SA TfEL

South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning

Framework guide
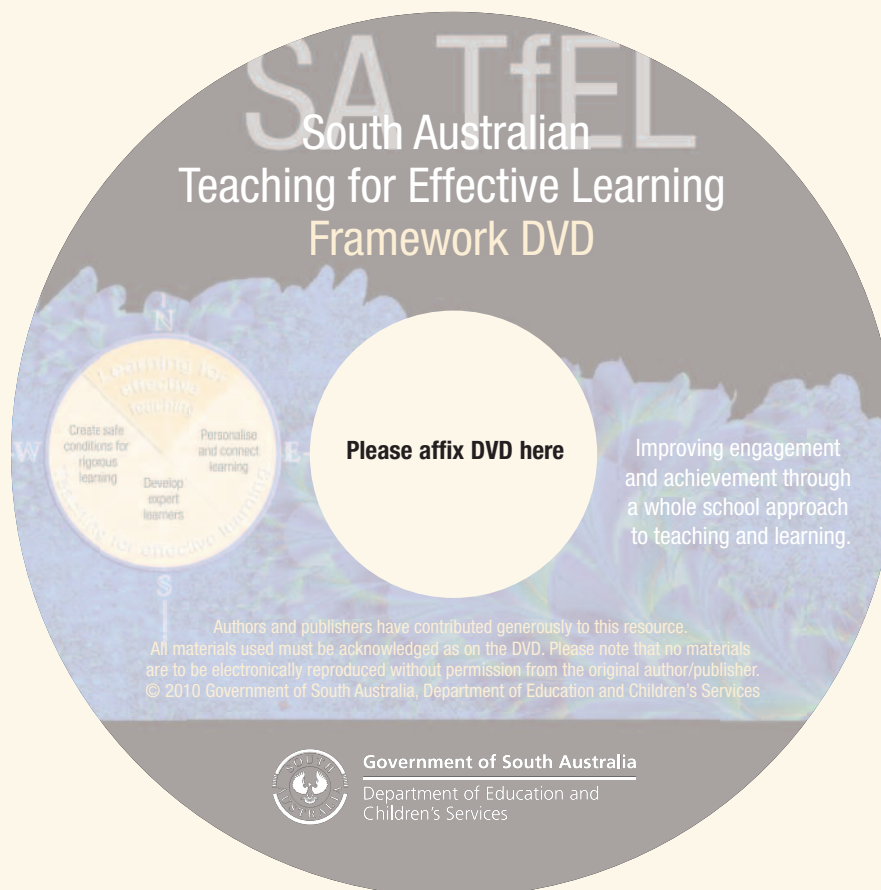
Learning for effective teaching

Create safe conditions for rigorous learning

Personalise and connect learning

Develop expert learners

Teaching for effective learning

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A resource for developing quality teaching and learning in South Australia

SA TfEL

South Australian
Teaching for Effective Learning
Framework DVD

Learning for
effective
teaching

Create safe
conditions for
rigorous
learning

Personalise
and connect
learning

Develop
expert
learners

Please affix DVD here

Improving engagement
and achievement through
a whole school approach
to teaching and learning.

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Government of South Australia
Department of Education and
Children's Services

SA TfEL

South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework guide

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Create safe conditions for rigorous learning

Personalise and connect learning

Develop expert learners

Teaching for effective learning

A resource for developing quality teaching and learning in South Australia

Foreword

Education equips young people with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to make the most of opportunities and to face the challenges of living and working in the 21st century.

The December 2008 *Melbourne Declaration on Education Goals for Young Australians* commits us to two goals:

Goal 1: Australian schooling promotes equity and excellence

Goal 2: All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals and active and informed citizens.

In striving for both equity and excellence, we know that the quality of teaching makes a difference. In Department of Education and Children's Services (DECS) schools, this improvement is guided by the DECS Improvement and Accountability framework (DIA*f*).

Central to the DIA*f* is a *focus on learning*. A challenge we face as educators is to continually develop new insights into teaching and learning practices that lead to improved student engagement and achievement. Together with the new Australian Curriculum, the South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning (SA TfEL) Framework will provide the basis for this ongoing development of our teaching and learning practices.

In establishing the DECS position on pedagogy, the SA TfEL Framework draws together the wisdom of South Australian teachers' practice with the voices of experts from around the world. This research-based pedagogy framework provides resources for ensuring the quality of teaching and achieving sustainable improvement in student learning outcomes

The SA TfEL Framework acknowledges the critical interplay between teaching and learning. It is learner and learning centred. The pedagogical elements provide explicit reference points and point the way to improved teaching practice by:

○ engaging learners, through a focus on personalisation and connecting the curriculum to learners' worlds

○ developing lifelong capacities, learning how to learn and developing self-efficacy for future life and employment contexts

○ providing a common vocabulary for DECS leaders and teachers to engage in rigorous dialogue about their core work.

Our most effective school leaders are instructional leaders who place teaching and learning at the centre of their schools. The challenge for all associated with student learning is to turn the SA TfEL Framework into reality for all learners, enact the pedagogical elements and support all students to become successful, confident learners who are well prepared for the future.

I commend the *SA Teaching for Effective Learning Framework guide* to you as a valuable catalyst for improving educational outcomes for all our students.

Chris Robinson
Chief Executive
Department of Education and Children's Services

Acknowledgments

South Australia has a long history of balancing the focus on teaching *and* learning and valuing teachers' professional voice.

The Teaching for Effective Learning Framework was a collaborative development between teachers, educational experts and researchers.

A mutually informing relationship

Teachers'
wisdom of
practice

Expert
referenced

Contents

Introducing the South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework and Resource

Teachers make the difference to students' learning.
It's unequivocal.
Teaching is too important to leave to chance.

Leaders make the difference to teachers' learning.
It's unequivocal.
Leading learning is too important to leave to chance.

As professionals, we need to continually learn to develop our 'craft' and our professional effectiveness as leaders and teachers. The South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework and Resource are designed to support leaders and teachers in this work.

What is the SA TfEL Framework?

Just as a compass guides navigation, the SA TfEL Framework provides an 'internal compass' for guiding our designs for learning and decision making about our practice. It gives us confidence that our professional practice incorporates the most recent evidence and understandings about learning and teaching that maximise student engagement and achievement.

The SA TfEL Framework recognises that we are all learners and that the conditions needed for student learning are just as important for adult learners, including the teachers and leaders in our schools. It reflects two key concepts:

○ **Learning for effective teaching** supports leaders and teachers to see themselves as learners, reflect on their practice and create opportunities to develop their professional expertise

○ **Teaching for effective learning** supports teachers to develop their practice in three domains:
  > Create safe conditions for rigorous learning
  > Develop expert learners
  > Personalise and connect learning.

What is the SA TfEL Resource?

The Resource consists of this Framework guide, the Review Tools handbook and the Framework DVD (inside the front cover of this book). Through stories, snapshots of exemplary practice, teaching strategies, reflective questions, provocative statements and indicators for teacher and student actions, the Resource, helps bring the framework alive. Exploring the Resource with your colleagues will help you make sense of the framework and give it personal meaning, thus providing inspiration for action.

Where does it fit?

Central to the DECS Improvement and Accountability framework (DIA*f*) is the principle, *Focus on Learning*. In this improvement focus, the SA TfEL Framework supports collaborative work to 'get behind the classroom door' by providing a common frame of reference for reflecting on teaching and learning practice. In this way, the SA TfEL materials guide individual, whole school and system-wide improvement of teaching and learning.
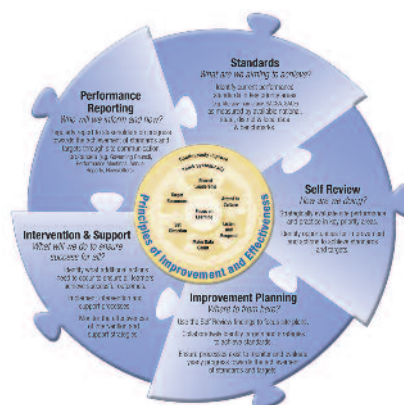
Developing a whole school approach to pedagogy—through building common language, shared meaning and collective commitment to action—provides the basis for alignment of practice and a focused learning culture. For students, this means seamlessness in how learning is experienced, leading to improved engagement and achievement.

South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework
unleashing learning potential

Leaders create learning opportunities with staff
Domain 1 Learning for effective teaching

understand how self and others learn	develop deep pedagogical and content knowledge	participate in professional learning communities and networks	engage with the community	discuss educational purpose and policy	design, plan and organise for teaching and learning

Teachers create learning opportunities with students

Domain 2 Create safe conditions for rigorous learning	Domain 3 Develop expert learners	Domain 4 Personalise and connect learning
develop democratic relationships	teach students how to learn	build on learners' understandings
build a community of learners	foster deep understanding and skilful action	connect learning to students' lives and aspirations
negotiate learning	explore the construction of knowledge	apply and assess learning in authentic contexts
support and challenge students to achieve high standards	promote dialogue as a means of learning	communicate learning in multiple modes

Key messages

Minds are not mechanisms; they are organisms.

And organisms are not assembled; they grow.

Guy Claxton

Just as a 'through line' is a device to help actors focus on characterisation, these key messages are 'through lines' which help leaders and teachers focus on what characterises effective teaching.

Learning as a way of being

When we understand learning and how we and others learn, it challenges us to unlearn old habits and perceptions. Surfacing and examining our assumptions about learning and teaching is crucial. When leaders and teachers are learners, we enrich and strengthen our professional practice.

Co-construction is key

Co-construction generates a dynamic form of knowledge. It captures our collective intelligence. This is as true for learning together as professionals as it is for working together with students. Dialogue and collaboration provide the means for co-construction.

Achievement of learning outcomes AND learning how to learn are our twin goals

Teaching learners to become numerate, multi-literate and to master the key elements of the disciplines provides them with a 'passport' to further learning. Teaching, simultaneously, the dispositions and skills of effective learning and thinking equip them to solve problems and apply their understandings, whatever the context.

Find every person's strengths

Learning is innate. Expect that everyone wants to and can learn. Teachers need to seek and build on learners' strengths to unleash their full learning potential. Learners move towards experiences from which they gain a sense of self-worth and achievement.

High expectations, with appropriate support, make the difference

Work with the students to determine readiness, and design challenging but achievable tasks. Convey high expectations and provide explicit teaching and scaffolding as necessary. This essential balancing act is at the heart of teachers' professional work.

Use the language of learning and teaching

Teach learners the language of learning so that they can articulate what, how and why they are learning. Understanding how learning and thinking occur gives learners more control over their own learning and it helps teachers be more discerning in their choice of strategies.

Teaching is a highly intentional act

Design mindfully, observe, reflect and act. There is no one teaching package that fits all. Think flexibly, design strategically and be on constant lookout for the teachable moments. Examine rich and varied assessment information to determine progress, the next steps in learning and to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies.

Finding your way around this guide

This guide is designed to support leaders and teachers in working together to reflect on and develop quality learning and teaching, using the SA TfEL Framework. Domain 1 describes leaders' work in this process, whilst domains 2, 3 and 4 describe teachers' work with students. The four domains work together and act as a frame of reference for thinking, reviewing and taking action.

Domain 1—Learning for effective teaching

Domain 1, 'Learning for effective teaching', focuses on school leaders' work with teachers and the community to develop a whole school approach to effective pedagogy. This domain has six elements: 1.1 to 1.6.

Example
Element > 1.1 Understand how self and others learn

Alert >
common traps/issues
related to this element

**Food for
thought >**
quotes that capture
the key ideas and
inherent tensions
of the element

Essence >
the idea at the
heart of this
element

Practice check >
questions leaders
ask themselves
to reflect
on their practice

In my role … >
implications for
leaders' own
learning and their
leadership role

**If teachers
understand … >**
anticipated outcomes
of working with teachers
on this element

Please note:

▶ This symbol in the text denotes an 'HpO Gizmo' and means there is more information available on the accompanying DVD about this item.

Domains 2, 3 and 4—Teaching for effective learning

Domains 2, 3 and 4, 'Teaching for effective learning', focus on teachers' work with students to reflect on and develop their pedagogy. Each domain has four elements (2.1 to 2.4, 3.1 to 3.4 and 4.1 to 4.4). Each element has a common format over four pages.

Example
Element > 3.2 Develop expert learners:
Foster deep understanding and skilful action

Teacher action >
teachers' commitments, thinking and actions to develop this element

Justice alert >
highlights potential equity issues related to this element

Essence >
the idea at the heart of this element

Ways to … >
ideas for practice

Story >
reflects the element essence

Student action >
how students might engage if the pedagogy is effective

Ways to … [continued] >
more ideas for embedding this element in practice

Element not demonstrated … >
thinking and/or actions that work against this element

Language … >
sentence starters and questions that help students internalise this element

Practice check >
questions teachers ask themselves to reflect on their practice

Domain 1

Learning for effective teaching

Central to the SA TfEL pedagogy framework is the belief that teachers respond more successfully to the needs of students when they approach their teaching as a rich learning process. Teachers need a deep understanding and knowledge of their field and to be expert learners themselves. When learning about learning becomes central to teachers' identities, they are better able to support and empathise with the learning of their students. Leaders play a significant role with teachers in creating a learning culture and community.

Pedagogy is improved through continual processes of questioning, review and redesign. The establishment of a professional learning community provides opportunities and support for such critical reflection with peers about classroom and teaching practice.

Becoming familiar with relevant policy and curriculum enables teachers to ensure the learning experiences they design for students address the big ideas in their field and develop the knowledge valued by our society.

Teachers have an important role and unique perspective in contributing to public debate about education. Teachers identifying themselves as learners is key to the development of a community of thinking in a school.

How does my learning inform my teaching?

Essence >

Leaders and teachers develop their understanding of current learning theories, and themselves as learners, to inform learning and teaching design.

1.1 Understand how self and others learn

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

○ **Develop awareness of myself as a learner and a leader**
- > Understand my preferences for thinking, learning and leading
- > Clarify and articulate my values as a leader

○ **Appreciate the impact of my style of leading on others and strengthen aspects as needed**
- > Gather 360˚ feedback regularly to monitor my impact on staff learning and check for congruence between my intent and the impact
- > Develop strategies to enhance my skills to lead for learning

○ **Develop an appreciation of the learning strengths and dispositions of my staff**
- > Explicitly draw out the learning dispositions and strengths of staff
- > Affirm and acknowledge staff members by engaging them in projects that utilise their strengths
- > Deliberately design teams to include complementary strengths

I will strategically design to:

○ **Determine the level of staff members' understanding about themselves as learners to establish relevant professional learning**
- > Ensure professional learning enables staff members to develop their understanding more deeply and learn about how this impacts on their teaching
- > Provide opportunities for staff members to extend their learning strategies
- > Encourage staff members' self-reflection and sharing about their learning

○ **Engage staff members in sharing their expertise and understanding of learning with each other**
- > Infuse meetings with a focus on learning
- > Encourage staff conversation about students as individual learners
- > Ensure professional learning incorporates the sharing of staff expertise

○ **Ensure professional learning engages staff members with current learning theories as a basis for co-constructing our whole school's vision and values for learning and teaching**
- > Strategically plan staff development to explore current learning theories and develop clear expectations for trialling, reviewing and implementing
- > Develop shared meaning and whole school agreements about learning and teaching
- > Be precise about what our shared agreements mean we do and don't do

Alert

We teach and lead who we are

We're 'naturally' blind to the impact we have on others—at the heart of developing our leading for learning is the recognition that we lead (and teach) to our preferences. Without this recognition, there is a danger of not seeing the strengths others bring to professional work, excluding some and stereotyping others.

'Know thyself', knowing your own worldviews and others' perceptions of you are key to leading for learning.

Practice check

- Do I have processes for gathering feedback, and a capacity to stay open to this and use it discerningly to rethink and modify my leadership as needed?

- Do all meetings of staff reflect sound learning principles? Do I:
  - > create safe conditions for rigorous learning with staff?
  - > develop staff expertise about learning?
  - > personalise and connect the learning of staff?

- Is there differentiation in the learning program to accommodate staff difference?

- Have we really learnt about 'learning', or have we simply engaged at a surface level and are mouthing the rhetoric?

- Have I identified who was an effective leader of my learning and modelled myself on his/her skills and attributes?

If teachers understand how self and others learn, they will …

- understand the process of learning as personal meaning making, and design teaching practice based on this understanding

- understand the fundamentally social and dialogic nature of learning and reflect this in the learning program

- appreciate the potency of the learner's self-concept in determining learning success

- know the significant role that emotion and the executive functions play in motivation, attention, felt meaning and learning

- develop an understanding of thinking and the role thinking plays in deep learning

- integrate current learning theories into their own personalised theories of learning and teaching

- appreciate diversity and, to enrich their thinking, collaborate with others who learn differently

- help their students understand and appreciate learner differences

Notes:

1.1

Leaders of learning— Food for thought

I would like to emphasise that unless leaders become learners themselves—unless they can acknowledge their own vulnerabilities and uncertainties —then transformational learning will never take place. When leaders become genuine learners, they set a good example and help to create a psychologically safe environment for others.

Edgar Schein

Effective leadership values diverse perspectives and believes that the richest view is that which is built from the perspectives of all.

Julia Atkin

Sustained school improvement processes are premised on the leader knowing the 'right questions to ask' without necessarily knowing all the answers.

Daniel White

It is ironic that whilst schools exist to educate children, the principles and processes of learning are rarely applied to organisational learning and the professional learning of teachers.

Andy Hargreaves

The more leaders focus their relationships, their work and their learning on the core business of teaching and learning, the greater their influence on student outcomes.

Viviane Robinson

Leadership dimensions that make a difference to student outcomes

Effect size

1 Establishing goals and expectations
2 Resourcing strategically
3 Planning, coordinating and evaluating teaching and the curriculum
4 Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development
5 Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment

Viviane Robinson

Essence >

Leaders and teachers develop their expertise by strengthening their disciplinary knowledge and translating learning theory into effective teaching practice.
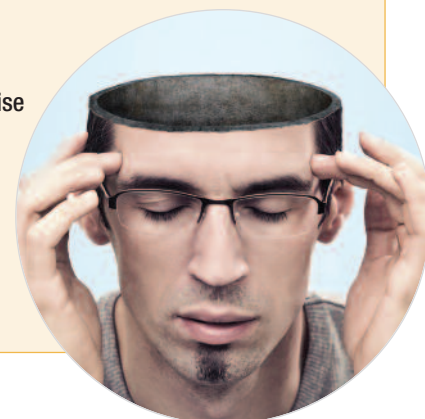
1.2 Develop deep pedagogical and content knowledge

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

○ **Understand what is involved in leadership for learning**
> Recognise that in this context my 'content' is knowledge of leading for learning
> Engage with current research on leadership that positively impacts on student and staff learning
> Recognise the power of my instructional leadership role to influence and develop a whole school learning culture, and prioritise meeting time and resources for professional learning and work with staff to ensure clarity of our vision for learning

○ **Accept responsibility to keep abreast of, engage with and critique theories of learning and teaching and their implications for practice**
> Seek out conferences and professional learning opportunities to be exposed to a range of learning theories
> Regularly engage in professional learning

○ **Develop personal clarity and precision with the metalanguage of learning and teaching**
> Discuss, debate and define the meaning of terms such as pedagogy, constructivism, mastery learning, student centred learning, personalised learning, explicit teaching, authentic assessment, professional learning community, learning styles …

○ **Appreciate that designing learning for understanding is strengthened by deep pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge**
> Identify staff members with expertise in particular learning areas, observe their practice and reflect on the role that deep pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge plays in their effectiveness

I will strategically design to:

○ **Ensure staff keep abreast of and critique theories of learning and teaching and their implications for practice**
> Provide professional learning opportunities on new pedagogy, including structured critique
> Identify staff with pedagogic expertise and develop opportunities for this to be shared through teams, mentors and staff professional learning programs

○ **Encourage and support staff members to develop their disciplinary and pedagogical expertise to ensure greater responsiveness and flexibility in their teaching**
> Encourage staff members to keep up to date with new knowledge in their relevant disciplines
> Distribute disciplinary expertise across collaborative teams
> Ensure faculty/year level leaders understand their roles as leaders of disciplinary learning as well as coordinating management tasks

Alert

In the past, knowledge was seen as a static body to be transmitted. Given this, it was reasonable to use strategies that simply required students to record and recall information.

