

## METHODS OF TEACHING

Teaching is an act of communication .It can also mean providing opportunities for students to learn. It is an interactive process as well as an intentional one. However pupils or students may learn other things that the teacher did not intend them to learn. If teaching is an act of communication then it means it has two components.

1. **Content:** In all social science subjects there are four things
  - (a) Facts: such as tribalism can lead to civil war.
  - (b) We teach understanding; have to do with what is known as causal relationship such as too much money causes inflation.
  - (c) We teach concepts: subjects like CVE, History heavily borrow concepts from other sciences concepts like democracy which is from political science.
  - (d) Skills: such as writing an essay and searching for information.
2. **Methodology:** this is the manner in which content is being communicated. Any method of teaching has two aspects:
  - (a) There is an activity part: this is what the pupils do in the course of the lesson. Some see activity as physical. A good activity must relate to thinking or puzzling a problem in a community.
  - (b) The other aspect of methodology is teaching aids. Teaching aids provides a focus for a study of a particular topic. Teaching aids include pictures, maps. Primary sources includes speeches, diary letters.

## METHODOLOGY OF METHODS OF TEACHING

This can be defined as a report of the way in which the subject matter is presented and is impressed upon the learner. Educationalists normally believe that there are two such ways of presenting the subject matter.

1. **The traditional method (teacher centered):** the right name for this method is the Neo-Thormist approach. It is called the Neo-Thormist approach after an Italian Thomas Aquinas of the 13<sup>th</sup> century a Catholic Priest.

In the tradition method, the teacher would choose the topic to be remembered. He/she would explain and define so that the subject matter can be understood and restated by the pupils. The pupil's activity is to listen and verbal repetition together with copying notes as the teacher talks. Normally questions asked in the traditional method are recall type such as what, when, which, who, where.

### Merits of the traditional method

- ❖ It is cheaper.
- ❖ Saves time
- ❖ Maintains discipline in class.

### Demerits of the traditional method

- ❖ The teacher does not room to the pupils.
- ❖ This method limits the pupils' ability to think.
- ❖ It is also said to be dictatorial.

2. **Inquiry method of teaching (pupil centered)**, This was first started by Jean Jacques Rousseau a French philosopher in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Rousseau called this method of teaching as child centered and another philosopher John Dewey called it the progressive method. The main idea of this method is that during the learning process was to provide a mental with which to tackle or solve practical problems of society. According to Dewey, the main aim of the teacher is to ask the pupils to perform a task assigned by the teacher and the activity of the teacher is to act as a facilitator of learning.

#### **Merits of the inquiry method**

- ❖ Supporters of the inquiry method say that this method gives individual pupils room to develop mentally.
- ❖ It is democratic and depends less on the teacher.

#### **Demerits of the inquiry method**

- ❖ It wastes a lot of time
- ❖ It is expensive and needs a lot of resources which is not possible for poor countries.
- ❖ It leads to anarchy and indiscipline in class as pupils work on their own.

As teachers it is important to know that both methods can produce good or bad results depending on the situation. A good and resourceful teacher can produce good results regardless of methods of teaching. A bad teacher on the other hand will produce bad results even in the presence of the good and necessary resources.

## **THE SYLLABUS**

This is a series of statements about what is to be taught to pupils or students over a period of time or year and usually concerned with a particular subject. It is an outline of what is to be taught. It is also a program of subject matter that should follow a logical sequence so that it is easy for both the teacher and the pupils to follow and use it fruitfully. It is the role of the teacher to infuse it with the necessary details when making schemes of work and lesson plans.

### **IMPORTANCE OF A SYLLABUS**

A syllabus is an important educational document because it facilitates the fulfillment of the aims of teaching a subject.

The syllabus makes it possible to teach and learn in an orderly fashion and systematic way. A topic in the syllabus is followed by another related and relevant one. There is some order in the way the way topics are arranged in a syllabus such as from the earliest to the latest or from the simplest to the more complex or from familiar to unfamiliar.

A syllabus also unifies the content and limits the scope of the examination. A syllabus unifies the content by ensuring that similar content material is placed under one heading, sub heading or topic. Sometimes the use of chronology also helps to unify the content material.

The syllabus also limits the scope of the examiner. By saying that the syllabus limits the scope of the examination, it implies that it creates certainty in the minds of the examiners. Both the teacher and the learner will desist from reading things that are not in the syllabus. The examiners will ensure that they do not set questions on the topics that are not in the syllabus, unless the questions are of general nature.

