

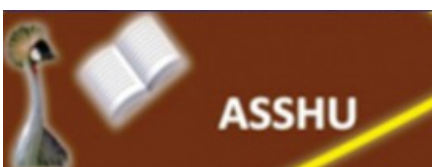
2025

Term 1



Teacher Portfolio - Secondary

LIC Theme: COLLABORATIVE LEARNING



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The Republic of Uganda
Ministry of Education and Sports

Ministry of Education and Sports
P.O. Box 7063
Kampala, Uganda
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6th January 2025

Dear Teachers,

PROMOTING A COLLABORATIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Welcome to The New Year!

Thank you for your dedication in supporting our learners.

The Ministry of Education and Sports, in partnership with STIR Education, is working to reignite and sustain intrinsic motivation among the teachers and school leaders. This initiative aims at transforming learning for our children, ensuring they become lifelong learners by creating an environment where teachers love teaching and learners love learning.

This term, we will focus on **Collaborative Learning**. Collaborative strategies like **Think-Pair-Share**, **Placemat**, and the **Jigsaw** method enhance student engagement, critical thinking. These methods promote teamwork, communication, problem-solving and respect for individual ability.

You will be supported by school leaders with the necessary resources and training to create a collaborative learning environment. Collaboration will make learning more interactive, help learners effectively communicate with peers, enhance critical thinking and stay motivated.

Thank you for your commitment. Let's make this year transformative for our learners.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink.

Muzoora Atuhairwe Juliet (Mrs)
For: **PERMANENT SECRETARY**



Vision: Quality Education and Sports for All!

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Part 1: Overview of the LIC Theme

Part 2: Teacher Network Meetings

What is collaborative Learning?

- Collaborative learning is a teaching method where students work together in small groups to complete a task or achieve a common goal, actively sharing ideas, discussing concepts and supporting each other's understanding of the material (**Smith & MacGregor, 1992**).
- For example, in maths, learners work together in groups, asking each other questions before asking the teacher. In English, learners lead their own round table discussions to deepen their understanding of the books they read.
- However, collaborative learning is not just about group work. It is about meaningful interaction that help learners learn better. When learners engage more with the material and with each other, it leads to better outcomes for everyone.

Why is collaborative learning important?

- Learners are intrinsically motivated and actively engaged in their learning, asking questions, explaining their thinking and engaging in discussions with peers.
- This method also helps learners build important skills like communication, critical thinking and problem-solving which are useful in real life.
- It allows teachers to create an inclusive learning environment, build positive relationships and feel connected to their learners.

However, it has limitations to think about.

It involves teachers rethinking of traditional classrooms, careful planning for time and resources and designing classrooms seating so that all the learners are engaged and benefit from the instruction.

How can a teacher do it?

1. Establish a clear, achievable learning goal.
2. Every learner has a shared responsibility for completing the task.
3. Learners are actively engaged in their learning,
4. Learners communicate and interact with each other.
5. Create an inclusive and gender responsive environment where learners feel connected, supported and safe to take risks.
6. Build learners' intrinsic motivation, make learning engaging and relevant.
7. Learners reflect on their learning process and outcomes.

What strategies can a teacher use to promote collaborative learning?

1. Think-Pair-Share
2. Placemat
3. Jigsaw

NETWORK MEETING ONE

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES: Teachers will be able to:

1. Reflect on the use of Think-Pair-Share and Placemat strategies to promote collaborative learning.
2. Discuss the steps for effectively integrating Think-Pair-Share and Placemat methods into a lesson.
3. Practice facilitating collaborative learning activities using Think-Pair-Share and Placemat strategies.



ACTIVITY 1 REFLECTION: 5 minutes

- Close your eyes and **think** for one minute.
- What is one teaching method you use to encourage learner collaboration?
- Then **turn and share** your thoughts in pairs.

What is Think-Pair-Share and Placemat?

Think-Pair-Share is a learning strategy where learners first think individually about a question or topic, then pair up with a partner to discuss their thoughts, and finally share their ideas with the larger group.

