

'We do not learn from experience ... we learn from reflecting on experience.'

John Dewey ¹

Teaching children how to learn has so far provided the theoretical rationale to learning to learn and the pedagogical principles which underpin the activities in Part B. You may already have been able to use these activities with your classes.

In Part C, we are going to consider the importance of reflecting on your practice as part of your professional development.

Throughout this book, there is an emphasis on encouraging your *learners* to develop a spirit of enquiry by adopting a critical and enquiring approach to their learning through questioning and reflection, and also for *you* to do the same to your *teaching*.

John Hattie ² refers to the teacher as a powerful support to and influence on learners: *'Teachers seem to be the single most powerful influence on students' learning.'*

One of the many ways teachers can provide this support and influence their learners, is to accept their responsibility to continue to grow and develop professionally in order to deliver ongoing quality teaching which impacts on their pupils' learning and achievement.

This will include actively engaging in personal and professional development, and viewing both teaching and learning as continually evolving processes.



In order to understand the relationship between theoretical principle and practical technique, we have encouraged you to follow Henry Widdowson's description of good language teachers who *'will refer technique back to principle, testing one out against the other in a continual process of experimentation'*. ³

This reflection can empower you, by leading to more effective teaching and, consequently, greater motivation and job satisfaction, as well as improved pupil learning and progress.

Reflective practice gives a theoretical underpinning to many of the techniques and strategies you use intuitively.

Enquiry, then, is the starting point for Part C, which contains teacher development activities that will engage you systematically in reviewing and reflecting on your teaching:

- The activities are structured around the 'plan do review' learning cycle, to enable you to experience this as applied to your own professional development.
- The fourth stage, *Share*, encourages you to support, exchange and collaborate with your colleagues, as they can be a key source of ideas and inspiration.

The activities which explore the areas for developing professionally are first outlined on page 116.

Developing professionally

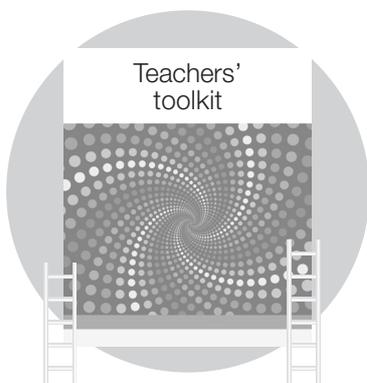
Pedagogical principles

These activities are related to each of the pedagogical principles in Part A which underpin the activities in Part B of *Teaching children how to learn*. Following your practical experimentation in Part B, the activities in Part C now give you the opportunity to further reflect on and develop awareness of how techniques relate to the principles.

You are also asked to consider the benefits and importance of the principles for your own context, as well as the impact they have had on the way you teach, on your pupils' learning and on your relationship with them.

Teaching strategies

These are related to selected teaching strategies necessary for implementing learning to learn, to other strategies which complement the activities in *Teaching children how to learn* and to your teaching in general.



The Teachers' toolkit (see page 149) contains all the Keys, Commentaries and Transcripts for the activities in Part C.

 A number of downloadable templates are available in the Teachers' toolkit on the website (see page 171).

Ongoing development strategies

These are in the form of longer term projects which will help you develop systematic methods and strategies for assessing the effectiveness of your teaching. The activities proposed engage you in action research and, in particular, a project on evaluating learning to learn, peer observation, and the development of an English Teaching Portfolio.

Self-assessment

We have seen the importance of helping children learn how to review and assess their performance in order to perceive a sense of progress as well as identify next steps. Self-assessment is also important to your development, and the activities in Part C involve you in this process.

In addition, there is a final overall self-assessment activity which gives you the opportunity to think about the strategies and knowledge you have acquired or improved as a result of using *Teaching children how to learn*, and what you want to improve or acquire in future.

Based on your self-assessment, you are invited to draw up your own personal action plan.

English Teaching Portfolio

An English Teaching Portfolio related to your teaching practice of learning to learn will help you reflect critically on your teaching, your pupils' learning and your own personal development and achievements. Think about what format your portfolio will take and what it will contain:

- It can adopt a paper or a digital format.
- It can contain examples of lesson plans, notes on observed lessons and examples of your pupils' work, such as completed worksheets, drawings, photos and any comments (see page 96) about their learning.
- It can contain your personal reflections, notes and worksheets from Part C, including your self-assessment and your action plan.

An English Teaching Portfolio is also useful to keep records of workshops or conferences you have attended, articles, books – including a record of storybooks you have used – and websites. Remember to organise and date all the items you collect in ways that are meaningful to you. You will be able to look back and feel pride in what you have achieved.

¹ Dewey, J *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* Simon & Brown 2011

² Hattie, J 'Teachers make a difference. What is the research evidence?' <https://cdn.auckland.ac.nz/assets/education/hattie/docs/teachers-make-a-difference-ACER-%282003%29.pdf>

³ Widdowson, H 'The incentive value of theory in teacher education' *English Language Teaching Journal* 38 (2) 1984