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# Skills for Effective Online Learning in the Age of Corona and Beyond

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Online learning requires students to acquire more and somewhat different skills than they need in school, while also enhancing existing skills.

The Henrietta Szold Institute in Jerusalem conducts extensive research relating to skills that are essential to promote in online learning.

Results of research performed by the Szold Institute and worldwide point to five skills, which are essential for effective online learning. The components of these skills will be delineated. Research based strategies to develop these essential skills will be provided.



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During online learning, the routine schedule usually changes. As a result, students need to plan and manage their learning time on their own.

Research has pointed out several strategies to develop effective time management:

- Sending a weekly mail requiring students to plan on which day and at which time they will watch asynchronous lessons enabled students to reach higher achievements in the first phases of a course than their peers in a comparison group (Baker, Even, Li & Cung, 2018).
- Constructing a digital list of tasks that every student needs to complete enables students to manage time in a more effective manner (Goda et al., 2009).



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Online learning is not implemented in a structured and organized environment like the classroom (Sharma, Dick, Chin & Land, 2007). Therefore, students have to organize the most comfortable learning environment for them. It is also important to take into account possible interruption of concentration, because there are many messages and websites available in the technological environment, which entice students to get off-task (Manny-Ikan, Bashan & Dahan, 2017). Consequently, teachers need to structure the learning environment together with the students to ensure minimum distractions (Miltiadou & Savenye, 2003).

Research (Kelehear, 2020) has shown that an environment more conducive to online learning may include such elements as:

- Having all needed learning materials handy.
- Finding a quiet and comfortable place to study.
- Focusing on certain self - set goals.
- Scheduling frequent short breaks during the day.

## 2

## Structuring a Personal Learning Environment

# 3 Information Literacy

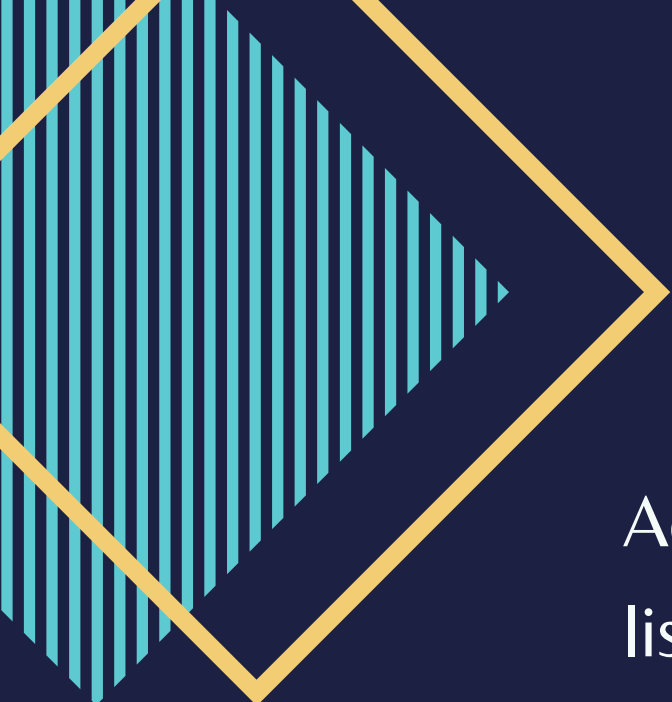
Information literacy includes several components, which are essential to the world of academic studies and work in the 21st century (Chang, Zhang & Mokhtar, 2012). Research (Bosman, 2016; Covello & Lei, 2010; Kurbanoglu, Akkoyunlu & Umau, 2004; Okeji, Ilika & Baro, 2020) pointed out that these components include:

1. Finding relevant information.
2. Assessing the reliability of the information.
3. Analyzing and synthesizing information from different sources to form new ideas.
4. Sharing ideas with others in an effective manner.

Activities that may develop information literacy (Tekale, 2018) include:


- Using a variety of materials from the internet, such as videos, texts, voice and video clips on a frequent basis.
- Requiring students to present their work via digital platforms.

Various research studies performed by the Szold Institute evaluation and strategy department (Manny-Ikan, Berger-Tikochinski, & Wolf, 2018) showed that half of the students who used tablets for learning on a daily basis reported that they know how to find reliable information on the internet and to summarize that information. In another study of classes utilizing a flexible physical environment for digital learning, more than half (52%) of the students reported that they prepare digital presentations as part of the learning process. Close to half (46%) reported that they work in shared collaborative documents.



