



Guide 1

**Introduction:
Helping Your
Teen to Learn**



**Help your teen
to learn** with
Mike Gershon

Introduction

As your child becomes a teenager, they change. Just like you changed at that age. Just like we all change as we start to mature and get closer to adulthood. But they are still your child. And you are still their greatest asset.

Every parent wants the best for their child and, when it comes to learning, wants them to grow and succeed as they progress through school.

The teenage years, from 13–16, bring their own challenges, for both parents and children. As well as opportunities. Adolescence sparks off many changes: physical, emotional and psychological. Through it all, however, learning is central.

Learning shapes a huge portion of your child's experience as they enter and then progress through those first few years of teenage life. Not only that, but it also starts to shape their future, through exams, assessments and the choices they make about what path to go down, post-16.



Every parent wants to support their child in their learning.

Every parent wants to help their child to be successful.

Every parent wants to make sure their child has opportunities to learn, grow and develop.

Of course, schools provide a huge amount of this. And your child's experience of school continues to change as they become a teenager. This reflects the changes they are going through themselves, their increasing maturity and their development as an individual.

But there is so much parents can do to support learning. So much they can do to help their child learn as they become a teenager and to guide their child as they face the twin challenges of exams and making choices about the future.







This course will show how any parent can help their teen to learn.

It'll show how you can help your teen to learn.

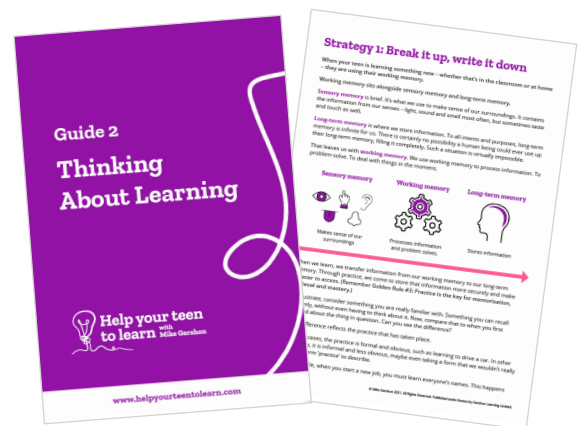
It'll show why you remain your child's greatest asset – just as you have been since they were born.

Course Overview

The course is divided into seven sections. This one, our first, is an introduction. Then we have sections covering:

-  **Thinking about learning**
-  **Fostering resilience**
-  **Deepening knowledge**
-  **Sharpening skills**
-  **Supporting revision**
-  **Play, enjoyment and engagement**

For each section, there are videos and a written guide. The videos help you to understand why each area is important, and how it supports learning. The guides give you practical strategies, activities and techniques you can use to help your teen to learn.



How you use the course is up to you. You can watch all the videos, then read the guides. Or, you can watch the videos from one section before reading the accompanying guide. Alternatively, you can read all the guides first, then watch the videos.

The course is set up so it flows from start to finish. However, if you want to jump ahead to some of the sections that stand out for you, then feel free.

The most important thing is to find the way that works for you.

The Golden Rules

As you work your way through the course, you will discover dozens of strategies, activities and techniques you can use to help your teen to learn. You can use these as they are described, or you can adapt, modify and develop them so they are personalised for you and your teen.

While the different sections of the course focus on different aspects of learning, there are a set of three golden rules that connect everything together.

These rules underpin the course.

They are the fundamentals, drawing together the most important aspects of learning during your child's teenage years. They are the three simple things you need to remember to help your teen to learn. And, chances are, you already know them and you're already doing them. You just might not have thought about them in this way.

- 1. You are your teen's greatest asset.**
- 2. Talk with your teen, praise them, listen to them and play with them.**
- 3. Practice is the key for memorisation, retrieval and mastery.**

Those are the golden rules. Simple!

Everything in this course is based around these principles.

Here's why they're so important:

Golden Rule Number 1 **You are your teen's greatest asset.**

As a parent, you have all the tools and experiences at your disposal to help your teen to learn, to guide them, to teach them. Remembering that you are their greatest asset means remembering that you can and do support them, in so many different ways, every day of their lives. And through doing this, and thinking in this way, you can and do help them to learn.

