



# Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning (AB4L): A Professional Development Program for Classroom Teachers (Years 1-7)



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# Introduction

**The Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning Program (AB4L) is a staff development program presented by a member of your staff to relevant teachers.**

Published research indicates that the AB4L teaching program strengthens students' attitudes and social-emotional skills needed for engagement, cooperative learning, independent classwork and homework and leads to an improvement in reading comprehension of students in the lower 50% of achievement.

*(Bernard, M.E. (2017). Impact of teaching attitudes and behaviors on learning on the reading achievement of students falling behind. International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research, 16, 51-64.)*

## Goals of the AB4L Professional Development Program:

- To increase knowledge of the role students' attitudes and social-emotional skills play in their engagement and learning.
- To learn about a group of attitudes and behaviours for learning that research indicates as having a major influence on student engagement in learning and in their development of their literacy, numeracy and other academic skills.
- To learn how to integrate the AB4L program in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and other key learning areas in order to increase student engagement and achievement.

## AB4L Teaching Practices Integrated Throughout a Classroom Lesson

1. Develop the positive mindset of students
2. Share with students the goals/targets of the lesson and have them set their own learning goals
3. Identify behaviours for learning
4. Discuss positive and negative self-talk for learning

5. Communicate behaviour-specific feedback for learning

## AB4L enables a student to:

- Begin their lessons with a positive mindset
- Set a goal for what they want to learn during the class period
- Apply behaviours for learning throughout lessons and during homework (e.g., staying calm when they don't understand what the teacher is explaining, raising their hand to answer a difficult question; staying on task and not being distracted by others when working independently)
- Employ positive rather than negative self-talk when faced with schoolwork that is hard or when making mistakes

<b>Authors</b>	Michael E. Bernard and Margaret Milne
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<b>Target Audience</b>	Teachers of primary and lower secondary students, particularly teachers of students struggling with reading.
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<b>Delivery</b>	Digital
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### Contents

1. Online guide for staff presenting this program providing information for conducting staff development sessions at school
2. Downloadable handouts
3. PowerPoint presentation demonstrating background and content of the program

<b>Price</b>	\$250 ANNUAL LICENSE ( <a href="#">BUY</a> ) (from date of purchase)
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International research continues to reveal that the quality of classroom instruction directly influences the development of students' academic skills and achievement. However, as seen below the impact of instruction is enhanced (or inhibited) by students' attitudes, and social-emotional skills for learning (SEL's).



## Sample: Video



**VIEW VIDEO EXCERPT**

<https://goo.gl/dndh4P>

# Sample: Leader's Guide

## Session 1

### Introduction to Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning (90 to 120 minutes)

1. Have a brief discussion with participants about the social and emotional characteristics of students that research indicates as influencing their achievement (see Background, page 2, in earlier section of this guide). An important point to be clear about is that the focus of the program you are about to introduce is not the social and emotional adjustment and well being of the students. Rather, the focus is on those positive attitudes and behaviours for learning that help students self-manage their learning in order for them to be engaged and to achieve to the best of their ability.

2. You can play the DVD segment: Introduction (5 minutes)

This segment introduces the topic of student characteristics and student achievement. It makes the point that there are non-cognitive, non-language skills that contribute to student achievement; namely, their positive attitudes and behaviours. At the end of the segment, ask for questions and comments.

3. Distribute Handout 1. Positive Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning. Review the five different teaching practices. Then, discuss the five components of a literacy lesson where the teaching practices will be embedded. You can play the DVD segment: Discussion on Content (1 minute).

4. Distribute Handout 2. Guidelines for Integrating Positive Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning throughout a Literacy Lesson. Indicate that the handout focuses on literacy and that there is another handout that concentrates on the integration of positive attitudes and behaviours for learning during numeracy instruction. You can decide the best time to distribute Handout 6. Guidelines for Integrating Positive Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning throughout a Numeracy Lesson.

Have teachers review the material in their handout: Beginning a Lesson.

