

Colgan, Thomas, 1997, *Didactic versus the Student-Centred Teaching Methods: A Survey of Teacher Preferences.*

ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

The purpose of this dissertation was to examine teaching methods used in primary schools and to evaluate the didactic and the student-centred approaches against one another.

Chapter One outlines the background to the study and highlights some of the areas to be investigated in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter Two examines teaching methods before the Plowden era, and looks at the nature of children's thinking, and the effects of socio-economic factors on learning. Instructional methods are investigated in detail.

Chapter Three explores the effects the Plowden Report and the introduction of a 'New Curriculum' in Ireland had upon instruction in the primary school in the 1980s and 1990s. It also looks at the recommendations of the OECD Reports.

Chapter Four involves research on current pedagogy in Irish primary schools and the reason for its choice. Data were gathered from questionnaires distributed to a number of schools and this was analysed.

Chapter Five concludes that the method of instruction in Irish primary schools is mainly didactic to the exclusion of most other methods of instruction. It further concludes that there is a gap in perception between what teachers think they are doing and what they are in actuality doing. The need for meaningful in-service is highlighted, with particular emphasis on teacher mentoring programmes.