Dear Murraylands Site Leaders,

The SLC (Student Learning Community) recommend that The Learning Pit be used as a model across the partnership from Kindy to High School. We would like you to consider our recommendation and use the learning pit at your sites.

The learning pit challenges students to become powerful lifelong learners by encouraging students to do the thinking when facing new challenges. It encourages students to take responsibility for their learning and know that it’s okay and important to be confused or stuck when learning.

The learning pit can be used to identify where you are with your learning and help you to find a way out of the pit to accomplish your goal.

It’s important for students to be in the learning pit to enable them to become powerful learners and discover different ways to move forward with their learning.

**The benefits include:**

- Developing Powerful Learners across the partnership (supporting the big ideas of your partnership plan and Numeracy Literacy RESULTS PLUS).
- A way to support and build resilience, critical curiosity, strategic awareness and a growth mindset for learners.
- Assist children with the learning and how to learn (*metacognition and self regulation).
- The Australian toolkit shows that *metacognition and self regulation have an impact of up to 8 months

*(PTO for more information)*

- Helping the teacher to identify if the task has an appropriate level of challenge.
- Encourages students to embrace deeper learning.
- It’s appropriate for all age groups and all learning areas.

As representatives of the SLC, we hope you take the learning pit into consideration for use at your site and across the partnership. Please refer to the Murraylands Learning Pit diagram for a visual explanation. If you have any questions please don’t hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

Jackie- Palmer Primary, Dillan- Tailem Bend Primary, Holly- Mypolonga Primary and Ebony- Jervois Primary.

2015 SLC representatives
Meta-cognition and self-regulation

High impact for low cost, based on extensive evidence.

What is it?

Meta-cognition (sometimes known as ‘learning to learn’) and self-regulation approaches aim to help learners think about their own learning more explicitly. This is usually by teaching students specific strategies to set goals, and monitor and evaluate their own academic development. Self-regulation means managing one’s own motivation towards learning. The intention is often to give students a repertoire of strategies to choose from during learning activities.

How effective is it?

Meta-cognition and self-regulation approaches have consistently high levels of impact, with students making an average of eight months’ additional progress. The evidence indicates that teaching these strategies can be particularly effective for low achieving and older students.

These strategies are usually more effective when taught in collaborative groups so learners can support each other and make their thinking explicit through discussion.

The potential impact of these approaches is very high, but can be difficult to achieve as they require students to take greater responsibility for their learning and develop their understanding of what is required to succeed. There is no simple strategy or trick for this. It is possible to support students’ work too much, so that they do not learn to monitor and manage their own learning but come to rely on the prompts and support from the teacher. “Scaffolding” provides a useful metaphor: a teacher would provide support (scaffolding) when first introducing a student to a concept, then remove the scaffolding to ensure that the student continues to manage their learning autonomously.

How secure is the evidence?

A number of systematic reviews and meta-analyses have consistently found similar levels of impact. Most studies have looked at the impact on English or mathematics, though there is some evidence from other subject areas like science, suggesting that the approach is likely to be widely applicable.

A substantial number of Australian studies have noted a positive correlation between meta-cognitive skills, and academic outcomes. However, fewer studies have evaluated interventions that sought to improve meta-cognitive skills. A 2014 study from South Australia found that students’ meta-cognitive skills did not improve substantially as students progressed through three secondary schools. The authors suggested that this highlights the need to provide explicit instruction to develop meta-cognitive skills.

What are the costs?

Overall, costs are estimated as low. Many studies report the benefits of professional development or an inquiry approach for teachers where teachers actively evaluate strategies as they learn to use them. A course of sustained professional development or collaborative professional inquiry is estimated at $4,500 per year (including some release from classroom teaching) or about $180 per student.

What should I consider?

Teaching approaches which encourage learners to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning have very high potential, but require careful implementation.

Have you taught students explicit strategies on how to plan, monitor and evaluate their learning? Have you given them opportunities to use them with support and then independently?

Teaching how to plan: Have you asked students to identify the different ways that they could plan (general strategies) and then how best to approach a particular task (specific technique)?

Teaching how to monitor: Have you asked students to consider where the task might go wrong? Have you asked the students to identify the key steps for keeping the task on track?

Teaching how to evaluate: Have you asked students to consider how they would improve their approach to the task if they completed it again?

For more information, videos and supporting resources, please visit:
http://australia.teachingandlearningtoolkit.net/
Murraylands SLC 2015:

How could we use this across our partnership?

Why would we use this across our partnership?

Does this connect to and support the partnership plan/other DECD foci?

What else do we know?