

The Active Learning Project

Annual Report 2022



SOUP

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List of Acronyms

ALP

Active Learning Project

BW PTC

Bishop Willis Primary Teachers College

CCE

Critical thinking, creative thinking, and ethical practices

CPD

Continuous professional development

FENU

Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda

K&A

Knowledge and attitude

MoES

Ministry of Education and Sports

PTC

Primary Teacher College

TEDT

Teacher Education, Development and Training

UNITE

Uganda National Institute for Teacher Education



Students enjoy a lesson in the computer lab at The African SOUP School.

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From the ALP Director



Dear Friends, Partners, and Stakeholders:

What a great year! Despite the challenges caused by COVID-19 and its aftereffects on education, we have generally had a smooth recovery. Seeing classrooms full again was promising, and we were once again engaged in supporting quality teacher education and training for the SOUP School and our partner Bishop Willis Primary Teachers College through active learning.

We would like to thank our dedicated staff who have committed to making our strategic plan come alive despite the challenges. Our Ugandan and U.S. Boards of Directors have also been instrumental in guiding, supporting, and believing in our work, and we continue to be thankful for their support.

Our stakeholders, especially the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) through the Teacher Education, Development, and Training (TETD) Department, have continued to be on our side, and each of our development partners in education have cheered us on and supported our efforts.

Thank you to each one of you who continue to believe in our work! May we see a better 2023.

Take the opportunity to have a glance at what we accomplished last year in this issue of our annual report.

Yours sincerely,

Rebecca

Rebecca Mirembe

Director of the Active Learning Project

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Overview of the ALP

The Active Learning Project (ALP) aims to improve the quality of early childhood and primary education in Uganda through the implementation of active learning teaching strategies, which emphasize experiential learning opportunities, constructivist education, creativity, and critical thinking. Active learning represents a departure from the traditional teaching methods of rote memorization and lecture. Currently, the ALP Team implements a methods course and continuous professional development (CPD) opportunities at one primary teacher college and at The SOUP Demonstration School, where the adoption of this methodology has resulted in increased matriculation rates and test scores for SOUP students. By partnering with teacher training colleges and education officials, we hope to equip and empower Uganda's future teachers with the knowledge and skills needed to enhance the potential of Uganda's nursery and primary students.



A student at The African SOUP School.

Key Purposes of the ALP

- Increase teacher investment, motivation, and performance by bridging the pedagogical gap in teacher education and training through active learning
- Facilitate independent, critical, and creative thinking, collaboration, and ethical practices among primary school pupils

ALP Key Beneficiaries

- Nursery and primary school learners
- In-service teachers
- Teacher educators (tutors)
- Teachers in training at Primary Teacher Colleges (PTCs)

Active Learning Core Activities

- Build knowledge and skills that support improved teaching practices and demonstrate active learning experiences for teacher educators, teachers in training, and SOUP School teachers through a methods course
- Utilize community-based teacher conferences to create opportunities to build knowledge and skills related to active learning
- Create a supportive space for learning and inquiry through networks and stakeholder engagement
- Maintain The SOUP School as a center of ALP innovation and create opportunities for active learning demonstration and sharing

Children participate in a lesson at The African SOUP School.



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ALP Highlights

We are pleased to share the following highlights of our work in 2022:

- The ALP team presented to the Teacher Education, Development and Training workgroup of the Ministry of Education and Sports and the Uganda National Institute of Teacher Education (UNITE) regarding the potential to serve as an implementing partner to strengthen teacher training across the country.
- The ALP team covered nine active learning modules at Bishop Willis Primary Teacher College (PTC), with an average of 200 teacher trainees in attendance.
- Upon completion of all modules, all teachers in training took a knowledge and attitude test where

89% scored above average and a total of 206 teacher trainees passed the exam.

- The ALP supported 76 teachers in training in their school practice.
- An average of 25 tutors attended our quarterly workshops at Bishop Willis PTC.
- The African SOUP School hosted its first Active Learning Conference on our campus with over 150 participants.
- The SOUP Nursery and Primary School was selected as a site where teachers in training can conduct their final school practice. We welcomed 10 teachers to our campus.

SOUP School teachers and ALP staff following an active learning continuing professional development lesson at the SOUP School campus.



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Active Learning in Teacher Education and Training

Working with Pre-service Teachers

We have worked with Bishop Willis PTC in Iganga, Uganda since 2019. Our partnership has been strengthened due to the successes and elevation of the quality of teachers that have graduated over the years.

