

The author of several books on curriculum, including ASCD's *Curriculum Renewal*, Allan Glatthorn taught English for 20 years and has been doing curriculum work for another 20. Here, in response to the 1988 ASCD yearbook and other recent publications, he makes specific recommendations for the content of the English "mastery curriculum," grades 5-12.

For years I have resisted the temptation to offer content recommendations for the English curriculum, since I have always been strongly committed to the importance of locally developed curriculums that reflect substantial input from teachers. However, three developments suggest that some prescriptive advice is needed, if only to correct an obvious imbalance. The first is the publication of Secretary Bennett's (1987) *James Madison High School*, which in my view is much too conservative in its orientation. The second is the publication of Charles Suhor's (1988) chapter in the recent ASCD yearbook; his recommendations seem narrow in perspective and radical in thrust. And the third is the continued reluctance of the National Council of Teachers of English to offer specific recommendations about content. (Mandel's monograph published by NCTE in 1980 does present three general models and can profitably be consulted by curriculum committees.)

In trying to redress the present imbalance, I would like to accomplish three related tasks: provide a rationale

for the recommendations, offer general guidelines for each strand or area of the curriculum, and provide specific content recommendations.

A Rationale for the Recommendations

The recommendations that follow are

characterized by four features: they are limited in the grade levels included, they focus on mastery; they deal only with the scope of the curriculum, and they emphasize renewal.

First, these recommendations are limited to the curriculum for grades 5-12. For earlier grades I recommend

No Shortage of Ideas: A Reply to Glatthorn

Charles Suhor

I welcome the opportunity to clarify the matter of recommendations from NCTE about curriculum content. Glatthorn is correct in saying that NCTE offers few specific recommendations about content, if "recommendations" means *official position statements*. NCTE is a forum for various viewpoints, and its members are understandably reluctant to pass a large number of official resolutions endorsing particular content. But books published by the Council (not to mention innumerable articles in its journals) include highly specific ideas about content, from critiques of grammar study to booklists for elementary and high school students. There is a shortage of imprimaturs, then, but no shortage of ideas for curriculum developers who want to weigh varied options for the content of K-12 English curriculums. I won't comment on Glatthorn's views of my own content recommendations, beyond suggesting that readers look at the current ASCD yearbook and consider both the range of those recommendations and coin-of-the-realm usage of the term *radical* in relation to my proposals.

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