However, if we truly believe that learning requires individuals to construct meaning and it is the teachers' role to foster this, we need to develop deep professional knowledge of the processes that best enable us to do this. We need to know the curriculum and the best ways to help students get to know 'the stuff'.

Practice check

○ Have I scheduled time for my own learning about educational leadership and learning through reading and conferences?

○ Do I regularly update my professional reading to ensure I'm abreast of current theories and engage in critiquing them?

○ Am I careful and precise in my use of professional language and ensure I'm communicating meaning, not empty words?

○ Do I challenge teachers to interrogate assessment information to determine where learning was not successful and to deliberately refine teaching to address this?

○ Do I support Learning Area/Year Level coordinators in their roles as leaders of learning?

○ Do staff members alert each other to emerging ideas and knowledge in their respective Learning Areas? Do I actively seek to develop content knowledge by engaging with my staff members who have experience in certain areas.

If teachers develop their pedagogical and content knowledge, they will …

○ understand their professional work as being intentional and responsive, not just technical implementation of textbook activities or others' programs and strategies

○ understand the nature of knowing through different disciplines and its application in real world/authentic contexts

○ maintain a responsiveness to learners and learning

○ develop and draw on an extensive repertoire of practice to provide multiple entry points into student learning

○ know and emulate contemporary pedagogical thinking and practice

○ work together to share and develop approaches to introduce new concepts/skills, identify misunderstandings, build and consolidate learner knowledge and design assessment tightly linked to the desired learning outcomes

Notes:

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1.2

Leaders of learning— Food for thought

Content Knowledge
is knowledge about the actual subject matter that is to be learnt or taught. Clearly teachers must know and understand the subjects that they teach, including knowledge of central facts, concepts, theories, and procedures within a given field; knowledge of explanatory frameworks that organise and connect ideas … (Shulman 1986). Teachers must also understand the nature of knowledge and inquiry in different fields. For example, how is a proof in mathematics different from a historical explanation or a literary interpretation? Teachers who do not have these understandings can misrepresent those subjects to their students.

Pedagogical Knowledge
is deep knowledge about learning and the processes and practices or methods of teaching and learning. This is a generic form of knowledge that is involved in all issues of student learning, classroom management, lesson plan development and implementation, and student evaluation. A teacher with deep pedagogical knowledge understands how students construct (meaning), acquire skills, and develop habits of mind and positive dispositions toward learning.

Pedagogical Content Knowledge is where pedagogical and content knowledge come together
When we have deep knowledge of what we are teaching, we can anticipate likely misconceptions and we know what makes concepts difficult or easy to learn. Deep pedagogical knowledge means we have a repertoire of specific and effective strategies to respond.

Deborah Loewenberg Ball
& Williamson McDiarmid

Content Knowledge | Pedagogical Content Knowledge | Pedagogical Knowledge

… Australian operational views of constructivism confuse a theory of knowing with a theory of teaching.

We confuse the need for the child to construct her own knowledge with a form of pedagogy which sees it as the child's responsibility to achieve that.

We focus on the action of the student in the construction of knowledge, rather than the action of the teacher in engaging with the child's current misconceptions and structuring experiences to challenge those misconceptions … The constructivist theory of knowing has been used to justify a non-interventionist theory of pedagogy, whereas it is a fair interpretation to argue that constructivism requires vigorous interventionist teaching: how, after all, is a student with misconceptions supposed to challenge them unaided? How does she even know they are misconceptions?

Bruce Wilson

Essence >

Leaders and teachers participate in critically reflective inquiry to develop teaching and learning across the school.
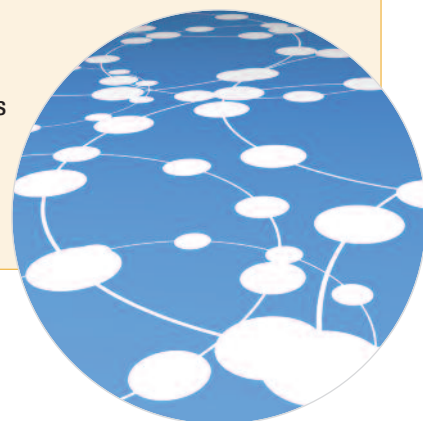
1.3 Participate in professional learning communities and networks

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

○ **Seek out and actively participate in professional dialogue about my experiences of leadership for learning**
> Form a small learning group of my peers as a professional learning community
> Engage in relevant learning opportunities, such as Regional Leaders' days and cluster meetings with my professional learning community

○ **Participate in critically reflective inquiry to develop my leadership practice**
> Use systems-mandated accountability points (eg DIA*f* site review and validation, performance reporting to my line manager) as opportunities for critical reflection on my leadership practice

○ **Create and sustain a professional learning community with my school leadership team**
> Embed a learning approach in the day-to-day work of my team
> Establish specific sessions where our focus is purely professional learning

I will strategically design to:

○ **Create a climate where teachers can explore ideas and their practice in open dialogue**
> Establish expectations and norms for staff to learn together, share and critique practice
> Make explicit the difference between professional disagreement and personal conflict

○ **Encourage and support teachers to participate in professional learning communities within and beyond the school**
> Model participation in professional learning communities
> Establish effective systems and processes to support 'deprivatised' practice, such as teachers working in collaborative teams, teacher peer moderation of students' work and observing each other's practice
> Help staff members develop professional language to be able to describe their work explicitly and accurately

○ **Deliberately allocate school resources to initiate and support professional learning communities**
> Structure the timetable to allow staff collaborative planning time
> Allocate a budget to professional learning communities
> Resource professional learning communities with expertise as needed

Alert

Many professional learning communities 'fail' because they cast their focus as a 'problem' to be solved and assume they will find an answer overnight.

Building a learning community where rich learning occurs takes time and focuses as much on exploration as it does on problem solution.

Effectiveness of Leaders' Learning Circles depends on existing relationships, culture, rapport and an environment where participants can share their beliefs and bring unconscious assumptions to the surface.

Practice check

○ Do we actively employ what we know about learning in our own leadership and staff meetings?

○ How and how often do I critically reflect on my own practice and set specific goals for my development? Do I have a professional support group?

○ How am I modelling being a learning community member with staff? How do I do this with my leadership team?

○ How am I actively promoting respectful and trusting relationships?

○ Am I monitoring the 'climate' of our meetings? Do we have the right balance of challenge and support?

○ Am I actively supporting teachers' involvement in professional learning communities? How?

If teachers engage in professional learning communities and networks, they will …

○ be avid, ongoing learners about their professional work and actively participate in collegiate learning

○ learn together by sharing their thinking, practice, programs and responses to students' work

○ reflect, through the learner's lens, on the impact of what they do, say and imply

○ seek to clarify their own assumptions and work towards congruence between beliefs and practice

○ understand the role of intellectual conflict in learning, and will not confuse this with personal conflict

○ develop their professional language to describe their work explicitly and accurately

Notes:

Leaders of learning— Food for thought

A professional learning community is a community where we can learn the 'artistry' of teaching.

A community where teachers and leaders provide support and challenge for each other to learn new practices and to unlearn old assumptions, beliefs and practices.

Milbrey McLaughlin

To operate as a professional learning community we had to challenge perceptions of positional power. What we 'grew' to understand was that everyone has personal theories and theories about learning and it's OK to put them on the table and ask questions about them. Initially being challenged about my practice (what I did and why I did it) hurt. I cringed, but eventually I realised there isn't one 'right' way and my job is not to have all the 'right' answers. This was very liberating as it enabled me to be far more creative in my thinking and ask questions to better understand what we did.

Penny Cook

Instruction improves when teachers in a team teach each other the practice of teaching.

The traditional school often functions as a collection of independent contractors united by a common parking lot.

Robert Eaker, Rebecca DuFour & Richard Dufour

A successful face-to-face team is more than just collectively intelligent. It makes everyone work harder, think smarter and reach better conclusions than they would have on their own.

James Surowiecki

It is only by subjecting our preferences and projects to the test of debate that we come to understand what we know and we still need to learn. Until we have to defend our opinions in public, they remain opinions … half-formed convictions based on random impressions and unexamined assumptions.

Mike Schmoker

The teacher teams carefully deliberate over each step and the best possible sequence of steps in the lesson; how to most effectively introduce and explain the concepts; how much time to devote to practical exercise; and how to assess and adjust during and after each lesson and unit.

Mike Schmoker

1.3

Essence >

Leaders and teachers interact with communities to build learning partnerships and connect student learning beyond the school.

1.4 Engage with the community

1.4

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

○ **Create conditions to involve parents/caregivers as partners in the educational process for their children**
  > Remember that parents are the child's first educators
  > Develop authentic, inclusive and respectful relationships with the community
  > Appreciate the differing levels of parental and community engagement appropriate for the family contexts
  > Harness the expertise of the community in the school's learning program

○ **Actively elicit and respond to parents'/caregivers' aspirations for their children's education**
  > Create focus groups where parents/caregivers and staff share their views
  > Work with the School Governing Council to promote its role in developing and communicating the learning vision for the school

○ **Ensure opportunities for the community to develop understandings about learning, the emerging future and the implications for their children**
  > Develop credibility as an educational leader with the community
  > Facilitate staff and parent/caregiver opportunities for shared learning
  > Regularly expose parents/caregivers to relevant educational research, ideas and information
  > Show connections between current educational thinking and the school's program

I will strategically design to:

○ **Clarify that partnership means mutual responsibility**
  > Demonstrate that decisions and judgments are based on professional knowledge together with parental perspectives

○ **Establish expectations that teachers will engage positively with parents/caregivers and students as partners in the educational process**
  > Develop protocols for engagement and prompt follow-up
  > Explicitly encourage valuing of the diverse strengths and interests of the community that contribute to student learning
  > Actively challenge non-inclusive attitudes and actions

○ **Establish systems and processes for teachers and families to work together to maximise student learning**
  > Establish effective open communication between school and home about student learning
  > Establish opportunities for teachers to learn in partnership with parents/caregivers
  > Establish school reporting processes that include parents/caregivers in shared celebrations of student learning
  > Encourage teachers to give specific strategies for parents/caregivers to assist learning at home

Alert

Some parents' own experience of schooling left them feeling vulnerable and alienated. Approaches and strategies to break down these barriers are crucial.

Establishing an appropriate interplay between parental perspectives and professional judgment can be challenging, requiring sensitivity and delicate balancing.

Practice check

○ Do I actively challenge deficit views and assumptions about the community aired by staff?

○ How consciously do we consider parents' own experiences of schooling when communicating with them?

○ What systems exist for staff and parents/caregivers to work together for student learning?

○ Are parents/caregivers invited to engage in conversations about learning, to listen to guest speakers about learning, and to talk about the future?

If teachers engage with the community, they will …

○ listen to and get to know the community, and actively seek out community strengths

○ use these strengths to complement and enrich the class learning program

○ develop richer understanding of their learners by seeking dialogue and feedback from parents/caregivers

○ blur the boundaries between home and school to create more natural learning contexts—the wall-less classroom

○ use contemporary ICTs to engage with global and online communities and to expand and enhance learning

○ communicate regularly with the community through multiple forums

Notes:

Leaders of learning— Food for thought

The best interests of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his/her education and guidance; that responsibility lies in the first place with his/her parents.

United Nations

If educators view children simply as students they are likely to see the family as separate from school … If educators view children as children, they are likely to see both the family and community as partners with the school in children's education and development.

Joyce Epstein

Involving parents in (and not just informing them about) common learning standards or outcomes, creates opportunities to develop a deeper dialogue between parents and teachers about teaching and learning …

Andy Hargreaves & Shawn Moore

For me as a parent, a teacher, a school principal, and one who remembers what it is like to be an Aboriginal student, I understand very well that just getting a child inside the school gate does not mean the problem is solved. My experience as an educator confirms that children and parents engage in school positively when respectful partnerships exist.

Chris Sarra

Our image of the child is rich in potential, strong, powerful, competent and most of all connected to the adults and other children around them. We wanted to build on parents' competencies, not their deficiencies, and recognise the crucial role they play in educating their children.

Margaret Whalley

A working relationship that is characterised by a shared sense of purpose, mutual respect and the willingness to negotiate. This implies a sharing of information, responsibility, skills, decision making and accountability.

Patrick Easen, Pippa Kendall & Janet Shaw

We often overestimate children's academic ability and underestimate their intellectual capacity.

Lillian Katz

1.4

Essence >

Leaders and teachers contribute to educational dialogue and debate that shapes whole school policy and informs practice.

1.5 Discuss educational purpose and policy

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

- **Develop personal clarity about my vision for learning and teaching at our school to achieve our educational purpose**
  - > Continue to test and refine my vision
  - > Appreciate that policy is purpose expressed as action, captured in print
- **Keep abreast of and develop understanding of current systems' policies as they relate to learning at my school**
  - > Maintain preparedness to constructively challenge policy against values and purpose
  - > Prioritise the school's engagement with systems' policies as they relate to the school's current focus
- **Engage with other leaders to contribute to the development of systems' policies**
  - > Participate in Principal Networks and Associations and provide a considered response to systems' policies
  - > Take responsibility for contributing to development of systems' policies

I will strategically design to:

- **Deliberately engage the community in co-constructing our school's values and vision for learning and teaching in light of our educational purpose**
  - > Establish processes to engage the school community in clarifying and articulating the school's purpose
  - > Establish dialogue processes to surface and debate staff values about learning and teaching
- **Translate our values, vision and purpose into policy and actions**
  - > Integrate our school's purpose and policy with DECS policy
  - > Keep our educational purpose alive by ensuring its visibility and deriving practice from our values, vision and purpose
- **Collectively monitor the congruence between our actions and our values and purpose**
  - > Review policies in terms of our educative purpose and make refinements to ensure congruence
  - > Obtain feedback from students and parents/caregivers
  - > Ensure school reviews and validation processes are referenced against our vision for learning, and are designed for continuous improvement

Alert

A school's vision and purpose statement can easily become empty words without regularly referencing our actions against them.

Do we systematically consider our declared purpose when developing, implementing and monitoring policy and action?

Are we congruent—do we really 'walk our talk'?

Practice check

- Do our policies and practices reflect our bigger intent—our purpose about teaching and learning?
- Do budget priorities reflect our declared vision and values?
- Can all my teachers describe how they translate our purpose and policies into their learning and teaching?
- How do I engage the school community in developing, reviewing and understanding our vision and values and keeping them current?
- What unconscious messages have we conveyed through the physical environment (eg displays, signage, access)?

If teachers discuss educational purpose and policy, they will …

- be passionate about their purpose and share a professional voice
- articulate what they do and how it supports the school's vision and values
- be conscious of and explicit about what makes a difference for teaching and learning for today's learners
- know policies and procedural guidelines that inform their work
- accept their professional responsibility and work collegially to develop whole school approaches to teaching and learning

Notes:

Leaders of learning— Food for thought

Vision without action is merely a dream. Action without vision just passes the time. Vision with action can change the world.

Joel Arthur Barker

Purpose acts as a moral north star on the route to excellence: It offers a steady beacon for inspiring and directing students' best efforts over the long haul, within the classroom and beyond.

William Damon

Intervention at the structural, policy or school level is like searching for your wallet, which you lost in the bushes, under the lamppost because that is where there is light. The answer lies elsewhere—it lies in the person who gently closes the classroom door and performs the teaching act—the person who puts into place the end effects of so many policies, who interprets these policies, and who is alone with students during their 15 000 hours of schooling.

John Hattie

When you have a very clear focus, you recognise what's important and all the other stuff becomes not important.

Anthony Alvarado

As the main institution for fostering social cohesion in an increasingly diverse society, publicly funded schools must serve all children, not simply those with the loudest or most powerful advocates. This means addressing the cognitive and social needs of all children, with an emphasis on including those who may not have been well served in the past.

John Goodlad

Leadership has multiple functions—the highest function of leadership is to release the creative energies of the people in the system and to manage the processes for giving that energy direction towards mutually beneficial goals.

Malcolm Knowles

People feel a commitment to a decision in proportion to the extent to which they feel they have participated in making it.

Julia Atkin

1.5

Essence >

Leaders and teachers develop systems and structures to ensure effective teaching and monitoring of learning progress.

1.6 Design, plan and organise for learning and teaching

In my role as a leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

○ **Develop my understanding and skills of designing, planning and organising for learning and teaching**
> Use the SA TfEL Framework's learning principles of domains 2, 3 and 4 to design staff professional learning

○ **Design the use of time, space, resources—human, physical, financial, technical—to maximise learning**
> Think through the impact of the use of resources on the effectiveness of learning (eg appropriateness of the design of learning spaces, availability of ICT)
> Evaluate the effectiveness of the current use of resources and re-allocate as necessary
> Establish whole school systems for ensuring efficient use of resources

○ **Use evidence to inform the design of our learning and teaching program**
> Develop my ability to identify valid evidence and analyse data

I will strategically design to:

○ **Work with staff members to develop their skills for designing, planning and organising for learning and teaching**
> Enable staff to model design expertise and program exemplars
> Enable staff with specific expertise to model classroom management systems, approaches for differentiating the curriculum, learning and teaching strategies and inclusive assessment practices

○ **Establish whole school systems for monitoring and tracking student engagement and learning outcomes**
> Develop our school-based learning management system and integrate this with available system data
> Use student data as an integral aspect of performance development and accountability processes

○ **Critically evaluate the effectiveness of our systems and structures for maximising learning**
> Gather and examine appropriate evidence
> Involve staff in using evidence as a basis for critiquing our systems and structures

Alert

Pedagogy in the 21st century is far more sophisticated than in the '80s when effective teaching was often perceived to be good classroom management and 'a quiet classroom was a good classroom'. It's far more sophisticated than the '90s when 'busy work' and fun activities were used to engage students and 'variety' was the buzz word.

Contemporary pedagogy challenges us to be deliberate and thoughtful in design, planning, organisation and evaluation.

Practice check

○ Do I ensure staff members work collaboratively to design and plan teaching programs that are responsive to student needs and the curriculum standards?

○ Have I established processes for collaborative moderation of student learning?

○ How am I supporting teachers to interpret and analyse assessment information to direct future learning and teaching?

○ What processes have I put in place to get feedback about the effectiveness of our systems and structures?

○ Do I have a good overview of all the programs in use in our school and have we considered their appropriateness for the needs of our students?

If teachers design, plan and organise for learning and teaching, they will …

○ use rich sources of data and evidence to identify learner needs and develop appropriate programs and plans

○ tailor programs to meet the needs of and extend all learners, with differentiation being seen as essential

○ develop skills of intervention that ensure mastery and success for all learners

○ develop a range of strategies for engaging and challenging learners

○ establish the conditions and explicitly teach students the skills to engage with and manage their own learning

○ develop a repertoire of strategies for managing student behaviour to maximise learning

○ design learning programs clearly identifying the learning intentions, strategies, resources and assessment processes

○ give consideration to the best arrangements for learning (eg student groupings, use of space, access to resources)

Notes:

Leaders of learning— Food for thought

After all … there is 'no packaged program' that ensures success. But there are … common 'structural features' that promote success in schools. Successful schools allow more professional autonomy, but they also provide accountability through 'explicit goals for student learning'. Best of all, these structures can be established by any leader, and not just the rare individual with 'charisma'.

Mike Schmoker

It's not about either/or—it's not management or leadership of learning, it's about how the managerialist work serves our core purpose of improving student learning and achievement.

