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## Transforming Educational Landscapes: How Student Choice Influences Achievement, Engagement, And Instructional Objectives

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TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES: HOW STUDENT CHOICE  
INFLUENCES ACHIEVEMENT, ENGAGEMENT, AND INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

by

Alissa K. Carter  
Master of Business Administration - Economics  
Master of Arts - Educational Administration and Supervision  
Bachelor of Science - Theoretical Mathematics

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

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in partial fulfillment of the requirements

for the degree of

Doctor of Education

Grand Forks, North Dakota

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2023

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This dissertation, submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education degree from the University of North Dakota, has been read by the Faculty Advisory Committee under whom the work has been done and is hereby approved.

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Alissa K. Carter  
September 2023

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## ABSTRACT

This case study addresses how to invigorate student motivation and engagement, which suffered a serious decline after an extended period of remote learning due to COVID-19. Conventional teaching methods have demonstrated shortcomings in meeting these challenges, so this research highlights the potential efficacy of student choice in reshaping educational dynamics and improving scholastic achievement. Utilizing a case study research approach, this investigation was conducted in an International Baccalaureate (IB) private school in Munich, Germany. Data was aggregated from a sample of 89 students, aged 12 to 14 years, from four Grade 7 humanities classes.

Student choice was introduced to the curriculum content and assessments iteratively, gradually increasing the level of student autonomy. Teacher feedback, student academic records, and the scope and sequence furnished a robust matrix for analysis. Supplementing the analysis of student marks, a survey provided nuanced insights from educators. Additionally, a comparative analysis of the scope and sequence from a similar school served as a comparison group. This study manifested an average of 22% gains in student academic marks and fostered a more collaborative and co-determined learning environment, where the gap between teacher and student roles diminished. The insights gained underscore the potential of embedding student choice within pedagogical frameworks to significantly elevate student motivation, engagement, and academic achievement without reducing the instructional rigor.



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## INTRODUCTION

Student motivation and engagement have long been areas of concern and focus in the field of education (Borah, 2021). The crux of the matter focuses on how to foster an engaged, motivated student body within the traditional classroom setting. These concerns were particularly visible in post-Covid learning conditions, where a noted decline in enthusiasm and engagement was observed (Daniels et al., 2021). This decline, accompanied by a deterioration in social and academic skills, highlighted a complex problem for educational institutions: how to reconcile student motivation and engagement with the academic objectives of curricula and skill development (Dorn et al., 2020).

Research and literature have shown that frameworks that incorporate elements of competence, autonomy, and relatedness stand out as particularly effective in reviving student engagement and motivation (Alley, 2019). By focusing on these elements, schools have the potential to create learning environments that not only adhere to academic standards but also foster a sense of agency and enthusiasm among students, thereby aligning content mastery with emotional and cognitive engagement.

The diverse academic and social impacts of the pandemic revealed a need for an innovative approach that could more holistically address the accelerated decline in motivation and engagement (Pokhrel et al., 2021). Such an approach required an examination of systemic issues, including interdisciplinary skill development of academic skills and proactive measures to mitigate the ongoing decline to tackle the problem of practice regarding the challenges of student motivation and engagement (Harris, 2021).

### **Organization of the Study**

This dissertation presents a case study of one international school's exploration of student choice within classroom content, assessment, and overarching curriculum. It highlights possible solutions to the central problem of practice, focusing on the challenges of student engagement and motivation. Because motivation and engagement are intangible concepts and are not directly measurable, this study used student marks and teacher feedback as measures of motivation and engagement (Liu et al., 2016).

Student marks are comparable to student grades in the United States. In the context of American educational terminology, the word "grades" can serve a dual purpose, denoting both a student's cohort level (e.g., a student being in second grade) and their individual achievement level (e.g., a student receiving a grade of 86 is equivalent to a B in most school districts). In contrast, international educational settings often differentiate these concepts. Specifically, the term "grade" refers exclusively to a student's cohort level, while the word "marks" designates the student's academic performance. Given that the case study school was based in Germany, the term "marks" was used to indicate individual student performance, and "grades" referred to cohort levels. This terminological clarity ensured a consistent understanding across various educational contexts and practices.

Within this case study, an observable increase in student marks inferred an enhancement in performance. Furthermore, observational feedback from teachers added another layer of insight, reinforcing the connection between the implemented solutions and positive shifts in student motivation and engagement.

The case study drew from an extensive review of existing literature to demonstrate how increasing student choice is essential to building and maintaining student and teacher motivation

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(Nagro et al., 2018). Alley (2019) showed that student choice plays a pivotal role in enhancing engagement within the educational context. Empowering students with the autonomy to select topics, roles, or modalities within assessments fosters a sense of ownership and relevance in their learning journey (Alley, 2019). This alignment with personal interests or cultural significance increases motivation and makes the learning experience more meaningful and engaging (Borah, 2021). The integration of student choice, therefore, serves as a strategic mechanism to increase student engagement without compromising the educational objectives and alignment with essential skills.

As Schoch (2020) states, motivation and engagement can only be measured by examining the perspectives of student choice from various lenses—including educator surveys, student marks, and curriculum documents. Schoch’s research and this case study addressed the multifaceted dynamics that contribute to engagement and motivation within the learning environment. Rather than proposing a one-size-fits-all solution, this study emphasized the importance of tailored approaches recognizing the diverse needs and interests of students while providing teachers with the tools needed to meet those needs and interests. The core of the research centered on the alignment of curriculum choices with individual student interests, striving to create a more dynamic and skills-based educational framework. The findings underscored the potential of increased student choice as a viable and adaptable strategy to enhance engagement and motivation.

This introduction serves as a guidepost, leading readers through the various components of the research while highlighting the significance of each aspect. An overview of the artifacts supporting this research will be given, followed by limitations that reflect the constraints that impacted the study’s scope or outcomes. Lastly, the initial section provides an overview of the

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environment or circumstances under which the investigation has been conducted, thus situating the study within its appropriate context.

Artifact I defines the problem of practice and the purpose of the study. It explores the conceptual basis of three interrelated educational theories: motivation, agency, and curriculum. This section also presents a detailed examination of literature where student choice has been integrated within different curriculum frameworks. By exploring strategies employed across diverse educational settings, this segment of the research offers crucial insights into the practical application of student choice within current curricular frameworks. It goes beyond theoretical discussions to provide a practical understanding of how student choice can be applied to combat challenges in student engagement and motivation, reflecting both the successes and limitations of these methods.

Consequently, this section explores both theory and practice. The aim was to scrutinize potential solutions and to understand the barriers that might be present in the overarching problem of student motivation, choice, and attainment. Hence, the investigative lens focused on the pursuit of viable solutions and on understanding challenges that might hinder the implementation of the solutions.

In Artifact II, the narrative pivots from a theoretical framework towards an in-depth examination of the research methodology and design of the case study at hand. The objective was to provide an overview of the specific data collection methods employed, along with the reasons supporting their use. Further, this segment highlights the techniques employed for data analysis, providing the readers with an insight into the operational framework of the research.

Artifact II also highlights potential areas for improvement and discusses the validity of the findings. Attention was given to the ethical considerations while conducting research within an

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educational environment, where interactions with students and teachers were an inherent component.

Beyond the simple justification of the chosen methods for data gathering, Artifact II further examines the collected data. This encompasses an extensive analysis of scope and sequence from both the case study school and comparable institutions within the same region, a comparative analysis of student achievement within traditional and student choice groups, as well as the results of educator surveys.

The concluding section of Artifact II explores the research methodology and the ensuing outcomes from the execution of the solution to the problem of practice. This integrative approach ensured a comprehensive understanding of both the process and the results of the solution to the problem of practice.

In Artifact III, the focus shifts to the execution of the three solutions that address the problem of practice. The initial solution, dubbed the “Pathways Programme,” describes an encompassing program aimed to cultivate academic skills within a content domain while ensuring additional student reflection on their academic progress and development. This program can be integrated across multiple curricular areas through a cyclical inquiry process called the “inquiry cycle.” This programmed approach to the cycle of inquiry fostered the cultivation of skills through diverse pedagogical approaches, including direct instruction, individual research and development, self-assessment, and student-led analysis of distinct learning strengths and areas requiring additional development. This program approach is not content-specific and may be applied to diverse content areas.

The second solution hinges on a reconstructed curriculum focused on student choice and skill acquisition within a distinct content area. This curricular framework demonstrated how the

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incorporation of student choice facilitated the development of academic skills beyond the mere mastery of content. The reconstructed curriculum ensured that the depth and scope of the content remained at an appropriate level while providing opportunities for student choice.

The third and final solution describes the transformation of assessments and content to incorporate further degrees of student choice to address autonomy, competence, and relevance, which are critical to the development of motivation. This solution introduced two exemplar assessments that assimilated student choice. The first assessment addressed varying assessment modalities, and the second assessment offered student choice in roles and topics while maintaining consistency in assessment modality. This multifaceted approach to assessments expanded student choice by enhancing relevance, autonomy, and skills-based competence, thereby augmenting motivation. Thus, Artifact III comprehensively addresses the implementation and implications of the proposed solutions.

The conclusion section of this dissertation serves to bind the trio of artifacts—namely, the research narrative, the methodology and results, and the solutions. The conclusion dissects how Artifact I set the foundational framework for the development of solutions presented in Artifact II. This development of solutions and the data collected from Artifact II support the efficacy of implementation in Artifact III with a specific focus on the tools themselves. However, the tools used during implementation in Artifact III tied directly back with the literature found in Artifact I, showcasing the interconnections between artifacts (research, data, and tools) to create a holistic picture of the overarching effect. These artifacts contribute to the existing research on student motivation, engagement, curriculum, and choice while addressing the degree to which the solutions address the problem of practice. Furthermore, the conclusion suggests potential avenues of future research and inquiry that may enhance the findings from this research.



### **Limitations**

As part of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Germany-specific research limitations, students under the age of 16 are protected and prohibited from direct engagement with ongoing research. Due to this limitation, direct student feedback could not be included in this dissertation.

Although various methods to measure student engagement exist, such as surveys, focus groups, and working groups, these tools would impact the traditional students' educational experience and remove them from their learning environments. If these tools were used, it would interfere with the student experience and would require additional approval from the German government (The Education System in the Federal Republic of Germany, 2018). Therefore, in order to avoid unnecessary delays to the study, the IB Assessment Framework for Middle Years Programme (MYP 2) humanities criteria was used to measure student engagement. The IB spent eight years creating and revising the rubrics to measure Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills (see Appendix D). Accordingly, this tool offered a reasonable degree of accuracy (MYP: From principles to practice, 2014).

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## ARTIFACT I

In recent years, the educational landscape experienced significant shifts that magnified pre-existing issues related to student motivation and engagement. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic called for hasty adaptations in educational delivery mechanisms, with varying levels of success. When classrooms eventually reopened, educators around the world and in a Munich-based case study school observed an alarming decrease in student engagement and motivation (Daniels et al., 2021). Though this decline was not solely caused by the remote learning phase, it highlighted an ongoing deficit in essential learning skills that transcended individual subject areas (Günaydin, 2021). Interventions aimed at ameliorating this situation had mixed results. As the data collected from teacher and student focus groups in the case study showed, the variation of results depended largely on the individual student's inclinations and needs. These discrepancies multiplied the inherent complexity of addressing these issues universally.

With the diverse academic and social impacts of the pandemic, a need emerged for an innovative approach that could effectively address some of the broader aspects of education that contributed to the widening gaps between students, namely student motivation and engagement. Such an approach required careful examination of systemic issues and proactive measures to mitigate the ongoing educational decline exacerbated by the pandemic (Dorn, 2020).

A significant concern that hindered progress toward this reimagined educational approach was the persistent mismatch between the academic structure and the rising need to increase student choice as a key tool for boosting motivation and engagement (Hughes and Lewis, 2020). The traditional academic framework, with its inherent restrictions and stringent structures, can inadvertently quell the emergence of student choice, thereby impacting intrinsic motivation (Willis et al., 2019). This case study reevaluated these academic restrictions and explored

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potential avenues for student choice to play a more prominent role in curriculum design and delivery (Sibold, 2016). This required a paradigm shift towards a more flexible academic model that balanced the need for curriculum consistency with the nurturing of student autonomy and decision-making in the student's learning journey (Bovill, 2019).

Considering these challenges, the need for a reimagined approach to teaching and curriculum delivery became apparent. Traditionally, motivation has played a critical role in driving student engagement with educational content. When students exhibit higher levels of motivation and engagement, a corresponding improvement in their skills and abilities within their areas of interest is often observed (Ardizzone, 1997). Consequently, a pioneering approach had to harness the power of intrinsic motivation to construct pathways for enhancing student motivation, engagement, and skills, particularly in the aftermath of such a prolonged deviation from traditional educational practices.

### **Assumptions and Delimitations**

The research took place in an international school in Munich, Germany, and focused on humanities content area for students in Grade 7 aged 12 to 14—the International Baccalaureate (IB) classifies Grade 7 as Middle Years Programme (MYP 2). Originally, this approach was not planned to be implemented across the whole grade level but only upon a cross-section of students. Therefore, it was expected that there would be disaggregated data from the traditional classroom as well as from the alternate program. However, as other instructors at the IB school observed positive results, the whole grade level opted to follow the alternate curricula. The data reflects students' mastery of Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills via their assessments (see Appendix D). The data collection was part of the standard educational experience and did not infringe or interfere with the student experience beyond the normal classroom.

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The research participants included the teachers of this program and the school administration, including heads of departments and principals. All research participants were adults, and the researcher did not hold a position of responsibility over any participant. The students participated in the program as part of their normal classroom experience.

### List of Terms and Abbreviations

Assessments:	The method used to evaluate student performance. This method can include formative, summative, and standardized assessments.
ATL:	Approaches to Learning, different methods of students acquiring knowledge and skills or displaying knowledge and skills to others (see Appendix D)
EAL:	English as an Additional Language
Formative Assessments:	A type of evaluation used to inform teacher instruction that can be used summatively but is not a conclusive evaluation of what the student is supposed to know.
GDPR:	General Data Protection Regulations, the governing requirements of the European Union that require additional protections for personal data. Students are a protected class and require additional scrutiny.
IB/IBO:	International Baccalaureate Organization
K12:	Kindergarten (age 4) through Grade 12 (age 18)
MYP:	Middle Years Programme (Grades 6–10 of the K12 IB Programme)
MYP2:	The second year of the Middle Years Programme (Grade 7 of the K12 IB Programme)
Secondary:	Grades 6-12 (age 11 to age 18). This includes students in the MYP program (Grades 6-10, ages 11 to 16).

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Student Marks:	Comparable to “grades” in the United States. Marks are determined through teacher evaluations of student work and designate the student’s academic performance.
Standardized Assessment:	A type of assessment usually given by an accreditation body or governmental agency to evaluate the depth to which the students have attained abilities, skills, or knowledge in a specific area.
Summative Assessment (SA):	A type of evaluation used to evaluate a student’s abilities, skills, and knowledge in a specific area at the end of a teaching unit. This can include standardized assessments, but for the purposes of this research, it will be broken into two distinct areas, namely summative assessments given in a classroom setting and standardized assessments given by agencies or companies outside the educational institution.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The wide-ranging academic and social repercussions of the pandemic foregrounded the necessity for an innovative pedagogical approach, one capable of addressing broader educational aspects that contributed to the expanding disparities among students, primarily student motivation and engagement (Whelan, 2020). This called for a different approach to systemic issues and the creation of new initiatives to alleviate the ongoing reduction in student engagement and motivation that the pandemic exacerbated (Dorn et al., 2020). The inconsistency between the traditional academic structure and the escalating need to increase student choice as a tool for augmenting motivation and engagement informed the problem of practice. The conventional academic framework, with inherent limitations and structures, may inadvertently limit student choice and thereby influence intrinsic motivation (Smith et al., 2021). A potential resolution necessitated the reassessment of these academic constraints and the exploration of plausible paths for student choice to assume a more conspicuous role in curriculum design and assessment.

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Historically, motivation has been a crucial driving force in galvanizing student engagement with educational content (Wade, 2002). As students demonstrated heightened levels of motivation and engagement, a corresponding enhancement in their skills and competencies within their areas of interest was typically noted (Wang & Hofkens, 2019). Hence, a new approach had to leverage the strength of intrinsic motivation to provide avenues for increasing student motivation, engagement, and skills (Liu et al., 2016), especially in the wake of such an extended deviation from traditional educational practices.

### *Purpose of the Study*

This research focused on developing a new approach to curriculum that utilized student choice to increase student motivation and engagement within a classroom setting. This approach consisted of integrating student choice into curriculum and assessments and reframing curricular direction to emphasize skills rather than content (Müller, 2022). Bovill (2019) outlined challenges in co-creating curriculum with students but also offered actionable steps for teachers and schools to mitigate these risks (Bovill, 2019). This case study addressed student motivation and engagement as the central problem of practice through the following overarching research question:

How can the integration of student choice influence student achievement and engagement while preserving alignment with instructional goals, skills, and objectives?

### **Overview of the Theories**

#### *Curriculum Theory*

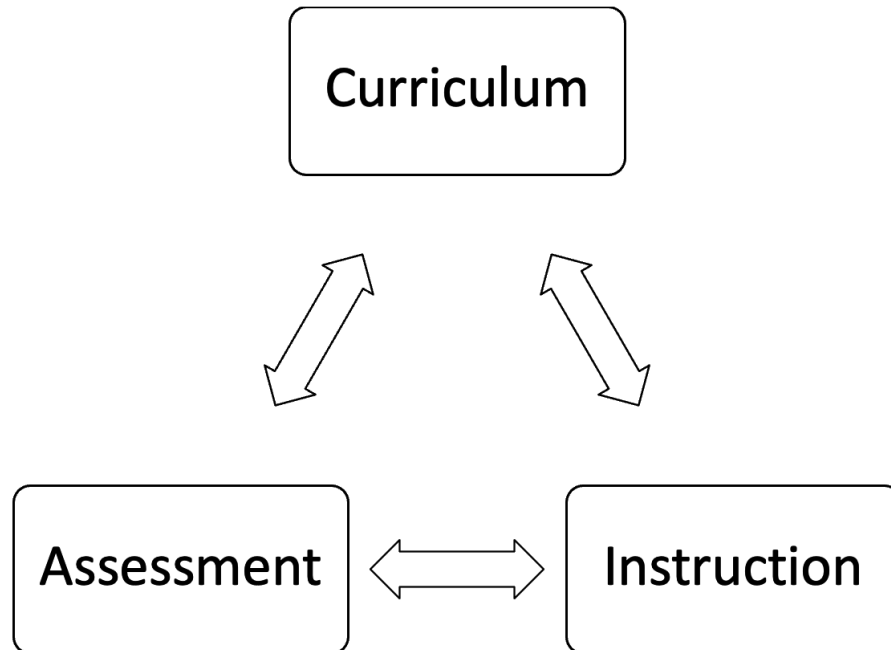
Since Beauchamp's groundbreaking theory of curriculum design in 1972, education has adopted a triangular model of education with three distinct parts: curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Beauchamp, 1972). The overarching belief has been that these interdependent pieces

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provide support as well as a check on the efficacy of the others (Figure 1). For example, the curriculum should drive the instruction, and the assessment checks that the instruction was adequate. Likewise, the assessment should be based on the curriculum framework and standards to ensure the instruction was of sufficient depth and complexity for the students. When the teacher deems that the instruction should be adjusted to meet the needs of the ever-evolving student population, the curriculum and assessment are adjusted as well.

**Figure 1**

*Beauchamp's Theory of Curriculum*



Within most educational systems that employed standardized assessments, the educational authority drove the curriculum and standardized assessments, with the teachers being in charge of instruction and classroom-based assessments (Herman et al., 1994). For the system to be successful, much of the curriculum was defined by specific educational topics that had to be mastered for students to advance. This focus on educational standards and specific topics left little room for student agency and choice in defining what the students would like to learn more

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about (Leckie & Prior, 2022). Traditionally, teachers must teach to the content and standards of the curriculum as the standardized assessment will cover specific topics within this curriculum. However, this assesses only the content of the curriculum and has limited applications in accurately measuring the skills and attributes of learning that are normally found within the classroom environment (Herman & Golan, 1991).

Beauchamp's curriculum theory (later further developed by Anderson in 2002) provided a clear division between curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Anderson, 2002). Some of Anderson's arguments pushed the narrative from what the student must learn (as seen in Beauchamp's 1972 model) to what the school must teach. Anderson argued that assessments evaluate the school's instructional abilities more than the individual student's learning and that assessments are a tool to measure the instructional effectiveness of systems. She further stated that true curriculum alignment is only possible when curriculum, assessment, and instruction are in harmony: "That is, curriculum alignment requires a strong link between objectives and assessments, between objectives and instructional activities and materials, and between assessments and instructional activities and materials" (Anderson, 2002, p. 257).

Just as Anderson's work indicated, these three areas of education work together to support each other, but each field can also be specifically aligned and developed (Anderson, 2002). For example, curriculum informs instruction and develops assessments, but assessments gauge the depth of difficulty for the students to attain and access the content. The teaching methods and teachers inform the curriculum while developing the formative assessment (ongoing assessment practices designed to evaluate student understanding within a unit of work) and summative assessment (end-of-unit or end-of-course assessment to evaluate student mastery of a specific topic) for the students.

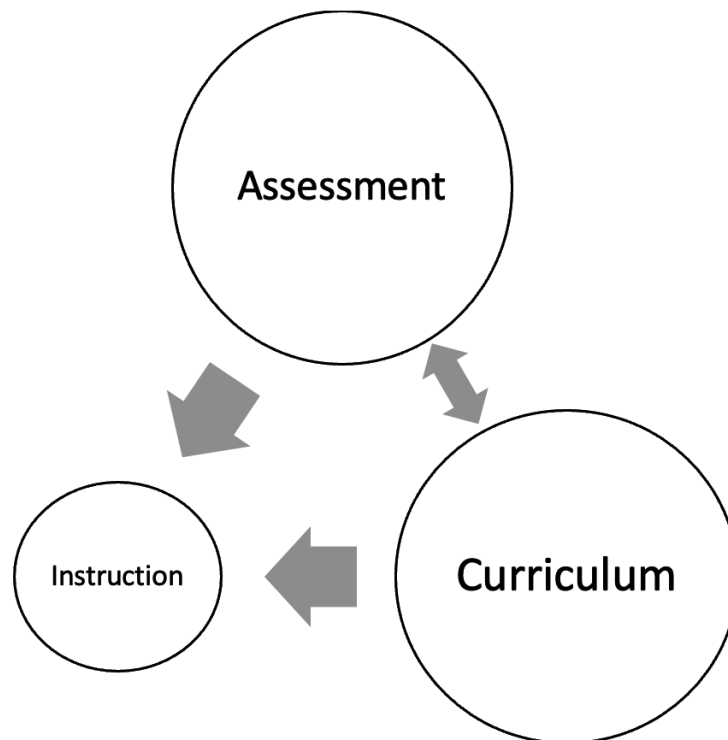


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In an educational landscape dominated by external and standardized assessments, instruction effectively becomes the terminal output, evaluated to gauge the efficacy of curriculum and assessment strategies (Hughes & Lewis, 2020). Under this model, instruction is not a dynamic component in a feedback loop with curriculum and assessment (see Figure 2); instead, it functions as the culmination of predetermined mandates from both (Herman & Golan, 1991). Thus, the existing system stifles the possibility for feedback-driven modifications either to the curriculum or the assessment mechanisms. This structural configuration subsequently limits the adaptive capacities of educational practitioners and institutions (Willis et al., 2019).

### **Figure 2**

*Effect of Standardized Assessment on the Original Curriculum Theory*



*Note: This diagram illustrates the dominant influence of assessment and curriculum on instruction.*

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It is important to note that the school observed in this case study used the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) assessment framework. Unlike many standardized curriculums that focus the assessments on the content taught, the IB MYP operates on an assessment framework grounded in skills acquisition. At its core, this distinctive approach to measure students' learning progress uses an overarching structure that gauges knowledge and skills without being tethered to any specific curriculum (Singh, 2002). This approach emphasizes the development of universal competencies rather than the memorization of subject-specific details. Consequently, the same IB assessment rubrics can be applied across diverse humanities subjects such as U.S. history, geography, world studies, or economics within a particular developmental level. The uniformity of these rubrics across different subject areas not only simplifies the assessment process but also serves as an ideal control method. It thereby allows for a more consistent evaluation of how student choice influences attainment, ensuring that the focus remains on the development of transferable skills that can be applied across various disciplines (Guy, 2001).

Additionally, the flexibility and adaptability of the framework allow it to be utilized across multiple global education systems, including U.S. common core, individual state curriculums, UK General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE), A-levels, Australian curriculums, and Chinese state curriculums (Singh, 2002). Rather than focusing on particular content, it prioritizes key skills and themes crucial for successful learning (Armstrong, 2000). This strategic approach ensures that assessments are grounded in transferable capabilities, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication. By focusing on these skills, the IB allows a consistency of assessment that

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transcends geographic boundaries and educational systems, ensuring all students are measured using the same standards of academic proficiency and skill mastery (Carber & Reis, 2004).

The IB assessment framework allows multiple representations of knowledge through various contexts. However, many IB classrooms across the world still must perform to the governmental standardized assessments and utilize formative assessment approaches in the classroom to measure student understanding. This can lead to additional stress and workload for the teachers and students and a greater loss of classroom and student autonomy when compared to a traditional classroom without the IB framework (Guy, 2001).

This assessment framework model, when used in isolation from government-created and standardized assessed curriculum, allows for the creation of a new type of system in which the teachers and students can develop the curriculum and instruction together (Pace & Standiford, 2003). It remains possible for a teacher to create and deliver a curriculum but allows for co-determination of curriculum and development of various forms of instruction.

### ***Motivational Theory—Self-Determination***

The foundational work by Ryan and Deci (2000) introduced the self-determination theory, examining how individuals could enhance their levels of motivation through the elements of competence and relatedness. Deci and Ryan proposed a new way of measuring motivation through a Taxonomy of Human Motivation, including a linear model to conceptualize and measure motivation. This model suggested that various stages of motivation build upon each other in a sequential manner, ranging from amotivation (a complete lack of motivation) to extrinsic motivation. This method of measurement served as a structured way to assess and understand the different types of motivation and how they relate to each other, thus offering a nuanced framework for analysis.

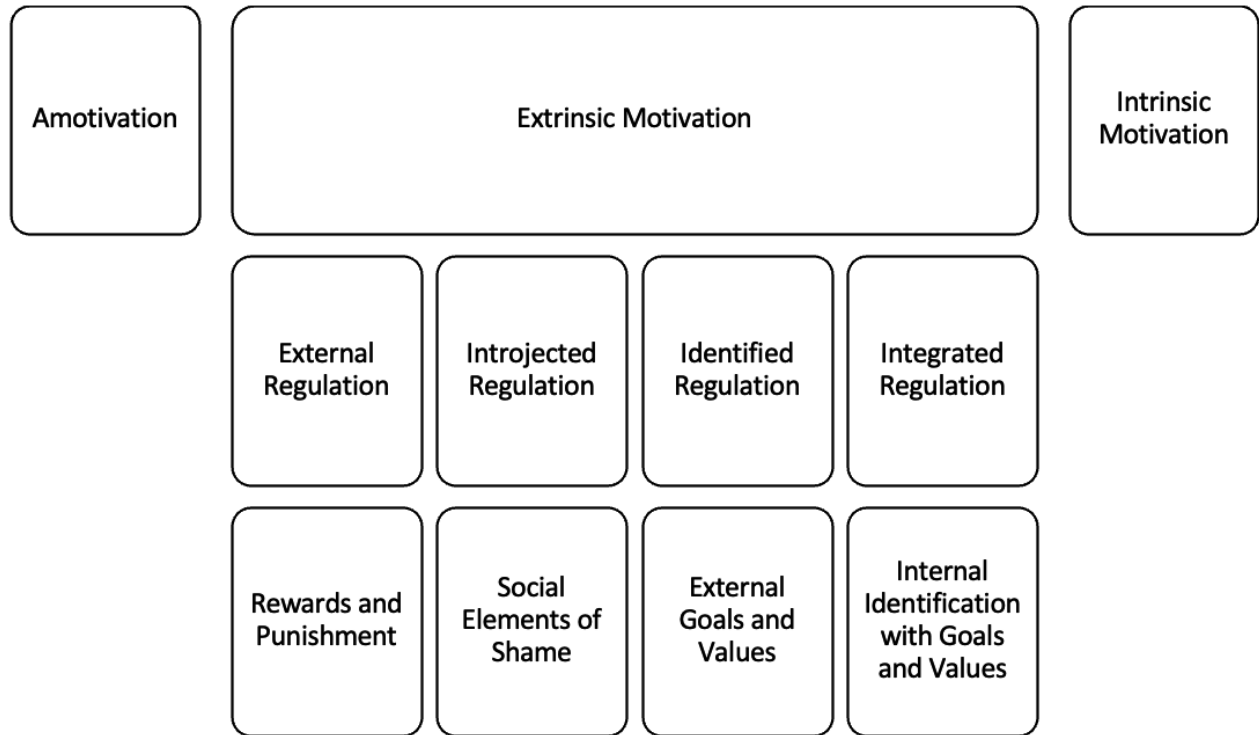
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The scope of this original work was extended by Gagné and Deci in 2005 to include interpersonal organizations and individuals (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Here, the theory was adapted from its individual-focused origins to a more inclusive framework that was both collective and individual, broadening its applicability. This adaptation expanded the theoretical model to include relatedness, accounting for the motivational dynamics within a group or organizational setting, thereby offering additional layers of understanding of how motivation can be cultivated and measured within collective entities.

Therefore, Gagné and Deci's 2005 work on self-determination and motivation expanded the basic needs that must be met for intrinsic motivation to be possible (Gagné & Deci, 2005). The first two areas, competence and autonomy, were well-researched before their seminal work was produced. However, a third crucial component was identified as a strong predictor of the development of intrinsic motivation: relatedness. Gagné and Deci (2005) described relatedness as the strength of relation that a person or organization has to a given action or cause. In other words, how much does the person or organization want to commit to the situation? Relatedness is critical for intrinsic motivation, as someone who has a weak relationship with a specific cause or task is incapable of developing high levels of motivation.

As Ryan and Deci (2000) proposed, Gagné and Deci (2005) also argued that motivation occurs on a sliding scale ranging from amotivation to intrinsic motivation (see Figure 3). Additionally, the individual or collective group must move laterally between the stages and cannot skip the various levels of motivation between amotivation to intrinsic motivation. This sequential progression of levels provides individuals and systems time to adjust any changes introduced to the system and see the impact these changes have on the subjects' motivation in a linear and directed fashion.

**Figure 3**  
*The Self-determination Continuum*



*Note:* Adapted from the work of Gagné and Deci. The self-determination continuum illustrates amotivation, the four types of extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation. Also shown are the nature of the regulation for each and its placement along the continuum. (Gagné & Deci, 2005, pg 342).

Amotivation, as earlier defined, is a complete lack of motivation. Extrinsic motivation (external motivation) is broken down into four sub-types. First, external regulation is motivation based upon external rewards or punishment. Next, introjected regulation is a type of motivation where the individual feels obligated to perform because they risk damaging their self-worth or what others think of them if they do not. Thirdly, identified regulation occurs when an individual is motivated by the goals or values tied to the task's completion. The fourth and most autonomous of the extrinsic motivation types is integrated regulation, which occurs when an individual is motivated because the value or goal is something that they identify with their own

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core values and goals. And finally, intrinsic motivation is often considered the best form of motivation because the individuals are motivated by the fact that they actually enjoy the task.

Gagné and Deci (2005) further argued that all three components of intrinsic motivation—competence, autonomy, and relatedness—are needed for psychological health. When one is missing, the psychological health of the individual and collective is impacted, and the subject (individual or system) will not be able to move beyond amotivation, external regulation, or introjected regulation. In other words, if the three basic components of psychological health are not met, the individual or group has no ability to reach the top three levels of motivation and will be stuck in the lower levels of extrinsic motivation or fall into amotivation entirely. By ensuring the inclusion of the three necessary components are provided, individuals and systems have the ability to reach identified regulation, integrated regulation, and intrinsic motivation.

Vallerand (2008) took the motivational theory further, discussing distinct areas of impact of relatedness within the educational framework (Vallerand, 2008). Because education within a school system is a social experience for students, perceptions of relatedness may be an important aspect in activities and tasks that emphasize the social nature of the classroom environment (Vallerand, 2008). Vallerand argued that within a social context where groups work together for a common goal, relatedness to others plays an important part in both individual and collective motivation.

Considering that autonomy is also a requirement for psychological health, research has shown that when students were presented with choice within a structured learning environment, they exercised autonomy in a developmentally appropriate way (Reeves, 2006). Reeves explained that students benefit when teachers act as facilitators of the student's inner motivation (similar to facilitators of learning). Acting as a teacher-facilitator who is able to structure the learning

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environment in a student-autonomous manner nurtures students' inner motivational development. One of Reeves' key proposals was that the teacher should develop learning experiences that consider the students' competency, interests, and choices. This aspect of developing age-appropriate student autonomy is considered critical in developing motivation (according to Gagné and Deci's 2005 theory of motivation) within individual students and the collective classroom system.

### ***Student Choice Theory—Intrinsic Motivation***

Social cognitive theory (previously known as social learning theory) states that learning occurs within a social context and is dynamic, occurring as interactions between people, environment, and behavior (Bandura, 1988). Furthermore, because humans are social creatures, the behavior of the group is based on the social environment of the individuals (Wood & Bandura, 1989).