Our approach towards teacher education focuses on providing teachers in training with exceptional experiences of what active learning classrooms should look and feel like. All active learning modules focus on challenging students to work collaboratively to solve problems presented to them. The different modules are designed to provide knowledge about the key concepts embedded in active learning as a pedagogical practice as well as an understanding of how these skill sets can change the classroom environment by making learning student-centered. The modules are also designed to change teachers' attitudes about student-centered learning and motivate teachers to adopt this approach in their own classrooms.

We are pleased to announce that all of the 2020 Grade Three intake students at Bishop Willis graduated from the teacher certificate program. Despite the challenges we



Active learning methods course graduates at Bishop Willis Primary Teachers College with their certifications.

encountered during the COVID lockdown, we built resilience by adapting technology to offer online sessions to reach these students.

The re-opening of institutions following the pandemic enabled us to complete all of the active learning modules in our training. We had the opportunity to observe these teachers in training during their first and final school practice to assess if they were able to implement what they had learned. A total of nine modules were covered, with an average of 200 teachers in training in attendance. A sample size of students was selected for observation during the school practice to measure key outcomes. Working with 10 tutors, the project supported 76 finalist students in their school practice. The key focus was around pedagogical practices specifically centered on active learning. Each teacher in training was observed twice and given feedback and guidance on how they can improve.

The following table provides a summary of some of the modules covered in 2022.

Topic covered	Purpose/expected outcomes
Questioning techniques; scaffolding using Bloom’s taxonomy	Empower teachers with skills of posing high-order questions that support critical and creative thinking
Emphasis on constructivism using the 5E Model (Engage, Explore, Explain, Elaborate, Evaluate) in lesson planning to enhance learner centeredness	Teachers learn how to incorporate the 5Es in lesson and activity development
CCE concepts and active learning ideas	Teachers are aware of key active learning concepts and classroom practices
Reflective teaching practices	Teachers can identify the key challenges in implementing active learning methodology and share ideas on how to solve them
Utilizing the environment as a resource for learning	Teachers know how meaningful learning experiences encourage higher levels of student performance and motivate students to practice higher level critical thinking skills

Upon completion of all modules, all teachers in training took a knowledge and attitude (K&A) test where 89% of the students scored above average. 206 teacher trainees were certified by the ALP team for having passed the K&A module.

Working with Teacher Educators (Tutors)

Our model places an emphasis on tutors’ knowledge, skills and experiences, and we build on these to enhance their pedagogical practices in the context of student-centered approaches to learning.

We have partnered with eight tutors at Bishop Willis PTC who demonstrate their skills in active learning to their peers through workshops and classroom demonstrations. We have trained the tutors on how to identify learner-centered approaches and use active learning assessments and observation tools, which has supported evaluation in all areas of focus.

In 2022, an average of 25 tutors attended our quarterly workshops at the college and were able to carry out the following activities and engagements.



ALP Project Manager Kenneth Agaba presents certificates to the active learning graduates of Bishop Willis Primary Teachers College during their graduation ceremony.

Activity/Topic covered	Key outcomes
Assessing active learning practices using an observation tool	Tutors are able to observe and document key pedagogical gaps in students' school practices
Engagement with Laura Johns, Ph.D. Dr. Johns serves as ALP Advisor and is a member of the U.S. Board of Directors. She is Managing Partner with Propulsion Squared, which focuses on education system reform	Sharing of challenges and reflections on active learning interventions at BWC PTC
Using ICT to enhance pedagogical practices	Tutors learned about key ICT tools that can be used in teaching
Reflective practices training	Tutors reflected on active learning and the challenges faced by tutors in covering the pedagogical gap

Ideas for Improving Active Learning Practices, Based on School Practice Reports

- Encourage more creativity in class engagement
- Teachers need to be trained on alternative methods of lesson evaluation that go beyond knowledge assessments
- Teachers should be supported in how to manage power sharing in the classroom by allowing learners to question their learning process
- More micro-teaching and demonstration lessons need to be encouraged, which can help foster research and innovation in teaching practices
- Teachers in training need to understand how to identify different learning intelligences and learners with different abilities so that they can provide choice when designing their lesson plans
- Strengthen clinical observations and reflective practices so that teachers are not afraid of observations

NBS television media group covers the first Active Learning Conference organized by ALP and hosted at The African SOUP School.

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Active Learning at The African SOUP School

The African SOUP Nursery and Primary School is a center of excellence for active learning teaching practices.

In 2022, The African SOUP School hosted its first Active Learning Conference where over 150 participants attended. The event's theme was: "The role of active learning in enhancing learning experiences to achieve 21st century life skills."

