

# UNIT I

## Contextual Learning for The Development of Life Skills

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### Introduction

Learning in class is basically intended to assist students to SURVIVE LIFE, or, in fact, to ENRICH LIFE. For that reason, learning in school should not be directed towards just knowing, remembering or understanding knowledge. Students have to be capable of making use of knowledge they have acquired to equip themselves to recognize and address life's challenges and creating something that is useful in life.

The skill to survive or enrich life is known by the expression Life Skills. These life skills can be classified into four groups: (a) Personal Skills; (b) Social Skills; (c) Academic Skills; and (d) Vocational Skills.

This program concerns itself mainly with only two groups of life skills: Academic Skills and Social Skills. In the area of academic skills, Problem-solving Skills and Decision-making Skills will be developed. In the area of Social Skills, the ability to work in a group and to learn cooperatively will be developed.

Contextual learning has been introduced at the junior secondary school level. This contextual learning pattern has several characteristics, including requiring the student to be active and creative, to use a high level of critical thinking, use the environment around them and work in groups. Contextual learning should contribute to the development of life skills however, although it has been much talked about, it has often not been applied properly or consistently.



### Objective

After completing this session, participants will be aware of the important role of contextual learning in developing the life skills of students. In particular, training participants are expected to be capable of:

- Determining the life skills/capabilities that can be developed through contextual learning.
- Finding improved strategies to apply contextual learning in the classroom.



## Key Questions

There are several key questions that need to be answered in this activity:

- What life skills can be developed by contextual learning?
- What strategies can be used by the teacher who wants to apply contextual learning on an ongoing basis in the classroom?



## General Guidance

In order for this session to work well, the following general guide is provided.

- The facilitator should encourage the participants to watch carefully video of the science lesson and look for the life skill being learnt there.
- Where there is no video or the video cannot be shown, there are some alternatives: (1) Introduction: explanation of the objectives and scenario; (2) Connection: presentation on life skills and contextual learning; (3) Application: group discussion on the potential for contextual learning in developing life skills and how to increase teachers' commitment to applying contextual learning in the classroom; (4) Reflection: reflect on the objectives and processes as well as the outcomes achieved; and (5) Extension: reading supplementary information and material on contextual learning and life skills to re-inforce understanding about these two issues.
- The facilitator should print out the handout on the principles of contextual learning, so they can be given out to participants in order to identify the contribution of contextual learning to the development of life skills.
- The facilitator should encourage participants to express their opinions objectively so that their thinking is consistent with the targets of the unit.



## Materials and Resources

- Video recording about teaching life skills
- Notes about the principles of contextual learning
- Participant Handout 1.1: Identifying Aspects of Life Skills learning in the Video Presentation
- Participant Handout 1.2: Identifying the Potential of CTL in developing Life Skills

- Participant Handout 1.3: Identifying the How to Increase the Commitment to Apply Contextual Learning
- Supplementary Information 1.1: Principles of contextual learning
- Supplementary Information 1.2: Definition of Life Skills
- Flipchart paper, markers, pens, colored post-it notes, notebooks, paper tacks or blue tac, glue, and scissors.



## Time

The time allocation for this activity is 90 minutes. The time schedule should be kept to at each stage of the delivery of this session.



## ICT (Information Communication Technologies)

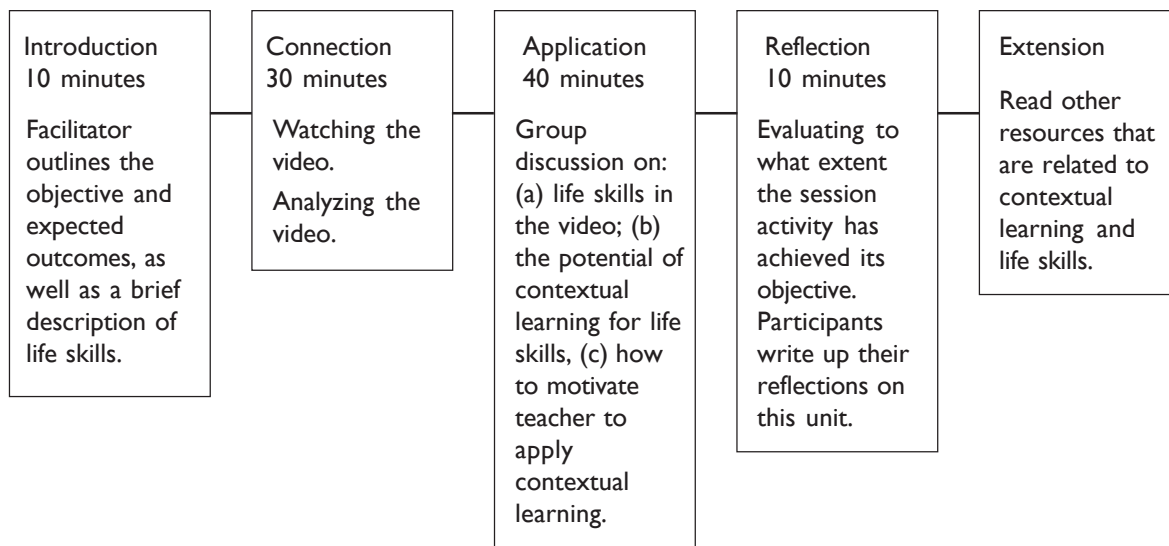
The use of ICT to support this session is not obligatory but if possible provide:

