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Design Learning Spaces for the 21st Century Classroom

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Karmen Vrhar
Helsinki, Finland

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Flexibility of learning space

Look carefully at the posters below. Which desin principles have the designers used to capture your attention?

Classroom incorporates the use of both physical and virtual space. E.g. **Blended learning approach**	Flexible learning space allows **easy movement** and facilitates interactions among students and teachers.	Students can modify the learning space to fit their **needs**, strengthening student autonomy.

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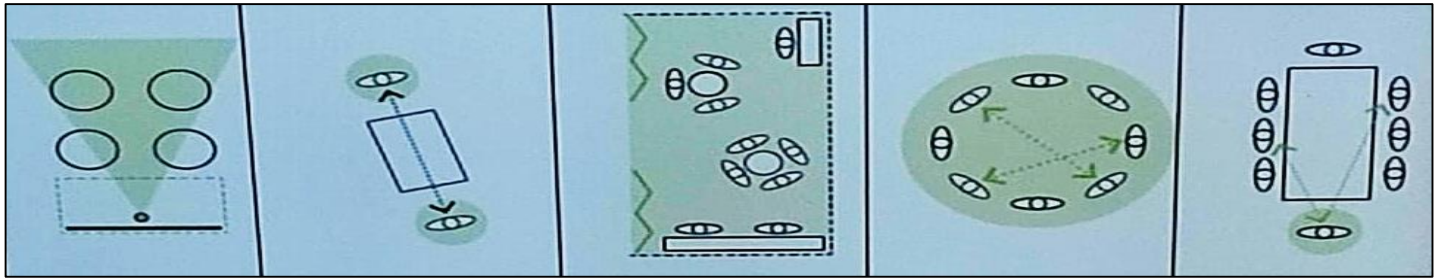
What type of learning activities work best in each setting?



1	2	3	4	5
Delivering	Applying	Creating	Communicating	Decision making

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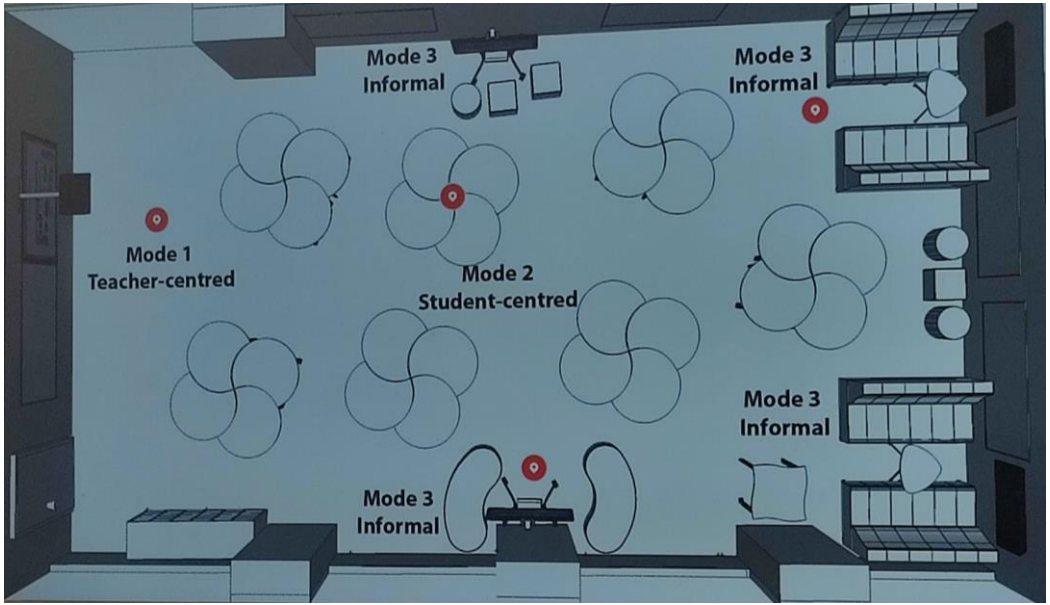
New Generation Learning Space Model (NGLS)



