ATL toolkit—Approaches to learning in practice

Communication

Thinking

Social

Approaches to learning (ATL)

Research

Self-management

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Thinking: Creative thinking

Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Use brainstorming and visual diagrams to generate new ideas and inquiries

ME

My interests and hobbies	My skills

My project ideas	My academic preferences

My academic shortcomings	What I don't want

Taking these findings into account, what learning goals (what I want to learn) could I develop?

Self-management: Organization
Managing time and tasks effectively

Skills-related objective

- Set goals that are challenging and realistic

Students present what their project is about.

Choose a research topic that you want to explore.	
What will your learning goal be? (To inform, to raise awareness, to develop a skill, etc)	
Describe how your learning goal is linked to your personal interests.	
What will your product be?	
What impact will your project have on you or on your learning?	Rationale:

Self-management: Organization
Managing time and tasks effectively

Skills-related objectives

- Plan short- and long-term assignments
- Keep and use a weekly planner for assignments
- Create plans to prepare for summative assessments

ACTION PLAN

Expected date	Task	New date	Rationale

Self-management: Organization Managing time and tasks effectively	Research: Information literacy Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information	Research: Media literacy Interacting with media to use and create ideas and information
Skills-related objectives • Keep an organized and logical system of information files/notebooks • Use appropriate strategies for organizing complex information	Skills-related objectives • Present information in a variety of formats and platforms • Collect, record and verify data	Skills-related objectives • Locate, organize, analyse, evaluate, synthesize and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media (including digital social media and online networks) • Seek a range of perspectives from multiple and varied sources • Compare, contrast and draw connections among (multi)media resources

RESEARCH PLAN:

Learning goal:
Product:
1. LEARNING GOAL:

Strand	Sources used	Methods and techniques	Links to success criteria
1.1			
1.2			
1.3			
1.4			

2. PRODUCT:

Strand	Sources used	Methods and techniques	Links to success criteria
2.1			
2.2			
2.3			

Self-management: Organization
Managing time and tasks effectively

Skills-related objectives

- Keep an organized and logical system of information files/notebooks
- Select and use technology effectively and productively
- Organize evidence collected (memory stick, Drive, portfolio, binder, etc)

Criterion A: Planning
- Learning goal and related personal interest
- Product and related success criteria
- Evidence of a plan for achieving the product and its associated success criteria

Criterion B: Applying skills
- Evidence of applying ATL skills to achieve the learning goal
- Evidence of applying ATL skills to achieve the product

Criterion C: Reflecting
- Explanation of the impact of the project on themselves or their learning
- Evaluation of the product based on the success criteria

**Research can be carried out at any point in the process.

Self-management: Reflection
(Re)considering the learning process
Choosing and using ATL skills

Skills-related objectives

- Develop new skills, techniques and strategies for effective learning
- Use new ATL skills and evaluate their effectiveness
- Consider ATL skills development

How have you developed these skills? Give specific examples of how you have used them in your project (before/after).	
Information literacy	
Media literacy	
Organization	
Affective skills	
Collaboration	
Communication	
Critical thinking	
Creative thinking	
Transfer	

Self-management: Reflection
(Re)considering the learning process
Choosing and using ATL skills

Skills-related objectives

- Identify strengths and weaknesses of personal learning strategies (self-assessment)
- Demonstrate flexibility in the selection and use of learning strategies
- Consider personal learning strategies

Have you reflected on how you learn? Have you reflected on what you used to do and what you do now?

I used to think …	Now I think …

Self-management: Reflection
(Re)considering the learning process
Choosing and using ATL skills

Use the ATL chart to answer these questions.

Have I developed new skills, techniques and strategies for effective learning? If so, please give examples.

During my project, have I identified strengths and weaknesses in my personal learning strategies? If so, please give examples.
How can I make my learning more effective and efficient?
What has helped me to learn effectively?

During my project, did I use new learning strategies? If so, please give examples.

During my project, have I tried other ways or methods of working? Were they effective?

Which skills did I already have?
Which skill(s) will I work on in the future?
Have my strengths and ways of doing things benefited my peers? Give an example.

Self-management: Reflection
(Re)considering the learning process
Choosing and using ATL skills

Answer these questions.

What did I learn about my learning goal?

What would I like to explore in relation to my learning goal or product?

What questions do I have after my project?

Have existing products inspired me to create my own? Give examples.

Am I aware of the ethical, cultural and environmental implications of my project? Give examples.

When collecting evidence, have I recorded how my reflections changed?

Self-management: Affective skills
Managing state of mind

Mindfulness

Sources of distraction	Means put in place to avoid this distraction and concentrate on the task

Perseverance

What means did you use to …

	Examples of means used
persevere and persist?	
reward yourself?	

Emotional management

What means did you use to ...

	Examples of means used
overcome your anger?	
reduce your level of anxiety and stress?	

Self-motivation

Sources of demotivation	Examples of means to motivate yourself

Resilience

Difficulties encountered (adversity, failures, mistakes, disappointments, changes)	Examples of means used to manage these difficulties

Social: Collaboration
Effective collaboration

Find my contributors

Skills-related objectives

- Use social media networks appropriately to build and develop relationships
- Listen actively to other perspectives and ideas
- Encourage others to contribute
- Give and receive meaningful feedback

Whom can I work with? Who will my resource people be?

- Supervisor
- Peers
- Alumni
- Community resource people
- Family
- Close friends
- Social media users
- Teachers
- Technicians
- Contacts via other people
- Others

Who will my resource people be? Name and title.	State how this person can help you in one of the strands of your project.

Social: Collaboration
Effective collaboration

Offer help

Skills-related objectives

- Practise empathy
- Help others to succeed

If one of your peers asks for help to complete their personal project, you can record your collaboration using the table below.

Whom did I help?	Why did they ask me for help?

Social: Collaboration
Effective collaboration

Contribute to teamwork

Skills-related objectives

- Take responsibility for one's own actions
- Delegate and share responsibility for decision-making
- Manage and resolve conflict, and work collaboratively in teams
- Build consensus
- Make fair and equitable decisions
- Negotiate effectively
- Exercise leadership and take on a variety of roles within groups
- Advocate for one's own rights and needs

If the project entails teamwork, you can fill in the table below.

