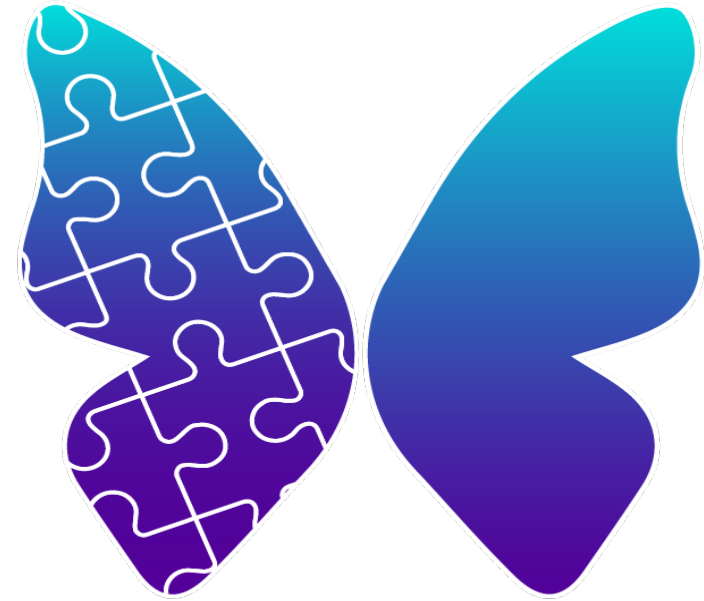


# Digital Democratic Learning: How can it be achieved?

-

## Service Learning to foster democratic competence



## Service-Learning for Democracy in Europe

<https://slead-europe.eu>



## Agenda

- Thought Experiment
- Service Learning as method
- Model “Democratic Competence in Service Learning”
- Group Phase: Planning a cross-border Service Learning Project
- Presentation of the Ideas



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## A thought experiment

Stiftung  **Lernen durch Engagement**  
Service-Learning in Deutschland

Netzwerk  **Lernen durch Engagement**  
Service-Learning in Deutschland

BUNDESWEITE SERVICE-LEARNING-TAGUNG 2021



VORTRAG  
**PROF. JOEL WESTHEIMER**

CAN SERVICE-LEARNING SAVE OUR WORLD?  
MIT DEUTSCHSPRACHIGEN UNTERTITELN

0:04 / 39:12

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5pfB2q\\_cco&t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5pfB2q_cco&t=4s)

# Reflection Questions

- What is my concept of „democracy“?
- Is there an common understanding in the team/in the teaching staff/ with the school management about what „democracy“ can mean in the school, the university or your institution?
- What is the concept of „democracy“ of the students?
- Do I agree with this statement: „A good school is also a democratic school.“ (Peter Fauser)



## Example Algorithm I

Students engage in understanding the functioning of algorithms in computer science classes and with applications as well as the use of algorithms for sorting applications in German classes, exploring to what extent this technology is already in use by larger companies in the region.

AND

One group of students organizes a long night of applications in collaboration with a library, where they provide information on the use of algorithms in application processes of larger companies and give tips on writing applications. Another group of students calls for more transparency in the use of this technology in discussions with district delegates and publishes blog posts.



## What is Service-Learning?

Service-Learning combines

**social engagement of students**

with

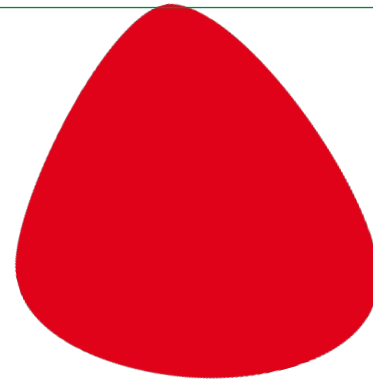
**subject-related learning in the classroom.**

This form of teaching and learning is suitable for all types of schools, age groups and subjects.

