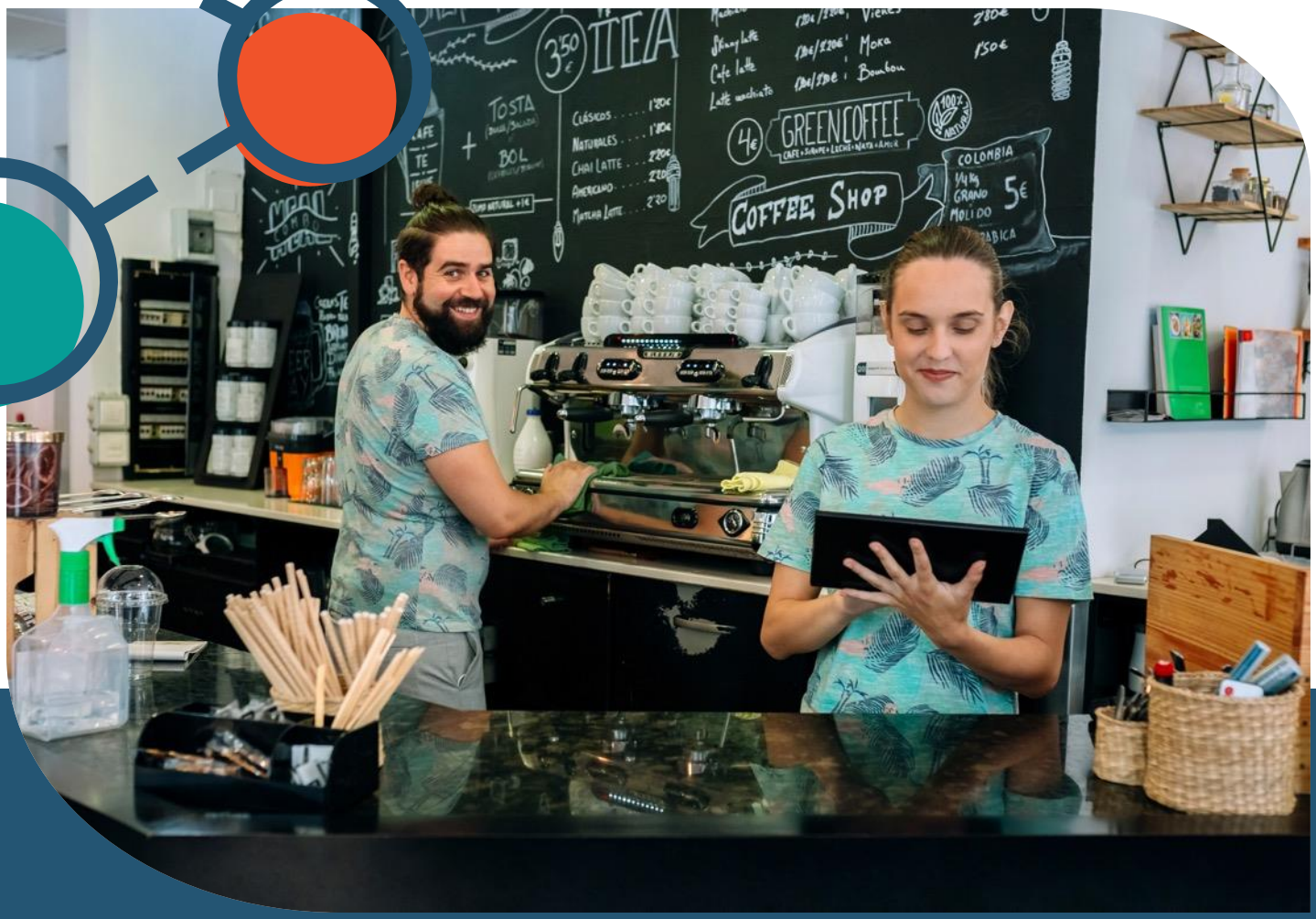
SLS CAFE



SUSTAINABLE LIFE SKILLS CAFÉ TOOLBOX

6 modules and 18 lesson templates of practical-based learning material

www.SLSCAFE.eu

Co-funded by the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

CC BY SA

contents

01 GETTING STARTED & GETTING TO KNOW EACH OTHER 05
- Building Trust
- Quality or Skills to Get Strengthen
- Identify Hopes for the Future