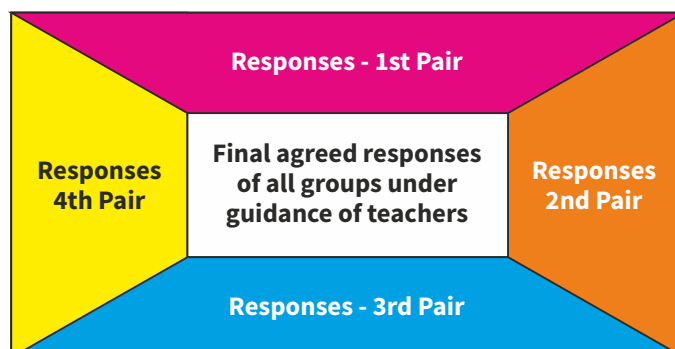
This strategy requires learners to:

1. **THINK** individually about an answer to a question.
2. **PAIR** up to talk about the answer.
3. **SHARE** their thinking with the rest of the class on the agreed upon answer.

Placemat: A Placemat is a visual learning strategy that provides learners with an opportunity to share their individual thinking on paper before working collaboratively to build on one another's individual thinking to create an overall agreed upon response.

- The teacher divides a large sheet of paper into sections with a central shared space and individual areas for each learner.
- Each learner in a group gets their own section to work in, while the central space is for collective input.

PLACEMAT



Why use think-pair-share?

- It helps learners to think individually, discuss ideas with classmates and build consensus.
- It ensures all learners get engaged and active in learning even those ones reluctant to talk.
- It helps the teacher to make class discussions more inclusive while building life skills such as confidence and critical thinking and refining ideas.



ACTIVITY 2

AN ENTREPRENEURSHIP LESSON USING THINK-PAIR-SHARE AND PLACEMAT STRATEGY

Topic: Identifying Business Opportunities in the Community

Introduction (5 minutes)

Teacher Joseph: “Good morning, class! Today, we will learn how to identify business opportunities in our community. *What do you think makes a business successful in our community?*”

Diana: “A business is successful if many people buy from it.”

Brian: “It should be affordable for people in the area.”

Teacher Joseph: “Great answers! Successful businesses solve problems or meet needs. Let's explore this further.”

Step 1: Think (5 minutes)

Teacher Joseph: “Take 2 minutes to think quietly about this question: *What problems or unmet needs exist in our community that could be turned into a business opportunity? Write down at least two ideas in your notebook.*”

Step 2: Pair (5 minutes)

Teacher Joseph: “Now, pair up with the person next to you. Share your ideas and discuss:

1. Is there a need for this idea?
2. Can it be started with resources we already have?
3. Will it make enough money?”

Teacher Joseph: “Make sure both of you explain your ideas clearly. Ask each other questions to improve your ideas.”

Step 3: Share in Small Groups (Placemat Activity) (15 minutes)

Teacher Joseph: “Now, let us form small groups of 8 learners (4 pairs per group). Each pair will write their best idea in one corner of a **Placemat**. Discuss and agree on the most promising one to write in the center.”

- The teacher distributes large sheets of paper divided into 4 corners with a circle in the center.
- Each pair writes or draws their idea in one corner.

The teacher moves around the room, listening and asks questions like: “Why do you think this idea is the best?”

- **Sandra and Daniel:** “We have chosen to sell fresh juice near the school gate because many students get thirsty, and it's easy to start with fruits we already have.”

Step 5: Presenting to the Whole Class (10 minutes)

Teacher Joseph: “Now, each group will share their agreed-upon idea with the class. Explain why you chose it and how it solves a problem in our community.”

- **Sandra:** “Our group has chosen selling fresh juice because many students get thirsty, and it's easy to start with fruits we already have.”
- **Modern:** “We have selected a poultry farm because eggs are in high demand, and we can use local materials to build a shelter.”

Teacher Joseph: “Great presentations! Let's give every group a round of applause for their creativity.” Let's reflect.

“What have we learned about identifying business opportunities?”

- **Joyce:** “We should look for problems in the community and think of ways to solve them.”
- **Teacher Joseph:** “Exactly! For homework, write down one more business idea and explain how it solves a problem in our community. We will discuss it in the next lesson.”



ACTIVITY 3

DISCUSSION: 15 minutes

1. How does Teacher Joseph use **Think-Pair-Share** and **Placemat** strategies to promote collaborative learning?
2. What challenges might come up and how can you support all learners, including girls, boys and those with special needs?
3. What steps of this strategy will you use in your class and how will you apply it in other subjects?



