

# TEACHING AND ASSESSING GENERIC SKILLS IN THE LSC



Tr. Arthur Kugonza

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## **Understanding the necessity of the generic skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

- It has never been more important to build a set of essential skills to succeed in life for our children and young people.
- The ability to creatively solve problems, to self-manage, to communicate effectively, and to work well with others.
- These skills are needed to do almost anything well.
- The need for these skills is clear, but there is still a gap.
- Many children and young people do not build these skills to the level they need, and so miss out on opportunities to thrive in other parts of their lives.
- These employability skills/generic skills/ 21st century skills were once called soft skills, core skills, transferable skills.

# Understanding the necessity of the generic skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century



- The Generic skills lie at the heart of every subject.
- They enable the learner to access and deepen learning across the whole curriculum.
- The same skills that are sought by employers and it is hoped that they will unlock the world of work.
- They allow young people to develop into lifelong learners who can adapt to change and cope with the challenges of life in the 21st Century.
- The mind set must therefore change from content to generic skills.

# Teaching and assessing the generic skills using the SBUF

- There hasn't been a uniform and systematic way in which teachers are teaching the generic skills, assessing their acquisition and reporting them to the stakeholders.
- These skills should deliberately be taught and assessed in the learners.
- The assessment of these skills should not spy on the learner.
- Students should get the support they need individually.
- The Skills Builder Universal Framework (SBUF) is a universal tool for educators to teach and develop the generic skills in the learners. It can be accessed from: [www.skillsbuilder.org](http://www.skillsbuilder.org)

# **The Skills Builder Universal Framework (SBUF)**

- It breaks down the core skills into steps that we can teach and assess - (the syllabus book also breaks them down into 'steps' but doesn't guide on how to teach the steps)
- It shows a progression roadmap to developing the generic skills from P 1 right through university.

# LSC Vs SBUF

| Generic skills in the LSC syllabus book           | Skills in the skills builder framework                            |
|---|---|
| 1. Critical thinking and problem solving          | • Problem solving   |
| 2. Creativity and innovation                      | • Creativity  |
| 3. Communication                                  | • Speaking<br>• Listening   |
| 4. Cooperation and self-directed learning         | • Teamwork<br>• Leadership<br>• Aiming high<br>• Staying positive |
| 5. Mathematical computations and ICT proficiency. | • Originally not part of the SBF                                  |

# Teaching and assessing the skills

In order to have an impact, the skills must be developed with consistency and focus by following the principles below:

- 1) Keep it simple,
- 2) Start early and keep going,
- 3) Measure it (observation, self or peer assessment),
- 4) Focus tightly on to the skill,
- 5) Keep practicing,
- 6) Bring it to life.

# Teaching and assessing the skills

- Each skill is broken down into 16 steps i.e., from 0 – 15 in the SBUF.
- They are taught right from Primary one starting with step 0 up to university.





# Communication

- Broken down into listening and speaking in the SBUF.
- A good communicator is a good listener and a good speaker.
- So learners have to be taught how to listen and how to speak.

## ***Broken down into the following in the Ugandan curriculum:***

- 1) *Listens attentively and with comprehension.*
- 2) Talks confidently and explain ideas/opinions clearly.
- 3) Reads accurately and fluently.
- 4) *Writes and presents coherently.*
- 5) Uses a range of media to communicate ideas.

# Generic skills in the SBUF and their teaching steps

## 1. Listening:

- This is the receiving, retaining and processing of information or ideas.
- The ability to pay attention to and effectively interpret what other people are saying.



| Step          | Class | The skill step  |
|---------------|-------|---|
| <b>Step 0</b> | P. 1  | I listen to others without interrupting.                            |
| <b>Step 1</b> | P.2   | I listen to others and can remember short instructions.             |
| <b>Step 2</b> | P.3   | I listen to others and can ask questions if I don't understand.     |
| <b>Step 3</b> | P.4   | I listen to others and can tell someone else what it was about.     |
| <b>Step 4</b> | P.5   | I listen to others and can tell why they are communicating with me. |
| <b>Step 5</b> | P.6   | I listen to others and record important information as I do.        |
| <b>Step 6</b> | P.7   | I show am listening by how I use eye contact and body language.     |

