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Commission



LifeComp into Action

TEACHING LIFE SKILLS
IN THE CLASSROOM
AND BEYOND

Joint
Research
Centre

EUR 31141 EN

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Abstract

“Personal, Social and Learning to Learn” was set as a Key Competence in 2018 by the Council Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning. The *LifeComp* framework provides a common language to describe this Key Competence, which applies to all spheres of life; and can be acquired through formal, informal and non-formal education in order to help citizens thrive in the 21st century. *LifeComp* is a conceptual and non-prescriptive framework that describes nine competences in three areas (Personal, Social and Learning to Learn).

The European Commission has developed *LifeComp into Action* to support educators to navigate the gap between theory and everyday pedagogical practices. It provides educational practitioners with a selection of principles, guidelines and research-based and learner-centred teaching strategies to foster the *LifeComp* competences.

LifeComp into Action is expected to inspire educators, not only as a general guide for their teaching practices to foster socio-emotional and metacognitive competences, but also as a basis from which to develop tailored strategies and practices to foster these competences.



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LifeComp into Action

Teaching life skills
in the classroom
and beyond

*Joint
Research
Centre*

Index

Foreword.....	1	4. Teaching strategies to foster <i>LifeComp</i> competences.....	49
Acknowledgements.....	2	1. Attention signal.....	52
Executive summary.....	3	2. Thumbs up, thumbs down.....	54
1. Introducing <i>LifeComp</i> into Action.....	4	3. Novel ideas.....	56
2. General principles to foster <i>LifeComp</i> competences.....	8	4. Give one, Get one, Move on (Go, Go, Mo).....	58
1. Trust.....	10	5. Think/Write/Pair/Share.....	60
2. Community.....	11	6. Text to text, Text to Self, Text to World.....	62
3. Learner-centred.....	12	7. Accountable talk.....	64
4. Reflection.....	13	8. Reciprocal learning strategy.....	66
5. Whole-school approach.....	14	9. Anonymous peer assessment.....	68
3. Guidelines to foster <i>LifeComp</i> competences.....	15	10. Jigsaw.....	70
1. Self-regulation.....	17	11. Fishbowl.....	72
2. Flexibility.....	20	12. Create an agreement on the rules for the (online) learning spaces.....	74
3. Wellbeing.....	23	13. Creating SMART goals.....	76
4. Empathy.....	26	14. Gratitude journal.....	78
5. Communication.....	30	15. Hope project: a path through goal setting.....	80
6. Collaboration.....	33	16. Role playing.....	82
7. Growth mindset.....	37	Annex 1.....	84
8. Critical thinking.....	41	Annex 2.....	87
9. Managing learning.....	45		

Foreword

We live in an increasingly digitised, interconnected and globalised world that affects virtually all areas of our lives: work, communication, social interactions, learning, shopping, or accessing public services.

The world is changing rapidly, and the COVID-19 outbreak has highlighted the need to adapt quickly to new working, social and learning conditions. To face these changes and unleash their dynamic potential, individuals need to develop new skills and competences within a lifelong learning process.

In 2018, the Council of the European Union adopted the Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning, setting out a core set of skills necessary to work and live in the 21st century. The Recommendation has been the starting point for the European Commission to develop *LifeComp*, the European Framework for Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence. *LifeComp* describes nine socio-emotional and metacognitive competences: Self-regulation, Flexibility, Wellbeing (Personal Area), Empathy, Communication, Collaboration (Social Area), Growth mindset, Critical thinking and Managing learning (Learning to Learn Area).

Research shows that the socio-emotional and metacognitive competences, also labelled as soft skills, non-cognitive skills, or 21st century skills, can increase individuals' self-fulfilment and capacity to thrive. They boost academic success, wellbeing and employability and the capacity to learn lifelong and life-wide in our volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous era.

LifeComp into Action aims to bridge the gap between the theoretical framework and the day-to-day pedagogical practice. It offers a selection of research-based general principles, guidelines and

teaching strategies that teachers and educators can adapt to foster *LifeComp* competences in their classrooms. Readers may find novel insights to create meaningful and engaging learning experiences to prepare their learners.

The JRC work on reference frameworks for individuals' competence development includes the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (*DigComp 2.2*); the Entrepreneurship Competence Framework (*EntreComp*); the European Framework for Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Competence (*LifeComp*); and the European Sustainability Competence Framework (*GreenComp*). Additionally, the European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators (*DigCompEdu*) supports the development of educators' digital competence, whereas the European Framework for Digitally-Competent Educational Organisations (*DigCompOrg*) supports the development of digital capacity within an educational organisation.

LifeComp into Action is intended to support implementation. Together with *DigComp into Action* and *EntreComp into Action*, it constitutes a series of practical guidelines to advise individuals and organisations who want to use the competence frameworks developed by the JRC to foster competence-based learning in education and training.

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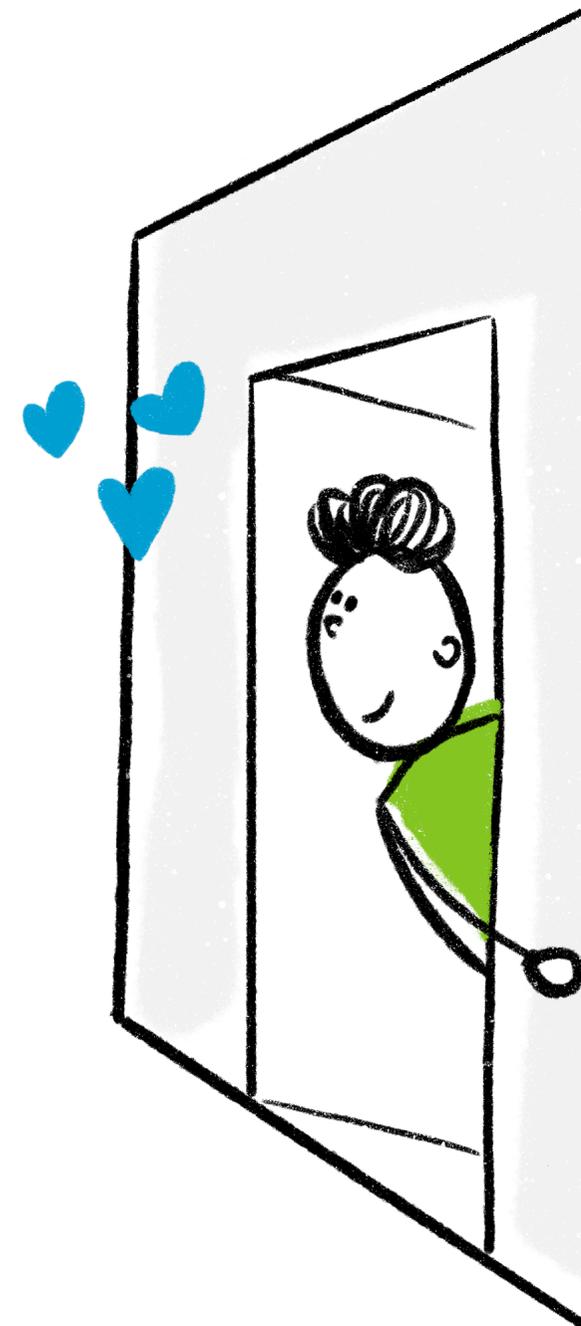
Acknowledgements

This work results from dialogue, feedback and knowledge exchange with colleagues, experts and educators, who were involved in different phases and steps of the process.

The authors would like to express their gratitude to all the people involved in bringing *LifeComp into Action* to life and PPMI for their initial work in drafting the guidelines. In particular, we would like to thank:

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To all of them, we sincerely acknowledge their outstanding and valuable contribution to *LifeComp into Action* as a reference to foster the promotion of the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence through education and training.



Executive summary

LifeComp is the European Competence Framework that provides a shared understanding and a common language to describe the Personal, Social, and Learning to Learn Key Competence (Council of the European Union, 2018). It describes nine socio-emotional and metacognitive competences (i.e. life skills) which assist individuals in developing their potential, self-regulating their emotions, thoughts and behaviours, coping with complexity, and being responsible social agents and reflective lifelong learners. Everyone needs to develop these competences to thrive in the digital age. Such competences can increase individuals' resilience and their ability to cope with the complex situations and wicked problems that we are facing in the 21st-century (climate crisis, current and potential pandemics, increasing automation of tasks, swift changes in the forms of employment, ageing population, the proliferation of misinformation, growing threats to sustainability, etc.).

Research has shown that developing life skills in education can boost learners' academic performance, personal satisfaction, wellbeing and employability; and is correlated with a reduction in early school leaving rates. At the same time, strong "non-cognitive skills" are expected to be required for most future jobs.

To help practitioners with these various challenges, the JRC took the opportunity to develop and test pedagogical resources intended to bridge the gap between theory and practice and to help teachers and educators create learning environments which may favour the acquisition of *LifeComp* competences.

LifeComp into Action has been developed through desk research and consultations with educators and experts. It addresses education practitioners and aims to support them in fostering learners' life skills.

LifeComp into Action articulates:

- **General principles to foster *LifeComp* competences.** They provide five general principles to create learning environments that foster personal, social and learning to learn competences.
- **Guidelines to foster *LifeComp* competences.** They provide suggestions on preparing, implementing and assessing formatively teaching activities that promote each *LifeComp* competence. They offer several inputs and ideas to trigger practitioners' curiosity to go deeper into specific topics and reflect on how to reorganize their pedagogical practices to foster both life skills and the regular curriculum. They also describe the primary enablers and barriers to promoting each competence and offer recommendations for online implementation.
- **Teaching strategies to promote *LifeComp* competences.** They include 16 research-based and learner-centred teaching strategies to foster *LifeComp* competences. The teaching strategies provide standardised and step-by-step instructions for implementation in the classroom, outside the classroom or online and have been tested by teachers and educators for fine-tuning. They are designed to allow learners to stage and hone their life skills while working on the regular curriculum. Education practitioners are invited to customise those strategies to fit their educational purposes.



1. Introducing *LifeComp into Action*



In May 2018, the European Council adopted an updated **Recommendation on Key Competences for Lifelong Learning** to promote the development of key competences in the European Union. The Recommendation identified eight key competences that all individuals need for their personal fulfilment and development, employability, social inclusion, sustainable lifestyles, successful and health-conscious life management and active citizenship. Among those competences, the Recommendation defines the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence as the *ability to reflect upon oneself, effectively manage time and information, work with others in a constructive way, remain resilient and manage one's own learning and career*.¹

To provide a shared understanding and common language for this key competence, the European Commission published *LifeComp*, the European Framework for the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence².

The framework has been developed using a mixed-methods approach, with a comprehensive review of academic and grey literature and multiple stakeholder consultations. *LifeComp* describes three areas and nine competences, which are often labelled as soft-skills, non-cognitive skills, or socio-emotional skills. Those are: Self-regulation, Flexibility and Wellbeing (Personal Area); Empathy,

Communication and Collaboration (Social Area); Growth Mindset, Critical Thinking and Managing Learning (Learning to Learn Area). Each competence has, in turn, three descriptors which provide more granularity to its depiction. The complete list of competences' definitions and descriptors is provided in Annex 1.

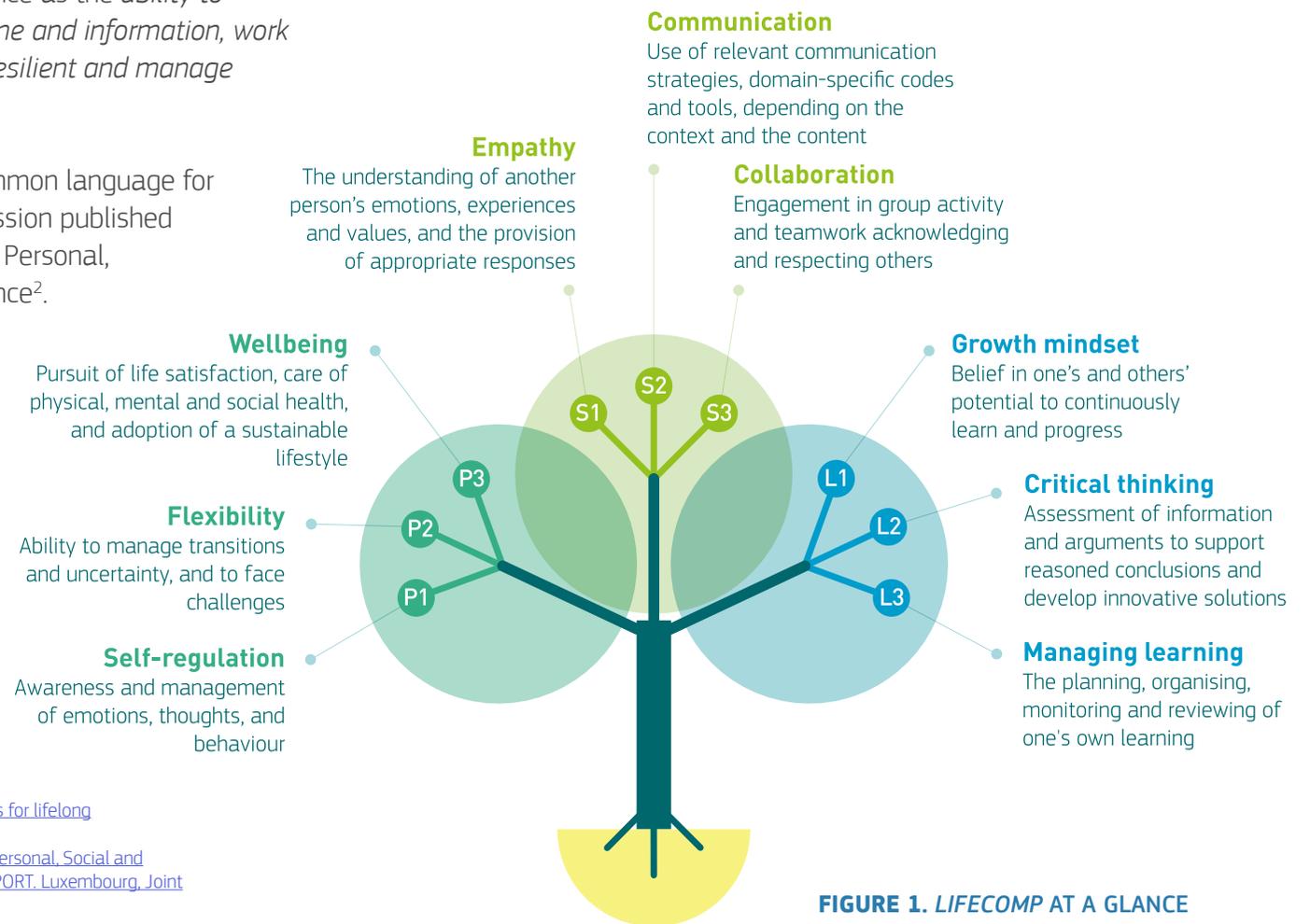


FIGURE 1. LIFECOMP AT A GLANCE

1. Council Recommendation of 22 May 2018 on key competences for lifelong learning. Official Journal of the European Union.
2. Sala, A., et al. (2020). LifeComp: The European Framework for Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence. JRC SCIENCE FOR POLICY REPORT. Luxembourg, Joint Research Centre, European Commission.

It is important to stress that *LifeComp* does not describe personality traits. Rather, it describes competences that everyone can develop lifelong and life-wide from early childhood to adult life, and through formal, non-formal and informal learning.

LifeComp builds on well-advanced research on Socio-Emotional Education. Research³ shows that when the emotional, social and metacognitive competences are intentionally promoted through education, this results in:

- increased academic success and decrease of early school leaving;
- enhanced student wellbeing and mental health;
- increases in student positive behaviour and decreases in interpersonal violence and bullying;
- better student–teacher relationship quality and teachers’ confidence and satisfaction;
- improved school climate;
- increased students’ employability and better wages.

If we think about the past two years (2020-2022) it is evident how important self-regulating our emotions, thoughts and behaviours, or taking care of our mental, physical and social wellbeing have been to cope with prolonged periods of confinement and concern due to the COVID-19 pandemic. From one day to the next, everyone had

to cope with uncertainty to face challenges with flexibility, and to adapt to a different way of working, studying, communicating and collaborating.

Technology is evolving so fast that today’s students will work with tools that do not yet exist. Therefore we need to equip them with a growth mindset and confidence to self-direct their learning lifelong to meet the ever-changing life and labour market requirements.

Coping with the volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity of our age has a personal cost, which, if not addressed, can convert into a social cost, as we are witnessing with the rise of mental health issues around the world. Research shows that the personal toll that we are paying could be reduced by intentionally training and educating people to hone their life skills, thus preventing costly outcomes for individuals and society.

Based on *LifeComp* framework, the European Commission has developed a reference document to support educators and teachers in fostering learners’ socio-emotional and metacognitive competences: *LifeComp into Action*.

LifeComp into Action presents a set of recommendations for teaching personal, social, and learning to learn (*LifeComp*) competences. It provides suggestions on how to create learner-centred learning environments and implement teaching methods to foster the development of *LifeComp* competences.

LifeComp into Action is not a process guide to be followed step by step. Instead, it provides the readers with a selection of principles, guidelines and teaching strategies to trigger the reflection on their teaching practices and facilitate the adoption of teaching styles that take into account the relevance of the emotional, social and

3. There is substantial evidence of the positive effects of implementing systematic interventions to foster social and emotional education, as well as policy recommendations that advocate for promoting socio-emotional competences through training and education. Among those we signal: [Sorrenti, G., et al. \(2020\). The Causal Impact of Socio-Emotional Skills Training on Educational Success. CESifo Group Munich](#); Durlak, J. A., et al. (2011). “The Impact of Enhancing Students’ Social and Emotional Learning: A Meta-Analysis of School-Based Universal Interventions.” *Child Development* 82(1): 405–432. [OECD \(2021\). Beyond Academic Learning: First Results from the Survey of Social and Emotional Skills. Paris, OECD Publishing](#); [Cefai, C., Bartolo, P. et al. \(2018\). Strengthening social and emotional education as a core curricular area across the EU. A review of the international evidence: analytical report. Luxembourg, European Commission, NESET II](#); Durlak, J. A., et al., Eds. (2015). *Handbook of Social and Emotional Learning. Research and Practice*. New York, The Guildford Press.

metacognitive aspects of learning. The section, “General principles to foster *LifeComp* competences” presents five inspirational principles to accompany educators in creating learning environments focused on fostering the personal, social and learning to learn competences. The section “Guidelines to foster *LifeComp* competences” provides recommendations on promoting each competence. The guidelines offer indications on how to prepare, implement and facilitate the formative assessment of the learning activities that promote life skills together with the regular syllabus. The guidelines also present the main enablers and barriers to developing each competence and tips on how to foster *LifeComp* competences in online settings. The section “Teaching strategies to foster *LifeComp* competences” describes 16 student-centred and research-based teaching strategies. They are meant to help teachers and educators create learning activities that favour learners to practise and hone *LifeComp* competences. The instructions for implementation are standardised to facilitate their use by teachers and educators. Most of the teaching strategies can be used to teach different curricular topics.

The selection of principles, guidelines and teaching strategies presented in this text is neither exhaustive nor comprehensive. Rather, it offers the readers a range of alternative approaches to explore, combine, adapt and experiment to find a way that best suits their specific situation and goals, as well as the needs of their students.



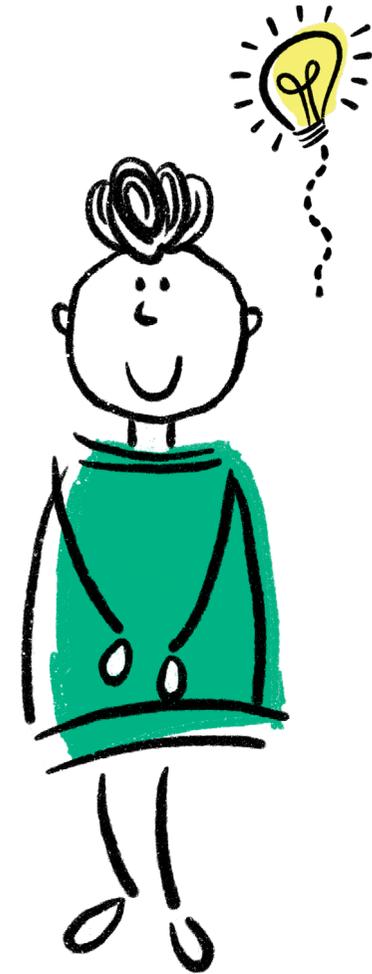
2. General principles to foster *LifeComp* competences



This section presents **five inspirational principles** that can help educators identify, implement and monitor the steps needed **to create learning environments** focused on developing the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence.