ACTIVITY 4

PLAN AND PRACTICE: 30 minutes

AREA	NOTES
TOPIC: What is your topic and learning outcome?	
THINK: What specific question or activity will you ask the Learners to Think about? How will it contribute to a collaborative learning?	
PAIR and SHARE (Turn and Talk): What activity will you assign the learners to pair up and talk?	
PLACEMAT: What activity will you ask the learners to draw and write on a placemat?	
PRACTICE: Get into a group of 3. Practice your plan and get feedback from your peers.	

- Share your plan with a peer teacher to get feedback.
- Agree on a date when your peer will observe your implementation of the chosen strategies using the classroom observation tool on page 6.



ACTIVITY 5 FEEDBACK: 10 minutes

Give each other feedback using the following success criteria:

THINK: How effectively does the teacher ask learners to think? <i>Implement the Think-Pair-Share, PlaceMat strategies, and what adjustments did he make for the classroom?</i>	
PAIR AND SHARE: Does the teacher ask the learners to pair up and share ideas? What changes do you observe in learners' engagement?	
PLACEMAT: How does the teacher ensure all learners write or draw and are supported during the PLACEMAT activity?	

NETWORK MEETING TWO

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES: Teachers will be able to:

1. Reflect on the Jigsaw strategy and its importance in teaching and learning.
2. Discuss an example of using the Jigsaw strategy to promote collaborative learning.
3. Practice teaching a topic using Jigsaw groups to enhance collaborative learning.



ACTIVITY 1 REFLECTION: 5 minutes

- Think about a recent group activity in your classroom.
- How did learners collaborate and stay engaged? What was the challenge?

What is Jigsaw strategy?

- Jigsaw is a collaborative learning strategy that asks groups of learners to become “experts” on different aspects of a topic and then share what they learn with their classmates.
- Each learner becomes an expert on a specific aspect of a larger topic and then teaches it to the rest of the group.
- For example, if the topic is climate change, one learner might learn about the causes, another about the effects, another about the solutions, and so on. Then, each learner joins a group of peers who have learned about different aspects and shares their knowledge with them.

Why is it important?

- The jigsaw strategy improves active learning and helps learners retain knowledge (Cochon, Lentillon-Kaestner & Margas (2023).

- It improves social skills such as collaboration, communication, listening and respect.
- It also helps improve learner achievement, motivation, social interactions and self-esteem.
- Additionally, the jigsaw helps teachers move from teacher-centred to student-centred learning.

How can a Teacher use the Jigsaw?

Step 1: Introduce the strategy and the topic.

Step 2: Divide learners into groups of 4 people per group.

Step 3: Divide content into 4 subtopics and assign one to each learner in the Home group to study.

Step 4: Learners meet in expert groups to compare their ideas and prepare a presentation.

Step 5: Learners return to Home groups, takes a turn presenting their information.

Step 6: Asses all learners on all the content such as using a simple quiz.

Note: The Jigsaw requires;

- Careful planning and preparation from the teacher.
- Providing materials and resources necessary for all learners to become “experts.”
- Forming gender balanced and diverse groups.
- The teacher must monitor and support the student's progress and performance.



ACTIVITY 2

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING USING THE JIGSAW STRATEGY IN SENIOR ONE

Teacher Joy is introducing the concept of; **How heat is transferred.** (S1, Topic: Heat Transfer Learning outcome: **Understand how heat energy is transferred and the rate at which heat transfer takes place.**)

Learners will explain how heat energy is transferred by conduction, convection and radiation using the jigsaw strategy.

Teacher Joy: “Today we will learn about how heat energy is transferred through matter from one point to another.

Have you ever wondered how heat travels from the bottom of water in a saucepan placed on fire to the top? Or from the hot end of a ladle placed in sauce to the other? Or from the sun to the earth?”

Jemima: It travels through the ladle by conduction.

Musa: “It travels through the water by convection and from the sun to the earth by radiation.”

Teacher Joy: “Thank you Jemima and Musa! We shall explain how conduction, convection and radiation take place in today's lesson.”

Step 1

“Let us form Home groups of 30; ensuring equal distribution of boys and girls! We shall label the groups **Red**, **Green**, and **Orange** respectively.”

Teacher Joy allows the learners 2 minutes to settle in their groups.



Figure 1

Teacher Joy: “Because the groups are big, we shall further subdivide into smaller groups, still ensuring equal distribution of boys and girls in the subgroups. I will allow you 2 more minutes to settle into your subgroups.”

