

Self-regulated Learning

Description

Metacognition refers to our knowledge and self-awareness of our cognitive processes—in other words, the way we “think about our thinking.” When a learner uses metacognition to improve their learning, they adapt different strategies to bolster their self-awareness about their knowledge. A subset of this is known as self-regulated learning, a set of interrelated skills and motivations that control learning. Self-regulated learning can consist of up to three stages:

Planning: forethought, where learners set goals, identify critical features around tasks, and plan strategies

Monitoring: performance, where learners track their current state and monitor their progress towards a goal

Evaluating: self-reflection, where learners assess their solutions, determine whether they met their goal, and review the strategies used.

Why is this important?

Metacognition is an extremely valuable skill. It helps students analyze new situations, identify which resources and strategies are useful in this situation, determine how to best apply them, and then assess and adjust as necessary, often leading to better academic outcomes. Learners who display or report using more metacognitive skills have higher conceptual knowledge, test performance, class grade, GPA, adaptive strategy use, transfer of knowledge to new contexts, college enrollment, and graduation rates.

Implementation Examples

Strategy training modules		
Adaptive quizzing	✓	
Goal setting and reflection surveys	✓	
Frequent in-class check-ins		▶
Use data to monitor class history and performance	✓	▶

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Sources: Boekaerts & Corno (2005), Conley (2014), Dinsmore et al. (2008), Donker et al. (2014), Theobald (2021), Winne (1995), Zepeda et al. (2015), Zimmerman & Campillo (2003)

Practical Applications

- ✓ Provide opportunities to set goals, both learning goals and well-being goals
- ✓ Use prompting questions and self-explanation during learning and problem-solving activities
- ✓ Deliver direct instruction on metacognitive strategies with opportunities for application and feedback
- ✓ Utilize feedback and reflections to encourage learners to determine what strategy is best for them
- ✓ Incorporate all three stages of self-regulated learning - planning, monitoring, and evaluating