

Cambridge IGCSE® / O Level Guide to Classroom Activities

This guide is intended to help you deliver interesting and varied lessons using constructivist (active) learning in the classroom. You may be familiar with many of the ideas and activities and be able to add some of your own to share with other teachers. We hope the activities will be especially useful if you are new to teaching and/or new to Cambridge qualifications. The activities and strategies in this guide can be integrated into any scheme of work or lesson.

It is a good idea for teachers within a subject area or department to build up a bank of resources that can be shared and used. This will encourage best practice. A central resource file for each topic may be useful. All members of a subject department can add to this resource file as they find new ideas and resources or as they adapt resources to meet different learning needs. Cambridge International Examinations provides support materials for each subject, available at [Teacher Support](#) and you may make use of other available resources. There are many websites that provide ideas for teaching and learning activities including video clips, sound bites, animations, presentations and worksheets. All websites, however, should be checked for suitability before use in the classroom.

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Questioning in the classroom

Questioning is a critical skill to use in the classroom for the following reasons:

- Questioning helps you to direct and control the pace of lessons.
- You can use questioning to check the understanding of learners and find out if you need to re-direct the learning in anyway.
- Questioning helps you to understand when and where you need to intervene.
- Asking questions is a useful differentiation tool to target questions to learners of specific abilities.

It is important to involve all learners in your questioning. [Bloom's revised taxonomy](#) and [Bloom's taxonomy](#) will help you to plan questions matched to the abilities of the learners in your group. The lower levels of Bloom's revised taxonomy (remembering, understanding) demand [lower order thinking skills \(LOTs\)](#) (see glossary) while the higher levels (applying, analysing, evaluating, creating) demand [higher order thinking skills \(HOTs\)](#) (see glossary).

See [Diagram of Bloom's revised taxonomy](#) with lower and higher order thinking skills on it.

Questioning strategies

Sometimes it is appropriate to ask questions of the whole class that can be responded to orally, on mini whiteboards, in exercise books or on [post-it notes](#). As well as asking **HOT** questions, think about how you can extend learners' understanding by passing questions from one learner to another – for example, by asking "Do you agree?", "What is a strength of that answer?", "Is there anyone who does not agree; why?"; "Can you add some further detail?", etc.

Using 'might' in questions also extends learning as a number of answers might be correct and more learners can respond. For example, "What might cause climate change?" lends itself to more answers than "What causes climate change?". This strategy also invites answers that might not necessarily be totally correct, but will not make a learner feel that they are in the wrong. Used regularly, you will find that more learners are willing to answer as their confidence increases – they do not fear getting the answer wrong.

Questioning can also be made into fun activities – think about how TV shows can be made into classroom based quiz activities to engage learners.

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You will also want to think about learners asking questions, not just responding to them. You can provide a **stimulus** (photograph, picture, poem) and ask learners to ask questions about it.

A **question wall** where learners put questions on a whiteboard or post-it notes, is a good way for learners to ask the questions they want answers to by the end of a lesson or topic. They can either identify themselves or ask the question anonymously. You can look at these questions with learners midway through the topic or lesson to see whether they have been answered.

Learners can create questions for their peers – for example, a great **plenary** activity is hot seating – learners write down questions about the lesson which have to be answered by the learner ‘in the hot seat’ – or you might want learners to come up with a series of questions and answers to form part of a revision booklet at the end of a topic. As well as: “What?”, “When?”, “Where?” ask learners to use “Why?” and “How?” to ask questions.

Types of question

- **Closed question**

Closed questions invite a short focused answer. Answers to closed questions are often, but not always, either right or wrong (true/false; yes/no). They could also ask learners to choose from a list of answers or invite learners to give short answers to check understanding. Learners usually find closed questions easy to answer. They are useful to establish knowledge (e.g. facts). They are sometimes referred to as lower order thinking questions.

Examples of closed questions:

Is today Monday?

When is International Women’s Day?

Was Eid in June, July or August in 2015?

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- **Open questions**

Open questions invite learners to think, which is why they are often referred to as higher order thinking questions?

