Journal publishing in Wales

Teacher's notes

Overview

This exercise covers the history of journal publishing in Wales, emphasising the different aims of the publishers and the variation in content that results. It is intended to be used as a follow-up to *What is a journal*?

It may well provoke discussion on:

How the publishers defined their target audience
Differences English- and Welsh-language titles in terms of their subject matter
Society and academic publishing

- *This exercise is intended for A/AS Level students*
- It is intended to be used as a follow-up to *What is a journal*?

Learning outcomes

At the end of this exercise the student should be able to:

- describe the subjects covered by journals in Wales
- explain the types of publisher
- discuss the way journals have changed over time
- identify journals which are good sources for specific types of material

Lesson plan

Content/Skills development	**Teacher activity**	**Learner activity**	**Resources**	**Checking learning/ assessment opportunities**
Discussion: magazines and journals about Wales	Gather titles	Suggest titles	Whiteboard	Level of contribution from students
Why are they different? Introduce factsheet	Introduce activity: look at the subjects covered and when the titles were started			
Discussion: how reliable and objective do you think they will be?	Lead discussion	Offer opinions and examples		Level of contribution from students
Activity: find a good source for history, literature,		Look at examples on website	Computers/web	

science and religion				
Discussion: feedback. What did you choose and why?	Lead discussion	Offer opinions and evidence		Level of contribution from students
Review	Importance of looking at why and were things were published when evaluating sources			
Assignment	Mark assignments	Write up preferred sources and give reasons		

Suggested marking scheme for assignment:

Demonstrates understanding of range of material	30%
Demonstrates knowledge of biases in coverage	20%
Discusses value as sources for future work	30%
Provides justification for choices and opinions	20%

Journal publishing in Wales

Welsh culture has a strong tradition of periodical publication, despite perpetual problems with circulation and advertising. The periodicals reflect the interests, views and personalities of their editors and contributors, and it is possible to see contemporary debates and attitudes reflected in their pages.

General interest and popular titles

The longest-running publication in Wales intended for the general reader is **Y Traethodydd** [the essayist], started in 1845 to provide the Welsh-language audience with information about current affairs, literature, philosophy, science and technology. It is published by the Presbyterian Church of Wales. **Cymru** [Wales], in contrast, was published by Owen M. Edwards between 1891 and 1927 as an explicitly non-denominational journal, aiming to develop a unified Welsh culture that transcended narrow partisan interests. **Y Llenor** [the reader] was started in 1922 by the Welsh societies of the University of Wales for its members (students and graduates). **Y Ford Gron** [the round table] was a bi-monthly popular magazine published in the 1930s, featuring fashion, travel, fiction, and news sections.

Gower is the only English-language general title included; published by the Gower Society, it includes articles on nature, geology, history and the landscape, aimed at a non-specialist audience.

History, geography and archaeology

Most historical and archaeological writing in Wales to this day is published under the auspices of national and local societies, for the benefit primarily of their members; academic publication is a relative newcomer.

The first journal to appear was that of the Honourable Society of the Cymmrodorion (set up by Welshmen studying or working in London), covering Welsh history, mythology and language; after a fitful first attempt at publication between 1822 and 1843, **Y Cymmrodor** became an annual publication from 1877. In 1892 it was supplemented by the **Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion**, which became the principal publication in the 1930s, when **Y Cymmrodor** concentrated on publishing editions of important manuscripts (ceasing completely in 1950).

The Cambrian Archaeological Association was founded in 1846 as an antiquarian society covering all of Wales, publishing the journal **Archaeologia Cambrensis**. In its early years, the journal mixed erudite archaeological and linguistic articles with more fanciful and conjectural content, but throughout the 20th century it has published authoritative excavation reports.

