

Life Skills Interactive Teaching Activities Manual

It is now documented that students can learn more effectively when actively involved in the learning process (Bonwell and Eison, 1991; Sivan et al, 2001).

Learners possess the ability to retain: 10 per cent of what they read, 20 per cent of what they hear, 30 per cent of what they see, 50 per cent of what they see and hear, 70 per cent of what they hear and say, and 90 per cent of the things they do. If a message is given once, the brain remembers only 10 per cent of it one day later, and when the same message is given six times in a day, the brain remembers 90 per cent of it. Hence, trainers must repeat, recap and review the training messages several times over.

* = Facilitators/Coordinators need to prepare this prior to session

Appendix = Refer to appendix for resources to be used in sessions e.g. worksheets, case studies, etc

Activity	Story/Testimony
Topics	All
Description of activity	The Coordinator/facilitator (c/f) tells their own story or an experience of someone they know (e.g. how they decided to change their criminal lifestyle).
Purpose of activity	This is a great way to elicit emotions in the students, possibly enabling them to question their own lifestyle and consider changing certain morals/actions.
Resources required	None

Activity	Questions for another group
Topics	All
Description of activity	Students get into groups of 4-7. Together, they write 1-3 questions based on the topic. Groups then choose another group to answer their

	question(s). Groups read their answers to the whole class.
Purpose of activity	This activity provides c/f information on what students already know or have learnt about the topic
Resources required	Small strips of paper Pens

Activity	Comments/Questions in a Box
Topics	More personal topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Healing of the past - Relationships - HIV/Aids
Description of activity	All students write down a comment or question about the topic on a small piece of paper and place it in a box. The c/f pulls out one at a time (ensuring the writer stays anonymous), reads it to the class, and opens it up for class discussion
Purpose of activity	Allows students to comment or ask questions that they would normally be too afraid to say/ask. Useful for more personal/emotional topics.
Resources required	Small strips of paper Pens Box

Activity	Case Studies
Topics	All
Description of activity	C/f reads out a case study to the class. Students work in a small group to discuss the case study-how it relates to the topic and what they can learn from the story. Questions can be given to groups to guide them. All groups then combine to have a whole class discussion. (Alternatively, small groups are each given a different case study. When groups combine, they

	will need to explain to the whole class what their case study was about)
Purpose of activity	Case Studies provide real life examples related to a particular issue. This helps students to better understand the issue as they can imagine being in the same situation explained in the case study.
Resources required	Case Study (Refer to <u>Appendix</u> for examples) Questions about Case Study *

Activity	Question Time
Topics	All
Description of activity	In pairs or groups, students write down one question relating to the topic. Each pair/group then takes turns to ask the c/f their question.
Purpose of activity	This will give a good indication of how much the students already know as well as directing the teaching to students' current level of knowledge.
Resources required	Small strips of paper Pens

Activity	Turn to your Neighbour
Topic	All
Description of activity	This activity is done at the end of the session. Each student turns to the person next to them to discuss the 2 or 3 main points of the topic. All students write down their answers.
Purpose of activity	Provides students a chance to summarise what they have learnt about the topic and compare to what another person learnt.
Resources required	Paper Pens

Activity	Quick Quiz
Topic	All
Description of activity	At a particular point in the session, or when the session has ended, hand out a short quiz to all students with 5-6 questions related to what has been covered. Go over the answers with the whole class.
Purpose of activity	Tests what students have learnt in the session. Gives c/f an idea of which aspects of a topic need to be revisited.
Resources required	Quiz Questions * Refer to <u>Appendix</u> for examples Pens

Activity	Fill in the blank
Topic	All
Description of activity	This technique involves students writing in missing words in a workbook (i.e. the lifeskills workbook). This can be used while the c/f is lecturing on the topic or done for homework.
Purpose of activity	Encourages students to think about what they are learning or have learnt about a topic.
Resources required	Life skills workbook Pens

Activity	Brainstorming
Topic	All
Description of activity	The c/f asks a question (e.g. 'What are your worldviews?'). Students call out answers, and the c/f writes ALL of them up on the board/flipchart (Generation of ideas). The whole class then decide together which of the points are most important and which can be crossed out (analysis of ideas). The c/f can then sum up the main ideas

	and use it to answer the question. This can be done in the form of a concept/mind map.
Purpose of activity	Allows students to express what they know/have learnt, listen to what other students know, and analyse the best of what has been learnt by all.
Resources required	Board/Flipchart Marker

PICTURE of concept map

Activity	Crossword Quiz
Topic	All
Description of activity	Students work in a small group to create a crossword based on the topic. Groups swap their crosswords with another group and complete each others.
Purpose of activity	A fun way for students to test each other about what has been learnt.
Resources required	Paper Pens

