



Cambridge

Life Competencies

A framework to develop skills for life



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Activity Cards

Teenage Learners

Better

Learning

HOW TO USE

We want you to feel comfortable teaching life competencies in your classroom, whether that's in person or via remote learning. To help with this, each card in this pack tackles a component from one of the core Cambridge Life Competencies. We've created a full suite of activities for you to try with your learners, which you can glance at before a lesson or keep nearby for those all-important planning days. So, if you're stuck for an ice-breaker or have a last-minute lesson to plan, we hope you'll find plenty of inspiration right here, and feel safe in the knowledge that your learners are developing key life skills to prepare them for further education or the world outside of the classroom.

Each card contains details of a face-to-face activity, as well as handy tips on adapting the task for online learning. For the more complex components, you'll find further guidances in the appendices at the end of this pack.

To find out more about the Cambridge Life Competencies Framework, go to: [cambridge.org/clcf](https://www.cambridge.org/clcf)

Creative Thinking



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Activity Cards

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Participating in a range of creative activities

GOING VERTICAL: ACROSTIC POEMS

a c r o s t i c
f o r m s o f
p o e t r y c a n
e n c o u r a g e l e a r n e r s
t o t h i n k
c r e a t i v e l y

When exploring a topic with learners, explain the concept of acrostic poetry, in which a word or phrase is written vertically on the page and each line of a poem is built around that phrase. The vertical phrase can provide the first letter of each line or can appear anywhere, like in the example here. Show learners an example and ask them to work together in pairs to write an acrostic poem based on or inspired by the topic.

Teaching Online?

Try inviting learners to work together using a collaborative document such as [Google Docs](#), or ask them to upload photos of their poems on a shared portfolio such as [Padlet](#) or [Bulb](#).

Creative Thinking

Preparing for
creativity

Exploring issues and concepts

IT'S ACTUALLY ABOUT...

When learners encounter creative works such as paintings or music in the coursebook, give them some time to discuss what they think the piece of work is about. After learners have shared their ideas, nominate one learner to choose a word at random that isn't obviously connected to the topic. Tell learners "It's actually about...", finishing the sentence with the word chosen by the learner you nominated. Then ask learners to imagine and discuss why and how it might be about this word.

Teaching Online?

Why not try having learners use an online word generator tool such as [WordCounter](#) or [RandomWordGenerator](#) to select words.

Considering multiple perspectives

PLAYING DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

When discussing concepts and ideas with learners, encourage them to consider other perspectives by asking 'What might be the arguments against this idea?'

Teaching Online?

Encourage learners to search online to find arguments for and against the idea or concept being discussed.

Finding connections

AFFINITY DIAGRAMS

This activity begins with a space on a wall or whiteboard which learners fill with as many ideas as possible before grouping and building connections between ideas. Affinity diagrams are especially useful when learners need to group and organise information, such as when planning a project, writing an essay, or planning a presentation.

1. Ask learners to write down anything connected to the topic on sticky notes. This might be in the form of ideas, arguments, data, factual information, drawings, questions, or observations.
 2. Ask learners to stick all their sticky notes to the wall.
 3. Take one sticky note and make it the first note in the first group.
 4. Take another sticky note and ask the class, 'Is this similar to or different from the first one?'
- If learners decide that it's similar, place the second note in the same group as the first. If they decide that it's different, place it in a new group.
5. Continue note by note, placing similar ideas together and creating new groups when ideas do not fit into an existing cluster.
 6. You should now have between 3 and 10 groups. Ask learners to decide on a name or title that identifies the theme of each group.
 7. Finally, ask learners to decide on an order or sequence for the groups.

Teaching Online?

You could ask learners to use a digital sticky note board, such as [Lucidspark](#), to organise their notes together.

Generating multiple ideas

WHAT CAN YOU HEAR AND SMELL IN THE PICTURE?

Adapted from *Language Activities for Teenagers* (Lindstromberg & Ur, 2004).

When learners encounter a photograph in the coursebook showing a scene (e.g. a busy railway station), ask them to work in pairs to formulate a good oral description of it. Bring the class together to share their descriptions. You will probably find that their descriptions concern only what is visible. On the board, draw an eye, an ear, a tongue, a hand and a nose. Ask everyone to work in pairs again and discuss what sounds, smells, tastes and textures the picture suggests. Bring the class together to share their ideas, and ask if they have learned anything about the picture through doing this activity.

Teaching Online?

You could create a collaborative document with one column for each of the five senses for learners to add their ideas to.

Elaborating on and combining ideas

BRAIN-WRITE

When learners complete a task in which they need to share ideas, give each learner a piece of paper on which to write their initial ideas. Next, ask them to pass their paper to the person sitting on their left. They then read their classmate's notes and have 3-5 minutes to build on the ideas. Encourage learners to build on and develop their classmate's ideas with more detail, rather than just adding a list of new ideas. Repeat the process a few more times so that each card has contributions from several learners. Finally, ask learners to return the paper to the original writer so they can read how others have built on their ideas.

Teaching Online?

Why not use a shared document such as [Google Docs](#) for learners to share and add to each other's ideas.

