



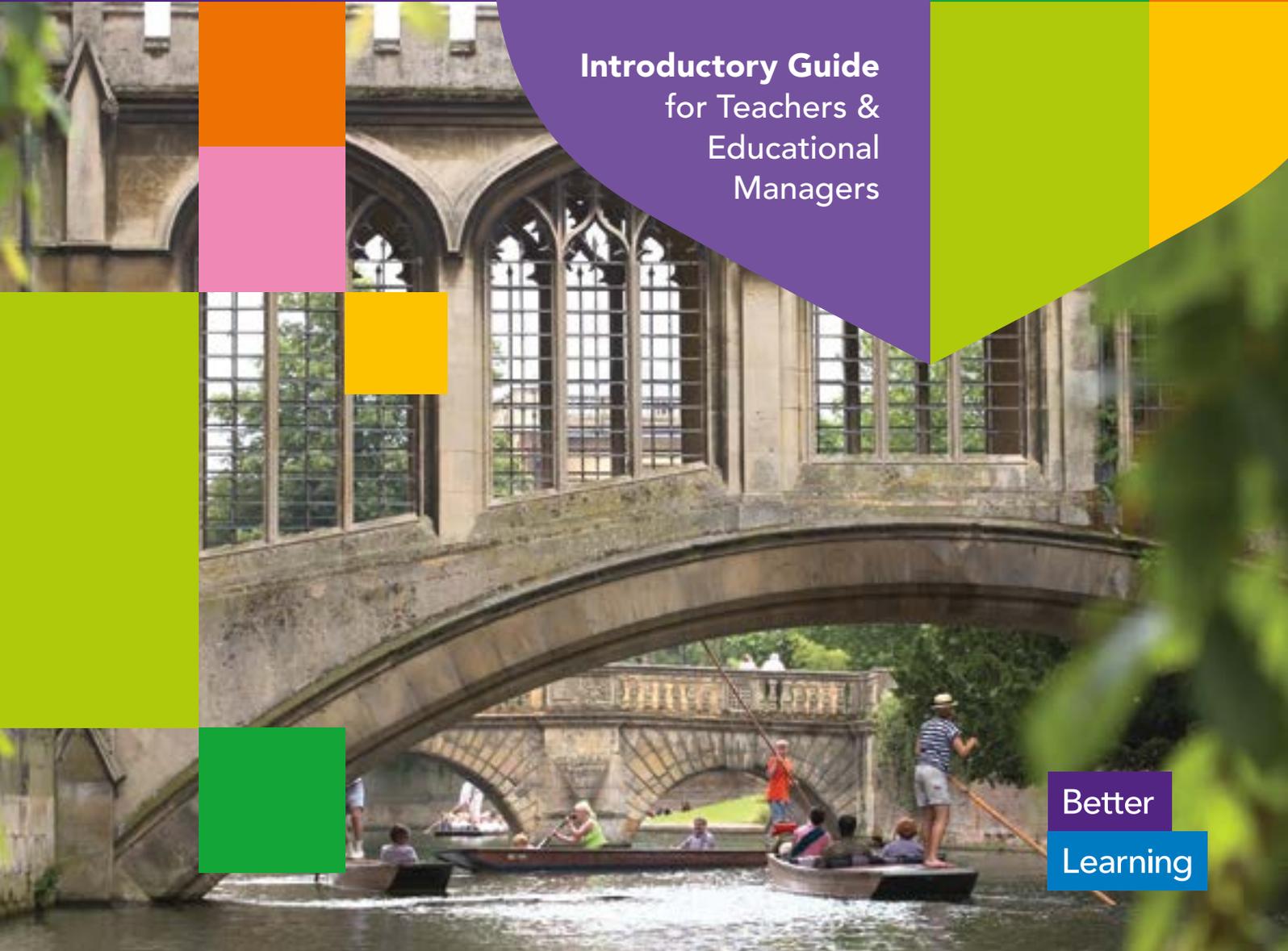
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The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework

Collaboration

Introductory Guide
for Teachers &
Educational
Managers

Better
Learning





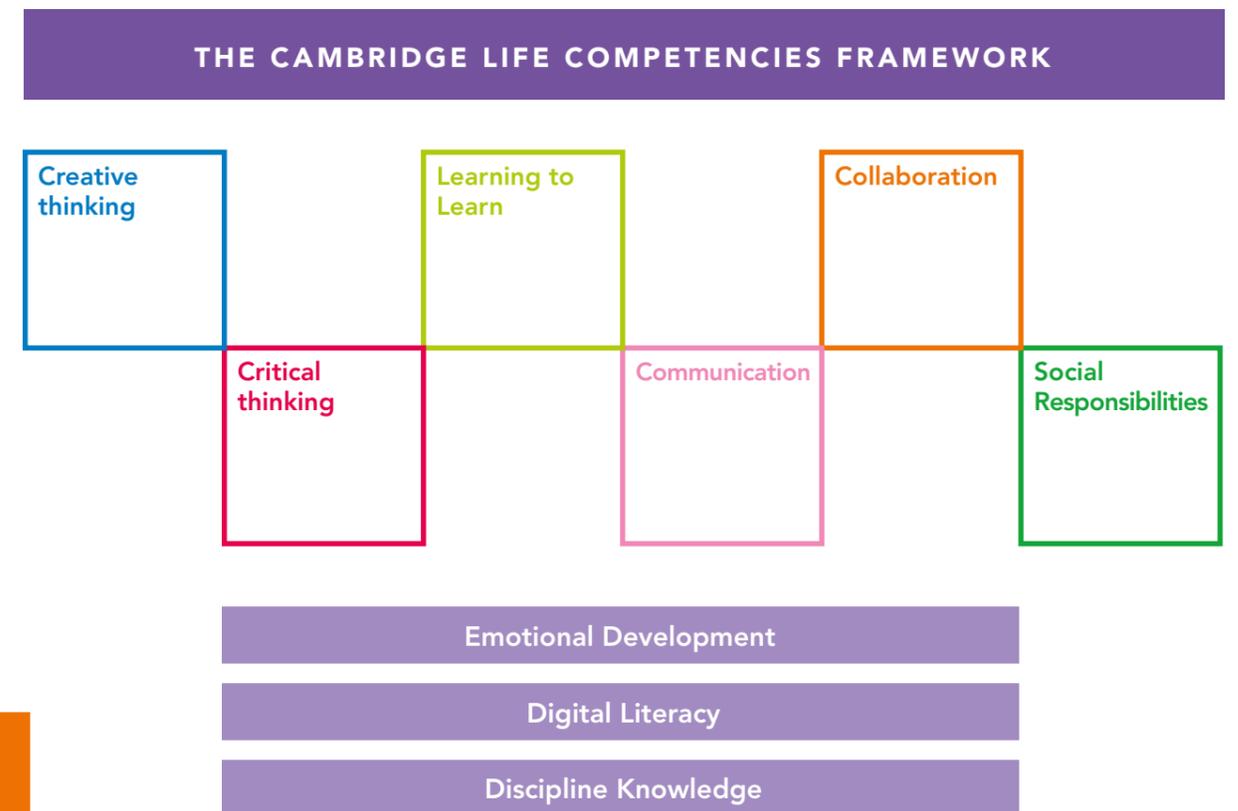
Collaboration

Introduction to The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework

There have been many initiatives to address the skills and competencies our learners need for the 21st century – each relating to different contexts. At Cambridge, we are responding to educators that have asked for a way to understand how all these different approaches to life competencies relate to English language programmes.

We have set out to analyse what the basic components of these competencies are. This is to help us create an underlying framework to interpret different initiatives.

We have grouped the different competencies into six main Areas of Competency and linked this to three foundation layers of the Framework.



The Learning Journey

We have also started work on examining the different stages of the learning journey, and how these competencies vary across each stage.



Pre-Primary



Primary



Secondary



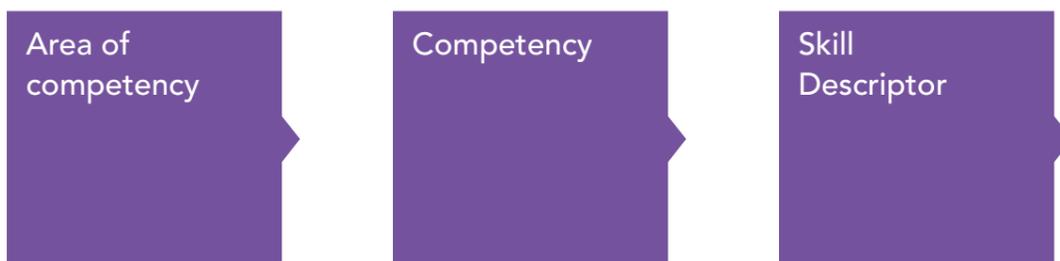
Higher Education



At Work

Then we are developing Skills Descriptors (see page 6) to describe what can be expected of a learner at each stage of learning for each competency. The Skills Descriptors are phrased as what a learner should be able to do by the end of that stage of learning. We have started to develop Skills Descriptors as descriptions of observable behaviour.

The Framework provides different levels of detail – from the broad Areas of Competency to the specific Skills Descriptor.



Defining Collaboration Competency

Collaboration is often described as a key skill for 21st century education (NRC, 2011). Some advantages of collaboration over individual problem-solving are claimed to be effective division of labour, use of information from multiple sources, perspectives and experiences, higher level of creativity and quality of solutions (OECD, 2013).

When people are dialogically involved in verbal interaction, they are not simply sharing information, but they are supporting each other in collective thinking. This collaborative interaction allows participants to achieve more than they can get alone.

We have identified four key competencies within the area of Collaboration:

- **Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task** refers to learners' ability to participate actively in group activities, to share own ideas freely with others and demonstrate a willingness to provide explanations for own contributions as required.
- **Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions** includes the learners' ability to listen carefully to others and to acknowledge their views even when conflicting with own. Learners are thus able to take turns appropriately in a group task, to provide constructive feedback and to also put forward own solutions and ideas.
- **Managing the sharing of tasks in a project** refers to learners' ability to identify tasks and sub-tasks in a group activity and to share them fairly.
- **Working towards a resolution related to a task** is related to the learner's ability to contribute to a task in such a way that it leads to solving the task. This might include evaluating multiple solutions and points of view during a group activity and an ability to acknowledge the most suited solution for the resolution of the task.



Collaboration Skills Descriptors

In this section, we have provided some examples of Skills Descriptors which detail what learners can be expected to do for each competency by the end of that stage of the learning journey. These Skills Descriptors will vary in their suitability for learners in different contexts, and so are provided as a starting point in the development of a curriculum, programme or assessment system.

The Skills Descriptors at each level generally assume that the learners have developed the skills at a previous stage of learning, although this is not true of the Higher Education and At Work stages, which are treated as being in parallel.