- LCD projector  
Laptop or personal computer for the presentation
- LCD projector screen

Nevertheless, the facilitator has to be ready in case the required equipment is not available. In this case the facilitator has to give the presentations by using an OHP or a flipchart.



## Session Summary



## Detailed Description of Activities



### Introduction (10 minutes)

- (1) The facilitator outlines the objectives and expected outcomes of the session activity
- (2) The facilitator outlines several points related to life skills at the junior secondary school level.
- (3) The facilitator announces that in a moment participants will be invited to watch a video presentation. They will be asked to take note of, and record, those aspects of life skills learning that they observe in the video.
- (4) The facilitator reminds participants that these notes will be used in the following discussion.



### Note for Facilitator

There are a variety of life skills, namely:

- a) Personal skills,
- b) Social skills,
- c) Academic skills, and
- d) Vocational skills.

At the junior secondary school level, the types of life skills that are the focus of this training program are:

- a) Problem solving and decision making,
- b) Working in groups and studying cooperatively.



### Connection (20 minutes)

- (1) The facilitator prepares and distributes Participant Handout 1.1: Identifying Aspects of Life Skills Learning in The Video Presentation to be completed by participants. The form consists of three columns and three rows. The first column contains the life skill. The second column is where to write a description of the event in the video that is suitable for developing an aspect of life skills. The third column contains suggestions for improving learning if learning certain life skill is not evident in the video presentation.
- (2) The facilitator shows the video on the science subject lesson, ensuring that each participant has a good view of the screen and can hear the broadcast from their seat.
- (3) The facilitator monitors and encourages each participant to complete the form they have been given.



### Application (50 minutes)

#### Activity 1: Discussion of the Video Presentation (10 minutes)

- (1) The facilitator asks participants to sit in small groups
- (2) The facilitator, invites participants to share their findings from their video observations and stresses that

**“Contextual learning appears to have significant potential in the development of life skills”.**

### Activity 2: Discussion on the Potential of Contextual Learning (20 minutes)

- (1) The facilitator distributes the Supplementary Information 1.1 that contains the various principles of contextual learning
- (2) The facilitator distributes Participant Handout 1.2: Identifying the Potential of CTL in Developing Life Skills and asks participants to discuss the potential of contextual learning in developing life skills from the perspective of each of the principles they have been given.
- (3) Write up the discussion on flipchart paper for display.



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#### Note for Facilitator

Several principles in contextual learning include:

1. supporting the child in active learning (*learning by doing*).
2. encouraging the child to be creative by using critical thinking, not copying from the teacher or a friend
3. encouraging the child to inquire and question (*questioning*) to find information that is needed
4. encourage the children to study together in community learning
5. encourage the use of assessment of students' work
6. encourage the child to reflect on the process and outcomes of what they have learnt

- (3) The facilitator emphasizes: **“Given the Importance of the Role of Contextual Learning in Developing Life Skills, and the Ongoing Low Level of Teacher Commitment to Applying Contextual Learning, There is a Need to Identify How to Increase the Commitment of Teachers to Apply Contextual Learning”**

### Activity 3: Discussion on the Means of Increasing Teachers' Commitment (20 minutes)

- (1) The facilitator distributes Participant Handout 1.3: Identifying How to Increase the Commitment to Apply Contextual Learning and discussion in groups.
- (2) Write up the outcome of the discussion on a flipchart and display it in the room.
- (3) The facilitator directs participants to circulate around the room and identify and write down the ideas that emerge from other groups.
- (4) The facilitator then stresses the potential for contextual learning in developing life skills and motivating participants to apply contextual learning in strengthening life skills.

