

3. NEOLIBERAL EDUCATION

SOCIETY: view of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Human nature is essentially <i>competitive</i> and this is how the world works ▪ It is therefore rational for each person to <i>maximise their own personal benefits</i> ▪ <i>Economic rationality</i>, i.e. competition, will bring appropriate benefits to all ▪ Role of the state should be minimal and not interfere in the <i>free market process</i> ▪ By definition <i>what is 'private' is good</i> and what is 'public' is bad
PURPOSE: of education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To prepare students to fit into the <i>existing neoliberal view of society</i> ▪ To provide an internationally <i>competitive workforce</i> ▪ To legitimate this <i>dominant view of society</i> and its structures ▪ Education is performance driven and demonstrates its <i>effectiveness by results</i>
LEARNER: role of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The student's task is to <i>fully engage</i> in this process ▪ And therefore to <i>accept given norms</i> in school and society ▪ <i>Finding one's place</i> in existing social/economic structures of society
LEARNING: form of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Stress on <i>competition by results</i>, e.g. SATS and league tables ▪ Focus on 'surface' learning, i.e. being good at <i>passing exams</i> ▪ A mechanistic and behaviouristic view of learning based on <i>transmission</i>
TEACHER: role of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Requires the teacher largely to be an <i>instructor</i> and transmitter of knowledge ▪ Requires <i>cognitive</i> (as against affective) <i>skills</i> and managerial skills ▪ Requires a largely <i>hierarchical and directive</i> mode of working
SCHOOL: focus of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools that reflect this worldview will tend to be <i>formal and standardised</i> ▪ The latter is particularly reflected in adherence to a <i>formal curriculum</i> ▪ Many of these aspects of neo-liberalism can be observed in <i>UK schools</i> today ▪ Some features are very explicit whilst others are more <i>implicit and hidden</i>

NB. Whilst summaries such as these oversimplify they do nevertheless highlight essential ideological differences