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UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES



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# *LbD4All Guidebook Series*

## *Experiential Nature*



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## EXPERIENTIAL NATURE

This guidebook is a part of a series of guidebooks concentrating on the LbD4All action model. The series of guidebooks consists of eight guidebooks that introduce the five dimensions of the LbD4All action model. The dimensions are authenticity, research-oriented approach, partnership, experiential nature and creativity. Furthermore, assessment, project and teamwork, as well as e-learning are introduced. In addition, the series of guidebooks includes five videos on the five dimensions.

The guidebook describes the LbD4All action model. The LbD4All action model is based on the action model Learning by Developing (LbD) that has been developed by Laurea University of Applied Sciences. LbD4All is an action

model developed in the LeTeEm (Learners, Teachers and Employers) project by Laurea University of Applied Sciences for comprehensive schools and secondary education. The guidebooks and videos have been created as part of the LeTeEm project.

This guidebook concentrates on **experiential nature**. Experiential nature is one of the dimensions of LbD4All (Learning by Developing for All). The dimension is defined on a general level and also from the perspective of a possible practical example (time management planning). The aim of this guidebook is to describe the nature of the dimension in practice and give concrete examples of how to implement the LbD4All methodology in secondary education.

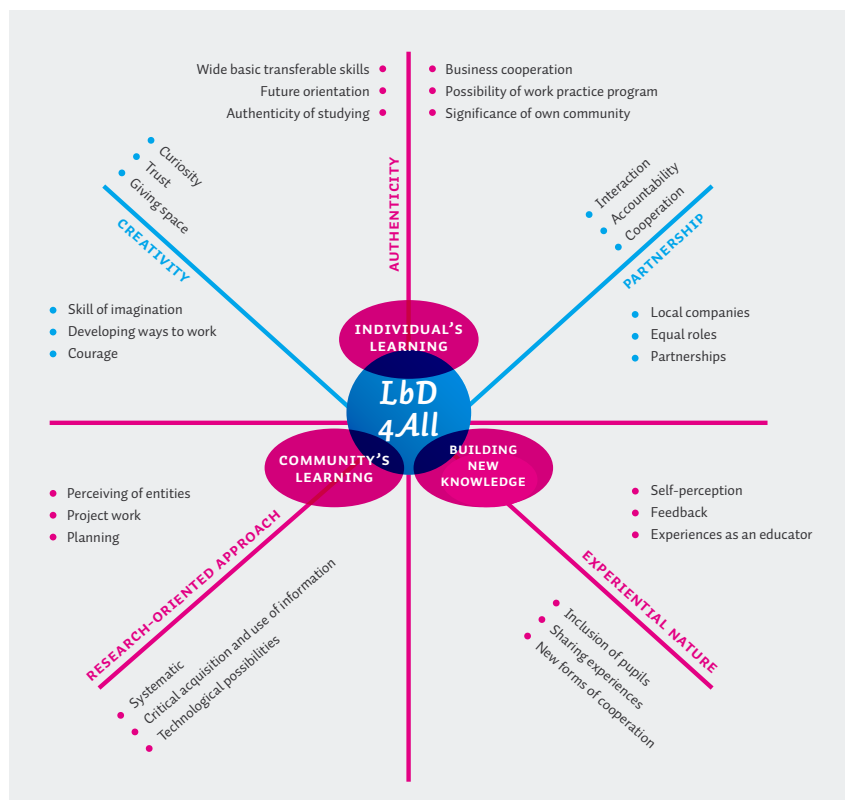


Figure 1. The LbD4All model adapted for comprehensive schools.

## Description:

Experiential learning is based on pragmatic epistemology, thus the LbD4All action model is clearly related to it. The same view is also shared also by research-oriented learning, expansive learning, and problem-based learning as well as constructive learning.