Active learning is characterized by the meaningful role of the students in learning, beyond listening to a frontal lecture (Edwards , 2015; Johnson and Johnson, 2008). Active learning has been shown as positively related to student satisfaction from online learning (Sahin, 2007).

The following strategies may promote active learning:

- Open discussion (Johnson and Johnson, 2008).
  - Various tasks and activities that require digital information finding, problem solving and performing experiments (Edwards , 2015), and independent investigation, utilizing various applications on the internet (Manny-Ikan, Berger-Ticochibsky & Bashan, 2015).
  - Authentic tasks which are relevant to students' daily lives may enhance both active learning and a sense of self competence (Cho & Shen,2013)
- 

# 4

## Active Learning

# 5 Knowing How to Get Help

The brave new world of online learning may be quite challenging to students who are not internet savvy. Moreover, the corona age led to a widening digital divide between students who had their own computer and support of family members and their peers who did not. Thus, is it important for students to identify the need for help and to know where to turn to receive it online (Mahasneh, Sowan & Nassar, 2010; Dunn, Rakes & Rakes, 2014).

The above researchers suggest several strategies to provide personal online help:

- Encouraging students to ask questions frequently.
- Using synchronous online platforms to ask questions and promote online discussion, such as chats, or video conversations on zoom, which is one of the most popular free and accessible platforms.
- Using asynchronous online platforms, such as e-mails or a classroom forum to raise questions.



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## Conclusion

The above skills relate both to Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and to utilizing the digital media well. Thus, the integration of these types of learning may lead to effective learning. Consequently, the role of the teacher is crucial in blending these types of learning to address student needs.

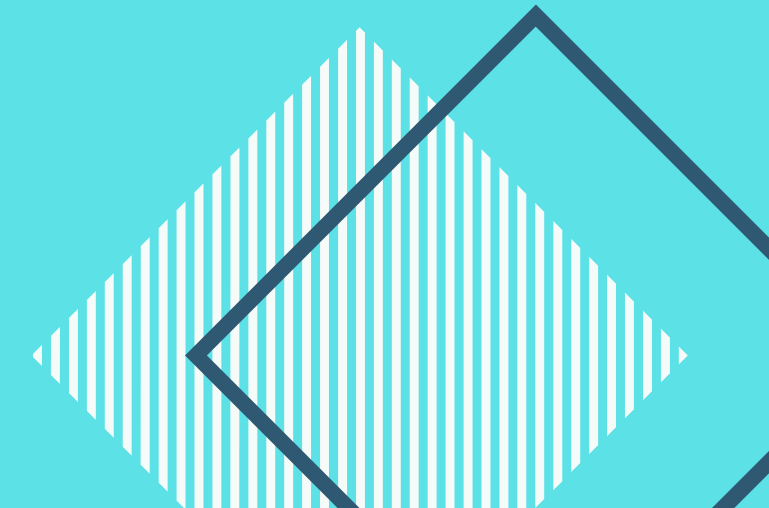


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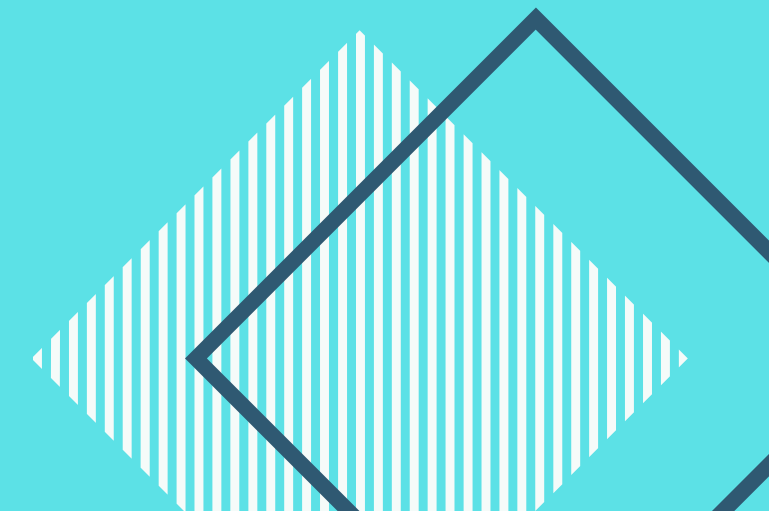
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