

# A-LEVEL ECONOMICS TEACHING APPROACH

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## OBJECTIVES

This poster summarizes the main ideas behind the teaching approach of the A-level system. It puts the focus on:

- Independent learning
- Problem solving skills
- Writing skills
- Adequate teaching material

## CORE IDEAS

*Independent knowledge acquisition.* Learners acquire knowledge on their own and the material used is designed to support that.

*Practice problem solving.* In the classroom, the teacher's role is to support learner's problem solving practice, including applying knowledge and analysing a real-world issue.

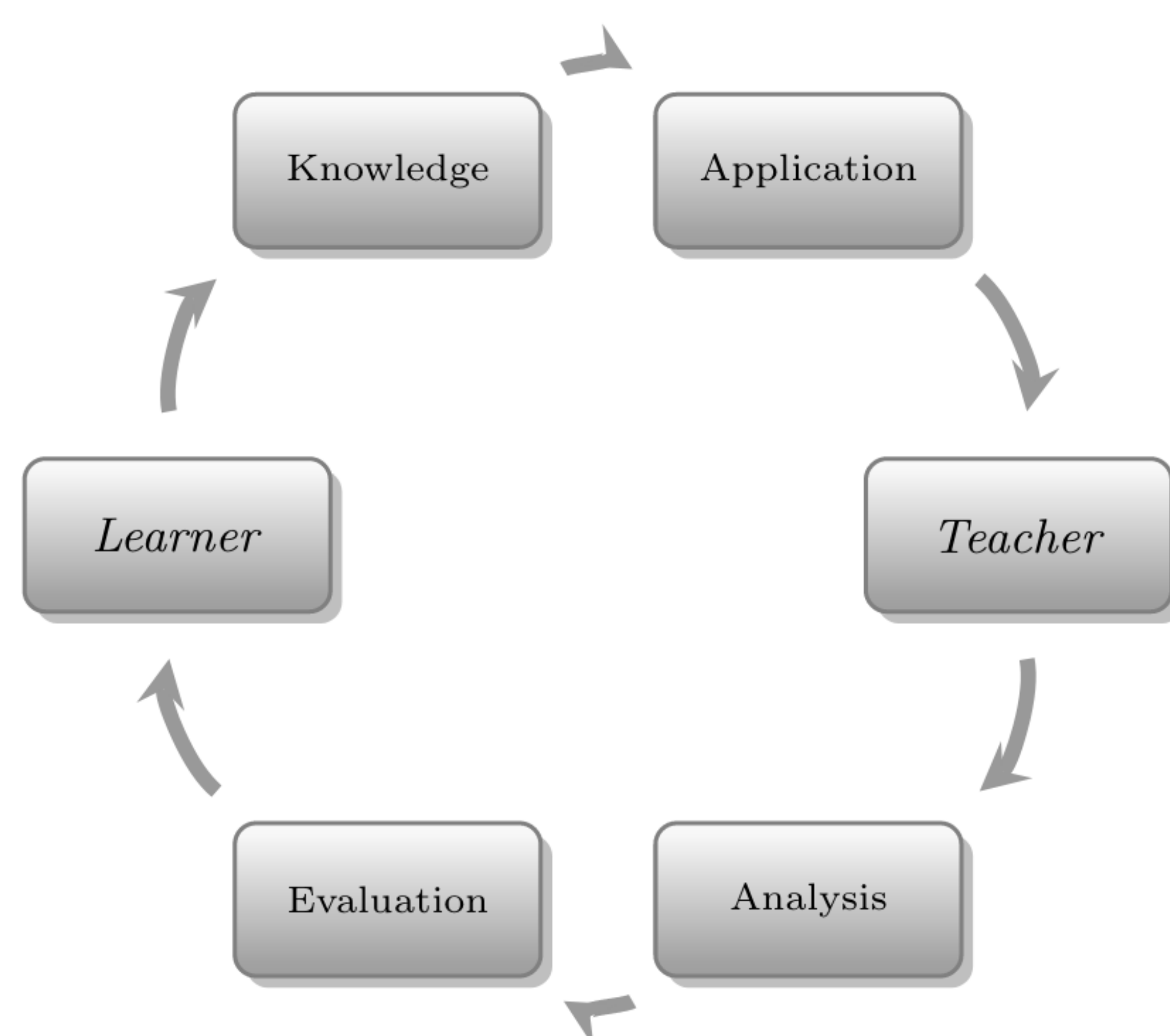


Figure 1: Teacher-learner interaction

## MATERIALS

The following materials are used to teach the syllabus:

- *coursebook*: theory, extracts from newspapers, questions (with teacher's solutions) [1]
- *workbook*: exercises (with solutions available to learners) [2]
- *revision guide*: summary of theory (*what learners memorize ...*) [3]

Additional material is provided in order to support learners and teachers:

- *learner guide*: explains how learners should organize and plan their school year
- *scheme of work*: provides suggestions to teachers for preparing their lesson plans
- *student answers*: tells learners how an answer should look like, and helps teachers to calibrate their marking [4]

## ASSESSING LEARNERS

Assessments are mainly based on essay writing. Knowledge (Kn) and application (App) will gradually become less important over the years, while essay writing, which requires analytical skills (An) and making a clear judgement (Ev), gain more importance.

