

# Teaching for effective learning

## Domain 2

### Create safe conditions for rigorous learning

#### 2.1 Develop democratic relationships

##### Teachers key actions

Model respect by listening attentively to students and acknowledging alternative perspectives  
Seek students' feedback on your teaching  
Ensure that learners listen to each other and feel safe to voice opinions and challenge thinking  
Students assume different roles and responsibilities  
Encourage all to act as leaders, teachers and learners  
Ensure that all individuals' strengths are valued equally

##### Ways to develop democratic relationships

**Shared ownership of routines:** It is important for students to feel a sense of control ... know work commitments and deadlines, upcoming events and planning schedules

**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

**Perception checks:** Has anyone identified an issue with this idea?

**Partner learning talks:** Give students time to share their learning on a task with a partner.

##### Language that teachers can use

What do you think? We value your opinion.

What support would you like me to give?

Could you teach this to someone else?

Would someone like to volunteer to ...?

##### Practice check

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?

Does my teaching style advantage some students over others?

Is it safe for students to disagree with me or their classmates?

#### Justice alert

Who is heard and who finds  
it difficult to be heard?

#### 2.2 Build a community of learners

##### Teachers key actions

Value my students' experiences, cultures and personal stories

Embed collaborative activities

Structure diverse groups where students can draw on each other's expertise

Actively seek out opportunities for all students to make a contribution

Celebrate individual achievements and shared successes

##### Ways to build a community of learners

**First weeks:** Focus on the shared values, attitudes, skills and community goals

**Embed cooperative activities:** 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.

##### Language that teachers can use

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

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

Who can 'piggyback' off this answer?

What can we do to build a sense of community in our choir?

## Practice check

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

**Justice alert**  
Who struggles to feel a sense of belonging?

## 2.3 Negotiate learning

### Teachers key actions

Remember the power of student interest  
Listen to students to find out their learning needs  
Establish ongoing procedures to engage students in self-monitoring, critical reflection and evaluation  
Actively involve students in the assessment process

### Ways to negotiate learning

**Ordered sharing:** At strategic points in the term, identify and discuss what students are expected to know, understand and do.  
**'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.  
**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. 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.

### Language that teachers can use

These are the outcomes we need to achieve. How might you work towards these in your own way?  
How are you going? Do we need to go back over it?

## Practice check

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?

**Justice alert**  
Are all students supported to engage in learning they are passionate about and achieve a meaningful outcome?

## 2.4 Challenge students to achieve high standards with appropriate support

### Teachers key actions

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  
Encourage students' resilience in using their strengths to tackle new learning, solve problems and 'raise the bar' with their expectations  
Ensure my teaching and learning program is referenced against criteria for high standards  
Challenge students with tasks that demand transference of skills/understandings

### Ways to challenge students to achieve high standards with appropriate support

**Supporting students to reach their potential:**  
Tell yourself 'This student *can* learn and *I* can help them do it'.  
Keep looking for new approaches.  
**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

**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' 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.

## Language that teachers can use

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

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?

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

## 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?

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Justice alert</b> Is every student challenged to reach her/his personal best??</p>
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# Teaching for effective learning

## Domain 3

### Develop expert learners

## 3.1 Teach students how to learn

### Teachers key actions

Model curiosity, excitement and appropriate habits of mind as a learner

Actively promote risk-taking

Affirm effort and committed approaches

Share personal stories of learning, and together reflect on the thinking and feelings involved

Lead students to explore how the human brain functions, and how there are optimal conditions for learning

Structure activities in a variety of learning modes and increase students' awareness of their strengths and areas for refining their skills

Model and reinforce goal setting, time management and organisation procedures and strategies

Reassure students that learning can be hard and requires persistence and practice

Explicitly teach and discuss effective collaboration: role taking, listening to and respecting others' points of view, appreciating different contributions and playing your part

### Ways to teach students how to learn

**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 to think about their own thought processes

Metacognitive Journal	
What I learnt	How I learnt It

**Future-based planning:** Learners envisage what it will look like when they've achieved their learning goal. They

They then decide what they'd have to do the days/weeks before

**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.

## Language that teachers can use

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

Did you make connections from what you already knew? How? Could you teach someone else?

Move outside your comfort zone and see what happens.

What learning challenge are you prepared to take on?

What strategies could help you learn?

What strategies could help you reinforce or master your learning?

## Practice check

When I am 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? 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?

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

Have I helped my students experience greater success through using appropriate learning strategies?

### Justice alert

Whose learning thrives and whose learning is stifled by classroom norms?

## 3.2 Foster deep understanding and skilful action

### Teachers key actions

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.

Encourage self-testing

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

Emphasise the power of precision in language

Help learners connect new knowledge to their own prior experience, other disciplines and the world beyond

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

### Justice alert

Have I made sure every student has developed the important understandings and mastery of the skills?

## Ways to foster deep understanding and skilful action

**Use precise language:** Model and teach the language constructs for specific disciplines of learning,

**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

**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 ...

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

## Language that teachers can use

What is the meaning of ...? How does it connect to what you already know?

## Practice check

Do I develop a deep understanding myself in order to guide students to their deep understanding?

How will I scaffold students' ongoing efforts in learning?

Do I value student inquiry and adapt my teaching to respond to individual questions at pivotal stages?

