

Supporting Your Learner

S1-S3 Modern Studies

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Course Outline

In Modern Studies our courses are designed in S1-S3 to give pupils an experience of the three main components which are essential in Modern Studies: Political Issues; Social Issues and International Issues. Each course includes a variety of assessment methods incorporated into the daily practice during lessons. There is also an assessment task at the end of each course and these are varied in each case to allow pupils a wide range of opportunities to demonstrate their skills and knowledge throughout S1-S3. For example some assessments will be focused on group work and presentation, some will focus on research skills and some on knowledge and essay writing skills. All assessment will be used to monitor progress and provide pupils with feedback on how they can further develop their skills and understanding.



S1

Pupils will study two courses in S1:

- Children's Rights – a course where pupils investigate the rights that Children have according to the UNCRC and carry out a series of case studies, looking at countries where children often don't receive their rights. The course is assessed via a research based news report that each pupil will produce at the end of the course.
- People Power – a course exploring the rights which citizens have in a democracy and in particular in Scotland. The course is assessed via a small research project on pressure groups as well as a mock-election at the end of the unit.

As pupils progress through S1 it is essential that they develop their literacy skills as well as their knowledge of current affairs in Modern Studies. As such, we encourage all S1 Modern Studies pupils to enter into the habit of researching a news story on a weekly basis and come to class prepared to write a short summary and perhaps discuss it with the rest of the class.

S2

Pupils will study two courses in S2:

- China – a course looking at the political; human rights; and social and economic issues that are prevalent today in China. The course is assessed via a Decision Making Exercise where pupils analyse sources to come to a decision about China's future.
- USA – a course looking at the political, social and economic issues in the USA. This course is also tied to the China course by way of a comparison between the two ideologies. The course is assessed via a group debate and an end of unit knowledge based assessment.

As in S1, it is essential in Modern Studies that pupils continue to develop their literacy skills and their subject knowledge. As such, pupils should be encouraged to regularly read a news story for a quality newspaper. Whilst we would still like to see pupils watching and listening to the news, it is extremely helpful in terms of improving political literacy if pupils can read the news on a regular basis from a quality source which will challenge their vocabulary.



S3

Pupils study three courses over the duration of S3:

- Need and Aid – a course looking at developing countries around the world. Pupils will examine the causes, effects and solutions to issues such as hunger, conflict, poor healthcare and education in a variety of countries across the globe. The course is assessed via a researched based report on a country of the pupil's choice.
- Health in Scotland - a course looking at the state of Scotland's health issues. Pupils will study the factors that cause the variety of health challenges faced by Scotland and debate and discuss the various reasons for these issues. Pupils will be assessed via an essay on the factors affecting health and an end of unit Decision Making Exercise.
- Democracy in Scotland – this course marks the beginning of the National 4 and 5 courses in Modern Studies. Pupils will examine the procedures of the Scottish Parliament, the roles of their MSPs and the workings of the electoral systems used to elect representatives. Assessment for this course will take the form on an National 5 Unit Assessment before the summer break.

As in S1 and S2 it is essential that pupils develop their knowledge via keeping up to date with current affairs. As pupils progress through S3 there will also be an increase in the amount of written work which is expected of them in order to help prepare them for the challenges which they will face in S4.

Support at Home

In S1-S3 Modern Studies the most effective way for pupils to work at home is to read regular, relevant news articles to deepen their understanding of the issues which are being studied in class. These can be accessed via the television, radio, online and in newspapers. However, in order to help develop pupils' literacy skills we strongly encourage parents to assist pupils in reading news stories from quality newspaper sources, such as the Guardian, Times, Independent and Scotsman. Such quality newspapers will have exactly the type of in-depth news articles that will not only help deepen their understanding but also challenge and improve their literacy skills.



Useful Websites

Some of the websites below will also be useful in helping pupils develop their understanding of the course content in Modern Studies.

S1

Children's Rights:

- [UNICEF](#)
- [War Child](#)

People Power:

- [Scottish Parliament Education Page](#)
- [BBC Scotland](#)

S2

China:

- [BBC Country Profile](#)

USA:

- [BBC Country Profile](#)

S3

Need and Aid:

- [Water Aid](#);
- [FAO](#)
- [UNICEF](#)
- [WFP](#)
- [WHO](#)

Health in Scotland:

- [BBC](#)
- [Scottish Government](#)
- [Joseph Rowntree Foundation](#)

Democracy in Scotland:

- [BBC Bitesize](#)
- [BBC Scotland Politics](#)



