Module 3 Learning Activity:

Self-Assessment & Practical Exercise in Assessing Collaborative Problem Solving!

SECTION A – OPTION 1: YOUR SELF-ASSESSMENT

**DESCRIPTION:** We would like you to **reflect on how aligned your current assessment methods are with the key competence approach**.

**OBJECTIVE:** The objective of this learning activity is for you to better understand to what extent your assessment of your students’ learning **already involves a key competence approach**, and in which areas you would like to **make progress**. Remember to take the time to reflect properly and to be honest with yourself. Assessing your starting point truthfully will help you make progress and enable you to improve your practice.

**DEADLINE:** The **deadline to complete the Learning Activity is Friday 5 December, 17.00 CET.**

**SUBMISSION:** To complete this learning activity you need to fill in this template and submit it, by clicking on the ‘hand-in task’ button in the ‘Learning Activity’ area.

**TASK:**

**1a)** To what extent does your assessment of learners currently involve the following 10 methods and tools, which are particularly suited for assessing learners’ competences? To refresh your memory of what each method or tool entails, watch videos 3.3.1 and 3.3.2. Next to each of the methods/tools in the box below insert one ‘X’ in the relevant column to indicate to what extent it is present in your teaching:

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| **ASSESSMENT METHOD/TOOL** | **Not at all present**  | **Weakly present**  | **To some extent present** | **Strongly present** |
| **1.** **Student self-assessment** |  |  |  |  |
| **2. Student peer-assessment** |  |  |  |  |
| **3. Use of portfolios, ePortfolios or other tools to track students’ progress** |  |  |  |  |
| **4. Interactive classroom discussions using deep questions (i.e. not ‘yes or no’ type of questions)** |  |  |  |  |
| **5. Observation of students’ social and cognitive skills while working on collaborative tasks or projects** |  |  |  |  |
| **6. Using a rubric or developmental progression to observe students’ social and cognitive skills while working on collaborative tasks or projects** |  |  |  |  |
| **7. Scaffolded feedback (i.e. feedback which gives the learner as much or as little help as he/she needs to reach the next stage and build toward the overall learning objective)**  |  |  |  |  |
| **8. ICT-based assessments** |  |  |  |  |
| **9. Use of ICT tools for formative assessment (e.g. classroom polling devices, educational video games, interactive white boards)** |  |  |  |  |
| **10. Simulations** |  |  |  |  |

**1b) How often do you implement the following good practices in assessing your students’ competences?** Next to each of questions in the box below insert one ‘X’ in the relevant column to indicate to how often this good practice is present in your teaching:

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| **QUESTION** | **Never** | **Sometimes** | **Always** |
| 1. **Do you measure students’ competences over time (i.e. you measure the same knowledge, skills and attitudes, perhaps in different formats more than once, as no single test or classroom interaction can fully capture a students’ learning or competences)?**
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| 1. **Is your feedback (whether oral, written, online etc.) timely (i.e. ‘on the spot’ or within a few days)?**
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| 1. **Is your feedback (whether oral, written, online etc.) task-based rather than focused on the student (e.g. ‘Your time management in this task was very good’ instead of ‘You were really good’)?**
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| 1. **Do you adjust your teaching based on what you learn from your formative assessment of students?**
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**1c)** Use the box below to explain in more detail any of your answers to questions 1a) and 1b) above. For example, if for method 2 (peer assessment) you answered that this is only ‘weakly present’ in your teaching you may want to explain, for example, that this is because there is little time to do this in addition to the compulsory forms of assessment that you have to prepare students for etc. You can use this space to reflect on the factors which have prevented you from fully implementing these methods and tools in your practice. Please also use this space to identify what you find difficult about any of these methods or tools. **(OPTIONAL)**

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**2)** Choose one or more of the methods, tools or good practices [mentioned in questions 1a) and 1b)] which you have some experience in, and provide evidence of this. The evidence you provide can take a variety of forms. Some examples are provided below (the list is not exhaustive):

* A simple written description of a few lines explaining how you currently are implementing or have implemented one or more of the assessment approaches described above to assess your students’ competence development.
* A lesson plan including any of the formative assessment approaches listed above (either to be done in class or as homework)
* A link to a video showing the teacher engaging students through deep questioning during a classroom discussion, or students involved in peer assessment, digital tools for formative assessment, or compiling portfolios etc.
* Students’ work
* A class/school blog or website

In the box below mention the assessment approach/es (methods or tools) you are providing evidence for, and insert your evidence (e.g. a short description, or a link to a video etc.).