Examples of open questions:

If you were alone in the house, and the phone was disconnected, and a robber was coming in, what would you do?

Which way will my paper aeroplane fly further – if I point it up or if I point it sideways?

Why do we celebrate International Women's Day?

Dialogue and discussion in the classroom

In class discussions, some learners may be reluctant to participate so it is helpful to have a range of strategies and to build in thinking time. A useful strategy is ‘think, pair, share’ – think (time to consider a question on your own); pair (discuss your ideas with a partner) and share (contribute to a small group or the whole class discussion).

- **Facing pairs**

Ask learners to stand in two rows facing each other. Give them a topic for discussion (a question or statement). The first one of the pair speaks for one minute. The other listens. Once the minute is up, the partner summarises what the first one said and gives their own response/ideas for one minute. Once this minute is up, the learners move to face another partner and summarise the previous discussion before giving their response. This can go on for as many times as you wish and you can change question/statement as necessary. This could lead into a writing activity where learners individually respond to the question/statement and can use what they have heard in their response.

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- **I agree/I disagree**

Give learners a statement to do with the topic and some thinking time (2–3 minutes to decide on their viewpoint and make notes). Learners work in groups and each member of the group has a number. The number 1s say whether they agree or disagree with the statement and their reason. The number 2s continue but must come up with a different reason to the person before them. Once all members of the group have given their decision and reasons, the group chooses whether they agree/disagree and the best justification for their choice to share with the rest of the class.

Key words and terms

In every subject there will be **key words** and terms for learners to know and understand. It is helpful for learners to identify the key words and terms for each unit of work – these could be kept as a glossary that learners write into their exercise books with definitions during the course of study. Key words and terms can also be displayed on the wall of your classroom. As well as key words and terms, learners will need to be familiar with command or question words which are used in examination papers. It is good practice to encourage learners to highlight key words and **command words** in practice examination questions so that they fully understand what the question is asking them to do.

You can use key words and terms in fun teaching and learning activities. Here are a few suggestions:

- **Give me five** – learners say or write five key words/terms they learnt/used the previous or that lesson.
- **Explain a term** – learners have to explain a specific term without using the word of the term. Their partner has to guess the term.
- **Heads and tails** – learners match up key words/terms with definitions which would also work as a card sorting activity.
- **Box of words/terms** – from a box of words/terms, one learner in each group pulls out a word/term and the group has to think of another four to go with that word/term, explaining their choices.
- **The answer is ...** – learners are given a key word/term and have to write a suggested question that would give that answer.

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- **Dominoes** – key words/terms and their definitions are written on cards given to the learners (one card per learner). A key word/term is read out and the person with the correct definition for this key word/term stands up and reads out their definition and so on... this continues in a loop until you are back to the start – great fun when you put learners against the clock.

Starting lessons

The importance of lesson beginnings cannot be overemphasised. Learners need to be engaged from the very start of lessons for the following reasons:

- They learn more at the beginning and end of a learning experience than they do in the middle (sometimes referred to as the BME principle);
- The beginning, in particular, is the time when the potential for learning is at its greatest – relatively high concentration and anticipation levels make learners more receptive.

'Do-it-now' tasks

One way of engaging learners from the start of any lesson is to give them a 'do-it-now' task that learners complete at the beginning of the lesson – as well as engaging them, a 'do-it-now' task also helps learners to settle down quickly, and allows you to complete routines such as the register.

A 'do-it-now' task should be one that can be completed independently to either recap previous learning or to introduce the new learning for the lesson.

Here are some examples of tried and tested 'do-it-now' tasks:

- Place a photograph on the board. Learners write three questions about the image that they would like to be able to answer by the end of the lesson. These questions could be revisited at the end as part of a plenary to demonstrate the progress that has been made.
- Cut up some A4 pictures to do with the topic so that there are four pieces for each picture and give each learners a piece of one of the pictures. Learners must find the rest of their picture by describing what is on their piece of the picture. Once they have found their group, they sit together and produce a summary of their picture and why they think they have that picture – this is a good way of forming groups, getting learners to speak to each other and introducing new learning.

