ASCL Professional Development

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Curriculum: 3 questions you should ask

LEADING ON

Curriculum - three questions you should ask

When	What
Wednesday 6th May 13:00-13:45	1. Why does knowledge matter?
Thursday 7th May 13:00-13:45	2. Why is subject distinctiveness important?
Monday 11th May 13:00-13:45	**3. Where did assessment go wrong, and how do we put it right?**

Debates are often focused on surface features, not the underlying principles.

Key points from Webinar 1:

Key points

- Knowledge gives pupils something to *work with*
- Some pupils have richer schema than others.
- If this is THE GAP curriculum must address it
- Retention in long term memory can be helpful
- Curriculum should help pupils to retain key content, not just encounter it
- Be clear about end points and sequencing

Key points from Webinar 2:

Key points

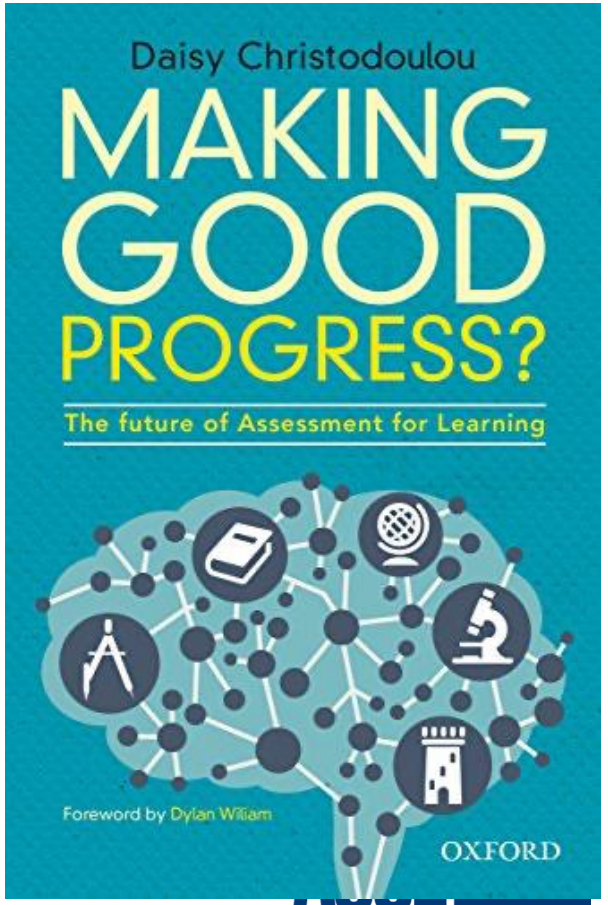
- Knowledge is not static, so curricula change
- Knowledge and subjects are structured differently.
- Subject knowledge matters.
- Avoid unhelpful genericism.
- Avoid policies that distort subjects.
- Support development of subject expertise.

Webinar 3
Where did assessment go wrong, and how do we put it right?

1. Problems in how we think about assessment

3 Problems with Reliability of Assessment – Daisy Christodoulou

1. Sample reliability – how much of the domain does the test sample? Bigger, longer exams can help.
2. Performance on the day – how are they feeling? Environmental factors?
3. Marker unreliability?