Bandura stated that the relationship between the environment, behavior, and individuals shaped the way students learn and relate to knowledge. Greater learning could occur through meaningful student interaction with the content. Likewise, when students are developing new skills, they are more open to learning (Bandura, 1993). For example, if a student is learning how to read and sound out simple words, they are more motivated to do so than when they have been reading for several years and are exposed to a new word they must sound out. Many students will skip over the word or look for context clues rather than take the time to go back to their previous methods to sound out a new and unfamiliar word. Additionally, when some students have a great skill set in a specific area, others can observe and learn from their peers and then develop their skills accordingly (Harrison et al., 2017). It is important to note that learning can occur without

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the social element; however, Bandura's research showed that deeper understanding and learning occur within a social construct (Bandura, 1993).

Under Bandura's model, engagement and motivation were identified as critical in fostering an effective and enriching learning environment. Interaction among the students, the content, and their surrounding context leads to a greater depth of knowledge. New experiences create a chance to review basic learning, and the students gradually become architects of their own skills. This notion solidifies the value of providing an environment that promotes and nurtures student interactions, co-creation, and peer learning (Bandura, 1993).

Transitioning from Bandura's paradigm, Klemenčič (2015) placed an additional emphasis on student agency. Klemenčič's theory not only added depth to the understanding of the social dimensions of learning but also weaved these aspects with the additional nuances of a student's identity and situational attributes. The interplay of these concepts bridged the social context with individual initiative and self-determination.

Klemenčič's theory of student agency (see Figure 4) incorporated six main concepts that students need in order to develop intrinsic motivation and overall engagement with education (Klemenčič, 2015). The first concept is that student agency can be developed when students interact with others within a specific relational context. This further supported Bandura's concept of learning as a social construct and provided the necessary integration of social frameworks into the solutions. The second concept of Klemenčič's theory was that student agency changes depending on the situation and the student's attributes. Klemenčič argued that this dynamic fluctuation is needed to build new skills and interests or to practice decision-making as students develop their identities.

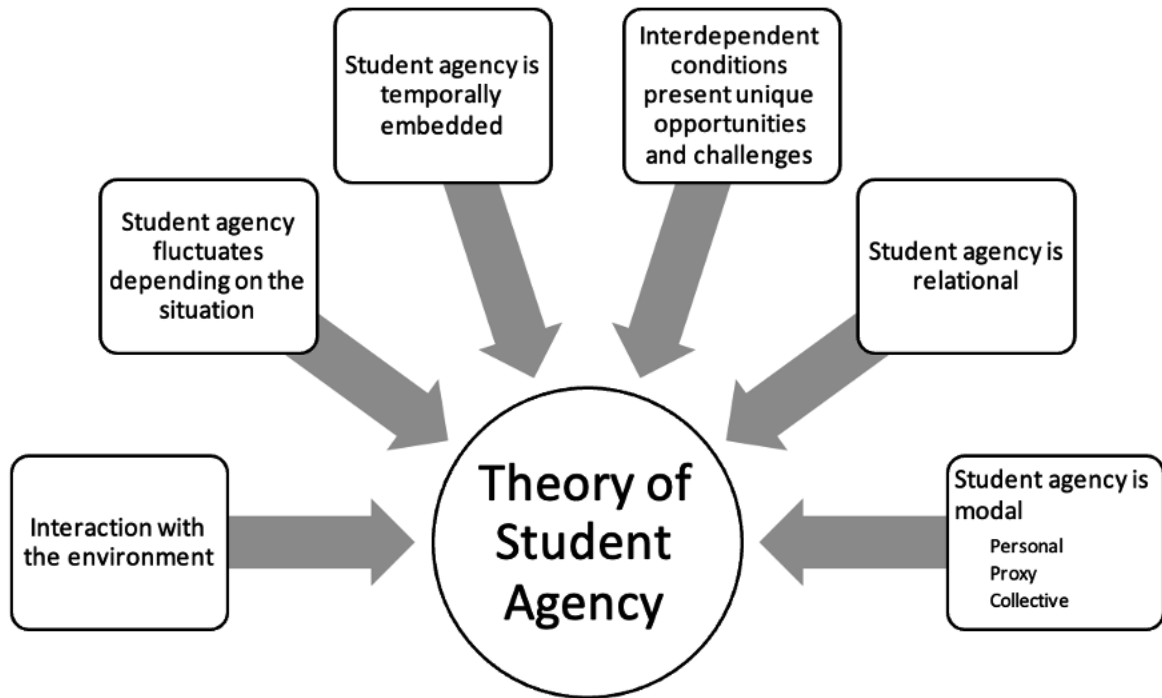


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This flows directly into the third concept, which stated that student agency is temporally embedded. Past experiences shape what a student views as possible, and previously developed habits contribute to this perception of the current and possible future self. As all learning is cultural and social, the fourth concept of the theory proposed that different interdependent conditions present opportunities and constraints to the development of student agency. Political, social, economic, and other cultural factors contribute to what a student individually values and is motivated by. These interdependent conditions include not only culture but also individual interests and pursuits that motivate or demotivate the student to take different calculated risks. The fifth concept contended that student agency is relational and is influenced by the individuals the student meets and interacts with.

The final sixth concept concluded that different modes of student agency can be used in isolation or in combination with each other. When the student acts as a self-advocate for their own interests, such as approaching a teacher directly with a problem or concern, this is personal agency. Proxy agency exists where the student is unable to exert direct influence or believes that others can do a better job, for example, student council or other democratic forms of representation. Finally, students use collective agency when they interact with others toward a common outcome.

**Figure 4**  
*The Theory of Student Agency*



*Note:* Diagram illustrating the different concepts of student agency (Klemenčič, 2015)

In John Dewey’s ideal classroom, student interests drive teacher instruction (Dewey, 1902). However, Dewey was not a proponent of individual curriculums for each child; rather, he suggested applying the child’s interests upon the subject matter’s delivery (Dewey, 1938). Dewey believed that with additional student interest in the content and curriculum, the students would acquire more knowledge and develop better metacognitive skills. This approach has been successfully implemented in different practices, such as Montessori schools and other individualized curriculum programs. However, Dewey was also concerned that teaching students only what they were interested in would lead to students missing out on other educational opportunities and skills.

### **Obstacles to Theory Implementation**

Current models of curriculum, teaching, and assessment do not allow much room for students and teachers to practice relatedness and autonomy. As seen in Gagné and Deci's (2005) motivational theory, these concepts are required to develop motivation (motivation requires competence, relatedness, and autonomy). Within the prevalent current educational system, this lack of autonomy and relatedness can lead to student and teacher demotivation, both individually and systematically, within the educational environment. Conversely, when the Klemenčič theory of student agency is applied—integrating relatedness, competence, and autonomy—safe and healthy psychological environments are created, which enhance both teaching and learning (Klemenčič, 2015). Therefore, the combination of the three overarching theories of curriculum, motivation, and agency highlights a gap in student choice within the curriculum and assessment framework of education.

In the current educational landscape, curriculum design, pedagogical methodology, and assessment practices are three separate but interlinked aspects of education. Teachers are able to adjust their pedagogical methodology to a certain extent and find new and innovative ways to reach students; however, the teachers and schools can do little to adjust the curriculum design and standardized assessment practices by which most schools are measured (Hughes & Lewis, 2020). This inability to make adjustments to curriculum design and assessments restricts the spaces for students and educators to exercise relatedness and autonomy (Goslin & Glass, 1997). According to motivation theory, these elements, along with competence, are the integral elements required to cultivate motivation. However, within the current curriculum theory framework's practice, these elements are out of reach.

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It is perhaps impossible to practice external standardization of assessments while still allowing for topical student choice and teacher flexibility within the classroom learning environment. When external regulators outline precisely what educators are to teach, this undermines autonomy and classroom-specific relatedness (Avalos et al., 2020). Consider, for instance, a scenario where the curriculum mandates teaching about the impact of the Black Death on Europe. While this historical event has unquestionable importance, other global repercussions, such as the effect of the Black Death on China, the Far East, or other areas, could also be explored. Alternatively, the study might branch into a discussion on how various diseases imported to Australia via convict ships had a devastating impact on the indigenous population. These different yet interlinked topics all serve the overarching concept of how pandemics, diseases, and medical innovations impact governmental systems and individual rights. However, when the curriculum is overly standardized to the point of prescription, it curtails autonomy and limits the scope for relatedness. This can have additional impacts on cultural relatedness and student and social identity. This constricting scenario within the prevailing system could potentially instigate a cascade of demotivation within the educational environment, impacting both students and teachers on an individual level and systematically.

By incorporating Klemenčič's theory of student agency with the constructs of Gagné and Deci's motivation theory (and therefore adopting relatedness, competence, and autonomy), a safe and psychologically healthy environment can be created—one which is conducive to enhancing both teaching and learning processes (Gagné & Deci, 2005; Klemenčič, 2015). The amalgamation of these three overarching concepts—curriculum, motivation, and agency—reveals a discernible gap in the context of student choice within the curriculum and the evaluative framework of education.

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It is therefore imperative that these theoretical lenses be used in concert to critically examine existing educational practices and propose solutions to current challenges. This combined theoretical approach enables the cultivation of a more engaging and autonomously motivated educational environment for students, teachers, and educational systems, effectively bridging the identified gap and promoting a more comprehensive and empowering educational experience for all.

### *Integration of Theoretical Frameworks*

In Figure 5, the alignment of contemporary curriculum design was examined in conjunction with theories of motivation and educational pedagogy, notably those posited by Gagné and Deci, Bandura, Klemenčič, and Anderson and Beauchamp. These theories presented significant areas of intersection, especially in acknowledging the role of social systems within the educational environment. Bandura and Klemenčič both emphasized the importance of these social constructs, with Klemenčič further delineating how the integration of social systems with other variables augmented levels of student agency (Bandura, 1993; Klemenčič, 2015).

This enhancement of student agency is congruent with Gagné and Deci's identified prerequisites for high levels of motivation, specifically the triad of competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Gagné & Deci, 2005). These elements, posited as essential for psychological safety and optimal motivation, are subsumed within Klemenčič's overarching theory of student agency, thus linking the constructs of motivation and agency within educational settings (Klemenčič, 2015). However, it is critical to note that practical barriers exist within the operational dimensions of educational systems, which often impede the full realization and application of these interrelated theories.

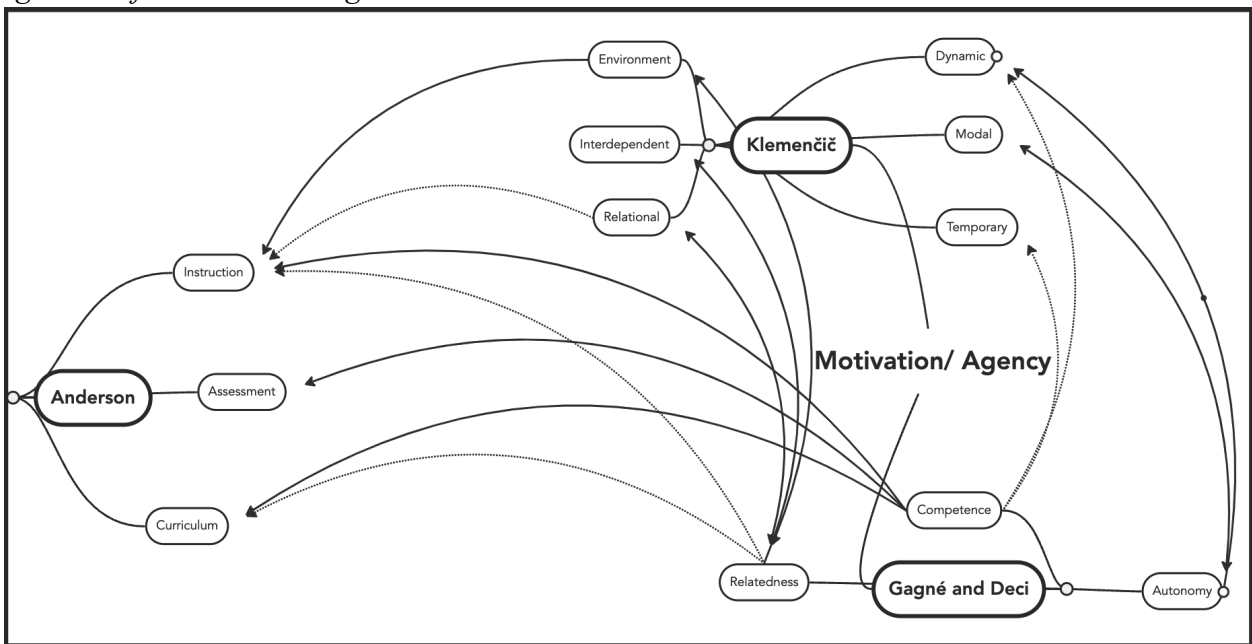
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In the original formulation of Beauchamp's curriculum theory (1972), which delineated the relationships among curriculum, instruction, and assessment, there was minimal emphasis on summative assessments or nationally-driven initiatives. This framework permitted considerable autonomy for both teachers and students, positioning students as the central agents of their learning. However, Anderson's subsequent adaptation of Beauchamp's theory in 2002 reframed the focus towards evaluating educational environments by the success rates of students therein, thereby establishing a metric for institutional success (Anderson, 2002). This evolution in theory influenced a shift in practice: the balanced feedback loop among curriculum, assessment, and instruction posited by Beauchamp was supplanted by a system increasingly influenced by external standardized assessments. In this modified context, curriculum and assessments dominated the instructional landscape, offering teachers only end-point assessment results and curriculum guidelines. This effectively disrupted Beauchamp's intended feedback loop, as teachers are provided with inputs primarily intended for altering instructional practices without the balancing effect of instructional feedback.

In today's educational model, autonomy is notably lacking for both students and teachers, diminishing their capacity for self-direction in the learning process. Additionally, the concept of 'relatedness'—as framed by Klemenčič and Bandura—exists primarily in the social interactions between students, teachers, and peers but may not extend to the relationship between students and the educational content itself (Bandura, 1993; Klemenčič, 2015). On the other hand, 'competence' remained a consistent element in Beauchamp's original triad of curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Beauchamp, 1972). The absence of autonomy and the limited application of relatedness hinder the potential for optimal motivation for both students and teachers. This incomplete alignment with key motivational elements can result in an educational

environment that is psychologically unsafe, thus compromising the effectiveness of instructional practices.

**Figure 5**  
*Integration of the Overarching Theories*



In the existing model of curriculum design, outlined in Figure 5, Gagné and Deci’s three core elements—competence, content, and autonomy—are situated within the context of Anderson’s educational institutions under the confines of standardized assessment and aligned with Klemenčič’s theory of agency (Anderson, 2002; Gagné & Deci, 2005; Klemenčič, 2015). The curriculum explicitly delineates the areas where student competence is expected. While the curriculum may also offer elements of relatedness—such as student interests or cultural touchpoints—these elements are not uniformly applicable to all students. This inconsistency in the incorporation of relatedness is indicated by a dashed line in the figure rather than a solid one, highlighting its variable presence in the educational framework.

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In the educational context, assessment serves to gauge student competence in relation to specified curriculum topics. Assessments can either be localized, administered and graded by the classroom teacher, or standardized, issued by an external accrediting entity such as a state education department or an international accreditation organization. Within the constraints of the classroom setting, teachers possess some latitude to offer choice to students; however, this autonomy is significantly curtailed by the requirements imposed by external standardized assessments. Thus, the practice of standardized assessment effectively limits teacher autonomy within the educational framework.

Within the domain of instruction, the teacher has the capacity to establish a meaningful relationship with students, thereby reflecting the concept of social relatedness as described by Bandura and Klemenčič (Bandura, 1993; Klemenčič, 2015). It should be noted, however, that the degree to which this is achieved is highly contingent upon individual teacher and student dynamics, making it variable rather than consistent across educational settings. Concurrently, the notion of competence is a recurring theme: teachers are expected to impart and evaluate skills related to specific curriculum topics. This aspect of competence is further influenced by the feedback derived from standardized assessment results, which often serve as a guideline for instructional focus. Thus, while social relatedness may vary, competence remains a constant criterion in both teaching and assessment practices.

In Anderson's (2002) curriculum theory, the concept of autonomy is notably absent for both students and teachers, representing a significant departure from more comprehensive educational frameworks. This absence not only compromises individual agency but also weakens the integral system of checks and balances traditionally present in curriculum planning and implementation. Coupled with this, the relatedness aspect—encompassing both social and topical dimensions—is



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also insufficiently emphasized in most modern curricula. This lack of focus on relatedness in the curriculum serves to further dilute the connections that could be made between learners and the educational material, thereby missing opportunities to enhance engagement and motivation.

By neglecting to incorporate Gagné and Deci's three essential elements—autonomy, competence, and relatedness—into the educational landscape, the prevailing curriculum models inadvertently create an environment that undermines student agency and motivation. These are pivotal components for fostering deeper engagement and facilitating effective learning. Consequently, the absence of these elements not only results in a curriculum that is less responsive to individual needs but also diminishes the likelihood of achieving optimal educational outcomes.

### **Review of Relevant Research**

#### ***Research on Student Agency Within Curriculum Choice***

With the inception of Dewey's ideal classroom and the creation of Montessori schools, the concept of student agency within the curriculum context has been around for over a century (Dewey, 1902). Dewey's early work focused on free exploration of knowledge without a defined curriculum. However, as education became more widespread and state regulation increased, professionals within the education sphere began to stipulate specific content knowledge that students might need at various ages to become contributing members of society, thereby removing exploration and choice from students and teachers of Dewey's time.

During the last 100 years, concepts such as Full-Scale Intelligence Quotient (FSIQ), cognitive development, neuroscience, standardized education, and curriculum have dominated the development of the educational landscape (Rowe, 2019). Within the counterculture revolution of the late 1960s into the 1970s, many theorists began to push back against the narrative of

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standardized education and create schooling systems commonly known as democratic schools or freedom schools that increased student and community choice (Geis, 1972). Several pedagogical practices emerged from these countercultural movements, such as student choice, problem-based learning, and teachers as facilitators (Davidson et al., 1973). However, most traditional educational institutions did not adopt many of the practices and argued against integrating more into their frameworks, citing the student as an uninformed consumer who was unable to make an informed choice (Geis, 1976).

As education reforms continued in the 1980s and 1990s, additional emphasis was placed on catering to individual student needs and making education accessible for all students. Elements of student choice began to be implemented within the curriculum, with the teacher guiding the students through required topics while finding ways to create elements of choice within the set governmental standards (Ardizzone, 1997). This resulted in an increased workload but also showed an increased student attainment with students deemed at-risk of dropping out. With increased expectations of more students graduating with a high school degree and looming expectations of all students being college-ready, educational researchers began studying if student choice was a way to increase motivation and attainment (Sibold, 2016).

Within advanced courses and private education, many teachers have already adopted student choice into the secondary school environment (Epple et al., 2016). Within specific frameworks, teachers have created units and lessons that allow students choice in modality of content as well as choice within assessment frameworks without changing the proscribed curriculum mandated by various accreditation bodies (Hamilton & Zumhagen, 2005). This has resulted in some students having additional opportunities for choice and engagement that other students do not have access to, further widening the achievement gap (Marquez et al., 2022). This achievement

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gap can have far-reaching implications for university acceptance and success regarding various job and income prospects (Nielsen, 2023). Furthermore, for those families who remain in a specific geographical realm, the cycle can repeat into the future from one generation to the next (Pivovarova & Powers, 2019).

By the early 2010s, the question was no longer whether or not schools should provide choice to students, but rather, how to provide choice to students while maintaining academic rigor and adhering to required state content. According to Lawson and Lawson (2013), when individual teachers incorporated student choice within their classrooms, it was not sufficient to meet the needs of vulnerable populations. Rather, they argued that the school system needs to develop structures that allow choice throughout the school and community so students may have a more sustained educational experience (Lawson & Lawson, 2013).

Researchers have begun to look closely at how students can have additional agency within the classroom curriculum and content (Netcoh, 2017). Due to the previously mentioned limitations on K12 standardized education, namely the standardization of assessments and the strict proscription of curriculum, the majority of research into student choice has focused on first-year university courses and the co-creation of content and curriculum focus on how to navigate policy and regulations that ensure a high-quality curriculum is provided (Bovill et al., 2016). This initial research has demonstrated that the increase of student choice in the curriculum results in a deeper understanding of curriculum content and interconnection with other subject areas, while acknowledging the challenge of overcoming the initial barriers of students as passive learners of curriculum content rather than active participants of curriculum co-creation. According to Bovill, “As has been shown in some of the examples presented, through co-creation, students and staff engage more deeply in learning and teaching and with the institution as a whole. Furthermore,

co-creation supports students and staff in the development of an enhanced metacognitive understanding of learning and teaching processes” (Bovill et al., 2016).

### ***Research on Student Motivation***

Student choice has a direct and positive impact on student motivation (De Meester et al., 2020). Furthermore, in areas where student choice is not present, when students are provided with the ability to make choices within their subject area, they are more likely to persist in those areas in post-secondary education even if those choices are limited (Hazari et al., 2019).

### ***Research on the Impact of Student Agency on Educational Outcomes***

Studies have showcased how providing additional student choice within the classroom benefits students with learning disabilities, culturally diverse backgrounds, or low socioeconomic levels, as well as students with higher abilities (Ardizzone, 1997). This is particularly important, considering the current race-to-the-top initiatives of various governments around the world. Students who are considered gifted or highly able have demonstrated the tendency to self-differentiate when presented with choice in the classroom. That is to say, they are more likely to select areas of greater challenge (Tomlinson, 2005).

When considered independently, student choice benefits multiple subgroups of individuals within a classroom. However, as stated previously, this requires teachers to invest additional effort to establish systems that promote student choice while adhering to the mandated curriculum scope and sequence in their educational institutions. Willis (2019) found that some groups report spending up to six months developing a unit for a student choice-centered two-month course. This is an unsustainable model over time. Nonetheless, the results showed that student attainment and engagement increased, and the students reported the unit that included student choice as the most memorable of their K12 experience (Willis et al., 2019). This is in line

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with other research demonstrating that when courses are presented with student choice at the core of the teaching model, students are more likely to pursue similar courses as part of their post-secondary education (Ardizzone, 1997).

While the impact on student attainment, engagement, and motivation is immediately evident, the long-term benefits of providing choice within the classroom extend far beyond the student's educational period. Student choice is embedded into the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) system that was promoted by the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (United Nations, 2006). UDL has three overarching blocks to create fully inclusive classrooms: systems and structures, instructional practices, and social and emotional learning (Katz, 2013). According to Katz (2013), student choice helps children learn how to make choices, reflect on decisions, and builds awareness of personal and collective strengths and weaknesses, all areas that develop functional adult learners.

### ***Student Agency Within Curriculum Choice and Direction***

While there is some research available for post-secondary level instruction, there is little information on the current state of student agency within curriculum choice and direction at the K12 level. However, some overarching meta-analyses and governmental reports from the last 50 years provide a glimpse into the educational experience of students in public schools.

Despite numerous efforts to improve the curriculum and enhance the student experience, many schools have struggled to achieve success. The Gehrke 1992 meta-analysis revealed that social studies in U.S. curriculums have undergone very little change since 1965. The overarching themes, topics, and plans have remained predominantly consistent (Gehrke et al., 1992). Gehrke found that several crucial areas, such as Black Studies, Studies of Developing Countries, sociology, and psychology, were notably absent from curriculums despite being essential for the

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development of civic knowledge in the current political and technological landscape (Gehrke et al., 1992). Although a new scope and sequence for social studies (later known as humanities) were proposed in 1976, many of the recommended changes were still missing from state curricular documents 15 years later (Gehrke et al., 1992).

### *Summary of Theory and Research*

By examining the robust literature on curriculum theory, motivational theory, and student choice theory, a compelling case can be made to integrate these approaches within an educational context to enhance learning outcomes. The research collectively underscores the need to connect the broader educational frameworks with student-centered methodologies, specifically concerning autonomy, relatedness, and competency, under the aegis of self-determination theory. These concepts are pivotal in facilitating an environment that empowers students to take ownership of their learning process, thus significantly boosting intrinsic motivation.

When examining the interconnectedness of these theories, it becomes apparent that including student agency within curriculum choice can greatly impact educational outcomes. Current research supports this assertion, demonstrating a direct correlation between increased student agency and improved academic achievements. However, it is important to underscore that the extent to which student agency can be incorporated into curriculum choice and direction varies across different educational contexts. Consequently, ongoing research should aim to delineate the optimal level of student agency within curriculum choice, balancing the necessity for autonomy with the structured guidance that a curriculum inherently provides. This synthesis of theory and current research paints a compelling picture of an evolving educational landscape where student agency and intrinsic motivation play increasingly significant roles.

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This case study aimed to address the extant research gaps by exploring the impacts of augmenting student choice in content and assessment. It provided a unique opportunity to contextualize and scrutinize the intricate relationships between student agency, motivation, and curriculum theory within a real-world educational setting by removing the structures of standardized governmental assessments and mandated curriculums. By examining the outcomes of empowering students with greater control over their educational journey, it illuminated the potential impact of this pedagogical strategy on teacher implementation and learning outcomes. Furthermore, these findings offer an additional evidence base to enrich theoretical discourse and contribute to the development of more responsive and inclusive educational frameworks, ultimately promoting the broader application of student choice theory within the context of curriculum and assessment design.

## ARTIFACT II

### **Problem of Practice and Research Question**

Artifact II offers an in-depth examination of the problem of practice concerning student engagement and motivation within the educational environment. Despite various efforts to foster active participation and interest, educators often grapple with a lack of student enthusiasm and connection to the learning material. This challenge poses significant ramifications on both academic achievement and the development of lifelong learning skills.

### **Methodology**

The tools and methods used to gather evidence centered around the overarching research question: How can the integration of student choice influence student achievement and engagement while preserving alignment with instructional goals, skills, and objectives? To divide this question into measurable parts, the case study utilized several data collection methods, including teacher feedback, student mark analysis, and scope and sequence analysis.

This approach offered a comprehensive picture with each collection method seeking to answer various components of the overarching research question. The educator feedback gleaned views and sentiments towards the revised curriculum, encapsulating elements of satisfaction, confidence, readiness, and support provided. In contrast, the student mark analysis supplied tangible evidence of the program's academic performance, adding a significant quantitative aspect to the study. Lastly, an in-depth examination of the curriculum mapping allowed a glimpse into its inherent design, highlighting its intrinsic values, complexity, cultural influences, teaching models, and assessment types. This range of data yielded a rich analysis, allowing for a thorough exploration of the research question.



*Justification for Case Study Approach*

Adopting a case study approach rather than a randomized control trial (RCT) facilitated a circumvention of a number of ethical considerations and pragmatic challenges. The primary concern with the RCT methodology, often heralded as the gold standard in educational research, lay in the ethical implications of withholding potentially beneficial interventions from a control group of students. Additionally, the random assignment of students may present significant barriers to school participation in RCTs, an issue that can be mitigated with a case study approach (Troyer, 2022). Embracing a case study methodology afforded greater flexibility in conducting the research and enabled researchers and educational institutions to avoid these ethical and practical obstacles.

By focusing on an in-depth, multifaceted analysis of a curricular change with teacher-supported adaptation, the case study approach provided robust and contextually rich data. This, in turn, allowed for nuanced insights that not only contributed to theoretical understandings but also informed practical applications in complex educational settings. Thus, while considering the implications for theory, policy, and practice, the case study approach struck a balance between research rigor and ethical considerations, enhancing the feasibility and external validity of the research.

The established impacts of student choice within school settings are well documented within extant literature, as referenced in Artifact I. Yet, the specific impacts of student choice on motivation and educational attainment, particularly when students are accorded co-determinative powers over both curriculum choice and assessment methodologies, is largely absent in the current body of scholarly work. The complexities and potentials inherent in this intersection of choice and educational outcomes merited further rigorous exploration.

### ***Research Design***

This methodological approach not only allowed for breadth and depth but also created opportunities for data triangulation, enhancing the validity of the case study. It facilitated a more holistic view of the curricular change, unraveling the intricate interplay between perceptive experiences and objective realities. Given the inherent complexity of the research question, the case study approach unified the strengths of student mark analysis, scope and sequence analysis, and educator survey data. Hence, in the interest of both rigorous analysis and faithful representation of stakeholder experiences, a case study research design was determined to be the superior choice for this research.

### ***Limitation of Study***

The research conducted in this case study was contextualized within an international school that was not constrained by a standardized curriculum or assessment. This unusual context imposed limitations on the study's application to educational environments characterized by standardization, which is the norm in schools throughout the world. Such standardization significantly impacts students' ability to choose and explore content. Nonetheless, this does not impede teachers from offering students a choice in the modality of assessment. The research presented in this case study suggested that such choice in assessment modality also positively influences student achievement, albeit not to the same degree as choice in content.

Furthermore, the research was based on a case study involving 89 students aged between 12 and 14 years in a Middle Years Programme Grade 7 (MYP2) humanities class within the case study school. This limitation necessitated additional research to comprehend the effect of student choice in differing academic disciplines and grade levels.

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### *Identified Areas of Bias*

The author of this dissertation was an employed staff member of the school involved in the case study. This presented a potential source of bias within the research. While the researcher was not directly associated with the humanities department or directly supervising any teacher implementing the program, a close working relationship with those implementing the program was maintained. This relationship extended to ongoing professional development, facilitating student choice within the content, advising on student choice within assessments, and assisting with student choice in the modality of learning within classroom-based assignments. The regular interaction between the researcher, teachers, and students could potentially influence perspectives and interpretations, thus constituting a possible bias.

However, it is important to note that the researcher did not stand to gain any personal or professional benefit from the success of the program. This fact helped mitigate the risk of any undue influence or bias in the conduct or interpretation of the research, as the program was experimental and in its initial stages of implementation. Still, the researcher's proximity to the implementation and the continuous interaction with those directly involved could result in subtle and unintentional influences that may have potentially affected the objectivity of the study.

Additionally, the researcher assumed the role of a support teacher for one of the classes implementing student choice, implying direct contact with both the students and the teacher on a periodic basis—varying from zero to two classes per week. This involvement potentially increased the risk of influence, thereby affecting the impartiality of the study. It is essential to be aware of these potential biases and consider their implications when interpreting the study's results. Future replications of this research should consider ways to minimize these potential sources of bias further.

### ***Ethical Considerations***

A critical component of the methodology in this case study involved ethical considerations, particularly pertaining to the acquisition of consent from the participating staff, teachers, and administrators. Prior to administering the survey, these parties were duly notified about the study in writing. Also, all respondents received consent forms which ensured their informed agreement to participate. It is worth noting that the surveys were constructed in such a manner that no personal identifying information, including names or demographic questions, was collected, thus safeguarding participant anonymity.

Further, it should be clarified that the researcher acted in full compliance with the ethical guidelines prescribed by the Institutional Review Board at the University of North Dakota. This encompassed securing approval from the principal overseeing the grade level and treating all acquired data with the highest level of confidentiality. Survey respondents were assured that the study's objectives were exclusively focused on exploring the impacts of student choice on attainment, well-being, and practicality, with the overarching aim to inform and enhance international educational practices and policies. The researcher affirmed no conflict of interest in conducting this case study.

### ***Data Collection***

#### **Scope and Sequence.**

The collection of the scope and sequence for Grade 7 humanities units from the academic year 2021–2022 was acquired from a comparable IB school in the Munich region. This data was obtained from a publicly available source in the selected Munich-based institution. Notably, this distinct scope and sequence impart a comparable assessment framework to the one employed by the case study school. Nevertheless, it is pertinent to note that the IB framework is not a

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curricular framework; consequently, the units fluctuate between the two systems. This intentional design is a characteristic feature of IB schools that cater to the diverse educational needs of local and expatriate populations, thus leading to various topical backgrounds. By focusing on skills rather than topics, the assessment framework facilitates the engagement of students originating from a myriad of curricular backgrounds.

Moreover, the scope and sequence of MYP2 humanities units were also assembled from the case study school for the academic years 2021–2022 and 2022–2023. This provided a comprehensive representation of the curricular topics and units before and after the introduction of student choice.

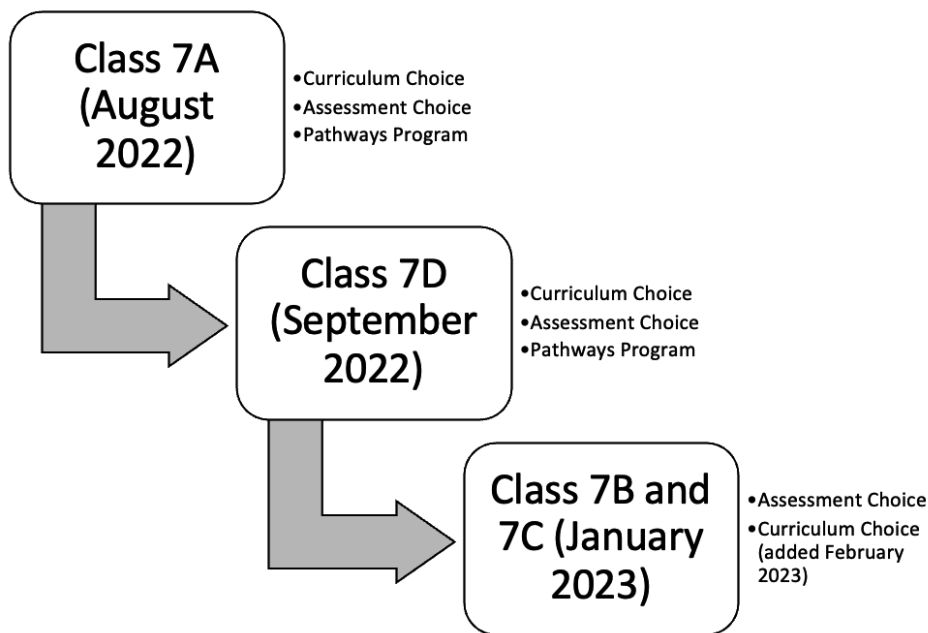
### **Student Marks.**

In the case study school, student marks (a measurement of an individual’s academic achievements, also referred to as “grades” in an American educational setting) under the IB assessment framework were systematically collected for all pupils enrolled in the MYP2 humanities program for the 2022–2023 academic year for each IB criterion (see Appendix C for more information). In the IB MYP grading system, students are evaluated using a rubric with a scale ranging from 0 (indicating a lack of submission) to 8 (representing excellence), with the average student typically earning an average between 4 and 6. This approach differs substantially from the U.S. grading system, which often relies on percentage attainment. The IB MYP’s unique grading method emphasizes skills rather than mere content mastery, thereby providing a more nuanced understanding of a student’s abilities and progress. The use of this skills-focused rubric allows for a more comprehensive and individualized assessment, aligning with the IB’s broader educational philosophy rather than directly correlating with traditional grading systems.