Experiential learning is understood as a process that begins from an experience and proceeds via reflective observation and abstract conceptualization to experimenting (cf. Kolb's Model of Experiential Learning). Learning takes place in interaction where the learners should be directed to reflect upon their own experiences. Growth takes place through experience, although not all experience is necessarily educational. The experience that leads to learning should continue with something that has earlier taken place and form it in some way. An experience is according to the previous experiential world of each individual.

## How is it visible?

One works together with others, sharing knowledge and information, building on previous knowledge.

## Whom does it influence?

- Pupils
- Teachers
- Partners
- School administration, etc

## Who does what, when, where, why?

- Possibilities for cooperation and working:
  - E-learning
  - Other environment than classroom

- Pupils can work together or individually part of the time
- Experiences are experienced together; thus, experiences are shared
- Discussions and reflections take place among team members, among classes, with pupils, with teachers
- Teachers need to be present and ready for guidance
- One needs courage to gain experience
- One needs to be confident to tell about their problems to others
- Assessment takes place also during the process (not only afterwards)

## What does it generate/produce?

- New knowledge
- New ways to learn and reflect
- Shared experiences
- Experience of cooperating with different kinds of people and stakeholders
- Learning from real working life

## Realization:

- Sharing experiences to build new knowledge
- Strengthens creativity
- External partners gain invaluable views from the young generation and experience from cooperation with them
- Teachers learn from the projects, as well as from their experiences
- Encouraging people to be themselves and supporting the development of self-esteem
- Indicate trust and permission to try
- Give space to act, think by oneself and strive for self-realization

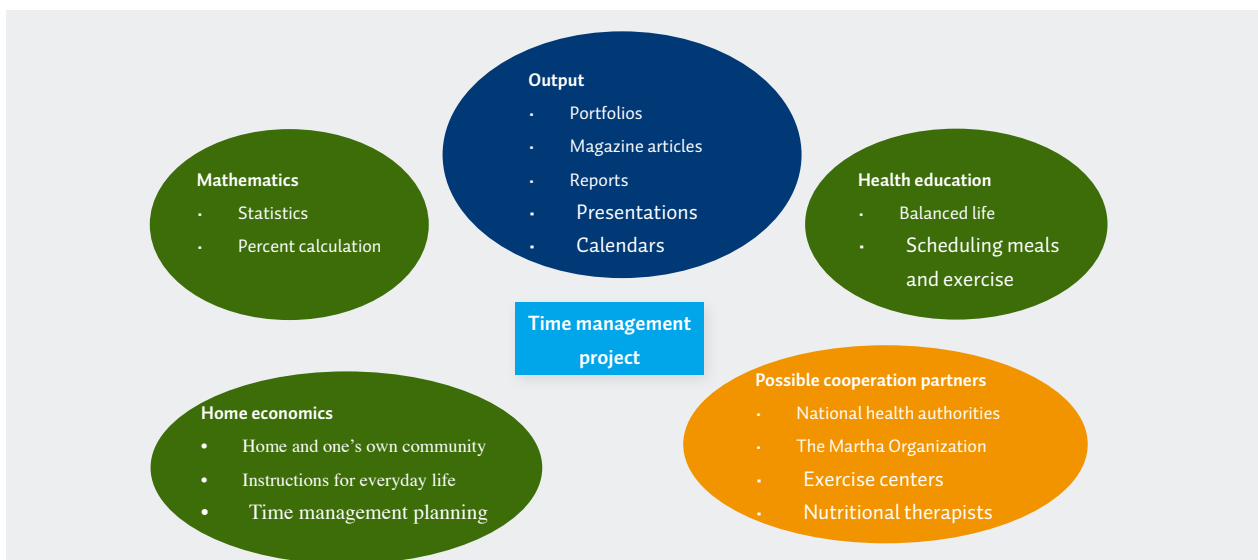


Figure 2. Example of a practical implementation, time management project.

The study subjects mathematics, home economics and health education are combined in this project. The partners in the project are national health authorities, the Martha Organization, exercise centers and nutritional therapists.