Imagining alternatives and possibilities

CHANGE THE CONVERSATION

After listening to dialogues in class, ask learners to imagine how the conversation might have ended differently or taken a different direction. Give pairs or small groups a copy of the audio script and ask them to make changes. Give learners time to practise reading the new audio script aloud before reading it to the class.

Teaching Online?

Learners could make audio recordings of their new conversations and share these in a digital portfolio, such as [Padlet](#) or [Bulb](#).

Experimenting with and refining ideas

MAKING PROBLEMS

When learners encounter a task or project that involves planning an event (e.g. a sponsored swim), provide them with a dilemma to resolve (e.g. the chosen swimming pool is closing). The more realistic the problem, the better, as learners will have to use real-world logic to resolve it. Finally, ask your learners to exchange their ideas. Watch our [Teaching Tips video](#) on making problems for your learners on the [World of Better Learning blog](#).

Teaching Online?

Encourage learners to search online to identify potential solutions to the problem or dilemma you present them with.

Creative Thinking

Implementing
ideas and
solving problems

Implementing, presenting and explaining ideas and solutions

CONVINCE ME

When learners generate ideas or arguments on a topic, ask them to create a poster in order to convince or persuade people of their idea or argument.

Teaching Online?

Try asking learners to use a digital poster creating site such as [Canva](#).

**Critical
Thinking**



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Critical Thinking

Understanding and
analysing ideas
and arguments

Identifying and classifying information

PARAGRAPH; SENTENCE; WORD

When learners have finished reading a text in the coursebook, ask them to select the paragraph or section which presents the most important information in the text, and to share their ideas with the class. Next, ask learners to select the most important sentence in the text and share their ideas. Finally, ask them to select the most important word or expression in the text and to share their ideas.

Teaching Online?

Collaborative platforms such as [Edmodo](#) are a great way for learners to share their ideas. You could also try asking learners to create a video or audio recording explaining their choices.

Recognising patterns and relationships

ODD ONE OUT

When learners encounter a new set of vocabulary, choose six items and write them on the board. Tell learners that one of the items does not belong in this group, and that they should work in pairs to decide which word is the odd one out. There are no right or wrong answers, but learners must be able to justify their decision. Learners might, for example, eliminate a word based on the meaning, register, connotation or pronunciation features. When learners have eliminated one word and justified their choices, they will have five words left in their list. Now tell learners that one of the items doesn't belong in this group, and that they should work in pairs to decide which word is the odd one out, and justify their reasons. Repeat this process until only two words remain, then ask learners to compare the similarities and differences between these two words.

Teaching Online?

Try inviting learners to share their screen when they explain and justify their choices. Learners could also upload and share their completed comparison framework to a digital portfolio such as [Padlet](#).

Critical Thinking

Understanding and
analysing ideas
and arguments

Interpreting and drawing inferences from arguments and data

MOMENTS BEFORE

When learners encounter images in the coursebook, encourage them to look at the picture and try to guess what happened just before the picture was taken.

Teaching Online?

Try sharing the image in a collaborative document, and invite learners to add notes about what they think happened just before the picture was taken.

Critical Thinking

Evaluating
ideas and
arguments

Evaluating specific information or points in an argument

FIND THE EVIDENCE

When learners are discussing information in a reading text, ask them to highlight all the points in the text that offer evidence, and to consider how reliable that evidence is. Useful questions to write on the board are: 'Where's the evidence?', 'How reliable is it?', and 'How do you know?'

Teaching Online?

During feedback, invite learners to use emoji reactions to indicate how reliable they think the evidence is. Use learners' reactions to decide who to nominate to explain how they know.

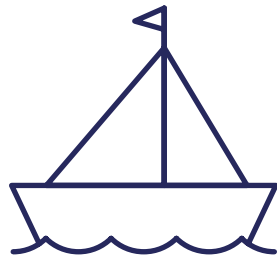
Critical Thinking

Evaluating
ideas and
arguments

Evaluating arguments as a whole

SINK OR FLOAT?

While learners are discussing an argument presented in a reading or listening text, draw a boat on the board. Ask learners to imagine that the text they've just read is a boat. Explain that weaknesses in the argument are like holes in the boat that let the water in. How many holes can they find? How big are the holes? Strengths in the argument will allow them to 'repair' holes. How many strengths are there? Are they big enough to repair the holes? Finally, ask them to explain whether they think the boat will sink or float, and to give reasons for their answers.



Teaching Online?

Why not use a collaborative document for learners to add shapes to the text to highlight strengths and weaknesses in the argument. You could ask learners to use different colour shapes to represent how big the strengths and weaknesses are.

Drawing appropriate conclusions

MY CHANGING MIND

Before listening to an audio recording or reading a text, give learners a copy of the framework below and ask them to write the topic inside the 'head'. Ask learners to consider what they believe or think about the topic, and to write notes about their views on the left-hand side of the framework.



After reading/listening and discussing the content, ask learners to return to their frameworks and consider whether what they learned has changed their opinion or perspective in any way. Encourage them to make notes on the right-hand side of the framework about how their views have changed.

Teaching Online?

