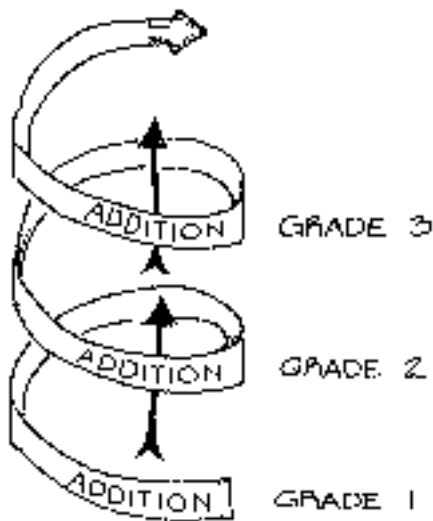


Two Types of Curriculum



There are two types of curriculum widely used today. Spiral curriculum is where a wide number of topics are taught in the early grades. The topics are cycled throughout the years, developing deeper understanding through the later grades. The United States uses spiral curriculum. Mastery curriculum covers a smaller set of topics and focuses on students' deep understanding of each topic. Students who are in a mastery curriculum program score higher than those who are in a spiral curriculum (school reform). Our country might need to lean toward mastery curriculum if they want to keep up with other countries. This shift might also cause a decline in student boredom. It seems possible that a solution to boredom could be an alteration to mastery curriculum. Mastery curriculum could help the problem of teacher burn out, which could be a cause of student boredom.

A movement to mastery curriculum might help with teacher burn out as well as boredom. If the curriculum focused on a more centered set of topics, there would be less repetition on

the part of the teacher and the students. The students would learn what was needed, and move on. There would be no going back in later years to dig deeper. That would have been done initially. The students would not be wasting their time relearning, and the teachers would focus on a smaller set of topics. Mastery curriculum seems like a good way to eliminate teacher burn out, which causes student boredom.

Changing something as drastic as the curriculum from spiral to mastery may also force changes in other problem areas, such as teacher burn out and dropout levels. If students are given a smaller range of things to study, looking at them in greater depth, they would probably be more inclined to stay in school, simply by eliminating boredom. Changing a curriculum to a more specialized one would also focus the teachers' attentions, allowing them to implement more exciting and engaging projects. The mastery curriculum could be taught with project-based learning and still work effectively. These changes needed to make high schools a better place might not be effective, but reducing boredom is certainly a step in the right direction.