Which skills-related objectives have you developed?	Give a specific example.

Research: Information literacy
Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information

Skills-related objective

- Collect and analyse data to identify solutions and make informed decisions

CHOOSE A LEARNING GOAL

Steps	Your information
1. Choose a learning goal *What about this learning goal interests me?* **Solution→** Make a list or brainstorm my likes and interests. *Does my learning goal allow me to find enough information?* **Solution→** Check your resource centre directory. Question:	
2. Define the learning goal *How should I approach my learning goal?* **Solution→** Consult reference materials. *Is my learning goal specific?* **Solution→** Try to pinpoint the approach, place, period, global context or a societal aspect (geography, society, politics, economics, culture, technology). Question:	
3. Identify your project's learning goal *What is the purpose of my research?* *To convince? To compare? To describe? To explain? To clarify?* Question:	

Research: Information literacy
Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information

Skills-related objective

- Collect and analyse data to identify solutions and make informed decisions

What do I want to learn (learning goal)?	What do I want to know in relation to the learning goal?	What have I found out?	How does the information I have found out help me achieve my learning goal and complete my product?

Research: Information literacy
Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information

Skills-related objective

- Identify primary and secondary sources

Types	Details
Secondary sources	
Reference material	Dictionary, encyclopedia (print, online, CD-ROM)
Book	Novel, poetry anthology, play, biography, essay, atlas, etc (print or digital)
Journal article	Article from a magazine or journal (print or online with a print edition)
DVD	Film, documentary, short or feature film
CD	Audio recording (music, interview)
Online journal article	Article from a magazine or journal (online edition only)
Online encyclopedia entry	Article from an online encyclopedia (for example, Wikipedia)
Photo or image	Work of art, photograph, map
Website	A company or organization's website
Online video	All types of online videos (film clip, interview, videoclip, documentary, advert, etc)
Other	Diagrams, statistical data, sewing pattern, thesis, archives, blog, radio programme, correspondence, social media and online networks, etc
Primary sources	
Data	Survey, questionnaire
Resource people	Mentor, interviewees (in person or otherwise)

Communication
Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction

Skills-related objectives

- Give and receive meaningful feedback
- Use appropriate forms of writing for different purposes and audiences
- Use a variety of media to communicate with a range of audiences
- Collaborate with peers and experts using a variety of digital environments and media
- Write for different purposes

Letter template (interview, survey, telephone interview)

[Town], 14 April 2020

Re. Interview request

Dear Ms/Mr [name of addressee],

I am a student at [name of school] in [town]. I am carrying out a project as part of my studies. The topic of my project is social engagement. I think you are an excellent example of someone actively involved in community life. I am writing to ask you for an interview so that I may include your experience in my project.

If you agree to meet me, I will send you my questions in advance. They will mainly be about your reasons for helping others. I would also like to ask you about the benefits you get out of your volunteer work. Through my project, I wish to show that volunteering helps both the volunteer and those being helped.

Should you kindly accept my request, I am available every afternoon from 3pm. As your schedule will no doubt be busy, kindly indicate whether you would prefer to be interviewed face to face, by email or by telephone. Please rest assured that this is a serious undertaking. My supervisor's name is [name of supervisor] and his/her telephone number is [telephone number].

Thank you for your consideration.

Student's name
Email:
Student at [Name of school]
[Class]

Communication
Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction

Skills-related objectives

- Give and receive meaningful feedback
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- Use a variety of media to communicate with a range of audiences
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- Write for different purposes

Preparation for the interview or telephone call

Before the meeting

- Name of interviewee:
- Contact details:
- Meeting date:

Define the purpose of the meeting:
Prepare questions (be sure to formulate neutral questions)

Conducting the meeting

1. Introduce yourself.
2. Explain the purpose of the meeting.
3. Ask questions and write down the answers.

Question 1:
Answer
Question 2:
Answer
Question 3:
Answer

4. Thank the interviewee.

After the meeting
- Organize the information received.

Research: Information literacy Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information	Research: Media literacy Interacting with media to use and create ideas and information	Communication Reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information
Skills-related objectives • Present information in a variety of formats and platforms • Collect, record and verify data • Make connections between various sources of information • Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on their appropriateness to specific tasks	Skills-related objectives • Locate, organize, analyse, evaluate, synthesize and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media (including digital social media and online networks) • Seek a range of perspectives from multiple and varied sources • Compare, contrast and draw connections among (multi)media resources	Skills-related objectives • Read critically and for comprehension • Read a variety of sources for information and for pleasure • Paraphrase accurately and concisely • Make effective summary notes for studying • Preview and skim texts to build understanding • Structure information in summaries and reports

Records

Make a list of research questions. What is the learning goal? Does my learning goal allow me to find enough information? How should I approach my learning goal? Is my learning goal specific? What is the purpose of my research?

Craft the answers to your questions and indicate the sources used.

Source type:
Media reference:
Question:
Answer: information summarized in your own words
Source assessment:

Research: **Information literacy** Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information	**Communication** Reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information
Skills-related objectives • Collect, record and verify data • Make connections between various sources of information • Present information in a variety of formats and platforms	Skills-related objectives • Read critically and for comprehension • Read a variety of sources for information and for pleasure • Paraphrase accurately and concisely • Make effective summary notes for studying • Preview and skim texts to build understanding • Structure information in summaries and reports

Annotations

Annotations help you highlight key information in a text.

1. Identify and highlight information relevant to the project.
2. State what aspects of inquiry this information pertains to.

Research:
Information literacy
Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information

Skills-related objective

- Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on their appropriateness to specific tasks

Source assessment grid

Research: Information literacy
Finding, interpreting, judging and creating information

Skills-related objective

- Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on their appropriateness to specific tasks

Source assessment grid

Source reference		
Source assessment grid		
Level descriptors 1 = Weak 2 = Average 3 = Excellent		
Criteria	Achievement level	Explanation of chosen level
Creator		
Source		
Objectivity		
Quality		
Quantity		
Total		
Comments:		

Communication
Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction

Skills-related objectives

- Give and receive meaningful feedback
- Collaborate with peers and experts using a variety of digital environments and media
- Share ideas with multiple audiences using a variety of digital environments and media

Throughout your project, how have you communicated and worked with others?

