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**EEKHOUT**  
- ACADEMY -

# Meta Learning & Thinking Skills

Recommendations for metacognition

# Poster discussion

- Choose 1 topic
- Read the recommendations
- Discuss to understand
- Give 5 examples for transfer into own context
  
- Formulate a *MANTRA*!



1

Teachers should acquire the professional understanding and skills to develop their pupils' metacognitive knowledge



- Self-regulated learners are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and can motivate themselves to engage in, and improve, their learning.
- Developing pupils' metacognitive knowledge of how they learn—their knowledge of **themselves as a learner**, of strategies, and of **tasks**—is an effective way of improving pupil outcomes.
- Teachers should support pupils to **plan, monitor, and evaluate** their learning.

2

Explicitly teach pupils metacognitive strategies, including how to plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning knowledge



- Explicit instruction in cognitive and metacognitive strategies can improve pupils' learning.
- While concepts like 'plan, monitor, evaluate' can be introduced generically, the strategies are mostly applied in relation to specific content and tasks, and are therefore best taught this way.
- A series of steps—beginning with **activating prior knowledge** and leading to **independent practice** before ending in **structured reflection**—can be applied to different subjects, ages and contents.

3

Model your own thinking to help pupils develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills



- Modelling by the teacher is a cornerstone of effective teaching; revealing the thought processes of an expert learner helps to develop pupils' metacognitive skills.
- Teachers should verbalise their metacognitive thinking (*'What do I know about problems like this? What ways of solving them have I used before?'*) as they approach and work through a task.
- Scaffolded tasks, like worked examples, allow pupils to develop their metacognitive and cognitive skills without placing too many demands on their mental resources.

4

Set an appropriate level of challenge to develop pupils' self-regulation and metacognition



- Challenge is crucial to allow pupils to develop and progress their knowledge of tasks, strategies, and of themselves as learners.
- However, challenge needs to be at an appropriate level.
- Pupils must have the motivation to accept the challenge.
- Tasks should not overload pupils' cognitive processes, particularly when they are expected to apply new strategies.

5

Promote and develop metacognitive talk in the classroom



- As well as explicit instruction and modelling, classroom dialogue can be used to develop metacognitive skills.
- Pupil-to-pupil and pupil-teacher talk can help to build knowledge and understanding of cognitive and metacognitive strategies.
- However, dialogue needs to be purposeful, with teachers guiding and supporting the conversation to ensure it is challenging and builds on prior subject knowledge.

6

Explicitly teach pupils how to organise and effectively manage their learning independently



- Teachers should explicitly support pupils to develop independent learning skills.
- Carefully designed **guided practice**, with support gradually withdrawn as the pupil becomes proficient, can allow pupils to develop skills and strategies before applying them in **independent practice**.
- Pupils will need timely, effective feedback and strategies to be able to judge accurately how effectively they are learning.
- Teachers should also support pupils' motivation to undertake the learning tasks.

7

Schools should support teachers to develop knowledge of these approaches and expect them to be applied appropriately



- Develop teachers' knowledge and understanding through high quality professional development and resources.
- Senior leaders should provide teachers with time and support to make sure approaches are implemented consistently.
- Teachers can use tools such as 'traces' and observation to assess pupils' use of self-regulated learning skills.
- Metacognition shouldn't be an 'extra' task for teachers to do but should be built into their teaching activities.