02 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION 22
- Attentive Listening
- Verbal & Non-verbal Behaviour
- Assertive Skills to Reduce Vulnerability

03 RELATIONSHIPS 43
- Change of Ideal Images
- Positive Conflict Resolution
- Creative Ways of Solving Conflict & Win-win Situation

04 DECISION MAKING & REACHING GOALS 61
- Determining the Risk & Safe Behavior
- Decisions & Effects
- Setting Realistic Goals & Reach Them

05 COPING WITH EMOTIONS AND STRESS 81
- Identifying & Expressing Feelings Verbally and Non-verbally
- Express Feelings Safely
- Coping Strategies for Positive Thinking

06 CREATIVE THINKING 99
- How to Understand Innovativeness?
- What does Analytical Thinking Represent?
- What is Fostering Creativity?

Co-funded by the European Union

The European Commission support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein

CC BY-SA 4.0

Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International

This license requires that reusers give credit to the creator. It allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, even for commercial purposes. If others remix, adapt, or build upon the material, they must license the modified material under identical terms.

BY: Credit must be given to you, the creator.

SA: Adaptations must be shared under the same terms.

01 | Guide to this Toolbox:

Within the Sustainable Life Skills Cafe PR1 toolbox, each part consists of several lessons. There are a total of 6 modules and 18 lesson templates included in this practical-based learning material. This publication contains a constructive structure including a logical sequence of lessons. Therefore, it is recommended not to change the sequence of the lessons. However, the trainers/tutors and practitioners might decide to leave out a specific lesson or activity or to extend another of the modules. And, for example, if there is not sufficient time to complete during Life Skills Cafe gatherings, it is also possible to apply the pick and choose approach.

This publication is written so that anybody, but specifically low-skilled/disadvantaged adults can benefit from it along with facilitation of tutors, mentors, coaches etc. In this way, we first pave the way on how to perform these tools in informal learning environments and then it enables peer education as well. This means that for example an adult participant can deliver a session to other participants. All the lessons include practical activities for the learners in the context of sustainable life skills mindset. The activities are closely related to practice and the real world. In this way the course encourages practical learning. Learners should be encouraged to ask questions, as many questions as they can think of.

02 | How to Use Lessons in the Training Material

In order to complete and facilitate the impact of the Training Material it is deemed important to provide a set of informal activities ready to be used by practitioners around the facilitators of Sustainable Life Skills Cafes. Activities should not be taken as isolated events but considered as a process contributing to the personal growth of the learner and its development in terms of life skills mindset.

Each lesson comes with a step-by-step instruction planning to guide some trainers/tutors/facilitators performing the activity. The following lessons will offer an opportunity to stimulate the learners' reflections and skills through practical, participatory and dialogue-based experiences.

By following these lessons, participants will practice a list of competences which is based upon the European Competence Framework for better lives, also known as LifeComp. This Framework aims to build consensus around a common understanding of Life Skills Competence by defining 9 competence areas (see image below). These competences are linked to the lessons in this training course.

03 | Sustainable Life Skills Competence Framework

Empowering and supporting disadvantaged adults plays a key role in Europe's Economy since these adults are in a vulnerable state in the labor market, many of them lacking the skills, work experience, job-search abilities and financial resources to find employment. The LifeComp Framework presented in this report proposes a concept of "Sustainable Life Skills" that can be explained in connection with internal capacities and behaviors that allow individuals to "build the needed competencies for human development and to adopt positive behaviors that enable them to deal effectively with the challenges.

LifeComp is a conceptual framework that describes 9 competencies (P1-3, S1-3, L1-3) that can be learned by everyone in formal, informal and non-formal education. These Competencies are structured in 3 intertwined competence areas: Personal, Social, and Learning to learn. Each of the-areas is made up of 3 competences, which, together, constitute the building blocks of Life Skills as a competence.