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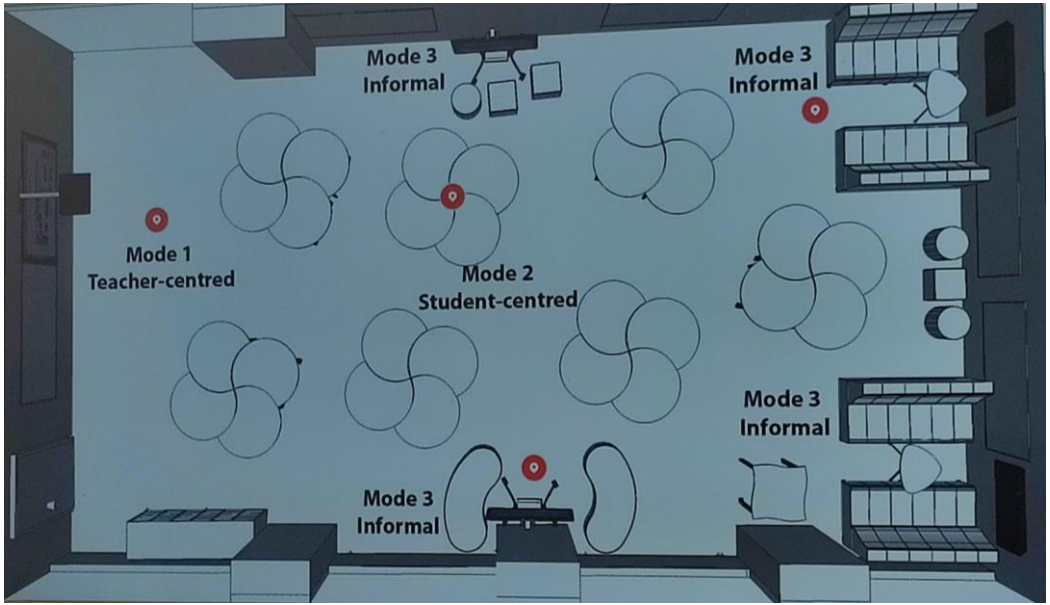
Group discussion

- What are the possible pros and cons/limitations of this model?
- How would you like to modify it to suit your teaching contexts?



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FLEXIBLE FURNITURE

Flexible seating and setting for collaborative learning

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1. Bean bag chairs

2. Exercise balls

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3. Working on the floor

4. Standing desks

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5. Mobile whiteborad

6. Wobble stools

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7. Chair on wheels

8. Switch table system

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Flexible furniture to meet our needs!

Benefits of flexible learning space:

- Personalized learning
- Collaboration – learning together
- Multiple ways of using the space and technology

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REAL-LIFE EXAMPLES

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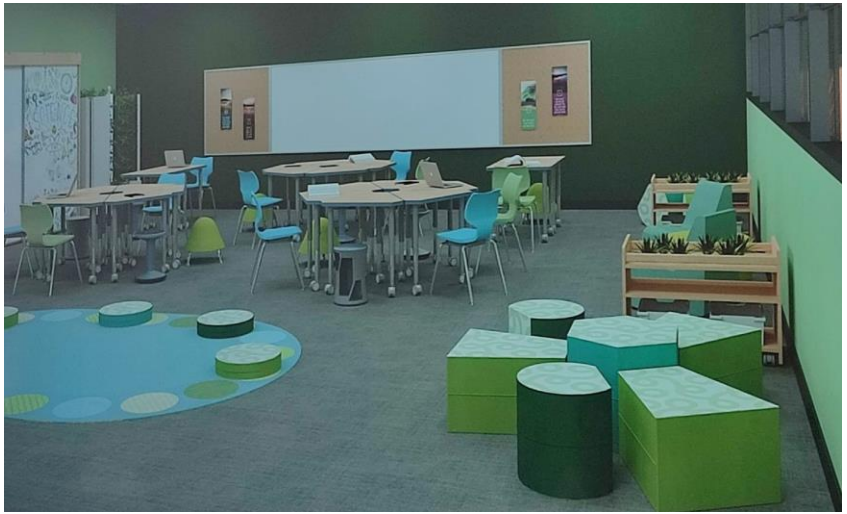