STAGE OF LEARNING	COMPETENCIES	SKILLS DESCRIPTORS
PRE-PRIMARY	Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Makes eye contact with group members. Uses gesture and posture inclusively (e.g. sits in a circle, looks at other children, waves to other children, points to where they could sit). Keeps play going by responding to what others are saying or doing. Actively chooses something to do and talk about with other children or adults. Engages with others to make sense of things around them. Observes rules of games when playing with other children. Takes turns in shared activities. Shares space and toys. Initiates play. Invites others to join him/her. Is keen to participate in group activities. Stays with the group throughout activity. Takes turns when talking and doing things with others. Actively contributes to activity. Allows other children to say and do things. Makes sure everyone joins in by asking them to share their ideas. Echoes the language of others, i.e. repeats them fully, partially or by paraphrase. Encourages others to share their feelings about the activity. Asks questions to make sure he/she has understood what others are saying. Asks questions to guide action. Asks questions of other children to extend on their idea. Offers help to others when they need it. Praises other children. Is creative, tentative and speculative when playing with other children. Shares and explains own knowledge and understanding. Suggests useful ideas about activities. Shares ideas about pictures, stories and experiences. Introduces new ideas at the right time. Understands why it's important to share ideas.
	Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is open to change and unpredictable turns of events during play or activity. Shows he/she is listening and thinking; that he/she is engaged throughout the task. Does not talk over others. Allows other children to finish speaking before sharing own ideas about stories, pictures and experiences. Listens carefully, attends to and takes account of what others say. Builds on others' ideas. Extends and elaborates play ideas, e.g. building up a role-play with other children.
	Managing the sharing of tasks in a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Directs and structures the activity. Understands the steps needed to complete the activity. Suggests who should do what. Takes account of others' ideas about how to organise and carry out the activity. Delegates to other children politely and respectfully. Identifies how he/she is going to contribute to the activity. Successfully contributes to the activity or task. Says if he/she feels happy with what he/she has done. Recognises when a task has been completed. Says if a task has been completed well.

STAGE OF LEARNING	COMPETENCIES	SKILLS DESCRIPTORS
	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understands when own action upsets other children while playing (e.g. wanting to use the same coloured pencil, toy, picture book). Recognises if own or another child's behaviour is causing a problem. Solves problems without aggression (e.g. when someone has taken their toy). Tries to resolve problems by finding a compromise (e.g. offers toys, books and pencils in exchange for others). Shows positive attitude towards different behaviours in the group. Listens to everyone's differing views about the activity. Tries to help work out a problem in the group. Stays engaged and focused, does not get distracted. Persists with the play activity. Shows determination to succeed in chosen activity. Keeps the group moving towards the goal of the activity or the solution to the task.
PRIMARY	Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates understanding of group talk by participating through body language. Uses language to interact with others in the group (e.g. I agree/don't agree with you; That's true; You're right; I'm not sure about that; Good idea). Is aware of when and how to take turns and when and how to interrupt. Is aware of how to clarify ideas. Takes part in tasks by interacting with others and stays on task. Communicates own knowledge of a topic. Asks others questions about a topic. Respects the importance of doing a fair share of group work. Keeps to the instructions to complete the task. Invites others to give their opinions during the task. Encourages others to join in and share ideas about familiar topics. Encourages others try to say something about unfamiliar topics. Supports other group members at all steps of the task by asking them to say some more. Communicates how well others are contributing to the group task by giving positive comments. Understands that others can be shy, less confident speaking English or unhappy about something and reassures them. Introduces new ideas and gives suggestions at start, during, and at end of tasks. Suggests more fully what the group can do during the task. Shares ideas and suggestions about familiar and unfamiliar topics during tasks. Introduces new ideas that develop the group discussion on a specific topic. Understands why it is important to share ideas with others especially when ideas are new or different. Shows acceptance of new ideas and challenges from others.
	Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focuses on the content of group talk from start to finish and indicates understanding of it. Demonstrates how to interrupt politely and at appropriate moments in group talk. Responds positively to what others say about the topic and the group task they are doing. Adds to what others are saying by contributing further ideas and examples.
	Managing the sharing of tasks in a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leads others in the group responsibly and helps them to understand the aim of the task. Identifies the sub-tasks that the group must do to achieve the main task. Shows leadership skills by giving roles and responsibilities to group members. Understands how their own sub-task achieves the aim of the task. Completes each step of the sub-task successfully. States the strengths and weaknesses of their role in completing each sub-task and the effort they made. States the strengths and weaknesses of the group's efforts and of the completed task.
	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognises when there are problems between group members and can say when they happened. Identifies how a problem started and can explain what the problem was about. Decides how to work out problems so that the group can achieve their task.

STAGE OF LEARNING	COMPETENCIES	SKILLS DESCRIPTORS
PRIMARY (CONTINUED)	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepts the opinions of group members and opinions from other sources. • Says how useful the different views of others are in achieving the task. • Suggests ways that could help to solve group problems. • Focuses on the task when the group is discussing what to do. • Stays focussed on the aim of the task. • Recognises the solution that the group has agreed. • Shares what the group has achieved. • Recognises when the group has reached all they can achieve.
SECONDARY	Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses head nods, eye contact when other students are speaking to show that they are listening. • Uses verbal cues such as 'yeah', 'uh-huh' when other students are speaking to show that they are listening. • Makes relevant suggestions based on the current topic of conversation. • Provides justification for their ideas or suggestions. • Asks clarifying questions when necessary. • Is aware how the group can work together to achieve the task. • Respectfully waits for their turn to speak. • Politely interrupts if necessary (e.g. due to time constraints or digression). • Stays on task. • Helps other students put their ideas across (e.g. by rephrasing their ideas or giving examples). • Encourages other group members to give their opinion throughout the activity. • Encourages other students to comment on their contribution (e.g. by asking whether they agree or disagree). • Encourages other students to stay on task. • Disagrees with other students' comments politely and respectfully. • Complements other students' work or how well they've achieved something. • Gives supportive feedback to other participants' comments. • Introduces new ideas and links them to prior knowledge during the task. • Makes contributions that are on task and explains them fully. • Introduces new, relevant ideas that build on their peers' ideas and help the conversation stay on task. • Acknowledges or agrees with others' ideas. • Encourages and builds on others' ideas by adding to them or asking follow-up questions.
	Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledges weaknesses in their own and others' suggestions when these are pointed out. • Listens attentively while other students are contributing. • Respectfully waits for their turn to speak. • Politely interrupts if necessary (e.g. due to time constraints). • Gives their opinion on other students' contributions respectfully. • Builds on the ideas of other students (e.g. by paraphrasing and adding examples or justification or adding further, related ideas). • Rephrases other students' contributions to show understanding of their ideas.
	Managing the sharing of tasks in a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbalises the requirements of the task or if in doubt, asks other students for clarification. • Helps other students understand the task by clarifying, explaining or giving examples. • Lists the steps necessary to achieve the tasks. • Identifies necessary roles and tasks and allocates them to peers. • Volunteers to take on a specific role. • Contributes to a fair allocation of tasks, taking into account the skills of the group members. • Understands how their role or task helps the group achieve the solution. • Completes all the steps necessary for the success of their sub-task. • Shows awareness of sub-task success and of support needed to achieve success. • Acknowledges strengths in the different sub-tasks. • Identifies strengths and weaknesses and provides possible ways to improve on a future task. • Identifies what went well in completing the task.
	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings other students back to the topic when there are disagreements. • Identifies the reasons for disagreement. • Decides if they should change their own viewpoint.