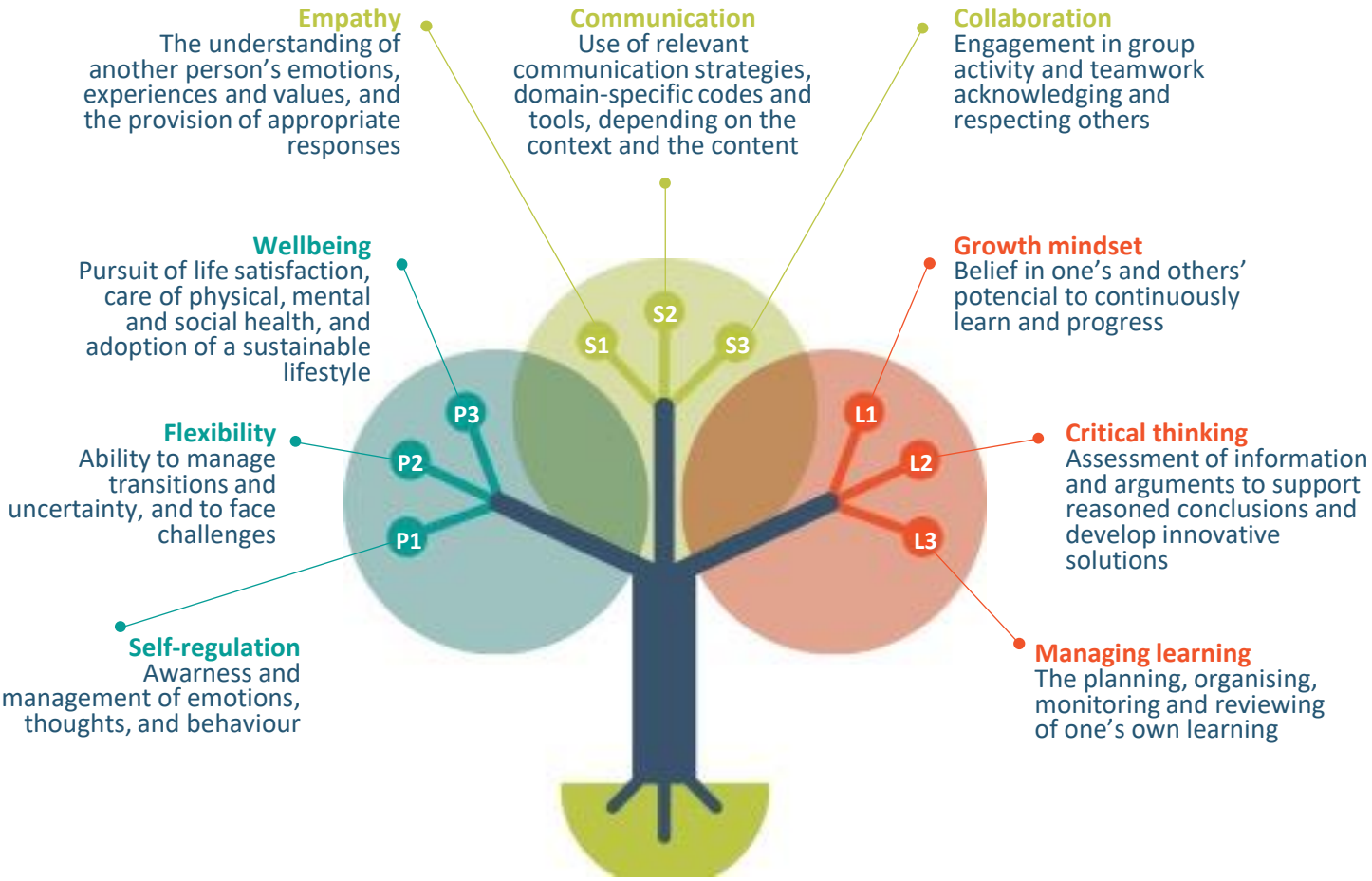


Figure 1: LifeComp Tree of competences describes nine competences, organised in three areas: The "personal" area (P1, P2, P3), the "social" area (S1, S2, S3) and the "learning to learn" area (L1, L2, L3)
© EU 2020, creative commons (CC BY 4.0)

LifeComp can be used as a basis for the development of curricula and learning activities fostering personal, and social development, and learning to learn.

06

CREATIVE THINKING

6.1 How to Understand Innovativeness?
6.2 What does Analytical Thinking Represent?
6.3 What is Fostering Creativity?

Creative thinking

Creative thinking is widely considered critical for growth in the information age and innovation-driven economies (OECD, 2018). It is also becoming more valuable in terms of individual and communal identity, and employability (Durham Commission on Creativity and Education, 2019).