With your supervisor?

With your resource people?

With your classmates?

By email or text message?

Using collaborative documents (Google Docs, etc)?

Orally?

In writing?

Communication
Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction

Skills-related objective

- Structure the meetings with your supervisor or another person

Meeting date	Points to discuss
Meeting report	

Subjects discussed:

Suggestions from your supervisor or another person:
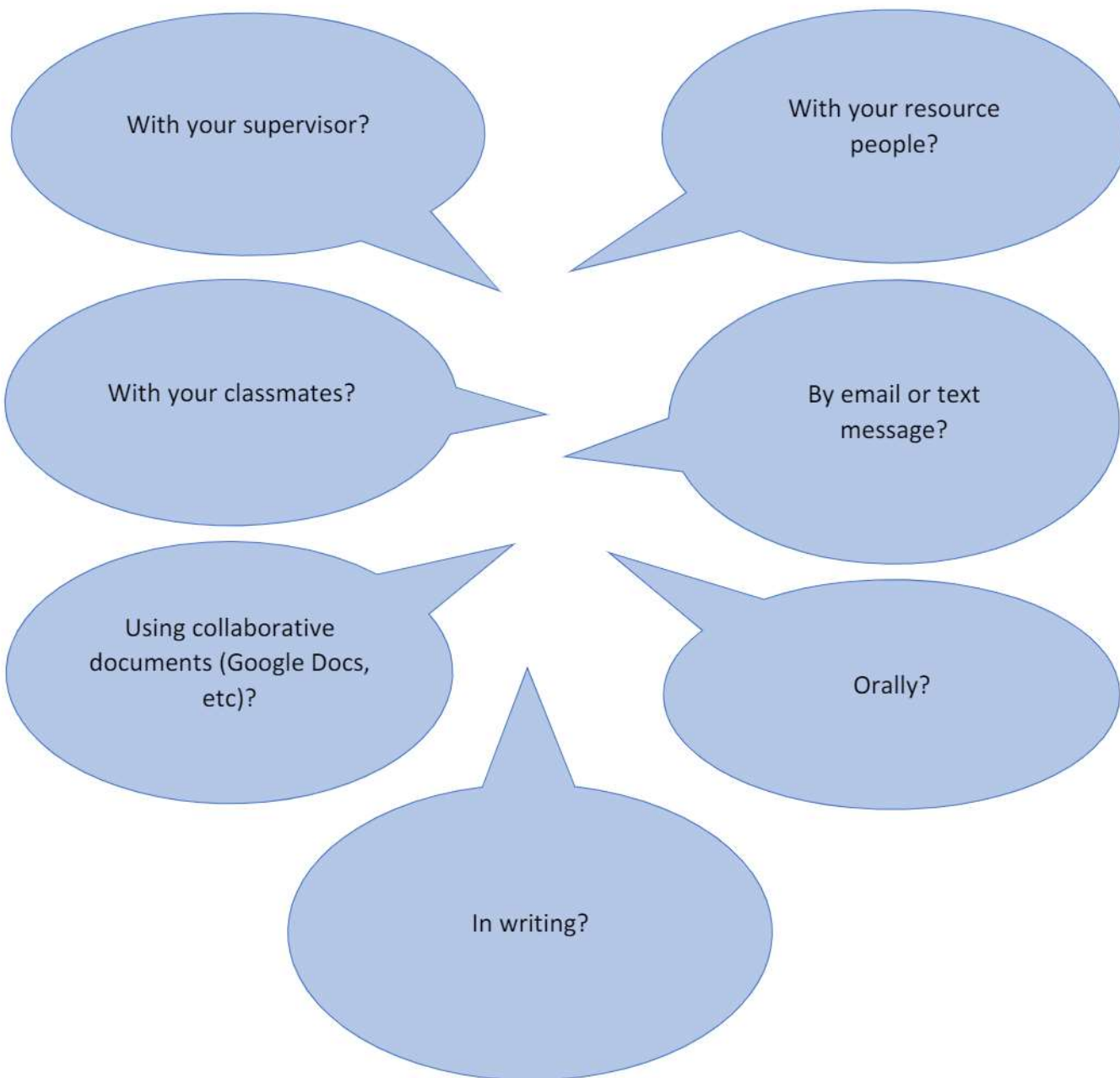

Aspects to work on:

Follow-up tasks:

Date of next meeting:

Communication
Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction

Skills-related objectives

- Use a variety of media to communicate with a range of audiences
- Use appropriate forms of writing for different purposes and audiences
- Give and receive meaningful feedback
- Use a variety of speaking techniques to communicate with a variety of audiences
- Interpret and effectively use modes of non-verbal communication

Below are different elements to think about for good oral communication.

Improve listening by silencing your inner voice (do not be judgmental, keep an open mind)

