Essential Learnings Workshop
An Introduction to Essential Learnings for Students

1. Introduction - What are we doing here today? What is a workshop? What are the purposes of this workshop? Reference to visual images displayed.

2. Topic on overhead about the future - think, pair, share process
   - as an individual think about the capabilities, understandings, skills you will need to manage in the future. Write them down.
   - Pair up with the person next to you - have a conversation about what you each have written
   - Share with the group. Come to a consensus of no more than 10. Write each on a separate post it. Keep them on your table.

3. What some famous people have said about the future. What have you heard people say about the future?

4. Tape recording or role-play of systems script about the future. Amend or modify post its if you all agree as a group.

5. Input about the Essential Learnings. What they are. Brief description of each. Place post its on charts.

6. An in-depth look at one Essential learning - aspects, dot points, understandings and actions

7. The Essential Learnings' dot points we will focus on in our activity today

8. Grouping activity

9. Introduce task, negotiate the assessment criteria - include the Essential Learning dot points task.

10. Share work with whole group

11. Reflection.
The Purposes of the Workshop

• You will be given an opportunity to think about and visualise your needs and understandings for the future
• You will have an understanding of the significance of the Essential Learnings for your future in a rapidly changing world
• You will begin to gain knowledge of what the Essential Learnings for the future are
• You will begin to explore ways you can develop the understandings related to the Essential Learnings
Think, pair, share

**TOPIC**

From what you know of the past and your understandings and knowledge of what is happening in our world at the present what capabilities, understandings and skills do you think you will need so that you can manage the future?

1. As an individual think about the topic above. Write down any skills, abilities and understandings you think you will need.
2. Pair up with the person next to you - have a conversation about what you both have written.
3. Share with your group. Come to a consensus of no more than 10. Keep them on your table.
We are preparing children for work that is not only not yet invented, it’s not even imagined.

(Ex-President Clinton)
In times of drastic change it is the learner who inherits the future.
It is so difficult to figure out what information will be crucial to students in the future, it makes sense to pay more attention to the intellectual tools that will be required in the future.

(Dennis Adams & Mary Hamm)
The Essential Learnings are understandings and abilities that children and students can draw upon throughout their lives to help them flourish in changing times. They also describe actions learners can take to shape a future which is fair, just and safe for all who live in our world.

The Essential Learnings are:

FUTURES
Be able to respond to change, recognise connections with the past, be able to come up with solutions for creating preferred futures and be able to learn for life.

IDENTITY
To know yourself and feel positive about yourself and others. To understand how we and others have become what we are. Able to respect the identity of others.

INTERDEPENDENCE
To be able to work in harmony with others within your own culture and across cultures. To understand what is needed for sustainable social and physical environments.

THINKING
To become independent, critical thinkers, to be able to make decisions, to analyse and evaluate information, to be able to think creatively and to know yourself as a thinker and learner.

COMMUNICATION
To be able to communicate in powerful ways using literacy, numeracy and technologies and to have an in depth understanding of how communication works.
An Example of an Essential Learning Aspect & Dot Points

IDENTITY

1. Is able to understand self and others. (The aspect)

- Can understand how culture and family contribute to forming identity i.e. the person you are

- Respects people from cultures that are different from their own

- Can describe aspects of their own identity, e.g. their cultural, emotional, intellectual identities

- Understands what impacts on the identity e.g. family, peers, media, age, race, gender etc.

- Respects different identities.
The Essential Learning focus for the Task

INTERDEPENDENCE

• Works effectively as a member of a team to achieve own goals as well as shared ones

THINKING

• Takes risks in thinking, is creative and imaginative
TASK

Your group has been allocated an Essential Learning. Your job as a group is to:

- Read and talk about what this Essential Learning is about. Ask for help if there is anything you do not understand.
- Design and make a classroom resource that clearly indicates to people what your Essential Learning is about and promotes it as important for all learners – the resource could be a chart, a mobile, a sculpture, a poster, a big book etc.
- Make sure that the aspects of the Essential Learning are clearly visible and are easy to read from a distance

Construction materials include: cardboard, brown paper, straws, string, paper plates, crepe paper, feathers, pom poms etc. Tools include: scissors, stapler, masking tape, textas and maybe computers.
Negotiated Assessment Criteria

Individual students have:

• have worked effectively as a team member
• can give examples of how they have been imaginative and taken risks in thinking
• helped to produce a product which promotes an Essential Learning clearly
Reflection Sheet  
What? So What? Now, What?  
(Metacognition)

What do you now know about Essential Learnings?

So what does this mean for you personally?

Now what do you need to do?

