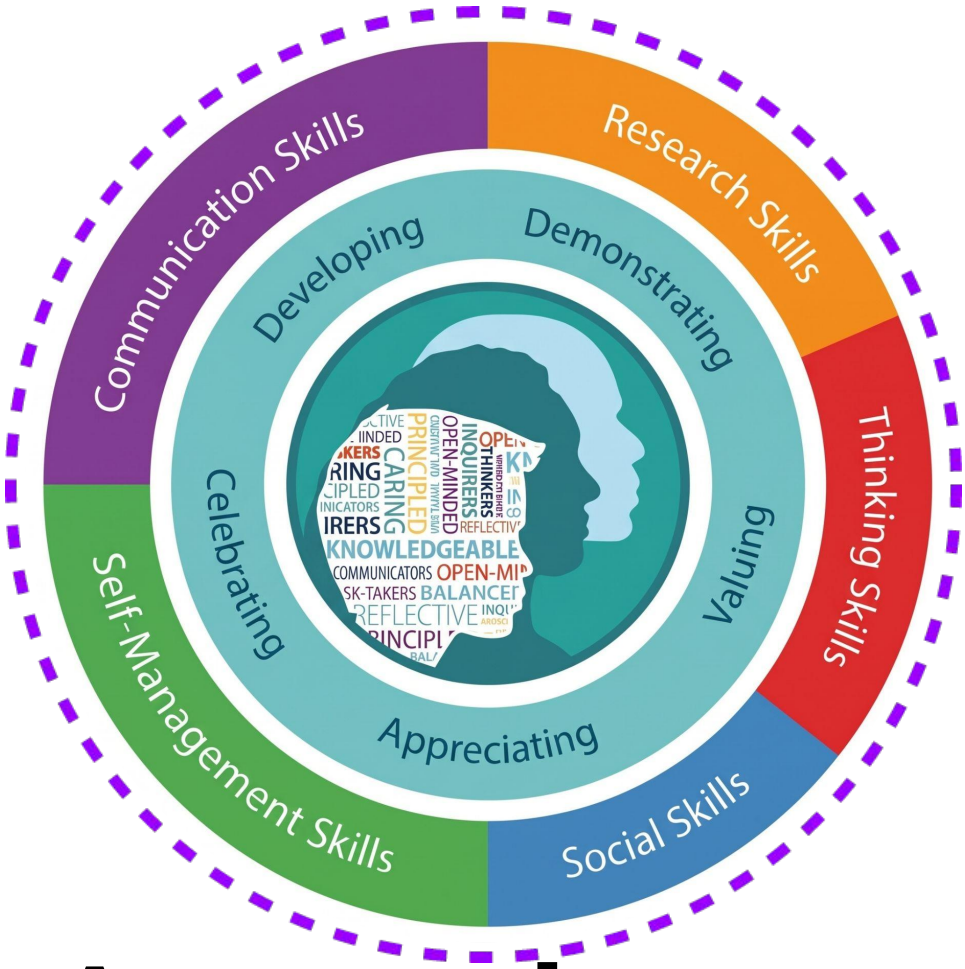
BIS ATL Framework



Approaches to Learning (ATL) toolkit

Empowering Assessment-Capable Learners through Reflection & Goal Setting

CC BY NC SA

Shared Innovation PDF Toolkit

For your school context

- Scaffolded HOW TO create I **Can' Statement Framework** (Early Years to Grade 12).
- **5-Step LP+ATL Reflection Cycle Template** (adaptable for digital portfolios).
- **Coordinators' Implementation Roadmap** for managing pedagogical change across teams.

CC BY NC SA

Guidance for Coordinators: Coordinators' Implementation Roadmap (One Year PDP)

Coordinators' Implementation Roadmap

A 4-phase pedagogical strategy for managing change and bridging the "implementation gap" across teaching teams.