Try copying the framework into a collaborative document and inviting learners to type their opinions into the same framework, using a different colour or font for each learner. Alternatively, have learners copy the framework onto paper, and upload a photo of their completed framework to a digital portfolio after the task.

Critical Thinking

Solving problems
and making
decisions

Identifying and understanding problems

WHAT COULD GO WRONG?

When learners encounter different situations and contexts in the coursebook, ask them to consider what might go wrong in that situation and what problems might arise as a result.

Teaching Online?

Try asking learners to find a photo online to represent their idea of what could go wrong.

Critical Thinking

Solving problems
and making
decisions

Identifying, gathering and organising relevant information

SEARCH TERMS

When a coursebook task instructs learners to search for information online or in the library, ask them to begin by thinking about what 'search terms' (words and phrases) they will use to find the information they need.

Teaching Online?

Create a table in a shared document, with one search term at the top of each column. Ask learners to add links to useful information they find online in the relevant columns.

Critical Thinking

Solving problems
and making
decisions

Evaluating options and recommendations to come to a decision

EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

An evaluation framework is useful when learners need to evaluate options, solve problems, explore ideas for a writing task, discuss the content of a reading text, or prepare for an oral presentation. Give learners a copy of the evaluation framework in **Appendix 1** and ask them to make notes about different aspects of the content. Learners don't need to answer every question, but they should try and write something in each box.

Teaching Online?

Why not share the framework as a collaborative document for learners to contribute and see each others' ideas. Alternatively, invite learners to use a digital mind mapping tool, such as [Miro](#), to organise their ideas.

Critical Thinking

Solving problems
and making
decisions

Justifying decisions and solutions

AND HERE'S WHY

Have the phrase 'And here's why...' written on a corner of the whiteboard or printed out and stuck on the wall. When learners give an answer to a question, encourage them to justify their decision by pointing to the phrase and asking them to complete the sentence.

Teaching Online?

Write the phrase on your digital whiteboard, or on paper you can hold up to your camera during your online lesson.

Critical Thinking

Solving problems
and making
decisions

Evaluating the effectiveness of implemented solutions

LOOKING BACK

After learners have completed a task, ask them to reflect on their process and answer the question 'What would you do differently next time?', giving reasons for their answers.

Teaching Online?

Encourage learners to create a reflection section in a digital portfolio, such as [Padlet](#), and invite them to film and upload a video of themselves answering the question.

Learning to Learn



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Learning to Learn

Developing skills
and strategies
for learning

Engaging in directed activities

WHAT CAN I SEE IN ENGLISH?

Adapted from *Language Activities for Teenagers* (Lindstromberg & Ur, 2004).

Choose a picture in your coursebook which shows a fairly large number of people and/ or things. Ask learners to look at the picture and think of at least three English words (not phrases or sentences) for things they can see in it. Ask learners to read out their words and write them on the board. Once you have lots of words (at least one per learner) on the board, ask learners to work in pairs to find all the words in the picture. Bring the class together and elicit ways of combining the words on the board. E.g. if car and black are on the board, someone might say 'black car'. Try drawing arrows between words to illustrate the connections that learners suggest.

Teaching Online?

Try writing the words on a digital whiteboard and allowing learners to make connections using the annotate function.

Learning to Learn

Developing skills
and strategies
for learning

Using effective systems for finding, keeping and retrieving information

MY WORDS AND PHRASES

When you reach the end of each unit in the coursebook, ask learners to look back at the unit and decide on five words and phrases they want to remember and reuse. Give each learner five sticky notes and ask them to write one of their five words or phrases on each note. Learners can then use these notes as page markers to identify where the word or phrase is introduced in the unit. When you reach the end of the coursebook, ask learners to look back at all the language they have selected over the course.

Teaching Online?

Why not create a digital dictionary for learners to add chosen words and phrases to as they finish each coursebook unit.

Learning to Learn

Developing skills and strategies for learning

Using effective strategies for learning and retaining information

WAYS TO WORDS

Adapted from *Learner Autonomy: A Guide to Developing Learner Responsibility* (Scharle, Szabó & Ur, 2000).

When learners encounter a list of vocabulary in the coursebook, ask them how they usually learn new words. Most likely, they will come up with different strategies. Ask them to think of other possible ways, and give them a few examples of your own (such as arranging words into new categories, putting sticky labels on objects in their room, or trying to use new words as often as they can). Give learners the list of vocabulary from the coursebook, and set them the homework of trying to memorise the words, using a new strategy of their choice.

In the next lesson, allow time to discuss how learners found the experience, and whether they thought the new method could be better than their old ways.

Teaching Online?

You could invite learners to use the internet to research different strategies for learning vocabulary.

Learning to Learn

Developing skills
and strategies
for learning

Using effective strategies for comprehension and production tasks

EVERYTHING BUT THE TEXT

Before learners read or listen to a text in the coursebook, give them a piece of paper and ask them to cover the text, but leave visible any accompanying pictures, titles or subtitles. Put learners into pairs or small groups and ask them to predict what the text will be about based only on these clues.

Teaching Online?

Breakout rooms are a great way to group learners for collaborative tasks. Invite groups to discuss their predictions before deciding which ideas they want to share with the whole class.

