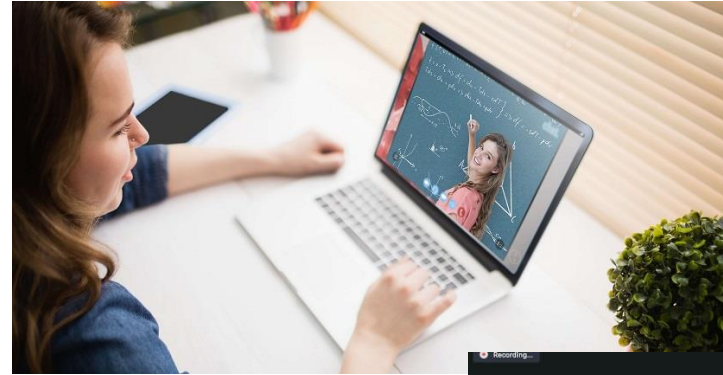

Helping your students become independent learners

Ben Knight

What does independent learning look like?



Think of an example of student behaving with independence

Think of an example of a student behaving without independence



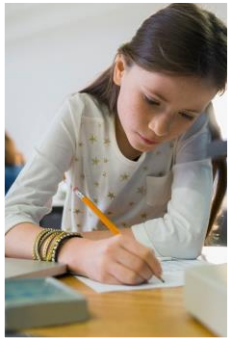
What are 'independent learners'?



Independent learners manage and improve their own learning.



They *believe* they can and should control and improve their learning – they have agency.



They make their own *decisions* about how to improve their learning – they have autonomy.



They *monitor* their progress and *adjust* their approach – they self-regulate.

Why is it important to develop independent learners?



Relevance



Mixed abilities



Time



Intrinsic motivation



Agency for life

What can you do as teachers?



1. Help them plan and set goals for their learning



2. Help them develop effective learning habits and strategies



3. Motivate them to manage their own learning

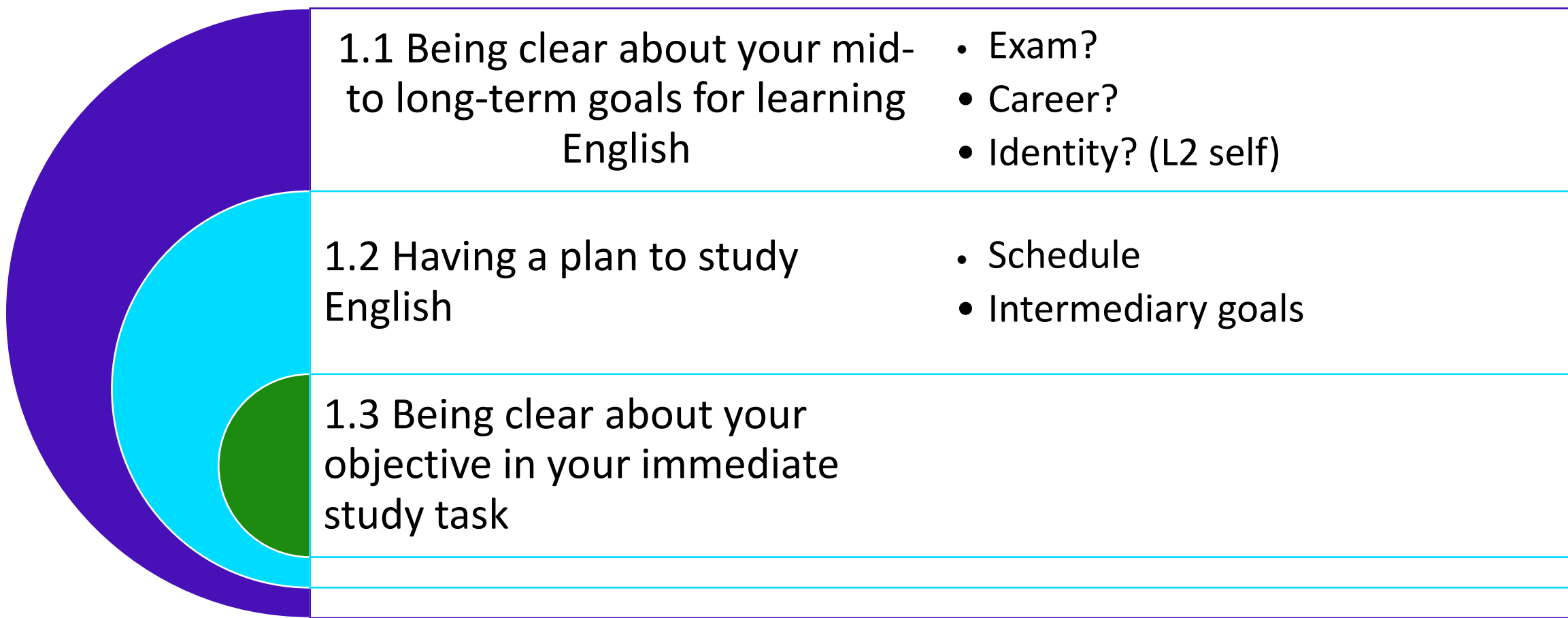
- Give control to the students
- Set engaging activities



