public, supported by the press, would no doubt vote like the Australians



for any efforts to keep out what they see as unwanted visitors. The Sangatte camp is designed to hold 650 people: it sometimes contains more than 1500. In the world there is a mass movement of well over 20 million people per year, most of them moving into neighbouring countries, which often don't have the money or facilities to house them. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, has begged the richer western countries to get together to help solve the problems which create refugee movements, in the first place, and to find agreed solutions as to where and how to accommodate people on the move. He also criticised politicians for encouraging people who rejected asylum-seekers, in their own political interests. *What reasons drive people to leave their own homes and countries? Do the richer countries in any way carry the blame for the problems that face the poorer countries?*

[Sources of information used in the compiling of these articles and their URLs may be found on the NfE website.]

We are indebted to Rhys Evans who produces this newsletter that is sent out by email. We have reproduced here two of the articles published in the September edition.

THE UK YOUTH PARLIAMENT CITIZENSHIP ON ACTION

Many Humanities Association members will have been involved in the local process leading to the election of local representatives for the first UK Youth Parliament. The UK Youth Parliament was officially launched in the House of Commons in July 1999. It has the support of the Prime Minister, the leader of the opposition and the leader of the Liberal Democrats, but is strictly non-party political. Over 200 young people made history at the first national sitting of the UK Youth Parliament in London. They drew up a Youth Manifesto that was presented to a panel of MPs. The UK Youth Parliament Development Manager, Peter Clarke, is seeking your views on the Youth Parliament.

Do you think young people should get involved in politics? Should each area have an MYP? Why and how do you think young people can play a part in the democratic process?

You can find out more about the UK Youth Parliament and view the Manifesto on the website: www.UKyouthparliament.com. or contact:

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UK Youth Parliament Development Manager
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Tel: 0114-259-1194

Dee Smith, Adviser, Wirral

News from Everywhere (No 161)

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7 September 2001

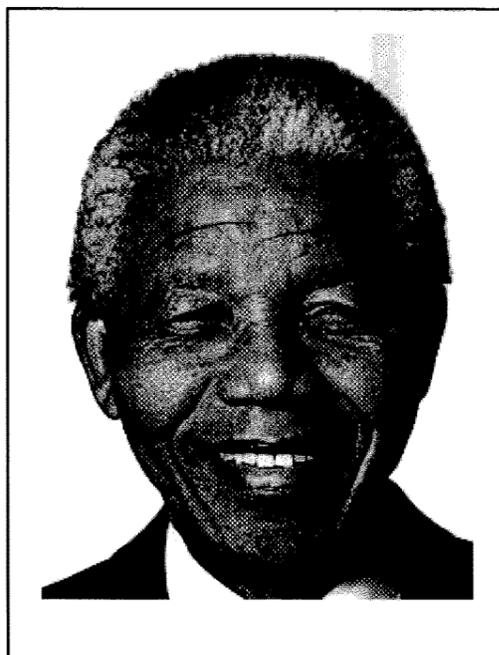
Rhys Evans sends us News from Everywhere. Here is an extract from the edition on September 7th, four days before the events of the 11th September.

World Conference against Racism

It was probably obvious when the United Nations organised its first international conference on one of the most hotly debated subjects in the history of the human race that there would be disagreement as well as hope. This week's World Conference Against Racism is just a tiny first step towards a "breakthrough in how we relate to each other as one human family in the 21st century".

Durban in South Africa was chosen as the symbolic place for the meeting because of South Africa's long and successful struggle against the apartheid regime that came to an end in 1994. Some people had hoped that the conference would focus on building a new future, but many - perhaps the majority - felt that there were too many wounds inherited from the past to allow easy solutions about the future. Over five hundred years of colonialism by ambitious and aggressive countries in less powerful, less industrialised areas of the world had sown the seeds of poverty and underdevelopment. Part of this history was the international slave trade, which ended officially just over 100 years ago, though slavery has been part of human society since earliest times and has not fully ended yet.