Margot Foster

The art of teaching involves clarity about the desired learning outcomes and learning activities to achieve these, as well as a thoughtful response to the context, learner needs and prior knowledge, the teachable moment and even the weather.

SA TfEL Review Tools handbook

Effective teaching is far more complex than the simple use of strategies … it is also a question of quality … The Quality Tests are:

Intentionality

Am I clear about what I want them to learn and how to help them learn it?

Is the teacher clear about the learning intent? Have approaches and strategies been designed purposefully, with the learners and their context in mind to achieve the desired learning outcomes?

Effectiveness

Did what I design work for everyone? Did they learn it? Are the strategies and approaches designed effective for their purpose? Did they meet the needs of each learner?

Consistency

Do I act consistently? Do the students know where they stand with the teacher? Are the messages given about learning consistent?

Responsiveness

Am I responding to the moment? Am I taking them to the next step? Is the teacher responsive to what is emerging? Is the teacher reading the cues indicating:

○ engagement/disengagement

○ understanding/misunderstanding

○ appropriate level of challenge

and intervening as needed?

SA TfEL Review Tools handbook

1.6

Domain 2

Teaching for effective learning:
Create safe conditions for rigorous learning

All teachers create physical, social and emotional conditions for the learners in their classrooms. Teachers who consciously foster supportive yet challenging conditions provide students with increased opportunities for high quality learning. Establishing democratic relationships is a critical condition to sharing power and developing a safe, low-threat environment for learning.

Shared understanding of expected classroom and learning behaviour allows teachers to build responsibility and to foster student autonomy through negotiating both learning and the direction of the curriculum. Rigorous learning is promoted when students are responsible for their own learning and engage with higher order thinking and intellectually challenging tasks.

Safe classroom conditions enable teachers to explicitly challenge students in a low-threat environment. Rigorous learning also requires that teachers maintain high expectations of students by communicating their belief that everyone is a learner capable of success. Having time available for teachers and students to critically reflect upon their learning and to recognise success enables the celebration of achievements and the setting of future learning goals.

Creating a supportive, challenging and critically reflective classroom ensures students are provided with optimal conditions for sustained, relevant and rigorous learning.

How does my classroom provide a supportive and challenging environment for student learning?

Essence >

The teacher shares power with students recognising it as a fundamental condition for learning.

Building democracy for more powerful learning networks

One of the challenges for a Year 7 teacher is finding ways to help students really get to know each other beyond their own friendship groups. If we don't address this, friction can spill into the classroom and we may lose the rigorous learning for another day.

I remember one particular group who, from day one, actively avoided any learning interactions with certain other class members. The inflexibility was getting in the way of team learning with and from each other.

I hatched a plan. I announced: 'Next week, everyone will change seats on Friday afternoon ready for the following Monday morning'.

There were lots of nods of approval, until I described the process. Names would be drawn randomly out of a hat in groups of four to form table seating for the following week. The initial groans and complaints were so enormous that it would have been easy at this point to give up, but I stuck with it. I explained that the concept and process were non-negotiable, but the ground rules and expectations needed to be developed collaboratively.

We put our heads together and the collaborative strategies flowed:

○ **Suspend judgment**—there would be no responses, verbal or otherwise, as names were drawn.

○ **Seek difference**—a redraw would be done if anyone was with more than one person from the previous week's table group.

○ **Get to know your group**—we would begin the week with a ten minute table conversation, sharing personal interests, strengths and talents, or responding to a posed question.

○ **Be in the moment**—all students would be actively involved in their table group.

To solve the teething problems, we explicitly revisited our ground rules and expectations. By the end of the term we'd established a weekly routine that didn't just run smoothly but was actually embraced enthusiastically by everyone. With these new arrangements came new and powerful learning. Students mixed freely and got to know each other on a new level. By talking and working with every class member, they became more positive and respectful of others in the class. They actively sought out peers, including those they wouldn't have been 'caught dead' talking to before.

Students were discovering what they were all good at and, in the process, they developed a range of ways of thinking. They nominated peers as being skilled in certain areas when others needed help. From this we developed a 'Skills Register' which was posted on the classroom wall; we continually added to it as the year progressed. Rather than coming to me as their first port of call for help, encouragement and feedback, my students were constantly tapping into their own rich source of collective knowledge and skills.

In one of our class meetings we decided to explore new timelines for the seating arrangements. On the last Friday of term we had one mega-draw and organised table group seating for the entire next term. In this way, every student knew what to expect, and who they would be sitting next to and when.

The students weren't the only winners in our new seating arrangements—I learnt powerful lessons as well. I came to understand that when students choose their own classroom seating there's a chance for implied rejection of peers. Choosing not to sit with particular classmates is often deliberate, and a form of harassment.

Sometimes democracy needs a little help—separate the entrenched groups, scaffold their new interactions, and you can empower individuals to develop ways of working with, supporting and learning from *all* learners.

Year 7 teacher

develop democratic

Key actions: Teachers

○ Accept my students as individuals, and work in partnership with them to develop class expectations and clarify rights and responsibilities

○ Model respect by listening attentively to students and acknowledging alternative perspectives

○ Seek students' feedback on my teaching, value their insights and act upon their advice

○ Ensure that learners listen to each other and feel safe to voice opinions and challenge thinking

○ Structure teamwork where students assume different roles and responsibilities within groups

○ Think carefully before overriding class or group agreements

○ Explicitly model fair voting processes and avoid bias

○ Encourage all to act as leaders, teachers and learners

○ Frame classroom conversations to focus on learning, and empower learners to contribute to future directions

○ Teach explicit skills and create opportunities for students to chair meetings, negotiate agendas, make decisions and take action

○ Help students to eliminate language and actions that make others feel uncomfortable

○ Ensure that all individuals' strengths are valued equally

○ Intervene strategically to ensure active inclusion (eg routinely adapt classroom seating arrangements to develop students' learning networks)

Key actions: Students

○ Strive to be an active class member

○ Talk about problems with my teacher rather than being silent

○ Think about when to work with others and when to work on my own

○ Help others and still focus on my own learning

○ Listen to others and give thoughtful feedback to teachers and classmates where I can

○ Think about feedback I'm given from classmates and teachers and choose how to use it

I began to grasp that teaching requires a plural pronoun. The best teaching is never so much about 'me' as about 'us'.

Carol Ann Tomlinson

Ways to develop democratic relationships

Shared ownership of routines and systems: It is important for students to feel a sense of control. They need to participate in decision making and know ahead of time what their session/day/week entails, who has responsibility for specific tasks, the work commitments and deadlines, upcoming events and planning schedules. With this 'transparency', everyone understands the context and everyone is accountable. Students share responsibility for notice boards, diaries, storyboards and timetables, and they keep information up to date.

Class agreement: As an introductory activity, use decision-making processes to involve students in listing the attitudes/actions they consider most important for maintaining a productive, democratic class. This agreement is displayed in the room, each student has a copy, and it is used as a reference for class issues as they arise.

▶ **Bone diagram:** This is a chart for monitoring the class agreements. Draw two circles linked by two parallel lines. In one circle, students note targets for what 'the ideal' will be. Then, in the other circle they describe the current state. Along one straight line, list the actions that will support progress towards achieving the 'ideal'. Along the other line, write the actions that might inhibit progress. Have the class regularly revisit the diagram to discuss and map progress.

Parking lot: This serves as an ongoing class feedback chart to post ideas, comments and concerns anonymously, ensuring that all voices are heard. It is a square with four quadrants labelled:
+ – What's going well?
Δ – What needs improvement?
? – questions
! – ideas or issues.

2.1

relationships

Perception checks: Regularly stop the class group and ask 'Has anyone found another way to do this?' or 'What would happen if we added …?' or 'Has anyone identified an issue with this idea?'.

This is useful for getting specific feedback. It can uncover a pressing issue or individual concern, and promote reflection, evaluation and the processing of ideas. This can be a circle or paired activity or the questions can be written.

New angles: This activity is based on the film *Dead Poets' Society* when Robin Williams' character stood on his desk to see a new perspective. Ask students to look at an object from a variety of angles: sitting, standing, lying on their sides. This activity may be extended by asking students to sketch an object from three or four different angles. Another extension of this activity is to set students the problem of photographing an object from three or four different angles, showing these photos to others and asking them to guess what it is.

The central concept of these activities is that where we stand can change what we see, thus encouraging students to see people from differing perspectives and to have a new appreciation of their peers.

Student-initiated challenges: Establish opportunities for students to work strategically together to achieve a common goal (eg online games, team technology tasks or physical games where students think, plan and act together).

Hearing all voices: This is a good strategy for starting learning conversations with a new group of students. Participants sit in a circle and can talk about themselves for two minutes or respond to a specific question. One person speaks uninterrupted for two minutes, with the next person in the circle following. The activity supports students in getting to know others while controlling how much they wish to share about themselves.

Partner learning talks: Give students time to share their learning on a task with a partner. They can share progress, seek feedback, ask for help, provide encouragement, ask challenging questions or give another perspective on the topic. Follow-up time is then given for students to refocus on what their next step will be.

Language that teachers can use to develop democratic relationships

- What do you think? We value your opinion.
- What other perspectives might there be?
- What support would you like me to give?
- Could you teach this to someone else?
- How do you feel about your achievement?
- Making mistakes really helps us learn.
- If that didn't work, can you find another way to …?
- Would someone like to volunteer to …?
- When you say those things, how might other people feel?
- We're all in this together.
- In this class, we've agreed to …

Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.
Nelson Mandela

This element is not demonstrated if:

- The teacher places all the onus on students to solve their own learning issues or behaviour problems
- Students believe that they have the 'rights' and teachers have the 'responsibilities'
- The teacher is defensive or uses autocratic behaviour when challenged
- Class meetings are held but decisions are not acted upon or items discussed are low level and disconnected from learning
- Voting procedures reflect popularity rather than expertise
- Class discussion is dominated by the teacher or by particular students

Practice check

- Is negotiation real in my classroom? Do students ask for help when they need it?
- Do I create an atmosphere for all students to be equitably engaged?
- Do I talk too much? Might I be the discipline problem?
- How are students supported to make their own decisions?
- Does my teaching style advantage some students over others?
- Is it safe for students to disagree with me or their classmates?

share power

Notes:

*How do I ensure that
all students experience:*
○ *dignity and security*
○ *the right to participate*
○ *respect for their identities*
○ *access to information*
○ *and privacy?*

Glenda MacNaughton &
Gillian Williams

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South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework guide | Teaching for effective learning | Create safe conditions for rigorous learning: Develop democratic relationships

for learning

Essence >

The teacher creates
a culture where everyone
inspires and encourages
each other's learning.

Year 8 camp a buzz

The beginning of a new school year is always coloured by high levels of organisation, catch-ups with colleagues and great hopes for the learning year ahead.

With several newly appointed staff and a Year 8 camp in week 5, the pressure was on! What were our plans for creating a culture of positive engagement and valuing the strengths of our new Year 8 staff and students? Could the camp be the vehicle?

During the induction process for our new Middle School teachers, we discussed the purpose of the camp. We welcomed their input, and acknowledged their experiences and talents for coordinating it. In the week before students arrived, we met to make initial plans. We agreed to begin the school year by facilitating discussions with our students. We would focus on *responsibility*, *equity*, *organisation* and *effective communication*, and we'd use these as a foundation for planning our year and, in particular, the camp. The students would nominate peers for a core group to represent the six home groups.

The year got underway. At the Year 8 assembly on the second day back, we could feel the excitement building. The various organisational aspects of the camp were allocated to home groups. Class discussions evolved, and the core student group was established. They met daily with the Middle Years coordinator to convey home group thinking and to relay shared information back to classes for further input.

In classrooms, the engagement was tangible—the buzz was happening! One home group researched the best deals and availability, and cabin preference forms were designed. Another group booked buses and, in the process, they collated student 'travel sickness' data before allocating buses. The catering group was busy surveying students and teachers, checking dietary requirements and allergies, negotiating a menu democratically based on preferences. Kitchen duty rosters were developed to bring different groups and individuals together and encourage new networking.

Staff and students discussed explicit learning outcomes for the camp. They did collaborative research on the campsite to explore learning possibilities. One class consulted all home groups in an inclusive process to compile 'camp expectations'. They aptly chose to use the school values as their basis, showing insight that impressed staff!

One home group developed team building activities. They surveyed students' individual strengths and mixed them up for Trivia Quiz teams. A definite highlight was going to be the Red Faces Talent Night; everyone would be expected to participate, even the adults.

Everyone played their part in ironing out hiccups and problems as they arose.

After much anticipation and a lot of great teamwork, Week 5 was upon us and the Year 8 camp became a reality. With every learner in each home group actively involved in organising it, the attendance far outstripped previous years. Student engagement was high and our new Year 8s achieved all the intended learning outcomes.

Back at school, teachers built on the friendships and the shared experiences. Students continued to work in teams with common purposes. The cohesive culture that had grown at camp allowed them to take risks in their learning, even at this early stage of the year. They all knew something about each other as people; they willingly talked with others about their learning, built on the ideas of their peers and sought assistance from both peers and teachers.

Through planning the camp, and participating in such a successful way, students and staff had all shown immense collaboration and trust. Our year was now set with the safe conditions and connections for students' rigorous learning.

Deputy principal of a metropolitan secondary school

build a community

Key actions: Teachers

- Remember that learning is social

- Value my students' experiences, cultures and personal stories which will help them to develop strong individual and group identity and a sense of belonging

- Embed collaborative activities that model and promote mutual support, respect and trust to facilitate learning

- Create opportunities for social interaction so that students can develop new relationships to transfer into their learning contexts

- Use my students' learning strengths and preferences to structure diverse groups where they can draw on each other's expertise

- Work with students to develop a learning environment where there is shared responsibility and equitable access to resourcing and support

- Teach explicit skills needed for teamwork

- Provide discussion time for students to share thinking, clarify ideas and inspire each other

- Pose challenges where individuals need to work independently and collaboratively to achieve success

- Use strategies that highlight the power of the learning community, such as a skills/interest register

- Model and reinforce processes for giving and receiving constructive, encouraging feedback

- Actively seek out opportunities for all students to make a contribution in teamwork across classes and year levels

- Celebrate individual achievements and shared successes as a community of learners

- Connect with students by reflecting on the meaning of 'community' for people through time and cultures

Key actions: Students

- Get to know my classmates so we understand each other better and can help each other in our learning

- Listen to my team mates and help solve problems together

- Play my part in teamwork and try out different roles

- Ask for help when I need it—from friends, classmates, teachers and family

- Tell my classmates and my teacher when I think they've done a good job

- Encourage my classmates when they're stuck

I get along with everybody and I specially get along with myself.
Year 1 student

Ways to build a community of learners

Community and service: Begin a class/school program where all students take on roles/responsibilities, keep records of their ongoing involvement and are formally acknowledged for their contributions (eg credit towards SACE subjects). This strengthens school culture and enhances students' connection to school. Roles might include peer tutoring, mentorship, forums, action groups, sports coaching, and classroom duties.

First two weeks program: Many schools begin the year with a specific focus on the shared values, attitudes, skills and community goals that will prepare the class/school for success. All learning activities are designed to develop the theme. Home–school links are an integral part of this process which is continually reinforced and revisited.

Embed cooperative activities: Use simple processes to extend students' connection within the learning community:

Trust Walk—Students pair up, one is blindfolded, and the partner walks beside, guiding the blindfolded person on an outside walk, while using a reassuring voice but no body contact.

Tangles—Eight students face into a circle with their right hands out in front. Each grasps the right hand of another person. Adding to this, the group now grasps left hands, making sure that no two particular people are joined by both hands. Now the challenge is to 'untangle' the group back to a simple circle without letting go of any hands.

Trust builders and trust busters—Students consider what they value for their learning community and compile two lists: attitudes/actions that 'build' learning community capacity and those that 'bust' it. These are revisited frequently.

▶ **Think, Pair, Share**—Students gather information/make notes alone. Next, students pair off to share ideas/combine notes. Then, each member of the pair joins with a member of another pair to think more deeply. Students continue this process, resulting in total class involvement.

of learners

2.2

► **Experts/Jigsaw**—Students go from their home group to another class and learn about a topic. They return as 'experts' to their home group and teach their peers.

Carousel brainstorm—Identify a range of issues from the students' current learning context. Assign an issue to each group. Arrange the groups in an order around the room. Each group records their issue as a heading on their sheet. For five minutes, each group brainstorms responses and ideas for their issue. After that, each group passes their sheet on to the next group, who read the comments and add their own ideas and opinions. The 'Carousel' process continues until all sheets return to their original author group. They then synthesise the results and report the summary back to the whole class.

Collaborative aids for classroom display:

Class values—Brainstorm and decide on class values by a multi-voting process. These could become the class motto and be displayed.

► **X-charts**—A sheet of paper is divided into four by a large 'X'. The areas are titled: 'Looks like', 'Sounds like', 'Feels like', 'Thinks like'.

Sentence starters—These are useful for facilitating feedback.

Thought bubbles—These are a different form of sentence starters (eg 'Learning partners are good at …').

Informal photographs—Photographs of students interacting/learning in groups other than their immediate friendship circles could be displayed. Please note that before photographs are taken, permission should be sought from the students' parents/guardians.

► **Class metaphor:** This could be a statement such as 'Our class is (like) a … because …'. This invites a humorous interpretation. Students work in groups to analyse their real class identity.

Online learning communities:

These create wider connections and new opportunities for all students' learning:

Fan Fiction at <www.fanfiction.net>: Students upload their writing to the site for sharing and receiving feedback from a global audience.

Class blog at <www.edublogs.org>: Create a class blog for students to collaborate on team challenges and pose critical questions of each other's work.

Language that teachers can use to build a community of learners

○ We've agreed on what we want to achieve. What challenges will we set ourselves?

○ How can we become better listeners in our learning community?

○ I don't know the answer to that one. How about finding out and then sharing with the group?

○ How are we all feeling about the issue? Let's brainstorm some possible ways forward.

○ Would this be a good question for our online learning blog?

○ This is what Ruby has achieved so far: … Does anyone have suggestions for how she could go on from here?

○ That's an interesting opinion. Can you tell us more?

○ Who can 'piggyback' off this idea? What if you work with Jack to combine your thinking?

○ Have you found people who agree or disagree with your view? How shall we get together to hear their ideas?

○ What does 'community' mean to you? What can we do to build a sense of community in our class?

This element is not demonstrated if:

○ Individual achievement is prized over collaborative endeavours

○ Students always work alone

○ Students identify only with their immediate friendship group

○ Minimal noise and student movement are seen as indicators of competent teaching

○ The teacher lets behaviour management concerns override learning opportunities when planning for teamwork

○ Student assessment is always individual, at the end of the learning, and marked by the teacher

Practice check

○ Do I know each of my students well enough to recognise their different needs for feeling a sense of belonging?

○ How do I deliberately develop a learning community with students? Do they all feel a part of the group?

○ Do I undermine students' self-esteem in front of their peers/teachers?

○ Do I teach collaboration skills?

○ Do my students share responsibility for progress?

○ How am I modelling being a community member with other teachers?

○ In what ways do I bring the resources of the wider community into the classroom?

Great discoveries and improvements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds.
Alexander Graham Bell

inspire and

Notes:

> *We need to construct our own meaning, in our own context, of a collaborative learning community … It is not a checklist of factors, it is a mindset as much as a map. It is a philosophy as much as a place … It is taking responsibility for our craft, our own development and that of our students; it is ensuring our future.*
>
> Carole Cooper & Julie Boyd

encourage learning

South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework guide | Teaching for effective learning | Create safe conditions for rigorous learning: Negotiate learning

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Never too old to learn

I was working harder than my Year 9 SOSE class! If working harder means learning more, then I was learning more than they were. Things needed to change. I wanted my students to be motivated and take the lead in their learning.

A colleague suggested, 'Why not try negotiating it with the students? You could use individual or team learning plans with scaffolds to build their knowledge and skills to work more independently? My students are so much more motivated when we work this way.'

