Learner Guide

Module 2: Understanding ECD

SAQA ID 244484: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the development of babies, toddlers and young children; NQF Level 4, 8 Credits

SAQA ID 119471: Use language and communication in occupational learning programmes; NQF Level 4, 5 Credits

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Programme Overview

Welcome to this learning programme that will lead you to greater understanding of:
- demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the development of babies, toddlers and young children
- using language and communication in occupational learning programmes

As you work your way through the learning programme you will gain competence against the following Unit Standards:

Programme	Module 2: Understanding ECD
Unit Standards	SAQA ID 244484: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the development of babies, toddlers and young children; NQF Level 4, 8 Credits SAQA ID 119471: Use language and communication in occupational learning programmes; NQF Level 4, 5 Credits

This learning programme is **intended for** all persons who need to:
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the development of babies, toddlers and young children. This Unit Standard is for people who wish to enter or obtain recognition at an entry level of Early Childhood Development (ECD).
- use language and communication in occupational learning programmes. The purpose of this Unit Standard is to facilitate learning and to ensure that learners are able to cope with learning in the context of learnerships, skills programmes, and other learning programmes. Many adult learners in the FET band have not been in a learning situation for a long time, and need learning and study strategies and skills to enable successful progression. Learners competent at this level will be able to deal with learning materials, to access and use useful resources, to seek clarification and help when necessary, and apply a range of learning strategies. They do this with an understanding of the features and processes of the workplace and occupations to which their learning programmes refer.

Programme entry level requirements

The credit calculation is based on the assumption that learners are already competent in terms of the full spectrum of language knowledge and communication skills laid down in the revised National Curriculum Statements or Unit Standards up to NQF Level 3.

It is assumed that people learning towards this Unit Standard comply with the following entry level requirements:
- Communication at NQF Level 3

Programme Outcomes

This learning programme is outcomes-based, which means we take the responsibility of learning away from the facilitator and place it in your hands.

Your learning will begin in the workshop where you will identify the skills and knowledge you require in order to meet the specific outcomes and assessment criteria contained in the Unit Standard.

In this learning programme, we will be covering the following **learning outcomes**:

Learning Unit 1: The development of babies, toddlers and young children	Learning Unit 2: Learning resources and the occupational learning materials and context
• Compare own views about the meaning and use of key terms to the views of others, showing how such views influence our ways of seeing and working with children. • Compare different ways of seeing the development of young children to highlight key similarities and differences in the theories. • Describe stages in the development of children in each domain in line with existing theories. • Identify factors that enable the development of children in each domain in line with relevant existing theories. • Ensure that explanations of how gender, socio-economic background, age, environment and special needs impact on the development of children in each domain are consistent with established theories or literature and the principles of inclusion and anti-bias. • Provide descriptions to show how development is shaped by socio-cultural influences. • Provide descriptions to show how development within each domain is linked to and affected by development in other domains.	• Identify relevant learning resources. • Use learning resources effectively and manage it through appropriate selection and cross-referencing of information and acknowledgement of sources. • Organise and use occupational learning materials for optimum learning. • Understand and use layout, presentation and organisational features of learning materials effectively. • Engage technical language/terminology with and clarification sought if needed. • Identify the sector and organisation type. • Describe and discuss the workplace features. • Describe and discuss the ways in which these features affect learning processes and/or application of learning.

Learning Unit 3: Formulate and use learning strategies	Learning Unit 4: Conduct research, analyse and present findings	Learning Unit 5: Lead and function in a team
• Formulate learning strategies by selection of specific tried techniques. • Summarise and use information in the learning process. • Synthesise and contextualise answers pertaining to relevant questions. • Read/view texts for detail, interpret, analyse and synthesise it for a given context. • Interpret, analyse and synthesise verbal interaction for a given context. • Ensure that learning takes place through communicating with others in groups or as individuals.	• Identify and define appropriate or relevant topic and scope. • Plan and sequence research steps appropriately. • Apply research techniques. • Sift information for relevance • Classify, categorise and sort information. • Analyse research findings and present it in the appropriate format. • Make conclusions and recommendations in the appropriate format.	• Actively lead and participate in group learning situations. • Take up responsibilities in the team and apply group work conventions in learning situations. • Practise conflict management and negotiating techniques in diverse contexts. • Ensure that team work results in meaningful products, outcomes or goals.

During the workshop you will complete a number of class activities that will form part of your formative assessment. During this process you have the opportunity to practise and explore your new skills in a safe environment. You should take the opportunity to collect as much information as you can to use during your workplace learning and self-study.

The workshop will be followed by summative assessment tasks to be completed through self-study in your workplace. In some cases you may be asked to do research and complete the tasks in your own time.

Assessment

PLEASE NOTE that it is your responsibility, as the learner, to prove that you are competent (that means, that you have acquired all the necessary skills and that you can successfully do all the necessary tasks). You therefore need to plan your time and make sure that you keep your Portfolio of Evidence up to date and hand it in timeously.

A Portfolio of Evidence is a collection of documents of work you have produced to prove your competence. You will compile your portfolio from activities, tools and checklists that are associated with and relevant to the Unit Standard that is being assessed.

You will be given the following documents to assist you in creating a Portfolio of Evidence:
- **Learner Guide**: The Learner Guide is designed as a guide for the duration of your learning programme and as the main source document for transfer of learning. It contains information (the knowledge and skills that you need) and application aids that will help you to develop the knowledge and skills that are stipulated in the specific outcomes and assessment criteria. The Learner Guide also indicates the formative assessment class activities that you need to complete as part of your Portfolio of Evidence.
- **Learner Workbook**: The Learner Workbook contains all the class activities that you will be completing to show formative learning. These will be assessed as part of your Portfolio of Evidence as formative assessment. You will be handing in the Learner Workbook as part of your Portfolio of Evidence.
- **Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide**: The Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide provides details about the assessment, such as the assessment preparation, plan and specific summative assessment activities that you need to complete in the workplace.

Both formative and summative assessment is used as part of this outcomes-based learning programme:
- **Formative Assessment**: In order to earn credits for this Unit Standard you will need to prove to an assessor that you are competent. The Class Activities in your Learner Workbook are designed not only to help you learn new skills, but also to prove that you have mastered competence. You will have to develop a Portfolio of Evidence to hand in to an assessor so that you can be assessed against the outcomes of this Unit Standard. Where you come across a Class Activity icon, you must complete the formative assessment activity in the Learner Workbook. You can find the comprehensive guidelines for the development of your Portfolio of Evidence in the Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide for the particular learning programme that you are working with.

- **Summative Assessment**: The objective of the NQF is to create independent and self-sufficient learners. This means that you will also have to do independent research and assignments, such as Knowledge Questions, Practical Activity (completed in the workplace), Summative Project and Logbook.

  The assessment process is discussed in detail in the Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide. When you are ready, you will advise your mentor that you are ready for assessment. He or she will then sign off the required sections in the Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide and you will be able to submit your Portfolio of Evidence for assessment. The summative assessment activities have been placed in the Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide for your convenience. If any of your assessment is conducted using observation, role plays or verbal assessment, you should place a signed copy of the checklists in your Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide, after your mentor or line manager has completed it.

The Training Provider will assess your portfolio. If you are successful, you will receive the credit value of this learning programme. The entire assessment process is explained in the Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide. Please read this guide as soon as possible, as it explains the assessment process in detail and clearly explains your rights and responsibilities that will ensure that the assessment is fair, valid and reliable.

If you are not successful, you will receive all the guidance needed to resubmit your Portfolio of Evidence within a specific time period, according to the requirements of the Training Provider.

Learning map (delivery structure)

Assessment	←Formative Assessment→ 30%		←Summative Assessment→70%	
Learning activities for 130 hours of notional learning	Contact Learning Theory input Formative assessment (workbook activities): group activities, simulations	Prescribed reading, support, coaching	Learning and application at the workplace	Summative assessment in PoE: Knowledge Questions, Practical Workplace Activity, Summative Project, Logbook
	35 hours	**4 hours**	**75 hours**	**16 hours**
	⬇	⬇	⬇	⬇
Portfolio of Evidence	←Compilation of Portfolio of Evidence→			
Complementary workplace practices	Coaching and Mentoring; Performance Management			

Learner support

Please remember that as the programme is outcomes-based – this means the following:
- You are responsible for your own learning – make sure you manage your study, practical, workplace and portfolio time responsibly.
- Learning activities are learner-driven – make sure you use the Learner Guide, Learner Workbook and Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide as they are meant to be used, and that you know and understand what the Portfolio requirements are.
- The facilitator is there to help you during the contact, practical and workplace periods of this programme – make sure that you have his/her contact details.

Dear Learner

Please note the following:

- The content of this course is organised according to the learning outcomes in the relevant Unit Standards. This means that certain content may overlap or be duplicated in and among Modules and Learning Units. You should see this is a useful opportunity to revise that particular information.

Learning Unit 1
The development of babies, toddlers and young children

After completing this Learning Unit, you will be able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the development of babies, toddlers and young children, by successfully completing the following:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of theories of child development.

- Compare own views about the meaning and use of key terms to the views of others, showing how such views influence our ways of seeing and working with children.

- Compare different ways of seeing the development of young children to highlight key similarities and differences in the theories.

- Describe stages in the development of children in each domain in line with existing theories.

- Identify factors that enable the development of children in each domain in line with relevant existing theories.

- Ensure that explanations of how gender, socio-economic background, age, environment and special needs impact on the development of children in each domain are consistent with established theories or literature and the principles of inclusion and anti-bias.

- Provide descriptions to show how development is shaped by socio-cultural influences.

- Provide descriptions to show how development within each domain is linked to and affected by development in other domains.

The development of babies, toddlers and young children

In this unit you will learn about the holistic (that is, total or complete) development of a child. You will also be able to understand the belief that all the different domains (areas) of child development are interconnected. When we say the domains are interconnected, we mean that learning in one domain will cause growth and development in the other domains.

You will also be introduced to psychologists who have produced theories on how children develop, their developmental stages, and which of their body parts and mind become ready to work at what age.

It is very important that you take a holistic approach to understand these theories. This means that you should not see the theories as separate, but as parts of one big whole. Once you are familiar with the theories of child development, you will need to combine and interpret them yourself so that you understand how the baby, toddler or young child develops as a whole person.

By holistic development we mean physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. This means that you need to provide children with activities that will make them grow and develop on all three these levels.

Definitions of key terms in child development

Childhood

Childhood refers to the period between infancy (about 1-2 years) and pubescence.

Most of the physical and mental development of a person takes place in childhood. It is the critical period during which children can establish good habits of both exercise and nutrition that can last a lifetime. By the age of seven, nearly all of the motor control mechanisms in the brain are present. Motor control mechanisms are those systems that help the child control movement. The child is now also quickly developing motor skills (movement skills).

Different cultures at different times have different views about childhood.

These viewpoints are that children:

- are basically good

- are eager to learn

- deserve kindness and respect

- should be seen, not heard

Human development

Human development is a pattern of change or movements that starts when a baby is conceived and continues through old age. In the younger years, development involves growth and maturation (becoming an adult).

In the early childhood years, children develop the ability to be fully capable human beings. They learn to speak their home language - or more than one language if they are exposed to other languages. They learn to co-ordinate their bodies by walking, talking, climbing, skipping, hopping, and jumping. They learn to interact socially others, taking turns, sharing, greeting, communicating ideas and feelings. They learn to physically manage more and more complex activities – drawing, painting, making models, and completing puzzles. They learn to play in creative and imaginative ways and use their creativity and imagination in their learning activities. They learn to develop and apply values, like kindness and caring, in their daily activities.

Holistic development

Holistic development is basically the development of everyone's intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and religious values and feelings. It is pretty much just the development of the entire brain's thoughts and feelings.

Teaching/Facilitation

Teaching takes place when the teacher presents knowledge to the learner and invites the learner to become involved in the learning process.

Facilitation is the process during the teacher guides and supports the child in a structured or unstructured environment.

Why do we talk about facilitating for child development, rather than teaching a child?

In the holistic and integrated perspective of early childhood development, a teacher takes an active role when he or she presents learning material and shape knowledge. A facilitator simply promotes and guides a process that is already on track.

Integrated learning

The integrated curriculum views children's experiences as learning opportunities, which are all interconnected. Integrated themes for curriculum planning enable children to make connections among and between ideas and knowledge, which is meaningful to them. Integrated learning makes it easier to link learning experiences across developmental domains and across content/learning areas. Learning is therefore viewed in a holistic manner, and a variety of materials is used to lead children to acquire knowledge, skills and disposition and feelings.

Developmentally appropriate activities

Developmentally appropriate activities are activities that are appropriate for each child's development stage.

You should understand how children develop and grow so that you can choose appropriate activities for them.

Selection of appropriate activities will lay a solid foundation and accommodate children's different learning abilities.

1.1 Theories of child development – ways of seeing the development of babies, toddlers and young children

Many theories of development have been described by psychologists, doctors and philosophers, and together they create a field of knowledge about childhood. The theory focuses mostly on the development process. It regards the individual as being active in the process of development, with change occurring because of the unfolding of internal forces. It is assumed that human beings will progress through definite stages of development, directed by forces within them. (Hook et al. , 2002, p. 382.)

These theories explain that the child slowly grows and develops abilities as his or her body becomes able to do certain tasks. Each stage of development can proceed well only if the previous stages have been mastered. For this reason, children may be prevented from developing well if some of their abilities are not stimulated at the right stage of their development.

Organismic development can be described as being similar to the way we bake a cake – if one ingredient is left out, the whole cake may not taste good, as all the ingredients interact together. Similarly, child development requires that all the right elements should interact together to be a total success.

In the same way that new born animals learn to stand on their legs within the first few hours after their birth if they are in a suitable environment, humans also need certain stimulating environmental conditions in order to develop all their abilities fully.

As you learn about the main theories of development, you should be aware that the child functions as a whole person, even though he is described in parts (domains) by the theorists. It is up to you to combine and integrate the theories so that you understand how the baby, toddler or young child develops as a whole person. Your work as an ECD practitioner/facilitator is to provide activities for babies, toddlers and young children, to help them grow and develop in all domains. Once development begins, it affects progress in all domains at once. You may not immediately see evidence of this but the parts of the picture will emerge later. (Think of a rainbow: sometimes you can't see all the colours at once, or even the whole rainbow, but if you walk to the end of your street or drive over a hill, you may see the whole thing – the potential was there all the time.)

Case Study 1 (below) paints a scenario of the holistic development of a child:

	Case Study 1: Thandeka Maseko
	(Depicts holistic development areas)

Thandeka is a little five-year-old girl who lives with her grandmother, Lumka in a two – roomed shack in the back yard of the garage owner in Jabavu "SOWETO".

Lumka loved Thandeka and kept her clean and fed at all times. Thandeka was made to watch TV for the whole day, when her grandmother was doing other household chores.

One day a neighbour told Lumka that she had seen an advertisement in the community newspaper for a new preschool that is to be opened in the area, run by non-governmental organisation and advised Lumka to register Thandeka, for her to get stimulated rather than sitting at home watching TV.

Thandeka joined the centre, the ECD educator Mrs Mongala decided to take her into her class for three months to see how she would cope. She was sure that by playing with other children her own age would be a very constructive experience for Thandeka.

Mrs Mongala couldn't spend all her time working with Thandeka so she organised friends of hers to work alongside her, talking to her and making sure she was able to participate in all the learning areas provided which include:

Painting

Drawing

Play dough kneading

Cutting and pasting

This helped Thandeka to make friends and she learned quickly by copying what her new friends were doing, which helped her to develop the small muscles.

After three months, Thandeka was a different child. Her small muscle control was excellent. Her creativity was good. Other children in the class responded to Thandeka's positive attitude and she began to integrate easily and socially into the group.

As this case study shows, there is a strong overlap between the different developmental areas. Thandeka's poor fine motor skills were an obstacle to her creative development, as well as her social and emotional development. However, when her fine motor skills improved, her development in other areas also improved.

- Holistic development means the need to help the child to develop in a holistic way, building and strengthening her skills and abilities in all of the main developmental areas.

Psychoanalytic child development theories by Sigmund Freud

The theories proposed by Sigmund Freud stressed the importance of childhood events and experiences, but almost exclusively focused on *mental disorders* rather that *normal functioning.*

- He emphasised that a child's personality is formed by the ways which his parents managed his sexual and aggressive drives. There were five stages:
    - oral (0-18 months)
    - anal (18 months – 3 1/2 years)
    - phallic (3 1/2 years – 6 years)
    - latency (6 years – puberty)
    - genital (puberty – adulthood)

Stage 1: Beginning at birth:

The Oral Stage: The lips, tongue, and teeth are at the centre of understanding the world. The impulses of hunger and thirst are paramount -- and can only be gratified orally.

Oral Gratification in adulthood is seen as pathological only in extreme instances. Partial fixation in the oral stage is seen as a cause of smoking, overeating, or heightened interest in oral sexual gratification.

Stage 2: Ages 2 to 4.

The Anal Stage: As children learn how to control their own bladder, urination and defecation play an increasing role in the child's life. Children associate both praise and criticism with the withholding or release of body waste. Anal fixation can occur due to the inconsistency between the praise given for successful toilet practice and the coexisting disgust of fecal material.

Stage 3: 3 years+

The Phallic Stage: If the child has passed through the anal stage. Genital focus now captures the child's interest and the child is either obsessed with having a penis or not having one. Sexual pleasure is linked to the closeness of one's parents. During this stage, children often want to sleep with their parents and become jealous when they are not the focus of their parent's attention.

Stage 4:

The Latency Stage: After the Phallic Stage, children repress sexual thoughts. Internal feelings of shame, guilt, and morality help maintain this latency period.

Stage 5: Puberty

*The Genital Stage***:** The sexual impulses are reawakened in the adolescent. The sexual behaviour is now directed toward other people, rather than the self-centred exploration of the phallic period. Females generally lose their penis envy during this stage. Heterosexuality (desire for a sexual partner of the opposite sex) is seen as a healthy direction for mature sexual impulses. Homosexuality is seen by Freud as a genital fixation.

Each psychosexual stage has three main parts:

1. *A physical focus*: where the child's energy is concentrated and their gratification obtained.

2. *A psychological theme*: related to both the physical focus and the demands of the outside world being made on the developing child. For each stage, there can be two extremes in psychological reaction – either doing too much or not doing enough of what is ideal.

3. *An adult character type*: in the first three stages this adult character type is related to being fixated or stuck at that stage. If a person doesn't resolve the psychological issues that arise at that stage they will always have problems relating to those issues.

At each stage, there is a crisis which must be worked through. If the crisis is not properly worked out, the person could become *fixated* at that stage of development. *Fixations* are seen in adulthood as child-like approaches to gratifying the basic impulses.

Erik Erikson's stages of psychosocial development

Erik Erikson also proposed a stage theory of development, but his theory involved **development throughout the entire human lifespan.**

Erikson believed that each stage of development was focused on overcoming a conflict e. g. the primary conflict during the adolescent period. This stage involves **establishing a sense of personal identity.**

Erikson suggests that success or failure in dealing with the conflicts at each stage can have an impact on overall functioning. During the adolescent stage, for example, **failure to develop an identity results in role confusion.**

He expanded on Freud's theories.

- He believed that development is life-long.
- Erikson outlined eight stages of psychosocial development. Each stage is described in terms of a positive and a negative quality. People are happiest when they can manage their lives to reach the positive outcome of a particular stage of development.
- He emphasised that at each stage, the child acquires attitudes and skills resulting from the successful negotiation of the psychological conflict.
- He identified the following eight stages:

  i.   Basic trust vs mistrust (birth – 1 year)

  ii. Autonomy vs shame and doubt (ages 1–3)

  iii. Initiative vs guilt (ages 3–6)

  iv. Industry vs inferiority (ages 6–11)

  v.   Identity vs identity confusion (adolescence)

  vi. Intimacy vs isolation (young adulthood)

  vii. Generativity vs stagnation (middle adulthood)

  viii. Integrity vs despair (the elderly)
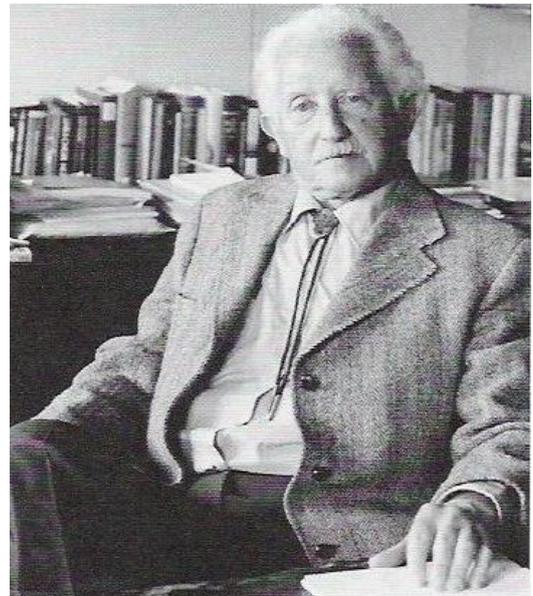
At different ages, certain types of behaviour and relationship might have a special meaning for socio-emotional development; for example for a school age child, it is important that the child get a sense of his own competence and ability to work.

With younger children there should be plenty of opportunities for free play and experimentation so that they can develop autonomy (independence). You as facilitator must balance this with firm guidance so that children will not experience self-doubt.

Among preschool children, for example, those who have been protected and have had everything done for them may have a lot of self-doubt. These children strive for perfection and are afraid of failure. To help children develop autonomy, you should let them know that it is acceptable to make mistakes and to create solutions that are less than perfect.

Jean Piaget's cognitive child development theories

Theorist Jean Piaget suggested that children think differently than adults and proposed *a stage theory of cognitive development*.

1.   The first stage of cognitive development is the sensorimotor stage, which means the infant uses his senses and motor abilities to understand the world and which occurs between birth and two years of age.

2.   The second stage of cognitive development is the pre-operational stage, which means the child uses mental representations of objects and is able to use symbolic thought and language and which lasts from about age two to age seven.

3.   The third stage of cognitive development is the concrete operational stage, which means the child uses logical operations or principles when solving problems and lasts from about seven to eleven years of age.

4.   The fourth stage of cognitive development is the formal operational stage, which begins at about twelve years of age. During this stage, children begin to think in more abstract and logical ways.