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The student marks data collection was a vital part of the study, as the implementation of student choice was a phased process, encompassing various stages throughout the academic year. Considering this phased implementation (see Figure 6), the marks from the entire student cohort were meticulously gathered to facilitate a comprehensive analysis. This extensive data collection enabled an in-depth examination of the specific class groups where student choice was enacted and those where it was not, as well as the subsequent impact of student choice on student understanding and overall educational attainment.

**Figure 6**  
*Case Study Classes and Student Choice Implementation Timeline*



### **Student Rubrics Alignment to the Skills-based Approach.**

The alignment of student rubrics with a skills-based approach was further accentuated by the integration of Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills, enhancing the breadth and depth of student development. As shown in Appendix D, the ATL skills are communication, social self-

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management, research, and thinking. The IBO rubrics outlined in Appendix C—knowing and understanding, investigating, communicating, and thinking critically—are carefully constructed to emphasize essential cognitive, emotional, and practical skill sets rather than content memorization. By focusing on the ATL skills, the rubrics provide a clear pathway for fostering critical thinking, collaboration, self-management, and other key competencies. This innovative approach allows educators to tailor learning experiences to individual needs and interests, promoting not only academic achievement but also the cultivation of skills that will prove indispensable in life beyond the classroom. The coherence between the rubrics and the ATL skills underlines the symbiotic relationship between student choice, skills development, and enhanced engagement, forming an integral part of the contemporary educational landscape.

In the interest of maintaining the utmost confidentiality, all marks were coded using pseudo-student numbers. Importantly, the pseudo-student numbers employed for coding were distinctly different from the student identification numbers used by the school for tracking purposes. This approach provided an additional layer of security, safeguarding student privacy while minimizing the potential for researchers to trace scores back to individual students. The use of pseudo-student numbers did not hinder the analytical processes in the study. Instead, this method permitted detailed data analysis while ensuring stringent ethical considerations of research within an educational setting are upheld. As a result, the research methodology remained robust and comprehensive, allowing for significant and nuanced findings to emerge while prioritizing the security and anonymity of students in accordance with German regulations.

### **Survey.**

During the final four weeks of the academic year, a survey was administered to the teachers involved in implementing the MYP2 humanities program, as well as the head of humanities, the

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support English as an Additional Language (EAL) teacher, the head of learning support, the secondary school librarian, and the principal overseeing the program's implementation—a total of seven individuals. The survey used a combination of the Likert scale and open-ended questions. Specifically, there were seven questions that utilized a Likert scale ranging from one to five, accompanied by four open-ended queries.

This survey investigated five distinct elements related to the implementation of student choice within the curriculum: satisfaction, confidence, preparation, support, and the effectiveness of curriculum goals. The overarching objective of this survey was twofold: first, to evaluate teachers' acceptance of student choice within the curricular frameworks, and second, to gauge teachers' perceptions of student motivation within the context of the given curriculum. By doing so, the study aimed to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the perceived efficacy and reception of the student choice program from the perspective of teacher implementers, administrators, and supporting staff.

### ***Justification for Scope and Sequence Selection***

The scope and sequence from a comparable school (also implementing the IB assessment framework) in the Munich region were obtained from a publicly available source. These documents enabled an external comparison with the case study school's own scope and sequence. The juxtaposition of these two sets of materials provides valuable insights into the alignment and distinctions between the case study school's practices and those of another institution following a similar assessment framework. This comparison helped contextualize the unique aspects of the case study school within the broader educational landscape, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of its methodologies and achievements. Given the limited number of IB international schools in the Munich region, the decision to select only one



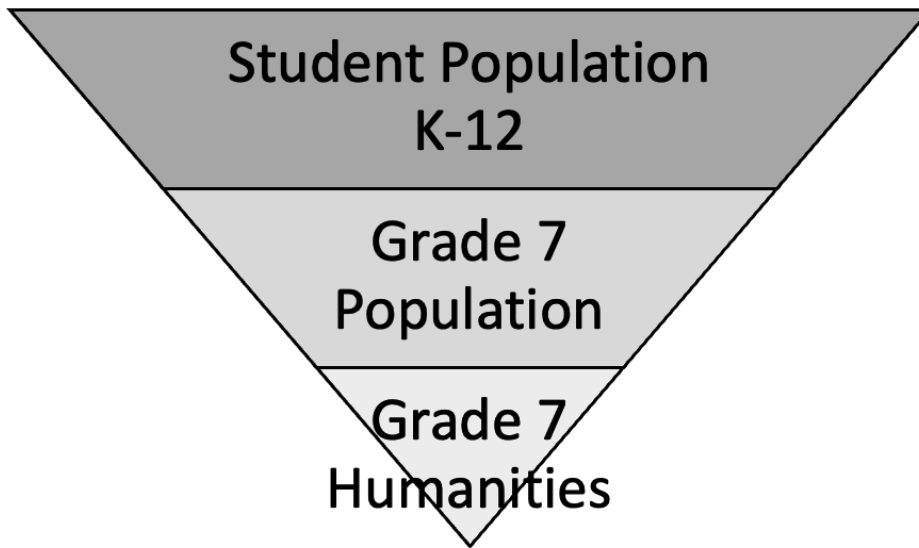
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additional school's scope and sequence was made judiciously, aiming to minimize the possibility of identification following the publication of this paper.

Examining the scope and sequence over two academic years at the case study school supported a longitudinal perspective on the changes that facilitate increased student choice within the curriculum. This temporal comparison was instrumental in charting the evolution of curriculum design to accommodate greater student choice, providing an insightful narrative of how the curriculum transformed over time. Tracking these changes across the two-year period allowed an in-depth analysis of how these adaptations may have influenced student learning outcomes, thereby contributing to the case study's comprehensive approach.

The decision to examine the entirety of the MYP2 humanities student population at the case study school was rooted in the overarching aim to explore the influence of student choice as the case study evolved (see Figure 7). Given that the principle focus of the research was on the exercise of student choice, it also acknowledged the teachers' freedom to decide when and how to integrate this concept into their classrooms.

**Figure 7**  
*Justification for Student Data Selection*



As shown in Figure 6, classes 7B and 7C (which were not originally part of the Pathways Programme) implemented student choice in January of 2023. The Pathways Programme was the internal name for the student choice program. Educators were not required to adopt the new curriculum program outside the initial classroom implementation. However, the material developed as part of the new curriculum approach was available for use to all teachers in the humanities department. As the year progressed, the other teacher in the grade level autonomously decided to adopt various aspects of the new curriculum, and the timeline of this implementation is showcased in Figure 6. The staggered integration also underscored the modular nature of the Pathways Programme (the Pathways Programme will be further discussed in Artifact III), curriculum alterations, and assessment choices. Teachers had the latitude to assimilate components that resonated with their pedagogical stance, progressively blending in other aspects as they deemed fit.

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Lastly, harnessing data from the entire student population permitted a wider scope of data analysis. It enabled the calculation and interpretation of data in diverse formats that may have remained hidden or unnoticed if only summarized classroom information was used. Thus, the decision to use the entire student population offered a more comprehensive and precise representation of the impact of student choice in the case study.

### *Justification for Survey Participants Selection*

Survey participants were selected with a focus on inclusivity to capture an array of perspectives that would produce a holistic understanding of the new program. Among the participants were the two teachers responsible for MYP2 humanities instruction. Their daily interaction with the students and immersion in the program and content provided them with a unique perspective, enabling them to offer critical insights into the regular dynamics of the teaching and learning experience.

Complementing this teacher insight were key figures within the administration, including the head of the humanities department and the grade level principal. The head of the humanities department, given their broad oversight of the program, supplied a wider perspective on the systemic implications and enactment of the innovative approach. Despite not having daily interactions with the specific class or program, the principal also played a significant role in establishing and observing the new curricular approach. His strategic viewpoint on the overall Grade 7 cohort added a different layer to the understanding of the problem.

In addition to these central figures, auxiliary staff members who maintained regular, though not daily, contact with the students were also surveyed. The librarian, who collaborated with teachers and students in developing research and academic writing skills, offered a different perspective. Similarly, the head of learning support, who worked with many students with

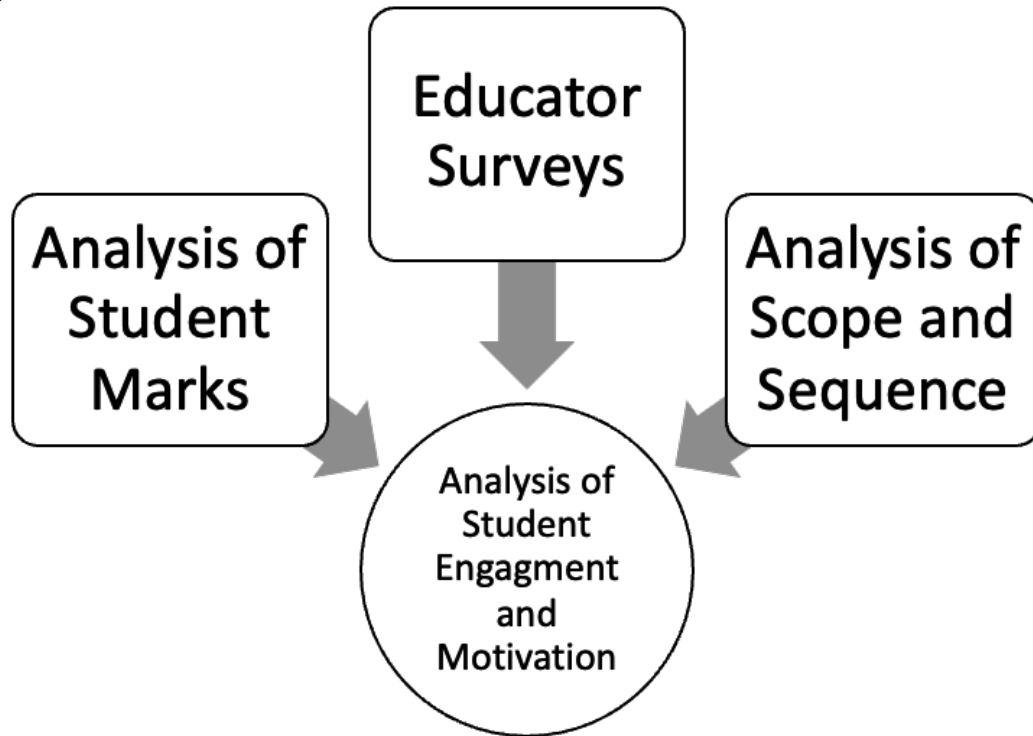
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additional needs, was in a position to provide insights into the challenges these students encountered. The (English as an Additional Language) EAL Department, which provided support across all four classes, offered insight into the effectiveness of language support mechanisms. These collective viewpoints further deepened the understanding of the diverse educational dynamics and the broader impacts on the student body.

### *Data Analysis Methods*

A multi-pronged data collection approach was used to address the problem of practice related to student motivation and engagement. Scope and sequence data from a comparable school served as a baseline, and year-on-year results from the case study school were analyzed. Alongside this, student marks were compared between classes that implemented student choice and those that did not. An educator survey captured teachers' perspectives on these changes. These combined methods provide a robust understanding of how incorporating student choice impacted student engagement and motivation (see **Figure 8**).

**Figure 8**  
*Data Analysis Methods*



The amalgamation of scope and sequence analysis, student mark analysis, and educator survey analysis served as a robust methodology to gauge levels of student engagement and motivation. Together, these diverse data sources provided a comprehensive and nuanced view, facilitating a more accurate understanding of the factors influencing student engagement and motivation in the educational environment of the case study school.

**Scope and Sequence.**

For an in-depth understanding of the evolution and impact of integrating student choice into the curriculum, three different scope and sequence documents were used. The first, sourced from an IB institution in the same geographic region that utilized the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) curriculum, provided a comparative perspective to the case study school that implemented increased student choice (see Appendix J). This document,

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obtained from a publicly available source in the selected Munich-based institution, offered a window into the operational methodologies of a similar institution during the 2021–2022 academic year (the year preceding this research). In addition to scope and sequence, the teaching documents were also analyzed to ensure validity with the provided scope and sequence.

The second document provided a historical perspective from the case study school, detailing its scope and sequence for the 2021–2022 school year, before the introduction of student choice (see Appendix B). This document constituted a crucial point of reference to observe the initial curriculum model and understand the structures and academic framework. Like the first scope and sequence, additional teaching material provided clarity in analyzing the curriculum. The analysis of these two documents provided a comparison of the traditional academic environment within the case study school before the introduction of student choice.

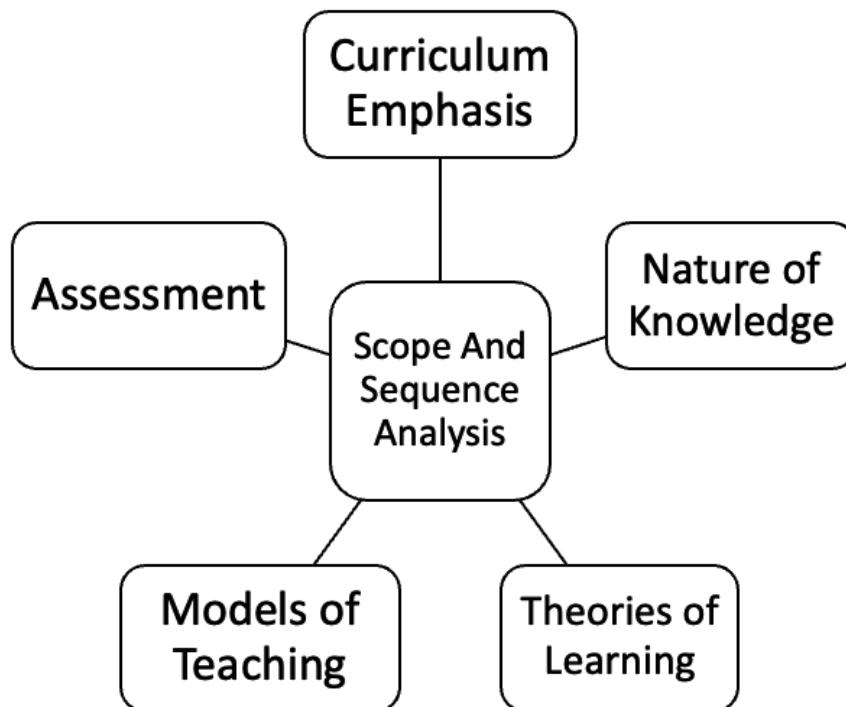
The third and final document, the 2022–2023 school year scope and sequence from the case study school showed the approach after integrating student choice into the curriculum's framework (see Appendix A). This document illustrated the degree of student involvement in unit determination and assessment choice, providing insight into the collaborative process between teacher and students. As with the other scope and sequence documents, additional teaching materials such as student assignments, teaching power points, and handouts were analyzed to provide additional validity and clarity.

The comparative analysis of these documents was underpinned by five overarching measures, namely the curriculum emphasis, nature of knowledge, theories of learning, models of teaching, and assessment (see Figure 9). Firstly, the curriculum emphasis assessed the values attributed to various skills, attitudes, and worldviews within the curriculum. This measure sought to understand the curriculum's overarching goals in the students' education rather than the content.

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The second measure concerned the nature of knowledge, exploring the curriculum's levels of complexity, cultural influences, and the multiple lenses through which it was viewed. This allowed for a deeper understanding of how the curriculum engaged with multifaceted knowledge perspectives. The supporting teaching materials exhibited how the use of roles and various lenses the students used to view the content and expand the nature of their knowledge. The assessments in the scope and sequence also portrayed the level of complexity the students were expected to achieve.

**Figure 9**  
*Analysis of Scope and Sequence*



*Note:* The five overarching measures of analysis for the various scope and sequences presented.

The third measure was theories of learning, evaluating the roles of teachers and students within the learning process. It examined the learning orientation, offering insight into the pedagogical approaches adopted within the curriculum. This measure was found throughout the

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scope and sequences and provided a clear example of expected teacher and student roles and which pedagogical approaches were valued by the various educational institutions.

The fourth measure involves models of teaching, focused on the expected actions and roles of both teachers and students. This analysis afforded a perspective on the teaching-learning dynamic within the classroom, taking into account the impact of student choice on these dynamics. This measure considered the roles of the teacher in a practical daily setting and described the expected duty of the teacher and student.

The fifth and final measure was an examination of assessment, considering the types of assessment employed, the flexibility in selecting different forms of assessment, and the knowledge and skills assessed. This part of the analysis provided a thorough understanding of how student abilities were evaluated in the wake of curriculum changes. This also provided a clear depiction of the extent to which student choice in curriculum and assessment were already present in the different case studies over multiple years.

The analytical process was guided by a top-down approach, adopting predetermined coding systems that spanned various educational parameters such as curriculum emphasis, nature of knowledge, theories of learning, and models for teaching and assessment (see Figure 9). This methodical approach ensured a structured investigation that lent itself to a nuanced and comprehensive interpretation of the curriculum and its associated elements. The thematic analysis was augmented by the inclusion of supplementary instructional materials—sample assessments, PowerPoint presentations, and quiz samples—which provided an additional layer of depth to the findings. These additional resources facilitated a more precise and holistic understanding of not only what was explicitly outlined in the scope and sequence but also how the curriculum was operationalized in the classroom context.



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The systematic thematic analysis was performed in iterative cycles to ensure a layered, multifaceted interpretation of the curricular framework. For instance, the use of a priori coding based on established educational theories and pedagogical models ensured that the analysis was grounded in substantive academic discourse, thereby enhancing its validity. This approach enabled the identification of emergent themes and sub-themes that were mapped against the predefined codes for a well-rounded, synthetic view of the curriculum. Through this meticulous process, the study sought to provide a rich, qualitative understanding of the curriculum, shedding light on its strengths, limitations, and potential areas for further development.

This comprehensive approach seeks to assess how and where student choice was evident in curriculum design and delivery, culminating in a multifaceted understanding of the effects of this shift on the teaching-learning dynamic considering the three prongs of curriculum: assessment, instruction, and curriculum.

### **Student Marks.**

Data collection was structured to ensure relevance and accuracy within this study. It utilized student marks from the MYP2 humanities cohort over the course of the 2022–2023 academic year (August 2022–June 2023). Student marks were collected to discern patterns and deduce meaningful insights about the correlation between student choice and overall academic performance.

These assessments served as key touchpoints for evaluation, each adhering to the criteria set forth by the IB assessment framework, thus ensuring a uniform standard of measurement across all classes (see Appendix C). This was particularly relevant given the phased nature of the program's implementation (see Figure 6). The assessment framework acted as a controlled variable in the assessment practices of each class despite the variability of student choice.

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The data harvested from this process was analyzed to determine whether an increase in student choice showed any correlation with a change in overall student attainment. This analysis did not merely contrast the mean student marks of the student choice and traditional classroom groups. It also offered valuable insights into the phased incorporation of the program as the academic year unfolded. This phased approach allowed for the consideration of multiple factors, thereby producing a more nuanced understanding of the impacts of student choice on academic achievement.

The collected data provided a more precise understanding of the effects of the program through statistical analysis. Central tendency measures—namely, mean, median, and mode—presented an overview of the general distribution and trends within the data. Concurrently, measures of dispersion, encompassing standard deviation and range, quantified the variability of the marks. These metrics were invaluable in obtaining a comprehensive understanding of the spread and consistency of the student marks.

Finally, the methodology encompassed an analysis of any aberrations within the data set. Extreme values, if present, were duly noted and earmarked for a detailed exploration later in the analysis. This additional analysis of outliers ensured that the overall assessment remained balanced and that any exceptional circumstances could be examined in isolation through various measures. The overarching goal of this holistic approach to data collection and analysis was to offer a comprehensive understanding of the effects of increasing student choice on academic performance within the context of the MYP2 humanities program.

### **Survey.**

In the final weeks of the academic year, an online survey was sent to various stakeholders involved in the new curricular approach of MYP2 humanities to gather data and perspectives

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from multiple lenses. This initiative sought to gather insights from both teachers and administrators to construct a comprehensive understanding of the program from multiple perspectives. The structure of the survey was twofold, incorporating both Likert scale questions and open-ended responses, and followed four overarching thematic components.

The first section of the survey employed a Likert scale designed to capture quantifiable data. This part of the survey offered participants a series of statements related to the four overarching themes of the evaluation: satisfaction with the new curricular approach, confidence in the program, preparation, and satisfaction with the support provided. Participants were asked to express their level of agreement with each statement on a scale, providing measurable responses that could be efficiently tabulated and analyzed.

The second section of the survey featured short answer questions that aligned with the corresponding themes from the Likert scale questions. This section aimed to delve deeper, inviting participants to articulate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in their own words. The purpose of these questions was to garner more nuanced data, allowing for a richer and more in-depth understanding of stakeholder experiences and perceptions. This two-pronged approach assured that the survey provided both breadth and depth of information, capturing a holistic picture of the program's reception and effectiveness as seen through the eyes of various stakeholders.

The thematic nature of the survey aimed to bring focus and coherence to the evaluation, ensuring that the data collected was directly relevant to the areas of interest. The themes of satisfaction, confidence, preparation, and effectiveness were chosen for their relevance to the overall program objectives and for their capacity to provide key insights into the program's effectiveness and areas for improvement. This survey design offered a comprehensive

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evaluation, allowing a nuanced understanding of the program and its impact on student understanding and motivation, teacher utilization, support staff views, and administrative oversight.

### ***Validity and Reliability***

Three measurement instruments—teacher surveys, student marks analysis, and scope and sequence analysis—were utilized to ensure a comprehensive and rigorous inquiry into the program’s implementation and efficacy. Each measurement tool brought its unique perspective, contributing to the validity of the investigation. The teacher survey, underpinned by thematic dimensions such as satisfaction, confidence, preparation, and support, captured valid data by directly soliciting experiences and perceptions from those intimately involved in the educational process. The consistent format of Likert scale responses and short answer items also lent additional validity to this instrument.

Simultaneously, student marks analysis provided an empirical measure of academic outcomes, a key facet of the program’s overall impact. The validity of this tool was anchored in its focus on performance outcomes as indicative of student proficiency. Its validity was established through the systematic application of the IB assessment framework to all classes regardless of implementation date (see Appendix C and Figure 6). By adhering to clearly defined criteria, these rubrics facilitated objective evaluation, minimizing subjectivity and variance among different assessors. Since the IB rubrics are skill-focused and have been carefully designed and tested to align with internationally recognized standards, they ensured that the marks awarded accurately reflected the competencies they were intended to measure (Rodríguez-Romero, 2018). The consistent application across different contexts and subjects contributed to the reliability of

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the assessments, ensuring that the marks obtained were not only precise but also reproducible under similar conditions, thereby providing a trustworthy measure of student performance.

Lastly, the scope and sequence analysis provided a broader lens into the curricular framework from comparative schools and different iterations of the current school, considering aspects such as curriculum values, complexity, cultural influences, teaching models, and assessment types. Its content validity was derived from the consistent framework for analysis applied across the different curricula, thus providing a uniform basis for comparative study. Therefore, each instrument offered a different yet complementary lens, ensuring the breadth and depth of the evaluation conducted to answer the overarching research question: How can the integration of student choice influence student achievement and engagement while preserving alignment with instructional goals, skills, and objectives?

### **Investigative Results**

#### *Scope and Sequence Analysis*

To analyze the curriculum's impact on students, multiple lenses were applied to the various scope and sequences. Firstly, the curriculum was examined, focusing on the educational institution values the schools aim to impart to the students, the proposed development of these skills and attributes, and their overall worldview.

Secondarily, the nature of knowledge concerning the subject matter was considered. This involved assessing various perspectives from which knowledge is perceived, the expected levels of complexity and ambiguity for students to grasp, and any cultural influences that might affect the content.

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Thirdly, the theoretical frameworks employed—specifically the theories of learning—were evaluated. This evaluation aims to understand the learning orientations and roles of the teacher and learner within the theoretical context.

Subsequently, the teaching models provided in the scope and sequence were examined, looking at what is expected to occur within the classroom. This takes into account elements like student activity in the learning process and the teacher's expected responsibilities.

Lastly, the fifth area examined was the variety of assessments utilized in the classroom. This included the types of assessments used, the skills and knowledge students were expected to master, and the range of assessment forms made available to the students.

### **Summary of Scope and Sequence Analysis.**

The comparisons and evolutions between the previous scope and sequences are depicted in the comparative chart, Table 1. This visual representation highlights the progression within the MYP2 humanities classes, particularly with the transformation away from the standardized curriculum toward the invigorated emphasis on student choice.

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**Table 1**  
*Comparative Summary of Scope and Sequences*

Measure	Comparative School 2021–2022	Case Study School 2021–2022	Case Study School 2022–2023
<b>Curriculum Emphasis</b> - What is valued and desired in the curriculum? - Skills and attitudes developed - World view	- Knowledge of definitions and facts - Foundation on remembering correct knowledge - Cause and effect - Descriptions - Identify differences in case studies - Extrapolate patterns to find future implications	- Focus on skills development within existing curriculum - Inquiry-based - Focus on knowledge gained through a cultural lens - Students are expected to analyze situations and may arrive at multiple correct conclusions - Students are expected to be critical thinkers	- Skills-based, not focused on curriculum content - Research and inquiry-based - Knowledge is subjective, based on individual roles and larger culture - Students are expected to formulate multiple correct conclusions to similar situations
<b>Nature of Knowledge</b> - Multiple lenses of facts and knowledge - Levels of complexity and ambiguity - Cultural influences	- Objective - Cumulative progress - Identifiable attributes to classify knowledge - Collection of facts based on existing truth - Past patterns can help predict future realities	- Knowledge is contextual and subjective - Knowledge can be classified and analyzed in multiple ways - Past patterns may not predict future pathways due to complexity of culture and technology	- Knowledge is contextual and subjective - Use perspectives and information to make valid and supported arguments - Consider multiple alternatives to presented knowledge - Use critical skills to analyze and interpret information
<b>Theories of Learning</b> - Orientation to learning - Role of the teacher and learner	- Behaviorism - Teacher-centered - Transfer of knowledge and facts - Rote memorization and classification	- Student-centered - Constructivism - Development of knowledge within a cultural framework	- Curriculum co-determined between teacher and student - Student-led, teacher-facilitated - Development of knowledge within multiple cultural frameworks and individual roles - Focus on understanding how knowledge changes through multiple roles

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Measure	Comparative School 2021–2022	Case Study School 2021–2022	Case Study School 2022–2023
<b>Models for Teaching</b> - Activity of the student in the learning process - Expected duties of the teacher	- Teacher as expert, student as learner - Teacher must provide the student with clear definitions and accurate explanations - Student must memorize knowledge and apply accurately	- Teacher-facilitator - Student is expected to research - Teacher clarifies any student misconceptions that may arise	- Curriculum is co-constructed by the students and teacher - Teacher clarifies student misconceptions - Student must make connections between similar situations - Definitions and key terminology is developed as a class based on individual student research - Teacher is expected to scaffold for students who are struggling
<b>Assessment</b> - Types of assessment - Skills assessment - Knowledge assessment - Flexibility of the curriculum to provide various forms of assessment	- Summative - Assessment of products - End-of-unit assessments - End-of-course assessment - Additional low-stakes assessments given (quizzes) - Student work marked based on IBO rubrics	- Summative - Formative - Investigations - Content Portfolio - Field work - Cross-discipline work between various subjects - Student work marked based on IBO rubrics	- Summative - Assessment and marking standards are co-developed with the students - Students can choose assessment modality and role from a pre-agreed list - Reflective skills-based portfolio used as end-of-year assessment - Cross-discipline work in various subjects - Student work marked based on IBO rubrics

### **Comparative Curriculum from a Similar International School.**

To establish a benchmark for the conventional classroom, supplementary scope and sequences, accompanied by teaching materials, were sourced from the MYP2 humanities program of a proximate school adhering to the IB assessment framework and the IGCSE curriculum and assessments. This provided an invaluable perspective on the influence that standardized curriculum and assessments have on pedagogical innovation within the context of an IB assessment framework and proscribed content. In addition, this scope and sequence offered



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a comparison with a traditional classroom where student choice in co-determining the content or assessments was absent.

A review of the curriculum revealed that the comparative school prioritized the acquisition and definition of factual knowledge in their curriculum. Their first unit consisted of a thorough review of geographical terminologies, classifications, and descriptions. However, all units incorporated identical PowerPoint presentations and handouts and suggested homework assignments. This stringent approach greatly limited teacher and student autonomy.

The nature of knowledge investigation revealed that, in the comparative school's curriculum, knowledge was predominantly viewed as an objective entity, leaving minimal room for divergent perspectives. The curriculum appeared to foster a cumulative knowledge acquisition process, with units needing to be taught in a specific sequence. The objective was to categorize knowledge and facts according to pre-established truths, identifying patterns to predict future occurrences. This approach, however, limited complexity and ambiguity to a singular lens, encouraging students to find the "correct" prediction needed for the assessment while rejecting other possibilities.

The underlying theories of learning analysis showed that behaviorism appeared to be central, with the teacher playing a traditional teaching role within the classroom, and students were expected to engage primarily with the instructor. Consequently, the instructor functioned as a vassal for the transmission of knowledge and facts, and the student's role was to retain this information for assessment purposes. Due to the highly objective nature of knowledge in this setting, dissenting student views could potentially lead to lower assessment scores.

The adherence to fixed teaching models was also evident, aligning with the earlier observation that the instructors were positioned as experts, with the students focusing on learning from these

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experts. Consequently, the instructor was required to provide the students with precise definitions and accurate explanations. The students, in turn, were required to memorize this imparted knowledge to apply it accurately in assessment contexts. This may explain the uniformity of the teaching materials, handouts, and homework assessments between teachers and classes.

In terms of student assessments, the process was primarily constrained to objective realities. Although specific assessment materials were not available, the list of assessments from the scope and sequence, teaching materials and handouts, and homework expectations indicated that assessments were of a summative nature and focused on end-of-unit and end-of-course measurements of knowledge retention. Low-stakes assessments in the form of quizzes were included; however, these assessments focused on objective knowledge with no explorations of ideas and concepts.

### **Analysis of Previous Curriculum (Before the Implementation of Student Choice).**

Upon analyzing the case study school before the introduction of student choice, a deviation from the comparative school's approach was clear, mainly stemming from the absence of a proscribed curriculum and its consequent standardized assessments. This single aspect underscored substantial differences between the two institutions even prior to the introduction of student choice.

In terms of curriculum emphasis, the school under study placed a priority on skill development within the curriculum. Accordingly, units were designed around an inquiry framework, where students were presented with concepts to explore and discuss. Moreover, knowledge acquisition was facilitated through multiple cultural lenses, with student handouts centered on events and situations viewed from varying roles and historical periods. The case

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study school acknowledged that due to the fluidity of knowledge and multiplicity of perspectives, students' analyses of situations may yield multiple valid conclusions. This recognition was emphasized to foster critical thinking and to encourage students to justify their decisions and choices.

This implies that the nature of knowledge within this framework is both contextual and subjective, capable of being categorized and analyzed in multiple ways. Due to this complexity, past patterns may not reliably predict future pathways. As part of the student's educational experience, they were encouraged to discuss possible outcomes from multiple lenses depending on the situation, time period, and motivation.

In response to the relinquishment of objectivism, the learning theories leaned towards a student-centered approach, wherein knowledge was collaboratively constructed by teacher and student within a cultural framework. This approach produced a more individualized learning experience than that offered by a standardized curriculum, as the knowledge constructed may vary among students.

The models for teaching in the case study school placed the teacher as a facilitator and the student as a researcher, necessitating a greater emphasis on research. The teacher needed to remain aware of the knowledge the student was developing to quickly address any misconceptions or conflicting information from various sources (Billingsley et al., 2018). This dual role of the student as an informed researcher and as a student developing their skills to perceive multiple worldviews provided both benefits and challenges as multiple perspectives are considered.

The openness of the teaching and learning experience was mirrored in the student assessments. Similar to the comparative school, some assessments were summative in nature in

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terms of end-of-unit assessments. However, the majority of assessments served as formative checkpoints within the unfolding of a unit, incorporating investigations, portfolios, fieldwork, and cross-curricular assessments involving multiple subjects. All assessments utilized the IB framework.

### **Analysis of Curriculum (After the Implementation of Student Choice).**

When integrating student choice into the curriculum between August 2022 and July 2023, the objective was to inject as much student autonomy as possible within the assessment and curricular frameworks. While student choice was not an entirely novel concept for the school, its prioritization necessitated substantial revisions to the scope and sequence.