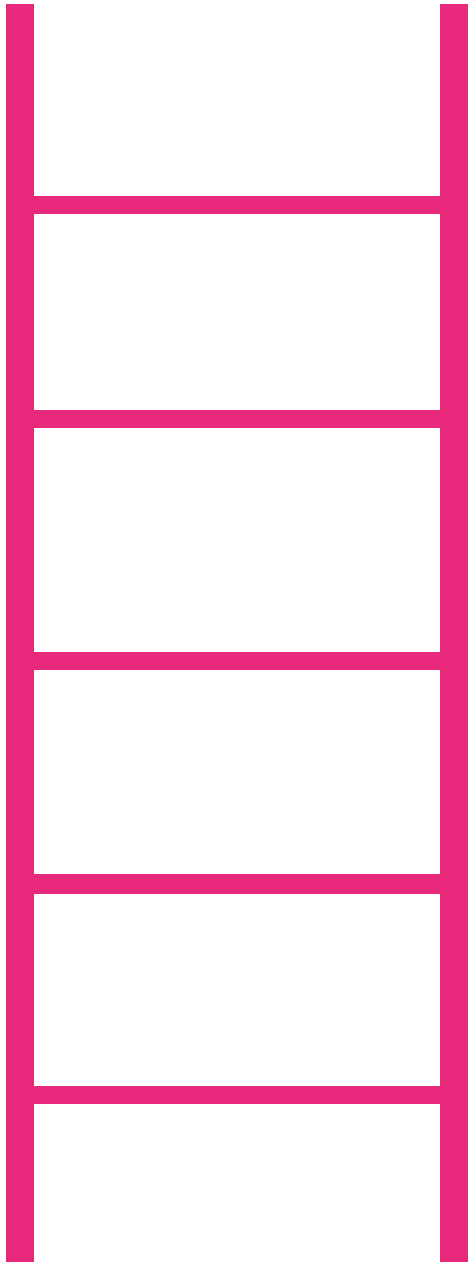


Sampled in Exam A

Sampled in Exam B

Sampled in Exam C

2. Problems in how we think about ‘progress’



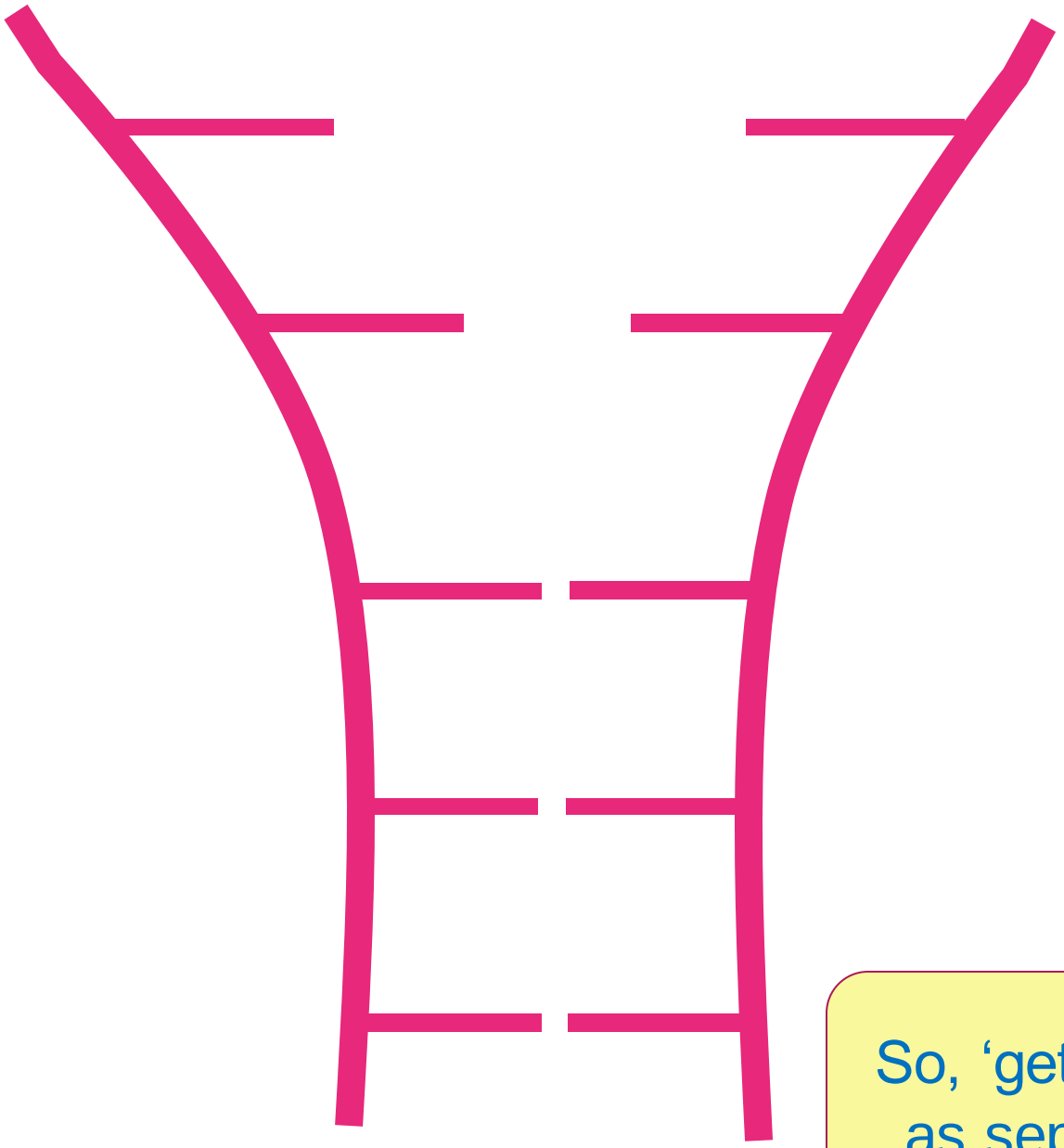
Common problems in progression models in subjects: Levels etc