He was the first to note that children *play an active role in gaining knowledge of the world.*

According to his theory, children can be thought of as "little scientists" who *actively construct their knowledge and understanding of the world.*

Behavioural Child Development Theories by John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov and B. F. Skinner

These theories were formulated by theorists such as John B. Watson, Ivan Pavlov and B. F. Skinner.

Behavioural theories of child development focus on *how environmental interaction influences behaviour.* The theories deal only with *observable behaviour* that means behaviour that can be seen or heard.

These theorists believe that development is considered a *reaction to rewards, punishments, stimuli and reinforcement.*

This theory differs considerably from other child development theories because it gives no consideration to internal thoughts or feelings.

Instead, it focuses purely on how our experience shapes who we are. The behavioural theories of Skinner continue to influence what goes on in schools, especially for some special education programmes. The mechanistic theory of behaviourism emphasises the role of the environment on an individual's development. Preparing the environment for appropriate reinforcement is a major goal.

Two examples of Skinner's contribution to education are behaviour modification and programmed learning. Both of these rely heavily on immediate reinforcement, in which a child has to exhibit the "right" behaviour or produce the "correct" answer in order to be positively reinforced.

Applications of this theory have resulted in an overemphasis on isolated skills and drill, as well as a heavy reliance on teacher-directed and teacher-reinforced activities. As a result, teachers often ignore children's curiosity and prior knowledge.

Social Child Development Theories by John Bowlby

There is a great deal of research on the social development of children. John Bowlby proposed one of the earliest theories of social development.

Bowlby believed that early *relationships with caregivers play a major role in child development* and *continue to influence social relationships throughout life*.

Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory

The psychologist Albert Bandura proposed what is known as *social learning theory.*

According to this theory of child development, *children learn new behaviours by observing other people.*

Unlike behavioural theories, Bandura believed that external reinforcement was not the only way that people learn new things.

Instead, *intrinsic reinforcements* such as a sense of pride, satisfaction and accomplishment could also lead to learning.

By observing the actions of others, including parents and peers, children develop new skills and acquire new information.

Lev Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory

Another psychologist named Lev Vygotsky proposed a seminal learning theory that has become very influential, especially in the field of education.

Like Piaget, Vygotsky believed that *children learn actively* and *through hands-on experiences.*

His socio-cultural theory also suggested that *parents, caregivers, peers and the culture at large* were responsible for the development of higher order functions.

An example of this might be when a parent "helps" an infant clap or roll her hands to the pat-a-cake rhyme, until she can clap and roll her hands herself.

Vygotsky was strongly focused on the role of culture in determining the child's pattern of development:

 "Every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first, between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals. "

Vygotsky says that the child's cultural environment plays a large part in his or her cognitive development. The child learns what and how to think through language. By interacting with parents, teachers and peers, a child develops and masters problem-solving skills.

1.2 Compare own views to the views of others

We all have an internal viewpoint of how other cultures live, as well as our own bias and stories that are not necessarily true. Opening your mind to how others think will greatly enrich your life. South Africa is multi-culturally rich, and offers a fine opportunity to explore and widen your own viewpoint.

In this section we will compare our own views about the meaning and use of key terms to the views of others, showing how such views influence our ways of seeing and working with children:

- "Key terms" include but are not limited to childhood, development, teaching, well-being, Ubuntu and rights, etc.
- "Views of others" refers to those views in the immediate environment as well as a more global or international view.

African culture point of view

In African culture, the baby is valued and kept close to the mother at all times. Parental control begins at about age two when the toddler is mobile and busy exploring the world. Children should always use their home language at home and respect their origins (where their ancestors came from) and traditional beliefs. They should be respectful towards adults.

Ubuntu has its origins in the indigenous languages of southern Africa; the concept focuses on people's loyalty to and associations with each other.

"Ubuntu" is an ancient African word meaning "humanity to others". It also means "I am what I am because of who we all are". Children are therefore never orphans since the roles of mother and father are not limited to in a single individual with respect to a single child. No adult will ever allow any child around him/her to be an orphan. Your neighbour's child is your own, and his/her success is your success too.

Western urbanised culture point of view

In Western urbanised culture there is a belief that too much attention may spoil the baby.

The mother should consult experts if she is at all unsure of how to care for the baby.

The baby's behaviour should fit the norms given in the media.

The mother's need to earn an income is primary, and children's needs must come second to that.

Young children should be respectful and quiet when in the company of adults.

(This urbanised culture is changing all the time as a result of various global influences so you may want to describe your own culture's beliefs here of the urban perspective on childhood.)

The evolutionary approach to childhood point of view

This is a new viewpoint on what childhood is.

This point of view looks at how human babies and mothers interact and compares it with how other babies interact with their mothers.

The human baby at birth is extremely weak and dependent, unlike most other babies who can walk very soon after birth.

Evolutionary adaptation refers to the changes of the human species to ensure that human beings can adapt to a changing environment.

These behaviours, like crying to be picked up and parenting of the mother, ensure that the baby gets what it needs in terms of both emotional comfort and food.

If the mother responds to the entire baby's crying and attachment behaviour, a better relationship is created and the baby will be easier to manage.

From this point of view, there is no "spoiling" by giving the baby exactly what he or she needs; rather, it is better that way.

The repeated, long daily separation of the child from the mother goes against the evolutionary approach.

- Placing a child in a day care centre, increases the level of anxiety in the child-mother relationship, compared to when the child is raised at home. Though it is a solution for working mothers, leaving a baby at a full day care centre might negatively effect the child's development phases.

In this situation, the responsibility of a practitioner within the ECD setting is most important. The practitioner should respond to the needs of children in the most sensitive and caring way possible. Children are extremely vulnerable and dependent. The practitioner should give the same attention to the toddlers and young children in her class like she would give her own children. Knowing the effects of long separation, it will help if a practitioner is understanding and supportive when children display signs of anxiety or unhappiness with no apparent reason.

1.3 Compare different ways of seeing the development of young children

There are certain key similarities and differences between the theories.

The following table outlines the similarities and differences of development theories:

Table 1

Theorist	Theories	Main Stages
Jean Piaget	Cognitive Development	Stages of Development Children as constructors of knowledge. Development leading learning. Environmental factors influence learning. Children assimilate experiences and then accommodate them within their current understanding. Children adjust and use new information continually to make sense of experiences and perceptions.
John Dewey & Jean Piaget	Constructivism	Learning is active and constructive. Learning by doing. Learning is interactive. Children learn through play.
Lev Vygotsky	Socio-constructivism	Children are actively engaged in social and cultural experiences. Play leads to development. Zone of proximal development – the area between actual and potential learning. Language is important. Interaction between children and more experienced others.
Erik Erikson	Psychosocial theory	Development is described in terms of eight stages that span childhood and adulthood, each offering opportunities for personality growth and development.
Abraham Maslow	Humanistic	Children's physical needs must be met. Children must feel psychologically safe and secure.
Urie Bronfenbrenner	Ecological	Children living and learning in multiple social and cultural context influence children's learning and development. Learning as reciprocal. Interactions and how they affect children.
Howard Gardner	Multiple intelligences	Human cognitive competence refers to a set of abilities, talents, or mental skills, which we call intelligences. Individuals differ in the degree or skill and the nature of their combinations.
Brain Researchers R. N. Caine and G. Caine, E. Jensen And R. Sylvester	Brain-based learning	Early childhood is a critical period for brain development. Children learn through all their senses and stimulation triggers chemicals that build connections. Children demonstrate different modes of knowing and different ways of representing what they know.
Loris Mamaguzzi	Constructivist, Socio-cultural	The Reggio Emilia Approach Child and Childhood Physical Space Parental Involvement Collaborative Relationships Documentation The Hundred Languages of Children

Theorist	Theories	Main Stages
D. Weikart and P. Hohmann	Cognitively oriented curriculum-based on Piaget and Vygotsky's Theory	The High/Scope Curriculum. Children are active learners. Use of a variety of learning centres with adequate materials and developmentally appropriate activities. Key experiences Active problem solving-plan-do-review process. Balance between child initiated and teacher planned instructional activities. Teachers responsible for planning curriculum that reinforces and extends learning activities.
Post-Modernists	Post-modernist Theory	Understanding children as capable learners having a role and a voice in the decision-making process, with diverse understandings, capabilities and dispositions. Understanding the contextualized and dynamic nature of practice. Understanding the danger of universalised practice. Recognizing many paths to learning. Having broad and diverse interests. Children need to be supported socially, culturally and emotionally as they engage in learning environments. Diversity is valued.

1.4 Describe stages in the development of children in each domain of development

The domains of childhood development are relevant to the development concepts of the following skills:

- gross motor

- fine motor

- cognitive

- social/emotional

- adaptive/self help

- spiritual and moral

Many theorists have come to their own conclusions of what occurs internally at the various stages of development and ages. Examining these conclusions will allow you to validate your own often instinctive knowledge of what occurs in the various stages.

Stages of development in different domains

All the domains of children's development are closely connected and influence each other. Developmentally appropriate practice embraces the concept that children are active learners who need direct cognitive, physical, and social experiences in order to construct their own understandings of the world.

Children need opportunities to form and test their own assumptions through social interaction, physical manipulation, and their own thought processes by observing what happens, reflecting on their findings, asking questions, and formulating answers. In addition, developmentally appropriate practice acknowledges that play is an important vehicle for children's development in all areas.

Freud's stages of childhood development are as follows:

First Stage: Oral

From birth until a child is one year old, Freud theorised an individual's psychic and sexual energy is concentrated on the mouth, from which he receives all his initial pleasure through breastfeeding.

Second Stage: Anal

Toddlers from ages two to three have reached Freud's second stage of psychosexual development. Freud believed that children at this age connect their developing understanding of societal rules and regulations to the pleasure they find in controlling their bowel movements.

Third Stage: Phallic

Freud's third stage of development is the phallic stage; it dominates from about age three to six. According to Freud, during this time a child finds pleasure in the genitals. He believed boys develop unconscious sexual desires for their mother and feel they must compete with their father for their mother's affection. This theory is known as the Oedipus complex. Freud theorized that out of fear, boys ultimately choose to identify with their father instead of fight him and learn to repress sexual feelings for their mother.

Freud's full psychosexual theory includes two more stages: the latent stage, in which a child's sexual development goes into a dormant period as he focuses on school from about age six until puberty, and the genital stage, at which children grow into their sexual maturity and refocus their source of sexual pleasure in the genitals in preparation for adulthood.

Erikson's childhood development is as follows:

First Stage: Infancy: Birth to 18 Months

Ego Development Outcome: Trust vs Mistrust. Basic strength: Drive and Hope

Erikson also referred to infancy as the Oral Sensory Stage (as anyone might see who watches a baby put everything in her mouth) where the major emphasis is on the mother's nurturing the child, with a big emphasis on visual contact and touch.

Second Stage Early Childhood: 18 Months to 3 Years

Ego Development Outcome: Autonomy vs Shame. Basic Strengths: Self-control, Courage, and Will.

During this a child masters skills for themselves. They learn to walk, talk and feed as well as developing finer motor development and toilet training. This is when self-esteem and autonomy is built and more control is gained over bodies and acquiring new skills, and learning right from wrong. And one of the skills during the "Terrible twos" is the ability to use the powerful word "NO!" an important skill of will. The most significant relationships are with parents.

Third Stage Play Age: 3 to 5 Years

Ego Development Outcome: Initiative vs Guilt. Basic Strength: Purpose

During this period the child experiences a desire to copy the adults around them and takes initiative in creating play situations. They make up stories with their environment of toys and objects, playing out roles in a trial universe, experimenting with the blueprint for what they believe it means to be an adult. The word WHY appears and the most significant relationship is with the basic family.

Piaget's childhood development is as follows:

- **Sensory-motor stage birth to 2 years**. This stage consists of six sub-stages infancy. Children are using their physical or motor skills and their senses to explore their world and develop their cognitive understandings.

- **Pre-operational stage 2 to 7 years**. In this stage children are less reliant upon senses and physical exploration and, according to Piaget. During this stage, for example, children can be shown that two balls of dough are exactly the same size, and they will agree that the balls are the same size, but when one is flattened, they will usually tell you that one of them is now bigger. This inability to conserve is a feature of the preoperational stage.

The Behaviourists theories (Skinner, Watson and Pavlov) can be summed up as early childhood development as follows (Watson's "words")

"Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors. I am going beyond my facts and I admit it, but so have the advocates of the contrary and they have been doing it for many thousands of years. "

The Social Learning Theorists:

These theorists agree that any stage is reinforced through rewards and punishment.

The domains of ECD are divided into five areas of development:

1. **Physical** - During this stage of development children are fast developing their gross and fine motor skills. They will learn how to jump and balance on one foot, write numbers and letters, draw shapes, and throw and catch a ball.

2. **Cognitive** - The cognitive domain is where children begin to think and ask questions about where why things happen and where they are. Cognitive development rapidly occurs during the preschool years. In the preschool years children can imagine objects that are being talked about even though the object is not physically present. Children also begin to form stable concepts about their environment and their own being.

3. **Emotional** - This grows as social development grows. Children understand that actions have consequences and begin to manage their emotions. They realise they can manage emotions such as fear, sadness, anger and happiness. During this period their confidence also develops.

4. **Social** - Children do not have a natural empathy (compassion) at this stage but will show signs of this development as they begin to share more information willingly. They begin to develop conflict resolution skills. They start to understand the basic rules of reasoning and how the world works, and they also understand that there are advantages and disadvantages of being a cooperative, active member of society. Participation in group activities becomes clear, especially games, and there is a lot of imaginary play time.

5. **Adaptive** - Adaptive domains in early childhood refer to children's ability to use daily living skills such as getting themselves dressed, brushing their teeth, combing their hair and even being able to help themselves to food. As the child enters preschool they should be learning how to open and close buttons and should be using the bathroom.

Table 2 below outlines stages from 0 to five years of age. It also describes the observable developments at various stages in different domains.

This table will help you to identify children's abilities at different stages. The purpose is to guide an ECD Practitioner to choose the appropriate learning resources and activities for children at different developmental stages.
Table 2

Stage	Physical and language	Emotional	Social
Birth to 1 month	Feedings: 5-8 per day Sleep: 20 hrs per day Sensory Capacities: makes basic distinctions in vision, hearing, smelling, tasting, touch, temperature, and perception of pain	Generalized Tension	Helpless Asocial Fed by mother
2 months to 3 months	Sensory Capacities: colour perception, visual exploration, and oral exploration. Sounds: cries, coos, grunts Motor Ability: control of eye muscles, lifts head when on stomach.	Distress Delight	Smiles at a face Visually fixates at a face, May be soothed by rocking.
4 months to 6 months	Sensory Capacities: localizes sounds Sounds: babbling makes most vowels and about half of the consonants Feedings: 3-5 per day Motor Ability: control of head and arm movements, purposive grasping, rolls over.	Enjoys being cuddled	Recognises their mother. Distinguishes between familiar persons and strangers, no longer smiles indiscriminately. Expects feeding, dressing, and bathing.
7 months to 9 months	Motor Ability: control of trunk and hands, sits without support, crawls about.	Specific emotional attachment to mother.	Protests separation from mother Enjoys "peek-a-boo"
10 months to 12 months	Motor Ability: control of legs and feet, stands, creeps, apposition of thumb and forefinger. Language: says one or two words, imitates sounds, and responds to simple commands. Feedings: 3 meals, 2 snacks Sleep: 12 hours, 2 naps Shows anger	Affection Fear of strangers Curiosity, exploration	Responsive to own name. Waves bye-bye. Plays pat-a-cake, Understands "no-no!" Gives and takes objects
1 years to 1 ½ years	Motor Ability: creeps up stairs, walks (10-20 min), and makes lines on paper with crayon. Dependent Behaviour	Gets very upset when separated from mother Fear of bath	Obeys limited commands. Repeats a few words. Interested in his mirror image. Feeds himself.
1 ½ years to 2 years	Motor Ability: runs, kicks a ball, builds 6 cube tower (2yrs) Capable of bowel and bladder control. Language: vocabulary of more than 200 words Sleep: 12 hours at night, 1-2 hr nap	Temper tantrums (1-3yrs)	Resentment of new baby. Does opposite of what he is told (18 months).
2 years to 3 years	Motor Ability: jumps off a step, rides a tricycle, uses crayons, builds a 9-10 cube tower. Language: starts to use short sentences. Controls and explores world with language, stuttering may appear briefly. Fear of separation	Negativistic (2 ½ yrs) Violent emotions, anger Differentiates facial expressions of anger, sorrow, and joy. Sense of humour (Plays tricks)	Talks, uses "I" "me" "you" Copies parents' actions. Dependent, clinging, possessive about toys, enjoys playing alongside another child. Negativism (2½ yrs). Resists parental demands. Gives orders. Rigid insistence on sameness of routine. Inability to make decisions.
3 years to 4 years	Motor ability: Stands on one leg, jumps up and down, draws a circle and a cross (4 yrs)	Self-sufficient in many routines of home life. Affectionate toward parents. Pleasure in genital manipulation Romantic attachment to parent of opposite sex (3 to 5 yrs.) Jealousy of same-sex parent. Imaginary fears of dark, injury, etc. (3 to 5 years)	Likes to share, uses "we". Cooperative play with other children, nursery school. Imitates parents. Beginning of identification with same-sex parent, practices sex-role activities. Intense curiosity & interest in other children's bodies. Imaginary friend.

Stage	Physical and language	Emotional	Social
4 years to 5 years	Motor ability: mature motor control, skips, broad jumps, dresses themselves, copies a square and a triangle. Language: talks clearly, uses adult speech and sounds, has mastered basic grammar, relates a story, knows over 2 000 words (5 yrs)	Responsibility and guilt Feels pride in accomplishment	Prefers to play with other children, becomes competitive prefers sex-appropriate activities.

1.5 Identify factors that enable the development of children in each domain

In this section we are going to look at the factors that enable the development of children in each domain by studying some of the relevant theories:

Domains/areas of development

The domains of development are areas that are not static and continue from childhood to adulthood. The successful completion of each developmental milestone will help the child reach their full potential. The child's social, cognitive, communicative and adaptive development determines future success as much as physical development.

The three-year-old

Gross motor skills

The two most evident characteristics of the three-year-old child are movement and balance:

- Walking: The child can walk, but not yet balance on a straight line.

- Running: Running comes easily, but for the child can stop, he or she must think about it.

- Climbing stairs: When climbing stairs, the child has to steady him or herself with one hand or be held by an adult, especially when going downstairs.

- Riding a tricycle: The child is able to ride a tricycle if he or she has been exposed to this.

- Jumping with both feet from a standing position: The three-year-old can jump with both feet from a standing position, but is not able to take all on one foot or jump over an obstacle.

- Catching and throwing a ball: The child can catch and throw a ball (using both hands). He or she enjoys kicking the ball, but distance and direction differ a lot.

Fine motor skills

Fine motor skills would depend on what opportunities the child has had to explore. The following characteristics can be observed and supported:

- Holding a crayon and scribbling: The child holds a crayon in his/her fists and scribbles. If this skill is practised, then his or her grip will become refined.

- Playing with building blocks and jigsaw puzzle: The children build a tower using five or six blocks and can try to build a jigsaw puzzle.

- Threading large beads: Threading large beads are useful activities to develop fine motor muscles.

The four-year-old

Gross motor skills

Two words that best describe this age group are "energy and action".

- The child prefers running to walking, and often jumps into objects.

- The child finds it easier to climb stairs and he or she likes to jump two or three stairs at a time.

- The four-year-old can even master a running jump. Climbing ladders, trees and the jungle gym are part of the child's new skills, but the child sometimes overestimates his or her abilities.

- He or she may try throwing the ball with one hand but is still not yet accurate. However, the child can kick quite accurately, especially if he or she has been exposed to this activity.

Fine motor skills

Again, fine motor skills are dependent on what opportunities the child has had to practise these skills. The four-year-old child tends to rush through activities when told to do them, but when he or she chooses an activity, he or she may spend more time and care to perform the task.

Depending on circumstances, the child may do the following:

- Draw or paint quite detailed picture of homes and families, including animals. Pencil and crayon grip is improving.

- This is a good time to introduce scissors and the skill of cutting. This is especially for left-handers. The adult can help by placing a hand over the child's hand so that they can feel the "cutting movement".

- The child still enjoys block play, but will often enjoy it just as much to destroy what has been built. He or she can now show focus on a jigsaw puzzle for a long time and can try to build more advanced puzzles.

The five-year-old

Gross motor skills

By now most of the gross motor skills of adulthood are developed.

- The five-year-old walks and runs with confidence, has a good sense of balance and is able to estimate distance and speed.

- The child no longer bumps into the projects and can climb up and down stairs confidently.

- Most five-year-old children like to run, gallop and jump.

- They are able to concentrate on tasks like catching a beanbag or tennis ball.

- Kicking skills are well developed, and the child may begin to show talent in this area.

Fine motor skills

With enough practice, a five-year-old can be skilled and accurate in manipulating crayons, scissors, paintbrushes, puzzles and building apparatus:

- He or she is able to colour in a picture within the lines.

- The child shows energetic skills when he/she copies simple shapes.

- Blocks are standing to work in the left-to-right reading direction.

The six-year-old

Gross motor skills

The six-year-old child's sense of balance is accurate and developed.

- They can stand on one foot until the count of 10.
- They can walk backwards for about five metres.
- They can jump with both feet together.

Fine motor skills

- They can throw and catch a ball.
- They can kick a ball.
- They can hit a ball with a bat.

Middle childhood

Though children in the middle childhood stage are extremely active, in school they have to spend a lot of time in quiet activities. They may develop nervous habits such as pencil chewing, running and general fidgeting. To help children work off nervous energy they need to take frequent breaks from quiet activities.

Important facts to note:

- Children in the early stage need some stimulation because of their mental and physical exertion (effort). It is a good thing to schedule relaxing activities after strenuous ones to create mental stability.
- Fine muscle control is still not completely developed during the early stages of middle childhood, especially in boys.
- Schedule writing assignments, such as printing letters and short sentences in the beginning stage.
- Move on to tasks such as writing and art works.
- Creative art projects and learning to play musical instruments are good ways to use these new skills.
- Children may struggle to focus on fine print or small objects. The shallow shape of the eye at this stage creates far-sightedness in many children. Do the following if your schedule allows:
    - o Break up reading time into short periods to avoid eye fatigue.
    - o Do not give children of this age reading materials with fine print.
- Although children become more and more co-ordinated, they are often reckless during this stage. Because accidents are common, you should not allow children to play with anything that can be dangerous if broken.
- Bone growth is not yet complete, and the skeleton and ligaments may injure easily. Children should avoid tiring and strenuous activities to reduce the risk of injury.