Under this renewed approach, the curriculum emphasis transitioned to a purely skill-based system, diverting from a blended approach between skills and curriculum content. The involvement of students in co-determining the content necessitated teachers to set more encompassing objectives, pinpointing the skills and goals they desired students to acquire. Toward this goal, an enhanced focus on inquiry and research was implemented, leading students to recognize the subjectivity and cultural aspects of historical knowledge. This recognition underscored that multiple valid conclusions can stem from similar situations.

Additionally, this inquiry and research approach reinforced the notion that knowledge within the humanities framework is intrinsically contextual and subjective. Diverse perspectives can render different yet equally valid arguments about the same events. Students were encouraged to consider various interpretations of knowledge and question the source's perspectives and motivation. Consequently, students performed an elevated level of critical thinking in the analysis and interpretation of information.

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Given the co-determination of content and co-creation of assessment, the implemented learning theories reflected a constructionist approach, with a pronounced emphasis on teacher and student as near-equal partners in the learning process. It was a student-led, teacher-facilitated methodology where students selected various content, and the teachers facilitated the acquisition of content and presented these units to the students. The individualized nature of this approach led to knowledge development within multiple frameworks and focused on understanding how perspectives alter knowledge.

The case study school's teaching models also underwent modifications with this new curricular approach as teachers and students collaboratively constructed content. As a result, teachers played a more active role in rectifying student misconceptions, and students were responsible for establishing connections between previous and new knowledge. Definitions and key terminology were collectively developed as content progressed, with different students contributing diverse knowledge from their individual research pursuits. This highly personalized learning required additional scaffolding for students who struggled with the self-directed nature of the classroom, which enabled them to participate with reduced individual research or motivation expectations.

The assessments in this learning environment maintained summative end-of-unit and end-of-course assessments, but these were skills-based rather than content-driven. Additionally, within the assessment framework, students had the autonomy to choose different modalities and roles from a pre-agreed list. There was an increased focus on reflective skills both as a learner and a person, with a concentration on the skills developed by the student and the skills that still required improvement. This was apparent in the end-of-year portfolio, where rather than discussing individual learning or research, students discussed which skills they had gained and

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which needed further development. As in the previous year, cross-disciplinary collaborations with other subjects were present, with the humanities department participating in the creation of integrated units. Consistent with all scope and sequences analyzed, all student work was assessed based on the IB assessment framework.

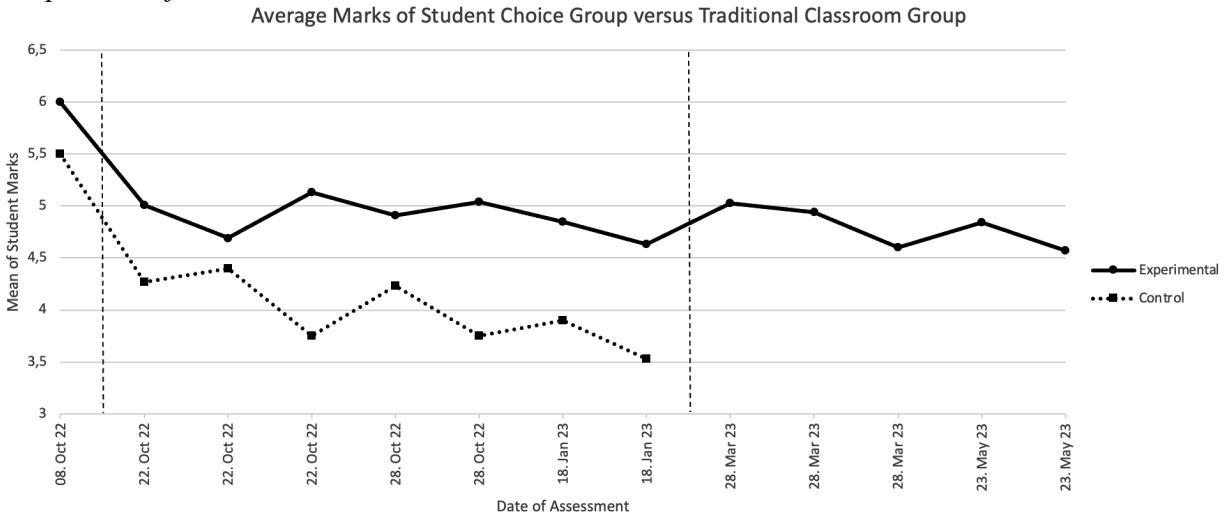
### *Student Marks Analysis*

Within the IB assessment framework, there are four distinct criteria to evaluate assessments, where each assesses different skills and attributes through various lenses: knowing and understanding, investigating, communicating, and thinking critically (see Appendix C). Teachers can evaluate a single piece of work using multiple criteria to measure different attributes using the same submission. For instance, when a student presents a paper, one criterion could be employed to assess the factual accuracy of the content presented, another criterion might be used to gauge the depth of inquiry and complexity the student demonstrates, while yet another criterion might examine the student's capacity for creative thinking and the synthesis of current and prior knowledge. Each of these lenses offers a unique perspective on the student's work and yields different marks.

The various applications of the multiple criteria approach were reflected in the assessments administered. For instance, the assessment administered on October 8, 2022, utilized a single criterion for evaluation. Conversely, the January 18, 2023 assessment used two criteria, and the March 28, 2023 assessment incorporated three criteria (see Figure 10).

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**Figure 10**  
*Comparison of Student Marks*



*Note:* Graph of student average marks from the student choice group and the traditional classroom group.

A single assessment, such as an essay, in the context of an interdisciplinary skills-based framework, can serve to evaluate multiple competencies simultaneously. For instance, an essay assigned on a specific research area requires students to demonstrate their aptitude in various distinct skills, such as researching, quality of communication, and developing solutions to problems. Each of these aspects can be separately evaluated using different assessment criteria. This means a student might exhibit strong research capabilities yet struggle with formulating coherent questions or face challenges in clearly communicating their analysis and findings through writing. The IB assessment framework accommodates these nuanced variations in abilities by allowing multiple marks to be awarded on a single assignment. This approach recognizes and addresses the multidimensional nature of students' skills, providing a more comprehensive understanding of their individual proficiencies and areas for growth. This approach allows a reduction in the quantity of assessments distributed throughout the year, allowing greater attention to the quality of these assessments.

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In conventional educational settings, the common practice is to assign one mark per task. This approach does not assess numerous skills and areas of knowledge that are integral to the assignment's completion. Furthermore, this practice often necessitates the distribution of multiple assignments to gauge the full spectrum of content comprehension and skills that a student might be demonstrating. Contrastingly, in an IB setting, the holistic nature of the assessment framework allows for a comprehensive evaluation of a student's knowledge and skills within the confines of a single assignment.

In the initial assessment conducted on October 8, 2022, classes 7A and 7D engaged in a source analysis task where the students were asked to review different news articles and analyze the motivations behind the writing. It should be noted that the other classes, 7B and 7C, were not involved in this exercise but remained aligned with all later assessments throughout the year. During this evaluation, class 7A exercised student choice by selecting the source and undertaking the corresponding analysis, whereas class 7D was presented with a standard source, and all performed the task based on this single example. It was observed that the average student score was higher in the student choice group, with the students outperforming their counterparts from the traditional approach by an average of 9%. Subsequently, the teacher decided to shift class 7D into a student choice framework, rendering this October assessment the sole assessment documenting a more traditional approach for class 7D.

Following this curriculum unit, the students engaged in an integrated unit with the science department. Some degree of student choice was facilitated in terms of assessment, although the content was established in harmony with the science department. Interestingly, despite only integrating student choice with assessment, the student choice group surpassed the traditional class by 17%, 7%, and 37%, respectively (see Figure 11).



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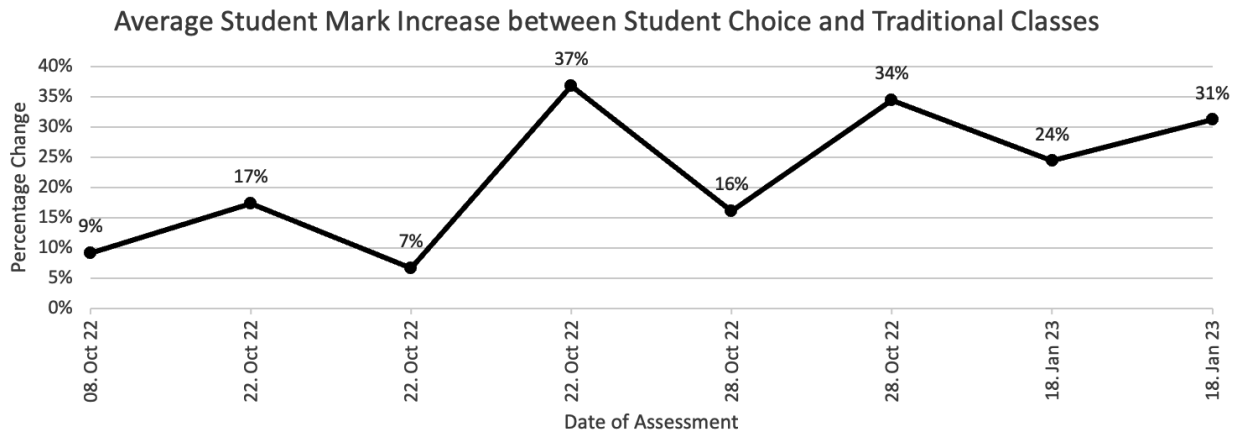
At the unit's conclusion, students were encouraged to reflect on the integration and engage in discussions regarding the diverse perspectives from which a single topic could be presented. While this was a reflective skill-building exercise for the entire cohort, the student choice group (classes 7A and 7D) differed in the mode of assessment—students had the liberty to choose their mode of knowledge representation—as opposed to the traditional classrooms (classes 7B and 7C), where students were expected to write a reflective essay. Even though the majority of students from classes 7A and 7D opted to write an essay, some students, particularly those still acquiring language proficiency or those with specific learning disabilities, chose to express their knowledge through a podcast or poster. This variety in assessment modality enabled the student choice classes to outperform the traditional classes by 16% and 34%.

Subsequent to this unit, classes 7A and 7D were empowered to co-create their unit topics and assessments in collaboration with the teachers. Meanwhile, in the traditional classes 7B and 7C, the teacher selected the Vikings as the topic to explore the Middle Ages through the lens of challenge and innovation. Contrarily, the student choice class was provided with five different curriculum topics, along with brief introductions to each, from which they could choose what interested them most. The five choices were: the Vikings (as taught in the other classes), the Black Death, the Mongol Empire, Feudal Japan, and the Muslim Enlightenment. Based on student surveys, both classes chose the Black Death. The students then had the opportunity to delve into a non-selected area (Vikings, Mongol Empire, Feudal Japan, or Muslim Enlightenment) for independent research and presentation. Similar to earlier instances, students had a choice of modality—namely, a paper, podcast, or poster—however, they were not permitted to select the same modality as before. This approach allowed the teacher to assess the students from a different perspective and provided students with multiple opportunities to

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develop various skills. Even with the restricted choices, students could still select their second choice. This enhanced role and modality for the assessment, in contrast to the traditional class, led to a higher score attainment by 24% and 31% by the student choice group compared to the traditional classroom.

**Figure 11**  
*Student Mark Increase by Percentage*



*Note:* The chart illustrates the comparative percentage rise in scores between the student choice group and the traditional classroom group. Consistently across all assessments, the student choice group registered higher marks than the traditional group.

It was at this point that the teacher from classes 7B and 7C elected to transition their classes into a student choice framework for the remainder of the academic year. Despite the fact that students could not select their topic, as the teacher had already commenced the unit on Vikings, they were granted the liberty to choose the modality of assessment and the perspective from which the assessment was viewed. The students were thus able to adopt the viewpoint of an individual from that era (choice of perspective) and then chose to either visually scrutinize the period through maps, linguistically explore it through journaling, or engage in artifact analysis (choice of modality). Although these classes had traditionally lagged behind the student choice

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group in average student marks, the students from 7B and 7C managed to elevate their scores significantly to match those of the other classes. This data suggested that the introduction of student choice, which encouraged an increase in student autonomy and relatedness, led to a boost in student performance without compromising the level of expectation or rigor.

The final unit of study, which focused on the impact of tourism, incorporated aspects of student choice in both content and perspective. The students could choose among 12 different areas, namely Stonehenge, the Great Barrier Reef, Machu Picchu, Oktoberfest, Serengeti National Park, Ha Long Bay, Petra, Varapiso, Venice, Carnaval, Sagrada Familia, and Everest Base Camp. They were also free to adopt a perspective from four choices: a business or land developer, a historian, a government zoning organization, or a non-governmental organization. However, the modality was predetermined, with all students required to draft a letter advocating for their position, considering the varying motivations and perspectives found in their selected roles. This particular assessment yielded slightly lower scores than the previous ones, albeit two students received a score of zero due to plagiarism, consequently lowering the overall grade level average. Figure 11 illustrates the scores, excluding the plagiarizing students' marks. All the other data represent the full population.

### **Student Mark Results.**

In line with the school's assessment practices, the IB assessment framework was uniformly applied across all classes, with a moderation process enacted between the classroom educators and the department head (who was not directly involved in teaching this grade level). This procedure provided an extra layer of reliability and validity to the final dataset of student marks.

### **Summary of Student Marks.**

Reflecting on the research question—How can the integration of student choice influence student achievement and engagement while preserving alignment with instructional goals, skills, and objectives?—the presentation of student marks in a phase-by-phase adoption within this case study offered a clear picture of impact. The implementation of student choice while maintaining curriculum targets, skills, objectives, and rigor *can* positively impact student achievement. Student marks for students who participated in the case study improved from 7%–37%, with an overall average impact of 22% compared to a traditional classroom. Furthermore, we observed that the introduction of student choice midway through a term or even a unit of instruction did not adversely affect student performance and, based on the results from this case study, may increase overall average student marks. While this data painted a clear and significant picture, it was merely a piece of the overall impact that student choice exerted on the educational environment. Along with considering its effects on students, the data must also address the implications for teachers regarding their time commitment and workload, as well as the impact on other school resources.

### ***Survey Results***

During the final week of the academic year, an online survey was given to various key stakeholders involved in the novel curricular approach of student choice in MYP2 humanities to ascertain how the new student choice approach impacted student attainment and engagement in the classroom. The survey aimed to gain multiple insights from teachers and administrators, creating a thorough understanding of the program from diverse viewpoints. The survey design incorporated both Likert scale and open-ended questions and was structured around four central themes. The overarching themes—satisfaction, confidence, preparation, and effectiveness with

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the new curricular framework—were selected due to their relevance to the program’s overall objectives and their capacity to provide pivotal insights into the program’s efficacy and areas for improvement.

Likert scale questions allowed data analysis based on participants’ levels of agreement with statements pertaining to the central themes. The short answer questions corresponded to the Likert scale questions, targeting insights and nuanced feedback to facilitate a richer understanding of the stakeholders’ experiences and perceptions. In addition to the specific thematic queries, an overarching question encompassing the theme of “effectiveness of curriculum goals” was integrated, granting survey respondents the opportunity for a comprehensive reflection on the entirety of the program. Of the seven people approached for the survey, four responded, indicating a response rate of 57%.

### **Thematic Analysis of Survey Results.**

The Likert scale questions used a one to five rating, with one signifying strong disagreement and five reflecting a strong agreement. Additionally, a provision for “not applicable” was provided for all question types. This inclusion increased the validity of the responses, permitting participants to abstain from answering questions they either failed to understand or preferred not to address. Such an approach increased the authenticity of the responses and allowed a nuanced perspective on the problem of practice.

Under the theme of satisfaction with the progressive curricular program promoting student choice, two Likert scale questions were posed (see Table 2). The first question, “The Pathways Program has helped me build knowledge in my content area,” garnered an average rating of four out of five, indicating general approval. The second question, “The Pathways Program is helping my students learn,” secured a perfect score of five, implying strong agreement. Simultaneously,

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the open-ended feedback from the educators denoted a pronounced appreciation for the increase in student choice, with all respondents reflecting a favorable viewpoint.

**Table 2**  
*Likert Scale Question Survey Results*

Survey Results						
Topic	Survey Question	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Satisfaction with the curriculum	The Pathways Program has helped me build knowledge in my content area.	0%	0%	0%	<b>100%</b>	0%
	The Pathways Program is helping my students learn.	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>100%</b>
Confidence with the curriculum	I am confident in my ability to teach a full lesson in the Pathways Program.	<b>No responses</b>				
	I understand the learning goals of the units I am teaching.	0%	0%	0%	0%	<b>100%</b>
Preparation with the curriculum	I have the time I need to prepare to teach lessons.	0%	0%	0%	<b>100%</b>	0%
	I have the resources I need to prepare lesson plans.	0%	0%	0%	<b>100%</b>	0%

*Note:* The survey was provided to seven people, four people responded.

Three-quarters of the participants (75%) suggested that elevating student choice was key in enhancing engagement, motivation, investment, and buy-in. A quarter (25%) of the respondents preferred the amplified collaboration between educators. One educator’s succinct response encapsulated the collective sentiment: “Student voice and choice is integral to student buy-in.”

When probing the respondents’ confidence in the curriculum, two Likert scale queries were posited. The first question, “I am confident in my ability to teach a full lesson in the Pathways

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Program,” did not procure any responses. However, the second question, “I understand the learning goals of the units I am teaching,” produced multiple responses, all of which were strongly in agreement (score of five). This suggested that while the participants might have refrained from commenting on their abilities in day-to-day lessons, they understood the learning objectives of their respective units.

The short answer responses suggested an assortment of challenges encountered by the participants, with no identifiable overarching theme (see Table 3). The first respondent expressed concerns about ensuring the depth of content, fearing its breadth and diversity might pose challenges. The second respondent expressed concerns about standardizing marking (or grading student work) amidst diverse assessment types. The third respondent contended that managing multiple physical spaces would hinder student choice development. Lastly, the fourth respondent was apprehensive about developing scaffolding that supports varying types of learners and levels of skill development, such as self-management and critical thinking. Subsequently, the educator survey responses indicated that educators faced diverse challenges in daily planning but understood the overarching goals and direction of student choice in their classrooms. The challenge appeared to be rooted more in logistical implementation rather than a lack of educator buy-in.

Upon evaluating the level of preparedness associated with the curriculum, two Likert scale queries were furnished. The initial question, “I have the time I need to prepare to teach lessons,” secured an average rating of 4, symbolizing a general agreement. Similarly, the follow-up query, “I have the resources I need to prepare lesson plans,” also received an average rating of 4, indicating broad agreement.

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**Table 3**  
*Short Answer Survey Results*

Survey Results				
Topic Area	Response 1	Response 2	Response 3	Response 4
Satisfaction with the curriculum	Encourages collaboration between educators.	Student voice and choice is key to student buy in.	Enables student choice increasing engagement and intrinsic motivation.	This program enabled my students to have choice, which clearly made them more invested in the learning engagements. Their motivation and enthusiasm resulted in most students being able to think more deeply about their chosen topics and make connections with other areas of the curriculum. They also seemed to stay on task for longer periods of time.
Confidence with the curriculum	it is hard to teach some skills is the content is too broad and diverse.	When allowing students choice it can be a bit challenging to standardize marking.	Most challenging is to create a learning environment that supports student choice.	At first, I was really unsure how to differentiate to meet the needs of all learners. This approach initially required more scaffolding than a traditionally taught unit, but once those supports were in place, all learners seemed to access the content and develop their thinking and self-management skills fairly well.
Preparation with the curriculum	Additional protected time dedicated to planning and marking	More time.	Developing the flexible learning environment	I would like to have a couple more opportunities to meet with the Learning Support team and colleagues from the English Language Acquisition department in order to learn new scaffolding strategies. In addition, the lesson preparation required more time than a traditional lesson in order to make sure that resources for all learners were available.
Effectiveness of curriculum goals	I don't think it would have been much different from a 'traditional' class; the skill of inquiry was a focus but I am not sure how to define that ATL skill.	This depends entirely on the student. If they are interested in Humanities, this gives them the ability to explore areas of personal interest. This in turn creates deeper learning.	The program helped the students to develop their ATL skills, especially their research skills and time management skills	I absolutely believe that this program enabled students to broaden their skills. In particular, with more choice and greater independence, they were able to exercise their self-management skills, including their abilities to manage their time and break tasks into smaller chunks. Similarly, their research skills developed significantly through this program. They expanded their ability to independently search for information, think critically about reliability of sources, and practice academic integrity through citation.
			They were so engaged and motivated that they used the required skills.	This sense of greater choice and personal accountability for their success made them interact with the curriculum content in a much richer manner than a traditional lesson in which they had little say in what they were learning.
	I think making the curriculum too broad risks lowering the interaction with curriculum content.	Some kids would prefer to be handed a list of items to memorize, and therefore struggle more with this method.	As they were able to choose their topics, they were more eager to explore the content and learn even the more challenging conceptual understandings.	For some students this led to their understanding their chosen topic to a greater depth, but not for all. A couple struggled with self-management to a point where they did not meet their learning goals. For those with limited English language skills, this approach requires significant scaffolding, and may not result in greater understanding of the content. Finding enough sources of the right reading level for English language newcomers was very tricky.



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The short answer queries yielded further insights into the educators' prerequisites for lesson preparation. Three out of four respondents (75%) proposed that additional and safeguarded time should be allocated for planning and assessing tasks within this program. One respondent (25%) suggested that a flexible learning environment could assist with lesson preparation. Furthermore, a respondent (25%) expressed a longing for greater collaboration opportunities with other support staff, such as learning support or EAL specialists, to better scaffold the material for diverse student cohorts.

This information suggested a disconnect between the Likert scale responses and the short answers. A majority of respondents highlighted the need for more time but concurrently agreed that they possessed adequate time to prepare and deliver lessons. This discrepancy could be attributed to the specificity of the question and its potential limitations. Adequate time for lesson preparation does not necessarily imply sufficient time for collaboration, assessment, or long-term planning.

In relation to satisfaction with curricular support, a single respondent engaged with the Likert scale query, affirming they possessed the required support. Given the limited responses to this theme relative to others, further analysis is deemed unnecessary.

In examining the effectiveness of curriculum goals, a single, multidimensional, short answer question was presented. This comprehensive inquiry: "How can the integration of student choice influence student achievement and engagement while preserving alignment with instructional goals, skills, and objectives?" produced the most insightful responses from the survey participants. The extensive nature of this question led to responses of equal breadth and depth, providing additional nuance.

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Notably, the provided responses ranged from the belief that the program was similar to a conventional classroom regarding skills development, to the view that the program significantly assisted both students and teachers in skill acquisition and development. A quarter of the respondents (25%) compared the program to a traditional class, albeit with an augmented inquiry component. Similarly, another respondent (25%) expressed that the effectiveness of the program hinged on the individual student. If the student held a strong interest in humanities, the program would provide additional opportunities for exploration. However, for some students who would “prefer to be handed a list of items to memorize,” the course could present challenges. Half of the respondents (50%) felt this program developed students’ ATL skills, particularly in research and time management. One of the respondents demonstrated stronger agreement, stating, “I absolutely believe that this program enabled students to broaden their skills.”

Regarding interaction with curriculum content, three out of four respondents (75%) affirmed that student choice played a crucial role in the program, enabling students to explore content to a greater extent than in a conventional classroom environment. One educator stated, “This sense of greater choice and personal accountability for their [student] success made them interact with the curriculum content in a much richer manner than a traditional lesson in which they had little say in what they were learning.” Concurrently, 50% of respondents indicated that offering student choice allowed students to delve into additional challenging content they might not have been otherwise exposed to. A single respondent (25%) suggested that granting student choice widened the curriculum and potentially diminished interaction with curriculum content.

However, when considering the depth of engagement, 75% of respondents indicated that this curriculum enabled students to dive deeper into the curriculum and further develop the richness of the overall content. Half of the respondents (50%) asserted that the freedom of content choice

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bolstered the students' overall motivation in coursework, leading to higher levels of student engagement compared to traditional classroom environments.

In considering some of the limitations of this approach, one educator (25%) stated that providing excessive choice could reduce students' interaction with the classroom content. Half of the educators (50%) highlighted that while this type of approach was beneficial for certain learners, it could introduce additional barriers for others, specifically those with learning disabilities or limited English proficiency. One respondent remarked, "A couple [of students] struggled with self-management to a point where they did not meet their learning goals. For those [students] with limited English language skills, this approach requires significant scaffolding, and may not result in greater understanding of the content."

### **Survey Investigation Summary.**

The evaluation of the survey, which integrated both the Likert scale and open-ended responses, provided key themes and insightful nuances regarding the increase in student choice. The Likert scale evaluations showcased an overall satisfaction with the program, and the short answer sections identified diverse challenges in daily planning but an understanding of the overarching goals and direction of student choice. Further, the respondents demonstrated their appreciation for the increased student choice and reported enhanced engagement, motivation, investment, and buy-in among students. An interesting note was the consensus on the role of student choice in augmenting engagement and overall learning experience, encapsulated by one respondent's comment: "Student voice and choice is integral to student buy-in."

The confidence of respondents in the curriculum was evaluated through both Likert scale questions and educator feedback. Although the educators did not comment on their abilities to teach day-to-day lessons, they were clear in their understanding of the learning goals of their

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respective units. However, the open-ended feedback showcased a variety of challenges encountered by the educators in executing the program without a common thematic issue emerging. These challenges ranged from concerns over the depth of content, standardization of marking amidst diverse assessment types, managing multiple physical spaces, and developing scaffolding suitable for diverse learners.

The level of preparedness in association with the curriculum execution was also assessed through a blend of Likert scale queries and short answer questions. The Likert scale responses suggested a general agreement on the adequacy of time and resources available for lesson preparation. However, the short answer responses revealed a need for additional and safeguarded time for planning and assessing tasks within the program, hinting at a possible discrepancy in the perception of time requirements for the program's implementation. Moreover, respondents expressed a desire for a more flexible learning environment and opportunities for collaboration with other support staff, such as learning support or EAL specialists.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of curriculum goals was assessed through a comprehensive question, which led to responses offering depth and nuance. Respondents largely viewed the program as beneficial to both students and teachers, aiding in the development of ATL skills and fostering a richer interaction with the curriculum content. However, some limitations were also identified, most notably the potential barrier this approach could pose to certain learners, specifically those with learning disabilities or limited English proficiency. This suggested that while the curricular program was viewed positively, considerations should be made for varying student needs and ensuring that the challenges identified by the educators are addressed for effective and ongoing implementation.

## ARTIFACT III

### **Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice**

Within the exploration of student motivation and engagement, three primary solutions were identified. First, the integration of an inquiry-based learning cycle, otherwise known as the inquiry cycle or the Pathways Programme, that included reflective practices and a diversity of teaching methodologies adaptable enough to suit different content areas. Second, the skills-based curriculum was modified to be enriched with elements of student choice. Finally, the existing assessment framework was modified to encapsulate more student autonomy while adhering to the rigorous standards defined by the International Baccalaureate (IB) assessment framework.

Each of these solutions, while designed to complement the others holistically, possessed intrinsic merits and could stand independently as a viable strategy. Educational institutions could elect to incorporate one, two, or all three of these solutions as they see fit within their respective frameworks. It is crucial to underscore that the flexibility of these solutions was a deliberate design feature, enabling schools and educators to adapt and adjust these tools in alignment with their local needs and challenges. While the synergistic effect of all three solutions working in tandem can potentially maximize student engagement and motivation, each solution offers a substantive avenue to address the identified problem of practice.

The essence of the adapted curriculum hinged on its flexibility, ensuring educators and students had a spectrum of topical areas for exploration. This was distinct from the inquiry cycle by offering not a structured process of investigation but rather a menu of subject matters to dive into. It enabled educators to direct students toward specific areas of study, regardless of whether the inquiry model was followed. Such an approach facilitated a tailored educational journey,

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accounting for both the educator's comfort and expertise and the learners' individual needs and preferences.

### ***Pathways Programme Development***

In order to implement curriculum and assessment adaptations that incorporate increased student choice, a new program was developed known as the Pathways Programme. This program is based on an inquiry cycle that embeds student choice within the program framework. This cycle fosters a dynamic academic setting where students and teachers collaboratively decide on the curriculum content and assessment framework. The unique aspect of this program is its emphasis on collective decision-making, where all participants in the classroom contribute to the selection of topics and determination of assessment criteria.

**Figure 12**  
*The Pathways Programme Inquiry Cycle*

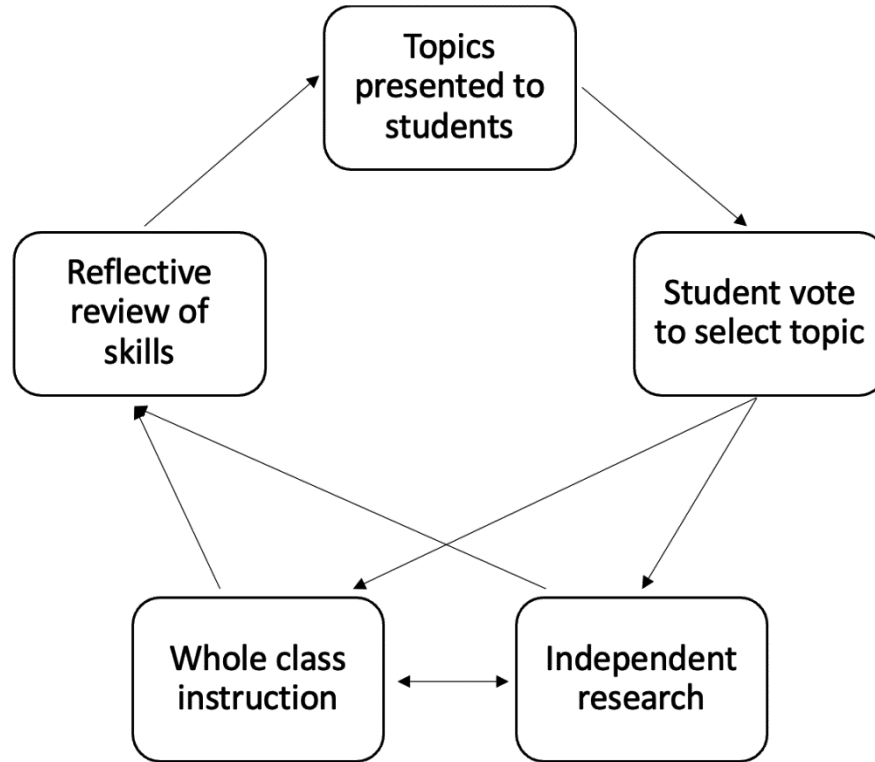


Figure 12 depicts the inquiry cycle that facilitates student choice in topic selection, while giving teachers discretion to decide when direct instruction and independent research should take place. Moreover, this cycle allocates time at the end for students to contemplate the skills they've enhanced and to discern their strong points as well as areas that require further development. The design of this program promotes student choice by expressly emphasizing co-determination and self-reflection, thereby ensuring that student preference remains central to the teaching process.

In the initial phase, the subject of inquiry is unveiled with a range of distinct topical areas embodying the comprehensive concept the teacher intends for the student to grasp. An introductory period is allocated for a synopsis of these different topics, ensuring the students comprehend the choices at their disposal, allowing competence, autonomy, and relatedness into

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the topic selection. Subsequently, they collectively vote on the topic they desire to dive into as a group. Once this collective decision has been made, the teacher can then opt for different pedagogical approaches.

The first approach is one in which the teacher takes on the role of a traditional educator, guiding the entire class through the chosen topic. This approach is typically adopted when the teacher has already fully prepared the unit and doesn't require additional time for further development. Additionally, if the educator identifies a need for additional scaffolding or more extensive guidance before students commence independent work, this pathway provides the opportunity to accommodate those needs.

Conversely, the second approach empowers students to explore a topic from the remaining list of topics that were not previously selected, allowing them to delve deeper within the confines of the assessment choice framework. This strategy may prove particularly advantageous if the educator has a group of students with a high degree of independent learning capability or if they need more time to prepare the unit chosen by the class.

Regardless of the chosen path, permitting students to undertake independent research in parallel to the whole-class topic endows them with a broader and deeper comprehension of their intended learning outcomes. This dual focus on an independent topic and a class-wide theme transcends the mere acquisition of facts and figures, instead fostering a richer understanding of the subject matter.

With the direction of the class primarily pivoting around skills development rather than merely content acquisition, exposing students to two distinct topics provides an opportunity to discern the interconnections and parallels between them. This arrangement aids in deepening their comprehension and augmenting their abilities within the chosen sphere of study. It



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facilitates a holistic perspective, allowing students to connect dots, make cross-topic associations, and reinforce their skills more efficiently. This process underscores the significance of comprehensive understanding, going beyond isolated facts to a broader view of the subject matter's interrelatedness.

The inquiry cycle culminates in a crucial reflection phase spearheaded by the students. This self-examination invites students to scrutinize their growth during the course of the unit, identifying the areas in which they have honed their skills, using the Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills (see Appendix D) list as a guide. Students not only pinpoint the skills they believe to be their strong suits, but they also identify areas requiring further development. This reflection stage becomes an instrumental source of feedback for educators, offering an intimate glimpse into students' perceptions of their own learning progression.

In line with the IB assessment framework's skills-based focus, the reflection exercise provided a valuable opportunity for teachers to juxtapose students' self-assessments against their actual performance metrics. Such comparisons enabled teachers to determine whether students had an accurate understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. The data procured from this process can serve as a powerful tool for diagnosing the efficacy of teaching methodologies and identifying areas needing refinement.

Moreover, this reflection process facilitates meaningful dialogue among students, their families, and educators. By discussing students' perceived strengths and areas needing improvement, it encourages shared understanding and co-construction of learning goals. This dialogue becomes particularly crucial when there is a misalignment between the student's and teacher's perceptions of the student's skills. This feedback loop enables explicit clarification of

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expectations, constructive criticism, and actionable suggestions for improvement, reinforcing the cooperative nature of the educational journey.