Furthermore the syllabus ensures that standardization of learning and teaching are in line with the given course of expansion.

Above all a syllabus controls what to teach and learn, and without it there will be no limit and this would lead to teaching and learning to be difficult.

### IMPORTANT FACTORS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SYLLABUS

The construction of a good syllabus always takes into account pupils' level and mental maturity. This is the reason why topics in the syllabus are arranged from simple to more complex and from known to unknown.

Those who construct the syllabus are usually former teachers who understand pertinent educational issues. In Zambia these specialist are found at Curriculum Development Center (CDC). These decide what to include or leave out in a given syllabus.

Practicing teachers can advise these specialists on work suitable for certain age groups. The systematic arrangement of content and the chronological arrangement of the same way.

Another factor to consider is that of the ideology of the country. Ideologies change from time to time according to the government that comes into power.

Another issue to consider is the school leaver issue, at Grade seven nine and twelve levels. Many pupils will drop from educational ladder and enter the world of work. It is therefore important to include useful topics to help these school leavers when they enter the world of work. These topics may include human rights, gender issues, values of democracy

and duties and rights of a citizen. They should be reminded about the problems they will encounter in society and how to cope with them. They should be taught how to be good citizens. Sometimes, the availability of teaching materials and resources are taken into account when drawing the syllabus. It is of no use to include topics in the syllabus which have no reference for teachers and pupils.

### ACTORS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SYLLABUS

Obviously, the first actor in the construction of the syllabus is the state. This is because the state is the overall representative of national ideals and aspirations and as such would like its policies be projected in the syllabus. Also the government is the founder of employment and the major employer.

### SCHEMES OF WORK

Schemes of work are also known as the forecast. Schemes of work originate from the syllabus. They comprise of specific topics from the syllabus, the major difference is that the scheme of work contains smaller and digestible topics or content material that is derived from the syllabus, where as a syllabus might simply show major themes to be taught.

A scheme of work will show smaller units or topics and each unit /topic stands more or less for a lesson to be learnt in one period.

Therefore a scheme of work is a plan of work which the teacher expects or is expected to cover with a class in one term or year. A scheme of work translates a syllabus in specific topics.

## **IMPORTANCE OF SCHEMES OF WORK**

One reason why the teacher is required to make schemes of work is that they should do their work smoothly as soon as the school opens.

Schemes of work help both the new and experienced teachers not to waste time before they will encounter straight forward work.

Schemes of work are easy to follow because they follow a logical sequence or order for teachers to teach and for pupils to learn.

The process of making schemes of work benefits teachers in the short term and benefits pupils in the long run.

It ensures that the teacher does not take for granted the work he will teach. By actually arranging and writing it down the teacher is able to know those areas in which he is weak and can be able to find out more information regarding such areas.

He/she is also able to know in advance the kind of concepts and teaching aids required for the content and prepare for that in advance. In so doing the teacher masters his /her work.

Furthermore the scheme of work is the teachers guarantee that he knows what pupils is ahead of his /her work and that of his/her and how to teach in a balanced fashion.

The process of making schemes of work makes the teacher able to emphasize the significant features of the syllabus.

The process of making schemes of work gives the teacher to take into account certain issues or problems such as how outbreaks from epidemics at school ,early closures due to writing of public

examinations, industrial disputes or strikes between teachers and the educational authorities, illness of teacher etc. The class affected by such problems need carefully constructed schemes of work to make for the lost time.

The schemes of work enable the teacher to translate the general objectives of a syllabus into specific objectives. Schemes of work are made either for each of the three terms or for the whole year.

However, this arrangement is not rigid, because each term the schemes of work are to be revised in case there has been time lost due to many reasons.

A good scheme of work should have period allocation for each lesson as this is the basis of all the lessons.

This is the reason why it should be done at the beginning of the each term if possible. The Head of Department together with teachers prepare the schemes of work. Each teacher must have a copy of schemes of work and must be reviewed at the end of the term to find out if all topics have been covered.

## **FORMAT OF SCHEMES OF WORK**

Schools have their own traditional format of schemes of work and teachers are advised to adhere to such format. However, most formats of schemes of work will include such things as Name of school, subject title, year, term, grade, topic, sources, reference of learning aid material, teachers comment, and comment by Head of Department.

