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The contribution of Scottish holocaust teaching materials to citizenship education

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Soon after Holocaust Memorial Day was announced in the UK, the Scottish Executive commissioned an education pack for teaching Scottish primary pupils in the upper stages, i.e. pupils aged 10 to 12 years. Entitled 'The Holocaust: a teaching pack for primary schools,' (LTS¹, 2000), this resource was distributed to every primary school in Scotland for preparation for the first national Holocaust Memorial Day in January 2001. This initiative was followed by 'The Holocaust: a teaching pack for secondary schools', (LTS, 2002a), which was distributed to every secondary school in Scotland and aimed mainly at the S1/S2 stages. The content of these packs are similar in the following ways:

- they are based on video testimonies of two Jewish camp survivors who have made Scotland their home
- they contain a strong focus on the areas of knowledge and understanding that are relevant to the development of active and responsible citizenship.

The focus of this paper is an examination of the contribution of these two Holocaust educational packs to citizenship education in Scotland.

Education for citizenship in Scotland

The first Act of the new Scottish Parliament was *The Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act* (2000). This set out a national vision for education in the shape of five National Priorities for Education, one of which is Values and Citizenship. This involves teaching pupils 'respect for self and one another and their interdependence with other members of their neighbourhood and society' and 'of the duties and responsibilities of citizenship in a democratic society'. The discussion paper 'Education for Citizenship in Scotland' (LTS, 2002b) provides a national framework for education for citizenship for pupils aged 3 to 18 years. At its launch, Nicol Stephen, the Deputy Education Minister, commented on the changing emphasis of schools, stating that the traditional three 'Rs' (representing reading, writing and arithmetic) were now replaced by 'rights, responsibilities and respect.' Implementation of these proposals is well under way and the Scottish Government and Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education expect all Scottish schools to have a strategy for education for citizenship by the session beginning in 2004. Closely linked to citizenship is the current 'One Scotland: Many Cultures.' campaign (2002). Organised by the Scottish Executive, this campaign aims to eliminate racism in Scotland by emphasising that it is the responsibility of each individual to tackle racism.

As in England and Wales, the proposal is for education for citizenship to be an entitlement for all pupils at all stages. However, in Scotland, citizenship education will permeate the primary and secondary curricula through a cross-curricular approach and will not be a separate subject. This involves principally the subject areas of Environmental Studies, Religious and Moral Education and Personal and Social Development in the primary

¹ Learning and Teaching Scotland

curriculum, and Modern Studies, History, Religious and Moral Education, and Personal and Social Development / Education in secondary schools.

Holocaust education and citizenship

The contribution of Holocaust education to citizenship education in the primary school includes developing pupils' understanding of 'the notion of justice, tolerance, equal treatment and the dangers of fascism' (Maitles & Cowan, 1999), and 'provides opportunities for developing the positive values of empathy, awareness of antiracism, and an understanding that the individual can make a difference' (Cowan, 2001).

Previous research in secondary schools perceives Holocaust education as making a significant contribution to citizenship in developing pupils' awareness of human rights issues and genocides, the process of stereotyping, the concept of scapegoating and the exercise of power in local, national and global contexts (for example, Carrington & Short, 1997; Short, 1997). Supple states that a key component of citizenship education is 'trying to understand why some people see the persecution of others as something they should be concerned about and choose to intervene on their behalf' (Supple, 1998). This point is reinforced by Landau (1989), who asserts that Holocaust teaching 'perhaps more effectively than any other subject, has the power to sensitise them (pupils) to the dangers of indifference, intolerance, racism and the dehumanisation of others'. Hector states that one popular approach to teaching the Holocaust is through discussions on bullying, prejudice and racism (Hector, 2000, in Davies, p105).

Teaching about the Holocaust provides a suitable context for the attainment of particular key areas of knowledge and understanding and the skills that need to be developed as specified in the proposals for education for citizenship in Scotland. These include:

- the legal and human rights and responsibilities of citizens, individually and collectively, in a democratic society;
- barriers to full opportunity to exercise citizenship arising from socio-economic circumstances, prejudice and discrimination;
- the diversity of identities - religious, ethnic, cultural, regional, national - within Scotland, across the UK and world-wide, and the need for mutual respect, tolerance and understanding;
- the ability to respond in imaginative ways to social, moral and political situations and challenges, for example developing a personal response to a topical moral issue;
- the ability to consider and empathise with the experience and perspective of others.

