EDU-MAGED

ATL SKILLS PLAYBOOK

FOR EDUCATORS



Dr. Maged Abdallah



What Are ATL Skills?

ATLs are not content-specific. They are essential learning tools that empower students to take ownership of how they learn, how they think, how they communicate, how they work with others, and how they manage themselves. These skills are the "how" of learning–supporting students not just in academic achievement, but in becoming lifelong learners who are adaptable, thoughtful, and globally minded.

The IB identifies five broad skill categories, each broken down into 10 clusters of developmentally appropriate, teachable skills:

1. Communication
2. Social
3. Self-Management (Organization, Affective, Reflection)
4. Research (Information and Media Literacy)
5. Thinking (Critical, Creative, and Transfer)

Each cluster contains specific, actionable skills that students can learn, practice, and reflect on as they grow. These skills are not isolated. They are interconnected, often overlapping, and applicable across subjects and disciplines.

Why Are ATL Skills Important?

Academic Success and Beyond

ATL skills provide students with essential strategies for tackling academic challenges, supporting them in managing assignments, studying effectively, and participating confidently in class. Beyond academics, these skills are transferable to a wide range of real-world scenarios, preparing students to think critically, solve problems, and adapt to changing expectations.

Learner Agency

By developing ATL skills, students become active participants in their own learning. They learn to set goals, make choices, reflect on their progress, and take initiative, which builds self-confidence and independence. This sense of agency enables students to personalize their learning experiences and take ownership of their educational journeys.

Metacognitive Awareness

ATL skills encourage students to reflect on how they learn, identify both strengths and areas for improvement, and set purposeful goals for growth. With greater metacognitive awareness, students become more strategic and intentional learners, able to assess what works best for them and adjust their approaches over time for continuous improvement.

Future Preparation

Equipping students with ATL skills prepares them to face an unpredictable future, where adaptability, collaboration, and innovation are key to success in further studies, the workplace, and life beyond school. These skills foster resilience and openness to new ideas, ensuring that students can thrive in diverse environments and careers yet to emerge.

By explicitly teaching ATL skills, educators transform their classrooms into spaces where students not only absorb information but also develop the habits and mindsets needed for lifelong learning. Instruction shifts from simply delivering content to guiding students as they learn how to learn, encouraging inquiry, curiosity, and self-reflection.

This holistic approach empowers students to become adaptable thinkers and responsible, engaged citizens. As education increasingly values skills alongside knowledge, the ability to navigate learning–through effective communication, self-management, research, social interaction, and thinking skills–becomes fundamental to personal and professional fulfillment in a rapidly evolving world.

From Novice to Expert: A Developmental Journey

As students develop ATL skills over time, they move along a continuum of competence:

Novice/Beginning

Observing others use the skill

Learner/Developing

Using the skill with guidance

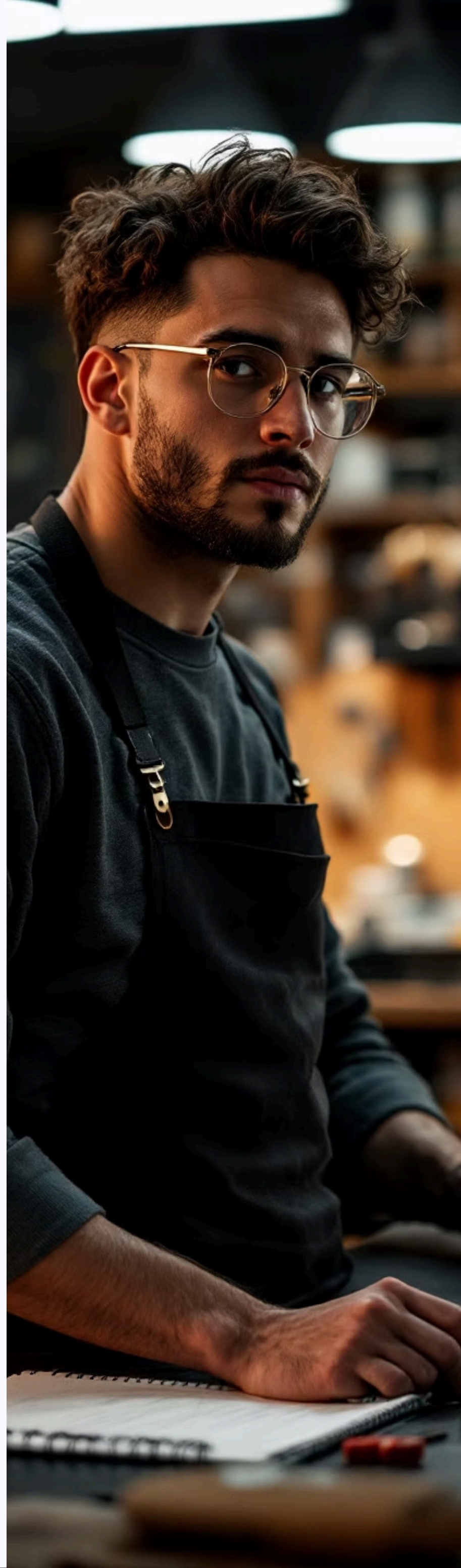
Practitioner/Using

Applying the skill independently and confidently

Expert/Sharing

Teaching the skill to others and using it for self-regulation

This progression encourages self-reflection, peer learning, and student-led growth, making ATL skills a central component of formative assessment and goal setting.



The Role of the Educator

Educators are not just content experts–they are ATL coaches. Embedding ATL skills into lessons requires intentional planning, modeling, and scaffolding. By making ATL skills visible, meaningful, and regularly practiced, educators help students understand not just what they are learning, but how and why.

An effective ATL educator intentionally weaves skill development into the fabric of daily instruction, rather than treating it as an add-on. This may involve explicitly identifying and communicating ATL skill objectives at the beginning of a lesson, providing real-life examples, or connecting skill growth to subject-specific contexts. Educators model effective strategies, such as thinking aloud during problem-solving, demonstrating productive collaboration, or showing how to reflect on one's own learning.

Scaffolding is key to supporting students at different levels of skill development. Educators can break complex skills into manageable steps, provide structured opportunities for practice, and gradually release responsibility as students gain confidence. Regular, formative feedback helps students recognize their progress and areas for growth, encouraging a sense of ownership and self-direction.

By fostering a classroom environment where ATL skills are valued and cultivated, educators empower students to become self-regulated learners, critical thinkers, and resilient collaborators–habits that last well beyond their time in school.





ATL Skill Cluster 1: Communication Skills

> "The art of communication is the language of leadership." - James Humes

What Are Communication Skills?

Communication is more than just speaking or writing–it's about exchanging ideas, understanding diverse perspectives, and expressing thoughts effectively through different modes: verbal, non-verbal, written, visual, and digital. It's also about active listening, which is at the core of collaboration and critical thinking.

This cluster includes two key strands:

- Communication through interaction
- Communication through language (reading, writing, interpreting)

Essential Questions for Communication Skills

Effective Communication

How do I communicate effectively with others?

Audience Adaptation

How do I adapt my communication for different audiences and purposes?

Active Listening

How can I listen more actively and understand others better?

Expression Tools

How do I use writing, media, and digital tools to express my ideas?





Giving and Receiving Meaningful Feedback

Beginner

"Two Stars and a Wish" peer feedback on a short paragraph or presentation.

Developing

Use sentence stems like: "I liked how you...", "You could improve by...", "Next time, try to..."

Practitioner

Design a self-assessment checklist for a writing or speaking task, then pair up to provide peer reviews using it.

Expert

Lead a peer workshop where students present projects and receive structured group feedback, followed by reflection logs.

Using a Variety of Speaking Techniques



Beginner

Engage in "turn-and-talk" sessions with a partner, practicing how to clearly articulate and explain simple concepts in your own words.



Developing

Record a short podcast or video reflection, focusing intentionally on voice tone, pacing, and deliberate gestures to enhance your message.



Practitioner

Craft and deliver a persuasive speech tailored to a particular audience, using engaging speaking techniques to strengthen your argument.



Expert

Facilitate a student-led panel or debate on a relevant issue, skillfully employing a range of rhetorical strategies to influence and inspire your listeners.

Reading Critically and for Comprehension

Beginner

Practice skimming and scanning texts using targeted questions to find main ideas and key details efficiently.

Developing

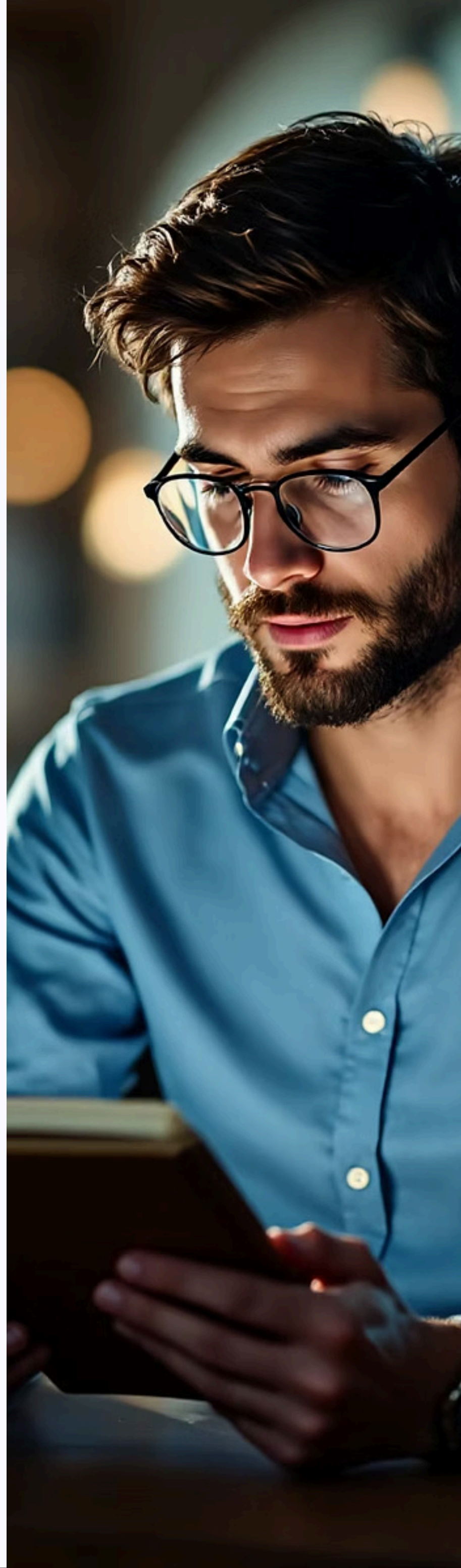
Apply a “Think-Aloud” approach as you read: pause regularly to voice questions, make inferences, and note points of uncertainty.

