



Active Citizenship Learning Methods

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promoting adult learning

Presentation

- **UK citizenship education**
- **Interpretations of citizenship**
- **Associated learning for citizenship**
- **Active learning for active citizenship**
- **Political education**

Range of citizenship education

- **New citizens and the test**
- **Political studies**
- **National curriculum**
- **Democratic participation**
- **Consultation exercises**
- **Specialist training for political roles**
- **Community development learning**
- **Post-16 citizenship learning**
- **Generic NGO training**
- **Advocacy training for particular groups**
- **Activist training**
- **Campaign training**

Concept of 'active citizen'

- **Traditional roots**
- **Revitalising for 21st century**
- **'Protected', - 'consumer' and 'active' citizens**
- **Combining collective empowerment, democratic renewal and accountability with efficiency, individual duty and self-help**

Democratic deficit (1)

- **Declining participation in formal democracy**
- **Powerlessness**
- **Less than 50% adults believe they are influential locally**
- **Less than 25% adults believe they are influential trans-nationally**
- **Less than 10% involved in local decision making**

Democratic deficit (2)

- **Increased participation in pressure politics**
- **Decreased participation in formal politics**
- **Focus of learning: connecting political concerns with political institutions**
- **Focus of learning: combating powerlessness in political processes**

Public service reform

- **Substantial programme to modernise public services**
- **Increase responsiveness, efficiency, quality**
- **Address accountability gap**
- **Lack of public understanding (Lyons Inquiry, 2006)**
- **Devolution of power to local government**
- **Duty to “inform, involve and consult”**
- **“Community Call for Action”**
- **Learning implications of ‘expert’ citizens, patients, learners**

Social fragmentation and extremism

- **Disturbances 1981, 2001**
- **Need for active engagement of citizens**
- **Polarisation and fragmentation**
- **Ignorance and fear of the ‘other’**
- **Impact of foreign policy, July 2005**

Response pre 2005

- **Bernie Grant Trust (NGO)**
- **Community Leadership Training**
- **Skills: advocacy, research, conflict resolution, mediation, critical thinking**
- **Knowledge: identity, cultural diversity, power and political institutions**
- **Overall aims: political literacy and social justice**

Response post 2005

- **Two strands:**
 - security and ‘winning hearts and minds’
- **Learning to promote shared values**
- **Learning to support strong community and national leadership**
- **Learning to strengthen role of faith institutions and leaders**
- **Development of programme leading to qualification with Standards Framework (NIACE leading)**

Inclusive citizenship

- **Cultural and racial diversity**
- **Ajegbo report (2007)**
- **Practice in schools – very mixed**
- **Uncertain, confused, non-specialist delivery**
- **Active citizenship skills not contextualised**
- **Need to connect issues of identity and diversity and political understanding**

*“If children and young people are to develop a notion of citizenship as inclusive, it is crucial that issues of identity and diversity are addressed explicitly – but getting the pedagogical approach right will be critical: the **process** of dialogue and communication must be central to pedagogical strategies for Citizenship”*

Ajegbo Report (2007)

Post-16 citizenship curriculum (1)

- **Three principles**
 - social and moral responsibility
 - community involvement
 - political literacy
- **Involving learners in active learning**
- **Led by learners**
- **Post-16 Learning Framework**
- **Many issues: crime, anti-discrimination practice, diversity and racism**

Post-16 citizenship curriculum (2)

- **Focus on learning to ask questions**
- **Critical thinking**
- **Issue based**
- **Led and owned by learners**
- **Participatory**
- **Engaging, stimulating, fun**
- **Suited to different learning styles**
- **Dialogue critical**

Active Learning for Active Citizenship (1)

- Home office, 2004-2006
- Support major expansion in citizenship learning for adults
- Based on 7 geographical 'Hubs'

*"...**active citizenship** should be defined more broadly to encompass active learning for political literacy and empowerment, addressing structures and relations of power and working to change these where necessary, in the pursuit of social inclusion and social justice"*

- ALAC Evaluation Report, 2006

Active Learning for Active Citizenship (2)

ALAC skills

- listening, communication, research, advocacy, group work, critical reading and thinking, mediation

ALAC knowledge

- cultural diversity, formal and informal political processes, self-awareness, causes of conflict, how power works

ALAC process

- learner-driven, reflective learning, participatory, experiential, underpinning outreach and learner support, 'safe' spaces, progression and accreditation

Pedagogy for practical politics

- **Issues**
- **Techniques**
- **People and power structures**
- **Confidence**
- **Communication skills**
- **Networking skills**
- **Analytical skills**
- **Interpersonal skills**
- **Creating appropriate environments**