

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Introduction

Omagh High School is a co-educational secondary school with an enrolment of around 430 students. It was a pilot school for the Revised Northern Ireland Curriculum. This case study illustrates the development of assessment within Learning for Life and Work (LLW) at Key Stage 3. It focuses on how LLW teachers are developing and using tasks to assess Local and Global Citizenship (LGC), Thinking Skills, and Communication, alongside knowledge and understanding in Year 10.

School Policy and Practice

Omagh High School is currently reviewing and developing its assessment policy and practice to ensure that they meet the statutory assessment and reporting requirements of the Northern Ireland Curriculum at Key Stage 3. The review aims to make greater use of assessment to improve learning outcomes for all pupils. It is intended to build on and improve the school's current assessment policy and practice, which includes using assessment of and for learning.

Assessment Planning

Assessment was planned alongside an audit of the Key Stage 3 curriculum to ensure that the statutory requirements were being met and that there was a consistent and coherent whole-school approach. As result of the audit, all subjects identified assessment opportunities for Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (TSPC) and the Cross-Curricular Skills and began to plan for assessment.

Each subject has an assessment policy that outlines the purpose of assessment, assessment approaches and the skills, personal capabilities, and knowledge and understanding that are assessed in each year of the Key Stage. This information is used to provide an overview of assessment at Key Stage 3 in the school assessment policy.

To make assessment more manageable, responsibility for assessment and reporting of TSPC, Using Maths, Communication and Using ICT is shared across subjects. In Year 10, LLW teachers currently assess and report on Self Management, but recently LLW teachers have been using a task to assess Thinking Skills, Problem Solving and Decision Making Skills, and Communication alongside subject knowledge and understanding.

Assessment for Learning: Learning for Life and Work

The LLW assessment policy promotes using a range of assessment strategies for both formative and summative purposes. The primary purpose of assessment in the school and in LLW is to enable pupils to improve their learning. To support pupils with this, Assessment for Learning (AfL) strategies have been developed as an integral part of classroom practice in Local and Global Citizenship, Personal Development and Employability (Home Economics is timetabled in school as a discrete subject at Key Stage 3). AfL strategies that have been developed within LLW include:

- **Effective questioning** – to encourage deep learning;
- **Quality feedback** – both written and oral, focusing on how pupils can close the gap in their learning;
- **Scaffolded reflection** – to allow pupils time to recognise how they learn and support them to develop their metacognitive abilities;
- **Peer and self-assessment** – to encourage pupils to reflect on their learning and become more independent learners; and
- **Sharing success criteria** – involving pupils in setting and using success criteria for peer and self-assessment.

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Teaching and Learning in Local and Global Citizenship

Throughout the Key Stage in LGC, as in the other subject strands of LLW, teachers use a range of active teaching methodologies (CCEA, 2007) to promote enquiry-based learning. When planning teaching and learning, teachers used subject progression maps, for Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities (CCEA, 2009), and the levels of progression, for Communication and Using ICT, to identify opportunities for pupils to acquire and develop these alongside LGC knowledge and understanding.

LGC activities are designed to support pupils to acquire and develop Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities and to use and further develop these when investigating a citizenship theme and its associated issues such as cultural diversity and the challenge of living in a diverse society, human rights and human rights abuse, and democracy and youth participation. Such investigations require pupils to think about issues, solve problems and make decisions. For example, a typical enquiry-based activity will focus on developing Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities that the teacher makes explicit along with other learning outcomes for knowledge and understanding. This is followed by class discussion and the teacher and pupils asking relevant questions to help clarify the purpose of the investigation.

The investigation may have a research focus, requiring pupils to select, gather and analyse information about an issue and/or to explore different viewpoints. Other activities support pupils to acquire and develop other skills and capabilities. For example, an activity's intended learning outcomes might include developing pupils' skills to make reasoned decisions about a course of action, by exploring an issue and how it might be addressed.

The investigations and activities also provide opportunities for pupils to acquire and develop aspects of their communication skills. For talking and listening, for example, pupils contribute to discussion and listen and respond to others' points of view. If a presentation is required, pupils structure their talk and communicate their ideas

clearly. They have to read and understand and be able to explain and interpret information and to communicate their ideas in a variety of written forms.

Developing Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

KS3 LGC teachers created a task (Appendix A) to give Year 10 pupils a challenging and motivating learning experience and assess aspects of their Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities, Problem Solving and Decision Making and Communication (Writing) alongside their knowledge and understanding. When creating the task, teachers referred to the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Progression Framework for LGC (CCEA, 2009) and the Levels of Progression for Communication. The task requires pupils to investigate ways that they could help to address local community issues, including working with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), to support the local community.