A technical report by the Joint Research Centre (JRC), the European Commission's science and knowledge service states that creative thinking is the ability to incorporate intellectual curiosity, tolerance for ambiguity and risk, and to be flexible and adaptive. Sustainable Life Skills Café Project-Creative Thinking lesson plans and tools serve as a starting point for developing/upgrading Creative thinking skills & mindset in an informal learning space for disadvantaged and low-skilled adults- especially but not exclusively migrants and socially excluded groups.

Through these practical and structured materials, we create new career opportunities for low-skilled adults and migrants including people facing economic and social obstacles.

6.1 HOW TO UNDERSTAND INNOVATIVENESS?

Aim

- Learning to start from the right place
- Learning to create new ideas, develop an idea from ideas, multiply and filter ideas with techniques and tools.

Activities

- 20 minutes - Warm-up: **Alternate Uses**
- 40 minutes - Main Activity: **SCAMPER Activity**
- Follow-up Activity: **Unrelated Reading (after the session)**

Resources

- **Warm-up Activity:** Everyday objects, timer, pen, paper
- **Main Activity:** Flipchart or whiteboard with a suitable marker and eraser.
- **Follow-up:** This activity is for after the session

Lifecomp Competencies Covered

- **P2.2** Understanding and adopting news ideas, approaches, tools, and actions in response to changing contexts.
- **L2.2** Comparing, analysing, assessing, and synthesising data, information, ideas, and media messages in order to draw logical conclusions.
- **L2.3** Developing creative ideas, synthesising, and combining concepts and information from different sources in view of solving problems.

Hints & Questions

- The educator helps participants to generate ideas for new products and services and encourages them to think about how they can improve existing ones.

Keywords

- Innovative ideas, creative thinking, diverse thinking, brainstorming, creativity, idea generation, thinking out of the box, innovate solutions.

Warm-Up

Alternate Uses:

Brainstorming activity that encourages diverse, outside-the-box thinking.

- **Supplies needed: Everyday objects, timer, pen, paper**

01

GOAL

The goal of this exercise is to help participants use brainstorming to think outside the box.

02

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Set a timer for three minutes.
2. Choose an everyday object, such as a toothbrush or a spoon. How many uses can you think of for a spoon? You have three minutes…..Go!
3. Make a list of all the many ways you may use that thing. A toothbrush, for example, may be used to clean objects, brush your brows, or produce a fantastic pain spatter effect for an art project.
4. As you go around the room, ask each team/participant to share their best ideas.

Warm-Up:
Alternate Uses

03

Conclusion and relevance to the Lifecomp Framework:

- This is a simple and enjoyable exercise for teams of any size. At the end, you will have a diverse range of useful and interesting ideas. You may be astonished at how inventive you may get after a few rounds of activities. This practice is a terrific way to shake up your brain and get to know your team members before getting into a serious brainstorming session.
- The alternate uses activity tests your imagination by allowing you limited time to come up with as many other extraordinary functions for the common things.
- This activity is indirectly related to the personal and flexibility area of the framework which refers to understanding and adopting new ideas, approaches, tools, and actions in different contexts. Additionally, the learning to learn-critical thinking area of the framework covers directly generating ideas, openness, and courage to explore new concepts which are the main objectives of this activity.

6.1 Creative Thinking:
Main Activity

The SCAMPER technique is useful for generating ideas for new products and services by encouraging you to think about how you could improve existing ones. Thus, this activity is directly related to the L2 Critical thinking area of the framework which refers to generating ideas, digging deeper into ideas, and generating valuable & original outcomes which are also the main objectives of this activity.

01

Supplies needed:

- Flip chart / whiteboard
- Markers

Learning Content:

- SCAMPER technique

02

SCAMPER Activity

SCAMPER is a method of creative brainstorming that is quick, simple, and direct. You utilise the tool by following each of the seven steps to ask questions about existing features. These questions might help you come up with innovative ideas for new products/methods/services or ways to improve existing ones.

SCAMPER Stands for:

❖ **Substitute**
- Other properties?
- Other time/place?
- Other feelings/attitudes?
- Other people?

❖ **Combine**
- Purposes/objectives?
- Talents/resources?
- Steps/activities?

❖ **Adapt**
- To a different context?
- Using ideas outside of your field?
- To another situation?