| Step           | Class      | The skill step  |
|----------------|------------|---|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | <b>S.1</b> | <i>I show am listening by using open questions to deepen my understanding.</i>                                    |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | <b>S.2</b> | <i>I show am listening by summarising or rephrasing what I have heard.</i>  |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | <b>S.3</b> | <i>I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their tone.</i>  |
| <b>Step 10</b> | <b>S.4</b> | <i>I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their language.</i>                                      |
| <b>Step 11</b> | <b>S.5</b> | I listen critically and compare different perspectives.   |
| <b>Step 12</b> | <b>S.6</b> | I listen critically and think about where differences in perspectives come from.                                  |
| <b>Step 13</b> |            | I listen critically and identify potential bias in different perspectives.  |
| <b>Step 14</b> |            | I listen critically and use questioning to evaluate different perspectives.                                       |
| <b>Step 15</b> |            | I listen critically and look beyond the way speakers speak or act to objectively evaluate different perspectives. |

# Communication

| Skill steps in the SBUF   | Steps in the Syllabus book   |
|---|--|
| <b>Listening</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Listens attentively and with comprehension.</i></li> <li>Talks confidently and explain ideas/opinions clearly.</li> <li>Reads accurately and fluently.</li> <li><i>Writes and presents coherently.</i></li> <li>Uses a range of media to communicate ideas.</li> </ul> |
| <b>S.1:</b> <i>I show am listening by using open questions to deepen my understanding.</i>                          |  |
| <b>S.2:</b> <i>I show am listening by summarising or rephrasing what I have heard.</i>                              |  |
| <b>S.3:</b> <i>I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their tone.</i>                                |  |
| <b>S.4:</b> <i>I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their language.</i>                            |  |
| <b>Speaking</b>   |  |
| <b>S.1:</b> I speak engagingly by using facts and examples to support my points.                                    |  |
| <b>S.2:</b> I speak engagingly by using visual aids to support my points.   |  |
| <b>S.3:</b> I speak engagingly by using tone, expression and gesture to engage listeners.                           |  |
| <b>S.4:</b> I speak adaptively by changing my language, tone and expression depending on the response of listeners. |  |

# **General overview of the listening skill**

- At the early stages, the learner is able to listen, retain, recall and share what they have heard.
- In the intermediate years, the learner will be able to demonstrate that they are listening by using eye contact with whoever is speaking and other positive, encouraging body language.

# How to teach a skill: what you need to know

- The teacher must deliberately teach the skill step and should clearly explain it to the learners.
- The teacher should constantly remind learners about the skill step by displaying it in the class room.
- The teacher should select a learning outcome from the curriculum that adequately brings out the skill step.
- The teacher should develop clear performance indicators / scoring rubric and inform learners about what is expected of them.
- The teacher should emphasise the skill step and not the skill itself since acquisition/development of a skill goes through various steps.

# Teaching the listening skill

- A teacher has to know the meaning of all the terms used in the skill step and clearly explain them to the learners.
- Teachers should make a deliberate effort to find out learners' ability in all the previous steps and also encourage learners who are exhibiting steps above their expected class category.



# Teaching the listening skill

*Step 7: I show am listening by using open questions to deepen my understanding*

To achieve step 7, individuals will be able to use appropriate open questions to demonstrate that they are listening and to open up the conversation to learn more.

*Step 8: I show am listening by summarising or rephrasing what I have heard.*

To achieve step 8, individuals will show that they can demonstrate that they are understanding more complex ideas by repeating or rephrasing what they have heard.

## Teaching the listening skill (cont...)

*Step 9: I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their tone.*

To achieve step 9, individuals will have to understand what is meant by 'tone', how it varies and what the impact of different tones of communicating can be.

*Step 10: I am aware of how a speaker is influencing me through their language.*

To achieve step 10, individuals will focus on how differences in the language that the speaker uses will influence the meaning of what they are saying, and identify some common elements and how to interpret them.

## Teaching the listening skill: skill step 8

*I show I am listening by summarizing or rephrasing what I have heard.*

- Individuals will show that they can demonstrate that they are understanding more complex ideas by repeating or rephrasing what they have heard.
- In step 6 and 7, the learners showed that they were listening by using eye contact, body language and open questions.
- Step 8, goes further by showing engagement with the content of what they are hearing itself, summarizing or even rephrasing what they have heard.