Setting goals and planning for learning

FRIDGE / SUITCASE / BIN

At the end of each lesson or coursebook unit, tell learners they are going to choose one item to put in the 'fridge', one item to keep in their 'suitcase' and one item to put in the 'bin'. The item they choose for each might be a word, phrase, or grammatical structure, a piece of information or advice that they've learned, or a learning strategy or approach they have experienced. Explain and write on the board what the fridge, suitcase and bin represent, (see below) and ask learners to reflect on the lesson/unit and choose one item for each.

- Fridge: something you want to keep to use again at a later date.
- Suitcase: something you want to carry with you and use again soon and/or frequently.
- Bin: something that didn't work for you, that you don't want to use again, or that you may want to avoid in future lessons.

Teaching Online?

Why not have learners create a digital file with three columns to type notes about their choices. They could search online for images to represent the fridge, suitcase and bin, and insert these at the top of each column.

Taking initiative to improve own learning

EXTENDED KWL CHARTS

In a KWL chart, K stands for 'What do I KNOW?'; W stands for 'What do I WANT to know?', and L stands for 'What did I LEARN?'. This extended version also asks learners to reflect on *HOW* they learned something and *HOW WELL* it went.

When a new skill or language area appears in the coursebook, ask learners to complete the first two columns of the chart. After learners have studied the relevant content, ask them to complete the final three columns of the chart. Watch our [Teaching Tips video](#) on how to use extended KWL charts with your learners on the [World of Better Learning blog](#).

What do I KNOW about this subject?	What do I WANT to know about this subject?	What did I LEARN about this subject?	HOW did I learn it?	How WELL did it go?

Teaching Online?

Try using [Google Forms](#) to collect learners' answers before and after the task, then share the results with the class.

Learning to Learn

Taking control
of own learning

Managing the learning environment

TOOLBOX

Draw a picture of a toolbox on the board. Before learners start work on a task, encourage them to identify (and collect) the tools they will need to be able to complete the task. Write ideas on the board to help them plan (e.g. pens and paper / dictionary / a clock). The 'tools' don't have to always be physical, they might be more abstract or linguistic tools (e.g. quiet time to think / help from the teacher / my notes about prepositions of place).



Teaching Online?

Digital mind mapping tools, such as [Miro](#), are a great way for learners to brainstorm and build on each other's ideas of what they might need for the task.

Learning to Learn

Taking control of own learning

Managing attitudes and emotions

MISTAKES LADDER

At the beginning of a course, ask learners to draw a picture of a ladder leaning against a tree. Explain that the ladder should have the same number of rungs as there are units in the coursebook.

At the end of the first unit, ask learners to reflect on what they found easy and what they found challenging. Ask them to find or recall the mistakes they made during the unit and to choose the 'biggest' one. Explain that mistakes help us to learn and progress, and ask learners to make notes about their chosen mistake and what they have learned from it next to the first rung on the ladder. Repeat this after each unit, so that by the end of the coursebook learners should have reached the top of the ladder. Finally, ask them to draw themselves at the top of the tree.



Teaching Online?

Invite learners to find an image of a tree and a ladder online and arrange them in a word document. Then they can add their notes about each mistake and what they have learned from it.

Learning to Learn

Reflecting on
and evaluating
own learning

Keeping track of progress

CONTENTS PAGES

At the start of a course, ensure that learners are familiar with the contents pages of their coursebook. At regular intervals throughout the course, encourage them to look back at the contents pages and tick or highlight the language and skills that they feel confident about using.

Teaching Online?

Why not use breakout rooms for learners to discuss what they have highlighted or ticked in groups.

Learning to Learn



Reflecting on
and evaluating
own learning

Evaluating learning and progress

UNIT REFLECTION

At the end of each coursebook unit, give learners some time to look back at the unit content. Write the questions below on the board for learners to discuss:

- What new language did you feel you learned well?
- What helped you to do this?
- What activities helped you to learn effectively?
- What challenges did you face?
- What helped you to overcome these challenges?

Teaching Online?

You could use breakout rooms for learners to discuss the reflection questions, and then set up a survey in [Google Forms](#) to collect their answers.

Learning to Learn

Reflecting on and evaluating own learning

Using feedback to improve learning

LOOKING FORWARD

When learners receive feedback (either in the form of correct / incorrect answers to a coursebook task, or written / spoken feedback from the teacher), encourage them to consider how this feedback influences them going forward, and what they can do to improve.



Teaching Online?

Why not invite learners to make a short audio or video recording of their thoughts on how the feedback they've received influences them going forward, and what they can do to improve.

Communication



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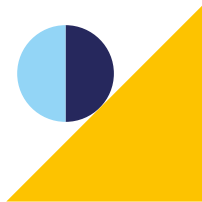
Communication

Using appropriate language and register for context

Using language appropriate for the situation

CHANGE THE REGISTER

When learners encounter new phrases and expressions in the coursebook, ask them to consider how they might say the same thing in a different register (i.e. more or less formal).



Teaching Online?

You could invite learners to use an [online thesaurus](#) to find alternative phrases or expressions.