The task consists of four parts; each part assesses different skills in addition to LGC knowledge and understanding. Part one assesses the Thinking Skills' *Seeing Relationships and Patterns* strand through a mind-mapping activity. Part two assesses the *Making Decisions and Problem Solving* strand through a decision-making exercise. In part three, the pupils' ability to *Develop a Line of Reasoning* is assessed through a class presentation and part four of the task assesses two of the requirements for the Communication skill of Writing.

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Using an Assessment Task

Pupils complete the task in stages over five weeks (six hours) during the summer term. The pupils' performance in the first three parts of the task is assessed against the assessment criteria and mark scheme (Appendix B). The task contributes to 20 percent of the summer examination. The Communication skill of Writing is assessed with reference to the Levels of Progression for Communication. Pupils also assess each other's work in the first three parts of the task. The mark awarded by pupils and teachers is averaged to give a mark for each pupil.

Although the task is used to provide summative information, the teacher also uses this information in formative ways to help pupils to improve their learning. Before engaging with the task, the teacher discusses it and explains to the pupils what each part of the task is intended to assess and how they will be assessed and marked. The teacher talks to the pupils about the skills and capabilities and knowledge and understanding that are being assessed with reference to success criteria (Appendix B). For example, the teacher explains to pupils how they can demonstrate the skill of seeing patterns and relationships by drawing a mind map and discussing what it might include. The teacher encourages them to ask questions to clarify their thinking.

When pupils finish each of the first three parts of the task, they participate in peer assessment to judge each other's work. In groups of three or four, they review, discuss and agree on a mark for each other's work. They have to say why they gave that mark and highlight how the pupil they are assessing could make improvements. The teacher also assesses the pupil's work and provides useful written comments about its strengths and ways that they could improve it. The teacher then gives pupils time to absorb the comments and think about and reflect on their work, before discussing it with individuals. Pupils use self-styled evaluation sheets, with a combination of closed and open leads, and questionnaires to help them evaluate their performance. They also keep an ongoing record of their progress in a workbook that charts their achievements against personal learning targets. They are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour, motivation and perseverance.

In the fourth part of the task, pupils write to their local councillor to express their views on local community issues that they have already identified and suggest how they would like the local council to deal with them. This task is used to assess two of the Communication requirements for Writing (Appendix C). It is aimed at pupils working at Levels 4, 5 and 6.

Ensuring Consistency

Departmental meetings are held regularly. These include discussions about teaching, learning, assessment, pupil progress and pupil work. Teachers have an opportunity to discuss and share examples of pupils' work, including pieces that have been produced from tasks. This helps teachers to gain a better understanding of standards and what might be expected from pupils in relation to the quality of their work. This also helps to ensure that teachers in LLW have a consistent approach to assessment and to applying standards.

The Way Forward

The LLW department plans to continue to explore ways of assessing subject knowledge and understanding alongside skills and capabilities as part of its commitment to developing quality assessment practice. This will involve further work to design other assessment tasks.

The journey continues. It is hoped that, through the work and dedication of the LLW team, pupil experiences can be improved in the future, helping each individual to prepare for the world outside the education system.

References

CCEA, *Active Learning and Teaching Methods for Key Stage 3* (2007)

CCEA, *Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities Progression Maps at Key Stage 3* (2009)

Appendix A

Local and Global Citizenship TASK

Exploring Local Community Issues and the Role of NGOs

Explore some of the ways that you could help to deal with local issues in your community.

Part One

Create a mind map to help you show some issues in your local community.

Questions to think about

Are these local issues linked to each other? If they are, how are they linked?

What impact do they have on people living in the community?

Are these issues affecting everyone in the community?

Discuss, think about and write down some other questions to help you clarify the issues.

How am I doing?



Success Criteria

I can draw a mind map to show local community issues.

I can ask questions to help clarify the issues.

I can show how these issues are connected.

I can identify what groups of people are most affected by these issues.

I can comment about how they are affected by these issues.

I can assess the consequences of these issues on people living in the community.

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Part Two

What could you do to help deal with these issue(s)?

Questions to think about

What options will you consider to deal with these issues?

Are your options practical?

How will you decide which is the best option?

How will you justify your choice?

How am I doing?



Success Criteria

I can create a diagram to help show how I make decisions.

I can provide options to deal with local community issues.

I can give the pros and cons for my options.