What did I have to lose? I'd give it a try.

I talked with the class about my ideas, emphasising that I had high expectations explicitly linked to the curriculum standards. It was important to me that they were motivated but also that they engaged in quality learning as well as produce quality work. I shared the standards with my students and had them highlight key words about the actions and the degree of skill and understanding needed. From this we developed a brief that outlined expectations and a planning proforma that could be used to develop inquiry questions from the unit of work.

The students chose their own learning focus within the SOSE unit. I then provided a range of proformas like the Bloom's Taxonomy with examples and question matrices to scaffold their learning.

The learning plans supported the development of rich inquiry questions—an essential element for success. We collectively brainstormed ways to publish and format the learning. As compiling a bibliography was part of the brief, I explicitly taught this skill. As opportunities arose for clarifying key concepts through the group work, I used them to demonstrate other skills such as using the Capacity matrix for the whole class. I found this explicit teaching at the point of need was much more effective.

As the students developed their personal learning, we stopped regularly to see what everyone was doing and what progress was being made. What help did they need? What was working well? Who was stuck? Where were the common dips and troughs? Along the way, the students shared their learning with each other and asked for feedback. They were becoming increasingly adept at providing explicit feedback and posing constructive questions.

After each of these monitoring sessions, I scaffolded their progress with targeted learning workshops for small focus groups and individuals. All students completed their inquiry with significantly more motivation and energy from them and less pushing from me.

Year 9 teacher of Studies of Society and Environment

negotiate

Key actions: Teachers

○ Remember the power of student interest—what they bring with them as they walk in the door and what I generate with them; both are key to engagement and persistence in learning

○ Empower my students by working with them to use the relevant curriculum guidelines as reference when setting their learning goals

○ Progressively move from more prescriptive learning activities to student-led activities

○ Support students to attain learning outcomes in personalised ways

○ Listen to students to find out their learning needs and interests and use this to inform learning plans

○ Design open-ended tasks with clearly defined criteria that challenge students to show initiative

○ Scaffold students' efforts in developing targets for their own learning

○ Work together with students to rigorously monitor their progress

○ Teach students explicit skills in questioning to develop their own inquiry processes

○ Clarify the steps needed to identify and access relevant resources for self-directed learning; model and practise this process with students

○ Acknowledge diversity, involving families and community in supporting students' personal learning

○ Establish ongoing procedures to engage students in goal setting, planning, self-monitoring, critical reflection and evaluation

○ Actively involve students in the assessment process as an integral part of all negotiated learning

Key actions: Students

○ Listen when the teacher is explaining the curriculum

○ Ask myself, 'How will I make this learning task really suit me so that I can do my best?'

○ Set my own learning goals, with the support of my teachers or peers

○ Challenge myself to manage my time and work hard towards my goals

○ Ask for help when I need it, so I can keep going

When children have a stake in their learning … powerful things happen. They become more committed to their learning, and so are motivated to learn … As they become autonomous learners, they grow in self-confidence and in belief in themselves.

Mark Collis & Joan Dalton

learning

Ways to negotiate learning

Ordered sharing: Begin a term/teaching block by outlining the general learning focus and hearing all students' responses. Then discuss and collate ideas to inform your planning. At strategic points during the term, identify sections of the curriculum and discuss what students are expected to know, understand and do.

Flexible learning environment: Ensure that students have easy access to resources, non-restrictive systems for movement outside the classroom (library passes etc), a balanced timetable with some extended blocks, and space for the 'teachable moments'.

Agree on protocols: Agree on ways for students to negotiate seating arrangements, grouping strategies, equitable use of ICTs/media, appropriate noise levels, and time management/organisation issues.

Classroom display: Displays can include flow charts for independent learning procedures, a peer skills register, agreed deadlines, clocks/timers, and sentence starters for students' critical reflection on their learning.

'Students' Tip' board: This could be a whiteboard where students can write tips about what worked for them/what didn't work, and strategies they used successfully.

Planning frames: Establish a convention of shapes and colours linked to elements needed for a good plan (eg green arrow for your target, blue hexagon for resources, yellow star for the people to help you, brown footprint for steps to take, grey clock for deadlines or time frames). For group or whole class work, use coloured card shapes to put together project plans. Set up symbols on the school computer network so that students can cut and paste these into their own personal learning plans.

2.3

Create worksheets using the symbols. Set criteria for what you expect in particular plans, and encourage students to use at least one frame of each colour/shape when developing every plan. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 33.)

Assessment rubrics: In the planning stage, work together to establish an assessment rubric. Vertically, list 'Criteria to be assessed', and cross-reference these horizontally with scaled achievement indicators, clearly worded. Students can then use the rubric to guide their learning.

Learning coaches: Teach students to coach each other. Coaching is basically a structured conversation where one person, the coach, helps another person to find out his/her own answers. The coach asks the questions and listens but does not offer suggestions. The GROW structure is widely used: set the Goal, find out the Reality, think of Options, commit to the Way forward (eg 'What is it that you want to do?', 'What's it like at the moment?', 'What might you do to improve?', 'So what are you going to do and when are you going to do it?'). 'Speed coaching' lasting ten minutes for each student can be really effective. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 35.)

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Language that teachers can use to negotiate learning

- What are you really interested in?
- These are the outcomes we need to achieve. How might you work towards these in your own way?
- Have you thought about …?
- How are you going? Do we need to go back over it?
- You've set your goals. How will you measure your success and what's your next step?
- Let's discuss your PLP [Personal Learning Plan]. What resources have you found? How are you deciding which ones are most useful?
- With online resources, how are you judging their reliability?
- Who else is in on your learning? Are you sharing your ideas at home? Do you need any extra support?

This element is not demonstrated if:

- There is one predetermined learning pathway (eg oral lesson, worksheet, ICT) for all students
- The teacher approaches each new task by dictating how students will work—as individuals, groups or as a class
- The teaching and learning program makes little reference to students' needs, interests or prior knowledge
- The classroom learning environment lacks clear boundaries, explicit norms or limits
- Students see 'negotiating learning' as doing whatever they like
- Teachers place more accountability on students than on themselves

Practice check

- Do I listen critically when students are making choices for learning and do I provide adequate guidance when they need it?
- How am I involving students during the planning process?
- Do I focus on both the learning and the learner?
- Do I maintain a balance in explicitly teaching the skills and then reinforcing them in negotiated, student-directed tasks?
- Are our record-keeping processes targeted to individuals' needs?
- How am I ensuring that students and I share accountability for their negotiated learning outcomes?

Interest matters … the depth of engagement established in the presence of interest is essential to the development of deep rather than surface learning.
Chris Goldspink

plan for …

Notes:

> *Student interest is key to ongoing student motivation to pursue tasks at increasing levels of complexity … and, satisfaction with earlier tasks is often important in keeping students engaged with work that is temporarily not interesting to them.*
>
> Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi

respond to …

Essence >

The teacher has high expectations and guides each student to achieve his/her personal best.

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Interrupting the failure cycle— Never give up

Rebecca was a Year 3 student who just wasn't making progress. She'd had one-on-one support for several hours a day since she started school, but her learning was still laboured. For Rebecca, writing her own name was an ongoing challenge. I kept thinking of the famous quote by Albert Einstein: 'Insanity is continuing to do the same thing over and over and expecting different results'. I had to do something different.

At the time, I was involved in further study on digital literacies, so I decided to try a new way of working with Rebecca. I negotiated with her and her family to send daily e-mails between school and home. Initially, Rebecca's mother would type the outgoing e-mails and read incoming e-mails to Rebecca.

Gradually, with encouragement, Rebecca took the reins. Her growing confidence was tangible. In time, she was writing and reading all her own e-mails. She was developing a taste for it—e-mailing classmates and then even teaching other students how to do things on the computer.

Rebecca was turning a corner. Things started to change at school. She was transferring her learning to other situations. For the first time, she was experiencing success.

Primary school teacher

Using transfer to challenge learners

Many students claim, 'I can't do maths!', but Sean was the classic. When he entered my maths lessons, his entire body language drooped into failure. One recess time I caught sight of him in the quadrangle practising his soccer skills. He was a different person! The confidence, persistence and precision shone through.

I had an idea. The next time I saw him I praised the skills and dedication he showed in learning his soccer techniques, and then I posed the challenge: 'If you bring one tenth of that doggedness to the next ten maths lessons, I'll work with you to get a passing grade.' He looked at me for a full five seconds and then replied, 'OK, just watch me!'.

He was up for the challenge.

Adapted from Professor Guy Claxton's presentation at the Building Learning Power conference, Port Pirie, 19 March 2009

When we expect that we have an impact on student achievement, we are right. When we expect that we are impotent, we are also right.

Douglas Reeves

challenge students to achieve

Key actions: Teachers

- Share my excitement and my own learning examples with my students

- Create a learning environment where every student feels driven by challenge rather than threat

- Listen to each student and identify and value his/her learning strengths and passions in developing personal learning goals

- Encourage students' resilience in using their strengths to tackle new learning, solve problems and 'raise the bar' with their expectations

- Set tasks with multiple entry and exit points to maximise each student's learning time and progress

- Establish and monitor classroom procedures to maximise learning time

- Continually nudge students—ask them 'What else could you do?'

- Ensure my teaching and learning program is referenced against criteria for high standards

- Engineer learning conversations that extend students' thinking

- Scaffold each student's progress with guidance, modelling, demonstrations and targeted feedback

- Challenge students with tasks that demand transference of skills/understandings

- Structure milestones for students to share their learning and get guidance along the way to enrich their final performance or demonstration of understanding

- Teach students how to seek feedback and offer timely feedback to move their learning forward

- Celebrate students' successes throughout the learning process as they challenge themselves to achieve their personal best

Key actions: Students

- Believe in myself, use my learning strengths and have a go—I can do it

- Aim high and challenge myself with goals that will take a lot of persistence

- Reflect on my learning, and explain how I got past being 'stuck'

- Show initiative—talk with people, read lots of books and explore new ways of using technologies

- Challenge myself: 'Is this my best? What risks will I take to prove to myself that I can do even better?'

- Look forward to getting feedback from others to help me take the next step

Do not worry about your difficulties in Mathematics. I can assure you that mine are still greater.

Albert Einstein

high standards

Ways to support and challenge students to achieve high standards

Supporting students to reach their potential:

- Most importantly, tell yourself 'This student *can* learn and *I* can help them do it'.
- Keep looking for new approaches.
- Look at both sides of the situation. Identify the challenges that the student, and you, must embrace to achieve success.
- Provide time for students to see a learning task through to completion. If at first they don't achieve the required standard, provide specific feedback and give them the opportunity to try again. If they are finding it hard to complete a task, help them tackle their difficulties, set new time-lines and support them to meet deadlines.
- Remember that your expectations matter.

Learning wall: Arrange wall space where students can share their learning processes, their individual strategies for risk taking, and celebrate their persistence. They can post photographs, stories, artworks, tokens, diagrams and questions.

Make the most of mistakes:
As a learner, model that it is all right to make mistakes. Share the emotions that you feel, and demonstrate how you learn through these experiences. Students could create cartoon strips to share their own experiences where 'mistakes' were the key to eventual success.

'Stuck' posters: Work with students
to display useful questions to ask themselves when they are 'stuck'. Encourage them to talk about how they got through being 'stuck'. Help them to draw on memories/ feelings of earlier successes to cope with new challenges. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 17.)

Pastoral care: Devote time for students to share tips for resolving problems and moving forward with challenging learning. Encourage them to use the strategies they see others use when having difficulties.

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2.4

Mentor links: Students can offer to share their strengths by acting as mentors for other learners. They can give specific tuition, supportive ideas/feedback or targeted advice on work skills and self-motivation.

Comfort zones: Explore the idea that people experience different degrees of comfort at different times when they are learning. In the classroom, identify three areas, each representing a degree, or zone, of comfort: 'Comfort', 'Stretch' and 'Panic'. Suggest different activities and ask students to move into the space that best represents how that activity makes them feel. For example, watching a video might move most students to the comfort zone while stroking a snake might move some of them to panic. Always end the activity with everyone in the comfort zone. Discuss what students felt and what they were able to learn in each of these zones. Good learning happens best in the stretch zone, not in a panic or when too comfortable. When students are stuck, ask for ideas of what could move them into the stretch zone. Code the zones with colours like traffic lights: red for panic, amber for stretch, green for coasting through with no effort and not picking up much learning. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 17.)

Expert interviews: Set up interviews with skilful people. Students develop a series of questions to uncover exactly what the expert does (eg What preparation is there?, How do you keep your eye on the ball?, What sort of thinking or beliefs are helpful?). Students create a checklist of key aspects to imitate. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 49.)

Scheduled learning conversations: These conversations can be a valuable opportunity for students to share their learning journey with you and other significant adult/s. Support students with a framework for their presentation. They extend an invitation and negotiate a 15 minute meeting time. During the meeting, the student shares growth points, concerns and achievements, shows evidence of his/her successful learning, and leads a three-way conversation where the adults ask questions and acknowledge the student's efforts.

Language that teachers can use to support and challenge students to achieve high standards

○ I'm a teacher and a learner too. You probably know more about this new topic than I do. I aim to be an expert by the end of it! What tips can you give me?

○ What's really important to you as a learner? What do you want to get better at?

○ What do you hope to achieve this time? How will you do it?

○ I'm going to model how to … for the class. You may move off on your own as soon as you've got the idea.

○ You have a real talent for … How does it feel to …? Remember to have that same confidence when you …

○ Let's say nothing's 'wrong' but, rather, there are just 'degrees of rightness'. How might this change your thinking?

○ It's great to move outside your comfort zone—that's when the real learning happens.

○ Do you understand it well enough to teach it to someone else?

○ What did you use to work it out last time? Find out three ways others have done it.

○ It's when you 'get stuck' that you really start to learn. What's your next step? You can do it!

This element is not demonstrated if:

○ Teachers'/students' words and actions reflect an attitude of 'near enough is good enough'

○ The learning intention is unclear

○ Learning lacks a clear sequence and evidence of mastery is difficult to find

○ Engagement in the learning process wanes before reaching the outcome

○ Teachers reference students' achievements only against external norms (eg class norms) without acknowledging individual progress

○ All tasks are geared towards final summative tests, without formative assessment to guide student progress

Practice check

○ How do I encourage students to persist when learning gets tough?

○ Do I provide opportunities for all students to learn and achieve to a high level?

○ How do I make the learning intention/s of each lesson clear to students?

○ How do I challenge individuals and acknowledge initiative and progress?

○ What procedures are in place to help students move forward when they encounter problems?

If you do things well, do them better. Be daring, be first, be different, be just.
Anita Roddick

believe all

Notes:

I began to challenge myself and I started to mature, because the teacher made me realise I can't go through school waiting for someone to push me all the way. Now that I am heading to high school I am glad I changed into the person I am now, because I reckon I work pretty hard and I follow everything through to the end.

Year 7 student

students can learn

Domain 3

Teaching for effective learning:
Develop expert learners

A central role for teachers is helping students become aware of how they learn and develop alternative learning strategies, approaches and skills. It is important for teachers to promote metacognitive understanding by talking explicitly about thinking and by fostering discussion about the processes used to construct knowledge. Making learning about learning an explicit part of the curriculum increases the opportunities for students to consciously develop their capacities as expert learners.

Teachers foster students' identities as active learners when they show that knowledge is constructed in order to serve particular purposes and is open to question. Expert learners are aware that they are responsible for creating knowledge about the world and for critically engaging with the knowledge that others have created. Learning and the application of knowledge are largely social processes—teachers promote learning through modelling, promoting collaborative problem solving and establishing the conditions for respectful dialogue between students as learners and teachers as learners.

Deep knowledge and understanding are promoted when teachers help students to build knowledge around big ideas that give learning meaning and purpose. Opportunities for students to create and actively develop knowledge are increased when they are expected to draw rich connections across different fields and to apply their learning to a range of real-world problems. Teachers increase student direction and ownership of learning when students are expected to display their knowledge in authentic contexts with real work consequences.

Developing expert learners involves explicitly reflecting upon our role as active meaning-makers with the responsibility to create, critique and apply knowledge in local and global contexts.

Are learning and thinking central topics of talk and reflection in my classroom?

Essence >

The teacher develops students' understanding of learning and expands their strategies for thinking, learning and working collaboratively.

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Create space for many ways

A great way to get the minds 'ticking' in the morning is to have a 'problem of the day'. Maths problems, such as the Prisoner's Puzzle, provide an exciting challenge for students to work on individually or as a group. The process involves students in thinking about:

○ How did I work this out?

○ Were there other ways I could have done this?

○ Which strategies work best for me?

The Prisoners' Puzzle[1]:

Fifty prisoners are locked in cells in a dungeon. The prison guard, not realising the doors are locked, passes each cell at bedtime and turns the key once. A second guard comes later and turns the locks on cells 2, 4, 6, 8 and so on, stopping only at multiples of 2. A third guard does the same, but stops at cells 3, 6, 9, 12 and so on, and a fourth guard turns the locks in cells 4, 8, 12, 16 and so on. This carries on until 50 guards have passed the cells and turned the locks, and then all the guards go to bed. **Which prisoners escape in the night?**

This problem aroused great excitement amongst my Year 6/7 students. Groups quickly galvanised to try and come up with a solution. The allocated 15 minute timeslot was soon up, and the students negotiated to spend more time on it later that day. We scheduled the last 20 minutes of the day for groups to share their strategies—both successful and unsuccessful—and to discuss how issues were dealt with and new discoveries made.

The strategies used by different groups were amazing:

○ One group had negotiated with the class next door to join us for the last 20 minutes of the day as they needed the extra 'bodies' to act out the problem. What fun the neighbouring class had in being prisoners and keeping track of whether their cell was locked or unlocked as each guard passed!

○ There were several interpretations through drawings and tables used by a number of groups—lots of versions were shown.

○ One group meant business. They enlisted the aid of a teacher who was good at maths to help them work out a formula and they proceeded to explain how it worked.

Then there was the group who gave up. Having exhausted all the strategies they thought they could use, they couldn't decide which way to go next. For this group in particular, the sharing led to significant learning because it opened their minds to new ways of thinking. By listening to others describe how they'd persisted and finally come up with a strategy that worked, this group realised that they'd definitely given up too quickly.

Through this new learning challenge I gained valuable insights. I hadn't needed to enforce limitations on students. I hadn't restricted them to working within the classroom. The group who needed the extra 'prisoners' came up with the idea of using more students, and they successfully engaged the interest of that teacher and her class. The experience showed me that I must continue to actively support creative ways of thinking.

Upper primary teacher

[1] *Dorling Kindersley & Ball J*, Think of a number, *2005, p 44*

teach students

Key actions: Teachers

Develop students' learning dispositions
- Model curiosity, excitement and appropriate habits of mind as a learner
- Actively promote risk-taking and discovery, so that students learn to challenge themselves

Develop students' self-concept
- Affirm effort and committed approaches to learning
- Share personal stories of learning, and together reflect on the thinking and feelings involved in learning experiences

Develop students' understanding of how we learn
- Lead students to explore how the human brain functions, and how there are optimal conditions for learning

Develop students' metacognition
- Structure activities in a variety of learning modes, encourage learners to reflect on modes of choice and what they tend to avoid, to increase students' awareness of their strengths and areas for refining their skills
- Teach the language of and specific strategies for thinking, learning and working together

Extend students' learning potential
- Teach strategies, and design opportunities for creative and critical thinking and inquiry
- Deliberately plan for students to use different strategies to reflect on what they have learnt, how they learnt, why it had that outcome and where it might lead

Manage and direct learning
- Create a range of tasks where students can decide to work individually or in groups, and discuss how those decisions affected their subsequent learning outcomes
- Model, teach and reinforce goal setting, time management and organisation procedures and strategies
- Reassure students that learning can be hard and requires persistence and practice

Work collaboratively
- Explicitly teach and articulate strategies for effective collaboration: role taking, listening to and respecting others' points of view, appreciating different contributions and playing your part

Key actions: Students

- Find out how I can use different strategies to help me concentrate
- Develop skills for learning in different ways—be creative and think 'How?', 'Why?' and 'What if?'
- Talk with others about how they learn best, and share tips that work well when we're facing a challenge
- Use time management and organisation skills to make the most of my learning time
- Value other people's help and advice, and keep reflecting on how I'm going
- Keep trying with my learning even when I find it hard

- Identify people such as other students, parents and teachers who have particular strengths, and learn from them and use them as models
- Be prepared to use my strengths to help others learn

If you never change your mind, why have one?
Edward de Bono

Ways to teach students how to learn

Strategies to support learning:
Useful strategies include Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, Costa's Habits of Mind, Bloom's Taxonomy, and Thinker's Keys. Design tasks for students to experience how these specific approaches help them to learn more effectively.