Ask specific, clear and open questions

Adapt your vocabulary

Maintain eye contact

Effective oral communication

Have self-confidence

Smile

Step back

Reformulate your interviewee's words
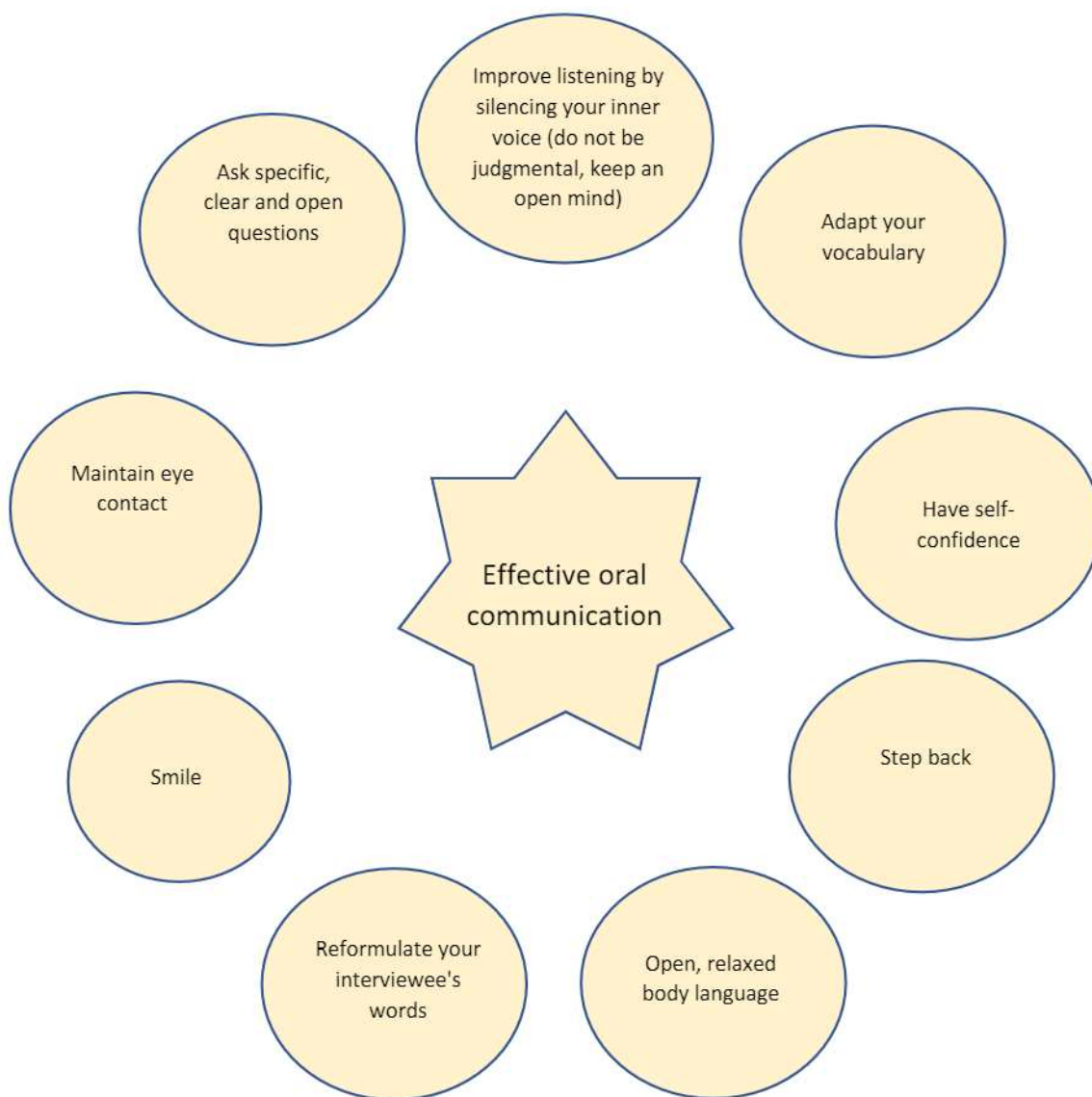
Open, relaxed body language

Communication
Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction

Skills-related objectives

- Use a variety of media to communicate with a range of audiences
- Use appropriate forms of writing for different purposes and audiences
- Give and receive meaningful feedback
- Participate in, and contribute to, digital social media networks

Below are different elements to think about for good written communication (formal writing, emails, social media).
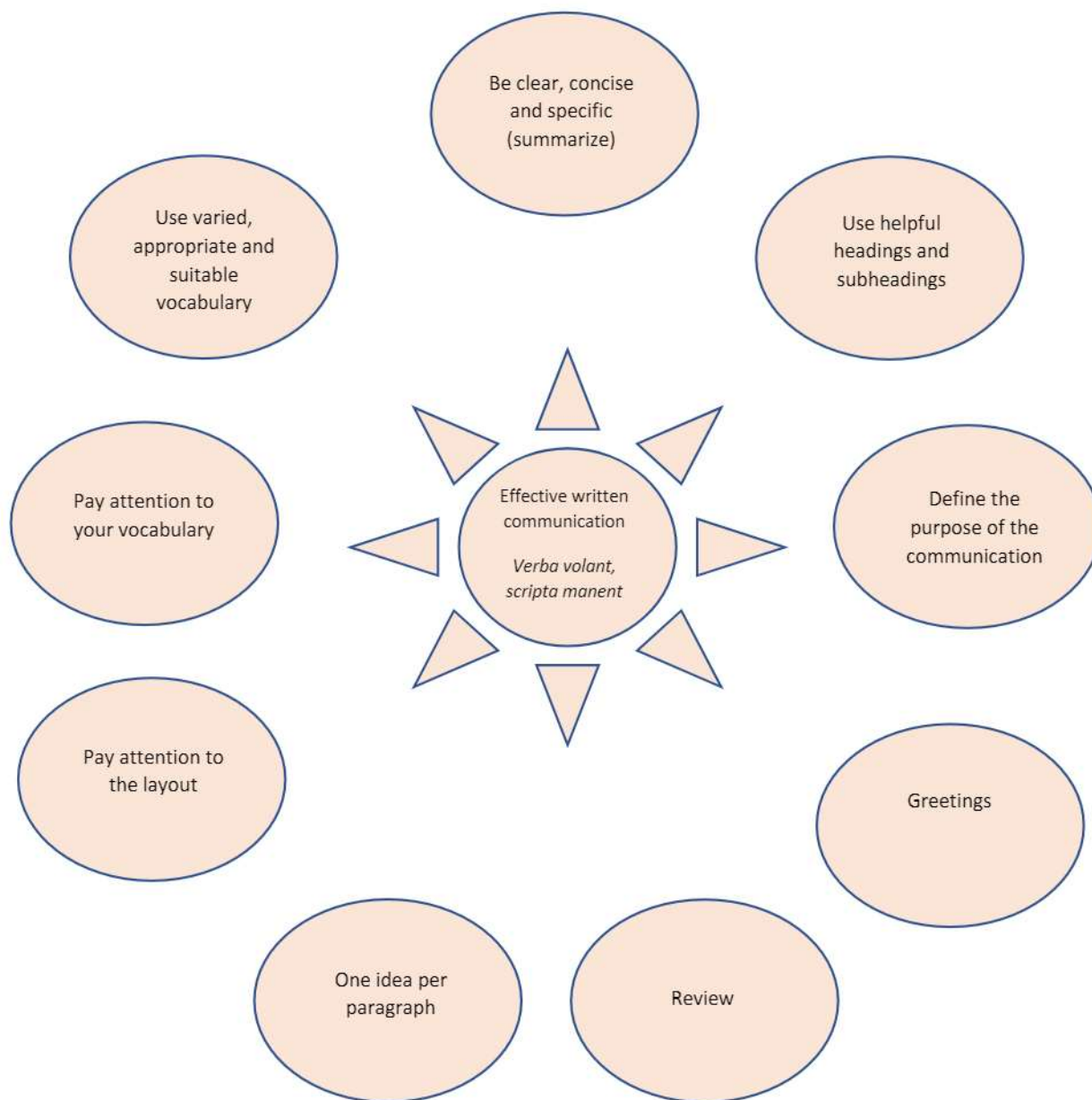
Be clear, concise and specific (summarize)