❖ **Modify**
- Physical qualities?
- Features/steps?
- Size/duration?
- Frequency?

❖ **Put to another use.**
- To solve other problems.
- To work elsewhere.

❖ **Eliminate**
- How to simplify?
- Make it smaller?
- Reduce time/cost/effort?

❖ **Reverse**
- Use another order?
- Exchange roles?

6.1 Follow-up activity: Unrelated Reading

Digital or non-digital tool: Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty: Intermediate

03

"Unrelated reading" activity helps to widen learners' perspectives. Reading in areas other than your professional or occupational interest establishes unusual connections which lead to innovative thinking. Thus, moving between unrelated subjects, thoughts, or situations will help to discover the link that pushes an idea "outside the box." This tool refers to and is directly related to LifeComp Framework Learning to learn- critical thinking area.

04

Description:

Learning about disciplines and reading literature other than your own might open you to alternative ways of thinking about and managing your business. After the session, ask your participants to go to a bookstore or library and explore an area entirely unrelated to their career or the books they regularly read. Suggest that they select a book and read it to see what new information they may gain.

6.2 WHAT DOES ANALYTICAL THINKING REPRESENT?

Aim

- Understanding, synthesising, conceptualising, analysing, interpreting, and evaluating information
- Applying the design thinking steps to solve problems more creatively
- Understanding problems from the different perspectives

Activities

- 20 minutes - Warm-up Activity**: Reading and Critiquing**
- 30 minutes - Body Activity: **Design Thinking**
- 10 minutes- Follow-up Activity/Reflection: **Free write**

Resources

- **Warm-up Activity:** Article from a publication (newspaper, book, research etc.)
- **Body Activity**: Board, markers, pen, papers
- **Follow-up Activity:** Pen, papers

Lifecomp Competencies Covered

- **S2.1** Awareness of the need for a variety of communication strategies, language registers, and tools that are adapted to context and content
- **P2.2** Understanding and adopting new ideas, approaches, tools, and actions in response to changing contexts
- **L2.1** Awareness of potential biases in the data and one's personal limitations, while collecting valid and reliable information and ideas from diverse and reputable sources
- **L2.2** Comparing, analysing, assessing, and synthesising data, information, ideas, and media messages in order to draw logical conclusions
- **L2.3** Developing creative ideas, synthesising and combining concepts and information from different sources in view of solving problems

Hints & Questions

- Lesson and activities can be done outdoors depending on the weather.
- How do participants feel compared to before the lesson?
- Has the exercise helped them with trust?

Keywords

- Design thinking, creativity, analytical thinking, creative thinking

6.2 Warm-up activity: Reading and Critiquing

Digital or non-digital tool: Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty: Advanced

01

Critical reading increases career opportunities and allows the reader to think for themselves and provide them with the skills they need to present their argument in any scenario. Furthermore, this tool helps them to improve their communication skills and make objective judgments about people and events in their lives. Thus, we can directly relate this tool to Social-communication and learn to learn-critical thinking area which refers to comparing, analysing, and generating data.

Description:

02

Participants might use this method to question the article's errors and the rationality of judgments. As a result, participants may apply their own thinking to generate fresh thoughts on the issue.

Instructions:

1. Present an article from a publication that is relevant to whatever topic you are addressing.

2. Ask participants to read the text critically and analyse its qualities and flaws.

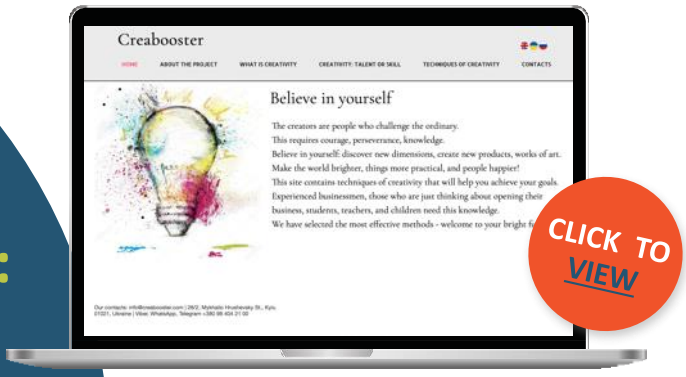
3. Participants can write about their thoughts on the article, any deceptive statements or biases made by the author, and analyse it using their own opinions

6.2 Body activity:
Design Thinking

Digital or non-digital tool:
Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty: Advanced

Tool website:
https://creabooster.com/



RELATION TO LifeComp Framework:

Design Thinking is a systematic & creative method of generating ideas, and their implementation, based on a deep understanding of users, their desires, and preferences.

