The Metacognitive Teacher and Learner: Teaching to Think, Learning to Learn

An introduction to metacognition and its role for teachers and students, with particular reference to students with individual learning needs

Metacognition

The capacity to understand and regulate their own thinking benefits students of all ages and abilities. The use of metacognitive thinking and strategies enables students to become flexible, creative and self-directed learners. Metacognition particularly assists students with additional educational needs in understanding learning tasks, in self-organising and in regulating their own learning.

The teaching and support of metacognitive skills in the classroom not only allows learners to learn more effectively, but it also improves cognition in all students at all levels of ability. It allows them to become aware of their own thinking and to become proficient in choosing appropriate thinking strategies for different learning tasks. Metacognitive knowledge also lays the foundation for the development of self-regulation, which is an essential pre-requisite for independent, self-directed learning. This is particularly relevant to some aspects of special educational needs.

Metacognition in the classroom, at both individual and collective level, underpins the reflective cycle that supports the culture of school self-evaluation (SSE), where self-evaluation as learning occurs. Good teachers are highly metacognitive – they reflect on their expertise and teaching and refine their pedagogy accordingly. Metacognitive thinking will, therefore, also support the observation, planning, monitoring and evaluation that is involved in the SSE process.

Seminar Overview

This seminar provides an overview of the concept of Metacognition and explores the important role that it plays in supporting the learning and cognitive development of students, with particular reference to those with certain special educational needs.

The seminar introduces a range of practical strategies, suitable for both primary and post-primary classes. It will outline how these strategies, which have been shown to be very effective in developing students’ higher order thinking skills and in supporting learners’ ability to self-regulate, may be introduced into the mainstream classroom to the benefit of all students.

Participants will have the opportunity to:
• explore the meaning of the term ‘Metacognition’
• become conversant with a range of metacognitive strategies that can be explicitly taught in the classroom and which will develop students’ higher order thinking skills, along with their ability to regulate their own learning
• learn how young people with a range of additional educational needs, including those with superior ability, can benefit from understanding their own thinking and being able to self-regulate
• learn how metacognitive approaches may be adapted for specific subject areas and for different age and ability levels
• consider the importance of metacognitive thinking in their role as reflective teachers

**Time:** the seminar will run from 7.00 PM - 9.30 PM

**Availability**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Booking Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 16th 2013</td>
<td>Blackrock Education Centre</td>
<td>Oct. 9th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 13th 2013</td>
<td>Cork Education Support Centre</td>
<td>Nov. 6th</td>
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