LESSONS FROM COVID-19

Enable your students to learn all the skills of self-managed remote learning – remotely

Lance King
August 2020

The global pandemic of 2020 demonstrated two things very clearly to the whole education community world-wide:

1. that most teachers were poorly prepared to facilitate students' remote learning of their subject matter
2. and that most students were poorly prepared to fully manage their own learning.

The reason being of course that remote learning hadn't been a necessity of school life before Covid-19, more of a luxury or an interesting alternative but now it has moved to centre stage as the no 1. post Covid-19, most vital educational strategy for all schools and all students world-wide.

Luckily teachers are very versatile and adaptable people and it did not take them too long from when schools closed to get up to speed and start working on turning their classroom lessons into fully independent remote learning experiences for students. In doing this they discovered:

1. that they were largely unfamiliar with the full variety of websites that teach their subject matter, and also
2. that designing engaging, good quality, remotely accessible, independent learning lessons for students to achieve the same educational objectives that would have happened in class in anything like the same time frame is not an easy thing to do.

And then once they had got familiar with the on-line material and designed some good lessons using it they discovered the final hurdle:

3. that many students did not really know how to manage their own learning - remotely.

Without the formal environment of a class to support them many students felt isolated and disconnected from their schooling and found it very difficult to generate the motivation and drive necessary to put in the hours of learning at home that they normally would at school. As one parent told me:

"Even in lockdown they still seem to have almost 24/7 connection with their friends on their devices, but the idea of using that connection to work together on schoolwork just doesn't seem to occur to them. They don't seem to have been taught how to form digital teams, how to collaborate and work together remotely, independent of teachers."

The real lessons we can all learn from Covid-19 are that:

1. teachers need to be very familiar with every website that teaches their subject matter – both the free and the paid sites and schools need to invest in subscriptions for teachers in all the best sites
2. teachers need comprehensive training in how to design engaging, independent remote-learning lessons for their students that utilise the best on-line resources available
3. students need to be taught all the thinking and learning (ATL) skills they need for effective self-managed learning
4. at school, students need training in and regular practice in the management of their own learning
5. becoming an effective, successful self-managed learner needs to be made into a high status achievement at school, something all children will aspire to.

LALATAT is designed to help achieve these goals.

LALATAT.com

Learning About Learning and Thinking About Thinking.

This is the name of our new website – release date 1st September, 2020.

LALATAT is unique in that it is the only thinking and learning skills platform that contains exercises for students to do that give them training in all of the ATL skills. Over 300 individual exercises that any MYP or DP student can easily do to learn all the ATL skills necessary for success at school, at university, in every modern job, in business and in every career.

1. Sept 1st release will be of the MYP and DP ATL portals which will include all five Categories of DP ATL skills and all 10 Clusters of MYP ATL skills

2. Next releases in October/November 2020 will be portals for GCSE, IGCSE, AS and A-Level, and specific portals for different national curricula

3. All exercises will be available online initially in English, French and Spanish with Chinese, Japanese and Vietnamese languages added subsequently

4. Help your students to learn all the skills of remote self-managed learning - remotely.

First release ATL portals for IB schools are aligned with the LALATAT framework as follows:

IB	MYP	DP	LALATAT
Self-Management	Organisation	Organisation	Organization skills
			Study Skills
	Affective	Character	Character Skills
	Reflection		Metacognitive Skills
Communication	Communication	Communication	Language skills
	Media Literacy		Media skills
Social	Collaboration	Social	Group skills
			Social skills
Research	Information Literacy	Research	Research Skills
Thinking	Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking	Critical Thinking Skills
		Computational Thinking	Computational Thinking Skills
			Decision Making Skills
	Creative Thinking	Creative Thinking	Idea Generation Skills
			Adaptive Thinking Skills
	Transfer		Transfer Skills

Each IB ATL portal contains a full range of ATL exercises for students that cover the full framework of ATL skills in each programme - all categories, clusters and strands. There are over 300 individual exercises in total over the two programmes that cover all the ATL skills your students will need to succeed at school and beyond.

