



Approaches to Learning (ATL) Skills

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Students are expected to develop and demonstrate skills, knowledge and understanding of the five Approaches to Learning (ATL) on a continuum across the PYP, MYP and DP. To enhance competency in these areas, teachers design learning tasks, activities or challenges that nurture students' further growth and understanding of the Approaches to Learning.

What are the Approaches To Learning (ATL) skills?

- ATL skills are deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes that permeate the IB teaching and learning environment.
- ATL skills supports the IB belief that a large influence on a student's education is not only what you learn but also how you learn.
- "What is of paramount importance in the pre-university stage is not what is learned but learning how to learn ... What matters is not the absorption and regurgitation either of fact or pre- digested interpretations of facts, but the development of powers of the mind or ways of thinking which can be applied to new situations and new presentations of facts as they arise." – Alec Peterson Peterson, A. 1972. The International Baccalaureate: An experiment in International Education. London. George Harrap.



The approaches to learning skills can be summed up with this ATL wheel:



<https://lcismyp.files.wordpress.com>

The Approaches to Learning skills are identified as:

- Communication skills - oral, written, digital and creative
- Collaborative social skills
- Organizational, affective and reflective self-management skills
- Research skills demonstrating information and media literacy
- Critical thinking, creative and innovative synthesis, and knowledge transfer skills

The IB approaches to teaching skills are:

- based on inquiry
- focused on conceptual understanding
- developed in local and global contexts
- focused on effective teamwork and collaboration
- differentiated to meet the needs of all learners
- informed by formative and summative assessment



Some of the key questions to be answered by students with respect to ATL skills include the following.

- What are my present skills in this area and what evidence do I have of my development?
- What skills can I improve?
- What new skills can I learn?

When specific ATL skills become an explicit focus for teaching and learning, students can begin to take responsibility for their own development. Over time, students can identify themselves and their competence in any learning strategy using terms like the following:

- **Novice/beginning**—students are introduced to the skill, and can watch others performing it (observation)
- **Learner/developing**—students copy others who use the skill and use the skill with scaffolding and guidance (emulation)
- **Practitioner/using**—students employ the skill confidently and effectively (demonstration)
- **Expert/sharing**—students can show others how to use the skill and accurately assess how effectively the skill is used (self-regulation)

In this newsletter we will be focusing on 3 skills of the ATLs cluster:

- Communication skills
- Social skills
- Self-management skills



Role of facilitator in developing communication, social and self-management skills:

I. Communication skills

APPROACHES TO LEARNING: COMMUNICATION					
COMMUNICATION THROUGH INTERACTION Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction					
Give and receive meaningful feedback	Use a variety of media & speaking & writing techniques	Use non-verbal techniques	Participate, share, and collaborate online and on social media	Use intercultural understanding to interpret others	Recognize the importance of audience
COMMUNICATION THROUGH LANGUAGE Reading, writing and using language to gather and communicate information					
Read	Write	Take notes & paraphrase	Use subject specific language	Make inferences & draw conclusions	Structure & organize information

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Communication which is easy to understand and process by our brain is considered to be effective. Effective communication is a skill by which information is shared and transferred and in the education system this skill plays a major role as maximum sharing of knowledge can only happen if effective communication takes place among peer groups and between student and teacher. However the language need not always be verbal, it can also be non-verbal or visual.

Ways to improve Verbal communication skill:

- Providing subject specific command terms to the students
- For a particular unit, provide a list of difficult words with their meaning
- Encourage students to write letters, blogs, and articles as per the subject requirement
- Give opportunity for debating in class
- Give an open ended topic and let them speak for a minute
- Encourage role play
- Give opportunities for paraphrasing