1. **Phase 1: Vertical Alignment & Audit (Months 1–3)**
   - Audit existing unit planners to identify where ATLs are documented versus actively taught.
   - Deconstruct abstract IB sub-skills into clear, progressive K–12 continuum statements.
2. **Phase 2: Standardizing Visual Language (Months 4–6)**
   - Develop standardized visual card decks and icon anchors for Early Years through Upper Primary.
   - Align Learner Profile attributes directly with ATL skill categories on a shared "split-screen" framework.
3. **Phase 3: Classroom Scaffolding & Pilot (Months 7–9)**
   - Pilot physical "Superpower" skill cards and desk anchors in targeted grade bands (e.g., Grades 3–5).
   - Train teachers on embedding the 5-step reflection cycle during daily micro-goal setting routines.
4. **Phase 4: Portfolio & Conference Integration (Months 10–12)**
   - Embed reflection tags into digital portfolio platforms (Toddle, Seesaw, ManageBac).
   - Transition traditional parent conferences to Student-Led Conferences driven by student ATL evidence.

Source of ATL text from My IB. Pictures/categorisation from @orenjibuta

BEWARE: If you attach a skill to a specific topic, it becomes a learning experience and this robs it of the ability to be transferred to other learning

ig. TRANSFERABLE SKILL.....use a graphic organiser to compare and contrast information. NOT A TRANSFERABLE SKILL.....Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the lives of 2 human rights activists

EARLY YEARS IB ATLs	EC0/1- EC2	PRIMARY IB PYP ATLs	LOWER PRIMARY	UPPER PRIMARY	IB MYP ATLs	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-10	CP and DP
COMMUNICATION SKILLS								
Exchanging information		**Exchanging information**			**Exchanging thoughts, messages and information effectively through interaction**			
Listening		**Listening**						
• Listen to information.		• Listen actively to other perspectives and ideas.						
• Listen actively and respectfully to others' ideas.		• Listen actively and respectfully while others speak.						
		• Listen to, and follow the information and directions of others.						
• Ask for clarifications.		• Ask for clarifications.						
Interpreting								
• Interpret visual, audio and oral communication: recognizing and creating signs, interpreting and using symbols and sounds.		• Interpret visual, audio and oral communication: recognizing and creating signs, interpreting and using symbols and sounds.			• Interpret and use effectively modes of non-verbal communication			
• Understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas.		• Understand the ways in which images and language interact to convey ideas.						
• Recognize the meaning of kinaesthetic communication (body language).		• Recognize the meaning of kinaesthetic communication (body language).						
		• Be aware of cultural differences when providing and interpreting communication.			• Use intercultural understanding to interpret communication			