Education for Citizenship in Scotland

Learning and Teaching Scotland, 2002b, pp32 and 34

Teaching methodologies of both teaching packs

1. Teachers' manuals include an introductory section which is to be completed before viewing the video. This ensures that the video testimonies are put in the appropriate context, provides opportunities to ascertain pupils' prior knowledge of the Holocaust

and to introduce the Holocaust, and in the case of secondary pupils, consolidates prior learning.

2. Teachers' manuals contain a great deal of teacher-supportive material. This includes video transcripts, discussion points, activity sheets with answer sheets and suggested activities. In Scotland this level of support is particularly important as many teachers of Personal and Social Development teach such lessons without expertise in this curricular area. This situation is similar to Rutter's study of secondary teachers which showed that in most schools in England, citizenship was taught by non-specialist teachers (Rutter, 2002, in Ross, p76).
3. Duration of the videos is approximately 30 minutes, and the videos are not to be viewed in one lesson, but in two, three, or four parts. This is to facilitate pupils' understanding of the main points and to enable the accompanying activities to be achieved. The video for the primary pack is divided into three sections and that in the secondary teaching pack into four sections.
4. No use is made of pictures that convey the ultimate horror of the Holocaust. Effective teaching of the Holocaust does not require young people to be intentionally upset and/or manipulated by shock horror tactics.
5. Each pack contains material which encourages pupils to consider how the lessons of the Holocaust relate to world events today and to important issues such as tolerance, respect, power and authority.
6. Teaching is to be cross-curricular. In the primary sector this will primarily involve a combination of teaching of Environmental Studies, Religious and Moral Education, and Personal and Social Development, and in the secondary sector, teaching of History, Modern Studies, Religious and Moral Education, and Personal and Social Education. Secondary teachers are encouraged to work co-operatively with subject teachers teaching particular section of the video.
7. Survivor testimony is used to convey to pupils that the Holocaust is a 'peoples' story by using people to tell their personal story. It also brings the concept of Holocaust survivors closer to home as these people have been Scottish citizens for more than forty years. This also supports the identity of a multicultural, multi-faith Scotland.
8. Each teaching pack is to be taught leading up to Holocaust Memorial Day, on 27 January to enable pupils to participate in associated local community events and/or activities.

The Holocaust teaching pack for primary schools

This resource² is based on the Holocaust experiences of Reverend Ernest Levy O.B.E. His testimony tells of the herding of his family from their home in Bratislava to No Man's

² The pack additionally includes a disc - *Anne Frank: Into Hiding*, which is based on the experiences of the Frank family. Written by Fred Rendell, 1987, this topic study is now out of print and is included in the primary pack as a supplementary resource for teaching the Holocaust. Its content is not discussed in this text as it is not newly published material.

Land at the Hungarian border in 1938, when he was 13 years of age, and of his imprisonment in a number of concentration camps from 1944 onwards. Levy was taken to Auschwitz-Birkenau, then to a number of satellite concentration camps near Auschwitz, and finally marched on a death march to Bergen-Belsen where he was liberated.

The focus of this testimony is the three special people who helped Ernest during this time. They were: Helmut, a soldier; Max, a farmer; and Emma, a ward sister. Helmut helped Ernest by giving him friendship and by looking after him whenever he could. Max helped by standing up to the German guards and insisting that he gave each prisoner (and guard) one potato a day whilst they stayed on his farm. Emma helped by nursing Ernest and encouraging him to live. Depicting German people in this way helps to challenge any negative feelings about Germans that pupils may develop, as shown in Carrington and Short's case study of secondary pupils (Carrington & Short, *ibid*). It also helps to dispel common myths that young people have about Germans. 'All Germans were Nazis' is one misconception that Kitson, a history teacher, includes in the list of misconceptions that she has experienced in the secondary classroom (Kitson, 2001). The actions of helpers is important for pupils to identify role models but, given the small numbers of such people, must be taught carefully to ensure that these roles are not over-emphasised.

Levy's testimony highlights the following elements of the systematic process of the Holocaust:

- the loss of civil rights and individual freedom
- deportation to a concentration camp
- incarceration in a number of concentration camps
- liberation in a concentration camp.