Where is the curriculum **content**?

History ‘Old Money’

Level 5 Pupils show their knowledge and understanding of local, national and international history by describing events, people and some features of past societies and periods in the context of their developing chronological framework. They begin to recognise and describe the nature and extent of diversity, change and continuity, and to suggest relationships between causes. They suggest some reasons for different interpretations of the past and they begin to recognise why some events, people and changes might be judged as more historically significant than others. They investigate historical problems and issues and begin to ask their own questions. They begin to evaluate sources to establish evidence for particular enquiries. They select and deploy information and make appropriate use of historical terminology to support and structure their work.

Specified content



Progression model

So, ‘getting better’ was seen as separate to the content

Previous national curriculum led to conflation of assessment and content

Are children making progress?

Curriculum content

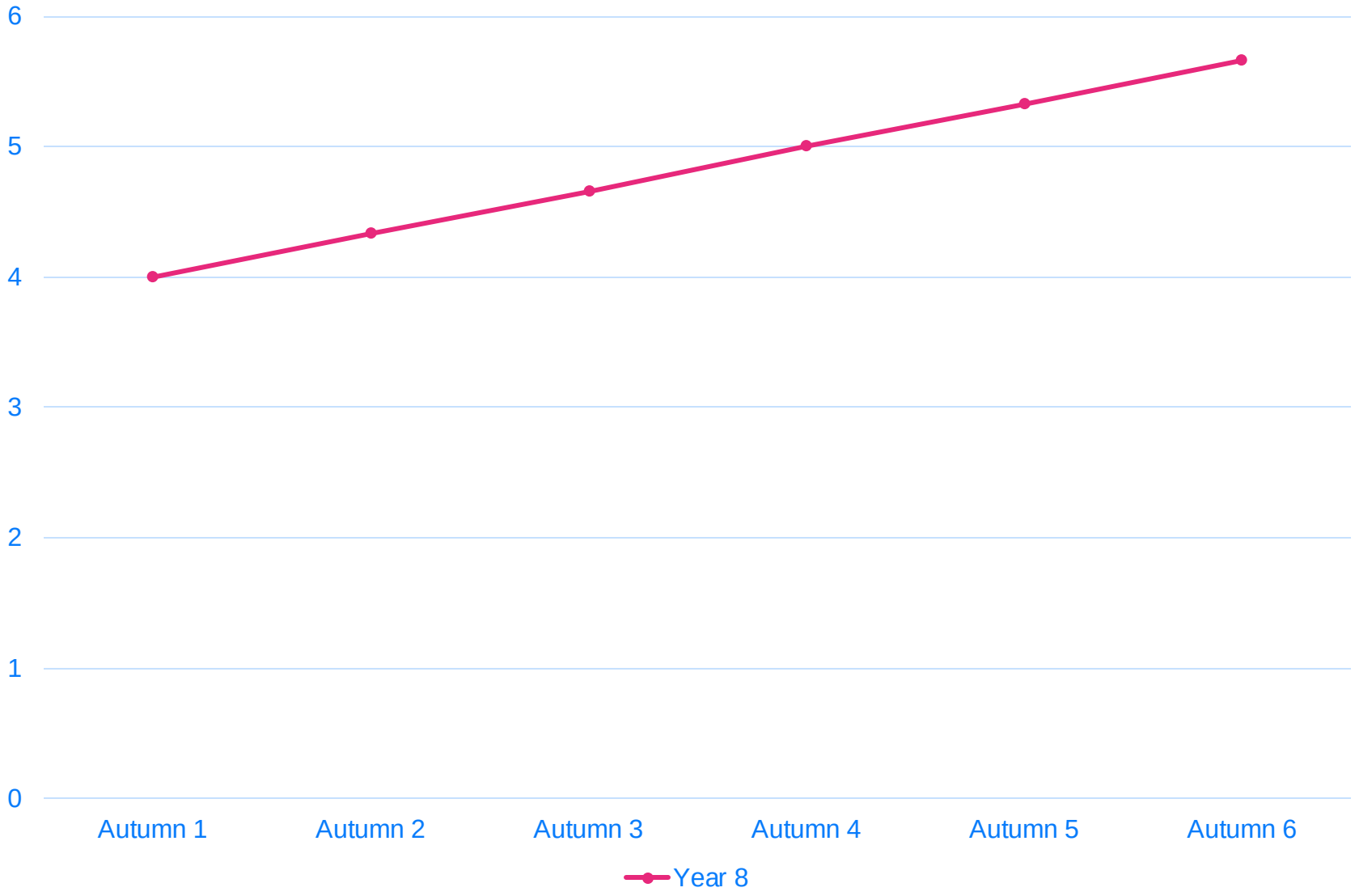
Assessment

I can statements:

“I can make a PowerPoint and present to an audience.”

- PowerPoint about what?
- Can I always do this?
- Does it depend on the subject?
- If I can’t do this, does the statement help to understand which components I’m missing?

The flightpath fallacy



Which is best?