In mathematics, the main focus points are statistics and calculation of percentage. In home economics, one focuses on the home and their own community, instructions for everyday life and time management planning. On the subject of health education, one studies balanced life and the measuring of ingredients.

The project lasts for one month, and the teachers plan in advance how to launch it after summer vacation. The project is implemented by a class of 20 pupils aged 11 years old. In the preparation phase, the teachers work closely with the cooperation partners to ensure their commitment on the project. The partners, the working schedule and the contents need to meet the learning requirements that are planned by the teachers. The teachers contact the organizations and agree on certain principles for carrying out the project with the pupils.

The project begins with an introduction held by the teachers, where they explain the main content and aims of the project. The pupils work in pairs to create a plan for the project, including the implementation and scheduling. The plan is then approved by the teachers.

During the project, the pupils work in close cooperation with the partners to receive information from the experts in different fields. The national health authorities give the pupils a tour in their facilities explaining the most critical ways to improve the wellbeing and health of an individual.

The Martha Organization visits the school premises and offers the pupils some useful tips on how to create a balance between school, exercise and free time. The pupils also receive consultation from nutritional therapists on how to eat healthily and plan the meals to suit individual needs. Exercise centers provide the pupils with exercise classes suitable for their age and healthy tips on how to maintain a balance between exercise and rest.

As the main output, the pupils produce a time management plan portfolio including a calendar that consists of each pair's time division between school, hobbies, free time and meals. The pupils also create short individual reports consisting of different areas of the project; scheduling, time management and healthy lifestyle. Articles for youth magazines about a balanced and healthy lifestyle are produced in pairs. Also, the pupils give presentations on the subject to fellow pupils.

The teacher's responsibility is to ensure that all the pupils get hands-on experience cooperating with working life, and that all pupils communicate with their project partners. They also need to ensure that the partners involved in the project are committed and willing to adapt their instructions to be age-appropriate.

The pupils gain experience in receiving up-to-date information and knowledge from real working life actors. Furthermore, the pupils gain knowledge and skills that can be utilized in different life situations, not only inside of the classroom.

*The project described above is an example that can be adapted to fit different needs and contents.*

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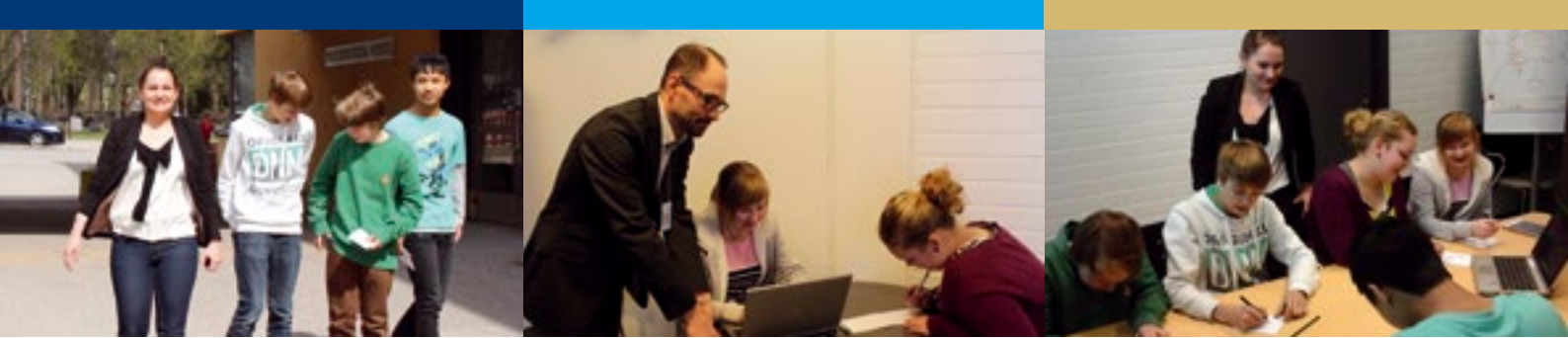
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