Metacognitive learning journals:
Learners are capable of higher levels of critical thinking and learning when they are aware of their thought processes. In this style of journal, learners are encouraged and supported to think about their own thought processes after reading or other class activities.

When students discuss ways of thinking with the whole class or with other individual students, it helps them to know their strengths in, or heightens their awareness about, other strategies to try.

Metacognitive Journal	
What I learnt	How I learnt It

Thinking aloud:
Provide dedicated time and opportunities for students to verbalise their emerging ideas. Thinking aloud helps students to talk their way into their learning by sorting and clarifying ideas, and putting words to their thinking. Listening to others think aloud provides models of a range of thinking strategies to try.

Reciprocal reading:
This is a structured process where students read together and monitor their comprehension by stopping, asking questions and explaining to each other what the text means.

Future-based planning:
Learners envisage what it will look like when they've achieved their learning goal. They write/draw it on a flip-chart with a target date; they then decide what they'd have to do the day/week before, then two days/weeks before, then three, moving back in time to the present. They can then ask the question: 'Now, what do I need to do first?'.

how to learn

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3.1

Evidence of Learning folder:
This is all about valuing the process, not just the product. Ask students to set up a folder (hard copy and/or electronic) to keep all their ongoing work, photos, articles etc, as all of these are evidence of their learning process. Don't insist on 'good copies' of everything—tell students to keep even the examples of 'quick thinking'. Make time for them to look back through their folder and reflect on all those steps they take in their learning.

Break states:
Change the mental and physical state of the class by using music, quick games, guided relaxation, change of lighting, breathing exercises, and snack breaks. Discuss their impact on concentration/focus. Invite students to devise ways to use these break states in other contexts to keep their learning on track.

Superheroes:
Ask students to design superheroes to embody the things that the students think are most important for them as lifelong learners (eg skills, dispositions, learning capacities).

Desert Island Discs:
Create a regular timeslot where students take turns to nominate four 'learning items' to take to their desert island. Which skills, capacities, approaches and techniques would they consider most useful to them when learning new things in a strange environment, and why?

Language that teachers can use to teach students how to learn

○ When are you most excited about learning? What makes it exciting?

○ How did you make connections from what you already know? Could you teach someone else?

○ What's your first step in this task?

○ Do you need time to talk it over?

○ Have a go, move outside your comfort zone and see what happens

○ What learning challenge are you prepared to take on?

○ What strategies could help you learn—diagrams, self-testing, physical activity, talking it through with someone?

○ What strategies could help you reinforce or master your learning—creating rhymes, memorising, imagining, experiencing, doing?

○ What didn't work so well? Why? What would you do differently next time? Who could help you?

○ Which tasks are more successful for you working alone? Which are better done as part of a group?

The illiterate of the 21st century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.
Alvin Toffler

This element is not demonstrated if:

○ The teacher assumes that all students can learn successfully in the same mode

○ The teacher focuses on affirming ability only, rather than including process and commitment

○ The teacher always sets the learning context, goals and strategies

○ There is a lack of explicit teaching of the strategies for successful learning

○ Feedback is teacher-dominated and fails to provide information about future direction

○ Students are unable to articulate what they are learning and how this connects to prior learning

○ Students are denied opportunity for critical thinking, creative thinking or inquiry

○ Students' approaches and ideas are dismissed as inappropriate, incorrect or inferior

Practice check

○ When teaching, do I tend to favour my own learning mode preference?

○ Have I deliberately extended my teaching style?

○ Am I creating an environment that encourages students to try new strategies for learning and helps them recognise that what feels comfortable is not necessarily best?

○ How do I clarify and support the learning process, and get students to share how they learn and what works for them?

○ How do I encourage students to be critically reflective thinkers?

○ Do I teach in a way that encourages students to ask questions, rather than restate information?

○ Am I giving opportunities for students to evaluate their learning outcomes from individual tasks and also group work?

○ Are my students ever stuck? If not, are they challenged enough in their learning?

○ Do I affirm curiosity, effort and challenge, or do I affirm compliance?

○ Have I helped my students to experience greater success through using appropriate learning strategies.
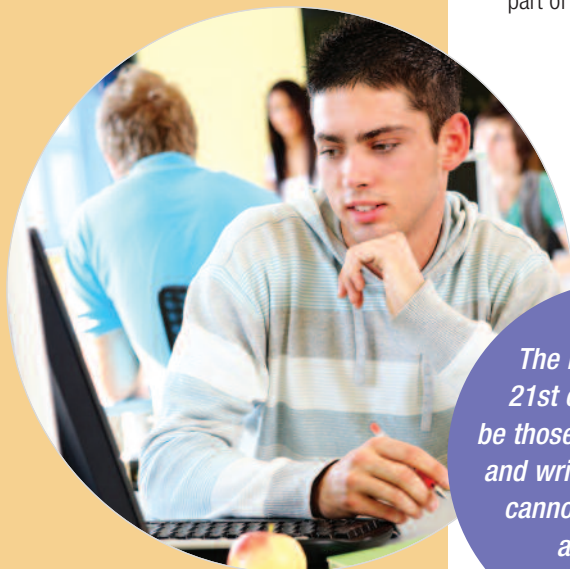
expand students'

Notes:

Metacognitive skills include taking conscious control of learning, planning and selecting strategies, monitoring the progress of learning, correcting errors, analysing the effectiveness of learning strategies and changing learning behaviours and strategies when necessary.

D Scott Ridley, Paul A Schutz, Robert S Glanz & Claire E Weinstein

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thinking strategies

Essence >

The teacher helps students build rich conceptual knowledge and mastery of complex skills.

Earthquakes shake up a classroom

We had the Smartboard ready and the students were keen to explore our new Geographic Information System (GIS). They could add data to maps to change visual representations and investigate issues.

I used their latest interest. 'Look at the screensaver earthquake pictures. We must have some experts in our midst. Does every place in the world have earthquakes?' I asked.

This very first question had the students responding. They were diligent, curious and exuberant, all at the same time. I fed their momentum by thinking aloud: 'I wonder why some areas have more earthquakes than others?'. There were plenty of experts eager to share their knowledge in response.

'There are these tectonic plates,' said one student. 'I think they've got something to do with it.'

It was time for the interactive searches. We added 'tectonic plates' to our map and predicted where earthquakes might happen. The students came to the screen and pointed to particular parts of the map. Some added extra pieces of information that they thought might be useful to our quest.

We added the 'earthquake' data. Our predictions were very close. That was great feedback! Then the excitement changed to puzzlement. Suddenly, the students saw one area with a huge number of earthquakes, and they were worried. There was real concern that it wouldn't be safe to live there or even visit there. Discussion was intense. I posed the question, 'Do you think that all of the earthquakes happen at the same time?'.

Now the students were weighing up visual data with personal reasoning. They were seeing the whole concept growing by the minute. Their minds were in overload, yet turbo-charged. They didn't look like giving up.

I posed more questions: 'Would all earthquakes be the same size? How do they measure how big an earthquake is?'.

It was back to the students. One told us about seismographs. He'd seen one at the science centre; he drew a zigzagging earthquake graph on the board. I showed the class how to organise the data to see when earthquakes occurred and how big they might be.

The students devoured the avalanche of data. Their enthusiasm showed in the self-questioning, the sharing of knowledge and the new learning. They were pushing themselves. The GIS data and instant feedback had resulted in deep learning, building on what they knew and wanted to know, generating questions, predictions, explorations and hypotheses, and enabling the students to use data to inform their next steps.

The use of raw data led the students to identify patterns and it supported and demanded scientific thinking. Students were pushed into complex thinking and new understandings that could be harnessed next time we used data.

There was a time that I would have just told them the 'answer'. But I've learnt the power of tapping into their questions and how 'interest' takes them deeper and deeper into the learning.

Primary teacher

foster deep understanding

Key actions: Teachers

- Develop my own deep understanding of the concepts I teach

- Design activities that lead students to grasp concepts and deepen their understanding

- Devote time and effort to helping my students grapple with the concepts, and get them to explain concepts to each other to ensure deep understanding

- Pose open questions with no right or wrong answers, to evoke students' emotions, imagination, reflection, action and research from a range of sources and perspectives

- Teach students explicit strategies for higher order thinking, and structure tasks where they choose strategies to investigate issues, develop their understanding, refine their skills and communicate what they've learnt

- Encourage self-testing

- Ask students to determine what level of practice they need to develop mastery and automaticity

- Model self-reflection, critical thinking, creative imagination and questioning of my own assumptions

- Guide students in searching for patterns and relationships to interpret information and experience

- Emphasise the power of precision in language

- Incorporate reflection and targeted formative assessment to ensure rigorous learning

- Use strategies to help learners connect new knowledge to their own prior experience, other disciplines and the world beyond the classroom

- Value students' input and commit quality time for them to discuss, share knowledge, explain their thinking, question assumptions and refine their understanding

- Guide and support learners to achieve a level of mastery that enables them to experience empowerment and intrinsic satisfaction

- Use models and illustrative stories to engage the imagination of students

- Engage students in working with authentic problems and issues

Key actions: Students

- Use thinking strategies that I've been taught, to help me understand better

- Talk about learning with others, share feedback, explain things and help solve problems

- Work together to fire questions and challenge our thinking, without being right or wrong

- Make the most of all the technologies I can use for learning

- Ask myself: 'Where am I heading?', 'What else might I need to know?', and 'How could I do it in another way?'

- Never give up, be proud of my efforts, and know for myself when I've really 'got it'

- Ask questions when I don't understand

- Seek feedback on how I could improve my skills

- Ask myself: 'Do I need to practise this more to feel really sure I can do it?'

> *The role of the educator is not to put knowledge where knowledge does not exist but rather to lead the mind's eye that it might see for itself.*
>
> Plato

Ways to foster deep understanding and skilful action

Use learning and teaching models: Use learning and teaching models to design learning for deep understanding and skilful action (eg Integral Learning Model, 5Es, Format, ESL Teaching Cycle).

Develop higher order thinking skills: Explicitly coach students in the use of question frameworks such as Bloom's Taxonomy, Question Matrix, 3 Storey Intellect, and SOLO. Record students' questions and teach them how to identify links.

Question wall: Students display questions that they think might be answered during a topic. Discuss the types with students—open, closed, speculative, divergent, clarifying, essential—and how they will need different strategies and lead to different reactions/forms of information. Draw up lists of generic questions to use for certain types of tasks (eg scientific investigation). Refer to and extend these question groups regularly.

Use precise language: Model and teach the language constructs for specific disciplines of learning, so that students are skilled in using language most appropriate for specific tasks (eg a film review needs different language from a data analysis report).

Exposition writing: Students use exposition writing to analyse differing perspectives and extract their own deep meaning.

Mu dictionary: Using this technique, students can express meaning in four different 'ways of knowing':
Propositional—'How can I describe/define this?'
Factual—'Some examples are …'
Personal—'What's this got to do with my life?'
Conceptual—'Can I express this as an image or illustration?'

Deepest understanding emerges from the integration of these four 'ways of knowing'.

The teacher can develop a mu dictionary of definitions of concepts to clarify what he/she wants the students to know and be able to do.

and skilful action

3.2

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Learning logs/reflective journals:
By documenting their progress, students can stop and think about what they are learning and how they are developing it within the 'big picture'.

Learning log
Try these for sentence starters
1 I now feel confident about …   2 I felt confused when …   3 What I would most like to know is …   4 I'm having problems with …

Reflective journal	
What happened?	
How do I feel about it?	
What did I learn?	

Strengthen connections in the brain:
Use practice, repetition and instructional supports such as demonstration, video clips and pre and post quizzes for skill mastery. Use processes like think–pair–share and graphic organisers for students to sort knowledge, represent their thinking visually and clarify meaning.

Mind space:
The mind sifts information with time. Use drawing, music, colour and silence to create space for reflection. Give students time for wandering in their minds to access their imagination, memories and images.

Goal setting:
Ask students to set specific individual goals for master. Help them develop habits of goal setting and self-assessment.

Concept attainment:
Use these steps to encourage concept attainment:
- Select a concept with clear critical attributes (eg evergreen plants, carnivores, mammals, fish).
- Provide students with 'yes' examples which fit the concept and some 'no' examples that have some of the attributes needed but not all.
- Ask students to hypothesise about what the 'yes' examples have in common.
- Provide more 'yes' and 'no' examples for students to test and refine their original thinking.
- As a whole group, make a list of critical/necessary attributes.

Students apply their knowledge of the concept in multiple contexts to demonstrate understanding.

Language that teachers can use to foster deep understanding and skilful action

- What are you wondering? Why? What if …?
- What is the meaning of …? How does it connect to what you already know?
- If you really believe that … then how will it shape your thinking from here?
- Each of you has your own way of seeing it, so let's explore all the perspectives.
- Can you clarify your point of view? Can you justify your conclusions?
- Try brainstorming lots of possible questions on the issue.
- Which thinking strategies would work best?
- Looking at the information, can you see common elements emerging?
- Could you represent this concept in another way—visual, musical, mathematical, technological, movement?
- How are you feeling? Are you getting closer to really understanding?
- How has this learning changed how you see things?
- What goals do you have for your learning in this activity?

The basic goal of education is understanding. You have to take enough time to get kids deeply involved in something they can think about in lots of different ways.

Howard Gardner

This element is not demonstrated if:

- Teachers focus on 'covering' rather than 'discovery', 'telling' rather than 'asking'
- Lessons are presented in isolation rather than linked in sequence within the 'big picture'
- Students are presented with topics to learn about, but few important issues to explore or research
- Priority is given to mastering recall of facts only
- Short timelines restrict students' opportunities for meaningful interaction and critical feedback
- A student is always expected to publicise her/his achievements
- Learners' questions are dismissed or seen as irrelevant
- Time and opportunities are not provided for individuals to develop mastery of skills

Practice check

- Do I develop a deep understanding myself in order to guide students to their deep understanding?
- Am I walking the talk by analysing my own thinking?
- What big ideas/concepts do I believe my students need to understand in relation to the Curriculum Standards?
- How will I scaffold students' ongoing efforts in learning?
- Does the class culture support each student to persevere towards deeper understanding?
- Do I value student inquiry and adapt my teaching to respond to individual questions at pivotal stages?
- Am I connecting with each student to assess mastery of complex skills?

get below the

Notes:

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Knowledge construction is best accomplished through collaboration. There is a good deal of evidence that learning is enhanced when teachers pay attention to the knowledge as a starting point for new instruction and monitor students' changing conceptions as instruction proceeds.

John Bransford, Ann Brown & Rodney Cocking

surface

Essence >

The teacher shows that knowledge is open to question, serves particular purposes and is shaped by culture and experience.

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Aboriginal learners connecting to country

I couldn't believe it—we had won! We didn't win just the state competition but the national one as well! What had started as an idea to help our Kaurna students reconnect to their country had blossomed into a full-on community project. Without a shadow of doubt, the learning outcomes and social benefits surpassed all our expectations.

It all started in 2003 when we began to develop a wetland area on the Kaurna Plains school site, with the intention of increasing students' cultural pride and understanding. Over the next two years, as the students worked and talked together, their shared cultural knowledge grew. They watched their wetlands become a living environment, and their questions flowed.

Like our Kaurna Plains students, most Aboriginal learners live in urban areas and, whilst many still retain a cultural connection to their country, many children and students find it difficult to experience and maintain cultural practices and develop a sense of identity. They live in cultural dislocation, and often 'learning about' that identity is the nearest they come to understanding.

Connection to country is evident in the more remote areas of Australia where traditional practices live on, but still there are challenges to face. Even though cultural knowledge and understandings are stronger in these areas, Aboriginal learners are required to move between two cultural worlds.

The secondary students were going to bring their two cultural worlds together. They started on the reconnection project. To grow cultural identity and understandings we developed a strategy which would bring together the wisdom and knowledge of Kaurna elders in the community with that of the students. By listening to and discussing the community stories and elders' oral histories, students could build on their existing understandings and compare with each other. For many students this was the first time they'd heard and made personal connections with things they'd 'learnt about'.

The students worked with a strong shared sense of purpose to produce a DVD entitled *Cooking Kangaroo Tail*. They learned how to dig an earth pit which became the cooking oven. To explain its cultural significance, they wrote a script, acted, filmed and then edited the footage. Watching their final product, there was a tangible sense of moving freely between two worlds. The students submitted their DVD to Panasonic in a nation-wide competition. Being chosen as winners of that national competition was powerful acknowledgment of their identity.

Having the wetlands on the school site has breathed life into learning. There is new knowledge, wellbeing, cultural understanding and connection to country. For me it is no longer just a 'head connection'—it is a 'heart connection'.

Senior secondary teacher

explore the construction

Key actions: Teachers

- Guide my students to understand that all individuals and groups have their own unique perspective on the world, and that their core beliefs and experiences influence the way they construct and value knowledge

- Compare and contrast cultural understandings (eg creation stories), attitudes and conceptual understandings from different time periods (eg belief in a flat earth) to demonstrate that knowledge is a cultural, social and political construct that can change with time and circumstance

- Stimulate rethinking by introducing contentious issues for students to question their own underlying assumptions and to have the opportunity to change their minds

- Structure investigations that enable students to identify bias and racist/sexist/class conscious attitudes in the community and the media

- Explore how each discipline has its own focus and constructs knowledge through its own processes and methods (eg compare the way scientists explore and express knowledge of forces with the way an artist would explore and express forces)

- Challenge my students to consider what they don't know by exposing them to new ideas or perspectives

- Elicit students' responses to 'Why is this worth knowing?'

- Target discussions where students share perspectives and give and receive feedback on their ideas

- Explicitly teach skills and create opportunities for students to disagree with ideas and/or each other in appropriate ways

- Teach students to critically analyse information and primary sources of data from a range of sources and for specific purposes

- Actively seek out online opportunities for students to compare beliefs and perspectives with other learners, wider society and experts

- Deepen students' understandings of the past and present as a means of influencing the future

- Design activities that encourage and actively support students to be 'apprentice' historians, scientists, writers, artists etc

Key actions: Students

- Listen carefully to others' ideas and try to see them from their point of view

- Ask questions: 'Why would they think this way?', 'Who might say this?' and 'Is there another way that someone might see this?'

- Use a variety of different research skills and ask myself: 'How reliable is this information?', 'Whose interests are being served?', 'What was the author's purpose here?' and 'Is there any bias?'

- Use graphic organisers such as mind maps to work out the links between ideas

- Challenge people's ideas in ways that are not threatening

- Express ideas in different ways by asking myself 'How would I communicate this idea in science?' and 'What if this was creative writing?'

Knowledge is a story that works.
Yoram Harpaz

of knowledge

Justice alert

What cultural constructs are dominant? Whose assumptions and core beliefs are affirmed and whose are threatened?

Ways to explore the construction of knowledge

Human graph: Each student considers the issue in question, then stands on a spot along a continuum that moves from 'strongly agree' through to 'strongly disagree'. When asked, students justify their position. After hearing others' views, they may wish to change position.