Activity	Match the Question and Answer
Topic	All
Description of activity	Hand out either questions or corresponding answers based on the topic to all students. Students walk around the room to find the person who has the answer to their question or vice versa. Students read the questions and answers to the whole class.
Purpose of activity	Encourages student interaction and is a fun way for students to demonstrate what they have learnt.
Resources	Questions & Answers about topic *

required	Refer to <u>Appendix</u> for examples
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Activity	Reading Presentations
Topic	All Best for topics that require specific knowledge content to be learnt (e.g. Worldview, African Renaissance, Personal Health, HIV)
Description of activity	Put students into groups and provide each with 2-3 pages of information relating to the topic. Allow groups to read the info and prepare to present what they learnt. When each group has presented, give time for other students to ask questions.
Purpose of activity	Students learn information/facts about a topic, think about what the info means to them, and practice their presentation skills.
Resources required	Reading material e.g. magazine articles, newspapers related to the topic * Refer to <u>Appendix</u> for examples

Activity	Group Task
Topic	All
Description of activity	Give groups of 3-5 a task based on the topic (e.g. answer a question, solve a problem). Put a time limit on the task. Ensure each group has paper, pens, flip chart paper, overhead film, etc. While groups are completing the task, walk around and assist by clarifying, answering questions, providing tips. When groups have completed their task, they present to the whole class. Encourage them to be creative in their presentations, e.g. drawing on the flipchart, showing overhead, etc.
Purpose of activity	Students have a chance to think deeply about one aspect of a topic, practice group interaction skills, and improve presentation skills.

Resources required	Question/Problems for each group * Refer to <u>Appendix</u> for examples Paper Pens Flipchart paper Overhead film (if available)
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Activity	Puzzle
Topic	Any topic that involves teaching about a process <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteerism (process of seeking volunteer work) - Finances (process of working out a mathematical question) - Job preparation skills (process of applying for work) - Time Management (a part of Personal Development/self-leadership)
Description of activity	<p>This activity works when you are teaching about a process.</p> <p>Hand out a card to each student with one step of a process (e.g. For Time Management, the steps could be: Write a list for what you want to do that day, Number the list in the order you want to carry it out, Plan how much time you will spend on each task, etc etc).</p> <p>Students get themselves in order from beginning to end. Once they are in line, review each step of the process and change the order if needed.</p> <p>If the group is large, you can hand out different coloured cards so that students only look for other students of the same colour- to form groups (e.g. all greens together, all blues, etc)</p>
Purpose of activity	Encourages students to interact with one another and think about steps of a process related to the topic
Resources	Process cards * Refer to <u>Appendix</u> for example

required	
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Activity	Safari
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>Stick up 4 pieces of flip chart paper around the room, each with a different question. Students get into 4 groups and stand together next to 1 of the flipcharts. Give each group a different coloured marker and 5 minutes to answer their question.</p> <p>Groups then rotate to the next flipchart. They spend 5 minutes adding to the previous group's answer. When each group has answered all 4 questions, tell them to stay at their final flipchart and report all the answers to the whole class.</p>
Purpose of activity	Students will practice their negotiating skills (in order for the group to agree on one answer for each question). They will also see how others interpreted a question (by observing other groups' answers)
Resources required	<p>Flip chart paper: 1 per group, each with a different question already written *</p> <p><u>Appendix</u> for questions</p> <p>Coloured markers- 1 per group</p>

Activity	Difficulties
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>This activity is similar to 'Safari', but instead of writing a question on each flipchart, the c/f writes one aspect of the topic on each (e.g. for Goal setting, write 'Vision', 'Goals', 'Action plans', etc). Students go and stand next to the flipchart that has the aspect they find most difficult to understand. Allow the students to work together for 5-10minutes, writing down what is particularly difficult on the chart.</p>

	Sit students down and have a class, reviewing what the main difficulties of aspects of the topic were.
Purpose of activity	Gives students a chance to express what they don't understand about a topic. These difficulties can then be discussed so that students will eventually understand.
Resources required	Flip chart paper: 1 per group, each with a different aspect of the topic already written * <u>Appendix</u> for aspects of topics Markers- 1 per group

Activity	Most/Least Useful
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>List 6-7 uses for the information the c/f has provided for on the topic, each written on a different piece of flipchart paper. Hang them around the room and ask students to stand next to the use they think applies most to them. Have students write why that is on the left half of the flipchart ('Most useful'). Review answers with the whole class.</p> <p>Repeat the exercise but this time students stand next to the flipchart with the info that is least applicable to them. Students write why that is on the right half of the flipchart ('Least useful'). Review again with whole class.</p>
Purpose of activity	This activity provides the c/f with good feedback about what students found most and least useful about the topic. This will assist the c/f to change the content for the next time the topic is taught- with the hope of making the content more useful for students.
Resources required	Flip chart paper: 1 per use * <u>Appendix</u> with picture of flipchart set-up markers