## RECORDS OF WORK

The records of work show the lesson that are actually taught during a given week. In general records of work are important for a number of reasons:

They show the actual work covered by the class and the success to which it was done.

They show the nature of the problems that the teacher and the learners encounter weekly and possibly how some can be overcome.

They also show the level of learning that goes on in the classroom.

The records of work show the nature of interruptions that take place from time to time. This makes it possible for the teacher to make necessary adjustments in his teaching.

Above all the teachers who take over from where others left for various reasons are able to do so with relative accuracy regarding where others have stopped teaching and where to begin from. Under the teacher's comment column the teacher must write honest and sincere comments which should be useful indicators of whether the topic needs to be revised or retaught. The teacher should have details in his/her comments. Comments such as taught, well taught are not useful.

Records of work are also very useful to Heads of Departments who need to know whether there are serious difficulties in carrying out the school schemes of work so that they can be modified at all if necessary. The Head of Department needs to know whether the teachers in his department are moving at the same or different speed or doing different ways so that he can correct serious differences between them. Even more

important the Head of Department needs to know at the end of the year what each class has covered so that the schemes of work for the following year is based on 'this'.

## FORMAT OF RECORDS OF WORK

The format of record of work is similar to the schemes of work except for a few things such as HOD's and head teacher's comment. Again most schools have their traditional records of work and teachers are advised to comply with that.

## LESSON AND LESSON PLAN

The lesson is the culmination of all the work that goes into making good syllabus or schemes of work. The two broad categories of a lesson are (i) preparation and (ii) the plan preparation involves all the activities which a teacher does in order to be conversant with the content or subject material. The preparation stage is also known as the pre-active stage. This includes finding out information from textbooks, library books, periodicals, newspapers, radio and television, reference books and interview with other knowledgeable people or persons.

The lesson plan is a strategy for ensuring effective teaching and learning. When making a lesson plan a teacher should take into account a number of things.

He should also take into account the prevailing conditions into school and class at the time he intends to teach such as: the time and day, the length of the period in which he will conduct the lesson. Teachers should also take into account the age of the children, their level of understanding new work especially familiarity with concepts and work to be given.

Teachers should also take into account whether the class is composed of boys or girls whether it is a mixed class. These and other factors influence the approach one takes in his work.

A lesson plan has a topic, objectives, teaching aids, introduction and conclusion/summary. It also includes pupils' activities as the lesson progresses.

Objectives must be clear and the verbs used must be measurable such as TPSBAT identify, define, suggest, mention, explain, write, discuss etc. and not words like understand, know.

The introduction is the first part of a lesson plan and this is meant to arouse pupils' interest and alertness in the lesson being taught. Most teachers start the introduction by revising the previous lesson.

This though is not the only way to start the lesson. Whatever form the teacher uses to start a lesson, it must be interesting live and short.

After the introduction comes the presentation of a lesson and its content. This is the most crucial part of teaching and learning strategies. When presenting a lesson the teacher should be aware of :

- a) Suitable communication—this entails use of suitable language the pupils will understand.
- b) There should be orderly presentation of the content of the lesson either chronological or from known to unknown.
- c) Use of various types of relevant instruction such as maps, pictures, charts, graphs, real objects, replicas of real objects.
- d) Use the board to the advantage of your lesson to benefit your learners.
- e) Ensure that most of your teaching involves pupils.

The conclusion of the lesson does not only imply going through the day's lesson. The teacher can value his/her conclusion his conclusion depending on the topic being taught. The teacher must remember that the lesson plan serves as a guide to a busy teacher and also it earns memory.

It should be direct to the point. The teacher should use notes as a reminder and should not bury his/her head in them.

A carefully prepared lesson is essential for effective learning and teaching that is a well taught lesson is as a result of a carefully prepared lesson.

#### RESULTS OF UNPREPARED LESSON

- ❖ If there is lack of logical presentation of structure of the lesson the pupils will have no clear notion of what you have covered.
- ❖ Boredom and restless in class, this can easily bring indiscipline in the class.
- ❖ Excessive correction of the teacher's work by the pupils. This may lead to loss of confidence in a teacher.
- ❖ Inaccurate facts taught and accepted as correct.
- ❖ Omission of important facts, elements or content.
- ❖ Poor timing
- ❖ Lack of interesting details or illustrating materials
- ❖ It is only by careful and thoughtful preparation that those faults can be avoided.