Such principles can help in creating learning environments that **foster learners' autonomous motivation, wellbeing and engagement** by taking into account the three psychological needs of **competence** (the need to produce a desired outcome and to experience mastery); **autonomy** (the need to feel ownership of one's behaviour); and **relatedness** (the need to feel secure emotional bonds with significant others).

They contribute to creating the right mindset for designing learning environments that allow learners to unleash their dynamic potential; self-regulate their emotions, thoughts and behaviours; to be able to build a meaningful life; cope with complexity; be thriving individuals; responsible social agents and reflective lifelong learners.



Trust



Promote trustworthy relationships with and among learners

This principle is about being positive, approachable and encouraging and putting effort in establishing positive relationships with learners. It encourages educators to become familiar with the diversity and needs of students as individuals, and to **promote equity over equality**. The principle recognises that one size doesn't fit all: aim at giving each learner what they need instead of offering everyone the same resources.

Fostering **psychological safety** is key to promoting learners' active engagement in the learning process. Psychological safety implies that learners trust that they will not be judged, punished, or humiliated for trying and committing mistakes. It encourages

learners' contributions and increases their willingness to take risks, trust, and openly share their opinions.

Trustworthy relationships and a feeling of psychological safety can be gradually developed by:

- **expressing genuine interest in learners' lives**, acknowledging their feelings, and investing efforts in helping them overcome learning difficulties and honour their commitments.
- being **consistent, honest** and **open** about your expectations and feelings as an educator.
- taking into account the **emotional and motivational dimension of learning**; and creating learning environments that respect and celebrate learners' self-expression and diversity in terms of background, beliefs, values, opinions, personal circumstances, experiences, learning styles and pace.
- encouraging **participation over perfection**. Make sure that learners feel entitled to participate, ask questions, take risks, and to generate and discuss new ideas.

Community



Develop a sense of belonging to a learning community

The learning process has a significant social dimension, and the quality of learners' relationships within their learning community and beyond can be a powerful driver or barrier to meaningful learning. Learning happens in context and through relationships with the people around us. A sense of belonging to a supportive learning community is significant leverage to trigger learners' active involvement in the learning process.

The following actions may facilitate community building in the classroom:

- **establish class norms together:** agree on common rules and procedures to ensure safe, respectful and trustworthy relationships within the classroom. The rules should be based on shared values and positive behaviour rather than on unwanted behaviours;
- be intentional, consistent, and public about constructing an **inclusive learning community;** a safe place in which bullying,

harassment or discrimination are not allowed and have clear consequences;

- **develop common routines;** for example, having weekly debriefings;
- offer learners opportunities for **peer-to-peer mentorship** and for supporting each other; and for learners **to work collaboratively** and discuss in pairs or small groups;
- **design collaborative learning activities** based on learners' positive interdependence so that they feel they are part of a team, of a community working together towards the same objective;
- establish **classroom assignments** so that each learner has the opportunity to have a responsibility within the classroom space;
- create opportunities for learners to share how they feel about each other. For example, **creating opportunities for praising and acknowledging** each other for attempting something difficult or doing a good job.

Working with others requires listening and respect for peers, developing empathy and emotional intelligence, teaming up, and acknowledging others' work. Being part of a community also provides the opportunity to seek feedback from peers, discuss it, assess performance, and plan for improvements; the other way around, it enables the sharing of knowledge, ideas, resources and experiences that can be helpful or inspire other colleagues.

Learner-centred



Create learner-centred learning environments

Meaningful learning, the lasting acquisition of knowledge, skills and attitudes, requires learners' intentional cognitive activity to engage with and make sense of new content, linking it to their previous knowledge to transfer and apply what has been learnt to authentic tasks in different settings. It is therefore important to create learning activities that offer learners the opportunity to **learn**, acquire a new concept or skill; **do**, put into practice the skills or apply the knowledge; and **reflect**, think about what worked well, what needs improvement, etc.

You can foster a learner-centred learning environment by:

- **giving learners opportunities to take the lead** and **experience autonomy** by engaging in learning activities based on their interests (e.g. writing a blog post on a game they enjoy, or create a mind map of the characters of their favourite film);
- engaging learners in participatory and active learning, rather than as passive listeners of a lecture. You can implement teaching strategies that actively engage learners in **learning** **by doing** and require collaboration, such as **project-based learning**, **role plays**, or **experiential activities** inspired by real world-problems
- intentionally guiding learners to **reflect on their previous knowledge** and helping them establish meaningful connections with the new concept and real-world situations. It will help learners interpret, relate and integrate new information with their existing knowledge and transfer the latest information to new situations and problems, therefore achieving meaningful learning;
- welcoming learners' opinions and ideas into the flow of the activity and allowing them to **choose the format to deliver a given assignment** (an article, a podcast, a video, etc.);
- modelling your way of resolving a task explaining both the knowledge that you are activating, describing each step and the rationale for choosing the better-suited strategies to solve the task. With modelling, you can **engage learners by showing them how to perform a task** with a rationale. This provides learners with a visual and verbal example of what they will be expected to do.
- progressively **increasing learners' ownership** of their learning paths and independence to foster academic self-regulation, allowing them to organise their work independently and develop the capacity to self-direct their work.

Reflection



Use reflection to make progress visible

Honing the personal, social and learning to learn competence is intrinsically an experiential process. Nevertheless, it is necessary to **reflect** on the experience **to achieve meaningful learning**. Reflection allows learners to increase their awareness and understanding of their own thought processes, strengths and weaknesses, and preferred learning strategies. By reflecting, learners can extract general principles from the learning process and apply them in new situations, becoming the basis for further learning. Reflection is the basis for progression and self-directed learning.

As an educator, you foster reflection by:

- **asking learners to establish short-term goals** and having them frequently assess whether they are progressing adequately;
- **implementing quick check-ins** to follow up on the progress toward the achievement of the short-term goals;
- **sharing the assessment criteria** with the learners before implementing the assignment to increase comprehension of the task, openly reflecting on errors and giving space for formulating goals. In addition, you can invite learners to participate in developing the assessment criteria to increase their sense of accountability for the learning process;
- **diversifying assessment formats**: self-assessment can be combined with educator's feedback, anonymous peer review, reflective journals (in case of a more extended assignment) or other forms of reflection on the experience;
- designing activities that require learners to explain a topic with their own words, or to **apply the knowledge to a different situation**. Use questions, debates and discussions to test the soundness of learners' understanding of a given topic and trigger their reflection on the learning process;
- providing several opportunities of **formative assessment** to foster learners' habit of monitoring their own progress, adjusting and moving forward accordingly.
- creating the habit of posing **metacognitive questions** to help learners reflect on the planning, monitoring and assessment of their learning process.

Whole-school approach



Mobilise your school ecosystem

The development of life skills is an organic process. It is favoured by a whole-school approach, consistently infusing the promotion of the socio-emotional and metacognitive competences into every aspect of learners' educational experience (e.g. across different areas and subjects, in the school discipline norms, or establishing meaningful relationships with the families). A whole school approach will reinforce individual educators' actions by setting the same goals and guidelines for the entire school community.

To foster a whole-school approach it is important to:

- **Listen to learners' voices:** Engage learners as problem solvers and leaders in the decision-making process toward setting the direction and creating a positive school culture to foster life skills.

- **Create a team:** a team committed to promoting a learning environment that fosters life skills has better chances of introducing sustainable changes at the school level. It is important that the team is representative of the school community and involves: school leaders, learners and their families, teachers representatives of different grades and subject areas, and non-instructional staff (clerks, counsellors, psychologists, etc.).
- **Design a whole-school action plan:** The team should create a shared vision for the whole-school approach; build a strategic plan reflecting on and defining the school priorities for the promotion of life skills; define specific, measurable and time-bound short-term goals (e.g. one school-year), and clear steps towards the shared vision. Each member should have a clear role and contribute to collect data to monitor the progress regularly, reflect on the implementation and outcomes, and update the plan to improve the process constantly.
- **Professional learning:** Schools are more effective in promoting learners' life skills when they also cultivate the same skills in adults. Educators and staff must have learning opportunities to reflect on and hone their own life skills and master learner-centred pedagogies. Professional networks and teacher learning communities can provide a collaborative learning environment for mentoring, sharing and discussing best practices.



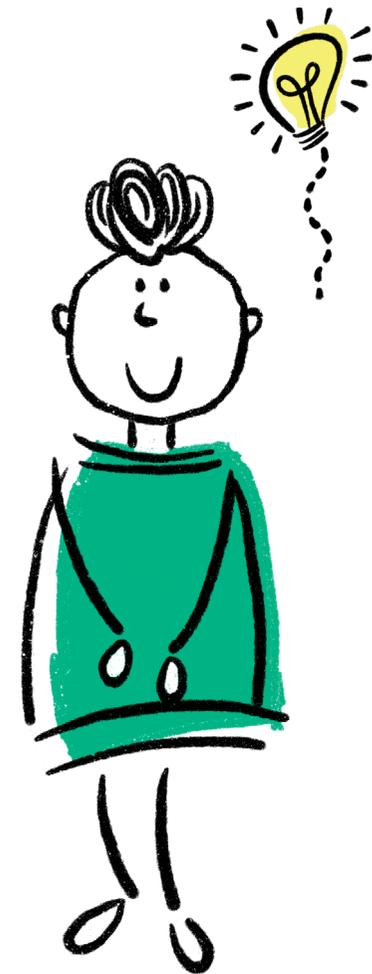
3. Guidelines to foster *LifeComp* competences



This section presents some ideas and guidelines for educators to nurture each of the nine personal, social and learning to learn competences described in *LifeComp*.

For each competence, the guidelines cover each phase of the activities: preparation (**Setting the scene**), implementation (**3, 2, 1, Action**) and reflection (**Promoting learning from experience**). They describe the main drivers and barriers to fostering each competence and suggestions on how to integrate technology into the activity (**Going digital**).

They provide several inputs and ideas to trigger practitioners' curiosity to go deeper into specific topics and reflect on how to reorganize their pedagogical practices **to foster both life skills and the regular curriculum**.



P1 Self-regulation

Awareness and management of emotions, thoughts and behaviour.

SETTING THE SCENE

- Provide learners with opportunities to reflect on, **recognise** and **label** their **emotions, building a rich related vocabulary**. Being able to identify emotions accurately is the first step to increasing the ability to regulate them. A direct way to expand the emotional vocabulary of students is to launch a “feeling brainstorming”, thus challenging students to identify as many words as possible to express an emotion (e.g., happiness, sadness, etc.). The **Mood meter**⁴ is a tool developed by Yale’s Centre for Emotional Intelligence. It can be used to help learners to identify the feelings they are experiencing by analysing their pleasantness and the associated energy level. The original tool suits more advanced learners, including adult learners; still, simplified versions are available for youngsters. Noticing and naming emotions helps learners manage their feelings in an adaptive and prosocial way.
- **Build a trustworthy atmosphere in the classroom, openly communicating your expectations** regarding welcomed and unwelcomed behaviours.
- **Acknowledge and validate students’ emotions** strengthening learners’ capacity to self-regulate and build trust. Emotional validation is acknowledging and accepting a person’s inner experience, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours as valid. You can practice emotional validation by:
 1. **rephrasing** what the student is saying to make sure you understand correctly and possibly ask for clarifications. You can rephrase using sentences such as “In other words...”; “If I understood you correctly, you said...”;
 2. **acknowledging the emotion**: You do not need to agree with the student’s reaction, but you can recognise the feeling they are experiencing without dismissing it. You can acknowledge learners’ emotions by giving feedback sentences such as “It sounds like you are feeling scared” or “That sounds irritating”;
 3. **communicating acceptance**: Tell the learner you accept their feelings as they are. This does not imply that you welcome misbehaviour caused by negative or positive sentiments. It means that you accept their emotions as legitimate: they have the right to feel what they are feeling. You can convey acceptance through sentences such as “I can see what you are feeling”; “I understand why you are feeling that way”. Acknowledging and validating people’s emotions make them feel listened to and understood. It facilitates the reflection to find a positive way for them to manage their emotions, thoughts and behaviours.

Check the Teaching Strategy “[Attention Signal](#)”, to support learners to be aware of and regulate their behaviours.

4. [A video introduction to The Mood Meter.](#)

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Facilitate the reflection by introducing **mood-related check-ins**, asking them to express how they are feeling, at various stages of your lessons. Including reflective components in all the activities allows for a **continuous process and habit of self-reflection**.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Thumbs up, thumbs down](#)" to support learners in identifying and expressing their level of energy and satisfaction.

- There are several strategies to regulate our thoughts, emotions and behaviours; **individuals need to find** those **strategies** which **best suit them** and adapt to tasks and specific situations. Invite your learners to reflect on and share their approaches to managing their emotions to foster reflection and increase their repertoires of coping strategies.
- Invite learners to imagine alternative ways to reach their personal and academic goals. This will help them develop positive expectations about their likely success now and in the future, intentionally **cultivating hope** and **optimism**.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Hope project: a path through goal setting](#)" to support learners to nurture their hope, the motivational energy to initiate and sustain progress, and the ability to imagine and go through alternative ways to reach them.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- Monitor long-term progress in emotional development with the help of **learning diaries** or **mood trackers**. Even though an educator cannot access learners' mood trackers for confidentiality reasons, students can reflect on their trends and gain insight.
- Note immediate mood changes and discuss them in **debriefings** following activities or sessions.
- **The formative assessment** can help strengthen self-efficacy (i.e., the belief in one's capacity to achieve one's goals) and provide motivational energy and a sense of personal purpose.

GOING DIGITAL

- Use different **mood tracking apps** (in addition to MOOD Meter) and other relevant apps (online diaries, for example) in the educational process. They can help boost self-knowledge, curiosity and engagement.
- Invite learners to **use different online environments** (social media, learning platforms, email, online games, etc.) and reflect on how each setting affects their feelings, emotions and specific behaviours.

DRIVERS

- **Provide opportunities for reflecting on the emotions and their expression:** emotional development and management require effort. Therefore, include observations, debriefings and reflections on learning from experience in each session. A few minutes can be enough to identify and name the feelings.
- **Emphasis on value-neutrality of emotions:** there are neither good nor bad feelings. Even the most acute and negative emotions are legitimate and provide important information. Yet, it is crucial to care about their timely appropriate expression and management. It is vital to avoid damaging oneself or others.

BARRIERS

- **Lack of trust towards the teacher:** working with learners' emotions is virtually impossible if they cannot open up to the teacher. A friendly, supportive atmosphere and individual approach to learners are crucial for trust in the classroom.
- **The fast pace of classes:** intense workload and quickly changing activities in the course of a session decrease the room for reflection and analysis of emotions experienced in the learning process.
- **Overly competitive environment:** individualised learning with the juxtaposition of education results can become obstacles to establishing friendly relationships among learners. They can cause frustration among those left behind. Moreover, when working individually, learners can hardly contribute to each other's emotional development by relating to each other's experiences and sharing feelings and self-regulation strategies.

P2 Flexibility

Ability to manage transitions and uncertainty, and to face challenges.

SETTING THE SCENE

- Be a **role model** for flexible behaviour in the classroom, be ready to review your opinion, adopt innovative ideas and manage unpredictable changes. Using the personal experience of identifying knowledge gaps and learning can also be very encouraging since it flattens the hierarchy between the teacher as knowledge-giver and learners as knowledge-receivers. It also gives a positive example of lifelong learning.
- **Make your classroom a safe space: allow mistakes.** Make sure that learners have room to experiment and fail without being mocked. Promote a culture of academic risk-taker, inviting learners to embrace failures as opportunities for learning and improvement. Celebrate learners' capacity to ask clarifying questions or to request extra support when needed.
- Invite learners to **explore their creativity** by engaging them in activities with an unusual format (e.g. producing a podcast, a video, or a comic) or requiring coming up with unusual connections and imaginative solutions (thinking out of the box). This can help to form an attitude of **openness to novel ideas**, adopt novel tools, and **deal with uncertainty**.
- Invite learners to come up with a list of problems or topics that are relevant and can trigger their **curiosity**. Give learners the opportunity to explore them. Invite learners to experiment with different ideas.
- **Promote curiosity.** Embed it in the instructional design process, for example, through inquiry-based learning. Gamify the Q&A process by symbolically rewarding those learners who are asking questions (e.g. with badges, by creating a ranking of curiosity with the winners awarded at the end of the course, etc.). Let students lead because active learning in which learners have control over their learning process fosters motivation and inquisitiveness.
- **Balance** learners' **stress levels** by distributing challenges evenly throughout the course. By staying challenged throughout the course, learners get a chance to adapt to different educational contexts (e.g. sessions with fast-moving changes of activities, outdoor edutainment sessions, independent work at home, high stakes exams and preparation for them), engage in different ways of doing things, explore working strategies and abandon those that do not lead to the desired result.

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Plan activities involving a **change of roles** in the process of a role play, **revision of formulated arguments** and other **plot twists**.

Check the Teaching Strategy “[Think/Write/Pair/Share](#)” to support learners in engaging in meaningful dialogue with their peers.

- Recognise and show **appreciation of unusual and creative solutions** to problems to build trust and respect in the classroom.

Check the Teaching Strategy “[Novel ideas](#)” to support learners in generating and accepting novel and unconventional ideas in a small group.

- Invite your students to **apply what they have learned** in a given context to a new one.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- Let learners participate in the **design of the assessment criteria** to decrease the stress related to risk-taking while coming up with non-standard solutions or alternative ways of fulfilling the tasks.

- Use **low-stake formative assessment** to promote the habit of reflecting on the learning process.
- Allow **students** to **generate questions or quizzes** to be answered by their classmates and give peer feedback, for example, using rubrics. Rubrics can be provided by the teacher or co-constructed by the learners.

GOING DIGITAL

- Encourage learners to use **diverse sources** of information in various **digital formats** for traditional assignments. For example, make a video to introduce a topic instead of a slides presentation or use data aggregated by or with the help of the apps instead of manual data collection. Having the opportunity to choose from different digital tools and formats may boost **independent exploration** of new sources or **software solutions**.
- Provide a list of relevant and secure apps to be used during the activity by the learners. It will help **learners** to **explore different tools** and properly fulfil the activity.

DRIVERS

- **Encouragement of curiosity** through the involvement of learners in activities requiring a search for new information and appreciation of learners' contributions that propose an alternative way of thinking or doing the tasks.
- **A safe environment for risk-taking:** knowing that curiosity and openness are welcome creates room for learners to innovate when fulfilling the tasks.
- **Job-oriented experiential activities:** to manage their transitions in personal life, learning pathways, and work, learners need activities to help them understand personal values, interests, skills, needs, abilities, and limitations. In addition, using experiential activities to explore occupational opportunities can help learners formulate their goals and monitor their progress towards achievement.
- **Bringing real-life situations to the classroom:** using problems that learners have a chance to deal with regularly makes it possible to explore different ways of dealing with those issues in a safe environment, allowing them to weigh up other points of view on a specific topic.
- **Offering multiple ways to achieve the outcome:** this can be done by allowing different formats of task submission, thus allowing learners to perform not identical tasks.

BARRIERS

- **A fixed mindset** of either teacher or learners: having strong opinions or deep beliefs that are not allowed to be challenged can be a severe obstacle to exploration and responsiveness to changes. Respect for the feelings and values of other people needs to be enhanced by creating a safe space for conversation about them.
- **Overly competitive environment:** readiness to review options and adopt new ideas requires a trusting environment where students are ready to share and learn from each other. Even though certain competitive elements can be beneficial in provoking innovative thinking, an overly competitive environment can lead to the atomisation of learners and their closing up from each other.
- **Fear of failure:** for learners who fear failure, it might be hard to speak up, innovate, or come up with alternative solutions, even if there are opportunities. That is why building a trusting environment in which errors are regarded as necessary steps in the learning process is so crucial to fostering learners' flexibility and willingness to engage.

P3 Wellbeing

Pursuit of life satisfaction, care of physical, mental and social health; and adoption of a sustainable lifestyle.

