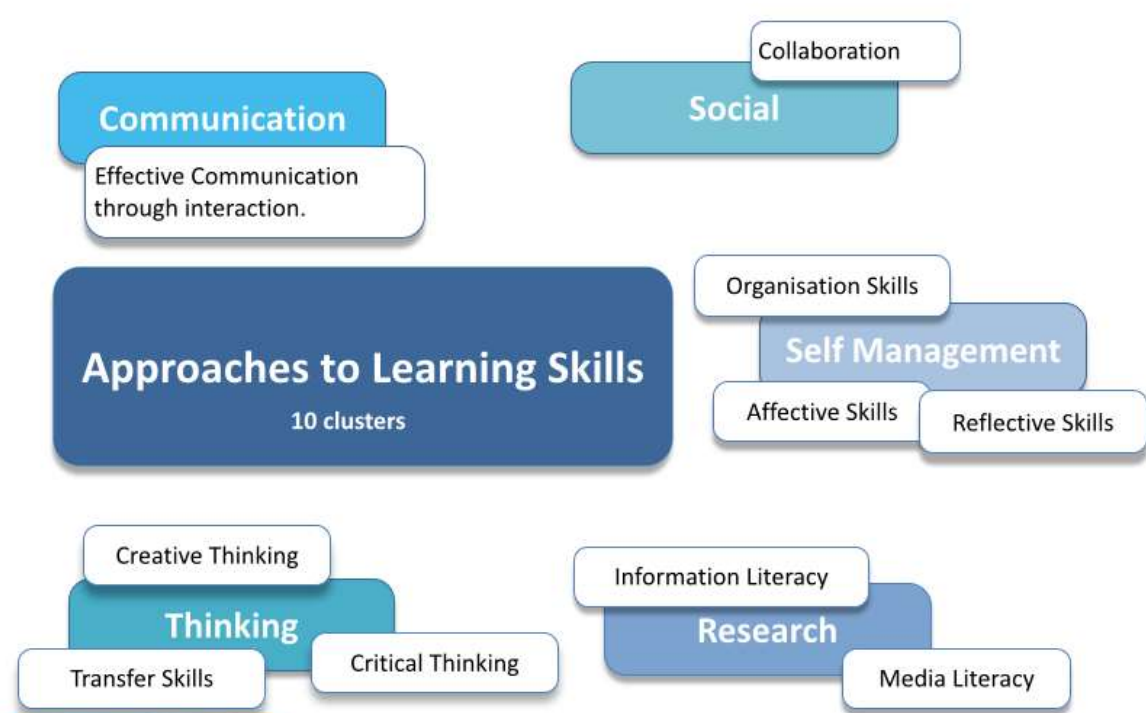


# ATL Student Handbook





Dear Student,

You will be learning different subjects, but all of your subjects will have one goal in common: to help you **learn how to learn**. Learning how to learn well involves a lot of skills and we call these “approaches to learning.”

Approaches to Learning (ATL) help you incorporate your knowledge, skills and experiences acquired through different subject groups in a whole preparing you for real life beyond classroom. You will be assigned different tasks each lesson that build on your ATL skills, giving you a chance to work on them and allowing you to be successful on your own and in a team situation.

Approaches to Learning:

- help you make your learning easier
- provide you with the tools to enable you to take responsibilities for your own learning
- help you connect your knowledge and ideas
- teach you how to become a successful learner.

These are the groups of ATL skills we use:

- 1) **Social Skills**, e.g. working in a group, encouraging contributions from others
- 2) **Communication Skills**, e.g. expressing ideas clearly, listening to others carefully
- 3) **Self-management skills**, e.g. organizing yourself and your work, being on time
- 4) **Thinking Skills**, e.g. analysing ideas and evaluating them, planning and creating work, and applying learning in one subject to another subject
- 5) **Research Skills**, e.g. finding and gathering sources of information, notetaking

You will work with many different resources, including the internet. You will learn how to use these resources correctly and develop your **research skills**. An example of this is that when you hand in work to your teacher, you must make sure it is your own work and not copied from anybody or anywhere else. For more details, see our **Academic Honesty Policy**.

Use this ATL Student Handbook to keep track of how you are progressing through the ATL. It will help you to get through the various skills in each level making you to be a successful and content learner.

**Good luck!**

Your,

Indira Brajčić  
ATL leader

# Approaches to learning

## Social

### Collaboration skills

- Respect and accept sociocultural difference
- Consider, respect and analyse different opinions, points of view, ideas and preferences
- Be empathetic
- Respect different opinions and the points of view of others
- Delegate and take responsibility as appropriate
- Help others: facilitate the success of others
- Take responsibility for own actions
- Resolve conflicts and work collaboratively with appropriate roles in a team
- Understand when and how to build consensus
- Make decisions based on fairness and equality
- Negotiate goals and limitations with peers and teachers
- Help others when appropriate and encourage contribution from others
- Drive change through an understanding of others and especially of group dynamics

## Communication

### Communication skills

- Use active listening techniques to understand others
- Give and receive appropriate feedback
- Interpret meaning through cultural understanding
- Use a variety of speaking techniques to make meaning clear for different audiences and purposes
- Use appropriate forms of writing for different purposes and audiences
- Use a variety of media to present to an audience
- Interpret non-verbal communication techniques and use them purposefully
- Negotiate ideas and knowledge with peers and teachers
- Interact, collaborate and publish media with peers, experts or others employing a variety of digital environments and media
- Develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with learners of other cultures
- Write for different purposes
- Make effective notes, in class and for studying
- Summarize and transform information
- Use structural writing planners for different academic tasks
- Organize information logically
- Structure information correctly in summaries, essays, reports and presentations