STAGE OF LEARNING	COMPETENCIES	SKILLS DESCRIPTORS
SECONDARY (CONTINUED)	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politely acknowledges differing ideas. • Evaluates the different views of the group. • Analyses different viewpoints and provides justification for their own viewpoint. • Suggests ideas to resolve disagreement within the group and to complete the task. • Stays on task during the negotiation. • Brings the discussion back to the main point of the task if necessary. • Encourages other students to agree on a solution after the negotiation. • Brings the negotiation closer to resolution by asking relevant questions and/or suggesting ideas. • Narrows down options and offers choices of solutions to others in the group. • Contributes successfully to the achievement of the agreed solution.
HE STUDENT	Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows interest in what others are saying throughout a discussion by smiling, nodding and making eye contact. • Acknowledges what others are saying using appropriate responses. • Is aware of what behaviour is appropriate during a group task. • Waits for their turn to speak and interrupts politely where appropriate. • Is able to follow instructions and contribute appropriately throughout a task. • Invites others to share their ideas and opinions throughout a discussion. • Actively encourages all group members to participate in all types of group task. • Supports others in a discussion by agreeing with or building on the points they make. • Is able to give appropriate and constructive feedback to other group members. • Recognises group members' different strengths and interests to help involve them fully in a task. • Contributes relevant points and ideas from sources throughout a discussion or group task. • Explains and develops the points they make fully. • Is able to contribute relevant points on both familiar and new topics. • Makes new points that build on previous contributions and develop the discussion. • Shows an understanding of the relevance and importance of the ideas being discussed.
	Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds in an open-minded way to different ideas, including those which represent an opposing point of view. • Listens to all the points put forward for an argument before responding. • Responds to others respectfully and interrupts in a polite, appropriate way. • Acknowledges the contributions of all members of the group so that everyone feels their input is valuable. • Builds on what others have said in a way that works towards completing the overall task.
	Managing the sharing of tasks in a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands what is needed to complete a task, explains this to others and directs the activity of the group. • Identifies the steps needed to complete a task. • Helps to share roles and tasks fairly and appropriately between the members of the group. • Fully understands what he/she needs to do individually and how this contributes to completing the overall task. • Carries out what is needed to complete his/her part of the task. • Recognises his/her own strengths and weaknesses in carrying out his/her part of task and either asks for help or thinks about ways to improve in the future. • Recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the group as a whole in carrying out a task and suggests effective ways to overcome any gaps or problems.
	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of disagreements over views or approaches to a task within a group. • Shows understanding of the reasons for any differences of opinion. • Decides when it is necessary to find ways to resolve differences in order to complete the overall task. • Acknowledges different points of view. • Is able to evaluate how his/her own view and those of others might all contribute towards completing the overall task. • Is able to put forward suggestions that might help resolve differences of opinion within a group in order to complete the task.

STAGE OF LEARNING	COMPETENCIES	SKILLS DESCRIPTORS
HE STUDENT (CONTINUED)	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stays focused on the main task and doesn't allow differences of opinion to divert attention. • Recognises the right point at which to agree a solution and move on, by encouraging others to agree or narrowing down the options. • Proactively helps to achieve what has been agreed on.
AT WORK	Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows interest in what colleagues are saying by smiling, nodding and making eye contact. • Acknowledges what others are saying using appropriate responses. • Is aware of what behaviour is appropriate during meetings and teamwork. • Waits for their turn to speak and interrupts politely where appropriate. • Is able to follow instructions and contribute appropriately throughout a task or project. • Invites others to share their ideas and opinions throughout a meeting or discussion. • Actively encourages all team members to participate in teamwork. • Supports others in meetings or discussions by agreeing with or building on the points they make. • Is able to give appropriate and constructive feedback to colleagues. • Recognises and makes use of colleagues' different strengths and skills on a project. • Contributes relevant points and new ideas and information throughout a meeting or discussion. • Explains and develops the ideas they put forward fully. • Is able to contribute relevant ideas on both familiar and new topics. • Makes new points that build on what colleagues have said so as to move a discussion forward and achieve an aim. • Shows an understanding of the relevance and importance of ideas being discussed.
	Listening respectfully and responding constructively to others' contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responds in an open-minded way to different ideas and suggestions, including those which represent an opposing point of view. • Listens to all the points someone puts forward before responding. • Listens respectfully and interrupts in a polite, appropriate way. • Acknowledges the contributions of everyone involved in a meeting or discussion so that they all feel their input is valuable. • Builds on what others have said in a way that works towards achieving a consensus or positive outcome.
	Managing the sharing of tasks in a project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands what is needed to complete a project, can explain this to others in a team and propose a way forward. • Is able to identify the steps needed to complete a project. • Allocates appropriate roles and responsibilities to team members. • Fully understands what he/she needs to do individually and how this contributes to achieving an overall objective. • Carries out the work needed to complete his/her part of a project. • Recognises his/her own strengths and weaknesses in completing his/her part of a project and looks for ways to fill any gaps. • Recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the team as a whole and suggests effective ways to overcome any gaps or issues.
	Working towards a resolution related to a task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is aware of disagreement over views or approaches to a task within a team. • Shows understanding of the reasons for any disagreement. • Decides when it is necessary to find ways to resolve disagreement in order to achieve an overall objective. • Acknowledges different ideas and suggestions from colleagues. • Is able to evaluate how different ideas and suggestions can contribute to achieving an overall objective. • Is able to put forward suggestions to resolve differences of opinion within a team. • Stays focused on the main objective and doesn't allow differences of opinion to divert attention. • Recognises the right point at which to agree a solution and move on, by encouraging others to agree or narrowing down the options. • Proactively helps to achieve what has been agreed on.