1.6 Factors that impact on the development of children in each domain

There are five different developmental domains of children, which all relate to each other. They are easily referred to as the SPICE of life:

- **Social** - Refers mostly to the ability to form attachments, play with others, co-operation and sharing, and being able to create lasting relationships with others.

- **Physical** - Development of fine (small) and gross (large) motor skills.

- **Intellectual** - The process of making sense of the world around them.

- **Creative** - The development of special abilities creating talents. Music, art, writing, reading, and singing are all ways in which creative development take place.

- **Emotional** - Development of self-awareness, self-confidence, and coping with feelings as well as understanding these feelings.

The following diagram shows the developmental domains:
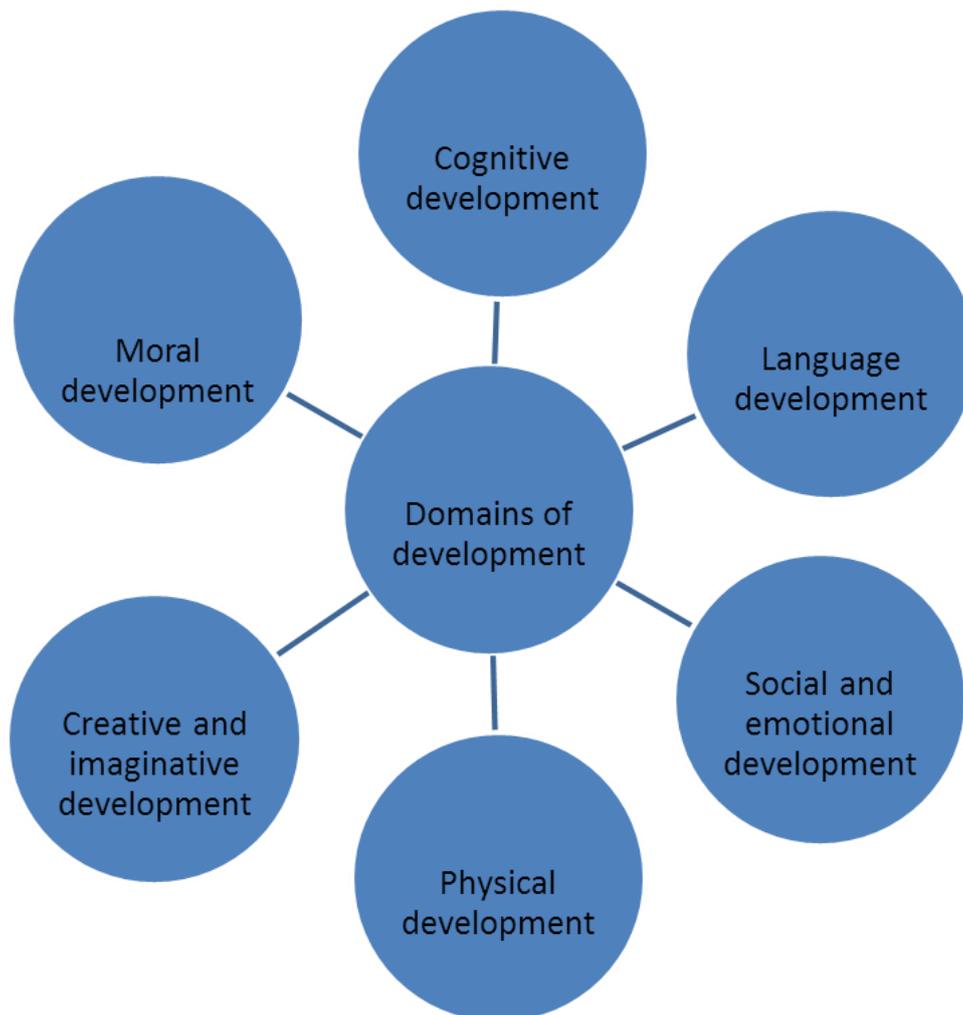
1.7 Describe how development is shaped by socio-cultural influences

- Socio-cultural learning theories have a lot to say about the influence of the environment that the child develops in. This is an influence that they will carry into their adulthood and will form a platform from which they will function for the rest of their lives. The emotional and social development environment of "growing up" determines how children handle relationships with others, and help them to better understand their own feelings.

Socio-cultural influences

This concept focuses not on the development stages as such, but rather on the overall effects that what children learn from their social environments, may have on their development.

- Children basically develop their value system from the environment in which they live.

- If children are raised by caregivers who put a strong emphasis on sharing, helping, and compassion for others, these children will probably integrate these values.

- If children are raised by caregivers who explain the difference between right and wrong actions, these children will develop the ability to distinguish between right and wrong.

Socio-economic background

Children's development may be affected by their background in the following ways:

- Girl children may be treated as less important in some cultures.

- Poverty or social disadvantage may mean that the child does not receive adequate stimulation, care or suitable models of appropriate behaviour.

- An environment without enough age-appropriate play materials may mean that the child reaches some milestones later than the norm.

- Special needs require extra attention, both at home and in the class, and they may cause problems in social relationships.

Cultural practices

- The parents or primary caregivers pass on their beliefs, values and practice to their children through modelling.

- They also reward their children for what they regard as culturally appropriate behaviour.

- The primary caregiving relationship is the most powerful way to impact beliefs, values and lifestyle practices. This happens through the process of identification: the child takes on the images that are portrayed by the caregiver. Eventually the child identifies with certain qualities of the caregiver and the environment.

1.8 Describe how development within each domain is linked to and affected by development in other domains

The domains of development are not motionless and each is inseparably linked to the other. Development in one domain influences and is influenced by development in other domains. Development in one domain can limit or facilitate development in others. Knowing these interrelations can give great insight into a child's development.

The case study below demonstrates how children can be influenced by people and environment around them.

	CASE STUDY: ROLE MODELLING
Fikile is four years old. Her mother Nomvula always wears skirts rather than jeans or trousers because she wants to be seen as valuing Xhosa tradition. Nomvula allows Fikile to wear jeans and trousers while she is a young child, but expects Fikile to also wear only skirts when she reaches puberty.	

Identification with another person means that you absorb and take on the images and qualities of that person.

Your role as ECD practitioner is not as powerful as the role of the primary caregiver. Nevertheless your role is powerful because of the amount of time you spend with the child and also because the young child is very open to learning.

In conclusion, it is obvious from the discussion of the various theories that all the domains of development are interdependent. The baby cannot learn to socialise or draw until she is physically mobile and can grasp a crayon. She cannot learn to speak until her brain has developed sufficiently (physically and cognitive development) and she has heard others speaking her home language in her environment, and seen them interacting socially. She cannot draw creatively or participate in creative and fantasy play until she has a physical foundation of skills for drawing and playing, combined with an awareness of the constancy and security of herself unchanged by fantasies and play experiences. She cannot judge an action as right or wrong until she has developed cognitively and also been a part of social interaction and understood how right and wrong affects others.

- Physical development of the baby must take place so that all systems (walking, talking, and ability to feed self and care for self, social interaction) develop to their full extent.

- Cognitive development takes place at the same time as physical development.

- Psychosocial development depends on cognitive (and therefore also on physical) development.

- Moral maturity depends on social and cognitive development.

- Creative ability depends on physical, social and cognitive development.

Class Activity 1: The development of babies, toddlers and young children

Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

Learning Unit 2
Learning resources and the occupational learning materials and context

After completing this Learning Unit, you will be able to access, use and manage suitable learning resources; manage occupational learning materials; and reflect on how characteristics of the workplace and occupational context affect learning, by successfully completing the following:

- Identify relevant learning resources.

- Use learning resources effectively and manage it through appropriate selection and cross-referencing of information and acknowledgement of sources.

- Organise and use occupational learning materials for optimum learning.

- Understand and use layout, presentation and organisational features of learning materials effectively.

- Engage technical language/terminology with and clarification sought if needed.

- Identify the sector and organisation type.

- Describe and discuss the workplace features.

- Describe and discuss the ways in which these features affect learning processes and/or application of learning.

Learning resources and occupational learning materials and context

Throughout your learning, you will discover and use a variety of learning materials,

Which training materials you use will depend partly on yourself and partly on the organisation or person who is facilitating (making possible) your learning. For example, you may be attending a course that includes a training manual; however, if you decide to add some further research on the internet, you will be using two types of learning materials.

2.1 Identify relevant learning resources

It is important to identify learning resources:
- resource centres
- a wide range of media
- internet
- other people

For each of the occupational learning materials we consider, we give a description and describe its use, benefits, and layout as well as how it is presented. We have brought all this information together in a table starting on the next page. Later we will look at organisational features and their benefits.

Learning materials	Description
Videos	Usually found in learning resource centres; can be purchased or hired from video learning organisations.
Internet	Accessed from a computer that has a modem. Search engines are used to search for information. Information can be printed out on paper.
Text– electronic or paper	Electronic versions of documentation accessed via a computer.
Handouts	Pieces of paper with written information usually given out at a training course, easy reference as they do not form part of a textbook.
Textbooks	A book with written information, usually given out a learning institution to support learning.
Charts, maps, plans and diagrams (See next table for more details)	Diagrammatic representations of information; produced either on paper or electronically.
Electronic texts such as menus, screens and links	There are two types: • text in a form that a computer can store and display on a computer screen • machine readable text is text that is stored as strings of characters and that can be displayed in a variety of formats such as MSWord documents Both types of text can be displayed in a word processing packages such as MSWord or on the internet in the format of HTML documents.

2.2 Use and manage learning resources

If you use resources in the ECD arena effectively and correctly, it may help you a lot to manage an ECD centre better. This is an ongoing exercise that needs to be updated according to new developments in technology and learning areas.

Use	Benefit	Layout	Presentation
Videos are best suited to demonstrating a new skill.	Practical demonstration of how to perform a task or skill.	Videos have an introduction, main body and conclusion, which is usually a summary of the learning points. Learning videos come with supporting documentation, which may be notes, handouts or exercises.	Videos are presented either by a person or a group of people (presenters). Often they include role plays, which are demonstration of skills or processes.
The internet is best suited for searching for information. Up-to-date information is available.	Up to date information; access to information from across the world.	Web page with graphics and hyperlinks.	Presented as a page with scroll bars to scroll across or up and down a web page. Information is presented on the page using words and diagrams, with hyperlinks to additional information or web page.
Texts are best suited for reading up information.	Easily stored and referred to as and when required; electronic texts can be used as guide for future use.	Text formatted using organisational features such as headings, sub-headings and paragraphs.	Presented on paper or electronically.
Handouts are suited for use as supporting documentation, exercises or instructions.	Easily stored and referred to as and when required.	Text formatted using organisational features such as headings, sub-headings and paragraphs.	Written on a particular topic; presented on paper; can also be presented electronically either in text or on web pages; electronic versions can be printed.
Textbooks are suited for transferring information to a learner.	Easily stored and referred to as and when required; comprehensive set of information contained in one book.	Pages of text laid out. Using organisational features such as titles, chapters, paragraphs and glossary.	Pages of text are presented bound with either a soft or hard cover; can also be presented electronically either in text or on web pages; electronic versions can be printed.
These materials are best suited for visual representation of information.	Often make a topic or process easier to understand, since they are visual representations of information; not just words.	Diagrammatic representations of information.	Presented either on paper or electronically in text or on web pages; electronic versions can be printed.
Electronic texts are well suited for transferring knowledge; formatting, information, and transmitting information electronically.	Unlike hard copy text (text that is typed or printed on paper), electronic text can be edited (changed), formatted, printed and sent electronically via e-mail.	In the case of word processing documents such as those prepared using MSWord, text is formatted using organisational features such as headings, sub-headings and paragraphs.	Presented either in an electronic document format such as MSWord or in HTML format on web pages, via the internet HTML stands for "hypertext mark-up language'. It is used to structure text and multimedia documents and to set up hypertext links between documents, used extensively on the World Wide Web. A hypertext link (hyperlink or simply a link) is a reference in a hypertext document to another document or other resource. You can click on it to fetch, or displayed the linked resource as document.

2.3 Manage language features and conventions for learning purposes

Good language skills result in effective communication skills. All young children arrive at your centre with a basic foundation in knowledge and learning that they acquired at home. Development and learning begins in the first language, and it is in this language that children begin to construct

their knowledge and form meaningful communicative relationships. The various stages that we mention below will give a better picture into how important this skill is for effective development.

Stages of language development

The baby's first word is an exciting event in a parent's life. It is an important milestone that usually occurs around 10–18 months.

The first words are usually verbs and nouns and often refer to the mother or father, toys, food, body parts, animals and household items.

At **around 13 months**, a baby may string two words together in sequences that resemble sentences.

Syntax, the set of rules for combining words, is learned during the early phases of this stage; this syntax, however, is very basic.

Comments/sentences that we may hear during this stage are:

- cat go
- me want
- give mummy

From two word strings, the child moves on to more complicated sentences that, although they are not always grammatically correct, have very clear meaning.

Examples:

- Daddy get toy
- I eat soup
- Lebo fall down

Knowledge of grammar and semantics (meaning of words and word endings and pre-fixes to form plurals and past tense) develops quickly as the child uses language to express mental processes.

By the third year, children may have acquired nearly 900 words in their vocabulary.

Young children are very competent talkers and often enjoy talking in front of groups. Sharing time gives children an opportunity to practise their speaking and listening. Some children are naturally talkative, others are quieter.

If you work with this age group, less confident children may need your help to come up with a "sharing" topic such as a new pet or a special outing. You will also come across children who talk about inappropriate things, such as private details of family life, or who try to outdo other children.

Also, remember that children at this age may have their own grammatical rules that are not easily changed, for example they might use *gived* for *gave* or mousses for mice. Do not correct these mistakes too much at this stage: the child may not pay attention to your efforts and you may inhibit them from speaking spontaneously.

Listening, speaking, reading or writing should be taught in a relevant and meaningful ways and should not be separated from the context in which the language is used.

Age	Nature of development
3–6 months	Cooing
6–10 months	Babbling
10–18 months	One word
18–24 months	Two word string
2–3 years	Sentences of three words or more

Additional language acquisition: Home language first

The term "additional language" means an extra language that the child learns in addition to the main language that is spoken at home.

Example:

If a child speaks isiZulu at home, but Sesotho at the ECD centre, the Sesotho is an additional language for the child. If a child speaks isiZulu at home, but during school holidays she/he visits grandparents in Mafikeng, then Setswana is an additional language for the child.

The process of acquiring an additional language is in many ways similar to the process of acquiring a main (first) language. This is because the same mental processes take place. When you acquire language, it is a subconscious process. You are so focused on getting the message across that you are not even aware that you are learning the language.

Language learning, on the other hand, is a conscious process during which you study new vocabulary, grammar and sentence construction.

It is a good idea to expose the child to a variety of familiar and unfamiliar language materials such as picture books, educational games, or flash cards with words.

Simple repetition does not necessarily help the child to acquire an additional language; however, it is essential to use and hear the language in context.

Language is acquired as a whole – not part by part. It is multi-sensory learning process that involves both the left and the right hemispheres (halves) of the brain.

The starting point for acquiring new concepts should be in the main language, or home language.

Once the child is confident in the home or main language, then learning and understanding an additional language will not be a problem.

As an ECD practitioner, you should arrange activities such as singing or reading poems and stories in the children's main language as far as possible.

2.4 Organise and use occupational learning materials

Learning aids in a classroom and ECD centre are key tools to help children to develop optimally. The occupational learning materials could include:
- videos
- internet
- texts
- hand outs
- text books
- charts
- maps
- plans
- diagrams

- electronic texts (menus, screens, links, etc)

If these tools are organised and used effectively, it will help to ensure that the ECD programme is valuable to the practitioner.

Charts

A chart is a graphical representation of data. We often use charts to make large quantities of data easier for readers to understand at first glance.

Charts can represent data in several ways. Some of the different methods are listed below. The way a chart represents data depends on the type of data that is presented. For example, a customer satisfaction response may be measured in percentages – the percentage of customers satisfied, not satisfied, and unsure. In this instance, a pie chart may be most appropriate. A pie chart is visually attractive and makes it easy to compare data: the number of "satisfied" responses can be easily compared to the number of "dissatisfied" responses by simply comparing the size of each sector.

Let's look at five different types of chart, namely:

- bar chart
- pie chart
- histogram
- flowchart
- Gantt chart
- bar chart

A bar chart is a chart with rectangular bars. The length of each bar is normally in proportion to the size of the value it presents. If the scale on the chart doesn't start at zero, the bars are not proportional. In some cases, starting at zero will not show the differences between the bars clearly, so we rather focus on the relevant range of values.

- Pie charts

A pie chart is a circular chart that is divided into segments, and that illustrates relative sizes or frequencies.

In a pie chart, the area of each segment is proportional to the quantity it represents.

Together the wedges create a full disk. A chart with one or more wedges separated from the rest of the disk is called an exploded pie chart.

- Histogram

A histogram is similar to a bar chart and is used to display statistics. So a histogram is the graphical version of a table that shows what proportion of cases fall into each category. The categories are usually neighbouring intervals of some variable, for example the months of the year or increasing amounts.

As an example, look at the figures in the table below, which are adapted from data collected during a census. About 105 000 people were asked how long it took them to get to work, and their responses were divided into categories: less than five minutes, five to ten minutes, and so on. (Column 4 gives the same figures as column 3, but here they are expressed as a percentage and rounded off.)

Commuting Time Figures Taken From Census Data			
Time in minutes	No. in interval	(No. in interval) ÷ (total no.)	%
0-5	4 180	0. 039812	3,98%
5-10	13 687	0. 130361	13,04%
10-15	13 618	0. 177326	17,13%
15-20	19 634	0. 187003	18,70%
20-25	17 981	0. 171259	17,13%
25-30	7 190	0. 068481	6,85%
30-35	16 369	0. 155906	15,59%
35-40	3 212	0. 030593	3,06%
40-45	4 122	0. 03926	3,93%
Total:	104 993		100%

In the histogram figure below that shows travelled time, the area of each bar is equal to the total number of people in that category. So the total area of all bars is equal to the total number of people in the survey (104 993) (We plotted the figures in columns 1 and 2)
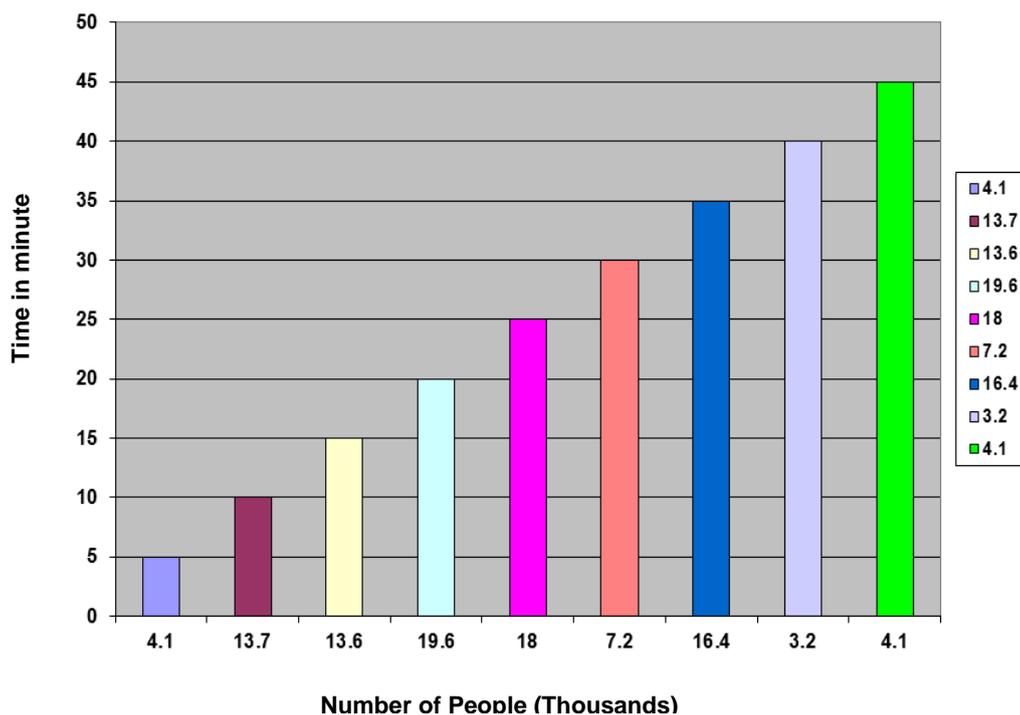
An interesting feature of this histogram is the spike (sudden rise) in the 30 to 35 minutes category. This is probably just because half an hour is a common unit of informal time measurement, so people who travelled for times that were perhaps a little less than or a little greater than 30 minutes might answer "30 minutes".

Now let's show the same data in a slightly different way. In the figure below, the area of each bar is equal to the proportion of all the people in the survey who fall into that category.
So the total of all the bars is equal to 1, or 100%. (Here we plotted the figures in columns 1 and 4 of the first table.)

This figure differs from the previous figure only in the vertical scale. The purpose of the histogram will determine which form one uses. If the absolute numbers are important, then the first form is more useful. The second form is more useful if proportions are important.
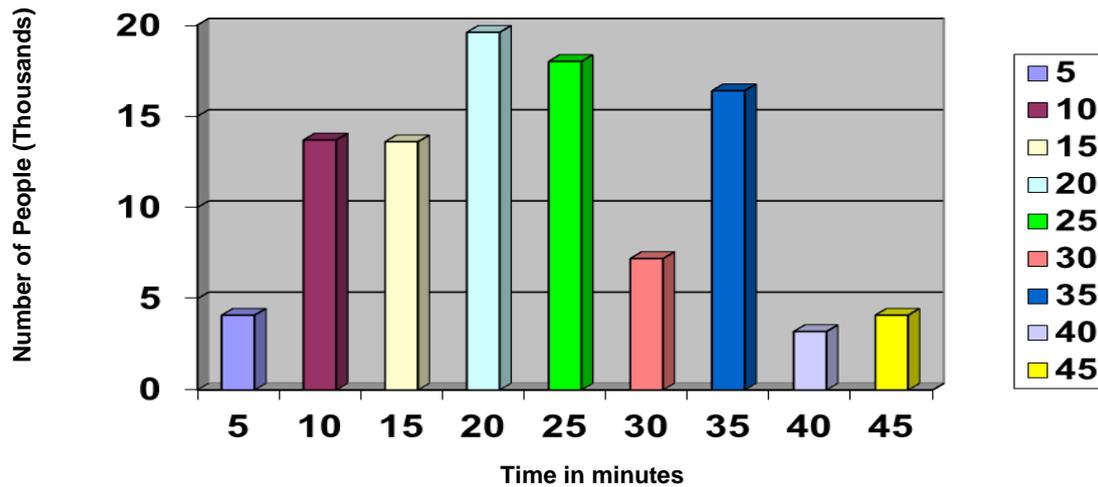
- Flowchart

A flowchart (also spelled flow-chart or flow chart) is a schematic representation of a process. Flowcharts are commonly used in business or economic presentations to give the audience an overview of a process or to find flaws and bottlenecks.