Thinking scaffolds: Students use strategies such as Venn diagrams to compare and contrast knowledge from different perspectives, times and places.

For more thinking scaffolds, go to <http://www.eduplace.com/graphicorganizer/pdf/venn.pdf>.

Fact or opinion: This is one way to support students to consider whether things they say are facts, opinions or a combination.

Fact or opinion		
Write your topic and the information you know. Add the details to the columns.		
Talk with others to check your ideas.		
Topic:		
Fact	**Opinion**	**Not sure**

3 2 1 Strategy: Students can follow these steps to clarify their thinking:

3 ideas I want to discuss
2 questions I want to ask
1 action I want/need to take

Knowledge interrogation: Provide opportunities for students to explore assumptions underpinning different perspectives, search for problems, generate ideas, and develop a critical attitude.

Debates: Pose a question for debate and allow students a class session for research or discussion before the debate. Split this preparation time so that they spend the first half gathering information about only the affirmative arguments, and then the same amount of time on only the negative arguments. The debate is conducted the next session/day. A topic might be 'Human nature: Good or evil?'.

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Exploration of cultural and contextual influences:

Students could explore cultural and contextual influences by:

○ studying visual art works to gain insights into social changes, beliefs, values or perspectives

○ researching medical practices through the ages to find how they reflected people's current levels of knowledge or their superstitions

○ analysing languages of various countries to find links and develop hypotheses about the reasons for the links which can then be researched and tested.

Contrasting news reports:

Challenge students to consider events from different perspectives by using a topical current event (eg a natural disaster, a discovery, a great invention, a war). Different perspectives could come from different countries/organisations, or news reports on the same event but from different media sources.

Viewing card: Use a viewing card (ie a small cardboard frame) on a montage of photos to help students get 'inside' characters from a period of time, or a country, which is distant from their own experience. Students scan the photos through the viewing window, identifying emotions or other features of interest. Discuss why they have picked out these examples and possible reasons for the emotions. What are the similarities with how they view things? (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 47.)

Big feet: Make two enormous feet out of different coloured card or material. Choose two volunteers: each stands on one of the feet. The first talks about a situation or problem from his/her point of view. The second talks about the same situation from her/his point of view. Then they each move to stand on the other foot and talk about the same situation from the other person's point of view. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 47.)

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Language that teachers can use to explore the construction of knowledge

○ Imagine yourself as a person from another culture or time. How might you view this issue differently?

○ Now that you've worked with Jane and Lyn, do you have another way of looking at it?

○ This text is written through the eyes of … How would it look through … eyes? Can you explain your idea?

○ Can you see where these theories connect or disconnect?

○ Now you've thought it through, what questions do you have?

○ This TV program is targeting … What are you noticing? Can you detect a bias?

○ Why might people think that? What is another view?

○ Whose voices are being heard and whose are not?

○ How reliable is the source of this information?

○ Why have these people reported the information differently?

○ Here is a bee. What knowledge would be most important to a beekeeper, a gardener, a scientist, a doctor, an artist, a historian, a geographer or a mathematician?

This element is not demonstrated if:

○ Knowledge is presented as fact or the 'truth' and open to only one interpretation

○ Teachers impart knowledge and students listen

○ Students play 'Guess what's in the teacher's head?'—questions are always asked by the teacher with a predetermined answer in mind

○ Students are discouraged from discussing or questioning

○ Students who raise contentious issues or disagree are considered difficult, are discouraged, or are 'shut down'

○ The views of the dominant culture strongly influence planning, programming and implementing learning tasks

Practice check

○ Am I modelling open mindedness, willingness to listen and consideration of other points of view?

○ How do I respond to students' misconceptions about the world and what strategies do I use to challenge their conceptions?

○ Do I give opportunities for students to discuss and question new ideas vigorously?

○ In what ways do I help students construct accurate and useful knowledge about new concepts?

○ Am I respecting different ways of learning for students with diverse backgrounds and needs?

○ How do I let students know its okay to ask me questions and challenge what is being said? Does my language encourage critical feedback?

knowledge

Notes:

> *Understanding is developed when key ideas and skills are reiterated, explored and rethought. These key ideas and skills need to have value beyond the classroom and to be linked to real world issues, so that students are engaged in processes of inquiry and problem solving that have some meaning to their own lives and to the issues facing contemporary society.*
>
> Grant Wiggins & Jay McTighe

is not neutral

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Essence >

The teacher provides opportunities for students to learn through interaction and learning conversation with others.

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South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework guide | Teaching for effective learning | Develop expert learners: Promote dialogue as a means of learning

Ordered sharing—bringing out the learning

My Year 10 group was dominated by strong cliques. There was no active listening or acknowledgment of others' ideas, and a lack of mutual respect. They related well to me as the teacher, but the same did not apply to interactions between class members. Individual learning tasks were my main mode of teaching, and I focused on written work and teacher-directed assessment. I was so consumed by the intensity of the day that we didn't step back and reflect on the learning, the teaching or the class dynamic. Looking back, I realised that the lack of dialogue was stopping students from making the most of their learning.

Involvement in the school's professional learning program made me confront my assumptions with questions such as, 'What do I know about teen social connections and how do teenagers learn most effectively?' and then, 'How do all children learn best?'.

My students' learning outcomes were being compromised because they weren't being taught the language of learning with real space for this to happen through learning conversations. I decided that we needed a new approach to take learning to a new level.

To build relationships and familiarity with dialogue, I introduced 'ordered sharing' so that every voice would be heard. Initially, I displayed poster collages of contemporary arts images and gave the students 30 seconds to develop a personal response. We then took turns speaking for 20–30 seconds without affirming or negating others' responses. We repeated the process at least once each week, using different pictures, phrases and questions. The feedback from students was, 'We have never expressed how we felt about issues before and we now know how people in the class feel about other things'.

Our next step was to identify and then challenge, not criticise, each other's assumptions through carefully worded statements and images. This was one small step in opening up dialogue. Students started to break out of their cliques and interact openly and meaningfully with peers. Over time, rich questioning became part of our class culture and it deepened the learning significantly.

Students now work with critical friends to discuss the core questions within the curriculum. I teach strategies for developing an argument and sharing constructive feedback. There is real conversation, real listening, and students have made new meanings that didn't exist before.

Secondary teacher

promote dialogue as a means

Key actions: Teachers

- Develop a culture of mutual respect by modelling nonjudgmental listening and actively seeking divergent views

- Establish agreed routines for think/wait time, to enhance the class dialogue (eg pause to reflect on what has been said before asking questions or responding)

- Teach and model strategies for dialogue and paraphrasing, and encourage students to articulate what they heard, 'piggyback' on others' comments and ask clarifying questions

- Pose thought-provoking questions that challenge students' analytical thinking and encourage them to develop and substantiate a point of view

- Support students to gain clarity by thinking out loud

- Encourage students to engage in rich questioning through the use of sentence stems (eg 'When … happened, why did …?')

- Build students' confidence by explicitly teaching skills for public speaking, and encourage them to rehearse with others before the event

- Incorporate dialogue and discussion about my learning, as integral to all stages of all learning tasks

Key actions: Students

- Talk with others—in pairs, small groups, large groups and with the whole class

- Use strategies to improve my participation in learning conversations

- Think 'out loud' to organise my thoughts

- Ask questions to clarify topics and hear others' explanations

- Give feedback to others and suggest ideas for improvement

- Check if I've understood what others meant

> *Free human dialogue … lies at the heart of education.*
> Neil Postman

of learning

Justice alert

Do all students experience genuine dialogue and learning conversation to develop their thinking and understandings?

Ways to promote dialogue as a means of learning

Appointments: An appointment system is helpful for students getting to know each other, discussing issues and so on. Students have a diary page with eight common 'appointment times'. Give the class ten minutes to mingle and make one-on-one appointments, filling the eight timeslots with no double-ups. State a topic and an appointment time. Students find their partner for that appointment time in their diary, and chat for two minutes on that topic. Then, give another time and topic and the process continues.

Focused learning conversations: These conversations about a specific topic generate rich questions that are:

- open and may have several answers
- challenge assumptions and require critical thinking
- complex and necessitate grappling with big ideas
- relevant to learners
- electric with emotional or social implications
- practical and can be researched within available resources.

Buzz groups: Students discuss a given topic in groups of three, then share their ideas/responses with the class to create new understandings.

Concentric circles: Students form two concentric circles. The inner circle has a discussion and the outer circle listens. When someone in the outer group wishes to contribute to the discussion, he/she taps the shoulder of someone in the inner circle and swaps places.

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3.4

Walk and talk: Students of opposing views work in pairs. One person speaks for an agreed time and the other person listens; then they swap roles.

Three cards for shared airtime:
Give every student three cards: two labelled 'comment' and one labelled 'question'. During class discussion, when a student wishes to contribute, he/she raises one card to make either a comment or pose a question, speaks, then hands in that card. This encourages them to think before jumping in. When a person has used all his/her cards, he/she cannot participate again until all students have used their own three cards.

Circular response:
This activity is similar to 'Hearing all voices' on page 28 with the exception that the speaker must summarise the comments of the previous speaker, checking with that person about the accuracy of the summation, before giving an opinion. The speaker must build on the idea of the previous speaker. After everyone has had his/her set time (two to three minutes) to speak about the topic, a general discussion may occur. (This activity is adapted with permission from Preskill, Vermilya & Otero 2000.)

*Dialogue …
to create a situation
where we suspend our
opinions and judgments
in order to be able to listen
to each other.*
David Bohm

Language that teachers can use to promote dialogue as a means of learning

- Find a space where you can talk it through.
- Have you talked this through with your partner? Maybe he/she has further ideas.
- So, what you're saying is … Have I got it right?
- What do you think about this point of view: …? What's another point of view?
- I'm not sure I understand fully. Tell me more.
- Why is … challenging for you?
- If you choose to solve it that way, what might be some of the advantages and disadvantages?
- Now that you're talking through the issue, are new ideas emerging?
- Are we ready to discuss our ideas as a class? Have a quick chat with the person next to you and we'll start.
- Remember our learning supports. For example, when you're stuck try three other people to help you think it through before coming to me.

This element is not demonstrated if:

- The teacher's voice is the dominant one
- The usual form of classroom interaction is 'teacher question, student response, teacher evaluation comment'
- Classroom procedure lacks 'wait time' before responses
- Students feel unsafe about questioning why or how
- Dialogue skills are assumed and there is little opportunity for students to be actively involved and develop expertise
- Silence is enforced in the classroom and written work is valued over verbal contribution
- Dialogue is seen as a strategy for only eliciting answers

Practice check

- Do I provide explicit time for dialogue?
- What is the ratio of teacher questions to student questions in any given learning session?
- Do I teach the students how to share their opinions effectively?
- How do I promote active listening and speaking?
- Are there students who do not contribute to discussions? How can I structure situations to encourage and support their involvement?
- Do I give students 'thinking time' before a discussion?
- Do I provide explicit time for classroom dialogue so that students can clarify ideas and concepts?

talking our

Notes:

_Dialogue is about what
we value and how we define it.
It is about discovering what our true
values are, about looking beyond the
superficial and automatic answers to our
questions. Dialogue is about expanding our
capacity for attention, awareness and
learning with and from each other. It is
about exploring the frontiers of what it
means to be human, in relationship
to each other and our world._

Glenna Gerard

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way into understanding

Domain 4

Teaching for effective learning: Personalise and connect learning

Curriculum that is connected to students' lives and the communities in which they live enhances the relevance and rigour of learning. An important step in this process is establishing students' prior knowledge in order to design and provide learning experiences that build on this knowledge.

Inquiring into the cultural practices and knowledge valued in students' homes and communities enables real world issues to be used as curriculum organisers that connect learning to sites beyond school. Teachers who understand and value the capacities, experience and aspirations all students bring to school communicate their belief in the importance of learning in a range of different forms. The provision of opportunities for all students to employ and build upon their strengths as learners is a crucial element for supportive learning environments.

Learning is deepened when students are required to develop and apply knowledge to real-life problems and issues. This means that teachers themselves learn about changing local and global contexts and the demands these will place on students in the future. One such opportunity is the transition from exclusively print-based literacies to multiple literacies and new forms of communication. Teachers thus can ensure that the curriculum enables students to engage with and develop proficiency in various modes of making meaning. Connecting learning requires starting with students' existing knowledge and capacities in order to promote learning that addresses the issues and problems that students must engage with beyond school.

Do my curriculum and pedagogy connect to the lives of students and the values, needs and demands of local and global contexts beyond school?

Personalise and connect learning

Essence >

The teacher identifies students' prior knowledge and cultural practices as a starting point for curriculum.

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Begin with what we know

Several years ago I attended a 'Teaching about Other Places' workshop at the Global Education Centre (SA). The focus on concept-driven learning resonated with me. This was an approach I really wanted to explore with my students.

Back in the classroom, I thought about how they would respond best to the new challenge. I gathered some basic resources: an unmarked world wall map and the ever-popular 'sticky notes'. The initial task was an open invitation: 'How many countries can you think of? Write each one on a sticky note and then put it where you think it belongs on the world map'.

That captured their imagination. Sticky notes were being stripped frenetically, dialogue was animated, and the map filled rapidly with a patchwork of place names—countries, continents, states, regions and cities.

Then the debate began. Which ones were countries and which weren't? Their knowledge was impressive, but already they were realising how much they didn't know. I was able to draw out their misconceptions.

Rather than send the students straight to a definitive source for answers, I asked them to form small groups. Providing only one sticky note per group, I posed the questions, 'What is a country? Can you give it your own definition?'.

Discussions were intense, reflective and purposeful. The students were constructing their own conceptual understandings. We compared definitions and questioned, clarified and refined each other's thinking. Sticky notes were juggled around, rewritten, moved or removed altogether. That school term, the world map was the focal point.

We went on to create our own 'countries', exploring general concepts of world geography, exploration and migration, citizenship and cultural identity, government, economic growth and tourism. With each deeper understanding, students were ready to make links to new, explicit learning about the world. We had laid the foundation for a rigorous learning journey.

Over the years I've introduced 'Learning about Other Places' to three different classes, and each group has brought to the task its own unique perspectives and dimensions. Each time the journey has been a new one—it's always different because they are different.

Country primary school teacher

build on learners'

Key actions: Teachers

○ Value prior knowledge as fundamental to new learning, seek out what the students already know, can do and understand, and use this to inform planning

○ Approach a new topic openly with students, discussing why we need to explore it, how we will share the learning and how we might use it in the future

○ Capture and record these initial responses as a starting point for mapping the shared learning journey

○ Ensure that all ideas are acknowledged, misconceptions explored and deliberate guidance towards accuracy provided

○ Pose guiding questions and listen closely to each student's response, to elicit understanding

○ Support learners to identify and clear up basic misunderstandings

○ Find hooks to create student interest and meaning making by responding to students' energies and enthusiasm

○ Deepen students' curiosity by linking new meanings to what they already know, and discuss how each of us may see these links in our own unique way

○ Challenge students to question what they don't know

○ Use visualisation, mind mapping and concept maps to capture students' thinking

○ Help learners to build on each other's understandings by teaching the skills of reflective listening, paraphrasing and questioning

○ Teach skills that enable students to show their understanding in a range of ways such as writing, artwork, practical tasks, roleplays and multimedia presentations

○ Design learning challenges that are open and stimulate further questions

○ Develop processes for students' active, ongoing reflection (eg where they have come from, what they now know, and where their new learning will lead)

Key actions: Students

○ Talk with my friends and teachers about what I already know and what I need to know next

○ Record what I know and understand by writing, drawing or other ways that show it best

○ Use technology to talk with others beyond the class

○ Ask questions to help me understand better

○ Think about how my new learning connects to my family and my life

○ Listen to other people's ideas and compare them with mine

… the challenge for educators is to help individuals construct, for themselves, the understandings that other minds have discovered before them. Left to chance, or open discovery, my belief is that you would have to be Einstein, or Einstein-like, to discover what he discovered.

Julia Atkin

understandings

Ways to build on learners' understandings

Graphic organisers: Use visual ways to connect with what students already know and understand, so that misconceptions can be explored. Examples are:
○ Mind Maps
○ Lotus Diagrams ▶
○ KWS (what I **K**now, **W**ant to learn, and possible **S**ources).

Graphic organisers can be sourced from <www.teachervision.com/graphic-organizers/printable/6293.html> and <www.education oasis.com/curriculum/graphic_organizers>.

▶ **Reflection partners:** Students work with a partner to reflect on their learning. Useful starters are: 'I know what I'm learning about because …', 'I could use this learning elsewhere by …', 'This is my understanding … This is how I got to it …', 'I came to this conclusion because …', 'I heard you say … Is this what you meant …?'.

▶ **Correlation chart:** This chart can be used for evaluating relationships between factors through looking at responses from a group and showing areas of agreement and difference. On a graph, the axes represent the two factors and each axis has a continuum. For example, when reviewing a task or new topic:
○ X axis—'what I learnt' with a continuum of *nothing*, *something*, *quite a lot*, *heaps*
○ Y axis—'how useful it will be for me' with a continuum of *not at all*, *quite useful*, *very useful*, *extremely useful*.

Students stick a coloured dot at the point that captures their own response. The results can inform further learning and planning.

4.1

4.1

Gallery walk: This technique can be used to share work/ideas on a central theme. It enables 'piggy back' thinking to build consensus/ connections between ideas. Display students' work/ideas as in an art gallery. Agree on a focus for the viewing (eg generating/adding ideas, feedback, writing questions). Students spend dedicated time in the gallery. Individuals or groups move from one exhibit to another, using the agreed focus to discuss/respond to the exhibits.

DIY museum: Students create a display of artefacts with 'question labels' rather than information labels. Classmates can then develop labels on the basis of their own prior knowledge and inference (not research).

Starting from scratch: Pose brainteasers to create new challenges for students. Some triggers might include:
- Structures in nature—what use are they to us?
- Light—who needs it?
- Time—is it the same for everyone?
- Taste—how do we change it?
- What can't we measure?

After students choose a brainteaser, ask them what they make of it, what is the big concept, how much do they already know about it, and how many ways can their thinking go. Have fun with all the interpretations and build new knowledge together.

Language that teachers can use to build on learners' understandings

- What is the meaning of …? Can you give it your own definition?
- How does this fit with your experience? Can you see the connections with …?
- What else do you know about …? Is there a link between … and …?
- How is this different from what you thought or felt before?
- Can you explain a bit more about …? What is another way you could say that same thing?
- What might be some different perspectives?
- What strategy could you use to develop this idea? How could you find out more about it?
- How and when can we use this new information?
- What if …? Could you predict …?
- Why might this be important for you in the next stage?

This element is not demonstrated if:

- There is an assumption that, for students to learn, the teachers have to impart the knowledge to them
- The teacher plans learning tasks without first considering students' prior experiences as an important part of the planning process
- Knowledge is viewed as only content— facts or topics—rather than concepts, personalised understandings and beliefs
- Students are disengaged or cannot see relevance in what they are learning
- Teachers ignore current technologies and students' expertise as powerful mediums for new learning
- All students are expected to show their understandings in the same way

Practice check

- What opportunities do my students have to share ideas and show what they know?
- How have I used students' prior knowledge when planning and programming?
- To what degree do I consider my students' cultural differences?
- How do I respond when my students demonstrate misconceptions and need to explore new meaning?
- Do I use questioning techniques to build on the complexity of their understandings (eg Bloom's Taxonomy)?

In a constructivist classroom the teacher searches for students' understandings of concepts, and then structures opportunities for students to refine or revise these understandings by posing contradictions, presenting new information, asking questions, encouraging research, and/or engaging students in inquiries designed to challenge current concepts.