One subscription to LALATAT gives a student access to both ATL portals.

Teachers are connected for free.

LALATAT ATL Skills Categories:

1. Organisation skills
2. Study Skills
3. Character Skills
4. Metacognitive Skills
5. Language skills
6. Media skills
7. Group skills
8. Social skills
9. Research Skills
10. Critical Thinking Skills
11. Computational Thinking Skills
12. Decision Making Skills
13. Idea Generation Skills
14. Adaptive Thinking Skills
15. Transfer Skills

Within each category are strands that focus skills around specific tasks or needs and within each strand are many exercises for students to do to enable them to gain mastery of all the thinking and learning skills they need.

This platform is designed for learners of all ages to use for themselves remotely at home or for teachers to use in class at school.

- Any IB school can use this platform to instantly create a complete ATL skills programme of their own that covers all the ATL skills their students need.

- Any teacher can use the exercises from this platform within existing lessons to teach specific ATL skills when they are needed or can use the exercises as complete lesson in themselves

- Any student can use this platform to teach themselves how to do all the tasks that they have to do for teachers, for tests, for assignments, for exams - at school or university, and also to learn how to concentrate, persevere, motivate themselves and develop resilience.

- Any parent can use this platform to make sure their children develop all the ATL thinking and learning skills they need for success at school and university

- Any person can use this platform to learn the ATL thinking and learning skills they will need for every career and in every business in their future.

LALATAT ATL – 15 Categories and 102 Strands:

1. Organization skills

Write Goals

Time and Task Management

Achieve Long Term goals

Trimming the Sails

Plan

Take Responsibility

Organise Resources

Predict Consequences

2. Study Skills
    Learning Preferences
    Learning Strategies
    Review Schedules for Long-Term Memory
    Create a Study Group
    Memory Techniques
    Exam Study Timetabling
    Exam Techniques

3. Character Skills
    Concentration and Mindfulness
    Virtues and Values
    Self-Motivation
    Failing Well
    Pressure, Stress and Anxiety
    Perseverance and Procrastination
    Resilience
    Courage

4. Metacognitive Skills
    Self-Assess Learning Skill Development
    Improve Performance
    Reflect on Knowledge
    Consider Ethical, Cultural and Environmental Implications
    Reflective Journaling

5. Language skills
    Critically Read Text
    Read Broadly
    Write for Different Purposes
    Create Glossaries of Terms
    Scientific Writing
    Business Writing
    Create Summary Notes from Text
    Create Summary Notes from Presentations
    Skim-Read and Speed-Read
    Give and Receive Feedback

6. Media skills
    Communicate Non-Verbally
    Create Presentations
    Media Options and Choices
    Media Formats
    Media Impact and Ethics

7. Group skills
- Listen well
- Ask Good Questions
- Empathise
- Understand Other Cultures
- Negotiate
- Teams and Groups
- Group Consensus
- Digital Groups
- Leadership
- Manage and Resolve Conflicts
- People Management

8. Social skills
- Relationships
- Social Pressure
- Rights and Needs
- Seeking Help
- Social Media Identity
- Social Media Security
- Social Action

9. Research Skills
- Develop a Research Question
- Build a Key-Word Search Strategy
- Effective Digital Searching
- Link Research Tasks and Tools
- Evaluate Sources of Evidence
- Primary and Secondary Sources
- Different Points of View
- Evaluate Sources for Bias
- IP rights, Academic Honesty and Referencing
- Organize and Store Information
- Create a Valid Research Argument
- Use Feedback to Evaluate Research

10. Critical Thinking Skills
- Induction, Deduction and Inference
- Develop Evidence-Based Arguments
- Consider Ideas from Multiple Perspectives
- Implications, Inferences and Conclusions
- Correlation and Causality
- Assumptions
- Interpret Data
- Draw Conclusions
- Solve Problems - Think Globally, Act Locally