What more do you need to know?
GROUPING ACTIVITY

Each learner is given one of the small sheets below.

The Essential Learning you have been allocated is FUTURES.
You will need to find your other group members without talking to anyone or showing anyone this sheet of paper. When you have found your group please get on with the task as it is described on the overhead.

The Essential Learning you have been allocated is IDENTITY.
You will need to find your other group members without talking to anyone or showing anyone this sheet of paper. When you have found your group please get on with the task as it is described on the overhead.

The Essential Learning you have been allocated is INTERDEPENDENCE
You will need to find your other group members without talking to anyone or showing anyone this sheet of paper. When you have found your group please get on with the task as it is described on the overhead.
The Essential Learning you have been allocated is THINKING.
You will need to find your other group members without talking to anyone or showing anyone this sheet of paper. When you have found your group please get on with the task as it is described on the overhead.

The Essential Learning you have been allocated is COMMUNICATION.
You will need to find your other group members without talking to anyone or showing anyone this sheet of paper. When you have found your group please get on with the task as it is described on the overhead.

When lots of children have found their group place Essential learning signs where you would like them to sit.
Script for Systems Interview

The following script could be performed by two students or educators or an educator and student. The performers could role play a couple of well known personalities of the time. In the original performance of this script the interviewer role played Geraldine Doug and the interviewee played herself.

Interviewer: This is not triple J, it’s not triple M, It is Triple F – FUTURES FUTURES and more FUTURES.
Hello and welcome to a look at the future.
I’m Geraldine Doug and this program is coming to you from Curriculum Directorate right in the heart of Adelaide.
Adelaide has been called a down-under city but as far as a futures focus for education is concerned it is right at the fore-front.
I am pleased to welcome our guest today - Carolyn White who is one of those futures experts who works for Curriculum Directorate. Her expertise is in Essential Learnings which focus on the skills, understandings and capabilities our children will need to acquire, in order to flourish in a future that we know will be dominated by rapid change, globalisation and extraordinary advances in technological development. So welcome again Carolyn. It’s great to have you in here working in such a vital area of the curriculum.

Interviewee: Well Geraldine I’m really pleased you invited me. We really do need to get the message to as many people as possible about what the future holds for our young people just so we can give them the opportunities to develop the capabilities, the skills and the attributes they need to manage what you have described in your introduction.

Interviewer: Well Carolyn could you then outline some of these capabilities and also I would suggest some of the understandings that people will need for the future.

Interviewee: Yes I can Phil. To begin with our young people will need to be prepared to learn for life. They can expect to have at least three to four occupations in their life time and many of those occupations and careers don’t even exist yet.

Interviewer: So they should right now be learning how to learn.

Interviewee: Yes that’s right. They’ll also certainly need to be able to work collaboratively in teams with others. These people may be from different backgrounds, cultures and countries from themselves. So they’ll need to understand and accept different viewpoints. Indeed it’s likely they’ll move from the area in which they were born and work and live in other countries from time to time.

Interviewer: Well I think I’d find that rather exciting myself but it certainly means our children will need to be adaptable and welcome new experiences. What about literacy and numeracy skills?
Interviewee: Thirty years ago it was crucial for all kids to be able to read and write. Now it is critical that all children be able to read and express themselves in visual media as well as print media. They need to be able to communicate at a high level in writing, in speech and electronically.

Interviewer: Yes. Now I have also heard that employers even now are asking for workers of the future be creative problem solvers.

Interviewer: Yes. That’s correct. More than ever we need to encourage our children to be imaginative and be able to critically analyse and evaluate media, situations and issues that arise. They need to be creative thinkers and be able to think outside the square so to speak.

Interviewer: Yes. One of the great concerns I have Carolyn is the ever widening gap between the rich, that’s those who have so much and therefore have lots of choices in their lives and those who are poor and have very few if any choices, often survival being their only and major aim because of the terrible conditions in which they have to live.

Interviewee: There is no doubt that a major concern for the future is enabling our children through their education to be able to shape a much more socially just society than we have at present. This is possible. An understanding of and a strong desire to take action on behalf of the less advantaged, the handicapped, the old, the poor, the hungry and the oppressed is essential for the survival of a global society that we’re now becoming.

Interviewer: Oh well on that note I’m afraid time has run out and we need to end this interview. Thank you Carolyn for sharing your expertise with us today. Goodbye and good luck with getting the message of these wonderful Essential Learnings out to all our schools and sites in South Australia.

Interviewee: Goodbye Geraldine and listeners and thank you for giving me the time to talk about such important issues for the future.

Interviewer: Good on you Carolyn. ‘Bye for now.