Communication

Using appropriate language and register for context

Using a variety of language and communication strategies to achieve a desired effect

SAY IT LIKE... EMOTIONS

When practising pronunciation of phrases and expressions, ask learners to “Say it like you’re happy / sad / angry / surprised / confused / annoyed”, etc.

Teaching Online?

Try nominating learners to choose an emotion and say the phrase to the whole group. Ask the rest of the class to use emoji reactions to comment on whether they think the speaker sounds happy / sad / angry, etc.

Communication

Using appropriate language and register for context

Adapting language use according to different cultures and social groups

SAY IT LIKE... PEOPLE

When practising pronunciation of phrases and expressions, ask learners to "Say it like you're talking to a friend / the Queen / your Granddad / a baby / your headteacher / your neighbour / someone you really don't like / someone you secretly like", etc.

Teaching Online?

Try nominating learners to choose the character that they're speaking to and say the phrase to the whole group. Ask the rest of the class to type their ideas in the chat box about who they think the speaker might be talking to.

Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations

THE THIRD DEGREE

Adapted from *Language Activities for Teenagers* (Lindstromberg & Ur, 2004).

After learners have read a text in the coursebook, ask them to prepare some interview questions about the text to ask someone else in the class. Give examples, such as 'Do you agree with the writer?' / 'What would you do in this situation?' Once learners have prepared their questions, distribute numbered slips with clarification or elaboration questions (see **Appendix 2** for examples). Explain that when you hold up one finger, whoever has Slip 1 must ask the question on it; when you hold up two fingers, whoever has Slip 2 must ask that question; and so on.

Nominate a fairly proficient learner to be interviewed. For the next three minutes the class fire their interview questions at the person in the 'hot seat'. When a clarification or elaboration question seems appropriate, give your number signal for individuals to ask the question on their slip.

Teaching Online?

When the class are interviewing one learner, ask them to use the 'raise hand' feature in your online classroom. Try 'distributing' the clarification and elaboration questions using the private chat function in the chat box.

Using strategies for overcoming language gaps and communication breakdowns

SAME POINT, DIFFERENT WORDS

When learners are practising new phrases and expressions, ask them how they might say the same thing or make the same point using different words. Write their ideas on the board (correcting any errors) and discuss how the different words change the meaning, connotation or register.

Teaching

Online?

Why not have learners add their own ideas to the board using the annotate function on a digital whiteboard.

Communication

Participating with
appropriate
confidence
and clarity

Structuring spoken and written texts effectively

ELABORATE

When a coursebook task asks learners to give an opinion or state a preference, encourage them to elaborate and extend their statement or idea by prompting “And / Also... tell me something else...” or “Because / However... tell me a reason...”

Teaching Online?

You could use the chat box feature in your online classroom to prompt individual learners to elaborate during discussions.

Communication

Participating with
appropriate
confidence
and clarity

Using appropriate language and presentation styles with confidence and fluency

POINT – EXPLAIN – EXAMPLE

Write on the board: 'Make a point; Explain why; Give an example'. When eliciting feedback from learners on a text, topic or task, give them a few minutes to prepare one or two points they want to make. Then, nominate learners to stand up and 'present' their answers/arguments including a point, their explanation and an example.

Teaching Online?

After each learner has presented, invite the rest of the group to use the chat box feature to comment on what they thought was the point, the explanation and the example.

Collaboration



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Collaboration

Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task

Actively contributing to a task

IDEAS CAROUSEL

When learners are generating ideas for a project or responding to a reading or listening text, use an *Ideas Carousel* framework, like the one in **Appendix 3**, to encourage them to contribute. Copy or draw the framework on large pieces of paper, writing a different question in the centre of each quarter, so that you have four questions in total. The framework in Appendix 3 uses the topic of recycling as an example. Put learners into groups of four and place the framework in the centre. Give around 5 minutes for learners to respond to the question, before rotating the framework. Learners then read what their classmates have written and add further ideas in answer to the next question. Repeat another two times so that each learner has added ideas for all four questions in the ideas carousel.

Teaching Online?

You could paste the framework into a digital sticky note board, such as [Lucidspark](#), and invite learners to respond to the questions using virtual sticky notes.

Collaboration

Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task

Taking on different roles

TODAY'S ROLES

Write on the board some different roles that people take on in group work, such as:

- Initiating ideas
- Summarising
- Focusing on results
- Managing conflict
- Seeking information
- Moving things forward
- Encouraging others

Elicit some useful phrases or language that people might need in fulfilling these roles.

At the beginning of a lesson or longer coursebook task, ask learners to each choose a role that they would like to try out and practise, and remind them to try and fulfil their role during the lesson or task.

At the end of the lesson or task, ask learners to reflect on and discuss how well they fulfilled their role, and what they might do differently next time. Encourage learners to try out a different role in the next lesson or for the next task. After several lessons or tasks, once learners have had a chance to try out different roles, ask them to reflect on and discuss which roles they think they are better at, and which they could improve.

Teaching Online?

Why not invite learners to search online for useful phrases or language that people might need in fulfilling the roles.