Use varied, appropriate and suitable vocabulary

Use helpful headings and subheadings

Pay attention to your vocabulary

Effective written communication

Verba volant, scripta manent

Define the purpose of the communication

Pay attention to the layout

Greetings

One idea per paragraph

Review

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Thinking: Creative thinking

Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Examine opposing points of view to gain perspective

Current point of view:

FOR	AGAINST	CONCLUSION

My point of view:

FOR	AGAINST

In the end, I ...

Points of view about my idea

My idea ...

My conclusion:

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Highlight similar ideas (underlined in colour, marked with a +, etc).

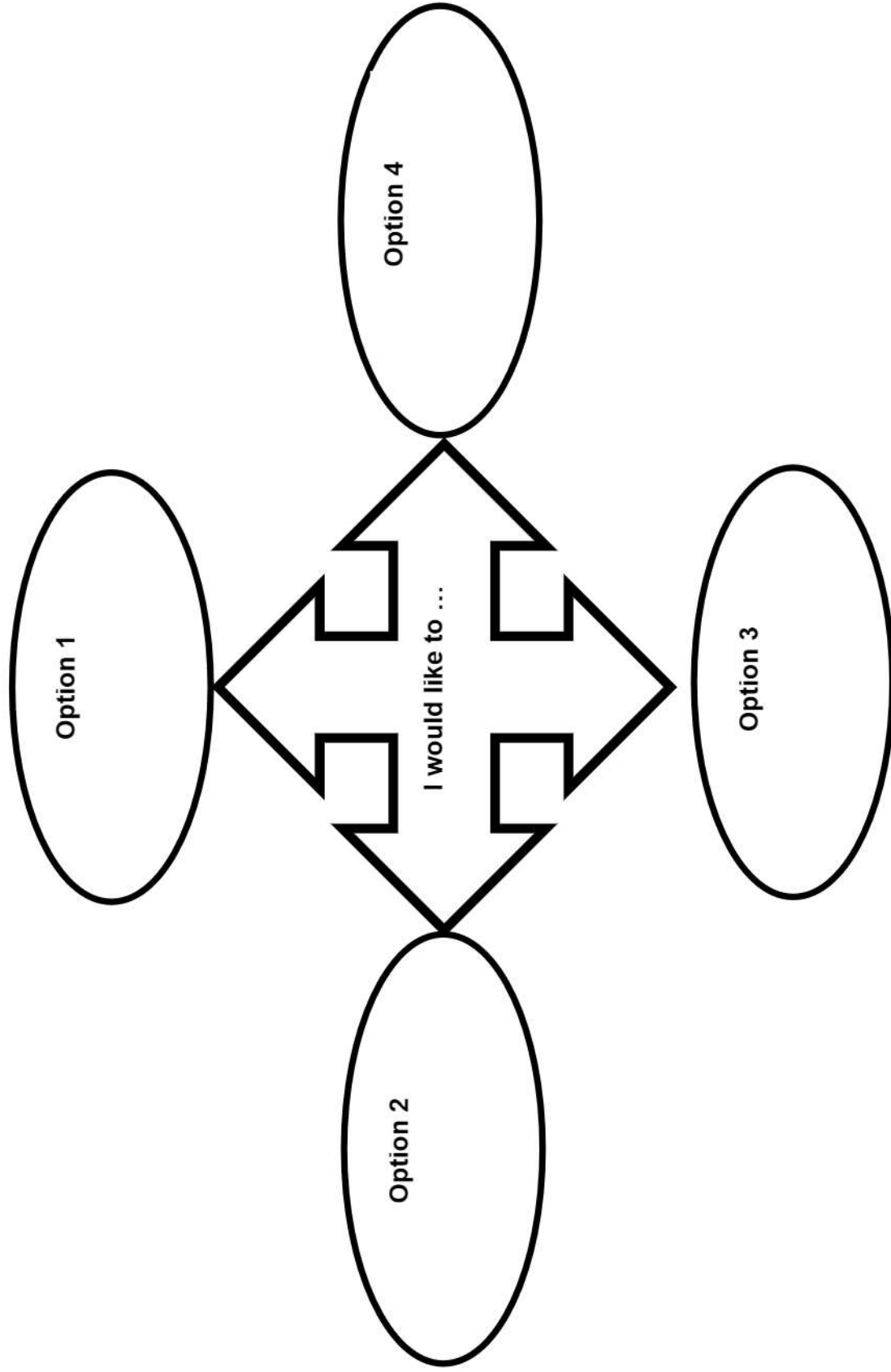**My idea:** _____

Related points of view:

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

Therefore,

_____

_____

And if my idea doesn't work, what are my other options?

