

ALLEY WAY LEARNING TEACHERS MANUAL (2024)

AN INTRODUCTION TO DELIVERING YOUR OWN WORKSHOP

THIS IS A RESOURCE TO SUPPORT PEOPLE TEACHING A WORKSHOP WITH THE ALLEY WAY LEARNING PROGRAMME.

Our mission is to help:

Build community connections

Create accessible learning

Offer an opportunity for people to learn and try new things

Provide affordable classes

To provide teacher support

To create a learning legacy in our community for the future

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WHAT IS ALLEY WAY LEARNING?

Welcome to Alley Way Learning. A peer to peer community building and skill sharing programme that takes learning out of traditional classroom environments and makes learning easy and fun for everyone!

WHO IS THIS HANDBOOK FOR AND WHAT DOES IT EXPLAIN?

This handbook is for anyone who is booked to teach a workshop with Alley Way Learning. The handbook is for supporting teachers with information on how to structure a workshop, how to manage attendees and how to deliver a fun and engaging workshop experience. The handbook will also explain: learning and teaching styles, how to create a welcoming environment for all and how to manage your time effectively.

The handbook will briefly cover safeguarding and self employment information which you will have to do further research on. Or you can contact our Youth Programme Manager for more information: Sidney Ewing, sidney@hastingscommons.com

WHAT IS A NON TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM APPROACH?

Learning doesn't have to happen in a classroom and people do not need a teaching qualification to be able to share their knowledge and skills with others. Alley Way Learning creates a space for anyone to teach. We prefer that people don't have teaching experience so we can help you build your skills right within our programme.

We focus on creating learning environments outside of a classroom. You can learn in nature, at a coffee shop, in a kitchen or anywhere else!

A teacher is anybody who has a skill, hobby or special interest to share. A teacher is not someone who has a teaching qualification. Rather, a teacher is someone who is passionate about a topic and wants to share it with others. A teacher is someone who wants to build community, make new friends and learn new skills without the pressure of attending class, college or examinations.

A NOTE ON FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES

If you enjoy the experience of teaching and are inspired to do more, we hope that it may give you the knowledge to do so. You are always welcome to share anything you might be offering in the future and where possible we can share it with others that are part of Alley Way learning as teachers and participants via our newsletter. Email obx@hastingscommons.com to send in your submissions. Please note not all will be shared due to our capacity.

LEARNING

Everyone has a different way of learning that isn't always presented in a school setting. Our programme covers different environments to support different ways of learning.

OUR DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES:

Audio: This lesson focuses on sounds and listening. This is for people who learn better by listening to information.

EXAMPLES: A MUSIC CLASS, ENGAGING WITH RADIO, LEARNING ABOUT EVERYDAY SOUNDS, LISTENING TO VOICE RECORDINGS, LISTENING TO A TALK.

VISUAL: THIS LESSON ENVIRONMENT FOCUSES ON THINGS YOU CAN SEE. THIS IS FOR PEOPLE WHO LEARN BETTER BY VISUALISING INFORMATION.

EXAMPLES: A PRESENTATION, A FILM CLUB, AN ART EXHIBITION, READING WORDS.

HANDS ON: THIS LESSON FOCUSES ON DOING THINGS WITH YOUR HANDS. THIS IS FOR PEOPLE WHO LEARN BY TOUCH AND MAKING THINGS.

EXAMPLES: BUILDING ELECTRONICS, MAKING SAND CASTLES, OR COOKING.

RELAXED/DISCUSSION BASED: THIS LESSON FOCUSES ON A RELAXED SETTING WITH A FLEXIBLE STRUCTURE OR TIMELINE. THIS IS FOR PEOPLE WHO LEARN BY HAVING CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHERS AND BEING ABLE TO ASK LOTS OF QUESTIONS.

EXAMPLES: SHOW AND TELL, OR SESSIONS THAT OFFER ADVICE OR INSPIRATION FOR YOUR HOBBIES OR CAREER.

SENSORY: THIS LESSON HAS NEURODIVERGENT (AN UMBRELLA TERM TO DESCRIBE A RANGE OF LEARNING DISABILITIES) PEOPLE IN MIND. IT INVOLVES LITTLE TALKING WITH A FOCUS ON EXPERIENCING LEARNING WITH THE SENSES.