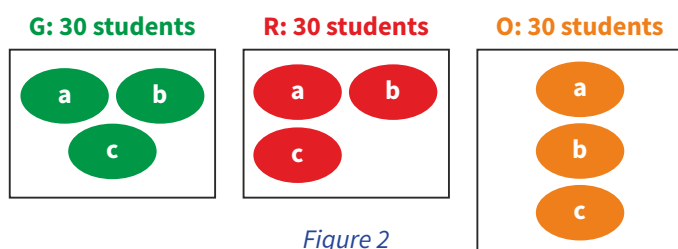


Figure 2

Step 2

Teacher Joy divides the content into three chunks. The subgroups will be labelled a, b, and c. I am assigning each subgroup a task according to its label.”

- Explain how heat transfer takes place by conduction
 - Explain how heat transfer takes place by convection
 - Explain how heat transfer takes place by radiation
- Each learner in each sub-group will study the content and make some notes independently.

Step 3

Teacher Joy asks learners with the same content (i.e. learners of the same sub-group a, b and c respectively, in each jigsaw group) to come together in **Expert groups** to share their learning. He asks them to discuss their content.

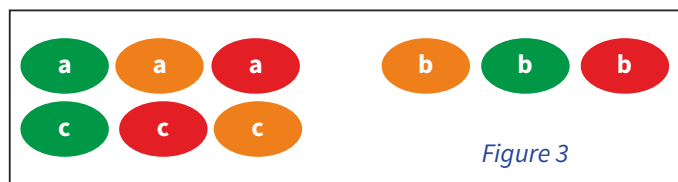


Figure 3

In each expert group, the learners share their learning. They reinforce important concepts, clear misconceptions and prepare presentations. He provides the following questions to guide the learners in their discussions:

Expert Group	Questions
a	Using your knowledge of motion of particles, explain how conduction takes place. State 2 examples to show conduction in everyday life.
b	Using your knowledge of motion of particles, explain how convection takes place. State 2 examples to show convection in everyday life.
c	Explain how radiation takes place. State 2 examples to show radiation in everyday life.

Step 4

Teacher Joy: “Return to your Home groups (figure 2). While there, let each expert take turns to teach the other what he/she learned. The rest will take notes and ask questions.”

Teacher Joy: “Can we have 3 volunteers to summarise what they learned?”

Fatuma: “Conduction is a process by which heat energy is transferred by collision between neighbouring particles. For example if you place a metal in fire, heat will be transferred from the hot end to cold end by conduction,”

Joshua: “Convection is the process of heat transfer by the bulk movement of particles within liquids and gasses. Examples include sea breeze and land breeze.”

Betty: “Radiation is the transfer of heat energy from a warmer region to a cooler region through the emission of electromagnetic waves. For example the sun warms the earth by radiation.”

Teacher Joy: “Thank you class! We shall generate more examples in our next lesson!”



ACTIVITY 3 DISCUSSION: 15 minutes

- What did you like that the teacher did in their use of the Jigsaw puzzle to promote collaboration?
- How does the teacher make changes to ensure that all learners, including girls and boys and those with special needs actively participate during the expert and jigsaw group discussions?
- How will you implement the Jigsaw strategy to better suit your classroom's specific needs?



ACTIVITY 4 PLAN AND PRACTICE: 30 minutes

Plan how to facilitate a topic using a Jigsaw puzzle in the class.

AREA	NOTES
TOPIC: What is your topic and learning outcome?	
JIGSAW GROUP: What subtopics will you assign the Jigsaw home groups ?	
EXPERT GROUP: What questions will you assign the expert group to remain engaged and learn new information?	
PRESENTATION: How will you ensure gender equity and inclusion during group work and presentation?	
PRACTICE: Get into a small group. Practice delivering the lesson and get feedback from your peers.	

- Share your plan with a peer teacher to get feedback.
- Agree on a date when your peer will observe your implementation of the chosen strategies using the classroom observation tool on page 6.



ACTIVITY 5 FEEDBACK: 10 minutes

Give each other feedback using the following success criteria:

HOME GROUP: Does the teacher assign the home group a topic and support materials?	
EXPERT GROUP: How does the teacher facilitate the Expert group to share ideas with each other and to understand the subtopic?	
PRESENTATION: How does the teacher ensure all learners, including girls and those with special needs are included during the presentation activity?	