Level	Kn	App	An	Ev
3 <sup>ème</sup> (IGCSE)	15	50	25	10
2 <sup>ème</sup> (AS-level)	30	30	20	20
1 <sup>ère</sup> (A-level)	20	20	30	30

Table 1: Assessment weights (in %)

## METHODS

A typical lesson is composed of a short, 10-15 minute presentation of the theory which is taken from the coursebook. For the rest of the lesson (35-40 minutes), learners solve problems. These problems are taken from the coursebook, which includes questions that teachers have solutions for. Based on these solutions, teachers provide support to learners who require it throughout the lesson. Support is in form of feedback on learner's chain of reasoning or on their written productions.

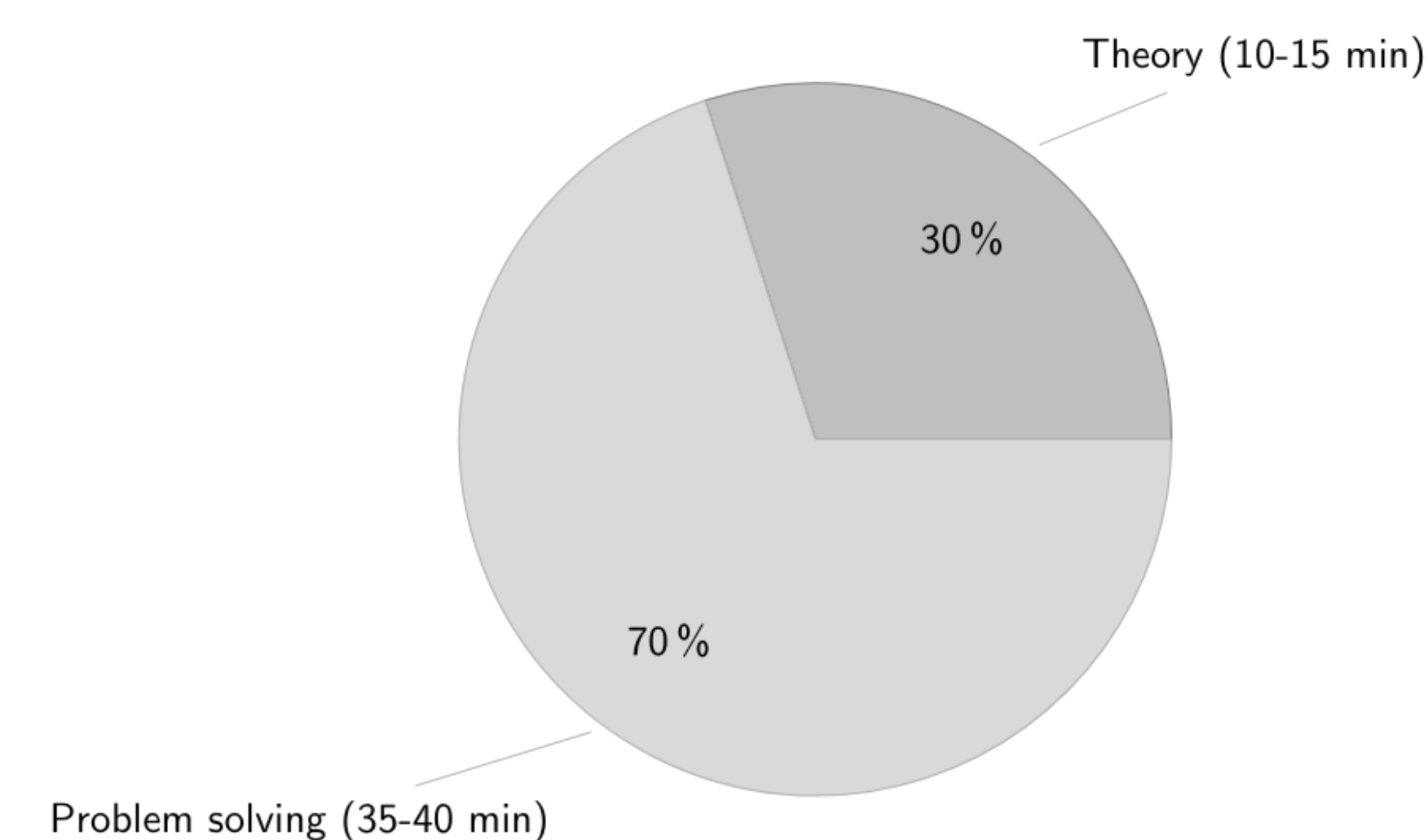


Figure 2: Typical lesson

## ECONOMICS ESSAY

Over three years, learners are assessed over their ability to analyse and evaluate real-world issues. The aim is to be able to express ideas in form of a structured economics essay.