I can explain the possible consequences of my choices.

I can give reasons for my choice of option(s).

I can justify my choice of option(s).

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Part Three

Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) often work to support the local community and help to deal with local community issues.

Produce a five minute presentation on the role of one NGO and how it helps deal with local community issues.

Questions to think about

What are the local community issues?

What role can the NGO play in helping to deal with these issues?

What effect is the NGO likely to have on the local community?

How effective is the NGO in dealing with local community issues?

How am I doing?



Success Criteria

I can give a presentation to the class about the role.

of NGOs in helping to deal with local community issues.

I can give reasons to justify working with an NGO.

I can explain how its actions can help people in the community.

I can assess how effective the NGO is in dealing with local issues.

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Part four

The local council are asking people for their views about local community issues and how they might deal with them. They have contacted your youth club asking for members' views.

Write to your local councillor expressing your views on some local community issues that you have already identified. Suggest how you would like the local council to deal with these issues.

How am I doing?



Success Criteria

I can write to my local councillor about local community issues and suggest ways that the council might deal with these issues.

I can express and clearly communicate my ideas and opinions.

I can use appropriate vocabulary.

I can structure my writing using paragraphs.

I can structure my writing to show how my ideas are linked and developed.

I can make use of information to justify my ideas/opinions.

I can accurately spell most words.

I can use punctuation accurately and consistently.

I use grammar appropriately.

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Knowledge, Understanding, Thinking and Problem Solving and Decision Making in LGC

Mark Scheme

	1–2 marks	3–4 marks	5–6 marks
Seeing Relationships and Patterns			
Pupils demonstrate the ability to:			
The pupil demonstrates knowledge and understanding about local community issues.	create a mind map to illustrate some local community issues; identify one or two questions to ask to help clarify issues; make broad connections between issues; and make general comments on the effect these issues can have on people living in the community.	create a mind map to illustrate the main community issues; identify two or more relevant questions to ask to help clarify issues; clearly show and comment on how the issues are connected; identify specific groups in the community who are affected by these issues; and comment on how they are affected.	create a mind map to illustrate the main community issues and possible causes; identify three or more appropriate questions to ask to help clarify issues; identify specific groups in the community who are affected by these issues; and assess the potential impact/consequences on them and the wider community.
	1–2 marks	3–4 marks	5–6 marks
Making Decisions and Solving Problems			
Pupils demonstrate the ability to:			
The pupil demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the ways that pupils might deal with a local community issue.	provide some ideas; and identify some options to help address the issue.	explore a wider range of options to address community issues; identify some pros and cons for each option; and justify their choice.	evaluate a range of options; weigh up pros and cons for each; suggest possible consequences; and justify their choice.
	1–2 marks	3–4 marks	5–6 marks
Developing a Line of Reasoning			
Pupils demonstrate the ability to:			
The pupil demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the work of non-governmental organisations (NGO) that work to support the local community.	give basic information about the work of one NGO and its role in helping to deal with local community issues; and provide reasons to justify its work.	use evidence and information to support an argument; explain the work of an NGO and its role in helping to deal with local community issues; and provide reasons to justify working with an NGO.	explain how the actions of an NGO can impact on the local community and how its actions can be affected by the actions of others; challenge the limitations of the NGO; and draw conclusions based on sound evidence on how effectively the NGO is supporting the local community.

Omagh High School

Developing and Using Assessment Tasks in Local and Global Citizenship

Guidance on
Subject Assessment
at Key Stage 3

Appendix C

Communication Skills (WRITING) Levels of Progression

	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6
Pupils demonstrate the ability to:			
Communicate information, meaning, feelings, imaginings and ideas in a clear and organised way.	express their ideas and opinions about local community issues and ways of addressing them, giving reasons when appropriate; structure writing, including using paragraphs; and express meaning clearly, using appropriate vocabulary and level of detail.	use precise vocabulary to convey their ideas about local community issues and ways of addressing them with justification; structure writing logically and coherently; match writing to purpose and audience; and present information in an appropriate form.	communicate ideas, information and opinions about local community issues and ways that they might be addressed in a sustained and developed way; and make use of information and evidence to support ideas and opinions.
Write with increasing accuracy and proficiency.	vary word order and use linking words within sentences; use a range of punctuation accurately; and use accurate grammar and spelling on most occasions.	create sentence structures which help to convey meaning; use a range of punctuation consistently and accurately; and use accurate grammar and spelling.	create sentence structures which convey meaning clearly; and use punctuation for effect.