CC BY NC SA

Continuum Breakdown

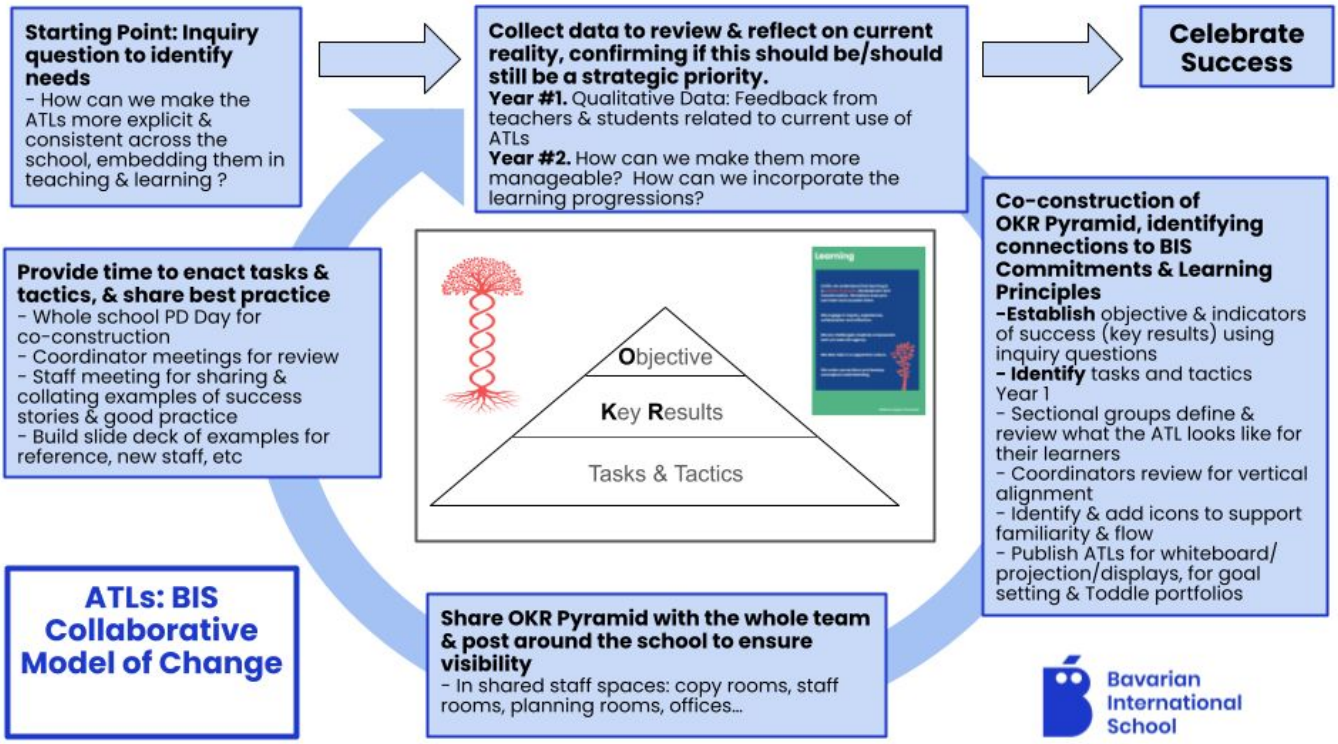
- **Early Years (EC0–EC2):**
  - **Framework Focus:** Concrete, picture-anchored "I Can" statements paired with immediate visual cues.
  - **Sample Descriptors:** "I can listen as part of a group"; "I can use my words to express my emotions"; "I can sort and find patterns".
  - **Scaffolding Tool:** Visual picture cards and 3-to-5 step simplified reflection prompts.
- **Lower Primary (Grades 1–2):**
  - **Framework Focus:** Co-constructed SMART goals connecting ATL skills directly to units of inquiry.
  - **Sample Descriptors:** "I can give and receive meaningful feedback when learning with peers"; "I can ask questions to understand better".
  - **Scaffolding Tool:** "Two Stars and a Wish" feedback structures, "Goal Post-its", and visual anchors.
- **Upper Primary (Grades 3–5):**
  - **Framework Focus:** Deep metacognitive goal setting, self-monitoring, and portfolio tagging.
  - **Sample Descriptors:** "I can ask deeper clarifying questions to gain more information"; "I can synthesize information from a range of trusted sources".
  - **Scaffolding Tool:** LP+ATL Reflection Cycle cards, graphic organizers, and digital portfolio tags.
- **Secondary Continuum (Grades 6–12 MYP/DP):**
  - **Framework Focus:** Autonomous skill transfer across subject groups, criterion-referenced self-assessment, and personal project alignment.
  - **Sample Descriptors:** "I can evaluate the reliability and bias of media sources across global contexts"; "I can independently adjust study strategies based on self-assessment data."
  - **Scaffolding Tool:** Digital reflection matrices, subject-specific ATL rubrics, and student-led conference portfolios.