You

While you might not know all the specific curriculum content your teen will learn about between the ages of 13 and 16, that's fine. You don't need to know that. Being their greatest asset means being there for them, finding ways to support them and guiding them as they grow.



Golden Rule Number 2

Talk with your teen, praise them, listen to them and play with them.

Talking with your teen gives them countless opportunities to develop their use of language, to articulate and externalise their thoughts and to make sense of their experiences, as well as what they are learning at school. Talking with your teen builds rapport and strengthens your relationship. It also provides a fertile basis for helping them to learn, revise and deepen their knowledge.

We all benefit from **praise**. It makes us feel good, reinforces positive behaviour and helps us to feel like we are being recognised for our efforts. When praising your teen, praise them for the choices they've made, the effort they've put in and the things they've done. Use praise as a tool to encourage your teen in positive habits. Make praise a signal that you recognise what they are doing and the decisions they've taken.

Listening to your teen means showing them that you are interested in who they are, what they think and what they have to say. Listening signals to your teen that you are engaged with them and that you value their thoughts. It can sometimes be challenging to listen to your teen if, for example, they are expressing frustration or anger. When that happens, try to listen to the messages contained within their words and behaviour. Recognise those feelings, even if you don't necessarily agree with them. We all want to be heard, and this feeling of needing to be heard is often at its strongest during adolescence.

Playing is something we tend to associate with younger children. But play does not disappear as we grow. It might get pushed to one side, it might manifest itself in different ways, or it might be forgotten about. But it does not cease to be relevant. Nor does it cease to be enjoyable! Finding ways to play with your teen means having fun with them, lightening the atmosphere and reconnecting with the inner child. That part of all of us that sees the fun, humour and light-heartedness in life.

Golden Rule Number 3

Practice is the key for memorisation, retrieval and mastery.

Practice has played a key role throughout your child's education. When they were young, they will have learned the alphabet, their times tables and how to write by engaging in extensive practice. As your child becomes a teen, practice starts to play an even more significant role. It is the starting point for memorisation, retrieval and mastery.

Through practice, your teen secures knowledge, understanding and skills in their mind. Through practice, all of this becomes easier and quicker to access.



But practice doesn't mean endlessly going over the same material. Practice can come in many forms, and throughout this course you'll find a wide range of activities and techniques you can use to help your teen to practice. All of which will help them to learn, to develop and to strengthen their ability to recall and apply ideas, information and skills.

It doesn't look too hard, does it? Talking, listening, playing and praising. We can all do those. No special skills or expert knowledge required. And helping your teen to practice should prove straightforward as well.

So, as we move forward into the rest of the course, remember the golden rules.

And, most of all, remember that you are your teen's greatest asset.

Tailoring the Course for You and Your Teen



We are all individuals. As a parent and as a person, you are different from your friends, just as they are different from you. Children are individuals. They are different from each other. We all have personalities and, as we grow, we have different experiences, think different things and come to understand ourselves and the world in different ways.

At the same time, there is much we all share. We are all humans. We learn in similar ways. We think and talk and play with each other. We interact. We are social beings – part of families, communities, cultures and societies.

This course looks at learning in general and presents strategies, activities and techniques that all parents can use to help their teens to learn.

But these aren't set in stone. They are a starting point. Trying them out with your teen means seeing how they work for the two of you. Sometimes, they will work perfectly first time around. Sometimes, you might need to practice using them. And sometimes, you will tweak, modify and adapt them so they better suit the needs of you and your teen.

You know your teen better than anyone. So feel confident in adapting and developing the ideas so they are a best fit for the two of you. Look at the course as a starting point. One you are free to tailor and adapt so it works for you.

And don't forget, learning is fun. It's exciting. It's stimulating. It's challenging and rewarding. It's about pushing back the boundaries of what we can do, what we know and what we understand. It's about developing and growing. It's about making sense of the world and of ourselves.

So when you're helping you teen to learn, have fun with them. And don't be surprised if helping them to learn means you also end up learning new things as well. After all, learning never really stops for any of us.

Strategy 1: Show them how



One of the techniques teachers use to support learners is called modelling. Modelling is when the teacher shows a learner how to do something. They model it for them. The learner can then copy the model, borrow from it or imitate it.

For example, in a maths lesson, a learner might be struggling to solve an equation. The teacher notices this, steps in, and models how to solve an equation of this type. The learner then has another go, using the model provided by the teacher to help them.