Flowcharts may be used to show e. g. instructions for assembling a bicycle, an attorney's timeline for a court case, a diagram in the work flow in a vehicle manufacturing plant, and the decisions you have to take when doing a tax calculation.

- Gantt chart

A Gantt chart is a popular type of bar chart that shows how projects, schedules, and other time-related systems progress over time. In project management, a Gantt chart shows how various parts of a project are interrelated and how each part is progressing.

- Maps

A map is a two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional space. Most maps give a scale, which indicates the relationship between the distances on the map or model and the corresponding distances in reality or the original. For example, a map of scale 1: 50 000 shows a distance of 50 000 cm (=500 m) as 1 cm on a map, in other words a kilometre is shown as 2 cm. if an architect designs a building that is to be 30 m in height, and builds a model of it on the scale of 1: 25, the model will be 1. 2 m high.

- Plans

A plan prescribes proposed methods of how to move towards, or achieving one or more objectives, such as when completing a project or running a business.

There are many types of plans. Let's look at business plans and marketing plans in more detail.

A *marketing plan* is a written document that details the actions needed to achieve a specified marketing objective for a product or service. The marketing plan can cover one year (in which case it is an *annual marketing plan*), or up to five years. A marketing plan may be part of an overall business plan.

A *business plan* is a summary of how a business owner, manager, or entrepreneur plans to organise a commercial venture and implement the actions required for it to succeed. It is a written explanation of the company's business model.

Business plans are used internally (inside the organisation) for management and planning. They are also used to convince outsiders such as banks or investors to invest money in the venture. In general, a business plan must:

- describe and explain the current situation

- specify the expected results (objectives)

- identify the resources that will be needed (including financing, time and skills)

- describe the actions that will need to be taken to achieve the objectives

- describe a method of monitoring results and adjusting the plan where necessary

There are many formats for marketing and business plans, and every company does it a little differently. The example outline below is a very comprehensive format for a 30- to 40-page business plan. The sections would be as follows:

1. Title page

2. Executive summary

3. Current situation

4. Competition and market share

5. Current situation – Consumer analysis

6. Current situation – Internal

7. Summary of situation analysis

8. Marketing strategy

9. Financial summary

10. Appendix

- Diagrams

A diagram is a simplified and structured visual representation of concepts and ideas. Diagrams of networks are some of the common types of diagrams you may have come across.

2.5 Understand and use layout, presentation and organisational features of learning materials

Organisational layout features are parts of text (like heading and spacing) that help to organise the text to make it the attractive, more reader friendly and easier to explain what they are used for.

Features	Definition	Purpose
Appendices or addenda	Additional material that is collected and added at the back of a book or document.	To list information that complements or enhances, but is not part of, the topic
Caption	A brief description accompanying an illustration or picture	To give the details of the picture
Chapter	A subdivision of a written work, usually numbered and titled	To state the subject of the next that follows
Conclusion	An ending statement of a document	To indicate the end of a book or document
Contents (or table of contents)	A list of divisions (chapters, sections or articles) and the pages on which they start	To give the reader an overview of the divisions and their page numbers

Features	Definition	Purpose
Diagram	A drawing intended to explain how something works; a drawing showing the relation between the parts	To explain a process visually in order to help reader understands
Font size and type	A specific size and style of printed characters within a type family	To add visual appeal to text and draw attention to important parts
Foreword	A short introductory essay that comes before the text of a book	To introduce the book
Glossary	An alphabetical list of technical terms in a specialised field of knowledge usually published as an appendix to a text on that field	To explain the meaning of words
Graphics	Diagrams, photographs or other visual representations in a printed publication	To create interest in the text, aid understanding or add visual appeal for the reader
Heading	A line of text in an emphasised font to indicate what the passage below it is about	To indicate what the passage below it is about
Hyperlink	An electronic link from a hypertext file to another location or file, typically activated by clicking on a highlighted word or icon at a particular location on a computer screen	To link additional information to the text without actually including it
Icon	A graphic symbol (usually a simple picture) to represent a program, command, concept or other piece of information	To create visual appeal for the reader; and signpost important features
Index	An alphabetical listing of names and topics along with page numbers where they are mentioned; appears at the back of the book	To enable the reader to find discussions of concepts in the text easily
Introduction	The first section of text, which introduces the topic	To lead the reader into the rest of the document or book and draw them into the topic
Layout	The plan or design of the text and graphics	To present text and graphics in an attractive and reader-friendly way
Paragraph	A distinct subdivision of a text, usually covering only one main idea	To separate ideas or thoughts so that the reader can process the information more easily
Summary	A brief statement that presents the main points concisely	To sum up and conclude all major points discussed in the text
Table	A set of data arranged in rows and columns	To show information in a simple format that is easy to read; to enable the reader to pick out relevant information easily for comparison
Title	A general or descriptive heading for a section of a written work	To inform the reader of the topic or theme of the text
Visuals	Visual representations (photos, illustrations, cartoons, graphs, diagrams) in a printed publication	To make the document or book more visually appealing

2.6 Engage with technical language/terminology

As an ECD practitioner, you need to be aware of the constant changing world of technology that can help you to be successful in your career. You are well aware that development does not stop when you become an adult. Learn, engage (get involved), ask and empower yourself continuously within the learning environment.

The table below presents some of the more commonly used terms that relate to online and learning environments.

Language or terminology	Explanation
CD-ROM (Compact disc read-only memory)	A CD-ROM is a flat disc with digital information encoded on it in a spiral from the centre to the outside edge. It is used for strong digital data, although CDs were originally invented for digital audio. A CD-ROM drive, required to read information on the CD-ROM, is a standard component of most modern personal computer.
Computer-based training (CBT)	Courses developed for computer-based training provide simulation and multimedia interaction to achieve training goals. CBT is usually distributed on CD-ROMs, on the internet or as applications installed on a company's computer network
E-mail	A system of world-wide electronic communication in which a computer user can compose a message at one computer and send it electronically to the receiver's computer
HTML	A programming language (consisting of tags and rules)
Hypertext document	Machine-readable text that is organised so that related items of information are connected by electronic links
Instructor-led training	Training that requires an instructor to be present, in either a physical or a virtual classroom, to present the material and be available for questions and discussion
Internet	A world-wide network of computers that link to each other to enable users to communicate and exchange data
Intranet	A restricted computer network, a private or internal network found with organisations
Intranet-based training (IBT)	Training that is accessed via a company's internal network and (usually) viewed with web browsers
Machine-readable text	Electronic text that is stored as strings of characters and that can be displayed in a variety of formats
Multi-media	Different mediums of communication combined into one presentation (text and graphics and sound, etc.)
Virtual learning	The process of learning over the internet without face-to-face contact between trainers and students
Web-based training (WBT)	Training based on content that has been published to the internet. With current technology, this content can include multimedia and animation, online assessments, e-mail forums and chat rooms
Web browser	A computer program used to view HTML documents, like Web pages

How to find help with technical language and terminology
What can you do if you hear or read technical language or terminology that you do not understand? Here are some ways in which you can seek clarity.

If you don't have internet access
Look up the meaning in a dictionary or visit your local library and find books on the subject.

If you have internet access
Use an internet dictionary to search for a definition or meaning of the word or phrase.
You can find an excellent internet dictionary on the website:
http: //encyclopaedia. thefreedictionary. com.

Here are the steps to follow to search for a word:

- Log on the internet and go to the website:

  http: //encyclopedia. thefreedictionary. com.

- Type in the word on which you seek clarification in the word search box as shown below:

2.7 Reflect on the characteristics of the workplace and occupational context affecting learning

It is important to be able to reflect on (ponder, think about) how the following characteristics of the workplace and occupational context affect learning, e. g.:

- environmental features
- technological resources
- communication resources
- communication strategies
- multilingual needs in relation to client or colleague interaction

The table below looks at each type of business in turn – features of workplaces and their impact on learning. In column 2 you can see what products or services each type focuses on. Column 3 summarises the features of the particular environment and column 4 looks at how these features affect the learning processes needed in that workplace. The skills levy legislation referred to in the next two tables is:

- The Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998
- The Skills Development Regulations 2001
- The related Guidelines

Occupational environment	Workplace or occupational focus	Features of the environment	Impact on learning processes and/or application
Services (Organisations that offer services to the public or other businesses) **Examples**: Lawyers, customer care divisions, accountants, municipalities	Delivery of services – Customer services face-to-face, electronically or telephonically	Technology Systems Procedures Service-oriented Clients	Learning is directed towards technology and soft skills, learning is both practical and theoretical.
Manufacturing (Organisations that manufacture a product to sell to the public or other businesses) **Examples**: Clothing and equipment manufacturers	Production Packaging Delivery	Technology Processes Machinery Sales and marketing Business focused	Learning is directed towards production or technology. Training is practical. Because of the nature of the skills, there are opportunities for on-the-job learning. Recognition of prior learning (RPL) means that "formal" qualifications are not essential.
Financial (Organisations offering financial services or products to the public or other businesses) **Examples**: Banks, insurance companies, medical companies	Financial procedures and systems Delivery of services and products Customer service: face-to-face, electronically and telephonically Regulations	Technology Systems Procedures Service oriented Sales and marketing Clients	Learning is directed towards product or service, soft skills and technology. Learning is practical and theoretical. The approach to learning is generally progressive, which creates new opportunities. Learning is affected by regulations and necessary accreditation of sales staff.
Educational (Institution offering education services) **Examples**: Schools, companies, universities	Learning Academic Delivery of services and products Skills levy legislation	Technology Outcomes-based Methodology Public Business	Learning is outcomes focused Learning is directed towards instruction Learning is practical and theoretical Skills levy legislation encourages training staff.

2.8 Identify the sector and organisation type

Organisations are made of various groups of people who are using their particular industry skills and resources for a service or manufactured products. The various types are listed and explained below:

Type of environment	Workplace or occupational focus
Government (the ruling political party or coalition of political parties in a parliamentary system, who serve the public)	Development and delivery of social and economic policies Foreign investment Legislation
Parastatal (a business that is owned or controlled wholly or party, by the government) Examples: Telkom, Eskom	Delivery of social and economic policies. Delivery of service. Customer service: face-to-face, electronically Systems
Heavy or light industry (organisations that operate in an industrial environment) Examples: Machinery manufacturers	Production Packaging Delivery Skills levy legislation
Large organisation (large organisations that offer services on products to the public or other businesses) Examples: Woolworths, Pick "n Pay	Delivery of services and products. Customer service: face-to-face, electronically and telephonically. Systems Procedures Regulations Skills levy legislation
Small business (small businesses that offer services or products, on a small scale in terms of production numbers, to the public or other businesses) Examples: Home industries (like carpet cleaning), handymen, ink refilling businesses	Delivery of services and products Customer service: face-to-face, electronically and telephonically Production Delivery Department on number of employees: Skills levy legislation

2.9 Describe and discuss the workplace features and the ways in which these features affect learning processes and/or application of learning

If you work within a particular type of organisational arena will build upon certain skills that are only found within that sector. Some of the skills can be used across various sectors. In the table below we show how these are inter-related and how they are applied in the various types of environment.

Type of environment	Features of the environment	Impact on learning processes and/or application
Government (the ruling political party or coalition of political parties in a parliamentary system, who serve the public)	Technology Regulation Service delivery Procedures Public	Learning is directed towards technology, soft skills, policy and procedures. Learning is theoretical. The changing environment creates opportunities for learning.
Parastatal (a business that is owned or controlled wholly or partly, by the government) Examples: Telkom, Eskom	Technology Regulation Service delivery Systems Procedures Public	Learning is directed towards technology, soft skills, policy and procedures. Learning is theoretical. The changing environment creates opportunities for learning.
Heavy or light industry (organisations that operate in an industrial environment) Examples: Machinery manufacturers	Technology Processes Machinery Sales and marketing Business-focused	Learning is directed towards production or technology. Training is mainly practical. Because of the nature of the skills, there are opportunities for on-the-job learning. Prior learning is recognised, so "formal" qualification not essential. Skills levy legislation encourages training of staff.
Large organisation (large organisations that offer services on products to the public or other businesses). Examples: Woolworths, Pick "n Pay.	Technology Systems Procedures Service-oriented Sales and marketing Clients	Learning is directed towards product or service, soft skills and technology. Learning is practical and theoretical. The approach to learning is generally progressive, which creates new opportunities. Skills levy legislation encourages training of staff.
Small business (small businesses that offer services or products, on a small scale in terms of production numbers, to the public or other businesses) Examples: Home industries (like carpet cleaning), handymen, ink refilling businesses	Service-oriented Sales and marketing clients	Learning opportunities are on a smaller scale On-the-job training and mentoring. Learning is directed towards product or service, soft skills and technology. Learning is practical and theoretical. Skills levy legislation (if application) encourages training of staff.

Conclusion

Learning can be defined formally as the act, process, or experience of gaining knowledge or skills. In contrast, memory can be defined as the capacity of storing, retrieving, and acting on that knowledge.

Learning helps us to change from beginners to experts and enables us to gain new knowledge and abilities.

Learning strengthens the brain by building new nerve pathways and increasing connections that we can use when we want to learn more, (More complex definitions of learning include references to comprehension and mastery through experience or study.)

Learning is important because no one is born with the ability to function competently as an adult in society. Amazingly enough, people can learn from the moment of birth.

Learning can and should be a lifelong process and is certainly not limited to school, company or university activities.

We constantly try to make sense of our experiences and keep searching for information, knowledge and meaning. In essence, we continue to learn.

In order to learn effectively and successfully in the workplace, we need to:

- access, use and manage suitable learning resources
- formulate and use learning strategies
- manage occupational learning materials
- lead and function in a team
- understand how characteristics of the workplace and occupational context affect learning

In today's business environment, organisations that can find better ways for their staff to learn, will get ahead. Strong minds fuel strong organisations. Companies must make the most of the natural learning styles of their people and then build systems to satisfy those needs.

Education is a companion which no misfortune can depress; no crime can destroy, no
Enemy can alienate, no repression can enslave.

Joseph Addison (1672-1719)

Class Activity 2: Learning resources and the occupational learning materials and context

Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

Learning Unit 3
Formulate and use learning strategies

After completing this Learning Unit, you will be able to formulate and use learning strategies, by successfully completing the following:

- Formulate learning strategies by selection of specific tried techniques.

- Summarise and use information in the learning process.

- Synthesise and contextualise answers pertaining to relevant questions.

- Read/view texts for detail, interpret, analyse and synthesise it for a given context.

- Interpret, analyse and synthesise verbal interaction for a given context.

- Ensure that learning takes place through communicating with others in groups or as individuals.

Formulate and use learning strategies

There are various strategies you can use to enhance (improve or add to) your learning.

Some examples are:

- brainstorming
- group analysis
- peer and self-assessment
- probing
- mind mapping
- note taking
- memorising
- word association
- underlining
- skimming
- scanning

In this module we will look at each of these strategies that can help us to learn more effectively.

3. 1 Formulate learning strategies

Let's look at each of the learning strategies that you can use to become an effective learner:

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is an organised approach that is used to produce creative ideas by letting the mind think without interruption. You first define a problem or idea and then let your brain come up with anything related to the topic – no matter how unlikely or "way out" a suggestion may sound.

You can brainstorm either individually or in a group. In group brainstorming sessions, the participants generally share their ideas with one another as soon as they "bubble up". Someone then records all these ideas.

The key to brainstorming is that you don't interrupt the thought process. As ideas come to the mind, they are noted. This again stimulates the development of further ideas.

When brainstorming, it is essential that all participants do not criticise any ideas that are mentioned. Instead of immediately thinking of what might be wrong with an idea, the participants should rather focus on extending or adding to it, while reserving criticism for a later stage of the process.

- Brainstorming procedure

Here is a summary of the procedure for brainstorming. It is important to make sure that all participants are aware of the procedure - especially the "no criticism" rule.

- In a small or large group select a leader and a recorder (they may be the same person).
- Define the problem or idea you want to brainstorm. Make sure everyone is clear about the topic that is being explored.

- Set up the rules about the session. They should include:

- letting the leader have control

- allowing everyone to contribute

- ensuring that no one will insult, demean or evaluate another participant or his or her response

- emphasising that no answer is wrong

- recording each answer unless it is a repeat of a previous idea

- setting a time limit and stopping when that time is up

- Start the brainstorming. Have the leader select members of the group to share their answers. The recorder should write down all responses, if possible where everyone can see them. Make sure no one tries to evaluate or criticise any answers until the brainstorming time is completed.

- Once you have finished brainstorming, go through the results and begin to evaluate the responses.

Some guidelines to follow when you examine the responses include:

- looking for any answers that are repeated or similar

- grouping similar concepts together

- eliminating responses that are definitely not appropriate

Now that you have narrowed your list down, discuss the remaining responses as a group.

Group analysis

An analysis is a detailed evaluation of something, literally it means "taking apart". Analysing usually involves breaking the subject down into its various parts and then describing the parts and their relationship to the whole.

So group analysis of a subject means that a group of people take that subject and explore the different parts of it. For example, if the subject is learning, they will explore adult learning, child learning, the process of learning, learning styles and so on.

The benefit of the group in the analysis process is that members of the group bring different insights and points of view, thus stimulating one another and sparking off differing ideas and thoughts.

Self-assessment

Self-assessment is a process in which a learner is responsible for assessing his or her own skills and understanding.

Educators recommend self-assessment:

- to help learners to examine their own work critically, taking an outsider's point of view and applying assessment criteria

- to help learners to improve their work by looking at it quite objectively (not too strongly influenced by their own feelings) once they think they have completed it

Peer assessment

Two or more people are peers if they are in the same social situation or have the same abilities. For example, we can think of the learners in the same class or studying the same subject as peers. Therefore *peer assessment* in a subject is the assessment of a student's work by another student studying the same subject.

Peer assessment is useful:

- to help each learner to get some feedback on their work from someone else

- to give the learner some insight into the criteria that are assessing

- to allow learners to see the work that other learners are doing on the same topics (this applies when everyone in a class are involved in assessing each other's work)

Types of assessment

There are two types of assessment, and they serve different purposes. These types are:

- summative assessment

- formative assessment

Summative assessment is used to grade learners and is generally done towards the end of a course.

Formative assessment is used to help learning; it is *not* used for grading, and is normally done in the early stages of learning. It gives the teacher and the learner an indication of the learner's strengths and indicates areas that need extra attention during the course.

How to do self- or peer assessment

To begin, we need to explain some terms we used to describe methods or principles of assessing, namely:

- criterion-referenced assessment

- norm-referenced assessment

With criterion-referenced assessment, you assess the learner's achievements by comparing them to the given assessment criteria and seeing whether each criterion has been met!

By contrast, with norm-referenced assessment, you assess the learner by comparing their achievements to those of other learners. In other words, the point of reference in this case is what the average learner in that group is able to achieve. (A *norm* is a generally accepted standard or average.)

For self-assessment and peer assessment, you have to base your assessment on given assessment criteria. It is not appropriate for learners to assess each other in ways that compare one learner's skills to those of other learners. One cannot assume that the learner who is assessing is familiar with the standards that have been achieved by other learners.

In other to apply criterion referenced assessment, you should understand the criteria and be able to apply them to the work you are assessing.

Assessing involves three essential skills:

- giving effective feedback

- applying a standards to the work assessed, according to some criterion

- deriving a grade from assessments on various criteria (to derive means to get something from something else)

Let's look more closely at that first point. **Effective feedback** ideally fulfils three objectives:

- It tells the recipient (the learner who is receiving the feedback) what is "right or good" about their work.

- It tells the recipient what is "wrong' or "bad" about their work.

- It tells the recipient how they might start correcting the defects (gaps or mistakes) in their work, or simply improving it, without reducing its strengths.

Valid and reliable assessment

Assessment should be valid and reliable. What do we mean by these terms?

- A *valid* assessment is one that measures what it is intended to measure. For example, it would not be valid to assess deriving skills through a written test (alone); the most valid way to assess deriving skills would be through a combination of practical assessment and a written test.

- *Reliability* relates to the consistency of an assessment. (If something is consistent, you can depend on it to always behave in the same way.) So a reliable assessment is one that consistently achieves the same results with the same or similar learners. Various factors affect reliability. These include ambiguous (vague) questions, too many options within a question paper, unclear marking instructions and poorly trained markers.

Although validity and reliability are the most important measures of an assessment, there are other considerations, such as:

- practicality (which relates to the feasibility of the assessment in other words whether it can actually be done without major difficulties)

- fairness (which relates to its application across various groups, such as males and females)

- authenticity (which relates to its realism)

Probing/Questioning

To probe something is to question or examine it thoroughly and closely. Probing, therefore is the process of questioning or examining.

Probing involves questioning. There are two types of questions to use in probing, namely open-ended and closed questions.

Open-ended questions are used when we want more detailed information. They lead to an "open" answer – a lot of information about and around the subject. Open-ended questions often begin with *how, what or in what way*. Let's look at some examples of each of these in turn.

- How questions

  o How did you decide which resources to use?

  o How did you decide that?

  o How do you think this will turn out?

  o How does this affect you?

  o How do you conclude that?

  o How were you involved?

- How did you go about researching your topic?
- How does this work?

- What questions

  - What made you choose X technique as topic as opposed to Y technique?
  - What would you like to do?
  - What is still outstanding?
  - What is the problem?
  - What do you plan to do?
  - What information do you have?
  - What would you like me to do?
  - What has been done?