Now, at the conference, many poorer countries demanded official apologies and compensation from the United States and Europe for the 'crimes against humanity' committed during nearly four centuries of the transatlantic slave trade. Several countries, including the US and Britain, refused to apologise because it could have legal implications and force them to pay reparations. Another issue, which raised its head at the conference, was criticism of Israel and its treatment of the Palestinians, which many countries referred to as 'racist', though Israel has insisted that their actions are 'political'. This particular argument caused both Israel and the US to withdraw from the meeting. Clearly the big questions: how to define racism, how to decide whether nations should recognise



and put right the crimes of the past, whether poverty and underdevelopment should be linked to racism, what should be done now... will be seen by different people in different ways, and none of them can be answered in a few days. *Do we today carry the responsibility for what our ancestors did many years ago?*

The International Homeless

When the Australian prime minister recently refused to let a ship carrying 433 Afghan refugees dock on Australian territory, his popularity in his own country soared. The press and media also supported him by not publishing any pictures of the dismal conditions in which the refugees were living on board the vessel. And the fact that more than half the refugees were finally given hospitality on one of the smallest countries in the world (Nauru: size 8 square miles; population roughly 10,000) did not seem to worry them. At the same time, on the other side of the world, asylum-seekers at the Sangatte refugee camp in northern France are making almost daily attempts to enter Britain through the channel tunnel, risking injury and death

Two GCSE's for the Price of One

The experience of the Humanities Faculty of the Maelor School, Wrexham.

The School

The Maelor School is a smallish, rural 11-18 comprehensive school situated just inside the Welsh border between Wrexham and Whitchurch. Historically it was built to serve the small villages of the Maelor, originally a detached part of Flintshire but which was incorporated first into the county of Clwyd and more recently into the unitary authority of Wrexham. Over the past ten years the character of the school has changed with an increasing number of the intake being drawn from Wrexham itself and the surrounding industrial villages. The school currently has a five form entry and demand for places continues to exceed the intake despite the proximity of other schools in both Cheshire and Shropshire.

The Background

Until the early 1990's the humanities faculty had offered students a choice of WJEC History, Avery Hill Geography or GCSE Humanities. The three subjects were offered on one option line and although, in theory, students could take any two of the subjects, option constraints really meant that in practice, it was a choice of one of the three at 14+. A free choice was offered and groups and sets were worked out in response to this. However the usual pattern was for Geography and History to have one or two sets with two sets being allocated to combined Humanities, the lower set being largely for non-examination students. This was a far from ideal situation because, despite the notional idea of sets the groups were very much mixed ability. For example the set 1 humanities group contained students who were in sets 1-4 for English and the feeling of the humanities staff was that we were not getting the best from some students. This and the pressure to improve GCSE results (Typical A-C grades for the whole cohort were between 40-45) prompted a detailed analysis of students' performance in the Humanities subjects at GCSE. It soon became apparent that more able students

were doing as well as, or better than, other subject areas but most of the mid-range and less able students were underachieving. Our response was to suggest that we drop Geography and History and make GCSE Humanities a compulsory subject for all students at GCSE.

Although some subject staff, students and parents were concerned about this apparent watering down of the curriculum, there were advantages in that all students would continue to study aspects of both geography and history, rather than being forced to choose one or the other at the age of 14. It would also enable us to match the setting arrangements to ability levels much more accurately and, hopefully, to raise achievements at GCSE. At the same time we introduced close monitoring of all students, regular feedback on performance and one to one mentoring for students who were deemed to be underachieving. The improvement in results was dramatic. At the end of the first cycle we achieved a 58% higher-grade pass rate and this rose to 64%, 68% and 73% by 1998. In recent years the rate has remained in the high 60s and low 70s. This rapid increase in overall rates was matched by a similarly impressive rise in the number of students gaining higher grades with typically between 20-25% of students gaining A* or grades. These figures are clearly a vindication of the decision to offer whole cohort GCSE Humanities. The modular nature of the course, and the increased flexibility it allowed, enabled us to structure the course more closely to the needs of the students.

Nevertheless there was still concern because, like many other schools, we had a large gender differential. The introduction of GCSE Humanities had brought an improvement in pass rates for both girls and boys, but the improvement for girls had been greater. With the exception of one year when the ability level of the boys, measured by the CAT scores was significantly higher than that of the girls, the gender differential in favour of the girls has been between 15- 26%. As the school intake was showing an increase in the number of the boys this was clearly an issue we needed to address.

GCSE Humanities in Year 10?