## Approaches to learning

### Self-management

#### Organization skills

- Keep to class schedules and project deadlines
- Set appropriate management goals and plan strengths to achieve them
- Structure information appropriately in written, oral and visual work
- Arrive to class with the appropriate equipment
- Keep an organized and logical system of information files/notebooks
- Find and select information via different media
- Use different information organizers for different purposes
- Plan strategies to guide your personal project inquiry
- Plan and manage activities to develop a solution or complete a project
- Select and use applications effectively and productively
- Make informed choices to achieve a balance in nutrient, rest, relaxation and exercise

#### Affective skills

- Demonstrate persistence and perseverance
- Practise focus and concentration to overcome distractions
- Make informed choices on behaviours and course of action
- Seek out criticism and feedback from others and make informed choices about including it in one's work
- Practise being aware of mind-body connection
- Practise positive thinking
- Practise dealing with disappointment and unmet expectations
- Practise dealing with change
- Practise strategies to prevent and eliminate bullying
- Practise strategies to reduce stress and anxiety

#### Reflection skills

- Consider ethical, cultural and environmental implications of issues
- Consider personal relationships to people, ideas and concepts
- Build understanding of personal learning strengths and weaknesses
- Be aware of areas of perceived limitation
- Develop awareness of the process of effective learning
- Analyse one's own and others' thought processes to think about how one thinks and how one learns
- Pause to reflect at different stages in the learning process
- Implement and measure the effectiveness of different learning strategies
- Demonstrate a preparedness to make changes to ineffective learning strategies
- Seek out constructive criticism
- Keep a reflective journal/portfolio of personal learning experiences focused on both process and content
- Create a record of personal learning change and improvement



## Approaches to learning

### Thinking

#### Critical thinking skills

- Identify problems and develop aims, goals and objectives
- Make inferences and draw conclusions
- Identify gaps in knowledge and formulate key questions
- Consider ideas from other perspectives and points of view
- Develop contrary arguments
- Break down large concepts and projects into component parts and combine parts logically as appropriate
- Formulate provocative and relevant questions and goals
- Plan to achieve goals, including identifying targets and outlining steps
- Consider consequences of events
- Identify obstacles and challenges
- Make logical, reasonable judgments and create arguments to support them
- Design improvement to existing machines, media and technologies
- Identify and define authentic problems and significant questions for investigation
- Use multiple processes and diverse perspectives to explore alternative solutions
- Identify trends and forecast possibilities
- Troubleshoot systems and applications

#### Creative thinking skills

- Generate impossible ideas
- Brainstorm and map thoughts to create ideas and questions
- Consider all alternatives
- Consider the seemingly impossible
- Create novel solutions to a problem
- Evaluate solutions to problems
- Make connections between random things
- Consider opposites to renew perspective
- Apply strategies of guesswork
- Generate "what if?" questions
- Transfer and apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products or processes
- Utilize old ideas in new ways and combine parts in new ways
- Make intuitive judgments
- Create original works and ideas and visualize alternatives
- Practise imitation of works with a focus on the creative process
- Practise flexible thinking—arguing both sides of an idea or issue
- Practise metaphorical thinking, generating questions and challenging conventions
- Challenge one's own and others' assumptions
- Seeing possibilities, problems and challenges positively
- Playing with ideas and experimenting
- Recognizing when an original idea has value and pursuing it

#### Transfer skills

- Use your knowledge, understanding and skills across subjects to create products or solutions
- Make connections between learning gained in different subject areas
- Apply skills and knowledge in unfamiliar situations
- Inquire in different contexts to gain a diverse perspective
- Create projects and products using knowledge and skills gained across different subject areas
- Use familiar learning skills with unfamiliar content
- Transfer current knowledge to learning of new technologies
- Demonstrate personal responsibility for lifelong learning
- Change the context of your project to gain different perspectives
- Make decisions







## Approaches to learning

### Research

#### Information literacy skills

- Access information to be informed and inform others
- Find information in different media
- Read critically and for comprehension
- Read a variety of sources for information and for pleasure
- Collect research from a variety of print and digital sources
- Collect and verify data
- Make connections between a variety of sources
- Utilize different media to obtain different perspectives
- Utilize appropriate multimedia technology to create effective presentation and representation
- Reference accurately and construct a bibliography according to recognized conventions
- Understand and implement intellectual property rights and the value of academic honesty
- Identify primary and secondary sources
- Demonstrate awareness of the effects of different modes of information representation and presentation
- Collect and analyse data to identify solutions and/or make informed decisions
- Process data and report results

#### Media literacy skills

- Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on their appropriateness to specific tasks
- Locate, organize, analyse, evaluate, synthesize and efficiently use information from a variety of sources and media
- Use and interpret a range of content-specific terminology
- Underline ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas, values and beliefs
- Identify different points of view
- Demonstrate awareness of different media interpretations of events and ideas, including social media
- Critically analyse various text forms for underlying meaning
- Use a variety of technologies and media platforms to source information including social media and online networks
- Utilize different media to obtain perspectives
- Communicate ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats
- Actively make connections between different media resources in presentations
- Advocate and practise safe, legal and responsible use of information technology



# What is your learning style?

## Verbal-Linguistic Learner

Tell me in words-written or spoken - and I will understand

- × often associated with doing well in school
- × the ability to use words effectively for reading, writing, listening, and speaking

### Tips for the way they learn:

- × use words to explain complicated subjects
- × ask questions
- × engage in the Socratic method, digesting information through a question-and-answer exchange
- × sharpen the native ability to tell a story

### Likes to:

- × read
- × write
- × tell stories



### Is good at:

- × memorizing names, places, dates

### Learns best by:

- × saying, hearing and seeing words

## Logical-Mathematical Learner

Why? Well, because it's logical!