Levy does not talk of the conditions and cruelties of these camps in depth as conveying such information to primary pupils is inappropriate. Testimony in the secondary pack contains more information on Auschwitz-Birkenau and Bergen-Belsen. Levy spent five days in Auschwitz-Birkenau: he makes a clear distinction between this experience and the rest of his camp experiences by the following reference to his time spent there:

These five days were like FIVE YEARS . I was selected for work. Those who were selected were taken to a smaller camp for work. I kissed the walls of the cattle train that took me out of Auschwitz. I was triumphant that I was taken away from that evil place. You could not breathe from the terrible smell. It TORE your chest apart. (LTS, 2000 p18)

Levy's testimony highlights the following aspects of social education and citizenship:

- effects of loss of civil rights, citizenship and individual freedom
- importance of friendship
- power of the individual to stand up to authority and others
- need for mutual respect, tolerance and understanding
- significance of the 'helpers'

- prejudice and discrimination in contemporary Scottish, European and world contexts

This teaching pack contains a separate section, 'The World Today', which focuses on the relevance of the Holocaust to the pupils' contemporary world. This includes a discussion activity which considers racism and neo-Nazism in Scottish and European dimensions, and specific issues pertaining to discrimination experienced by Scots from different ethnic groups, cultures and religions, such as Roma travellers, refugees, and Asians.

The Holocaust teaching pack for secondary schools

This resource is based on the Holocaust experiences of Marianne Grant from the time of the German occupation of her home city of Prague in 1939, when she was 18, through her imprisonment in Theresienstadt ghetto, the Auschwitz-Birkenau death camp (where she stayed for seven months) and a number of slave labour camps, until her liberation from Bergen-Belsen in 1945. Her experiences show good and bad in both Nazis and Jews, e.g. Murrelstein, a member of the Jewish council in Prague whom Marianne claims was a Nazi collaborator, and two SS officers, one of whom ensured Marianne received the necessary medicines when she fell ill, and the other, Dr. Josef Mengele, who ordered Marianne to draw a family tree at the dwarf camp³.

Marianne Grant's testimony builds on one's understanding of the systematic process of the Holocaust achieved from the Primary pack by:

- emphasising the infringement of civil rights for Czech Jews
- introducing segregation into the process of the Holocaust in the form of ghettoisation
- making a distinction between concentration, slave labour and death camps
- revealing more of daily life in Auschwitz-Birkenau

This testimony highlights the following aspects of social education and citizenship:

- effects of loss of civil rights, citizenship and individual freedom
- moral dilemmas concerning individual responsibility and obedience
- use and abuse of power
- prejudice and discrimination in contemporary Scottish, European and world contexts
- potential of developments in science and /or technology to change the physical, social and cultural environment for good or ill

Table 1 is one suggested activity. In line with developing citizenship skills, this activity requires pupils to work collaboratively in groups, sharing ideas and analysing situations and exercising pupils to consider and empathise with the experience and perspective of others.

³ Dwarfs were segregated in Auschwitz 1.

Table 1 Pupil activity sheet - Marianne's Dilemmas

Read the following situations. Discuss Marianne's dilemma in each and how she came to her decisions

The situation	The dilemma	Reason(s) why	Reason(s) why not	Marianne's skills and qualities that affected her decision	Marianne's decision
Marianne gets a place at the art school in Jerusalem					
Marianne and Murrelstein					
Marianne in the store rooms					
Marianne and the dead bodies					
Marianne and the payment for her drawings of the dead bodies					

The universal lessons of the Holocaust are permeated throughout this pack in each of its five sections. These include group discussions of comparison of Marianne's situation in trying to leave Czechoslovakia in 1940 to the situation of today's refugees and asylum seekers, current Scottish attitudes to refugees and asylum seekers, and Scotland's role in asylum dispersal.

Conclusion

This paper supports previous research suggesting that learning about the Holocaust can be an effective context for teaching young people many aspects of citizenship education. Notably it does not address all components of citizenship e.g. political literacy. Yet the educational packs provide a wide range of knowledge and understanding of key areas of citizenship and personal and social issues whilst developing pupils' understanding of Holocaust history. This emphasises the importance of integrating lessons about the Holocaust with the lessons that can be learned from the Holocaust.

The methodology of using survivor testimony allows pupils to gain a personal insight into understanding this historical event. Using Scottish survivors brings the Holocaust closer to Scottish pupils and shows how this important event in European history is part of Scotland's cultural history.

The packs provide a continuity of learning as promoted by the Scottish curriculum which is titled '5-14' to ensure progression and continuity for pupils from the primary to secondary stages.

The Primary pack provides a basic grounding in Holocaust history while the Secondary pack builds on this previous learning. Finally, the packs provide a high level of teacher support to encourage teachers who have never taught the Holocaust and/or values associated with citizenship education, as well as teachers with experience of this teaching, to teach it in their schools. By doing so, pupils' understanding of Holocaust Memorial Day will be enhanced, and this may in turn lead to pupil participation in activities associated with this event in their local and wider communities.

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