### **Program Application.**

The foundation of this program was rooted in the principle of sustainability. A well-documented phenomenon in human behavior is the tendency to revert to familiar patterns, especially during periods of heightened stress or change. Educators are no exception to this behavioral norm. Though teachers recognize the potential benefits of student choice, they might still revert to traditional unit plans and teaching methods during times of stress. This regression often arises not from a resistance to innovation but as a coping mechanism to mitigate the immediate challenges posed by increased workload and the intricate dynamics of an evolving academic year.

The necessity to implement a program such as the one carried out for this case study emerged precisely from this understanding. By institutionalizing a cycle of inquiry that seamlessly integrates student choice and reinforces reflective practices, the program offers teachers a framework to lean on during challenging times. Instead of navigating multiple new instructional plans with new teaching frameworks and foci, educators now have a unified, cohesive system that inherently promotes student agency and reflection. This structure not only simplifies the planning process but also ensures consistency in pedagogical approaches across various subjects.

Moreover, by operationalizing such a system, schools can ensure that the core tenets of the program—student choice, skill development, and reflective practices—remain central to the learning experience, even when external pressures mount. This consistent adherence to core principles ensures that students consistently benefit from a curriculum that values their agency and fosters deeper, more critical engagement with content.

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The program also serves as a continual reminder for educators about the value and importance of a skills-focused approach. By standardizing this within the content's curriculum, it becomes an integral part of the educational ethos, thereby reducing the likelihood of deviations. In essence, the program acts as both a guide and a safeguard, ensuring that the educational journey remains true to its objectives of fostering student agency, deepening skill acquisition, and promoting reflective learning.

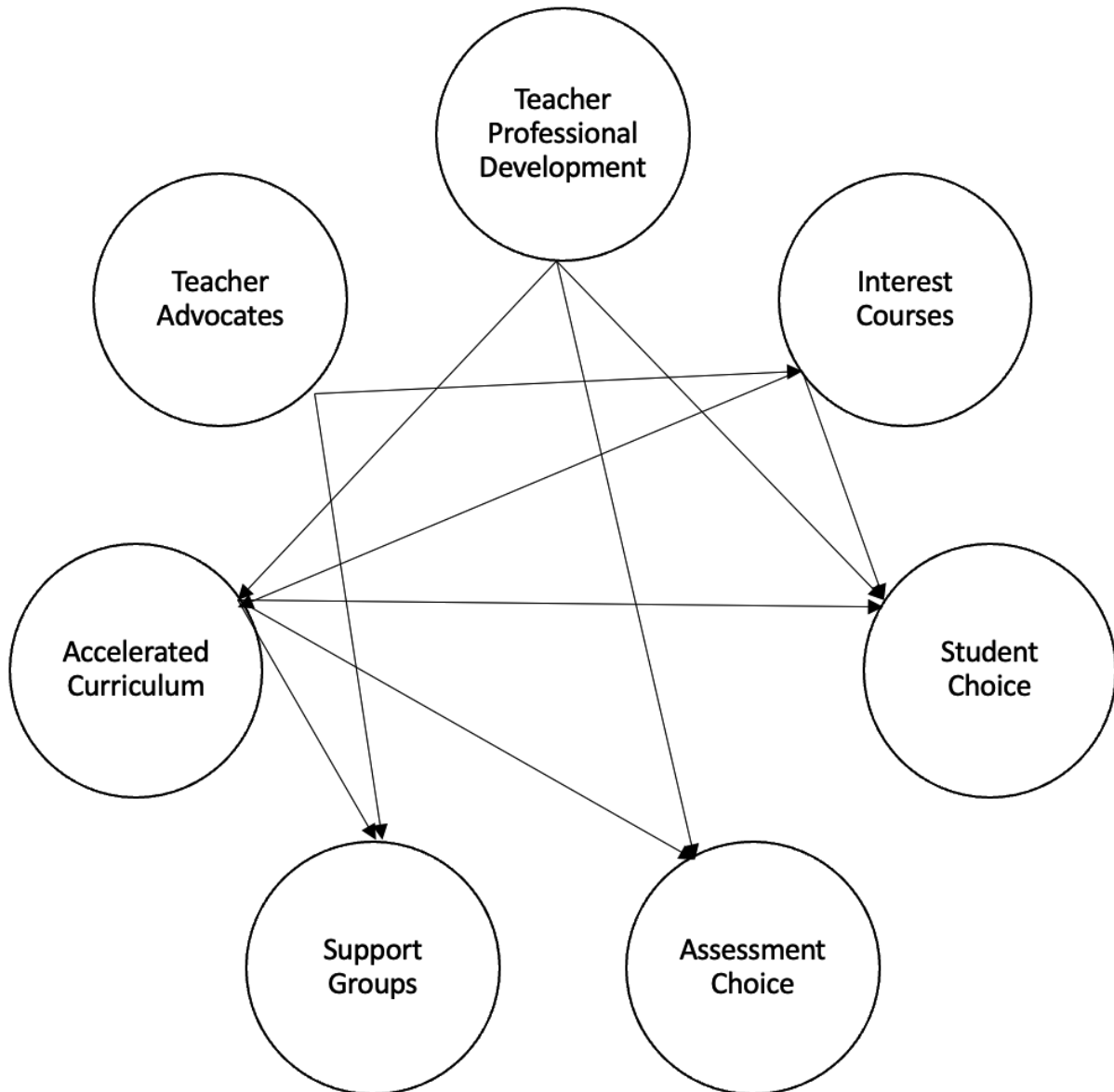
While change is a constant in the educational landscape, having a sustainable and unified framework like this program equips educators with the necessary tools to consistently prioritize student choice and reflection. This not only enhances the quality of education but also ensures that the foundational principles of student autonomy remain the focus so that engagement and motivation can develop, irrespective of external challenges or shifts.

### **Showcasing How Student Choice Fits into a Larger School Development Plan.**

The case study school's initiative to foster excellence in learning used a multifaceted approach that reached beyond the single dimension of student choice. Student choice was provided as one solution to address a general decline in motivation and engagement but did not address other topics within the overall initiative. Recognizing the diversity of its student population and the varying needs across different educational levels, the school outlined overarching goals that encompassed various components. Alongside student choice, the following programs were included: whole school professional development, peer coaching initiatives, targeted coursework to develop and promote passions, differentiated curriculums, and counseling and support groups to address areas of need (see Figure 13). Collectively, these strategies aimed to provide a robust educational ecosystem tailored to inspire and challenge individual students. As seen in Figure 13,

the concept of student choice is only one aspect of the overall school initiative to promote student excellence.

**Figure 13**  
*Case Study Initiative*



*Note:* This diagram shows how student choice and assessment choice fit into larger initiatives for the case study school.

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In the pursuit of excellence in education, a one-size-fits-all approach often falls short in addressing the complex and varied needs of students. Within the context of the case study school, multiple programs were designed to cater to different subgroups, such as English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners, students requiring learning support, and those facing additional educational barriers. Likewise, the different initiatives blended together to provide a support system for students in which they can excel. This multi-pronged approach ensures that diverse needs are met, creating an environment where each student has the opportunity to thrive.

While student choice served as a valuable component in fostering engagement and individualized learning, it was acknowledged that it may not be suitable for every student (Billingsley, 2018). The system thus prioritizes flexibility, recognizing the importance of implementing varied strategies and interventions that align with the unique attributes and requirements of different students. By adopting a comprehensive approach that integrated student choice with other targeted programs and strategies, the school was well-positioned to promote excellence in learning across the entire educational community.

### **Conference Presentations.**

Student choice, as one integral aspect of the case study school's overarching initiative, was highlighted during various conferences throughout the year. At the European Council of International Schools (ECIS) Inclusive Education Conference in Athens, Greece, targeting international school special education teachers and administrators, student choice was presented as a part of a broader plan to enhance inclusive practices (see Appendix E for the presentation) (Carter, 2023a). The ability to cater student choice to different learning requirements was emphasized, showcasing its potential to foster a more personalized educational environment.

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The overall initiative of the case study school's adaptability and success led to a subsequent presentation given to a wide range of international school administration officials in Dusseldorf, Germany, at the ECIS Leadership Conference (Carter, 2023b). This conference focused on the implementation of student choice within various school climates and cultures, adapting different parts of the plan to fit individual needs. The PowerPoint referenced in Appendix E was used to demonstrate the versatile nature of student choice within the educational ecosystem. The ability to tailor this approach to diverse school settings accentuated its value in enhancing learning across different educational contexts.

### *Curriculum*

As discussed in Artifact I, Gagné and Deci expressed that the concepts of autonomy, relatedness, and competence are key to increasing levels of motivation within individuals and systems (Gagné & Deci, 2005). Klemenčič went further with an analysis of how student agency upholds the ideals of Gagné and Deci while incorporating interdependence and environment (Klemenčič, 2015). However, the development of curriculum theory by Beauchamp, and then further developed by Anderson, promoted a standardized framework that is currently employed by schools across the globe, effectively restricting the application of relatedness, autonomy, and competence (Anderson 2002; Beauchamp, 1972). With standardized assessments, students and teachers are restricted to specific content and further limited by assessment practices that will be congruent with the summative standardized assessment at the end of the year. There is little room for teachers to incorporate aspects of relatedness or autonomy into the educational framework.

To this end, a reframing of the curriculum was needed to incorporate classroom autonomy and relatedness into the curricular framework at the case study IB school. The new approach included student choice within content, individual research assignments, and unit development.

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Likewise, as the IB assessment framework is a skills-based approach, it allowed the educational institution to address underlying skills and attributes needed in the various content areas rather than focus entirely on content and concepts.

The initial unit integrated an element of student choice by allowing students to choose from a selection of articles for a written assignment. This choice was purposely restricted, thereby providing a gentle introduction to decision-making and initiating a self-reflective process on individual strengths and weaknesses. After this assignment, the entire grade embarked on an interdisciplinary unit with the science department (which was not participating in the case study), focusing on rivers and human impact on the environment. The level of student choice was considerably constrained in this scenario due to the joint responsibilities between the two departments and the prescribed requirements of the overarching unit. In this instance, the integration of student choice, while beneficial, had limitations when coordinating across departments was necessary.

In contrast, the second unit introduced student choice within the domain of humanities content areas within the study of the Middle Ages. The students received an initial two-week orientation on five distinct topics, including the Mongol Empire, Feudal Japan, the Vikings, the Muslim Enlightenment, and the Black Death. The students then voted on their first and second choices for topics for further learning. The orientation served to equip the students with the necessary competence to make an informed choice and facilitated a level of relatedness to the diverse concepts at hand. Moreover, the voting process embedded within the structure instilled a degree of autonomy in the classroom environment, aligning with the theories advanced by Beauchamp and Klemenčič (Beauchamp, 1972; Klemenčič, 2015).

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In addition to choosing the overall class content, students were assigned an individual research assignment as part of their unit assessment. Students chose a topic from the previously introduced topics (excluding the topic that the whole class was studying) for their research assignment. The design of this approach allowed for the incorporation of choice and deliberation, along with fostering skills such as executive management and time management, all within a secure and structured educational framework.

The reflective nature following the choices further allowed the students to reflect on their decisions and identify ATL skills that appealed to their areas of strengths, areas of challenges, and areas they would enjoy developing further. This was a critical component as enjoyment in an assignment and content area is key to relatedness in the motivational framework.

Following the conclusion of the reflective session and submission of the individual research project, the instruction transitioned into the phase of direct teaching. The student choice groups (Classes 7A and 7D) proceeded with a unit on the Black Death, a topic chosen by the students themselves. In contrast, the traditional classroom groups (Classes 7B and 7C) delved into a unit on Vikings, a subject chosen without student input.

During this phase, it is worth noting that the other grade level teacher (teaching classes 7B and 7C, see Figure 6) who was not part of the case study autonomously decided to incorporate some elements of student choice as observed in the student choice groups, albeit without the liberty to change the content topic. Rather, the teacher chose to allow student choice within the assessment framework as it was the only feasible way to instill student choice under these circumstances.

During the Black Death unit, a summative project was designated, which introduced diversity in the form of assessment choice in modality and role (see Table 4 and Appendix I). Both teachers mirrored this approach, implementing a comparable assessment that integrated student



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choice of role within the preselected topic area (Vikings for 7B and 7C, and Black Death for 7A and 7D). Despite this flexibility, the standardization and moderation of student work remained consistent, as all assessments were evaluated in line with the IB assessment framework. This safeguarded the uniformity of assessment standards, notwithstanding the introduction of choice within the assignment parameters.

**Table 4**  
*Roles and Modalities Example Assessment*

	<b>Modality</b>		
<b>Role</b>	Essay (writing)	Artifact (critical thinking)	Map (visual/spatial)
Mayor	Letter to the lord describing the effect of the plague on the town.	Any artifact from the Middle Ages before the plague.	One map of the town before the plague that includes all the industries required for the town to be self-sustaining, and one map of the town after the plague taking into account that one-third of the citizens are dead. Focus on what industries would need to be preserved.
Plague Doctor	Letter to a doctor in another town describing the effects of the plague and outlining at least one thing they have done to try to alleviate it.	Three artifacts that a plague doctor used and what was the purpose of use. The analysis must be from the perspective of a plague doctor from that time period and only reference technology and medicine that was available at the time.	A map of a town with areas of illness and what actions they would recommend as the doctor to stop the transmission of the disease.

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	Modality		
Role	Essay (writing)	Artifact (critical thinking)	Map (visual/spatial)
Traveler	Three essays from different time periods as the plague spread across Europe. The first essay must be before the plague and what life was like. The second essay must be when the plague started focusing on the confusion and chaos of the time period. The third letter must be after the plague has ended and the impact this has had on the population.	Analysis of how wealthy people traveled during that time and an artifact that a traveler may possess when traveling.	A map of where in Europe the traveler visited and when they traveled to those locations. The map must align with the writing.

From this point forward, all of the Grade 7 cohort was fully incorporated, using student choice frameworks within the curriculum selection as well as in the choice of assessments. The final unit for all sections in the cohort focused on understanding a current topic (as opposed to a historical assignment) from multiple viewpoints. Within this unit, students were tasked with examining the importance of preserving historical landmarks. They were encouraged to recognize the possibility of multiple viewpoints existing within a single situation and to consider the balance between historical preservation and progress when making decisions. The final class unit began with voting on which monument they wanted to discuss and debate as a class. Following the direct teaching part of the unit, the students selected one of the remaining eleven monuments for their individual research assignment (see Appendix H). In this portion of the unit,

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the students did not have a choice of modality; everyone was expected to write a 250-word essay. However, they were asked to choose the role (land developer or business investor, environmentalist non-governmental organization, governmental zoning commission, or cultural historian) and the site they would advocate based on their role (see Appendix A for the curriculum scope and sequence).

### **Coaching Support with Teachers.**

One of the identified solutions to the problem of practice, which aimed to enhance student engagement and motivation, was coaching for teachers implementing student choice (see Appendices F and G). Recognized as a robust method within educational systems, coaching offers a sustainable and lasting means to catalyze developmental change (Van Nieuwerburgh, 2018). The practice of coaching, in this context, allowed the teachers to shift their conventional roles and become facilitators of learning. This shift emphasized a more collaborative learning environment, fostering a climate wherein students were encouraged to explore, inquire, and reflect, thereby enhancing their autonomous learning capabilities.

The coaching also extended to the integration of choice within assessments and homework, a practice that further underlined the empowerment of students within the learning process. The implementation of this coaching approach represented a deliberate attempt to align educational practices in the classroom with contemporary pedagogical theories that stress student-centered learning.

### ***Assessment Choice.***

During the coaching sessions, significant emphasis was placed on supporting teachers in integrating and developing diverse types of assessments within their teaching communities. Understanding that students have unique learning styles and needs, offering varied assessment

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options aligns with the broader educational strategy to personalize learning and foster deeper engagement. The techniques and strategies imparted during these sessions are elucidated in Appendix F, which shows specific examples of assessment choices and demonstrates how different types of students might benefit from different forms of assessments. The coaching sessions were designed to bring a practical approach to a theoretical concept for many teachers, specifically how to incorporate student choice into assessments while maintaining rigor and consistency in marking. By embracing this multifaceted approach, the school positioned itself at the forefront of an inclusive and responsive pedagogy, where assessment becomes a dynamic and adaptable tool that resonates with the diverse learning profiles of the students.

### *Homework Choice.*

Teachers were also coached on extending student choice to the domain of homework, aiming to foster greater self-reflection and awareness among students regarding their abilities and skills. This tailored approach to homework required students to engage in reflection on a daily basis, identifying areas in need of further development or improvement based on the lesson or principle that they worked on that day in class. The objective was to empower students to take an active role in their learning journey, directing their focus toward self-identified areas of growth. A detailed example of how student choice was employed as an instrumental tool for reflection and development can be found in Appendix G, which encapsulates a specific coaching session. By integrating choice and reflection within homework, the initiative cultivated a more personalized and responsive learning experience, aligning with the broader goals of fostering self-awareness and autonomous growth in learners.

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### **Classroom Changes.**

One of the most significant yet unanticipated transformations following the implementation of the new curriculum was a distinct change in the classroom dynamics, particularly the traditional teacher-student power hierarchy. Traditionally, the classroom paradigm has been dominated by the image of the teacher as the ultimate authority or the infallible expert whose function is to dispense information and provide precise answers. However, the new curriculum introduced a considerable shift in this dynamic by giving prominence to student choice in both curriculum and assessment, consequently reshaping the teacher's role.

With the incorporation of student choice, the role of the teacher metamorphosed from a conventional authority figure to more of a facilitator or a guide. Instead of delivering information and providing direct answers, the teacher's primary responsibility now moved to offering resources, suggesting reference sources, and, most importantly, encouraging students to pursue information independently. This subtle yet profound shift effectively dissolved the rigid teacher-student hierarchy, fostering a more inclusive and collaborative learning environment where knowledge exploration was not solely dependent on the teacher.

However, these changes were not without their challenges. Certain groups of students, particularly those with identified learning support needs or those still mastering English, faced difficulties in adapting to this autonomous learning approach. Recognizing this, from the second unit onwards, the teachers developed additional scaffolding tailored to support these students. This assistance, however, limited the content areas these students could explore, effectively reducing their degree of choice.

This restriction of choice for certain groups might seem counterintuitive to the ethos of the new curriculum. However, it is important to note that this was merely an initial step in the first

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year of implementing the new curriculum. The educators will incrementally build upon these scaffolds in the coming years, allowing for an expanded array of choice areas. The ultimate aim is to gradually facilitate all students access to the benefits of the choice-based curriculum, thereby creating a learning environment that upholds the principles of inclusivity, support, and individual progression, all while ensuring the necessary structures are in place to cater to individual learning needs.

It is also important to note that the shift towards a more choice-centric curriculum required a considerable increase in teachers' preparation and planning time. Implementing such an approach for the first year involved a deep and multifaceted restructuring of both the curriculum and the lesson plans. The teachers found themselves crafting multiple learning options to accommodate the various choices offered to students. Simultaneously, they wrestled with the broader teaching objectives inherent in each unit, aiming to ensure these objectives were not overshadowed by the choices presented to students. As such, maintaining a balance between variety and coherence within the unit goals became a central part of their planning process.

This new curriculum also prompted a pivotal shift in the traditional approach to curriculum mapping. The focus, which had previously been anchored in the content taught (both horizontally across subjects and vertically through the years), was now redirected towards the skills expected within the curriculum framework. This represented a paradigm shift from content alignment to skills alignment. Although the educators welcomed this shift as it focused on skill development over mere knowledge acquisition, the transition did create a significant workload. This was particularly felt at the start of the academic year and the commencement of each subsequent unit.

### *Student Assessment*

#### **A Skills-based Approach to the Marking of Student Work.**

A skills-based approach to assessing student work offered a substantial shift in the focus from content memorization to the development of lifelong learning skills. The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) has adopted this approach, creating rubrics that emphasize skills rather than specific content. These rubrics, adaptable within multiple curricular frameworks across the world, foster a flexible environment that facilitates a broader understanding of academic concepts. As shown in Appendix C, these rubrics—knowing and understanding, investigating, communicating, and thinking critically—align seamlessly with ATL skills—communication, social self-management, research, and thinking (see Appendix D). These skills emphasize the essential cognitive, emotional, and practical abilities students need to succeed in the rapidly changing world.

For instance, the alignment of “knowing and understanding” with “research” and “thinking” demonstrates the direct connection between specific rubric criteria and corresponding ATL skills. Similarly, “investigating” aligns closely with “communication” and “research.” This alignment reinforces the emphasis on skill development in assessment practices.

The skills-based rubrics provided an opportunity for the case study school to develop and assess academic skills within a defined curriculum without mandating the exact content that must be used. This skills-based rubric opened doors for educators to implement a wide array of student choice options, as shown in the assessment choice options listed in Appendix F, which in turn supported increased motivation and engagement within the classroom framework. This approach enabled a variety of assessment types to coexist within the same framework. For example, in the Black Death assessment, some students chose to map a town before and after the plague,

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providing a spatial analysis, while others opted for artifact analysis or a conventional essay format. This diversity in assessment methods is documented in Appendix H and I. The rubrics became tools that empowered both students and teachers, reinforcing the school's commitment to provide personalized learning experiences that resonated with individual interests, strengths, and needs.

In embracing this innovative framework, the case study school leveraged the IBO's expertise in developing skill-focused rubrics to create a dynamic and responsive learning environment. The alignment with ATL skills ensured that students were not only engaged with the content but also actively developing skills that will serve them throughout their lives. By prioritizing skills over content, the approach invites exploration, inquiry, and creativity, ultimately fostering a generation of learners who are better prepared to navigate complex challenges and contribute positively to their communities and the broader global context.

The solutions for reshaping the curriculum also extended to the assessments, infusing them with a richer variety of student choice options. Such variety materialized in multiple formats, each designed to assist the students in their skills development and reflection of abilities (see Figure 14).

The initial format revolved around content selection. Put simply, students had the ability to choose the topic they wanted to delve into for their class-wide assessment from a preselected list aligning with the overarching theme for the unit. This strategy rooted student learning in collective interest and relevance, fostering deeper student motivation and engagement as a class community with the subject matter.

Additionally, role-based choice was introduced within the assessments. As humanities subject areas revolve around comprehending the human condition, understanding the diverse



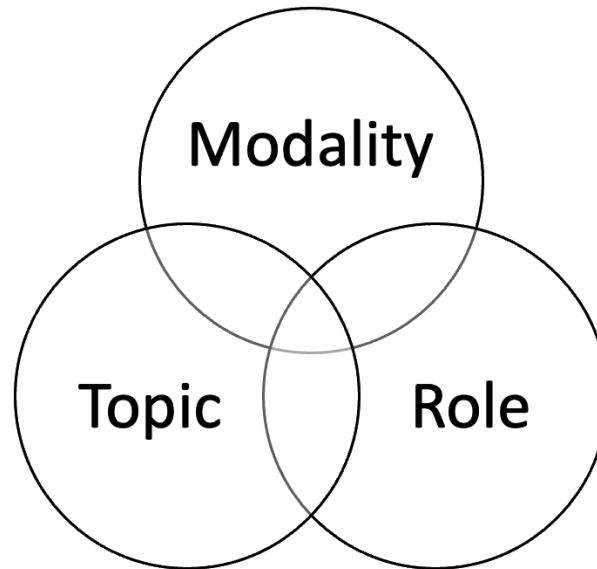
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perspectives and roles that have shaped history is an integral part of learning. By offering students the chance to choose from a preselected list of roles, students could opt to view and tackle the assessment from a different perspective. This ability to embody various roles deepened their understanding of the human experience across different historical contexts while maintaining standards expected for the marking within the IB assessment framework.

Lastly, students were given the freedom to decide on the modality of their assessment, effectively accommodating their preferred mode of expression. Students were not confined to traditional methods but could choose to present their learning in various ways—from PowerPoint presentations, dioramas, essays, and visual creations such as maps or field sketches, to crafting posters or other inventive forms of assessments. This was also presented to the students in the form of a preselected list but allowed variation and reflection on the part of the student in determining what modality would best highlight their knowledge, skills, and abilities. In order to preserve variation in assessment modes, students were not allowed to choose the same mode more than once. This allowed the student to showcase their best work while continuing to challenge them in different ways.

This enhanced flexibility allowed students to demonstrate their understanding in a way that best suited their strengths, promoting a more authentic and meaningful assessment experience. By aligning their assessment with their chosen topic, role, and mode of delivery, students were able to demonstrate their learning in ways that were more personally resonant and academically fulfilling.

**Figure 14**  
*Assessment Alignment Choice Options*



**Student Example with Role and Modality.**

Implementing student choice in academic assessments introduces numerous benefits, including the flexibility to choose roles that align with students’ interests and strengths. The concept of role can be effortlessly integrated into most existing assessment frameworks, whereas the modality for assignments might pose certain challenges.

A clear illustration of role choice can be found in a case study where the students had opted to study the Black Death (see Appendix I). As a class, they delved into various facets of the topic, such as the miasma theory, the role of plague doctors, and the plague’s effects on individuals and society at large. The assessment entailed choosing a role, each tied to a specific modality, enabling students to lean into their strengths.

Regarding modality, for students with a knack for writing, the role of a traveler was available, requiring them to write diary entries during specific periods of the historic event. Students with a visual inclination could adopt the role of a town mayor, tasked with creating a detailed map

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illustrating a self-sustaining medieval town pre- and post-plague. Those who excelled at analysis could embody the role of a plague doctor, tasked with the evaluation of various artifacts from that period.

While each student was required to complete a writing sample, a map, and an artifact analysis, their chosen role enabled them to highlight their strengths. For instance, the mayor's writing task involved writing to a lord detailing the effects of the plague, while the plague doctor wrote to another physician, seeking advice on handling the disease. Similarly, while the doctor's drawing assignment involved mapping the spread of the disease and quarantine zones, the traveler's map depicted the places they had visited during this period.

In sum, altering the modality based on a student's chosen role allowed the students not only to showcase their strengths but also to tackle other assessed areas effectively. It created a learning environment where assessments became less of a universal measuring tool and more of a personalized journey that accounted for individual strengths, learning styles, and interests.

Table 4 highlights how the aspect of role and modality interact within a single assignment. The areas highlighted indicate the focus of the assignment and how the student could select the role based on the modality they wished to explore.

The challenge of allowing variation in topics while maintaining alignment with the modality of assessment is not a new one. Teachers have successfully incorporated this into their pedagogical practices in various subjects across diverse educational institutions. For instance, in English literature classes studying dystopian fiction, teachers may offer students a range of books to choose from, allowing a degree of personalization while preserving the uniformity of assessment tasks.

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To illustrate, the educator might cater to student's individual learning needs by providing different options for varying proficiency levels. For English language learners, a simpler text like *Animal Farm* could be proposed, whereas advanced learners might be given a choice between more complex works like *The Handmaid's Tale* or *1984*. This offers the students a sense of autonomy and fosters motivation without compromising the focus on the thematic study of dystopian fiction.

### **Student Example with Topic and Role.**

The humanities assessment provided another apt example of integrating topic selection in assessments. An exercise on cultural preservation required students to choose a physical site from a list of twelve options. After a collective vote determined one site for class-wide study, the remaining eleven served as options for independent assignments. The sites, which ranged from Stonehenge and the Great Barrier Reef to the Oktoberfest grounds and Serengeti National Park, provided diverse cultural and interest-based avenues for student engagement (see Appendix H).

This assessment also encompassed role selection, enabling students to examine their chosen site from the perspective of a land developer, an environmental non-governmental organization, a member of a governmental zoning commission, or a cultural historian. However, the modality of the assessment was constant across all students, with each required to write an essay of 250 words. The essay required the student to articulate their stance, from the perspective of the role they selected, on the site's preservation or removal, including at least two supporting arguments and one counterargument refuted within the text.

Through these innovative approaches, educators ensured an equitable assessment framework using consistent IB assessment criteria, allowing students to engage with topics of personal interest and different perspectives while maintaining the consistency of the evaluation process.

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By giving students the autonomy to choose their roles within assessments, educators facilitate the development of empathy and perspective-taking skills. These roles often require students to view scenarios through lenses that might be foreign to their own experiences, promoting a more nuanced understanding of the human condition and its many complexities.

Simultaneously, the flexibility of selecting the modality of assessments allows students to showcase their skills and talents in ways that best suit their learning styles and strengths. Whether through writing, drawing, or presenting, this freedom to express knowledge in diverse ways caters to a broader spectrum of learners and helps ensure that no student is disadvantaged due to their unique learning style.

Moreover, the opportunity to select their topics for study further increases student engagement and motivation. By enabling students to study subjects they are genuinely interested in, educators are more likely to witness heightened involvement, a deeper engagement with the material, and, ultimately, a higher quality of work.

Notably, this increased variety and choice did not compromise the rigor and integrity of the assessment process. Regardless of the chosen role, modality, or topic, all assignments were marked and moderated according to the established IB assessment criteria. This ensured that while students had the autonomy to navigate their learning paths, consistency, uniformity, and fairness remained uncompromised.

Hence, through this multifaceted approach, educators could strike a balance between fostering student choice and engagement and upholding the high academic standards set by the IB assessment framework. This methodology ultimately cultivated a more inclusive, personalized, and student-centered learning environment.

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### **Classroom Changes.**

To analyze the impact of these varied assessments on the classroom environment, it is important to refer to the educator surveys conducted at the end of the academic year. According to these surveys, teachers reported witnessing significant enhancements in the students' independent learning skills, particularly in their ability to conduct research effectively. Moreover, there was a marked increase in student engagement with the curriculum content, demonstrating the motivational benefits of providing students with more agency over their learning process.

As part of the experiment, as the academic year unfolded, the level of student choice was progressively increased. With the first assignment, students were permitted to choose the article they would engage with. By the final assignment, students had the freedom to select not only the topic of study but also the role they would adopt within the project.

This evolution towards greater autonomy created a dynamic and responsive learning environment. The classroom, in essence, became a space of continual growth and adaptation, evolving alongside students as they became more comfortable navigating the freedoms offered within the student choice-oriented assessment framework. This approach not only catered to the students' developmental pace but also allowed them to gradually cultivate their decision-making and critical thinking skills.

Crucially, this model of assessment also afforded the educators more flexibility. Teachers could tailor the assessment framework to meet the students' readiness levels and their individual rates of progression (see Appendix H and Appendix I). Thus, rather than adhering to a rigid, one-size-fits-all approach, the assessments could be adapted to ensure that each student was appropriately challenged and supported in their learning journey. Therefore, the variety in

assessments was beneficial not only in terms of enhancing student autonomy but also in creating a more adaptable and responsive pedagogical approach.

### **Implementation Summary**

The Pathways Programme is the inquiry cycle that weaves the elements of curriculum and assessment choice together into a cohesive whole (see Figure 12). Its design embodies the cycle of inquiry, wherein student choice, teacher guidance, and student reflection play key roles. Students can opt for their preferred topics of inquiry and choose roles for assessments, while teachers provide structured support and decide when to facilitate direct instruction or encourage independent exploration. The reflective element of the program enables students to monitor their skill development, offering invaluable feedback for teachers and opening a pathway for dialogue between students, teachers, and families (see Appendix G). This approach not only strengthens student learning outcomes but also fosters a sense of ownership and accountability among students for their own learning progress.

The updated curriculum scope and sequence (see Appendix A), developed in line with the principles of student choice and active learning, forms the foundation for enhancing student motivation and engagement. It enables students to engage deeply with the humanities subjects, transforming learning from a content focus to an exploration of skills. The curriculum acknowledges the criticality of skill alignment and incorporates changes to prioritize this over traditional content alignment. By doing so, it allows students to acquire vital abilities necessary for progressing within multiple subject areas while simultaneously opening the door to varied and engaging thematic units.

The assessment choice complements the updated curriculum perfectly. It provides students with a range of options in terms of topic, role, and modality (see Appendix H and I). This allows

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learners to capitalize on their strengths, thus augmenting their confidence and engagement in the learning process. By offering a variety of modalities—such as writing, drawing, or analyzing—the assessments cater to diverse learning styles, enabling each student to showcase their strengths and improve upon their weaknesses (see Appendix F). Even within each modality, students can assume varied roles that reflect different perspectives, thereby further enriching their learning experience. Moreover, including an opportunity to choose the assessment topic boosts student autonomy and furthers their active involvement in their own learning.

In conclusion, the revised curriculum, assessment choice, and the Pathways Programme work in synergy to foster a learning environment that is engaging, motivating, and challenging while ensuring that the requisite rigor and standards are maintained. These combined elements support the development of autonomous learners and equip them with the skills they need to succeed in their academic pursuits and take an active role in shaping their educational journey.

### ***Student Choice Alignment to Rubric Marking***

As seen in Artifact II, the integration of various elements of student choice, such as topic, role, and modality, presents an adaptable approach to assessment. These factors can be carefully aligned with the IB rubrics, allowing for individualized choice without losing the standardized framework of assessment (see Appendix C, Appendix H, and Appendix I). This balance between personal preference and standardized evaluation is indicative of a method that can offer a more tailored learning experience while maintaining consistent evaluation criteria.

The use of IB rubrics, referenced in Appendix C, shows a skills-based assessment approach aligned with the ATL skills outlined in Appendix D. This structure accommodates different methods of student expression while focusing on skill development rather than content memorization. Even in cases where student choice might be limited, the focus on skills rather



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than specific content ensures that the evaluation process remains consistent and equitable. This method supports a learning environment that encourages skill development, critical thinking, and personalized learning paths without compromising on standardized assessment frameworks.

