The Olympics

- Intense preparation
- Intense activity and investment
- Intense media coverage
- Intense emotions

- Widespread public involvement, even some participation!
Three Winners …

Gold, silver and bronze

- media attention (good and bad)
- sponsorships?
- honours?
- role models?
- coaches and facilitators?
and dozens of ‘losers’

who, although at the top of their sport, become invisible and

• go back to routine and redouble their efforts

or

• become demoralised and give up
and then

- Focus, activity and investment move on
- Media coverage dies
- Emotions become private
- Public interest wanes
Community games

- A more human scale
- More participants
- No less important
- Integration into ‘normal’ life
- Greater chance of ongoing involvement
The Education Cycle

Aims/priorities

Assessment

Teaching materials

Teaching methods

Curriculum

School organisation

Structure

Control
... over time

- diverse values and priorities
- different aims
- intended and unintended outcomes
- inherited and emerging structure
- pupils part-way through courses
- old assessments
- new curricula
- relevant teacher training and materials
- curriculum relevance
Aims and priorities

• Raise participation and achievement

• Basic skills and shared knowledge
• Foundations for lifelong learning
• Key skills for (self-)employment

• Social and communication skills
• Informed, active, responsible citizenship
Aims and priorities: issues

- Reconciling values
- Managing the present
- Predicting the future
- Short-term wants and long-term needs
- Resources
Curriculum content

- Language, maths, science, ICT
- Foreign languages
- Technology, humanities, citizenship, the arts, PE/health
- Religious/moral education
- Communication, ICT, thinking, work and study skills, problem solving, creativity, environmental and economic awareness, working with others, personal, social and sex education
Curriculum formulation

- Organisers
- Prescribed inputs
  - Dispensations for special needs
  - Special programmes to highlight changing priorities
- Prescribed achievement objectives
- Defined outcome targets
Curriculum: issues

- Breadth and balance
- Progression and transfer
- Relevance
- Access and challenge
- Manageability
- Stability
Northern Ireland: new curriculum

Aims

to develop the student as an individual, as a contributor to society and as a contributor to the economy

Elements

personal understanding, mutual understanding, personal health, moral character, spiritual awareness

Framework for generic skills

personal, interpersonal, thinking, learning, ICT and physical
Tasmania: essential learnings

Five areas

• Thinking, Communicating, Personal Futures, Social Responsibility and World Futures

Key elements, e.g. for World Futures

• Investigating the natural and constructed world
• Understanding systems
• Designing and evaluating technological solutions
• Creating sustainable futures
Teaching methods

Teacher-led class, group or solo work

Independent solo or group work
Teaching methods: issues

• Pupils’ learning styles
• Class size
• Curriculum requirements
• Assessment requirements
• Teacher availability, training and styles
• Resources
Continuous formative

Internal summative

International surveys

External standardised
Assessment: issues

How is learning affected by:

- Frequency of assessment
- Nature of assessment
- Use of results
- Targets
Case study:

New Zealand
The assessment menu

**Ongoing assessment by teachers**

supported by exemplars
Early Years to Year 10

supported by asTTLeS
Years 4 to 12

**Periodic external assessment**

NEMP 3% sample
Year 4 and Year 8

NEAC (also teacher asst)
Years 11-13

**International surveys**

TIMSS Years 5 and 9

PIRLS Year 6

PISA

Year 11
Benefits of teacher assessment

- Support for individual students: assessment for learning
- Respect for teachers’ role
But, it needs

- Teachers to be ‘assessment literate’
- Affordable, reliable, valid, efficient and flexible tests
- Rapid and reliable feedback
- Identification of learning needs
- Ways forward
Benefits of external assessment

- Range of routes for individuals
- Detailed accreditation for students, employers and education institutions
- Further exemplars
- Further staff development
- Rich and varied data for policy
But

- How many items? How detailed?
- ‘Value’ of qualification – users need to read more carefully
- National and international recognition
- Staff development and time to administer (esp NEMP)
- Staff time to analyse data
Benefits of international surveys

• Benchmarking
• Triangulation
• Recognition
But

- Limited control over scope, content
- Curriculum compatibility
- Reliability of comparisons
- Political sensitivity and potential for ‘knee-jerk’ reactions
Education as an Olympic sport

- TIMSS, PISA, PIRLS
- Who sets the goals?
- Who wins?
- What happens next?
- Who pays?
Focusing on the Olympics

may be expensive
may derail the ‘community effort’
may demoralise staff and students

without topping the ‘league’
and
without convincing the voters
Education as community games

- What do we want to achieve?
- What can we achieve?
- What is the cost?
- What are our priorities?
- What are the consequences for individuals - and society?
majority and minority politicians

Participants and spectators

Curriculum developers
Parents
Teachers
Students
Higher education
Employers
Education administrators
Grow from the past

Acknowledge heritage and culture
Retain appropriate technologies
Cultivate the future

Flexibility and creativity
Self-reliance and resilience
Participation and cooperation
Foster diversity

Talents and abilities
Approaches and learning styles
Skills and knowledge
Unite the Nation

Welcome new citizens
Respect all cultures
Adapt and adopt new approaches
Grow from the past

From national strength

to global well-being

Foster diversity

Cultivate the future

Unite the nation
Use overseas ‘coaches’ by all means
...but remember, they are our children
out on the pitch