# How to teach the step

- Summarising-The teacher can begin by organising a conversation may be between the teacher and one learner or give learners some key information or a set of instructions. At some points the teacher can show how what learners have heard can be summarised and put into the flow of a conversation.
- Learners can then work in pairs e.g. giving a long set of instructions or information. This involves repetition and encourages the listener to summarise a number of times during the conversation.
- Rephrasing-This works well by rephrasing a single idea first e.g. related to a subject concept. For example, the teacher may rephrase some key concepts in this Step 8 of listening.
- Learners can then also practice this individually when given a concept or idea and tell one another or write in their own words rephrasing what they have heard.
- Also in pairs, learners can explain a concept/idea to one another. The listener or the teacher has to find an appropriate point to check the learner's understanding by rephrasing what they have heard.

# How to reinforce the step

This skill can be reinforced in class;

- During regular lessons for example, the teacher can pause at some points to ask learners to summarise what they have learnt or heard so far or to rephrase it to demonstrate their understanding.
- The teacher can also continue to model / illustrate, for example using concepts or ideas that learners find challenging, to demonstrate how they can rephrase them so as to build their understanding of what they have heard.

## **Assessing the skill step 8**

This step can be assessed through observation or a deliberate activity. For example:

- The teacher could check that learners can summarise and rephrase by giving them all something to listen to for 2-3 minutes and then having to summarise or rephrase it, either verbally or in writing.
- The teacher will then check whether learners can build / develop this naturally into the flow of a conversation.
- This could be done through peer assessment of learners as they work in pairs, or through observation of conversations.

## 2. Speaking:

- The oral transmission of information or ideas.



|                |     |   |
|----------------|-----|---|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I speak engagingly by using facts and examples to support my points.                                    |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I speak engagingly by using visual aids to support my points.   |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I speak engagingly by using tone, expression and gesture to engage listeners.                           |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I speak adaptively by changing my language, tone and expression depending on the response of listeners. |

### 3. Problem solving and critical thinking:

- Problem solving is the ability to find a solution to a situation or challenge.
- Critical thinking is the ability of putting forth an open-minded inquiry or investigation.



#### ***Problem solving and critical thinking in the syllabus book:***

- *Plans and carries out investigations*
- *Sort and analyze information*
- *Identifies problems and ways forward.*
- *Predicts outcomes and make reasoned decisions*
- *Evaluates different solutions.*



# Critical thinkers

- Critical thinkers rigorously question ideas and assumptions rather than accepting them at face value.
- They will always seek to determine whether the ideas, arguments and findings represent the entire picture and are open to finding out what they do not know.
- Critical thinkers will identify, analyse and solve problems systematically rather than by intuition or instinct.

# Critical thinking in use

- A supervisor who needs to resolve a conflict between two employees, will use critical thinking to understand the nature of the conflict and also what action should be taken to resolve the situation.
- Finding out if some news is actually fake news.

# Problem solving steps in the SBUF:

|                |     |  |
|----------------|-----|--|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I explore complex problems by building my understanding through research.                                      |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I explore complex problems by analysing the causes and effects.  |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I create solutions for complex problems by generating a range of options.                                      |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I create solutions for complex problems by evaluating the positive and negative effects of a range of options. |

## 4. Creativity:

- The use of imagination and the generation of new ideas.
- The ability to think about a task or a problem in a new or different way.



### ***Creativity and innovation in the syllabus book:***

- *Uses imaginations to explore possibilities.*
- *Works with others to generate ideas.*
- *Suggests and develops new solutions.*
- *Tries out innovative alternatives.*
- *Looks for patterns and makes generalizations.*

# Creativity steps:

|                |     |  |
|----------------|-----|--|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I use creativity in the context of my wider life.      |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I develop ideas by using mind mapping.                 |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I develop ideas by asking myself questions.            |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I develop ideas by considering different perspectives. |

# Cooperation and self- directed learning.

It is broken down in the SBUF into:

- Team work
- Leadership
- Aiming high
- Staying positive

## Cooperation and self-directed learning in the syllabus book:

- Work effectively in diverse teams.
- Interact effectively with others.
- Take responsibility for your own learning.
- Work independently with persistence.
- Manage goals and time.