4. Help them evaluate their own learning

**1. Help your students
plan and set goals for
their learning**

1. Planning and goal setting



1.1 Being clear about your mid- to long-term goals for learning English

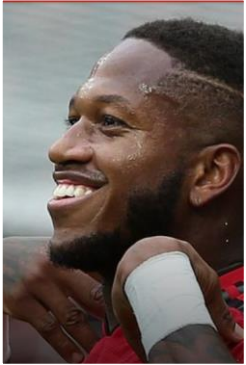
- Exam?
- Career?
- Identity? (L2 self)

1.2 Having a plan to study English

- Schedule
- Intermediary goals

1.3 Being clear about your objective in your immediate study task

1.1 Your L2 self



Choose an L2
role model



Imagine your
future L2 self



5 wishes

1.2 Developing plans for learning

Scheduling

- Weekly/monthly planner
- How much time?
- What & when?

Intermediary goals

- 20 new words a week
- 30 mins of English podcasts each week
- Watch one film in English each month

Set your goals

How much do you want each skill?

	1	2	3	4	5
I can write conditional 'if' sentences with very few mistakes.					
I can understand most of the recordings in this lesson.					
I can give advice confidently and clearly.					
I can talk easily about illnesses and medicines.					

How well did you do?

2. Help your students develop effective learning habits and strategies

Managing your learning

Obtaining and using learning resources



Developing effective learning habits



Using learning techniques



Motivational management



Making use of sources of help



Creating an effective environment for learning



2.1 Resources for learners

Podcasts

BBC:
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p02pc9zn/episodes/downloads>

Pickle
<https://www.wnycstudios.org/podcasts/pickle>

Vocab apps

[MyWordBook app \(British Council\)](#)

Writing

Write & Improve <https://writeandimprove.com>

Listening

Ted Ed <https://ed.ted.com/>

Speaking

ELSA – English Language Speech Assistant
LearnEnglish Sounds Right (Pronunciation)

Exam Practice

IELTS Prep App (BC)

2.2 Developing effective learning habits

- I will revise vocabulary for 10 mins in my room, before breakfast

Implementation intentions



- Before I take a shower, I will read one paragraph in English
- On my bus journey to work, I will listen to 10 mins of English

Habit stacking



- Read one page of this English book
- Learn 5 words
- listen to 2 mins of news in English
- write two sentences in English

Two-Minute Rule



2.3 Using learning techniques

Retrieval

Test yourself

- Can I remember these 30 words?
 - Can I re-do this exercise and get everything right?

Spaced practice

Spread your practice out over time

- Plan to repeat this grammar exercise next month

Deliberate practice

Push yourself to improve on each attempt

- Record your speaking, listen, and re-record it better

2.4 Motivational management



Keep track of your habit streak and “don’t break the chain.” Set up targets and rewards for ‘streaks’

- “I will have a takeaway on Friday if I complete my 10 mins practice for 7 days”



Variety in activities

- vocab check, listening to a song, watch a video clip, grammar task, read a blog, post comments



Track progress over time

- Keep portfolio of recordings and writing from start of course

2.5 Making use of sources of help

Join an online English study group

Meet once a week for lunch with people who will chat in English

Keep a notebook of questions you'd like to ask to the teacher or someone else who speaks English

2.6 Creating an effective environment for learning

Find/establish a quiet place to study English

Keep your vocab notebook next to your bed

Put your language learning app top of your favourites

Organise your computer files to find your study notes/exercises quickly

3. Motivate students to take charge of their learning

- a) Giving control to learners
- b) Engaging activities

Teacher to student



Teacher-directed

- You tell them



Teacher-supported

- You help them



Learner-directed

- You give them the chance

Choices

	Yes	Possibly	No
Which text for reading task			
Which questions to answer			
Topic for writing/speaking task			
Who they work with			
Working in group or alone			
How long to spend on the activity			
What the next activity will be			
Homework – which task			
Homework – how much			
Unit test			
End of course assessment			
Grades			
Lesson focus			
Course objectives			