- × often associated with doing well in school
- × the ability to understand **complex problems**, both logical and mathematical, ask questions, **find solutions**, and reflect on the **problem-solving**

### Tips for the way they learn:

- × think about what they are trying to learn as a **puzzle or a formula**
- × ask questions and allow themselves to experiment with their own hypotheses to find solutions or new answers
- × concentrate on symbols, designs, and words to bridge mathematical and verbal logic
- × create an outline to understand their subject step by step

### Likes to:

- × do experiments
- × figure things out
- × work with numbers
- × explore patterns and relationships



### Is good at:

- × maths
- × reasoning logic
- × problem solving

### Learns best by:

- × categorizing
- × classifying
- × working with patterns/relationships



# Visual-Spatial Learner

## What You See Is What You Get!

- ✗ the ability to see the visual world and its relation to physical items and modify things in your mind
- ✗ good at solving spatial problems, designing, and doing crafts



### Tips for the way they learn:

- ✗ **visualize the topics**
- ✗ **draw related images next to the notes** (along with arrows between ideas) to create connection and reference points
- ✗ **organize with colour** and use different-coloured highlighters, paper, index cards, folders, or tabs to create a visual system for finding things and grouping topics

### Likes to:

- ✗ draw, build, design, and create things
- ✗ daydream
- ✗ watch movies
- ✗ look at pictures/slides
- ✗ play with machines

### Is good at:

- ✗ imagining things
- ✗ sensing changes
- ✗ mazes, puzzles
- ✗ reading maps and charts

### Learns best by:

- ✗ visualizing
- ✗ dreaming
- ✗ working with colours and pictures

# Musical Learner

## That Sound Good To Me!

- ✗ associated with enjoying music, singing (vocalists), making music (composers), and playing an instrument (instrumentalists)
- ✗ the unique ability to know when something is off the key

### Tips for the way they learn:

- ✗ **listen to music while they study** to connect its patterns and sounds with the subject they are studying
- ✗ **replay the same song just before a test**
- ✗ create a rhyme or a song for material they would like to memorize
- ✗ **associate what they are learning with a song they like**



### Learns best by:

- ✗ rhythm
- ✗ melody
- ✗ music

### Likes to:

- ✗ sing, hum tunes
- ✗ listen to music
- ✗ play an instrument
- ✗ respond to music

### Is good at:

- ✗ picking up sounds
- ✗ remembering melodies
- ✗ noticing rhythms
- ✗ keeping time

# Bodily-Kinesthetic Learner

## Movement is fun-damental!

- ✗ the ability to think in movements
- ✗ they need a hands-on approach to learn the best
- ✗ they find difficult to stay still and organise
- ✗ they concentrate best when they are active

### Tips for the way they learn:

- ✗ **relate the content of learning to some physical activity**
- ✗ teach the information they learn to someone else
- ✗ translate what they are learning into something that can be touched, such as note cards
- ✗ **use concrete objects to help them understand math concepts**
- ✗ with spelling and vocabulary, trace their word in salt or sand, or use magnetic letters to spell out the word
- ✗ **use maps, globes, and puzzles to study history and geography**
- ✗ **stay active** when studying - squeezing a stress ball when talking with someone or walking around while reading a book



### Likes to:

- ✗ move around
- ✗ touch and talk
- ✗ work with hands
- ✗ use body language
- ✗ do sport

### Is good at:

- ✗ physical activities (sports, dance, acting ...)
- ✗ crafts

### Learns best by:

- ✗ touching, moving
- ✗ interacting with space
- ✗ processing knowledge through bodily sensations



# Interpersonal Learner

## I Understand What You Mean

- ✗ prosper on social interactions
- ✗ excellent at giving advice, understanding and leading other people and all social interactions

### Tips for the way they learn:

- ✗ give and receive feedback
- ✗ **talk out problems**
- ✗ work on large-group projects so they can use their social abilities to divide up tasks and understand all aspects of the project
- ✗ **cooperative learning**



### Likes to:

- ✗ **have lots of friends**
- ✗ **talk to people**
- ✗ **join groups**

### Is good at:

- ✗ **understanding people**
- ✗ **leading others**
- ✗ **organising**
- ✗ **communicating**
- ✗ **mediating conflicts**
- ✗ **manipulating**

### Learns best by:

- ✗ **sharing**
- ✗ **comparing**
- ✗ **relating**
- ✗ **cooperating**
- ✗ **interviewing**

# Intrapersonal Learner

## To Your Own Self Be True

- ✗ connected to who they are and how they feel
- ✗ they know their own limits and abilities
- ✗ they often set goals for themselves and reflect on results



### Tips for the way they learn:

- ✗ **study alone in a comfortable yet quiet environment**
- ✗ **set goals for themselves**, and monitor their progress regularly
- ✗ reflect on what they have learned, and think through new material
- ✗ create a connection between new material and subjects they already know, and gain understanding by finding their similarities

### Likes to:

- ✗ **work alone**
- ✗ **pursue own interests**

### Is good at:

- ✗ **understanding self**
- ✗ **being original**
- ✗ **focusing inward on feeling/dreams**
- ✗ **following instincts**
- ✗ **pursuing interests/goals**

### Learns best by:

- ✗ **working alone**
- ✗ **individual projects**
- ✗ **self-paced instructions**
- ✗ **having own space**

## How to start? *Organise yourself and work well*

Find a good place to study. This means a desk with nothing on it except what you need for the task you are going to work on. Move everything out of the way. You want to concentrate on one thing: studying. Have a regular time and place for studying. Make sure you have the following:

