

Metacognition and self-assessment

You have been introduced to the concept of metacognition in Module 2 and built on this in Module 3 through the strategy of 'Think Aloud'. Metacognitive strategies not only support pupils to embed new learning in the long-term memory, but also improve pupils' independence and their ability to self-assess and think critically about their learning.

Imagine a group of pupils that are independent enough to effectively self-assess by evaluating their knowledge, identifying gaps in their learning, determining the effectiveness of their work and planning to make the relevant changes in the future. By working through these stages, the pupils are demonstrating effective metacognition strategies. Metacognitive strategies support pupils to be able to do this by focusing on developing their ability to **plan, monitor and evaluate** their own learning. Pupils will be effectively self-assessing their progress as they move through the task, as well as after the fact.

How can you teach pupils to plan, monitor and evaluate learning?

The first step is to ensure that pupils have secure subject knowledge in the area in which they are applying the metacognitive strategy. Without knowledge, pupils will not be able to apply the strategies they are being taught. Instead, they will still be trying to understand and learn the concept, rather than reflecting effectively on how well they have learnt it and what they need to do next.

The next step is to know that the development of metacognitive strategies requires explicit teaching and modelling in order to train pupils' thinking.

The EEF report into metacognition and self-regulation highlights that you should ask pupils questions that focus their thinking on how they could plan, monitor and evaluate their learning. The teacher should also explicitly model this thinking in order to develop it in their pupils.

Plan

Encourage pupils to think about the goal of their learning and how they will approach the task.

How will I approach the problem? Which strategies will I use? How do I manage my resources?

Monitor

Emphasising the need for pupils to assess the progress they are making as they go.

What is working? What isn't working? Why am I finding this challenging?

Evaluate

Appraising the effectiveness of their plan.

How did I do?

The EEF have developed seven practical recommendations that support the teaching and development of metacognition in pupils. Two of these strategies have been covered in this ECF programme.

Take five minutes to review the remaining five [here](#).