5. You can play the DVD segment: Beginning a Literacy Lesson (6 minutes)

The segment illustrates two of the important teaching practices: 1. Develop a positive mindset and 2. Share learning goals.

You can now ask for teachers to begin to develop in their own words how to implement these two practices. See the following page for an illustration of how Margaret Milne conducts this activity (see Activity: Developing Individual Protocols of SEL Teaching Practice, page 19).

# Sample: Leader's Guide

## Activity Developing Individual Protocols of SEL Teaching Practice

### Instructions

The following examples of SEL teaching practices can be read. Then, have teachers construct their own version and share.

#### **Component 1 of Literacy Block (develop positive mindset for learning and sharing learning goals)**

- SEL Practice 1. Developing a positive mindset

This is what I'd say to my class. 'Now, there is a positive attitude or mindset that will help us to be successful in our reading today. Who can tell me what it is? Yes, "I can do it", rather than "I can't" and remember that the more you try at your reading the more successful you will be.'

Now, can you write down what you might say to your class?

After several minutes, ask teachers to share aloud their examples of what they would say to introduce to students the need for a positive mindset and what it sounds like.

- SEL Practice 2. Establishing the literacy goal

This is what I'd say to my class. 'Your learning goal today is, while reading a story, to be able to locate "the complication" – the problem the characters are experiencing.' Sometimes, I have students write down their own learning goal on their goal setting form Handout 4. Hitting the Target with Your Learning.

Now, can you write down an example of a literacy goal you could share with students at the beginning of a class? You can include the criteria for learning and success. After several minutes, have each teacher share his or her goals.

#### **Component 2 of Literacy Block (whole-class teacher led activity)**

- SEL Practice 3. Discuss Behaviours for Learning

This is what I'd say to my class. 'I want you to remember those Behaviours for Learning that will help you to be successful while we are all sitting on the floor in a group. For example, raising your hand to answer a question, reading with a strong

# Sample: Teacher Handout

## Guidelines for Integrating Positive Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning throughout a Literacy Lesson

Component of Literacy Block	Literacy Practice	SEL Practices
1. Beginning a Lesson	(Ask students to sit and to be ready for the lesson.)	<p><b>Share Literacy Goals of Lesson</b></p> <p>Say: 'Before we begin, I want you to know what I am planning to teach in this reading session. These are the goals of the lesson that you are trying to achieve. After I describe the goals of this lesson, I will ask you to say what they are so I am sure you understand the goals.'</p> <p>(For example, you can say: 'Today, you are going to learn different ways you can tell the main ideas that an author is writing about. Can someone tell me what you will be learning in this lesson?'). Guidelines for writing instructional goals are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As often as possible, share the goal(s) for learning with your students before you begin the lesson.</li> <li>• After stating and writing down the goal, it is important that you make sure every member of class understands the different words you have used in the sentence describing the goal.</li> <li>• Before beginning the lesson, you ask each student to set a goal for what he/she wants to achieve. For example: 'Now that you know what the goal is for this literacy lesson, set your own goal for what you will learn in the lesson.'</li> <li>• Help students to state goals: For example: 'I have the goal to correctly locate as many adjectives as I can.'</li> <li>• To write a good literacy goal, it is good practice not to refer to the activities the students will be doing during the lesson as part of the literacy goal. For example, 'Today, we will be reading a new chapter from our big book and then playing some literacy games.'</li> <li>• In describing the literacy goal (you often will have more than one), it is important to use action verbs that describe as concretely as possible what students will be expected to be able to know and do by the end of the lesson.</li> <li>• It is a good idea for you from time to time throughout the lesson to remind students to think about the goal of the lesson; that is, what they are trying to learn.</li> </ul> <p>Other examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (Prep): 'The goal for this part of the literacy lesson is for you to be able read the common words you have been learning about this week.'</li> <li>• (Grade 1/2): 'Your learning goal today is to be able to find compound words from a book we will all be reading together.'</li> <li>• (Grade 3/4): 'Today, children, we are going to do some writing about a character and about how she behaved in her family. Your goal for learning is to be able to write about your feelings using words that describe your different feelings such as happy, afraid and sad.'</li> <li>• (Grade 5/6): 'Your learning goal today is, while reading a story, to be able to locate "the complication" – the problem the characters are experiencing.'</li> </ul>