The participants included teachers from Namutumba schools, District Education officials, tutors, and teachers in training. The event was organized by the ALP in partnership with the Namutumba District Education Office and hosted by The African SOUP Nursery and Primary School. The event included ALP presentations, school tours, classroom demonstrations, and the sharing of experiences about active learning practices.

SOUP School teachers also engaged in a series of continuous professional development (CPD) trainings on key active learning pedagogical skills. These monthly workshops covered modules which included the role of ICT in enhancing pedagogical practices, an introduction to active learning for newly recruited teachers, and deep analysis of active learning concepts and ideas.

In addition, The SOUP School was named among the selected schools where teachers in training can conduct





Teachers and educators take notes during the Active Learning Conference hosted by the SOUP School in Namutumba District.

their final school practice. A total of 10 teachers were able to experience the demonstration of active learning at The SOUP School through their practicum.

In May, The SOUP also hosted five students and one tutor from Bishop Willis PTC in a best practice tour. The students demonstrated the key skills they learned from the College and co-taught with SOUP School teachers. They participated in feedback sessions where they reflected on their experiences. One of the students noted, "I honestly feel like there is so much to learn when it comes to practice. I really enjoyed the experience, and I think the school practice time given to us is not enough for us to be prepared teachers."



Dr. Humphrey Gusango, ALP Advisor and member of the SOUP's Ugandan Board, presents on reflective practices at the Active Learning Conference.

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Government and Stakeholder Relations

2022 was a year in which we shared our learnings with key stakeholders, developed deeper relationships with our partners, and set the stage for even greater national impact in promoting active learning.

In September, the ALP team had an opportunity to share its strategy, methodology, outcomes, and critical findings with the Teacher Education, Development, and Training (TEDT) workgroup. The meeting included 40 Ministry of Education and Sports officials. In October, the ALP team continued to engage with the Ministry of Education and Sports through the Uganda National Institute of Teacher Education (UNITE). The discussion focused on how active learning will be embedded in teacher training programs as part of Uganda's new four-year degree requirement for teachers. The fruitful meeting highlighted an opportunity for the ALP's modules to support continuous capacity development training for teacher educators and teacher trainees.

Dr. Humphrey Gusango, ALP Advisor and member of the SOUP's Ugandan Board, shares ideas regarding UNITE's new teacher training programs.





ALP Manager Kenneth Agaba and ALP Director Rebecca Mirembe met with Caroline Kavuma (center), the UNITE Task Force Coordinator, to explore partnership opportunities.

The Active Learning Project continues to engage with UNITE on accrediting its modules for future implementation.

In August 2022, the ALP team was invited by ALforEducation (“AL” refers to “African Leadership”) for the annual ALforEducation Network Gathering that took place in Kigali, Rwanda. Attendees of the gathering included educators, heads of schools, entrepreneurs, funders, innovators, policy makers and ecosystem builders. They convened around the topic, “Developing Leading Teachers: The Educators We Need for the Outcomes We Want.” The two-day exploration of excellence in education focused on the critical role that teachers play in leading learning. The ideas were built on the thought that schools and educational organizations must inspire, develop, and retain educators who foster deep learning and empower children from all backgrounds to pursue self-determined, purposeful lives.



Rebecca Mirembe, ALP Director, and Kenneth Agaba, ALP Manager, attend the ALforEducation conference in Kigali, Rwanda.



Bishop Willis Primary Teachers College Tutor and ALP Partner, Mr. Mukungu Peter.

Reflections From Bishop Willis PTC

Tutor/ALP Partner: Mr. Mukungu Peter:

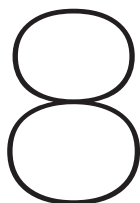
"I teach mathematics education to both pre-service and in-service primary school teachers. My task as a teacher trainer is not only to develop mathematics subject competences among the teachers, but also to stimulate and activate their mathematics pedagogical competencies. I find active learning methods relevant to that cause. I have adopted active learning methods in my lessons to ensure collaboration, effective communication, and critical and creative thinking among the teacher trainees. This I do through group work discussions, having trainees lead plenary presentations, and holding micro-teaching sessions on how to teach specific mathematics concepts.

Active learning methods of teaching allow for multiple entry pathways to pupils' learning, and the use of concrete teaching-learning aids.

Given the relevance of active learning methods, I coordinate ALP activities at Bishop Willis PTC. These activities include the primary school teacher trainees' pedagogical sessions, the tutors' engagement sessions, the trainees' micro-teaching and school practice, and lesson observation for both tutors and trainees to improve pedagogical output and improve pupils' learning experiences."

Pre-service student Mpendo Julius had this to say about his experience at Bishop Willis PTC:

"Thanks for the great support that you gave us both in class and outside class. You have really made us the country's best teachers. All appreciations coming from my team. I did my final school practice at Iganga Boys Primary School. God bless you abundantly."