Giving control



Pro's

Con's

3a. Managing the transfer of control



Scaffolding



Structure



Learner-centred



Flexibility



Visible monitoring

i) Scaffolding



Project: produce a poster to promote healthy living

- What are the different areas of knowledge or skill they need to do this well? Language, information, putting it together?
- How can you help them with any of those?
- What stages can you break it up into, to allow you to check on their progress?

ii) Structure - routines

Routines for writing tasks

- A reading task to introduce the topic, the vocabulary and as a model text
- Check the vocabulary
- Examine the structure of the text
- Generating ideas for the writing task
- Organise ideas
- Draft
- Share and comment
- Revise and present

Routines for listening tasks

- ..
- ..
- ..
- ..
- ..

iii) Learner centred



Learner-generated content

Padlet, JamBoard

Own experiences on a topic – likes/dislikes, pictures, words and phrases, ideas



Using other students

- Three before me
- Group questions



Students actions

Students write new words on board

Peer assessment



Peer teach vocab

- Divide key vocab between groups
- Research meanings
- Teach their words to other students



Develop own questions for presentation

- Before students give presentation, they write 3 questions about it for the other students

iv) Flexibility



Open-ended activities

- Creative writing (story or argument)
- Projects
- Visual prompts for speaking



Add stretch options

Write up new vocab on the board
Record themselves and then self-correct
Give reasons for answers



Change groupings

Strong-strong, strong-weak

v) Tracking & monitoring progress

Logbooks



Journal
Planner
Feedback

Portfolios



- Written texts
- Audio/video Recordings of speaking
 - Books, articles, sites, etc, in English, read out of class
 - Videos, songs, etc, in English, listened to out of class

Posters



- Shared plans or goals
- Semester goals (curriculum)
 - Plan for each project
 - Ground rules
 - Recurrent errors
 - Favourite vocab

3b) Engaging activities

Accomplishment

- Target numbers
- Time limits
- Competition

Curiosity

- Cliffhangers
- Puzzles (anagrams)