- ◆ Your assignment notebook
- ◆ Solid flat surface for writing
- ◆ Good lighting
- ◆ Chair
- ◆ Books
- ◆ Supplies
- ◆ Clock
- ◆ Eliminate all distractions
- ◆ Computer (optional)
- ◆ Wear your glasses (if you are supposed to)
- ◆ Good health



### More Details

#### ◆ Your assignment notebook

- ◆ write down all assignments right away
- ◆ listen carefully to what the teacher says
- ◆ know exactly what you are supposed to do
- ◆ Start immediately when you sit down to study
- ◆ Have everything that you need with you
- ◆ Plan what you want to accomplish
  - ◆ plan when you will study
  - ◆ a consistent time and place is best
  - ◆ break down large tasks into smaller ones
  - ◆ make a list of what you want to accomplish
  - ◆ keep a record of what you do accomplish

#### ◆ Solid flat surface you can write on.

- ◆ Clear everything off your desk except what you are working on

#### ◆ Good lighting

- ◆ not too bright, not too dim

#### ◆ Chair

- ◆ A regular chair that is comfortable
- ◆ Avoid strain and fatigue

## ◆Books

- ◆have all necessary text books and reference books

## ◆Supplies

- ◆pencils, pens, markers, erasers, white-out, ruler, stapler and staples, paperclips, pencil sharpener, post it notes, index cards, paper, scissors, calculator, etc.
- ◆Have them in a handy place - like in a shoe box

## ◆Clock

- ◆This will help you to manage your time

## ◆Eliminate all distractions

- ◆this would include TV, loud radio music, boom-boxes, etc.
- ◆Classical music played softly may be helpful
- ◆Be aware of when you start to daydream - and stop right away

## ◆Computer (optional)

- ◆If you have one it can be helpful
- ◆If you don't, you can get along just fine without it

## ◆Wear your glasses

- ◆If you are supposed to wear glasses, please do so
- ◆This will help in getting the most out of your studying

## ◆Good health

- ◆Get enough sleep - set a reasonable bedtime
- ◆Eat breakfast - eat three good meals a day, your body needs energy to study well
- ◆get some exercise
- ◆take frequent breaks from studying



**For maximum effectiveness you should study in the same place most of the time."**



# How to Listen Better



Listening is one of the most important skills you can develop to do better in school. It is the second most difficult skill. Reading is the most difficult.

- ◆ Form a good habit - good listening in class!
- ◆ Concentrate on what is going on in class - do not daydream.
- ◆ You can't listen if you are talking!

- ◆ **Before class** - think about what the class is going to be about
- ◆ What were the main points covered in the last class
- ◆ Review what your assignment was for the class

## **During class - relate what you have already learned to what is being taught**

- ◆ Did your homework have anything to do with the subject being taught during this class?
- ◆ Did your reading have anything to do with the subject?
- ◆ Does your general knowledge provide any information about the subject being taught?
- ◆ What comes to mind during the instruction
- ◆ Concentrate on the subject being taught
- ◆ Take notes on the main points



## **After class -**

review your notes and think about what was covered in class.

- ◆ Some people like to rewrite their notes
- ◆ Some people like to underline and highlight important ideas and vocabulary



- ◆ If you have a choice, try to sit near the front of the class - you can usually listen better if you are in the front.

## ◆ Learning to listen - more details

- ◆ Good listening means you are paying attention
- ◆ Try to hear what is said, not what you want to hear
- ◆ Think "around" the topic and "between the lines"
- ◆ Relate it to what you already know
- ◆ What is the main point?
- ◆ What is likely to be on the test?
- ◆ What is the teacher going to say next?
- ◆ Listen carefully to what the teacher says about an assignment and write it down in your assignment notebook right away
- ◆ Listen for these essential phrases from the teacher: "This is important...", "It is essential that you know this...", and "You will need to know this for the test..."

Do not confuse  
listening with  
hearing.

You can hear  
something but not be  
listening: "In one ear  
and out the other."

To listen you must be  
thinking. Listening is an  
*active*, not passive  
activity.

# Improving Reading Skills

Getting more from what you Read

A good reader does as many of the following as possible:



*Seizes* the main ideas

*Thinks* about what the author is saying

Is active, not passive

*Concentrates* on what is being read

*Remembers* as much as possible,

*Applies* what is being read to personal *experience*.

## More Details

◆ **Think about the subject** you are going to read about.

- ◆ What do you know about this subject?
- ◆ What do you want to learn about this subject?
- ◆ After you read - What have you learned about this subject?

◆ **Skim the section** you are going to read.

- ◆ Do you see anything familiar?
- ◆ Do you see anything new?
- ◆ What is your overall impression?

◆ **Read for comprehension** - Make a note of important parts.

- ◆ Use a post-it note or an index card and write down important main ideas and vocabulary. This will help you review what you have read.
- ◆ Stop and re-read ideas that you are not sure you understand.
- ◆ Think of where else you might find more information about the same topic. "I bet there would be something in my history book about this, too."

◆ **Recall to yourself what you have just read**



- ◆ Stop occasionally as you are reading and put into your own words what you have just read
- ◆ At the end of a chapter, recall what the main points were

◆ Discuss what you have read with another student or with your teacher. This will help you clarify your thinking.

## More Details

### ◆ Textbooks

- ◆ Read the Title and Author of the text.
- ◆ When was it published?
- ◆ Read the Table of Contents
  - ◆ How many chapters are there?
  - ◆ How many pages in the whole book?
  - ◆ What chapter or chapters look the most interesting?
- ◆ Thumb through the book
  - ◆ Are there pictures, graphs, maps, charts, and illustrations?
- ◆ What impression do you have about the text?
- ◆ After you have done all the above, go back and do it again in a more detailed way.