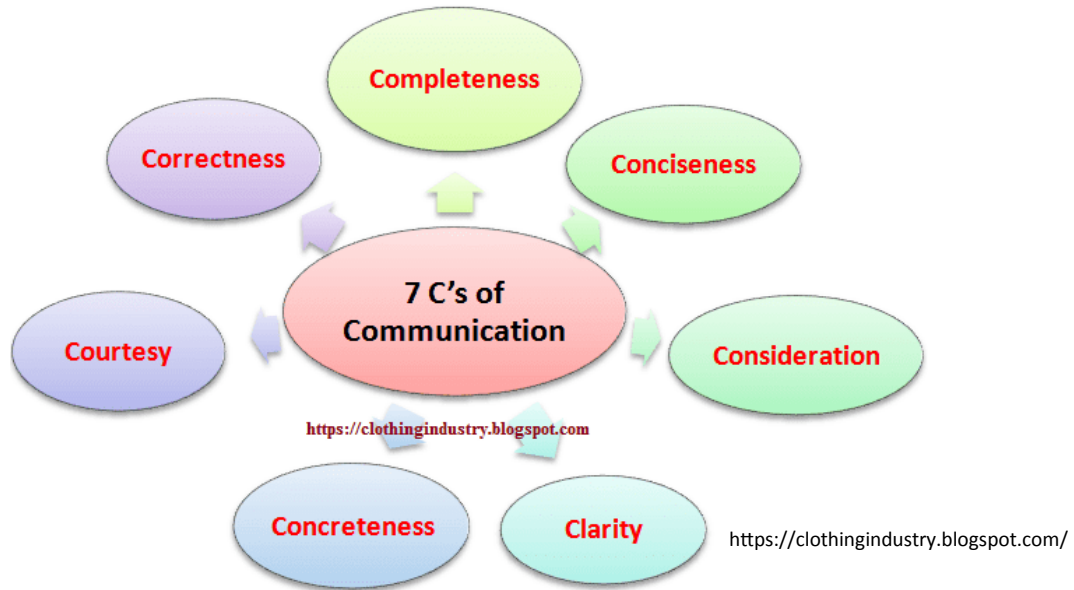
Ways to improve Non-verbal communication skill:

- After completion of the topic let students summarize their understanding in the form of flow chart
- Give opportunities to present information in the form of table and graphs
- Play games like dumb charades
- Do stress management activities which will help students to tune their volume and control their body language



Conduct activities which give students an opportunity to look into each other's eyes and speak confidently or express them without using words but just with gestures.

Communication skill is of foremost importance because if a student masters this skill and is able to excel in all the 7C's of communication he/she is also able to achieve other ATL skills as these 7 C's can be related to other skills as follows.








1. **Completeness:** If the communication is complete, that is the other person is able to draw the correct conclusion from then it is considered that the student has also developed organization skill because he/ she is able to organize the thoughts before speaking.
2. **Conciseness:** If the idea is presented in short clear sentences then it is considered to be concise and if the child is able to do that he has learnt self-management skills to some extent.
3. **Consideration:** While conveying our own thoughts if we think about its impact on other persons emotion we are actually displaying affective skills.
4. **Clarity:** When the ideas are clearly transferred either verbally or nonverbally, it indicates that before transferring brain has given a thought to it therefore thinking skills have played its role.
5. **Courtesy:** In nonverbal communication if our body language is showing respect to others then also we do display affective skills.
6. **Concreteness:** If the communication is supported with instances basically evidence it indicates that some research has been done before conveying the information which must have developed research skills.
7. **Correctness:** A correct communication is always the one with examples, evidence and which is easily interpreted that means, critical thinking and transferring skills are achieved.



II. Social Skills

Collaboration Skills

APPROACHES TO LEARNING: SOCIAL					
COLLABORATION Working effectively with others					
Be responsible & advocate for yourself	Share responsibility and roles with others	Listen to others	Show empathy, respect, and support to others	Demonstrate Leadership	Build consensus & resolve conflict
					

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Skills that enable you to work effectively with others to complete a common task

- Consider, respect, and accept social and/or cultural differences
- Consider, respect, and accept different points of view and opinions
- Encourage contributions from others
- Be sympathetic (express sorrow for someone else's misfortune)
- Be empathetic (understand and share someone else's feelings)
- Consider group dynamics
- Assume a particular role in a team as appropriate
- Delegate, take, and share responsibility as appropriate
- Negotiate goals and limitations with teachers, partners, and peers
- Understand when and how to build consensus
- Understand when and how to agree to disagree
- Resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Make decisions based on fairness and equality
- Help others achieve success

III. Self-Management Skills

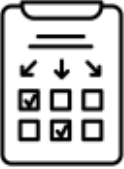





Self-management is an ATL (Approaches to Learning) skill which every IB student should exhibit as they grow in their learning process.

Self-management skill is not limited to meeting deadlines and submitting assignments on time as per the requirement.



It can be further categorized into three strands each with its own significance:

Organization skills:

ORGANIZATION SKILLS Managing time and tasks effectively					
Plan	Set goals, identify strategies, & take action	Manage Materials	Organize Files & Complex information	Manage Time	Select & use technology effectively & productively
					







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It is the ability to use time, energy, resources etc. in an effective manner. As an educator, we need to use our time and knowledge in a way, which benefits the organization and the students, but at the same time, we should also be balanced. This means there should be a good balance between personal and professional life.