### ***Problem of Practice and Research Question***

The multifaceted solutions of teacher coaching, student choice within a standardized assessment framework, and alignment within a broader educational ecosystem of the case study school synergistically addressed the identified problem of practice concerning student engagement and motivation. By empowering educators through coaching, a transformative environment was created with students actively involved in their learning process. Assessment choice, carefully tailored to align with skills-focused rubrics, further empowered students by catering to individual interests and strengths. This integration of student choice, complemented by the acknowledgment of diverse educational needs and an overall inclusive approach, directly responded to the research question: How can the integration of student choice influence student achievement and engagement while maintaining alignment with learning targets, skills, and objectives? The collective implementation of these strategies fostered a dynamic learning atmosphere that encouraged student participation, reflection, and growth, thus answering the underlying issues at the heart of the investigation.

### CONCLUSION

This dissertation underscores the transformative potential of student choice in shaping educational landscapes for both the teacher and the student. The adoption of student choice not only disrupts traditional classroom dynamics but fundamentally reorients the pedagogical lens towards a more egalitarian, student-centered approach. This paradigm shift from a knowledge-focused to a skill-centric curriculum redefines the educational experience, placing the onus of learning directly on the learner, thereby nurturing an environment where students are active participants in their educational journey.

The infusion of student choice in the curriculum also serves to enable students to reach higher levels of motivation within Gagné and Deci's self-determination continuum. When students are granted the autonomy to co-determine content and co-create assessments, they engage more deeply with the learning materials. This sense of agency inspires motivation and kindles curiosity, leading to a more profound exploration of knowledge. The empowerment that students derive from exercising choice cultivates ownership of the learning process, fostering commitment and engagement that reverberates far beyond classroom walls.

Moreover, student choice serves as a conduit for cultivating a variety of essential skills, including critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving, and decision-making. This approach produces not just learners but thinkers and creators, well-prepared to navigate the multifaceted demands of the real world.

While the incorporation of student choice within the learning process generally contributes to heightened engagement and motivation, it is not without its challenges, particularly for students with additional needs. Students with learning disabilities or attention difficulties may find an abundance of choices overwhelming, and it might impede their ability to focus on a task.

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Similarly, English as an Additional Language (EAL) learners might not receive the tailored support they require if choices are presented without due consideration of their unique needs. Nevertheless, these challenges do not preclude the benefit of student choice for these subgroups. By thoughtfully designing choices with additional scaffolding, such as guided prompts or structured options, educators can make the empowerment of choice accessible and beneficial for all students, ensuring that individual needs and abilities are addressed within a framework of inclusive education.

The increased student engagement and motivation resulting from the introduction of student choice also reverberates with the educators themselves. Empowering students to co-direct their learning process lessens the hierarchical divide between teachers and students, fostering a more collaborative and interactive classroom atmosphere. This shift not only enhances the quality of education but also infuses teachers with renewed inspiration and motivation, leading to overall enhanced educational outcomes.

The integration of student choice within the curriculum framework doesn't just alter the mechanics of teaching and learning; it shifts the very ethos of education. It transforms classrooms from spaces of instruction to arenas of exploration, where curiosity is allowed to develop, and lifelong learning is practiced. As such, the positive implications of student choice on student engagement and motivation underscore its potential as a powerful catalyst for the evolution of education.

### **Artifact I**

Artifact I dove into three primary theoretical frameworks centered on student motivation, existing curriculum practices, and the role of student choice in the wider context of the research question and problem of practice. This artifact examined common methodologies utilized by

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educational institutions to address student motivation and engagement and identified potential solutions and associated barriers within each framework. The emphasis lay in fostering a comprehensive understanding, ensuring the effective application of strategies tailored to specific educational contexts.

### *Alignment of Data and Literature*

The initial start of student agency within the curriculum context can be traced back to Dewey's ideal classroom and Montessori schools over a century ago, characterized by a free exploration of knowledge (Dewey, 1902). However, as education became more state-regulated and widespread, a defined curriculum emerged, determining the content knowledge required by students at various ages (Beauchamp, 1972). This evolution diminished the elements of exploration and choice within Dewey's original model.

Building on Beauchamp's seminal curriculum theory of 1972, education has primarily embraced a triangular model consisting of curriculum, instruction, and assessment (Beauchamp, 1972). The interdependence of these elements serves as a check on each other's efficacy, with the curriculum informing instruction and the assessment gauging the quality of the instruction. Notably, standardized assessments and curriculum-driven instruction dominate this model, potentially limiting student agency and choice within a curricular context. This model, while efficient, has leaned heavily on standardized assessments, which potentially confine student autonomy.

Beauchamp's theory was further developed by Anderson in 2002, underscoring the shift in focus from what students must learn to what schools must teach (Anderson, 2002). Anderson contended that assessments are primarily tools for gauging the effectiveness of institutional instruction. Her alignment theory emphasized an interconnected synergy among the three

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components while highlighting the role of the educational institution as paramount in the teaching process, with the burden of education falling to the institution. She posited that true curriculum alignment is only achieved when there is a harmonious connection between objectives, assessments, and instructional activities.

The International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) assessment framework adopts a different approach, focusing less on specific content and more on assessing key skills and themes (Harrison et al., 2017). It can be used alongside various curricula globally, providing a consistent measure of student ability across different educational systems (Katz, 2013).

However, the model also presents challenges when applied alongside government-standardized assessments, potentially increasing stress and workload for teachers and students and reducing classroom autonomy (Willis et al., 2019). Nevertheless, when used in isolation, it affords an opportunity for the co-creation of curriculum and instruction between teachers and students (Pace & Standiford, 2003).

Gagné and Deci (2005) advanced the understanding of motivation, compartmentalizing it into amotivation, extrinsic motivation, and intrinsic motivation. They stressed the need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness as fundamental components to foster genuine intrinsic motivation. The absence of any of these components can reduce motivation to mere extrinsic levels or even to the point of amotivation. Importantly, the psychological health of an individual or system, and by extension, the capacity to engage with higher levels of motivation, depends on the presence of three intrinsic motivation components. This conceptualization underscores the need for education to be tailored, providing environments where all three motivation components thrive.

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Vallerand (2008) and Klemenčič (2015) both spotlighted the power of relatedness and social interaction within the educational realm. They contended that significant student interaction with content, fortified by social constructs, is pivotal for meaningful learning. Furthermore, according to Reeves, when students are given choices within a structured learning setting, they exercise developmentally appropriate autonomy (Reeves, 2006). Reeves advocated for teachers to function as facilitators of students' internal motivation and to design learning experiences that consider students' competency, interests, and choices. This approach aligns with Bandura's social cognitive theory, which posited learning as an interaction between individuals, environment, and behavior (Bandura, 1993).

Modern research consistently echoes the merits of student choice, associating it with heightened motivation, engagement, and academic achievement. The benefits span across diverse student demographics, promising not only immediate academic gains but also sculpting responsible adult learners. While embedding student choice within contemporary education presents implementation challenges, the potential long-term societal benefits make it an indispensable component for consideration in curriculum design.

### **Artifact II**

As a critical component of the research, Artifact II examined the procedural aspects of the investigation, outlining the methodologies deployed and providing a summarization of the data analysis conducted following the implemented solutions. The methodologies illuminated the research question: How can the integration of student choice influence student achievement and engagement while maintaining alignment with learning targets, skills, and objectives?

This section facilitated the alignment of the empirical data with the theoretical constructs outlined in Artifact I. Through this, the problem of practice could be assessed in an academically

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rigorous manner. Artifact II not only served as a cornerstone in the methodological structure of this research but also provided an analytical lens to evaluate the degree to which the implemented solutions have impacted the identified issues. The analytical outcomes generated through this artifact consequently contributed to the evolution of a more informed understanding of the dynamics at play between educational practices, student motivation, and engagement.

The findings from the scope and sequence analysis, student marks, and teacher survey support the literature on the beneficial impacts of student choice and enrich the original findings. Existing research has established that an increase in student choice enhances motivation, engagement, behavior, and academic achievement. However, there is little research on the transformative implications of student choice on curriculum dimensions such as emphasis, nature of knowledge, learning theories, pedagogical models, and assessment. The data in this study implies that, even within identical educational institutions, the presence of student choice prompts an evolution in these curriculum aspects towards a more student-centric and engaged classroom.

This case study was supported by research and literature that shows that incorporating and expanding student choice within a curriculum framework not only provides theoretical advantages to the classroom environment but also enhances the curriculum and content without diminishing the level of rigor (Armstrong, 2000; Ardizzone, 1997).

### ***Scope and Sequence***

In an analysis comparing a traditional international school employing the IB and International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) framework with a case study school, stark differences emerged in curriculum approaches. The traditional school focused on factual knowledge acquisition, fixed teaching models, and predominantly summative assessments. In

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contrast, the case study school, particularly after integrating student choice, gravitated towards skill development, viewing knowledge as both contextual and subjective. This constructivist approach transformed the teaching model, placing students and teachers as collaborative partners in learning, with assessments redesigned to reflect this shared responsibility in content determination and evaluation.

### ***Student Marks***

This case study revealed the impact of student choice on academic performance in this case study. The data illustrated that the incorporation of student choice into the teaching process while upholding curriculum benchmarks, skills, objectives, and rigor can indeed have a positive influence on student achievement. This positive effect was not static but fluctuated, demonstrating an increase of 7% to 37%, with an average influence of a 22% increase compared to conventional classroom settings. Furthermore, the timing of student choice introduction during an academic term did not negatively impact student marks, underlining its versatility as an effective tool for elevating student motivation, engagement, and consequent performance throughout the academic year.

### ***Survey Results***

The survey findings showed that educators predominantly perceived the student choice curriculum as a net gain for student engagement and interaction with content. The majority acknowledged that student choice facilitates deeper exploration and comprehension of unit learning objectives. Despite challenges in managing daily teaching tasks and desires for increased planning and collaboration time, most educators agreed the benefits outweighed the negatives. Survey data predominantly supports the notion that student choice positively impacted learning targets, skills, and objectives. The majority of educators surveyed favored a skills-based



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approach over a content-based one, with many educators highlighting that increased student choice bolsters interest, motivation, and depth of knowledge. Overall, while educators recognized the significant advantages of student choice, they also highlighted areas needing refinement for optimal classroom application.

### *Integration of Data Collection Methods and Analysis of Results*

The scope and sequence analysis, student marks data, and educator surveys all contributed to a robust exploration of the effect of student choice integration on student achievement and engagement while maintaining instructional alignment. Each data point within the triangulated approach brought clarity to an aspect of the research question while simultaneously bolstering other components of the main question. Concurrently, the research aligned with the three principle constituents of the curriculum—content, assessment, and pedagogy. This triangulated methodology furnished both Likert scale and open-ended evidence of the student choice impact on various elements within a Middle Years Programme Grade 7 (MYP2) classroom setting.

Student marks distinctly showed higher attainment for students with choice in assessment modality and content. Even a singular choice in assessment type boosted student marks. These findings were supported by educator feedback, with no teacher indicating any detrimental effects of student choice. A significant majority of the case study teachers, 75%, felt students were more immersed in lessons when offered choice. This sentiment was further buttressed by teachers' unsolicited adoption of the curriculum. The survey results were overwhelmingly positive, with three-quarters of respondents acknowledging a beneficial influence of student choice. Marks data further supported this. While student marks generally signify ability or competence, given that the marks are based on skill attribution rather than content knowledge, this also inferred

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engagement with the curriculum and class. Interestingly, even mid-year introduction of student choice spurred an upward trend in student marks.

In sum, when evaluating the comprehensive research question through the prism of the collated data (scope and sequence analysis, student marks, and educator surveys), it became unequivocally apparent that student choice, when well-integrated into the curriculum, can substantially uplift student achievement and engagement, all while aligning with set instructional benchmarks. This research firmly posits the potential of student choice as a transformative tool in education within the studied context.

### **Artifact III**

Artifact III highlighted the three key solutions designed to address the problem of practice. The first solution was a proposed overarching program using the cycle of inquiry model. This cycle of inquiry, which created opportunities for various pedagogical approaches, could be used with multiple content areas. This diverse spectrum of instructional methods included direct teaching, collaborative group learning, individual research, and reflective assessment review. The second solution was a revised curriculum design that combined skill-based learning with the principle of student choice and empowered learners by granting them greater autonomy and relatedness in their educational journey. The third solution introduced an innovative assessment framework that combined student choice with diverse assessment modalities and roles. These assessments provided a more tailored, engaging evaluation experience that directly related to individual student's interests. This paradigm shift within assessment dynamics fostered an environment of increased competence and relatability.

These interventions collectively aimed to augment student motivation and engagement by developing students' sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness within the learning

context. Artifact III constructed a bridge between the theoretical frameworks of student motivation, motivational theory, and curriculum theory to the tangible reality of educational practice. It also provided examples and frameworks that other educational institutions can continue to build upon. This artifact scrutinized the practical implications of the implemented solutions and emphasized their capacity to address and potentially rectify the overarching problem of practice.

### **Areas for Future Improvement**

The case study school, situated within the European Union's (EU) jurisdiction, operated under the comprehensive mandates of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The protections extended by GDPR significantly influence the manner and extent to which individual students can contribute to research dialogues and requires stringent approval processes facilitated by local governmental authorities. While protecting individual data rights is important, this regulatory environment limits the depth of firsthand student information that can be obtained without substantial bureaucratic permissions. Therefore, performing a case study in an environment which does not need to comply with these restrictions could reveal richer data sets.

Looking ahead, the methodological enrichment of this research could be significantly enhanced by incorporating additional student perspectives by including focus groups, surveys, and interviews. Indeed, the theoretical foundation of this study, the idea that enhancing student choice elevates student motivation, lends itself to the inclusion of direct student voices. Such firsthand data would add an invaluable layer of insight to this research and provide a more comprehensive understanding of the phenomena being studied.

While the current study analyzed the impacts of student choice on student attainment, teacher observations, and the analysis of curriculum content through various scopes and sequences, it

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primarily relied on second-hand student mark data. The value of firsthand student data cannot be overstated in enriching the research. By accessing students' thoughts, ideas, and perceptions directly, the depth and applicability of the findings can be greatly augmented. Hence, this constitutes a key area for potential improvement in future iterations of this case study.

Future research can explore diverse curricular spaces, including those featuring standardized curriculum and assessment, different grade levels and subjects, and public and private school environments. Additionally, ongoing research should aim to delineate the optimal level of student agency within curriculum choice, balancing the necessity for autonomy with the structured guidance that a curriculum inherently provides.

Furthermore, as noted in Artifact III, one of the key advantages of the three solutions is their flexibility. As each institution knows its own unique cultural and pedagogical landscape best, educators could potentially implement any combination of the solutions to maximize student engagement and motivation in their school. As all three solutions were utilized in the case study, we do not have data to measure the effectiveness of each solution independently. Therefore, additional research to measure the results of each solution individually could further highlight flexibility and identify approaches that require reduced effort to implement.

Lastly, the location of the case study was conducted within a private, fee-paying school environment characterized by the socioeconomic advantages inherent to the student body. This context significantly reduced the representation of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, students with significant physical or learning disabilities, and students with additional health concerns. However, the international nature of the school and its inclusive policies have resulted in a high English as an Additional Language (EAL) population, and 33% of MYP2 students have been diagnosed with a learning disability and receive additional support

both in and outside the classroom. This leads to additional research in multiple areas of student sub populations and differing school contexts.

### **Implications for Practice or Policy**

The data collected from this case study highlights that the implementation of student choice within classroom curriculum and content results in increased engagement, motivation, attainment, and depth of student understanding. However, for such outcomes to be realized, educators require additional time and support in curriculum development, content creation, and assessment marking, resulting in an increased need for planning and preparation time. The resultant impact on student achievement, characterized by an average 22% elevation in overall student marks, re-emphasizes the significant returns of this additional investment in teacher time. Even when students are only able to select assessment modality without the freedom to choose content, an increase in student attainment is still observed.

Further, incorporating student choice in classroom content and curriculum allows additional beneficial outcomes, such as the development of student-centered practices, critical thinking, and the reduction of hierarchical structures between teachers and students. The educator survey collected affirms this correlation and shows an escalation in student engagement, motivation, and attainment when student choice is available.

The phased structure of the case study demonstrates that the introduction of student choice can occur both within singular classrooms and as a school policy, with various degrees of implementation yielding positive effects on student attainment. The primary challenges identified pertain to the need for expanded time to prepare and develop materials, as well as to scaffold learning for particular student populations, including English as an Additional Language (EAL) students and those requiring learning support. Despite these challenges, each phase of

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data collection corroborates that the integration of student choice yields overall benefits for students, teachers, and the broader school environment.

The comprehensive data collected from scope and sequence analysis, student marks, and educator surveys clearly depict how the integration of student choice into the curriculum can significantly enhance student achievement and engagement while concurrently aligning with instructional objectives. This transformative shift does not merely hold true for a particular demographic or a specific educational framework; rather, it transcends geographical boundaries and educational systems.

The findings of this dissertation, embodied in the cycle of inquiry's example of the Pathways Programme, elucidate a universally applicable model. The program's inherent flexibility and adaptability render it viable for implementation in practically any school, anywhere in the world, providing a powerful tool to reimagine and reshape the educational landscape.

The implementation of student choice, as illustrated in this research, not only disrupts traditional pedagogical approaches but also has the potential to spawn a new generation of learners, fully engaged, motivated, and equipped with essential life skills. These learners will be primed to navigate life's challenges with dexterity, emerging as independent, critical thinkers and creative problem-solvers. The implications of student choice in transforming the educational experience reaffirm the critical importance of student-centered approaches. It shows that when students are at the helm of their learning journey, it sparks engagement and motivation that transcends traditional classroom boundaries, resulting in improved academic outcomes.

In conclusion, the promise of student choice is not just a conduit for academic success. It is a pathway for a pedagogical revolution—an educational tool that could usher in a new era in education characterized by increased student engagement, motivation, and achievement. It is a

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vision of an educational future that empowers learners not only to succeed academically but also to be prepared to face the complexities and challenges of life with confidence and competence.

In sum, when evaluating the comprehensive research question through the prism of the collated data (scope and sequence analysis, student marks, and educator surveys), it becomes unequivocally apparent that student choice, when well-integrated into the curriculum, can substantially uplift student achievement and engagement, all while aligning with set instructional benchmarks.

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TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

APPENDIX A

Curriculum Scope and Sequence - Case Study School 2022-2023

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies—Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit title</b>	<b>Living With Rivers</b>	<b>The Middle Ages</b>	<b>Global Heritage</b>
Key Concept	Change	Time, Space, and Place	Global Interaction
Related concept(s)	<b>Humanities:</b> Globalization, Processes, Resources  <b>Science:</b> Consequences Environment	Power, Equity, Identity, Globalization	Choice, identity, sustainability
Global Context	Globalization and sustainability	Identities and Relationships	Personal and cultural expression
Statement of Inquiry	Human settlements will have unavoidable consequences on the technological and physical environments.	Privilege was essential to making life bearable for all of society in the Medieval period.	Our cultural heritage depends on choosing what will be preserved and how it can be conserved for future generations.

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies—Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit title</b>	<b>Living With Rivers</b>	<b>The Middle Ages</b>	<b>Global Heritage</b>
MYP subject group objectives	<p><b>A: Knowing and understanding</b></p> <p>i. Use a range of terminology in context</p> <p><b>B: Investigating</b></p> <p>i. Formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance</p> <p>ii. Formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question</p> <p>iii. Use the methods to collect and record relevant information</p> <p>iv. Evaluate the research process and results—with guidance.</p> <p><b>C: Communicating</b></p> <p>i. Structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</p> <p><b>D: Thinking critically</b></p> <p>i. Summarize information to make valid, well-supported arguments</p> <p>ii. Analyze a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations</p>	<p><b>A: Knowing and understanding</b></p> <p>i. Use a range of terminology in context</p> <p>ii. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p><b>B: Investigating</b></p> <p>i. Formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance</p> <p>ii. Use the methods to collect and record relevant information</p> <p>iii. Evaluate the research process and results—with guidance.</p> <p><b>C: Communicating</b></p> <p>i. Communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</p> <p>ii. Create a reference list and cite sources of information.</p> <p><b>D: Thinking critically</b></p> <p>i. Analyze concepts, issues, models, visual representation, and/or theories</p> <p>ii. Analyze a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations</p> <p>iii. Recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</p>	<p><b>A: Knowing and understanding</b></p> <p>i. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p><b>B: Investigating</b></p> <p>i. Formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance</p> <p>ii. Formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question</p> <p>iii. Use the methods to collect and record relevant information</p> <p><b>C: Communicating</b></p> <p>i. Communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</p> <p>ii. Structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</p> <p>iii. Create a reference list and cite sources of information.</p> <p><b>D: Thinking critically</b></p> <p>i. Summarize information to make valid, well-supported arguments</p> <p>ii. Recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</p>



TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

	<b>Scope and Sequence</b>		
	<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies—Combined Humanities</b>		
<b>Unit title</b>	<b>Living With Rivers</b>	<b>The Middle Ages</b>	<b>Global Heritage</b>

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies—Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit title</b>	<b>Living With Rivers</b>	<b>The Middle Ages</b>	<b>Global Heritage</b>
ATL skills	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>A. Communication skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Organize and depict information logically</li> <li>ii. Structure information in summaries, essays and reports</li> </ul>	<p><b>Research</b></p> <p><b>A. Information literacy skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Access information to be informed and inform others</li> <li>ii. Make connections between various sources of information</li> <li>iii. Use critical literacy skills to analyze and interpret media communications</li> <li>iv. Identify primary and secondary sources</li> </ul> <p><b>Thinking</b></p> <p><b>Critical thinking skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Formulate factual, topical, conceptual, and debatable questions</li> <li>ii. Consider multiple alternatives, including those that might be unlikely or impossible</li> </ul>	<p><b>Communication</b></p> <p><b>I. Communication skills</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction</li> <li>ii. Interpret and use effectively modes of non-verbal communication</li> <li>iii. Collaborate with peers and experts using a variety of digital environments and media</li> <li>iv. Share ideas with multiple audiences using a variety of digital environments and media</li> </ul>

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<p>Assessments with criteria</p>	<p><b>Summative – Interdisciplinary unit with Science</b></p> <p>Fieldwork ‘To what extent has the city of Haimhausen and the people who live there changed the Amper?’</p> <p><b>Task 1: Rivers of the World Student Choice – Topic</b></p> <p><b>C: Communicating (OPVL on news articles)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</li> <li>iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</li> </ol> <p><b>Task 2: (Humanities only) No Student Choice possible (IDU)</b></p> <p><b>‘What’s the source of pollution?’ – Field work in groups</b></p> <p>Case study analysis—human impacts on freshwater catchments OPCVL map and other source exploration of the upper, middle and lower courses of a chosen river—Amper</p> <p><b>A: Knowing and understanding</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. use a range of terminology in context</li> <li>ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</li> </ol> <p><b>B: Investigating</b></p>	<p><b>Task 1: Understanding life of the Middle Ages across the world.</b></p> <p>The task will establish an understanding of the conditions within particular global communities in the Middle Ages; specifically, why different tiers in society may experience more or less privileged in their daily lives. Students will be able to choose between Muslim Enlightenment, Feudal Japan, Mongols, Black Death, and Vikings.</p> <p><b>Student preliminary research task 1: Student Choice – Topic, Role</b></p> <p><b>B: Investigating</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question</li> <li>iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information</li> <li>iv. evaluate the research process and results, with guidance.</li> </ol> <p><b>D: Thinking critically</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. analyze concepts, issues, models, visual representation and/or theories</li> <li>ii. summarize information to make valid, well-supported arguments</li> <li>iii. analyze a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations</li> <li>iv. recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</li> </ol> <p><b>Part 2 Task2: Understanding life of the Middle Ages – Student Choice.</b></p> <p><b>Student Choice – Role Student Choice – Modality of Assessment (3)</b></p>	<p><b>Task 1: Is tourism good for cultural heritage?</b></p> <p>Looking at the local community, we consider how our human and natural landscape has changed in terms of purpose and use through time. Through such inquiry, we consider the possibly difficult tug-of-war the ensues between the need to preserve the past while at the same time causing considerable damage to make it adapt to new functions and technologies</p> <p><b>Student Choice – Topic and Role</b></p> <p>The students will extrapolate the process of use over time to other landmarks around the world to weigh the choice of preservation or modernization. The students have a choice of Stonehenge, Great Barrier Reef, Machu Picchu, Oktoberfest, Serengeti National Park, Ha Long Bay, Petra, Varapiso, Venice, Carnaval, Sagrada Familia, and Everest Base Camp.</p> <p><b>B: Investigating</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance</li> <li>ii. formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question</li> <li>iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information</li> </ol> <p><b>C: Communicating</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</li> <li>iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</li> </ol>
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## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question</li> <li>iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information</li> <li>iv. evaluate the research process and results, with guidance.</li> </ul> <p><b>C: Communicating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</li> <li>iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</li> </ul> <p><b>Science</b> (Video assessment—To be marked by both departments together)</p> <p><b>A: Knowing and understanding (Humanities)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. use a range of terminology in context</li> <li>ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</li> </ul> <p><b>C: Communicating (Humanities)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</li> <li>iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</li> </ul> <p><b>B: Inquiring and designing (Science)</b></p>	<p>The task will establish further understanding of the conditions within a particular global community that is chosen by the students in the Middle Ages; specifically, how different roles within society worked together. Students will be able to choose between Muslim Enlightenment, Feudal Japan, Mongols, Black Death, and Vikings. (Note: class-wide decision will be made before individual research to avoid students studying the same topic twice.)</p> <p><b>A: Knowing and understanding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. use a range of terminology in context</li> <li>ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</li> </ul> <p><b>C: Communicating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</li> </ul> <p><b>D: Thinking critically</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. analyze concepts, issues, models, visual representation and/or theories</li> <li>iii. analyze a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations</li> <li>iv. recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</li> </ul>	
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## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

- i. describe a problem or question to be tested by a scientific investigation
- ii. outline a testable hypothesis and explain it using scientific reasoning
- iii. describe how to manipulate the variables, and describe how data will be collected
- iv. design scientific investigations.

**D: Thinking critically (Science)**

- i. analyze concepts, issues, models, visual representation and/or theories
- ii. summarize information to make valid, well-supported arguments
- iii. analyze a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations
- iv. recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.

TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<p><b>Scope and Sequence</b></p> <p><b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies—Combined Humanities</b></p>			
Unit title	Living With Rivers	The Middle Ages	Global Heritage
<p>Key content (topics, knowledge, skills)</p>	<p>This unit focuses on the technological and physical environment—namely what are the individual characteristics that contribute to the appearance of a built-up area.</p> <p>Students will explore the biophysical characteristics of rivers and their surrounding environments. They will appreciate that a single river is part of a larger drainage system and that human activity is often synonymous with their change in behavior over time.</p> <p>Drainage Basins— characteristics of a river’s course from source to sea.</p> <p>Processes of change—river landforms generated from erosion and deposition, Human use of rivers—communication, domestic use, industrial use, leisure and tourism and cultural significance.</p> <p>Fieldwork report—measuring the characteristics of cross sections of a stream along its course.</p>	<p>How was society organized during the Middle Ages and who held the most power? Students will explore how the structure of older societies resemble modern systems, specifically in terms of hierarchies of entitlement and power.</p> <p>When was the middle ages, why are they called this and why are they important to us?</p> <p>Students will learn why this era is defined so, and what modern trappings were derived from this era. Specifically, systems of government, trade, technology and living conditions.</p> <p>What were the challenges that people faced in medieval times? Students need to know what the daily life was like for people at all levels of social strata. This is vital for when they come to investigate the conditions associated with MEDCs and LEDCs.</p>	<p>The aims of this unit are to have students understand the general idea of culture and demonstrate the different aspects of culture.</p> <p>This will initially be done by examining considering the criteria UNESCO uses to determine sites awarded World Heritage status through lessons from Bavaria and applied to sites worldwide. Students will need to know the specific criteria used by various stakeholders consider the difficulties sites have with meeting the requirements (cost of living, difficulties with daily life in sites preserved in medieval form, issues with tourism, et cet.). Through this as well, students will identify tangible and intangible cultural elements. They will then apply the concepts through the lens of culture and how cultural priorities have changed over the course of time.</p>

TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

APPENDIX B

Curriculum Scope and Sequence - Case Study School 2021-2022

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies - Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit Title</b>	Global Heritage	The Middle Ages - It wasn't that bad, was it?	Living With Rivers
<b>Key Concept</b>	Global Interaction	Time, Space and Place	Change
<b>Related Concept(s)</b>	Choice, identity, sustainability	Power, Equity, Identity, Globalisation	Humanities: Globalisation, Processes, Resources  Science: Consequences, Environment
<b>Global Context</b>	Personal and cultural expression	Identities and Relationships	Globalisation and sustainability
<b>Statement of Inquiry</b>	Our cultural heritage depends on choosing what is to be preserved and how it can be conserved for future generations.	Privilege was essential to making life bearable for all of society in the Medieval period	Human settlements will have unavoidable consequences on the technological and physical environments

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies - Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit Title</b>	Global Heritage	The Middle Ages - It wasn't that bad, was it?	Living With Rivers
<b>MYP Subject Group Objectives</b>	<p>A: Knowing and understanding ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p>B: Investigating i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance ii. formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information</p> <p>C: Communicating i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</p> <p>D: Thinking critically ii. summarize information to make valid, well-supported arguments iv. recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</p>	<p>A: Knowing and understanding i. use a range of terminology in context ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p>B: Investigating i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information iv. evaluate the research process and results, with guidance.</p> <p>C: Communicating i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</p> <p>D: Thinking critically i. analyse concepts, issues, models, visual representation and/or theories iii. analyse a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations iv. recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</p>	<p>A: Knowing and understanding i. use a range of terminology in context</p> <p>B: Investigating i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance ii. formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information iv. evaluate the research process and results, with guidance.</p> <p>C: Communicating ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</p> <p>D: Thinking critically ii. summarise information to make valid, well-supported arguments iii. analyse a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations</p>



TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies - Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit Title</b>	Global Heritage	The Middle Ages - It wasn't that bad, was it?	Living With Rivers
<b>ATL Skills</b>	<p>Communication</p> <p>I. Communication skills</p> <p>Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction</p> <p>Interpret and use effectively modes of non-verbal communication</p> <p>Collaborate with peers and experts using a variety of digital environments and media</p> <p>Share ideas with multiple audiences using a variety of digital environments and media</p>	<p>Research</p> <p>VI. Information literacy skills</p> <p>Access information to be informed and inform others</p> <p>Make connections between various sources of information</p> <p>Use critical literacy skills to analyse and interpret media communications</p> <p>Identify primary and secondary sources</p> <p>Thinking</p> <p>VIII. Critical thinking skills</p> <p>Formulate factual, topical, conceptual and debatable questions</p> <p>IX. Creative thinking skills</p> <p>Consider multiple alternatives, including those that might be unlikely or impossible</p>	<p>Communication</p> <p>I. Communication skills</p> <p>Organize and depict information logically</p> <p>Structure information in summaries, essays and reports</p>

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<p><b>Assessments With Criteria</b></p>	<p>Summative - "What's so special about the Schloss?" Looking at the local community, we consider how our human and natural landscape has changed in terms of purpose and use through time. Through such enquiry, we consider the possibly difficult tug-of-war the ensues between the need to preserve the past whilst at the same time causing considerable damage to make it adapt to new functions and technologies</p> <p>Documentary - Haimhausen Schloss</p> <p>A: Knowing and understanding</p> <p>ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p>B: Investigating</p> <p>i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance ii. formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information</p> <p>C: Communicating</p> <p>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</p>	<p>Formative Task: 'Playing at fairness and feudalism'</p> <p>The formative task will establish understanding of the conditions within particular communities in the Middle ages; specifically, why different tiers in society may experience more of less privileged in their daily lives.</p> <p>B - Investigating</p> <p>i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance</p> <p>C: Communicating</p> <p>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</p> <p>D: Thinking critically</p> <p>iv. recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</p> <p>Formative</p> <p>Group play task: Roles, Rights and Responsibilities of feudalism.</p> <p>Summative</p> <p>Storyboard that! A captioned graphic novel style interpretation of Medieval life.</p> <p>A: Knowing and understanding</p> <p>i. use a range of terminology in context ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p>B: Investigating</p>	<p>Summative Fieldwork 'To what extent has Haimhausen changed the Amper?'</p> <p>B: Investigating</p> <p>i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance ii. formulate and follow an action plan to investigate a research question iii. use the methods to collect and record relevant information iv. evaluate the research process and results, with guidance.</p> <p>Summative (Humanities only) 'What's the source of pollution?'</p> <p>Case study analysis - human impacts on freshwater catchments OPCVL map and other source exploration of the upper, middle and lower courses of a chosen river - Amper</p> <p>A: Knowing and understanding</p> <p>i. use a range of terminology in context ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p>D: Thinking critically</p> <p>i. analyse concepts, issues, models, visual representation and/or theories ii. summarize information to make valid, well-supported arguments iii. analyse a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognizing values and limitations</p>
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## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<p>iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</p> <p>D: Thinking critically</p> <p>ii. summarize information to make valid, well-supported arguments</p>	<p>i. formulate/choose a clear and focused research question, explaining its relevance</p> <p>iv. evaluate the research process and results, with guidance.</p> <p>C: Communicating</p> <p>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</p> <p>iii. create a reference list and cite sources of information.</p> <p>D: Thinking critically</p> <p>i. analyse concepts, issues, models, visual representation and/or theories</p> <p>iii. analyse a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, recognising values and limitations</p> <p>iv. recognise different perspectives and explain their implications.</p>	<p>iv. recognize different perspectives and explain their implications.</p> <p>Science</p> <p>B: Inquiring and designing</p> <p>i. describe a problem or question to be tested by a scientific investigation</p> <p>ii. outline a testable hypothesis and explain it using scientific reasoning</p> <p>iii. describe how to manipulate the variables, and describe how data will be collected</p> <p>iv. design scientific investigations.</p>
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## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies - Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit Title</b>	Global Heritage	The Middle Ages - It wasn't that bad, was it?	Living With Rivers
<b>Key content (topics, knowledge, skills)</b>	<p>The aims of this unit are to have students understand the general idea of culture and demonstrate the different aspects of culture.</p> <p>This will initially be done by examining considering the criteria UNESCO uses to determine sites awarded World Heritage status through examples in Bavaria. Students will need to know the specific criteria employed for each site and consider the difficulties sites have with meeting the requirements (cost of living, difficulties with daily life in sites preserved in mediæval form, issues with tourism, et cet.). Through this as well, students will identify tangible and intangible cultural elements. They will then apply the concepts to examine the history of the school from the time of the Thirty Years War to the present in a documentary they will create as a group.</p>	<p>How was society organised during the Middle Ages and who held the most power? Students will explore how the structure of older societies resemble modern systems, specifically in terms of hierarchies of entitlement and power.</p> <p>When were the middle ages, why are they called this and why are they important to us?</p> <p>Students will learn why this era is defined so, and what modern trappings were derived from this era. Specifically, systems of government, trade, technology and living conditions.</p> <p>What were the challenges that people faced in medieval times? Students need to know what the daily life was like for people at all levels of social strata. This is vital for when they come to investigate the conditions associated with MEDCs and LEDCs.</p> <p>Students will be introduced to another study routine - OPVL, in order for them to analyse the purpose and perspective of historical sources - from both the ancient and modern world.</p>	<p>This unit focuses on the technological and physical environment - namely what are the individual characteristics that contribute to the appearance of a built-up area. Students will explore the biophysical characteristics of rivers and their surrounding environments. They will appreciate that a single river is part of a larger drainage system and that human activity is often synonymous with their change in behaviour over time.</p> <p>Drainage Basins - characteristics of a river's course from source to sea.,</p> <p>Processes of change - river landforms generated from erosion and deposition, Human use of rivers - communication, domestic use, industrial use, leisure and tourism and cultural significance.</p> <p>Fieldwork report - measuring the characteristics of cross sections of a stream along its course.</p>

TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<b>Scope and Sequence</b>			
<b>MYP 2 Individuals and Societies - Combined Humanities</b>			
<b>Unit Title</b>	Global Heritage	The Middle Ages - It wasn't that bad, was it?	Living With Rivers
<b>Subject Specific terminology</b>	Assistance, cultural landscape, Authenticity, Balance, Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA), evaluations, Conservation, Convention, Criteria, Cultural heritage, Delisting, landscape, Evaluation, Global Strategy, Heritage route, Historic towns, Implementation, Natural Heritage, Monuments, Natural area, Nomination, Outstanding universal value	Barbarian, Saxons, Battle of Hastings, Castle, Charlemagne, Chivalric Code, Dark Ages, Feudalism, King, Lord, Magna Carta, Manor, Mediæval, Middle Ages, Nobles, Peasant, Serf, Tithe, William The Conqueror	Confluence Deposition Delta Drainage Eutrophication Floodplain Freshwater Marsh Meander Permeability Runoff Suspension Transport Tributary Valley Velocity Water table Waterfall
<b>Possible Interdisciplinary Links</b>	Drama - public speaking, storyboarding, role playing.  Design - applying technology to communicate understanding	English - persuasive writing and script writing  Drama - developing scenes via setting and complication	Science - scientific method and fieldwork, water sampling and data collection.