## **Reflection (5 minutes)**

- (1) The facilitator asks participants to reflect again on whether the objectives of this session have been achieved or not.
- (2) The facilitator encourages participants to write down the important issues that they learnt from the session, why those are viewed as more important than others that were also looked at during the session, what other important issues still need to be addressed, as well as what follow-up plans they have in relation to these important issues.

## **Extension**

The facilitator encourages participants to:

- (1) Look for other important points concerning contextual learning and life skills.
- (2) Study and take heed of Supplementary Information 1.2: Definition of Life Skills that are provided in this unit.
- (3) Identify one learning experience that applied the highest (lowest) level of contextual learning principles. Why did it happen?
- (4) Look for a strategy on how to assist the teacher to want to, and be capable of applying a higher level of contextual learning.



## **Key Message**

Contextual learning has significant potential to develop life skills. For that reason, the teacher needs to continue making an effort to apply contextual learning in the daily learning routine in an effective and efficient way.



## Participant Handout 1.1

### Identifying Aspects of Life Skills in the Video Presentation

**Instruction:** Write a description life skills learning observed in the video in the second column and ideas for the development of life skills in the third column

Aspect of Life Skills that Should be Developed	Seen in the Video, when ...	Not Seen in the Video, but Can be Developed by .....
Aspect of Life Skills that Should be Developed		
Group Work/ Cooperative Learning		



## Participant Handout 1.2

### Identifying the Potential of CTL in Developing Life Skills

**Instruction:** Enter a tick (Ö) in the relevant column if this aspect of CTL contributes to the development of the life skill.

CTL PRINCIPLES	CONTRIBUTION OF CONTEXTUAL LEARNING IN DEVELOPMENT OF:	
	Academic Skills (Problem Solving, Decision Making etc)	Social Skills (Working and Studying Cooperatively etc.)
Child learning actively ( <i>learning by doing</i> )		
Child using critical thinking		
Child making inquiries and questioning		
Developing the community to learn		
Using assessment of students' work		
Child reflecting on the process and outcomes of their learning		



## Participant Handout 1.3

### Identifying How to Raise the Commitment of Teachers to Apply Contextual Learning

Factor that Influences Teacher Commitment to Apply Contextual Learning		What Needs to be Done to Raise TeacherS' Commitment to Apply Contextual Learning
Teacher Ability		
School Policy		
School Committee Support		
Supervisor Support		
Regional Facilitator Support		
Education Agency Policy		
Other:		



## Supplementary Information 1.1

### Contextual Learning Principles

There are several principles in contextual learning, including:

1. Encourage the child to think critically (*learning by doing*);
2. Encourage the child to be creative by using their own thoughts rather than imitating that of the teacher or a friend;
3. Encourage the child to inquire and question (*questioning*) to obtain the information that is needed;
4. Encourage the child to learn cooperatively with their peers;
5. Encourage the use of assessment of the work the students have produced; and
6. Encourage the child to reflect on the processes and outcomes of learning that they have undertaken.



## Supplementary Information 1.2

### Definition of Life Skill

The definition of life skills that is used in this unit is consistent with the definition that has been formulated by the Ministry of National Education.

**Life Skill:** A skill that makes it possible for someone to be positive and adaptable in overcoming life's daily situations and demands, such as thinking creatively and critically, making correct decisions, solving problems, and having a responsible attitude. These skills are associated with the personal health of youth (physical and emotional), family and community development, participation as a citizen and as a worker.

Source: *Ministry of National Education*

Many teachers in Indonesia have the view that life skills education is only in the form of vocational skills or training. However, the meaning of life skills is more than that. Personal, social and academic skills are also important life skills for a child's development. In Indonesia, Life Skills Education is based on the concept that a young child needs to: (1) learn<sup>1</sup> to know; (2) learn to do; (3) learn to live with others; and (4) learn to be. For that reason, life skills are divided into three categories:

- Academic life skills (*know*)
- Vocational life skills (*do*)
- Personal life skills (*be*), and
- Social life skills (*live with others*)

Life skills are included in primary and middle schooling, both in the formal nonformal sector, in the manner determined by the National Education Standards (Article 13).