## Learning

- cognitive learning
- social & methodological competencies
- personal development
- democratic competencies

&

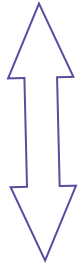


## Engagement

- Doing something for others/for society
- Solving a real problem
- Practical commitment for the common good

## Twofold Objective

Service



Learning

### **Strengthening democracy & civil society**

Develop willingness and competency for engagement ("Democracy as a way of life", John Dewey)

### **Changing teaching & learning**

Learning through experience (John Dewey, constructivist view of learning)



## The commitment to Service Learning

- social engagement
- ecological engagement
- cultural engagement; e.g. in the field of music, monument protection, sport, ...
- socio-political engagement; e.g. in the area of democratic culture, integration, civic participation, in the form of campaigns for important social issues ...

## Example Algorithm II

Students engage interdisciplinary with news suggestions via social media and selective perception, identifying the influence their own liking, commenting, and clicking behavior has on the suggestions in their timelines. They receive support from the expertise of the organization Buzzard.

They mobilize young people from their school and personal environment for an action week, during which participants consciously follow new news sources and click on political or social comments that do not correspond to their personal views. The experience and the impact on the timelines are surveyed in a questionnaire, which they evaluate during mathematics classes. They write a brief report in German on their findings with recommendations for online behavior and publish it on the school website and send it to online editorial offices.



## Real Need:

The commitment responds to a real need in the community or neighborhood  
→ real problem solving

① Alphabet des Engagements (ABC)  
② Präsentation / Abschlussveranstaltung  
→ Wie präsentieren wir?

Unsere Projektgruppen  
Hand sammeln  
Biographien schreiben  
Lesen  
zubereiten  
gestalten  
Hilfem

Biographie Gruppe  
WER? Seray, Pamela, Scharo, Abdullah, Serhat, Kevin, Alex, Ebrima und Tafiqur.  
WAS? Interviews durch führen, Lebensgeschichten aufschreiben, Informationen zusammenfassen, Hefte erstellen/verkaufen?  
WIE? Leitfaden erstellen, Obdachlose befragen, Informationen zusammenfassen, Kön Lehrkräfte/Schülern korrigieren lassen, Zum Hinz und Kunz gehen

**Curricular connection:**  
1. content: link to educational plans (applying knowledge, experiential learning...)  
2. structural: not an "extra activity", but part of regular lessons



## For Example: Cybermobbing can be addressed ....

The following topics could be addressed:

- Responsibility for others, change of perspective (e.g. in the subject of ethics)
- Personal rights, laws in the area of bullying, ways of changing the law (e.g. in the subject of politics/citizenship education)
- Mental well-being, resilience (e.g. in the subjects of biology, psychology, class council)
- Safe online activities, protection of personal data and images (e.g. in the subject of German)

## For Example: Conspiracy Narratives can be addressed

The following topics could be addressed:

- Source analysis, source criticism, media as a means of information (e.g. in Languages, in history)
- Basics of scientific work (e.g. in biology)
- Propaganda, historical conspiracy narratives (e.g. in the subject of history, politics)
- Rhetoric, use of language, myths (e.g. in Languages)
- Epistemology (e.g. in the subject of philosophy/ethics)
- Depending on the content, individual conspiracy narratives in specific subject areas can be and refuted, e.g. climate change (subject geography, biology)



4. Wenn du zurückblickst vor den Beginn deines Engagements:  
Wie hast du dich seitdem verändert?

*Ich habe keine Angst mehr mit den  
Kindern zu sprechen.*

**Reflection:**

Structured, consciously  
planned reflection



**Engagement outside of  
school:**

**Practical engagement  
outside of school and in  
cooperation with partners**



Students deal with the topic of individual responsibility and charity in religious education, develop anti-cyberbullying training and organize an action day for the third grade of the nearby elementary school. (Based on the SL project of the Gymnasium Geretsried, Bavaria)

Following a case of cyberbullying in the classroom, students in the school for special needs deal with rules for social interaction in the classroom and safe online behavior and create a brochure on dealing with social media, which they hand out to social institutions in the school environment. (Based on the SL project at Schule am Mummelsoll, Berlin)

In their politics lessons, students work on ways to change the law and the effects of cyberbullying and organize a public panel discussion with politicians on an anti-bullying law.