- In what way questions

  - In what way did it help you knowing?
  - In what way do you think we can best?
  - In what way do you believe?
  - In what way could we improve?

Closed questions

Closed questions start with a verb. They ask for a "yes" or "no" answer and are useful to check details and to confirm facts.

Here are some examples:

- Have you tried asking her for information?
- May we meet tomorrow at 10:00 for a brainstorming session?
- Have you tried to?
- Would you like me to show how I did it?

Mind maps

Mind maps work the way the brain works, which is not in nice neat lines! Memory is naturally connective, not linear (organised in lines, straightforward). Any idea probably has thousands of links in your mind. Mind maps let you record and reinforce those associations and links.

(If you don't know what mind maps are, take a quick look at the example on the next pages before you read on, just to get a general impression.)

The mind remembers key words and images, not sentences – try to recall just one sentence from memory! Mind maps use just key words and key images, which mean that you can fit a lot more information on to a page.

Because mind maps are more visual and show associations between key words, they are much easier to remember than linear notes. This makes them a very good tool for revision.

When you draw a mind map, start from the middle of the page rather than the top left-hand corner. This way you can work outwards in all directions. The organisation of a mind map is meant to reflect the way your own brain organises ideas. Mind maps are easy to review. Regular review

reinforces your memory of the topic. It is best to review the mind map in your imagination first (or draw it out on paper from memory), then go back and check on those areas that were hazy.

Our minds remember best what stands out easily.

EXAMPLES

Step 1

Write down the most important word or short phrase or symbol in the centre of your page. This is your central concept. Think about it, circle it.

Garbage

Extinct

Water pollution

Recycle

Coral Reef

Environmental Action

Transportation

Oil sticks

Reduce

Reuse

Air pollution

Action

Pollution

3 Rs

Endangered species
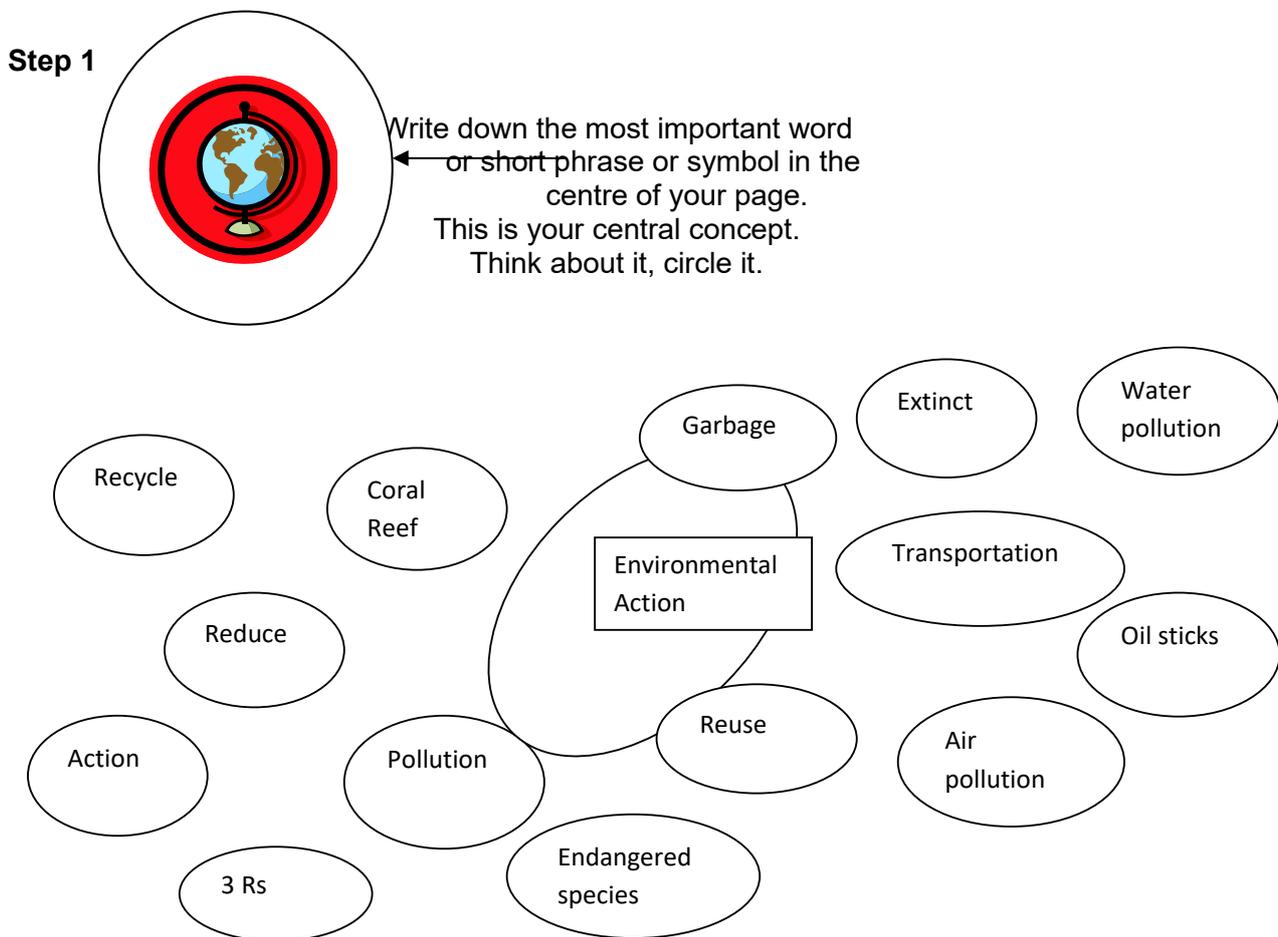
Step 2
Write down any thoughts that you have about the central concept. Note these other important concepts and their words outside the circle.
Edit this first phase:
- Think about how the outside words relate to the word in the centre.
- Erase, edit, and shorten words to key ideas.
- Shift important items closer to each other for better organisation.
- If possible, use colour to organise information.
- Use words to link different concepts to clarify their relationships.
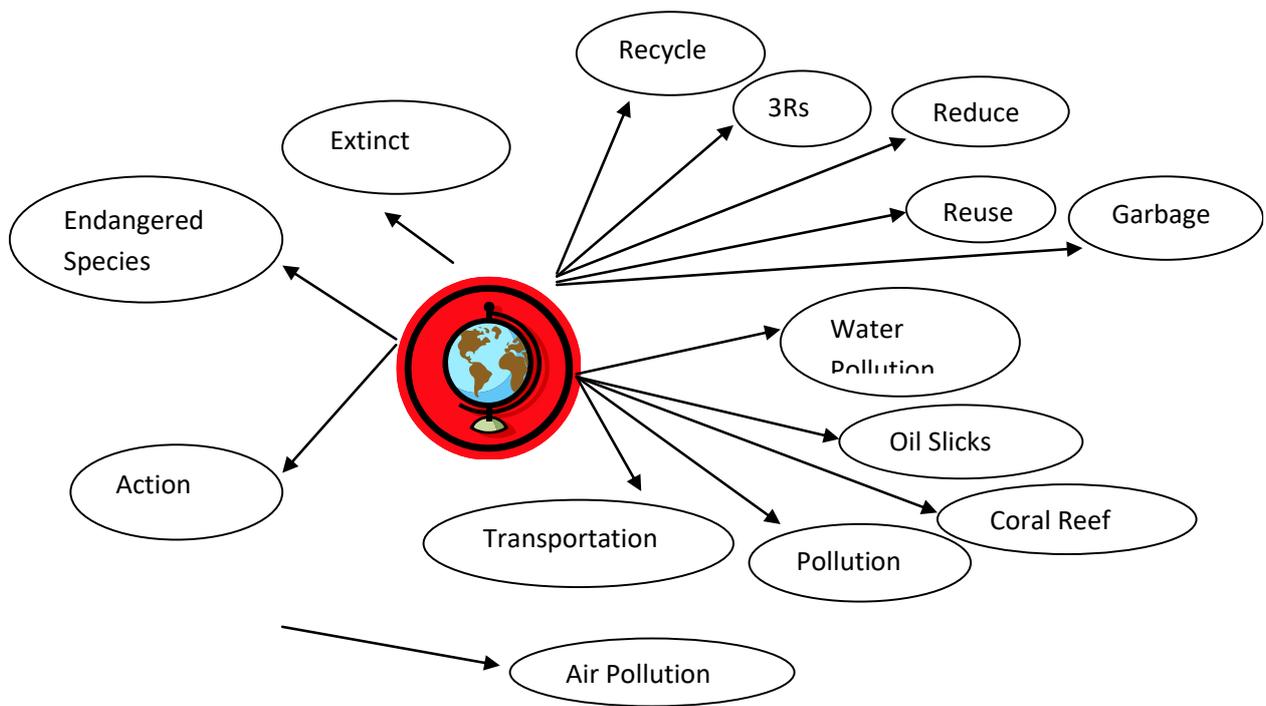
Step 3

- Freely and quickly add other key words and ideas (you can always rub out later).
- Combine concepts to expand your map or break boundaries. Develop in directions the topic takes you – don't be limited by how you feel you "should" do the map.
- As you expand your map, become more specific or detailed.
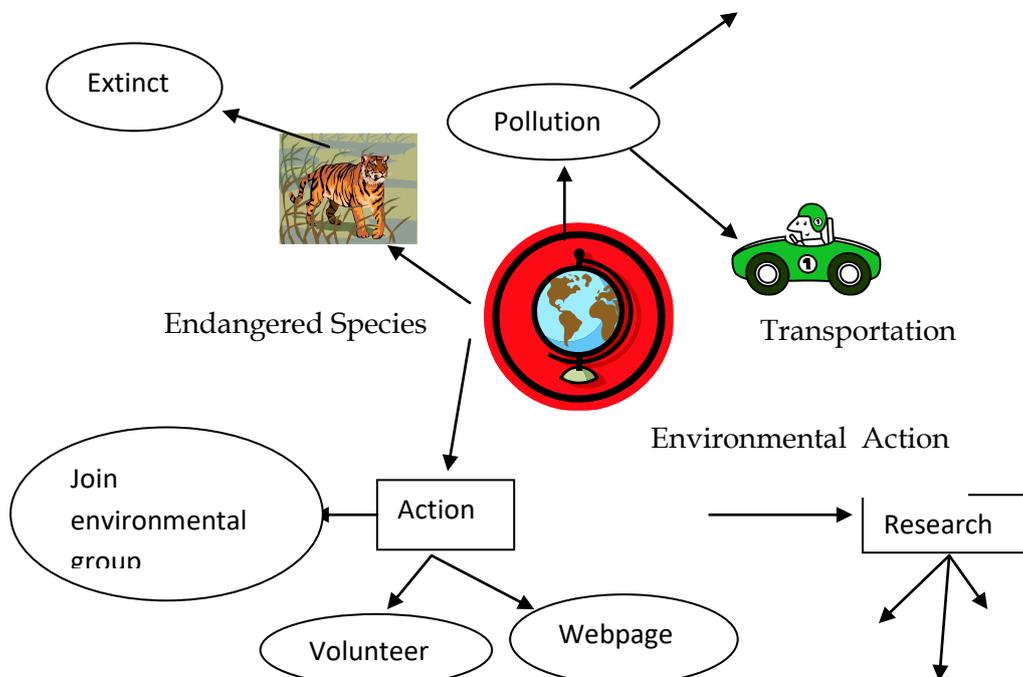
Step 4

- Set the map aside for a while.
- Later, continue to develop and revise it.
- Stop and think about relationships you are developing.
- Expand the map over time.
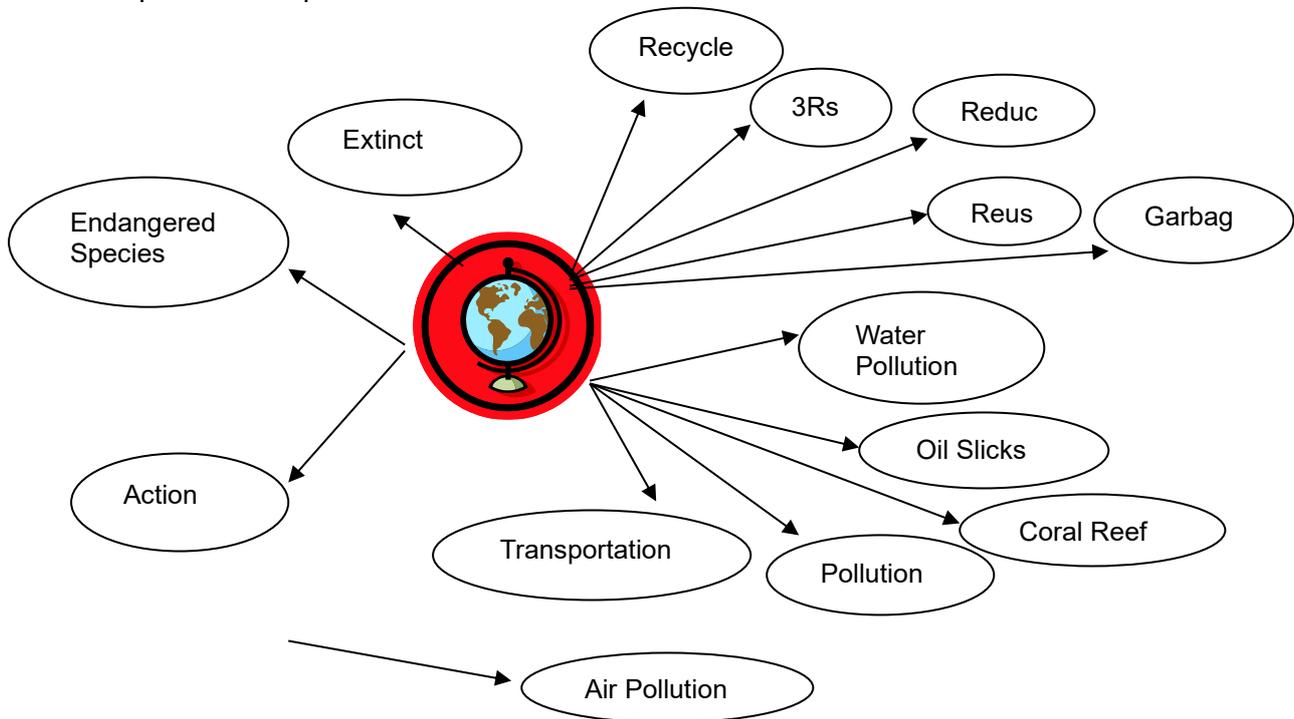
This map is your personal learning document. It combines what you knew already with what you are learning and what you may need to complete your "picture".

How to draw mind maps

Here are some pointers to help you draw creative and effective mind maps.

- Use just key words, or wherever possible images (pictures and icons).
- Start from the centre of the page and work out.
- Make the centre a clear and strong visual image that depicts the general theme of the map.
- Create sub-centres for sub-themes.
- Put your key words on lines. This reinforces the structure of your notes.
- Print rather than write in script. It makes your words more readable and memorable, lower case is clearer to read (and better remembered) than upper case.
- Use colour to depict themes and associations and to make things stand out.
- What stands out on the page will stand out in your mind.
- Use arrows, icons or other aids to show links between different elements.
- Don't get stuck in one area. If you dry up in one area, go to another branch.
- Put ideas down as they come up in your mind, wherever they fit. Don't judge or hold back.
- Break boundaries. If you run out of space, don't start a new sheet; paste more paper onto the map.

Uses of mind maps

We have already mentioned that mind maps are useful revision tools, and you have seen how you can use them to explore a topic. Here are some other uses of mind maps to explore:

- **Notes** - Whenever you are taking in information, mind maps help to organise it into a form that is easy for your brain to absorb and remember. Use them to make notes of anything - books, lectures, meetings, interviews, phone conversations and so on.

- **Recall (remember)** - Whenever you are retrieving information from memory, mind maps allow you to note ideas quickly as they occur, in an organised manner. There's no need to form sentences and write them out in full. The mind map serves as a quick and efficient way of reviewing, and so keeps recall at a high level.

- **Creativity** - Whenever you want to encourage creativity, mind maps free the mind from linear thinking, allowing new ideas to flow more rapidly. Think of every item in a mind map as the centre of another mind map.

- **Problem solving** - Whenever you are confronted by a problem, professional, or personal, mind maps help you to see all the issues and how they relate to each other. They also help others to get a quick overview of how you see different aspects of the situation, and their relative importance.

- **Planning** - Whenever you are planning something, mind maps help you get all the relevant information down in one place and organise it easily. They can be used for planning any piece of writing, from a letter to a film script to a book, or for planning a meeting, a day or a holiday.

- **Presentations** - Use mind maps when you are preparing a speech. It helps you to organise the ideas coherently. The visual nature of the map means that you can "read" the whole thing in your head as you talk without ever having to look at a sheet of paper.

- **Learning** - You can see mind mapping to put things into perspective, to analyse relationships and to prioritise. Try using it for the following learning activities:
  - organising a subject
  - bringing about deeper learning
  - integrating old and new knowledge
  - revising and preparing for tests

Note-taking

You have probably done a lot of note-taking throughout your education, but perhaps there's room for improvement in this skill. The steps and tips below will help you to take notes more effectively.

- Read a section of your book

  - Read just enough to keep an understanding of the material.
  - Do not take notes yet, but rather focus on understanding the material.
  - It is tempting to take a shortcut. You will probably write down too much information and simply copy from the text without understanding.

- Review the material

  - Identify the main ideas as well as important sub-points.
  - Set the book aside.
  - Paraphrase the information (put it into your own words). Putting the information into your own words forces you to become actively involved with the material.

- Write the paraphrased ideas as your notes

  o Do not copy information directly from the textbook.
  o Add only enough detail to understand.
  o Review, and compare your notes with the text.
  o Ask yourself whether you truly understand the information.

Memorising

When you are memorising information, it is important that you don't remember words but that you also:

- understand the ideas

- deal with the information

- grasp the subject

To memorise facts, use the best methods:

- wall charts and maps

- portable index cards

- audio tapes

- one-page summaries - including mind maps

Learn the basics of your subject. Learn names, dates, formulas and equations.

After that, you should concentrate on general themes and topics.

Some mnemonic techniques
A mnemonic is something (like a word, rhyme or visualisation technique) that is designed to help you memorise information. For example, if you did chemistry at school, you may have learnt the sentence **L**ittle **B**eer **B**ottle **C**an **N**ot **O**ver**f**low **N**aturally to remind you of the elements in the top row of the periodic Table.

There are many mnemonic techniques that would be very useful and powerful in your studies, and in everyday life. The most appropriate technique often depends on the material you are trying to memorise.

Find opportunities to practise each of the following:

- For information involving key words – acronyms

- For ordered numbers of lists – rhyme-keys

- For approximately 20 items – the method of loci

- For remembering names – the image-name technique

- For ordered or unordered lists – chaining

Let's look at each of these in turn. Remember, it doesn't help just to know about them
– you have to *apply* (practise) them to get the benefit!

For information involving key words – acronyms
An acronym is an invented combination of letters. Each letter is a link to an idea you need to remember. For example, BRASS is an acronym for how to shoot a rifle: breath, relax, aim, sight, squeeze.

For ordered numbers of list – rhyme-keys
First, memorise key words that you can associate easily with numbers. For instance, bun with one; shoe with two, tree with three, door with four, hive with five, and so on.

Next, for each item you need to remember, create an image to link it to one of the key words. Make each image quite ridiculous or unusual, so it sticks in your mind. Suppose you want to remember the four basic food groups: dairy products; meat, fish, and poultry; grains; and fruit and vegetables. You could imagine:

- cheese on bun (1)
- livestock wearing shoes (2)
- a sack of grain suspended in a tree (3)
- opening a door to a room piled high with fruits and vegetables (4)

For approximately 20 items – the methods of loci
(*Loci* is the plural of locus, which simply means place, position or location.)

Select any location where you have spent a lot of time and that you know well.
Imagine yourself walking through the scene, selecting clearly define fixed items or places – the door, couch, fridge, shelf and so on.

Imagine yourself walking through this location in a direct path and putting the objects that you need to remember into each of these places. Again you need a standard direct path and clearly defined locations for objects, so that your mind can retrieve this object easily.

For example, if you had to remember Nelson Mandela, FW de Klerk and Eugene Terre Blanche, you could imagine walking up to the door of your location and seeing a colour poster of Nelson Mandela stuck on the door when you open the door. FW de Klerk is sitting on the couch and Eugene Terre Blanche is sitting on the fridge, holding the reins of his horse.

For remembering names – the image – name technique
This is a technique for remembering the names of people you meet. You invent any relationship between the name and the physical characteristics of the person. (Again, it helps if there's something odd or ridiculous about the images to make it memorable – as long as you don't burst out laughing when next you see the person!) For example, if you had to remember Shirley Temple's name, you might carve the name into your memory by noting that she has curly (rhymes with Shirley) hair around her temples (forehead).

For ordered or unordered lists - chaining
This means that you create a story where each word or idea you have to remember cues (links your memory) to the next idea you need to recall.

If you had to remember the words Desmond Tutu, ear, door, Germany, you could invent a story of Desmond Tutu with his ear to the door listening to people speak in German.

Word association
The word association method, also known as "key words" has become very popular as an effective strategy for learning foreign words. It is just as valuable for extending your language vocabulary and learning technical jargon. It has also been used successfully to teach social studies facts (for example the products of a country; capital cities), scientific facts (for example chemical reactions or parts of the skeletal and nervous systems) and for remembering people's names and faces.

Basically, you associate the sound of a word in the foreign language with an image.
Here's an example we found in an advertisement for the Linkword© memory method:

The Russian for **COW** is **KAROVA**
To remember this: Imagine driving your **CAR OVER** a **COW**
Source: http//www. unforgettablelanguages. com

Word association is:

- very effective for learning the meanings of words

- most effective when you are supplied with the word, but create your own image

- particularly well suited to learning:

  - vocabulary

  - face-name associations

  - core facts

- When not to use the word association method

If you want to understand what a word means when you come across it, word association is probably the best memory strategy. However, if your goal is to be able to remember the word itself, note repetition may work better.

Here's an example of what we mean. If you learn that Canberra is the capital of Australia by visualising a can top of a map of Australia, you should find it easy to answer. Canberra the capital of? But you may struggle to answer the question: what is the capital of Australia?