There are two important things to draw out here:

1. The teacher didn't solve the equation for the learner.

Instead, they showed them how to solve an equation like the one they were struggling with.

2. The teacher modelled the process of solving an equation.

They showed the learner the different things you need to do when dealing with an equation. The different steps you need to go through. And the different things you need to think about.

If the teacher had solved the equation for the learner, there would have been less opportunity for the learner to learn. The teacher would have done the work for them.

Modelling is a powerful technique any parent can call on to help their teen to learn.

Showing your teen how to do something is different to showing them what the right answer is. Armed with the 'how', your teen is in a better position to get the right answer themselves. We can't guarantee they'll get the right answer, but there's a better chance of them doing so. And a much better chance that they'll keep learning while they try.

Here is an example of how you can model things for your teen or, to put it another way, how you can 'show them how':

Imagine your teen is stuck on their geography homework. They have to write a short essay about migration, and they're finding it difficult. They ask you for help. One option is to tell them what to write. Another option is to write some of it for them. Both of these can be tempting, as they are a quick way to solve the problem your teen is facing. But neither gets to the core of learning. Neither really helps your teen to focus in on learning. And neither gives your teen a tool they can use in the future when faced with a similar challenge.

This is a great example of where modelling is an incredibly useful strategy. Rather than telling your teen what to write or writing it for them, you can show them how to tackle a problem like the one they are facing. For example, you might say that a good starting point is to create a short plan and then offer to help them come up with a plan. Or you might

suggest another strategy is to take a piece of scrap paper and write down everything you know about the topic, before choosing the most important things to write about.

Here we can see that you are modelling for your teen how to solve a problem, rather than solving it for them. You are showing them how to tackle a challenge – and some of the different strategies they could use to be successful.

Showing your teen how means encouraging them to take control of their learning. It helps them recognise themselves as the active player – the person who can make a difference.

It also means giving your teen tools and strategies they can use again in the future.

In our above example, you are not only helping your teen with their geography homework, you're also showing them a strategy they can use the next time they find themselves faced by a similarly challenging piece of homework – or classwork, for that matter.

When you show your teen how, you are tapping into the benefits encapsulated in the old saying:

'Give someone a fish and they'll eat for a day.

Teach someone how to fish and they'll never go hungry.'



Cheesy, yes! But it does sum up what we're talking about.

And this is a technique you can use even if your teen asks for help with something you don't know about or don't understand.

Imagine, for example, that your teen is struggling with some of the coding they have to do as part of their computing homework. For a lot of adults, myself included, coding is something of a black hole.

But that's OK. Because with *'Show them how'* you don't have to know the right answer to support your teen. Instead, you can show them how to deal with situations that are unfamiliar, or problems for which you don't know the answer.

After all, we encounter these sorts of situations all the time – both in our working lives and in our family life. Something to which many parents can attest.

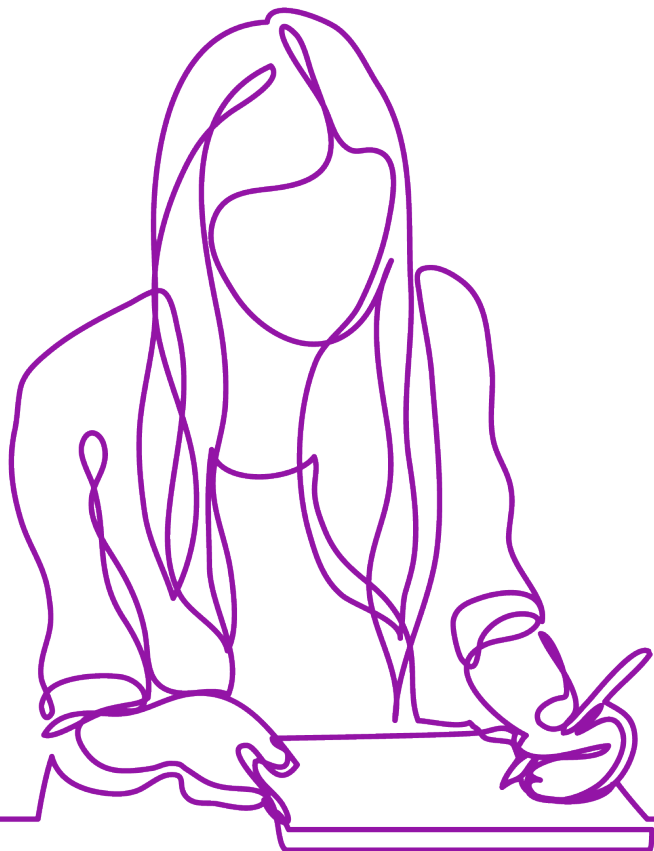
In our example, you could spend some time talking with your teen and modelling some of the strategies you use when you have a problem you can't solve. Your teen can then try out