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SECTION A – OPTION 2: THE PUZZLE CHALLENGE

Below you will find the following sections to complete the challenge:

A. A list of characteristics that all collaborative problem-solving tasks should have

B. Description of the puzzle challenge to carry out with your students

C. A list of questions students should answer after they have finished the puzzle to create a student log

D. Instructions on how to interpret the student logs

E. Tell us your experience of doing this activity!

**A. Characteristics of a collaborative problem-solving tasks**

1. The task must involve a solvable problem which will require two or more people to reach a solution. There should be multiple ways to work through the problem.
2. The materials and other resources necessary to solve the problem should be listed by the teacher.
3. Different materials and resources should be allocated to the students engaged in solving the problem. Each student should be given a unique set of materials and resources and there should be no overlap between what the students receive. Different information and resources are controlled by different collaborators;
4. At some point during the problem solution process one or more of the students should be able to identify a general principle or rule that needs to be shared among the partners in order to collaboratively solve the problem;
5. The problem can be based in a curriculum area of learning or be curriculum-free.

**B. Description of the puzzle challenge to carry out with your students**

Most collaborative problems that need to be solved by two or more people are like jigsaw puzzles. Follow the instructions below to try this challenge out with your students! If you want to try it out with more than one group at a time, you will need several puzzles!

* Find a small, readily solveable jigsaw puzzle to use with your students
* Divide the jigsaw pieces amongst two, three or four students. Each student should receive some pieces but not necessarily the same number of pieces. Encourage students to make notes of the steps they are doing to solve the problem, while it is being carried out, as after they solve the puzzle, they will need to create a ‘student log’ by answering questions about the process they used to solve the puzzle.
* The students should not know at the beginning what the picture, pattern or final jigsaw puzzle would look like. This is something that they should discover during the process. It is at this point that planning and hypothesis testing would emerge in the process.
* Observe the students while they carry out the challenge but do not necessarily try to assess each individual.
* Collect the student logs and analyze them by referring to any of the developmental progressions provided in Professor Patrick Griffin’s paper available under video talk 3.3.3 (and in the Module 3 library).

**C. A list of questions students can answer after they have solved the puzzle to create a student log**

Please note that the questions listed below are indicative only. The teacher should adapt them as appropriate to suit the age group they are teaching and their students’ level of learning**.**

1. Describe the way you participated in this exercise. Just make a few notes about the kind of action that you took.
2. List three ways that you interacted with the other people helping to solve this problem.
3. Did you feel like giving up? Were you determined to see this through to the end of the problem solution? Did you start to hope that your partners would solve the problem for you? Did you take the lead and be determined to solve the problem? List three ways in which you showed that determination.
4. How did you respond to your partner’s suggestions during the process of solving the problem? Make a couple of notes to illustrate how you responded.
5. Describe two ways in which you allowed your partner to help solve the problem.
6. Did you and your partners have any different ways of solving the problem? How did you resolve these different ways so that you could use a united approach?
7. Describe your best contribution to this problem solution. Describe some of the mistakes that you made in solving the problem.
8. Describe your partners best contribution to the problem solution. Now describe some of the mistakes that your partner made in solving the problem.
9. Make a few notes about how you took responsibility and took the lead at some points in this process of solving the problem.
10. When you first got your information about the problem to be solved (in this case a set of jigsaw pieces) what was your first action in identifying what you had and more importantly what you did not have that would help solve the problem?
11. Apart from solving the overall problem, what was the first step that you thought you had to take in order to begin the process of problem solving? Were there other things that you also thought you would have to do in order to solve the problem? If so give a short description.
12. Were you able to organise the materials (in this case the jigsaw puzzle pieces) you had to help the process of solving the problem?
13. Did you find sometimes that you were unsure of how to proceed? What did you do to find a way forward in working with your partner and clarifying the steps that you needed to take?
14. When you organised the materials that you had (in this case the jigsaw puzzle pieces) what other information did you think you needed in order to finalise and solve the problem with your partner? Make a few notes about the sorts of information you had to find.
15. How would you describe the way you went about this? Did you try ideas and find out what worked and what did not work? Describe this process. Were you able to organise the steps that you needed to take and the steps that your partner needed to take? Make a few notes to describe how you went about this.
16. Did you identify the way in which some of the materials (in this case the jigsaw puzzle pieces) were similar? Describe the way you were able to organise the pieces to make it easier to work on the problem.
17. Were you able to say that in some cases particular materials (in this case the jigsaw puzzle pieces) that you had could be classified into groups that had similar properties? What were those properties? Describe how this was a specific approach that you needed to take.
18. If you were presented with another similar problem would you know exactly what the steps are that you would need to take in order to solve it? What would those steps be? List the steps and explain why each step is important.
19. Did you and your partner solve the problem? Who do you think contributed most to the solution? Was anyone able to do nothing and still have the problem solved? Was anyone more important than anyone else in solving the problem? If so, why would you say this and describe why these differences in contribution were important to solving the problem.
20. Was the way you solved the problem the best of all possible ways to do it? Did you consider exploring another way? What changes would you make to the procedures in order to find another solution?

