

The importance of subject knowledge

"Self-regulated learning and metacognition have often been found to be context-dependent, so how you best plan in Key Stage 2 art may have significant differences to planning strategies in GCSE maths. This means that a pupil who shows strong self-regulated learning and metacognitive competence in one task or subject domain may be weak in another, and metacognitive strategies may or may not be effective, depending on the specific task, subject, or problem tackled."

(EEF, 2018, p. 24)

What implications does this have for you?

As outlined in the quote from the Education Endowment Foundation above, self-regulation and metacognition is subject specific. Pupils cannot use metacognition to self-regulate their learning if they do not have a good understanding of the subject upon which the task is based. For example, if pupils do not understand what multiplication is, or only have one strategy to solve a multiplication problem, they will not be able to implement metacognitive regulation. In order to evaluate how successful a cognitive strategy is, pupils need to have sufficient knowledge of the strategy itself. They also need alternative strategies they can draw upon when one doesn't work. Therefore it is important that you, as a teacher, support pupils to use cognitive and metacognition strategies in the phases and subjects you teach. Plus, although these strategies are largely unconscious for experts, such as yourself, for novice learners they are not.

Please note, this session has provided you with an introduction to metacognition and self-regulation. Modules and sessions throughout this programme will return to the concept of self-regulation and metacognition several times. As you revisit and retrieve these concepts, the content within the modules will help build your knowledge of strategies that you can use to support the development of metacognition in your pupils.