The objective of life skills education, according to the Ministry of National Education, is to empower young children (teenagers)<sup>2</sup> to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to survive life in all aspects by using available resources to enhance the quality of their life.

<sup>1</sup> National Plan of Action: Indonesia's Education For All (2003) National Coordination Forum Education For All.

<sup>2</sup> Young children or teenagers: children aged between 12 and 16 years of age.

The Ministry of National Education defines a student who has life skills as those:

- who have the skills, knowledge, attitude and readiness to succeed in working with others or independently, and that will assist in improving the quality of their life;
- who have the motivation and high ethic to succeed in working and competing in the local, domestic and international (global) environment and fulfilling market demands;
- who have the skills and opportunities to study throughout their life in order to achieve the same status as other people;
- who are aware of the importance of education for themselves and their family and the relationship between education their level of income and social welfare.

The following are some of the definitions that are normally used to explain life skills:

**Definition of life skills:** This definition refers to a large group of psychological-social and interpersonal skills that can help someone to make correct decisions, communicate effectively, and develop the ability to overcome problems and manage themselves to live a life that is healthy and productive. Life skills can be personal actions or actions directed towards others, as well as actions to change the environment so it is conducive to good health.

**Education is the basis for life skills:** This definition is often used interchangeably with the meaning of health education based skills. The difference between the two is on the type of content or topic covered. By using the expression “education-based life skills”, not all program content is considered to be “related to health”. For example, it may cover reading, writing and arithmetic, education about peaceful living or human rights.

**Skill at making a living:** Life skills are possibly confused with the ability to make a living but the two are not the same. The ability to make a living is only related to earning an income and vocational/technical skills and is only one aspect of life skills. Skill in making a living is the ability, resources, and opportunity to achieve a personal goal and ensure the family’s welfare. These skills cover such things as carpentry, tailoring, computer programming, seeking employment (for example by attending an interview), ability to manage a business, entrepreneurial skills, and ability to manage money. Life skills cover personal, social and academic skills, in addition to the ability to make a living or a vocational skill.

Source: [http://www.unicef.org/hidup\\_skills/index\\_7308.html](http://www.unicef.org/hidup_skills/index_7308.html)

## The Importance of Life Skills

The section below presents the positive benefits to be obtained from *Personal, Social and Academic Skills* and the consequences of not having these skills.

### Social Skills

*Social Skills* are very important in assisting a child to make social choices that will strengthen their interpersonal skills and make it easy for them to succeed at school. The benefits to be obtained from *good social skills* are:

- Persistent when facing future crises and events in life that cause stress.
- Capable of seeking safe and secure solutions to overcome aggressive attitudes and frustrations.
- Have a responsible attitude to school safety, academic success and positive behavior.

Students who are less adept in social skills:

- Have difficulties in interpersonal relationships with parents, teachers and friends.
- Experience a high level of rejection by their peers.
- Rejection by peers is often related to violence at school.
- Show signs of depression, aggression and anxiety.
- Have poor levels of academic achievement as an indirect consequence.
- Are very often involved in criminal acts as an adult.

### Personal Skills

*Personal Skills* are very important in helping a child to develop self-confidence, good values and respect and love for other people in the community. What is desired is a person whose actions reflect an educated, rational and empathetic attitude towards their social responsibilities. The Ministry of National Education has designated personal skills as the skills that are shown by someone who has good values and who optimizes their individual potential.

Those whose *personal skills have not developed* do not appear to value the feelings of others, disrespect people who are less fortunate, suffer physical or verbal abuse, and lose opportunities because of poor self-worth and exhibit behavior that is immoral, rude or breaks the laws of their country.

### Academic Skills

*Academic Skills* are considered important in assisting a child to become an effective student and to develop skills that are necessary for success in higher education and the professional

environment, such as research, problem-solving and technological skills. Academic skills are useful in assisting the child to adapt to new surroundings, to make correct decisions, to apply investigative skills and to apply new knowledge quickly.

People whose academic skills are less proficient drop out of school, and appear to be involved in criminal behavior, become pregnant before marriage, and are unemployed and poor.

Success in developing these skills depends on to what extent the child can observe people who provide a role model of these characteristics and a comfortable environment where the child can learn to use these skills such as in a family or classroom setting.

Students need to be given the opportunity to develop, build and practice these skills each day so they are able to use these skills effectively when they face life's daily challenges.