# Taking Notes in Class

Taking notes in class requires a clear system that will be easy for you to use. This system is easy to follow and will work well!

- ◆ Be prepared to take notes when class begins.
  - ◆ Have your notebook open and pen in hand.
- ◆ Avoid any distracting conduct.
  - ◆ Talking, eating, drinking, etc. will be a distraction to you *and* other students!
- ◆ Participate constructively in class discussions.
- ◆ Ask questions.



## More Details

- ◆ Pay attention to what the teacher is presenting.
    - ◆ Listen for what is emphasized
      - ◆ Look for words like "to summarize...", "the main point is..."
      - ◆ If something is written on the board, you should probably write it down!
    - ◆ Be alert for all important information
  - ◆ If something is repeated, it is probably important!
    - ◆ Make sure you identify and understand the important information.
  - ◆ Listen and watch for all material presented in alphabetical or numerical fashion.
- 
- ◆ Write notes in a concise, organized manner.
    1. DO NOT try to write down every word.
    2. Write down the main ideas, content, and information.
    3. Develop your own way of abbreviating words.
    4. Listen carefully when a teacher elaborates on important material and then briefly summarize it in writing.
    5. Write class notes in an outline form.
      - a. Do you notice how I have put the main topic in bold letters?
      - b. Then there are five main ideas that are numbered.
      - c. Under the numbered ideas are lettered ideas

Taking notes in class is a skill like any other. The more you do it, the better you will become.

◆ **Do not use a tape recorder in class.**

- ◆ This is a very inefficient way to study.
- ◆ It is very time consuming!
- ◆ It is a poor substitute for good note taking.
- ◆ It is almost useless for reviewing for a test.

### ◆ **After Class**

- ◆ It is a very good idea to go over your notes after class.
  - ◆ This is when your memory is still fresh!
- ◆ Make sure you have identified the main ideas.
- ◆ Underline or **highlight** main ideas, concepts, and information
- ◆ *Make sure you know what the assignment is.*
- ◆ *Write it down in your assignment notebook or in your notes.*
- ◆ Taking ten minutes after class to review your notes will save you *much* more time later!

## Take notes

Record information that can help you to answer research questions.

You can use one of these handy methods:

1. The KWL method
2. Note cards

## The KWL method

This is a very popular method for taking notes. You divide the page into three sections and label each one as follows:

1. What I KNOW?
2. What I WANT to know?
3. What I LEARNED?

WHAT DO I KNOW?	WHAT DID I FIND OUT?	WHAT DID I LEARN?



## Doing projects Working independently

### INQUIRY CYCLE



IT IS GOOD TO PLAN OUR RESEARCH CAREFULLY. ONE WAY OF DOING THIS IS TO FOLLOW SIX SIMPLE STEPS GIVEN BELOW.

#### 1 DEFINING and QUESTIONING

We should emphasize inquiry questions that define our task and cause us to make up our own minds and fashion our own answers.

- What do I want to find out?
- What is my purpose?
- What are the key words and ideas of this task?
- What exactly do I need to do it well?

#### 2 PLANNING: DEVELOP A RESEARCH PLAN

The next step is to think strategically about the best ways to find reliable information that will help us to construct answers to research questions.

*OFTEN WHEN WE WANT TO FIND OUT MORE DETAILS ABOUT A SUBJECT WE GO TO THE LIBRARY OR RESOURCE CENTRE AND LOOK FOR FURTHER INFORMATION (ASK LIBRARIAN TEACHER FOR FURTHER HELP!)*

- Where can I find the information I need?
- What do I already know?
- What do I still need to find out?

### 3 INVESTIGATING: COLLECT AND SELECT INFORMATION

What information do I really need?

What can I leave out?

How relevant is the information I have found?

How will I record all the information?

create a storage system that will protect you from accumulating huge mountains of information

you can use this kind of RESEARCH PAPER (index card) to write down important notes

Source: (Author, Title, Date, URL)	.....
Subject:	.....
Keywords:	.....
Abstract:	..... ..... ..... .....

Write down the name of the author and the title of the book, magazine article, etc.

Write one idea down on each index card.

One author and source for each index card

### 4 INVESTIGATING: ORGANISE AND DEMONSTRATE

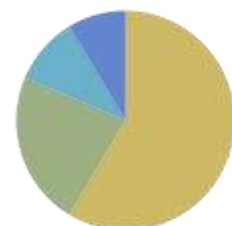
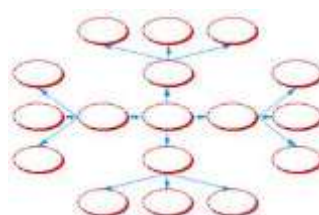
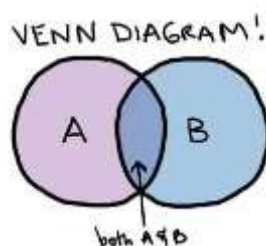
What is the best way I can use this information?

Do I need to use ALL the information or just selected items?

When you have enough ideas you put the cards together.

Put the cards in the order in which you want to write your paper.

You can organise information using **mind mapping, tables, graphs, charts, Venn diagrams...**



## 5 SHARING: REPORT/PRESENT YOUR WORK

How can I combine all the information I have collected in the best way?

How to put them in a logical order?

How to compose my own piece of work to be accurate, with my own ideas,

thoughts and conclusions based on relevant sources?