Activity	Picture/video
Topic	All
Description of activity	Show class a picture or video. Have a whole class discussion (and ask questions if appropriate) about the relevance of the pic/vid to the topic.
Purpose of activity	Helps students to understand the topic in more depth. E.g. If the video is about someone with HIV, students will be able to sympathise with the character and learn more about the issue (i.e. living with HIV)
Resources required	Picture or Video relating to topic <u>Appendix</u> with pics/videos

Activity	Reading Groups
Topic	All Best for topics that require specific knowledge content to be learnt (e.g. Worldview, African Renaissance, Personal Health, HIV)
Description of activity	Put students into groups of about 5 and hand out reading material (e.g. newspaper article, case study, etc) with questions so that all students in the same group receive the same material and questions (and each group receives different material and questions). Students read material and answer questions ALONE. When all students in their group are ready, the group gets together and discusses their answers.
Purpose of activity	For students to gain knowledge on a topic and express (in writing and by speaking) what they learn from the reading material.
Resources required	Reading material e.g. newspaper, magazine article Questions on reading material * See <u>Appendix</u> for reading material and questions

Activity	Summaries
Topic	All
Description of activity	Divide class into groups of about 5. Pass out a card to each group and allow groups to summarize the information on the topic taught. All groups hand in their card to the c/f and discuss each of the summaries with the whole class. The c/f writes up the main points gathered from each group's summaries, writes these on a flipchart, and all students copy points down in workbook/paper.
Purpose of activity	Students demonstrate the main aspects they have learnt about the topic and share this with the whole class.
Resources required	Cards- 1 per group Pens Paper Flipchart paper Marker

Activity	Field Trip
Topic	Topics that can be learnt about by going on an excursion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Worldview (e.g. mosque, church) - Volunteerism (e.g. orphanage, woman's centre) - Finances (e.g. bank, business)
Description of activity	Organise a visit to an important site in the community. Provide students with questions to be answered while on the field trip. After the field trip, have a class discussion in which students answer the questions and provide feedback on what they learnt.
Purpose of activity	Gives students practical experience of what they are learning (e.g. by seeing how a volunteer community organisation runs and understanding

	the practicalities of running/working at such an organisation)
Resources required	Questions- for field trip * <u>Appendix</u> has examples of Qs

Activity	Paper Bag competition
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>Divide the class into 4-5 teams. Give each team a paper bag and a stack of coloured cards. Each team should have its own colour. Each team creates a question related to the topic and writes it on the paper bag. Teams rotate their paper bags so that each group has a different team's bag. Teams spend 2 minutes discussing the question and writing their answer on one of their coloured cards, placing it into the bag when they are done. Teams rotate the bags around until all teams have answered each question. Bags are returned to the original team who wrote the question on that bag.</p> <p>Teams then open their bags, read and discuss the other team's answers. Teams give other points to other teams: A total of 10 points should be divided between the answers, with more points going toward the better answers (e.g. 5 points for the best answer, 3 for 2nd best, 2 for 3rd if there are 4 teams).</p> <p>The whole class reviews all questions and answers and the c/f hands out a prize to the group who gained the most points.</p>
Purpose of activity	A fun challenge that requires teams to think of a question related to the topic and work together to answer other teams' answers.
Resources required	Paper bags- 1 per group Coloured cards- 1 colour per group, each group receives the same number of cards as there are groups Pens

Activity	Skit
Topic	All
Description of activity	Divide class into groups and hand each group a pre-prepared dialogue/script that relates to the topic being taught. Allow about 20 minutes for groups to practice their skit, then have each group perform in front of the whole class.
Purpose of activity	Role playing allows students to take risk-free positions by acting out characters in hypothetical situations. It can help them understand the range of concerns, values, and positions held by other people. Role playing is an enlightening and interesting way to help students see a problem from another perspective
Resources required	Skit/dialogue relating to topic <u>Appendix</u> has examples skits

Activity	Crumpled Questions
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>Have each student write a question about the topic (either before the topic has been introduced or after having discussed the topic at length) on a small piece of paper. Each student crumples up their question into a ball and throws it (gently) across the room to another student. Each student uncrumples the paper ball thrown to them and write an answer on the same paper. When all questions have been answered, have students re-crumple and throw again to another student. Students add more info to this second question (so that there are now 2 answers for 1 question on each piece of paper).</p> <p>Crumple one more time and throw to another student. Each student un-crumples the piece of paper and read out the question and answers to the whole class and add any comments they have.</p>

Purpose of activity	Students are challenged to consider a range of aspects on the topic they may not yet have thought about
Resources required	Small strips of paper Pens