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- Learners produce a mind-map/bulleted list of key words/terms from previous lesson or can predict what key words/terms will be used that lesson (referring to the learning objective written on the board as they arrive).
- Learners answer simple multiple-choice questions that recap the previous lesson or reflect on and record ideas to answer questions ready for the start of the lesson.
- Learners make corrections and improve their work after receiving marked work or exercise books back. Examples include: a learner responding to a question set by the teacher; correcting key word spellings or redrafting a piece of work in response to feedback.

Ideas for classroom activities given in this guide can also be easily adapted for a ‘do-it-now’ task.

It is helpful to immerse learners in learning from the start of the lesson by providing a **hook** (see glossary) on entry to the lesson – this allows learners to focus on the topic for the lesson. An example might be a short video clip, images, a short story, some objects to consider or a piece of music playing that links the theme of the lesson.

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Classroom activities

Lessons should have a beginning, middle and end. To facilitate this, classroom activities can be organised into starter activities, main activities and plenaries.

A starter activity at the beginning enables learners to recap prior learning or introduce a new topic; the middle is the main activity where new learning is practiced and a plenary at the end of a lesson reviews and consolidates learning.

When considering classroom activities, think about how you are going to engage learners. Think also about the support that learners are going to need, either by organising pair and group activities or by providing resources that allow learners to work independently. Learners need to be given sufficient opportunity to build on what they already know and can do, practise new learning and review and consolidate learning.

Listed here are some activities that you might try in your classroom. Some of the activities may be more suitable to some subjects than others, but the majority can be adapted for use in any subject lesson. The activities have been grouped under the headings:

- **Analysis**
- **Audio**
- **Collaboration**
- **Note-taking and writing**
- **Mind maps and diagrams**
- **Create eLearning**
- **Quizzes and questions**
- **Presentations**
- **Videos**

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Analysis		
Diagrams	Adding labels to a diagram or using diagrams to display information – for example, tree diagrams, timelines, mind maps, flowcharts.	Learners' exercise books A4 paper
Card sorting	This activity encourages classification. Make a set of cards which learners place in categories – for example, cause and effect. The cards can then be sorted further – for example, immediate and long term effects. Add challenge by not revealing the categories to begin with or providing blank cards for learners to add their own ideas.	Set of cards with details on to put into categories
Timelines	<u>Timetoast</u> is an online timeline creation tool – useful for analysis, development of overviews. Learners could be given a topic to research and then produce their own timeline to present or share.	www.timetoast.com/ – make timelines, share them on the web
Word clouds	<u>Wordle</u> is a tool to create a visual diagram made up of words relating to a topic. Learners could use this to present and analyse more complex information.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.wordle.net/
Maps	<u>Worldmapper</u> is a collection of world maps where territories are resized according to the subject of interest with nearly 700 maps covering a range of topics.	Computer/laptops/tablets, internet www.worldmapper.org/

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Analysis		
Carousels	Put learners in groups and ask a question. They record their ideas on a large piece of paper. After a short time, the groups move around and add information to the work of the previous group in a different colour. Reduce the time to increase the challenge!	A5/flip chart paper Brainstorming and reviewing using the carousel strategy
Diamond Nine	Learners rank key information cards by placing them in the shape of a diamond. Follow up by a justification of the position of their cards – they can then compare with other groups and change their ranking positions if they wish.	A4 paper Key information cards Diamond 9 template
Using flashcards	A good way to introduce key words or to support learners by providing an image alongside a key word/term or phrase or to provide a series so learners know what information they need to look for in a text, for example.	Pictures on cards Key words/terms on cards Create and study with flashcards

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Analysis		
Photographs Pictures Cartoons	<p>These add reality to topics and can act as a great stimulus to discussion and learning. They can be used in so many different ways. Some examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annotate a picture or photo to show main features • produce a sketch from a photo • write a story based on a photo • ask questions about the photograph • write down what it shows and also what it does not show • show a combination of photographs and ask learners to identify what connects them. <p>High-impact photographs can provide a great hook for a lesson.</p>	Photos/pictures/cartoons Internet (Google images search)
Washing line	<p>Ask learners to place something in order or into a sequence by hanging statement cards along a line in the correct order. Alternatively, support learners with English as an additional language by providing pictures too.</p>	String for a washing line across the classroom Cards of information for sequencing