#### LECTURE METHOD

The lecture method is the oldest procedure of teaching social science subjects especially for imparting authentic, systematic and effective

information about some events or trends. This method is particularly used in secondary schools and higher learning institutions of learning .it is also used in primary schools.

It is used.

*To motivate*-when introducing a new topic all you need the teacher can in most cases present the outstanding aspect of the topic using the lecture method such as indicating significant persons, or characters ,events and problems. This can arouse the curiosity and interest of learners or pupils.

*To clarify*-the lecture method is also used to clarify some problems or difficulties to save time.

*To review*-using the lecture method, the teacher can easily guide pupils by summarizing the main points of the topic and indicate some of the important details.

*To expand content*-the lecture method is one of the best method of presenting additional materials which may not be in the pupils' textbooks but based on teachers additional reading and personal experience. Through the lecture method the teacher can give latest and up to date information which is not in the textbook.

#### ADVANTAGES OF THE LECTURE METHOD

If well prepared and well executed, lecture method could make the lesson interesting. During the lecture the teacher can indicate by tones, gestures and facial expression the extent of meaning that he wishes to convey. The teacher can act out his/her story by shifting position, by impersonating the characters, by changing his voice and by using simple

devices. He/she can make learning meaningful than the printed material. This is why it is said that, spoken word is frequently more effective than the printed one.

The lecture method brings the teacher into immediate contact with his/her pupils. While lecturing he can see whether the pupils are following what he/she is saying. If not he can repeat the message or change the approach and carry his pupils along with him/her.

The lecture method saves time .it ensures adequate preparation by the teacher which is useful or benefit the pupils.

Good lectures stimulate brighter pupils. Serious and brighter pupils prefer lecture method than any other method as it prompts them to put in more work without wasting time.

It is cheaper and cost saving to poor countries.

The lecture method gives the pupils the training in listening and taking quick notes.

#### DISADVANTAGES OF THE LECTURE METHOD

Extensive use of this method to substitute the teacher or the pupil has the following disadvantages.

This method deprives the pupils to acquire knowledge on their own and become nearly dependent on the teacher.

Learning is participating in the learning process. The pupils need the opportunity to talk, to ask questions, consult various reading etc. only then does the best of learning take place.

The method reduces the opportunity for the pupils to learn by doing because ready-made cooked material is presented to them by the teacher.

Frequent use of the lecture method may lead to monotony

### PICTURE STUDY

Pictures are an international language. Pictures are also worth a thousand words. We use pictures when teaching social science subjects for imaginative learning. Motion pictures are even better because they can be reversed and clarify the point.

Pictures are also used for interpretation of events or things. Pictures bring same reality when teaching something that pupils have not seen e.g. when teaching about the role of women in the struggle for Zambia's independence a still picture of Julia Chikamoneka would bring reality to pupils on how she looked like.

Pictures bring correct mental images and remove false or wrong images. Pupils may have formed about something through mishearing or misunderstanding verbal description.

Children show considerable interest when looking at a well-chosen picture or pictures. The visual impact pictures have on the mind of pupils is important in their lives because children well when seeing and hearing.

However long and Robertson warns us against putting much emphasis on the entertainment value of pictures.

Pictures like other visual aid offer as much opportunity for hard work and afford scope for various forms of activities.

Pictures are not just observed and considered and be able to analyze and differentiable emphasis can be included.

Pictures can be used in three ways and these are;

- (i) View by whole class
- (ii) Viewing in groups
- (iii) Viewing by individual

Pictures which the whole class can see at once can be incorporated into normal teaching lesson. These can be projected pictures ,textbook illustration, the large poster size pictures, which can be pinned up and the printed picture of which the teacher have sufficient copies to distribute where only few pictures are available, the group viewing can be used. We also use what is known as the artist impression. We also use pictures for the interpretation of things or events.

We can use pictures like skeletons at Ing'ombe Illede. By looking at the items or objects found at Ingombe illede one can interpret that there was local and foreign trade at Ingombe Illede because of the items which were not locally produced like cowery shapes. You can also interpret by looking at different graves that there was stratification of society at Ingombe illede, because some skeletons had a lot items buried with them because these were reach people such as chiefs, things while others were buried with nothing.

