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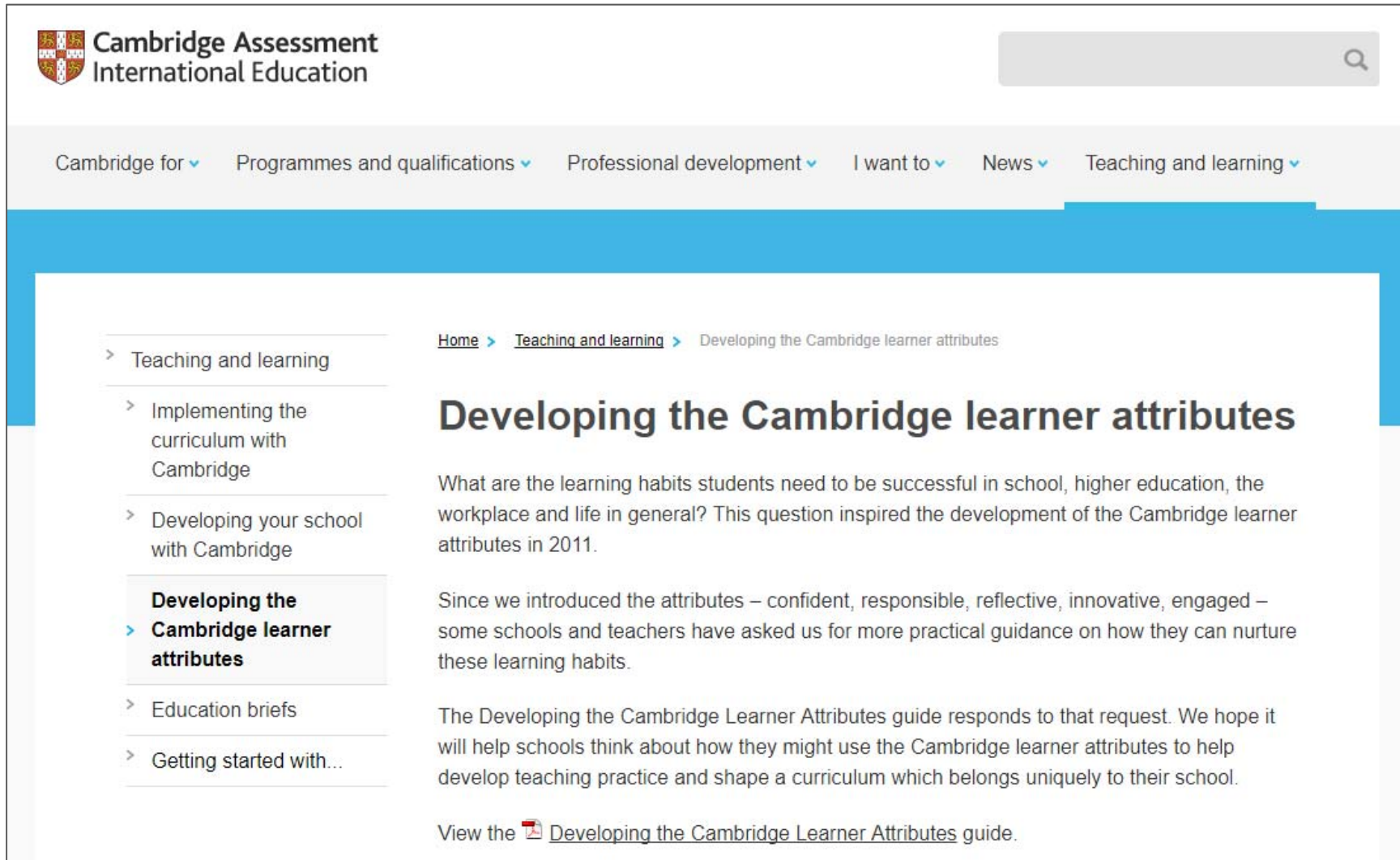
The Cambridge Learner Attributes Guide


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The Learner Attributes Guide



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Developing the Cambridge learner attributes

What are the learning habits students need to be successful in school, higher education, the workplace and life in general? This question inspired the development of the Cambridge learner attributes in 2011.