# Sample: Teacher Handout

## Guidelines for Integrating Positive Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning throughout a Literacy Lesson

Component of Literacy Block	Literacy Practice	SEL Practices
1. Beginning a Lesson	(Ask students to sit and to be ready for the lesson.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Grade 5/6): 'OK boys and girls, today during your reading group time, your learning goal is to be able to locate verbs, adjectives, and adverbs in the story you will be reading.'</li> <li>(Grade 6/7) 'There are two learning goals for our literacy lesson today. 1. To locate "directly stated" information in a text and 2. To develop "literal questions" based on the facts you have located.'</li> </ul> <p><b>Develop Positive Mindset of Students</b> Say: 'Before getting started, it is important that you have a positive attitude towards what you will be learning.' Provide one or more of the following examples.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>'Let's make sure everyone has an "I can do it" rather than an "I can't do it" attitude to what we're doing today.' (Ask students to volunteer what this means).</li> <li>'I want you all to remember to have a "red hot go" and that it doesn't matter if you make a mistake.'</li> <li>'I want you to remember that the more you try at your reading the more successful you will be as a reader.'</li> <li>'I want everyone to be confident that you will achieve the goals of the lesson.'</li> <li>'By helping everyone, you will be more successful.'</li> </ul>
2. Whole Class Teacher Led Literacy Activities	Present literacy activities.	<p><b>Describe Behaviours for Learning</b> Say: 'For you to be successful in this next activity, it is very important for you to know how to be a successful learner. Here is a list of what are called "behaviours for learning" that will help you to be successful. I want you to practise these behaviours during this activity.'</p> <p>Provide examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>raising your hand to answer a difficult question</li> <li>reading out loud with a strong voice so that everyone can clearly hear you</li> <li>coming up to the board to write a difficult word or sentence</li> <li>listening when someone else is speaking</li> <li>putting up your hand when you want your teacher to explain something again</li> <li>trying to read a difficult word out loud even if you think it might not be correct</li> <li>having all the materials you need for the lesson listening carefully to what your teacher is saying even when you are feeling confused or frustrated</li> <li>staying calm when you don't understand what the teacher is explaining and the other kids do</li> </ul> <p><b>Describe Self-Talk for Learning</b> Say: 'The self-talk you have when you are learning to read is very important. (Hold up an illustration of students with self-talk clouds over their heads. Make sure students understand self-talk.)</p>

# Sample: Powerpoint Display




## Attitudes and Behaviours for Learning (AB4L): A Program for Increasing Student Engagement and Achievement

### Goals of the AB4L Professional Development Program

- To increase knowledge of the role students' attitudes and social-emotional skills play in their engagement and learning
- To learn about a group of attitudes and behaviours for learning that research indicates as having a major influence on student engagement in learning and in their development of their literacy, numeracy and other academic skills
- To learn how to integrate the AB4L program in the teaching of literacy, numeracy and other key learning areas in order to increase student engagement and achievement



# Sample: Powerpoint Display



Attitudes  
or Learning

- **I Can Do It** means thinking that when learning something new and I try very hard, I am more likely to be successful than to fail.
- **Accepting Myself** means when I make a mistake or don't understand something, thinking that I am not useless or a total failure, I am still proud of me.
- **Taking Risks** means thinking that it's good to try to learn new things even though I might not be able to do it.
- **Being Independent** means thinking that it's important for me to try new activities and to speak up even if classmates think I'm silly or stupid.
- **Setting Goals** means thinking that setting a goal for what I want to learn can help me be more successful at a task.



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