Securing

Extending

Exceeding

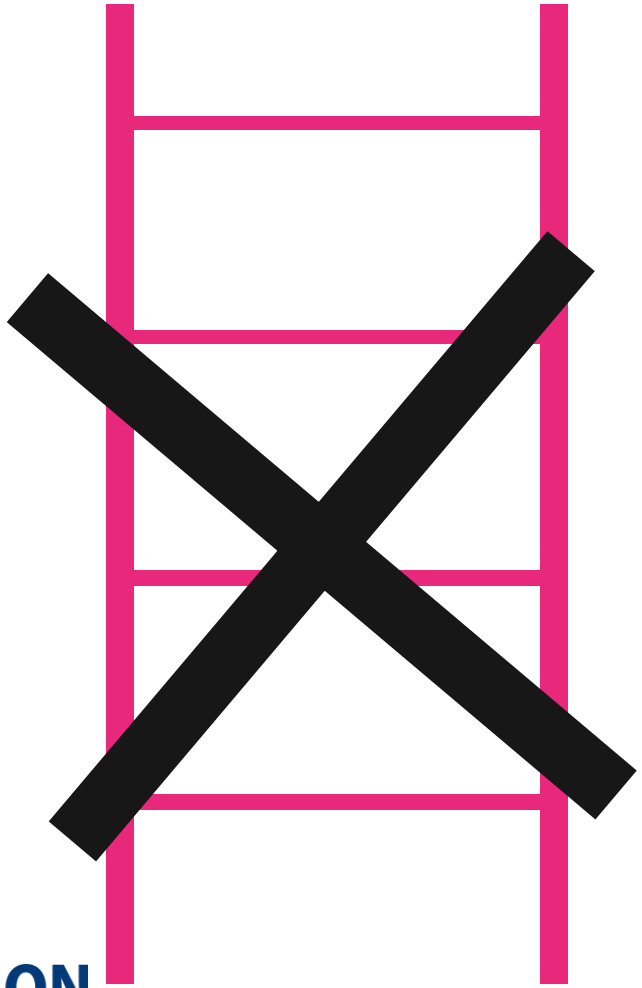
Developing

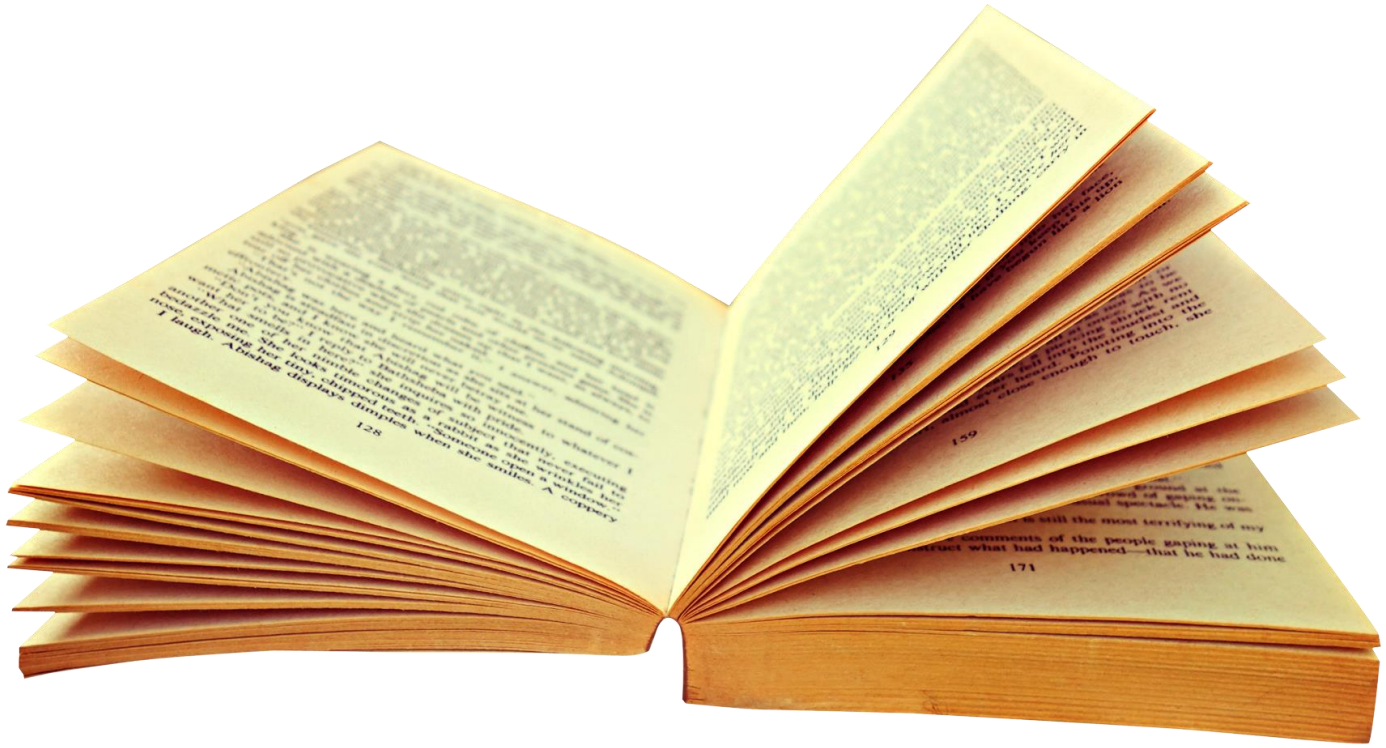
Emerging

Christine Counsell

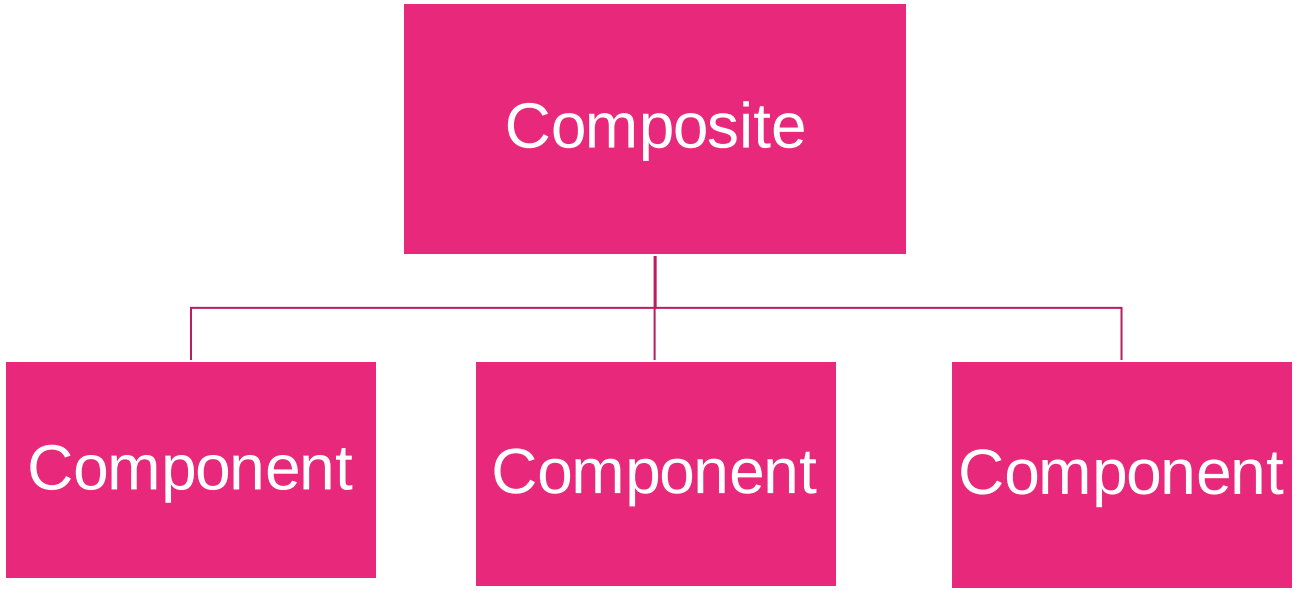
“The curriculum is the progression model”

Progression:
Less of a ladder, more a novel

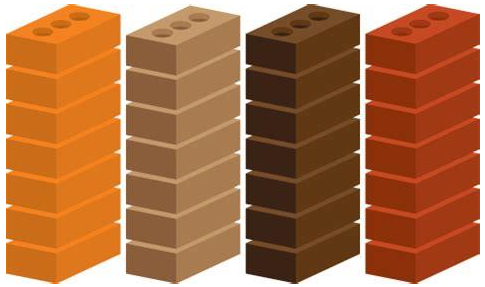




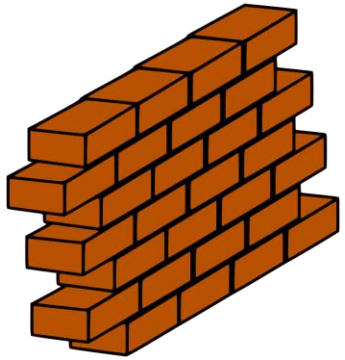