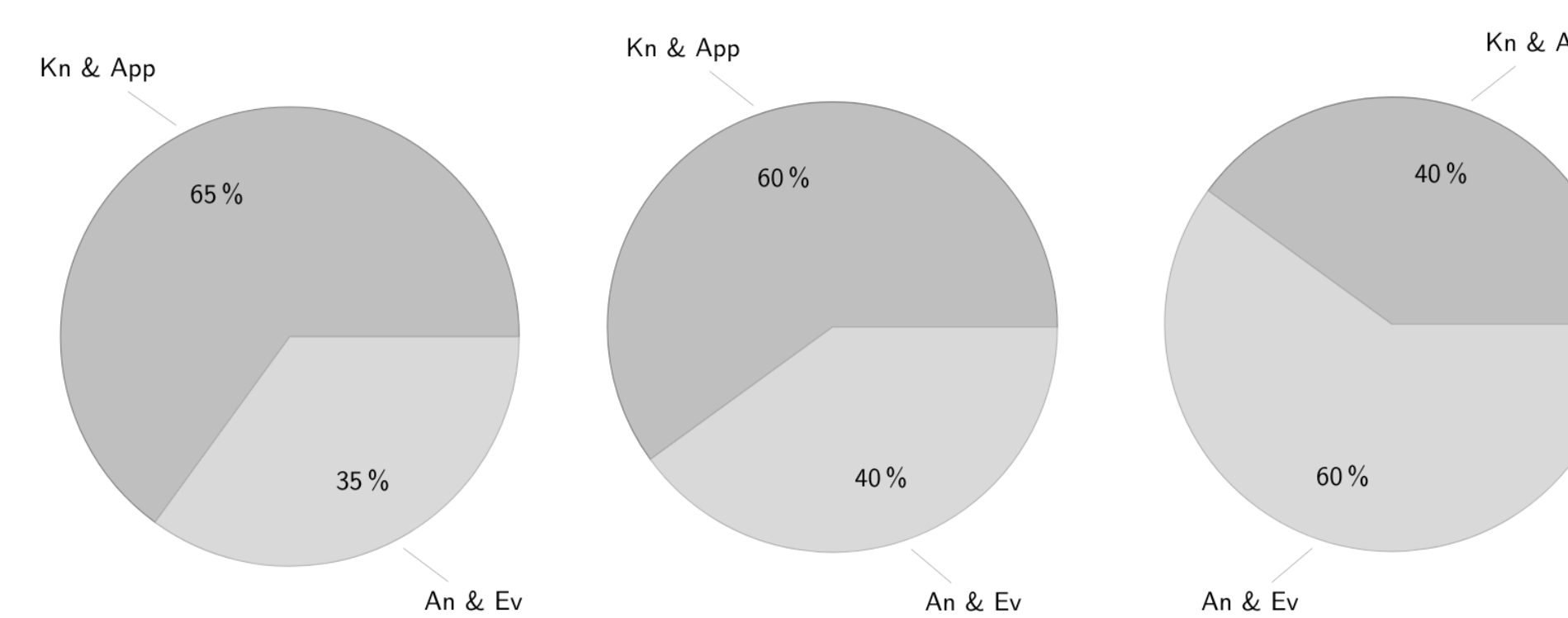


Figure 3: Increasing share of analysis for a) IGCSE b) AS-level c) A-level

## CONCLUSION

The main focus of this teaching approach is to develop the **problem solving skills** of learners. It is conditional on the ability of **independent learning**. The role of the teacher is not to transmit knowledge but rather to support learners in their use of theory to solve real-world issues. This approach also relies on good **writing skills**, which is the basis of assessment.

Finally, this whole approach relies heavily on well-designed **teaching material**. Books and other material is designed such that learners are able to study on their own with minimal support from the teachers. The role of the teacher is essentially to provide **feedback** on learners' chains of reasoning and their written productions.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Colin Bamford and Susan Grant. *Cambridge International AS and A Level Economics Coursebook with CD-ROM*. Cambridge University Press, 2014.
- [2] Colin Bamford. *Cambridge International AS and A Level Economics Workbook*. Cambridge University Press, 2018.
- [3] Susan Grant. *Cambridge International AS and A level economics revision guide*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- [4] Pearson qualifications | edexcel, btec, lcci and edi | pearson qualifications. <https://qualifications.pearson.com>. Accessed: 2021-02-20.

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