Option 1

Option 2

I would like to …

Option 3

Option 4

My product:

And if ...	Possible solutions/expected outcomes
my research is not successful or does not turn out as expected?	➢ _____ ➢ _____
the desired materials to achieve my product are not available?	➢ _____ ➢ _____
the planned location or time for my project is no longer available?	➢ _____ ➢ _____
the product I chose to achieve my objective is no longer suitable?	➢ _____ ➢ _____
I consider input from my supervisor or those around me when I create my product?	➢ _____ ➢ _____
Other	➢ _____ ➢ _____

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Thinking: Creative thinking

Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Use brainstorming and visual diagrams to generate new ideas and inquiries

My learning goal

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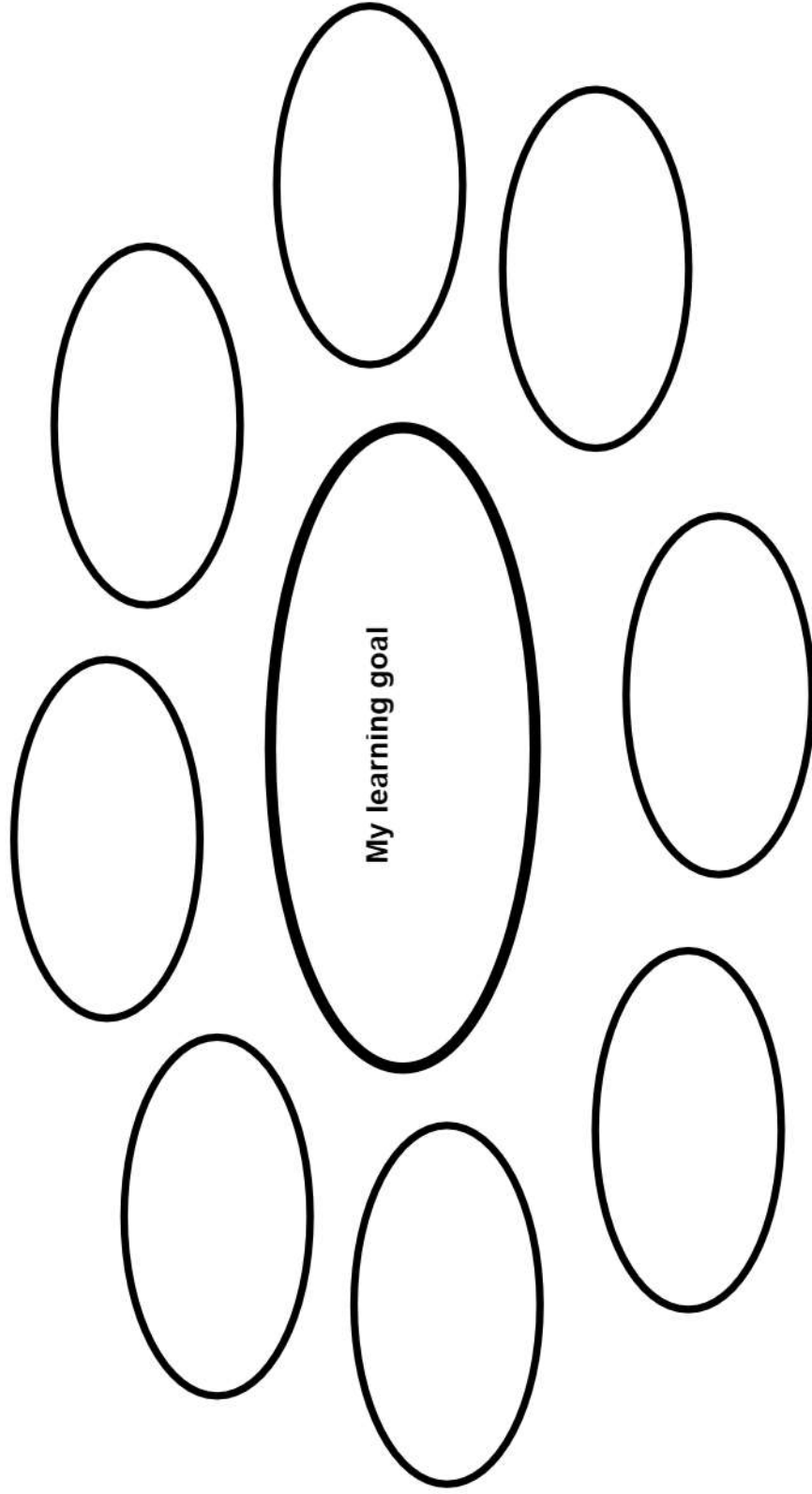
Thinking: Creative thinking

Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Look to others to find solutions

1) I find two or three people to help me overcome my problem. (It is better to work with people you do not know as well and who can steer you towards new ideas.)

2) I explain my problem.

3) On a sheet of paper, each person writes possible solutions to this problem (5 minutes maximum).

4) Each person gives me their piece of paper, and then I have solutions I can use to solve my problem.

*** This exercise is more interesting if each participant has a problem. Students can then share their sheets and add their ideas for solutions to those already offered.

Thinking: Creative thinking
Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Look to others to find solutions

The problem:

Where?

Who?

On their own or in teams, students find solutions by asking questions rather than responding straight away.

What?

How?

When?