Components and composites



Why that?
Why then?



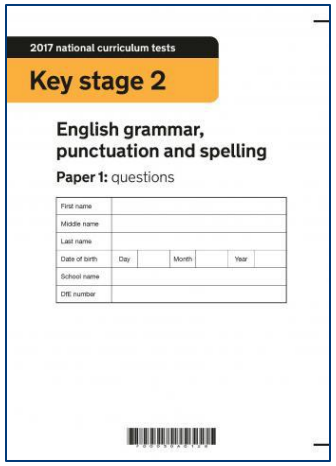
Selection



Sequencing

End points

Make assessment coherent with curriculum: The curriculum is the progression model


2017 national curriculum tests

Key stage 2

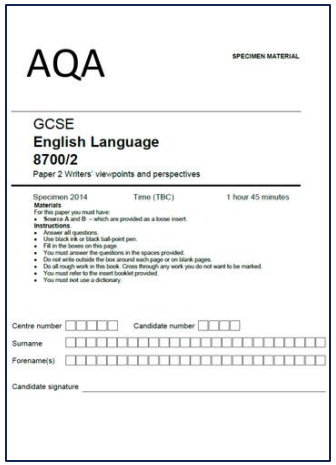
English grammar, punctuation and spelling

Paper 1: questions

First name
Middle name
Last name
Date of birth Day Month Year
School name
DfE number

Year 5

The final performance looks different to the means of its nurture


AQA

SPECIMEN MATERIAL

GCSE
English Language
8700/2
Paper 2 Writers' viewpoints and perspectives

Specimen 2014 Time (TBC) 1 hour 45 minutes

Materials
For this paper you must have:
- Source A and B – which are provided as a loose insert.