Alongside the national societies, the publications of county historical and antiquarian societies cover much of Wales, including **Montgomeryshire Collections** (the oldest, starting in 1868), **Brycheiniog** and **Radnorshire Society Transactions** [Powys],

Flintshire Historical Society Transactions [Flintshire], **Morgannwg** [Swansea-Cardiff], **Transactions of Cardiganshire Antiquarian Society** and **Ceredigion** [Ceredigion], **The Pembrokeshire Historian** and **Journal of the Pembrokeshire Historical Society** [Pembrokeshire], **Minerva** [Swansea], **Presenting Monmouthshire** and **Gwent Local History** [Monmouthshire]. These usually contain articles based on lectures to the society and the results of local history research, and sometimes include reports on archaeological work in the area.

Academic titles covering the subject arose from the need to publish research by the University of Wales staff: the first was **Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies**, which covered linguistics, law and archaeology; **Studia Celtica** was later started to focus entirely on linguistics, but in 1993 took other topics over from the **Bulletin.** The **Welsh History Review** was started in 1959 and is the principal journal for the field. These journals are aimed at the specialist reader.

The **South Wales Record Society publications** include transcripts of important historical sources, accompanied by an introduction, footnotes and indexes. The **National Library of Wales Journal**, published since 1939, includes articles on historical topics relating to material by the Library.

Llafur is an academic journal on Welsh labour history, published by an independent society. **Cambria**, published between 1974 and 1989, was an academic geographical journal.

Numerous titles covering ecclesiastical history are covered by the *Religion* category.

Law, politics and education

Politics is covered by two titles here. **Welsh Outlook** was published from 1914 to 1933 and was influential in political debate in Wales at the time, covering social and economic issues, government and administration, and cultural matters. **Contemporary Wales** is an academic journal covering politics and public policy.

The **Cambrian law review**, published since 1970, is an academic journal with articles on general legal topics, international law and recent legislation.

Lleufer was published by the Welsh branch of the Workers' Educational Association and covered a wide range of current affairs and the arts.

Literature and the arts

There have been a series of literary journals in Wales which owed their existence to the enthusiasm of their editors and contributors, exerting an influence over the

nation's culture out of proportion to their readership and commercial success. In English language literature these include several titles still being published: New Welsh Review, Poetry Wales, and Planet: the Welsh Internationalist (for licensing reasons, these are not included in Welsh Journals Online) . The journal **Wales**, edited by Keidrych Rhys, published in the 1940s and 1950s, brought together many of the Welsh writers then becoming established. Welsh-language literary magazines from the 1930s to 1950s include **Tir Newydd**, **Heddiw**, **Y Fflam**, and **Yr Arloeswr**; current Welsh poetry appears in **Barddas**.

The history of the arts in Wales is covered by **Bwletin Cymdeithas Emynau Cymru** and **Welsh music history,** and titles such as Canu Gwerin not included in Welsh Journals Online. The history of literature and the publishing industry is described in the **Journal of the Welsh Bibliographical Society** and **Welsh book studies**.

Religion and philosophy

Religious denominations in Wales have always been keenly interested in their history, reflected in the establishment of **Bathafarn**: the journal of the Historical Society of the Methodist Church in Wales, and **Cofiadur** : sef cylchgrawn Cymdeithas Hanes Annibynwyr Cymru; **Cristion** is an exception as a contemporary inter-denominational publication. The academic study of religious history is covered by the **Journal of Welsh ecclesiastical history** and its successor, **Journal of Welsh religious history** and Welsh philosophy by **Efrydiau Athronyddol**.

Science and engineering

The majority of scientific research in Wales has been published in UK-wide or international journals. Exceptions are the Welsh-language medicine journal **Cennad** and the general science publication **Y Gwyddonydd**. For engineering and technology, particularly for mining and railways, **Proceedings of the South Wales Institute of Engineers** published contemporary reports on techniques and projects.

Cardiff Naturalists Society was established in the 1860s for those interested in natural history and the environment, although its **Reports and Transactions** also included geology, archaeology and photography. **Nature in Wales** was intended for a more general readership.

Conclusion

Although these journals appear very similar in layout, their contents reflect the interests of the publishers and the audience for whom they were intended. This affects the subjects covered by the articles and the type of advertisements. Taken together, the journals provide an insight into the nature of 20th century Welsh culture.

Further reading

All titles listed in **bold** can be found at the Welsh Journals Online website http://welshjournal.llgc.org.uk