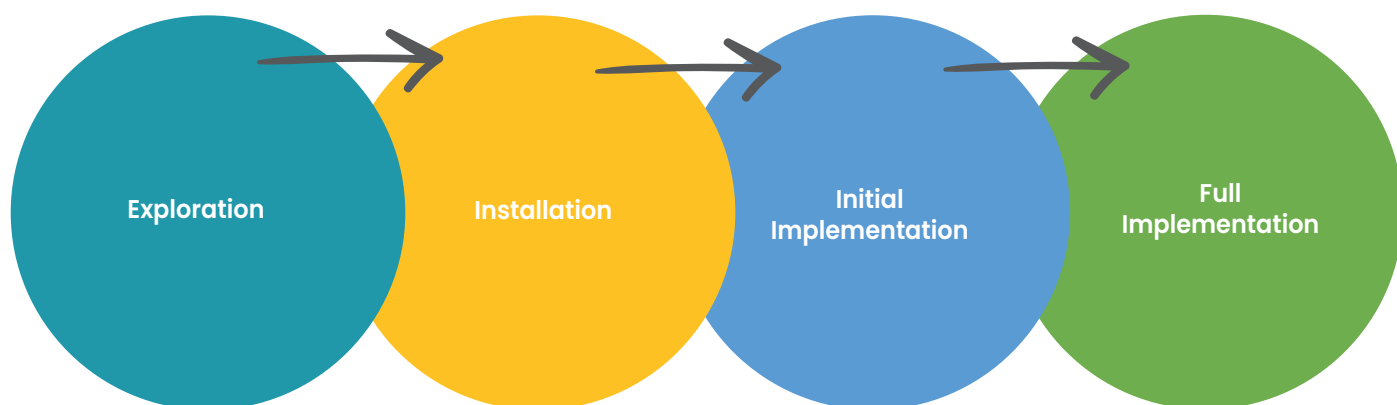


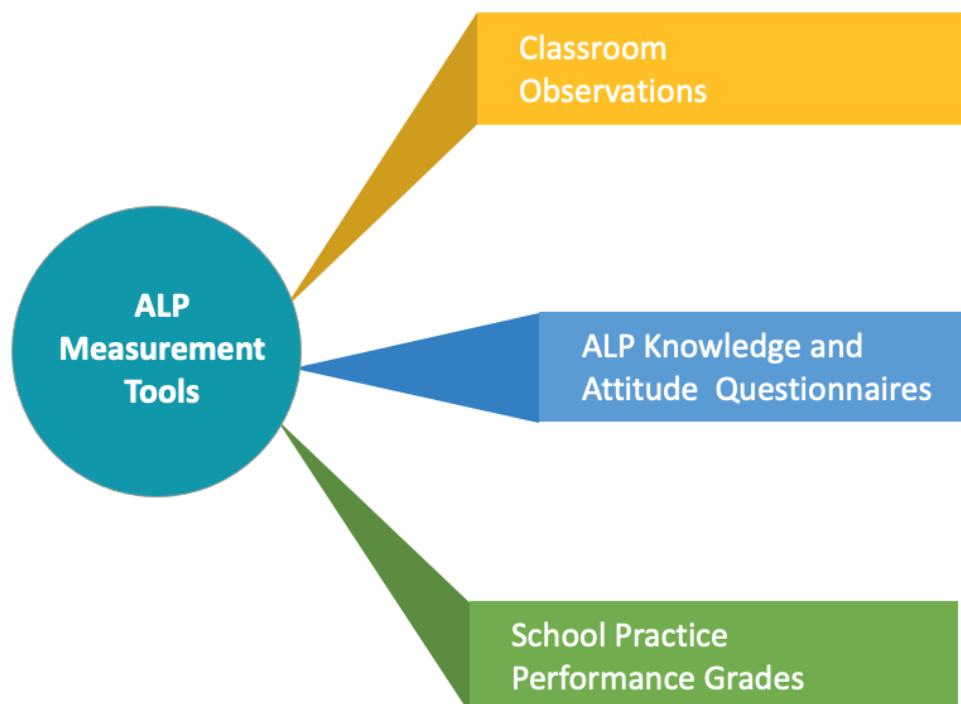
Monitoring ALP'S Impact: Measurement and Evaluation Goals and Design

M&E Design

The M&E design consists of two overarching approaches. First, the team will utilize implementation science as a grounding research and evaluation methodology. Implementation science has emerged out of a heightened emphasis on evidence-based practice that has proven to be effective in improving defined outcomes. Researchers and system-level change agents have broadly utilized the implementation science framework to support improved implementation practices across education quality initiatives. The application of an implementation science lens places an emphasis on the evaluation and reflection of the ALP and its professional development, coaching and teacher practice components. The evaluation will be organized to capture lessons learned throughout each stage of the implementation of the ALP. Feedback loops will be established between ALP leadership, researchers, tutors, teachers in training and teachers in-service so that adjustments can be made to support program success.

