



St Ippolyts C.E. (Aided) Primary School



Part Three

Reflectiveness



Building Learning Power (BLP) is about becoming better learners and as such, thinking is just a part of this. This is what makes BLP stand out from other learning tools.

To be an effective learner we need to be able to plan, monitor, adapt and understand how we learn best as an individual. This is about playing with what we know and having our own ideas and thinking about ourselves as a learner – and it is just as relevant for adults as well as children!

Being reflective includes such things as planning, revising, being able to adapt and take a different direction.

Look carefully

This is not about looking carefully at the things around us to learn as you might in the 'curiosity' strand, but looking carefully at our learning itself and lessons that we can take on into other situations in the future. Often children do not transfer skills they have learnt in one area to another – a very common example of this is when children learn spellings perfectly for a test, but then cannot recall them when writing in their books independently. Developing the skill to look carefully at what they know and link back to previous learning is vital to move forwards.

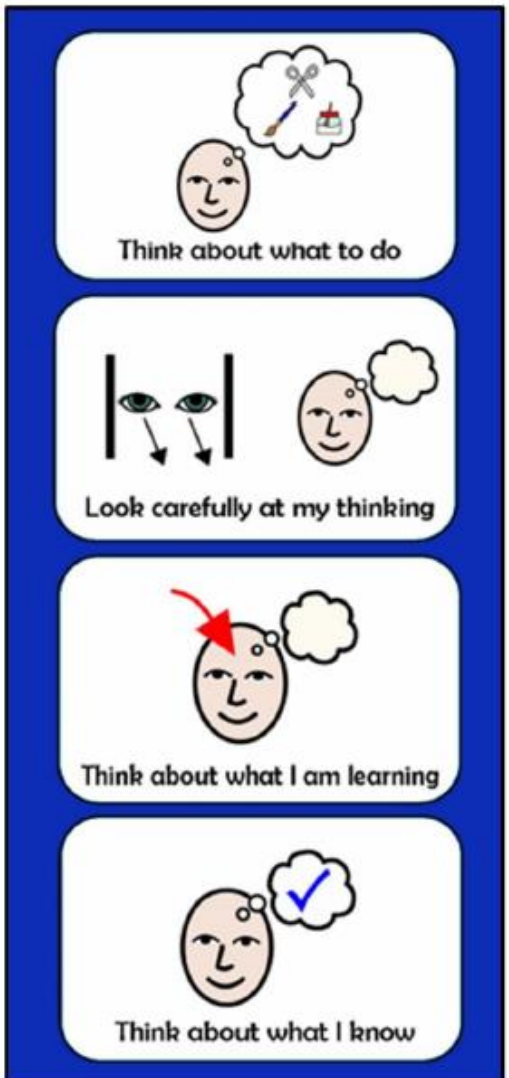


Think about what to do

Thinking about what to do before we do it and making a plan allows us to make good decisions. This freedom to learn when, where, why, what and how enables us to improve at learning.

Talk to your child about plans they make before they start activities. What are they hoping to achieve? What questions do they wish to answer? What mysteries do they wish to solve? How will they do this? What will they do if they meet an obstacle?

Many lessons at school are designed to give children lots of opportunities to plan ahead and follow their own direction, adapting and revising as they go along.



Thinking about what I know

This is linked to looking carefully, but we are now looking carefully at ourselves as learners and what we know. There is evidence to show that being able to talk about learning makes a good learner. This also involves not just being able to think about what you do know or how you know to learn, but also what you don't yet know. Many topics at school begin with children asking questions and being encouraged to say what they would like to know about something – for example dinosaurs, historical

The Language of Reflectiveness we use in the classroom

Think about what the task is really about.

What are you wanting/trying to achieve?

What will help you to do this?

Think about which resources will help you.

That's a good plan...you've thought of a lot of things. What might get in the way of this?

There isn't just one way of doing it. Can you think of other ways you might do it?

What can you learn from this mistake?

Ask yourself - am I happy/satisfied with what I have achieved? Do I need to do something more to make it better?

I like how you were flexible and you changed things as you were going along.

Try to think about your plan as you go along and check you are on track to meet it.

Ask yourself from time to time, is this going ok? Is my plan still working?

I like how you changed your plan with a better idea.

What are the three most important things you have found out?

If you only had to tell someone one thing about what you've learnt today, what would it be? How come you've chosen that?

Think back to when you.... What did you learn from that?

Think over what we have been doing. What went well? What could be improved? What lessons can we learn from this?

Where else could you use this skill/knowledge/idea?

How did you learn this?

How did what you were talking about help you to learn?

Think about what you are learning

Again, this is a skill that can be modelled for our children to learn how to do this. It is revising what we are doing and how it is going, making amendments as we go. The ability to make changes to the original plan is not always easy especially for younger children, but often when completely absorbed and determined to complete a task this will happen naturally. It is hard to criticise your own work or ideas, but part of this is the ability to sometimes admit that it is time to 'go back to the drawing board' or go a different way.

How can parents help children to be reflective?

- **With homework or other activities at home, give your child time to plan what they will need, what steps they will take and what potential obstacles there are.**
- **Let them see you as adults trying different approaches to tasks: "oh that didn't quite work out, I need to try something different"**
- **When they have made something – ask them what went well? What would make it better next time?**
- **Help them to identify skills and knowledge they already have that they can apply to new situations**