Activity	Jigsaw
Topic	All Best for topics that require specific knowledge content to be learnt (e.g. Worldview, African Renaissance, Personal Health, HIV)
Description of activity	<p>Divide the class into groups (the number of students in each group will depend on the number of sections (e.g. pages or chapters) in the reading material you want the class to cover e.g. 7 issues = 7 students in each group). Tell groups to give each student a number (e.g. 1 to 7).</p> <p>Assign all the number 1's to read the first section of the reading material, all the 2's to read the second section, and so on.</p> <p>Give students questions to focus on (e.g. What is this section about? What are the main points? How can you apply this to your life?) and a set time to read through their sections and answer the questions.</p> <p>When students have finished, have them form a group with the other students or the same number (e.g. all ones together, all twos, etc). These new groups come to agreement on each of the questions and write down the best points.</p> <p>After a set amount of time, tell students to go back to their original groups and share what their section is about.</p>
Purpose of activity	A useful way of getting the class to cover a large amount of reading material without expecting each student to read all of it. Also gets students to think for themselves when answering questions, share

	what they learnt, and compare this to what others learnt.
Resources required	Reading material, e.g. newspaper, magazine, internet info * Questions relating to reading material * Paper Pens

Activity	Note Taking
Topic	All
Description of activity	This is when students write their own notes related to what the c/f says during a lecture
Purpose of activity	This is a good way for students to express what they are learning in their own words, and will form a useful resource for them to remember what they learnt in future.
Resources required	Paper Pens

Activity	Team Lists
Topic	All
Description of activity	Divide the class into 3 teams. Have the first team write a list of the key points on the topic. The second team writes a list of how they can put into practice what was taught. The third team writes a list of what could happen if they don't use what they have learnt.
Purpose of activity	Encourages cooperative team work and provides the c/f feedback about what the class has learnt.
Resources required	Paper Pens

Activity	Group Role Play
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Topic	All
Description of activity	Put students into groups of 4-6. Give them 10-15mins to come up with a role-play for one main theme to do with the topic. Groups take turns to act out their role-play to the rest of the class.
Purpose of activity	Role playing allows students to take risk-free positions by acting out characters in hypothetical situations. It can help them understand the range of concerns, values, and positions held by other people. Role playing is an enlightening and interesting way to help students see a problem from another perspective
Resources required	Any props students find and use

Activity	2 Truths and 1 Lie
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>Divide the class into groups of about 5 students each. Give each group a piece of flip-chart paper. The group works together to come up with 3 statements about the topic they've been learning about. 2 of these should be true, the other false.</p> <p>Go around the room and have each group read out the statements. The other groups write down on paper which 2 they think are true and which is false. Have a class discussion when all statements have been presented.</p>
Purpose of activity	Gets students to demonstrate what they have learnt about the topic in a fun, challenging way.
Resources required	Flipchart paper Pens/Markers

Activity	Lectures
Topic	All
Description of	This involves the c/f speaking to the whole class.

activity	Although this method can be useful for certain topics, the time spent merely talking should be kept to a minimum (to prevent students becoming bored). C/f's must remember to speak loudly and clearly, include visual aids (e.g. drawing a picture on the flip-chart), and allow students to ask questions and make comments on the content.
Purpose of activity	C/f can impart their knowledge to the students. The purpose may be to merely impart facts, or can be a more personal speech in which the c/f describes their own experiences or feelings.
Resources required	None

Activity	2 sides of an issue
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>Post flipchart paper around the room. Draw a large 'T' on each flipchart. Above the 'T' write a topic heading (e.g. 'Leadership'). Underneath the 'T' on the left hand side write one aspect of the topic (e.g. 'What makes a Leader Effective?') and on the right hand side an opposing aspect (e.g. 'What makes a leader Ineffective?').</p> <p>Divide the class into groups of about 5 and have them answer the 2 questions on one of the flipcharts around the room. Discuss all group's answers with the whole class.</p>
Purpose of activity	Encourages students to think of one aspect in two very different ways. This assists those students who may have previously only considered one side of an argument/issue to consider the other side as well.
Resources required	Flipchart paper Pens/markers <u>Appendix</u> with flipchart setup

Activity	Panel Discussion
Topic	All
Description of activity	<p>Invite a speaker(s) or member(s) from the community who are experts on the topic to be taught. Certain students who have experience on the topic can also be part of the panel- this is a good strategy to assist particular students to feel like experts. Students take turns to ask the panel member(s) questions about the topic.</p> <p>It helps if students have written questions about the topic before the panel arrives (e.g. the day before).</p>
Purpose of activity	This activity provides students with useful information about the topic. The information is useful as it comes from an experienced person, and possibly provides a different point of view on the topic to what the students currently hold.
Resources required	<p>Speakers/community members</p> <p>Students' questions</p>