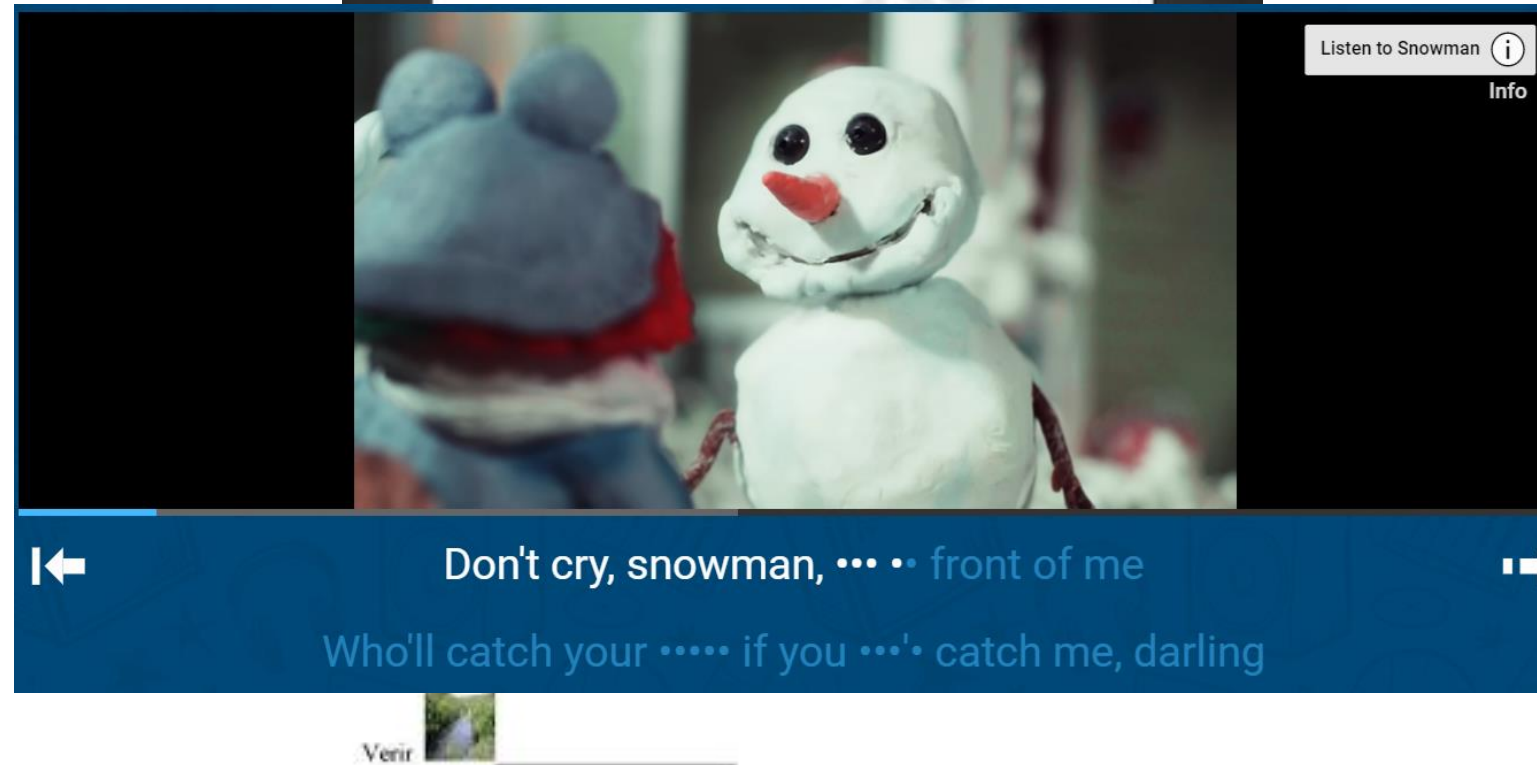
Fun


- Visual impact
- Music

NATURE ANAGRAMS

NAME: _____


Lyricstraining



Listen to Snowman  Info

Don't cry, snowman, ... front of me

Who'll catch your if you ... catch me, darling

Verir 

4. Help them evaluate their own learning

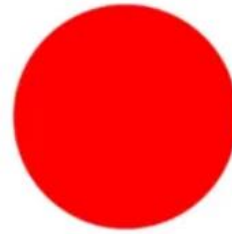
Self-evaluation – getting started

Evaluate activities or lessons

- Enjoyment
- Difficulty
- Participation
- Collaboration

Exit tickets

- Today I learned
- Traffic lights



Today my learning stopped because...



Today I considered a question, new idea or new perspective...



Today I understood and learned...

Self-assessment and peer-assessment

1. **Focus on one or two things**
2. Balance encouragement and correction
3. Give phrases for feedback
4. Use criteria

Speaking in show and tell

- *loud and clear enough*
- *not too much hesitating*

Self-assessment and peer-assessment

1. Focus on one or two things
2. **Balance encouragement and correction**
3. Give phrases for feedback
4. Use criteria

One positive comment and one correction or improvement

Self-assessment and peer-assessment

1. Focus on one or two things
2. Balance encouragement and correction
 - It was good when you.....
 - You should try to
 - You shouldn't say
3. **Give phrases for feedback**
4. Use criteria

Self-assessment and peer-assessment

1. Focus on one or two things
2. Balance encouragement and correction
3. Give phrases for feedback
4. Use criteria

Twinkl

Student Self-Assessment: Writing

Name: _____ Date: _____

Title of my story: _____

	Never	Sometimes	Always
I used interesting words.			
I varied my sentences.			
I gave lots of details.			
I included many interesting events.			
My story was well organized and easy to read.			
I had few spelling and grammatical errors.			
My story had interesting character development.			
My story had a beginning, middle and end.			
The setting of my story is detailed and interesting.			

Self-evaluation - descriptors

WRITING A NARRATIVE (CEFR LEVEL: B1)	
CONTENT AND COMMUNICATIVE ACHIEVEMENT	<p>Is the story interesting?</p> <p>Does the story hold the reader's attention?</p>
ORGANIZATION	<p>Is the story organized in a clear, readable way?</p> <p>Is the sequence of events in the story easy to follow?</p> <p>Does the story have a clear beginning, middle and end?</p>
LANGUAGE	<p>Does the writing contain a good range of appropriate vocabulary to tell the story?</p> <p>Does the writer use appropriate past tenses and linking words to help the reader follow the story?</p> <p>Do errors of grammar, vocabulary, punctuation or spelling make it difficult to understand the story?</p>

G grammar	T tense	∅ not necessary
MW missing word	WC word choice	/ start a new sentence
P punctuation	WO word order	Λ something is missing
Sp spelling	WW wrong word	??? very unclear

Self-correction – speaking

S

'th'

How can you help your students become independent learners?



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Any questions?

“A well-educated mind will always have more questions than answers.”

Helen Keller

Ben Knight