The design thinking process involves developing an innovative mindset and promoting creative thinking, creating effective ideas that can live up to the solution.

Design Thinking Process Diagram*

d.School Executive Education
Hasso Plattner Institue of Design at Stanford University
**not necessary linear, apply as needed © 2019*

Description

Design thinking

Design thinking is a non-linear, iterative approach that allows to understand & challenge assumptions, reframe obstacles, and develop and test novel solutions. Empathise, Define, Ideate, Prototype, and Test are the five phases that are most beneficial for tackling challenges that are poorly defined or uncertain.

The Five Stages of Design Thinking

The Hasso Plattner Institute of Design at Stanford describes design thinking as a five-stage process.

1. Empathise-Research Needs
2. Define-State Needs and Problems
3. Ideate-Challenge Assumptions and Create Ideas
4. Prototype-Start to Create Solutions
5. Test-Try Your Solutions Out

These stages are not always sequential, and teams often run them in parallel, out of order, and repeat them in an iterative fashion.

Design Thinking is well-suited to tackling a wide range of problems and is most effective in fostering creativity in the following scenarios:

- Value redefinition
- Innovation focused on people
- Well-being
- Problems that impact various groups of people
- Different components are involved.
- Changing behaviours
- Concerns about corporate culture
- Concerns about new technologies
- Creating new business models
- Addressing society's fast changes
- Unresolved social problems
- Professional initiatives
- Intellectual progress
- Imagination is required

6.2 Follow-up activity: Free write

Digital or non-digital tool: Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty: Intermediate

03

Free writing tool provides an opportunity for participants to be imaginative without restriction, frequently resulting in confidence and a sense of pleasure. 'Free writing' tool whereby the participants are expected to write continuously for a set amount of time, but without focusing on any particular skill fosters the creative thought which directly covers the same areas and targets the same goals with the LifeComp Framework L2 Critical Thinking competence.

04

Description:

Schedule a few minutes at the end of the session to write in a stream of consciousness. This type of freewriting, where your learners write whatever comes to mind consistently without stopping, is a great way to discover some of their subconscious ideas, which could lead to innovative solutions to work challenges.

6.3 WHAT IS FOSTERING CREATIVITY?

Aim

- Learning to create new ideas, and approaches, develop an idea from ideas, multiply and filter ideas with techniques and tools
- Developing the creative abilities
- Stimulating diverse and critical thinking

Activities

- 20 minutes - Warm-up Activity: **Run-on Story**
- 30 minutes - Body Activity: **Synectic**
- 60 minutes- Follow-up Activity: **Field Trip**

Resources

- **Warm-up Activity:** Article from a publication (newspaper, book, research etc.)
- **Body Activity:** Board, markers, pen, papers
- **Follow-up Activity:** Pen, papers

Lifecomp Competencies Covered

- **P2.2** Understanding and adopting new ideas, approaches, tools, and actions in response to changing contexts
- **S2.3** Listening to others and engaging in conversations with confidence, assertiveness, clarity, and reciprocity, both in personal and social contexts
- **L2.2** Comparing, analysing, assessing, and synthesising data, information, ideas, and media messages in order to draw logical conclusions
- **L2.3** Developing creative ideas, synthesising, and combining concepts and information from different sources in view of solving problems

Hints & Questions

- The smaller group can operate more successfully for creative training.
- It may be used in various disciplines, including science and the arts.

Keywords

- Creativity, creative thinking, Synectic technique, lateral thinking

6.3 Warm-up activity:
Run-on Story

Digital or non-digital tool: Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty:
Intermediate

01

The run-on story is an excellent way to begin any brainstorming session. It offers participants a voice in narrative creation and is an interesting practice in active listening to build on the ideas of others, converting good ideas into outstanding ones.

02

Description:

A group creates a narrative/storyline one phrase at a time in a run-on story activity.

Instructions:

Choose a moderator and ask them to provide a basic prompt (for example, "Verona's graduation or Tom's new business"). Keep it broad and basic so that the group may fill in the information as they go.

