

Practical ways of developing metacognition in the classroom

| Area for development | How could I develop this in my classroom |
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| Increase <i>own</i> awareness of what metacognition is – develop subject knowledge of metacognition | |
| Model thinking aloud. Reveal hidden thinking processes – make them explicit. Use I... statements. When I...I find it useful to... | |
| Develop the vocabulary and phrases pupils need to talk about their thinking and learning. Model, provide opportunities, and encourage pupils to explain HOW they did something, not just WHAT they did. | |
| Encourage pupils to engage in think alouds with each other. | |
| Model, provide opportunities, and encourage pupils to 'explain' and 'describe' to each other. | |
| Develop pupils' abilities to observe carefully | |
| Build pupil skills and provide opportunities for them to write instructions / video how to do something. Deconstruct the process. Ask them to record the process they have used. | |
| Ask questions that require pupils to explain their thinking. 'Why do you think that?' 'How do you know?' 'Is that always true?' 'Is there an alternative?' 'What evidence supports the answer'. Try to reveal 'shades' of thinking and understanding. Encourage pupils to use an evidence base / prove it / disprove it, e.g. 'on page 6', 'the graph shows'. | |
| Help pupils to understand what good learners do. What do good writers do? What do good mathematicians do? Scientists? Sportsmen and women? It should not be a mystery. | |
| Teach pupils strategies. Help them to understand the difference between a 'task' and a 'strategy'. Help them to evaluate strategies, adapt strategies and combine strategies. Give them choices as to the strategy they use. Get pupils discussing and reflecting on strategies. E.g. different problem solving strategies, different revision strategies, strategies for getting 'unstuck'. | |
| Help pupils develop thinking tools and strategies – e.g. brainstorming, visualisation, association, flow diagrams, categorising, thinking maps, graphic organisers. | |
| Develop their ability to PLAN, MONITOR, CHECK (and for younger pupils PLAN – DO – REVIEW) What questions do good learners ask themselves at each stage? | |
| Develop their skills of reflection, including peer and self-assessment – develop their ability to evaluate their work and think about how improvements could be made. | |
| Encourage pupils to discuss, describe and test out – When do you 'know' something? How do you know if you understand? How can you test out your skill level? What can you do to improve? Encourage them (and teach them how to) learn from mistakes. | |