

Refocusing and reimagining inquiry ... with the help of the ATLs (Approaches to Learning / Transdisciplinary Skills)

Kath Murdoch for the Victorian PYP network
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What are we inquiring into ?

- Why are the ATL's so important?
- What is the connection between ATL's, inquiry and agency?
- How can we amplify the ATL's across the day?
- How do we plan for and assess the ATL's?

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A mantra for our times...

- "Pedagogy should, at its best, be about what teachers do that not only helps students to learn but actively strengthens their capacity to learn."

David Hargreaves, Learning for Life, 2004


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How will We approach our learning this evening?

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Self awareness -awareness of oneself as a learner - is one of the greatest gifts we can give our children. To nurture self-knowledge in our children means we need to nurture it in ourselves.

- *What do you know about yourself as a learner?*
- *Do you see yourself as a learner?*
- *Do your children see you as a learner?*

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Some recent reflections..

- I noticed that documenting my learning helped me stay focused
- I noticed I responded well to visual prompts
- I noticed I tended to make quick judgments - I need to be more open minded
- I noticed it was hard for me to transfer when I didn't relate to the examples, I have to work at that
- I noticed how excited I feel when I am thinking about my actual teaching - not worrying about all the peripheral stuff
- I noticed that this made me want to research more - the more I know, the more I want to know!

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What is the purpose of the ATL's?

Like other similar frameworks, the ATL's (together with the learner profile attributes) provide us with a common language to think and talk about learning.

The ATL's provide powerful throughlines that connect learning across disciplines and across year levels (and into secondary programs)

The ATL's are ultimately about building the individual's capacity to be an empowered, capable, confident learner – for life.

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The top skills and skill groups which employers see as rising in prominence in the lead up to 2025 include groups such as critical thinking and analysis as well as problem-solving, and skills in self-management such as active learning, resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility.

Top 10 skills of 2025

- 1 Analytical thinking and innovation
- 2 Active learning and learning strategies
- 3 Complex problem-solving
- 4 Critical thinking and analysis
- 5 Creativity, originality and initiative
- 6 Leadership and social influence
- 7 Technology use, monitoring and control
- 8 Technology design and programming
- 9 Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility
- 10 Reasoning, problem-solving and situation

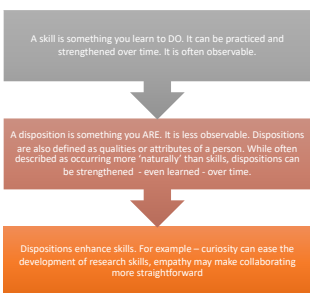
Source of skill

- Problem-solving
- Self-management
- Learning and practice
- Technology use and innovation

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'Do' and 'Be' encompass the combined ATL's and Profile attributes (skills and dispositions)



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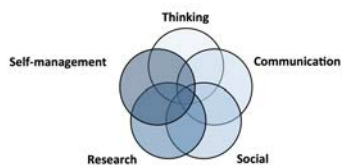
A balanced program

Learning	Learning about (content/concepts)
Learning	Learning to do (skills/capabilities)
Learning	Learning to be (dispositions/qualities/values/habits)

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Not discrete skills sets



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Many frameworks, same purpose

- Examples:**
- Art Costa: habits of mind
 - You Can Do It program
 - Berry street Character strengths
 - Guy Claxton Learning Powers
 - Mraz and Hertz Constellation of stances
 - Australian Curriculum General Capabilities
 - The 4C's of 21C learning
 - Kath Murdoch: Learning Assets
 - Australian Curriculum: General Capabilities
 - NZ curriculum: Key Competencies

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Let's dive in!

- What can we do to strengthen the ATLs in our learners? How can we amplify research, self-management, communication, social skills and thinking across the day?

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Minute by minute, day by day....

- "We are aiming to develop strong mental habits in our children that will stand them in good stead for a lifetime and that takes time and consistency. Habits take months, even years to develop and change. Children's development depends on day to day cultures we create for them to inhabit, not on something special we remember to pay attention to every so often. And to create those cultures, we teachers have to be conscious, resilient and imaginative learners too." (Claxton 2019:5)

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The learning river

SOURCE: Claxton, G. (2017). *The learning power approach: Teaching learners to teach themselves*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin, 2017. Printed by permission of Juan and Becky Catfzon.

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2. Mind your language...