EXAMPLES: BUILDING STIMULATION TOYS, LEARNING HOW TO CREATE MOOD LIGHTING, MOVING AROUND A SPACE, OR MOVING THE BODY OR EXPERIENCING DIFFERENT TEXTURES (WORKING OUT/DANCING/PLAYING WITH AUDIO/FOOD/TEXTILE EQUIPMENT).

ACCESSIBLE LEARNING - WHAT IS IT?

Accessible learning is making sure that a learning environment is adaptable to someone's additional needs. We may have to adapt our lessons or ways of teaching for people to feel comfortable, safe and can learn new things in an easy way.

WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

There are different ways to create accessible learning for someone and where possible we will try to find out participants' needs in advance so that we can support you to prepare for specific needs in advance, but you should be thinking about this right from the start of planning.

HERE ARE SOME WAYS THAT YOU CAN MAKE YOUR WORKSHOP ACCESSIBLE TO A VARIETY OF PEOPLE WITH ADDITIONAL NEEDS AND DIFFERENT LEARNING STYLES.

EASY CONTENT

Plan your lesson out in advance. Divide your lesson into clear sections, each with a simple learning outcome. Create easy to follow content. Don't make your lessons too complicated and think about ways you want to present your information.

Teach one thing at a time and make sure to check in and ask questions to make sure people are following your workshop okay.

Clarify your content and ask everyone if they are following along before moving to the next step of your workshop.

LANGUAGE

Use easy to follow language. No complicated words. This is important for people whose first language is not English and for making sure that people with additional needs, disabled people and neurodivergent people can be included.

READABLE MATERIALS

Make sure that your reading materials are easy on the eyes.

Think about the colour of paper and text that you are using - or which size font you decide on. Bigger block fonts are easier to read and are dyslexia friendly. You can search to see which dyslexia friendly font to use online.

Use colour to organise content to support people who are colour blind (try not to use reds and greens). Make sure content is easy to read with shorter sentences.

REASONABLE TIME

Give enough time for people to finish their activities.

Think about how to balance the following in your lesson:

The time you will take to speak about the subject,

The time needed to show the skill

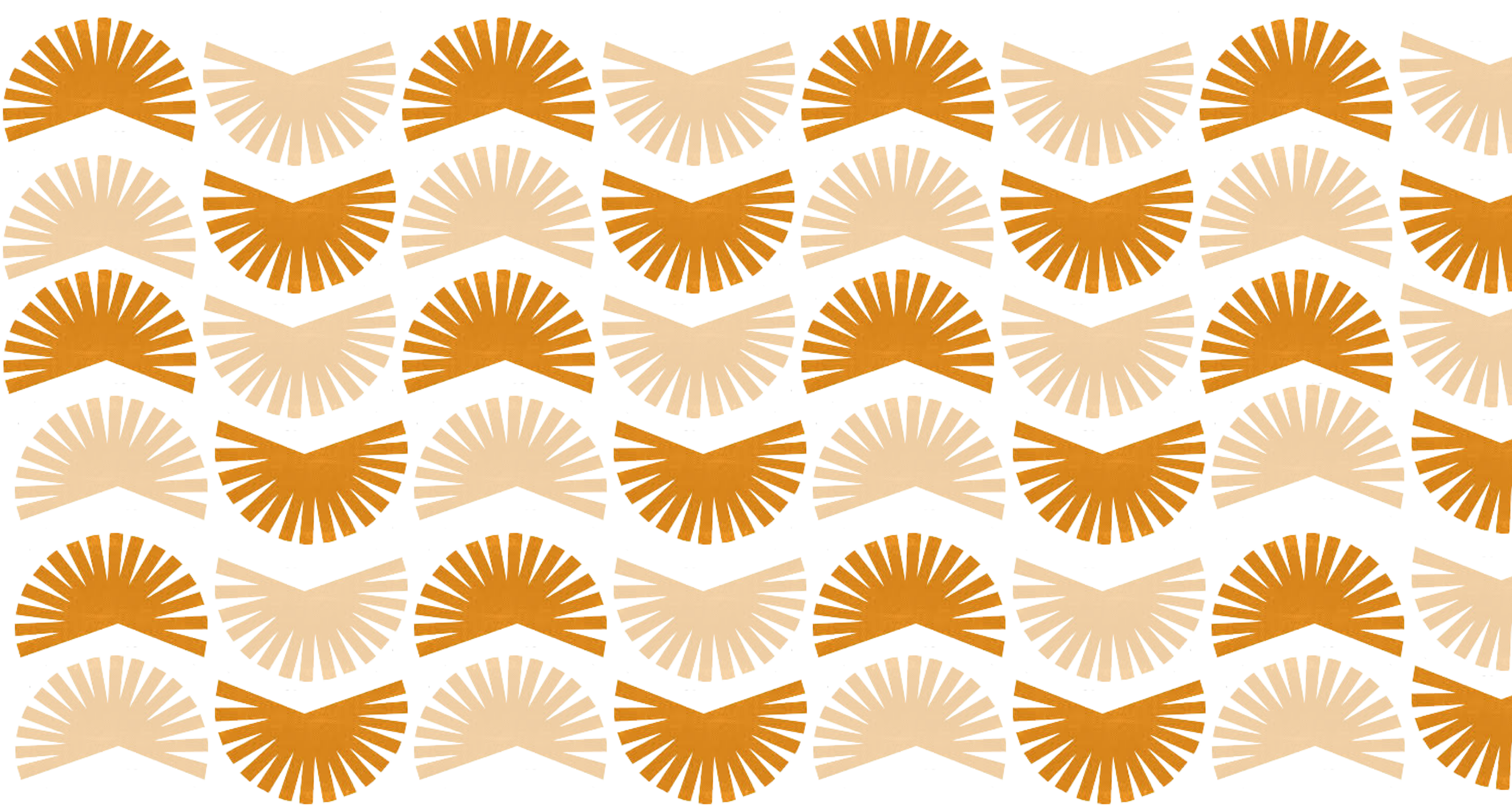
The time needed for people to try the skill through completing a task (if this is suitable for your lesson)