SETTING THE SCENE

- **Empower your learners.** Help them realise that their development is a priority, that they are valued as evolving human beings, and not for their excellent results. This may promote an attitude of self-reflection and openness to review their own choices, habits and lifestyles.
- Prepare activities to discuss health and the impact of habits on one's wellbeing with **evidence-based research** and **relevant examples** of tools and practices to help develop those healthy habits.
- Create **quick check-in routines** to invite learners to notice and reflect on how they feel.
- Show how to give **authentic and specific compliments and praise**. Research demonstrates that the praises that can better inspire, build trust and reinforce positive behaviours are:
 - **Behaviour-specific:** instead of generic praise, like saying "good job!", effective praises describe the observed behaviour and make a positive remark, e.g. "I loved how you contributed to the group work, helping your classmates to keep the focus"; in other words, effective praise, links the instructional feedback about students' achievement to specific learning goals.
 - **Immediate:** effective praises celebrate the expected behaviour as soon as it happens.

- **Authentic:** effective praise is sincere and truthful. Overpraising for small things can make learners doubt their capacity to reach more significant goals.

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Invite learners to **reflect on wellness** (combination of body, mind, and environment) and **share good practices** (physical activities, mental exercises, useful habits) to live a more balanced and healthy life.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Creating SMART goals](#)" to support learners in creating specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based goals, which can be used to develop wellbeing-related purposes.

- **Create opportunities for implementing prosocial behaviours.** Prosocial behaviours are intended to benefit other people, including help, support, and acts of altruism. Prosocial behaviours contribute to a sense of community and belonging at school, which, in turn, contribute to a sense of self-esteem, overall satisfaction and wellbeing. The following activities can promote prosocial behaviours:
 - **Friendly Fridays:** each Friday, a learner writes a warm and sincere, anonymous note to a classmate.
 - **Sharing Acts of Kindness:** a shared digital "kindness wall" is used to express gratitude and appreciation for peers anonymously.

- **Group Salutes:** a teacher-prompted interaction to express gratitude or appreciation in a physical (e.g. high five, thumbs up, etc.) or verbal form.
- **Create opportunities for learners to give behaviour-specific, authentic feedback to peers.** It helps strengthen the bonds among peers and the feeling of belonging to a learning community.
- Openly discuss what **bullying** looks and feels like and how it can affect victims, perpetrators and bystanders. Foster a healthy classroom culture which does not tolerate any aggression. Empower learners to intervene when they see abusive behaviours directed at their peers. **Restorative justice practices** are strategies to prevent conflict and repair the harm caused by offences and misbehaviour. They are intended to restore the relationships within the school community, making the aggressor aware of the impact of their actions on the victims and then act restoratively, e.g. through apologies or compensatory measures. Research shows that restorative practices help learners improve their problem-solving ability and build a sense of belonging in a nurturing and caring school community.
- Use **discussions, games or activities on environmental issues (e.g. climate change, pollution, overpopulation, deforestation)** to address the key concepts related to sustainable development and to reflect on individual choices and lifestyles.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- Invite learners to use **wellbeing diaries** to track health-related

habits, stress levels and potential triggers. The observations collected during these tracking activities can be analysed, interpreted and presented in an aggregated manner. Such presentations can be formally assessed as individual projects.

- Invite learners to **produce digital content** (videos, podcasts, blog posts, posters, illustrations) related to potential risks to wellbeing and ways of protection from those.

GOING DIGITAL

- Discuss with learners the importance of balancing the use of digital technologies with **non-use as an option**, as well as the possible impact of digital life on personal health, wellbeing and life satisfaction.
- Discuss with learners how to recognise signs of **digital addictions** (e.g. loss of control, withdrawal symptoms, dysfunctional mood regulation). Foster the reflection on the possible physical and psychological harm caused by digital addiction.
- Raise awareness of the harmful effects of cyberbullying on learners' wellbeing. **Co-create rules on how to respond to cyberbullying** (e.g. block online contact from the abuser, report the abuse, and keep the evidence).
- Discuss with learners how to make **conscious and critical use of digital applications to promote healthy habits**, helping them identify possible benefits and harm to their health.

DRIVERS

- **A sense of belonging at school and learners' perception of being supported, respected and treated fairly by teachers:** students who feel part of a caring learning community are more likely to be motivated to learn and achieve better academic performance and higher physical and emotional wellbeing levels.
- **A shared understanding of what forms a healthy lifestyle:** a healthy lifestyle is a deeply personal matter that cannot be imposed in a top-down manner. Having the opportunity to reflect collectively on physically and mentally healthy habits, learners can increase their repertoire of actions and find suitable ways of nurturing their wellbeing.
- **Evidence-based information** on how to promote health and prevent diseases: adopting a sustainable lifestyle requires a sequence of informed choices related to health, wellbeing and the safeguarding of healthy environments. To make those choices, learners need reliable information.
- **Outdoor experiential activities:** doing outdoor activities can contribute to improving learners' wellbeing during a school day, but it is also an engaging way to be aware of the link between them and their environment.

BARRIERS

- **School culture, values and policies** that do not prioritise the promotion of life skills.
- **Lack of teacher training, mentoring, and support:** educators need training to feel confident in promoting life skills. Lack of teacher training and mentoring to develop their own life skills is a significant obstacle to promoting wellbeing.

S1 Empathy

Understanding of another person's emotions, experiences and values, and the provision of appropriate responses.

SETTING THE SCENE

- Provide learners with **opportunities** to improve the awareness of their own emotions. Self-awareness is a prerequisite for understanding other people's emotions.
- Create the **habit of implementing a quick check-in** about how learners are feeling and allow them to do the same with others.
- Reflect with your learners on the **value of establishing empathetic and caring relationships** within the classroom. In other words, make empathy a common value in the classroom.
- **Model active listening.** Active listening is the active process of listening to understand. You can model it by:
 - 1. paying attention** to what the person is saying and avoiding distractions. Use your body language to show that you are listening (e.g. nod, smile, establish eye contact) and maintain an open posture;
 - 2. providing feedback**, ask open-ended questions and occasionally paraphrase and summarise what the other told to make sure you understand correctly;

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Reciprocal Learning Strategy](#)" to support learners to self-direct their learning and put in place peer coaching.

- 3. avoiding being judgemental** and remaining neutral. Allow the person to finish their point and do not interrupt. Focus on listening to understand instead of listening to react;
- **acknowledging and validating the emotions** the other person is expressing (*see Self-regulation - Setting the scene*). Remember that it is possible to validate another person's feelings and still not agree with their strategies to manage them. Take the opportunity to invite learners to reflect on constructive approaches to managing their emotions.

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Create opportunities for students to **engage with people holding different cultural and socio-economic backgrounds**. Arrange educational visits to companies, local associations or organisations. Invite students to design interview scripts to get to know how different people work, think or feel. Having those first-hand experiences will help learners challenge stereotypes and therefore be more empathetic.
- Provide opportunities for learners' interaction in the class by **creating small and diversified groups in terms** of ethnicity, gender, socio-cultural background, and also learning styles or learning interests.

- **Build relationships in the class.** Community building is a crucial part of fostering social competences. Getting a chance to express themselves and know each other better creates a ground for cognitive empathy. Among possible activities allowing learners to relate more to each other are:
 - peer-to-peer interviews;
 - sharing personal objects or stories about them;
 - two facts and a lie when peers have to guess one wrong fact out of three statements about each learner.
 - Guess who? When each student shares a fact about themselves anonymously, and everyone has to guess whose fact it is.
- **Raise awareness about stereotypes** whether they come from the teaching material or from the learners. If you lack time to openly discuss and question stereotypes, simply identifying them can help shift learners' perspectives.
- Activities **such as role-playing around social or moral dilemmas** are often helpful, as they are engaging ways to invite learners to step into somebody else's shoes and "act out" conflicts or gain a more nuanced perspective on a personal, social or historical issue.

Check the Teaching Strategy "Role Playing" to support learners to take the perspective of others.

- Empathy is a multidimensional construct. It includes being aware of others' emotions, understanding them and caring for others. Typically, it is easier to feel empathy for people in our in-group (those who we perceive as "us") than for people in the out-group (those who we perceive as "them" or "the others"). This can lead to empathetic failure, prejudice and conflict. Train learners to be aware of their feelings and thoughts, to reflect on and **be mindful of how social belonging may alter their capacity to empathise** and deploy prosocial behaviours.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- The development of empathy is a gradual process. Yet, it can be observed and documented. Invite learners to **keep a written record of their reflections and observations**. Check the quality of learners' observations and reflections for formative assessment. For example, after being confronted with moral dilemmas, the records of learners' reflections will allow both the educator and the learner to appreciate the changes over time.
- At the end of the school year, you can share with each learner a record of their previous reflections to foster their capacity to note their **evolution over time**.

GOING DIGITAL

- While having classes online, encourage your learners to **keep their cameras on**, for at least a portion of the lesson. Being able to see others' facial expressions and body language facilitates active listening and empathy. Configure the screen to see as many participants as possible (e.g. mosaic or tile view).
- Design activities that require learners' active participation by creating **opportunities to work in small groups or pairs**. This will help face the barriers to establishing a genuine connection online.
- To develop empathy and openness to diversity, opportunities should be offered to **establish personal contact with people perceived as an alien** (e.g. because of their nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, etc.). You can leverage opportunities to know, connect, collaborate and network with people all over the world thanks to the internet. For example, *eTwinning*⁵ provides a dedicated platform that allows European teachers and students to collaborate, learn about cultural differences, develop projects, and build a vibrant and international learning community.

5. [eTwinning - Homepage](#)

DRIVERS

- Train the ability to read non-verbal cues.** Non-verbal communication is an important vehicle for people to express emotions. Therefore, the development of empathy implies paying attention to these cues. Non-verbal cues include gestures like smiling, nodding, leaning back on the chair, tapping fingers, tone of voice and facial expressions.
- Make room for expression of emotions and opinions.** Help learners recognise and appropriately label their feelings in the course of reflection. This is a necessary step for active resonance and recognition of other people's sentiments. Stronger self-regulation competence and higher self-awareness are solid foundations for empathy development.
- Acknowledge and celebrate learners' diversity.** Plan activities that foster prosocial behaviours by focusing on learners' diverse experiences and what those experiences have in common.
- Undertake role-playing.** Organising charades and role-play, reading and discussing fictional stories can provide opportunities to practice taking another's perspective. It increases the ability to take others' perspectives and imagine what they can feel, want or need, providing learners with experiences of otherness and contributing to the development of empathy.
- Foster a culture of respect in the classroom.** Responsiveness to other people's emotions is only possible in a safe, inclusive environment welcoming expression. Even though this cannot be achieved after one or two sessions, you can contribute to its development by modelling how to use constructive criticism and appreciate novelties. By expressing gratitude, willingness to support, and noticing the efforts of others, learners help each other feel welcome and appreciated for who they are.

BARRIERS

- Overly individualistic and competitive environment:** proactively taking the perspectives of each other might be challenging in an environment where successful performance is conditioned to individual achievement.
- Empathetic failure towards learners:** research shows that the degree of educator's empathy affects learners' performance since empathetic communication allows learners to develop more positive attitudes towards themselves and schooling.
- Tendency to empathetic failure of learners towards out-group members:** the empathetic response toward other people's experiences is not automatic and requires effort to understand and relate to. It is important to realise that empathy is malleable and, therefore, can increase with intentional effort. Additionally, it is relevant to be aware that we tend to be less empathetic towards people that we perceive as belonging to different social groups.
- Prevalence of individualised activities and methods of learning:** the lack of collaborative group work and collective learning experiences prevents learners from building a sense of community and limits their opportunities to develop prosocial behaviours.
- A value-loaded syllabus** favouring certain religious or ideology-driven values: building empathy requires respect for the diversity of experiences and identities.

S2 Communication

The use of relevant communication strategies, domain-specific codes and tools, depending on the context and the content.

SETTING THE SCENE

- **Watch and discuss videos** of conversations **paying attention to non-verbal and paralinguistic communication**. Provide an observation checklist to guide learners in paying attention to gestures; facial expression; eye contact; interpersonal distance; volume and rate of speech; tone of voice; use of silence. Invite learners to share their observations and discuss the meaning of each of the observed aspects.
- **Model** and reinforce **active listening**.
- Encourage learners to **ask clarifying and open questions** to better understand the speaker's message.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Think/Write/Pair/Share](#)" to support learners in engaging in meaningful dialogue with their peers.

- Co-create **rules for respectful communication** in the classroom. Some basic rules you can start with are:
 - *allow everyone to speak;*
 - *listen carefully;*
 - *don't interrupt or engage in parallel conversation while someone is speaking;*
 - *use the "I" statement to present your views;*
 - *build on others' comments, whether you agree or not;*
 - *criticise ideas, not individuals.*

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Show learners with your own example that tone of **voice, expressions and body language** can be powerful communication tools when communicating a message. Invite learners to make observations of your ways of expression.
- Facilitate **cross-team interaction** during which learners seek additional information, request help, and communicate their expectations to each other.
- Invite learners to create different presentations of the same topic, to **speak to different audiences** (e.g. children, peers, general public, etc.) for different purposes (e.g. to instruct, inform, persuade, entertain, etc.), or using diverse communication means (e.g. an oral presentation, a video log, a written presentation). Facilitate the reflection on the need to modulate the communication strategies to achieve different goals.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- Reach an agreement on a few age-appropriate criteria to assess the quality of a presentation. Invite learners to **video record** their presentations **and analyse the recording** to assess their own performance. Some initial criteria can include:

- **Organisation and structure:** The presentation articulates the introduction, main messages and conclusions harmonically.
 - **Content:** The key concepts of the topic are presented and relevant ideas and information support the argument.
 - **Quality of delivery:** The presenter respects the allotted time; the voice is clear; the pace is neither too fast nor slow; the presenter seeks to engage the audience.
- After group work, **ask learners to assess the communication within the team** using the following rubric: not yet, sometimes, usually, mostly, always. Some initial criteria can be:
 - *everyone has contributed in a meaningful way and more or less equally;*
 - *everyone listened carefully and respectfully to one another;*
 - *everyone tried to support their contributions with evidence;*

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Text to Text, Text to Self, Text to World](#)", to support learners in structuring their contributions by linking them to their experience, what is happening in the world, or what they have read.

- *everyone used the Accountable talk stems;*

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Accountable talk](#)" to support learners to discuss and justify their ideas, contesting or endorsing each other's opinions respectfully and based on accountable evidence.

- *everyone has respected the turn-taking avoiding interrupting others;*

GOING DIGITAL

- **Communication online** differs from regular offline communication not only from a technological perspective but also substantively. It does not involve body language and

is based primarily on verbal expression, allows anonymous interaction and can involve an unlimited number of participants. Introduce **netiquette guidelines** to learners for respectful online communication.

Possible guidelines for netiquette:

- *Be scholarly:* use appropriate language, grammar and spelling. Credit the ideas.
- *Be respectful:* recognise the diversity of experiences and plurality of opinions. Avoid hostile interactions.
- *Be polite:* mind your written tone. Avoid sarcasm and rudeness.

- **eTwinning** is a secure platform for teachers and students to work together on international collaborative projects and to exchange with colleagues and peers from different countries. eTwinning has developed a specific netiquette⁶ for this purpose.
- Reflect with learners on making **safe, responsible and ethical use of social media and protecting their personal information**. Systematise the collective reflections through an agreed-upon and limited set of norms for online communication to which the whole classroom agrees to commit.
- Encourage learners to take additional responsibility for the quality of their communication by **producing digital content and publicly sharing it**.
- Give learners the opportunity to record **short videos**, create **infographics, wikis**, blogs or **online mind-maps** to share their ideas, or present their assignments.

⁶ [eTwinning Code of Conduct](#)

DRIVERS

- **Non-verbal communication:** invite learners, when engaged in a conversation, to be aware and pay attention not only to the words but also to participants' body language, including facial expressions, gestures, posture and proxemics (use of space).
- **Alternation of communication modes:** give learners the opportunity to explore different communication modes to express the same messages (for example, using pantomime and then drawing the same message). This can be a fun and engaging way to explore how messages can be modulated.

BARRIERS

- **Conflicts within the class:** activities involving learners' interactions might be challenging in case of strong interpersonal conflicts among learners. Even though it is outside the teacher's capacity to propose solutions for all the tensions among learners, coming up with communication rules for the classroom might contribute to the creation of a space where constructive interaction is possible.
- **Language barrier:** in a diverse classroom where learners have different levels of language proficiency, the application of universal assessment criteria of the communication capacity of all learners might create imbalance and lead to exclusion of learners with language difficulties from both teacher and other learners.
- **Prevalence of individualised activities and methods of learning:** even though learners can train communication while doing individual assignments or interacting with the instructor, group work creates an authentic environment for adjusting communication registers.

S3

Collaboration

Engagement in group activity and teamwork acknowledging and respecting others.

SETTING THE SCENE

- **Create challenging learning activities:** the complexity of the task should require the active participation of the whole group to meet the requirements on time.
- **Make it difficult for free riding:** one of the principal learners' concerns about collaboration is dealing with classmates who do not contribute equally to the group work, benefiting from the collective effort. To avoid free riding you may:
 - create small **groups of up to five people**. It will make non-participation more difficult;
 - ensure **both individual and collective accountability** by assessing learners both individually and as a group;
 - ask learners to self-assess their effort and participation, and to assess anonymously those displayed by each of their group classmates. **Triangulate peer assessment** with your assessment **for final grading**.
- Guide collaborative learning experiences **scaffolding learners** on organising their collaboration efforts, providing structured guidance on how to solve the different tasks, manage time, and assign different roles within the group. As the learners become more used to collaborating, you can progressively limit your

scaffolding, giving them increasing autonomy to organise their work.

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Use **different formats for group division:** by the level of learners' knowledge, shared interests, by learners' own choice, or randomly. It will allow learners to know their classmates better and learn how to interact with diverse people.
- Design collaborative learning activities based on:
 - **Positive interdependence:** the success of each group member is linked to the success of the group itself, and members feel they have a common goal. To foster positive interdependence, you can promote:
 - **Positive reward interdependence:** besides individual scores in an exam, learners receive a number of points if all the group members score above a specific grade;
 - **Positive resource interdependence:** each learner receives only a part of the information or resources needed for the task. Learners must put in common their knowledge to allow the group to reach the shared goal;

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Jigsaw](#)" to support learners to engage in collaboration and peer learning.

- **Positive role interdependence:** each learner has a complementary and interconnected academic role and responsibility (e.g. Prioritiser, Devil's Advocate, Facilitator). All roles are needed to achieve the common goal. Members of a team should rotate their roles.
- **Individual accountability:** each member is individually accountable for their share of the group work. Moreover, each learner is responsible for their own performance, which can be measured through quizzes and exams. To foster individual accountability, you can ask each group member to rate their classmates' contributions anonymously and include the average rating from all of a learner's group classmates as a part of their grade.
- **Simultaneous interaction:** the active participation of learners in constructing their learning is key to fostering motivation and significant learning. Cooperative learning activities are designed to engage as many students as possible simultaneously.
- Spend extra time **clarifying tasks, academic roles and responsibilities within a team.** The distribution of roles may ensure smoother activity management in the classroom and among the team members. Make sure that students shift roles in the course of group activities.
- Possible **academic roles** for team members involved in work on a joint project might include:
 - *Leader:* keeps the agenda ensuring everyone understands the task;
 - *Facilitator:* ensures everyone's participation proposes suggestions for resolving disputes and acts as a cheerleader;
 - *Notetaker:* takes notes, summarises and keeps track of time.
 - *Devil's advocate:* looks for holes in the group process, keeps the mind open for problems or opposing ideas, and ensures quality control.
- **Address the conflicts,** why they happen and why they should not be avoided. The management of tensions in the class can help improve the classroom's psychological climate. Although the teacher cannot resolve interpersonal conflicts among learners, they can organise constructive spaces of interaction accepted by all learners.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- Invite learners to come up with **criteria for collaboration assessment** and then grade them using these criteria.
- **Assess individual learning and performance.** Despite multiple incentives to collaborate that the teacher might provide learners with, the efforts involved from different team members can still be unequal. A way to avoid a decrease in motivation and strengthen individual responsibility for results is to give merit to individual contributions and team performance.
- Include the **quality of teamwork as a component of a grade** to avoid free-riding and solo work. The quality of teamwork can be assessed using the following rubric: not yet, sometimes, usually, mostly, always. Some initial criteria can be:
 - *everyone has participated in a meaningful way and more or less equally;*
 - *everyone listened carefully and respectfully to one another;*
 - *everyone had precise tasks and responsibilities for which has been accountable;*
 - *the team met the deadlines;*
 - *there was a team effort.*

GOING DIGITAL

- Use online platforms that allow splitting learners into **breakout rooms** for group work.
- Use **shared online boards** to brainstorm together and encourage anonymous contributions of shy or less outspoken learners.
- **Explore different tools** to support online collaboration with your learners and choose the one that suits your needs better.
- **Agree on a set of rules for online collaborative work** (e.g. respecting turns, use of video system).