Why?
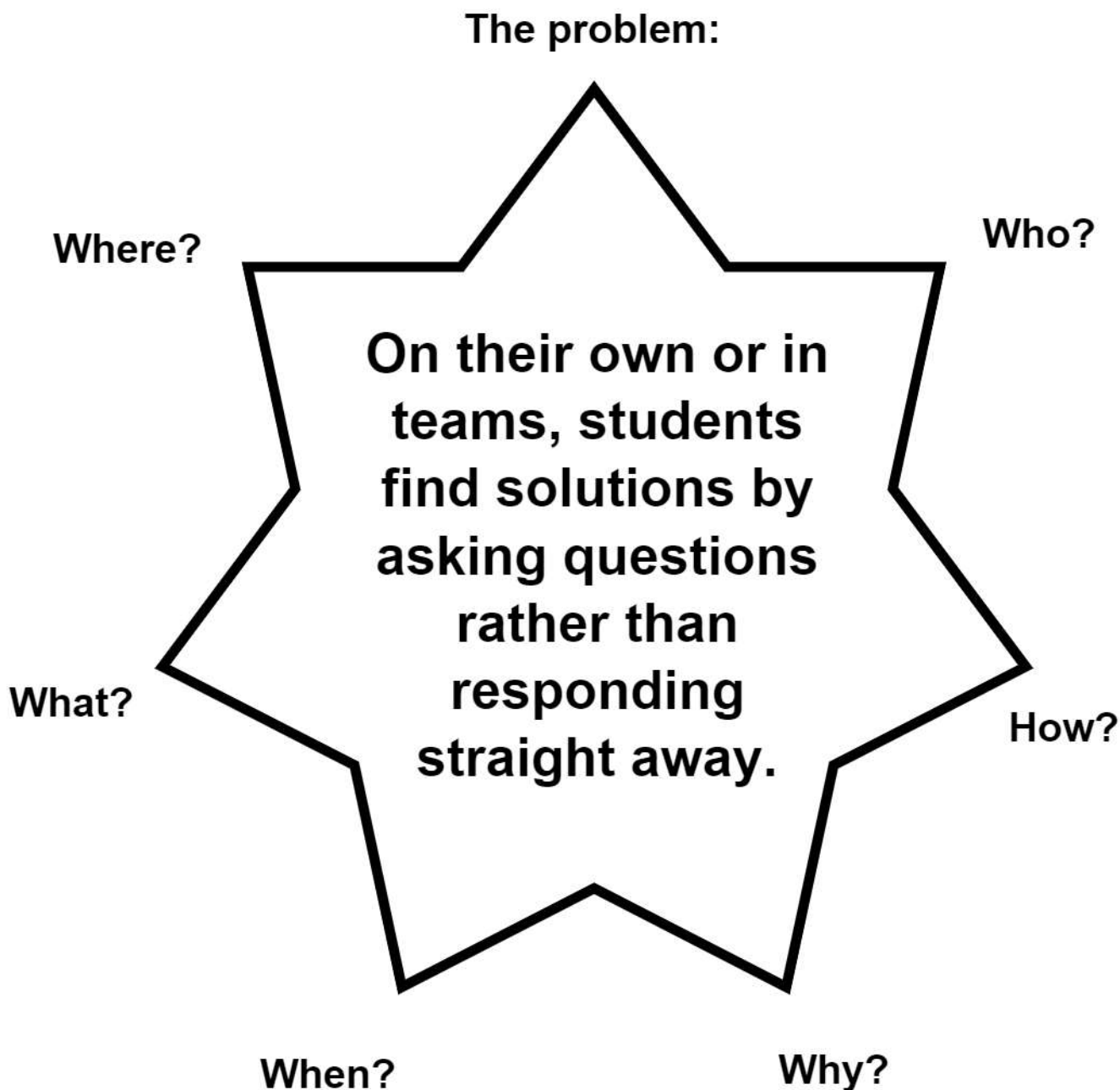
Thinking: Creative thinking
Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Use brainstorming and visual diagrams to generate new ideas and inquiries

Below are example questions that I can ask myself to brainstorm effectively to finish my product.

- ✓ What can I change to improve my product?

- ✓ Could I envisage a completely different product?

- ✓ Can I achieve my learning goal in another way?

- ✓ Can people help me to come up with new ideas?

- ✓ Can similar projects inspire me?

- ✓ Can the product I envisage help me achieve another learning goal?

- ✓ Could I create a product smaller in scope and still manage to achieve my learning goal?

- ✓ Can I change how I have worded my learning goal so that it better relates to my product?

- ✓ What do I need? Time? Resources?

- ✓ What **can** I add to my product? Is there anything I **should** add to my product?

- ✓ Are there any elements of my product that I absolutely cannot change?

Thinking: Creative thinking
Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products or processes

What I already knew …	What new ideas can I have thanks to this knowledge?	Impact on the product
about my product: ✓ _____ ✓ _____ ✓ _____ ✓ _____		
about the process to achieve my learning goal: ✓ _____ ✓ _____ ✓ _____ ✓ _____		

Thinking: Creative thinking
Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Play with ideas and experiment

Sticky notes activity

1) Students present a problem using three questions to be displayed in class.

2) Each student receives at least three different coloured sticky notes.

3) Students write a response and/or a question related to the questions posed.

4) Students stick the sticky notes in the relevant places.

5) Teachers and/or students read the responses.

6) Students choose the two best ideas for each question.

7) Students use or reject the result of this group reflection.

***Students can keep all the sticky notes to explore other options.

Thinking: Creative thinking
Generating novel ideas and considering new perspectives

Skills-related objective

- Play with ideas and experiment

Best case/worst case activity

1) Students share a problem with the group.

2) The class is split into two:

   a) best-case scenario

   b) worst-case scenario

3) Each team has to respond to a problem based on the scenario they are working on.

   a) What would the best possible scenario be if we had no constraints?

   b) What would the worst possible scenario be if everything went wrong?

4) Students share thoughts and improve the other team's ideas, if possible.

5) In groups, students say what should be prioritized to achieve the better outcome.

6) In groups, students say what should be avoided to prevent the worst outcome.

7) Students leave with ideas on how to improve their work from their group work.

Thinking: Critical thinking
Analysing and evaluating issues and ideas

Skills-related objectives

- Recognize the shortcomings in their knowledge and formulate key questions
- Define any important questions to study

What I already know about …	
My product	**Actions to complete**

What knowledge am I lacking …	
About my product?	**About the actions?**

Can I use what I've noticed about my shortcomings to formulate questions to solve my problems?

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

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Thinking: Transfer
Using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts

Skills-related objective

- Use knowledge, understanding and skills acquired in different subjects to create products or solutions

What I know (knowledge)	What I understand (understanding)	What I have mastered (ATL skills, technical skills, manual skills, intellectual skills, etc)
How will this help me to carry out my project?		