Does faster mean better?
The main advantage of the keyword mnemonic over other strategies for remembering is that you acquire the information faster. But this doesn't mean it's necessarily a better method than others. Learning new words in a meaningful context is an equally effective strategy for long-term recall.

Underlining
Underlining has the following advantages:

- It forces you to decide what's important in what you are reading, and how ideas are related.

- It tests your understanding as you rephrase the text.

- It improves your concentration levels, because you read actively rather than possible.

Here are some basic guidelines for effective underlining:

- Read the entire paragraph or section (depending on the subject matter of the book) before underlining. Pick out the main idea and the supporting details.

- Select key words and short phrases to make smooth and complete sentences, always try to make your own sentences. Generally, it is best to leave out minor words like "the" of "a'.

- Underline the right amount. Make sure your underlining covers all the necessary material for recall, but don't underline too much. Different kinds of material require different proportions of underlining. A very tough guideline might be to underline about 20% of the material.

- Develop a variety of marks to help you recognise and distinguish between different features when you review the next. You could for example, circle words that are defined; underline the definition; or draw a line down the side of the page to indicate examples. Then, when you review the material look first at the circled words. You may not need to revise the definition itself.

- Underline and use the above markings consistently. Every once in a while look back at the type and amount of marking in earlier chapters to make sure you are being consistent.

- Use the margins for writing down key words, your own thoughts or reactions and so on.

- Always remember that the main purpose underlining it to reduce the amount of material you have to remember specifically and thus the amount you have to review.

Effective habits for effective study

You can prepare yourself to succeed in your studies by developing and appreciating the following habits:

- Take responsibility for yourself. Responsibility is recognition that in order to succeed you can make decision about your priorities, your time, and your resources.

- Focus yourself around your values and principles. Don't let friends and acquaintances dictate what you consider important.

- Put first things first. Follow up on the priorities you have set for yourself, and don't let others, or other interests distract you from your goals.

- Discover your key productivity periods and places. Morning, afternoon or evening; study spaces where you can be the most focused and productive. Make use of these for your most difficult study challenges.

- Consider yourself in a win-win situation. You win by doing your best and contributing your best to learning, whether for yourself, your fellow students, and even for your teachers and instructors. If you are content with your performance, a qualification becomes an external check on your performance, which may not coincide with what you really think is beneficial.

- First understand others, and then attempt to be understood. When you have an issue with an instructor, for example a questionable grade, an assignment deadline extension, put yourself in the instructor's place. Now ask yourself how best can make your argument given his or her situation.

- Look for better solutions to problems. For example, if you don't understand the course material, don't just re-read material. Try something else! Consult with the lecturer; a tutor, an academic advisor, a classmate, a study group, or a study skills centre.

Skimming

When we skim a text we search for the main ideas by reading mainly the first and last paragraphs and by noting other organisational cues, such as summaries, that the author used.

Skimming is used to quickly identify the main ideas of a text. When you read the newspaper you're probably not reading it word by word; instead, you're skimming the text.

Skimming is done at a speed that is three to four times faster than normal reading. People often skim when they have lots of material to read in a limited amount of time. Use skimming when you want to see whether an article may be interest in your research.

There are many strategies you can use when skimming. Some people read the first and last paragraphs, along with headings, summarises and other organisers as they move down the page or screen. You might read the title, subtitles, subheading, and illustrations. Consider reading the first sentence of each paragraph. This technique is useful when you're seeking specific information rather than reading for comprehension. Skimming works well to find dates, names, and places. You can also use it to review graphs, tables, and charts.

Scanning, on the other hand, means that you search for specific information. For example, you might **scan** for a particular word or concept.

Skimming and scanning are particularly valuable techniques for studying scientific textbooks. Science writers pack many facts and details closely together, and learners usually react by shifting their reading speeds to the lowest gear and crawling through the material.

Although science textbooks are usually well-organised, with main points and sub topics clearly set out, the typical learner ignores these clues and plots through the chapter word to word, trying to cram it all in. it is precisely these characteristics organisation and density of facts per page – that makes it so vital that you learn and use skimming techniques.

To succeed in science studies, you need a thorough understanding of the major ideas and concepts presented. Without such a conceptual framework, you will find yourself faced with the impossible task of trying to cram hundreds of apparently disconnected facts into your memory. Rather skim the text for the main ideas first, using the author's organisation signs (topic headings, italics, summaries and so on). Then you are ready to do the more intensive reading with the aim to remember as much as possible. The skimming step will provide a logical framework into which you can then fit the details.

3.2 Summarise and use information in the learning process

A summary can be regarded as a shortened version of a longer text that provides a reader with the general theme, but does not expand on details. It describes a larger work (such as an entire book, speech, or research project), and has far less content that the actual original text.

Summarising

For effective summarising, we need to:

- pull out key details – answer the questions who, what, when, why and how
- use key words and phrases
- break down the larger ideas
- write only enough to convey the gist (essence)
- take brief but complete notes

Summarising is one of the most difficult learning strategies to master. You have to practise it repeatedly, but it is such a valuable strategy and competency that it's worth learning to do well.

3.3 Synthesise and contextualise answers pertaining to relevant questions

Synthesis and contextualisation are tools that allow you to delve deeper into the meaning of text and ensuring that there is a greater understanding of what is being read. You can use the following techniques in order to gain this insight.

Checking understanding and clarifying meaning
Paraphrasing and questioning are two effective techniques to use when checking your understanding and clarifying meaning.

Paraphrasing
To paraphrase is to repeat someone else's message in your own words. What you paraphrase in a conversation, you use statements like "let me make sure I'm with you so far", or "what I hear you saying is …", then you rephrase the communicator's ideas in your own words. With this type of feedback, you voice your understanding, which creates an opportunity for the speaker to check that you have understood correctly and clarify the point if necessary.

Questioning
Questioning is useful in conversation when you need additional information to clarity the communicator's message. For instance, you might ask: "What do you mean?" Asking this type of question lets the person add to the information they have already given.

Closed questions require only a "yes" or "no" response. If you use this type of question, you can expect to get a very short answer. It will not encourage the other person to go into detail although sometimes they may do so anyway. Once you have used this kind of question, you may want to follow it up with an open- ended question. Yes or no questions are useful for checking facts.

Open-ended questions do not seek "yes" or "no" response. Instead, they draw out more information from the speaker. Open-ended questions are useful for gathering information.

Gathering information
As you have already seen, there are various resources that you can use to gather information. These include:

- resource centre
- libraries
- the internet
- videos
- documentary television programmes
- brochures, magazines, books, encyclopaedias and other reading matters
- other people – friends, colleagues and family

When you gather information, it is important to ensure that the information is:

- accurate
- appropriate (relevant to the topic)

Let's look at what each terms means and how you can check for accuracy and appropriateness.

Accuracy
Is the information in the resource accurate? You may wish to check this against other resources (cross-check), or by checking some aspects in which you have some expertise.

Is the information biased in any way? Some resources are produced as marketing and advertising tools, so it is a good idea to ask: What motivation does the organisation, person or author have for giving me this information? Sometimes the answer is that the information is placed to support a particular point of view, in other words, it is biased.

How can you tell whether a piece of text is biased? Look for evidence like misleading statements or outrageous, unsupported claims made by the organisation, person or author; sponsorship by individuals or groups with a vested interest in the topic, or one-sided arguments about controversial issues.

Inconsistent quality (making an article look as though it was patched together from several sources) and signs of hasty preparation (typing, spelling and grammatical errors) also indicate that the article is likely to be inaccurate.
Questions to ask to check accuracy:

- Are there any obvious or misleading omissions?
- Can I cross-check this information with another source?
- If the issue is controversial:
  - Does the next present all sides, or do I have to look for alternative views elsewhere?
  - Is the bias of the source of information clearly identified (if any)?
  - Is the publication of the information sponsored or co-sponsored by an individual or group that holds a known position on the issues discussed?
  - Does the resource have a vested or commercial interest in the topic?

o Are there indications of careless or hasty preparation, such as spelling or grammatical errors?

o Is the information of a consistent quality?

Appropriateness

Whether information is appropriate or not depends on the needs as the user. Appropriateness deals with whether the information meets your needs in terms of type and depth of the material provided, whether it complements (adds to completes) other information available or leaves gaps, and whether it fits into the broader field of knowledge.

Questions to ask to check appropriateness:

- Is the content related to my needs?

- Is the information sufficiently current (up to date) to meet my needs?

- Is the coverage of the topic sufficiently broad to meet my needs?

- Does the document provide any new information on the topic?

- Are there any obvious gaps or omissions in the coverage of the topic?

Asking questions is, unfortunately, the skill we use least often when we communicate with others. We often avoid asking questions because we don't want to appear uninformed, too inquisitive or too challenging.

Sometimes questions are not well received because people feel that they have either defended or justify their perspective. Like listening, asking questions is a skill that requires practice. When questions are focused on learning, they can be used to help us learn.

Typically, in learning situations we would ask questions of:

- facilitators

- other learners

- colleagues

Tips for asking questions

Effective questioning is a skill you can learn and improve. Here are some tips to help you:

- Pair your questioning with effective listening skills. Asking the other person questions is only one part of communicating effectively. The other key part is listening effectively for a complete understanding.

- Ask questions to understand. Asking the wrong questions, or asking in a way that might seem intimidating or challenging, shuts down effective communication. Avoid asking questions to prove your point. Instead, ask questions to gain an understanding. (For example" "Can you help me understand why that is the best methods to use?")

- Asking questions prevents you from jumping to conclusions by allowing you to clarify your understanding. We often jump to the wrong conclusions because we don't ask questions to clarify what we are hearing. Without clarifying our understanding. We end up reinterpreting other people's reality and often shut down conversation. Questions can help clear up any misunderstandings early in the conversation. (Example: "When you said …, I understood it mean … Am I understanding you correctly?")

- Allow the person an opportunity to think about the question. This applies particularly in a learning environment with a facilitator. Give the other person a chance to consider the question and formulate an answer. Waiting patiently for the answer will give you more benefits than rushing the person into answering too quickly. If your question does not get you the information you need, try phrasing it another way.

- Ask open-ended questions. Open-ended questions are ideal for gaining information from others, because they require more than a yes or no answer. The most effective open-ended questions are simplest. (Examples: "What is an alternative?" "What do you mean when you say …?")

- Ask "what" and "how" questions. These kinds of questions are less threatening and allow people to describe and explain. These kinds of questions help prevent people from becoming defensive and allow for an exchange of perspectives (Examples" "How would you describe it?" "What is the benefit?")

- Remember that people aren't always receptive to answering questions. Be sure that you are not being intrusive when you ask questions. Be aware of the non-verbal and verbal messages you may be giving when you ask questions. Make sure that your facial expression and tone of voice are friendly and convey respect of the person.

- Be sensitive to the other person's non-verbal and verbal reactions to your questions. Be aware that you may be interrupting their train of thought. Ask your questions when the person has finished their points or when you are trying to clarify your understanding.

- If asking questions is not working, try making a request instead. (Example: "I'm having a little difficulty understanding. Please help me to understand what you are trying to tell me. ")

3.4 Learn from texts

You can learn from texts, by reading texts for detail, interpreting texts, analysing texts and the synthesising the texts.

3.4.1 Read/view texts for detail

To identify details in text, ask the questions:

Who? What? Where? When? Why? How?

Asking and answering these six questions will help you to learn more from your reading.

Some paragraphs in your reading will answer all your questions and be loaded with details. Other paragraphs will make you work and really investigate just like the reporters do. As a reader, it's your job to notice the small pieces of information that support the main idea of paragraph or passage.

The main idea and the supporting details
The *main idea* tells you what a paragraph is about. It is usually stated in the *topic* sentence, the sentence can be located anywhere in a paragraph, but very often it will be placed first or last.

When you have identified the main idea, you are ready to look for the details that support the main idea. To explain a point clearly, a paragraph should contain supporting details, facts, and examples that back up the main idea.

When reading text for details, look for:

- **Examples** - Writers use examples to illustrate what they are saying. Examples help readers to understand a general statement by giving them specific information that represents one piece of the whole concept.

- **Facts** - A fact is a statement that can be proved. It can be verified, and there are no reasonable arguments against it.

- **Statistics** - Statistics are figures (numbers) that give additional information. Statistics can be presented in different ways, such as charts, graphs, tables and lists. The numbers

themselves can also be expressed in different ways, for example as fractions, percentages and decimals.

- **Reasons** - Reasons are explanations. They tell you why something happened. Reasons may also explain the cause of someone's belief, attitude or behaviour.

- **Definitions** - Definitions are statements that explain what something means. Definitions often come from the dictionary.

- **Descriptions** - Descriptions are words or phrases that tell what something looks, smells, tastes, sounds, or feels like. Descriptions use sense-related words to help readers visualise or get a mental picture of what they are reading.

Examples:

Text	Example of …
It soars so high above everyone else has a beautiful wingspan, eyes that can see its prey from miles away and uncanny accuracy in getting its food.	**Description**
When Les Wexner, Chairman of Limited, designed Victoria's Secret his mission was "to design a store where Cybil Shepherd would love to shop for lingerie".	**Fact**
Bill Gates' mission is to "put a computer on every desk".	**Fact**
Within three months their sales rocketed to the highest they had ever had.	**Statistic**
You see, geese fly in a V formation.	**Fact**

Here are some tips for finding and understanding details:

- Ask yourself who? what? when? why? and how? while you read.

- Picture the details in your mind.

- Think about how the details fit with the main idea of the passage.

3.5 Interpret, analyse and synthesise verbal interaction for a given context

In order to make sense of either written text or spoken conversation, we *interpret* and *analyse* text or the spoken words in order to understand them.

Once we have this understanding, we are then able to synthesise the text. In other words, we create a new version of the text, using our own words. This process is known as critical thinking. During critical thinking we use information to solve problems or issues and make decisions.

The steps for critical thinking
We can identify five steps for critical thinking and decision-making. These steps apply to both written text and verbal text.

1. Identify and clarify the situation.

2. Gather information.

3. Evaluate the evidence.

4. Consider alternatives and implications.

5. Choose and implement the best alternative.

6. Characteristics of effective critical thinkers.

Notes:

- **Identify and clarify the situation -** The first step is to pinpoint specifically what the text is saying. It could be expressing a problem or asking for a decision to be made, or for information. With written text, you may need to gather various texts from different sources in order to gain different perspectives of the situation. With verbal text, speak to all parties concerned. Identify whether the content is explicitly (clearly) stated, or whether the text is implying things that it isn't stating clearly:
    - *Implicit meaning* – a meaning that is not directly expressed, but implied.
    - *Explicit meaning* – a meaning that is fully and clearly expressed, leaving nothing implied.

- **Gather information -** Learn more about the situation. Gather all sides of the story; look for possible courses and solutions. This step may mean speaking to others, reading up on information or brainstorming with colleagues.

- **Evaluate the evidence** - Where did the information come from? Does it represent various points of view? What biases could you expect from each source? How accurate is the information you have gathered? Is it fact or opinion?

- **Consider alternatives and implication** - Draw conclusions from the gathered evidence, be it written or verbal, and suggest solutions. Then weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. What are the costs, benefits, and consequences? What are the obstacles, and how can you deal with them? Most importantly, what solution best serves the need?

- **Choose and implement the best alternative** - Select an alternative and put it into action. Then, follow through on your decision by monitoring the results of implementing your plan.

Characteristics of effective critical thinkers

- Raise vital questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely.

- Gather and assess relevant data and information (written and spoken).

- Come to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, and test them against relevant criteria and standards.

- Keep an open mind, recognise the assumptions they are making and assess the implications and consequences of these assumptions.

- Communicate effectively with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems.

3.6 Ensure that learning takes place through communicating with others

You will find that you can learn through communicating with others in groups or individuals, such as:
- facilitators
- other learners
- colleagues

Critical thinking is one of the essential skills that you should master in order to formulate and use learning strategies effectively. Critical thinkers are able to solve problems or issues effectively and make effective decisions, individually or as part of a team.

We become critical thinkers by insuring that we are able to learn through communicating with others, interpreting, and summarising, synthesising and contextualising information.

When we allow ourselves to learn from our colleagues, facilitators and even other learners we benefit from their experience and our shared world therefore gaining new information.

This is not a passive process, and requires an open mind and commitment on our part. Read through the following ideas about how to learn best from others:

Exchange roles: Learning is a two-way street. Connecting and exchanging with key stakeholders around shared development challenges catalyses considerable results.

Collaborate: We do not need to always gain knowledge on our own. Collaboration and sharing make it twice as rich.

Find the expert in the room: Who's the local expert on what we need to know? Who's been in the department or organisation the longest and has a long-term perspective? Who has the most experience for us to draw on?

Mix it up: Engage in several levels of learning. Sharpen your expertise in one area by finding out about another.

Experiencing and learning with others makes our learning a richer experience and also could cement relationship within your organisation. Learning from others helps us grow emotionally, and can often help with our own decision making.

Class Activity 3: Formulate and use learning strategies
Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

Learning Unit 4
Conduct research, analyse and present findings

After completing this Learning Unit, you will be able to conduct research, analyse and present findings, by successfully completing the following:

- Identify and define appropriate or relevant topic and scope.

- Plan and sequence research steps appropriately.

- Apply research techniques.

- Sift information for relevance.

- Classify, categorise and sort information.

- Analyse research findings and present it in the appropriate format.

- Make conclusions and recommendations in the appropriate format.

Conduct research, analyse and present findings

Any research, if it is correctly designed and undertaken, will build knowledge, because it is basically an objective investigation of the facts about a certain subject.

Research is a lengthy process that involves many steps such as choosing a topic, gathering information, writing the research paper and so on. In order to ensure that our research is effective, we must follow a structured, step-by-step approach. That way we can manage ourselves and our time and ensure that we complete all the necessary activities in the most efficient way.

The step-by-step approach
The paper is your final product, but the research to generate the product (the paper). The steps below will guide you through this process, from getting the assignment to writing the paper.

For each step, we will consider:

- the goal of that step

- your likely feelings

- your thoughts and actions related to the step

Here is an overview of the main steps in the research process:

Step 1 – Identifying and choosing a topic

Step 2 – Getting started: planning the process

Step 3 – Looking for and forming a focus

Step 4 – Gathering information: detailed research

Step 5 – Preparing to write

Step 6 – Writing and revising the paper

Let's consider each step in turn. As you will see, there are several smaller steps within each of these main steps.

4. 1 Identify and define appropriate or relevant topic and scope

The research process has various stages that allow you to systematically gain information in an effective manner. If you have a method that you use, this will allow you to save time and do a more effective analysis of the topic that you are planning to research.

Research Process Step 1 – Identifying and choosing a topic
- Goal

Your goal is to discover and choose a topic for your research.

Your information search at this stage takes the form of "surveying the territory". Picture yourself piloting a helicopter, at times soaring over the landscape, then hovering for a while over an interesting area and maybe even dipping down for a closer look.

- Feelings

You may feel confused, adrift in a sea of information. You may be anxious to pick a topic and get on with it. Once you've made a choice, you'll probably feel elated and excited for a while, at least.

- Thoughts and actions

Follow the steps described below to get an idea of things you should be thinking about and doing, and some of the strategies that will help to achieve that. Note the type of information search you should be doing at this stage.

Teachers of writing and research use the word *topic* to mean anything from the very general subject matter to the very specific "thesis statement". In this course, the term topic is broadly defined, while *focus* means a narrower perspective on the topic, and *thesis statement* is the main point of your paper, which you cannot determine until you have completed your research and analysis.

Here are the smaller steps that make up Step 1:

- Information search – browse, read, relax.

- Relate the topic to your prior experience and learning.

- Write down your questions and ideas about possible topics.

- Brainstorm, alone and with others.

- Information search – browse, read, relax.

Start by skimming textbooks, books and magazines. Browse the table of contents, chapter headings and subheadings to get an overview of the subject matter. Visit your library and browse in the catalogue and reference room to find out what sources are available there.

To get a broad overview of a subject, you can also browse the internet. Once you feel that you are familiar enough with the subject that you have identified some key words of concepts, you can use them to run a quick search. Use one of the many search engines available, such as google or yahoo, and see what results you get. Look at both the quantity and the quality of the first few pages of hits to get some idea of how easy or difficult it may be to research that subject in more depth in the internet if you choose it as your topic.

Your objective in this step is to get a bird's eye view of the general subject matter to give your brain some ideas to work on while you're getting ready for the step of choosing a topic.

- Relate the topic to your prior experience and learning

Successful research and writing means building on what you know. You don't need to know a lot about a subject in order to use it as your topic, but choosing a subject that you are totally unfamiliar with could be a mistake. It may take so much time and effort to become informed about the subject that you don't really have time to get into the depth required by your assignment.

- Write down your questions and ideas about possible topics:

Use your notebook to start recording questions that interest you or ideas for possible topics.

You'll end up with a list of ideas, some of which are obviously ridiculous and not reasonable topics for your paper, but don't worry about that at this point. Think about things that interest you and that build on some experience or knowledge you have, or things you are currently learning.

- Brainstorm, alone and with others

Toss ideas around in your mind. Bounce ideas off of your friends and colleagues to get their reactions and ideas. Often another person will have a fresh perspective you might not have thought of, or something they say will trigger an idea for you.

4.2 Plan and sequence research steps appropriately

The research process has a beginning and an end, with many stages or steps in between. Each one of these steps is built upon the foundation of information. Carefully completing each step will create a well-defined and thoroughly researched paper or presentation. You may need to also be flexible; if you on occasion have to go back a step or two, it will refine your research.

Research Process Step 2 – Getting started: Planning the process

- Goal

Your goal now is to plan for the assignment and get ready to narrow the focus of your topic.

- Feelings

Many people, as they start a research project, get worried about the amount of work ahead and feel a bit unsure of them. Don't be surprised if you feel like that! You might also feel a little excitement, anticipating the project – or may not.

- Thoughts and actions

Follow the steps below to get an idea of things you should be thinking about and doing, and some of the strategies that will help. Note the type of information search you should be doing at this stage.

Your information search at this stage involves clarifying the assigned topics and planning your research process.

Here are the smaller steps that make up Step 2:
- understand the assignment and its format
- report
- issue analysis
- advocacy or persuasion
- consider the process you'll use
- set deadlines for each step of the assignment
- research and reflect

- Understand the assignment

Read over the instructions for the assignment to make sure you fully understand what the instructor has in mind and on what basis you will be graded. Are you required to produce a report, to analyse an issue, to advise or persuade? Let's look briefly at the different options.