these strategies themselves, as they attempt to get to grips with their coding.

Here are some examples of where you can show your teen how.

You can show your teen how to...

- **... break a challenge down into separate parts.**
- **... talk through a problem or difficulty to make sense of it.**
- **... use trial and error to deal with a problem.**
- **... look at things they've done in the past to see if they can use these to help them solve problems and deal with challenges in the present.**
- **... search for answers online.**



Strategy 2: Be uncertain together

Uncertainty often feels like something that needs to be avoided. If we are uncertain, we don't know what we are doing, and that's not good, right?

But when it comes to learning, uncertainty is an inevitable feature of your teen's experience. If your teen went through their school career and was never uncertain about anything, chances are they were never challenged.

**When we are challenged, we meet uncertainty.
Uncertainty comes when we don't know how to do things.**

In the context of learning, challenges are things we have to overcome, because we can't yet do them.

The best way to deal with uncertainty when you are learning is to keep going. The least effective response is to give up. If you do give up, the uncertainty will disappear. Not because you've overcome the challenge, but because you are no longer thinking about it.

Being uncertain with your teen means showing them that uncertainty is OK. That it is normal. And that it is a fundamental feature of learning.

Being uncertain with your teen means you can show them different ways of dealing with uncertainty.

For example, your teen might come to you to ask for help with their homework. You take a look at it with them and realise that you don't know the answer either. Rather than hiding this, tell them. Explain that you are uncertain as well, but that you think by working together you might be able to find an answer, or at least try some different ways of solving the problem.

Your teen will observe how you respond to uncertainty. They might not be consciously aware they are doing this, but they will do it, nonetheless. Parents are role models for their children, and that extends to how you respond in different situations.

Your teen will internalise how they see you acting around the home. That's inevitable. We did it with our own parents. It's just part of growing up.

That doesn't mean to say your teen will copy, mimic or imitate all of your traits or characteristics. But it does mean that the examples you give and the behaviours you demonstrate can be influential in your teen's life. Including how they subsequently respond to similar situations they themselves face.

Showing your teen positive responses to uncertainty is therefore good. It gives your teen a way of dealing with uncertainty that is purposeful and optimistic. It also shows your teen

that uncertainty is not something to be avoided. Rather, it's a situation to be dealt with, a problem to be solved, or a challenge to be overcome.

You can extend the technique by talking to your teen about uncertainty. This will stand them in good stead as they progress further in their education and in life more generally.

Arguably, we find ourselves meeting more uncertainty as we grow. Be that in the context of our schooling, in the workplace or in the transition from being a young person to being an adult. Having techniques we can call on when faced with uncertainty is beneficial and helps us to feel in control.

With these thoughts in mind, here are five examples of how you and your teen can be uncertain together:

- 1.** If your teen is having difficulties with their homework, show them how to respond positively to uncertainty by, for example, trying different strategies such as trial and error, breaking things down or comparing the current challenge to challenges they've overcome in the past.
- 2.** Spend some time with your teen learning about a new topic. Something neither of you has ever come across before. As you are spending time on this, talk about uncertainty with your teen. Make it concrete by talking about how you are both experiencing uncertainty together, while learning about the new topic.
- 3.** Ask your teen to teach you about something they know lots about, but which is unfamiliar to you. This could be something from school or something that is a hobby for them. As they teach you, ask questions and seek their advice on things. Show them the kind of strategies that are useful to call on when you are dealing with uncertainty – as is often the case when learning something new.
- 4.** If your teen is uncertain about the future, for example, what they want to do after they are 16, sit down with them and talk about this. As part of your discussion, talk about the fact that the future is always uncertain. We can never know for sure what will happen. Often, we can make pretty accurate predictions, but not always. Help your teen to understand that uncertainty is part of life, and that it brings benefits as well as challenges.
- 5.** Extend the previous strategy by helping your teen to sketch out the potential consequences of different choices. Take a sheet of paper and ask your teen to identify two or three decisions they are thinking about making or which they are uncertain about. For example, whether to study A Levels, do an apprenticeship or go to college for a vocational course.