One at a time, go around the room. Each team member brings one sentence to the story. Continue until the story comes to a final or you've gone around the group a few times.

The Run-On Story activity is an improvisational practice that requires rapid thinking and imagination. It also teaches active listening since everyone must pay close attention to how the story unfolds to contribute positively to the story when it is their time.

6.3 Body activity: Synectic

Digital or non-digital tool: Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty: Advanced

02

Synectic, along with Brainstorming and Lateral Thinking, is commonly characterized as a Creative Problem-Solving (CPS) Technique. Synectic comes from the Greek language and “the joining together of different and apparently irrelevant elements”. Originators of the method are George M. Prince and William J.J. Gordon who formed a company called Synectic to practice this approach

Synectic's Model Structure

The Synectic's model is composed of 2 strategies:

1. **Exploring the unfamiliar**
2. **Creating something new**

Experiencing the unfamiliar

The initial strategy

There are seven steps to exploring the unfamiliar.

- During the first step, the educator introduces a new topic.
- In the second step, the educator proposes a clear analogy and asks participants to describe it.
- The educator asks participants to connect the analogy in the third step.
- Participants re-explore the original themes on their own terms in the fourth and fifth steps.
- Participants might present their own direct analogy and identity similarities and differences in the final round.

6.3 Body activity: Synectic

Digital or non-digital tool: Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty: Advanced

02

Creating new things

There are seven steps to creating something new.

- The educator collects participants' descriptions of the situation as it is presently viewed in the first step.
- The educator states difficulties and defines the task in the second step.
- In the third step, the participants propose direct similarities, choose one and investigate it.
- The participants choose a personalised analogy in the fourth step.
- They take their definition in the fifth step.
- They construct and select under direct analogy based on disagreements in the sixth step.
- The last step allows the educator to return to the original job.

6.3 Follow-up activity:

Field Trip

Digital or non-digital tool:

Non - digital

Suggested level of difficulty:

Intermediate

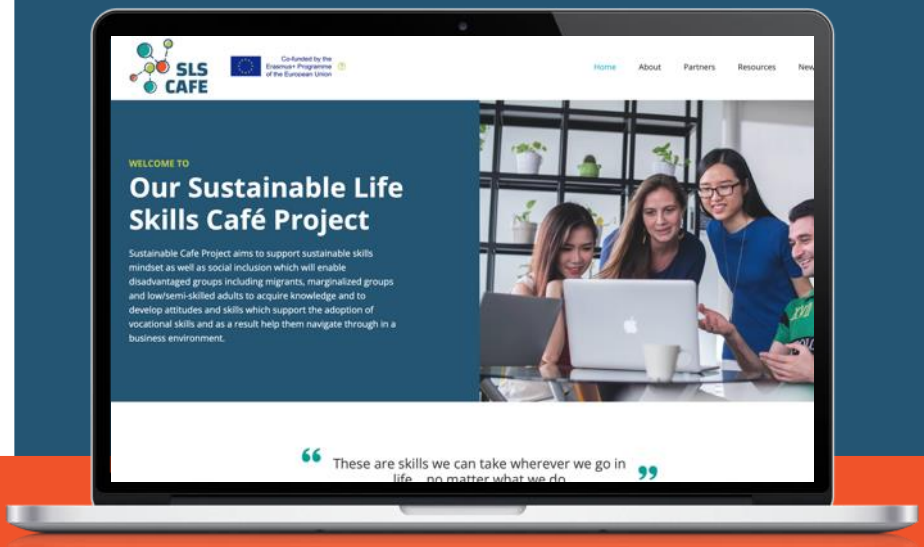
RELATION TO LifeComp Framework:

Environmental psychology says that spending time outside benefits learners both psychologically and physically. Creators also embrace the natural environment as a source of inspiration for conceptual designs. Field trips to natural and industrial settings are an excellent learning tool for enhancing learners' creativity and critical thinking skills.

Description:

With this activity, participants will experience the effect of changing their way of thinking by changing the setting. Holding the session at a different location might spark fresh thoughts. Take the class field trip as a group. Explore a nearby garden or take a walk around town and re-create the story that they created at the beginning of the session and let the participants observe what new thoughts or concepts they find as a result of the new setting.

SLS CAFE



www.**SLSCAFE**.eu

follow your journey

Co-funded by the European Union