- (a) Report

Sometimes the facilitator will assign topics to specific students or give a range of topics to choose from and ask that you write a report on your research. This type of research paper is really a form of individual study. The measure of success is how well you can conduct research, analyse and organise the information and communicate it clearly in writing form. Sometimes, reporting means that you have to do an oral presentation as well.

- (b) Issue analysis

A research paper may highlight a particular issue or problem in a field of study. You may be asked to analyse the issue and its solutions, possibly from both a historical and a current perspective.

Often you are expected to be a neutral observer, not to promote a particular position. The success of the paper is often based on how completely and clearly you have identified the key aspects of the issue and their significance to the field to which they relate.

- Advocacy or persuasion

A research paper may require you to take a stand on an issue and defend it against opposing points of view. You will then research the issue and read others' arguments for and against. Your paper has to anticipate and deal with arguments against your position, while presenting supporting evidence in favour of your position. Your success will depend on how persuasively the paper makes its case and defends against possible opposition.

Be sure you understand what kind of a paper you have been asked to write, since the approach you'd take could be vastly different, depending on the purpose of the paper and the expectations of your instructor!

- Consider the process you'll use

The paper is your final product, but a research paper involves an extensive process before you can generate the product.

If you focus too quickly on the end product, you may miss some of the important research steps and find yourself writing a paper without understanding enough about the topic to do a first-class job. Browse over the rest of the steps suggested in this section to get an idea of the process and think about how you'll approach each step. Start a journal or notebook and begin jotting notes about not only *what* you plan to do but also *how* you plan to do it.

- Set deadlines for each step of the assignment

Time could be one of your biggest challenges in completing a successful research paper. Take the time now to plan your deadlines. It will help you to get going and tell you when to wrap up one step and move on to the next.

Step-by-step research and writing	Portion of time*	Date to complete this step
Step 1 – Identifying and choosing a topic	10%	
Step 2 – Getting started: Planning the process	5%	
Step 3 – Looking for and forming a focus	20%	
Step 4 – Gathering information: Detail research	25%	
Step 5 – Preparing to write	10%	
Step 6 – Writing and revising the paper	30%	

- Suggested time for each step

The suggested percentages of time are to give you a general idea of how you may want to divide up your time between now and the time your paper is due. As you can see, we have given the research steps 60% of the total time, while writing gets 40%. Depending on how complex your topic is and how much you know about it at the start, your time could be more or less heavily weighted toward research as opposed to writing.

- Research and reflect

As you work through the step-by-step approach, you will find that you need time for reading and research at almost every step. This means a trip to the library, or an internet session on your computer, so be sure to plan enough time for those activities. Also, the whole process works best if you have time to think and reflect – time for you to put the project aside and "sleep on it". If you possibly can, build these times into your schedule. Your final paper will be a better product and you are likely to be happier with the whole process.

4. 3 Apply research techniques

This step is crucial in your "gathering" process. This is where you begin to collect information in order to gain a wider overview of your topic.

Research Process Step 3 – Looking for and forming a focus

- Goal

Your goal now is to explore your topics, and find and form a focus for your research.

Now that you have a topic, you need to learn about it! Instead of piloting a helicopter over the landscape, you're now on the ground. Picture your topic as a square kilometre of land. Your task is to explore it, which will require going around, over and through it several times to see what's there, looking at it from different perspectives.

- Feelings

You're probably still feeling uncertain, even though you have a topic. As you dig around in your topic, you may have your darkest hour in the whole process, feeling threatened by the choice of a focus – what if you pick the "wrong" one? Be confident. You may even have an "Aha!" experience, but don't worry if you don't – there isn't an Aha! in every top-grade paper.

- Thoughts and actions

Follow the steps below to get an idea of things you should be thinking about and doing, and some of the strategies which will help. Note the type of information search you should be doing at this stage.

Here are the smaller steps that make up Step 3:

- exploring your topic
- preliminary note-taking
- purposeful thinking about possible focuses
- choosing a focus or combining themes to form a focus

- Exploring your topic

Before you can decide on a focus, you need to explore your topic, to become informed about the topic, to build on your knowledge and experience. You'll be finding books, articles, videos, internet and other resources about your topic and reading to learn! You're looking for an issue, an aspect, and a perspective on which to focus your research paper.

This is the first step in which you'll probably be taking books out of the library. Encyclopaedias won't be much help here. You're looking for texts on your topic which are either more comprehensive or more specific than what an encyclopaedia offers, with various authors' summaries, analyses and opinions. But until you've chosen a focus, you're not really on a mission of gathering information. If you gather information on a topic as a whole, you'll waste a lot of time doing it and have way too much to sort through when you are ready to write your paper. Until you have chosen a focus, resist the temptation to "gather".

- Preliminary note-taking

While you read, start taking notes of what you're learning about your topic concepts, issues, and problems, areas where experts agree or disagree. Keep careful track of the bibliographic references for the information you're using and write down a note or two about what's contained in the book, article or website. There is nothing more frustrating than having to look for it again when you decide it is indeed something you need.

- Purposeful thinking about possible focuses

While you're learning about your topic, make a point of looking for possible focuses in the material. You could spend enormous amounts of time reading, especially about an interesting topic, without being any closer in a focus unless you deliberately keep that goal in your mind while you read.

- Choosing a focus or combining themes to form a focus

Try out your various choices of focus, as you did with your topic. Which ones fit the assignment, the size, scope and type of the paper? Think about which of your possible focuses have the best chance of making a successful paper. If you find several themes within your topic, you may want to combine them to form a focus.

Research Process Step 4 – Gather information: Detail research

- Goal

Your goal in this step is to gather information that clarifies and supports your focus.

Your information search at this stage is focused and specific, and you are keeping a careful record of what you find. Instead of the square mile of land to explore, you've roped off an acre. You are walking it systematically, bending down now and then to pick up something and toss it in your backpack, then recording in your notebook what you found and where you found it.

- Feelings

Many people feel interested and challenged at this stage. The agonising part of choosing what to research is over. The task of finding the specific information you need is more like solving a puzzle or going on a treasure hunt. This is the part of the research process that is most likely to be fun.

- Thoughts and actions

Follow the steps below to get an idea of things you should be thinking about and doing, and some of the strategies, which will help. Note the type of information search you should be doing at this stage.

Here are the smaller steps that make up Step 4:

- Find, collect and record:

  - in the library
  - on the internet

- Analyse your findings:

  - authority
  - accuracy
  - bias
  - currency

- Think about clarifying or refining your focus:

  - Start organising your notes.
  - Think about the main point of your research.

- Finding, collecting and recording

This is the step most of people think of when they think of "library research". It is a hunt for information in any available form (book, periodical, CD, video, internet), which is relevant to your chosen focus. Once you know the focus of your research, there are lots of tools and strategies to help you find and collect the information you need.

Your information search should be focused and specific, but pay careful attention to finding, by chance, valuable things you weren't even looking for. Keep your mind open to continue learning about your focused topic.

Now is the time to carefully record your sources in the correct bibliographic format. Every piece of information you collect should have its complete bibliographic information written down before you leave the library. Also pay attention to the *quality* of the information you find, especially if you are using information you find on the internet.

- In the library

To get a broad overview of a subject in the library, you will read and browse general sources of information discovered using three strategies:

- reference room browsing
- catalogue browsing
- shelf browsing

Suppose you're making your first trip to the library to get ideas for your research paper topic.

Start in the reference room, *with some general sources*. You may browse the encyclopaedia or current magazines. Ask the reference librarian to recommend sources to use for general reading in your subject area.

Search the library's catalogue, after getting some advice about specific subject headings to use. Browse the library's list of books and materials under several different subject headings related to your course. Note how many items the library has and whether they look interesting to you. Are there interesting items other than books?

Look at the subcategories used in the catalogue. You can learn a lot about subject simply by looking at how it's broken down into subcategories. This will show you what issues the experts in this field consider important enough to treat separately.

Last, take a trip to the bookshelves. Browse the shelves in your subject area to see what titles are available. The shelves are probably arranged according to the Dewey decimal system. If you are unfamiliar with this system, ask a librarian to explain it to you and show you how to find your subject area. On the shelves, books with similar subjects will be located near each other. When you find a book you are looking for, also look at other books around that one. Pull some books off the shelf and look through the table of contents and index to get an idea of topics covered and how they are organised. Do a little skimming and look for interesting issues or ideas.

- On the internet

You can use a search engine to get started as we described earlier, or you may like to refer to some references to websites that you found in the bibliographies of other sources.

Note how the subject is broken down into subcategories, to see how information in that subject is organised and what some of the issues are. Spend some time following the links to examine the pages and sites that have been listed. It isn't easy to tell how thoroughly a subject is covered just by looking at the number of sites. Many thousands of web pages have little actual content and are mainly links to other pages, which may be links to other pages, and so on.

Following the links through to actual pages is like browsing the library shelves and pulling books off the shelf to skim the contents.

- Analyse your findings

Evaluate your information carefully. Use the criteria listed below to analyse the authority, accuracy and bias of the information you want to use in your research paper.

Authority
- Who is the author?
- What are the author's qualifications, education, and occupation?
- Has the author written articles or books?
- Is the source peer-reviewed or edited? If so, by whom?
- Does the author or person being interviewed belong to or represent an organisation?

Accuracy
- Are there clues to tell you the information is true?
- Does the author list sources?
- Can you verify the information by cross-checking against other sources?
- Are there obvious errors (spelling, grammar, typing)?

Bias
- Does the information reflect a particular bias or viewpoint?
- What is the purpose of the information? Why was it written, and for whom? To inform? To sell or market the product or idea? To entertain? To persuade?

Currency
- When the information was first published and last updated?
- Is the information current or outdated?
- When did you gather this information?

Interviewing

There is a huge base of information readily available through the internet and libraries, as well as through interviewing others. It is critical that we become educated and accomplished users of research, using effective research strategies, in order to promote our learning and development.

Observing

Observing is also known as direct observation. This implies that you are not involved with what you are observing. Another form of observation is immersing yourself into the actual area of study - becoming in some way a part of it.

There are ethical considerations that arise in an immersion of study – it could overstep the boundaries of consent.

Both immersion and straight forward observation are excellent ways to gain information first hand, and then compare your findings to other observant research to verify what you have seen.

Using appropriate electronic sources

Internet research is one of the quickest manners of obtaining information. However, there is also the risk of having information that could be out-dated, or not scientifically verifiable. A good rule of thumb to follow is:

- Is it **Current**? Check dates on articles.

- Is it **Reliable**? – from a University Source vs a personal blog

- Does it come from an **Authority** that is an expert in the field?

- Does it fit the **Purpose** and **Point of view** of your research?

This process has a silly acronym (C R A P) - this ought to help you remember!

4.4 Sift information for relevance

Once you have collected information, you need to become a little more ruthless in what to use and what to discard. Going through all that you have gathered will slowly bring forth clarity and focus to continue to the next step.

- Think about clarifying or refining your focus

As you gather information about your focused topic, you may find new information that prompts you to refine, clarify, extend or narrow your focus.
Stay flexible and adjust your information search to account for the changes, widening or narrowing your search or heading down a slightly different path to follow a new lead.

- Start organising your notes

Start organising your notes into logical groups. You may notice a gap in your research, or a heavier emphasis on one aspect of the subject that you had intended. Starting to organise as you gather information can save you an extra trip to the library.

- Think about the main point of your research

As you gather information and refine your focus, intentionally look for a main point to your findings. Sometimes, a main point emerges very obviously from the material, and other times you may struggle to bring together the parts into a sensible whole. The tricky part is to know when to stop

gathering information – when do you have enough, and of the right kind? Seeking a main point as you research will help you know when you've finished.

4.5 Classify, categorise and sort information

Simply put, **categorising** means **sorting** your research information into groups that work methodically. The categories in your research topic will be very specific and help you impose order in your findings.

Whereas **classifying** involves **sorting** your research material into known, fixed classes.

For example: Classifying is a key skill in reading and doing research because it people to focus on:

- what interests them
- what information they need to glean in your research
- what meets their specific research purpose
- what they can ignore

Research Process Step 5 - Preparing to write

- Goal

Your goal now is to analyse and organise your information and form a thesis statement.

Be prepared to go back to your information sources to fill in any gaps you find as you analyse and organise your information before you start writing.

- Feelings

You may feel uncertain as to where to start, or overwhelmed by information, but you can probably also see an encouraging glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel.

- Thoughts and actions

Follow the steps below to get an idea of things you should be thinking about and doing, and some of the strategies, which will help. Note the type of information search you should be doing at this stage.

Here are the smaller steps that make up Step 5:

- Analyse and organise your information.
- State the main point of your research.
- Weed out irrelevant information.
- Fill in the gaps.
- Analyse and organise your information.

Remember, the word "analyse" means to break something down into its parts. A meaningful analysis identifies the parts and shows how they relate to each other.

You may have information from different sources that examine different aspects of your topic. By breaking down the information, you may be able to see relationships between the different sources and build them into whole concepts.

When you are trying to make sense of the information coming out of your research process, you often have to look at it from different perspective and sometimes have to step back and try to get a "big picture" view. Some ways to do this are to try out different ways of organising your information:

- Compare and contrast.

- List advantages and disadvantages.

- Start from a narrow premise and build on it.

- Identify cause and effect.

- Order facts in a logical sequence.

- State the main point of your research

Before you begin to write your paper, write the main point in a statement. A well-written statement, usually expressed in one sentence, is the most important sentence in your entire paper.

It should both summarise for your reader the position you will be arguing and set up the pattern statement of organisation you will use in your discussion. A statement sentence is not providing proof for your argument.

The main point statement:

- declares the position you are taking in your paper

- sets up the way will organise your discussion

- points to the conclusion you will draw

- Weed out irrelevant information

Now that you have all those wonderful notes from your research, you are going to have to get rid of some of them!

No matter how insightful and interesting the information is, if it doesn't relate to and supports the topic you've chosen, you should not try to cram it into the paper. Writing the paper will be much easier if you do this weeding before you start.

- Fill in the gaps

Once you have identified which of your research notes you'll use, you may see some gaps where you need additional support for a point you want to make.
Leave enough time in your writing plan for an extra trip to the library, just in case.

4. 6 Analyse research findings and present it in the appropriate format

This is when you should connect all of your research findings together and indicate how they stem from the research questions. Make certain that your results allow you to present acceptable answers to your questions. Also be open minded and show why some elements of the answers are satisfactory and others are not as satisfactory.

Once you have analysed your research findings, you need to present it in the appropriate format, such as:
- report
- research paper
- presentation

Research Process Step 6 – Writing and revising the paper

- Goal

Your goal in this final step is to write, revise and finalise the paper.

- Feelings

When you have finished your paper, you will probably feel great satisfaction – or you may feel dissatisfaction, depending on how you feel about the end product.

- Thoughts and actions

Follow the steps below to get an idea of things you should be thinking about and doing, and some of the strategies which will help.

Here are some smaller steps that make up Step 5:

- Think about the assignment, the audience and the purpose.

- Prepare an outline.

- Have others read and assess critically the paper.

- Revise and proofread.

- Think about the assignment, the audience and the purpose

To prepare for writing, you should go over the requirements of the assignment once more to make sure you focus your writing efforts on what your course facilitator is expecting.

Consider the purpose of the paper, either as set in the assignment or as stated in your main point statement – are you trying to persuade, to inform, to evaluate, and to summarise?

- Who is your audience, and how will that affect your paper?

- What existing knowledge can you assume the audience has on the topic?

- What style and tone of writing are required by the audience and the assignment? For most academic papers, you are expected to use a fairly formal style – but use plain uncomplicated English.

- Prepare an outline

Develop an outline for the paper you are writing and then develop a rough draft. You can use your mind mapping skills to organise your thoughts. Here is a basic outline you can build on.

Introduction
Statement of the problem
Main point

Body: Paragraphs 1 and 2
History of the problem (Consider discussing past attempts at solutions. Include some sources.)

Body: Paragraphs 3 and 4
Extent of the problem (Who is affected? How bad is it? Include sources.)

Body: Paragraphs 5 and 6
Repercussions of the problem

Body: Paragraphs 7 and 8
Future solutions (Not necessarily your own. More sources.)

Conclusion
Summarise your findings

- Have others read and critically assess the paper

Read your paper out loud, to yourself. See if the arguments are coherent (hanging together), logical and conclusive when read aloud. Ask several experienced people to read and comment critically on your paper.

- Revise and proofread

Ask yourself:

- Have I kept the needs of my reader in mind?
- Have I developed the ideas adequately?
- Are all paragraphs unified and coherent?
- Does the placement of each paragraph show an inherent logical order?
- Do the paragraphs flow smoothly from one to another?
- Does each paragraph serve a logical purpose?
- Could I rewrite any of the sentences more concisely without losing meaning?
- Are the sentences clear and complete?
- Are there sentences that announce what I am going to say, or that sum up what I have already said, and therefore could be cut?
- Is the piece of writing fair to the subject and to the reader?

The above checklist begins with some general questions to help you step back and take a look at the overall content and structure of the paper. It then "drills down" to paragraphs, sentences and words for a closer examination of the writing style.

Format to present research findings
When you do research, you can present your findings in various ways, depending on the purpose. For example, you could be asked to:

- write a report or research paper
- give an oral presentation

Let's look at each of these two basic formats of presentation in turn.

Research report

Placement
You can apply a few basic guidelines to help you make good formatting decisions. Formatting has to do with, for example, spacing, margins and pagination:

Spacing
Most documents are either double-spaced or single-spaced. Mostly, single-spacing is used (unless a publisher specifies otherwise).

Margins
Reports and research papers are formatted with top, side, and bottom margins.
Remember to allow enough space on the sides of the pages if the report or research paper is to be bound.

Pagination
The body of the report or research paper starts with page 1 even though there may be several pages before it. This is because you usually prepare the preliminary pages only after you've completed the report or research paper. Therefore, you handle them as a separate document and number them with lowercase Roman numerals (i, ii, iii. iv …) to avoid duplicate numbers. Have a look at the preliminary pages of this unit (before the ……) – you will see the page number (ii) on the copyright page. (The contents page is page (i), but we don't normally number the first page.)

Headings
Headings introduce the material that follows and give structure to a report or research paper. Text attributes such as position, capitalisation, font size, bold, italics and underlining indicate levels of importance.

Headings also set segments of text apart and make the whole text easier to read. Leave a little space above and below headings so that your document doesn't look too cramped.

Source references
Writers must give credit their sources when they use the work of others. Quotes or extensive use of published material must be referenced. Referencing helps the interested reader to find more complete information than the report or research paper contains.

Documentation can be provided in several ways. Within the text, you can use either endnotes (or footnotes) or citations to acknowledge the source you are referring to at a particular point. A list of references at the end of your document must give full details of all sources. Let's look at these three features more closely.

Endnotes
When you use endnotes, you put a little, raised number (like this [2]) in the text to indicate that you have given details of the source at the end of the document. You then give all source references on a separate page at the end of the report or research paper, in numerical order. The endnotes come before the bibliography or list of complete references. Number the endnotes page in sequence will the previous page. Endnotes are single-spaced, with a double space between notes.

Internal citations
Citations give the source of information within the body of the report or research paper. The author's name, publication date, and the page numbers are separated by a column and enclosed in brackets: (Van Huss, 1994, 10–12.) When you have already used the author's name as part of your text, you give only the date and page numbers in the citation. For example, "The theory formulated by Van Huss (1994, 10–12) is very interesting".

References
The reference list at the end of the report or research paper contains all references, whether quoted or not, in alphabetical order by author name. We have already discussed how you should format the items in a bibliography.

Document assembly
The components of a business report or research paper vary, depending on their formality. Reports or research papers are generally assembled in three separate segments. Generally, the body of

the report or research paper is prepared first, then the material to be attached as appendices or annexures, and finally the front matter (preliminary pages), as we have already mentioned.

Preliminary pages

Many reports or research papers begin with a title page, table of contents and executive summary. Other pages, such as a list of figures, may be added.

The title page makes the initial impression for the report or research paper; therefore, it deserves special attention. An effective title page is formatted attractively and contains the title of the report or research paper that it was prepared for, the name of the person who prepared it, and the date.

The body of the report or research paper

The content and format of the body varies widely, depending on the type of report or research paper. Reports or research papers may contain numbered items, tables, charts and graphics.

Appendices

If you have materials to support your report or research paper, such as questionnaires or tables, you can place them in an appendix at the end of the document. Often the material is segmented into several different appendices.

Research paper

The way you present and research papers can have a strong influence on the reader's response to your conclusions and recommendations. It is thus important to prepare them with great care.

Pay attention to each of the following factors when you format your document:

- placement – spacing, margins, and pagination

- headings – main, secondary, side and paragraph headings

- source references

- document assembly – beginning pages, body of report or research paper, and appendices

Research presentations

You have finally completed your document and have all the information in a sequenced and acceptable format. However it does not always end there. Presenting your findings often is part and parcel of moving forward in any arena of research.

Here are some general tips for your preparation and for the presentation itself:

- The audience's ability to remember information is reduced as a talk proceeds. So if you do want to make a series of points in your presentation, organise them from the most to the least important. That way, the people are more likely to remember the important points afterwards. You may even find that the less important points become irrelevant to the focus of the talk as you practise.

- Create "switch elements" to help your audience to follow the link from one issue to the next. These should be logical, and may be presented by posing a question, or explaining your own discovery of the link's existence.

- Use short, simple sentences. The concept will be made clearer, and the sentence structure is more similar to conversational styles.

- Run through the talk once beforehand. Go back and re-think the sequencing. Leave out non-essential elements.

- Don't assume the audience will be familiar with basic concepts that form the foundation of your talk. Outline these concepts briefly but clearly early on in the talk to avoid confusion.

- Try to identify problems or questions the audience may have and address them in the talk - before people in the audience become distracted and think of them instead of listening to what you have to say.

- Determine which elements would benefit from visual aids. Spend time working out the best way to present the material.

- When in doubt about which presentation medium to use (transparencies, slides, and videos, multimedia), choose the format that is the least complex. Keep in mind that the more technology you use, the more things can go wrong.

