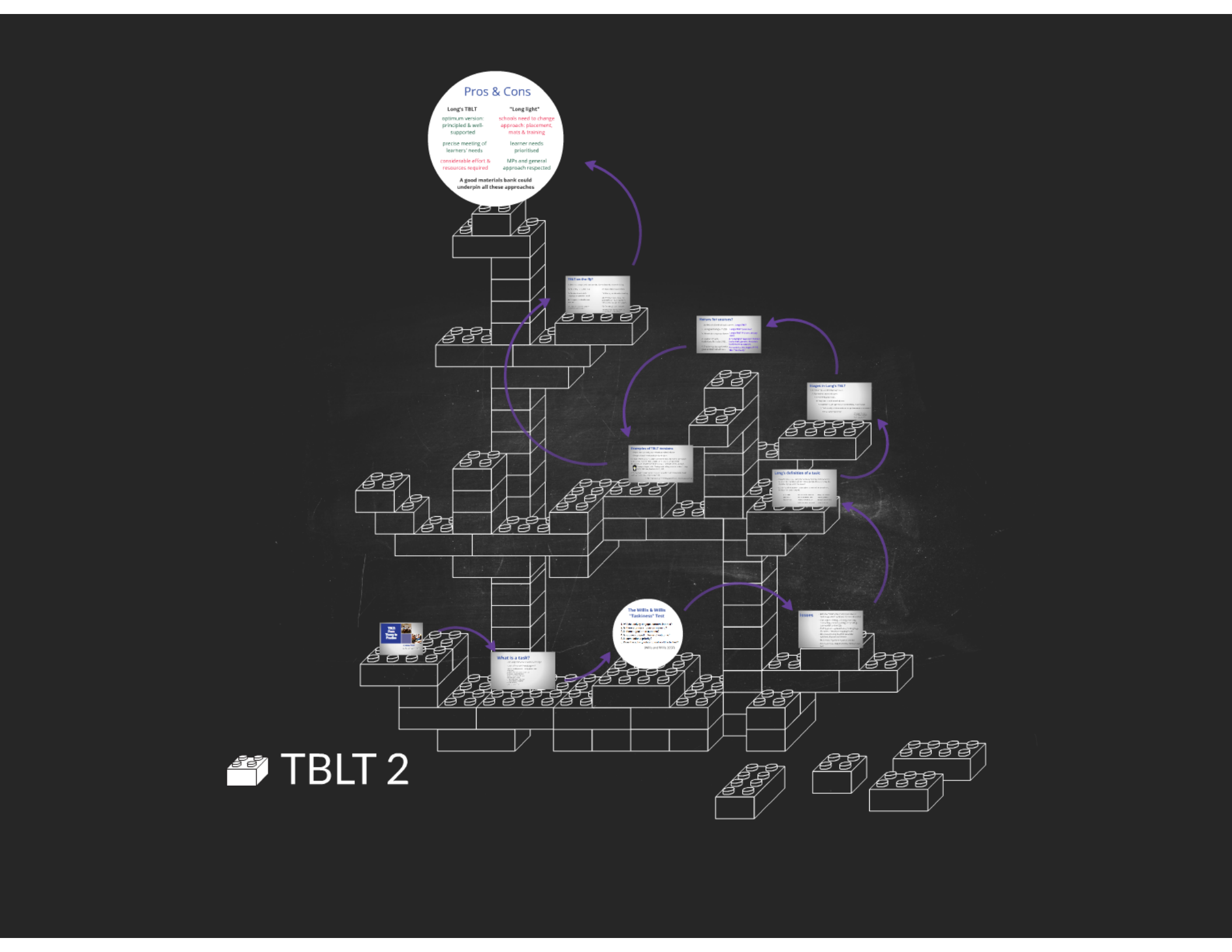