A close analysis of students' performance in Humanities showed that there was a very definite dip in performance between Easter in Year 10 and Christmas in Year 11, and it co-incided with an

obvious increase in disaffection generally. It was also clear that it affected boys much more than girls. Students had generally started the GCSE course with enthusiasm but this waned somewhat as the year progressed and although many students picked up the pace again after the mock exams in Year 11 many, mostly boys, did not. We also identified the end of Year 9 as another time when the attitude of students changed. Like many other schools our internal exams for Year 9 were held in February – March, and, as there are no end of key stage SATs in the humanities subjects, many students, perhaps subconsciously, saw this as a time to ease off.

Although there is a lot of research into gender differential at GCSE and various people have approached the problem in various ways, one aspect seemed common. Boys generally respond well to short, “snappy” sections of study, with clearly identifiable short-term goals. The WJEC’s GCSE Humanities syllabus provides part of this through its modular format but perhaps the length of the course, over two years, was diluting the effect. A colleague at the exam board, who taught in a school in Gloucestershire, had introduced GCSE Humanities as a one year course and had noticed a marked improvement in the gender differential. Although we would not be granted any extra time in the curriculum we decided to investigate the feasibility of completing the Humanities course by the summer of Year 10 and then giving students the option of studying either GCSE History or Geography as an additional subject in Year 11. The timing would be tight, particularly as the examination had shifted from its usual position at the end of June to the end of May in 2001, but using the summer term of Year 9 to start the course and teaching right up until exam day could do it. The single subject courses for Year 11 also had to dovetail with the WJEC Humanities course and allow students to use the content that they had already studied. After much discussion and studying of syllabi it was agreed to adopt SEG syllabus “B” for Geography, changing to AQA Syllabus “C” for 2003 and the WJEC syllabus for History. Senior management gave the go-ahead so we drew up plans and held our breath. The curriculum plan for the delivery of GCSE Humanities, by the end of Year 10, is as follows.

KS4 Humanities Curriculum Plan

Year 9	
Feb 2000	Year 9 school examinations
Mar 2000	Start GCSE Humanities course Geography (1.5 hours/ week) History (1.5 hours/week) Contemporary Issues Unit: (Tourism Travel & Leisure) Contemporary Issues Unit: (War & Peace)
June 2000	Geography & History lessons combined (3 hours /week) Students choose preferred coursework task for the Contemporary Issues unit: Either: Tourism in Developing countries; Or: The Vietnam War
Year 10	
Sep 2000	All students study Humanities (3 hours/week) Local Issues Unit: An inter-disciplinary coursework study in the locality.
Oct 2000	Modular teaching of the 3 core units for 9 weeks each: Geography: Patterns & Places History: The USA since 1945 Rel. St.: Christianity & Contemporary Lifestyles.
April 2001	Year 10 internal examinations
May 2001	GCSE Humanities examination for all students who reach pre-determined standards in Year 10 internal examinations & coursework
June 2001	Students who have been entered for the GCSE Humanities exam begin their single subject courses by starting various coursework tasks; Students not entered for the coursework revisit the Contemporary Issues & local Issues units to attempt to improve coursework marks.
Year 11	
Sep 2001	Students who have gained C grade or above continue with choice of single subject for examination in May/June 2002. Students not entered continue to re-visit various GCSE Humanities modules. Students who have failed to achieve a C grade in Humanities are mentored and allowed to choose between re-sitting Humanities or continuing with single subject choices.

Measuring your footprint - examples from www.globalfootprints.org

Children's 'How Big is your Footprint' Quiz

This quiz provides children with an opportunity to learn about and reflect on factors which effect their impact on the community – locally and globally.

The quiz aims to:

- raise important issues of global citizenship in an interactive and engaging way
- provide a starting point or vehicle for encouraging discussion and debate on important global, social and environmental issues
- stimulate children into actions which will help reduce their impact
- bring about if not a change in attitudes and behaviour, at least a degree of questioning and critical thinking

Having completed the quiz children can enter a page offering information boxes on each of the issues covered by the quiz. The boxes provide quirky, alarming or informative facts and figures to back up the issue. They also present a slightly provocative discussion starter, inviting children to express their views on the issue. There are also suggested links to find out more on particular issues.

Example question:

Which do you think is the most important for reducing waste?

Re-use it

Recycle it

Make sure it all goes into the bin

Don't make so much in the first place

Far too much of our waste goes into the bin. Rubbish which ends up in the bin is either **landfilled** taking up huge amounts of space or **incinerated** pumping out smoke and fumes into the air and leaving behind poisonous ash. This is completely unnecessary because much of the rubbish we produce can be re-used or recycled. Paper, tins, cans, glass and cardboard can all be recycled. Clothes can be re-used by younger brothers or sisters when they are grown out of or given to a charity shop for someone else to buy. However, while recycling and re-using are important ways of reducing waste, not making so much in the first place is the best way to reduce your footprint.