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Audio		
Music creation	<u>Audiotool</u> is an online tool which encourages and gives learners the opportunity to produce music online for presentations/poems/songs, etc.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.audiotool.com/
Audio cutter	<u>Audio Cutter</u> is an editing tool which is excellent for editing any audio file online.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet http://mp3cut.net/ – cut, trim and edit audio
Live discussion	<u>TodaysMeet</u> is a temporary online space to gather learner feedback and comments. This could be used during a presentation to gather instant thoughts and feedback – very powerful.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet https://todaysmeet.com/

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Collaboration		
Decision-making activities	<p>Provide information about an issue with a number of options. Learners work in groups to discuss and decide on the best solution/course of action and their reasons for it. Arrive at an overall decision and justify their choice.</p>	<p>List of issues Decision making lesson idea</p>
Dash and discover	<p>Place a set of questions on a table in the middle of the room. Learners work in groups. A member of each group comes up to the table to collect a question and then has to “dash” back to their group to discuss/find the right answer. When they return to the table with the correct answer, the point is recorded and the learner takes another question to find the answer to from their group. They then return to the table again to get another question and so on. The group with the most correct answers within the time wins.</p>	<p>Each card has a question on to do with the topic. Make a pile of cards with different questions on using different stems (where, when, who, what, why, how?). Groups can use reference materials/exercise books to find the answer if they don't know it.</p>
Learning detectives	<p>Ask a question or set up a mystery and provide information for learners to investigate. They have to use the information to present an answer to the question. Make it more challenging by offering them choice of how to present. Differentiate by resource – introducing more complex resources for more able learners. You can group learners of similar ability or use your experts to lead each group.</p>	<p>Mystery worksheet scenario The Detective Game – a classroom activity</p>

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Collaboration		
Questions and answers	Split the class into two groups. Provide one group with the questions and the other with the answers. They have to find someone who can answer their questions and make a note of the answer.	Set of questions
Role play	In groups, learners investigate an issue and have to consider it from different viewpoints. They could act out the scenario with each learners taking on a role in line with their perspective. For example, the role play forum could be a meeting to make a decision about a local issue. In the end, a decision could be taken, considering all viewpoints, with justifications.	List of issues List of perspectives Roleplay – an article about why and how to use role play in the classroom

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Note-taking and writing		
Notes and photos	Lino sticky and photo sharing for you This website could be used to encourage learners to collaborate and discuss a specific project or concept using images and notes. Groups could make a visual representation of an issue.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet http://en.linoit.com/
Note-taking	Padlet is a free (with premium pay for) tool to create and collaborate – learners could use this to develop an overview of a topic combining notes, links to online resources and uploaded files.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet https://padlet.com/
Note-taking strategies	Encourage learners to read for meaning by highlighting, underlining and/or annotating text. Learners can use different colours for key pieces of information – for example, cause, effect and solutions. Text can be summarised into tables or grids with specific headings to record information.	Template for recording information Take Note: 5 lessons for note-taking fun
Writing styles	Encourage literacy and add variety by using a wide variety of writing styles and contexts to record ideas – for example, a newspaper article, a poster; a TV news report; blog; sound bite; an article for a journal; a diary entry; a letter; an advert; web page; presentation for a younger audience, information leaflet; storyboards; fact-files, etc.	Templates for different types of writing style Writing a news report Identifying genre, audience, purpose and style

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Mind maps and diagrams		
Mind maps	<p>Record all the ideas a learner can think about a topic – can be sorted into different areas. Discuss as a class – the learner add new ideas in a different colour.</p> <p>Ask learners to develop their thinking by writing a development point for each of the ideas on their mind map in a different colour.</p>	A5 paper, marker pens Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.mindomo.com/ Part of a larger set of tools, this could be used by learners to make notes and develop an overview diagram for any topic – lots of interesting mind mapping potential.
Thoughts diagram	<p>Coggle is a simple to use online tool that learners can use to create their own visual maps on a specific topic. Ideal to map out ideas and links within a topic.</p>	Computer/laptops/tablets, internet https://coggle.it/