## 3.3 Explore the construction of knowledge

### Teachers key actions

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  
Introduce contentious issues for students to question their own underlying assumptions  
Challenge students to consider what they don't know by exposing them to new ideas or perspectives  
Ask students 'Why is this worth knowing?'  
Target discussions where students share perspectives and give and receive feedback  
Deepen students' understandings of the past and present  
Design activities that encourage and actively support students to be 'apprentice' historians, scientists, writers, musicians, composers etc

### 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 varying strategies to compare and contrast knowledge. For more thinking scaffolds, go to <[www.eduplace.com](http://www.eduplace.com)>.

**Exploration of cultural and contextual influences:** Students could explore cultural and contextual influences by: studying visual art, music

**Big feet:** Each volunteers stands on one of the two 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 swap and represent the other person's point of view.

### Language that teachers can use

Imagine yourself as a person from another culture or time. How might you view this issue differently?  
This text is written through the eyes of ... How would it look through ... eyes? Can you explain your idea?  
Whose voices are being heard and whose are not?

### 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?  
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?

#### Justice alert

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

## 3.4 Promote dialogue as a means of learning

### Teachers key actions

Develop a culture of mutual respect by modelling nonjudgmental listening and actively seeking divergent views  
Establish agreed routines for think/wait time, (eg pause to reflect on what has been said before asking questions or responding)  
Encourage students to articulate what they heard, 'piggyback' on others' information and 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  
Build students' confidence by explicitly teaching skills for public speaking and performance, and encourage them to rehearse with others before the event  
Incorporate dialogue and discussion about my learning

### Ways to promote dialogue as a means of learning

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### Language that teachers can use

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?

## Practice check

Do I provide explicit time for dialogue?  
How do I promote active listening and speaking?

### Justice alert

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

# Teaching for effective learning

## Domain 4

### Personalise and connect learning

#### 4.1 Build on learner's understanding

##### Teachers key actions

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

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

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

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

##### 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 Know, Want to learn, and possible Sources).

Graphic organisers can be sourced from

<[www.teachervision.fen.com](http://www.teachervision.fen.com)> and

<[www.educationoasis.com](http://www.educationoasis.com)>.

**Correlation chart:**

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.

The results can inform further learning and planning.

##### Language that teachers can use

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 ...?

Can you explain a bit more about ...?

How could you find out more about it?

##### 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?

### Justice alert

Whose prior knowledge and cultural practices are seen as valid for building upon?

## 4.2 Connect learning to students' lives and aspirations

### Teachers' key actions

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  
Listen open-mindedly to students' perspectives, and encourage discussion to help explore reasons for differing views  
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

### 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. Support them to make contacts and coordinate sessions.  
**Student leadership:** Promote vehicles for all students to have a say when issues arise. Facilitate activities where all students can have levels of leadership.  
**Strengthening aspirations:** Support programs where students are able to visit workplaces and/or have first hand experience in the workforce. Invite visiting speakers.  
**How does this fit with me?:** 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?

### Language that teachers can use

How can we use your strengths and enthusiasm to make your school learning really meaningful for you?  
What do you hope for your future?  
Are there extra skills you think you need? How can we support you?

### 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  
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?

<p><b>Justice alert</b> Whose goals are seen as legitimate and whose are questioned?</p>
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## 4.3 Apply and assess learning in authentic contexts

### Teachers' key actions

Build connections with my students with real-world settings and model lifelong learning where school is part of the wider community  
Develop assessment that is real to my students and use assessment criteria relevant to these  
Use digital resources  
Incorporate deliberate and impromptu self and peer focusing on the quality of performance demonstrated in learning skills, understandings and knowledge  
Teach the skills of self and peer assessment  
Ensure my students learn about their own thinking processes (the metacognitive work of learning) to develop self-monitoring skills  
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

### Ways to apply and assess learning in authentic contexts

**Learning shots:** Students use digital cameras to capture 'learning moments' (Ensure that permission for photographs to be taken has been obtained from parents/guardians.)  
**Rubric:** Students perform a task— other students write a confidential set of criteria. Task then assessed against those criteria. This evokes discussion on how important it is to know the criteria for success when working on any task.  
**Learning expo:** Students organise an expo to showcase their learning, inviting other classes, parents and community members.  
**Round table conference:** students plan and give a presentation/demonstration on something they feel knowledgeable and confident about. Dialogue follows and is question-driven and spontaneous.

## Language that teachers can use

Who feels confident enough to teach this to others?

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

## 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?

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?

### Justice alert

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

## 4.4 Communicate learning in multiple modes

### Teachers' actions

Monitor planning and design of activities to ensure a balance of communication modes

Structure learning tasks where students must use varied modes for accessing, processing and presenting information

Reinforce a culture of risk taking where we all explore new media and modes of communicating learning

Teach safety considerations such as voice care.

Teach the conventions and specialist terms.

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.

### 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 and students can make connections between learning modes to create their own meaning. Students' life experiences give different 'patterns' to learning.

**Create a flexible learning environment:** Engage all the senses so that students work with sound, movement, pictures and practical activities. Develop a shared inventory of ideas for communicating learning in influential ways, such as traditional modes, new Technologies.

## Language that teachers can use

Whose voices are included or excluded?

What message are you trying to give?

When you learnt how to ... what helped you most? How did they add meaning to each other?

Could you find another way to demonstrate what you know? What will be your biggest challenge?

## Practice check

Do I encourage modes of learning that engage all the senses—learning through sound, gesture, movement, pictures, practical activities?

### Justice alert

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