**Student participation:  
Real participation**



Recognition and graduation:

Culture of recognition and appreciative closure

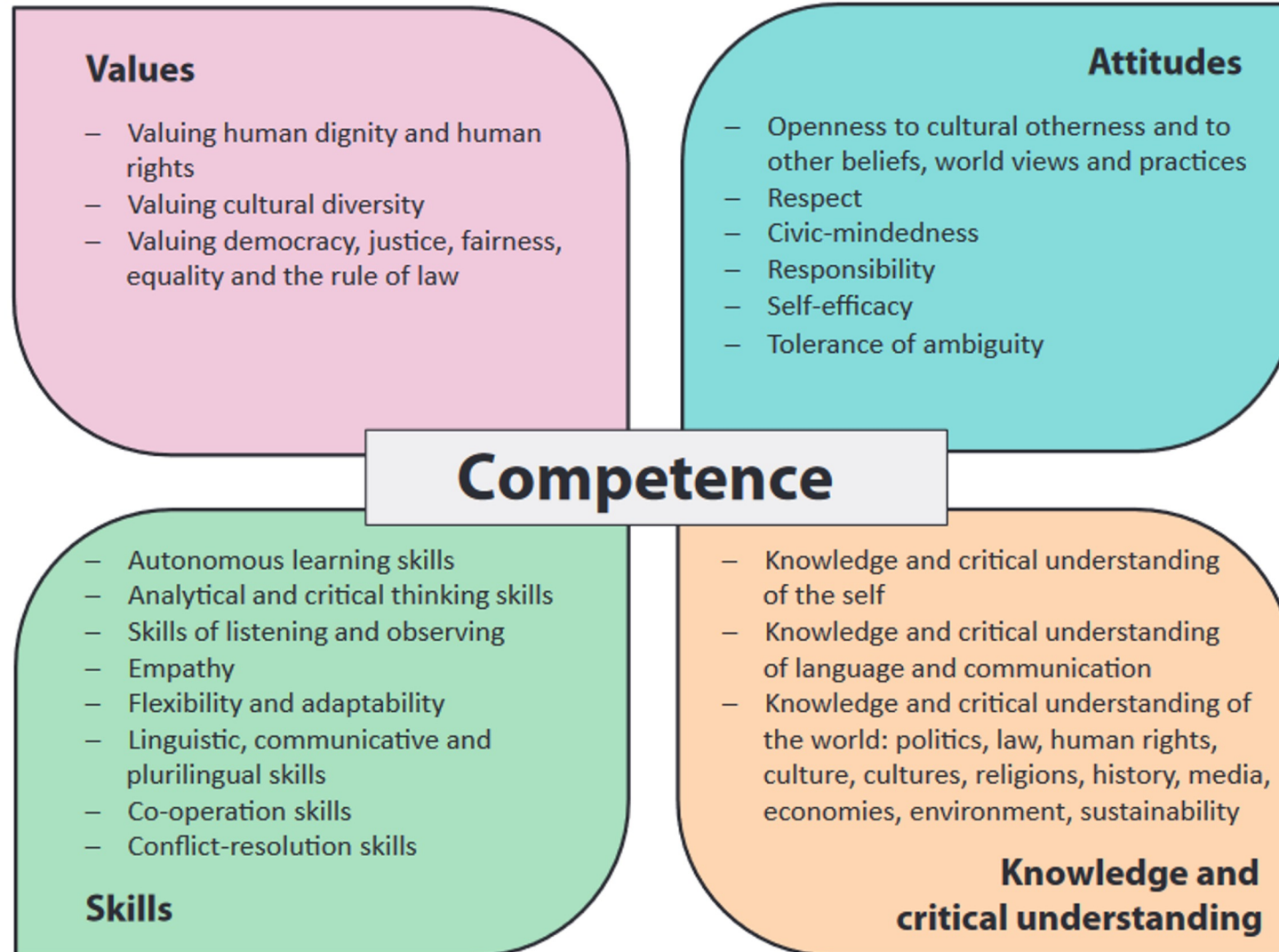


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# Democratic Competence in Service-Learning - A model and guide to implementation