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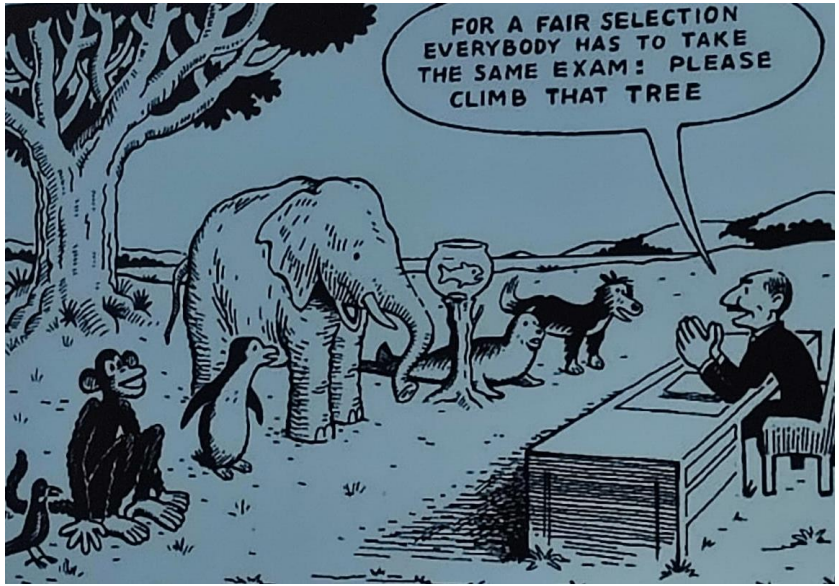
Social learning space

- Safe
- Supportive
- Inclusive
- Engaging
- Challenging



Why?
Multiple Intelligences!

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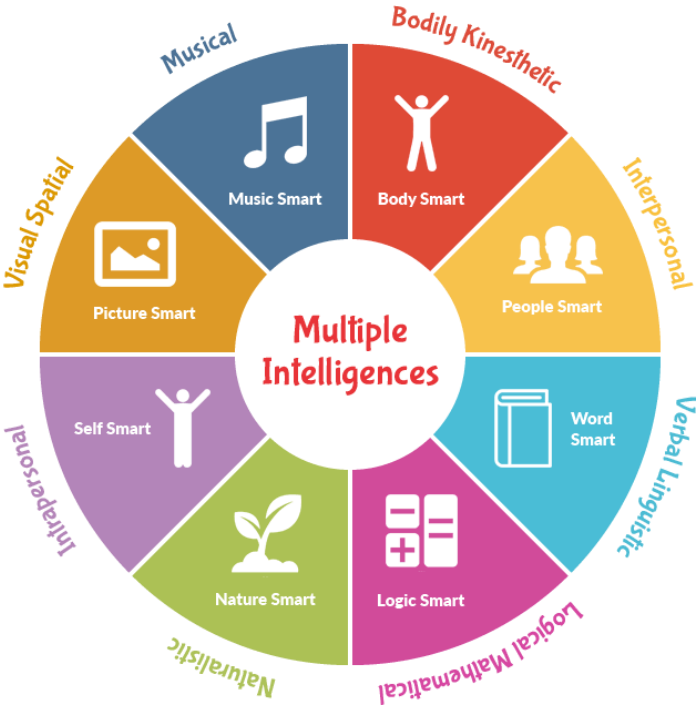

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TOOLS FOR MULTIPLE TYPES OF NEEDS

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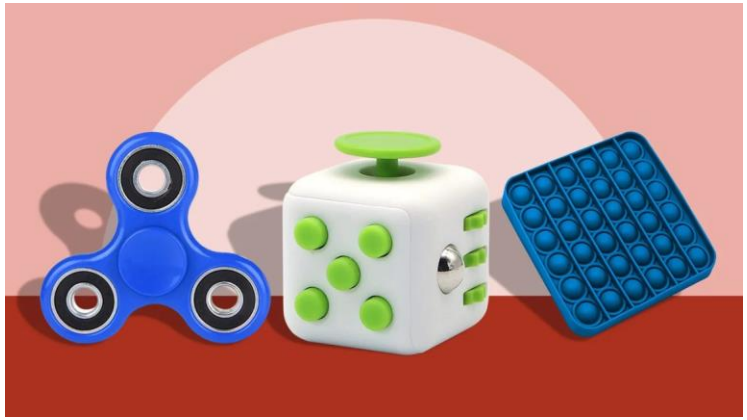
1. Fidgeting tools



2. Spiky tactile cushion

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3. Break Box / Sensory tool box

4. Visual timers

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5. Rubberband (or Bouncy Band)

6. Noise Cancelling Headsets

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7. Brain Breaks & Movement Breaks during the lesson

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8. Reading Corner & Relaxing Area

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9. Your words matter!

	INSTEAD OF...	TRY
	Be quiet.	Can you use a softer voice?
	What a mess!	It looks like you had fun! How can we clean up?
	Do you need help?	I'm here to help if you need me.
	I explained how to do this yesterday.	Maybe I can show you another way.
	Do I need to separate you?	Could you use a break?
	Stop crying.	It's okay to cry.
	Do you have any questions?	What questions do you have?
	You're OK.	How are you feeling?
	It's not that hard.	You can do hard things.
	We don't talk like that.	Please use kind words.