# 5. Teamwork:

Working cooperatively with others towards achieving a shared goal.

|                |     |   |
|----------------|-----|---|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I contribute to group decision making, whilst recognising the value of others' ideas. |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I contribute to group decision making, encouraging others to contribute.              |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I improve the team by not creating unhelpful conflicts.                               |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I improve the team by resolving unhelpful conflicts.                                  |

## 6. Leadership:

Supporting, encouraging and developing others to achieve a shared goal.

|                |     |  |
|----------------|-----|--|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I recognise my own strengths and weaknesses as a leader.   |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I recognise the strengths and weaknesses of others in my team.   |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I recognise the strengths and weaknesses of others in my team, and use this to allocate roles accordingly. |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I support others through mentorship.   |



## 7. Aiming high:

- The ability to set clear, tangible goals and devise a robust route to achieving them.

|                |     |  |
|----------------|-----|--|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I set goals, ordering and prioritise tasks to achieve them.          |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I set goals and secure the right resources to achieve them.          |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I set goals and plan to involve others in the best way               |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I create plans that are informed by my skill set and that of others. |

## 8. Staying positive:

- The ability to use tactics and strategies to overcome setbacks and achieve goals.

|                |     |   |
|----------------|-----|---|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I look for opportunities in difficult situations.   |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I look for opportunities in difficult situations, and share these with others.                |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I look for opportunities in difficult situations, and adapt plans to use these opportunities. |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I look for opportunities in difficult situations, and create new plans to use opportunities.  |

## 9. Mathematical computation and ICT proficiency

The ability to use functional mathematics and ICT facilities effectively.

Common experiences:

- 6 in 10 of urban dwellers use wood fuel for cooking.
- Drugs prescribed as 2x3, 3x2
- Loans offered at 1% rate
- Graphical representations of information, etc

***In the syllabus book:***

- *Uses numbers and measurements accurately.*
- *Interprets and interrogate mathematical data.*
- *Uses mathematics to justify and support decisions.*
- *Uses technology to create, manipulate and process information.*
- *Uses technology to collaborate, communicate and refine their work.*

## 9. Mathematical computation and ICT proficiency steps

|                |     |   |
|----------------|-----|---|
| <b>Step 7</b>  | S.1 | I create insights by using data and technology accurately and critically.                                     |
| <b>Step 8</b>  | S.2 | I create insights by using technology to process quantitative data for wider communication and interrogation. |
| <b>Step 9</b>  | S.3 | I create insights by using technology to support collaborative discussions.                                   |
| <b>Step 10</b> | S.4 | I create insights by using technology to support collaborative decision-making.                               |

# What you need to know on MC and ICT proficiency

- *Skill step 7 (S.1): I create insights by using data and technology accurately and critically*
- Suggests that the individual is skilled at analyzing data and using technology to extract meaningful and valuable insights. This can be taught using concepts like:
- Understanding Data Sources and Quality: Teach learners how to critically evaluate the sources of data and assess its quality. Discuss the importance of using reliable and relevant data to generate accurate insights.
- Data Collection and Cleaning: Guide learners in the process of collecting and cleaning data using technology. Teach them how to use tools like camera, thermometer, recorders, etc accurately.
- Data Analysis Techniques: Introduce learners to various data analysis techniques and tools, such as statistical analysis, data visualization. Teach them how to apply these techniques critically to extract meaningful insights.

# What you need to know on MC and ICT proficiency

- *Skill step 8 (S.2): I create insights by using technology to process quantitative data for wider communication and interrogation.*
- Involves guiding them in leveraging digital tools to analyze, interpret, and effectively communicate quantitative information.
- Introduce them to data analysis tools such as Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets, or other data visualization and analysis platforms. Explain how these tools can be used to process quantitative data and extract meaningful insights.
- Provide hands-on practice with data processing using technology such as spreadsheet software or specialized data analysis tools.
- Teach learners how to use technology to create visual representations of quantitative data, such as charts, graphs, and dashboards.
- Teach learners how to use technology to interrogate quantitative data by asking critical questions, identifying patterns, and drawing meaningful conclusions. Provide examples of how data can be probed to uncover insights.

# What you need to know on MC and ICT proficiency

- *Skill step 9 (S.3): I create insights by using technology to support collaborative discussions*
- Involves guiding them in leveraging digital tools to facilitate information exchange, critical thinking, and the generation of valuable ideas within a group setting.
- Introduce them to Collaborative Tools such as video conferencing platforms, online whiteboards, shared document editing tools.
- Create simulated scenarios where learners must use technology to engage in collaborative discussions.
- This could involve using chat platforms, video conferencing, or collaborative document editing to work through a problem or generate insights as a group.