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Create an agreement on the rules for the online learning spaces](#)", to support learners in constructing common rules for online communication and collaboration.

DRIVERS

- **Adopt a shared vision of successful collaboration principles.** Formulating the rules according to which teamwork will be organised contributes both to the development of collaboration competence and the creation of an inclusive environment for learners who struggle to cooperate.
- **Recognise that conflicts are natural.** Bring an example of a conflict (it can be an imaginary one inspired by real events or an anonymised version of an actual conflict) and illustrate the main takeaways for all the sides of an interaction.
- **Create value for others.** Working on a project that benefits other people outside the classroom (e.g. for younger learners) can be a powerful driver for collaboration.

BARRIERS

- **Prevalence of individualised activities and methods of learning:** while learners can foster other social competences, such as empathy and communication in individual assignments, training collaboration is impossible outside the context of group work.
- **Free-riding, back benching:** unfair distribution of tasks in the team and lack of control mechanisms that would ensure equal involvement (inclusion of division of responsibilities as a separate step of an activity and assessment criteria) can be discouraging for learners. Moreover, the fear of free riders (learners who do not contribute to the task but enjoy the final results together with those who did the job) or backbenchers (learners who are officially part of the team but do not contribute to the group activity) can lead to learners' atomisation and disappointment in collaborative formats.
- **Resistance from introverted learners:** shy or introverted learners might want to avoid group activities requiring active engagement with others, especially if they have an option to do the project individually without their grades being affected by this choice. Prepare the tasks based on real-life problems that require interaction to help learners accept the collaborative format.



Growth Mindset

Belief in one's and others' potential to continuously learn and progress.

SETTING THE SCENE

- **Believe in your students' potential to continuously learn and progress and share your positive expectations.** Research shows that positive expectations influence performance positively, while negative expectations influence it negatively. This phenomenon is known as the Pygmalion effect. When teachers have high expectations of learners' performance they tend to pay more attention to their development, set higher expectations, and give extended feedback when learners fail, leading to increased self-esteem, self-efficacy and performance. Conversely, when they have low expectations of learners, they engage less in giving feedback and pay less attention to learners' activity, leading to impaired self-esteem, self-efficacy and performance.
- Create the habit of **praising and valuing the variety of learners' learning strategies, effort, perseverance, curiosity** and learning progress. In other words, praise the process instead of the results. Focus the attention on learners' motivation, effort and goal setting instead of on personal characteristics such as "intelligence". Explicitly promote the idea that intelligence, abilities and talents are malleable, can be trained and improved with work and persistence, and that effort is the path to mastery.

You can link it to a discussion appropriate to the age of students on neuroplasticity, i.e. our brain's capacity to modify and adapt their structure and improve their functions as a response to lifelong training.

- Build **trusting relationships** by demonstrating your knowledge and skill gaps and your **willingness to improve**. Being a role model demonstrating self-awareness and a willingness to learn can be a positive example for learners of how a growth mindset can be embraced.

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- **Set high expectations.** Level the difficulty of the assignment to learners' capacity. Tasks should be challenging instead of overwhelming or intimidating. It is advisable that you frequently check learners' level of understanding of a given topic so that you can calibrate the difficulty of the tasks accordingly. Consider adopting the stance of a **"warm demander"**, that is, a teacher who has and communicates high expectations about the capacity of each student to thrive academically and personally. A warm demander intentionally builds positive relationships with their students, learns about their interests and cultures, communicates expectations of success, and insists that students demonstrate self-discipline and hard work.

- **Take advantage of failures.** Making mistakes is unavoidable in a learning process. Make sure that learners know that failing, reflecting on mistakes and learning from them, are necessary steps on the pathway toward growth and improvement. A learning environment that allows errors encourages learners' active exploration and engagement. When identifying a mistake, you can explain the reasoning that led to the correct answer or ask a student who solved the task correctly to model the right process. Errors can indicate to the educator the concepts that need to be clarified and, therefore, can help focus on key aspects that need further explanations.
- **Invite learners to reflect on how to request feedback.** Effective feedback enables learners to improve their performance. Questions openly requesting tips for improving the assignments are more likely to originate effective feedback. Conversely, questions aimed at getting validation (e.g. is this ok?) are likely to generate ineffective feedback.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Reciprocal Learning Strategy](#)" to support learners to self-direct their learning and coach among themselves.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- **Use a Growth Mindset Scale**⁷ at the beginning of a course to glimpse learners' mindsets. Repeat the assessment at the end of the course and invite learners to reflect on if there has been any change. Invite learners to assess the following sentences using a 6-point scale (1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = mostly agree; 4 = mostly disagree; 5 = disagree; 6 = strongly disagree)⁸.
 1. *Naturally intelligent people don't need to try hard to succeed.*
 2. *Intelligence can change with hard work and perseverance.*
 3. *I feel bad about myself when I make a mistake and my confidence suffers.*
 4. *Mistakes are valuable learning opportunities.*
 5. *I feel nervous about taking on new challenges and trying new things. I prefer to avoid them.*
 6. *Only a few people are extremely talented and they are born with it.*
 7. *I often feel discouraged or angry when I receive negative feedback about my performance.*
 8. *Learning is a lifelong journey, and I enjoy learning new things.*
 9. *When I am not good at something at first, I keep practising. I celebrate my little progress.*
 10. *You have a certain amount of intelligence, and you can't really do much to change it.*

7. Adapted from: [Dweck, C. S. \(2006\). Mindset: The new psychology of success. New York: Random House Inc.](#)

8. The scale is intended to trigger reflection, comparing individual perceptions in two different moments of the course. For this reason, we don't provide a handout to interpret the results.

- Invite learners to keep learning diaries, or to construct a learning portfolio to encourage them to take increased ownership and responsibility for their learning process by reflecting on their own work and academic progress.
- People typically hold a mixed mindset, adopting a growth mindset in some areas of their lives and holding a fixed one in others. Invite learners to reflect and identify the spheres of their lives in which it is easier or harder to adopt a growth mindset. Also, on possible triggers of a fixed mindset (e.g. criticism, setbacks, or comparing ourselves to others). Awareness of the triggers that turn us toward a fixed mindset is the first step toward change.

GOING DIGITAL

- Encourage learners to use **digital learning diaries** (via shared pages, chats and blog platforms) for individual progress tracking.
- Invite learners to create **digital portfolios** to showcase achievements, set goals, and reflect on growth.
- Invite learners to reflect about the potential benefits and challenges when using digital technologies for their personal development.

DRIVERS

- **The power of “yet”:** encourage learners to reframe their thinking from “not being able to do something” to “not being able to do something yet”, which assumes that the learner is on their learning curve and can hone their skills with time and dedication.
- **Celebration of progress:** encourage learners to share their progress. Take time to recognise and celebrate different progress and achievements learners make.
- **Encouragement of curiosity:** provide learners with enough opportunities and resources to explore different ways of resolving tasks, looking for innovative solutions for different challenges and develop and extend their interests. Curiosity can support in making learning more effective.

BARRIERS

- **Learners’ low self-efficacy** causes a lack of motivation, pessimism and disengagement from the effort. Low self-efficacy limits curiosity and the motivation to get new knowledge and skills. To challenge it you can capitalise on students’ interests to boost intrinsic motivation; teach specific learning strategies to address particularly complex aspects of your syllabus; leverage peer tutoring to improve students’ attitudes toward learning; make your classroom a safe space for trying.
- **Priority of results over the process:** within a growth mindset, skills are understood as malleable abilities that can be enhanced through effort and commitment. Yet, developing a capacity requires effort and time. Therefore, prioritising grades over the exploration of learning strategies is a significant obstacle to growth mindset development.
- **Praising intelligence:** it is very important to encourage learners’ development and moving towards their goals, rather than having certain qualities, e.g. being smart. Moreover, it can discourage further effort of both groups of learners, those who consider themselves smart and do not feel like improving, and those who do not consider themselves smart and feel unprivileged.



Critical Thinking

Assessment of information and arguments to support reasoned conclusions and develop innovative solutions.

SETTING THE SCENE

- Invite learners to reflect on and be aware of the limitations and biases in their knowledge. For instance, the **confirmation bias**, the tendency to favour ideas that confirm our existing beliefs, only remembering details that support those beliefs and ignoring the information that challenges them; the **availability bias**, the tendency to judge the probability of an event based on how easily an example of those events comes to mind; or the **belief bias**, the tendency to evaluate the logical strength of an argument based on the believability of its conclusions.
- Model the lifelong pursuit of intellectual virtues. Learning critical thinking abilities is not enough to deploy critical thinking in daily lives. Instead, there is a need to develop the willingness to embrace intellectual virtues such as **fair-mindedness** (the capacity to treat all viewpoints with equality, without being influenced by personal feelings or selfish interest); **intellectual humility** (being conscious of the limits of one's knowledge, and of one's bias and prejudices, being ready to recognise one's errors); **intellectual courage** (the willingness to critically examine popular and unpopular ideas, beliefs and viewpoints to determine their reasonability, without reference to their popularity).
- Co-create with learners a set of “**rules for critical thinkers**” to foster a class culture that promotes intellectual virtues. After reaching an agreement, print the rules and display them, so they are always visible to learners. You can start with the following statements developed by the University of Leeds⁹:
 1. *I look for evidence before believing claims;*
 2. *I consider issues from different perspectives;*
 3. *I am willing to present my own arguments even when they challenge the views of others;*
 4. *I actively seek evidence that might counter what I already know;*
 5. *My opinions are influenced by evidence rather than just personal experience and emotion;*
 6. *If I am not sure about something, I will research to find out more;*
 7. *I know how to search for reliable information to develop my knowledge of a topic;*
 8. *I question what I see or hear on the news;*
 9. *I am willing to change my mind about something when presented with compelling evidence.*
- Provide an initial **list of credible online sources** that learners can refer to in order to cross-check online information. Invite learners to enlarge the list by adding their trusted online sources.

9. [Critical Thinking at University - Online Course \(futurelearn.com\)](https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/critical-thinking-at-university)

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Model the principles of **lateral reading**: A vertical approach to checking the reliability of online content will imply reading it thoroughly from top to bottom to look for mistakes or inconsistencies. On the other hand, lateral reading implies opening several browser tabs to look for additional information about the source's credibility, reputation, funding sources and biases. This way, the reader does not engage with the content of an unfamiliar website until they get further and more reliable information about the source.

Introduce further criteria to **evaluate the credibility of a source**. The credibility of sources can be assessed using the CRAAP test¹⁰, which proposes the following criteria:

- **Currency**: Timeliness of the information: When was the information published or posted?
 - Has the information been revised or updated?
- **Relevance**: Importance of the information for your needs.
 - Does the information relate to your topic or answer your question?
 - Have you looked at a variety of sources before determining this is the one you will use?
- **Authority**: Source of the information.
 - Who is the author/publisher/source/sponsor?
 - What are the author's credentials or organisational affiliations?
- **Accuracy**: Truthfulness and correctness of the information.
 - Is the information supported by evidence?
 - Can you verify any of the information in another source or from personal knowledge?

- **Purpose**: Reason why the information exists.
 - What is the purpose of the information? Is it to inform, teach, sell, entertain or persuade?
 - Are there political, ideological, cultural, religious, institutional or personal biases?

Another option to check the credibility of a source is using the SMART¹¹ check relying on the following criteria:

- **Source**: Who or what is the source?
 - **Motive**: Why do they say what they do?
 - **Authority**: Who wrote the story?
 - **Review**: Is there anything included that jumps out as potentially untrue?
 - **Two-Source Test**: How does it compare to another source?
- Invite learners to identify a topic of interest and build a **personal learning network** connecting through social media with people or organisations that are producing quality content on that topic. Invite learners to reflect on: do those accounts have something in common? How can you assess the quality of a post? Share the list of trusted accounts to expand learners' personal learning network.
 - Involve **social media** as a data source. Many learners use social media as one of the primary sources of getting news. Use social media sources for activities requiring data collection and analysis. Activities aiming at identifying biases can be an engaging way to practice critical thinking in a familiar environment. Invite learners not only to **express themselves** but also **to be accountable** for their judgements. Require learners to justify their position and be prepared to provide clarifications if necessary.

10. [The CRAAP Test](#)

11. [Module 5: Evaluating Sources - General Library Research Tutorial - Research Guides at Benedictine University Library](#)

- Involve real **stakeholders** (local entrepreneurs, activists, members of administration) or **experts** (researchers from the university, public experts, journalists with specialisation in specific topics) to **provide learners with access** to different sources of information. The key point of their participation is to invite learners to reflect on the importance of getting information from primary sources.

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- Invite learners to **observe and analyse different facts** (situations in class/school/district context, breaking news, advertisement topic, etc.) and to look for **patterns and connections** with academic topics. It is important to be able to use different sources of information and to identify relevant information from relevant sources, discarding irrelevant information, in order to eventually generate an elaborated judgement, based on proper evidence.
- Reflect with the learners about the possible **consequences** that a **lack of critical thinking** might cause at the individual and social levels.
- Ask learners to develop convincing arguments to address a given issue and then **prepare counter arguments** for them. Invite learners to reflect on how it felt to change the side of argumentation, whether it was easy for them, and what was

the most challenging aspect of this activity. Reflecting on the justification of the opposite sides of an argument can increase the awareness of biases in one's knowledge. Confirmation bias, availability bias, or belief bias can be identified during such a reflection.

- Ask learners to **self-assess their critical thinking skills** at the beginning of a course to glimpse learners' skills. Repeat the assessment at the end of the course and invite learners to reflect on if there has been any change. You can adapt the statements from the "Rules for critical thinkers" presented in the "Setting the scene" section. Ask learners to choose between three possible responses: Always, Sometimes, Never.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Fishbowl](#)" to support learners in honing their critical thinking and their capacity to take the perspective of others.

GOING DIGITAL

- Invite learners to use **diverse** online sources and justify their **reliability** following CRAAP or SMART tests to make critical thinking a habit.
- Keep in-class discussions going after the session via **forums** or **chats**.
- Encourage the learners to use their critical thinking skills to **choose appropriate and relevant online resources** for their work.

DRIVERS

-  **A classroom culture that actively promotes intellectual virtues:** to adopt a critical stance, learners must be committed to developing and deploying intellectual virtues. A classroom culture that emphasises the intellectual virtues' relevance and explicitly teaches them will help learners become critical thinkers and active citizens.
-  **Promotion of reflexivity to increase the awareness of unconscious bias:** discuss with learners how to increase the awareness of one's own and others' biases, overcome denial and implement strategies to mitigate the human tendency to take mental shortcuts that might lead to stereotyping, making poor decisions or embracing prejudices.
-  **Explicit teaching to debate:** research shows that having to prepare and actively participate in an academic debate helps develop the capacity of thinking critically. In the preparation for a debate, learners need to go deeper into a particular topic, weigh different options, clarify ideas, construct their arguments, and question the evidence examining the quality and the relevance of the information. During the debate, learners are exposed to multiple perspectives, need to counterargument in a polite and constructive way, and increase their awareness of the complexity of the topic.
-  **Variety of information sources and content used in the classroom:** keep the learners intellectually challenged by combining information from different sources (for example, combining a meeting with an expert with a pre-assigned individual search or bringing two pieces of propaganda representing different sides of a conflict) to support their development of intellectual integrity.

BARRIERS

-  **Incompatibility of learning pace:** awareness of potential biases and reliability check requires additional time for learners to grow the suspicion and do the fact-checking. In case the course follows a high pace, there might be no room for making sense of knowledge and critically assessing it.
-  **Value-loaded syllabus:** if the course programme is not valued as neutral and contains certain political or ideological orientations that cannot be a subject of revision, it can become a severe obstacle to developing critical thinking.
-  **Overloading with information:** there needs to be room between (or in the process of) learning activities to compare and critically assess information, test its dependability, and identify biases. Critical thinking might be compromised if the information stream is too dense and there is no time to process the information.

L3

Managing learning

The planning, organising, monitoring and reviewing of one's own learning.

SETTING THE SCENE

- Share the goals and expectations or **learning objectives** of each lesson (or cluster of lessons). Make sure that learning objectives are clear and measurable, and address both what learners should be able to do, and what they should know and understand. Consistently invite students to self-reflect on whether they achieved the learning objective. If they didn't meet the learning goals yet, you might scaffold them in identifying the best learning strategies to reach that specific goal.
- When asking learners to complete a task, show them examples of a similar kind of well-executed or poorly executed job. Share the **criteria for the assessment**, explain its rationale and signal the aspects you are paying attention to. It will help learners understand the task and adopt a strategic approach to solve it.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Anonymous peer assessment](#)" to support learners to develop strategic knowledge about a given assignment, better understand the criteria for the evaluation, and hone critical thinking.

- Adopt the routine of **implementing quick check-ins** asking learners to assess their level of understanding of a topic, their level of interest, or their readiness to start a new topic. Frequently implementing these quick check-ins may support students' engagement and help educators understand if the learners are keeping the lesson's pace.

Check the Teaching Strategy "[Thumbs up, thumbs down](#)" to support learners in identifying and expressing their energy level or understanding of a topic.

- Invite learners to **get familiar with the syllabus**, list of topics, expected learning outcomes and the calendar. Invite them to brainstorm on the possible activities that might be interesting, engaging, or useful in their opinion. You might choose the best ideas and include them in your teaching planning.

3, 2, 1... ACTION

- Explicitly **model your thought process** to acquire new knowledge, and solve problems or tasks. It implies sharing and modelling self-monitoring processes, giving explicit justifications for your chosen strategy, and explaining why a particular approach is helpful to solve a specific task.

- **Model how to ask oneself metacognitive questions** while approaching a task, and instruct learners to ask themselves those questions for planning, monitoring and assessing their learning and provide enough time to implement this strategy. An initial set of questions might be:
 - **Before starting an assignment:** Which is the goal of this activity? What do I want to achieve? What is the best way to tackle the assignment? What should I do first? Is this similar to a task that I completed previously?
 - **During the assignment:** How does this connect to what I already know? Is the strategy I am applying working to complete the task? Am I meeting my goals? Who can I ask for help?
 - **After the assignment:** What worked well? What could I have done better? Can I apply this strategy to other tasks? Can I explain what I have learned? What have I learned about my strengths and areas which need improvement?
- Check the Teaching Strategy “[Give one, Get one, Move on](#)”, to support learners in reflecting on their learning process.*
- **Promote engagement.** Self-direction of learning is easier if learners are intrinsically motivated to learn. Provide learners with increasing degrees of autonomy giving them a say and the possibility to choose among different possible ways of showing their progress (e.g. allowing them to choose the topic of a task, how to present an assignment, or the classmates they want to work with).

PROMOTING LEARNING FROM EXPERIENCE

- **Formative assessment** is also known as the assessment for learning (as opposed to the assessment of learning, implemented through summative assessment). Through formative assessment, both the educator and the learners can become experts in detecting the indicators of learning during the process, being able to re-adjust the process rather than limiting themselves to knowing the results at its end. The feedback in the formative assessment should focus on the learner’s progress towards the learning goal and on which activities or strategies they should implement to improve their progress toward the goal.
- Encourage learners to **think critically** about their work through **self-assessment** based on rubrics. Rubrics can be co-created with learners before the assignment or developed by the teacher and explained before the implementation of the task. Rubrics are extremely useful tools that allow learners to gain a clearer understanding of what they are expected to learn and how they are expected to show it.
- Involve learners in the **development of assessment criteria**. It will help to improve their understanding of expectations and strengthen their accountability.

- Invite learners to use **diaries of meta-learning** to observe their learning strategies. Meta in meta-learning refers to the process of understanding how exactly cognition is happening and what is one's knowledge state. Such diaries also help to focus on the objectives of activities.
- Let learners **choose the format of their assignments**. This can work as an invitation to reflect on one's preferences, thus increasing self-awareness and establishing relevant goals defined by the format. For example, suppose learners decide to submit a video to present their project work. In that case, they have to prepare a scenario, organise a time to record and edit the video, select technological tools and software, make decisions on the delivery of information, and see how the footage meets presentation assessment criteria. All of these steps allow monitoring of the learning process and work on self-efficacy.