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Create eLearning		
Interactive teaching tools	<p>Triptico is an online tool to create classroom timers, group activities and learning quizzes. It is useful to use with a digital projector to share with the entire class.</p>	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.tripticoplus.com/
Online activities and classroom tools	<p>Classtools provides online tools to create a whole range of online activities for learners to use – could be used to support other classroom activities or to create online quizzes.</p>	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.classtools.net/
Learning quizzes, games and activities	<p>Contentgenerator is a downloadable programs that allow you to generate quizzes, games and activities. This activity is ideal for whole class reviews as formative assessment and to provide learners with a starter/plenary activity.</p>	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.contentgenerator.net
Give me Five	<p>This can work well as a plenary activity for formative assessment. Ask five things about a topic and learners record ideas – younger learners like to draw around their hand and record their answers on the five fingers.</p>	A4 paper

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Quizzes and questions		
Questions	<u>Kahoot</u> is an action-packed online tool where learners can create quizzes and questions for learners and then run a quiz where they connect with any available device. This activity creates a real element of challenge.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet https://getkahoot.com/
Quiz and voting	<u>Socrative</u> is an online tool to create questionnaires and quizzes for learners. Link can be shared with learners to record instant feedback and gather results. Lots of possibilities for learning activities.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.socrative.com/
Online polling	<u>Epic Decide</u> is a simple and accessible online tool that learners could use to post their own surveys to gather views and opinions with others. Very useful to gather quick and easy feedback.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet http://epicdecide.com/
Collaborative voting	<u>tricider</u> This online activity is ideal for learners to use to post ideas, invite others to review and then vote on their favourites. A ‘social voting tool’ which could be used in a variety of ways.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.tricider.com/ – collect ideas and vote

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Quizzes and questions		
True/false	<p>Ask questions and learners have to hold up a card to decide if the answer is true or false – add challenge by asking them to justify their answer and then provide the accurate statement. Can work in the same way with multiple-choice questions and letter cards to hold up. Each learner has a set of four cards (labelled A, B, C, D). Multiple-choice question is asked and learner puts up the correct response. This is also known as four corners where learners move to the correct corner of the room for the correct answer.</p>	<p>Cards with <i>True</i> written on one side and <i>False</i> written on the other side</p> <p>Cards with A, B, C, D written on them – a set for each learners</p>
Treasure hunts	<p>Place information around the room at key points. Learners have different questions that they answer – they move around the room to discover the answers to their questions. This could be a timed activity to challenge learners and create competition if learners do this in groups.</p>	<p>Information around the room</p> <p>List of questions</p>

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Presentations		
Presentations	Use of powerpoint or slideshare to provide presentations for learners – there are many on the internet that teachers are prepared to share. Ensure learners have a task to complete based on the presentation so are not completely passive but actively involved in the learning. Set images to catchy music to create a movie.	Computers/laptops/tablets Internet (Google docs) www.slideshare.net/
Animation	PowToon is a tool for learners to create their own animated videos and presentations – learners could use this to present research and viewpoints or develop their own fully animated presentation.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.powtoon.com/ – create animated videos and presentations
Online presentations	prezi is a very popular online tool to create animated presentations. A good tool to suggest to learners to create presentations on a topic that can be shared online.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet http://prezi.com/
Designs	Canva is an online graphics creation tool – could be used by learners to create social media posts, presentations, posters and similar graphics. Supportive tool to create impressive effectives.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.canva.com/
Just a minute	Learners have a minute to summarise the lesson. When, they have finished they nominate a peer to add more detail and so on.	