Practical Guidelines for teaching Collaboration Competencies

Introduction

Many teachers of English around the world use the communicative approach, and course books generally include activities that encourage learners to work together. Teachers have moved away from teacher-centred to student-centred learning, but this has not always been totally successful for many reasons.

Merely asking learners to work together is not enough. In order for learners of all ages to work together effectively, teachers need to be aware of how to establish collaborative practices. Teachers may need to scaffold the experience by initially introducing formal cooperative learning and make decisions about the objectives of a task, size and composition of groups, roles assigned to learners and the materials needed. By following some simple strategies, both teachers and learners can benefit from developing collaborative skills in the classroom.

Collaboration in the language classroom promotes not just language development but also crucial skills for teamwork and self-development. By encouraging learners to become part of a team working together, they can support each other in order to succeed in their learning goals. This is motivating and promotes authentic communication. It can also boost learners' self-esteem, as they become aware of the value of their contributions to their team and build relationships through helping each other to learn.

Other benefits of a collaborative learning environment are that:

- It equips learners with useful language and interpersonal skills to take into further study and the work place.
- All learners participate and feel involved in their learning.
- It links what they learn with how they are learning, as the process is transparent, presented by the teacher and discussed by the class.
- It allows learners to experience a different way of learning. For example, learners from contexts where collaboration is not usually encouraged, can experience different ways of approaching problems, thinking and cooperating with others.
- It creates a positive and dynamic learning environment, in contrast to competitive classrooms which can create divisions, isolation and a sense of failure.

Students, Thailand





Suggestions for classroom practice

YOUNG LEARNERS

Developing collaborative skills with young learners can be challenging, as in the early years, children tend to be more egocentric and often do not find sharing natural. It is therefore important to lay the foundations for collaboration, starting in pre-primary classes, by creating positive class routines that steadily build up teamwork. Teachers can explain to their learners the merits of collaboration (if necessary, using the learners' mother tongue), and model the behaviour and appropriate language for collaborative tasks.

The following are examples of effective tasks/strategies for building these skills:

- Choral work e.g. action songs, where children have to follow not just the teacher, but also each other to be synchronised and feel part of the whole class;
- Shared tasks, for example building a castle, which will be used in a story-telling activity. With support from the teacher, the learners take on different roles and collaborate, so that at the end they can see the result and understand that this was only achieved by working together;
- Games – turn taking, paying attention to their classmates and responding with appropriate responses like 'well done' or 'never mind'.

These tasks can easily integrate the competencies as outlined in the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework. For example, learners **take personal responsibility for own contributions to a group task** when they take on specific roles within group activities. Even when singing songs, such as in the example on the right, learners could be grouped to take on different roles within the song and will therefore be responsible to sing and do the actions at the relevant parts. Only by playing their part can the class get through the whole song – this can foster a sense of togetherness and responsibility among the learners.

Teachers can monitor and encourage good collaboration techniques and reward members of the group demonstrating these skills. This could be done by taking photos or videos of group activities to show to the learners at the end of the task as evidence of their collaboration.

I'm writing a new song,
I'm writing a new song.
At the beach, at the beach.

Suzy's getting a lot of shells,
Suzy's getting a lot of shells.
At the beach, at the beach.

Scott's swimming in the ocean,
Scott's swimming in the ocean.
At the beach, at the beach.

Dad's walking on the sand,
Dad's walking on the sand.
At the beach, at the beach.

Mom's reading in the sun,
Mom's reading in the sun.
At the beach, at the beach.

TEENAGE LEARNERS

As learners move into secondary education, they will generally encounter more opportunities for collaboration, especially with increased project work. However, it is worth considering the problems that teens may face when working together.

They can be sensitive about sharing their ideas with their peers: about being judged by others. It is not unusual for some teens to opt out of group work and refuse to work with some of their classmates. While it can be beneficial to mix groups up and get learners working with peers they would not normally work with, this may lead to conflict or silence. Allowing teens to work with their friends can therefore be important.

Giving learners a clear objective for the task can lead to greater motivation and increased levels of collaboration. Project work can be an excellent vehicle for developing collaborative skills as the aims are often very clear and outlined at the very beginning. It is also important when doing projects to establish clear norms and roles.