	EARLY YEARS IB ATLs	EC0/1- EC2	PRIMARY IB PYP ATLs	LOWER PRIMARY	UPPER PRIMARY	IB MYP ATLs	Grades 6-8	Grades 9-10	CP and DP
Speaking	• Express oneself using words and sentences.	I can share my ideas. I can say what I think, feel and see.	• Speak and express ideas clearly and logically in small and large groups.	I can speak clearly in small and large groups to share my ideas so others understand them.	I can speak and express ideas clearly and logically in different settings (e.g. discussions, conversations, debates and group presentations) by using the right voice and language.	• Negotiate ideas and knowledge with peers and teachers	I can communicate my reasons for my ideas.	I can actively participate in a debate I can present supported ideas (by sources, facts)	I can defend ideas orally, justify my opinions, or modify them after discussing with peers or teachers.

CC BY NC SA

Guidance for Coordinators: Fostering Assessment-Capable Learners

Audit the Reality: Map where ATLs are actively taught and assessed versus where they only live on paper in unit planners.
Standardize the Vocabulary: Eliminate 'skill fatigue' by establishing a consistent, school-wide "I Can" framework so students build on the same language year after year.
Make the Invisible Visible: Equip classrooms with physical scaffolds (Superpower cards, desk anchors) so ATL development is as prominent as content learning.
Shift the Evidence Base: Transition from teacher-generated grades to student-curated portfolios that drive Three-Way Conferences.



A Contextual Framework: This cycle represents our specific approach at Bavarian International School; it is an example of how to structure pedagogical shifts, not the only way to do it.
Inquiry & Data: The cycle begins with a guiding question and data collection to assess the current reality.
Actionable Strategy: Priorities are structured into an OKR pyramid, outlining Objectives, Key Results, Tasks, and Tactics.
Shared Alignment: The strategic pyramid is shared in staff meetings and visually posted around the school to ensure collaborative review.
Iterative Process: The framework operates as a continuous loop of publishing, trialing, and refining, returning to the start of the cycle for the next academic year.

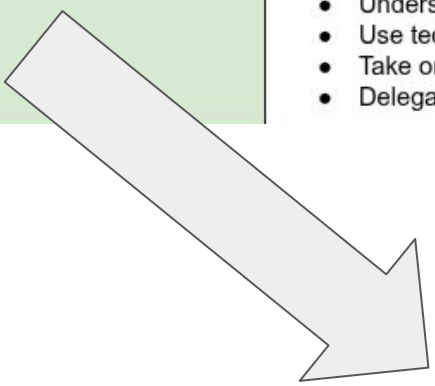
CC BY NC SA

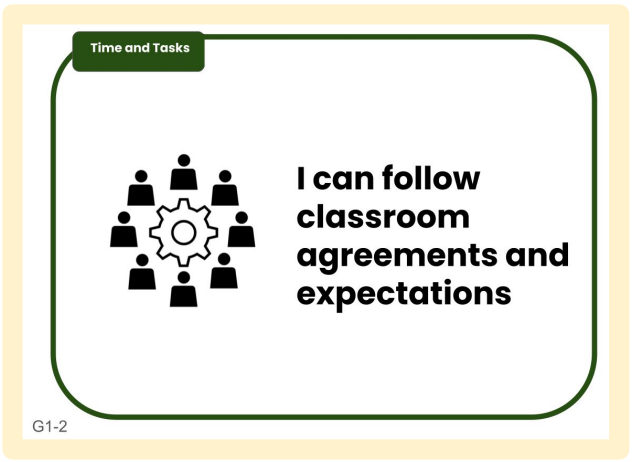
Coordinator Guide

Teacher Toolkit: Crafting Student-Friendly "I Can" Descriptors

Identify the IB Sub-Skill: Select an abstract sub-skill from the IB ATL documentation (e.g., *"Synthesize information from a range of sources"*).
Deconstruct the Skill: Break down what the skill looks, sounds, and feels like in classroom practice at different grade bands.
Translate to "I Can" Statements: Reframe using active, empowering, student-owned verbs matched to visual cues (e.g., EY: *"I can sort and find patterns"*; Upper Primary: *"I can clarify details using trusted sources"*).