Stages of Implementation for the ALP





The evaluation will utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods and study the implementation of the active learning approach at two interactional levels: The SOUP School and PTCs. This represents two levels of the education system.

Research Questions

The proposed research questions help to set the stage for a better understanding of the impact of the ALP across three specific areas of change: change in attitude/mindset, change in knowledge, and change in practice.

Attitude

- a. How has professional development and technical support related to active learning changed participant attitude related to how children/adults learn and the role of the teacher?
- b. How has professional development and technical support related to active learning changed teacher disposition or mindset related to how children/adults learn and the role of the teacher?

Knowledge

- c. Has professional development and technical support related to active learning increased knowledge related to developmentally appropriate teaching practices and how students learn?

Practice

- d. Has professional development and technical support related to active Learning promoted change in teacher/tutor classroom practices (from teacher-directed learning to student-directed learning)?
- e. Are student outcomes improved when learning occurs in an active learning environment?

The quantitative evaluation incorporates data from:

- Teacher practice observations
- Pre- and post-surveys
 - o Teacher Attitude Questionnaire
 - o Knowledge Questionnaire

An additional measure of success is based on the reach of the ALP’s methods course and CPD series. In 2021-2022, over **900 in-service and pre-service teachers participated** in an active learning professional development event.

M&E Limitations

Extensive care is taken to address all aspects of threats to validity and reliability within the research design. Specific strategies are implemented to minimize error and increase reliability, including standardizing administration of all measures as well as training data collectors to ensure proper implementation of all measures.

The African SOUP ALP M&E Team

Executive Director: Michael Kaidhiwa
 ALP Director: Rebecca Mirembe
 ALP Manager: Kenneth Agaba

KPMG – Project Advisor

KPMG brings together an experienced global network of professionals through KPMG ESG, which is a global platform that delivers industry leading practices, research, and solutions to address the biggest issues facing our planet, having a real and positive impact today and for our collective future. KPMG is specifically working with The African SOUP to help measure the impact generated by The SOUP’s initiatives in Uganda.

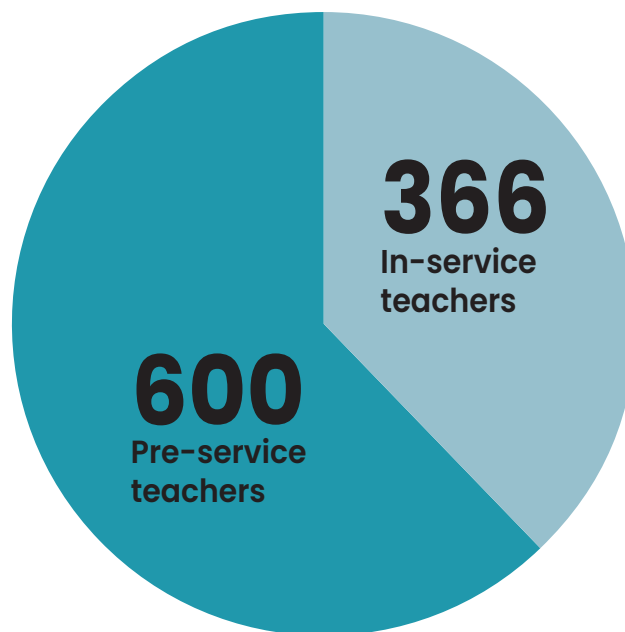
Research Partners and Advisors:

Laura J. Johns, Ph.D., Propulsion Squared
 Kelley Perkins, Ph.D., Rowan University
 Chad Dorn, Ph.D., Propulsion Squared
 Karen Ruprecht, Ph.D., Independent Consultant
 Humphrey Gusango, Ph.D., Kyambogo University

The African SOUP ALP Partners:

- Ministry of Education and Sports
- District local governments in Eastern Uganda
- Bishop Willis Core Primary Teachers College
- Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda
- African Leadership Academy
- KPMG
- Propulsion Squared
- UNITE

Total number of In-service and Pre-service teachers trained via ALP CPD and Methods Courses



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2022 ALP Impact: Revised Tool and Data Collection Pilot

Using classroom observations, K&A questionnaires, interviews and the review of teacher lesson plans, the ALP team is already seeing positive changes in teacher knowledge, attitude, and practice.