Include activities based on building a consensus of opinion which are age appropriate, for example, planning an end-of-year party. These could have a time limit, so that consensus must be reached quickly. This will support the competency **working towards a resolution related to a task**. Such tasks could feature the following:

- Learners should understand the success criteria for a task;
- There should therefore be a sense of achievement once it's finished;
- Teacher should monitor and help as necessary;
- Allow reasonable time – start with short tasks with quick resolutions and work up.

Even tasks where learners are working individually can include a collaborative element by adding a stage in which learners share their answers and negotiate a consensus of opinion. In the following example, the learners rank the qualities of teamwork based on their own opinions but must then work with others and share ideas to decide on a final ranking.

1 Rank the following qualities in order of how important they are to be a good team player (1 = least important; 5 = most important).

- being a good listener
- possessing strong leadership skills
- having a small ego
- liking your teammates
- respecting your teammates

2 Think of and note down other important qualities and decide on your final top five.

3 Work in groups of four. Compare your ranking and agree on a new list of five.



ADULT LEARNERS

Adult learners will come to class with the background of their previous learning experiences and may have certain expectations about what their roles in the class are: the teacher teaches and learners do what they are told to do. In this case, a teacher introducing collaborative teaching practices may face resistance and may lose the respect of their learners who may think the teacher doesn't know the answers that they are expected to find. It is thus important for teachers to introduce the reasons for collaborative learning from the outset and allow for questions and discussion throughout the process, so that learners feel secure and clear of the aims of this methodology.

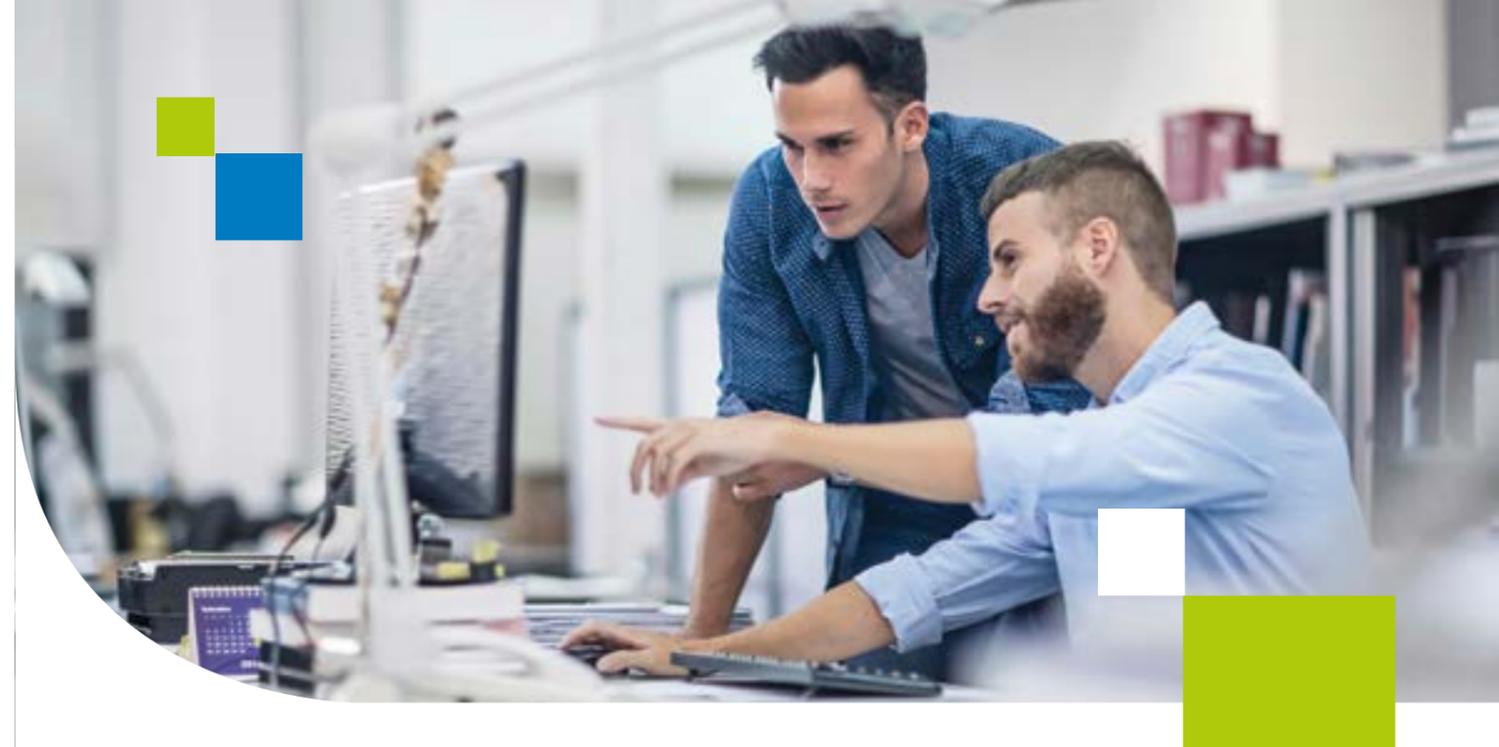
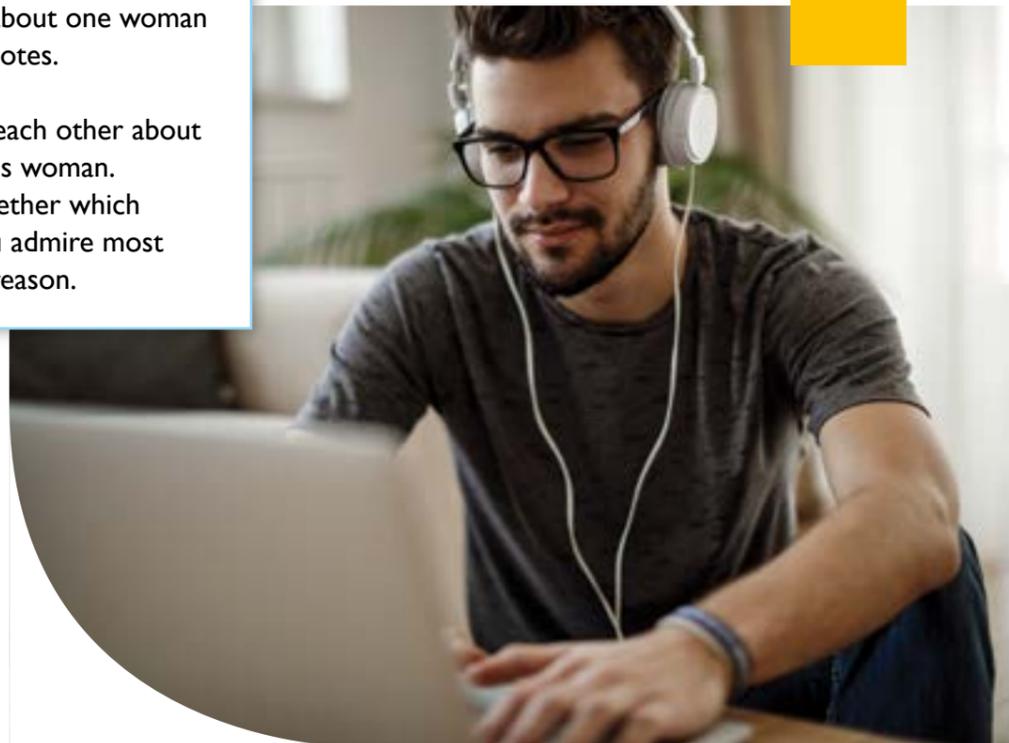
The following activities can be set up at the beginning of the course/semester to foster collaborative practices among learners throughout the course:

- The flipped classroom model – learners research different aspects of a topic and bring in what they have learnt and share with the class.
- Learners create an online platform (such as on a learning management system [LMS] or use networking apps such as *WhatsApp* or *Skype*) to share research, problems, ideas, etc. in order to support each other's learning, prepare for lessons and do homework.
- Before starting a task, learners formally present what they are going to do to the rest of the group, take questions and suggestions.
- After a task is complete, learners reflect on where they were most successful in the task and where collaboration broke down and how they can remedy that in the future.

Peer-assessment can be a useful tool when developing the competency **listen respectfully and respond constructively to others' contributions**. Learners are required to be active listeners during group tasks and take notes simultaneously in order to provide others with constructive feedback and counter arguments. Jigsaw activities can be used to develop these skills – in this activity, each member of a group researches one aspect of the topic they are working on (such as famous women, as in the example below) and they have to listen to each other and complete a task. The task could be structured with a fill-in template designed by the teacher.

Work in groups of three.
Each read about one woman
and make notes.

Tell each other about
your famous woman.
Decide together which
woman you admire most
and give a reason.



GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

Promoting a collaborative classroom

Here are some strategies for making the classroom more collaborative-friendly:

- Tasks should have clear goals and steps.
- By using the list of competencies when planning lessons, teachers can clearly focus their activities to specific aims and therefore be more confident; teachers need to select tasks which require collaboration, and which will motivate their learners.
- The task should be at the appropriate level of challenge for the learners so that they do not become demotivated by the task or complete it too quickly.
- It is crucial for teachers to explain and discuss the need for collaboration within each task with their learners.
- Learners should understand the aim of what they are doing and how their own contributions fit into the whole task – that the success of the task is the responsibility of each member of the group.
- Teachers must monitor group work and give timely feedback. The teacher can also encourage peer-feedback.
- Encourage learners to celebrate the success of the task by reflecting on their own contributions and roles, as well as setting goals for improvement.
- Teach active listening skills (make eye contact, show empathy and understanding, don't interrupt, summarise what the speaker has said, etc.) and introduce the language of turn-taking.
- Tasks should allow choice so that learners can choose to work to their strengths, for example, the best at drawing does the illustrating, or the opposite in order for them to try things they are not confident at in order to develop new skills. Additionally, the learners that do have strengths in one particular area can coach others and support general upskilling.

Assessment

Both teachers and learners may have concerns about how collaborative work is assessed, especially in learning environments heavily influenced by the pressures of exam success. Learners may not be motivated to engage in tasks where there is no individual mark that adds to their final assessment, or the task 'is not in the exam'.

Teachers will probably still be using traditional tests and exams in parallel with group work, so a fruitful strategy is to ask learners to reflect on how they think their tests results were helped by the collaborative learning they were involved in and discuss how future group work can support exam success.

When introducing the collaborative learning approach, teachers can integrate self- and peer-assessment of both the achievement of the task as well as of the collaborative skills used, so that learners can understand how this way of working is beneficial.

Example of activities practising Collaboration Competencies

PRIMARY

Power Up Level 4, page 63,
ISBN 9781108414661

Competency: Taking personal responsibility for own contributions to a group task

Skills Descriptor: Takes part in tasks by interacting with others and stays on task. Communicates own knowledge of a topic.

Culture
5

4 **Listen and read about the different seasons in Argentina. Answer the questions.**

Argentina is a very large country in South America. It's in the southern hemisphere, so winter begins in June and summer begins in December. However, it isn't cold in winter in all of Argentina because it has different climate zones.

Let's look at two examples. The north of Argentina is near the equator and it has a tropical climate. There are lots of rainforests and there are high temperatures all year, even in winter. The south of Argentina has a polar climate. It's close to

Antarctica, so it's very cold all year – cold enough for penguins – because it's never near the sun.