Some strategies to improve organization skills :

- Make a daily checklist of tasks
- Place the task on the checklist in a priority order
- Organize your study place
- Do not hesitate in taking help from others
- Discuss activities done in class with the peers
- Give some time to yourself every day, doing something in which you are interested and which mentally relaxes you

Affective Skills:

AFFECTIVE SKILLS Managing state of mind					
Be Mindful	Demonstrate perseverance	Manage emotions	Be self-motivated	Show Resilience	Think Positively
					


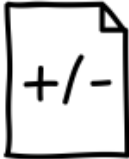
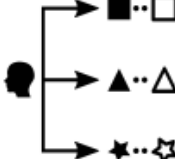





Affective skill means the skills of gaining or valuing knowledge is affected closely by the emotional state of the learner.

Some strategies to improve affective skills:

- Overcome distractions
- Practise empathy
- Practise mindfulness
- Overcome impulsiveness and anger
- Prevent and eliminate bullying
- Reduce stress and anxiety
- Analysing and attributing causes for failure
- Practise managing self-talk
- Positive thinking
- Dealing with disappointment and unmet expectations
- Dealing with change

Reflection:

REFLECTIVE SKILLS (Re-) considering the process of learning; choosing and using ATL skills					
Develop new skills, techniques and strategies	Identify areas of growth and areas for improvement	Be a flexible learner	Try and evaluate new ATL skills	Consider implications of choices	Use Multiple Techniques for Reflection
					

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Reflection should not be a tedious process. Instead, reflection is a process that helps us develop identity and to understand the meaning of our experiences.

For reflecting creatively students should:

- Track their progress
- Find pattern in their learning and performance
- Take ownership of their growth
- Analyse their learning experience

Reflection can be done in a number of ways and these different style adopted by the student also helps the teacher to identify the learning style of the student and this will help them to adopt differentiated learning styles in class.



Different styles of reflection:

- **Visual reflection:** This can be done by making drawings, flowchart, animation etc.
- **Kinaesthetic Reflection:** This can be done by giving opportunity for role play, speeches, and presentations.
- **Auditory Reflection:** Can be done by conducting discussions in class, asking questions and letting students to audio record their thoughts.

At the end of every class if the student is asked to close eyes and think about what they have learned, write or discuss that, it will not only ensure the student's full engagement in class but also help them to retain the concepts for a longer time. Self-reflection is not only a way of looking back on the learning but is also an exercise of the brain which increases the memory and makes the subconscious mind more active.

Here are some sticky note strategies to support reflection:

Connect - Extend - Challenge

Connect How are the ideas that you learned connected to what you already knew?

Extend How did your learning then extend your thinking?

Challenge What do you still find challenging or puzzling?

Triangle - Square - Circle

Triangle What 3 key points or ideas am I taking away from this experience?

Square What squares with my thinking? (things I agree with or understood)

Circle What questions are still circling my mind?

I used to think... Now I think...

My thinking shifted because...

My takeaway from today's lesson is...

The most important idea for me is...

Reflection 6 Word-Memoir

<https://alisonyang.weebly.com/>



ATL Skills & Differentiation:

“Differentiation” doesn’t refer to special education. It addresses the approach of every student’s needs, but this doesn’t mean that we will turn our class into private tutoring lessons.

Here are few ways in which ATL Skills can help in differentiation :

Communication Skills:

- It provides opportunities to students to communicate through body language (smile, eye contact, gestures, and tone)
- Summarizing what has been said
- Checking for understanding
- Cultural sensitivity
- Asking effective questions

Social Skills:

- Provides students opportunities to understand when to agree and disagree
- Using conversation starters
- Helping students to resolve interpersonal conflicts
- Provides opportunities to model social interactions

Self-Management skills:

- Breaking down task
- Using multiple techniques for reflection
- Using visual strategies
- Modelling organisation
- Using checklist and help track activities
- Self-monitoring
- Self-evaluation
- Self-talk
- Time management
- Goal setting



ATL SKILL CHALLENGE

Map your way from **start** to **finish** by completing ATL skills and logging them in Skill Tracker

Move from one square to the next **vertically** or **horizontally**.

Colour code the square depending on skill level

- watch
- copy
- do
- teach

START				
				FINISH





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