Since we introduced the attributes – confident, responsible, reflective, innovative, engaged – some schools and teachers have asked us for more practical guidance on how they can nurture these learning habits.

The Developing the Cambridge Learner Attributes guide responds to that request. We hope it will help schools think about how they might use the Cambridge learner attributes to help develop teaching practice and shape a curriculum which belongs uniquely to their school.

View the  [Developing the Cambridge Learner Attributes](#) guide.

Cambridge learner and teacher attributes

Cambridge learners	Cambridge teachers
Confident in working with information and ideas – their own and those of others.	Confident in teaching their subject and engaging each student in learning.
Responsible for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others.	Responsible for themselves, responsive to and respectful of others.
Reflective as learners, developing their ability to learn.	Reflective as learners themselves, developing their practice.
Innovative and equipped for new and future challenges.	Innovative and equipped for new and future challenges.
Engaged intellectually and socially, ready to make a difference.	Engaged intellectually, professionally and socially, ready to make a difference.

Habits in learning

- ▶ The purpose of the Cambridge learner and teacher attributes is to support the development of five powerful and highly desirable learning habits that will inspire students to love learning and help them to lead fulfilled and successful lives. Students who demonstrate the attributes habitually approach learning by being confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged. They are able to skilfully employ a broad range of cognitive skills, non-cognitive skills (including a range of social skills, personality traits such as resilience and self-awareness) towards effectively managing their performance.



Central Ideas

- ▶ The importance of school culture
- ▶ Appropriate challenge
- ▶ Self-understanding and emotional thought
- ▶ Learning to learn
- ▶ Goal Directed diligent and deliberate practice
- ▶ Well being

How?

- ▶ Effective teaching and school leadership
- ▶ A culture of learning
- ▶ A broad, balanced and coherent curriculum

The Importance of School Culture

- ▶ Curriculum is built on culture so it is in reality a local construct. No two schools are the same. All Cambridge or any other external organisation can do is support you to develop your own.
- ▶ Culture is not easily changed. It is important to understand and respect what your culture is and work with it, gradually evolving practice.
- ▶ Evaluation is central. Are learners actually experiencing what you intend? If not, why not? Often the intended prescribed curriculum is different from the experienced curriculum.
- ▶ Recruitment of teachers, school leadership and governors is absolutely critical.
- ▶ Most learning happens outside the school at home and in the wider community so parental understanding and support for the school mission is crucial.

Appropriate challenge

In the classroom

- ▶ Learning happens when we are made to think hard
- ▶ Making thinking and learning visible
- ▶ Understanding performance