- "Words mediate, shape, inform and solidify much of our experience." (Ritchhart 2015:7)
- "Talk is the central tool of (the teacher's) trade. With it they mediate children's activity and experience, and help them make sense of learning, literacy, life and themselves" (Johnson, 2004:4)
- "Children grow into the intellectual life around them" Vygotsky

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Infuse classroom discourse with the language of learning



- *I noticed you kept going after that first attempt failed. As a self manager, you really persisted!*
- *Wow, this information is quite different to what we have read previously. As researchers, we will need to be flexible with our thinking and open to changing our minds!*
- *So we are working collaboratively for this task. How might we engage each person contributes? What social skills we be most helpful here?*
- *I'm feeling quite distracted right now. I need to re-focus and be more present so I can do a good job.*
- *How might we approach this? What will we need to be in order to meet this challenge?*
- *Remember the way we worked on 'explaining' in our maths challenges? I wonder how we could use that skill as we communicate our scientific findings today?*
- *I am trying to be creative with my thinking right now - I'm wondering if there is an alternative way we could approach this?*


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- And when we DO talk...
- we should ASK more than we tell

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In an inquiry classroom we are always inquiring into learning...our questions 'nudge' this kind of thinking


- What are you noticing about your learning?
- How might you help yourself figure this out?
- What could you try instead?
- What are you finding easiest about this? Why?
- How could you explain your thinking?
- What skill might help you do this better

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3. If you design it....the ATL's will come

- The **design of learning experiences** is the most powerful way we can help students build their capacity to self manage, communicate, research, work with others and think.



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Lesson design can enhance or diminish the ATLS

-
- Authentic
- Open ended
- Co constructed
- Conceptual
- Transferable

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How could we help families new to this area, get to know our local neighborhood?

- Children tuned in and shared their own experience and knowledge of the local area. (communication, thinking)
- As researchers Children gathered first hand data about the local community (observing, interviewing, surveying)
- Information was sifted, sorted and analysed and presented (thinking, collaborating, communicating)
- As researchers, children collaboratively analysed the features of pamphlets – what makes an effective and informative pamphlet?
- Several iterations of the pamphlets occurred through feedback and re-working- lots of self management (persistence, accepting feedback)
- Pamphlets placed in the office for new (and existing) families.

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Gradual AND rapid release



I do it (teacher models)	You do it (teacher poses a problem/challenge)
We do it (work on it together)	We do it (children share their discoveries/strategies/questions)
You do it (more independent application)	I do it (teacher provides necessary instruction)

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A sample lesson...

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Setting our intentions...

What are we learning about?	What are we learning to do/be
What makes an effective timeline? How can we effectively, visually represent a sequence of events over time?	How can we use our thinking to <u>analyse</u> a text?

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A tip...

- As you consider the design of a lesson, ask yourself:
“What skills will the children be using in this session?
How might I make that explicit? How might these skills be useful to them in OTHER contexts?”

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-
- “If we always model for students how to approach challenges, they are not being prepared to confidently address problems without teacher previews and scaffolding...teachers may end up doing some of the struggling and thinking for the students ahead of time.”
 - Berger et al. 2016.

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4. Split screen intentions (and reflections)

Use a 'split screen' approach to learning intentions and reflections. Think about the 'how' as well as the 'what' (and, of course, the why!) Embed into your planning.

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5. 'Mini' inquiries into ATL's

Case studies to highlight the skills in action

Fishbowling/ demonstrating/ exploring a skill

Literature and other texts that model aspects of the ATL

(Linked to an inquiry and/or at point of need)

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Thinking Social skills



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Taking time to practise the skills (turn taking, body language, paraphrasing, respectful disagreement, validating, giving feedback etc.)

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6. Include ATL's in personal goal setting

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7. Think 'Transfer'....

- How might this skill be useful in another part of our day?
- How might we connect this skill from generalist to specialist sessions?
- How might this be applicable to life outside of school?

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As a communicator, I can give helpful feedback to others

Writing workshops	Art	Home
Providing feedback to peers in group conferences	Providing feedback on art-work in progress	Providing feedback on ideas about a family event?

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ATL's and agency: what's the connection?

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Building the learning tool kit

“If people are given the given the skills and tools to use and presented with a range of potentially powerful educative experiences, then given freedom, they will almost invariably choose one and get on with it.

Once learners get in touch with their own sense of personal power, get out of their way and watch in awe”

Edwards, J. 2004: encouraging achievement: 3

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Children with a strong sense of agency...

- Can talk about themselves as learners
- Can identify their strengths AND areas for improving– and ways to go about improving
- Rely less on extrinsic validation of their efforts
- Show initiative – tend to act without seeking permission/approval
- Link their learning to action – and see themselves as capable of making a difference
- Have a growth mindset

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Tips for planning and assessment

- Less is more: all the ATLS will be used in some way but put the spotlight on 2 or 3
- Be SPECIFIC about the skill within the ATL you will be spotlighting
- Tune in to the children’s thinking about the ATLS just as you would the central idea

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Initial ‘self reported’ questionnaires

Skill/disposition	Not like me	Sometimes like me	Quite often like me	Usually like me	Always like me
I can listen respectfully to other people's points of view even when I don't agree with them.					
I can express my point of view and give reasons for my position					
I am open minded and willing to change my point of view					

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Formative and embedded

- In an inquiry based approach – the instruction IS the assessment. Building the ATL's into the journey ensures you have the opportunity to observe and gather data along the way.

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Design tasks that allow you to observe and listen to the learning in action

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Be explicit and focussed

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Emphasise self assessment

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Co construct criteria

I need more help with this	Criteria	I can bump this up!
	I can make notes when watching a clip for information	
	I can make connections between my questions and the information I find in a clip	
	I can identify the relevant information in a video	

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