GOING DIGITAL

- Encourage learners to use **learning diaries** (via shared pages, chats, or blog platforms) for progress tracking. The following content might be included in such a diary:
 - short-term (e.g. start preparing for the exam on Tuesday) and long-term (e.g. improve presentation skills) goals, updates for which are written down regularly;
 - to-do lists or checklists;
 - feedback received for different assignments, including positive and negative reactions;
 - grades and necessary efforts to improve them (in case of low grades);
 - timetable with classes and extracurricular activities, weekly and/or monthly planning.
- Invite learners to start their **digital portfolios** to showcase achievements, set goals, and reflect on growth.
- Invite learners to **explore** available **platforms** for project-based assignments.

DRIVERS

- Clear articulation of learning goals and learning outcomes:** to monitor a learning activity and formulate an individual strategy, learners need to have a clear vision of what they are doing and for what purpose.
- Flipped classroom:** this method implies that learners get familiar with the key learning materials at home, and during the session, they engage in a debate or other types of active learning. Getting involved in substantive preparation happening at their own pace allows learners to explore their interests, processes and preferred learning strategies.

BARRIERS

- Lack of variety of teaching approaches:** lessons in which learners mainly have a passive stance do not create enough room for curiosity and active exploration and may demotivate learners.
- Rigidity of syllabus:** to manage their learning, students should be actively involved in their learning process by defining their goals and strategies to achieve them. Even though each course has its learning outcomes and programme requirements, a certain level of syllabus flexibility is required to give room for different strategies that learners might choose.
- Overloading with information:** the awareness of oneself as a learner with specific interests requires access to diverse sources of information, formats of activities and forms of assessment. However, overloaded with too much information, learners redirect their efforts from exploring learning needs and processes to proceeding with all the new information. Even though this might be beneficial for gaining new knowledge, it weakens individual learning management.
- Lack of learning motivation and negative attitudes towards school:** individuals' belief in their self-efficacy as learners affects how they face challenges and the effort and interest that they mobilise in learning. Subsequently, a lack of confidence in one's own capacity to achieve positive results might be a challenge in managing one's learning. This obstacle should be addressed.



4. Teaching strategies to foster *LifeComp* competences



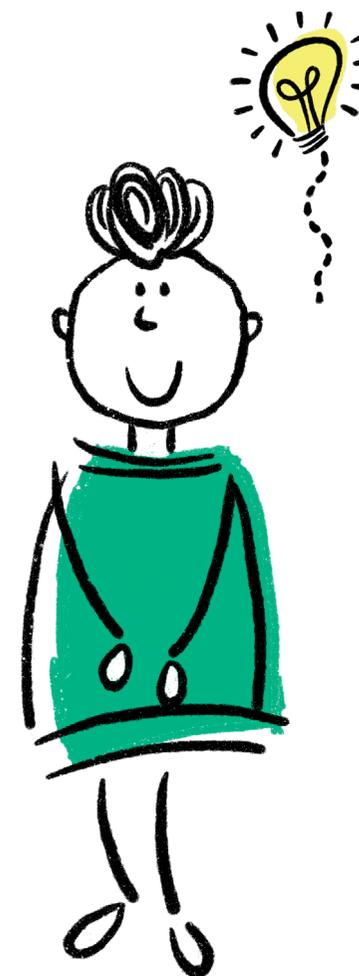
This section presents **16 research-based and learner-centred teaching strategies** to foster the Personal, Social and Learning to Learn Key Competence (*LifeComp* competences).

Teachers and educators have tested these teaching strategies **to check** their functionality and **fine-tuning**.

They provide standardised and **step-by-step instructions for implementation** in the classroom, outside the school or online. Each strategy is mapped with an explanation to the particular life skills that it is intended to develop, as well as the group size, time needed, learning environment and broad target age group.

The teaching strategies **cover all *LifeComp* competences** and target learners from different educational levels: **from Primary to Adult education**.

They are designed to allow learners to stage and hone their life skills while working on the regular curriculum. Education practitioners are invited to **customise** those strategies **to fit their educational purposes**.



Teaching strategies vs LifeComp competences

LIFECOMP PERSONAL AREA

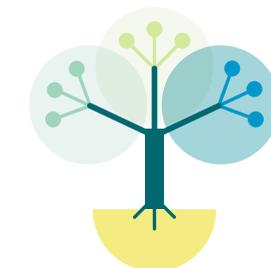
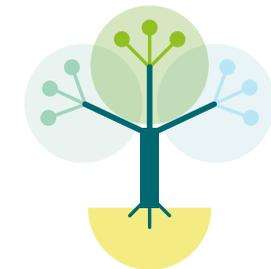
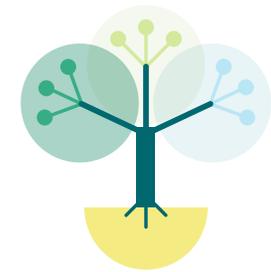
COMPETENCE	TEACHING STRATEGY
Self-regulation	1 2 6 12 13 14 15
Flexibility	3 5 7 12 13 15
Wellbeing	12 13 14 15

LIFECOMP SOCIAL AREA

COMPETENCE	TEACHING STRATEGY
Empathy	5 6 7 8 11 16
Communication	1 3 4 5 7 8 10 11 12 16
Collaboration	1 3 7 8 10

LIFECOMP LEARNING TO LEARN AREA

COMPETENCE	TEACHING STRATEGY
Growth mindset	5 8 9 10
Critical thinking	3 7 9 10 11 16
Managing learning	2 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Attention signal

To obtain learners' attention while achieving silence in the classroom after an activity that requested peers interaction.

1

OVERVIEW

The educator reaches a consensus with learners on a shared signal to quickly bring the group to silence and focus the attention on the educator.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator explains to learners that there will be moments in which they need that everybody stops speaking and pays attention during the lesson. The educator also explains that achieving a smooth transition among activities will benefit the group climate.

The educator explains that learners will need to do two actions when they raise their hand: 1. To raise their hand too; 2. To bring the conversation to an end.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

1. The educator raises their hand;
2. Wait for everybody to raise their hand and be quiet before giving new instructions.

TIPS:

It is advisable that the educator:

- is consistent in waiting that the whole group is in complete silence before going on with the instructions;
- avoids re-asserting their expectations or asking specific learners to be quiet.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

- P1 Self-regulation
- P2 Flexibility
- P3 Wellbeing

Social

- S1 Empathy
- S2 Communication
- S3 Collaboration

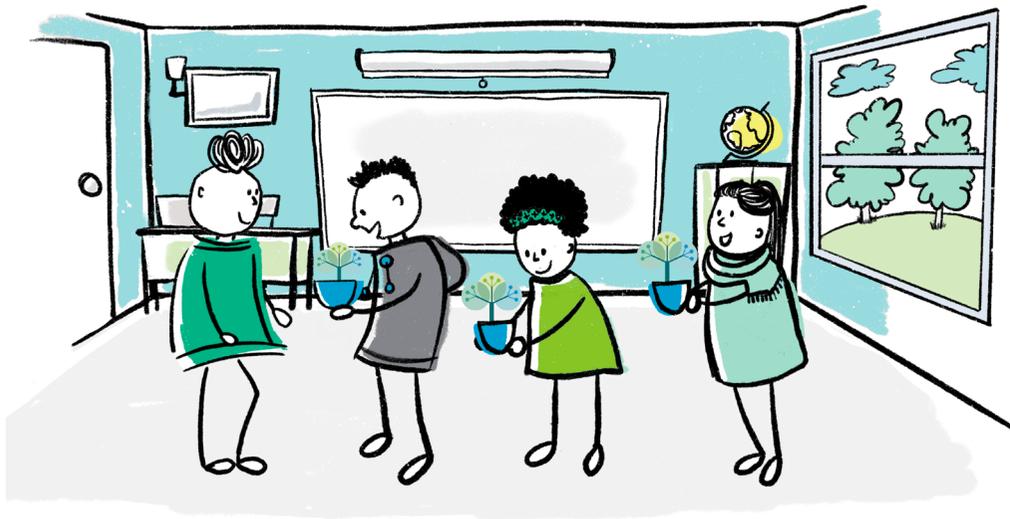
Learning to learn

- L1 Growth mindset
- L2 Critical thinking
- L3 Managing learning



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	



LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

The educator may ask learners how they felt about the exercise and which competences they think they are putting in place while responding to the attention signal. E.g.:

- Self-regulation (since they regulate their behaviour and stop talking)
- Communication (since they conclude their conversations)
- Collaboration (contributing to the common good of the group through being quiet)

LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P1 Self-regulation, since participants are requested to be aware of, and regulate their behaviours, stop talking and shift their attention toward the educator when requested to.

S2 Communication, since the learners are invited to:

- adopt a specific communication strategy and learn to react appropriately to a communication signal;
- understand and manage the interactions and conversations following the rules set in that specific setting.

S3 Collaboration, since participants are invited to regulate their behaviours to achieve the common good of the group.

Thumbs up, thumbs down

This activity invites the learners to quickly assess and show their level of understanding of a topic, wellbeing, or preparation to tackle an activity. Depending on the statement to be assessed, it can focus more on Self-regulation or Managing learning.

2

OVERVIEW

Learners are asked to reflect on a given statement and express their understanding/ agreement/energy level by displaying different thumb positions (thumbs up, down, or horizontal). This activity provides a quick way to implement formative assessment and allows educators to check for understanding and provide learners with feedback.

RESOURCES

List of statements you want the learner to reflect on.

- Examples (Focus on Managing learning): *I feel ready to start a new topic; I have understood the subject that has been explained; I am ready to start the group work; I am interested in the topic that we are working on;* etc.
- Examples (Focus on Self-regulation): *I feel energetic; I feel relaxed; I feel anxious; I feel confident;* etc.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator introduces the activity and explains to the learners the meaning of different thumb positions:

- **Thumb up:** I feel energetic, charged, optimistic, confident, I agree, I understand, I am ready, etc.
- **Thumb down:** I feel tired, bored, pessimistic, unconfident, I disagree, I didn't understand, I am not ready, etc.
- **Thumb horizontal:** I feel so-so, neither agree nor disagree.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator says the statement, then, on a count of three, asks everybody to show their level of energy or comprehension by showing their thumbs. They can also take part in the exercise.

TIPS FOR ONLINE SETTINGS:

The educator says the statement and asks learners to answer with an emoji in the chatbox (thumbs up or down, happy or sad faces, etc.) or launch online polls to determine whether they are ready to move on. Pausing frequently during the online lesson to implement these quick check-ins may help engage students and help educators understand if the learners are keeping the lesson's pace.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
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TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education
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2

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

The educator and the learners can quickly understand the level of energy/ understanding of the group.

Further considerations can be prompted to reflect on why we feel the way we feel and how to modify it if needed.

LIFECOMP FOCUS

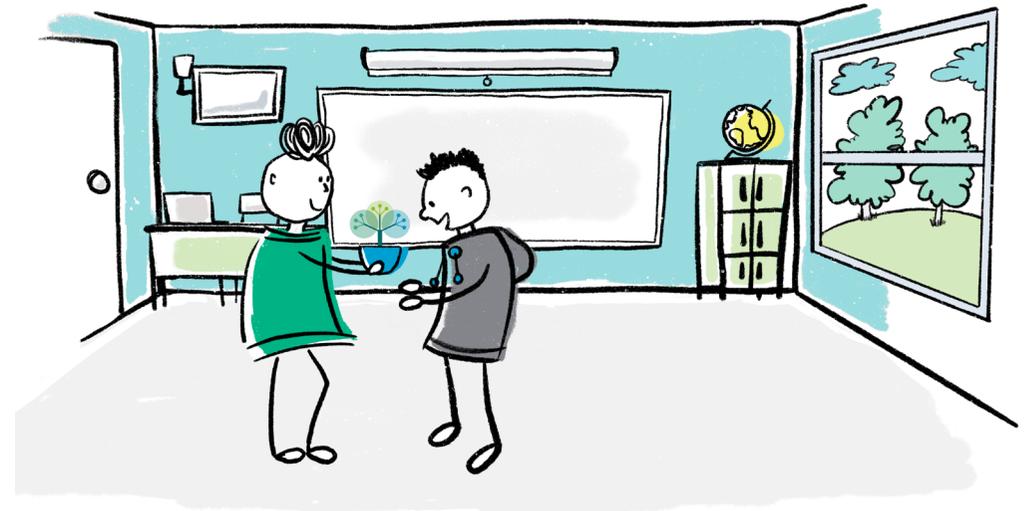
This activity can help foster:

P1 Self-regulation, since learners are invited to:

- improve their self-awareness, adopting a reflective attitude to gain a realistic insight into how they are feeling;
- express how they are feeling in a specific moment in time, labelling their emotions and expressing their thoughts.

L3 Managing learning, since learners are invited to:

- improve their capacity of thinking about their own thinking;
- monitor their comprehension of a topic, of their learning interests, needs and outcomes while executing the learning task;
- assess their learning outcomes and identify possible obstacles in the learning process.



Novel ideas

This activity promotes the generation and acceptance of novel and unconventional ideas in a small group.

3

OVERVIEW

The educator chooses a curricular topic and one or more images to share with learners. The educator invites learners to establish relationships between the pictures and the selected curricular topic. Participants are invited to brainstorm individually, share their ideas in small working groups and choose one idea to present at the plenary.

RESOURCES

One or more evocative images.

The educator can provide the same image to the different working groups or choose a picture for each group.

The images can be projected on a screen, or a printed copy can be shared with each group.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. divides the learners into groups of four to five people;
2. projects the image(s) or distributes the pictures to each group.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

- P1 Self-regulation
- P2 Flexibility
- P3 Wellbeing

Social

- S1 Empathy
- S2 Communication
- S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

- L1 Growth mindset
- L2 Critical thinking
- L3 Managing learning

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator explains that participants, when prompted, have to :

1. brainstorm individually and record as many ideas as possible in 4-5 minutes;
2. share their ideas within the small group, granting that each member of the group will have the opportunity to share their ideas;
3. avoid judging one idea until all ideas are expressed;
4. listen attentively to the others and not interrupt;
5. build on each other's ideas and reach a consensus on a sentence shared with the whole group.

The educator explains that the task is to complete the following sentence:
“(Given curricular topic) is like this image because...”.

Alternatively, the task could be:

“(Given curricular topic) is **not** like this image because...”.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

After brainstorming and reaching a consensus on which sentence to share, each group chooses a spokesperson to share aloud with the whole group.

After listening to the comparisons created by each group, the educator can lead the reflection on:

- the differences and similarities among proposals and how those proposals can contribute to a better understanding of the given topic;
- the process of generating ideas (Was it complicated? Was it easy? Why?);
- the process of sharing those ideas (How do they feel sharing it? And listening to it? Did learners manage to listen without interrupting?).

LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P2 Flexibility, since it invites learners to adopt an attitude of openness to novel ideas and peers' contributions.

S2 Communication, since it requires learners to:

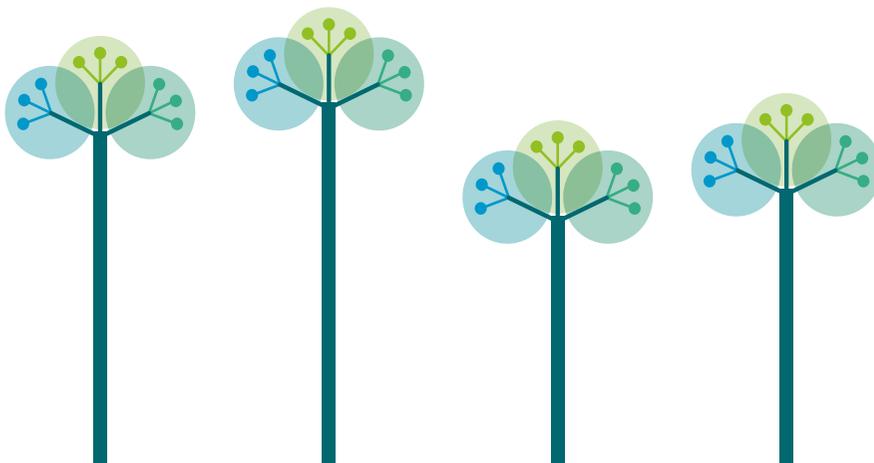
- express their ideas concisely;
- respect turn-taking;
- listen to others attentively.

S3 Collaboration, since it requires learners to:

- increase their awareness that others have different ideas and all ideas deserve to listen to carefully;
- elicit the expression of each group member;
- achieve a shared agreement.

L2 Critical thinking, since it requires learners to:

- develop creative association and novel ideas;
- synthesise and combine concepts and information from different sources.



Give one, Get one, Move on

This activity invites learners to reflect on their learning process and share with others what they have learned.

4

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

OVERVIEW

Participants are asked to write down 3-5 key learnings on a given topic and share them with a partner so that each participant gets one and gives one. The process is then repeated, forming new couples.

RESOURCES

3-5 cards or sticky notes for each participant.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

- gives participants up to five minutes to write down three to five key learning or prior knowledge about the topic at hand;
- each idea will be written on a different card or sticky note;
- explains that learners will need to mingle until the attention signal is launched;
- while learners are writing down their ideas or presenting them to their pairs, the educator circulates among the learners, trying to identify and correct possible inconsistencies or misconceptions.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

- Upon the attention signal, learners will gather in pairs, and each one will give the other one of their cards with one key learning or important idea so that each one gets one and gives one.
- Each one will explain their idea while the other listens in silence.
- After two or three minutes, the educator launches the attention signal again and, when the room is quiet, invites learners to form new pairs.
- The sharing process is repeated. Participants can now decide to share their own card or the one that they have received from the previous classmate.



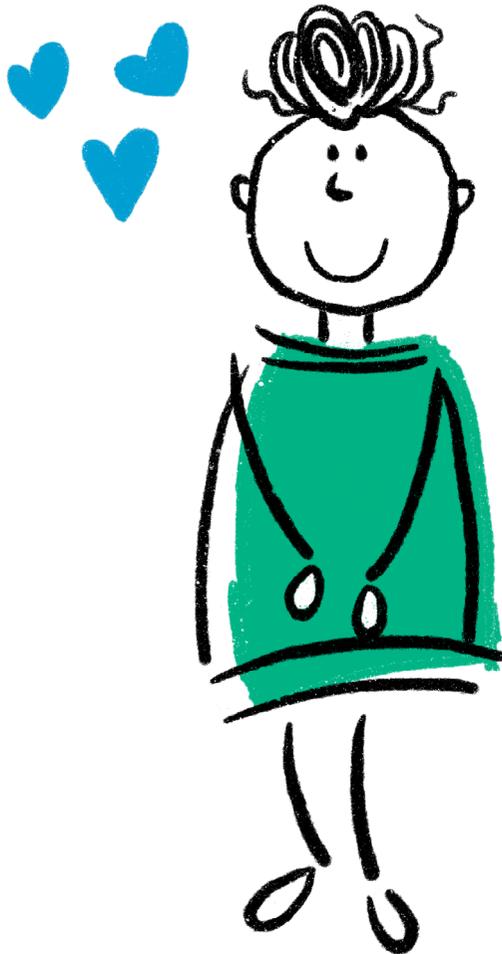
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT Classroom Online learning platform Outdoor Any

GROUP SIZE Individual task Pairs Small group (up to 5 people) Large groups The whole classroom

TIME 1-5 mins 5-15 mins 15-30 mins 30-60 mins 60+ mins

TARGET GROUP Primary school students Secondary school students VET school students Adult education

4



LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

The educator invites a few learners to share some meaningful insight or learning that was shared with them.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

S2 Communication, since learners are invited to:

- listen attentively to their pairs to learn from them;
- engage in conversation with clarity to explain their ideas;
- engage in conversation with reciprocity since all participants will need to talk and listen to the others, respecting turn-taking.

L3 Managing learning, since learners are invited to:

- reflect on their knowledge and level of comprehension of a topic;
- make an effort to explain clearly their ideas to their peers;
- develop an attitude of openness toward learning with and from others and a sense of belonging to a learning community.