In 2021 and 2022, the ALP team began the process of refining its data collection process and tools. Initially, all data collection was completed with pen and paper by the ALP Director and the ALP Manager. In 2022, the team piloted the use of KOBO Toolbox for data collection, but after only one cycle of data collection, the tool did not prove to be user friendly or reliable for fieldwork.

The team began piloting the use of Survey Monkey's secure survey platform for data collection in mid-2022, and to date over 200 surveys and an initial pilot of 30 classroom observations have been completed with no technology issues and the benefit of instant reports and a data dashboard that can be shared with multiple users. Survey Monkey allows the ALP team to quickly send out links to pre- and post-questionnaires to in-service and pre-service teachers, allowing them to use their smartphones to complete the questionnaires in under 10 minutes. In



Students participate in an active learning session at Bishop Willis Primary Teachers College.

addition, trained data collectors log into the survey to complete classroom observations and have reported how easy the tool is to use on their tablets. Since the initial pilot of the classroom observation and the K&A questionnaires, the research team has modified questions to promote better reliability and validity.

Data from the pilot of the revised tools and new data collection process using Survey Monkey indicate a 75+% increase in knowledge and 75+% positive change in attitude when it comes to active learning practices among an initial group of pre-service and in-service teachers completing both pre- and post-assessments.

More discreet data from the pilot of our revised surveys and observation tool is included on the following pages and indicate positive outcomes for teachers who have participated in our pre-service methods course.