# Reference Framework of Competencies of a democratic culture

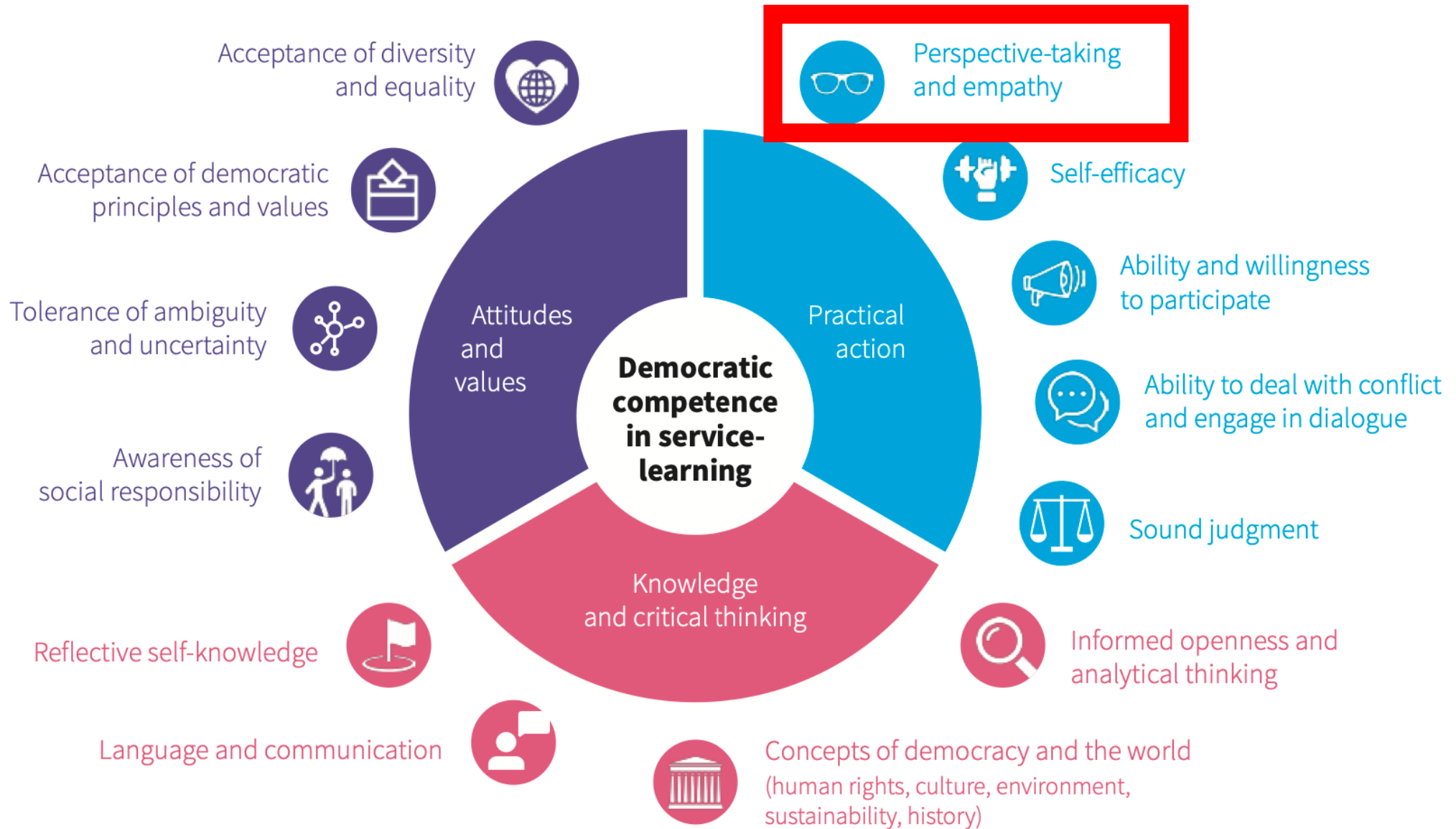




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# Democratic Competence in Service-Learning - A model and guide to implementation