Practitioner

Select two different sources on the same topic; analyze each for bias, tone, and perspective, explaining how they differ or align.

Expert

Thoroughly annotate a complex academic text, then craft a concise summary and critically evaluate the author's key arguments in your own words.





Using Digital Media for Communication

Beginner

Share your thoughts and ideas by posting respectful, well-structured responses on a class blog or online forum, following proper digital etiquette at all times.

Developing

Design a visually engaging infographic to represent and summarize a chosen topic, using tools like Canva and effectively combining images, text, and data.

Practitioner

Develop and organize a video presentation that teaches a concept from class, carefully planning the script, visuals, and narration to communicate your message clearly.

Expert

Take the lead on a digital awareness project–such as promoting sustainability or wellness–by conceiving and managing a social media campaign that actively engages diverse audiences through your school's online platforms.

Reflective Prompts for Communication Skills

Audience Awareness

How did I adjust my communication for my audience today?

Feedback Exchange

What feedback did I give or receive that helped me grow?

Improvement Focus

What is one communication strategy I'd like to improve next time?

Active Listening

In what ways did I listen actively and show understanding?



ATL Skill Cluster 2: Social - Collaboration Skills

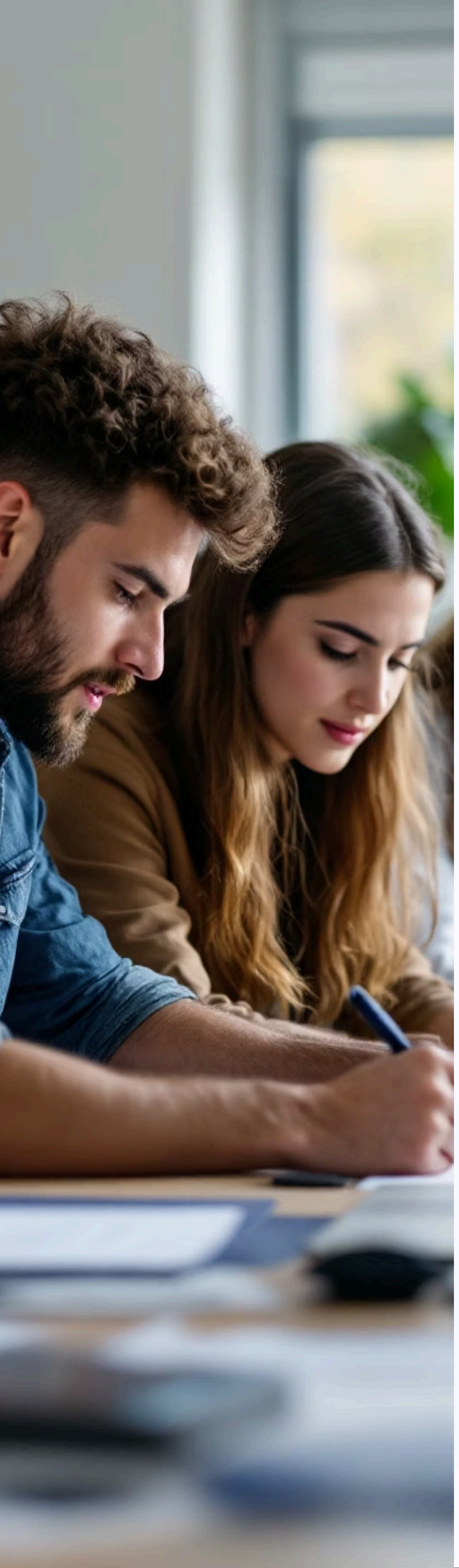
> "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." - African Proverb

What Are Collaboration Skills?

Collaboration skills are about working effectively with others, not just to get tasks done, but to build mutual understanding, respect, and shared success. These skills are essential for real-world learning and prepare students to thrive in team-based environments, whether in school, university, or the workplace.

This cluster includes skills such as:

- Active listening
- Sharing responsibility
- Giving/receiving feedback
- Conflict resolution
- Empathy and leadership



Essential Questions for Collaboration Skills

Effective Teamwork

How do I work well with others?

Team Success

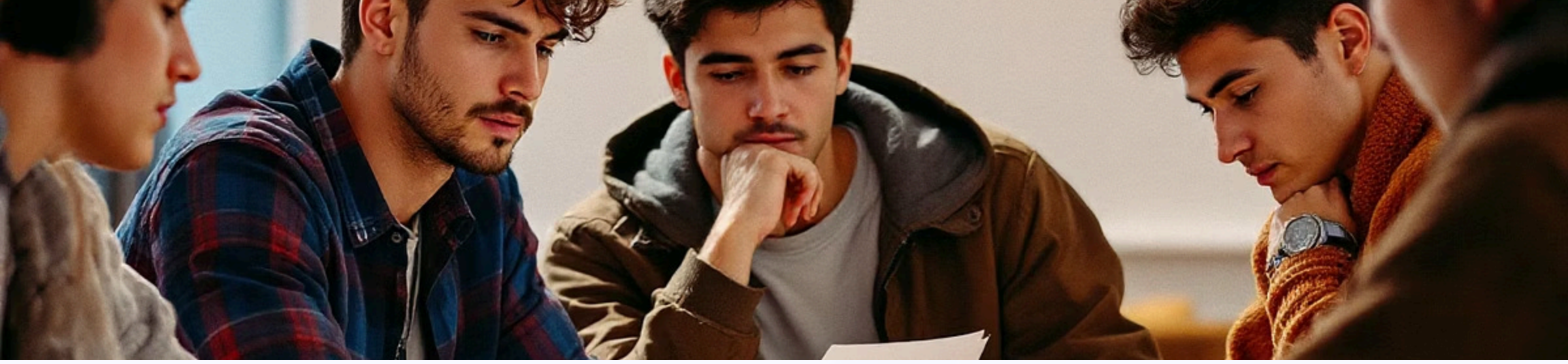
How can I help my team succeed?

Fair Decision-Making

What does fair decision-making look like?

Personal Responsibility

How can I take responsibility for my role and actions?



Listen Actively to Other Perspectives and Ideas

1

Beginner

"Silent Summary" - After a partner speaks, students summarize what they heard without adding opinions.

Developing

Use discussion cards: "What I heard you say was..." and "Can I build on that idea by adding..."

Practitioner

Facilitate a Socratic seminar where students listen, respond, and document evolving perspectives.

Expert

Analyze a group discussion or meeting (recorded or live) and evaluate the listening strategies used.

Delegate and Share Responsibility for Decision-Making



Beginner

Students cycle through roles like recorder or timekeeper, gaining hands-on experience with diverse responsibilities within a group setting.



Developing

Teams use consensus-building tools such as Dot Voting and Fist to Five, making sure everyone's ideas are valued and included in the decision-making process.



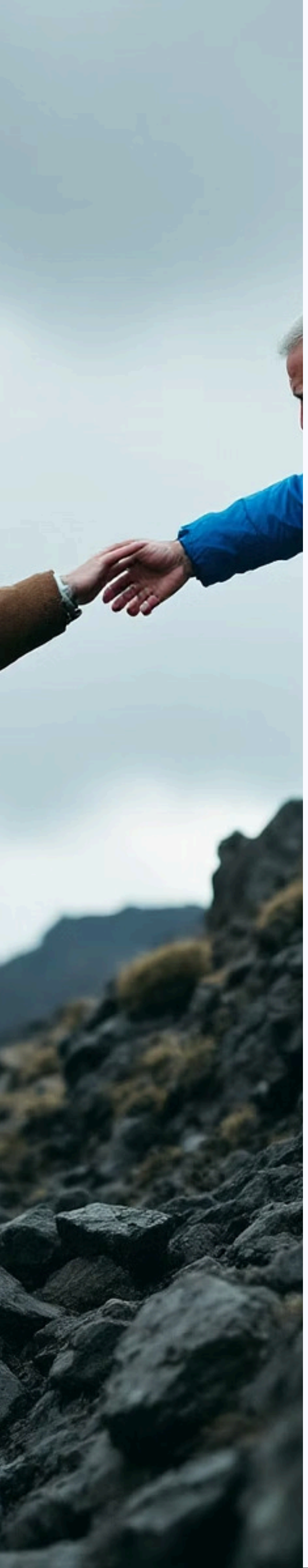
Practitioner

Groups collaboratively design detailed project timelines and divide up tasks, using digital tools to stay organized and ensure transparency.



Expert

A student leader delegates responsibilities based on each member's strengths, tracks progress closely, and encourages peer review to promote shared accountability and excellence.



Help Others to Succeed

Beginner

"Compliment Chain" - During group activities, each student highlights a specific positive contribution made by a teammate, fostering a culture of appreciation and encouragement.

Developing

Peer tutoring opportunities: Students with a strong understanding break down concepts for classmates, using supportive sentence stems and visual aids to make learning accessible for everyone.

Practitioner

"Teach It Back" mini-lessons: Students design and present short tutorials to clarify topics for peers who missed a lesson or need extra support, reinforcing their own understanding while helping others grow.

Expert

Mentor a student from a younger grade or another group by providing regular guidance, thoughtful feedback, and encouragement to support their ongoing growth and confidence.

Manage and Resolve Conflict

Beginner

Express disagreements respectfully using “I messages” (e.g. “I feel upset when my work is interrupted because it distracts me”) to explain feelings and needs without blaming others.

Developing

Pause and take deep breaths before responding to conflict, giving yourself time to calm down, reflect, and choose a thoughtful response instead of reacting impulsively.

Practitioner

Participate in restorative circles to openly discuss group conflicts, listen to all perspectives, and collaboratively find a fair and lasting solution everyone can support.

Expert

Design and lead the class through a clear, step-by-step conflict resolution protocol, teaching peers how to mediate and restore relationships when disagreements arise.



Reflective Prompts for Collaboration Skills

Personal Contribution

How did I contribute to my group's success today?

Challenge Management

What challenges came up, and how did we manage them?