Students with life skills provide a **benefit** to the individual, community and regional government.

#### Individual

Skills, knowledge and understanding to work in a company or become an entrepreneur in seeking work

The ability to successfully support oneself and one's family

Have the opportunity to further develop their skills

#### Community

Create new employment opportunities in the community

Reduce poverty

Reduce social inequity and the threat of crime that is associated with social and other problems

#### Regional Government

Enhance the quality of human resources

Grow the regional economy and the potential for regional revenues

Reduce urbanization

## Presentation Unit I



**UNIT 1**  
CONTEXTUAL LEARNING IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF LIFE SKILLS

### I Introduction - 10'

**Types of Life Skills:**

- Personal Skills
- Social Skills
- Academic Skills
- Vocational Skills (Trade)

### Life Skills Focus

- **Social Skills**  
Cooperation/Learning Together
- **Academic**  
Problem solving/Decision making

### Objective

- Determining life skills/abilities that can be developed via contextual learning.
- Finding strategies to enhance the teacher's commitment to applying the contextual lesson in each respective class.

### C Connection - 20'

- Look at Participant Handout I.1: Identification of Life Skills Learning in the Video Presentation.
- Watch the Video Presentation on the Following Lesson and Complete Handout I.1. on Your Observations.

### A Application I - 10'

- Participants sit in small groups on various subjects.
- Discuss the observations from the video presentation.
- How does contextual learning contribute to the development of life skills?

## Application 2 – 20'

- Read the CTL learning principles (**Supplementary Information 1.1**) and study Participant Handout 1.2.
- Discuss the potential of CTL in developing life skills.
- Write up the outcome of the discussion on flipchart paper and display it.

## Application 3 – 20'

- Study Participant Handout 1.3 and discuss.
- Write up the outcome of the discussion on flipchart paper and display it.
- Circulate around the room and read the presentations of other groups and identify their good ideas.
- Re-inforcement.

## R Reflection – 10'

- Recap the unit's objectives and clarify the achievements of this objective.
- Write up in your journal:
  - the important points learned and why they are important.
  - other matters that still need to be addressed
  - your follow-up plans

## E Extension

- Look for other important points on contextual learning and life skills.
- Study and pay attention to Supplementary Information 1.1.
- Identify one learning experience that had the highest (lowest) element of contextual learning principles. Why did that occur?
- Look for strategies to assist the teacher to apply learning with a higher contextual element.

## Some Principles of Contextual Learning



**UNIT 1**  
Some Principles of  
Contextual Learning

### Main Components Contextual Learning

- Constructivism
- Inquiry
- Questioning
- Learning Community
- Modelling
- Authentic Assessment
- Reflection

### CONSTRUCTIVISM

- Student-centered learning
- *Learning by Doing* is very much encouraged
- Lessons relate to the students' context

### INQUIRY

- The child has to search for additional information
- The child has to become accustomed to using problem-solving abilities

### QUESTIONING

- The child is invited to use critical thinking
- The child uses his/her own thinking, not copying the answer from a book or from the teacher

### LEARNING COMMUNITY

- The child learns cooperatively (in pairs, small groups, and traditionally)
- Interaction and communication of ideas between children is high

## MODELING

- The teacher is not the only source of learning
- The teacher is also an active learner (not just teaching)
- The teacher models good learning behavior (active, creative, innovative, reflective)
- The child learns by imitating and investigating the model

## AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT

- Learning outcomes are counted upwards from 0 (what can be done at the present time), not deducted from 100 (number of errors)
- Prioritizing the entire mastery of evidence (cognition, skills, and attitude)
- Informal measurement (observation, and informal discussions) or formal (portfolio, performance)

## REFLECTION

- Learning does not cease only after mastering one piece of knowledge
- Learning continues by questioning oneself, including:
  - What was easy (difficult) for me to learn? Why was it easy (difficult)?
  - What were the important things I learnt?
  - What is the relationship of this knowledge with what I already know?
  - What should I do next?

## SEVERAL PRINCIPLES CONTEXTUAL LEARNING

- Centered on the child, *learning by doing*
- Related to the context and child's background
- Accustomed to looking for necessary information
- Accustomed to thinking at a high level: critically, creatively, and innovatively
- Empowering cooperative learning
- The teacher is also a learner and models good learning habits
- Assessment used has to be of students' actual achievement and work
- The child needs to be invited to reflect on their performance and achievements