Think/Write/Pair/Share

This activity allows learners to engage in meaningful dialogue with their peers, strengthening their communication competence, self-confidence and motivation to participate in the learning activities.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

- P1 Self-regulation
- P2 Flexibility
- P3 Wellbeing

Social

- S1 Empathy
- S2 Communication
- S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

- L1 Growth mindset
- L2 Critical thinking
- L3 Managing learning

5

OVERVIEW

The educator launches a question on a given academic topic. Learners will think individually (**think**), write down their answer (**write**), find a partner (**pair**) and discuss their response with the partner (**share**). This activity requires little preparation and is an easy way to get all the learners actively engaged with the topic. Moreover, the discussion in pairs provides a safe setting for learners to hone their communication competence.

RESOURCES

An open-ended question.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. explains the activity and its objectives: having all learners think about the academic topic and explain their ideas to peers; improve learners' comprehension of the subject as well as their communication skills;
2. assigns a pair to each learner so that the activity can start as soon as the question is launched;
3. identify a person "A" and a person "B" in each pair, and explains that upon a signal, they will have to switch roles to ensure equal participation (i.e. person "A" speaks" while person "B" listens and vice-versa).

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. launches the question;
2. gives students 5 minutes to individually think and write down an answer;
3. asks learners to pair and share their answers;
4. gives 10 minutes for the pairs to discuss. After the first 5 minutes, the educator can use the attention signal to have the pairs switch their roles;
5. while the pairs are discussing, will circulate to help learners focus on the task and listen to learners' discussion. Listening to the pairs' conversations will provide helpful insight into the level of comprehension of the topic and an opportunity for formative assessment.

Variation

The educator can ask each learner to explain their partner's ideas. This will contribute to strengthening the capacity to listen attentively. If the educator decides to adopt this variation, it is advisable to inform students in advance.

TIPS FOR ONLINE SETTINGS:

The educator may follow the same steps as in the face-to-face activity but will create as many breakout rooms as pairs in the group. Moreover, they could ask learners to record their answers on an online shared document. This allows:

- a record of the discussion, which keeps students accountable;
- learners to share their work with the whole group in writing or reading their answers, which should help to moderate the plenary discussion.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT Classroom Online learning platform Outdoor Any

GROUP SIZE Individual task Pairs Small group (up to 5 people) Large groups The whole classroom

TIME 1-5 mins 5-15 mins 15-30 mins 30-60 mins 60+ mins

TARGET GROUP Primary school students Secondary school students VET school students Adult education

5

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

After the discussion, the educator asks some volunteers to share their conversations with the whole group.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P2 Flexibility, since it invites learners:

- to adopt an attitude of openness to novel ideas and peers' contributions;
- to strengthen their readiness to review their opinion in the face of new evidence.

S1 Empathy, since participants have the opportunity to be aware of and to better understand other people's perspectives.

S2 Communication, since it requires learners to:

- express their ideas concisely;
- respect turn-taking;
- listen to others attentively.

L1 Growth mindset, since learners are invited to:

- learn from each other;
- develop an attitude of willingness and openness to learning from each interaction and experience;
- experience their and other's capacity to deepen their understanding of a given topic and learn through meaningful effort and dedication.

L3 Managing learning, since learners are invited to:

- think about their thinking and personal knowledge;
- gain a deeper understanding of a given topic, establishing relationships across domains;
- plan, implement and assess a learning strategy.

Text to Self, Text to Text, Text to World

This activity helps learners deepen their learning, fostering strategic reading and establishing the habit to connect the ideas they find in a text with their own experiences and beliefs, with events that are taking place or took place in the world or in another domain of knowledge, and with what they know from other texts.

6

OVERVIEW

The educator gives each learner a copy of a text and sample “connection statements” that can help them establish connections between what they read and their experience (Text to Self), what is happening in the world (Text to World), and what they read in other texts (Text to Text). Learners answer the questions individually and share their thoughts with their peers at the end of the activity.

RESOURCES

1. A copy of the selected text for each learner. This strategy works better if the text evokes universal themes that might resonate with the learners’ experience and previous knowledge.
2. Printed copies of the connection statements that will guide the reading process, for example:
 - **Text to Self-Connections:**
 - What I have read reminds me of the time when I...
 - I agree with/understand what I just read because in my own life...
 - I disagree with what I just read because in my own life...
 - I understand how the character feels because...
 - What I have read is similar to what happens in my life because...
 - What I have read is different from what happens in my life because...
 - **Text to Text Connections:**
 - What I have read reminds me of... (story/book, film/song, etc.) because...
 - The ideas in this text are similar to those in... because...
 - The ideas in this text are different from those in... because...

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

- P1 Self-regulation
- P2 Flexibility
- P3 Wellbeing

Social

- S1 Empathy
- S2 Communication
- S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

- L1 Growth mindset
- L2 Critical thinking
- L3 Managing learning

- **Text to World Connections:**

- What I have read makes me think about... (event from the past) because...
- What I have read makes me think about... (event currently happening in my community, country, worldwide) because...
- What I have read makes me question the future because...
- The events described in the text are similar to what happens in the real world/my community because...
- The events described in the text are different from what happens in the real world/my community because...

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. creates a list of personal connections related to the text for which they will model this strategy;
2. explains that learners are going to practice a comprehension strategy finding connections so that they can personally relate to a text they need to read;
3. gives a copy of both the text and the connection statements to each learner;
4. goes through the connection statements which will guide the reading;
5. models how to establish connections to the text by sharing their own connections;
6. models how to use deep connections (i.e. those that help in gaining a deeper understanding of the text) versus using surface connections; when modelling connections, the educator is aware that “Text to Self” connections are usually the easiest to establish, while “Text to the world” connections are more complex.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

- Learners have up to 20 minutes to read the text, and find and write down the connections.
- The assigned time can change depending on the length and complexity of the text and the number of connections that learners are invited to find.

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

Depending on the time allocated to the activity, the educator can:

- ask some volunteers to share their connections to the whole group;
- gather the learners in pairs or small groups so that they can compare and discuss their connections; having the opportunity to discuss them with peers typically helps learners in gaining a deeper understanding of the text;
- invite the small groups to visually represent the relationships between ideas, events, and their own answers, creating a mind map (manually or digitally)



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P1 Self-regulation, since it invites learners to deepen their awareness of personal emotions, thoughts, values and behaviour by establishing connections between their experience and the text they have read.

S1 Empathy, since it invites learners to deepen their awareness of other people's emotions, thoughts, values and behaviour by establishing connections between their experience and the intentions of the author, the characters of the text they have read, and/or the connections made by their peers.

L3 Managing learning, since it helps learners to:

- put in place and hone a learning strategy that will allow them to deepen their comprehension of a text;
- identify relationships among domains, gaining a better understanding of the subject.

Accountable talk

This activity allows learners to discuss and justify their ideas, contesting or endorsing each other's opinions respectfully and based on accountable evidence.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

7

OVERVIEW

The educator divides the classroom into groups of up to five people, chooses a topic and asks a question that provokes discussion but does not have a single, correct answer. The group has to answer the question to reach a common position. The learners need to use the “accountable stems” to discuss and reach an agreement. The activity ends with learners self-assessing the quality of their discussion.

RESOURCES

1. Talk Norms:

To foster participation it is fundamental that participants feel that the group members will not neglect, despise or undermine someone for expressing opinions, asking for clarification or proposing solutions. A feeling of trust and an attitude of respect within the group is critical for learning in work teams. A sense of confidence allows members to seek feedback and further information, discuss errors and innovate, thus facilitating appropriate actions to accomplish a task. It is, therefore, essential to set talk norms to facilitate communication in the classroom.

Some ground rules for discussion are:

- Listen carefully with respect and empathy:
 - No insults.
 - No put-downs.
 - No ridiculing.
 - No one ignored.
- Respect turn-taking and do not interrupt others' speech.
- Participate by using accountable talk stems.
- Support your answers with evidence (check the “Text to Text, Text to Self, Text to World” teaching strategy).
- Collaborate to find an answer as a team.

To facilitate adopting the talk norms, the educator should reach a consensus and co-create them with learners. Educators may adapt the “Create an agreement on the rules for the online learning spaces” teaching strategy to co-create the talk norms with their learners.

2. Printed copies of the accountable talk stem for each group:

The accountable talk stems should be available to all groups to foster their adoption by

all learners. Examples of accountable talk stems: *I respectfully agree/disagree with you because...*, *Could you please clarify what you said about...*, *The evidence from the text tells me...*

You can find further examples of accountable talk stems (*Opinion, Build on a Connection, Wonderings, Ask for clarification, Making Connections and Recalling Details*) in [Annexe 2](#).

3. Self-assessment rubric:

Example of self-assessment rubric (*not yet, sometimes, usually, mostly, always*):

- Everyone has participated in a meaningful way and more or less equally.
- Everyone listened carefully and respectfully to one another.
- Everyone tried to support their answers with evidence.
- Everyone used Accountable Talk Stem.
- There was a team effort.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. establishes the classroom talk norms to ensure that the discourse is respectful, equitable and focused on reasoning. It is more likely that learners adopt those norms if they had the opportunity to discuss and co-construct them;
2. uses accountable talk stems and models how to participate;
3. explains the group discussion rubric;
4. chooses a curricular topic to work on. Learners should already be familiarised with the topic before the discussion;
5. prepares higher-order open questions, i.e. those which cannot be answered just referring to the text. For example, questions that foster:
 - **Hypothetical thinking:** These questions follow general forms such as: *What if this happened? What if this were not true?*
 - **Reversal thinking:** For example: *What happens if I reverse the addends in a math problem? What caused this? How does it change if I go backwards?*
 - **Analogy:** These questions typically ask to compare unrelated situations, for example: *How is this like...?*
 - **Analysis of point of view:** This way of thinking requires students to consider and question other people's perspectives, beliefs, or opinions. For instance, a teacher may ask a student, *What else could account for this? or How many*

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

other ways could someone look at this?

- **Completion:** This form of thinking requires students to finish an incomplete project or situation that would typically be completed. For example, removing the end of a story and asking the students to create their own ending.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

- divides the classroom into groups of up to 5 people; To facilitate the discussion, participants should face one another;
- identifies a facilitator in each group to help the participants:
 - to focus on the collaborative task;
 - to use the accountable talk stems;
 - to share; the discussion time equitably;
- launches the prepared higher-order open question, stressing that there is no single correct answer;
- it gives enough time for students to engage with the content individually and draft their answers before the discussion starts (e.g. up to ten minutes);
- invites learners to engage in group discussion. Learners should share and discuss their individual answers and reach a consensus on a group answer to the question;
- monitors and tracks the participation in the groups. If needed, repeat the talk norms and the accountable talk stems;
- when the time for group talk is finished, can use the attention signal to bring the groups to silence and ask each group to share their answer with the whole classroom.

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

To conclude the activity, each group has to fill out their self-assessment rubric jointly. The educator can ask learners which strategies they could use to improve the quality of their discussion. This strategy can be used in combination with the fishbowl strategy to model the use of the “accountable talk stems”. The educator needs to remember that it may take time before learners can discuss their ideas in an accountable way. The more consistently the learners are invited to put into practice their skills, the more accountable their discussion will be.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P2 Flexibility, since it invites learners:

- to adopt an attitude of openness to novel ideas and peers’ contributions;
- to strengthen their readiness to review their opinion in the face of new evidence.

S1 Empathy, since participants have the opportunity to be aware of and to better understand other people’s perspectives.

S2 Communication, since it requires learners to:

- express their ideas concisely;
- respect turn-taking;
- listen to others attentively;
- learn the rules for academic discourse and engage in it;
- express agreement and disagreement politely.

S3 Collaboration, since learners are invited to:

- contribute to the common good of the group by finding a shared answer to the question;
- build respectful relationships with their classmates, negotiate disagreements and copying with conflicts;
- elicit the participation of all the members of the group and the expression of different points of view, granting everyone space and time to express their opinion.

L2 Critical Thinking, since learners are invited to:

- apply standards for thinking;
- justify their opinions referring to the text, their personal experience, or others’ ideas.

L3 Managing Learning, since learners are invited to:

- gain a deeper understanding of a given topic, establishing relationships across domains;
- plan, implement and assess a learning strategy.

Reciprocal learning strategy

This activity helps learners increase their capacity to self-direct their learning and improve their comprehension of a topic or procedure, coaching each other through resolving an exercise or problem.

8

OVERVIEW

Learners are divided into pairs. Both learners have a different set of questions. Moreover, learner A has the answers to the questions of learner B and vice-versa. While learner A is the player, learner B is the coach and helps their partner solve the problem. Learners then switch their roles so that A is the coach and B is the player.

RESOURCES

Printed copies of two sets of problems: one for “A” learners, one for “B” learners”.

On the bottom of the sheet for “A” learners, there are the correct answers to the problems for the “B” learners and vice-versa.

The problems must lead to a single correct answer and focus on a topic that learners already know to practice and apply what they have learned. This strategy is helpful to trigger both declarative learning and procedural learning.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. divides the group into pairs, taking care that the partners have a similar level of understanding of the topic;
2. seat learners side by side so that the coach can easily see what the player is doing. In this activity, the side by side arrangement is preferable to the face to face one;
3. explains that the learners in the couple, upon the attention signal, will switch their roles. For example, learner “A” starts as a player and has to carry out the exercises in their sheet, while learner “B” will start as a coach and help learner “A” accomplish the task.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

- P1 Self-regulation
- P2 Flexibility
- P3 Wellbeing

Social

- S1 Empathy
- S2 Communication
- S3 Collaboration

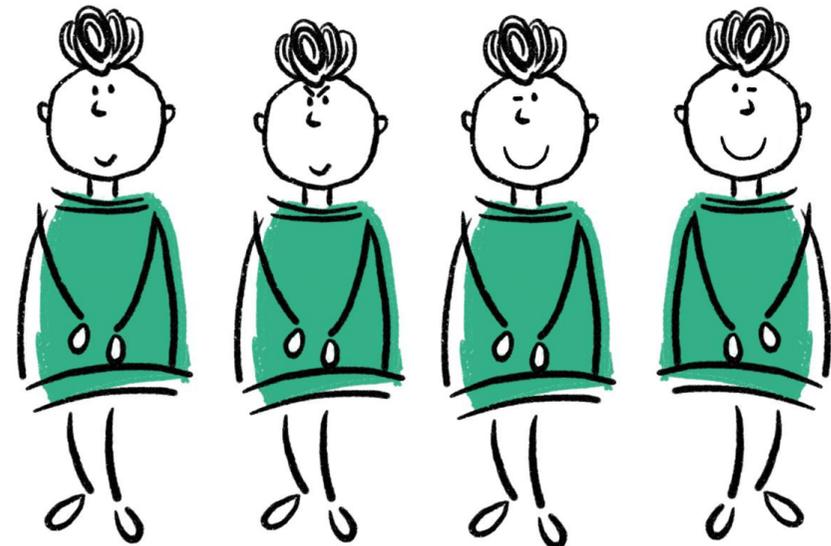
Learning to learn

- L1 Growth mindset
- L2 Critical thinking
- L3 Managing learning

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. sets up the balanced pairs of learners;
2. handles each learner a printed copy of the problem to solve (i.e. a set for learner A which contains the answers to the questions for learner B and a set for learner B which includes the answers to the questions for learner A);
3. instructs learners to fold their sheets so that learner B will not be able to see the answers to their own exercises while helping learner A and vice-versa;
4. instructs learners in the role of the coach to use the hints at the bottom of their sheet to help the player reach the correct answer;
5. stresses the importance of the coach not to “reveal” the correct answer to their players;
6. if the player is facing difficulties to solve the problem, **help the coach** so that they can give better advice and tips to the player.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

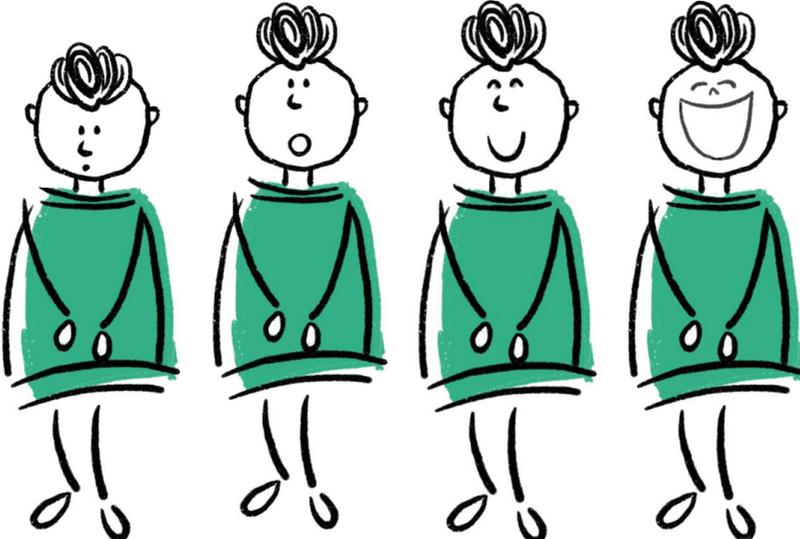
TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

TIPS:

- It is advisable to have a pair modelling the process (e.g. giving hints, reminding what was learned in the lesson, praising the other when finding a solution) until the whole group is familiar with this strategy.
- During the activity, the educator circulates among the couples helping them stay focused on the task and offering support to the coaches if the players need help.

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

When each learner has acted both as a player and as a coach, the educator will ask them to reflect on how successfully they acted in both roles and how they could improve for next time. The educator then asks some volunteers to share their reflections with the group.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

S1. Empathy, since learners, when acting as coaches, are invited to note the other person’s ways of thinking, and level of understanding, to offer the hints that are better suited to help the player;

S2 Communication, since it requires learners to:

- look for an effective way to communicate with their partner giving sensible hints to help them find the right solution;
- listen to others attentively;
- respect turn-taking.

S3 Collaboration, since learners are invited to:

- contribute to the achievement of a common goal (complete the exercise).
- assume different roles in the teamwork (i.e. the coach and the player);
- experience a fair share of tasks and responsibilities within the group.

L1 Growth mindset, since learners are invited to:

- experience how their partners and they themselves can improve and advance in the comprehension of a task with dedication;
- experience how relevant feedback from peers can help in achieving a task.

L3 Managing learning, since learners are invited to:

- reflect on the best strategy to fulfil a task;
- explain this strategy out loud so that they can detect incongruencies or partial comprehension of the topic;
- reflect on and assess the processes and outcomes of the learning activity.

Anonymous peer assessment

This activity aims to help learners develop strategic knowledge about a given assignment they will perform, better understand the criteria for the evaluation, and hone critical thinking. This activity also helps students to learn how to provide constructive feedback.

9

OVERVIEW

This activity is designed to be implemented in two sessions: in the *first session*, after the educator has introduced a given assignment, learners discuss it in small groups until they produce an agreed-upon list of up to four criteria for its evaluation. The whole classroom then discusses all the proposed criteria until the group reaches a shared understanding of a limited set of standards for evaluation and a limited set of rules on how to give constructive feedback. The educator then hands each learner an assignment from another class or prior year's class to evaluate. The assignment to assess will be anonymous so that learners can evaluate it without fear of offending or hurting their peers. Learners will assess the assignment individually at home and bring their written feedback for the second session. During the *second session*, learners will join the same team as in the first session and compare their feedback. They will discuss and reach an agreement, and then hone their feedback. To conclude, all the groups will present the analysed assignments and their feedback to the whole class.

RESOURCES

Before the first session, once the educator has chosen the kind of assignment to work with their learners, they will need:

- an anonymised assignment from previous years or another class to evaluate. The sample assignment must be of the same kind and level as the one assigned to learners;
- a clear and limited set of standards for the evaluation of the assignment;
- a clear and limited set of standards for constructive feedback. Following the "SPARK" acronym, feedback should be:
 - **Specific:** linked to a particular aspect of the assignment (e.g. a phrase or a sentence in written essays);
 - **Prescriptive:** offer a strategy, helpful resources or examples to improve the work;
 - **Actionable:** give indications of the steps to improve the work;
 - **Referenced:** refer to the task criteria and requirements;
 - **Kind:** must be framed in a kind, respectful and empathetic way.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

To help learners provide "SPARK" feedback, at the end of the first session, the teacher could guide the class to co-create a set of constructive "feedback stems" following the same logic employed in the [accountable talk](#) teaching strategy.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

Before session 1, the educator needs to:

- set their criteria for evaluation of the assignment to be complemented with those proposed by the learners; learners should be instructed to give feedback which is at the same time accurate and respectful of their colleagues' work;
- identify an assignment from a previous year or another class which has a similar complexity level to the one to be completed by learners.