Why don't you try practising what you might say and timing it? Or test out the lesson plan with a friend or family member?

Remember this is just an introduction to a skillset so be clear about what you want people to leave the lesson knowing.

Class adjustments

Be prepared to change the way you teach in the moment.



You may have to change things in your environment to make sure someone is comfortable.

Think about adjusting lighting in the space, moving to a different room with less noise, maybe you have to drop a group activity if people don't want to speak in class, or maybe you have to change the structure of your lessons.

Manage Noise Levels

It is important to make sure that an environment is not too noisy when you are teaching. Think about closing windows or keeping background music low.

You may want to ask people to turn their phone rings to silent and to manage the space when there is too much talking or noise being made that isn't part of the lesson or activity.

Physical access

Arrange your learning environment so people with physical disabilities can move around the space.

For example, making sure that chairs and tables aren't left in doorways or blocking the path to the toilets. Provide different seating arrangements if you can (chairs, sofas, benches). Make sure that your lesson can be adapted to people who have physical additional needs. Something that could be useful is having a starting level activity or movement in this case to try and then offering more complex options for people to try should they wish

For example, if you are teaching dance and someone attends using a mobility aid, you will need to think about ways that the person can adapt the dance move using their mobility aid.

Creating an inclusive environment

It is important that people from all walks of life feel welcomed at Alley Way Learning. Please read the Hastings Commons policy on diversity, equity and inclusion.

[Read policy here](#)

What does creating a diverse environment look like in practice?

In the section before this, we talked about making sure you represent different identities in your work. Here are some ways to approach:

Use images of people from different backgrounds in your presentations or visual content (For example people of colour, people using mobility aids, people of different ages and genders).

If it's relevant, share information about current social movements, charity support events or culturally diverse hubs to visit in the local area as well as resources for people to learn more about the subject matter from other people who are also sharing your skill .

Try not to assume people's identities. Ask attendees what pronouns they use and/or don't expect that someone has a wife or husband.

Include religious identities in your discussion circles. It's okay to ask people about their experiences and to ask what suits them. For example you might want to ask about dietary preferences, speak about holidays more broadly or acknowledge non-western holidays and traditions/celebrations in your work.

Make sure a space is accessible in different ways: physically, culturally, socially.

Creating an intersectional environment means that we also understand how identities connect. Someone might be a wheelchair user but also ethnically diverse. You can represent this in your materials, in your examples, and also by ensuring that the space you host your workshop in is accommodating to both experiences.



THINGS TO STEER CLEAR OF:

At Alley Way Learning we do not teach lessons that provide health advice or religion.

No homophobic, racist, transphobic, ableist, classist or ageist jokes.