# What you need to know on MC and ICT proficiency

- *Skill step 10 (S.4): I create insights by using technology to support collaborative decision-making.*
- Involves a combination of practical skills, critical thinking, and an understanding of how technology can enhance group processes.
- Introduce the learner to various collaborative technology tools such as Google Workspace (Google Docs, Sheets, Slides), Microsoft Teams and communication platforms. Explain the features and benefits of each tool.
- Provide real-world examples of how technology has been used to support collaborative decision-making in various contexts. For instance, you might discuss how businesses use collaborative tools to make strategic decisions or how research teams use technology to reach consensus on findings.
- Hands-On Practice: Provide opportunities for the learner to engage in hands-on practice with collaborative tools. This could involve creating a shared document, setting up a collaborative project board, or participating in a simulated decision-making exercise using technology.



# The SBF lesson plan template

| Item                                     | Description   |
|--|---|
| <b>Class</b>                             | The class from the syllabus   |
| <b>Subject</b>                           | The subject area from the syllabus  |
| <b>Theme</b>                             | Theme from the syllabus   |
| <b>Topic</b>                             | The topic from the syllabus   |
| <b>Skill, skill step and description</b> | The skill, skill step number and description from the skills builder framework  |
| <b>Learning outcomes</b>                 | Extracted from the syllabus and recalibrated to the learning experiences.   |
| <b>Learning activities</b>               | Design the learning activity by contextualizing the content through considering the values and the cross-cutting issues. Construct learning experiences that will enhance the skill step as they construct the concept. |
| <b>Performance indicators</b>            | The skill descriptor is reviewed with reference to the learning outcome and the learning activity to present performance indicators that will demonstrate the achievement of the skill step.                            |

# The General School lesson plan template

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Theme:  |  |
| Topic   |  |
| Competency  |  |
| Learning outcomes   |  |
| Generic skills <i>(skill, skill step and description)</i> |  |
| Values  |  |
| Cross-cutting issues                                      |  |
| Key learning  |  |
| <i>(Performance indicators)</i>                           |  |

