

How cultured are you?



Some British children cannot tell the difference between a violin and a guitar. Others think Shakespeare, Elvis and Michael Jackson are classical composers, according to a survey.

Session 2 - What is Cultural Capital?

The mention of cultural capital in the inspection framework is new and has its own heading in the school's inspection handbook – this is positive!

As part of making the judgement about the quality of education, inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.' There is no conflict between teaching a broad, rich curriculum and achieving success in examinations and tests...[inspectors will consider] what the school has in place to ensure that the most disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are given the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Cultural Capital as a historic term

French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu originally came up with the concept of a person possessing "capital". Bourdieu (1973, 1986) explores the theory of cultural capital and highlights the link between an individual's background and their access to knowledge.

He emphasised that cultural capital is intrinsically linked to economic and social capital. Access to economic and social capital allows greater access to cultural capital and Bourdieu (1973) observed that, as a side effect, cultural capital is often linked to social class and as a result reinforces social divisions, hierarchies of power and inequality within society.

Within education, we obviously aim to reduce and, in time, eradicate inequalities. But improving an individual student's cultural capital isn't a matter of giving them a book or sending them to see a play.

And, in turn, building on their social capital doesn't just mean giving them a talking frame so they know how to interact. **For schools to truly provide the required skills and experiences, social capital and economic capital must be considered and taken into account, as well as cultural capital.**

In *Cultural Literacy* (1988), ED Hirsch succinctly summarises that "**to be culturally literate is to possess the basic information needed to thrive in the modern world**". But alongside this, as teachers, we must not overlook the importance of social capital and the opportunities and skills required for students to be successful in the delivery of themselves.

And our Modern world looks like?



"The danger is that pupils will be over-promoted into jobs that are beyond their competence"



The skills, knowledge and attitudes associated with the dominant culture, e.g. the established middle class

Cultural Capital is passed down to middle class children through:

- Reading non-fiction and classical literature rather than pop lit
- Watching documentaries rather than soap operas
- Learning to play classical instruments (e.g. the violin)
- Going on educational visits – to museums and art galleries
- Going on holidays abroad (to 'broaden horizons').

This gives them a 'head start' and more confidence in school




Applications

- Cultural capital helps explain why MC children do better in education
- MC parents are skilled choosers, so got more choice following marketisation
- It's a Marxist concept: it explains inequality by looking at MC advantage.

Criticisms

- Criticised by cultural deprivation theory' and for being difficult to measure

- Knowledge
- Attitudes
- Values
- Language
- Taste
- Abilities



Of the middle class

- Therefore middle class culture is a type of capital.
(Like wealth, it gives an advantage to those who possess it)

A Sociology A level student said to their tutor-

And the student said, “Ah, so like, people with cultural capital don’t need Google ohhhh, I get it, they just automatically know shit and don’t really have to think about it.”

Criticisms and concerns

Diane Reay, a Cambridge education professor, says: "This new requirement is a crude, reductionist model of learning, both authoritarian and elitist. The key elements of cultural capital are entwined with privileged lifestyles rather than qualities you can separate off and then teach the poor and working classes.

"As was argued nearly 50 years ago by the sociologist Basil Bernstein, 'education cannot compensate for society'. Only in a very different society would the aims of the national curriculum quoted by Ofsted become a reality," Michael Young, professor of education at UCL Institute of Education.

John Yandell, an associate professor of English at UCL Institute of Education, says the notion that schools should facilitate social change without taking into account the unequal society in which they operate is "extraordinarily naïve...This new requirement is a crude, reductionist model of learning, both authoritarian and elitist. The key elements of cultural capital are entwined with privileged lifestyles rather than qualities you can separate off and then teach the poor and working classes.

Early years writer Juliet Mickelburgh, there is a worry that more "middle-class" art forms, such as classical music, could be over-emphasised at the expense of, say, rap music. "Is there a danger that working-class culture could be seen as inferior to middle-class culture?"

Geoff Barton, general secretary of the Association of School and College Leaders, says: "The difficulty with making it part of the inspection framework is that 'cultural capital' is an abstract notion and hard to pin down into a concrete definition that can then be consistently measured across schools."

So is Cultural Capital as defined for schools.....?

A bolt-on, a reinforcement of the class system, an authoritarian attempt to feed crumbs of elitist entertainment to the poor, a condescending lack of understanding and value of the culture of the diverse masses – and it can't be measured anyway.