Thinking: Transfer
Using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts

Skills-related objective

- Demonstrate personal responsibility for their continuous learning

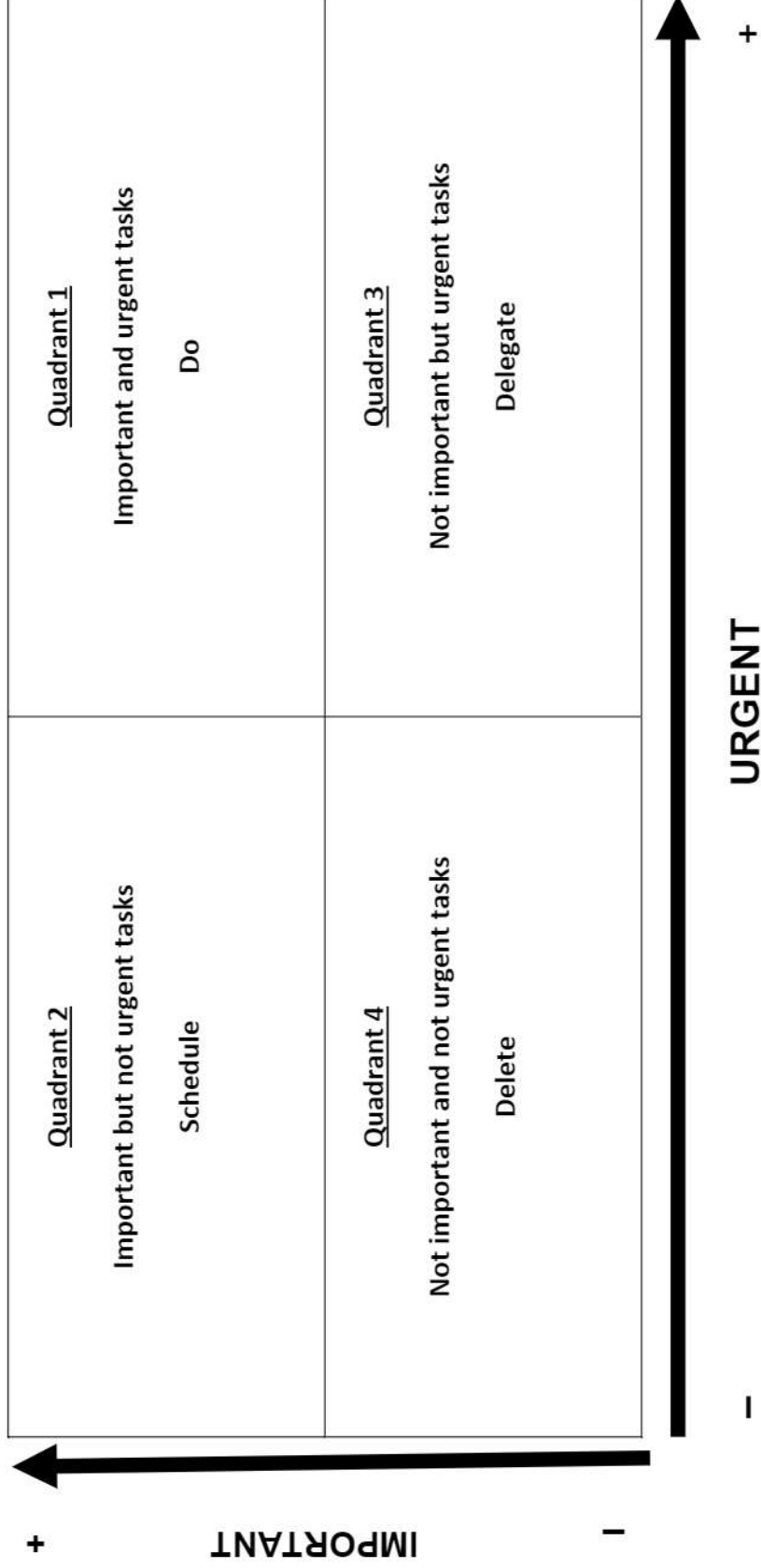**Below is a list of questions that could help students reflect on the impact that their personal projects have on them.**

✓ What qualities do I need for lifelong learning?

✓ Have I carried out any research for my project out of curiosity?

✓ Have I carried out any research for my project because I am passionate about the subject?

✓ Has my research expanded my horizons?

✓ What impact has my personal project's learning goal had on me?

✓ I have finished my personal project. Has this work made me want to learn more about the subject or other related subjects?

✓ In the course of my research, have I found interesting resources (books, resource people, websites, etc) that have made me want to keep learning?

✓ Have I spoken to people who have inspired me or made me want to learn more?

✓ I made some mistakes during my project. How have these mistakes helped me learn and move forward?

✓ Was the subject of my personal project interesting enough to make me want to learn more?

✓ Did the people I encountered during my project teach me anything or make any contribution?

Thinking: Transfer

Using skills and knowledge in multiple contexts

Skills-related objective

- Make decisions

- The Eisenhower Matrix

Quadrant 2 Important but not urgent tasks Schedule	**Quadrant 1** Important and urgent tasks Do
Quadrant 4 Not important and not urgent tasks Delete	**Quadrant 3** Not important but urgent tasks Delegate

IMPORTANT

URGENT

ATL toolkit—Approaches to learning in practice

ATL reflection tools
Criterion B: Applying skills

Choose the ATLs to inform the report wisely.

Using an assessment scale from 1 to 10 (10 being the most important and 1 the least important), rank the ATLs in terms of importance.

ATL skill(s) clusters	Importance for furthering my learning goal	Importance for achieving my product
I. Communication		
II. Collaboration		
III. Organization		
IV. Affective skills		
V. Reflection		
VI. Information literacy		
VII. Media literacy		
VIII. Critical thinking		
IX. Creative thinking		
X. Transfer		

For ATL skills clusters that I have given a 10, which skills-related objectives (bulleted lists) have been most useful?

Skills clusters chosen to further my learning goal:

_____

Skills-related objectives (bulleted lists):

> _____

> _____

> _____

Skills clusters chosen to achieve my product:

_____

Skills-related objectives (bulleted lists):

> _____

> _____

> _____

The exercise I have just completed will be useful when I write my report and in fulfilling criterion B.