Jacqueline Brooks & Martin Brooks

begin with

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Notes:

_We confuse the need for
the child to construct her own
knowledge with a form of pedagogy which
sees it as the child's responsibility to achieve that._

_We focus on the action of the student in the
constriction of knowledge, rather than the action of the
teacher in engaging with the child's current misconceptions
and structuring experiences to challenge those
misconceptions … The constructivist theory of knowing
has been used to justify a non-interventionist theory
of pedagogy, whereas it is a fair interpretation to argue
that constructivism requires vigorous interventionist
teaching: how, after all, is a student with
misconceptions supposed to challenge them
unaided? How does she even know
they are misconceptions?_

Ken Rowe

what they know

Personalise and connect learning

Essence >

The teacher ensures that learning builds on the resources, skills, knowledge and goals that students develop in their homes and communities.

Multicultural or Eurocentric?

My own schooling had been Eurocentric, my background was European and my tertiary studies were based on European, American and white Australian 'dead, white, male' artists.

Our school is a very multicultural school in an outer suburban region. Vietnamese and Cambodian families have made this area their home over the past twenty years, and a strong community has evolved.

Until three years ago, racial harmony had been the norm in our community. Then a serious incident occurred. For me, that upheaval was the catalyst for significant curriculum reform.

Initially, I was incensed at the disruption that the incident caused for our school, the untrue claims and the way in which prejudice was fuelled. I began to think more deeply about prejudice. I reflected on and, for the first time, really questioned my own values and beliefs.

Was I providing learning opportunities that built on the diverse cultural understandings of students in my classes? I realised that even though many of my students were of Asian background, what I taught was predominantly Eurocentric.

In reality, I knew very little about my students' cultural identity— their history, religion, language and arts. There was a gap in my own understanding of a major part of the world's geography and history, despite Australia's close proximity to Asia and my pivotal role in the learning journey for my Asian students.

That disruptive incident was an awakening for me. I now recognise that my students have rich cultural backgrounds that we can explore in developing curriculum that connects to their experiences, interests and enthusiasms.

Adapted from McRae (2001)

Cultural competency means becoming aware of the cultural differences that exist—appreciating and having an understanding of those differences and accepting them and being prepared to guard against accepting your own behaviours, beliefs and actions as the norm.

Dominant culture behaviour is 'unthinking behaviour' because the dominant culture prevails.

Members of the dominant culture are granted automatic presumption of innocence, worthiness and competence.

connect learning to students'

Justice alert

Whose goals are seen as legitimate and whose are questioned?

Key actions: Teachers

- Genuinely acknowledge the personal significance of my students' contexts, cultures and aspirations
- Recognise learner interest is both what the students bring through the door and what is generated in the classroom
- Support students to know themselves and their passions and strengths as learners
- Focus on essential questions and big ideas that inspire students
- Listen open-mindedly to students' perspectives, and encourage discussion to help explore reasons for differing views
- Pose guiding questions that lead students to view familiar topics in more complex ways
- Create space in the program where students can investigate and share their learning interests

- Identify and develop topics that demonstrate relevance to life beyond the classroom
- Encourage students to connect learning with issues of personal, local or national significance
- Use contemporary technologies (eg pod casts, social networking websites) in meaningful ways
- Actively seek opportunities for linking the community with programming and planning
- Enrich learning by ensuring a range of purposes and community audiences for students' work
- Create opportunities to involve families in ways that acknowledge and support their contexts, cultures and aspirations for their children
- Value individual self-expression and capitalise on students' unique strengths to convey their meaning

Key actions: Students

- Understand we're all different and say what's important to me
- Listen to my classmates and try to understand their views
- Be confident to talk about my hopes and dreams, fears and concerns

- Link my classroom learning to the things I do at home
- Use technology skills to help my learning
- Understand that learning happens everywhere, not just at school, and try new activities in the community

> *When students are able to use their own cultural information and experiences to connect to academic lessons, they develop a deeper understanding of the content.*
> Geneva Gay

Ways to connect learning to students' lives and aspirations

Community-based learning: Access programs and connect students with people/organisations that promote lifestyle choices, community involvement, and career and job opportunities. Make connections with role models in the local and wider community.

Have a go: Talk with students about their interests, and link with community groups and sporting clubs. Plan 'have a go' sessions for some of the identified activities. Encourage students to seek out more of these opportunities. Support them to make contacts and coordinate new sessions.

Student leadership: Promote SRC/forums/committees and student governance as important vehicles for all students to have a say when issues arise. Facilitate activities where all students can have levels of leadership in their class, school and community. Use current issues for students to take a lead role in change, and be flexible in programming to capitalise on emerging learning opportunities.

Strengthening aspirations: Support programs where students are able to visit workplaces and/or have first hand experience in the workforce (eg work experience).

Invite visiting speakers from allied health professions, volunteer organisations and education institutions. Engage in follow-up activities, such as Driver Education programs for secondary students. Integrate these into the subject offerings. For example, liaise with community representatives for sessions on vehicle maintenance/insurance/drivers' legal obligations.

lives and aspirations

4.2

Anticipating outcomes:
Ask students to predict possible applications remote from the learning context. For example:

○ After students have practised a thinking skill or other skill, ask, 'Where might you use this or adapt it? Let's brainstorm. Be creative.' List ideas and discuss some.

○ After teaching students about velocity, ask, 'Who may use this knowledge?' (eg crash investigator, town planner, bridge architect, boat builder, building demolition expert), 'When may they use this knowledge?' (eg to work out the speed of cars and impact after a crash, to establish gradients).

▶ How does this fit with me?:
After establishing a new learning topic, ask students to individually complete questions that make the topic more pertinent:

○ How can I use this at home/in my life outside of school?

○ How do other groups or cultures use this knowledge, skill, strategy?

○ How might I use this in the future?

○ Is this learning important to me? Why? Why not?

○ What do I want to know about this? Why?

Play The Connection Cube:
The Connection Cube is an interactive thinking game on the Active Learning Practice for Schools (ALPS) website.

The Connection Cube can be accessed at <http://learnweb.harvard.edu/alps/thinking>.

Language that teachers can use to connect learning to students' lives and aspirations

○ How can we use your strengths and enthusiasm to make your school learning really meaningful for you?

○ When you watched that program, how did it connect to your life?

○ Who might see this differently?

○ You're on the computer all the time at home. Let's use your IT skills to get the most out of this learning task. Any new ideas?

○ What do you hope for your future?

○ Are there extra skills you think you need? How can we support you?

○ How can you use this learning in other ways?

○ There are community agencies that may be able to help you with this issue? Do you know how to get in touch?

… training across many cultures is a mighty challenge—people have different ways of learning, different views about assessing competency, different approaches.

Kate Horwood

This element is not demonstrated if:

○ Teachers fail to consider their students' and their families' needs/interests and enthusiasms when planning for learning

○ A monocultural perspective prevails in the classroom

○ Racist, sexist, ageist and class conscious comments and perspectives are expressed and not challenged

○ Teachers predominantly teach and value only traditional print literacies from the pre-digital world

○ Teachers avoid engaging in conversation with students about current, complex social issues

Practice check

○ Have I created an environment where students feel comfortable in sharing their families' stories, rituals and traditions?

○ Do I know what my students aspire to?

○ What links can I make with the community to broaden my students' opportunities and encourage their aspirations?

○ Do students feel safe to disagree with each other and me?

○ In my classroom, do I make the most of each student's individuality?

○ Do I listen to students' perspectives and pick up on their knowledge?

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go beyond

Notes:

When a teacher is familiar
with aspects of a child's culture,
then the teacher may be better able to
assess the child's competence. Many
teachers, unfamiliar with the language, the
metaphors, or the environments of the children
they teach, may easily underestimate the
children's competence.

I have also discovered that to effectively
monitor and assess the needs of children
who may come from a different cultural
background, the notion of basic skills
often needs to be turned on its head.

Lisa Delpit

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the classroom

Personalise and connect learning

Learning for effective teaching

Teaching for effective learning

Essence >

The teacher structures the curriculum so that students apply their learning in real-world/authentic contexts.

Presentation or demonstration: how to make learning relevant

In the SACE Stage 1 English course, an oral presentation is one requirement. My group of students struggled with their learning—in fact, encouraging them to stay in school was a challenge in itself. They made it quite clear that talking in front of the class was not going to happen. As I wanted them to complete the requirement, I had to reconsider the activity.

Perhaps they'd relate better to an oral 'demonstration'? In this way, students could speak on any topic that interested them and bring along whatever props they needed to complete the task.

As I sat discussing the new approach with them, the body language began to change—the enthusiasm was building. Ideas were flooding in. Preparation was underway. We worked together to negotiate the criteria by which oral demonstrations would be assessed. We negotiated what makes a good oral demonstration and we specified the success criteria in a rubric. Their commitment was unprecedented.

We had students energetically demonstrating and talking explicitly about their interests. One student showed us how to decorate biscuits for a child's party and we joined in. Another brought in a complete car brake system to demonstrate how it worked. Later, we all found ourselves down in the student car park with a student earnestly demonstrating the under-the-bonnet workings of all the engine parts. We learnt how to make scones, use eBay, play a guitar, and on and on it went.

I discovered that these students had vast background knowledge to share; they could speak with ease and confidence when they were sharing their passions. They addressed the class competently, spoke clearly, used expressive body language, and they were interesting to listen to. Many of the demonstrations called for active class participation, with students listening attentively to instructions and keenly following the student lead.

The peer audience rewarded the students' efforts; they were highly supportive of each other, and were very honest in their appraisal of the oral demonstration as they used the assessment rubric to guide their feedback.

What had started off as a bit of a gamble had quickly become one of the best moves I could have made. The students made real connections, our class dialogue became much more meaningful, they provided constructive, targeted and useful feedback and, above all, these students experienced success.

Senior secondary English teacher

apply and assess learning in

Key actions: Teachers

- Build connections with my students, align curriculum outcomes with real-world settings and model lifelong learning where school is part of the wider community

- Develop topics and assessment through issues and projects that are real to my students and use assessment criteria relevant to these

- Use digital resources and *Scootle* learning objects to simulate real-life situations and assessment scenarios

- Incorporate deliberate and impromptu self and peer evaluation into everyday class activities, focusing on the quality of performance demonstrated in learning skills, understandings and knowledge

- Teach the skills of self and peer assessment

- Scaffold learners' efforts to conduct their own inquiry processes, experimentation and problem solving

- Allocate time for students to share their work with peers, to discuss their thinking and their plans

- Ensure my students learn about their own thinking processes (the metacognitive work of learning) to develop self-monitoring skills

- Negotiate with students how they will demonstrate their learning by directly linking to the intended learning outcomes

- Involve students in local community initiatives to 'make a difference' in contexts that matter to them

- Connect students with authentic audiences face-to-face and online

- Develop students' skills and confidence to take on advocacy roles within the school and the community

- Provide scaffolds for students to participate in authentic contexts (eg coordinate mentor partnerships across year levels)

- Give 'just in time', relevant developmental feedback

Key actions: Students

- Use different situations to show what I know, can do and understand

- Develop projects about issues that matter to me

- Assess whether I achieved what I set out to do

- Give feedback to others and accept it from people who are helping me

- Make sure I check with others to see how I'm going and to get new ideas

> *Teachers need to see assessment data as saying something about them, what they are doing and what they need to do. Our eventual success depends on our ferreting out student responses and adjusting our performance, not just theirs, in light of results.*
>
> Grant Wiggins

authentic contexts

Justice alert

Do the dominant assessment practices regularly exclude certain ways of demonstrating understanding?

Ways to apply and assess learning in authentic contexts

Learning shots: Students use digital cameras to capture 'learning moments' throughout a unit of work. Students develop captions for each shot that describe their thinking and progress made at each stage. Post these on the wall to create a 'Learning moments' wall collage. (Ensure that permission for photographs to be taken has been obtained from parents/guardians.)

Hamburger rubric: Three students are to do a well known task—constructing hamburgers. Three other students write a confidential set of criteria that they think a good hamburger should have. Stars can be used to indicate the quality of the hamburger on a rubric; for example:

Stars	Criteria
★★ ★★	Superb job of placing burger in bun All parts in respective places Used sauce to draw a smiley face on the patty Wrapped neatly in a folded origami swan
★★ ★	Burger in bun Lettuce piled neatly on patty Sauce on inside of bun Pickle centred Wrapped nicely
★★	Burger in bun Lettuce in bun Sauce on inside of bun Pickle in bun, but a little off centre
★	Burger hanging out of bun Lettuce hanging out Sauce all over the bun Pickle on floor

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4.3

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Hamburgers are then assessed against those criteria. This evokes discussion on how important it is to know the criteria for success when working on any task (eg 'If I knew you wanted me to put the pickle right in the centre, then I would have!').

Learning expo: Students organise an expo to showcase their learning, inviting other classes, parents and community members.

An example of such an expo is provided by a class that studied local marine environments. Students consulted with experts and reported outcomes, interviewed local residents and participated in learning programs with the Maritime Museum and conservation groups. They gave mini-presentations with interactive tasks to demonstrate issues of human impact. They displayed photographs of their learning journeys, including processes and end products.

Getting communities online: Set up blogs for community members. Students can make photo stories to share online and get feedback. They can link with other schools and participate in online challenges, both nationally and globally. (Ensure school cyber-safety policy is adhered to.)

Round table conference: This is a forum for students to immerse themselves in their heart, hand and mind interests and share their passion with others. Each student plans and gives a presentation/demonstration on an issue/activity in which they feel knowledgeable and confident. The panel members can be peers and/or adults, from within the school or across the broader community. Dialogue is question-driven and spontaneous.

When implemented well, formative assessment can double the speed of students' learning.
Dylan Wiliam

Language that teachers can use to apply and assess learning in authentic contexts

○ What could you do next? Do you know other ways to do this? Which might you choose and why?

○ Who feels confident enough to teach this to others?

○ Where else could you use these skills and ideas?

○ Where have you seen them used before? How could you use what you learnt last week to help you now?

○ What were you thinking while you were doing this?

○ If this didn't work, why do you think it didn't and what else can you do?

○ What are you doing? Why are you doing it? How might you use this in your life?

○ Who would you like to invite to this forum?

○ How are you intending to report on your findings?

This element is not demonstrated if:

○ The links to real life are talked about, rather than experienced, by students

○ Teachers plan authentic learning activities, but assessment is linked to final product only

○ Assessment is teacher-driven and students feel unsure of the marking criteria or their relevance to intended learning outcomes

○ Teachers always determine the audience for specific learning presentations

○ Assessment is always summative, not formative

Practice check

○ Am I giving ongoing opportunities for my students to apply their learning in real-life contexts?

○ Do I know my community and what it has to offer?

○ How does the assessment align with the learning intention? Do I ask my students to show the processes and not just the end product?

○ Do I consider my students' cultural backgrounds, interests, skills and attitudes when I plan assessment tasks?

○ Are my students receiving constructive feedback and advice from a range of people?

ongoing assessment

Notes:

> *Effective, healthy learning occurs in relationship to community rather than in isolation. Learning is not restricted to educational institutions, it occurs in communities and workplaces just as frequently. Thus, if a person has the skills to navigate the relational elements of the learning experience, he or she can carry those skills from classroom to classroom, to non-traditional learning environments, to work, and to the larger community with success and confidence as well as the ability to function in the current world of increasing change and challenge.*
>
> George Otero

informs learning

Essence >

The teacher ensures that the curriculum incorporates rich and varied modes of making and communicating meaning.

Australia Day—to watch the cricket or the tennis?

We had all enjoyed the Australia Day holiday, but I was surprised at how little my Year 6–7 students knew about Australia. How could I help them appreciate what it is to 'be Australian'?

We brainstormed all the important aspects of what being Australian means. The students sorted and categorised the ideas into *history*, *customs/traditions*, *language*, *unique to Australia*, and *lifestyle*. I introduced the learning intentions:

○ to research information about aspects of Australian life and present their understandings to an audience

○ to find and use the mode of presentation most appropriate for the aspect of 'being Australian' that they were demonstrating.

We all engaged in lively conversation, clarifying what these learning intentions entailed. The students discussed different modes of communicating information. They considered the advantages and disadvantages and impact of each, and the resources needed. Now the students were ready to begin.

I randomly selected five teams to develop presentations that would be shared at the school assembly. The design brief included the following requirements:

○ each aspect of Australian life had to be demonstrated in a different mode, one that was most appropriate for the topic

○ the presentation was to provide targeted information for the audience

○ all group members needed to contribute to the development and presentation

○ all presentations were to be previewed by the whole class, with their feedback used to refine the end product.

Time was dedicated daily for groups to plan, rehearse, organise props and write scripts. The five presentations were:

○ 'Australia's history', through a debate entitled: 'Was it colonisation or invasion?'

○ 'Lifestyles around the Australian barbecue'—a dramatic re-enactment

○ 'Customs and traditions' highlighted by video snippets of community members as they talked about their family activities

○ 'Language through time', in a PowerPoint presentation, 'Do you remember when …?', with vignettes showing the evolution of language as history and technology impacted on Australians

○ 'Uniqueness to Australia', depicted by the music and dances peculiar to Australia, with audience participation in 'Do the Stomp!'.

As each group gave its presentation to the class audience, the group members invited instantaneous oral feedback around the messages that were presented. They refined and improved their performances and then presented them at a school assembly.

The whole school audience gave authentic evaluation and honest feedback—there was applause, students were invited to the microphone to respond and, afterwards, classes sent written feedback that was highly valued.

As we reflected on our learning and all the different modes we'd used in telling our story, it was clear that not only did we now share a richer meaning of 'being Australian', but we had communicated that meaning to our entire school community.

Upper primary teacher

communicate learning

Justice alert

Whose ways of communicating are being privileged in the culture of the classroom?

Key actions: Teachers

- Monitor my planning and design of activities to ensure a balance of communication modes

- Ensure students consider how to present their learning using the mode that best suits the purpose and audience

- Structure learning tasks where students must use varied modes for accessing, processing and presenting information

- Develop in my students the skills to critique what they see, hear and feel through various modes of communication, and model strategies of how to do this

- Reinforce a culture of risk taking where we all explore new media and modes of communicating learning

- Teach safety considerations in each mode, such as safe use of art tools, warm up and cool down requirements in dance or drama, and safety online

- Model being open to many modes of accessing, processing and presenting information (eg Twitter, Wikis, written and oral text)

- Teach the conventions and specialist terms for each mode (eg how to create a story-board for a video production, how to use different camera shots, the position of the camera and panning to tell a story and communicate different moods through film)

- Design activities where students learn in two different modes and make comparisons (eg character development in a book and in a film)

- Ensure students show what they've learnt in different modes over time

- Teach students to challenge different communication modes by asking questions that encourage critical responses

- Recognise that all students are expert in something, which may be demonstrated in ways not usually recognised in school, and dedicate time to sharing this expertise

Key actions: Students

- Use research from many sources and show the same information in different ways

- Talk with others to understand the main ideas and to decide on a form of presentation

- Suggest ways to use media that I'm skilled in, and offer to help other people

- Try new technologies and ask others for help

- Practise communicating better by varying my voice, body language and using the space well

- Challenge myself to present my learning in a new way, to suit the purpose and get the best audience response

There are many ways to see and interpret the world … The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.

Elliot Eisner

Ways to communicate learning in multiple modes

A kaleidoscope is the metaphor: Think of the pieces of glass in a kaleidoscope as modes of learning. Each mode helps students to see meaning from a different perspective. Just as a kaleidoscope lens makes a pattern from the glass pieces, so students make connections between learning modes to create their own meaning. When the kaleidoscope is turned, different patterns emerge. Students' life experiences give different 'patterns' to learning. Knowledge and understandings are ever-changing through our own unique lenses.

Create a flexible learning environment:

- **Organise the space** and the curriculum so that students can be involved in multiple tasks.
- **Engage all the senses** so that students work with sound, movement, pictures, practical activities, and both verbal and non-verbal role play.
- **Develop a shared inventory of ideas** for communicating learning in influential ways, such as traditional modes, new technologies and skills drawn from all curriculum areas.
- **Use 'spotlight' sessions** in which students share their favourite mode of communication (eg playing an instrument, drawing, computer animation, mime, lecture or demonstration).