WE ARE TEACHERS

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HOW TO DESIGN YOUR LEARNING SPACES?

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7 Main Colour Groups in Education Spaces

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Plants & Greenery

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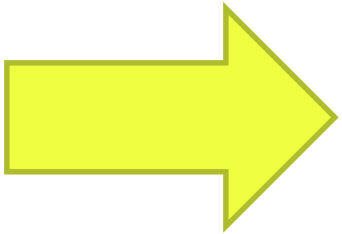
Think about...



- Temperature
- Lights
- Colors
- Material placement
- Classroom routines
- Needs in your classroom

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ceWeIKLfgv8&ab_channel=LienFoundation

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DESIGN THE POSITIVE

Positive Education

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Positive Education

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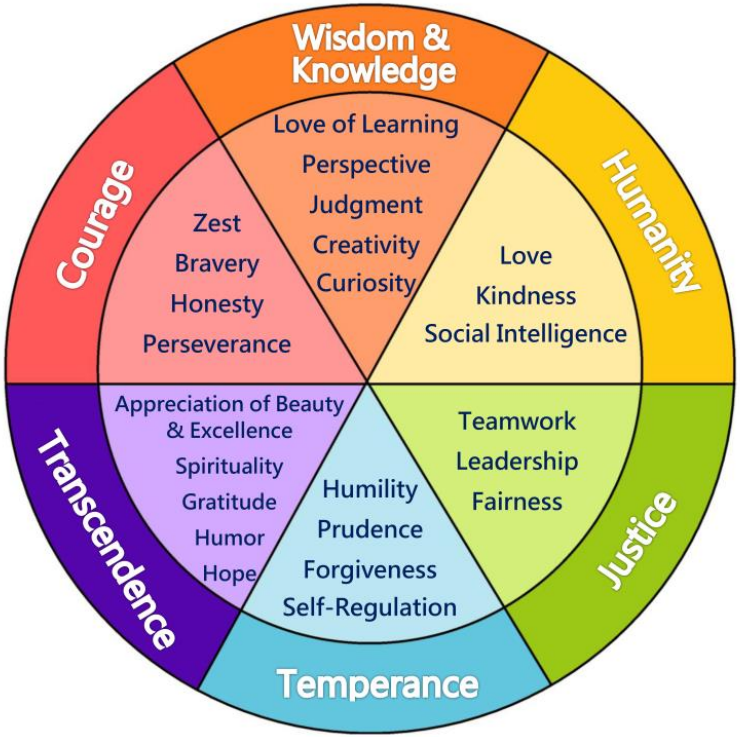

Character Strengths are the positive qualities individuals have – as reflected in their thoughts, feelings and actions – that promote the well-being of themselves and others.

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HOW WE STUDY AND LEARN?

The Flipped Classroom

Blended Learning

Universal Design for Learning?

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UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING

Dr. Katie Novak

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Universal Design for Learning: 3 principles

Engagement

Offer options and supports to stimulate motivation and sustained enthusiasm for learning

Representation

Present information in different ways to support access and understanding

Action & expression

Offer options and supports to all so everyone can create, learn, and share

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FUTURE CLASSROOM LAB (FCL)

- By European Schoolnet
- EU funded projects since 2012
- Over 2500 classrooms across 20 European countries
- Rethink learning space design, innovative pedagogy and the use of ICT

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The Future Classroom Lab is formed by **six different learning zones**. Each space highlights a specific area of learning and teaching and helps to rethink important aspects related to them: physical space and layout, resources, and tools, changing roles of student and teacher, and how to support different learning styles. The learning zones reflect the many ways in which flexible space design and educational technology can facilitate active learning pedagogy and contribute to the development of 21st century key competences.

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INTERACT

The Interact classroom reminds both teachers and students to participate actively in the learning process and interact with one another.

Interactivity can be enhanced with the use of technology, which can encourage at the same time a more differentiated instruction.

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EXCHANGE

In the **Exchange zone,** students' learning is enhanced by teamwork, learning by playing, brainstorming and peer-to-peer collaboration.

This can be either face-to-face or online, synchronus or asynchronus.

Sharing of ideas is encouraged and collaboration is facilitated.

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PRESENT

The Present zone brings the communicative dimension into the learning process.

The present zone is a dedicated area for interactive presentations that, through its design and layout, encourages interaction and feedback.