Discuss each of these options and then help your teen map out what the potential consequences might be in both the short term and the long term. When dealing with big decisions like this – decisions tinged by uncertainty – being able to visualise and then compare different options is often hugely beneficial.

Strategy 3: Scaffolding homework

Scaffolding is a technique teachers use all the time.

It's where the teacher does a little bit of work for the learner, helping them to then do the rest of the work themselves.

Often, a teacher will use scaffolding when a piece of learning is slightly too difficult for a learner, when it's just out of reach, or when it's a little beyond their current capabilities.

Here are some examples to illustrate:

- In PE, learners are practising long passing in football. One learner is having difficulties, so the teacher shortens the distance over which they are passing the ball.
- In maths, a learner is struggling to work out the answer to a question about compound interest. The teacher steps in and does the first bit of the sum for the learner, then asks them to take it from there.
- In English, a learner is unsure how they should start a piece of persuasive writing. The teacher steps in and suggests three possible openings, from which the learner selects the one they like best.
- In dance, a learner is struggling to learn a complicated new routine. The teacher asks the learner to practice the first third of the routine and to leave the rest of it until they have mastered the beginning.
- In business studies, a learner is having difficulties making sense of a balance sheet. The teacher gives the learner a simpler balance sheet and asks them to come back to the more challenging one once they've had a go at the easier one.



In each of these examples, the teacher has scaffolded the learning. They've made things a bit easier for the learner, so they can engage with the learning and experience success.

One way to think about this is that the teacher has simplified things. For example, when the English teacher provides three possible openings for the piece of writing, it is like they are saying to the learner: *'Don't worry about working out how to start. Let me take care of that for you. You can then focus on the rest of the writing, which is the most important part.'*

Scaffolding homework uses the same principle, except it sees you – the parent – making things a little simpler for your teen, if they run into difficulties at home.

Sometimes, you'll be able to scaffold homework by doing a little bit of the work for your teen, and then letting them focus on completing the rest.

For example, your teen might be struggling to write a history essay for their homework, on the topic of World War II. You might have a good knowledge of World War II and also feel confident about how to write an essay. In this situation, you can support your teen by simplifying the essay writing for them. You might suggest some options for how they could start their essay, or you might suggest what they should write about.

Notice how scaffolding is always about simplification – about doing a little bit for your teen and then leaving the rest up to them.

We can see that really clearly in the example. If you helped your teen with their history homework in this way, they would still be the one doing the work. Your support – your scaffolding – would simply be that little bit of extra guidance they needed to get going.

Of course, there will be other situations where you won't be able to do a little bit of the work for your teen. It might be that their homework is on a topic you know nothing about. Or, they might be doing homework from a subject you struggled with when you were at school.

These situations are common. But do not fear! You can still scaffold your teen's homework for them, helping them to learn and make progress. You don't need to know the answers to what they're working on. Sometimes it can be a great help, but it is not a necessity.

Here are three ways you can scaffold your teen's homework, even if you don't know anything about what they are studying:

1.

Ask them to talk you through what they've done so far and what they're trying to do. The process of articulating their thoughts will help your teen to make sense of where they are at and will often clear a path for them to move forwards.

2.

Ask them to talk you through the task the teacher has set and what they feel is the best way to go about tackling it. Similarly, getting your teen to verbalise what they need to do helps them do a bit of the work first, before trying to tackle the main part of their homework. Talking things through means your teen can focus on making sense of the homework and identifying a possible way to deal with it. Then, after they have done that thinking, they can focus their attention on the homework task itself.

3.

Ask your teen to try breaking their homework down into smaller chunks. We can all feel overloaded when faced with too much information or too many things we need to do. Helping your teen to break their homework down into chunks means helping them to recognise that they don't need to do everything at once. Instead, they can focus their attention on one element of their homework at a time – which is far more achievable.