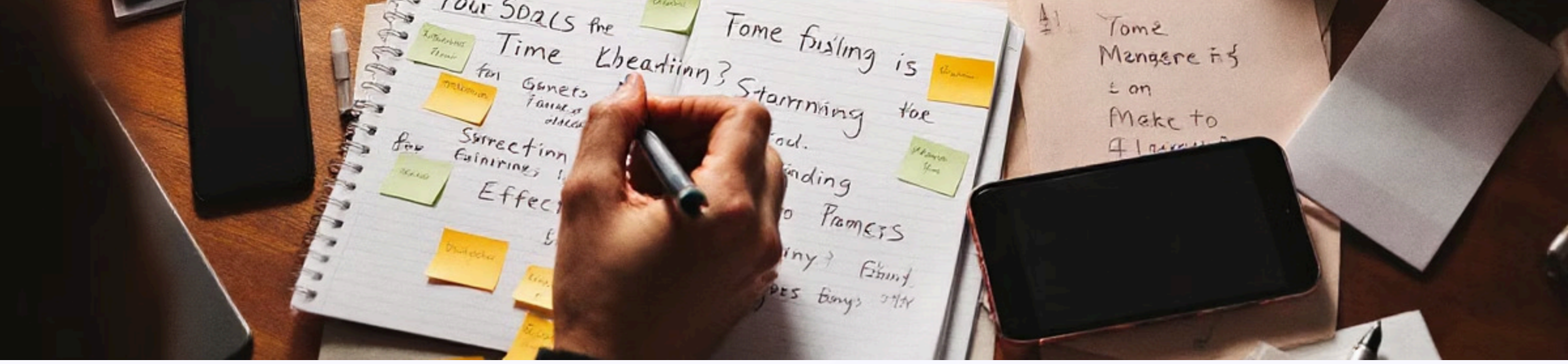
Empathy and Support

How did I show empathy or support to others?

Role Fulfillment

What role did I play in the group, and how did I handle it?





ATL Skill Cluster 3: Self-Management - Organization Skills

> "Success doesn't come from what you do occasionally, it comes from what you do consistently."
> - Marie Forleo

What Are Organization Skills?

Organization skills are at the heart of time management, task planning, and preparedness. These skills empower students to structure their learning, meet deadlines, and manage resources effectively. Strong organizational habits also reduce stress and increase confidence.

This cluster includes:

- Planning short- and long-term tasks
- Keeping organized notes and materials
- Setting personal and academic goals
- Using digital tools effectively



Essential Questions for Organization Skills

Time Management

How can I plan my time and responsibilities effectively?

Organizational Habits

What habits help me stay organized?

Task Prioritization

How do I prioritize tasks and avoid procrastination?

Long-term Planning

How can I prepare for long-term projects or assessments?

Plan Short- and Long-Term Assignments: Meet Deadlines

Beginner

Use a weekly planner to record homework deadlines, and check off each assignment as you complete it.

Developing

Divide a small project into manageable steps, organizing them in a checklist or simple timeline to stay on track.

Practitioner

Create a structured plan for a larger project using tools like Gantt charts or Trello boards, setting clear milestones and deadlines.

Expert

Guide peers or younger students in developing effective time management strategies, supporting them as they create and follow their own long-term organizational plans.



Keep an Organized and Logical System of Files or Notebooks



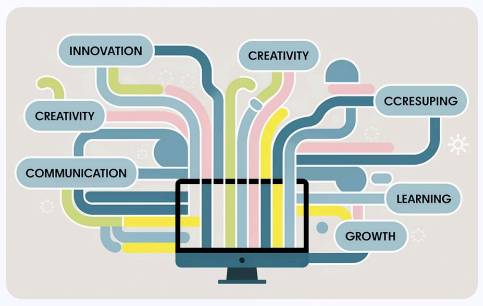
Beginner

Create clearly labeled folders for each subject and make it a habit to sort handouts and notes into the correct folders at the end of every week.



Developing

Use color-coded notebooks or digital folders, assigning a unique color to each subject, and consistently include clear headings and dates on every page or file.



Practitioner

Leverage digital mind-mapping tools to create a comprehensive ‘Study Map’ that visually connects topics across units, helping you quickly review and relate concepts.



Expert

Demonstrate your personalized organizational system to your peers, explaining how it streamlines your learning process and enhances your ability to retrieve and apply information effectively.



Setting Challenging Yet Achievable Goals

Beginner

Identify one meaningful goal to focus on for the week and monitor your progress daily using a simple reflection method, such as recording your feelings with smiley faces.

Developing

Set goals using the SMART framework: make each goal Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Review and adjust these goals at the end of each week.

Practitioner

Draft a personal learning contract outlining your goals, detailed strategies for achieving them, and specific checkpoints to evaluate your progress over time.

Expert

Create and present a comprehensive reflection portfolio that documents your goal-setting journey throughout the semester, showing growth, the challenges you overcame, and how you adapted your strategies.

Select and Use Technology Effectively and Productively

Beginner

Set up basic digital timers or alarms to help you stay focused on individual tasks and remind you when to take breaks or switch activities.

Developing

Organize your daily schedule and track deadlines using online calendars, such as Google Calendar, by creating events for project milestones and exam preparation sessions.

Practitioner

Gather relevant digital materials and tools in a well-labeled shared folder to streamline teamwork and ensure everyone can easily access project resources.

Expert

Analyze and compare multiple digital platforms for managing time and tasks, then recommend and support others in choosing the most suitable options based on their specific goals and learning styles.



Reflective Prompts for Organization Skills

Organization Strategies

What did I do this week to stay organized?

Time Management

How did I manage my time effectively?

Improvement Areas

What's one area where I can improve my organization?

Habit Impact

How do my habits affect my stress level and productivity?



ATL Skill Cluster 4: Self-Management - Affective Skills

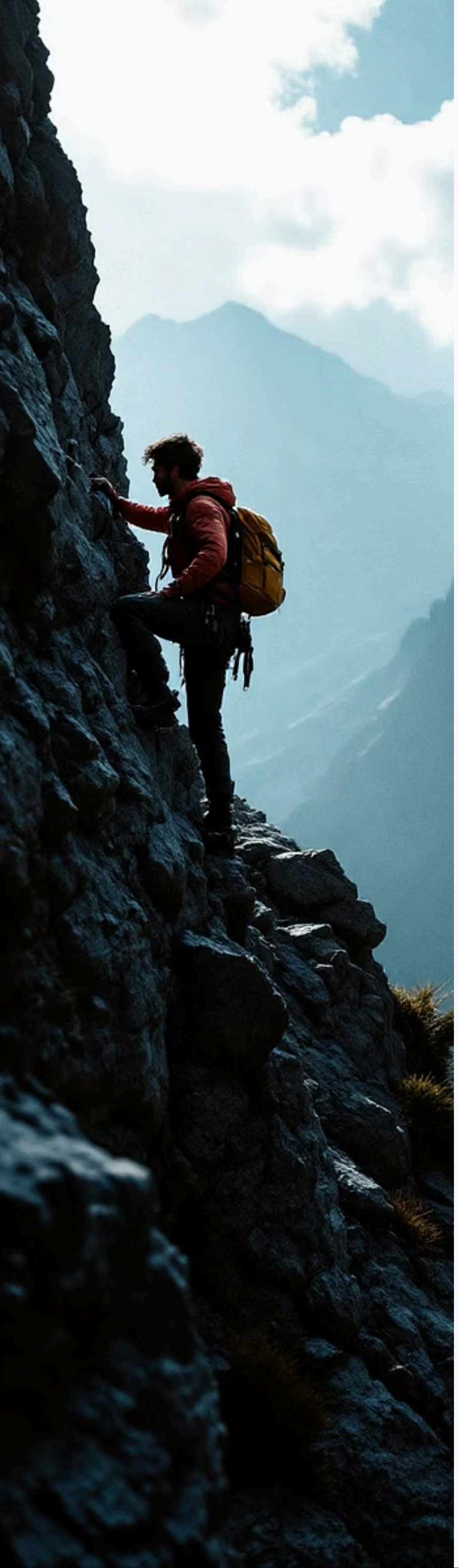
> "You have power over your mind–not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength." - Marcus Aurelius

What Are Affective Skills?

Affective skills help students manage their emotions, develop resilience, and maintain a positive mindset in the face of challenges. These are internal habits of mind that allow learners to stay focused, bounce back from failure, and regulate their thoughts and feelings to support success and wellbeing.

This cluster includes:

- Mindfulness and focus
- Perseverance and delayed gratification
- Emotional regulation
- Self-motivation
- Resilience in the face of setbacks



Essential Questions for Affective Skills

Challenge Response

How do I respond to challenges and stress?

Focus Strategies

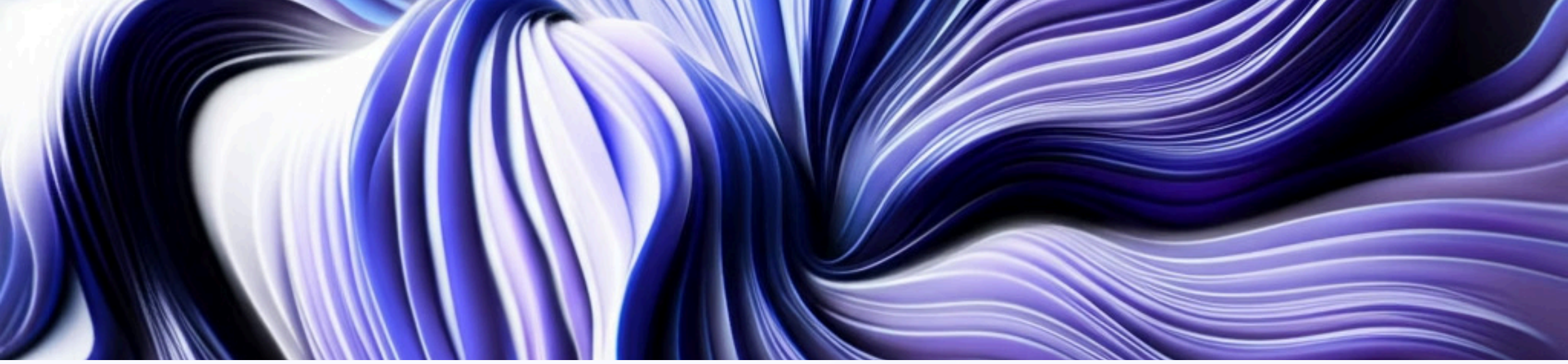
What strategies help me stay calm and focused?

Growth Mindset

How can I develop a growth mindset?

Resilience Building

How do I recover from failure or disappointment?



Practise Focus and Concentration (Mindfulness)

Beginner

Start each class with a simple 1-minute breathing or grounding exercise to settle your mind and bring gentle attention to the present moment.