- The most important preparation factor is to rehearse! Do so in private at first. You can then try the presentation out in front of a few colleagues. Ask for feedback, and then act on that information. Select those who know a little about your topic, not those who know a lot. This will focus your attention on explaining your method and results in simple terms rather than giving details only specialists care about.

- If you start preparing early, you'll have plenty of time to refine the presentation based on your colleague's feedback. This is always a useful process.

- Don't waste your colleagues' time. If you are sincere about wanting that feedback, don't wait until the night before the presentation to ask for other people's input.

- Remember the shorter the talk, the more difficult it will be to cover the material for the clearly and completely. Be strict about including only what is essential for the presentation and remove all the non-essential pieces of information.

- Oral presentations

Oral presentations cannot provide as much detail as in written paper: most people cannot process as much information when they hear it as when they read it. So in an oral presentation, you need to leave out less essential details. It is also important to pay attention to presenting the big picture – place your presentation in context from the start, so that the audience is with you throughout the presentation.

Your oral introduction is likely to be the longest section, methods of research will be second longest, results is likely to be very brief, and the discussion section will probably be of short to medium length.

Fifteen to twenty minutes may sound like a long time for a presentation, but it really isn't. It takes about one minute just to describe the topic you've chosen; perhaps another two or three to explain why you chose it – and then you are almost a quarter of the way through.

Your main goal in the presentation should be to *convey an understanding of the basic questions and answers about your topic. Who, what, when, where, why, how?* As long as you communicate something interesting and relevant, you have fulfilled your obligations. So try to set up your presentation in a way that you at least find interesting.

Present your topic in a way that is comfortable for you. This may mean:

- reading a paper you've written before the time

- using note cards to remind you of topics you want to discuss

- getting the audience to participate

- using audio-visual aids such as a PowerPoint presentation; overhead projector transparencies or posters

- using hand-outs

- involving audience members in role-play

Initial planning
The initial planning is when you begin to adapt the talk to the situation, so this stage is very important for a successful presentation. Talk to your host or facilitator and clarify all the necessary details that we mention below before you spend much preparation time.

If the environment and the audience are unfamiliar to you, this is a critical stage. You may even want to do a literature search on potential audience members to identify areas of common interest or potential questions that may arise.

Begin this stage early. The more planning time you allow yourself, the more time you will have to think up approaches to the topic and the more interesting your presentation will be.

Before you begin preparing the presentation, you'll need to determine:

- the type of talk you are expected to give

- the composition of the audience

- the time allotted for the talk

- expectation for information content

The type of talk you will be expected to give
Ask yourself: will this be an informal chat, a seminar discussion, or a more formal presentation?

Different talks have different purposes; the purpose of a conference presentation is not the same as job talk. When in doubt ask for guidance from your facilitator.

The composition of the audience
Ask yourself:

- Will I be speaking to a general audience or specialists?

- How many people are expected to attend?

- Is this likely to be a friendly audience? An interactive audience?

The time allotted for the talk
The longer the talk, the more freedom you will have to explore the topic. A short talk needs to be very clear and to address the topic directly. Find out well in advance whether question time is included in the time allocation.

Expectations for information content
Is there a specific purpose for having you give a talk? Clarify the expectations beforehand and plan to address them during the presentation.

Will you be presenting new and unfamiliar concepts to this audience, or building on their existing knowledge? Either way, make sure you cover the basics clearly, and early in the talk, to avoid losing the audience.

Preparation
Once you have a general idea of *what* you want to say, you have to decide *how* to say it.

Unlike a conversation or a written document, a talk is a one chance attempt to make a point. By contrast, a conversation consists of repetitions and clarifications based on questions and immediate feedback, while a written paper allows a reader to puzzle through its contents as often as necessary.

It is essential that your talk be well constructed and tidy, and that you present your points to the audience logically. This all takes a fair amount of preparation. *Start early*!

Conducting the presentation

Introduction
If you can give a good example of the experience, event or trend that you are presenting information on, start with that. A good example that everyone can relate to will get your audience interested on the right wavelength. Give a theoretical context, but don't go into unnecessary details.

State your theory clearly. Make sure the logic behind it is clear, but emphasise the major point in the argument rather than the weight of evidence for each one.

4.7 Make conclusions and recommendations

In order to make effective recommendations, particularly when requiring action on the part of the audience, state it clearly as part of your ending. Plan the precise words you will use in your recommendation and inform your audience exactly what you want them to do.

Presentation methods
A *transparency* is a thin sheet of transparent flexible material, typically celluloid film, onto which you can write or print. This is then used on an overhead projector.

An *overhead projector* is a piece of electronic equipment that is used to display images to an audience. It typically consists of a large box containing a very bright lamp and a fan to cool it on top of which is a large lens that the light shines through. Above the box, typically on a long arm, is a mirror that redirects the light forward instead of up.

The table below provides a few ideas of methods you can use to present and illustrate your talk and the materials you will need in each case:

Method	Materials
Blackboard	Blackboard, chalk (coloured), eraser
Whiteboard	Whiteboard, erasable colour markers, eraser
Flip chart	Flip chart, colour markers
Hand-drawn poster	Materials: poster boards, paints or markers
Overhead transparencies	Overhead projector, screen, laser printer (colour), colour markers, scanner
Important images, graphs, and data	Big screen monitor(s), computer disk space, paint or drawing program, method of display
Video movies	Video camera, video tape
Computer-assisted presentation	Big screen monitor(s), disk space, computer programs such as PowerPoint.

Presenting results and recommendations of your findings
Where appropriate, put the overall results in the table or graph. You don't have to give minute detail about your research, just show the overall relationships.

If you are presenting recommendations, communicate these after you have presented the results, and link your recommendations to specific points in your findings. These links will demonstrate that your recommendations are based on sound information and judgement. This will make the audience more receptive to your recommendations.

Discussion
Briefly explain what is important about your finding, both with regard to theory and applications. What does this study reveal that could be important? Why is it important?

Allow for the opportunities for the audience to give feedback and ask questions. This can happen either during the presentation or at the end. Usually it is better to allow time at the end, to prevent interruptions or breaks in the flow of your presentation. Tell the audience at the beginning of the presentation that you will welcome questions at the end.

Class Activity 4: Conduct research, analyse and present findings
Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

Learning Unit 5
Lead and function in a team

After completing this Learning Unit, you will be able to lead and function in a team, by successfully completing the following:

- Actively lead and participate in group learning situations.

- Take up responsibilities in the team and apply group work conventions in learning situations.

- Practise conflict management and negotiating techniques in diverse contexts.

- Ensure that team work results in meaningful products, outcomes or goals.

Lead and function in a team

In this unit we will discuss how to lead as the leader of a team as well as how to interact effectively as a team member in order to meet outcomes or goals.

- The purpose of a team

A team is a distinguishable set of two or more individuals who interact dynamically, interdependently and adaptively to achieve specified, shared and valued objectives.

<div align="right">

Bowers, C. A. , Salas, E and Weaver, J. L.
Coordination and Virtual Environment, 1997

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As you can see from the definition, the purpose of the team is to achieve "specified, shared and valued objectives". There are many activities as well as learning situations that a team will perform together in order to meet objectives.

5.1 Actively lead and participate in group learning situations

Team learning situations in which a team will work together include:

- **Meetings** - Meetings may be team get-togethers or meetings held with trainers, other departments or institutions.

- **Site or field visits** - Site or field visits are business visits that you need to undertake in an official capacity - in other words as a representative of your organisation, not in a personal capacity - to another organisation or division.

- **Excursions** - Excursions are generally more relaxed than field visits, in other words they are outings that include a leisurely objective, for example a team-building excursion. In this instance, the objective is to build the team, but also for the team to have fun together.

- **Discussions** - Discussions are informal; in contrast to meetings, which are formal. A team can hold discussions in order to offer advice, gather information and so on.

- **Activities** - Activities are tasks that the team performs together. In the learning context, activities include exercises and group activities that a team does together to enhance learning. Role plays are one example of learning activities.

- **Workshops** - Workshops can be either:
  - business-oriented events, for example strategies workshops at which the strategy of a team is discussed and decided, or
  - learning-oriented events at which the team will learn new skills or gain knowledge

In order for a team to operate effectively in all of these activities, it is important that all members have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the team. We will now look at the roles in a team and the responsibilities that go with each role.

5.2 Take up responsibilities in the team and apply group work conventions in learning situations

When leading or functioning in a team, you need to take up responsibilities in the team and apply group work conventions in learning situations. This could include you doing any or all of the following:

- **Turn taking** - Certain conventions should be adhered to in group work and turn taking is one of the areas in which there needs to be some measure of control. There is a danger of an imbalance between types of members of a group, based on learning styles and

personalities such as extroverts and introverts. This may result in there being team members who "do the work" versus "those who do not".

Clear instructions regarding who does what and where needs to be clear to maintain some balance.

- **Supervision** - Supervising is an informal and less structured method of learning. The leader supervises the team members as they complete assigned tasks, and gives guidance and regular feedback. The focus is on supervising and managing.

- **Mentoring** - Mentoring can be formal or informal. The focus is on guiding the team members. Formal mentoring programmes usually include programme goals, schedules, training and evaluation. In informal mentoring, the role of the leader is to guide, and not control the activities of the team member.

- **Rotation of roles** – Rotation of roles involves team members performing differing roles for varying lengths of time. The objective is to give team members exposure to different tasks. It is also an opportunity for the team members to develop and gain new skills and knowledge. The leader may use the opportunity to assess a team member's potential when performing the following tasks:

  - **Conducting -** This role includes the organisation of information sessions; training workshops; brainstorming and/or mind mapping activities. The activities included in this role may vary.

  - **Chairing -** Chairing the team's learning activities means that you will have to guide them. Make sure that they stay on track with the assignments, discussions and other activities. This role also means that you would take the role of chairperson at all the meetings that are held.

  - **Recording -** If you are given the role of recording, you are responsible for recording the milestones or achievements of the team and/or individuals within the team. You would also record attendance at the various meetings or functions that your team attends. Your function would also include the recording of all assignments completed and submitted, together with the uncompleted tasks and/or assignments.

  - **Reporting -** One of your team will be required to report back to management on the progress, the activities and problems that the team may have faced.

Steps in effective teaching

The steps of effective teaching, whether by mentoring, supervising or rotating of roles, include:

- choosing the learning objectives

- providing a discovery experience that helps the learner understand the need for the skill

- demonstrating or explaining the skill

- allowing the learner to practise the skill

- evaluating the process

- Reflection questions for the team chairperson, supervisor or leader

After each team activity, ask yourself:

- Did I honour my obligations to other team members?

- Did the team cooperate, communicate, and lead appropriately? Did all team members get the relevant information about the team's work?

- How can team members and the team as a whole act more effectively?

5. 3 Practise conflict management and negotiating techniques in diverse contexts

Dealing with interpersonal relationships in a team is a complex subject that doesn't always get adequate attention. Each individual in a group has a particular and unique personality style, which has been shaped by the experiences of their whole lifetime. People have different things that motivate them. There are "driver" types and quiet people, expressive, and analytical, reserved, shy, and reactive types, and many others.

Understanding yourself and others in the team enables everyone to work together effectively to achieve the outcomes and goals of the team. Let's break this subject down into the following topics:

- getting to know yourself

- getting to know each other

- dealing with conflicts

- negotiation

Working with personality style conflicts

One of the most common sources of conflict and tension in teams is the friction between the "doers" and the "talkers". This is very common and is often a source of frustration.

A healthy community has a balance between task (action) and process (communication). You need process to determine the direction to go and how to work together; you need task orientation to accomplish all the jobs needed.

Picture a task and a process as the wings of a bird. If one wing is shorter than the other, the bird flies around in circles. If there is mostly task and little process, the friction between people will erupt into communication problems, and the resulting conflicts will prevent tasks from moving forward. With too much process, everybody spends much of their time on feelings, and the tasks that need doing do not get done. However, when task and process are balanced, both wings are working at maximum efficient to carry the community in the direction it wants to go.

Resolving conflicts

Conflicts and miscommunications happen, they are part of life. Not everyone thinks, acts, or responds in the same way, and members come under stress at different times, which causes differences in tolerance and patience. Not everyone in the team has the same level of commitment, honesty, or even integrity.

It is important to define a process that resolves problems and encourages members to talk about the issues behind the conflict in a controlled and reasonable way, even if these issues are intensively personal. Many people are conditioned to avoid conflict at any cost. They believe that conflict is bad and indicates failure. It is hard to overcome this tendency to avoid conflict, and conflict resolution training is a good first step. Conflict is healthy and a normal part of any human relationship. One of the most important elements of all successful teams is a clearly defined process for dealing with group and personal conflicts.

Sometimes conflicts cannot be resolved and must simply be respectfully accepted as differences.

If you ignore conflicts between individuals, it is common to find these conflicts coming into meetings as hidden agendas. The more frank and open you are while communicating, the less conflict will exist, and the less severe it will be when it does occur.

Sometimes meetings become really intense, and negotiations and discussions become counterproductive. The whole meeting environment becomes too emotionally charged to reach a solution. Conflicts can be emotionally draining, and meetings dealing with conflict can leave you feeling drained and exhausted. Group conflict resolution is a very demanding process, and sometimes you simply may not be up to it. Under these conditions it is often best for the facilitator to break the meeting or adjourn to another time, perhaps with a homework assignment for each individual to brainstorm all the pros and cons of the issue to bring back to the next meeting.

5.3.1 Conflict management techniques

One approach to managing conflict is Endelburg's "4 Rs Method" as presented below:

1. **R**easons. The causes or reasons for the conflict are investigated and openly, yet respectfully discussed.

2. **R**eactions. Team members look at their own reactions to the conflict. If those reactions are destructive, rather than constructive, individuals can self-correct and take the necessary steps to recommit to team success.

3. **R**esults. If the conflict is not resolved, what might happen? How might the team work together to resolve the conflict in a constructive manner?

4. **R**esolution. Which approach to conflict resolution could be used to effectively resolve the conflict? (Engleburg, 2003).

Here are some more strategies that have proved useful in resolving various types of conflict.

- Look for opportunities to practise using them before you really need them!

Begin conflict communication with "I" statements that reflect how you feel. The "I am feeling …" statements create a group process where individuals feelings are out front. For example, here are two ways to say the same thing. "I need to know the details so that I know exactly what it is I am required to do", and "You never give me the details and just expect me to know what to do!" In the first sentence, the individual is expressing his or her needs, which can then be discussed and worked around. In the second sentence, others may think the speaker is criticising them, and may react defensively, and it is unclear what the speaker's needs are.

Learn to identify what another person needs, and learn how to gracefully ask another person to define what they need.

A key question in working with conflicts is "why"? Why do you feel so strongly about this? Why are you shouting? Why are you so anxious about this issue? Why do you think that way? Learn to ask for clarification when an issue becomes a conflict.

Determine whether the disagreement is over facts or over the respective people's feelings about the facts. Ask questions to discover the underlying assumptions, values, and attitudes. Separate feelings from facts by using the phrases like: "To me; in my opinion; it appears to me". When people feel intensely about issues, it is important to ask them: "Why do you feel so strongly about this?" Keep asking that until the real issues emerge. Often the real issues are buried, and the current issue in dispute is only the carrier for feelings left unexpressed.

Do not make it personal. If you disagree about an idea or concept, frame the discussion around the idea, not the person. Say: "I don't agree with that idea", not, "Your idea is stupid".

Try reversing the roles. Agree to argue the other side for 15 minutes and then express the other viewpoint as persuasively as you can. This can be an effective way of keeping a single issue

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conflict from escalating into a larger conflict. If you do this with integrity, you will find that, amazingly enough, the other side's opinions have some validity.

Is it really an either or issue? Put both sides away and brainstorm alternative ideas. Often conflicts arise because of boxed thinking, when the participants believe that there is only a limited solution. Conflict occurs when people believe there is only one way. Breakthrough happens when people discover there is a third way, a fourth way, and a fifth way.

Do a trial solution. "Let's try this for three weeks and then evaluate it." Often a group has to make decisions without adequate knowledge or experience. Doing a trial solution and then evaluating the results can often lead to future changes and can also reassure reluctant participants, since the decision is not permanent.

If people get visibly angry, stop the discussion. If you cannot discuss the issue without anger, you need mediation. Get professional arbitration help early in a conflict it there is real visible anger. If people get visibly angry, and if you take a "time-out" meeting adjournment, make the time-out last at least one hour, and preferable two hours. The hormones released by anger take at least 90 minutes to dissipate, and these hormones will not let the body be calm, no matter what.

If you are arguing about details or specifics, back up a step to a bigger concept. Sometimes people who won't agree about the details can agree on a concept or goal. Then the details can be sorted and placed in relationship to the agreed concept or goal. It is often a good idea to define and agree on goals first, then try to find agreement on details that support the goal.

Rather than try to find the right answer, throw out the bad answers, the things you agree won't work. This might narrow the focus and also bring up something you hadn't thought of before.

5.3.2 Negotiating techniques
Although there are common patterns, there is no single best way to deal with conflict. Disputes arise for different reasons and every group or team is unique. Often negotiation is the most effective response to conflict. When both parties stand to gain something, each has some power, and there is interdependency.

Negotiation offers flexibility and viability that other responses, such as avoidance and confrontation, lack.

The process of negotiation involves listening to both sides, seeking out common areas of interest and agreement, and building on them so that individuals can understand each other's points of view.

There are four essential steps you need to apply to resolve disagreements effectively in a negotiation process.

- **diagnosis** – recognising areas of understanding and areas where differences exist

- **initiation** – bringing the disagreements to the surface

- **listening** – hearing not only what the other person is saying, but the emotional aspects as well

- **problem solving** – a process with numerous steps includes gathering data, considering its impact, examining alternatives, identifying solutions and developing a plan of action

Bring the parties together and, with the help of a third party, ask the following questions:

- What is the problem, as you perceive it?

- What does the other person do that contributes to the problem?

- What do you want or need from the other person?

- What do you do that contributes to the problem?

- What first step can you take to resolve the problem?

Each party should be questioned while the other listens, asking questions only for clarification. Then the parties discuss a mutual definition and understanding of the problem. They should be allowed to express their feelings and get hostility out of their systems at this stage, but both parties must be willing to admit partial responsibility for the problem. This requires good listening, low defensiveness, and an ability to stay in a problem-solving mode. The parties should reach agreement on what steps will be taken to resolve the problem, and this agreement should be put in writing to prevent later misunderstandings.

Revealing the sources of conflict early on enables people to understand the facts of the dispute before emotions get the upper hand. This may help them to see their areas of agreement more easily. When agreement areas are identified, people can then work toward arriving at a consensus and develop a process for resolving problems in the future.

Conflict within a team is virtually inevitable at some point. In order for a team to work effectively together towards achieving outcomes or goals it is essential that effective conflict resolution strategies are applied.

5.4 Ensure that team work results in meaningful goals, products or outcomes

There is a morale building component within any team work that is subtle but essential for successful team work. This is the clear message that what they are engaging in will result in something that is meaningful for themselves as well as for the team. These include the need to gain consensus, complete tasks within a good time frame and allow this transfer of knowledge to be effective.

5.4.1 Reaching consensus

Getting to know each other is an essential element of being able to work together as a team. As you get to know one another, you develop an appreciation for others and the contribution each person can make to a team.

Many groups neglect this, assuming that the task is more important than their relationships. It may be easy to incorporate social activities as part of business meetings, but the group should also hold purely social gatherings, where the point is to have fun. Share stories of where you grew up, important turning points in your life, people you admire. Another way is to get each member to interview another and write up a brief biography. These stories can be kept in a notebook for future members to read and add to. Spend time talking and learning about one another.

5.4.2 Completing tasks

Teamwork is a good way to ensure the timely completion of any work, with the maximum possible efficiency. Like any project that an individual might take on there will be milestones. This is no different in team work, where there will be milestones that need to be completed before the next team member may continue. Time management is therefore critical.

There might also be cases where team members are given sets of work simultaneously to make sure that deadlines are met. Clear and constant planned communication between team members regarding the progress will limit conflict, should some tasks appear to be behind schedule.

5.4.3 Transferring knowledge

Any group or team will function more successfully if they use certain types of knowledge; this will also lead to better completion of tasks. This concept also falls within the field of Knowledge Management.

Two types of knowledge are important here:

- **Tacit knowledge** – this is knowledge that group members have within their minds, based on experience and is often difficult to share because the people who possess it do not often ~~access it to~~ communicate it. This knowledge often provides context for ideas, experiences, people, and places and is not easily captured.

- **Explicit knowledge** – this is more structured knowledge, such as data elements that are organised in a particular way for future retrieval, e. g. documents, databases, and spread sheets or unstructured information, that is not referenced for retrieval, e. g. e-mails, images, audio or video selections.

Meaningful dialogue must be established in order to obtain tacit knowledge whereas explicit knowledge is far more easily obtainable.

Take the following steps to ensure effective knowledge transfer:

- Determine how the knowledge will be transferred.

- Transfer the knowledge.

- Test knowledge transfer by observing its recollection and use.

Class Activity 5: Lead and function in a team
Please follow the instructions from the facilitator to complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

Reflection
Individually, complete the formative activity in your Learner Workbook.

Facilitator Observation Checklist
The facilitator will provide you with feedback about your participation during the class activities in your Learner Workbook.

Summative Assessment

You are required to complete a number of summative assessment activities in your Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide. The Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide will guide you as to what you are required to do:

- Complete all the required administration documents and submit all the required documentation, such as a certified copy of your ID, a copy of your CV and relevant certificates of achievement:

  - Learner Personal Information Form

  - Pre-Assessment Preparation Sheet

  - Assessment Plan Document

  - Declaration of Authenticity Form

  - Appeals Procedure Declaration Form

- Place your complete Learner Workbook (with the completed Class Activities) in the specified place in the Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide.

- Complete the Knowledge Questions under the guidance of your facilitator:

> ### *Knowledge Questions*
> Individually, complete this summative activity in your Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide.

- Complete the other summative assessment activities in your workplace:

> ### *Practical Activities*
> Individually, complete this summative activity in your Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide.

> ### *Summative Project*
> Individually, complete this summative activity in your Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide.

> ### *Logbook*
> Individually, complete this summative activity in your Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide.

Once you have completed all the summative activities in your Learner Portfolio of Evidence Guide, complete the Assessment Activities Checklist to ensure that you have submitted all the required evidence for your portfolio, before submitting your portfolio for assessment.

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