Teach specific strategies:

Treat each mode of learning as a 'language' and teach specific decoding and critiquing strategies. For example, teach students how to organise electronic folders; 'mash' information from several websites; create mood through colour, sound or camera shots; or make different types of puppets. Directly teach students skills such as how to organise electronic folders, safely use glue guns and electrical equipment, write scripts, and add voice-overs to PowerPoints.

in multiple modes

4.4

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Focus on intention: Encourage students to ask the question, 'What does this mode offer that another doesn't in terms of what needs to be communicated?'. Include assessment criteria that focus on intention; for example, how do student choices of font, colour, image and sound in a PowerPoint combine to communicate the intended message? Encourage students to nominate a target audience (eg family, school, community) and use this to direct their planning focus.

Surprising photos: Display photographs around the school that astonish or that portray something from unexpected perspectives. Use pictures which seem to pose questions that do not have neat answers. Intriguing images on the walls will stimulate the imagination at a subliminal level. Engage students in dialogue about the pictures, either directly or via comments boards. (This activity is based on work by Gornal, Chambers & Claxton 2008, p 25.)

> *I am among those who think that science has a great beauty. A scientist in his laboratory is not only a technician: he is also a child placed before natural phenomena which impress him like a fairy tale.*
>
> Marie Curie

Language that teachers can use to communicate learning in multiple modes

- What are the assumptions in this art work (or performance or text)?

- Whose voices are included or excluded? Is there bias? How might this influence people's perceptions?

- What role does music play in telling the story in a performance (or television program)? What purpose does silence play during the performance?

- What message are you trying to give? What mode will you use to communicate this clearly to other people?

- Where and how will you research this question? What are you likely to learn from each source?

- What does this remind you of? Can you think of a metaphor?

- Could you create an animation to teach that process? What character would you develop? Why?

- When you learnt how to … which instructions helped you most—the DVD, printed booklet or fold-out diagrams? How did they add meaning to each other? What mode of instruction will you use when you're showing people how to …?

- From this painting/performance, what can you tell about the artist's views?

- When you watched this demonstration, how did the expert show what she/he wanted to prove?

- How does the film version compare with the book? In what ways are the film characters similar to or different from those you imagined when reading the book? What effects did the music and silence have in the film?

- Could you find another way to demonstrate what you know? What will be your biggest challenge?

This element is not demonstrated if:

- Written communication dominates

- Students and teachers stay in their comfort zone, using a range of tried and trusted modes of communication

- Different modes are used without links to the learning purpose

- Electronic/live text/symbol systems are used just for decoration or entertainment

Practice check

- What communication modes did my students use today?

- To give students real choice, does everyone have the chance to develop multimodal skills?

- Are my students challenging and critiquing information from multiple sources?

- Am I helping my students to translate meaning from one mode to another?

- How do I monitor the modes students use? Do I extend them?

- Do I encourage modes of learning that engage all the senses—learning through sound, gesture, movement, pictures, practical activities and role playing with and without spoken language?

making meaning

Notes:

> *The only real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes but in having new eyes.*
>
> Marcel Proust

with all our senses

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Appendix A—South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework

unleashing learning potential

Leaders create learning opportunities with staff

Domain 1 Learning for effective teaching

1.1 understand how self and others learn

leaders and teachers develop their understanding of current learning theories, and themselves as learners, to inform learning and teaching design

1.2 develop deep pedagogical and content knowledge

leaders and teachers develop their expertise by strengthening their disciplinary knowledge and translating learning theory into effective teaching practice

1.3 participate in professional learning communities and networks

leaders and teachers participate in critically reflective inquiry to develop teaching and learning across the school

1.4 engage with the community

leaders and teachers interact with communities to build learning partnerships and connect student learning beyond the school

1.5 discuss educational purpose and policy

leaders and teachers contribute to educational dialogue and debate that shapes whole school policy and informs practice

1.6 design, plan and organise for teaching and learning

leaders and teachers develop systems and structures to ensure effective teaching and monitoring of learning progress

Teachers create learning opportunities with students

Domain 2
Create safe conditions for rigorous learning

2.1 develop democratic relationships

the teacher shares power with students recognising it as a fundamental condition for learning

2.2 build a community of learners

the teacher creates a culture where everyone inspires and encourages each other's learning

2.3 negotiate learning

the teacher responds to students' changing needs and involves them in deciding the direction of the curriculum

2.4 support and challenge students to achieve high standards

the teacher has high expectations and guides each student to achieve his/her personal best

Domain 3
Develop expert learners

3.1 teach students how to learn

the teacher develops student understanding of learning and expands their strategies for thinking, learning and working collaboratively

3.2 foster deep understanding and skilful action

the teacher helps students build rich conceptual knowledge and mastery of complex skills

3.3 explore the construction of knowledge

the teacher shows that knowledge is open to question, serves particular purposes and is shaped by culture and experience

3.4 promote dialogue as a means of learning

the teacher provides opportunities for students to learn through interaction and learning conversation with others

Domain 4
Personalise and connect learning

4.1 build on learners' understandings

the teacher identifies students' prior knowledge and cultural practices as a starting point for curriculum

4.2 connect learning to students' lives and aspirations

the teacher ensures that learning builds on the resources, skills, knowledge and goals students develop in their homes and communities

4.3 apply and assess learning in authentic contexts

the teacher structures the curriculum so that students apply their learning in real-world/authentic contexts

4.4 communicate learning in multiple modes

the teacher ensures that the curriculum incorporates rich and varied modes of making and communicating meaning

Appendix B—South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework

unleashing learning potential

Leaders create learning opportunities with staff

Domain 1
Learning for effective teaching

1.1 understand how self and others learn

leaders and teachers develop their understanding of current learning theories, and themselves as learners, to inform learning and teaching design

1.2 develop deep pedagogical and content knowledge

leaders and teachers develop their expertise by strengthening their disciplinary knowledge and translating learning theory into effective teaching practice

1.3 participate in professional learning communities and networks

leaders and teachers participate in critically reflective inquiry to develop teaching and learning across the school

1.4 engage with the community

leaders and teachers interact with communities to build learning partnerships and connect student learning beyond the school

1.5 discuss educational purpose and policy

leaders and teachers contribute to educational dialogue and debate that shapes whole school policy and informs practice

1.6 design, plan and organise for teaching and learning

leaders and teachers develop systems and structures to ensure effective teaching and monitoring of learning progress

Teachers create learning opportunities with students

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the teacher shares power with students recognising it as a fundamental condition for learning

2.2 build a community of learners

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Domain 4
Personalise and connect learning

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the teacher identifies students' prior knowledge and cultural practices as a starting point for curriculum

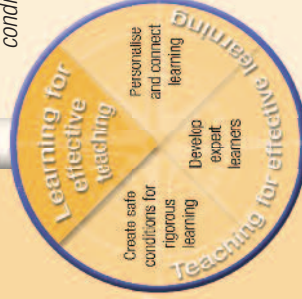**4.2 connect learning to students' lives and aspirations**

the teacher ensures that learning builds on the resources, skills, knowledge and goals students develop in their homes and communities

4.3 apply and assess learning in authentic contexts

the teacher structures the curriculum so that students apply their learning in real-world/authentic contexts

4.4 communicate learning in multiple modes

the teacher ensures that the curriculum incorporates rich and varied modes of making and communicating meaning

Personalise and connect learning

Develop expert learners

Learning for effective teaching

Create safe conditions for rigorous learning

Teaching for effective learning

Appendix C—South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning Framework

Domain 1 Leadership overview

In my role as leader of learning (instructional leader) this means I will:

1.1 Understand how self and others learn

Develop awareness of myself as a learner and a leader
- understand my preferences for thinking, learning and leading
- clarify and articulate my values as a leader

Appreciate the impact of my style of leading on others and strengthen aspects as needed
- gather 360° feedback regularly to monitor my impact on staff learning and check for congruence between my intent and the impact
- develop strategies to enhance my skills to lead for learning

Develop an appreciation of the learning strengths and dispositions of my staff
- explicitly draw out the learning dispositions and strengths of staff
- affirm and acknowledge staff members by engaging them in projects that utilise their strengths
- deliberately design teams to include complementary strengths

1.2 Develop deep pedagogical and content knowledge

Understand what is involved in leadership for learning
- recognise that in this context my 'content' is knowledge of leading for learning
- engage with current research on leadership that positively impacts on student and staff learning
- recognise the power of my instructional leadership role to influence and develop a whole school learning culture, and prioritise meeting time and resources for professional learning and work with staff to ensure clarity of our vision for learning

Accept responsibility to keep abreast of, engage with and critique theories of learning and teaching and their implications for practice
- seek out conferences and professional learning opportunities to be exposed to a range of learning theories
- regularly engage in professional learning

Develop personal clarity and precision with the metalanguage of learning and teaching
- discuss, debate and define the meaning of terms such as pedagogy, constructivism, mastery learning, student centred learning, personalised learning, explicit teaching, authentic assessment, professional learning community, learning styles …

Appreciate that designing learning for understanding is strengthened by deep pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge
- identify staff members with expertise in particular learning areas, observe their practice and reflect on the role that deep pedagogical and disciplinary knowledge plays in their effectiveness

1.3 Participate in professional learning communities and networks

Seek out and actively participate in professional dialogue about my experiences of leadership for learning
- form a small learning group of my peers as a professional learning community
- engage in relevant learning opportunities, such as Regional Leaders' days and cluster meetings with my professional learning community

Participate in critically reflective inquiry to develop my leadership practice
- use systems-mandated accountability points (eg DIAf site review and validation, performance reporting to my line manager) as opportunities for critical reflection on my leadership practice

Create and sustain a professional learning community with my school leadership team
- embed a learning approach in the day-to-day work of my team
- establish specific sessions where our focus is purely professional learning

1.4 Engage with the community

Create conditions to involve parents/caregivers as partners in the educational process for their children
- remember that parents are the child's first educators
- develop authentic, inclusive and respectful relationships with the community
- appreciate the differing levels of parental and community engagement appropriate for the family contexts
- harness the expertise of the community in the school's learning program

Actively elicit and respond to parents'/caregivers' aspirations for their children's education
- create focus groups where parents/caregivers and staff share their views
- work with the School Governing Council to promote its role in developing and communicating the learning vision for the school

Ensure opportunities for the community to develop understandings about learning, the emerging future and the implications for their children
- develop credibility as an educational leader with the community
- facilitate staff and parent/caregiver opportunities for shared learning
- regularly expose parents/caregivers to relevant educational research, ideas and information
- show connections between current educational thinking and the school's program

1.5 Discuss educational purpose and policy

Develop personal clarity about my vision for learning and teaching at our school to achieve our educational purpose
- continue to test and refine my vision
- appreciate that policy is purpose expressed as action, captured in print

Keep abreast of and develop understanding of current systems' policies as they relate to learning at my school
- maintain preparedness to constructively challenge policy against values and purpose
- prioritise the school's engagement with systems' policies as they relate to the school's current focus

Engage with other leaders to contribute to the development of systems' policies
- participate in Principal Networks and Associations and provide a considered response to systems' policies
- take responsibility for contributing to development of systems' policies

1.6 Design, plan and organise for learning and teaching

Develop my understanding and skills of designing, planning and organising for learning and teaching
- use the SA TfEL Framework's learning principles of domains 2, 3 and 4 to design staff professional learning

Design the use of time, space, resources—human, physical, financial, technical—to maximise learning
- think through the impact of the use of resources on the effectiveness of learning (eg appropriateness of the design of learning spaces, availability of ICT)
- evaluate the effectiveness of the current use of resources and re-allocate as necessary
- establish whole school systems for ensuring efficient use of resources

Use evidence to inform the design of our learning and teaching program
- develop my ability to identify valid evidence and analyse data

I will strategically design to:

Determine the level of staff members' understanding about themselves as learners to establish relevant professional learning
- ensure professional learning enables staff members to develop their understanding more deeply and learn about how this impacts on their teaching
- provide opportunities for staff members to extend their learning strategies
- encourage staff members' self-reflection and sharing about their learning

Engage staff members in sharing their expertise and understanding of learning with each other
- infuse meetings with a focus on learning
- encourage staff conversation about students as individual learners
- ensure professional learning incorporates the sharing of staff expertise

Ensure professional learning engages staff members with current learning theories as a basis for co-constructing our whole school's vision and values for learning and teaching
- strategically plan staff development to explore current learning theories and develop clear expectations for trialling, reviewing and implementing
- develop shared meaning and whole school agreements about learning and teaching
- be precise about what our shared agreements mean we do and don't do

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Ensure staff keep abreast of and critique theories of learning and teaching and their implications for practice
- provide professional learning opportunities on new pedagogy, including structured critique
- identify staff with pedagogic expertise and develop opportunities for this to be shared through teams, mentors and staff professional learning programs

Encourage and support staff members to develop their disciplinary and pedagogical expertise to ensure greater responsiveness and flexibility in their teaching
- encourage staff members to keep up to date with new knowledge in their relevant disciplines
- distribute disciplinary expertise across collaborative teams
- ensure faculty/year level leaders understand their roles as leaders of disciplinary learning as well as coordinating management tasks

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Create a climate where teachers can explore ideas and their practice in open dialogue
- establish expectations and norms for staff to learn together, share and critique practice
- make explicit the difference between professional disagreement and personal conflict

Encourage and support teachers to participate in professional learning communities within and beyond the school
- model participation in professional learning communities
- establish effective systems and processes to support 'deprivatised' practice, such as teachers working in collaborative teams, teacher peer moderation of students' work and observing each other's practice
- help staff members develop professional language to be able to describe their work explicitly and accurately

Deliberately allocate school resources to initiate and support professional learning communities
- structure the timetable to allow staff collaborative planning time
- allocate a budget to professional learning communities
- resource professional learning communities with expertise as needed

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Clarify that partnership means mutual responsibility
- demonstrate that decisions and judgments are based on professional knowledge together with parental perspectives

Establish expectations that teachers will engage positively with parents/caregivers and students as partners in the educational process
- develop protocols for engagement and prompt follow-up
- explicitly encourage valuing of the diverse strengths and interests of the community that contribute to student learning
- actively challenge non-inclusive attitudes and actions

Establish systems and processes for teachers and families to work together to maximise student learning
- establish effective open communication between school and home about student learning
- establish opportunities for teachers to learn in partnership with parents/caregivers
- establish school reporting processes that include parents/caregivers in shared celebrations of student learning
- encourage teachers to give specific strategies for parents/caregivers to assist learning at home

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Deliberately engage the community in co-constructing our school's values and vision for learning and teaching in light of our educational purpose
- establish processes to engage the school community in clarifying and articulating the school's purpose
- establish dialogue processes to surface and debate staff values about learning and teaching

Translate our values, vision and purpose into policy and actions
- integrate our school's purpose and policy with DECS policy
- keep our educational purpose alive by ensuring its visibility and deriving practice from our values, vision and purpose

Collectively monitor the congruence between our actions and our values and purpose
- review policies in terms of our educative purpose and make refinements to ensure congruence
- obtain feedback from students and parents/caregivers
- ensure school reviews and validation processes are referenced against our vision for learning, and are designed for continuous improvement

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Work with staff members to develop their skills for designing, planning and organising for learning and teaching
- enable staff to model design expertise and program exemplars
- enable staff with specific expertise to model classroom management systems, approaches for differentiating the curriculum, learning and teaching strategies and inclusive assessment practices
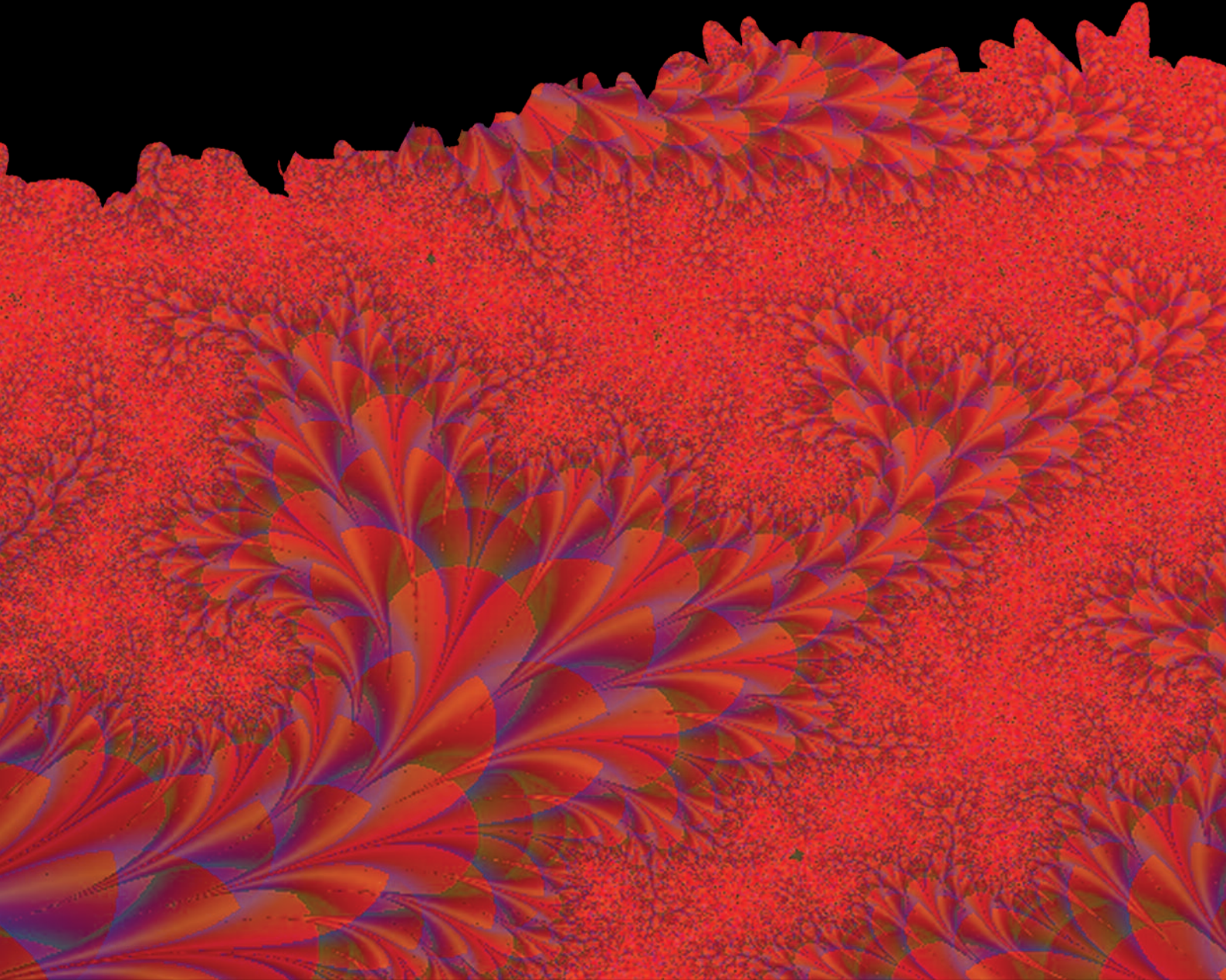
Establish whole school systems for monitoring and tracking student engagement and learning outcomes
- develop our school-based learning management system and integrate this with available system data
- use student data as an integral aspect of performance development and accountability processes

Critically evaluate the effectiveness of our systems and structures for maximising learning
- gather and examine appropriate evidence
- involve staff in using evidence as a basis for critiquing our systems and structures

As professionals, we need to continually learn to develop our 'craft' and our professional effectiveness as leaders and teachers. The South Australian Teaching for Effective Learning (SA TfEL) Framework and Resource are designed to support leaders and teachers in this work.

The SA TfEL Framework recognises that we are all learners and that the conditions needed for student learning are just as important for adult learners, including the teachers and leaders in our schools.