Are schools likely to be required to prescribe a version of culture that pervades most establishment seats of learning, whose histories are steeped in imperialism and the exclusion of working-class and minority peoples.

Going back to Ofsted's intention

Sean Harford, its national director, says: "Our new framework puts the substance of education at the heart of inspections - not just test and exam results - because it's a well-designed, well-taught curriculum that gives children the essential knowledge and cultural capital that they need to succeed in becoming well-rounded, informed citizens."

OUR Challenge is to decide for ourselves what Cultural Capital means for our pupils and our school.

We need to define what it is, what we want , how we can start this journey, what do we do with our curriculum, what do we provide as enrichment, how do we make sure our children stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before and create new and exciting forms of culture; things which may well help them fuel solutions to society's problems, build our creative industries and help UK survive. We want definitions of cultural capital to celebrate and embrace the different backgrounds, heritage, language and traditions of all the children living in this country.

It is an opportunity

Session 3 – Moving forward ...

The mention of cultural capital in the inspection framework is new and has its own heading in the school's inspection handbook – this is positive!

As part of making the judgement about the quality of education, inspectors will consider the extent to which schools are equipping pupils with the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.' There is no conflict between teaching a broad, rich curriculum and achieving success in examinations and tests...[inspectors will consider] what the school has in place to ensure that the most disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are given the knowledge and cultural capital they need to succeed in life.

Going back to Ofsted's intention

Sean Harford, its national director, says: "Our new framework puts the substance of education at the heart of inspections - not just test and exam results - because it's a well-designed, well-taught curriculum that gives children the essential knowledge and cultural capital that they need to succeed in becoming well-rounded, informed citizens."

OUR Challenge is to decide for ourselves what Cultural Capital means for our pupils and our school.

We need to define what it is, what we want , how we can start this journey, what do we do with our curriculum, what do we provide as enrichment, how do we make sure our children stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before and create new and exciting forms of culture; things which may well help them fuel solutions to society's problems, build our creative industries and help UK survive. We want definitions of cultural capital to celebrate and embrace the different backgrounds, heritage, language and traditions of all the children living in this country.

It is an opportunity

How can this statement be seen as an Opportunity for us as practioners and for the school ?

Forum discussion

*A GOAL
without
A PLAN
is just a
WISH*



To increase the Cultural Capital for pupils at THOA

**START WHERE YOU
ARE. USE WHAT
YOU HAVE. DO
WHAT YOU CAN.**

- Arthur Ashe



Raised by single father after mother died, graduated top in high school. Overcame racial segregation in 60's to become #1 rank world tennis player- 1975 Wimbledon champion. Writer, social activist, philanthropist, campaigner and humanitarian. Died 1993 from HIV blood transfusion.



What are we already doing to give our children the ‘essential...cultural capital that they need to succeed in becoming well-rounded, informed citizens.’



Unlocking Cultural Capital: A key

Cultural Capital provides health, well-being and growth.

Cultural Capital lets us share our histories, our memories, the people, the places and the things that matter to us.

Cultural Capital creates the curiosity and confidence to make connections between the past, the present and the future.

Cultural Capital sparks generations of innovators.

Cultural Capital is to be found locally, nationally, globally - everywhere.

Cultural Capital nurtures inclusive communities.

Cultural Capital enriches today and inspires tomorrow.

Cultural Capital is ours to discover, ours to create, ours to share.

Cultural Capital belongs to me, belongs to you, belongs to us all.

This document is from NSEAD (art and Design Union, who have a working party on Cultural Capital.

These considerations are broad terms.

What do we think about this?

Session 4 (short session)

**Discussion of outcomes
started by forum members**

Plan of future action

Considering Outcomes and A plan forward=

Auditing our own Curriculum offer – KK/ PS/ RL/DT (start Autumn Term)

Raising broader awareness, understanding and the profile of CC:

Noticeboard /visual campaign ‘ CC- How big is yours?’ (January)

Staff CPD (KK/PS- January 4th)

Y7 Target focus group (action research) – KK/PS (Spring Term 2/ Summer Term)

Cultural Capital Champions student group – named ‘Cultural Cataysts’ (Spring Term)

This group of mixed age students would be responsible for identifying and collecting evidence of cultural capital learning/ opportunities in different subject areas- they would celebrate this via an Instagram site, made widely available.

https://www.instagram.com/shrewsbury_art/?fbclid=IwAR2D-nXx8oqAMsa8TP3jhmBAJrsevclzEJb_DbVwg01pNa052TiSPtwrGdA

Other ideas???