Collaboration

Encouraging
effective group
interaction

Listening and responding respectfully

REPHRASING

After a learner has contributed an idea or explanation to the class, nominate another learner to summarise or paraphrase what the previous learner said.

Teaching Online?

Learners could volunteer to paraphrase by using the 'raise hand' feature in your online classroom.

Collaboration

Encouraging
effective group
interaction

Establishing ways of working together

WHAT ARE THE RULES?

After giving instructions for a collaborative coursebook task, ask learners to repeat/suggest some group rules.

Teaching Online?

Invite learners to use the annotate function on a digital whiteboard to add their ideas for group rules.

Collaboration

Encouraging
effective group
interaction

Engaging and supporting others

NEVER-ENDING DIALOGUE

Adapted from *Dialogue Activities* (Billbrough & Thornbury, 2007).

Write a question to each learner in the first page of their notebooks. Aim to write something about the coursebook topic which would be motivating for the learner to think about, and which is comprehensible yet challenging in terms of language input. Do this in dialogue format. Ask the learner to write the next line of the dialogue at home and to hand the notebook in to you the next day. You then continue with the next line of the dialogue. Keep this process going for as long as it seems appropriate.

At regular intervals ask learners to do some reflective work on what has been written. For example, it is useful to get them to cover the dialogue and try to remember what the next line is, or to make a note of new language items which have come up in the text. Once you have established this dialogue format, pair learners up with a partner and ask them to start their own dialogues in each other's notebooks.

Teaching Online?

Create a shared online document for each learner, such as in [Google Docs](#), to act as a digital notebook where you can both add to the dialogue.

Collaboration

Managing the sharing of tasks in a group activity

Agreeing what needs to be done

FIRST, WE PLAN!

Before learners begin work on a group task, first ask them to plan how they will go about completing the task. Tell them to include a plan of how each person in the group will contribute. Give them around 10 minutes to make their plan and to draw it up on paper to show you.

Teaching Online?

Learners could share their plans in a digital portfolio, such as [Padlet](#) or [Bulb](#).

Collaboration

Managing the sharing of tasks in a group activity

Managing the distribution of tasks

TODAY'S LEADER

Elicit ideas about what makes a good leader and write these on the whiteboard as a reminder for learners. While groups work on a project, nominate a learner to be 'leader' of their group for the project. Explain that leaders should ensure that while the group carries out the project, tasks are shared equally between all the group members. Nominate different learners for different projects or stages of the project, so that everyone has the opportunity to take on the role of leader.

Teaching Online?

Try inviting learners to research online to find ideas about what makes a good leader, and use breakout rooms for groups to work together.

Collaboration

Working towards
task completion

Ensuring progress towards a goal

HOW TO GET THERE

After giving instructions for a collaborative coursebook task (but before starting the task), ask learners to work in pairs to draw a 'map' of the route they will take to reach the intended goal. What turnings will they need to take? What landmarks will they pass along the way?

Teaching Online?

Learners could create drawings of their maps using a digital drawing site such as [Sketchpad](#) and share them in a digital portfolio.

Collaboration

Working towards
task completion

Identifying issues and challenges

SOME PEOPLE THINK..., BUT...

When learners give an opinion on a topic, encourage them to identify other possible viewpoints. Ask learners to begin by saying 'Some people think...' before sharing their own view. (e.g. *'Some people think everyone should be vegetarian, but I think it's okay to eat meat as long as we treat animals humanely.'*)

Teaching Online?

Use the chat box feature in your online classroom to prompt individual learners during discussions by typing 'Some people think...'

Collaboration

Working towards
task completion

Resolving issues

CONFLICTING VIEWS

Before starting discussions on a coursebook topic, find out learners' viewpoints with a simple show of hands (e.g. for or against). Then, pair or group learners so that there are conflicting viewpoints within each pair/group. After the discussion task, elicit feedback from learners about how they managed (or didn't manage) to resolve their differing opinions.

Teaching

Online?

Why not have learners use emoji reactions to indicate their viewpoints on the topic.

Social Responsibilities



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Activity Cards

Teenage Learners



Better

Learning

Social

Responsibilities

Understanding personal responsibilities as part of a social group

Understanding responsibilities within a social group

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

When working with reading and listening texts, choose a character in the text and ask learners the following questions:

- What is this character's role in this context?
- If their role had a 'job title', what would it be?
- What responsibilities do they have?

Teaching

Online?

You could ask learners to use an online tool, such as [Canva](#), to create a digital collage with information and ideas about the character.

Social

Responsibilities

Understanding personal responsibilities as part of a social group

Fulfilling responsibilities within a social group

TAKING OWNERSHIP

When learners undertake a project or carry out a task in the coursebook, ask them to work in groups and decide how they want to present their finished project to the class (e.g. in a presentation, a poster, a short video, etc). Once learners have decided what they want to create, they should write down the stages they need to follow to do the task.

Owning the stages and the outcome of the project encourages learners to take an active role in the task, helps motivate learners, and helps develop independence. Watch our [Teaching Tips video](#) found on the [World of Better Learning blog](#), on helping learners take ownership of their work.

Teaching

Online?

Try using a digital portfolio to 'display' learners' presentations, posters, videos, etc.