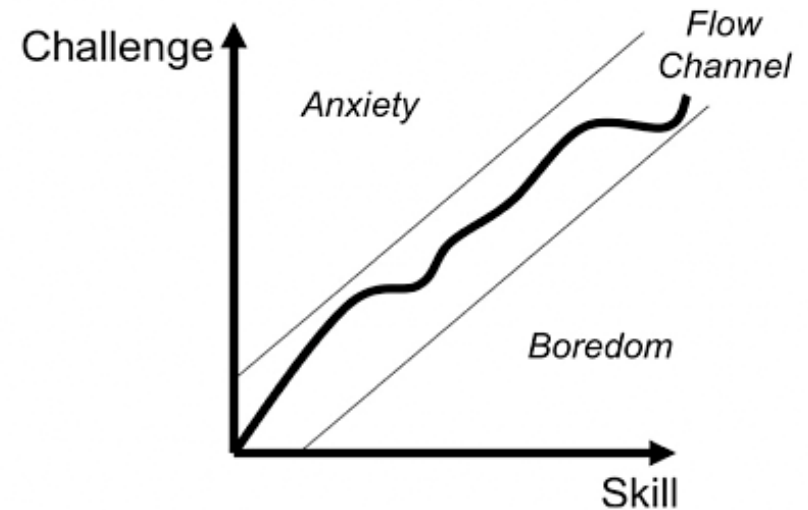
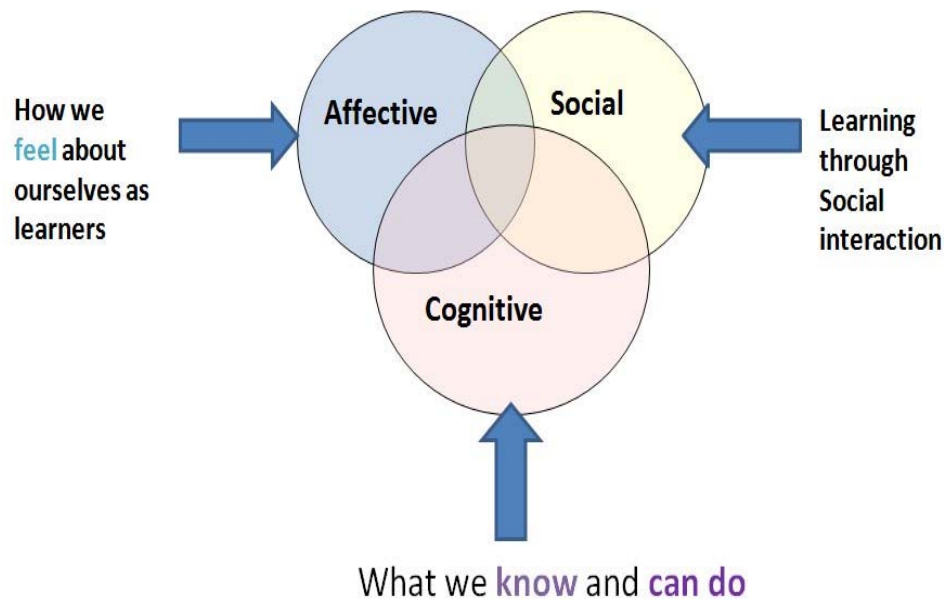
Challenge Education “Plus est en vous” [Kurt Hahn]

- ▶ Opportunities provided by real world challenging environments beyond the classroom
- ▶ Leadership team work collaboration

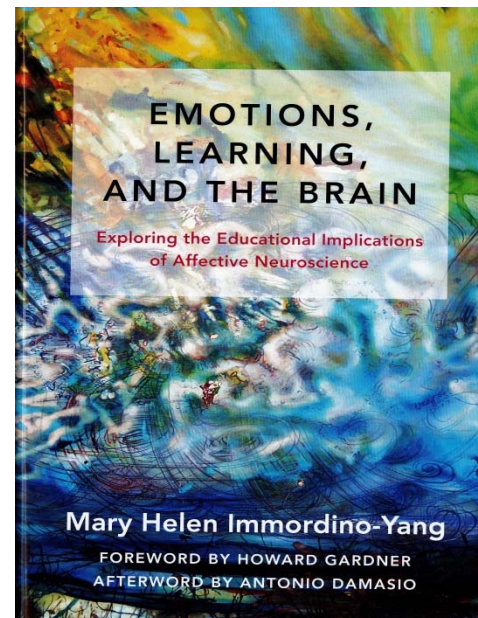
Importance of Emotional Thought

“It is literally neurobiologically impossible to build memories, engage complex thoughts, or make meaningful decisions without emotion.” Immordino-Yang:

Self concept is an amalgam of....



"Flow" concept by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi. Drawn by Senia Maymin.



Learning to Learn

Learning to learn means reflecting on one's learning and intentionally applying the results of one's reflection to further learning [Professor David Hargreaves / Chris Watkins]

Metacognition is a term used to describe the processes involved when learners plan, monitor, evaluate, and make changes to their own learning behaviours.

One Approach: [Chris Watkins]

- ▶ Making learning an object of attention
- ▶ Making learning an object of conversation
- ▶ Making learning an object of reflection
- ▶ **Making learning an object of learning**



Diligent and Deliberate Practice [source Helen Abadzi]

- ▶ Students have limited working memory and this can be overwhelmed by tasks that are too cognitively demanding. Critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration depend on complex reasoning as well as multiple low-level skills that first must be automated.
- ▶ Longer and complex chains of skills can only be effectively developed after smaller chains have been formed through practice. When learners practise a task like mental arithmetic it becomes automatic and embedded in long term memory, freeing up space in the working memory for more complex calculations.
- ▶ Knowledge is also a prerequisite for sophisticated analysis and understanding.