Do you agree? Add your voice to the debate on this issue

Did you know?

- An average family produces about one tonne of rubbish every year. This weighs about the same as two small cars
- 3000 used plastic drink bottles can be recycled to make one plastic garden table

Take Action

REMEMBER THE 4 Rs

REDUCE what we buy in the first place. If we buy less then we will throw away less!

REUSE as many things as possible. Take bags with you when you go shopping, reuse envelopes

REPAIR things rather than throw them away and buy new ones

RECYCLE any material which can be turned into something new

Find out more from the Environment Agency:

www.environment-agency.gov.uk/kids/?lang=_e

Measuring the school footprint

This quiz aims to help schools assess to what extent they are promoting an ethos of active global citizenship. The questions are divided into three areas: social, global and ecological.

Example 'social' question:

Participation of children in decision making

- An effective school council, known and recognised by the whole school community, is involved in policy decisions and often discusses global, social and environmental issues relevant to the school and local community
- A school council or similar process of pupil representation and participation exists and is recognised by the whole community
- No school council, but the school believes that children should have a voice in the school
- Pupils do not need representation

For each question there is an information box providing a rationale for the question and appropriate links for further information. The information box provided for this question reads:

An increasing number of schools are introducing classroom and School Councils as a way of involving children in the decision making process. School Councils introduce children to the language, principles and structures of democratic decision making. Through classroom and School Councils children can learn to recognise their rights as young citizens and their duties and responsibilities towards the school community. Children develop their self-esteem and self-confidence through discussion, problem solving and reflection on the effects or impacts of decisions made and learn that many issues are complex and do not necessarily have simple or single answers. The opportunity to resolve real issues in school enables children to explore their relationships with others, their attitudes and their behaviour and many schools notice improvements in teacher/pupil and pupil/pupil relationships and a reduction in behavioural problems.

This direct firsthand experience of active citizenship provides a foundation for becoming a global citizen and for campaigning and taking action to help achieve sustainability. Learning and experiencing problem solving in a school context will provide the basis for children to extend their exploration of real life issues in their local and global communities. Further information on the benefits of democracy in schools and how to set up effective classroom and School Councils can be obtained from **School Councils UK** www.schoolcouncils.org

Find out whether you or your school have a giant footprint and are giving the earth a terrible kicking or whether you have a tiny footprint and are walking on air. Make tracks for the Global Footprints website: www.globalfootprints.org



Global Footprints
steps to a sustainable future
www.globalfootprints.org

“A footprint means pressing down and global means the world, so global footprints means pressing down on the world and we don’t want to press too hard.”

How on earth can you get across to children the concept of our footprint? How do primary aged children grasp the idea that our footprint relates to the impact of a given population living a particular lifestyle? The above quote from a nine year old girl demonstrates how we often worry unnecessarily about getting across what are apparently difficult concepts. Sometimes we rely on children themselves to arrive at an understanding of these concepts and define them for themselves and others.

In fact children have shown remarkable aptitude for understanding that the image of footprints trampling on the earth relates to the impact we are having on the environment and on each other.

Global Footprints is a three year project funded by the EU and DFID and is now in its final year. The project has seen a groundbreaking collaboration between eight Development Education Centres (DECs) around the UK and has also involved European partners and Southern partners in Bangladesh, India, Peru and Kenya. The main aim of the project is to provide children with the essential knowledge and skills to challenge and tackle poverty, injustice and environmental destruction both locally and globally and understand the links between the countries of the North and those of the South. The project also seeks to promote the incorporation of a global perspective and sustainable development across the curriculum and throughout all areas of school policy.

The recent launch of the *Global Footprints* website brings together the work carried out in a number of schools around the UK. The site includes activities and lesson plans, particularly for numeracy and literacy, developed and trialled by DECs and participating primary schools. With such a strong emphasis being placed on the teaching of numeracy and literacy in primary schools, incorporating global citizenship education into the numeracy and

literacy lessons has been a major focus of the project. A series of issues have been selected for this; those which are often studied as topics in their own right at primary level or have links with other curriculum subjects such as geography, history or personal, social and health education. Issues include food, water, transport, trade and waste and recycling.

