

USING IMPERSONAL LANGUAGE: ANSWER KEY

The language you were asked to identify has been highlighted below.

*The **fragmentary**, **disjointed** and **unbalanced** nature of the current subject content within the **history curriculum**, which leaves pupils without a **coherent** ‘mental map’ of the past [40, 73] also **needs to be addressed**. The sometimes **inchoate** and **vague** approach to the development of pupils’ ‘historical skills’ also **needs to be considered**.*

Haydn, T. (2012). History in Schools and the Problem of “The Nation,” *Education Sciences* 2:4 276–289. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci2040276>

Passive structures (highlighted in yellow)

The two passive structures follow the same grammatical pattern, but different verbs are used. The use of the passive allows the author to focus on the need for action, rather than the person or people who need to implement these actions.

Noun phrase (in bold)

This noun phrase is very long and complex.

*The **fragmentary, disjointed and unbalanced nature of the current subject content within the history curriculum**,...*

At the core of the noun phrase we have “*nature of the current subject content*” with three adjectives before it, and a prepositional phrase behind it (“*within the history curriculum*”). The noun phrase is also qualified by a relative clause (“*which leaves pupils without a coherent ‘mental map’ of the past*”), so the main verb is very far from the start of the sentence, in this case right at the end of the sentence. Long, complex noun phrases like this are common in academic writing, and locating the main verb in a sentence can be problematic for some students.

Adjectives that reveal the author’s viewpoint (highlighted in green)

These are all adjectives that have a subjective sense. They reveal the author’s negative view of the current content of the history curriculum and its impact on learning. 5 of the adjectives (**fragmentary**, **disjointed**, **unbalanced**, **inchoate**, **vague**) have negative connotations and “*without a **coherent** ‘mental map’*” is also negative.