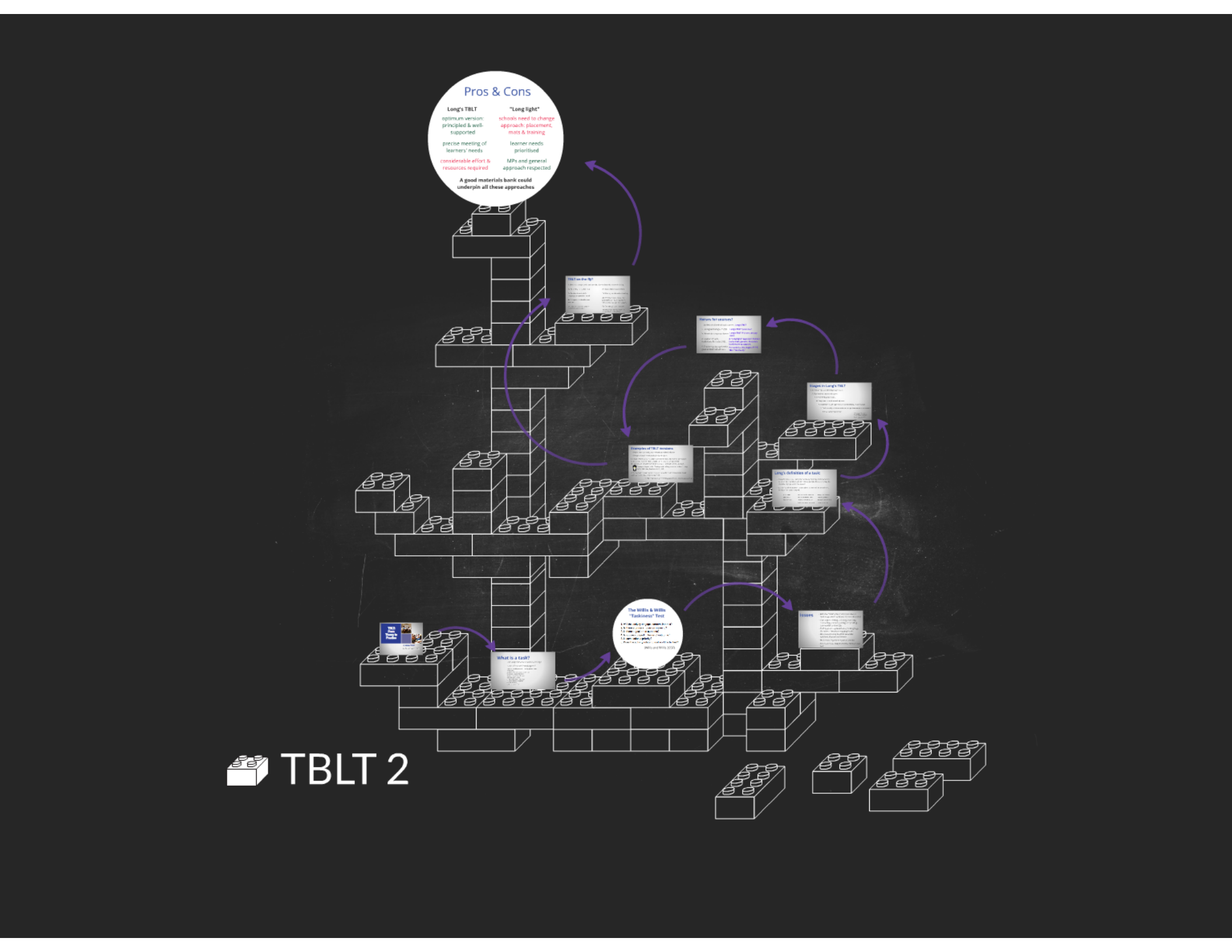