Developing

Before tests or presentations, use "focus cards" with short, practical mindfulness strategies that help calm nerves and sharpen awareness.

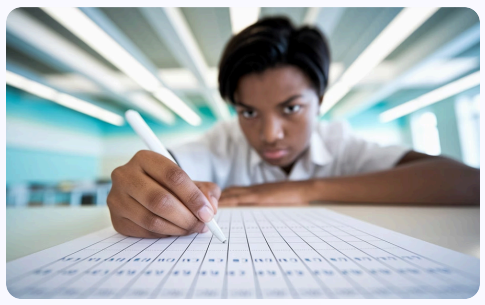
Practitioner

Lead a 5-minute guided mindfulness or visualization practice tailored to your learning goals–such as picturing success during an oral presentation.

Expert

Maintain a mindfulness journal over the week to reflect on your focus, identify distractions, and evaluate which strategies help you concentrate best.

Demonstrate Persistence and Perseverance



Beginner

Notice times when you face difficulties in your learning, and celebrate your efforts to keep going–even when it feels tough.



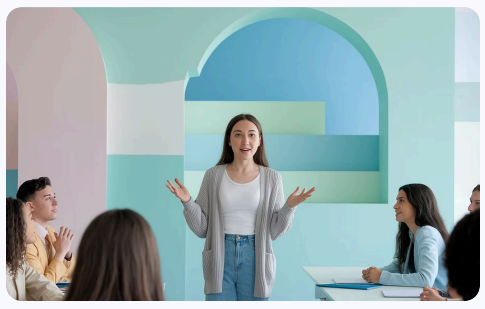
Developing

Track your setbacks and successes with a Challenge Chart, and reflect on which strategies helped you overcome obstacles.



Practitioner

Examine stories of perseverance in literature or real life, then compare them with your own growth and insights from overcoming challenges.



Expert

Create and lead a Growth Story presentation, sharing a personal experience where your persistence made a difference and the lessons you learned along the way.

Practise Strategies to Manage Impulsiveness and Anger

Beginner

When you feel frustration rising, remind yourself to stop and use a cue like “Pause. Breathe. Respond.” This quick check-in can interrupt impulsive reactions and help you regain self-control.

Developing

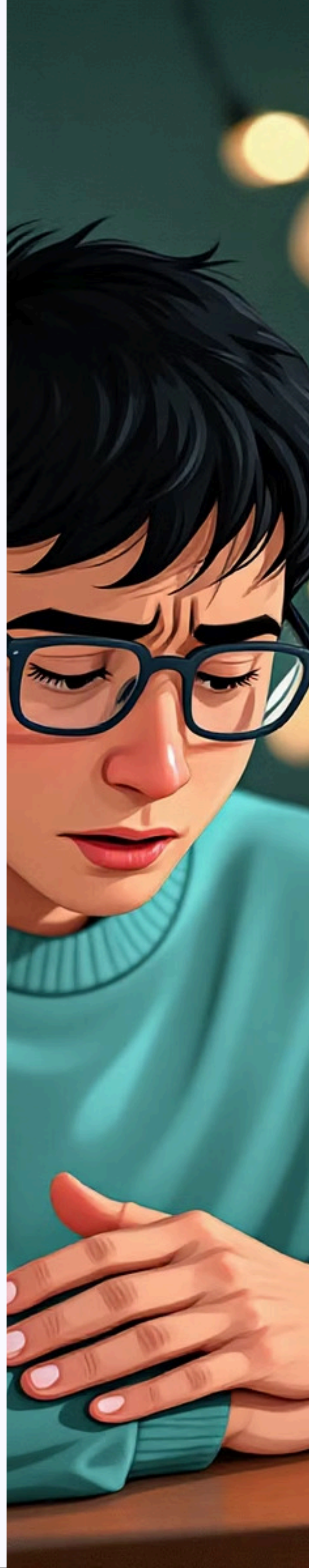
After experiencing anger or conflict, take time to write in a journal or use a mood tracker to reflect on what triggered your emotions and how you responded. This helps you spot patterns and plan healthier reactions for next time.

Practitioner

Practise managing frustration by role-playing challenging scenarios. Focus on calmly expressing your feelings and needs–model assertiveness without losing composure.

Expert

Support your peers by teaching emotional regulation strategies or organizing a wellness workshop. Help others develop calm, constructive ways to handle anger and impulsive moments.





Practise Positive Thinking and Self-Talk

Beginner

Write or say one encouraging phrase to themselves before starting a challenging task.

Developing

Create a "self-talk switch" list–replace negative thoughts (e.g., "I can't do this") with affirming ones (e.g., "I'll do my best and grow from this").

Practitioner

Analyze self-talk in fictional or real-life figures and connect to personal mindsets.

Expert

Record a podcast episode or short video reflecting on how mindset shapes academic and personal growth.



Practice Resilience ("Bouncing Back" from Failure)

Beginner

Think back on a recent setback, even a small one, and write down one valuable lesson the experience taught you.

Practitioner

Maintain a resilience tracker: regularly record moments when you faced adversity, describe the strategies you used to respond, and reflect on what new approaches you discovered through these experiences.

Developing

Design a "Fail Forward" board to anonymously share and celebrate real examples of setbacks that ultimately led to progress or new understanding.

Expert

Lead a class discussion exploring how failure contributes to growth, inviting others to share stories about how mistakes and setbacks have shaped their personal or collective achievements.

Reflective Prompts for Affective Skills

Challenge Response

What situations pushed me outside my comfort zone today, and in what ways did I adapt or persevere?

Emotion Management

Which emotions surfaced throughout my day, and what strategies did I use to navigate or regulate them?

Self-Talk Awareness

How did my inner dialogue influence my approach to challenges, and what positive self-talk helped me persist or learn?

Failure Response

How do I typically respond when I experience setbacks, and what steps can I take to turn those moments into opportunities for growth?





ATL Skill Cluster 5: Self-Management - Reflection Skills

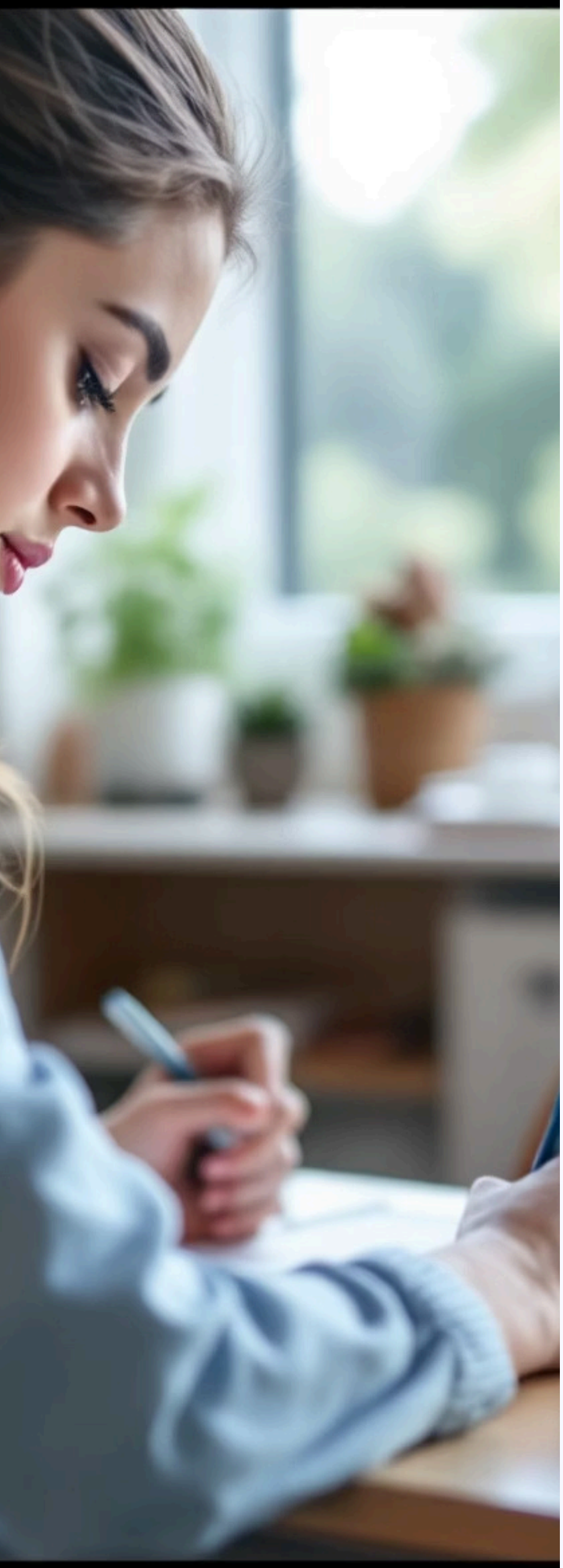
> "We do not learn from experience... we learn from reflecting on experience." - John Dewey

What Are Reflection Skills?

Reflection skills help students evaluate their own learning, recognize growth areas, and plan their next steps. These metacognitive skills empower learners to become self-aware, intentional, and adaptive. Through reflection, students connect what they learn with how and why they learn it.

This cluster focuses on:

- Assessing personal learning strategies
- Setting goals for improvement
- Evaluating the effectiveness of ATL skills
- Reflecting on content, process, and mindset



Essential Questions for Reflection Skills

Learning Process

What did I learn and how did I learn it?

Strategy Effectiveness

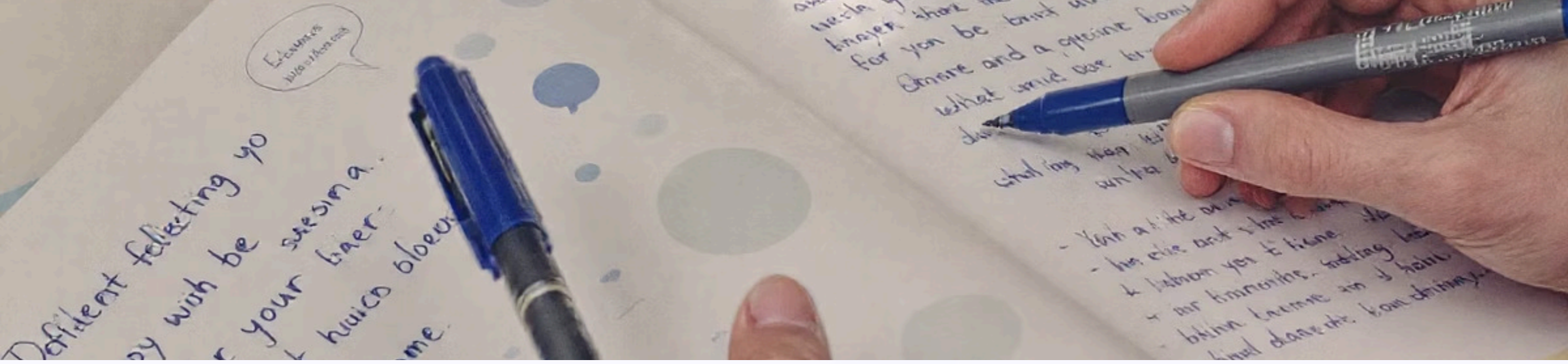
What strategies worked for me? What didn't?