NETWORK MEETING THREE

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES: Teachers will be able to:

1. Share their experiences of using **Think-Pair-Share** and **Placemat** and **Jigsaw** strategies to promote learner collaboration.
2. Apply the **Roses**, **Thorns** and **Buds** technique to identify key lessons learned during this LIC.
3. Describe their learning journey and their transformation as a result of this learning experience.



ACTIVITY 1 REFLECTION: 10 minutes

Reflect and share your experiences of implementing **Think-Pair-Share**, **Placemat** and **Jigsaw** strategy.

What did you do to implement one of the following; a) Think-Pair-Share and Placemat . b) Jigsaw strategy			
What changes did you see before, during and after implementing the following in your class? a) Think-Pair-Share and Placemat . b) Jigsaw strategy			



ACTIVITY 2 30 minutes

1. In this activity you will work together to reflect on what you learned about creating collaborative learning in class.
2. You will apply the **Roses**, **Thorns**, and **Buds** technique, whereby:
 - a. **Roses:** Concepts, strategies, or actions that led to successful outcomes.
 - b. **Thorns:** Concepts, strategies, or actions that were difficult to apply or not effective.
 - c. **Buds:** Concepts, strategies, or actions that teachers will adopt or explore further in their teaching.
3. Organised into groups of no more than three, each group will reflect on your individual **Roses**, **Thorns**, and **Buds**. You will write your main takeaways for each category on the large pieces of paper.
4. Representatives (women and men) from each group will share those takeaways with the rest of the bigger group.



ACTIVITY 3 30 minutes

1. In this final activity, each teacher will work individually to reflect on their learning journey in this LIC.
2. Describe your learning journey during this LIC. You may do so visually, in writing, or combining pictures and words. You are encouraged to think creatively, but below are some guidelines on aspects you may want to consider in your reflection:
 - a. How did your depth of creating a Collaborative Learning environment evolve during this LIC?
 - b. How did your confidence in applying **Think Pair share** and **Placemat** and **Jigsaw** strategy in the classes evolve during the LIC?
 - c. How did your beliefs about teaching and learning change during this LIC?
 - d. What will you do to increase the demonstration of collaborative learning strategies in the next lesson or term?
 - e. Share what you drew or wrote.
 - f. End with a celebration song.



APPENDIX: Classroom Observation Tool

Write the feedback in your Journal/Notebook



1. BEFORE THE OBSERVATION (Teacher to complete)

Class: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____	
Strategy: e.g. Think Pair Share, Placemat or Jigsaw strategy.	
Name of observer: _____	
Number of Girls: _____ Number of boys: _____	
1. What topic do you plan to teach in the next lesson/ week?	
2. What strategy will you try out to create a collaborative learning environment? e.g. Think Pair Share, Placemat or Jigsaw strategy	
3. What activities or tasks will you implement in the lesson?	
4. How will you promote gender equity and inclusion? e.g. Encourage female leadership and girls to take on active roles during the group and presentation activities?	
5. How will you know that you are successful? e.g. Learners: Think- Pair and Share, draw a Placemat or work in Home groups and Expert groups.	



2. DURING LESSON OBSERVATION

(Teacher gives portfolio to observer to fill in responses)

1. Write 1-2 things the teacher is doing well in this lesson based on the questions above.	
2. Suggest one thing the teacher needs to improve further and say why?	Observation: Suggestion:
3. Write down any probing question to help the teacher reflect on how they might improve. e.g: <i>What do you think you could have done to ensure that both girls and boys take on active roles to enhance collaborative learning strategies?</i>	
4. Write down one thing you have learned from the way the teacher has delivered this lesson.	

3. FEEDBACK (Observer & teacher talk through section 2 together)

Tips; 1. Be specific 2. Link comments and questions to Purpose 3. Ask why and how questions. 4. Action leads to improvement

1. Teacher shares their reflection on how they feel the lesson went (strengths and one area for improvement)
2. Observer asks probing questions and the teacher responds.
3. Observer shares one area for development, and asks probing questions.
4. Observer shares one thing they have learned from the lesson.

4. ACTION (Teacher feedback discussion - teacher to complete and share with observer)

As a result of feedback, what **ONE** thing will you do differently next time?

Classroom Observation/ Institute/ Meeting Tools

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