## Perspective-Taking and Empathy

### Discription:

Students can empathize with other people's thoughts, opinions, and feelings even if they are not part of their own environment. They can feel and express sympathy for people or groups, in particular for those who face obstacles to participating in society or accessing resources.

### How to recognize the competence in students

- When working with other people or in difficult situations, I can identify and explain other people's points of view.
- In conflict situations I try to put myself in the other person's shoes.
- I can appreciate other people's behavior and understand their feelings, even in difficult situations.
- When there are questions or problems I can describe the points of view and feelings of everyone involved.
- I know that people have different opportunities for participating in society and face different barriers.

### How to strengthen the competence in Service-Learning

- Role-playing, images, and stories that involve taking on new perspectives and attitudes
- Reflecting on oneself and one's fears, concerns, and prejudices
- Reflecting on experiences during the civic engagement
- Research: exploring what engagement is really needed,
- weighing up and clarifying the needs and expectations of everyone involved, seeking conversations with people outside the students' usual environment

## Questions for reflection

- What types of people have I encountered during Service-Learning/in the project/during the civic engagement?
- How did these people behave? How did they think and feel?
- What explanation can I provide for their doing so?
- What did people do or say that I did not understand?

- What are algorithms and to what extent are automated decision-making systems objective?
- How and in what positions do algorithms influence decision-making processes and with what consequences for those affected? - To what extent is discrimination through algorithms in conflict with our constitution?
- Which values are violated by this?
- Are there democratic mechanisms to defend oneself against this (small requests to the state, letters to politicians, round table discussions, demonstrations)? - What would have to change to make automated decision-making processes more compatible with our democratic principles?
- How could this change be brought about and by whom/which institutions?

## Attitudes and Values

- To what extent do conspiracy narratives threaten social cohesion? ▪ What responsibility do I have as an individual to react when I encounter conspiracy narratives in my private life?
- Dare to change perspective: why is Person X so convinced of a conspiracy narrative? What would be missing if they lost this belief?

## Practical Action

- What can we do if we observe cyberbullying?
- What can we do to make others (other young people, parents, teachers, etc.) aware of the issue?
- What rules do we set ourselves for our communication in class chats etc. and how do we enforce them? How do we implement them?
- How can we pass on positive experiences to other students?
- What measures/behavior in the digital space/on platforms can increase my safety? (e.g. not making profiles public, etc.)?
- How can we as a school take a public stance on cyberbullying?
- How can we as students offer help for other young men and women?

Step 1	What democratic competence should be promoted in the digital service learning project?
Step 2	What is the real need that we are addressing in our digital service learning project?
Step 3	Which subjects are included? What content from the curriculum is addressed?
Step 4	What possible cooperation partners are there outside the school to address real needs?
Step 5	How can students participate in the design of the project?
Step 6	Which exercises do we incorporate so that the students can make targeted use of the selected democratic competence?
Step 7	What questions do we use in reflection to make students aware of the learning process in relation to the chosen democratic competence?



## Instead of a conclusion

- What are my beliefs about learning democratic competences?
- What knowledge do I believe to be true in this issue?
- Where do my beliefs come from?
  - Which of my own previous experiences play a role?
  - What assumptions lie behind my beliefs?
  - To what extent do my pre-assumptions and my beliefs influence my actions so far?
- Where could these reflections lead me? Ideas? Wishes?



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I look forward to questions, criticism,  
suggestions and discussion!

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