

Professional Learning Activity: Collaboration for the 21st Century

Learning Objectives:

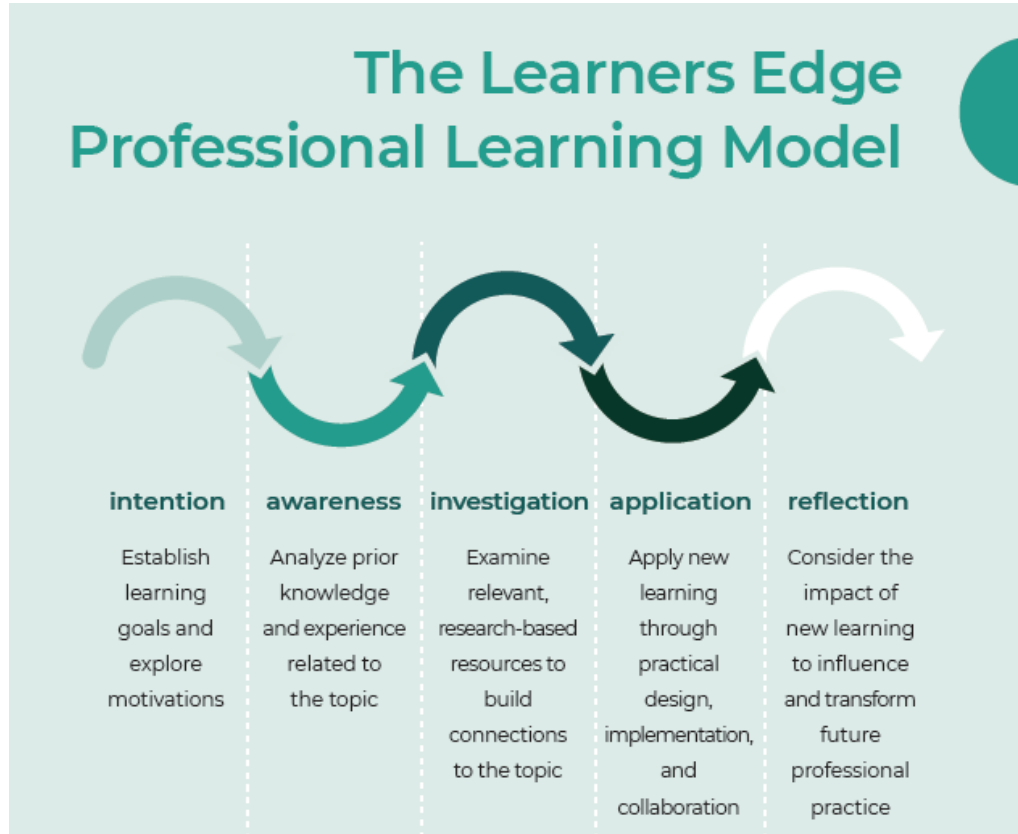
- Participants will identify the importance of explicitly teaching collaboration.
- Participants will explore methods for ensuring students collaborate to learn.
- Participants will identify at least one method for increasing student collaboration in an online, distance learning environment.

Necessary Materials:

- Internet access
- Conversation Notes handout (one per partnership or small group)

Facilitator Email:

Today we are going to discover more about teaching for the 21st Century through examining one of the 4 C's. The four C's are critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity. For now, we will focus on collaboration. To do so, we will follow this research-based professional learning model developed by Learners Edge.



Watch these quick introductory videos to get you thinking about our topic:

[What is 21st century education?](#)

[What are the 4Cs?](#)

Now, take a minute to jot down five reasons for teaching our students to collaborate.

Collaboration is inherent to the nature of how work is accomplished in our civic and workforce lives. Much of our work is completed in teams. Collaboration allows us, as a society, to develop more inclusive solutions and valuable resources. There are many reasons for us to teach students about collaboration and allow for practice opportunities. You even wrote a few down!

It's imperative that we not only provide opportunities for collaboration amongst students (both in person and with technology), but we must also teach the prerequisite skills necessary to making a collaborative group successful. Below you'll find ISTE's recommended standards regarding collaboration on a more global scale.

7 Global Collaborator

Students use digital tools to broaden their perspectives and enrich their learning by collaborating with others and working effectively in teams locally and globally.

7a	Students use digital tools to connect with learners from a variety of backgrounds and cultures, engaging with them in ways that broaden mutual understanding and learning.
7b	Students use collaborative technologies to work with others, including peers, experts or community members, to examine issues and problems from multiple viewpoints.
7c	Students contribute constructively to project teams, assuming various roles and responsibilities to work effectively toward a common goal.
7d	Students explore local and global issues and use collaborative technologies to work with others to investigate solutions .

Now, it's time to dig into the skill of collaboration more deeply and devise a plan for increasing collaborative opportunities for your students. Please complete the following:

1. Read p. 19-23 in this great resource on the 4 C's: [Preparing 21st Century Students for a Global Society](#)
2. Explore some of the digital resources available to help facilitate effective collaboration. As you work through this activity, consider how you could develop a lesson around the use of one of the resources below. As you are watching and reading the tutorials, we encourage you to pause intermittently so you can try the features and skills demonstrated.

Collaboration Tools and Resources	
Google Apps for Education offers easy collaboration via shared documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared Files and Folders in Drive • Collaborate with Slides • Collaborative Note-Taking with Keep
Create collaborative bulletin boards with images, video, and text.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Padlet Video Tutorials • 30 Creative Ways to Use Padlet
Play collaborative games that promote teamwork, leadership, learning, and FUN!	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kahoot Video Tutorials • Quizziz Video Tutorials

3. *Research tells us that students often benefit from coaching and practice to deepen collaboration skills with peers. Read the following articles for some tips to help you facilitate productive collaborative groups (with or without technology).*

- [Collaboration: It's Got to be Taught \(and How to Do It\)!](#)
- [5 Strategies to Deepen Student Collaboration](#)

4. *Draft a quick plan using ONE thing you learned to increase student collaboration in your online, distance learning classroom. Remember, starting small is just fine!*
5. *Lastly, meet virtually with a colleague or small group of your peers to discuss the prompts outlined on the Conversation Notes handout.*

To learn more about collaboration, check out these learning opportunities from Learners Edge:

[Course 5093: Digital Tools in the Connected Classroom](#)

[PD 132: Teaching 21st Century Skills Through the 4 C's](#)

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Conversation Notes:

Discussion Prompts	Notes
<i>Share one reason you should teach your students about collaboration.</i>	
<i>What do you already know about student collaboration? What more do you want to know? How do you plan to find out?</i>	
<i>Share one takeaway from the articles, videos or tutorials you watched that will positively impact your professional practice.</i>	
<i>How will you implement ONE thing you learned to increase student collaboration in your online, distance learning classroom?</i>	
<i>How will learning to collaborate positively impact your students? The school? The community?</i>	