

## **Longman Science for AQA, GCSE Additional Science**

Here on the 'other' side of Offa's Dyke, Science teachers face a demanding task in finding published resource material that matches up exactly to the WJEC specifications. Even the BBC on its 'Bitesize' pages doesn't acknowledge the existence of these specifications!

Curiously, it appears that the AQA specification provides some sort of "best match" so I was delighted to have the opportunity of reviewing these resources, even though at my school we follow the WJEC Additional Science course. The "small but friendly" WJEC do not, apparently, have the same 'clout' with publishers in producing resources which fully match the spec., I was interested in seeing how useful the 'AQA' resource would be in matching the 'WJEC' specification and the degree of overlap was pretty good.

The Longman 'blurb' tells us that "Following on from the successful 'complete' package for GCSE Science, series Editor Nigel English has led a team of experienced teachers to ensure that these materials are the perfect match to the AQA Additional Science GCSE specifications." To be fair, they have done an excellent job.

The package comprises a Student Book, an 'Active' Book, which is an electronic version with audio glossaries and the like. There is also a Teacher's Guide, which contains everything the busy teacher is likely to need and along with the Copymaster file and electronic 'Active Teach' it is difficult to find fault with the materials.

I had a copy of the Copymaster File to review along with a copy of the Teacher's Guide and CD. The former provides all the worksheets and other materials intended to be photocopied for student use, from Target sheets which encourage self-assessment ("At the start..."; "I have studied ..."; "I have revised ..."), to Practical and Classwork sheets, Homework sheets, practice exam-style tests and as a bonus, sample investigative skills assignments, which assess the 'How Science Works' criteria in context of the specification topics. Beware that the supplied master-copy paper is a bit thin and won't wear well and so you can expect to make full use of the CD to reprint resources!

The Teacher's Guide is "a fully supported and differentiated solution to help deliver the AQA specifications successfully". It provides detailed information for each topic, starting with a brief overview and learning objectives, followed by notes for each double page spread in the Student Book. The lesson plans include all the detail you would expect including ideas for starters and plenaries, practicals and ways to integrate 'How Science Works' into your teaching. They have also included all the answers to the questions from both the Student's Book and Copymaster File. In addition you are given you notes on how to integrate the "exciting new" ActiveTeach into your lessons, all of which make this make this an excellent resource package. One little gripe that one might have is that the resource deals with some topics in a different sequence to the AQA specification but that is a minor point.

One bigger gripe I did have was that the Teacher's notes (Scheme of Work and lesson plans) were only produced in pdf format; word documents would have enabled much easier customising and the licence agreement prohibits "reverse engineering or "decompiling" (e.g. converting 'pdf' into 'doc' files which could then be edited). If editing were possible then hard-pressed 'WJEC' teachers would easily be able to customise most of this resource to suit their specification. However the Teacher's CD does have PDF AND Word doc versions and of course, the latter can be modified!

Overall, well worth a look at, and not just if you are teaching the AQA specification.

**Keith Jones**