Online publication and sharing is also encouraged.

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INVESTIGATE

The Investigate zone promotes inquiry and project-based learning to enhance students' critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

The flexible furniture and the technological equipment available support the learning-by-doing concept.

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CREATE

The Create zone encourages creativity. Students work on realistic knowledge-building activities.

Interpretation, analysis, teamwork, and evaluation are important parts of the creative process.

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DEVELOP

The Develop zone is a space for informal learning and self-reflection where students can work independently at their own pace using personal learning devices, learning diaries and portfolios.

It encourages students to develop metacognitive skills on their own and promotes lifelong learning strategies.

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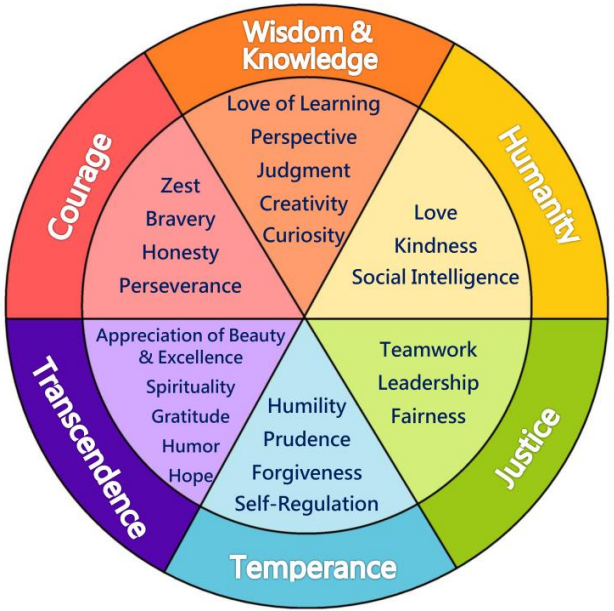
Creative Activity: Gallery of Strengths



- Choose one of character strenghts that describes you as a person (something that you use a lot in your everyday life, something that is natural and easy for you and you feel it's your strength)
- Draw it – how you use that strength in your everyday life? How you see that strength?

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Activity: Draw your learning space/classroom

- Draw your classroom or the learning space you have in your working premises/at home.
- List down three things you would like to change or modify in the future.

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Activity: Dream Island

- Imagine your dream island – how it looks like? Who lives there? What features your island has?
- Disaster approaching! – there is a disaster approaching your island. Try to find a way to survive. Don’t destroy your island. Make modifications and creative solutions to stay stafe!

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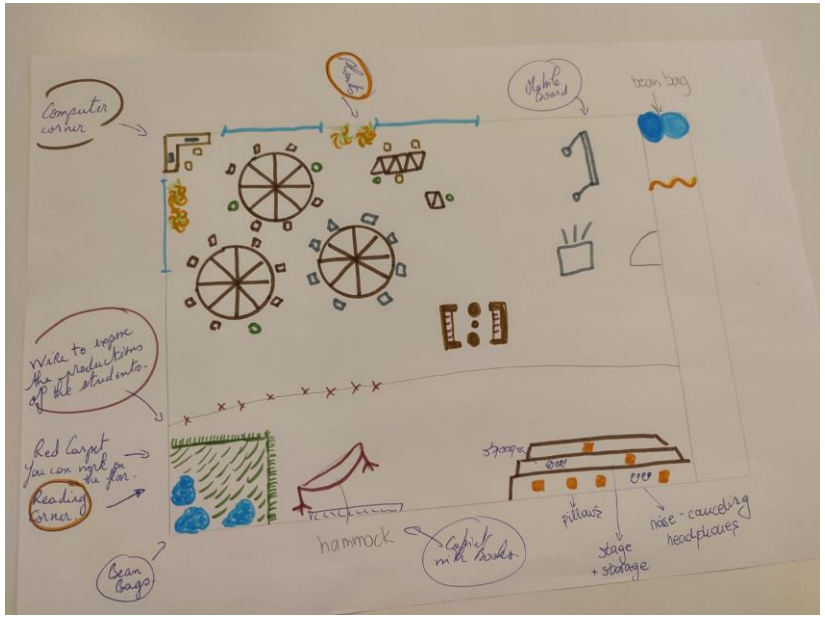
Activity: Let's re-design our learning space



- List down the benefits and struggles you currently have. What can you change? Who to involve to the process (people, funding)? Are the changes minor (use what you already have) or would you like to participate to bigger project?
- Think about the physical environment, social environment and learning environment.

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