Improvement Planning

How can I improve next time?

Success Criteria

How do I know when I've succeeded?



Identify Strengths and Weaknesses of Personal Learning Strategies

Beginner

Apply a "Traffic Light Reflection": Green means you grasped the concept, yellow signals you need more practice, and red shows where you're confused or need support.

Developing

Develop a personalized "learning profile" that outlines your preferred learning strategies and environments where you learn best.

Practitioner

Monitor your performance across multiple assessments, identifying which approaches consistently lead to your best results and where there is room for growth.

Expert

Write a thoughtful self-analysis essay comparing how different learning strategies impact your success across various subjects, and adjust your future learning plans accordingly.

Try New ATL Skills and Evaluate Their Effectiveness



Beginner

Select a single ATL skill you've never used before and dedicate this week to practicing it daily. Keep a journal to record when and how you use the skill, along with your observations and any immediate challenges or successes.



Developing

Create a simple reflection chart to track which ATL skill you experimented with, in what context you applied it, how well it worked for you, and whether you'd choose to use it again in the future.



Practitioner

Participate in a "Skills Swap" group where you regularly share strategies and exchange feedback with classmates, discussing the real impact of different ATL skills in your learning journey.



Expert

Build and update a comprehensive ATL growth portfolio that documents your use, growth, and effectiveness of various ATL skills across the term, using evidence from your schoolwork, reflections, and peer feedback.

Reflect on Content and Learning Process

Beginner

Conclude each lesson with a quick 1-minute reflection: write one thing you learned today and one question or curiosity you still have. This helps cement new ideas and identify areas where you need more clarity.

Developing

Apply the 3-2-1 routine after learning sessions: list three key takeaways, two lingering questions, and one way the learning connects to your real-life experiences. This deepens understanding and personalizes your learning process.

Practitioner

When you finish a major project or assessment, write a reflective "learning letter" to your future self. Describe what strategies worked well, any mistakes to avoid, and advice for tackling similar tasks in the future.

Expert

Design a detailed metacognitive flowchart that maps how your thinking and understanding developed over the course of a project or unit. Use this visual tool to examine your growth and the shifts in your learning approach.





Consider Ethical, Cultural, and Environmental Implications

Beginner

Explore reflection prompts like: "Whose voice is heard in this story?", "How might someone from a different culture view this?"

Developing

After reading or researching, reflect on how the topic connects to global issues or personal values.

Practitioner

Use a reflection journal to consider dilemmas (e.g., Should animals be used in research?) and articulate personal positions.

Expert

Facilitate a class discussion connecting learning to real-world ethical decisions and sustainability efforts.

Reflective Prompts for Reflection Skills

Success Recognition

What was my biggest success this week? Why?

Challenge Response

What challenged me, and how did I respond?

Strategy Improvement

What learning strategy could I improve next time?

Thinking Evolution

How has my thinking changed since the beginning of the unit?





ATL Skill Cluster 6: Research - Information Literacy Skills

> "Information is not knowledge. The only source of knowledge is experience–and reflection on that experience." - Albert Einstein

What Are Information Literacy Skills?

Information literacy involves the ability to find, evaluate, and use information effectively. In an age of information overload, students need to become discerning researchers–able to ask questions, assess sources, and turn data into meaningful understanding. These skills are foundational for academic integrity, critical inquiry, and informed decision-making.

This cluster includes:

- Collecting and verifying data
- Evaluating sources and digital tools
- Analyzing and presenting information
- Understanding ethical research practices



Essential Questions for Information Literacy Skills

Information Sources

Where do I find trustworthy information?

Source Reliability

How can I check the reliability of a source?

Information Presentation

How do I present information clearly and ethically?

Data Understanding

How can I turn data into understanding?



Collect, Record and Verify Data

Beginner

Create structured fact sheets with clearly labeled sources to organize research findings and build foundational data literacy skills.

Developing

Analyze and compare multiple sources on the same topic, identifying points of consensus and contradiction to develop critical evaluation skills.

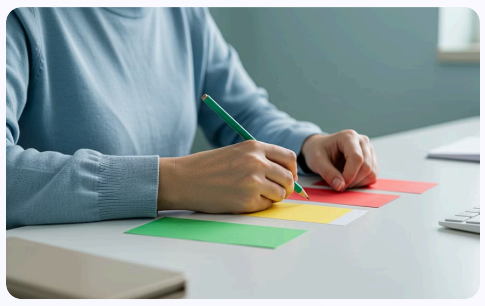
Practitioner

Develop customized data collection instruments that align with research questions, ensuring systematic gathering of relevant information for meaningful analysis.

Expert

Execute comprehensive research projects incorporating triangulation between primary and secondary sources, rigorous data verification protocols, and compelling presentation of evidence-based conclusions.

Evaluate and Select Information Sources and Digital Tools



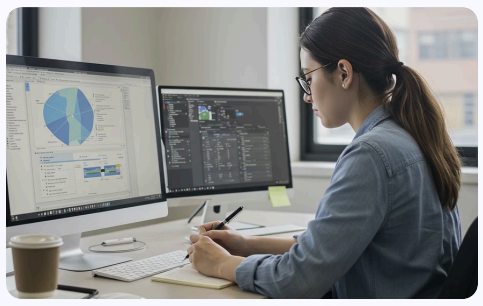
Beginner

Implement a "Source Check" system where students evaluate information sources using a simple traffic light method–classifying them as "Green" (highly reliable), "Yellow" (requires verification), or "Red" (potentially misleading or biased).



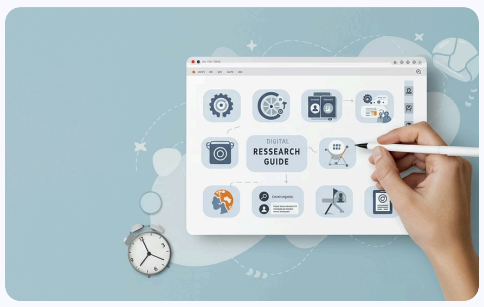
Developing

Apply the comprehensive CRAAP test framework–analyzing Currency (timeliness), Relevance (importance to research), Authority (source credentials), Accuracy (reliability and correctness), and Purpose (reason for creation)–to systematically evaluate digital resources.



Practitioner

Conduct a detailed comparative analysis of three distinct research platforms (such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, and Wikipedia), identifying their unique search capabilities, content depth, academic rigor, and appropriate research contexts for maximizing research efficiency.



Expert

Develop and distribute a sophisticated research resource guide for peers that evaluates digital tools against established scholarly criteria, provides strategic implementation recommendations for different research scenarios, and includes personalized workflow integration suggestions based on evidence-based practices.

Use Critical-Literacy Skills to Analyze and Interpret Media

Beginner

Distinguish between facts and opinions in news articles by highlighting objective statements and subjective judgments, developing foundational critical analysis capabilities.

Developing

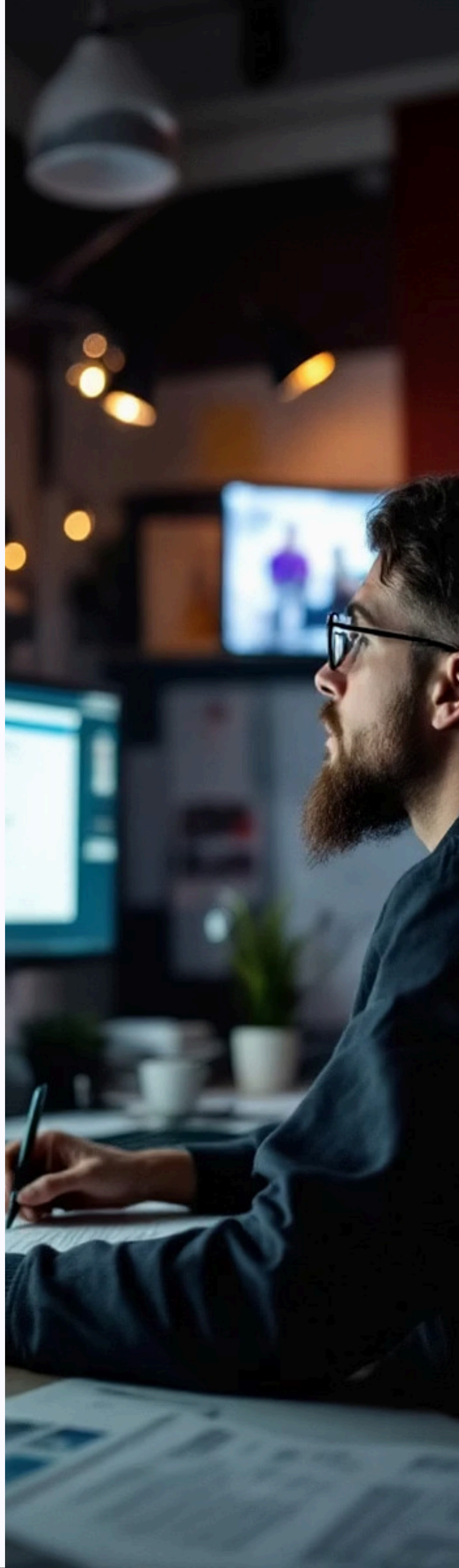
Deconstruct media content (videos, social media posts, advertisements) to identify potential bias, underlying assumptions, and persuasive techniques that influence audience perception.

Practitioner

Systematically compare multiple media outlets' coverage of the same event, analyzing differences in language choice, visual presentation, source selection, and emphasis to reveal editorial perspectives.

Expert

Design and facilitate comprehensive media literacy workshops for peers, curating examples of manipulated content and teaching analytical frameworks that empower others to navigate today's complex information landscape.