Pros & Cons
Long's TBLT
optimum version: principled & well-supported
precise meeting of learners' needs
considerable effort & resources required
"Long light"
schools need to change approach: placement, mats & training
learner needs prioritised
MPs and general approach respected
A good materials bank could underpin all these approaches
TBLT 2


Pros & Cons
Long's TBLT
optimum version: principled & well-supported
precise meeting of learners' needs
considerable effort & resources required
"Long light"
schools need to change approach: placement, mats & training
learner needs prioritised
MPs and general approach respected
A good materials bank could underpin all these approaches
TBLT 2

TBLT: From Theory to Practice

2: Which TBLT?

Geoff Jordan & Neil McMillan

What is a task?

- a trendy name for a practice activity?
- one of Bruton's "9 task types?"

1. problem-solving, decision-making, spontaneous role-playing
2. information/opinion gap resolution
3. cued prompted interaction
4. question-answer exchanges
5. prepared role plays
6. focused receptive language
7. focused written language
8. understanding
9. written expression

"Based on such a miscellany of activities, skills, modalities, pedagogic procedures, language, conversational moves, and cognitive processes, it would be impossible to define task or task type or know what would and would not qualify as examples of either." (Long 2016)

The Willis & Willis "Taskiness" Test

1. Will the activity engage learners' interest?
2. Is there a primary focus on meaning?
3. Is there a goal or an outcome?
4. Is success judged in terms of outcome?
5. Is completion a priority?
6. Does the activity relate to real world activities?'

(Willis and Willis 2007)

Think of the busiest day you have had recently. Work in pairs.

Tell your partner all the things you did.

- Decide which of you had the busiest day, then tell the class about it.
- Decide who in the whole class had the most hectic day (and say why.)
- Finally, from memory, write a list of the things one person did on their busiest day, and, without revealing their name, read it out to the class (or display it on the wall) to see how many people can remember whose day it was.

The Willis & Willis "Taskiness" Test

1. Will the activity engage learners' interest?
2. Is there a primary focus on meaning?
3. Is there a goal or an outcome?
4. Is success judged in terms of outcome?
5. Is completion a priority?
6. Does the activity relate to real world activities?'

(Willis and Willis 2007)

Issues

- With the "taskification" of CB activities, a "task-supported" syllabus (TSLT) is advocated
- 6 task types - listing, ordering, matching, comparing, problem-solving, story-telling - commonly found in CBs
- TSLT approach epitomised by Cutting Edge CB series - "structure-trapping" tasks
- Also advocated by Rod Ellis (modular syllabus), Klapper and Waters
- Problems of synthetic syllabus remain
- Tasks, on close analysis, fail the Willises' own test

Long's definition of a task:

- Long defines a task using the ordinary meaning of the word to refer to “the hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play, and in between”.
- A task is a piece of work undertaken for oneself or for others, freely or for some reward.

sorting letters	making an airline reservation	buying a pair of shoes
typing a letter	making a hotel reservation	weighing a patient
filling out a form	finding a street destination	borrowing a library book
	helping someone cross a road	taking a driving test

Stages in Long's TBLT

1. Needs analysis to identify target tasks
2. Classify into target task types
3. Derive Pedagogic tasks
4. Sequence to task-based syllabus
5. Implement with appropriate methodology & pedagogy
6. Task-based, criterion-referenced, performance assessment
7. Evaluate programme

"TBLT is still a relatively recent innovation—one whose adoption requires expertise on the part of course designers and classroom teachers, and a considerable investment of time and effort if it is to be successful. Success will be more likely in programs housed in institutions with a stable, qualified, and experienced teaching staff and a relatively stable student population (thereby making an NA and materials development worth the effort), located in societies where language learning is a serious matter and recognized and supported as such. Increasing numbers of school systems, universities, and government language programs in many countries meet those requirements. Programs for refugees and migrant workers would be very well served by TBLT, too, but often lack adequate staffing, funding, and other resources, and so require the assistance of volunteers."
Long (2016)

"TBLT is still a relatively recent innovation—one whose adoption requires expertise on the part of course designers and classroom teachers, and a considerable investment of time and effort if it is to be successful. Success will be more likely in programs housed in institutions with a stable, qualified, and experienced teaching staff and a relatively stable student population (thereby making an NA and materials development worth the effort), located in societies where language learning is a serious matter and recognized and supported as such. Increasing numbers of school systems, universities, and government language programs in many countries meet those requirements. Programs for refugees and migrant workers would be very well served by TBLT, too, but often lack adequate staffing, funding, and other resources, and so require the assistance of volunteers."
Long (2016)

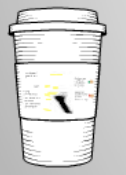
Horses for courses?