Self-Management Skills - What Students do (ATL04):	
Organization *Managing time and tasks effectively*	• Plan short- and long-term tasks. • Set goals that are challenging and realistic. • Use time effectively and appropriately. • Bring necessary equipment and supplies to class. • Keep an organized and logical system to document learning. • Understand and use learning preferences. • Use technology effectively and productively. • Take on and complete tasks as agreed. • Delegate and share responsibility for decision-making.





Self-Management Skills - What Teachers do (ATL03):
• Provide opportunities for students to monitor and manage their learning to make progress. • Involve students in planning. • Build resilience by ensuring that learning goals co-constructed with students are challenging but achievable. • Create an atmosphere where students regard learning as a process of gradual improvement. • Continually reflect on how they are supporting student agency as an intrinsic motivation to success. • Support students to manage distractions.

CC BY NC SA

Coordinator Guide

Agentic Dialogue & Goal Setting

Empowering Assessment-Capable Learners Ahead of Conferences

1. Self-Reflection (Student)

- Review ATL skill strengths and growth areas.
- Select evidence/work samples showing progress.
- Reflect using "I can..." statements.



2. Co-Construct Goals

- Partner with teachers to define clear goals.
- Co-create measurable success criteria.
- Identify required action steps & support.

3. Three-Way Conference Dialogue

Student-Led Sharing: Learner presents reflections, evidence, and target goals to parents & teacher.

Collaborative Discussion: All parties discuss progress, celebrate growth, and refine next steps.

Shared Commitment: Agree on actions at school and home to support self-adjusted learning.

CC BY NC SA

Goal Setting Support

Guidance for Educators: Fostering Assessment-Capable Learners

Use these cards prior to Three-Way Conferences to build student agency and metacognition through structured, self-directed reflection.

1. Pre-Conference Prep & Agency

- **Student-Led Inquiry:** Have students review work alongside ATL descriptors to select evidence.
- **Transitioning to Self-Adjusters:** Guide students beyond self-assessment into self-monitoring and self-adjusting by asking:

"Where are you going next in your learning?"

"What steps will help you get there?"

2. Co-Constructing SMART Goals

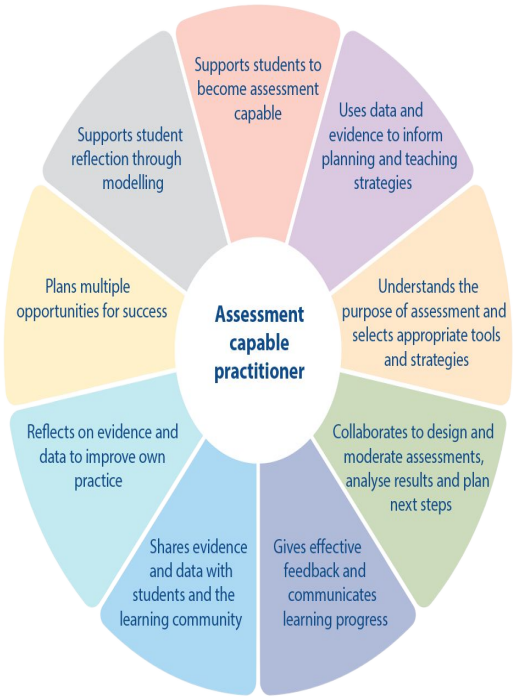
- **Agentic Goal Setting:** Ensure goals are personalized and reflect student ownership rather than top-down targets.
- **SMART Alignment:**

• **Specific:** Use exact ATL descriptors (e.g., *"I can ask clarifying questions"*).
• **Measurable & Actionable:** Co-construct clear success criteria so students know quality.
• **Relevant & Time-bound:** Connect directly to units of inquiry or personal targets.

3. IB PYP Capability Alignment

- **The Assessment-Capable Student:** Partner to design goals & success criteria. Draw on teacher/peer feedback to feedforward into future steps.
- **The Assessment-Capable Teacher:** Model reflective practices, provide timely feedforward, and apply both:

• **Backward by Design:** Assessing planned outcomes.
• **Forward by Design:** Valuing emergent, unscripted ATL skills surfacing during inquiry.