When selecting pictures for teaching, a topic, the teacher should take note of;

- (i) Pictures should be interesting and attractive to pupils and so they should be bright and clear.
- (ii) Pictures showing a variety of details are more interesting than those lacking contrast.
- (iii) Pictures should stimulate the desired to learn or to know more.
- (iv) Should select pictures which relate to the subject under study.
- (v) When selecting pictures pay more attention to the relevance of the pictures and not to the attractiveness alone.
- (vi) Pictures should be reach in some activities of scene for pupils to manipulate to get more information.
- (vii) Give pupils an activity to interpret pictures for themselves.
- (viii) Use pictures should be the main focus and principles source of information.

Many educators say that picture study is one of the most difficult method of teaching and learning it is said that; the ability to make simple deductions from pictorial data probably increases in age experience and intelligence but appears to present even in some ten years old.

It is said that probably intelligent pupils benefit more from pictures than those who are less intelligent.

### **DEBATE AS A METHOD OF TEACHING**

A debate is a program in which two or more students or people completely holding contradictory opinions on a particular problem or issue present argument.

A debate is an argument or context between two persons or between two groups of people. It can be said to be constructive controversy. The two or opposing groups are given the opportunity to rebut the proposing side.

The debate requires that the pupils with opposing views to prepare adequate their arguments on a topic or an issue. A debate must have a moderator or a chairman or summarizers both the two arguments after giving each part equal opportunity to present its argument to the audience. After the debate the class or audience may be given a chance to ask the debaters questions.

Debate as a method of teaching in social sciences can be used in any formal way following the formal rules of debate or informally with modified rules of debate suitable to the class. After both pupils and parties have presented their parts the chairman wraps up.

### **ADVANTAGES OF DEBATE**

Debate encourages the pupils to develop the skill and ability to argue and form opinion on an issue.

The process of debate encourages pupils to develop an ability to express themselves clearly to an audience on their side. It is who speaks well and clearly who wins the day. Politicians who speak very well and in a language that is more appealing to the audience are preferred that bad

speakers. Good speakers can convince the audience even for what they are saying does not have substance. People who hope for persuasive careers such as politicians, lawyers, preachers, trade unionists' must be good speakers. Debate method is one way of preparing our men and women to such careers.

Debate method allows pupils to apply the knowledge they acquire during the process of debate in their daily life. The facts and information acquired during debate become useful because some of it might not have been known before. During debate a lot of facts and information unknown before is retrieved for benefits of all either for or against. After the debate some people or pupils who were for or against the issue may change their stand based on the newly information they have learned during the debate.

Debate method affirms the people or the pupils their right of freedom of speech and expression. This gives satisfaction for being accorded chance to speak their mind on an issue under protection of the chairperson.

Finally debate distances the teacher from being accused of being biased.

### **TEACHING CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES**

Social science subjects sometimes brings in some controversial issues or topics. This is because very often they tackle current issues in society which may be controversial e.g. the third term, the Barotse agreement etc. such issues not only provoke debate and controversy but also involve remote, recent and complex issues, charged with emotionalism and traditional, political or religious prejudices.

In most cases there is disagreement over fact and interpretation of events or issues. Opinions expressed are sometimes very misleading and

it is possible that both the teacher and his class may be misled under such circumstances depending on their political, religious or traditional inclination.

The subjective element also plays a very important part in the process of acceptance, selection and interpretation of facts (supporting yourselves). The way the social scientist view past happenings may also determine to some extent the attitude to current problems in society because CVE like any other social science deals with development of a society. It is for this reason that society in turn drags CVE into manifold problems of conflicting antagonistic and contradictory forces of tension and development.

Hence the social science subject cannot be neutral due different opinions. This is because social science subjects like CVE have immense power of molding the attitude of people in society. This is why it is urgent for us Civic Education teachers to consider seriously as to what and how Civic Education should be taught in class. Controversy therefore is inherent in social science subject. Our knowledge is limited and the source of material may be inadequate. Because of this, the social science teachers may find difficulties in getting the true account of controversial issue and also in separating the truth from the falsehood.

The data available may have varying terminology and at times it is highly confusing. This leads to different interpretation by social scientist and thereby giving birth to controversy. The social scientists' approach to the study of controversial issues also influences to the interpretation of facts.

There are also some social scientist who try to relate various facts with one another with a view to present a picture they want to present. Thus

the subjective factor involved in the interpretation of facts introduces an element of controversy. Social science cannot be treated as a finished product. Each generation needs to study it afresh.