Understand and Implement Intellectual Property Rights

Beginner

Learn to distinguish between original and borrowed content by practicing thoughtful paraphrasing of short texts while acknowledging sources through informal citation methods.

Developing

Master digital citation management by exploring tools like EasyBib, Zotero, or Mendeley to automatically generate properly formatted references and organize research materials.

Practitioner

Demonstrate academic integrity by independently creating comprehensive bibliographies in established formats (MLA, APA, Chicago) for research projects, correctly citing various source types including digital media.

Expert

Develop leadership in ethical scholarship by creating instructional resources that guide peers through proper attribution of diverse sources (multimedia, digital repositories, primary documents), emphasizing both technical citation requirements and the ethical principles behind intellectual property rights.



Reflective Prompts for Information Literacy Skills

Information Finding

How did I find the information I used today?

Reliability Checking

What steps did I take to check if it was reliable?

Citation Practices

Did I cite my sources clearly and correctly?

Skill Development

What research skill do I want to develop next?





ATL Skill Cluster 7: Research - Media Literacy Skills

> "The most dangerous person is the one who only has one source of information." - Unknown

What Are Media Literacy Skills?

Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create media in a variety of forms. It empowers students to become critical consumers and ethical producers of content, especially in today's fast-paced digital world. Media literacy supports inquiry, bias detection, perspective-taking, and digital citizenship.

This cluster includes:

- Understanding and evaluating media messages
- Interacting with digital media responsibly
- Creating content across formats for varied audiences
- Seeking multiple perspectives

Essential Questions for Media Literacy Skills

Media Influence

How do media shape our beliefs and choices?

Media Trustworthiness

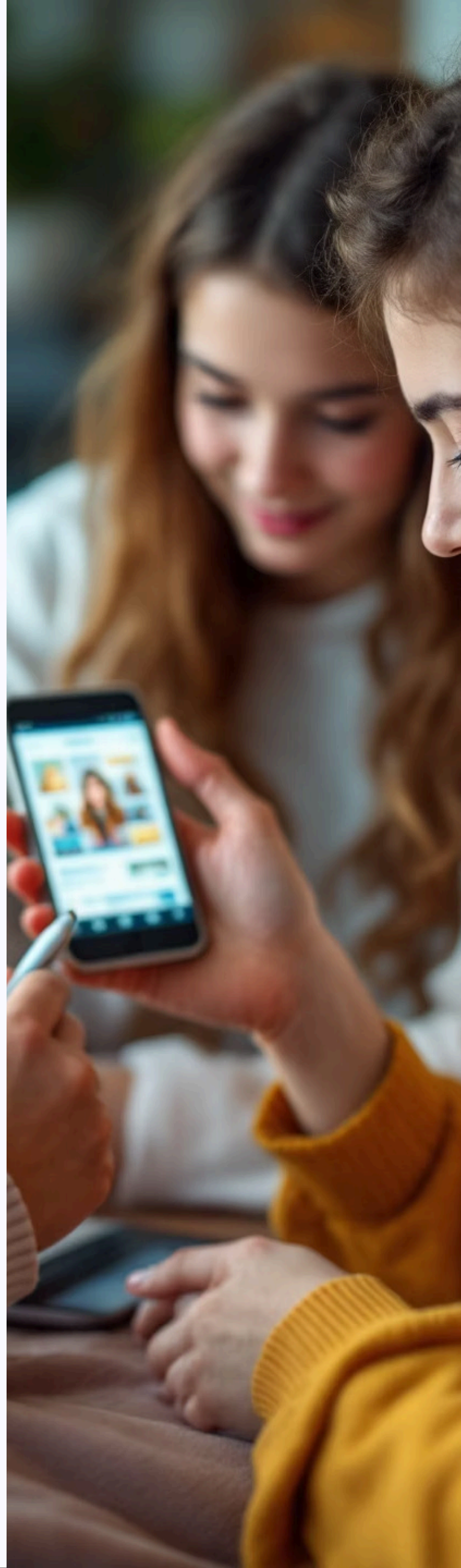
What makes a media message trustworthy?

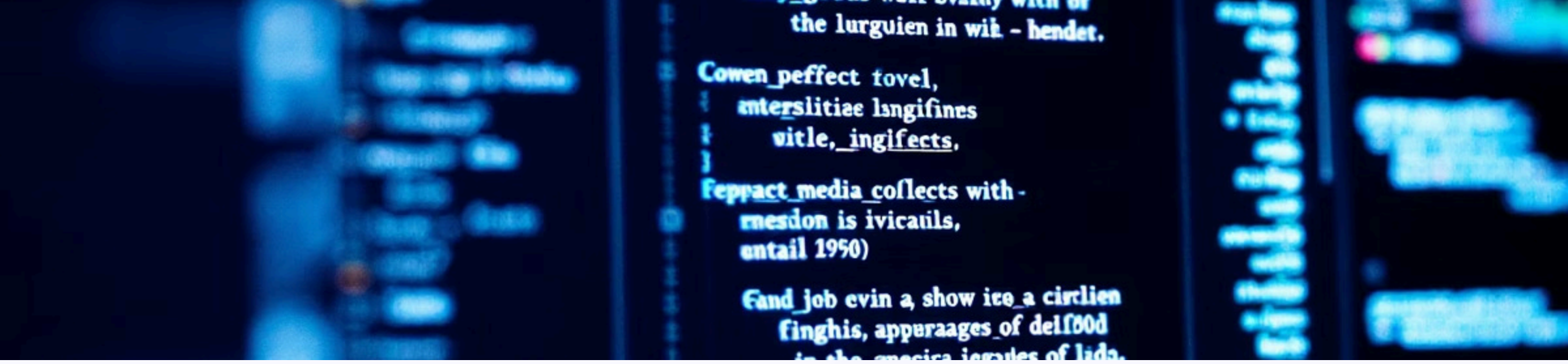
Responsible Usage

How can I use media responsibly and ethically?

Creative Communication

How can I communicate ideas creatively across different formats?





Analyze and Evaluate Media Messages and Interpretations

Beginner

Examine two advertisements and identify the emotional appeals they employ. Determine their target audiences by analyzing visual elements, language choice, and placement. Consider how these elements work together to create persuasive messages.

Developing

Conduct a detailed analysis of a news clip or social media post, examining specific language choices, visual composition, and potential bias indicators. Identify the creator's perspective and how it shapes the presentation of information.

Practitioner

Select a significant current event and systematically compare its coverage across multiple platforms (television, social media, international news sources). Document differences in emphasis, omissions, and framing techniques that influence audience understanding.

Expert

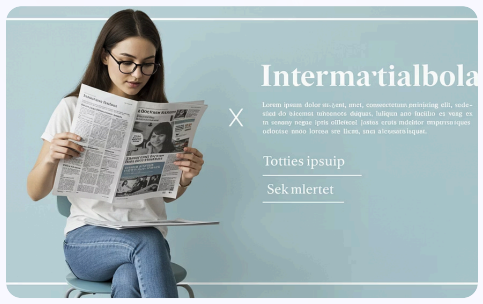
Develop a comprehensive case study analyzing a specific instance of media manipulation, detailing the techniques employed and their effectiveness. Present your findings with evidence-based analysis of how audience perceptions were influenced, and propose critical evaluation strategies to counter such manipulation.

Seek Multiple Perspectives from Varied Sources

Developing the ability to consider diverse viewpoints is fundamental to critical media literacy. This skill enables students to recognize bias, deepen understanding, and form more balanced conclusions through exposure to different interpretations of the same information.









Beginner

Explore three websites presenting the same topic and systematically document similarities and differences in content, tone, and emphasis. Reflect on how each source shapes your understanding.

Developing

After examining a global issue or participating in a class debate, create a detailed "Perspective Map" that identifies and connects different stakeholder viewpoints, considering their motivations and underlying values.

Practitioner

Conduct a comprehensive analysis of a controversial issue through political, cultural, and economic lenses using international media sources. Evaluate how regional and cultural contexts influence reporting and audience interpretation.

Expert

Design and facilitate an in-depth class inquiry that purposefully elevates underrepresented perspectives on a significant world issue. Develop criteria for evaluating source credibility and synthesize findings into actionable insights.

Communicate Ideas Using Different Media Formats

Beginner

Turn a written summary into a visual poster or digital story.

Developing

Create a short explainer video or Instagram-style carousel on a class concept using design apps.

Practitioner

Record a podcast or produce a blog post offering commentary on a school or global issue.

Expert

Launch a student-run digital media channel (YouTube, podcast, newsletter) with clear editorial standards and roles.





Make Informed Choices About Media Consumption

Beginner

Document and analyze personal screen time patterns, identifying which platforms, content types, and genres dominate your media diet. Consider how these choices influence your perspectives and time management.

Developing

Maintain a comprehensive one-week media consumption journal that tracks not only what media you consume but also emotional responses, learning outcomes, and time investments. Analyze patterns to identify healthy and problematic usage.

Practitioner

Develop a thoughtful "Personal Media Diet" plan that establishes clear guidelines for balanced consumption, prioritizes high-credibility sources, and deliberately incorporates diverse perspectives that challenge your existing viewpoints.

Expert

Conceptualize and implement a school-wide media literacy campaign that educates peers about digital well-being, promotes critical consumption habits, and provides practical tools for maintaining healthy relationships with technology.

Reflective Prompts for Media Literacy Skills

Media Influence

How did this media message influence how I felt or thought?

Source Verification

Did I check multiple sources before forming my opinion?

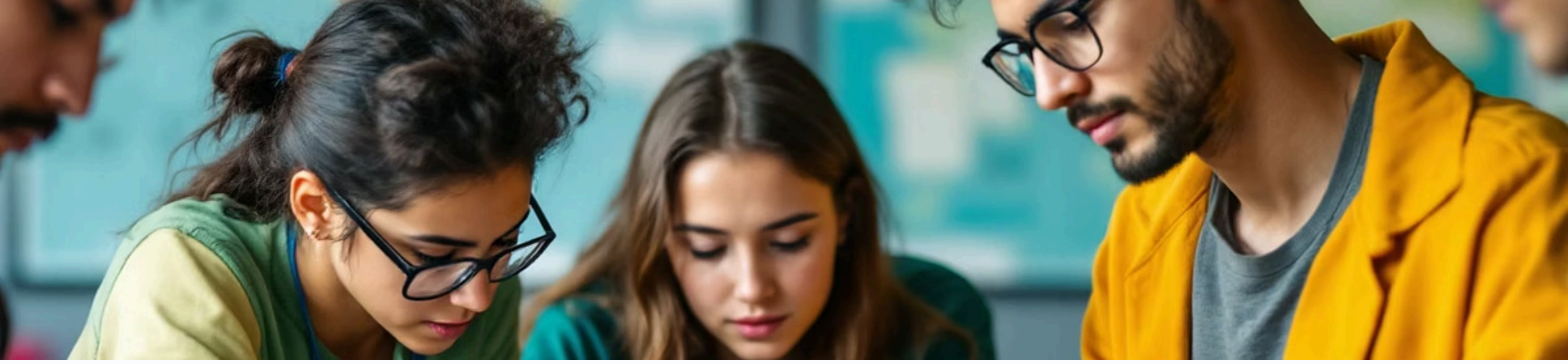
Worldview Shaping

What role does media play in shaping the way I view the world?