Active Learning Pre-service Teacher Classroom Observations

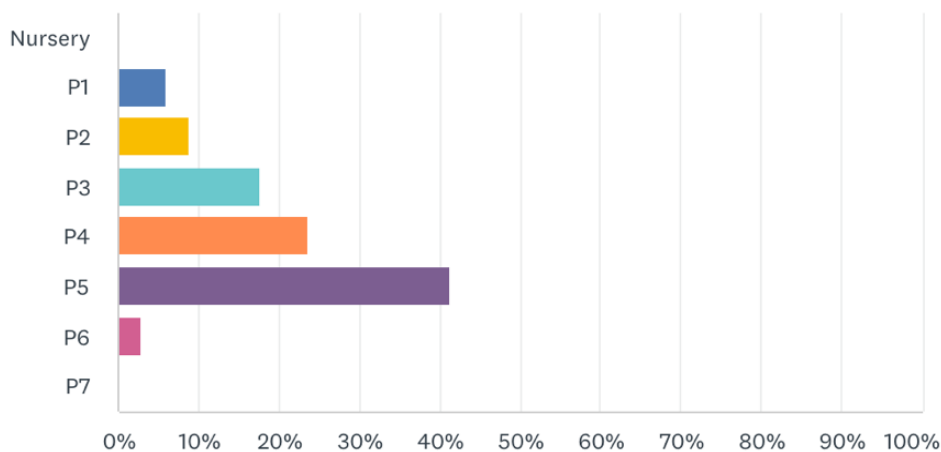
Post Completion of Methods Course

N=34

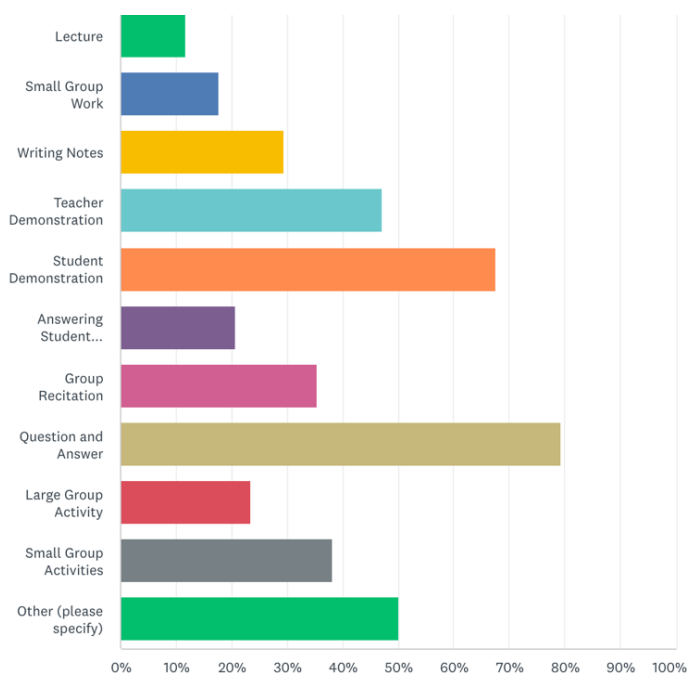
Number of School Observation Sites = 8

Data Collection Dates – November 2022

Answered: 34 Skipped: 0

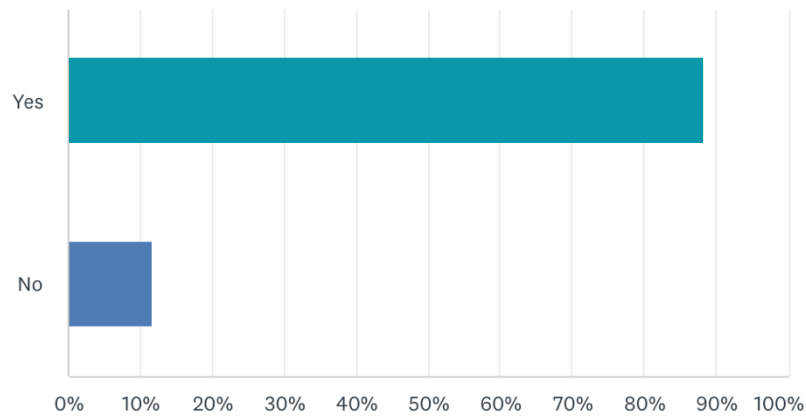


Lesson Delivery Methods Used During Observation



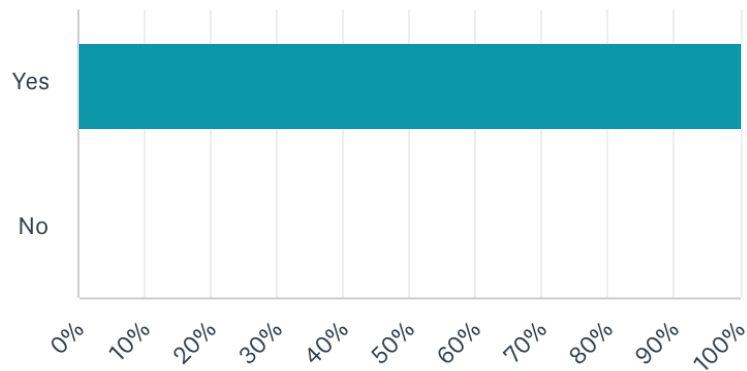
Are students given the chance to practice what they have learned?

Answered: 34 Skipped: 0



Do students appear to be engaged in lesson?

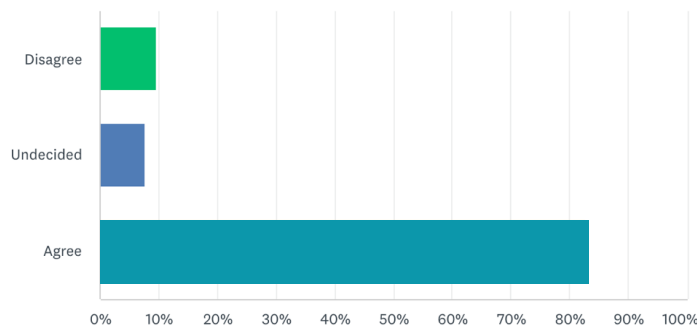
Answered: 34 Skipped: 0



Pre-service Teacher Active Learning Attitude Survey Post Completion of Methods Course N=168

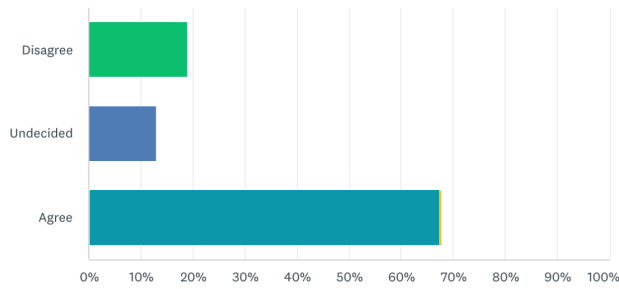
Students should be allowed to think of solutions to practical problems themselves before the teacher shows them how they are solved.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



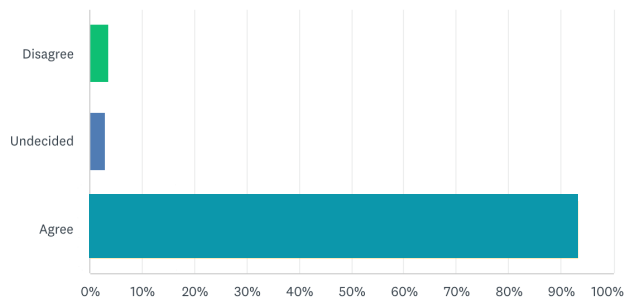
My role as a teacher is to facilitate students' own inquiry.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