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Presentations		
Learner as teacher	<p>We learn something really well when we have to teach it to another person. This can be done as a paired activity where one learner explains a concept to another. It can make use of your experts (more able learners). This may also work as a group activity – learners research a topic and produce a presentation for their peers. They can provide revision materials too. A class discussion can follow as quality assurance to add any missing points. Learners could peer assess the presentation, commenting what has gone well or could have gone better.</p>	
Research tasks	<p>Ask learners to research an issue and either present their findings back to the group or write up using one of the “writing styles” examples listed below. Good to set as homework or independent study tasks which can provide opportunities to extend or consolidate learning that has taken place in the classroom. A good tool for differentiation – introduce a higher number of and more complex resources for more able learners.</p>	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet

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Activity	Notes	Materials and URL resources
Videos		
Adapting videos	edpuzzle is a simple to use online video creation – crop videos, add voice over and embed quizzes – ideal for learners to use to annotate and extend existing online videos.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet https://edpuzzle.com/
Animated media	Learners could use thinglink to create and share interactive images and videos – extend an existing video or image by adding hotspots that can include links and notes.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet www.thinglink.com/
Remix video	This tool can be used to remix, edit and adapt existing videos – learners can edit and add their own notes, links and additional media to develop their own online video or presentation.	Computers/laptops/tablets, internet

This list of activities includes website links providing direct access to internet resources. Cambridge International Examinations is not responsible for the accuracy or content of information contained in these sites. The inclusion of a link to an external website is a suggestion only and is not an endorsement of that website or the site's owners (or their products/services). The particular URL website pages were selected when the guide was produced. Other aspects of the sites were not checked and only the particular resources are recommended.

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Learning environment

The learning environment in your classroom is very important. Consider the wall displays that you can use and how these can be incorporated into your teaching – a question wall; key words/terms; command words; Bloom's taxonomy; a progress wall; 'in the news board' to show topical events relating to your subject; revision techniques; useful websites; exam advice, etc. Consider also how you use your space and the seating arrangements that can be used for different activities. Seating plans can also help you to differentiate – for example, by placing learners of similar abilities together so you can target support or by seating a 'subject expert' on a table to provide support and guidance to other learners. The subject expert could vary according to the topic or could target your more able learners. You can also organise group work so that learners each have a specific role with the group – for example, a researcher; a leader, a presenter.



For some subjects it may be appropriate to be outside the classroom, this is as simple as using your school grounds/field as well as local areas of interest. Consider how you can use the environment around you – sketching a scene outdoors or collecting materials for a collage; conducting an investigation into the weather conditions or investigating different habitats in the grounds – are just some simple ideas for getting out of the classroom. You can also plan fieldtrips and visits.

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Assessment opportunities

Formative assessment provides learners with developmental feedback on their progress during the learning programme and informs the design of their next steps in learning. Effective marking is regular and provides guidance to learners on what has gone well and how they can improve. Encourage learners to respond to your marking – for example, by asking a question that they have to respond to or by setting a target to achieve for the next time you mark their work. Dedicated time can be made available in lessons for marking dialogue – correcting key word spellings; redrafting a piece of work; adding greater detail, answering a targeted question. These are just a few examples of how time can be spent on using marking to improve learners' work.

Summative assessment is typically end-of-learning assessment tasks, such as examinations and tests, to measure and record the level of learning achieved, for progression to the next level or for certification, for example, a mock examination. Summative assessment can be used in a formative way by providing feedback to learners on common mistakes and how to improve. Time should be made available for learners to peer- and self-assess work using specific criteria such as a mark scheme (these can be adapted for learners) and to set targets for improvement as a result. Model answers are a great way to exemplify standards. For example, provide an example of an answer at different grades, ask learners to award a grade using criteria and then justify why. Summative assessment and other guidance such as examiner reports can be used to update schemes of work and adapt teaching practice – using the data to inform planning and consider what needs to change to improve learner progress.

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Differentiated learning

This is about meeting the needs of all learners which may involve adapting work to meet a specific need such as enlarged resources for a visually impaired learner or providing challenge for a most able learner. Challenge can be achieved in a variety of ways, for example, cards that have challenging activities on that can be handed out as a learner is ready to move on; planned extension opportunities and lead learners (using the more able learners as experts in the room).