Strategy 4: 'Might'

The word 'might' can have a big effect on how your teen interprets a question. It can influence how your teen thinks in response to a question.

This is a technique you can call on any time you are asking them a question, talking with them or having a discussion. Whether the topic is schoolwork, what they want to do in the future, or anything else for that matter.

Have a look at these pairs of questions. They show how the word 'might' can turn things around:

What do you think the answer is?

What do you think the answer **might be?**

What would you need to achieve to have a career as a doctor?

What **might you need to achieve to have a career as a doctor?**

What's the best way to get there?

What **might be the best way to get there?**

This strategy is called **making knowledge provisional**.

When we put the word 'might' into a question, it makes knowledge provisional. It takes away the feeling that there is a definite right answer, out there somewhere, that we're searching for.

A couple of points follow:

1. This can be a really good way to support your teen when they are trying to make sense of something, when they are struggling to understand something, or when they seem reluctant to share their thoughts.

Changing the way you ask a question means changing how your teen perceives and interprets that question. **By using the word 'might', you send a signal to them that there might (!) be a range of different answers out there.** And what you really want to do is hear what they think and have a discussion with them.

That doesn't mean there's anything wrong with other types of questions. It just means that this is different way to frame your questions. One that can lead to different results.

2. When your teen hears a question like this, they may well be more likely to answer. Sometimes, if a young person is uncertain about a question, or doesn't want to be seen to be getting something wrong, they may choose not to answer (or say something like: 'I don't know').

This is a **safety-first approach**. If you are concerned about getting something wrong, the simplest way to avoid that happening is to not provide an answer.

However, with a question containing the word 'might', like those examples above, we automatically remove the idea that there is a definite answer we're searching for. The question implies there could be many answers, and that we want to have a conversation or discussion about what the other person thinks.

As a result, the risk of failure – of giving a wrong answer or revealing that we don't know the answer – falls away. This often encourages more open responses, whatever the topic being discussed.

You can even tell your teen what you are doing. If you ask them a question and it feels like you've hit a brick wall, you can say something like: *'Hang on, maybe that wasn't the best question. Let me try asking it in a different way ...'*

This is a signal to your teen that you are hearing their response (which, in this case, might be the decision not to give a response) and you are changing something in acknowledgement of that.

It won't always work – no technique comes with a cast-iron guarantee – but it often does and is a great strategy to call on, as well as being easy to apply.

Here are some examples of questions with 'might' in them, illustrating how you can use it:

- What might the teacher have meant?
- What might be a good way to tackle this?
- What might be the best approach?
- How might things have turned out differently?
- Why might that have happened?
- What might be a good strategy to try next?
- What might make things better?
- Why might you be feeling like that?
- Where might we find the answer?
- Why might this problem seem a lot harder than the last one?

Strategy 5: What does the teacher want?

It's generally easier to be successful if you know what's expected of you.

If you're not sure what you're supposed to be doing, or if you are uncertain about what someone else's expectations are, then it's harder to feel confident you are doing the right things or targeting your effort in the right direction.



This is true in schools and with learning. If your teen has a clear understanding of what their teacher wants, it is easier for them to meet those expectations. On the other hand, if your teen is uncertain about what the teacher wants, things become much more challenging.

When it comes to helping your teen to learn, one strategy to call on is helping them to understand what their teacher wants from them.

If your teen is doing their homework, working on some coursework, preparing for an assessment or revising for an exam, ask yourself whether they have a clear understanding of what their teacher expects.

If they do, great. Chances are they will be targeting their efforts effectively. What they are doing will be in line with the teacher's expectations. And that should lead to good results.

If they don't, this is an opportunity to step in and support them.

Doing this will help them gain a clearer understanding of what they're trying to do and why they are trying to do it. They'll then be able to target their effort more effectively. Which will lead to a better outcome.

When your teen is working on their homework, a piece of coursework or if they are preparing for an assessment or an exam, ask them whether they know what the teacher wants them to do.

You can use questions like these:

- What does your teacher want you to do here?
- Do you know what your teacher has asked you to do with this?
- What do you have to do to be successful with this?

- Do you know what success looks like for this piece of work?
- How will you know you've been successful with this?
- What are the success criteria?
- What is your teacher looking for?

With some pieces of work, the answer will be straightforward, and your teen will have no problems understanding what the teacher wants. In other cases, however, they may be less certain. It's here that starting a discussion with your teen can have a big impact.

