

Metacognitive Strategies

Effective teachers use metacognitive strategies to help students develop awareness of their own learning, to self-regulate, and to drive and sustain their motivation to learn.

Strategy overview

Hattie (2009) found an effect size of 0.69 for metacognitive strategies.

What is it?

Metacognitive strategies empower students to think about their own thinking. Awareness of the learning process enhances control over their own learning. It also enhances personal capacity for self-regulation and managing one's own motivation for learning. Metacognitive activities can include planning how to approach learning tasks, evaluating progress, and monitoring comprehension.

How effective is it?

Evidence shows teaching metacognitive strategies can substantially improve student learning. Hattie measured the average effect size of metacognitive strategies at 0.69. The Australian Teaching and Learning Toolkit reports an impact equivalent to 8 additional months of progress.

Considerations

Students use metacognitive strategies to make the most of classroom instruction and to extend the learning beyond it. Metacognitive strategies do not directly influence how content knowledge is presented to students. In a sense, teaching metacognitive strategies entails teaching students to teach themselves.

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Metacognitive Strategies

Metacognitive strategies are taught explicitly, extensively modelled, embedded in routines and the lesson structure, and linked to the content being taught. Most importantly, the advantage of using a metacognitive strategy must be clear to students. These considerations apply to basic cognitive skills like notetaking and summarising, and to self-regulation strategies such as self-questioning and self-consequences.



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Metacognitive Strategies

Personal reflection on my teaching practice...

Reflective practice provides a means for teachers to improve their practice to effectively meet the learning needs of their students. Brookfield succinctly describes the advantages of reflective practice to teachers as:

- It helps teachers to take informed actions that can be justified and explained to others and that can be used to guide further action.
- It allows teachers to adjust and respond to issues.
- It helps teachers to become aware of their underlying beliefs and assumptions about learning and teaching.
- It helps teachers promote a positive learning environment.
- It allows teachers to consciously develop a repertoire of relevant and context specific strategies and techniques.

It helps teachers locate their teaching in the broader institutional, social and political context and to appreciate that many factors influence student learning.



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Metacognitive Strategies

This strategy is demonstrated when the teacher:

- provides students with specific strategies to set goals, and monitor and evaluate their learning progress

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- assists students to identify and use strategies that support them to achieve learning goals

Personal reflection on my teaching practice...

- demonstrates how to use a particular metacognitive strategy in ways that make content knowledge more accessible, malleable and intriguing

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- uses a variety of learning and assessment strategies to scaffold and personalise the learning process

Personal reflection on my teaching practice...



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- provides support and scaffolding for tasks through checklists, self-questioning, student-teacher conferences and self-assessment

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- uses ICT to increase student choice and flexible learning.

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This strategy is not demonstrated when the teacher:

- gives students a choice of activities but does not explain how they can use specific strategies to achieve particular learning goals

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- does not encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning, or for applying metacognitive strategies.

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This strategy is demonstrated when students:

- have a repertoire of learning strategies and can select strategies appropriate for the learning goals

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- reflect on their learning processes, self-assess and acknowledge the impact of effort on achievement

Personal reflection on my teaching practice...



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- actively seek out feedback because they value it as a way to improve understanding of how they learn

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- are capable of self-regulation and proactively take control of, and responsibility for, their own learning.

Personal reflection on my teaching practice...



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Continuity of practice

Teachers participate in professional learning to build their knowledge of metacognitive strategies.

Teachers encourage students to be self-reflective learners by assisting them to think about their own thinking and about how they learn.

Teachers emphasise that a person's ability to learn is not fixed and that it is always possible to learn effective learning strategies that improve performance.

Teachers introduce learning strategies that students can apply to tackle specific tasks.

Teachers identify metacognitive strategies as a focus for learning and development in Performance and Development Plans.

Teachers introduce students to a number of differentiated learning strategies they can apply to completing a range of problems.

Teachers explain how to make informed choices about which strategies to use in particular situations to achieve the learning goals.

Teachers teach students how to reflect on and monitor their own learning. Professional Learning Communities support building knowledge and skills in using metacognitive strategies, as referenced in all teacher Performance and Development Plans.



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Metacognitive Strategies

Teachers explicitly teach a number of metacognitive strategies, model their use, and embed them in routines and the lesson structure.

Teachers encourage students to reflect critically on the strategies they use to complete tasks, and to identify which learning strategies are most effective for them.

Teachers support students to consider their learning goals, plan and monitor their own learning, and evaluate their learning.

An integrated, whole-school approach to using metacognitive strategies is implemented, accompanied by regular monitoring and evaluation processes that ensure teacher accountability.

Teachers effectively diagnose individual students' abilities, then select and coach them in appropriately challenging tailored strategies.

Metacognitive strategies are explicitly taught, extensively modelled, embedded in routines and the lesson structure, and linked to the content being taught.

Students take responsibility for their past and future learning – they understand the standards expected of them, set and monitor their own learning goals, and develop strategies for working towards them.



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