Support can be provided by additional adults in the room or resources can be adapted to support less able learners – for example, providing a worksheet with the key words/terms on for learners to look at if need be. **Writing** and **speaking frames** or templates can be used as support. These usually have the beginning of a sentence or give learners a clue to the layout/structure of a piece of work. Many writing and speaking frames are available online and can be used or adapted. Differentiate activity worksheets so that the challenge increases as learners progress through the activities – remember not all learners have to start at the same point. Use the grade descriptors in the syllabus to help you to understand what is required for each grade. English as an additional language also needs extra support – provide dictionaries; key word/term definitions and use visual images to help introduce new concepts.

You can also differentiate by questioning and resources as mentioned earlier in this document. Match the task to the learner's ability – different learners can be working on different tasks in the same classroom at the same time – use your data about prior achievement to group similar ability learners together for certain activities.

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Glossary

Active learning

Learning which engages learners and challenges their thinking, using a variety of activities.

Collaboration

Learners work together to achieve a task or outcome.

Command words

Words used in tasks and examinations that define what a learner needs to do, e.g. describe, explain, write.

Differentiated learning

Adapting one's teaching to suit the needs of different learners for their current level of understanding and performance., by providing appropriate learning activities, support, and assessment, so that all learners in the group can learn effectively.

Flash cards

A4 cards with an image and the corresponding word on to give learners support.

Formative assessment

Provides learners with developmental feedback on their progress during the learning programme and informs the design of their next steps in learning.

Higher order thinking (HOT)

Thinking, completing an activity or answering questions at the higher end of Bloom's revised taxonomy: analysis, application, evaluation and creation.

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Hook

A ‘Hook’ is a short (ten seconds to three minutes), engaging moment at the start of your lesson. It should grab the interest and attention of your learners.

Independent study

Learners work on their own to complete a task, e.g. research or reading activity. Generally independent study will go before a more collaborative activity.

Key terms

Key terms are the terms associated with a particular topic, e.g. mitosis with Biology.

Key words

A key word is a word that serves as a clue as to the meaning of another word, a sentence, passage.

Lower order thinking (LOT)

Thinking, completing an activity or answering questions at the lower end of Bloom’s revised taxonomy: remembering and understanding.

Mind mapping

A diagram used to visually organise information. A mind map can be created around a single concept, drawn as an image in the centre of a blank page, to which associated representations of ideas such as images, words and parts of words can be added.

Plenary

A plenary happens at the end of a learning experience or lesson and its purpose is to sum up learning and refer back to what has been learnt in the lesson. A plenary is often used to assess whether learning objectives have been met.

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Post-it notes

A piece of paper with an adhesive strip on one side, designed to stick an object or surface and it can be easily removed when necessary. You could also use small pieces of paper with a piece of sticky tape on the back.

Question wall

As part of the classroom display, set aside for learners to attach their questions about topics and lessons. This may be used as a planned learning activity or spontaneously to change the course of a lesson.

Revision

This is often done in preparation for an examination or test and requires learners to go over work learnt to check that they understand and/or can do something as required by their course of study.

Scheme of work

A set of planned units of learning relating to a topic, subject or stage.

Sound bites

A short extract from a recorded interview or speech.

Speaking frame

A template to support learners. It gives structure so that learners can concentrate on the content rather than the structure of a speech or spoken task.

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Starter activity

An activity designed to check previous learning or an engaging activity at the start of your lesson. It should grab the interest and attention of your learners and prepare them for the new learning in your lesson.

Stimulus

Something that motivates learners to do an activity or gets learners thinking. A picture, photo, piece of music or words are all classed as stimulus materials.

Student-centred learning

In designing the learning activities, the teacher focuses on the needs, abilities and interests of the learner in relation to the learning outcomes.

Summative assessment

Typically end-of-learning assessment tasks such as examinations and tests, to measure and record the level of learning achieved, for progression to the next level or for certification.

Writing frame

A template to support learners. It gives structure so that learners can concentrate on the content rather than the structure of a piece of writing.