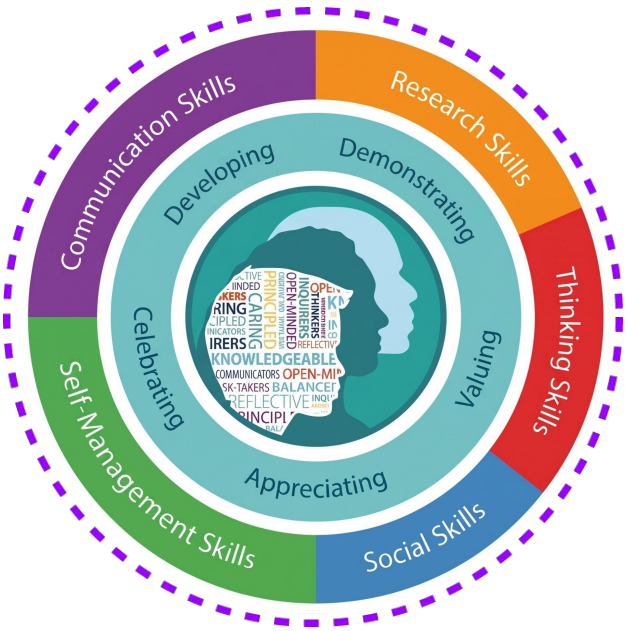
CC BY NC SA

Goal Setting Support

The 3 Steps of Your Reflection Journey Early Years

1. I Tried!

What new or tricky skill did I try today?"



2. I Can Show It!

"Where in my picture, drawing, or play can I show it?"

3. I Feel Proud!

"How do I feel now that I did it?"

CC BY NC SA

Goal Setting Support

The 3 Steps of Your Reflection Journey Early years



1 I Tried! Focus: Developing

Kid-Friendly Prompt & Question

"What new or tricky skill did I try today?"

Core Metacognitive Action

Goal Identification: Selecting and naming a newly attempted ATL skill or target.

2 I Can Show It! Focus: Demonstrating & Valuing

Kid-Friendly Prompt & Question

"Where in my picture, drawing, or play can I show it?"

Core Metacognitive Action

Evidence Mapping: Locating concrete physical or visual proof of strategy application in work or play.

3 I Feel Proud! Focus: Appreciating & Celebrating

Kid-Friendly Prompt & Question

"How do I feel now that I did it?"

Core Metacognitive Action

Self-Assessment & Emotion: Connecting personal effort and learning growth directly to emotional self-awareness.

CC BY NC SA

Instruction Card

The 5 Steps of Your Reflection Journey

Use these 5 steps with your ATL cards when choosing work to reflect on or preparing for your conference:

1. Developing (Trying it out)

"This is when you are just starting to learn a new skill."

Ask yourself:

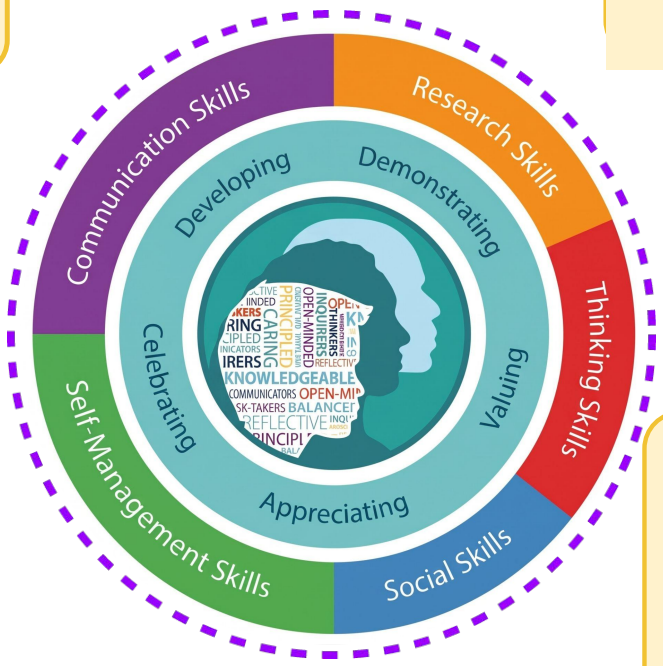
- "Which ATL skill was I practising?"
- "What felt new or a little tricky?"

