Definition
A structured activity is an activity in which the learners participate, usually working together. It is structured, though not led, by the facilitator. Structured activities are the “bridge” of discovery between knowledge and skills.

Purpose
To help learners engage with content at a deeper level by thinking through a concept, inferring from it to generate principles, and applying it to different situations or to “discover” the content that they already know.

How to proceed
1. Form learner groups.
2. Post instructions for their work together. The instructions will explain
   - what they will do (answer a set of questions, build an object, discuss a subject, and the like)
   - what result they will produce, such as a presentation, a report, or a model
   - how much time they have to complete the assignment.
3. Start the activity.
4. Monitor the learners’ progress; walk around the room and answer any questions.
5. Give a time warning.
6. When time is up, ask groups to produce or present their results.
7. Conduct a debriefing discussion.

Appropriate to use when . . .
The learners know enough about the content to accomplish the task. They have learned the content in a previous learning activity, or they already knew it before they began the course. The activity is facilitated first, before the content is revealed, so the learners have “first crack” at discovering the content for themselves. After all the groups have reported, present the content in a debriefing format to ensure that all the points have been made.

Tips
- Structured activities can encompass a variety of activities, not just a small group discussion. Some examples of structured activities, in order of increasing learner involvement, include
  - solo work: learners are given an assignment to work on alone (such as fill out a questionnaire or analyze a problem), then discuss it with others.

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The Structured Bridge Activity

- **small group discussion**: small groups of learners are given a topic to discuss or questions to answer; they work together, and then present their results.

- **group inquiry**: learners are provided with content, and they work together to identify questions they have about the content.

- **information search**: learners are given reference materials and must search through them for answers to questions presented by the facilitator. In a blended learning experience (in which face-to-face learning and e-learning are combined), the “search” may involve using the Internet to conduct inquiries or to download information.

- **small group assignment/problem-solving**: small groups of learners are given a problem to solve, a situation to analyze, a list of principles or guidelines to develop in response to a problem, and so on.

- **peer teaching**: small groups of learners study the material, then teach it to the other participants or groups within the class. Determining the teaching methodology is part of the activity, and is left up to the groups.

- **games (for example, “Jeopardy,” “Bingo,” “Concentration”)**: a version of a popular game can be developed to assist learners in remembering, comprehending, and applying content that has been presented.