**Start writing by taking the idea from each card and putting it in a complete sentence.**

**Put similar ideas together**

**Draw conclusions**

**Don't forget your own opinion and attitude about the problem**

What is the best way of presenting this information?

Your teacher will give you guidance on this. It could be for personal study or for public or school examinations.

## 6 EVALUATING AND REFLECTING

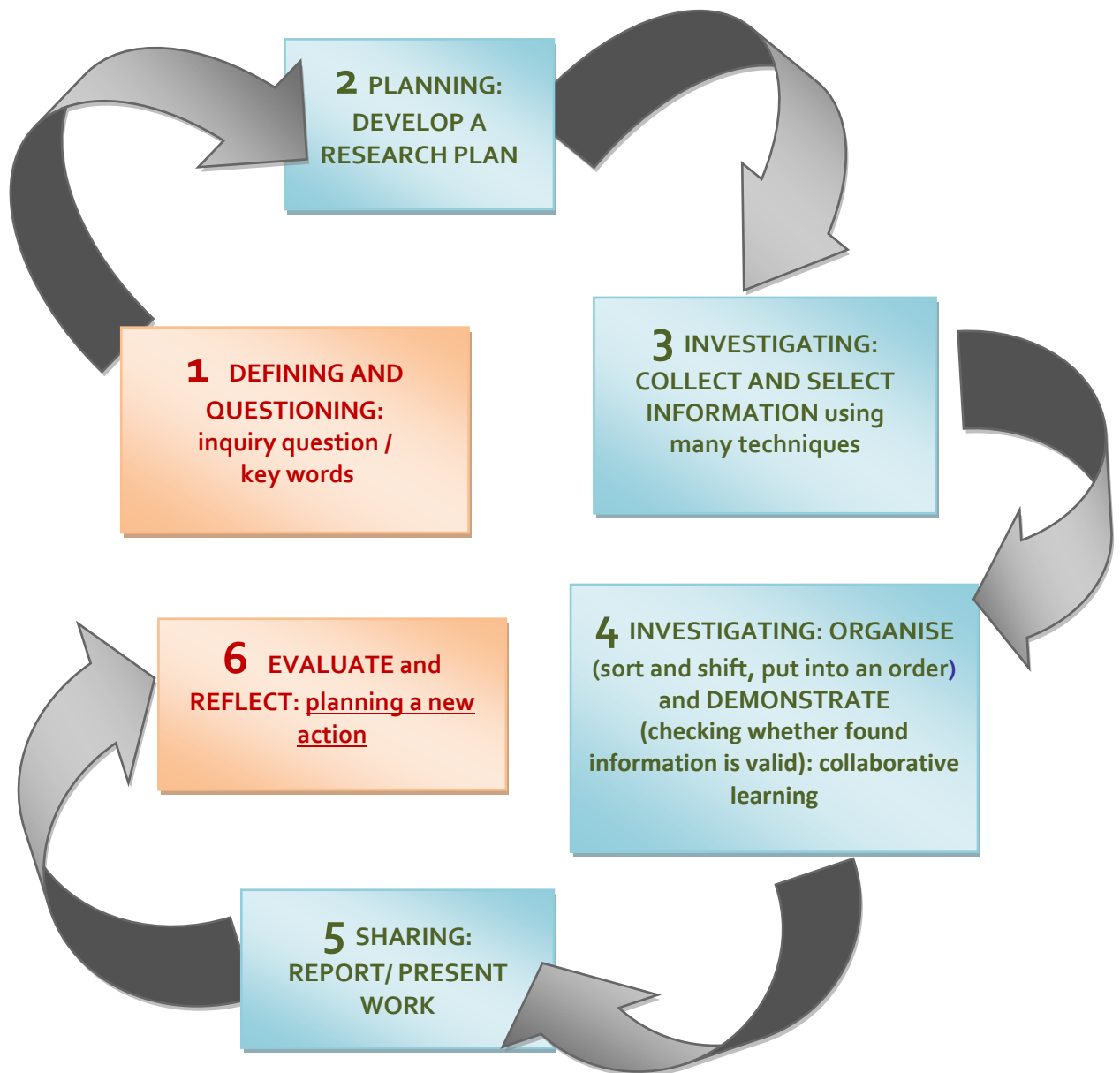
What did I learn from this?

Did I achieve what I set out to do?

Did I put each stage of the information in logical order/chronological or time order?

Is the way I have presented it clear?

## INQUIRY CYCLE





# Guide to writing an essay

An essay can have many purposes, but the basic structure is the same no matter what. You may be writing an essay to argue for a particular point of view or to explain the steps necessary to complete a task. Either way, your essay will have the same **basic format.**

If you follow a few **simple steps**, you will find that the essay almost writes itself. You will be responsible only for supplying ideas, which are the important part of the essay anyway.