Ask them to talk you through what they are doing, why they think they have been asked to do it and what they think the outcome will be. Take a look at the task with them. Read through anything the teacher has provided and see if your understanding is the same as your teen's, or different.

From here, the two of you can have a conversation about what the teacher's expectations might be and how this might affect what your teen is trying to do.

The aim is twofold:

1. You are giving your teen an opportunity to verbalise their uncertainty and talk through their thinking.

In many cases, this is enough to help them clarify their understanding of the teacher's expectations.

2. You are helping your teen to appreciate that it is worthwhile spending time thinking about what you need to do to be successful – instead of simply ploughing on regardless.

This is a lesson all learners can benefit from. And one your teen can take with them and use in the future when faced with new and novel situations.

If you and your teen can't work out between the two of you what the teacher's expectations are, or what your teen needs to do to be successful, that's OK as well.

Simply suggest to your teen that they give their homework/coursework/revision their best shot, but that they also make a point of finding their teacher the next day they are in school and asking them for guidance.

This approach means your teen is taking control of their learning and being proactive. It also reinforces in their mind the idea that knowing what you need to do to be successful is an integral part of learning and, when armed with this information, it is much easier to target your effort successfully.

Strategy 6: Question master

This is a game you can come back to again and again. Playing it with your teen can be a lot of fun. It helps them develop their critical thinking, their questioning skills, and their ability to think under pressure.

To prepare, you will need some card or some paper. Cut this up into credit-card-sized pieces. Thirty pieces is about the right number.

Separate the pieces into two piles. One pile should have seven pieces, while the other will have twenty-three.

Take the pile of seven pieces. These are your 'Questioner' cards. On one side of each piece, write the word 'Questioner'. On the other side, you are going to write the style of questioning that the person must use.

Here are seven options:



And here's an explanation of how each one works:



Cross-examination:

The questioner must cross-examine the other person as if they were a detective cross-examining a suspect, or a lawyer cross-examining a witness. They should probe the other person's answer, look for inconsistencies and not let them off the hook.

**Devil's advocate:**

The devil's advocate always puts the other side of the case. Their role is to take what the other person says and then ask a question that looks at things from the opposite point of view. And they do this every time.

**What if ...:**

This time, the questioner may only ask 'What if ...?' questions. Every question they ask must start with the words 'What if ...?'

**Yes, but ...:**

Here, the questioner can only ask questions that begin with the words 'Yes, but ...'. They should listen to what the other person says, and then ask a question that begins 'Yes, but ...'. They continue doing this for as long as they can manage.

**Ignoramus:**

The ignoramus plays dumb and pretends they don't understand anything. They ask questions that seem basic, straightforward or obvious. Their goal is to make the other person explain their ideas in more detail, and not to take anything for granted.

**Midwife:**

The midwife helps give birth to ideas. They ask questions like 'What do you mean by that?' 'Can you explain that another way?' and 'So, are you saying ...?' The midwife wants to help the other person get their ideas out in the open.

**Either/or:**

This is where every question the questioner asks contains two options – an either/or. For example: 'So, are you saying that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, or a meal that is important, but not crucial?' and 'Is the best approach to ignore what other people say, or to base your decisions on what other people say?'

Next, take the pile of twenty-three and write the word 'Topic' on one side of each piece. On the other side, write a series of different topics. These could be random, or they could connect to subjects your teen is studying at school. You can come up with the topics on your own, or you can do it together with your teen.



You now have everything you need to play 'Question Master'.

Here's how it works:

- You and your teen sit down together. Decide who is going to be the questioner. They draw one of the questioner cards. This is the questioning style they will have to use.
- The other person draws a topic card. This is the topic card the two of you will be discussing.
- The questioner's aim is to keep asking questions in the style of their card. The other person's aim is to keep answering the questions.

You can make it competitive by saying the questioner wins when the other person can't answer a question, or that the other person wins when the questioner runs out of questions.

You can develop the game by drawing a series of topic cards, or by having the questioner switch to a different questioning style midway through. (They could even draw two questioner cards at the beginning and then ask questions in either style as the game progresses).

You can even use this game as part of your teen's revision. Simply make sure the topic cards all relate to topics your teen is revising.