**D. Instructions on how to interpret the student logs**

* Please refer to Patrick Griffin’s paper, available under video talk 3.3.3 (and in the Module 3 library) and choose a developmental progression to use as a reference to interpret the student logs.

**E. Tell us how got on!**

Describe below your experience of carrying out this task as a teacher. What did you find useful? What did you find difficult ? What did you observe in terms of your students’ learning? Please provide any other comments.

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SECTION B: PEER REVIEWING ANOTHER PARTICIPANT’S LEARNING ACTIVITY

**DESCRIPTION:** To maximize what you gain from this learning activity, please peer review another course participant’s completed template by answering the 2 questions below.

**DEADLINE:** Please complete this template by **Sunday, 7 December, 17:00 CET**. It is preferable for you to complete this peer review by this date. However, should you not have time, or join the course at a later stage, you can complete the peer review by **12 December.**

**SUBMISSION:** Once you have finished the peer review, please upload it in the ‘Learning Activity’ area.

**TASK:**

**If the participant completed option 1, please answer the following 3 questions below:**

**1)** In your opinion, to what extent does the participant’s evidence reflect the methods, tools or practices mentioned as particularly suited to assessing key competences? Type the method or tool being referred to under the left-hand column where indicated, and insert an ‘X’ in the appropriate column next to it to indicate your response. Use as few or as many rows as appropriate.

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| **ASSESSMENT METHOD/TOOL/PRACTICE** | **A lot** | **Quite a bit** | **To some extent** | **Not at all** |
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**2)** Please justify your opinion/s in the text box below. Remember to be constructive in your feedback and clearly explain what you found to be in line with the assessment methods, tools and practices identified as suitable for competence-based teaching and learning, and/or what you found to be missing or incorrectly understood.

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**3)** If any, please carefully consider the issues and difficulties mentioned by the participant in answer to question 1c) in part A of this document. Are these issues or difficulties you have encountered in your own experience, and can perhaps suggest solutions to? Please provide your suggestions in the box below. This is your chance to help a colleague somewhere else in Europe improve their competence-based assessment of learners!

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**If the participant completed option 2, please answer the following questions below:**

**1.** According to the information provided by the participant in answer to part E under Section A: Option 2 of this document, evaluate whether the participant has understood the challenge and carried it out according to the instructions provided in parts A and B, adapting as necessary to suit their context and needs.

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| **A lot** | **Quite a bit** | **To some extent** | **Not at all** |
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**2)** Please justify your opinion/s in the text box below. Remember to be constructive in your feedback.

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**3)** If any, please carefully consider the issues and difficulties mentioned by the participant in answer to part E. Are these issues or difficulties you have encountered in your own experience? Can you provide advice on any of the issues mentioned or suggest solutions? Please provide your suggestions in the box below, so that you can help your fellow course participant to carry out this or a similar collaborative problem solving task with their students again and more effectively!

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