In many countries we can say, 'I go skiing in winter and I love swimming in the sea in summer.' You can do those activities in Argentina, but in any season. Why? The Andes is the longest mountain range in the world and 4,000 kilometres of it is on the border between Chile and Argentina. Argentina also has almost 5,000 kilometres of coast from north to south. It's no problem to go skiing in summer and swim in the sea in winter. You only have to choose the correct place!

<p>1 Why are the seasons different in various parts of Argentina?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>4 Can you only find penguins in winter?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>2 Where are the rainforests?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>5 What's special about the Andes?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
<p>3 Where is the polar climate zone in Argentina?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>6 Are the Andes in Argentina longer than the coast?</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

5 **Make a poster about the seasons in your country. Use your poster to describe the things you like best about each season.**

Write some travel advice.

- In your group, think about the weather and prepare travel advice.
It's snowy in the mountains. You can go skiing! Be careful, there will be ice on the road.

My mission diary
Activity Book
page 56

Learn about climate in Argentina **63**

PRIMARY

Talent Level 1, page 57,
ISBN 9781108465274

Competency: Managing the sharing of tasks in a project

Skills Descriptor: Helps other students understand the task by clarifying, explaining or giving examples. Lists the steps necessary to achieve the tasks.

LIFE SKILLS

Teamwork and cooperation

LEAD IN

35 Match the words to the definitions.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 <input type="checkbox"/> teamwork is | 2 <input type="checkbox"/> cooperation is |
| a when one person works with another person for a specific reason | b a group of people working together on one project |



PRACTICE

36 Read the text and choose the best title.

- Groupwork – A skill for your future
- The advantages of groupwork in class
- Groupwork – I always end up doing all the work!



Groupwork in the classroom teaches students how to work in a team towards a common goal. Students learn skills such as how to organise work and how to distribute tasks between group members at the beginning of a project. During work on the project, they learn to share their skills and talents and to ask other group members for help with the things they can't do. Good communication is essential to successful groupwork. Students need to learn to cooperate with all the other group members and to share ideas, research and resources. They also need to learn how to agree and disagree with other students in a friendly way. In the world of work, a team usually has a mix of people from different jobs such as IT, design, administration, technical, marketing, sales. Each team member brings a different point of view to the project but the basic teamwork skills are the same as the ones you learn from groupwork at school.



37 THINKING FURTHER Read the text again. Then answer the questions and discuss with your partner.

- According to the text, what can you learn from groupwork at school?
- What is your experience of groupwork? Did you learn these things?
- According to the text, how does groupwork prepare you for your working life?
- Do you think team skills will be useful for you personally? Why / Why not?

LIFE STRATEGY

Tips for useful teamwork skills

- Communicate your ideas clearly to other students in your team.
- Listen to the opinions and ideas of other students.
- Cooperate with other students – try and work together and share your ideas.
- Persuade other students of your ideas in a friendly way.
- Respect the opinion of other students – do not shout at or interrupt other students.
- Encourage other students to ask questions.
- Try and ensure that all students contribute to the project.

38 TASK In groups of four, produce a poster with information about voluntary work for teenagers in your area. Follow these steps.

- Research:
 - organisations that need volunteers
 - information about the work
 - contacts
 - photos
- Write out the information. Think of some short sentences and slogans.
- Design the layout of the poster. Use your laptop / the internet to think of some ideas.
- Print a few copies and present it to the class.

SECONDARY

Prism Level 1 Listening and Speaking,
page 145, ISBN 9781316620946

Competency: Managing the sharing of tasks in a project

Skills Descriptor: Understands what is needed to complete a task, explains this to others and directs the activity of the group.

Helps to share roles and tasks fairly and appropriately between the members of the group.

SKILLS Strategies for group projects

- Have a clear goal.
- Choose a leader.
- Plan a timeline, with deadlines for each part of the project.
- Make sure that every member of the group has a specific task.
- Respect everyone's point of view.

PRACTICE

7 Look at the quotes. Match each quote to one of the strategies in the box.

1 What do you think about this, Amina?
Respect everyone's point of view.

2 I can do this part of the project.
Would you like to take charge of ... ?

3 Let's focus on what we need to do today.

4 We should try to finish this by
Friday. Then next week we can ...

5 Let's choose a leader. I'd like
to nominate Cheng.

REAL-WORLD APPLICATION

8 Work in small groups. Choose one of the tasks below to do as a group. You will present your project to the class in two weeks. Hold a planning meeting. Work out a timeline and a schedule, and assign specific roles to each person.

- Create a website, wiki, or blog for your class.
- Write a short comedy sketch to be presented to the class.
- Create a short audio or video news program about events in your school and/or in your town or city.

9 Report back to the class. Answer the questions.

- 1 What exactly is your group going to produce?
- 2 What is each person in the group going to do?
- 3 How are you going to organize your time?
- 4 Did your group work well together? Why or why not?

ON CAMPUS 145

Further reading

Here are a number of books or articles that you could also look at:

Dornyei, Z. and Murphey, T. (2003). *Group Dynamics in the Language Classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hess, N. (2001). *Teaching Large Multilevel Classes*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mccafferty, S. (ed). (2006). *Cooperative Learning and Second Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Mercer, N. (2000). *Words and Minds: How We Use Language to Think Together*. London: Routledge.

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) (2013). *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2015: Collaborative Problem Solving Framework*.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: Development of Higher Psychological Processes*. Harvard University Press.



**Laura Grimes and
Olivia Goodman**

Language Research Team,
Cambridge University Press



You can find information about the other competencies in The Cambridge Life Competencies Framework at cambridge.org/clcf

- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Creative Thinking
- ✓ Critical Thinking
- ✓ Emotional Development
- ✓ Learning to Learn
- ✓ Social Responsibilities