- 1. Well-funded institutional courses: **Long's TBLT**
- 2. Immigrant/refugee ES(O)L: **Long's TBLT *possible***
- 3. Private/in-company classes: **Long's TBLT IF client can pay for it**
- 4. Smaller schools/ institutions that adopt TBLT: **A "Long light" approach: NA but tasks more generic. Materials bank/training support.**
- 5. Teachers going against the grain in CB-driven schools: **Persuade Ls, NA, Dogme/T-T-T, TBLT "on-the-fly"**

Examples of TBLT versions

- Reject the synthetic, coursebook-provided syllabus
- Respect Long's methodological principles

1. Long's TBLT: tasks in syllabus derived from representative "target tasks", constructed from samples of real tasks analysed for discourse, which were identified using a thorough needs analysis.



Example target task: "Buying and selling a cup of coffee" (Long 2015, 198-200; Bartlett 2005, 338)

2. "Long-Light": more generic tasks curated in a local materials bank such as that of the cooperative SLB.

3. TBLT "on the fly": T-T-T/Dogme: T & Ls co-construct task.

Avoidance of generic term

Ellipsis

Widely attested forms

- 284 interactions recorded
- 168 transcribed and analysed

s: Hi. Can I help you?
c: Can I get a grande latté with vanilla?
s: Did you want that blended or on the rocks?
c: Blended, I guess
s: 2% or skimmed?
c: Uhm 2%
s: 2%. OK. Any whipped cream?
c: Sorry?
s: Did you want whipped cream on that?
c: Yes
s: Anything else?
c: No, that's it. Oh no. Can I get- are those scones?
s: Yeah, we have cranberry and blueberry
c: I think I'll have one of those (pointing)
s: A blueberry scone?
c: Yeah. The one in the back
s: This one
c: Yeah that's it
s: Ok. For here or to go?
c: To go
s: Ok. That'll be three forty-eight
c: (hands over money)
s: How about a frequent user card?
c: Oh sure
s: Thank you. 52 cents is your change (hands over change). And your card. Ok. It'll be ready for you in just one minute
c: Thank you
s: There you go (hands over drink). Have a nice day
c: You too

Deictics & pronouns

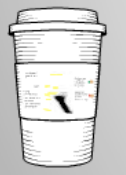
On how to use in class -no prescriptions but principles

Substantial amount of work to get to classroom stage

Examples of TBLT versions

- Reject the synthetic, coursebook-provided syllabus
- Respect Long's methodological principles

1. Long's TBLT: tasks in syllabus derived from representative "target tasks", constructed from samples of real tasks analysed for discourse, which were identified using a thorough needs analysis.



Example target task: "Buying and selling a cup of coffee" (Long 2015, 198-200; Bartlett 2005, 338)

2. "Long-Light": more generic tasks curated in a local materials bank such as that of the cooperative SLB.

3. TBLT "on the fly": T-T-T/Dogme: T & Ls co-construct task.

TBLT on the fly?

1. Identify a target task from previous NA or immediate need arising.

2a Set roles, Ls try the task

3a Feedback on task & language, responsive work

4a Ls repeat task with new partner

Test Teach Test - cf. Brumfit's "Deep End Strategy" but roots are deeper ...