The controversy play an important part in knowing the past better as in the process to many issues get classified and main issues get to be clear. Thus in the meantime, unacceptable picture emerges which may further be challenged or modified by later research or generations.

#### TYPES OF CONTROVERSY

Controversial issues or topics in social science are of two types;

- (i) *Those concerning facts*—these controversies may arise due to the insufficient data or doubts regarding the possibility of the available accounts.
- (ii) *Those concerning the significance, relevance and interpretation of a set of facts.*

#### CONTRAVERSIES DUE TO INTERPRETATION

It has been noticed that sometimes, the approach of social scientist is not the scientific because it is biased and views facts through color and classes and there deep rooted with prejudices.

Sometimes, the event or phenomenon is viewed in isolation due to all these factors interpretation of an event is faulty leading to controversy.

Controversy on facts may arise due to insufficient data or doubts regarding the possibility of available accounts.

#### CONTROVERSIES DUE TO INTERPRETATION

It has been noticed that sometimes the approach of the social scientists is sometimes not scientific because he is bias and view facts through coloured glasses and there are there are sometimes deep rooted prejudices. The event or phenomenon is viewed in isolation. Due to all these factors, interpretation of the event is faulty.

#### CONTRAVERSIAL ISSUES TO BE TAUGHT

*The issues within the competence, the group or class.* Teachers of social science should be careful in dealing with young pupils. They should bring adult concern upon young people. At the same time teachers should not under rate the interest of both boys and girls in controversy or their competence to handle such issues under guidance.

*Issues of interest and importance to the class.* It is important that interest is created in some important issues by showing the pupils how necessary and relevant these issues are.

*Issues that are not too "HOT" at the moment.* Hot issues can be handled properly by a highly experienced teacher. New and inexperienced teachers should take up only those issues which are within their competence.

*Issues for which there is adequate time.* Controversial issues cannot be handled properly in a short time. If we want that the issues do not lead to misunderstanding and misconception we should handle the issue adequately. This can only be done if there is adequate time.

*Issues for which there is adequate material.* All the facts of an issue can be dealt with only when adequate material is available.

Teaching of controversial issues or topics demand great caution on the part of the teacher. Teaching of hot issues involves divergent opinion heightened. This makes it necessary that certain principles maintaining decorum be decided upon well in advance. For example the discussion should not be dominated by one pupil nor conquering of the authorities without facts, speaking without emotions and listening to questions. The following procedure may be followed.

- (a) *Introductory session:* it would be quite useful to provide an introductory session. Here pupils may be provided with the opportunity to express their strong feelings freely before they are challenged to examine and re-examine their point of view. This will help the teacher in knowing what to be examined and how he should proceed. The specific points of controversy involved in the topic should be listed.
- (b) *Stating the problem:* the teacher should state the problem and difficult. He should make all the relevant data and information available to his /her pupils to study. He should help them gather data to present the arguments for and against specific and alternative cause of action collected and sift it and come to their own conclusion.

#### **GROUP ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION**

- ❖ The pupils should be encouraged to take up some group discussions such as collection of opinions of different authorities on the controversy, collection of extracts from original sources if possible, panel discussion or debate. These will help capitalise their thinking. The teacher should also

ensure that all the sides of questions or issue are presented. if possible, he should get pupils to present issues that have been neglected. if necessary he should present other sides of the story. if the contradiction of the issue gets out of hand, he should stop the discussion for a while or postpone it to another time till emotions cool down.

#### **DRAWING CONCLUSION**

This being the last step /stage, the teacher should help the pupils to draw conclusions with a number of questions such as which of the look least bias, more authentic or convincing? Has the controversy being solved? These questions posed by the teacher will help pupils analyse the data and information collected and sift it and come to a conclusion.

#### **THE TEACHERS ROLE**

- ❖ Educators are divided about the role of the teacher in learning controversial issues. Some say that the teachers role should be largely that of the moderator, chairperson or referee. Others feel that teachers should play a more outspoken role. may the combination of the two should be the best depending on the situation. it is important that the teacher is adequately equipped with the latest knowledge regarding issues under discussion. He should be able to refer to the new findings provide the pupils with extract from the original sources and encourage the pupils to refer to them their own. the teacher should create an atmosphere that emphasizes free enquiry and the weightage of evidences. This will

To finally arrive at a choice between these alternatives. The teacher should encourage pupils to read as much as possible and compare as many reliable sources as possible representing the different issues. This will help the pupils to develop scientific attitude and view things objectively.