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## APPENDIX C

### IBO Rubrics for MYP2 (Grade 7) Humanities

#### Individuals and Societies

#### Criterion A: Knowing and understanding

**Maximum: 8**

At the end of year 2, students should be able to:

- i. use vocabulary in context
- ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, using descriptions, explanations and examples.

Achievement level	Level descriptor
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1-2	The student: i. <b>recognizes some</b> vocabulary ii. demonstrates <b>basic</b> knowledge and understanding of content and concepts through <b>limited</b> descriptions and/or examples.
3-4	The student: i. <b>uses some</b> vocabulary ii. demonstrates <b>satisfactory</b> knowledge and understanding of content and concepts through <b>simple</b> descriptions, explanations and/or examples.
5-6	The student: i. <b>uses considerable relevant</b> vocabulary, <b>often accurately</b> ii. demonstrates <b>substantial</b> knowledge and understanding of content and concepts through descriptions, explanations and examples.
7-8	The student: i. <b>consistently uses relevant</b> vocabulary <b>accurately</b> ii. demonstrates <b>excellent</b> knowledge and understanding of content and concepts through <b>detailed</b> descriptions, explanations and examples.

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## Individuals and Societies

### Criterion B: Investigating

**Maximum: 8**

At the end of year 2, students should be able to:

- i. explain the choice of a research question
- ii. follow an action plan to explore a research question
- iii. collect and record relevant information consistent with the research question
- iv. reflect on the process and results of the investigation.

Achievement level	Level descriptor
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1–2	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <b>identifies</b> a research question</li><li>ii. follows an action plan in a <b>limited way</b> to explore a research question</li><li>iii. <b>collects</b> and <b>records</b> information, to a <b>limited extent</b></li><li>iv. <b>with guidance</b>, reflects on the research process and results, to a <b>limited extent</b>.</li></ol>
3–4	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <b>describes</b> the choice of a research question</li><li>ii. <b>partially</b> follows an action plan to explore a research question</li><li>iii. <b>uses</b> a method or methods to collect and record <b>some relevant</b> information</li><li>iv. <b>with guidance</b>, reflects on the research process and results with <b>some</b> depth.</li></ol>
5–6	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <b>describes</b> the choice of a research question <b>in detail</b></li><li>ii. <b>mostly</b> follows an action plan to explore a research question</li><li>iii. <b>uses</b> method(s) to collect and record <b>often relevant</b> information</li><li>iv. <b>reflects</b> on the research process and results.</li></ol>
7–8	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. <b>explains</b> the choice of a research question</li><li>ii. <b>effectively</b> follows an action plan to explore a research question</li><li>iii. <b>uses</b> methods to collect and record <b>consistently relevant</b> information</li><li>iv. <b>thoroughly</b> reflects on the research process and results.</li></ol>

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## Individuals and Societies

### Criterion C: Communicating

**Maximum: 8**

At the end of year 2, students should be able to:

- i. communicate information and ideas with clarity
- ii. organize information and ideas effectively for the task
- iii. list sources of information in a way that follows the task instructions.

Achievement level	Level descriptor
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1-2	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. communicates information and ideas in a style that is <b>not always</b> clear</li><li>ii. organizes information and ideas <b>in a limited way</b></li><li>iii. <b>inconsistently</b> lists sources, not following the task instructions.</li></ol>
3-4	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. communicates information and ideas in a way that is <b>somewhat</b> clear</li><li>ii. <b>somewhat</b> organizes information and ideas</li><li>iii. lists sources in a way that <b>sometimes</b> follows the task instructions.</li></ol>
5-6	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. communicates information and ideas in a way that is <b>mostly</b> clear</li><li>ii. <b>mostly</b> organizes information and ideas</li><li>iii. lists sources in a way that <b>often</b> follows the task instructions.</li></ol>
7-8	The student: <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>i. communicates information and ideas in a way that is <b>completely</b> clear</li><li>ii. <b>completely</b> organizes information and ideas <b>effectively</b></li><li>iii. lists sources in a way that <b>always</b> follows the task instructions.</li></ol>



# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## Individuals and Societies

### Criterion D: Thinking critically

**Maximum: 8**

At the end of year 2, students should be able to:

- i. identify the main points of ideas, events, visual representation or arguments
- ii. use information to justify an opinion
- iii. identify and analyse a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose
- iv. identify different views and their implications.

Achievement level	Level descriptor
0	The student <b>does not</b> reach a standard described by any of the descriptors below.
1-2	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. identifies the main points of ideas, events, visual representation or arguments <b>to a limited extent</b></li> <li>ii. <b>rarely</b> uses information to justify opinions</li> <li>iii. identifies the origin and purpose of <b>limited</b> sources/data</li> <li>iv. identifies <b>some</b> different views.</li> </ul>
3-4	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. identifies <b>some</b> main points of ideas, events, visual representation or arguments</li> <li>ii. justifies opinions with <b>some</b> information</li> <li>iii. <b>identifies</b> the origin and purpose of sources/data</li> <li>iv. identifies <b>some</b> different views and suggests <b>some</b> of their implications.</li> </ul>
5-6	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. <b>identifies</b> the main points of ideas, events, visual representation or arguments</li> <li>ii. gives <b>sufficient</b> justification of opinions using information</li> <li>iii. identifies the origin and purpose of a <b>range</b> of sources/data</li> <li>iv. identifies different views and <b>most</b> of their implications.</li> </ul>
7-8	The student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. identifies <b>in detail</b> the main points of ideas, events, visual representation or arguments</li> <li>ii. gives <b>detailed</b> justification of opinions using information</li> <li>iii. <b>consistently</b> identifies and <b>analyses a range</b> of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose</li> <li>iv. <b>consistently</b> identifies different views and their implications</li> </ul>

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## APPENDIX D

### Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills Handout

#### Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills

**ATL skills help you to become more autonomous, strategic, and self-motivated and ultimately prepare you for responsible participation in your local and global communities.**

#### Communication

<b>Communication skills: Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction</b>	<b>Communication skills: Reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Give and receive meaningful feedback</li> <li>2) Use intercultural understanding to interpret communication</li> <li>3) Use a variety of speaking techniques to communicate with a variety of audiences</li> <li>4) Use appropriate forms of writing for different purposes and audiences</li> <li>5) Use a variety of media to communicate with a range of audiences</li> <li>6) Interpret and use effectively modes of non-verbal communication</li> <li>7) Negotiate ideas and knowledge with peers and teachers</li> <li>8) Participate in, and contribute to, digital social media networks</li> <li>9) Collaborate with peers and experts using a variety of digital environments and media</li> <li>10) Share ideas with multiple audiences using a variety of digital environments and media</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Read critically and for comprehension</li> <li>2) Read a variety of sources for information and for pleasure</li> <li>3) Make inferences and draw conclusions</li> <li>4) Use and interpret a range of discipline-specific terms and symbols</li> <li>5) Write for different purposes</li> <li>6) Understand and use mathematical notation</li> <li>7) Paraphrase accurately and concisely</li> <li>8) Preview and skim texts to build understanding</li> <li>9) Take effective notes in class</li> <li>10) Make effective summary notes for studying</li> <li>11) Use a variety of organizers for academic writing tasks</li> <li>12) Find information for disciplinary and interdisciplinary inquiries, using a variety of media</li> <li>13) Organize and depict information logically</li> <li>14) Structure information in summaries, essays and reports</li> </ol>

#### Social Self-Management

<b>Collaboration skills: Working effectively with others</b>	<b>Organization skills: Managing time and tasks effectively</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Use social media networks appropriately to build and develop relationships</li> <li>2) Practice empathy</li> <li>3) Delegate and share responsibility for decision-making</li> <li>4) Help others to succeed</li> <li>5) Take responsibility for one's own actions</li> <li>6) Manage and resolve conflict, and work collaboratively in teams</li> <li>7) Build consensus</li> <li>8) Make fair and equitable decisions</li> <li>9) Listen actively to other perspectives and ideas</li> <li>10) Negotiate effectively</li> <li>11) Encourage others to contribute</li> <li>12) Exercise leadership and take on a variety of roles within groups</li> <li>13) Give and receive meaningful feedback</li> <li>14) Advocate for one's own rights and needs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Plan short- and long-term assignments; meet deadlines</li> <li>2) Create plans to prepare for summative assessments</li> <li>3) Keep and use a weekly planner for assignments</li> <li>4) Set goals that are challenging and realistic</li> <li>5) Plan strategies and take action to achieve personal and academic goals</li> <li>6) Bring necessary equipment and supplies to class</li> <li>7) Keep an organized and logical system of information files/notebooks</li> <li>8) Use appropriate strategies for organizing complex information</li> <li>9) Understand and use sensory learning preferences (learning styles)</li> <li>10) Select and use technology effectively and productively</li> </ol>

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

### Self-Management (cont.)

Affective skills: Managing state of mind	Reflection skills: (Re)considering the process of learning; choosing and using ATL skills
1) Mindfulness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Practice focus and concentration</li> <li>b. Practice strategies to develop mental focus</li> <li>c. Practice strategies to overcome distractions</li> <li>d. Practice being aware of body-mind connections</li> </ul> 2) Perseverance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Demonstrate persistence and perseverance</li> <li>b. Practice delaying gratification</li> </ul> 3) Emotional management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Practice strategies to overcome impulsiveness and anger</li> <li>d. Practice strategies to prevent and eliminate bullying</li> <li>e. Practice strategies to reduce stress and anxiety</li> </ul> 4) Self-motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>f. Practice analyzing and attributing causes for failure</li> <li>g. Practice managing self-talk</li> <li>h. Practice positive thinking</li> </ul> 5) Resilience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Practice "bouncing back" after adversity, mistakes and failures</li> <li>j. Practice "failing well"</li> <li>k. Practice dealing with disappointment and unmet expectations</li> <li>l. Practice dealing with change</li> </ul>	1) Develop new skills, techniques and strategies for effective learning 2) Identify strengths and weaknesses of personal learning strategies (self-assessment) 3) Demonstrate flexibility in the selection and use of learning strategies 4) Try new ATL skills and evaluate their effectiveness 5) Consider content <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What did I learn today?</li> <li>b. What don't I yet understand?</li> <li>c. What questions do I have now?</li> </ul> 6) Consider ATL skills development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What can I already do?</li> <li>b. How can I share my skills to help peers who need more practice?</li> <li>c. What will I work on next?</li> </ul> 7) Consider personal learning strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. What can I do to become a more efficient and effective learner?</li> <li>b. How can I become more flexible in my choice of learning strategies?</li> <li>c. What factors are important for helping me learn well?</li> </ul> 8) Focus on the process of creating by imitating the work of others 9) Consider ethical, cultural and environmental implications 10) Keep a journal to record reflections

### Research

Information literacy skills: Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information	Media literacy skills: Interacting with media to use and create ideas and information
1) Collect, record and verify data 2) Access information to be informed and inform others 3) Make connections between various sources of information 4) Understand the benefits and limitations of personal sensory learning preferences when accessing, processing and recalling information 5) Use memory techniques to develop long-term memory 6) Present information in a variety of formats and platforms	1) Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media (including digital social media and online networks) 2) Demonstrate awareness of media interpretations of events and ideas (including digital social media) 3) Make informed choices about personal viewing experiences 4) Understand the impact of media representation and modes of presentation

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7) Collect and analyze data to identify solutions and make informed decisions</li> <li>8) Process data and report results</li> <li>9) Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on their appropriateness to specific tasks</li> <li>10) Understand and use technology systems</li> <li>11) Use critical-literacy skills to analyze and interpret media communications</li> <li>12) Understand and implement intellectual property rights</li> <li>13) Create references, citations and bibliography according to recognized conventions</li> <li>14) Identify primary and secondary sources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5) Seek a range of perspectives from multiple and varied sources</li> <li>6) Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats</li> <li>7) Compare, contrast and draw connections among (multi)media resources</li> </ul>
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### Thinking

<b>Critical-thinking skills: Analyzing and evaluating issues and ideas</b>	<b>Creative-thinking skills: Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Practice observing carefully in order to recognize problems</li> <li>2) Gather and organize relevant information to formulate an argument</li> <li>3) Recognize unstated assumptions and bias</li> <li>4) Interpret data</li> <li>5) Evaluate evidence and arguments</li> <li>6) Recognize and evaluate propositions</li> <li>7) Draw reasonable conclusions and generalizations</li> <li>8) Test generalizations and conclusions</li> <li>9) Revise understanding based on new information and evidence</li> <li>10) Evaluate and manage risk</li> <li>11) Formulate factual, topical, conceptual and debatable questions</li> <li>12) Consider ideas from multiple perspectives</li> <li>13) Develop contrary or opposing arguments</li> <li>14) Analyze complex concepts and projects into their constituent parts and synthesize them to create new understanding</li> <li>15) Propose and evaluate a variety of solutions</li> <li>16) Identify obstacles and challenges</li> <li>17) Use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues</li> <li>18) Identify trends and forecast possibilities</li> <li>19) Troubleshoot systems and application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Use brainstorming and visual diagrams to generate new ideas and inquiries</li> <li>2) Consider multiple alternatives, including those that might be unlikely or impossible</li> <li>3) Create novel solutions to authentic problems</li> <li>4) Make unexpected or unusual connections between objects and/or ideas</li> <li>5) Design improvements to existing machines, media and technologies</li> <li>6) Design new machines, media and technologies</li> <li>7) Make guesses, ask "what if" questions and generate testable hypotheses</li> <li>8) Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products or processes</li> <li>9) Create original works and ideas; use existing works and ideas in new ways</li> <li>10) Practice flexible thinking – develop multiple opposing, contradictory and complementary arguments</li> <li>11) Practice visible thinking strategies and techniques</li> <li>12) Generate metaphors and analogies</li> </ul>

<b>Transfer skills: Using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Use effective learning strategies in subject groups and disciplines</li> <li>2) Apply skills and knowledge in unfamiliar situations</li> <li>3) Inquire in different contexts to gain a different perspective</li> </ul>

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

- 4) Compare conceptual understanding across multiple subject groups and disciplines
- 5) Make connections between subject groups and disciplines
- 6) Combine knowledge, understanding and skills to create products or solutions
- 7) Transfer current knowledge to learning of new technologies
- 8) Change the context of an inquiry to gain different perspectives

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## APPENDIX E

### Professional Development Presented Showing Student Choice as a School-wide Initiative

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■■ IS 17 & 18 MARCH | ATHENS




## Gifted Programs in an International School - A Case Study

Alissa Carter | [a.carter@XXX-school.com](mailto:a.carter@XXX-school.com) | [alissakcarter@gmail.com](mailto:alissakcarter@gmail.com) | 18 March

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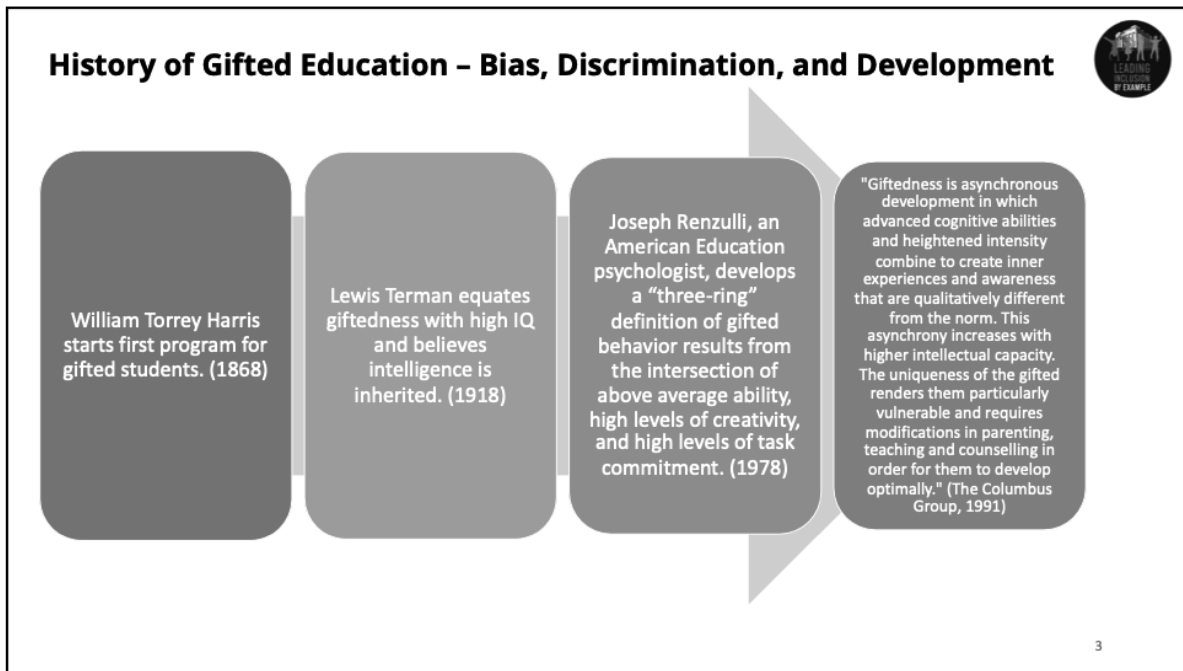
## Agenda

1. History of Gifted Education – Bias, Discrimination, and Development
2. Unique Structure of International Schools
3. Infinity Program at XXX International School:
  1. Teacher Professional Development
  2. Courses tailored to high ability students
  3. Development of Student Choice within the general education curriculum
  4. Development of Assessment Choice in the general education curriculum
  5. Inquiry Cycles (Pathways Introduction)
  6. Support Groups for high ability students facing challenges
  7. Accelerated Curriculum for highly advanced students
  8. Student Advocates
4. Interconnections and Stand-Alone Elements
5. Discussion: How can your school incorporate some of these elements into your school's framework?

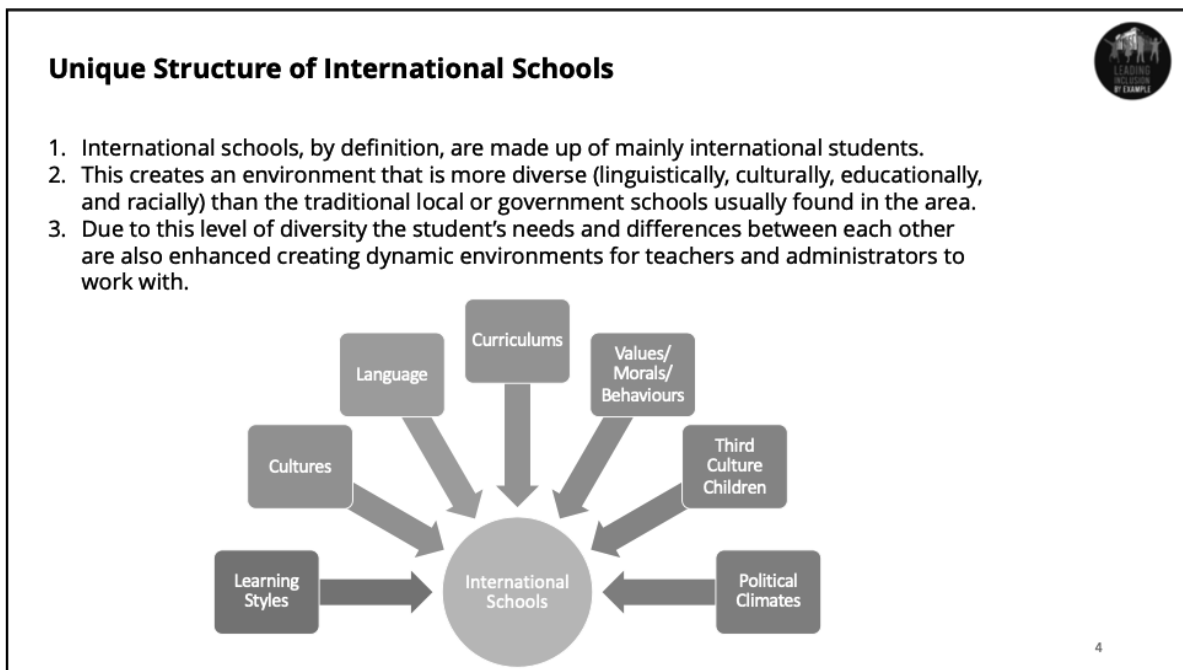
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## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES



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## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

### Infinity Program at XXX International School



1. Designed for students who show abilities or skills beyond their like-in-age peers.
2. Primarily opt-in program for any student who wants additional challenge or experiences.
3. Focused on building motivation to learn, social skills, and additional challenge in key academic areas.
4. Overarching goal is to foster curiosity and build relationships with students who perceive the world differently than their like-in-age peers.



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### Infinity Program at XXX International School



1. Teacher Professional Development
2. Courses tailored to high ability students
3. Development of Student Choice within the general education curriculum
4. Development of Assessment Choice in the general education curriculum
5. Inquiry Cycles (Pathways Introduction)
6. Support Groups for high ability students facing challenges
7. Accelerated Curriculum for highly advanced students
8. Student Advocates

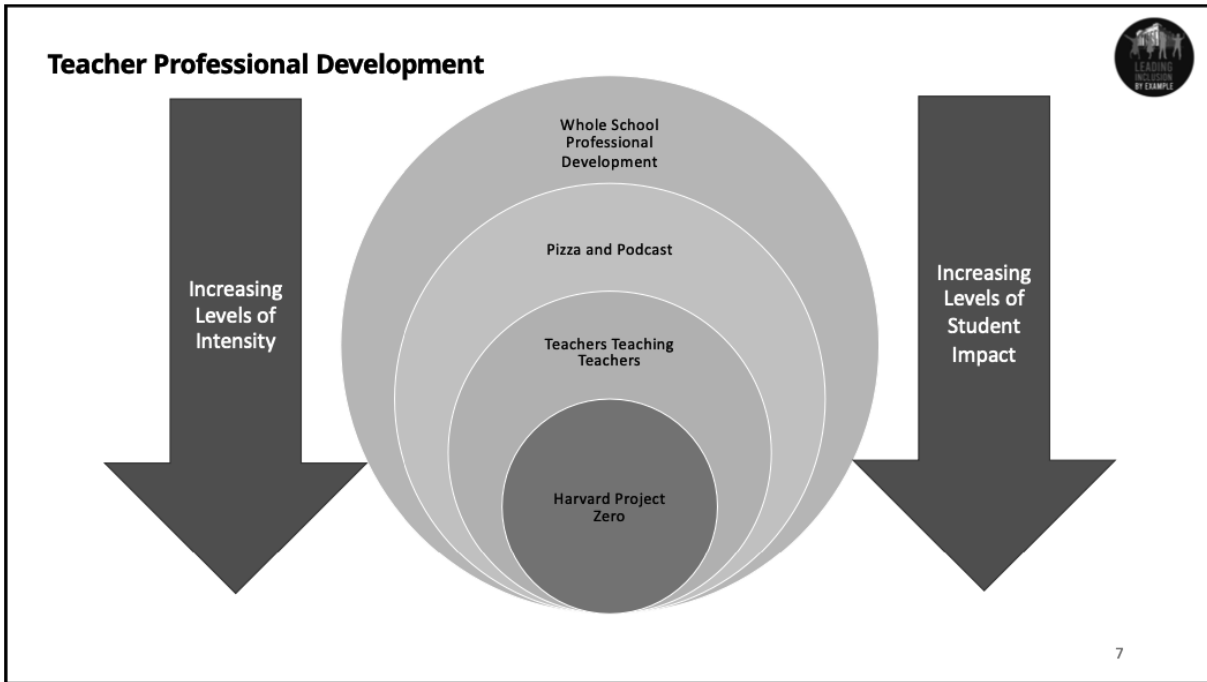


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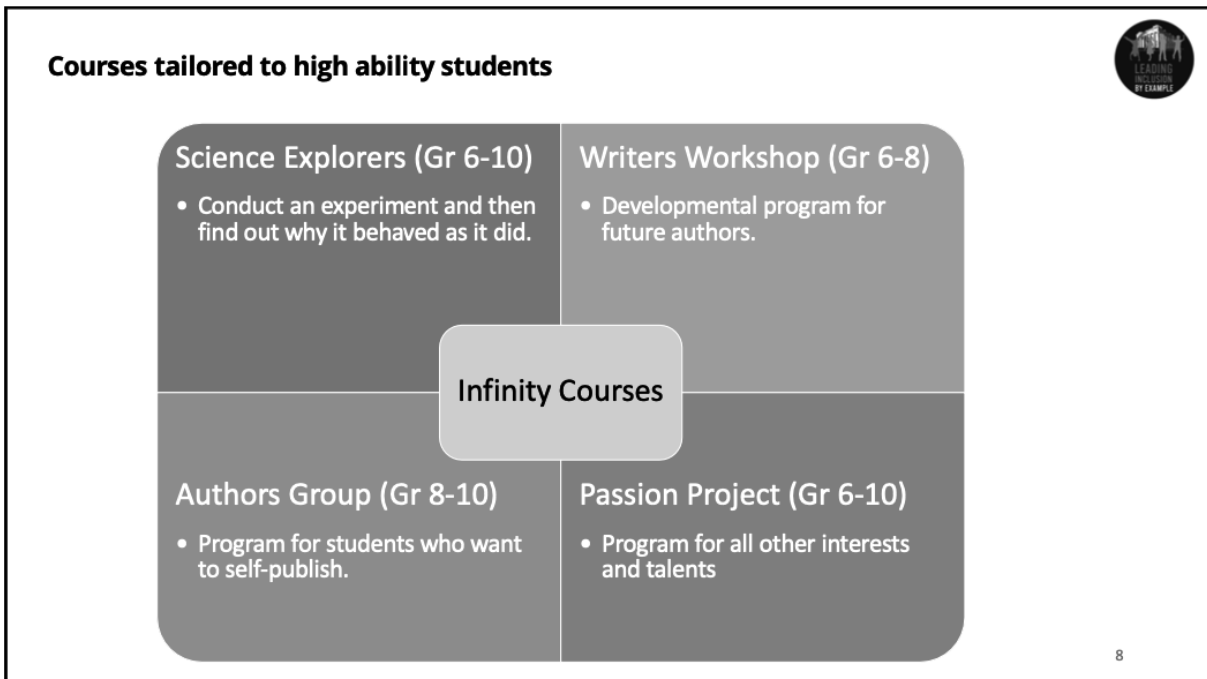
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# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

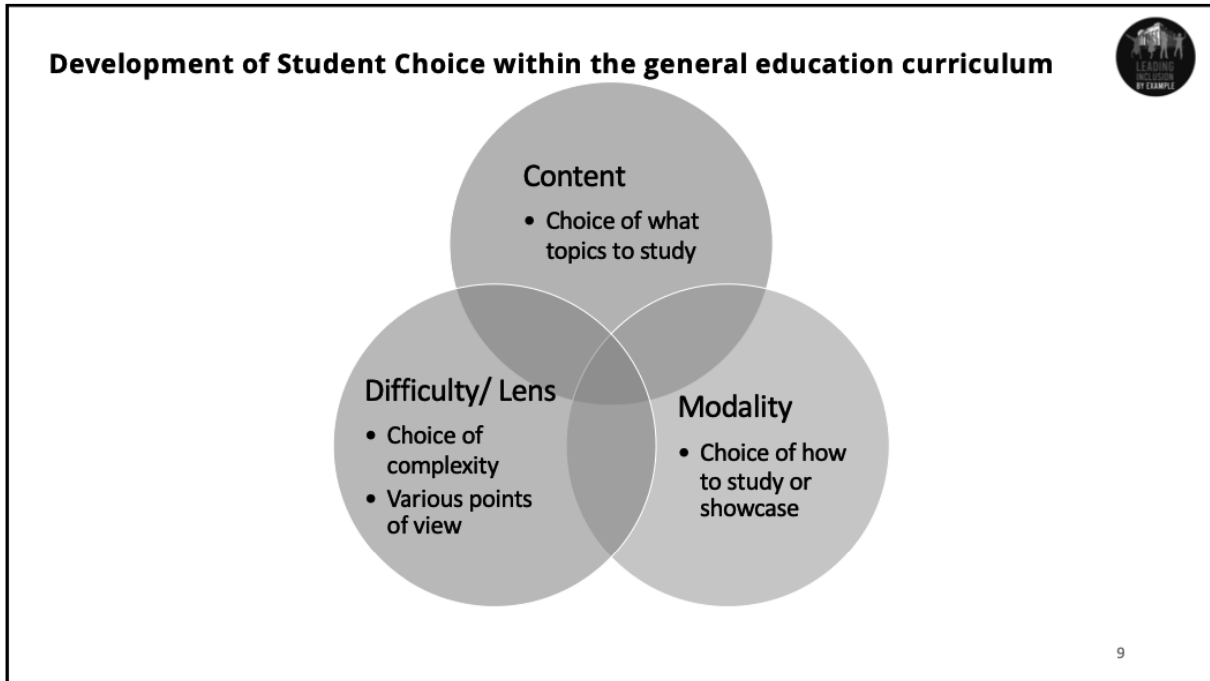


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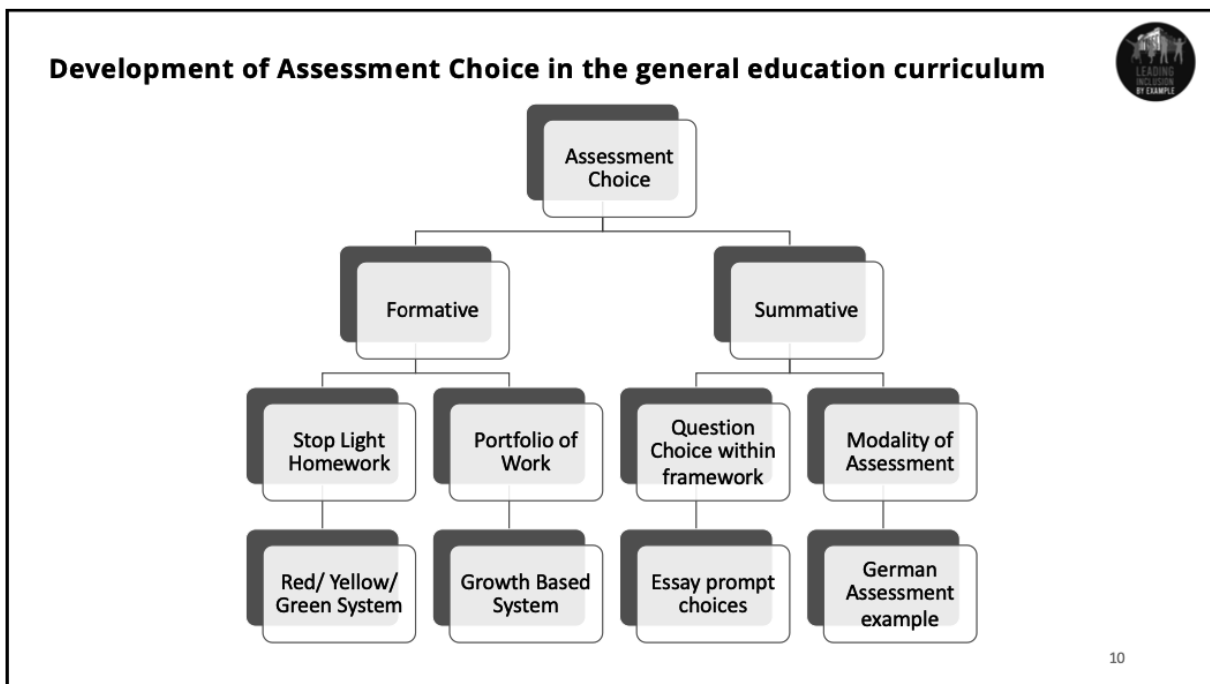


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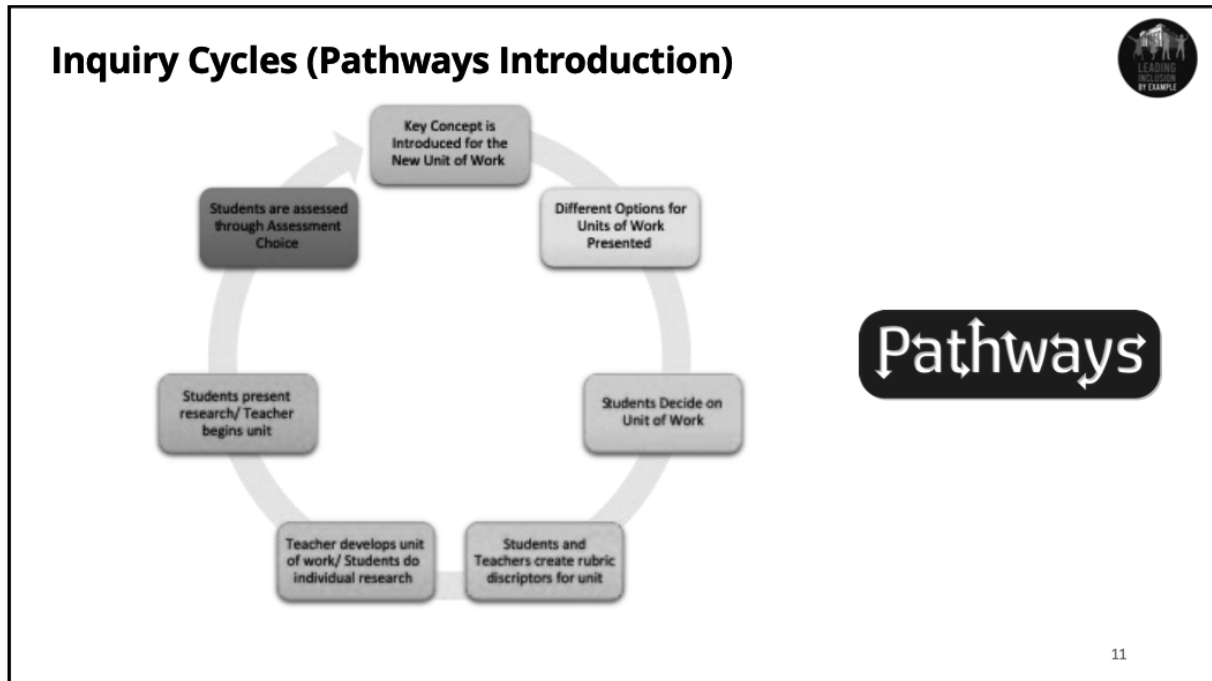
# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES



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### Support Groups

1. Currently working on Perfectionism and Burnout
2. Student join through three routes: Nominated by teachers, parents, or self.
3. Groups meet for one period a month to address underlying and foundational causes of perfectionism and burnout.
4. Groups come with an overarching goal and additional skills to learn that are discussed over several lessons.
5. Primary goal is to show students they are not alone in these challenges and together we can support each other to become better versions of ourselves.