11. Computational Thinking Skills
    Decomposition - break down complex problems into smaller parts
    Pattern Recognition - look for patterns in problems and data
    Abstraction - represent problems using models and simulations
    Algorithmic thinking - develop operational instructions to suit digital processors
    Solve Problems - Using Computational Thinking

12. Decision Making Skills
    Adaptive Thinking
    Take Initiative
    Recognise Danger
    Manage Risk
    Fairness and Equity
    Make Decisions - Hard and Easy Choices
    Learn from Decisions

13. Idea Generation Skills
    Metaphors
    Connections and Extensions
    Form and Function
    100 Uses

14. Adaptive Thinking Skills
    Flexible Thinking
    Guess Well
    Creation through Imitation
    Visual Thinking

15. Transfer Skills
    Connections between Subjects
    Connection between Concepts
    Changing Contexts

Within each Strand are up to 10 exercises for students to do to develop and practise the skills that make up each strand eg. in the first LALATAT category Organisation skills these are the details of the exercises in each strand:

1. Organisation skills
    1a. Write Goals
        Ex 1 Write goals to generate action
    1b. Time and Task Management
        Ex 1 Chores, tasks, immediate goals
        Ex 2 Reduce the pressure by taking strategic action
        Ex 3 Manage all assignments to reduce stress
        Ex 4 Get all subject deadlines organised
        Ex 5 Make 'To Do' lists

1c. Achieve Long Term goals

        Ex 1 Generate purpose, plan and take action

1d. Trimming the Sails

        Ex 1 Evaluate action, make changes

        Ex 2 Consequences and action

1e. Plan

        Ex 1 Plan to achieve goals

        Ex 2 Plan to develop strategies

        Ex 3 Plan to identify obstacles

1f. Take Responsibility

        Ex 1 Identify responsibilities

        Ex 2 Actions and consequences

        Ex 3 Impulsiveness

1g. Organise Resources

        Ex 1 Resources for classes

        Ex 2 Set up alarms

1h. Predict Consequences

        Ex 1 In daily life

        Ex 2 At school

The rationale for LALATAT is all about control.

Giving control of learning back to students.

What do children have control over at school?

- Who they are taught by?

- What they are taught?

- Where they are taught?

- When they are taught?

- How they are taught?

- Who sets their assignments, tests and exams?

- Who marks their assignments, tests and exams?

Of course not.

Almost everything at school is out of students direct control and yet we still expect students to try their hardest to achieve difficult academic goals. The problem is that if a child is struggling to succeed at school and they attribute their lack of success to one of the factors listed above then they could very easily become depressed, dispirited and feel helpless.

What we need to help all our children realise is that there are two factors that are completely in their control which will determine their success in any academic task. They are:

1. The amount of effort they put in, and
2. The way they apply that effort, in other words what strategies and techniques they use for:

   a. time management
   b. listening and concentration
   c. note making & summarising
   d. reading for understanding
   e. remembering well
   f. setting and achieving goals
   g. dealing with pressure & stress
   h. failing well
   etc.

These controllable factors are, of course, all ATL skills.

Taken as a whole group, ATL skills are the single most controllable factor available to students to improve their grades, scores, marks and overall performance in any area – especially in remote self-managed learning.

Any ATL programme needs to demonstrate to all learners that they do have control over the success of their own learning efforts, they just need to learn how to learn – effectively and efficiently.

The ultimate aim of ATL has to be to help students develop into fully self-managed, self-directed, autonomous, independent, life-long learners.

And not need teachers anymore.

We aim to make ourselves redundant.

Like all good teachers.

One thing that Covid-19 showed all educators and parents is the need for making sure our children develop all these ATL skills and become fully self-managed learners, not just because there may be another pandemic in the future but because those are the skills that all success in a digital future will depend on.