### **GROUP ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION**

The pupil should be encouraged to take some group activities and discussion such as collection of opinion of different authorities on the controversies, collection of extracts from regional sources, panel discussion and debate. These will help pupils develop critical thinking and problem solving skills and respect differences of opinions. He should always consider various points on view about controversial issues. He should hold back his opinions and should only give his personal opinion at

### **LEARNING THE SKILL OF NOTEMAKING**

Notes are a problem for every secondary school teacher who is concerned about the learning of his pupils. Under our present system of public examinations and a tradition of schooling in this country, Zambia, pupils are accustomed to be given notes by the teacher and then learning or memorising these notes for repetition in examinations.

This is made worse in schools where there are few pupils textbooks or even worse none in a particular subject. Whether or not the pupils

understand the notes is considered a function of the teacher's ability to explain them. Any teacher who asks pupils to write their own notes is considered lazy by his pupils and usually gives up before very long. Note making is a skill which requires several interrelated intellectual activities. In order to make notes a pupil should be able to comprehend, organise, categorise and summarise. Before he can make notes from either a written passage or a lecture, he must understand not just the individual words but the story that the words tell. He must know which are the key points and which are sub-giving points. He must be able to select the key points, summarise them in sub-heading and put subsidiary points under correct headings. He must be able to put these in logical order. If this is not already done by the writer or speaker, in other words they must be able to summarise the essence of the passage or speech in a systematic form. None of these are easy tasks and they must practice repeatedly before they are mastered.

### **WHAT SECONDARY SCHOOL PUPILS SHOULD LEARN TO MAKE THEIR OWN NOTES**

The art or skill of notemaking by secondary school pupils is part of the whole issue of educational objectives. From the individual point the purpose of secondary education is to get a job. This is so because secondary education must play a role in providing educated labour force, educated in the types of skills required as well as knowledge. The facts learnt in Civic Education are of course important but the facts themselves are constantly changing and hence the intellectual skills are associated with the organisation, application and understanding of facts must be given equal if not even greater weight than the facts themselves. The pupils we teach in secondary schools will become workers in government and industries, they will become clerks and

secretaries etc and they will need intellectual skills rather than memorisations. They will need to be able to categorise and classify. They will need to be able to read reports and summarise them. They will need to take down minutes in meetings. These are important as they enter the job markets unless they go on further training in secretarial skills they will never receive training for those tasks unless they are given some basic training in secondary schools. No one should leave secondary schools without acquiring these basic skills.

Many teachers give the excuse that teachers must have "good notes" to learn for the exams and that there is no time for pupils to make their own notes and yet teachers spend a lot of time letting their pupils copy teachers notes from the board. They can use that time to prepare pupils in those skills. The need to read and understand what is being said in the media and speech and one aspect of understanding is being able to categorise, classify and distinguish the unimportant from the important, distinguish between general principle and examples of principles.

So the purpose of notemaking is not simply to produce notes but it is vital for developing these skills which might be considered aspect of comprehension is necessary before notemaking can even begin, the very act of notemaking. While a certain level of comprehension is necessary before note making can even begin, the very act of notemaking itself deepens and strengthens the comprehension leading to the possibility of analysis.

### **WHAT KIND OF NOTES**

It is obvious that making notes from a lecture and making notes from a written passage are not the same. Making notes from a lecture is much

more difficult which we cannot expect from our secondary school pupils. This requires concentration on two main activities at the same time. Therefore when talk of notemaking by pupils, we mean notemaking from books or other books or passages written by the teacher. Notes may be in different forms. They may be a direct summary of the main points to be remembered or recorded and arranged in more or less the same order as the writer put it. They may be a summary of the points from main parts of the writing to demonstrate a theme or argument organised according to plan of the notemaking rather than the original writer or speech. They may include the critique of the point made by the original writer.

Which ever line taken by the note maker, the notes should be arranged in a logical sequence according to the headings and the sub heading and that the important aspect of the topic are clearly evident and emphasized. These notes are of benefit to the mental exercise pupils require at the time of writing and they are also useful for the quick revision of materials required for the examination.

In practice, the notes required for the secondary school pupils are of the first type which is the summary of information in the same sequence as the original writer wrote a close.