2b Find video of task online

3b Watch, check understanding

4b Generate transcript, key word/phrase list, Ls work on relevant language, exchanges

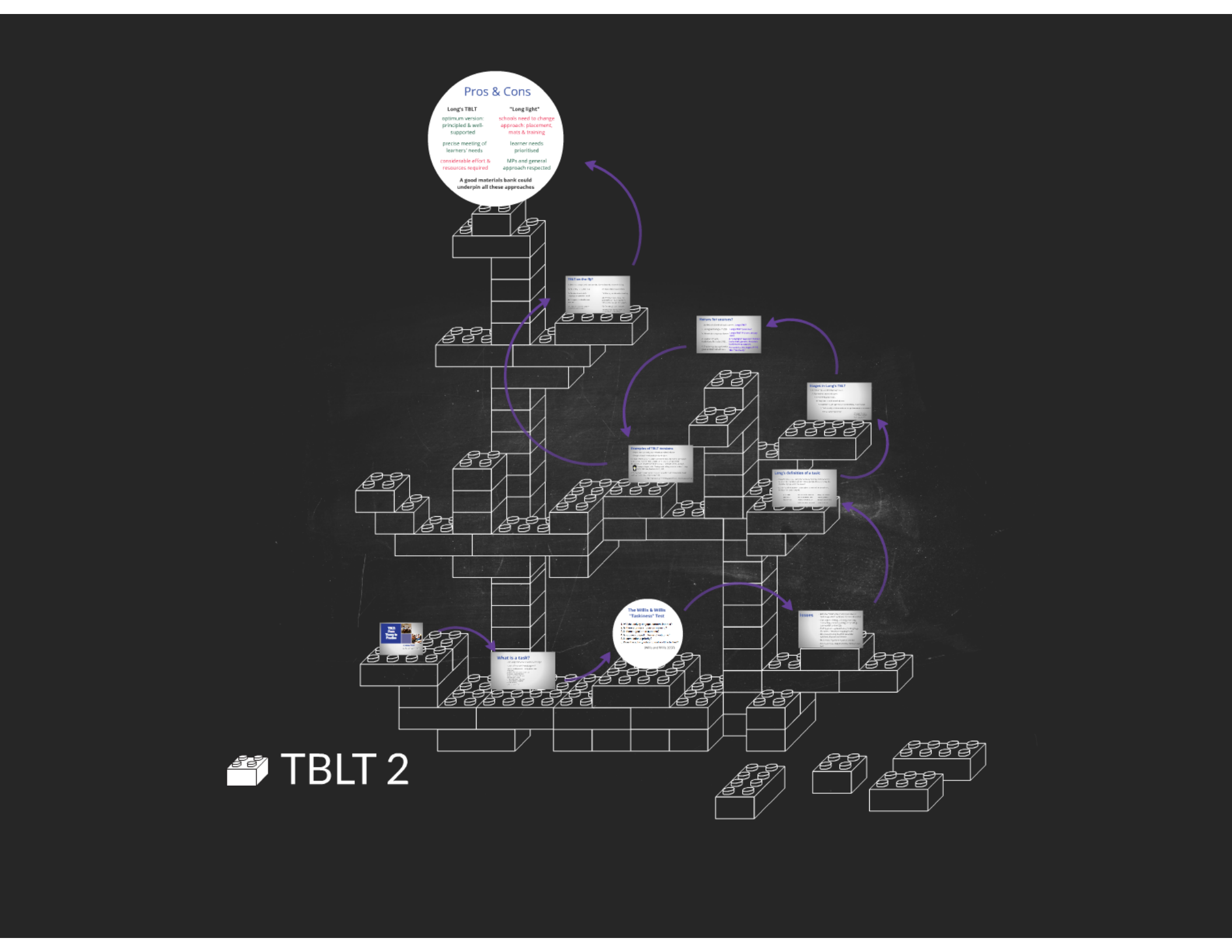
5b Set roles, Ls try the task

Adapted from Scott Thornbury's post "E is for eCoursebook" - with apologies!

Pros & Cons

Long's TBLT	"Long light"
optimum version: principled & well-supported	schools need to change approach: placement, mats & training
precise meeting of learners' needs	learner needs prioritised
considerable effort & resources required	MPs and general approach respected

A good materials bank could underpin all these approaches


Pros & Cons
Long's TBLT
optimum version: principled & well-supported
precise meeting of learners' needs
considerable effort & resources required
"Long light"
schools need to change approach: placement, mats & training
learner needs prioritised
MPs and general approach respected
A good materials bank could underpin all these approaches
TBLT 2