Social

Responsibilities

Showing intercultural awareness

Understanding aspects of own culture

MOST PEOPLE

When learners encounter different issues or discussion points in coursebooks, ask them to discuss the following questions:

- What do you think about this issue?
- What do different people in your country think about this?

Teaching

Online?

Breakout rooms are a great way to group learners for discussion tasks. After discussing the questions, invite groups to choose their most interesting ideas to share with the whole class.

Teen

Social

Responsibilities

Showing intercultural awareness

Understanding aspects of other cultures

ANOTHER PLACE

When learners encounter different situations in coursebooks, ask the following questions:

- How do you think this situation might be different in other countries?

Teaching

Online?

You could invite learners to search online for ideas about how the situation might be different in other countries.

Interacting with others across cultures

DOS AND DON'TS

Adapted from *Five Minute Activities for Business English Learners* (Emmerson, Hamilton & Ur, 2010).

Write the following sentence stems on the board:

- In ... (name of country) ...
- It's worth knowing that ...
- Don't be surprised if ...
- Whatever you do, don't ...

Give a few examples, talking about a country you are familiar with. Here are some examples about the UK:

- It's worth knowing that England isn't the same as Britain.
- Don't be surprised if someone suggests splitting the bill after a meal in a restaurant.
- Whatever you do, don't push into a queue.

When coursebook material refers to a country other than the learners' home country, set learners the homework task of researching to find out about cultural conventions in that country. In the next lesson, elicit ideas to finish the sentences about that country.

Teaching Online?

Learners could search online for ideas about cultural conventions in different countries, and create a collaborative digital 'fact file' of information they find out.

Social

Responsibilities

Understanding
global issues

Discussing a range of global issues

ORGANISATIONS

When learners encounter a topic related to global issues in the coursebook (e.g. recycling, climate change, poverty), set them the task of searching online to identify organisations that help to tackle that issue.

Teaching

Online?

Try asking learners to use an online tool such as [Canva](#) or [Venngage](#) to create a digital infographic to showcase their findings.

Teen

Recognising personal impact on global issues

WHAT'S IT GOT TO DO WITH ME?

When learners encounter a topic related to global issues in the coursebook (e.g. recycling, climate change, poverty), ask them to discuss the following questions:

- What's this got to do with me?
- How does it impact me?
- How does it impact others?
- How does my lifestyle and behaviour impact on this issue?

Try setting up one breakout room for each of the questions, and have learners spend a short time in each room to discuss the question before moving to the next room.

Emotional Development



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Activity Cards

Teenage Learners



Better

Learning

Emotional Development

Identifying and
understanding
emotions

Recognising and describing emotions

SEE-THINK-FEEL

When learners encounter a photograph, artwork or piece of music in the coursebook, give them time to make notes about what they see/hear, what it makes them think of, and how it makes them feel. After they've made notes, ask learners to share their ideas in groups.

Teaching Online?

Learners could find images online to represent their answers and organise these in a digital whiteboard, such as [Jamboard](#).

Understanding emotions

LISTS FROM PICTURES, PICTURES FROM LISTS

Adapted from *Language Activities for Teenagers* (Lindstromberg & Ur, 2004).

Select several photographs from the coursebook that show people and faces, and make a copy of each. Divide your class into groups and give each group one of the pictures. Ask groups not to look at other groups' pictures.

Ask groups to brainstorm adjectives and nouns describing emotions for the face(s) in their photograph, and to write these down. Ask groups to exchange lists with another group. Give each group a sheet of blank paper and colour pens/pencils. Groups then draw a scene in which all the emotions in their new list would be likely.

Display the coursebook photographs, lists and drawings on the wall, all mixed up. Ask learners to discuss how the photographs, lists and drawings might match up. Explain that different matches are possible, but each should be believable and justifiable.

Teaching Online?

Try sharing learners' drawings, lists of words, and the original coursebook pictures in a digital portfolio, such as [Padlet](#) or [Bulb](#), and numbering each item to make it easier for learners to suggest groupings.

Emotional Development

Managing own
emotions

Monitoring and reflecting on own emotions

WHAT EMOTIONS?

When learners encounter a set of sentences in the coursebook (e.g. in grammar practice tasks), ask them to discuss the following questions:

- What emotions do you associate with this situation?
- How might this situation make you feel?

Teaching Online?

You could ask the questions to the whole class in your online classroom and invite learners to use emoji reactions to indicate their answers. Then you can nominate different learners to explain their choice of emoji.

Emotional Development

Managing own
emotions

Regulating emotions

MY HURDLES

At the beginning of a coursebook unit, ask learners to flick through the pages of the unit and discuss the content. What tasks and activities are they looking forward to? What do they think they'll find challenging? Ask them to identify their 'hurdles' in learning – what are the challenges they'll need to overcome?

Give each learner a piece of paper with a drawing of several hurdles. Ask them to name or label each of their hurdles with one of the potential challenges they identified. At the end of each lesson, ask learners which of their hurdles they have managed to overcome, and tell them to draw themselves jumping over that hurdle.



Teaching Online?

Learners could create digital drawings of their hurdles and notes, then share these on their screen during feedback.

