

Learning Table 5: Selection, Marketisation and Privatisation Policies

	Analysis	Evaluation
Selection Policies	<p>1944 – 1965: The Tripartite System The 1944 Education Act brought in the Tripartite System which was based on the principles of meritocracy. This involved children being selected and allocated to one of 3 different types of secondary school, supposedly according to their aptitude and abilities. This was based on a test called the 11+ exam.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar Schools – offered an academic curriculum and access to non-manual jobs and higher education. They were for pupils with academic abilities who passed the 11+. These pupils were mainly middle class. • Secondary Modern Schools – offered a non-academic practical curriculum and access to manual work for pupils who failed the 11+. These pupils were mainly working class. • Technical Schools – were the third type but only existed in a few areas so really there was a choice of two schools for the majority. These would teach mechanical, scientific and engineering skills to serve industry and science. <p>1965 Onwards: Comprehensive Schooling The comprehensive system aimed to overcome the class divide of the tripartite system and make education more meritocratic. The 11+ was abolished along with grammars and secondary moderns. All pupils in a certain area would attend the local comprehensive school.</p>	<p>The Tripartite System Marxists: Rather than promoting meritocracy the system reproduced class inequality by channelling two social classes into two different types of schools that offered unequal opportunities. Feminists: The system also reproduced gender inequality by requiring girls to gain higher marks than boys in the 11+ to obtain a grammar school place.</p> <p>Comprehensive Schooling It was left to the local education authority to decide whether or not to go over to this system and not all did. Functionalists: Were in favour of comprehensive schooling because they argue it promotes integration and bringing children of different social classes together in one school. However an early study by Ford (1969) found little social mixing between working-class and middle-class pupils because of streaming.</p>
Marketisation Policies	<p>Education post 1988: Under Thatcher and Beyond The Education Reform Act of 1988 introduced marketization to education. This has created an education market by reducing direct state control over education and increasing competition between schools and parent choice of school.</p> <p>Parentocracy This literally means ‘rule by parents’ and promoted a market by several means including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of league tables and Ofsted inspection reports that rank schools according to their exam performance to give parents the information to choose the right school. • Open enrolment, allowing successful schools to recruit more pupils. • Funding formula, where schools receive funding per pupil. • Schools having to compete to attract pupils. <p>David (1993) claims that this encouraged diversity among schools, give parents more choice and raises standards.</p> <p>Coalition Government Policies from 2010 The Conservative-Liberal Democrat government elected in 2010 had policies strongly influenced by the New Right and Neoliberals. They further supported the marketisation of education through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allowing schools to become academies and opt out of local education authority control. • Allowing parents and others to set up free schools. They are funded directly by the state but are set up and run by parents, teachers, faith organisations or businesses rather than the local authority. It gives parents the chance to create a new school if they are unhappy with the state schools in their local area. 	<p>League Tables Ball (1994) and Whitty (1998) criticise marketization policies by highlighting that they reproduce class inequalities by creating inequalities between schools. Bartlett (1993) explained this by noting these policies encourage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cream-skimming – ‘good’ schools can be more selective, choose their own customer and recruit high achieving mainly middle class pupils. As a result these pupils gain an advantage. • Silt-shifting – ‘good’ schools can avoid taking less able pupils who are likely to get poor results and damage the schools league table position. <p>For schools with poor league table positions, the opposite applies: they cannot afford to be selective and have to take less able, mainly working class pupils so their results are poorer and they remain unattractive to middle-class parents. The overall effect of league tables is thus to produce unequal schools and reproduce social class inequalities.</p> <p>The Funding Formula Schools are allocated funds by a formula based on how many pupils they attract. As a result, popular schools get more funds and so can afford better-qualified teachers and better facilities. This allows them to be more selective and attracts more able or ambitious generally middle-class applicants. Unpopular schools lose income and find it difficult to make the teacher skills and facilities of their more successful rivals. Unpopular schools fail to attract pupils and their funding is reduced.</p> <p>Parental Choice Gerwitz (1995) studied 14 London secondary schools and found that marketization advantages middle class parents who were in a better position to choose ‘good’ schools for their children. She identified 3 types of parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Privileged-skilled Choosers – Professional middle class parents who possessed cultural capital. They knew the importance of putting a particular school as first choice. They had time to visit schools and the skills to research options. Their economic capital meant they could afford to move their children around the education system to get the best deal out of it. For example by paying extra travel costs so that children could attend good schools out of their area. • Disconnected-local choosers – working class parents whose lack of cultural capital meant they did not understand how school admissions worked. They were less confident with dealing with schools and less aware of choices open to them. Their lack of economic capital meant their child was restricted to going to the local school due to travel expenses. • Semi-skilled choosers – Working class parents who were ambitious for their children. However they too lacked cultural capital and were frustrated by their inability to obtain a good school for their child. <p>Free Schools Allen (2010) argued that research from Sweden where 20% of schools are free schools, shows that they only benefit children from highly educated families. In the UK evidence suggests that free schools take fewer disadvantages pupils than over nearby schools. For example in 2011 only 6.4% of pupils at Bristol Free School were eligible for free school meals compared with 22.5% of pupils across the city as a whole.</p>
Privatisation Policies	<p>Privatisation involved the transfer of public assets such as schools to private companies. Private companies may be involved in building schools, providing supply teachers, work-based learning, careers advice and Ofsted inspection services. Many of these activities are very profitable for the private companies however, local authorities are often obliged to enter into these agreements as the only way of building new schools because of a lack of funding by the government.</p> <p>The Globalisation of Education Policy Many private companies in the education services industry are foreign-owned. The exam board Edexcel is owned by the US educational publishing and testing giant Pearson.</p> <p>Buckingham and Scanlon (2005) report that the UK’s four leading educational software companies are all owned by global multinationals such as Disney. Many contracts for educational services in the UK are sold on by the original company to others such as banks and investment funds.</p> <p>Some UK education businesses work overseas such as Prospects has worked in China, Macedonia and Finland. As a result, nation states are becoming less important in policymaking, which is shifting to a global level and which is also often privatised.</p> <p>The Cola-isation of Schools The private sector is also penetrating education through vending machines on school premises and the development of brand loyalty through displays of logos and sponsorships. This process is called the cola-isation of schools.</p>	<p>The Cola-isation of Schools Ball highlights that the benefits of private sector involvement in schools is very limited. For example, a Cadbury’s sports equipment promotion was scrapped after it was revealed that pupils would have to eat 5440 chocolate bars just to qualify for a set of volleyball posts.</p> <p>Marxists Critique of Privatisation Hall (2011) sees academies as an example of handing over public services to private capitalists, such as educational businesses. The neoliberal claim that privatisation and competition drives up standards is a myth used to legitimate the turning of education into a source of private profit.</p>