

USING HISTORY TEXTBOOKS TO TEACH IN PERI-URBAN KENYA

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I have been teaching for 26 years and hold the following qualifications: a BSc in Leadership and Management, a Higher Diploma in Guidance and Counselling and a Diploma in Education. I teach History to Forms 1, 2 3 and 4.

In my preparation and planning of History I mainly use the *Evolving World series* by Oxford University Press. I supplement the notes with other books like *History and Government* by the Kenya Literature Bureau. I like the *Evolving World* because it is detailed and an excellent source for use by the teacher.

The textbooks I use are useful especially when the learners are doing group work and discussions. Sometimes I assign them to do work in groups and then do presentations to the class. Not every learner has a textbook so I make notes and dictate these where necessary. I instruct the students to note down important points in their exercise books during the lesson. When teaching topics like Nationalism in Kenya and Africa, the First and Second World Wars and the lives and contributions of Kenyan leaders, I also use video and DVDs so that the learners can watch and internalise the content. This is normally done in the hall because our classes do not have screens. After each viewing we have a recap of the happenings and allow the students to express their views.

After every topic there are revision questions and class activities that need

to be done. These are found in the textbooks and I have set aside one lesson every week for the students to use in class to answer the questions and do the activities which include debates. I sometimes get topical questions from the textbooks in the library and have them copied for every student for individual studies.

The prescribed books for use in the teaching of History and Government are: *The Evolving World History*; *Government Course* and *History and Government* by the Kenya Literature Bureau. I mainly use these books because they follow the syllabus and the learning objectives are well arranged. My students perform well in their final KCSE exams when taken through the course with the prescribed books. The Examination Council mainly uses the mentioned books to examine the students in the final secondary examination.

I avoid using books that are not prescribed because they give unnecessary though important information. The use of such books can end up confusing the learners and the objectives may not be achieved.

I use the following books for setting mid-term and end of term examinations, continuous assessment tasks and random assessment tests:

- Top Mark Series KCSE revision Books 1 and 2
- How to Pass KCSE History and Government Form 1, 2, 3 and 4
- Quick Reading, History and Government Form 1, 2, 3, and 4
- The Mirror
- Test It Fix It
- KCSE past papers
- Milestones in History and Government Form 1
- The Evolving World – a History and Government Course Form 1
- History and Government – Form 2 Students' Book
- Test it & Fix It – KCSE Revision History