Wellbeing [source Nicola Morgan]

Wellbeing is neither permanent nor innate. It is a state of mind and body which is acquired over time and can be lost over time. It forms a valid part of a school curriculum because:

- ▶ It has profound direct effects on learning and performance
- ▶ It affects relationships with peers, family and teachers
- ▶ Many aspects can be (to a valuable extent) within the control of an individual who has learnt good practices
- ▶ Not being fixed, it is vulnerable over time to external events; therefore the individual needs to build a bank of wellbeing for resilience
- ▶ Understanding about and strategies for wellbeing gained at an early age can be used at all stages of the individual's life – wellbeing management is a genuine life skill
- ▶ It explicitly affects learner attributes as students can better 'understand themselves as learners' when they understand some influences that directly affect their ability to learn easily
- ▶ For all these reasons, it falls into the competency category of Living in the World

What are the implications?

A culture of learning

- ▶ A learning rather than a performance orientation. Making learning an object of attention and reflection
- ▶ Effective habits of learning should be taught, nurtured and reinforced in all classes by all teachers, in the broader curriculum and at home.
- ▶ Making thinking and learning visible
- ▶ Teachers model learning to learn
- ▶ The attributes are interdependent and should be viewed as a whole
- ▶ Importance of resilience
- ▶ Importance of reflection

What are the implications?

Focus on a learning rather than a performance orientation

Source: Watkins, C. [2010] Learning Performance and Improvement. *Research Matters*. The London Centre for Leadership in Learning issue 34, summer 2010. www.ioe.ac.uk/insi

We need to challenge and change culture

From	To
Proving Competence	Improving Competence
Performance orientation	Learning Orientation
'Looking good'	'Learning Well'
	Making Learning an object of attention, conversation and reflection

“Students with more elaborated conceptions of learning perform better in public examinations.”

“The evidence leads to the conclusion that learning about learning is a practically viable and educationally important strategy which also has the effect of improving performance.”

What are the implications?

Focus on active learning

Effect Sizes for teacher as activator and teacher as facilitator

Source: Hattie, J. [2009] Visible learning

Teacher as Activator	d	Teacher as Facilitator	d
Reciprocal teaching	.74	Simulations and gaming	.32
Feedback	.72	Inquiry based teaching	.31
Teaching students self-verbalization	.67	Smaller class sizes	.21
Metacognition strategies	.67	Individual instruction	.20
Direct instruction	.59	Problem based learning	.15
Mastery learning	.57	Different teaching for boys and girls	.12
Challenging goals	.56	Web based learning	.09
Frequent / effects of testing	.46	Whole language reading	.06
Behavioural organizers	.41	Inductive teaching	.06
Average activator	.60	Average facilitator	0.17

Key curriculum messages

- ▶ Less can be more
- ▶ An excellent curriculum is more than the sum of its parts
- ▶ The learner attributes are nurtured in all subjects and activities across the curriculum
- ▶ Interdisciplinary learning is critical but must be based on a solid disciplinary foundation
- ▶ Language is privileged in the curriculum
- ▶ Worthwhile student activities in the co-curriculum are valued

Broad, balanced and coherent curriculum

Does your curriculum:

- ▶ Provide an appropriate balance of subjects, disciplines and activities?
- ▶ Make connections in students' minds between what they are learning in different topics in a discipline and between different disciplines?
- ▶ Teach subjects and disciplines in a way that helps students' master basic skills and build on these to develop deep understanding of the material and the ability to apply their knowledge in unfamiliar contexts?
- ▶ Encourage students' creative contributions?
- ▶ Help students explore their interests and passions, exposing them to new possibilities?
- ▶ Support the development of collaborative and individual learning habits and skills?
- ▶ Provide challenge in non-academic practical areas, for example service learning?
- ▶ Support students' physical and mental wellbeing?

Questions and Discussion

- ▶ What do you do in your classroom / school to support the learner attributes?
- ▶ What more could you do?
- ▶ What more could Cambridge do to help you?