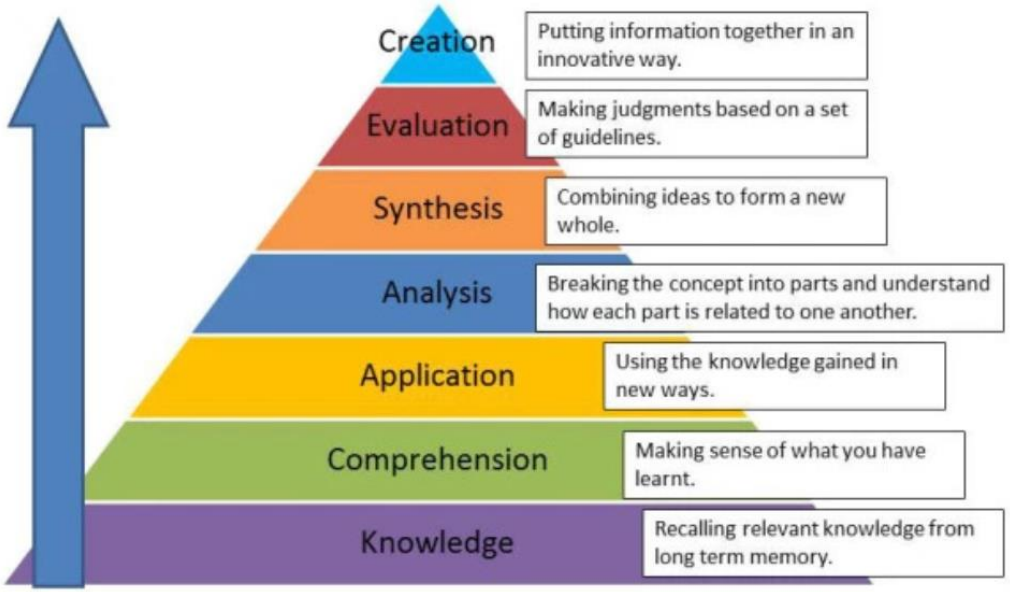
Instructions
- Answer all questions.
- Use black ink or black ball-point pen.
- Fill in the boxes on this page.
- You must answer the questions in the spaces provided.
- Do not write outside the box around each page or on blank pages.
- Do all rough work in this book. Cross through any work you do not want to be marked.
- You must refer to the insert booklet provided.
- You must not use a dictionary.

Centre number Candidate number
Surname
Forename(s)
Candidate signature

Year 7

Redefining what we mean by 'challenge'

- Challenge resides in curriculum goals – not in lesson activities.
- 'How challenging is this?' is a curriculum question, not a question of pedagogy.



Things to consider

- Frequent **low stakes tests** to boost **retrieval** (*formative*)
- Frequent **low stakes tests** to inform **teaching/reteaching** (*formative*)
- **Multiple choice** tests? (only when other answers are plausible)
- Infrequent longer exams covering a **large section of the domain** (*summative*)
- Not ascribing 'working at' grades.
- Reporting attainment averages (e.g. average % across tests) or standardised scores?
- Reporting grades only when sufficient domain is tested
- **The curriculum is the progression model.** Conversations about progress are about the curriculum. What are the granular details pupils are/not remembering?

Bringing the 3 webinars together:

Curriculum should teach and assess knowledge. *Which knowledge?*

Grounded in appropriate theory/knowledge

Driven by subject, not genericism

How to find the time?
Strategic abandonment

You don’t develop a deep understanding without making it the core of what you do.

Curriculum is not a strategy or intervention.

Should be the ongoing conversation that subject teams are having.

Questions

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