Creative Expression

How can I express my views creatively and ethically using media?





ATL Skill Cluster 8: Thinking – Critical Thinking Skills

> "Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think." – Albert Einstein

What Are Critical Thinking Skills?

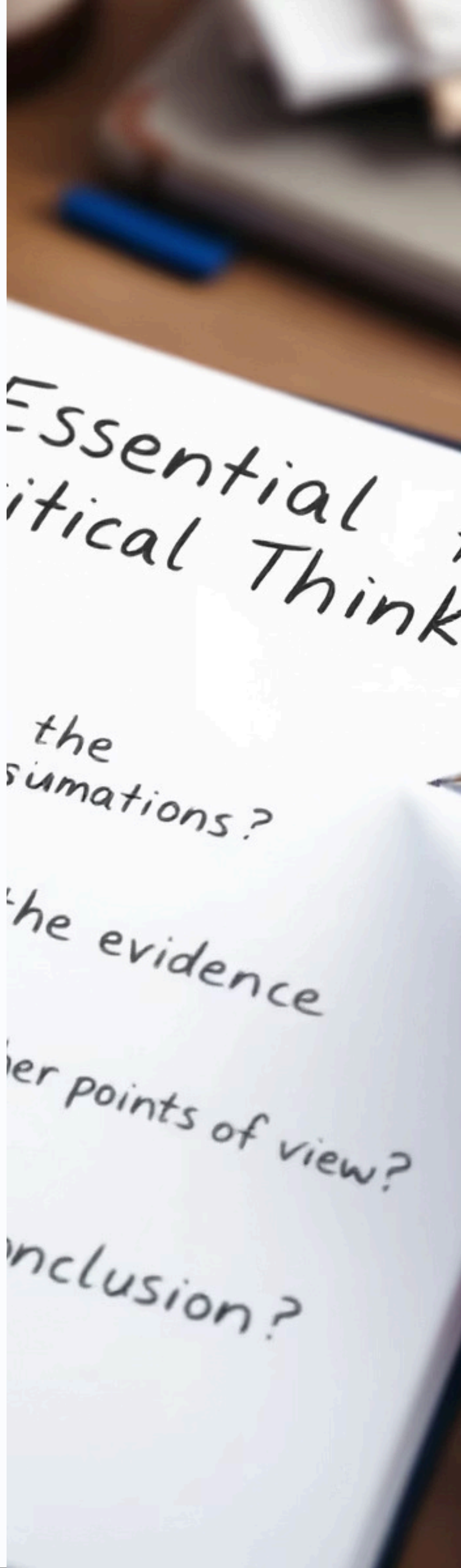
Critical thinking is the ability to **analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information and ideas** in a structured and reflective way. It enables students to examine evidence, make reasoned judgments, challenge assumptions, and approach problems creatively and ethically.

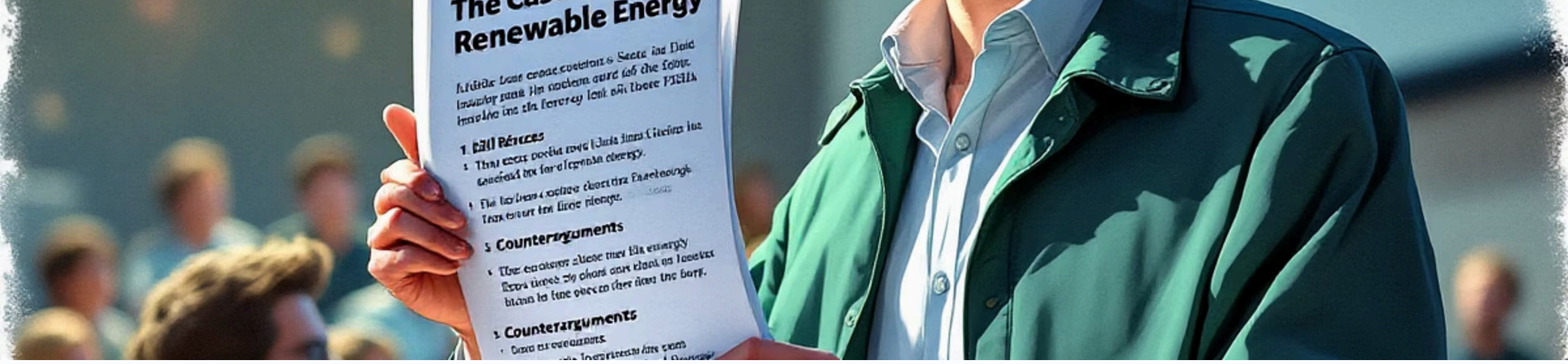
This cluster includes:

- Recognizing assumptions and bias
- Evaluating arguments and sources
- Drawing conclusions and testing them
- Asking effective questions
- Considering multiple perspectiv

Essential Questions for Critical Thinking

- How do I evaluate ideas and arguments critically?
- What evidence supports or challenges this claim?
- Am I considering different perspectives before making a judgment?
- How can I improve the quality of my questions?





Skill: Gather and organize relevant information to formulate an argument

Beginner

Construct a basic claim-evidence-reasoning (CER) framework to support a clear opinion statement with relevant facts and logical connections.

Developing

Conduct focused research on a debate topic, distinguishing between reliable and unreliable sources while organizing compelling evidence for multiple perspectives.

Practitioner

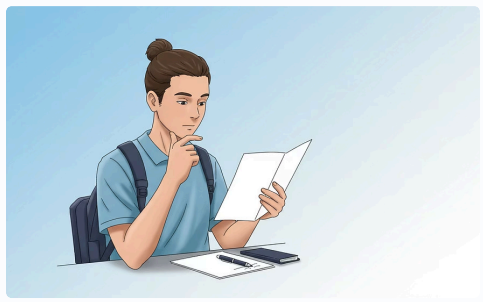
Craft a comprehensive argumentative essay that strategically integrates credible sources, presents substantive evidence, and thoughtfully addresses potential counterarguments.

Expert

Masterfully navigate a formal debate or Model UN simulation by synthesizing complex evidence on the spot, adapting arguments in real-time, and persuasively responding to unexpected opposing viewpoints.

Skill: Evaluate evidence and arguments

Developing your ability to assess information critically requires different approaches as you progress through these proficiency levels:



Beginner

Compare two contrasting sources on the same topic, identifying specific evidence that makes one more credible and convincing than the other.



Developing

Apply a structured evaluation framework to analyze arguments, examining the validity of claims, quality of evidence, and logical consistency of reasoning.



Practitioner

Construct a comprehensive critique of an editorial or academic paper, evaluating its methodology, evidence quality, underlying assumptions, and logical coherence.



Expert

Synthesize multiple perspectives on a complex issue by evaluating quantitative data, historical precedents, and competing theories, then formulate a nuanced position that acknowledges strengths and limitations of various viewpoints.

Skill: Formulate factual, conceptual, and debatable questions

Beginner

Master the distinction between question types through interactive examples and visual color coding, identifying factual questions that seek information, conceptual questions that explore meaning, and debatable questions that invite diverse perspectives.

Developing

Create a comprehensive "question ladder" that transforms any topic into increasingly complex inquiries:

- Factual: What specific events, data, or observable phenomena occurred?
- Conceptual: How does this connect to broader principles, and why is it significant?
- Debatable: To what extent should this be permitted, prioritized, or valued in society?

Practitioner

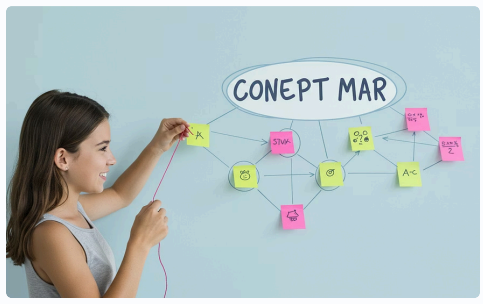
Develop a sophisticated inquiry framework for units or projects that employs student-generated debatable questions to drive authentic research, encourage multiple perspectives, and foster meaningful engagement with complex issues.

Expert

Orchestrate dynamic, student-led Socratic seminars or inquiry circles where participants generate provocative debatable questions, facilitate peer discussions, evaluate diverse viewpoints, and collectively build deeper understanding through sustained dialogic inquiry.

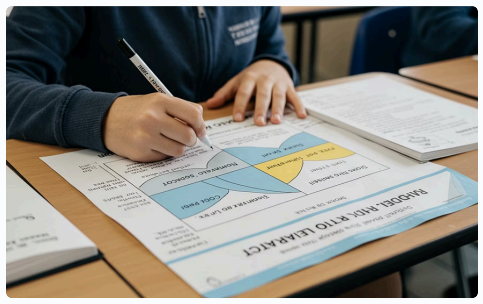


Skill: Analyze complex concepts and synthesize them



Beginner

Create a detailed concept map identifying key components of an idea and establishing meaningful connections between related elements to visualize relationships.



Developing

Apply the comprehensive "Frayer Model" to thoroughly explore abstract concepts by articulating precise definitions, providing concrete examples, distinguishing non-examples, and creating visual representations that capture essential attributes.



Practitioner

Analyze complex real-world issues (such as climate change, censorship, or economic inequality) by examining them through multiple disciplinary perspectives, identifying interconnected factors, and evaluating how different frameworks reveal unique insights.



Expert

Craft sophisticated comparative analyses or interdisciplinary reflections that thoughtfully integrate multiple theoretical frameworks, reconcile seemingly contradictory viewpoints, and generate original insights that transcend individual disciplinary boundaries.

Reflective Prompts for Critical Thinking

- What assumptions might I be making?
- What evidence supports or challenges this idea?
- How can I make my reasoning clearer?
- What other perspectives should I consider?