The site also includes articles, thoughts and comments on what constitutes a sustainable community and invites others to contribute to this on-going debate. A special section for children contains quizzes and puzzles to help children understand the problems of global inequality and the importance of sustainability.

Naturally, a key element of the project is to use the image of the footprint in demonstrating the social, economic and ecological impacts of human activity. *Global Footprints* builds on the ‘Ecological Footprint’ model developed by Rees and Wackernagel. This essentially provides a measure of the land area necessary to sustain levels of resource consumption and waste discharge by a given population. The global footprint seeks to extend this concept by including an examination of the social and global effects of human activity.

Through the project two quizzes have been developed providing schools and students the opportunity to measure their global footprint. Both can be completed on line and provide a ‘footprint rating’. Both also aim to provide food for thought on how footprints might be reduced or improved. Or as another child put it: how to walk lightly and carefully and not leave too many damaging marks on the earth.

Andrew Bell
Global Footprints Project Officer

The Outcome

The plan outlined above was duly followed and 92 students of the year 10 cohort of 133 were entered for the examination in May 2001. Would our decision be vindicated? The results day in August was awaited with a mixture of anticipation and trepidation. We had the usual concerns about the success rate of the Year 11 students who had followed the usual pattern of GCSE Humanities over the two years but also the first set of results from our experiment added to the tension. The results show that at this stage the experiment had been a great success.

The Year 11 students (top table) produced another great set of results with 68% of the year group achieving C grades and above and 25% gaining A* and A grades. The Year 10 students were equally impressive. Of the 92 students entered, over 78% achieved higher grades. It was disappointing that 15 students (11%) missed out by one grade but the analysis of the results showed that in 10 cases this was by a mark of less than 4% and we would hope that these students will achieve their C grade in the 2002 examination. Even when the results take the whole cohort into account (bottom table) it shows a “pass” rate of 54% and as the Yellis predictions for the year group were for 55% A*-C grades over the two years, it is a highly creditable performance after just 12 months. We are confident that many of the 61 “unsuccessful” students will achieve their C grade in the summer of 2002 after a full two year period of study period while over half the year group will go on to gain C grades or higher in their single subject choices.

The Gender Differential

Whatever happens in the coming months, one of the most pleasing aspects of the 2001 results is the relative performance of boys and girls in Year 11. The usual gender differential was still a feature with 82.5% of the girls gaining higher grades compared with a relatively low 56.3% for boys. However for the Year 10 group it was virtually non-existent. An analysis of the CAT scores has revealed no marked difference in ability between boys and girls in the two year groups. This would suggest that the boys have indeed responded positively to the increased pressure and short term targets they have been set. It will be interesting to see if there is any difference in the performance of

the boys and girls who re-sit, or take the examination for the first time, after the full two years – watch this space.

The Future

This clearly is an ongoing experiment. We have repeated the process for our current Year 10 students and intend to continue for a further year at least while we analyse next year’s results. There have been problems. The GCSE syllabus reviews for 2003 have been an added complication and have involved extra research and tweaking of our curriculum plan. There is the issue of compulsory RE in Year 11 that in the past was delivered by the GCSE Humanities syllabus. We have yet to discover the views of inspectors to this curriculum innovation. Our next inspection is due in Summer 2002. It has also involved the Humanities staff in a huge amount of work and added pressure with the extra curriculum planning, coursework marking etc. but we have shown that it can be done and can bring about a marked improvement in the achievement of students in the humanities subjects. The results are enclosed on a separate sheet.

A Personal Note

I am fortunate to have had the backing of a dedicated group of colleagues and there is no doubt that such a major curriculum innovation could not have been achieved without their complete support, good humour and commitment. To all the Humanities staff of the Maelor School,

Jan Binley-Jones
 Sian Jones
 Graham Reardon
 Rob Quinn

Thanks guys I appreciate everything you have done and I know the students do also!

Dave Lewis
 Head of Humanities

If anyone would like further information about the WJEC Humanities syllabus, or how we operate the KS4 Humanities curriculum, please contact me at:

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www.happylink.org



HAPPY – a new resource for citizenship for Key Stages 2 & 3 -

encourages a more peaceful world through building up international relationships among children around the world to understand and respect each other as people made in the image of God. (Based on United Nations Charter)

Research shows that our children are concerned about many issues, including:

- the destruction of rainforests
- that many people in the world go hungry
- the rights and wrong of peoples' actions
- a desire for justice.