2. Demonstrating (Showing my skill)

"This is when you can show proof that you used the skill."

Ask yourself:

- "Where exactly in my work can I show I used this skill?"
- "How does this work show I was getting better at it??"



3. Valuing (Seeing why it matters)

"This is when you understand why the skill is important."

Ask yourself:

- "Why was this skill helpful for this task?"
- "How did using this skill help me reach my goal?"

4. Appreciating (Noticing my growth)

"This is when you see how you are getting better."

Ask yourself:

- "What did I learn about myself as a learner?"
- "How do I feel now that I can do this?"

5. Celebrating (Feeling proud!)

"This is when you get to celebrate your success!"

Ask yourself:

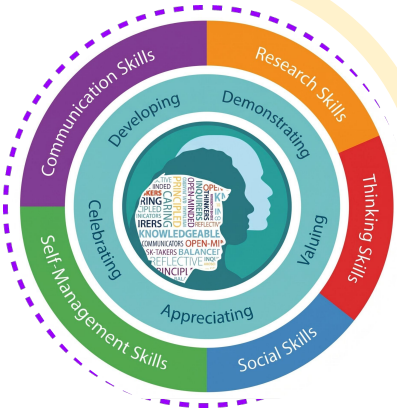
- "What am I most proud of in this work?"
- "How can I celebrate being able to fulfill my goal?"

CC BY NC SA

Instruction Card

The 5 Steps of Your Reflection Journey

Use these 5 steps with your ATL cards when choosing work to reflect on or preparing for your conference:



1 Developing (Trying it out)

"This is when you are just starting to learn a new skill."

Ask yourself:

- "Which ATL skill was I practising?"
- "What felt new or a little tricky?"

2 Demonstrating (Showing my skill)

"This is when you can show proof that you used the skill."

Ask yourself:

- "Where exactly in my work can I show I used this skill?"
- "How does this work show I was getting better at it?"

3 Valuing (Seeing why it matters)

"This is when you understand why the skill is important."

Ask yourself:

- "Why was this skill helpful for this task?"
- "How did using this skill help me reach my goal?"

4 Appreciating (Noticing my growth)

"This is when you see how you are getting better."

Ask yourself:

- "What did I learn about myself as a learner?"
- "How do I feel now that I can do this?"

5 Celebrating (Feeling proud!)

"This is when you get to celebrate your success!"

Ask yourself:

- "What am I most proud of in this work?"
- "How can I celebrate being able to fulfill my goal?"

CC BY NC SA

Terms of Use

Thank You For Downloading!

The contents of this product are the property of Niko Lewman & Nicola Moloney and published under Creative Commons Licence (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0).

✅ You May:

- Use this resource for your personal use or with students.
- Share it directly with colleagues or anyone who may benefit from it.
- Reference or share this product digitally in blog posts, presentations, workshops, newsletters, websites, or social media as long as clear credit is given to us.

🚫 You May Not:

- Claim this work as your own.
- Sell this file or bundle it with other materials for sale.
- Re-upload or post this resource on any website or platform without proper credit.

Professional Ethics & Intellectual Property: Thank you for respecting professional ethics and intellectual property as you use this resource.

If you notice an error or have any issues with the file, please contact me at **niko.lewman@gmail.com**.

Questions? Want to Learn More?

If you have questions, comments, or would like a **free consultation** on how to achieve school-wide change—or just want to talk all things inquiry—reach out to:

✉️ niko.lewman@gmail.com
✉️ n.lewman@bis-school.com



BY NC SA