Emotional Development

Empathy and
relationship skills

Establishing and maintaining positive relationships

HE'D MAKE A GREAT FRIEND!

After reading or listening to a text in the coursebook, ask learners to choose one of the characters and work in pairs to think of three or four adjectives to describe them, giving reasons for their answers. Next, write a list of roles on the board:

- Mum / Dad
- Sister / Brother
- Friend
- Neighbour
- Teacher

Ask learners whether they think their chosen character would make a good Mum/Dad, friend, etc. Ask them to discuss in pairs whether the character would be well suited to any of these roles, and to give reasons.

Teaching Online?

Learners could use an online tool, such as [Canva](#), to create a digital collage with information about why their chosen character would make a good Mum/Dad, friend, etc.

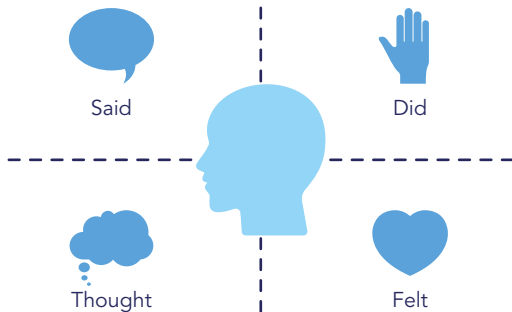
Emotional Development

Empathy and
relationship skills

Showing empathy for the feelings of others

EMPATHY MAP

After learners have listened to an audio recording, read a text or watched a video, ask them to choose one character from the text and complete the framework here, making notes about what the character said, what they did, what they thought, and how they felt.



Teaching Online?

Why not copy the framework into a shared document, such as [Google Docs](#), for learners to add their notes about specific characters.

Emotional Development

Empathy and
relationship skills

Supporting others

ADVICE FOR A VISITOR

Adapted from *Five Minute Activities for Young Learners* (McKay & Guse 2007).

When learners encounter a 'place' in the coursebook (such as the classroom, someone's home, a swimming pool, a town or city, or another country), tell them they are going to prepare some advice for a visitor. This advice will help the visitor to feel comfortable in the environment. Elicit ideas from learners about what instructions the visitor might need in that environment, and write ideas on the board. Then ask learners in pairs to choose five instructions they think are most useful, and to write them down in order of importance. Pairs then share and discuss their ideas with the class.

Teaching Online?

Why not invite learners to search online for advice related to the place they are discussing.

Critical Thinking

Solving problems
and making
decisions

Appendix 1a: Evaluation Framework

Evaluating options and recommendations to come to a decision

INFORMATION What information do you have? What more information do you need? How can you find out more information?	
BENEFITS What are the benefits of this? Who might benefit from it? How could it be more beneficial?	
DRAWBACKS What are the drawbacks of this? Who might be negatively affected by it? How could the drawbacks be reduced?	

Critical Thinking

Solving problems
and making
decisions






Appendix 1b: Evaluation Framework

Evaluating options and recommendations to come to a decision

FEELINGS What do you feel about this? What makes you feel that way? What would need to happen for you to feel differently?	
ALTERNATIVES How could this be different? What could cause it to be different? What impact would it have if it were different?	
GOING FORWARD What have you learned from this? What is the best decision or solution? What do you need in order to go forward?	

Appendix 2: The Third Degree

Using communication strategies to facilitate conversations

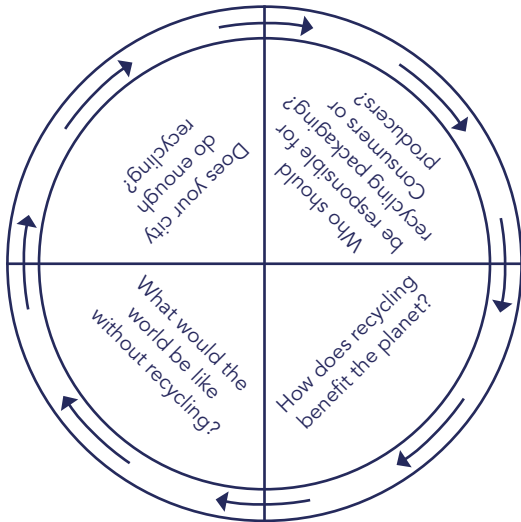
1 <i>In other words?</i>	2 <i>Could you say that again?</i>	
3 <i>I would like to know more about that.</i>	4 <i>Why do you think that is true?</i>	
5 <i>What is your evidence for that?</i>	6 <i>Could you say a bit more about that?</i>	
7 <i>Could you elaborate?</i>	8 <i>I didn't really understand that.</i>	
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Collaboration

Taking personal responsibility for own contribution to a group task

Appendix 3: Ideas Carousel

Actively contributing to a task



REFERENCES

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Jade Blue is an English language teacher, trainer, materials developer and researcher who works closely with the Language Research team at Cambridge University Press. Jade has authored a wide range of articles, teacher guides and research guides, and has presented at various conferences including IATEFL. Jade's primary research interests focus on learner-generated visuals in ELT, learner autonomy, and integrating life skills into classroom practice.

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