Use gender neutral language when you can.

Respect different religions.

Don't ask for personal information.

Do not comment on people's appearances, relationships or ways of dressing.

Not asking people personal information or commenting on their appearance etc.

How can we support neurodivergent people?

Neurodivergent people learn in different ways. We might have to make adjustments to suit their additional needs.

Examples of Adjustments can be:


Giving more time to someone who needs it

Getting rid of sensory overload: low lights, no music, no loud noises

Using pictures instead of text

Add variety into your teaching: add breaks, use movement and offer quiet spaces

Some of these methods can also help support ESL learners



Brain I Tastic Top tips for a more neurodiversity inclusive classroom

To help those with ADHD:	...and for Autism/ASD:
1 Allow fidget toys in the classroom	1 Allow students to follow their passions
2 Let students stand up rather than sit	2 Give the choice to work in a group or alone, as needed
3 Use 'bouncy bands' on chair legs for that excess energy	3 Provide support when changing task, with warnings in the lead up
4 Schedule brief movement breaks into your lessons	4 Allow earplugs, hats or sunglasses for sensory issues, where they don't interfere with teaching

Icons created by ultimatearm, Good Ware, Parzival 1997

For more great tips and brain-based resources:
www.brainasticscience.com

Learn more [HERE](#)

How do I teach a workshop?

Before your workshop begins, the best way to be an effective teacher is by preparing your workshop before. You don't need to prepare exactly what you want to say, but you should prepare an outline for the structure of your workshop.

What do I put in my workshop outline?

Your workshop outline doesn't have to be fancy. It can be a list of things you want to say, share and demonstrate.

Here are some things to include or consider in your list (in order):

Introduce yourself

Icebreaker: get attendees to introduce themselves or run a quick activity

Introduce your topic/do a demonstration

Get attendees to form groups and try out the activity

Break & refreshments

Start a discussion group about the activity

Time for people to finish their projects

Group sharing Thank people for coming/share resources

How can I be an effective workshop facilitator?

Teaching a community workshop is about making sure that you get others to join in on the conversation. People learn best when there is variety in the workshop. For example, if you are running a discussion group, you don't want to be speaking the entire time.

You also may want to add different forms of media or learning to keep people engaged. Speak about the topic, then do a hands on demonstration, maybe you want to take people on a field trip before they start a writing exercise.

This hybrid way of learning is known as the sandwich method. Think of your teaching as adding different layers to a yummy sandwich.

Example:

Bread: introduction

Lettuce: activity 1

Cheese: activity 2

Tomato: a break or opportunity to move around the space Olives: a sharing circle

Bread: conclusion



Creating activities:

Make sure the activities you create are easy to follow
Offer alternatives for people who don't want to do the activities
Group activities are best for making connections
Activities can reflect different learning styles
Do not use images, videos etc that you do not have permission to use

Offering resources:

Offer resources that are accessible. For example ones that are in the local area or relevant to the person's identity
Offer different resources for different experiences and abilities

What kinds of questions should I ask?

Asking open ended questions leaves more room for discussion. It is also doesn't put anybody on the spot to answer anything that feels too personal.

Ask the group questions and wait for someone to respond. Be mindful of body language- if someone doesn't seem like they want to speak, it is probably best to ask someone else.

Open ended questions start with:

When
Where
How
Who
What

For example:

When do you think a good time to play chess is?

Instead of:

Do you think 9pm is a good time to play chess?

Open ended questions give more agency to the person answering the question.

How do I provide opportunities for feedback?

Getting feedback from your workshop attendees is really important. It can help you make adjustments for your next workshop so that it is accessible to more people.

Ways you can ask for feedback so it is anonymous:

People can write things they liked/didn't like about the workshop on a piece of paper and you can create a box for people to put it in

Send out our Alley Way learning digital feedback form for people to fill out
You can listen to anyone who steps forward to give feedback to you in person

Safeguarding information:

We all have a responsibility to keep everyone safe during the lessons. Please stay in the sight of a Hastings Commons staff member at all times as they are DBS checked. If you have a DBS or are registered for the update service, please send this through to Sidney or Becca to discuss further.

References/Resources:

Teacher SEND handbook

Dyslexia Advice

Intersectionality

Accessible Learning

Designing accessible learning content

Neurodiversity inclusive learning

A supportive framework for blended learning