Before session 2, the educator needs to:

- revise the anonymised assignment providing their feedback so that they can share and compare them with those provided by the learners.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

Session 1: Before setting up an assignment, e.g. writing an essay, the educator:

1. asks learners to reflect, in groups of up to five people, on the characteristics of a good answer to the task, e.g. a well-structured essay;
2. gives each group up to 20 minutes to produce an agreed-upon list of up to four criteria for evaluation. Those criteria will be presented to the whole classroom;
3. introduces their own criteria stressing similarities and differences with those proposed by the learners until the entire group reach an agreement on a shared and limited set of standards for evaluation which should be visible to all learners in the next phase;
4. leads the discussion on the characteristics of good feedback (e.g. respectful and empathetic, based on evidence, specific and actionable, etc.);
5. gives each group an anonymous assignment from another class or prior year's class to evaluate;
6. instructs each group member to revise the anonymous assignment individually by applying the common criteria for evaluation and providing written constructive feedback as homework.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

Session 2: The educator:

1. invites learners to join the same groups as in the previous session;
2. instruct learners to share their evaluation and feedback in the group to hone their comprehension of the assignment and the grading criteria. Each group should reach an agreement on the review of the assignment and on the constructive feedback to provide;
3. asks each group to share their evaluations and feedback;
4. when needed, models how to reformulate the learners' contributions to meet the criteria for constructive feedback.

TIPS FOR ONLINE SETTINGS:

Ensuring learners' active participation is critical to engaging them in an online learning environment. To implement this strategy in a synchronous online session, the educator:

1. divides learners into groups of three to four members in the "breakout rooms" that almost all the online platforms allow to create;
2. circulates among the breakout rooms to foster participation, listen to learners' discussion, solve doubts, etc.;
3. asks each group to choose one spokesperson who will share the discussion in the plenary;
4. asks each group to write down their reflection in an online shared document, which the spokesperson may read in the plenary. Having a written form to read in the plenary may help learners respect turn-taking, and the educator moderate the discussion.

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

To conclude the activity, the educator leads the discussion on:

- the comprehension of the assignment requirements (e.g. do the learners understand better what they are expected to do to complete the assignment successfully?);
- the main challenges of providing constructive feedback.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

S1 Empathy, since learners are invited to:

- reflect on the characteristics of empathetic and constructive feedback;
- imagine the impact of their feedback on peers;
- actively find a way to provide respectful feedback.

L1 Growth mindset, since learners are invited to:

- offer constructive feedback on how to improve the assignment;
- deploy intentional, meaningful and reflective work to analyse the task actively and choose the best strategy to resolve it;
- reflect on and suggest possible ways for improving the assignment;
- engage actively in learning.

L2 Critical thinking, since learners are invited to:

- increase their critical engagement with the assignment by reviewing, summarising, clarifying, giving feedback, identifying missing knowledge and considering deviations from the agreed-upon criteria to identify a good answer to the task;
- engage in complex problem-solving processes of diagnosing problems and suggesting solutions.

L3 Managing learning, since learners are invited to:

- deepen their comprehension of the tasks' requirements;
- reflect on the characteristics that define a good resolution of the task;
- identify standards that can then be transferred to their own work;
- develop their metacognitive capacity to think about their own work through the evaluation of their peers' work;
- construct an evolving understanding of discipline-specific content.

Jigsaw

This activity allows learners to analyse a large amount of content in a short time while fostering collaboration and peer learning.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

10

OVERVIEW

Learners are divided into “home groups”. Each learner will analyse a piece of text individually. Then the educator re-arranges learners into “expert groups” where all the members have worked on the same text. In the expert groups, the learners will discuss the text, extract the most important information and prepare a short presentation. The learners will then return to their “home group” and explain the text piece that has been worked on the “expert group”.

RESOURCES

A text that can be divided into 4-6 segments or 4-6 pieces of text describing different aspects of the same topic.

Each learner must receive a copy of the text that they will analyse.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. divides the large group into “home groups”. The number of students in each “home group” should correspond to the number of pieces of text to be analysed;
2. appoints one student from each group as the facilitator. The facilitator will encourage groups members to stay on task and keep track of time. This role should be assigned to different learners each time that the jigsaw is implemented;
3. assigns to each group member a piece of text to analyse. This can be done for work in class or outside class;
4. if the reading is done in class, assigns time so that learners can analyse their segment of text individually at first.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. invites the learners to form an “expert group”. The expert group will gather the learners who analysed the same segment of text or the same topic;
2. gives time (up to 20 min) for students to work together on the text, sharing their reflections, highlighting the more important aspects of the text, and preparing a short presentation of it;
3. invites learners to go back to the “home groups”. To facilitate the transition from “expert groups” to “home groups”, the educator can use the “attention signal” strategy;
4. establishes the amount of time that each group member will have to share their reflections or presentation and teach their topic to the “homegroup”;
5. circulates from group to group, observing the process and intervening if there is the need to facilitate group work;
6. at the end of the session, gives a quiz on the whole material.

TIPS FOR ONLINE SETTING:

The educator:

1. creates a discussion forum for each segment of the text or topic;
2. assigns one member of each “home group” to a discussion forum that will host the “expert groups”;
3. invite learners to get familiar with their topic and to post in the forum extra information, their comments, doubts, teaching material etc.;
4. invite learners to create their own teaching material (a video, a presentation, a text, etc.).

Suppose learners will be teaching asynchronously to their “home groups”. In that case, the educator creates a private online forum for each “homegroup” for experts to post their material and share their knowledge with the others.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

Suppose learners will be teaching *synchronously* to their “home groups”. In that case, the educator creates “breakout rooms” and establishes the time each group member will have to share their reflections or presentation and teach their topic to the “home group”.

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

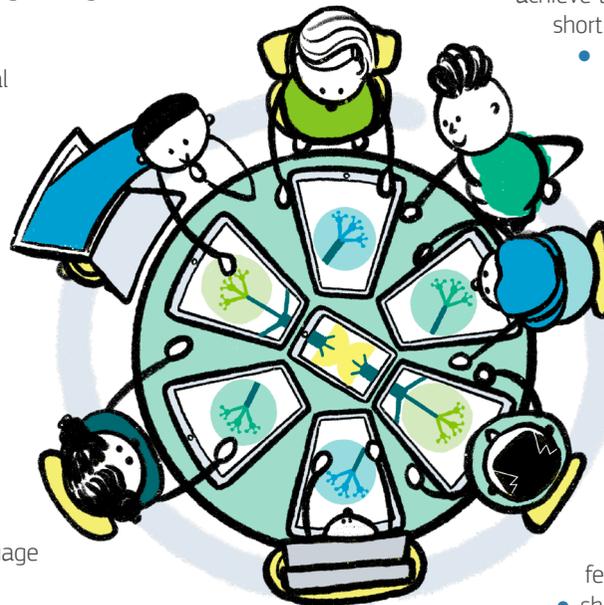
The educator invites a few learners to share some meaningful insight or learning.

- How did they feel having to teach their peers?
- Did they use the same strategies as for the individual study?
- How could they improve their strategies?
- Did they observe any of their peers implementing any interesting study strategy?
- How did they feel to being taught by peers?
- Did they receive interesting feedback from peers?
- How would they rate their knowledge of the topic they acted as experts on?



This activity can help foster:

- S2 Communication**, since learners are invited to:
- use a variety of communication strategies and language registers that are adapted to context and content to explain their piece of text to their classmates;
 - listen attentively to their classmates to learn from them, gaining an overview of the whole material.



- engage in conversation with clarity to explain their ideas both in the “expert groups” and the “home groups”;
- engage in conversation with reciprocity since all participants will need to talk and listen to the others, respecting turn-taking.

S3 Collaboration, since learners are invited to:

- contribute to the common good of their “home groups”, trying to explain as clearly as possible their piece of text;
- share tasks, resources and responsibilities fairly within the “home group” to achieve the common goal of analysing a large amount of content in a short time;
 - elicit the expression of different views in the “expert groups”;

L1 Growth mindset, since learners:

- can experiment with their and others’ abilities to learn, and improve and grow with work and dedication;
- are invited to reflect on others’ feedback to continue developing their competences.

L2 Critical thinking, since learners are invited to:

- analyse and synthesise data, information and ideas to share them with their classmates.

L3 Managing learning, since learners are invited to:

- hone their awareness of preferred learning strategies, learning interests and needs;
- implement a learning process receiving immediate feedback from peers in the home groups;
- share their learning strategies and observe those of others, having the opportunity to better understand learning intentions and criteria for success.

Fishbowl

This activity is aimed at improving the learners' communication skills. It provides a setting in which all participants are invited to listen to others and express their point of view, respecting turn-taking.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

11

OVERVIEW

The learners are seated in two concentric circles, all facing the centre. The learners in the inner circle discuss a text, presenting their point of view on the text's central idea(s), the author's intention, their conclusions, etc. The learners in the outside circle listen silently to the discussion and take note of the effectiveness of the group discussion.

RESOURCES

- A short text on a relevant topic adapted to the interests and skills of the learners;
- An observation guide for the observers, which helps them to detect when:
 - questions are answered using evidence from the text;
 - the posed questions are grounded in the text;
 - the question helps to improve the understanding of the text;
 - the speakers establish relationships among their personal experiences to make a connection to a claim made in the text;
 - the speakers agree with another's view and explain why;
 - the speakers respectfully express disagreement with another's view and explain why;
 - the participants listen respectfully to others' ideas;
 - the participants consider ideas that conflict with their own thoughts.



PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. distributes a copy of the text to each learner. This can be done before the activity takes place or within the lesson;
2. instructs learners to read the text individually and to create text-dependent questions before the activity; answering the questions should require classmates to go through the text and find specific textual evidence;
3. selects four to five learners to be part of the fishbowl group. They will sit in the inner circle of chairs, while the rest of the group will sit in the external one;
4. can distribute printed copies of the "accountable talk stems" to help the learners in the inner group to increase the quality of their discussion (see resources of the [accountable talk strategy](#));
5. distributes the observation guide to the learners in the outer group. The whole group will know the observation guide and the list of behaviours to be registered;
6. explains the rules of the activity and that there will be a switch between observed and observers.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

1. Instruct the learners in the outer circle to keep silent, observe the interaction in the inner circle and take note of the process and the content of the discussion. The educator can pair learners so that one or more observers from the outside circle can focus on one single person in the inner circle.
2. Only people in the fishbowl group can talk. They will have to ask and answer the preprepared questions.
3. The educator only steps in if their help is needed to achieve a better discussion.
4. Invite four to five participants from the outer group to compose a new inner group and those previously in the internal group to act as observers.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

The educator invites:

- the observers to share their observations to stress the strengths of the discussion and provide feedback on how to improve communication;
- the participants to express how they felt in both roles. Was it difficult to keep silent while observing? How did it feel to be observed? Does anyone want to share any insight from the discussion?

LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

S1 Empathy, since participants have the opportunity to be aware of and to understand other people's perspectives better.

S2 Communication, since participants are requested to:

- manage the interactions following the rules specifically set for the activity;
- listen attentively to others;
- observe and reflect on appropriate ways to participate in a discussion.

L1 Growth mindset, since participants are invited to:

- provide feedback to improve the group discussion skills;
- reflect on other learners' feedback to improve their communication skills.

L2 Critical thinking, since participants are asked to analyse and synthesise the text critically.



Create an agreement on the rules for the (online) learning spaces

This activity aims to reach a consensus on the basic rules that everyone should follow in the online learning space to make the most of the online learning experience and foster participants' wellbeing.

12

OVERVIEW

The educator introduces the importance of establishing shared rules on behaving in online learning spaces to nurture meaningful learning and participants' wellbeing. Learners brainstorm and write up to five basic rules individually and then discuss and agree on those rules in small groups (up to five people). The whole classroom will then discuss the proposals of each group. After participants reach an agreement, learners and educators are invited to sign those rules.

The steps presented in this teaching strategy can be adapted to create rules for face-to-face learning spaces.

RESOURCES

Having the learners involved in creating the rules that apply to their own online learning space can contribute to compliance with those rules and foster learners' sense of belonging to their learning community.

However, the educator should reflect on each group's specific needs to guide the learners' reflections on the most relevant topics to be tackled and be ready to introduce it if those don't arise spontaneously. Those can be, for example, online participation rules, netiquette, ways to react to cyberbullying, recognising the work of others, protecting their own and others' privacy, among others.

Educators can find an example of rules for online learning environments [here](#).



COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator introduces the importance of setting agreed-upon rules to promote a safe and respectful online learning environment that fosters learners' wellbeing and explains that the group will have to reach a consensus on a set of norms to guide their online behaviour.

The educator invites learners to:

1. reflect individually and write up to five draft rules to promote an online learning environment in which they can be thriving learners and feel safe and respected members of a learning community;
2. formulate the rules positively, i.e. focusing on the behaviours that should be performed instead of the behaviours that should be avoided. For example, it is preferable to set a rule on respecting turn-taking rather than avoiding interrupting others.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

After the learners have their own list of positively stated rules, the educator:

1. explains that learners will be split into small groups;
2. invites learners to share and discuss their own list with other colleagues in small groups and to reach an agreement on the rules to share with the whole class;
3. instructs each group to choose a spokesperson to share the list of rules on which they agreed with the entire class in the main room;
4. uses a tool from the online platform to split the learners into breakout rooms with up to five learners and gives them up to 15 minutes to reach an agreement;
5. circulates in the virtual rooms to support learners' discussion.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

When the time for debate is over, learners will be automatically redirected to the main session. The educator will:

1. ask each spokesperson to share with the plenary the list of rules of their group;
2. instruct learners to refrain from commenting until all the groups have shared their set of rules;
3. open the discussion on the different proposals; If the educator deems that some essential aspect of the online classroom rules has not been considered, they should trigger the discussion to add it to the agreed rules;
4. with the help of learners, identify common themes, merge similar rules and create an agreed-upon list of positively stated rules;
5. allow learners to fine-tune the final set of rules so that they are clearly understood and ideally endorsed by all the learners.

Once the group has its final list of rules, the educator can ask a volunteer to create an online contract that each learner should sign.

In order for the activity to be authentic and meaningful, it is important that the rules are actually applied.

TIP:

The list should be as concise and straightforward as possible to maximise compliance with the shared rules. The younger the learners, the fewer and more precise the rules. On the other hand, when working with adults, it could be more appropriate to talk about 'expectations' rather than 'rules', to support adult agency and independence, as a part of netiquette.



LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

After the completion of the activity, the educator can trigger the discussion on:

- how learners felt in thinking about and discussing their ideas on how to improve the climate of the online classroom;
- which are the main challenges to respecting the shared rules, and how they can support each other in doing so;
- how following the agreed-upon rules can help learners create an online space that can nurture their personal wellbeing;
- how learners can help each other to follow the agreed-upon rules.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P1 Self-regulation, since learners are invited to think about strategies to self-regulate their thoughts, emotions and behaviours to make the most of the online learning experience.

P2 Flexibility, since learners are invited to:

- foster their capacity to adapt to new situations (such as having to follow their school lesson from home), making intentional adjustments to accommodate changes;
- develop strategies to cope with uncertainty and ambiguity;
- understand, negotiate and weigh up different points of view on a specific topic.

P3 Wellbeing, since learners are invited to:

- reflect on the different factors that can contribute to their sense of physical and emotional wellbeing while studying online;
- work together to create shared rules, which can contribute to their sense of belonging and social wellbeing.

S2 Communication, since learners are invited to:

- share their ideas in a group;
- listen attentively to others, respecting turn-taking;
- debate, persuade and negotiate with others to achieve a common position.

Creating SMART goals

This activity helps learners to reflect on their goals. It guides toward creating specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-based goals.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

13

OVERVIEW

Learners are invited to set up one goal that is meaningful to them. The educator then leads a discussion on the importance of how a goal is formulated to improve the possibility of achieving it. The educator introduces the characteristics of the “smart goals” (i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based) and invites learners to revise their initial goal to match those criteria.

RESOURCES

- The “SMART goal” criteria, which must be visible to all learners whether in a poster, printed, projected, etc.:
 - S**pecific: well defined, clear, unambiguous. It should determine: What do I want to accomplish? Why is it important? Who is involved? Where is it located? Which resources are involved? When will I do it?
 - M**easurable: identifies ways of measuring the progress toward the achievement of the goal;
 - A**chievable: attainable, realistic, can be achieved given the available resources;
 - R**elevant: makes sense in my life; it is in line with other goals in my life;
 - T**ime-based: it has a start and finish date.
- A printed guide for self-reflection to refine the goal-setting:
 - S**: Is the goal specific? Does it exactly describe what I want to achieve and how I will achieve it?
 - M**: Did I identify how to measure the progress toward achieving the goal?
 - A**: Is the goal realistic? Can I achieve it given the time and resource constraints?
 - R**: Does the goal mean something to me? Is it something I want to accomplish? Is it in line with my values, strengths and expectations?
 - T**: Does this goal have a deadline? Can I realistically accomplish it by the time I have set?

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

- before the implementation of the activity, thinks about a personal goal and describes it both in a generic way and following the “SMART” criteria so that they can model the process;
- introduces the importance of reflecting on what anyone wants to achieve in different life domains to accomplish it;
- stresses the importance for students to identify goals that are authentically relevant to them and not imposed on them by peers, parents or teachers;
- stresses the relevance of setting goals that are challenging but attainable;
- provides examples of relevant and appropriate goals for the age group of the learners. The goals can be related to home/family, work, school, social relationships, romantic relationships, hobbies, physical health, athletics, arts/music, civic engagement, etc.;
- depending on the age of the students, can set a deadline to achieve the goal. The younger the learners, the shorter the deadline should be so that learners can experience success.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

- gives learners up to 10 minutes to individually think about a personal goal and write it down;
- introduces the criteria to set “SMART goals” (i.e. goals that are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based);
- hands a copy of the guide for self-reflection to refine the goal setting to each learner and makes sure that the criteria to develop the “SMART goals” are visible to everyone;
- models the thinking process to answer the questions prompted in the guide for self-reflection and transform their generic goal into a “SMART goal”;
- invites learners to revise their goal to match the “SMART goal” criteria and gives them up to 25 minutes to do so.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
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TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education
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LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

The educator:

- asks for volunteers to share their “SMART goal” and the process to construct them;
- guides the reflection on the difference between setting generic and “SMART goals” and on how the latter can help in achieving the desired outcomes.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P1 Self-regulation, since learners are invited to:

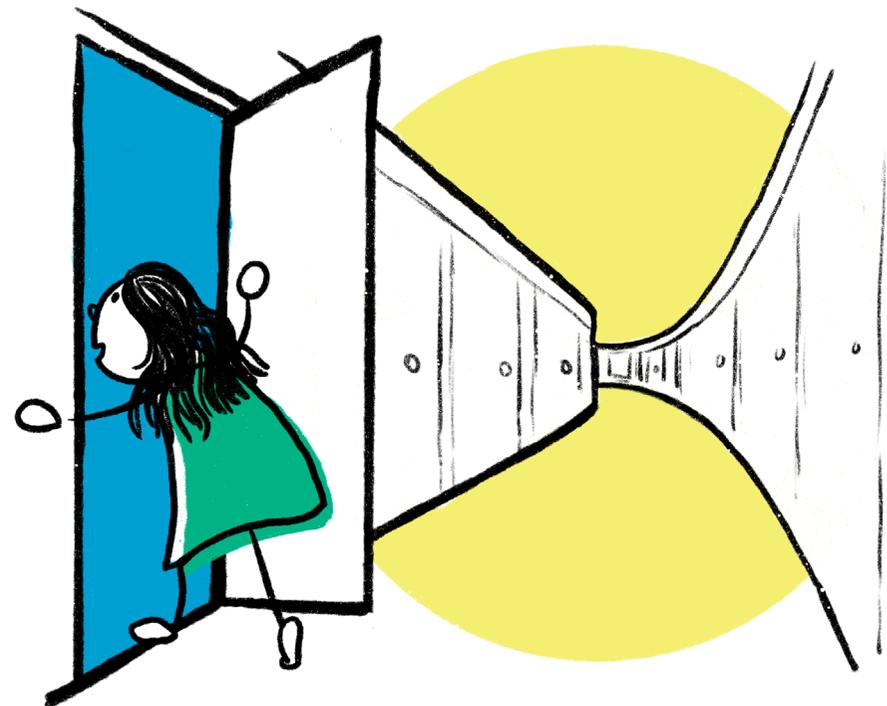
- reflect on and express their personal values, goals and desires;
- reflect on and describe strategies to regulate personal emotions and behaviours to keep motivated and achieve their goals, training their sense of perspective;
- nurture their sense of purpose by thinking about the goals that are important to them.