## Get started!

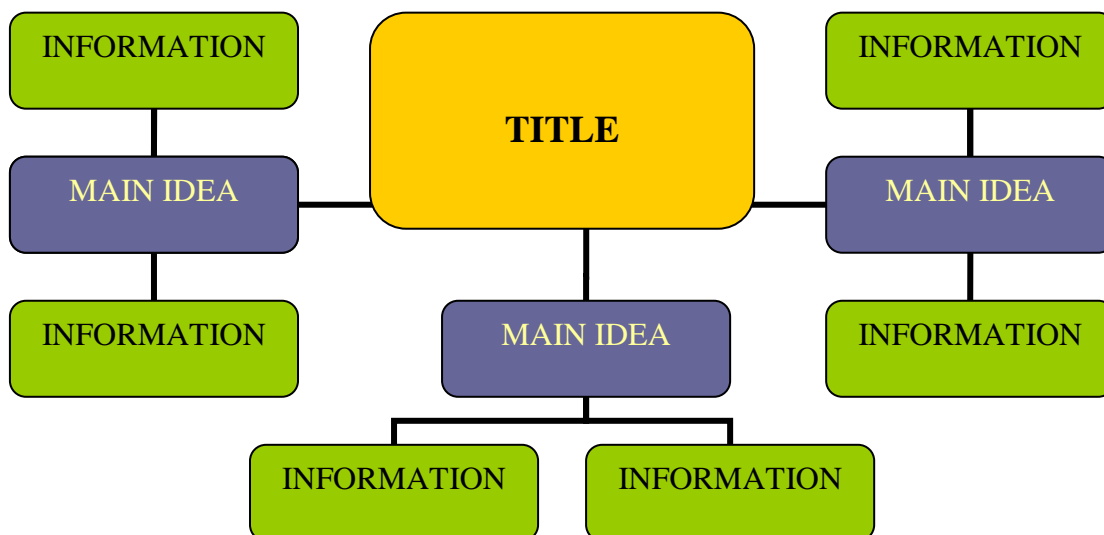
### 1 Choose a Topic for Your Essay

### 2 Organize Your Ideas



The purpose of an outline or **diagram** is to **put your ideas** about the topic on paper, in a moderately **organized format**. The structure you create here may still change before the essay is complete, so don't agonize over this.

## Diagram



When you have finished, you have the basic structure for your essay and are ready to continue.

### 3 Compose a Thesis Statement

Now that you have decided, at least tentatively, what information you plan to present in your essay, you are ready to write your thesis statement.

The thesis statement tells the reader **what the essay will be about**, and what point you, the author, will be making. You know what the essay will be about. That was your topic. Now you must look at your outline or diagram and decide what point you will be making. What do the main ideas and supporting ideas that you listed say about your topic?

### 4 Write the Body Paragraphs

In the body of the essay, all the preparation up to this point comes to fruition. The topic you have chosen must now be explained, described, or argued.

**Each main idea** that you wrote down in your diagram or outline will become **one of the body paragraphs**. If you had three or four main ideas, you will have three or four body paragraphs.

***Each body paragraph will have the same basic structure.***

1. Start by writing down one of your main ideas,
2. Next, write down each of your supporting points for that main idea, but leave four or five lines in between each point.
3. In the space under each point, write down some elaboration for that point.  
*Elaboration* can be further description or explanation or discussion.
4. If you wish, include a summary sentence for each paragraph.  
This is not generally needed, however, and such sentences have a tendency to sound stilted, so be cautious about using them.

### 5 Write the Introduction and Conclusion

Your essay lacks only two paragraphs now: the introduction and the conclusion. These paragraphs will give the reader a point of entry to and a point of exit from your essay.

#### ***Introduction***

The introduction should be designed **to attract** the reader's attention and give her an idea of the essay's focus.

1. Begin with an attention grabber.

The attention grabber you use is up to you, but here are some ideas:

- Startling information  
This information must be true and verifiable, and it doesn't need to be totally new to your readers. It could simply be a fact that illustrates the point you wish to make.  
If you use a piece of startling information, follow it with a sentence or two of elaboration
- Anecdote  
An *anecdote* is a story that illustrates a point.

- Be sure your anecdote is short, to the point, and relevant to your topic. This can be a very effective opener for your essay, but use it carefully.
- Dialogue  
An appropriate dialogue does not have to identify the speakers, but the reader must understand the point you are trying to convey. Use only two or three exchanges between speakers to make your point.  
Follow dialogue with a sentence or two of elaboration.
  - Summary Information  
A few sentences explaining your topic in general terms can lead the reader gently to your thesis. Each sentence should become gradually more specific, until you reach your thesis.
2. If the attention grabber was only a sentence or two, add one or two more sentences that will lead the reader from your opening to your thesis statement.
  3. Finish the paragraph with your thesis statement.

## **Conclusion**

The conclusion brings closure to the reader, **summing up your points** or providing **a final perspective on your topic**.

All the conclusion needs is three or four strong sentences which do not need to follow any set formula. Simply review the main points (being careful not to restate them exactly) or briefly describe your feelings about the topic. Even an anecdote can end your essay in a useful way.

The introduction and conclusion complete the paragraphs of your essay.  
Don't stop just yet! One more step remains before your essay is truly finished.

## **6 Add the Finishing Touches**

You have now completed all of the paragraphs of your essay. Before you can consider this a finished product, however, you must give some thought to the formatting of your paper.

### ***Check the order of your paragraphs.***

Look at your paragraphs. Which one is the strongest? You might want to start with the strongest paragraph, end with the second strongest, and put the weakest in the middle. Whatever order you decide on, be sure it makes sense. If your paper is describing a process, you will probably need to stick to the order in which the steps must be completed.

## ***Check the instructions for the assignment.***

When you prepare a **final draft**, you must be sure to follow all of the instructions you have been given.

- Are your margins correct?
- Have you titled it as directed?
- What other information (name, date, etc.) must you include?
- Did you double-space your lines?

## ***Check your writing.***

Nothing can substitute for revision of your work. By reviewing what you have done, you can improve weak points that otherwise would be missed. **Read and reread your paper.**

- Does it make logical sense?  
Leave it for a few hours and then read it again. Does it still make logical sense?
- Do the sentences flow smoothly from one another?  
If not, try to add some words and phrases to help connect them. Transition words, such as "therefore" or "however," sometimes help. Also, you might refer in one sentence to a thought in the previous sentence. This is especially useful when you move from one paragraph to another.
- Have you run a spell checker or a grammar checker?  
These aids cannot catch every error, but they might catch errors that you have missed.