ATL Skill Cluster 9: Thinking – Creative Thinking Skills

> "Creativity is intelligence having fun." – Albert Einstein

What Are Creative Thinking Skills?

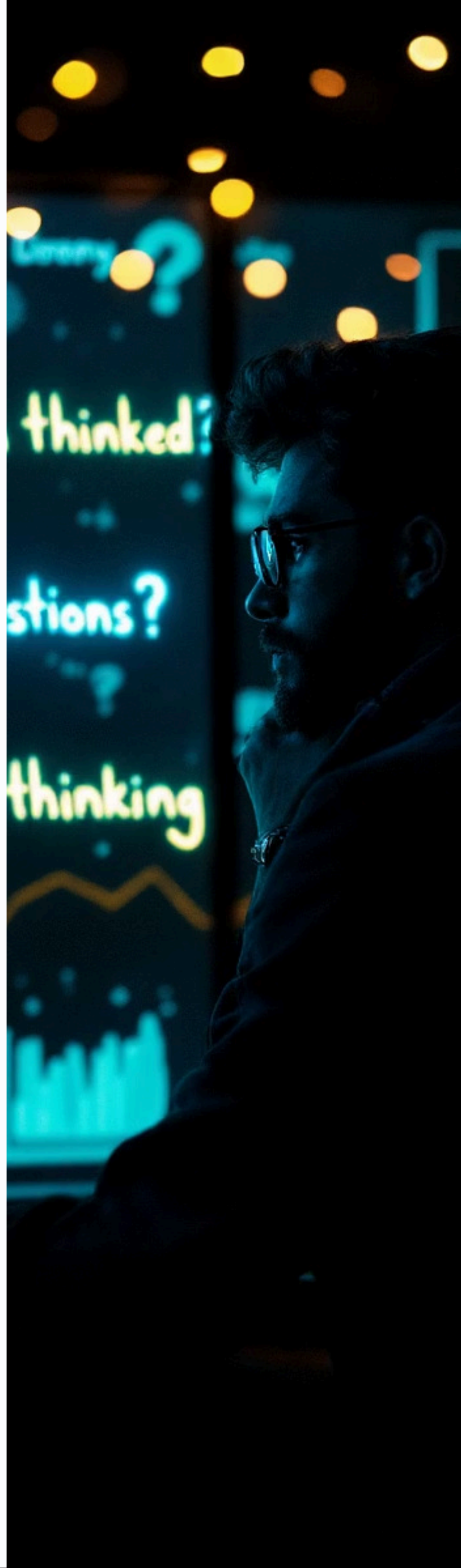
Creative thinking involves **generating new ideas**, **making connections**, and **considering multiple perspectives** to solve problems or express understanding. It empowers students to be imaginative, open-minded, and confident in experimenting with novel solutions and original works. Creative thinking thrives in inquiry-based learning and interdisciplinary contexts.

This cluster includes:

- Brainstorming and divergent thinking
- Making unexpected connections
- Designing innovations
- Applying knowledge in original ways
- Thinking flexibly and playfully

Essential Questions for Creative Thinking

- How can I generate new ideas or solutions?
- In what ways can I think beyond what's expected?
- How can I use what I know in a new or surprising way?
- What helps me stay open to creative risks?





Skill: Use brainstorming and visual diagrams to generate ideas

Beginner

Conduct a "Rapid Fire" brainstorming session where you generate one idea every 5 seconds without self-censoring or evaluating, allowing your creativity to flow freely.

Developing

Construct a detailed mind map or concept web that visually connects main ideas with related concepts, allowing you to discover unexpected relationships and expand your thinking in multiple directions.

Practitioner

Apply the comprehensive SCAMPER technique (Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Modify, Put to other uses, Eliminate, Reverse) to transform familiar objects or concepts into innovative solutions by systematically challenging assumptions.

Expert

Design and facilitate a collaborative design thinking workshop where participants move through ideation, refinement, and prototyping phases, resulting in tangible innovations that address complex challenges.

Skill: Make unexpected or unusual connections



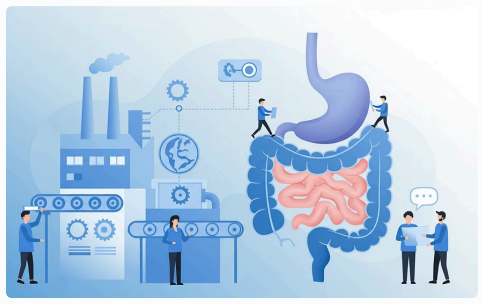
Beginner

Explore "What If" scenarios by creating prompt cards with thought-provoking questions: What if gravity worked sideways? What if animals could talk? Use these prompts to spark conversations that challenge conventional thinking.



Developing

Select two completely unrelated objects (e.g., umbrella and refrigerator) and systematically brainstorm innovative ways they could work together to solve an everyday problem or create a useful invention.



Practitioner

Develop sophisticated metaphors or analogies for complex scientific or abstract concepts that illuminate key principles (e.g., "The digestive system is like a factory with quality control stations" or "The water cycle is Earth's recycling program").



Expert

Design and execute a comprehensive cross-disciplinary project that meaningfully integrates seemingly disparate fields (e.g., creating an interactive data visualization that translates mathematical patterns into musical compositions, or developing computational poetry that explores scientific phenomena).

Skill: Design improvements or invent new products

Beginner

Analyze a common classroom object (e.g., pencil, desk, backpack) and sketch detailed improvements that enhance its functionality, sustainability, or user experience.

Developing

Research and develop a compelling "Shark Tank" style pitch for an original invention that addresses a specific school challenge or global issue, including prototype sketches and benefit analysis.

Practitioner

Conduct user interviews to identify an authentic need, then design and create a functioning prototype of an app, system, or tool with features directly responding to research findings.

Expert

Develop a comprehensive design portfolio that documents your iterative process from problem definition through multiple solution iterations, user testing phases, and reflective analysis of both successes and failures.





Skill: Apply knowledge in new ways

Beginner

Transform abstract concepts into tangible models using building blocks, clay, or craft materials, enabling visual and kinesthetic learning that solidifies understanding of classroom content.

Developing

Reimagine historical events or literary narratives by recreating them in contemporary settings, demonstrating how timeless themes and principles remain relevant across different contexts and time periods.

Practitioner

Design and produce a compelling photo essay or documentary film that translates complex scientific principles or social issues into visual narratives accessible to diverse audiences, showcasing both technical and conceptual mastery.

Expert

Develop and deliver a polished, research-backed presentation or interactive exhibition that not only demonstrates advanced knowledge but also reveals unique insights generated through your creative approach to synthesis and application across disciplines.

Reflective Prompts for Creative Thinking

How did I approach this task differently from others?

What new idea or connection did I discover?

How did I take risks in my thinking or expression?

What would I do differently next time to improve my creative process?





ATL Skill Cluster 10: Thinking – Transfer Skills

> "The essence of knowledge is, having it, to apply it." – Confucius

What Are Transfer Skills?

Transfer skills enable students to **apply knowledge, understanding, and skills in new contexts**, across disciplines, and in real-world situations. These skills promote **adaptability**, **conceptual understanding**, and **lifelong learning**, as students learn to make connections, draw parallels, and solve problems creatively using what they already know.

This cluster includes:

- Applying skills and knowledge across disciplines
- Making connections between concepts
- Using prior knowledge in unfamiliar situations
- Adapting to new contexts and challenges

Essential Questions for Transfer Skills

- How can I use what I already know in new situations?
- What patterns or concepts connect different subjects or experiences?
- How do I adapt my learning strategies when faced with something unfamiliar?
- In what ways can I connect classroom learning to the world beyond school?





Skill: Apply skills and knowledge in unfamiliar situations

Beginner

Tackle scenario-based challenges (e.g., "You're stranded on a deserted island") and methodically identify how specific classroom skills could help you survive and thrive in this unfamiliar context.

Developing

Craft a structured reflection analyzing: "How could I apply specific concepts from [subject] to overcome obstacles or create solutions in [real-world scenario]?" Include concrete examples of knowledge transfer.

Practitioner

Select a complex topic from one discipline and deliberately reframe it through the methodologies and principles of another (e.g., examine environmental sustainability using economic models, or analyze literary themes through psychological theories).

Expert

Design and execute a sophisticated interdisciplinary project that strategically integrates approaches from multiple subjects to address a real-world challenge, demonstrating how the synthesis of diverse knowledge domains creates innovative solutions.

Skill: Make connections between subject groups and disciplines

Beginner

Complete a "double bubble" map comparing how two different subjects approach a topic (e.g., storytelling in English and in History).

Developing

Participate in a cross-subject discussion panel—how does each subject contribute to understanding a central idea?

Practitioner

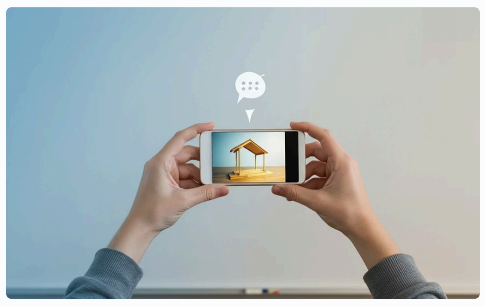
Create an interdisciplinary portfolio exploring a real-world concept (e.g., sustainability) from at least three subject perspectives.

Expert

Design a unit or inquiry plan that integrates concepts from multiple disciplines to investigate a global challenge (e.g., climate change, AI ethics).



Skill: Inquire in different contexts to gain new perspectives



Beginner

Capture a photograph from your everyday environment and establish meaningful connections between this visual element and a specific concept you've learned in class, demonstrating how academic knowledge appears in the world around you.



Developing

Select a topic of interest and deliberately explore how different cultures, communities, or disciplines understand and approach it, documenting the varied perspectives you discover and reflecting on how they expand your original understanding.



Practitioner

Design and implement a structured mini-action research project that systematically applies theoretical classroom concepts to address a tangible real-world challenge (such as enhancing school recycling systems), collecting data to evaluate your intervention's effectiveness.



Expert

Develop and deliver a comprehensive "Learning Beyond the Subject" presentation where you articulate with precision how you identified, adapted, and applied a specific academic concept to successfully solve a complex non-academic problem, analyzing both the process and impact of this knowledge transfer.

Reflective Prompts for Students:

- How did I use prior knowledge to help me in this new situation?
- What connections can I draw between different subjects or experiences?
- What did I learn about myself as a learner from transferring skills?
- How can I apply today's learning in the future?