P2 Flexibility, since learners are invited to:

- make conscious choices and define meaningful goals;
- reflect on and set priorities, which would provide a clearer sense of direction;
- anticipating possible obstacles to achieving their goals, which could improve their readiness to review their course of action if the obstacles arise.

P3 Wellbeing, since learners are invited to:

- set goals that are meaningful to them, which could improve their sense of autonomy, i.e. the feeling of ownership of one’s behaviour;
- establish and implement different paths to achieve their goals, taking into consideration possible obstacles and ways to overcome them, which could improve their sense of competence, i.e. the ability to produce the desired outcome and to experience mastery.



Gratitude journal

This activity contributes to establishing the habit of paying attention to “gratitude-inspiring” events, which, in turn, contribute to emotional wellbeing.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

14

OVERVIEW

The educator invites learners to write down three to five things they are grateful for each week. After the individual reflection to identify reasons to be thankful, the educator can invite learners who are willing to do so to share them with the group.

RESOURCES

Any support on which to write a gratitude list (post-it, notebook, laptop, etc.).

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

- invites learners to reflect on the good in their lives, focusing on, and writing down three to five things that happened during the week for which they are grateful;
- explains that they will do this exercise once per week. The educator can involve learners in choosing at which moment to consistently implement the exercise (e.g. every last hour of lessons on a Friday).

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

- chooses a moment in the week in which to consistently implement this activity. Involving learners in this decision may foster a feeling of agency and self-determination, which may strengthen their motivation to participate in it;
- suggests learners be specific when describing what they are grateful for;
- explains that the entries can be as short as a single sentence;
- gives up to five minutes to implement the activity.



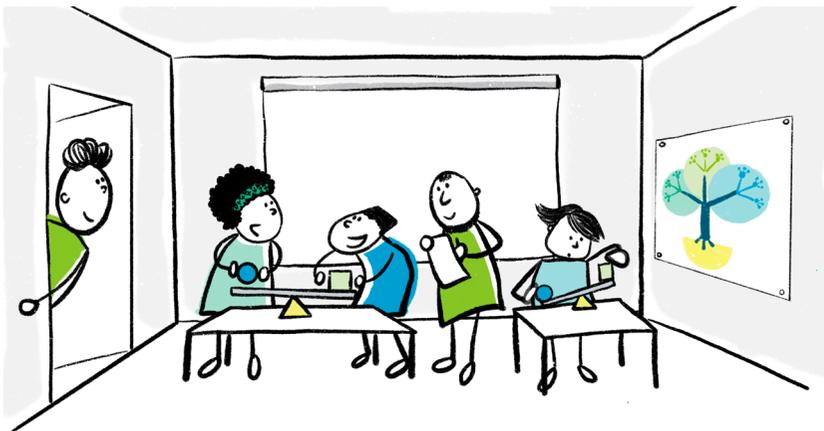
LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

The educator:

- models how to explain why they are grateful for something, sharing something they are thankful for. As the learners gain familiarity with this task, the educator can limit their intervention;
- can, if they consider that the learners are ready to listen one to another respectfully, invite those who want to share something they are grateful for with the group.



LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P1 Self-regulation, since learners are invited to:

- improve their awareness of personal emotions;
- implement a strategy to up-regulate their emotions, intentionally paying attention and nurturing emotions such as gratitude which cause positive feelings;
- nurture optimism, hope, and resilience through cultivating gratitude deliberately.

P3 Wellbeing, since learners are invited to:

- adopt a habit that increases emotional wellbeing;
- increase their awareness of how individual behaviours can improve their health and wellbeing.

Hope project: a path through goal setting

This activity helps learners nurture their hope, the motivational energy to initiate and sustain progress in pursuing “SMART” goals, and the ability to imagine and go through alternative ways to reach them.

15

OVERVIEW

This activity helps learners reflect on their personal goals, conceptualise and refine them, thinking about and representing possible strategies to achieve them.

It can be developed in two steps:

1. The learners individually brainstorm, identify and write down up to three personal goals. They are then invited to revise them following the “SMART goals” criteria;
2. Learners are invited to create (at home) a “hope project”, a multimedia representation of:
 - their smart goals;
 - the strategies to reach each goal and overcome challenges (pathways thinking);
 - different sources of motivation to achieve each goal (agency thinking).

The hope project can be created in hard-copy or digital format.

RESOURCES

A list of up to three personal goals ideally revised with the “SMART goals” criteria for each learner.

- A set of prompts to guide the learners in the creation of their projects, as:
 - Achieving this goal (these goals) is important to me because...
 - The pathways I will need to follow to achieve this goal are...
 - If I can't follow my plan “A”, my plan “B” is...
 - If I can't follow my plan “B”, my plan “C” is...
 - The people who can help me to work toward my goals are...
 - The people who can inspire me to achieve my goals are... because...
 - I will find support to keep me motivated in...
 - The challenges that I might face while working to achieve my goals are...
 - I can navigate around those challenges by...
 - I can overcome those challenges by...

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

- P1 Self-regulation
- P2 Flexibility
- P3 Wellbeing

Social

- S1 Empathy
- S2 Communication
- S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

- L1 Growth mindset
- L2 Critical thinking
- L3 Managing learning

- Learners are invited to freely use different resources (e.g. photos, drawings, letters, poems, music, lyrics, etc.) to create their “hope project”.
- Learners are invited to freely choose the kind of support they want to use to create their project (e.g. card stock paper and printed photos to create a hard copy of the project or PowerPoint slides to create a digital copy of it).

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. in a previous session, has already guided students in the creation of “SMART goals”;
2. introduces the importance of nurturing *hope*, the motivational energy to initiate and sustain progress in the pursuit of “SMART” goals, and the ability to imagine and go through alternative ways to reach them;
3. invites learners to choose one SMART goal from their list to develop their project.
4. gives the learners a printed copy of the set of prompts to guide them in the creation of their projects;
5. invites learners to freely choose the kind of support they want to use to create their project (e.g. card stock paper and printed photos to create a hard copy of it, or PowerPoint slides to create a digital copy of it);
6. invites learners to complete the prompts creatively, using different types of resources (e.g. photos, drawings, letters, poems, music, lyrics, etc.) to create their “hope project”;
7. stresses the importance of creating some narrative (e.g. caption to photos, a written letter, a story, etc.) to enhance the meaningfulness of their effort;
8. reaches a consensus with learners on a deadline to finish the project;
9. explains that some volunteers will be invited to share their projects with the whole group.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
GROUP SIZE	Individual task	Pairs	Small group (up to 5 people)	Large groups	The whole classroom

TIME	1-5 mins	5-15 mins	15-30 mins	30-60 mins	60+ mins
TARGET GROUP	Primary school students	Secondary school students	VET school students	Adult education	

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The learners create a multi-media representation of their goals, the pathways they will follow to achieve them, their sources of support, inspiration and motivation, and the challenges they may face to enhance the visualisation of the accomplishment of their goal.

For example, a girl whose goal it is to complete an engineering degree can create a photo of herself holding her admission certificate. This could be complemented by pictures and photomontages representing pathways thinking, i.e. showing her engaging in strategies that will help her to get closer to her goal (such as photos of her studying in the library, taking a complementary course of maths, attending introductory meetings at the university, etc.) Moreover, she could add to her project images that are inspiring and motivating (e.g. a photo of an admired women engineer, her mentor, family member or friend who supports and encourages her, a poem she finds inspiring etc.). The project can also be complemented by representing the challenges that she may face and the possible strategies to overcome them. Digital projects can also be enriched by using video clips, pieces of music, GIFs, etc.

Projects that creatively use different media to create an upbeat personal narration meaningful to the learner are more likely to support goal accomplishment.

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

Volunteers can be invited to share their “hope project” with the group. Moreover, learners can be invited to share their reflections on goal setting, the strategies they find helpful to keep motivated, overcome challenges, etc.

If the educator is still working with the learners by the time at which they should achieve the goal (e.g. if the exercise is launched at the beginning of a school year, and the goals are set to be accomplished by the end of the school year), they can ask volunteers to share whether they managed to achieve the goal or not and the factors that contributed to that.

LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

P1 Self-regulation, since learners are invited to:

- reflect on and express their personal values, goals and desires;
- reflect on and describe strategies to regulate personal emotions and behaviours to keep motivated and achieve their goals, training their sense of perspective;
- nurture their hope (i.e. the motivational energy to initiate and sustain progress in the pursuit of goals and the ability to imagine and go through alternative ways to reach them) and optimism since the positive expectations about the possibility of succeeding in the present and the future can be enhanced by the representation of oneself reaching own goals;
- nurture their resilience by reflecting on and anticipating possible challenges and the possible actions and resources to overcome them;
- nurture their sense of purpose by thinking about the goals that are important to them.

P2 Flexibility, since learners are invited to:

- make conscious choices to set meaningful goals;
- imagine different paths to achieve their goals so that they are in a better position to manage transition and face challenges;
- anticipating possible obstacles to achieving their goals, which could improve their readiness to review their course of action if the obstacles arise.

P3 Wellbeing, since learners are invited to:

- set goals that are meaningful to them, which could improve their sense of *autonomy*, i.e. the feeling of ownership of one's behaviour;
- establish and implement different paths to achieve their goals, taking into consideration possible obstacles and ways to overcome them, which could improve their sense of *competence*, i.e. the ability to produce the desired outcome and to experience mastery;
- identify people who can help and inspire them to achieve a goal, which could improve their sense of relatedness, i.e. the feeling of connection with others.

Role playing

Role-play is an active and participatory strategy to foster meaningful learning. It helps learners to take the perspective of others and hone their critical thinking, communication, and empathy competences while increasing the understanding of a given topic.

COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT

Personal

P1 Self-regulation
P2 Flexibility
P3 Wellbeing

Social

S1 Empathy
S2 Communication
S3 Collaboration

Learning to learn

L1 Growth mindset
L2 Critical thinking
L3 Managing learning

16

OVERVIEW

The educator chooses a dilemma, a problem or a real-life situation they want their students to reflect on and ensures that learners have access to the essential information they need to act meaningfully on it. They assign each learner a role (whether as an actor or an observer) and invite learners to take the perspective of the characters to understand and better embody their goals, motivations and emotions. The educator invites learners to enact the role-play, keeps track of time and invites learners to reflect on the whole activity upon its completion.

RESOURCES

1. The **dilemma** to be discussed, the problem to be solved, or the real-life situation to be handled. The story or problem should be compelling and generate different positions among students. It can be generic or crafted by the teacher or some student to address a specific situation in the classroom. Depending on students' maturity, the educator can present it through storytelling, video, or writing.
2. The **roles** to be played; for each role, the educator must provide enough meaningful details to enhance the authenticity of the exercise.
3. The **essential information** that learners need to know to act out the role play.

PREPARATION OF THE ACTIVITY

Before the implementation of the activity, the educator:

- reminds learners of the ground rules for constructive discussion in the classroom. To ensure the efficacy of the role-play, learners must trust that they can interpret the assigned character without being mocked;
- invites learners to reflect on the importance of being able to see things from different angles and to understand others' perspectives;

- makes sure that learners have the essential background information to reflect and act on the dilemma. To increase learners' level of independence and autonomy, the educator can progressively limit the information they provide and ask learners to research it before the role-play;
- reminds learners that the objective of the role-play is to increase their understanding of a given topic, not to scrutinise the actual person who is performing the role;
- presents the activity's learning objectives so that learners understand its academic relevance.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ACTIVITY

The educator:

1. presents the story to learners (a moral dilemma, a problem, a real-life professional situation);
2. allows students to discuss the story, clarifying their understanding of the characters and the competing goals that each character holds;
3. asks students to describe the dilemma, problem, or real-life situation in their own words and asks open questions that allow them to give their opinion freely;
4. assigns the roles. Typically there will be acting roles and observers roles. Make sure that learners have the opportunity to experiment with both;
5. instructs those with acting roles to try understanding the perspectives, goals, motivations, and feelings of the people they represent. Instruct observers: not to interrupt the role-play; give specific, constructive, kind and actionable feedback; discuss the role that is performed, not the person who is performing it;
6. grants enough time for learners to prepare for their roles. Depending on the primary goal of the activity (e.g. improve the understanding of a historical issue, address a relational problem within the class, discuss a moral dilemma, train how to handle a real-life working situation professionally, etc.), learners will need more or less time to get ready. Be sure to give them enough time to look for and interpret the information they need to perform their role accurately;
7. invites learners to enact the role play and keep track of time and is ready to intervene if the learners don't respect the rules for respectful interactions.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	Classroom	Online learning platform	Outdoor	Any	
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LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE

After the role-play took place, the educator concludes the activity by inviting students to reflect on the experience.

You can adapt this initial set of questions for debriefing:

- How and why does each character reach their decision? How did they feel?
- Could the situation have been approached differently? How?
- What different outcomes might we expect if the situation is approached differently?
- What would the story look like, if you rewrite it based on our discussion?
- How did you feel representing the character? How did you feel seeing the character to be represented?
- Did the activity help you in shifting your understanding of the topic? How?

LIFECOMP FOCUS

This activity can help foster:

S1 Empathy, since learners are invited to:

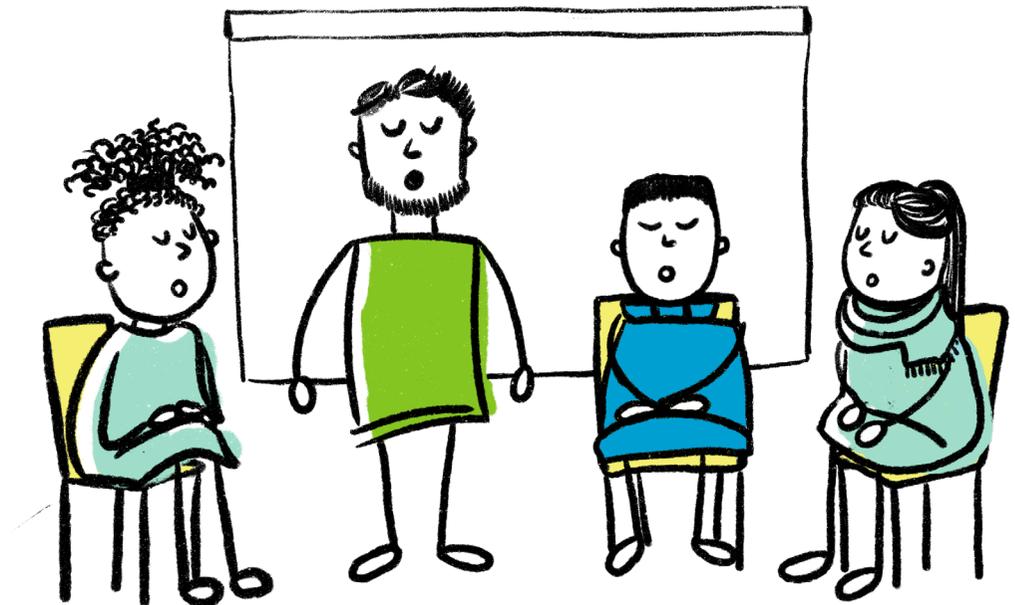
- increase their awareness of other peoples' emotions, experiences and values, whether preparing for and enacting the character or attending the performance of others;
- gain a deeper understanding of other people's motives, and increase their ability to take their perspective, and see a situation from a different point of view to be able to enact the character;
- increase their awareness of how belonging to a given social group can influence our understanding and way of feeling about a given issue.

S2 Communication, since it requires learners to:

- modulate their message taking into account the situation and the roles that they are representing, and the purpose of the communication (argue, persuade, instruct, etc.);
- attentively listen to others and respect the turn-taking;
- speak in public.

L2 Critical thinking, since learners are invited to:

- increase their awareness of possible bias in their way of thinking;
- increase their understanding of a given issue by having to weigh different options, clarify ideas, and construct their mental representations of a given issue to enact the characters.



Annex

LifeComp competences: definitions and descriptors.

1. Personal area

P1 Self-regulation

Awareness and management of emotions, thoughts and behaviour.

- P1.1** Awareness and expression of personal emotions, thoughts, values, and behaviour.
- P1.2** Understanding and regulating personal emotions, thoughts, and behaviour, including stress responses.
- P1.3** Nurturing optimism, hope, resilience, self-efficacy and a sense of purpose to support learning and action.

P2 Flexibility

Ability to manage transitions and uncertainty, and to face challenges.

- P2.1** Readiness to review opinions and courses of action in the face of of new evidence.
- P2.2** Understanding and adopting new ideas, approaches, tools, and actions in response to changing contexts.
- P2.3** Managing transitions in personal life, social participation work and learning pathways, while making conscious choices and setting goals.

P3 Wellbeing

Pursuit of life satisfaction, care of physical, mental and social health; and adoption of a sustainable lifestyle.

- P3.1** Awareness that individual behaviour, personal characteristics and social environmental factors influence health and wellbeing.
- P3.2** Understanding potential risks for wellbeing, and using reliable information and services for health and social protection.
- P3.3** Adoption of a sustainable lifestyle that respects the environment, and the physical and mental wellbeing of self and others, while seeking and offering social support.

2. Social area

S1 Empathy

The understanding of another person’s emotions, experiences and values, and the provision of appropriate responses.

- S1.1 Awareness of another person’s emotions, experiences and values.
- S1.2 Understanding another person’s emotions and experiences, and the ability to proactively take their perspective.
- S1.3 Responsiveness to another person’s emotions and experiences, being conscious that group belonging influences one’s attitude.

S2 Communication

Use of relevant communication strategies, domain-specific codes and tools, depending on the context and the content.

- S2.1 Awareness of the need for a variety of communication strategies, language registers, and tools that are adopted to context and content.
- S2.2 Understanding and managing interactions and conversations in different socio-cultural contexts and domain-specific situations.
- S2.3 Listening to others and engaging in conversations with confidence, assertiveness, clarity and reciprocity, both in personal and social contexts.

S3 Collaboration

Engagement in group activity and teamwork acknowledging and respecting others.

- S2.1 Intention to contribute to the common good and awareness that others may have different cultural affiliations, backgrounds, beliefs, values, opinions or personal circumstances.
- S2.2 Understanding the importance of trust, respect for human dignity and equality, coping with conflicts and negotiating disagreements to build and sustain fair and respectful relationships.
- S2.3 Fair sharing of tasks, resources and responsibility within a group taking into account its specific aim; eliciting the expression of different views and adopting a systemic approach.

3. Learning to learn area

L1 Growth mindset

Belief in one's and others' potential to continuously learn and progress.

- L1.1** Awareness of and confidence in one's own and others' abilities to learn, improve and achieve with work and dedication.
- L1.2** Understanding that learning is a lifelong process that requires openness, curiosity and determination.
- L1.3** Reflecting on other people's feedback as well on successful and unsuccessful experiences to continue developing one's potential.

L2 Critical thinking

Assessment of information and arguments to support reasoned conclusions and develop innovative solutions.

- L2.1** Awareness of potential biases in the data and one's personal limitations, while collecting valid and reliable information and ideas from diverse and reputable sources.
- L2.2** Comparing, analysing, assessing, and synthesising data, information, ideas, and media messages in order to draw logical conclusions.
- L2.3** Developing creative ideas, synthesising and combining concepts and information from different sources in view of solving problems.

L3 Managing learning

The planning, organising, monitoring and reviewing of one's own learning.

- L2.1** Awareness of one's own learning interests, processes and preferred strategies, including learning needs and required support.
- L2.2** Planning and implementing learning goals, strategies, resources and processes.
- L2.3** Reflecting on and assessing purposes, processes and outcomes of learning and knowledge construction, establishing relationships across domains.

Annex 2

Examples of accountable talk stems.

Opinion

- I believe/think... because...
- I respectfully agree/disagree with you because...
- In my opinion...
- I believe... is true/false because...
- From my perspective...

Building On a Connection

- I like what you said about...
- I heard you say... I would like to add...
- What you said made me think about...
- I want to add on to what... said about...
- To expand on what... said...

Wonderings

- I wonder why...
- I predict/infer that... because...
- I think... because...
- A question I have is...

Ask for clarification

- I still have a question about...
- Could you please clarify what you said about...
- I have a question about...
- I don't understand...

Making Connections

- This reminds me of...
- This is similar/different to...

Recalling Details

- I read...
- The evidence from the text tells me...

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