Once you have checked your work and perfected your formatting,  
your essay is finished.

# **Congratulations!**





# Public Speaking

## ◆Public Speaking - giving a speech!

### ◆Practice giving your speech.

◆Read your speech to yourself.

◆Repeat this, seeing if you can not look at your index cards all the time.

◆Practice in front of a mirror.

◆Try different expressions, hand movements, tone of voice, etc.



### ◆Practice by recording your speech on a tape recorder.

◆If you have never heard your own voice on tape, this could be very interesting!

◆Are you speaking loudly enough? Too loud? Are you saying the words clearly? Are there any improvements you can think of?

◆Time the length of the speech. Is it too long? Too short?

### ◆Practice by giving your speech to someone you know.

◆Ask them what they think.

◆If they make a suggestion, think about what they have said.

**When the time comes  
to give your speech -  
you'll be ready and it  
will go very smoothly.**

# How should you present your work?

Unless your teacher advises you otherwise, please follow the guidelines below when you do homework or prepare a written assignment.

## Hand written work

- On **A4 paper**
- Your **name** on the left
- Your **teacher's name** on the right
- The **date** under the teacher's name on the right
- A **title**
- A **margin on the left**
- Hand-written work in **dark blue or black ink**
- An **indentation or skipped line** for each new paragraph
- Pages are **numbered** if more than one page

## Digital or printed copy

- Your **name** on the left
- Your **teacher's name** on the right
- The **date** under the teacher's name on the right
- A **title**
- Text aligned both left and right
- **Font size 12 and 1.0 spacing**
- A clearly **legible font**, e.g. Arial, Calibri or Comic Sans
- An **extra space** before each new paragraph
- Pages are **numbered** if more than one page

For extended pieces of writing your teacher may require you to include a cover page and table of contents. On the cover page you will include:

- A **title and subject**
- Your **name and surname**
- Your **teacher's name**
- The **date** the assignment is due

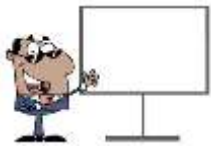
## **Naming and Submitting work as digital File Types**

You should name your work accordingly:

Name - Year - Subject – Topic e.g. Joel Blogs – MYP2- Science - Motion. PDF

## **Assignments:**

- Microsoft Word™ (DOC and DOCX)
- Portable Document Format (PDF)
- Pages saved as PDF



# **PRESENTATION CREATING**

*Improving your presentation and public speaking skills*

## **Main Guidelines:**

- ⚡ divide the presentation into sections and choose subtitles for each slide
- ⚡ organise your information in a logical order
- ⚡ choose information relevant to the title and subtitles
- ⚡ start paragraph with key words (bold)
- ⚡ present your work by using photos, tables, present statistic data using charts, diagrams → to point out the topic by visual elements
- ⚡ use your own sentences (simple language)
- ⚡ explain the consequences of the problem
- ⚡ send your own message (slogan) and add your own opinion about the problem
- ⚡ try to be convincing, interesting and creative to draw the audience's attention



## **PowerPoint Presentation**

- Y the more information on a slide the more difficult is to concentrate on what a presenter is trying to say (crowded slides are difficult to read)
- Y that's why is recommended your slide not to have more than **7** notes
- Y if you have a lot of information divide them into sections and create a new slide for each section
- Y emphasise key words by using special effects: animation, colours, sound effects, WordArt, importing graphics (for example Clip Art, Web), AutoShapes
- Y the presentation is recommended to have maximum 20 slides
- Y the slides should be neat, typed and well organized
- Y put the main issues on the slides as bulleted points on the slide
- Y use computer checking spelling



## **Fonts**

- Y the font size should be large (minimum 18 point) and easy to read
- Y in a slide use maximum 2 fonts: one for title and one for text
- Y use legible fonts
- Y in a slide it is recommended to use maximum 2 font styles, for example: bold and regular
- Y be careful by choosing style combinations, for example avoid combination of bold and italic in order your presentation to be more legible on screen

## **Colours Effects**

- ① colours are as important as fonts
- ① different colours send different messages to target audience
- ① "cold" colours (blue, green, violet): since they are not intrusive they are recommended to be used for slide background
- ① "warm" colours (red, orange, yellow): to draw attention
- ① light colours: to achieve the elements look more near
- ① dark colours: to achieve elements look more distant
- ① emphasise some information by colours: for example put positive numbers in blue, negative numbers in red
- ① too many colours can achieve confusing effect

## **Guidelines For Student Presentations In Class**

- ① **the time allocated is 6–10 minutes**
- ① **a basic rule is NOT to read from your paper**
- ① Power Point allows you to download a copy of slides with the ability to write in comments
- ① the best ways to minimize nervousness and anxiety is to practice - practice in front of a mirror and/or in front of friends or family and ask for feedback
- ① at the beginning of the presentation involve your audience by asking a question or having them do an activity, like take a test
- ① fill the room with your voice and your knowledge

There are two main reasons for making in-class presentations: sharing what you have learned with your classmates for their educational benefit, and as a way to build and improve your research, presentation and public speaking skills.

**Good luck!**



## Credits

1/ J. McKenzie; **Beyond Technology**: Questioning, Research and Information  
Literate School, FNO Press

2/ **Guide to writing a Basic Essay**

<http://members.tripod.com/~Iklivingstone/essay/>

3/ **How to study?**

<http://www.how-to-atudy.com/pitcher&catcher.htm>

4/ S. Taylor **ATL student handbook**, Sekolah Tunas Muda, Jakarta, OCC  
resources