# Sample SBF lesson plan

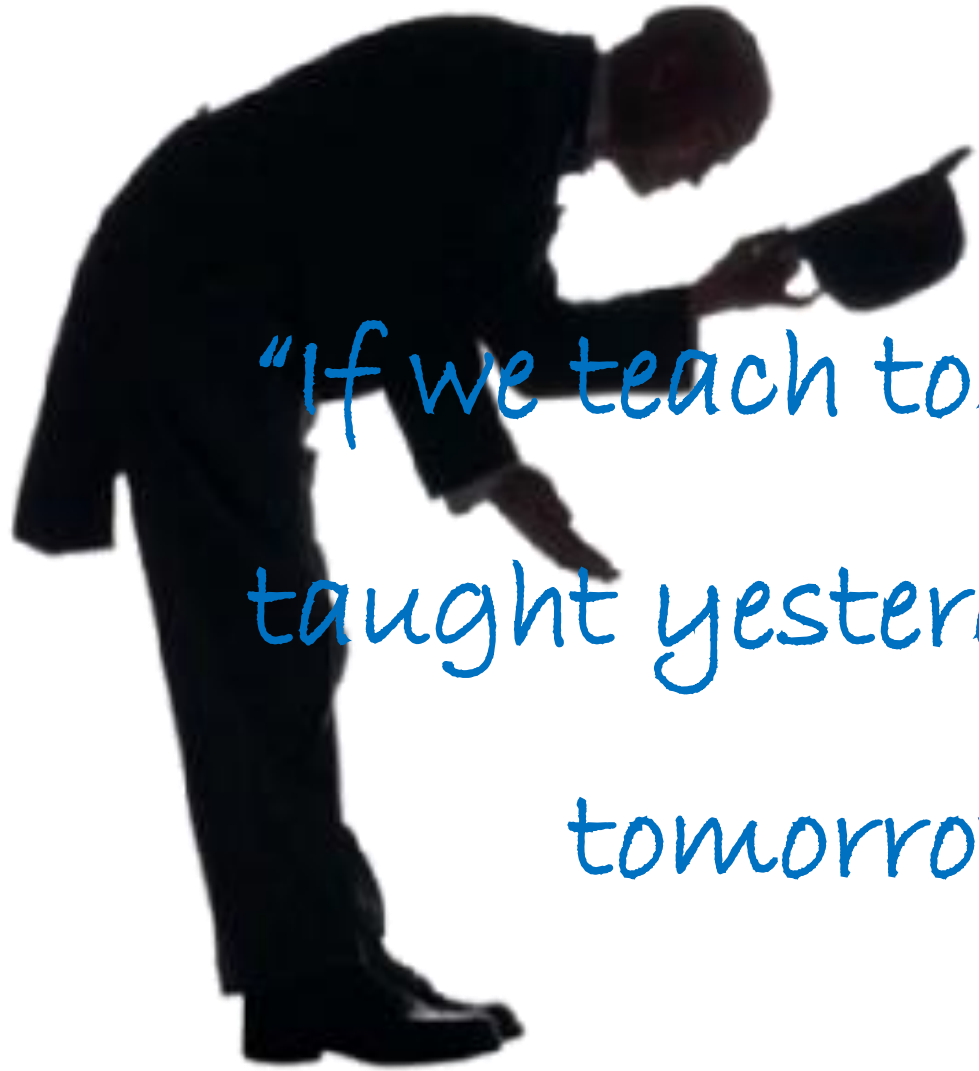
| Item                                       | Description   |
|--|---|
| <b>Class</b>                               | S.2   |
| <b>Subject</b>                             | Biology   |
| <b>Theme</b>                               | Nutrition in plants and animals   |
| <b>Topic</b>                               | Nutrition types and nutrient compounds  |
| <b>Skill, skill step # and description</b> | Listening Step 8: I show am listening by summarising or rephrasing what I have heard.   |
| <b>Learning outcomes</b>                   | Appreciate the causes and effects of nutrient deficiency in humans including diseases related to malnutrition.  |
| <b>Learning activities</b>                 | <p>Learners' representatives will visit a nearby nutrition clinic and listen to a nutritionist talking about nutrient deficiencies and diseases related to malnutrition in humans.</p> <p><b>Task:</b> summarise the causes and effects of nutrient deficiencies in humans and report back to the rest of the class.</p>  |
| <b>Performance indicators</b>              | <p>To demonstrate the skill step, the learner should:</p> <p>Show that they can listen and then summarise or rephrase what they have heard.</p> <p>In this task learners would listen and make notes or a presentation on the causes, effects and diseases related to malnutrition to relay to the rest of the class by repeating the key points back in their own words.</p> |

# Sample SBF lesson plan 2

| Item                                     | Description   |
|--|---|
| <b>Class</b>                             | S.2   |
| <b>Subject</b>                           | ENGLISH LANGUAGE  |
| <b>Theme</b>                             | Public/Education  |
| <b>Topic</b>                             | Finding Information   |
| <b>Skill, skill step and description</b> | Listening, step 8: I show I am listening by summarising or rephrasing what I have heard   |
| <b>Learning outcomes</b>                 | Extract and present information from recorded material  |
| <b>Learning activities</b>               | Your class is preparing for a study trip to the shores of Lake Victoria. The class has been divided into study teams and as one of the team leaders, you are required to listen to the guidelines for presenting the report which are recorded and played to the class by the Geography teacher. Summarise the content of what you have heard before you set off for the trip and present it to your group.   |
| <b>Performance indicators</b>            | <p>To demonstrate the skill step, the learner should:</p> <p>Show that they can listen and then summarise or rephrase what they have heard.</p> <p>For example, in this task learners would listen and make notes on the teacher's instruction to relay to the group. This would include listening attentively to extract guidelines on report writing, presenting the guidelines to the group, and repeating the key points back in their own words.</p> |

# Reporting/commenting

- You can observe a group performance and report on individual achievement.
- How do we comment?
- Facilitator comment Vs generic skill comment
- How about performance (scores) comment? (The mind set must change from content to generic skills)
- Is there failing? (4<sup>th</sup> CBE principle- learners move forward when they demonstrate mastery)



"If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow." John Dewey

THANK YOU  
for your  
ATTENTION!