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## Accelerated Curriculum




1. Only offered to students with internal or external referrals.
2. Primarily used in Mathematics with one or two students each year in English.
3. Other areas include professional obligations (Professional Sports/ Orchestra/ University courses).
4. Goal is to offer students with highly advanced abilities the chance to have a somewhat traditional school experience and meet with students their own age.

Mathematics	English	Other
ALEKS	IB DP Language, or IB DP Language and Literature	Sports/ Music/ Academica
Teacher referral required	Teacher referral required	External referral required



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## Teacher Advocates for Infinity Students

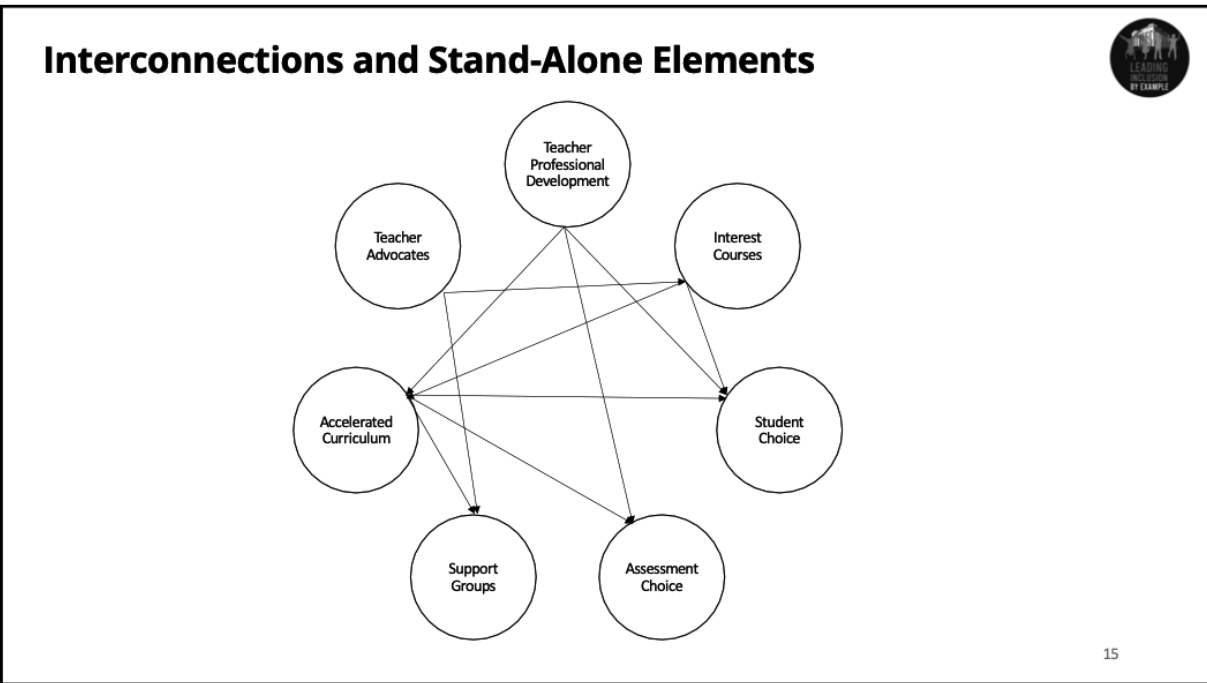


1. Students with abilities beyond their like-in-age peers often act in ways that are different than their like-in-age peers.
2. This can lead to unusual assignments and behaviours that the teachers and administrators may not be familiar with.
3. Having an adult advocate, that is not involved in the discipline of the student, be there as a support will help students find solutions to problems they create and help the school understand the thought process and reasoning of these students.
  1. Case Study: Hacker
4. Teacher advocates also work with teachers of the student to differentiate instruction and assignments.
5. Parents of students also have a point of contact to help with situations that may impact school environments.
6. The goal is to be proactive in preventing situations, rather than reactive.

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### Discussion

How can your school incorporate some of these elements into your school's framework?

The illustration shows a group of stylized human figures in various shades of gray. Above them are several overlapping speech bubbles of different sizes and shades, representing an active discussion or meeting.

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## Any Questions – Additional Material Requests



Questions – Please meet me up front and, hopefully, I will answer them.

Additional material for each section can be found by the back door on the table. Please take only what you need. If something is empty, please put your email address down on the list and I will be happy to send you a soft copy.



# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## APPENDIX F

### Student Choice Handout from Ongoing Coaching Sessions with Teachers

#### Assessment Choice - Media

Students have different areas of normative and relative strengths where they can best communicate their knowledge most effectively. Below is a list of different ways teachers may assess students through various forms of media and a breakdown of which students would most benefit from which forms of media assessment.

<p>Visual Media</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Clay or Lego Animation</li> <li>2. FlipBook</li> <li>3. 3D animation or Comic</li> <li>4. Sand animation</li> </ol>	<p>Most suitable for students strong in planning, creative design, and initiative.</p> <p>Not suitable for students with organisational challenges, fine motor coordination skills, or perfectionists.</p>
<p>Cause/Effect or Humanities</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Presentation as a(n)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Expert (current or at the time of the event)</li> <li>b. Guest Speaker</li> <li>c. Someone who lived through the cause or effect</li> <li>d. Autobiographical as a notable person</li> <li>e. A child who may be unaware of events but can communicate their experience</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Re-enactment of an event               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Pictures following a story or comic book</li> <li>b. Videos</li> <li>c. Play with script</li> </ol> </li> <li>3. Documentary (written or video)</li> <li>4. Diary Entries</li> </ol>	<p>Most suitable for students strong in social skills, communication, and research/investigation</p> <p>Not suitable for students with communication barriers, EAL, or who have cognitive impairments in logic.</p>
<p>Facts or Definitions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop a board game</li> <li>2. Create a class quiz show</li> <li>3. Develop a Treasure Hunt</li> <li>4. Work on creating questions for an online game</li> <li>5. Work together with a group to contribute to a Trivia Game</li> <li>6. Develop level 7 questions of the topic (bonus, these can be used for current or future assessments)</li> </ol>	<p>Most suitable for students strong in logical thinking, analytical thinking, organisation, and memorisation.</p> <p>Not suitable for students who struggle with communication, need additional processing time, or have difficulty with complex reasoning.</p>
<p>Finding Solutions and Investigations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design your process to address the issue through               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Social Enterprise</li> <li>b. Fundraising campaign</li> <li>c. Public Awareness Project</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>Most suitable for students strong in social skills, planning, communication, creative thinking, and logic.</p>

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>d. Community Service</li> <li>2. Pretend you are the ruler             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Find the root of the problem and give reasons why this is the primary cause.</li> <li>b. Develop an action plan to address the solution</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Think outside of the box             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. If you could suspend one natural law to solve the issue, what law would that be, and how would that solve it?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>Not suitable for students who struggle with initiative, have difficulty with complex reasoning, or have organisational challenges.</p>
<p>Reflect and Improve</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. You have the MYP rubric used to assess your work. Give examples of what each level might look like.</li> <li>2. Develop a checklist for the next grade level. What will they need to do this assignment well?</li> <li>3. Write a feedback form on a classmate based on what they did well and where they can improve.</li> <li>4. Provide the class with a low-quality piece of work and ask them to improve it.</li> <li>5. Provide the class with an inefficient piece of medium quality work and ask them to condense it.</li> </ul>	<p>Most suitable for students strong in evaluation, analytical thinking, and perfectionists.</p> <p>Not suitable for students who struggle with self-esteem issues, anxiety, or have low cognitive functioning (unable to see where the problems are).</p>
<p>Diving deeply into a specific topic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write a magazine article with appropriate pictures to accompany it.</li> <li>2. Create a poster, display, or piece of art that encompasses the topic.</li> <li>3. Go on a tangent and document your studies and what you found out about a more specific part of the topic.</li> <li>4. Create a graphic organiser with references to learn more about different aspects of a topic.</li> </ul>	<p>Most suitable for students strong in analytical thinking, research skills, presentation, creative skills, and initiative.</p> <p>Not suitable for students who struggle with initiative, visual representations, or spatial awareness.</p>
<p>Tie to Real World</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take the topic and discover a real-life application.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Create a booklet for others to find out about the topic.</li> <li>b. Construct a working model</li> <li>c. Develop a podcast where you talk to another person and answer their questions</li> <li>d. Design a documentary of life before this topic and how this topic changed the world.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Give a presentation on this topic in the real world</li> </ul>	<p>Most suitable for students strong in analytical thinking, communication, organisation, research, and initiative.</p> <p>Not suitable for students who struggle with research.</p>



# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## APPENDIX G

### How to Incorporate Student Choice into Homework to Increase Student Reflection

#### Assessment Choice – Homework Stretch Goals

The first workshop will be how to offer homework to meet struggling learners, learners on track, and advanced learners.

To do this, you will need to plan out your unit in advance and plan out some homework assignments. Likewise, you will need to discuss this with your students and get them to reflect on their learning before making a homework choice. I have also used this as a revision before assessments, so they can select their revision goals.

The homework is divided into three levels: (Please note, these could be anything i.e. square, triangle, circle or Bunny, Fox, Hawk, whatever as long as there is clear designation between the levels and the students are aware of the difficulty level before they make the choices)

**Red:** Homework is focused on developing the basic skills needed for the situation.

There can be some questions that apply or develop these essential skills. Still, the vast majority (80%+) is spent on the lower level concepts to establish a foundation. This is used for struggling learners. This homework has the largest number of questions as each question does not take too long to answer. (Please note: not exclusively for learning support, but any student who struggled with that day's material)

**Yellow:** Homework is focused on applying the skills and developing these in new ways. The breakdown is similar to what you would typically give for homework. This is used for students who understand the concepts of the day and will spend homework solidifying and extending their knowledge.

**Blue:** This homework has no foundational elements. Some of the assignment is used to apply the skills. Still, most of the task has the students extend the knowledge they have learned in new ways. This homework has the fewest number of questions, but each question takes much longer to figure out. This is used for students who have a strong understanding of the material and need the additional challenge. Also known as Higher Quality work, not Higher Quantity work. (Please note: not advanced students, but any student who has mastered that day's material)

When reviewing homework questions for the following lesson, pick most from the red group, a few from the yellow group, and only one or two from the blue group. This way students who did not choose those colours can still go over and discuss the material.

This is also useful for you to keep a record of who does which colour. Then, when you meet with parents, you can show them homework completion rates and the depth of the homework attempted. This is also helpful when students review their results to dialogue about changing levels or remaining the same.

All of this can be done in the typical classroom without doing too much additional work but does provide choice to students and an opportunity for reflection and growth goals.

APPENDIX H

**Example of Student Choice Assessment that Incorporates Topic and Role with Forms Used  
to Identify Student's Choices**

## Choose Your Tourist Site!

Use this form to choose which tourist site you would like to research for your assessment.

\* Indicates required question

1. Email \*

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Choose Your Tourist Site! \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- Stonehenge, England
- Great Barrier Reef, Australia
- Oktoberfest, Munich, Germany
- Sagrada Familia, Spain
- Venice and its Lagoon, Italy
- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
- Ha Long Bay, Vietnam
- Serengeti National Park, Tanzania
- Machu Picchu, Peru
- Historic Quarter of the Seaport City of Valparaiso, Chile
- Petra, Jordan
- Everest Base Camp, Nepal

### Who are you?

You need to complete your research and essay from a chosen perspective. Please make sure to "think" as that role would in real life.

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3. Please select which of the following perspectives you will use in your research and essay:

*Mark only one oval.*

- A land developer or business investor
- An environmental non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- A governmental zoning commission (neutral party)
- A cultural historian

4. What is your name? \*

---

5. Which class are you in? \*

*Mark only one oval.*

- 7A
- 7B
- 7C
- 7D

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Google Forms

# Research Journal

Title: The Eiffel Tower

Name: Dr Acula

Date: 15 May 2023

## I. Overview

Tourist Site:

(Choose a tourist site from the list provided)

The Eiffel Tower

Personal Perspective (Your Role):

(Choose a role from the list provided)

Historian

Location:

(Write down where your chosen tourist site is located)

Paris, France

Brief Description:

(Give a brief description of your chosen tourist site and why it's significant)

## II. Research Questions

Broad Overall Question:

How does tourism impact the Eiffel Tower and its cultural heritage, and is this impact positive or negative?

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(Create 3 research questions related to the impact of tourism on your chosen site. For example: “What cultural traditions at [site] could be impacted by tourism?”)

Research Question 1:

What makes the Eiffel Tower a significant tourist site?

Research Question 2:

What are the benefits of tourism for the Eiffel Tower and the surrounding area?

Research Question 3:

What are the negative impacts of tourism on the Eiffel Tower and its cultural heritage?

### III. Sources

(Collect 3 reliable sources related to your research questions. Summarize the key information from each source. Be sure to include the name and link/reference of each source)

#### Source 1

Name of Source:

Official Eiffel Tower Website:

Link/Reference:

Key Information:

Information on visitor numbers, opening times, maintenance schedules, etc.

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### Source 2

Name of Source:

The Eiffel Tower: Memories and experiences by G. Teissonnières

Link/Reference:

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294642507\\_The\\_Eiffel\\_Tower\\_Memories\\_and\\_experiences](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294642507_The_Eiffel_Tower_Memories_and_experiences)

Key Information:

Article from the Journal of Parisian Studies that describes the impact the tower had on a tourist.

### Source 3

Name of Source:

Eiffel Tower faces 'another difficult year', despite recovery

Link/Reference:

<https://www.euronews.com/culture/2022/05/25/eiffel-tower-faces-another-difficult-year-despite-recovery>

Key Information:

I learned that the Eiffel Tower is struggling to make enough money because of a drop in the number of tourists.

## IV. Notes

(Write down 3 important notes from your research. These could be interesting facts, important points related to your research questions, role, or something surprising you discovered.)

Note 1:

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The Eiffel Tower was built in 1889 and is an important symbol of French cultural heritage. It attracts millions of tourists each year, providing significant economic benefits, but also increases wear on the building and other surrounding cultural sites.

Note 2:

The sheer number of visitors also leads to issues like littering and strain on the infrastructure.

Note 3:

There are measures in place to preserve the tower, such as regular maintenance and limiting visitor numbers, but these are not without problems.

## V. Reflections

For this part, you'll be thinking about your own learning process. Try to be honest and detailed in your responses. Here are some guiding questions to help you:

Reflection on Effective Question Asking:

*(This is where you reflect on how effective your research questions were. Did they help guide your research? Did you have to revise them as you went along? How well did they focus your research on the impacts of tourism?)*

Coming up with these research questions made me think about the different aspects of tourism from a historical perspective. I realized that while tourism can bring economic benefits, it can also have negative impacts on a site's cultural heritage. It was challenging to consider how these different factors interact and the other perspectives that need to be considered.

Were your initial research questions effective in guiding your research? Why or why not?

Yes, my initial research questions were effective in guiding my research. They helped me focus on the important aspects of the Eiffel Tower's relationship with history and tourism. For example, one of my questions was, "How does tourism impact the Eiffel Tower and its cultural heritage, and is this impact positive or negative?" This question directed me to look for information about the impact of tourism, revenue generated from tourist activities compared to the cost financially and as a society, and how the question of being positive or negative is not as direct as I thought.

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Did you have to modify your research questions as you conducted your research? If so, what changes did you make, and why?

Yes, I did modify my research questions a little as I conducted my research. Initially, I had a question about the number of tourists the Eiffel Tower receives each year. However, I realized that knowing the number alone wouldn't give me a complete picture of tourism's impact. So, I changed the question to, "How does the number of tourists visiting the Eiffel Tower each year affect the structure and its surroundings?" This allowed me to delve deeper into the potential negative impacts of tourism, like overcrowding, littering, and strain on the tower and its surrounding environment.

How did your research questions help you focus your research on the impacts of tourism on your chosen site?

My research questions were instrumental in keeping my research focused on the impacts of tourism on the Eiffel Tower. They acted like a compass, pointing me in the right direction. For instance, one of my questions was, "Does tourism detract from the cultural significance of the Eiffel Tower?" This question guided me to find information about how commercial activities could potentially overshadow the tower's cultural value. Overall, the questions made sure that my research was aligned with the objective of understanding the positive and negative impacts of tourism on the Eiffel Tower.

## VI. Conclusion

Is tourism good for [Tourist Site]? Why or why not? Use PEEL format in your answer. It should be between 200-250 words.



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Tourism plays a complex role in the life of the Eiffel Tower. On one hand, it has undeniable economic benefits. It boosts the local economy, supports jobs, and helps fund the tower's maintenance. The tower, as an icon of France, also promotes French culture globally, acting as a symbol of the nation's innovative spirit and elegance.

However, the impact of tourism isn't all positive. The massive footfall - around 7 million people per year - puts considerable strain on the structure and its surroundings. Issues like littering, noise, and overcrowding can detract from the cultural and aesthetic value of the site. More subtly, the commercial aspects of tourism can sometimes overshadow the cultural significance of the tower, reducing it to merely an attraction rather than a symbol of French heritage.

In the balance, it seems that tourism is a double-edged sword for the Eiffel Tower. While it brings economic prosperity and global recognition, it also poses challenges to the preservation and appreciation of the tower's cultural value. Thus, it becomes crucial to manage tourism sustainably, ensuring that it supports rather than detracts from the tower's cultural heritage.

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APPENDIX I

**Example of Student Choice Assessment that Incorporates Role and Modality Task Sheet**

	MYP2 - Individuals & Societies G7 Middle Ages Artefact Summative

## TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

	<h3>MYP2 - Individuals &amp; Societies</h3> <h3>G7 Middle Ages Artefact Summative</h3>
Task	<p>You will be creating a primary source from the Middle Ages, specifically the 14th Century. Students choose between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● A doctor</li><li>● A mayor</li><li>● A travelling writer</li></ul> <p>All students will create a scrapbook of three primary sources from the time period. The role you choose changes the requirement of primary sources you must create.</p> <p>Everyone creates:</p> <p>Diary entries or letters</p> <p>An annotated map of a town</p> <p>A drawing or image of a piece of medical equipment from the time period, with a description of how it works.</p> <p>A reflection, in which you imagine they are a historian of the Middle Ages that has found the scrapbook. You must evaluate the scrapbook for its value and limitations.</p> <p>The writer goes on a journey from Italy to Munich. There are four stages of the journey, and at each stage they write a one page diary entry. They also annotate one map of a town that has been affected by the Black Death, and include an image of a piece of medical equipment from the time period.</p> <p>The Mayor draws two A3 maps. One map is of their town before the outbreak of the plague, and one afterwards. The mayor also writes a letter to another mayor about the plague, and includes one image of a piece of medical equipment.</p> <p>The Doctor writes a letter about how to cure the plague to another doctor. They annotate one map with how they go about securing the town against the plague. They include two images of artefacts from the time period, with a description of what they were for.</p> <p>All students then imagine they are a <i>researcher</i> who has found their scrapbook. They must identify the origin and purpose of their scrapbook to</p>

	<p><b>MYP2 - Individuals &amp; Societies</b></p> <p><b>G7 Middle Ages Artefact Summative</b></p>
	<p><i>evaluate</i> its value and limitation for someone trying to learn about the Middle Ages.</p> <p>You will complete your assessment in a booklet provided by Mr XXX and Ms YYY. Students will complete the assessment by hand, unless they receive an accommodation that allows them to use their computer. These students may print off their work and glue it into their booklets.</p> <p>This assessment will be completed in-class only.</p>

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	<p><b>MYP2 - Individuals &amp; Societies</b></p> <p><b>G7 Middle Ages Artefact Summative</b></p>		
Global Context and exploration	Fairness and Development	<b>Key Concept (subject specific)</b>	<b>Time, Place, and Space</b>
Statement of Inquiry	<i>The identity and development of past societies can be explored through the perspectives of the people who lived there.</i>		
Marking	<p>Your booklet will be summatively assessed according to the following MYP Integrated Humanities criteria:</p> <p><b>A - Knowledge and Understanding</b></p> <p>i. use a range of terminology in context</p> <p>ii. demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject-specific content and concepts, through descriptions, explanations and examples.</p> <p><b>C - Communication</b></p> <p>i. communicate information and ideas in a way that is appropriate for the audience and purpose</p> <p>ii. structure information and ideas according to the task instructions</p> <p><b>D - Critical Thinking</b></p> <p>i. complete a detailed analysis of concepts, issues, models, visual representation and/or theories</p> <p>ii. summarise information to make consistent, well-supported arguments</p> <p>iii. effectively analyse a range of sources/data in terms of origin and purpose, consistently recognise value and limitations</p> <p>iv. clearly recognise different perspectives and consistently explains their implications.”</p>		
Conditions	The creation of the booklet will be carried out during class time over the period of 6 lessons from when the task is set. Booklets will remain in the classroom for the duration of the assessment.		
ATL	<p>Communication: reading, writing, and using language to gather and communicate information</p> <p>Research: information literacy skills - finding, interpreting, and judging information</p> <p>Thinking: critical thinking - analysing and evaluating issues and ideas</p>		

TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

	<b>MYP2 - Individuals &amp; Societies</b> <b>G7 Middle Ages Artefact Summative</b>		
	Self-Management: managing time and tasks effectively		
<b>Time Allocation</b>	6 classes	<b>Resources</b>	Resource Bank. A3 Paper. Booklet with writing prompts.
<b>Date of Issue</b>	Thursday 9 March 2023	<b>Due Date/Time</b>	Thursday 23 March, 9pm
<b>Assessment</b>	Your work will be assessed by Mr XXX and Ms YYY		
<b>Authenticity</b>	Copied or collusive written work will result in the awarding of zero for the assignment for both the copying and source students.		

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## APPENDIX J

### Scope and Sequence of a Comparative IB International School in the Munich Region

#### Year 7 Geography Curriculum Overview

Timeline for delivering Lessons	Topic	Description	Assessment*	Resources
September – November 11 Weeks Week 1 – Week 11	Intro to Geography	An introduction to the key vocabulary and knowledge required of students in Geography.	1. Written exam – skills based to take place during <b>Week 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources to be delivered via PowerPoints slides – all to be uploaded onto Teams/ Classnotebook</li> <li>Geog 1 Textbook</li> </ul>
November – February 9 Weeks Week 11 - 20	Rivers	Students journey along a river from source to mouth, gaining knowledge of the different processes which take place along its course.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessed as part of the Winter Exams <b>Week 13</b></li> <li>Second Assessment to take place <b>Week 20</b></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources to be delivered via PowerPoints slides – all to be uploaded onto Teams/ Classnotebook</li> <li><a href="#">Link</a></li> </ul>
February – March 8 Weeks Weeks 21 - 26	Biomes and Ecosystems with a focus on Tropical Rainforests.	Students explore a range of ecosystems at different scales around the world and gain an understanding of the processes which drive their development.  They then investigate the causes and impacts of deforestation in the Amazon Rainforest.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infographic creation of a biome – <b>Week 20-21</b></li> <li>Report into the cause and impacts of deforestation in the Amazon – <b>Week 26</b></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources to be delivered via PowerPoints slides – all to be uploaded onto Teams/Classnotebook</li> <li>Geog 2 Textbook</li> <li><a href="#">Link</a></li> </ul>

March – May 8 Weeks Week 26 - 34	Weather & Climate	Students explore the key differences between weather and climate. They will also investigate the Microclimates of SGS, conducting a local field investigation. Then students will explore the factors affecting climate and the risks of extreme climates.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Microclimate Investigation – <b>Weeks 28-30</b></li> <li>Mini Assessment <b>Week 33/34</b></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources to be delivered via PowerPoints slides – all to be uploaded onto Teams/ Classnotebook</li> </ul>
May Week 35	SUMMER EXAM & FEEDBACK WEEKS		Assessed as part of the Summer Exams.	
Jun-July Weeks 36-38	Zombie Maps skills Challenge	In the time remaining from Exams, students will undertake a zombie theme map skill investigation.	No Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Resources to be delivered via PowerPoints slides – all to be uploaded onto Teams/ Classnotebook</li> </ul>

\* Smaller / low stake assessments to take place throughout the course. This will primarily take place in quizzes. Each topic folder has a folder for quizzes. An overview of all low stake assessments can also be found in the Year 7 folder in Teams under the title 'Low Stake Assessments'

# TRANSFORMING EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES

## Assessment Grading Criteria (Year 7)

Year 7		
Grade A		
Criteria		RAG
1	Written descriptions are very thorough and explanations show a great depth of detail and analysis. Conclusions are substantiated. There is strong use of analysis and evaluation throughout. Exemplification is detailed and use specific case study depth rather than just examples. An example would include: In 1979 China introduced the one child policy. This was an anti-natal policy that aimed to reduce births in China to aid economic progress. It was largely seen as successful as it led to an estimated fall of 400 million births.	
2	A great deal of initiative is shown in researching work, often drawing on resources that would be accessed at a later key stage. These will be referenced and used accurately	
3	Extensive use of geographical vocabulary	
4	An extensive factual knowledge is demonstrated which uses key terms, specific facts, dates and data.	
5	Very accurate use of a wide range of skills. Numeracy skills will be used throughout, for example, mode, mean and median and other mathematical terms used correctly and appropriately. A wide range of maps and graphs can be created and used effectively, such as choropleth maps and cross sections. These can be created from Ordnance Survey maps with little explanation required.	
6	Evaluative comments/limitations of skills are often offered as well as suggested improvements that could be made to the work following reflection or feedback.	
Grade B		
Criteria		RAG
1	Descriptions of features, places and processes are very detailed and more specific and increasingly detailed and explanations are offered. Conclusions are substantiated. Processes will be linked together well and accurately. An example could be; human activities are responsible for climate change. We burn fossil fuels, for example, in the cars we drive, which add to the greenhouse gases (such as Co2) in the atmosphere. These trap heat and create a range of negative impacts, such as...	
2	Responses show a very good understanding; misinterpretations are less common. Initiative is shown in researching work.	
3	A wide range of geographical vocabulary is used.	
4	A broad factual knowledge is demonstrated, such as a range of accurate greenhouse gases. Specific facts linked to population growth or reduction will be evident, such as % changes in populations or specific policies and years when they were implemented (China's one child policy)	
5	Accurate use of a wide range of skills – graphs are well presented, with axis and all labels all present in the right place and used correctly. There is more accurate use of advanced mathematical skills and methods to present data, such as a choropleth map and advanced climate graphs showing both precipitation and temperature, all plotted correctly.	
6	Accurate presentation with a range of methods used to enhance the work, both hand drawn and using relevant technology.	
Grade C		
Criteria		RAG
1	Descriptions of features, places and processes are fairly detailed and are beginning to offer more reasoned explanations, for example, Global warming can affect the world. Sea levels will rise and this could flood places, which is not good, as it will affect people and animals. Population grows in countries where birth rates increase. People will also live longer. Both will change the population in a country.	
2	Satisfactory understanding but misinterpretations are common.	
3	A range of appropriate geographical vocabulary is used.	
4	A sound factual knowledge is demonstrated. Place names and a number of processes (such as reasons for climate change and factors that change birth or death rates) will be used, but with limited explanation.	
5	Satisfactory use of a range of skills – students can plot a bar graph accurately and correctly with all labels and axis correct. Line graphs will be plotted with some accuracy, although there will be some mistakes, such as plotted at the wrong point.	
6	Satisfactory presentation – work will be completed using mainly hand drawn or simpler computer presentation methods.	
Grade D		
Criteria		RAG
1	Beginning to describe places, features and processes but not in detail.	
2	Perhaps one, simple, explanation given, such as Global warming is a bad thing as it could affect animals and where they live. Population is getting higher in some countries because more babies are being born.	
3	The student is beginning to use appropriate geographical vocabulary.	
4	Demonstrates an adequate factual knowledge. Climate change can be natural and man-made, birth rates can make a population bigger, like in developing countries. They are factually accurate but not developed.	
5	Use of a range of simple skills. Single numerical skills may be present when using data, for example, the average/mean will be attempted, but may not always be correct.	
6	Presentation will be hand drawn with some accuracy but computer/tech methods will not be used/present.	
Grade E		
Criteria		RAG
1	Brief, simple descriptions of places and features. Little content. For example, they will be able to name up to 3 continents and locate a limited amount of countries on a world map	
2	Simple observations of patterns and processes. They will know what climate change is but will be unsure of how it occurs. There will be limited understanding of reasons why populations change but will not be able to tell you where in the world growth will be and why.	
3	Some use of basic geographical vocabulary linked to the topics – birth, death, weather, hot, people, world etc. will be used, but simply.	
4	Demonstrates a superficial factual knowledge. There will be no accurate examples used with no specific points raised. Very generalised.	
5	Use of simple skills – students can use a basic chart/graph and plot some points, but they may not be accurately plotted or on the correct axis. Numbering on the axis and/or the scale may not be accurate.	
6	Ordnance Survey maps will be used to recognise areas on the map using 4 figure references and some use of the key to recognise features.	