HAPPY contributes to children's development of values and attitudes, by:

- building up their sense of themselves as responsible local, national and global citizens
- becoming concerned for their impact on others around them and care for them
- tackling issues such as bullying
- helping them feel they have a positive role to play in the world.

The full colour magazine presents articles using a mix of photos and comic strip. It deals with citizenship topics internationally, in an attractive and up to date style that motivates both boys and girls in their reading. Feedback is encouraged which helps children's feeling of involvement.

This we've begun to explore topics, such as:

- The Olympic Games
- Festivals of Light around the world from children's perspective
- Young Role Models – Craig Keilburger's campaign against child labour
- Fair Trade including competition with DUBBLE chocolate
- HAPPY's life experiences in India and Africa.

You can help by:

- taking part in a school pilot group.
- contributing to the teacher materials, which you can see on: www.happylink.org.

HAPPY is an independent, international organisation, with no government funding. We have no cause to promote other than our own. Happy has received encouragement and support from, among others: UK Educational Advisers, Classroom Teachers, World Vision, Traidcraft and other international Aid Agencies.

HAPPY is made up of three components:

- **A child focussed colour magazine**
- **Teacher support material**, available at www.happylink.org
- **An internet-based link club and discussion forum.**

To receive a FREE copy of the magazine simply contact HAPPY at:

1. 97A Gloucester Road, Malmesbury, Wiltshire, SN16 0AJ
2. Enquiries@happylink.org

Holocaust Memorial Day: an Assembly that Worked

You know enough. And I know enough.

We don't need to know more.

We need courage.

We need the courage to do something about what we know.

Two pictures will give us courage.

I need four people who are good friends.

[Four people, of the same sex, have previously been briefed. They come up onto the stage and all of them stand in a chalked square with sides of 90cm. They press their hands against the imaginary walls which contain them.]

The Standing Cell at Auschwitz was 90cm by 90cm. It is still there today though its walls have been partly demolished. Prisoners were put in it, often four at a time.

This is the Nazi prison camp in Poland. Here the Nazis murdered about one and a half million men, women and children between 1940 and 1945.

Some of the people killed were criminals. But most were murdered because the Nazis thought they were "different", inferior to normal white Europeans. Some of the victims were Jehovah's Witnesses. Some were Gypsies. Some were homosexuals. Some were Communists. Some, the biggest group of all, were Jews.

Last Saturday the assembly took place for Holocaust Day 2001. Fifty-six years after the Russian army drove the Nazis out of Auschwitz. And the world learned again what can happen when we think that whole groups of people are not normal. Homosexuals, Gypsies, Jews, or any other group.

You know how dangerous it is to act as if whole groups of people are not normal. You know and I know. Have we the courage to treat every group we meet as normal human beings like ourselves?

The four volunteers return to their places.

I said two pictures. The picture of Auschwitz is one. But it is not enough. It might leave us thinking that only wicked Germans could think and act like that.

The second picture is from a book written by a certain Robert Knox about one hundred and fifty years ago.

The white Anglo-Saxon race, he wrote, is superior to the Dark Races. Who are the Dark Races? It is not easy to answer, he says. But the Jews are, and the Gypsies, and the Chinese to some extent. So too are the American Indians and Eskimos, the inhabitants of almost the whole of Africa, the Far East and the black inhabitants of Australia.

Can the Dark Races become civilised? I should say not, says Knox. The Saxon Race will never tolerate them ... never be at peace. It is a war of extermination.

Twenty-six years after Knox's book the last of the Tasmanian people died.

Who is this Robert Knox? Is he some German Nazi? No. He is a Scotsman. A doctor. A founder of a school of anatomy in Edinburgh. A white British citizen.

You know how dangerous it is to act as if whole groups of people are not normal. You know and I know. Have we the courage to treat every group we meet as normal human beings?

Notes. The quotations from Robert Knox are adapted from S. LINDQVIST, "Exterminate All the Brutes", Granta Books, London, 1997, p. 126. The opening words of the assembly are based on the same book, p.2. Pages 118-20 and 147 give essential background.

Robert Knox has provided the model for a character in a remarkable novel. M. KNEALE, English Passengers, Penguin Books, 2001. It combines a racy storyline, a formidable knowledge of history carried lightly and a great sense of fun.

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