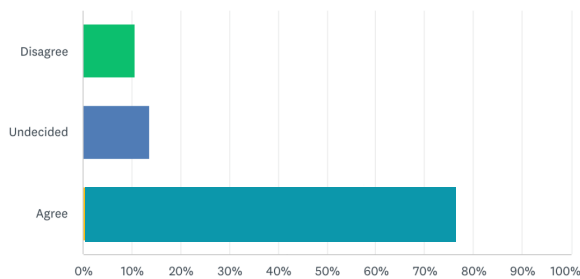
Knowledge should be shared between teachers and students.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



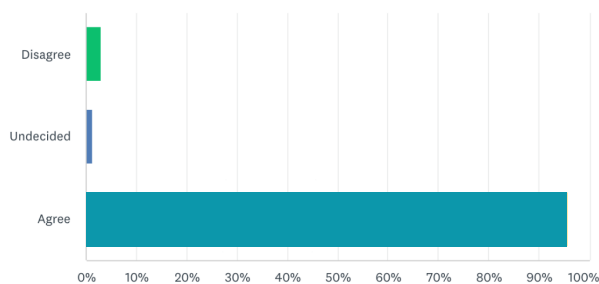
Thinking and reasoning processes are more important than specific curriculum content.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



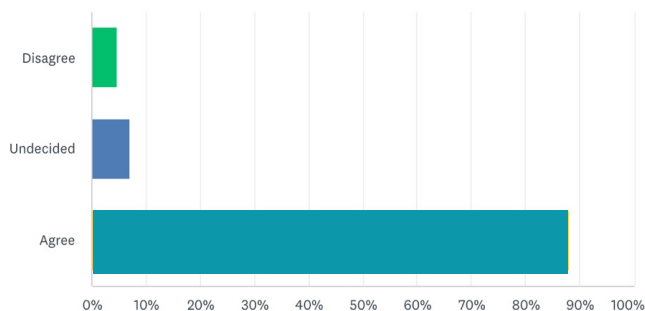
The teacher's role in the classroom is to be a facilitator or guide.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



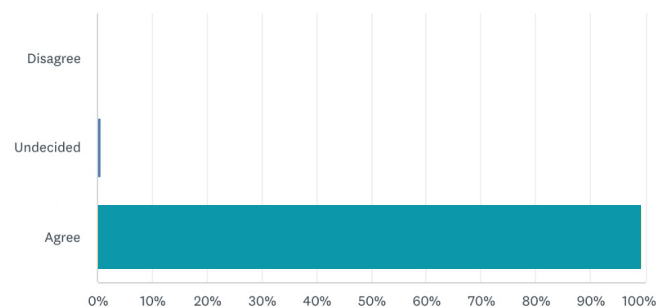
Education works best when it concentrates on thinking and understanding, rather than on rote memorization.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



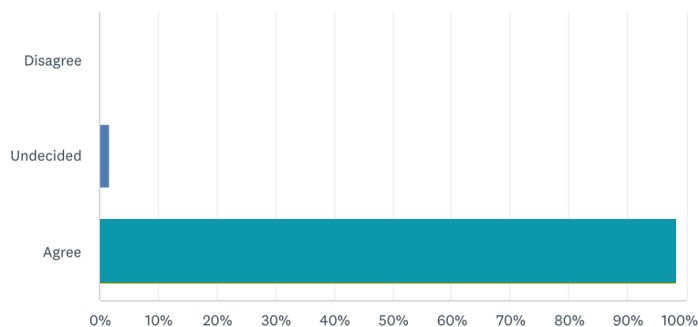
Active learning promotes social and communication skills by creating a classroom environment that emphasizes collaboration and exchange of ideas.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



Students learn more, and enjoy learning more when they are actively involved, rather than passive listeners.

Answered: 168 Skipped: 0



10

2023 and Beyond

Working in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Sports, the ALP's goal to improve teaching practices and learner experiences continues to focus on creating a supportive space for learning and inquiry by:

- Supporting the implementation of the national teacher policy in addressing the key needs in continuous capacity development on active learning for teachers in training and those already serving in the classroom
- Creating opportunities for continued professional development on active learning practices for coordinating center tutors and teacher educators
- Maintaining The SOUP School as a center of ALP excellence and innovation and creating opportunities for active learning demonstration and sharing with schools in Eastern Uganda

We continue to thank our incredible staff, funders, and partners who were part of actualizing our 2022 goals and who continue to make the ALP possible. We cannot wait to advance this important work in 2023 as we continue to equip teachers, engage learners and empower communities.

Children at The African SOUP School.



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