But to write essays in Senior Grades, a pupil must be able to pick points to develop a theme from different sections of a textbook. Both of these types of notemaking require considerably more than recall. They require skills of selecting, organising and categorising. These are all skills required in the study of civic education or any other humanity or social science subject.

## PRACTICAL PROBLEMS

Any teacher who wants his pupils to write his notes faces many daunting problems. First, it is true that there is often very little time for the teaching of a long syllabus and while it is time instead to write notes on the board for the pupils to copy. It is time saving to duplicate or photocopy notes and give them to each pupil at the end of each topic. This brings in the problem of resources in many schools. Secondly, when the pupils write their own notes the majority fail to do the exercise adequately and produce very poor notes to use for their revision purposes. It is the belief of all pupils that good results depend on the on good notes and feel insecure and discouraged if they can't rely on the teacher given notes. This is further worsened by non existence of textbooks to help revision. Even serving teachers may discourage you that it is not necessary to note making.

You can go round this problem in many ways. First pre-note making and note making exercises can be given as part of home work and class assignment that you as teachers will be giving to pupils. These should be marked by you as a teacher and hence you can ensure that if there are no other notes being given on the topic that each pupil has something adequate.

Secondly, give pupils easy passages to begin with before more challenging passages or books are introduced. Thirdly, give pupils in a schematic not a paragraph form for pupils to start developing their own schema.

## HOW CAN WE TEACH NOTEMAKING

Note making is not a single activity but involves several separate but related mental operation. Pupils cannot make adequate notes unless they master and practice a variety of subordinate scheme. Note making is like essay writing where you have to employ certain skills. It is possible that a grade ten should be able to write adequate notes from a simple text. However, not all pupils will achieve this objective or goal. Others achieve it much earlier but no one will achieve it if it is not made a specific part of the teachers instructional programme. Give pupils on the following:

1. Stating the main idea of the paragraph
2. Arranging the facts in order of importance
3. Distinguishing general principles from examples of principles.
4. Classifying and categorising phenomena and events as you read the passage.
5. Choosing a suitable heading for the whole passage and the sub headings for the paragraphs.
6. Basic comprehension of the whole passage.

You can make pupils to combine any two or three of the above and give guidelines on the actual note making guided by your questions to help pupils construct their own notes and must emphasize that they should be writing in full sentences.

### CAUTION

Teaching practice period is not long enough for you to embark on note making exercise. Your attempt to do so may produce hostility from pupils who are used to teacher made notes. Find out the practice of the previous

teacher and follow it as long as you are a student teacher. However, you have all the opportunities to give pupils all types of notemaking exercises without actually specifying that they are making their own notes. If you are lucky and establish a good support with the class pupils may be receptive to your ideas. If that happens by all means go ahead and try some actual notemaking. However, be sure that you check their work and don't leave the regular teacher complaining that he/she has to dish out notes covering all the ground topics you were supposed to deal with.

### **DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

A concept is a mental image of something, concrete or abstract which is represented by a verbal symbol. It has two dimensions: the individual components itself and the relationship of the components to each other.

### **DEVELOPMENT OF CONCEPTS**

People begin to acquire concepts from early childhood. They first learn concepts of concrete things as these are showed to them accompanied by repeated mention of their verbal representation. Acquisition of abstract concepts start from about eleven (11) years of age but this varies according to individuals. A person's knowledge of concepts changes with experience. For instance, a child who learnt a concept of a dog may consider all four legged animals as dogs until he learns the existence of other animals through sight and description accompanied by animals verbal symbol. As in other types of learning, knowledge of concepts grow quicker in some individuals than in others.

### **FUNCTIONS OF CONCEPTS**

Knowledge of concepts play a number of important roles in the teaching process.

- ❖ They reduce the necessity of concept learning
- ❖ They help comprehension by reducing the complexity of things
- ❖ They are short cuts to communicate
- ❖ They facilitate actions e.g a shout of a snake makes one run away.
- ❖ In an inquiry lesson, they help to provide a set of inter-related categories into which data can be placed.

### **TEACHING OF CONCEPTS**

Key concepts should be explained at the beginning of the lesson. Explanation should be brief so that more time is reserved for teaching the main topic.

Concepts should be presented or taught through

- I. Presenting concrete objects, pictures, diagrams or drawings
- II. Unpacking the concepts
- III. By demonstrating the concept
- IV. Defining and giving examples of the concept.