

Matthew Russell
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Metacognition in the Classroom – Let's Think in English

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JTMAT Conference

Metacognition. Collaboration. Feedback.



ABOUT THIS SESSION:

This session will explore the practical applications of metacognition in the classroom, with a specific focus on the Let's Think in English programme created by Laurie Smith at King's College, London. Come to this session if you're interested in metacognition and making students think critically and independently, even if you're not necessarily an English specialist.

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR:

Matthew Russell is Senior Leader for English and Literacy at Kingsmead. He has been an English teacher for 11 years and has 8 years' experience of middle leadership in various roles ranging from Literacy, Able, Gifted and Talented, CPD and Initial Teacher Development. Currently he's interested in Extended Writing, Debate and strategies for improving the resilience and independence of students.

ADVANCED READING:

Let's Think in English: <https://www.letsthinkinenglish.org/>

EEF: <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/metacognition-and-self-regulation/>

TeacherToolkit: <https://www.teachertoolkit.co.uk/2018/04/28/metacognition/>

WIDER READING:

Closing the Vocabulary Gap - Alex Quigley

www.letsthinkinenglish.org

LET'S THINK
in English

ABOUT LTE

PRIMARY

SECONDARY

BLOGS

CONTACT US



Let's Think in English (LTE) is a teaching programme which helps primary and secondary pupils develop the higher-order skills needed for success in English.

These include inference, deduction and analysis together with confidence and resilience when responding to unfamiliar texts.

Like CASE and CAME, LTE is one of the cognitive acceleration programmes developed at King's College London.

Laurie Smith:
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King's College London

**Independently
researched and written**

Suitable for KS2, 3 & 4

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Outline of session:

1. The Problem
2. The Solution
3. The Implementation
4. Questions

1. The Problem

Strengths:

1. Girls – HAP, MAP, LAP, PP
2. LAP overall
3. Non-PP

Weaknesses:

1. Boys
2. MAP and HAP
3. PP

1. The Problem

Boys at Kingsmead:

1. Lack confidence
2. Lack stamina
3. Give up too soon
4. Are not apathetic, but portraying apathy is easier than admitting fear

1. The Problem

The usual solutions only get us so far:

1. Period 6 intervention
2. Tutor time intervention
3. School holiday booster sessions
4. Saturday School
5. Motivational speakers and treat packages like “The Champions League”

Girls P8 = +0.3
Boys P8 = -0.2

2. The Solution

Cognitive Acceleration – Rooted in principles of metacognition

Let's Think in English – To develop students' confidence with handling text, especially unseen text, to help with:

1. Confidence
2. Stamina
3. Resilience
4. Fear

2. The Solution – Cognitive Acceleration Origins

- Cognitive Acceleration in Science Education (CASE) developed by Philip Adey and Michael Shayer of King's College for Science 1980 – 1987.
- 8 reasoning patterns underlying scientific understanding identified, e.g. handling variables, classification, correlation, probability, etc
- Lessons created to stimulate students to develop these reasoning patterns based on:
 - a. social construction of understanding (“we become ourselves through working with others”)
 - b. thought is clarified by being expressed in words
 - c. the more knowledgeable other (teacher, peer, parent)
 - d. students challenged to work at the upper limit of their current ability (zone of proximal development)

2. The Solution – Research-based evidence

Main Findings:

Cognitive Acceleration enhances general thinking skills, not just scientific ones

The Research:

1. Shayer – GCSE 1999: Added-value from schools adopting the CASE intervention available at www.kcl.ac.uk/schools/sspp/education/research/appandcog
2. Shayer and Adey – Learning Intelligence : Cognitive Acceleration Across the Curriculum from 5 to 15 Year [Open University Press 2002]
3. <https://www.letsthinkinenglish.org/about-lets-think-in-english/>

2. The Solution – So, why is it not everywhere then?

Squeezed out of curricula in England during 2000s by:

1. National Strategies' emphasis on particular approaches to teaching, and
2. Increased emphasis on detailed assessment (e.g. APP) and tracking

Revival brought about by:

1. Abolition of KS3 tests (2008);
2. Discontinuation of National Strategies (March 2011);
3. Removal of APP (May 2010);
4. National Curriculum review leading to new NC without levels (from September 2014);
5. New higher-demand GCSEs with more open questions requiring higher thinking skills (from September 2015)

2. The Solution – LTE Reasoning Patterns

1. **Classification** - genre issues, e.g. satire, fantasy, rhetorical persuasion
2. **Frames of reference** – comparing two texts or discourses to another
3. **Intentions and consequences** – the author's intentions and the reader's responses
4. **Symbolic representation** – figurative language (simile and metaphor developing into symbolism)
5. **Narrative sequencing** – non-linear narrative techniques e.g. flashback, flash forward, multiple narrators, unreliable narrator

All things which teenage boys make a mess of in GCSE English Language exams!!!...

2. The Solution – LTE Lesson Structure

1. **Concrete preparation:** explanation of topic and reading of text
2. **Social construction:** discussion of specified issues in groups to develop initial understanding; feedback to whole class
3. **Cognitive conflict:** challenge to resolve a problem requiring deeper understanding of text; group discussion and feedback to whole class
4. **Metacognitive phase:** explicit review by students of the thinking that has taken place
5. **Bridging:** using the same kind of thinking in other contexts

2. The Solution – LTE Metacognitive Activity 1

“The clearing in the woods was home to the small forest creatures. The birds and squirrels shared the trees. The rabbits and the porcupines shared the shade beneath the trees and the frogs and fish shared the cool brown waters of the forest pond. They were content.”

2. The Solution – LTE Metacognitive Activity 2

The Bridge

3. Implementation

1. A two-year programme of lessons – available for Years 1/2, 3/4, 5/6, 7/8 and 9/10.
2. Lessons need to be fortnightly (15 per year), so they can be:
 - a. stand-alone lessons
 - b. part of schemes of work
 - c. a combination of these.
3. Mixed-ability discussion groups work best; mixed ability classes work best of all.
4. Not a quick fix - evidence of long-term effects on cognition takes time to grow!

3. Implementation

1. Authentic texts – fiction, non-fiction, poetry, film
2. Teacher facilitates group discussions, not intervening except to rectify factual errors and ensure students are on task – students develop their own ideas
3. Teacher facilitates whole-class feedback and discussion, but doesn't agree with or praise any views expressed – all views are considered equally and a view of their reasonableness and depth developed together
4. Factual errors are immediately corrected, but opinions are explored in detail
5. Students are welcome to change their minds – some do this days or weeks later.

4. Questions?

Convinced?

Email me: m.russell@kingsmeadschool.net

Email Laurie Smith: laurie.smith@kcl.ac.uk

Go to the website: www.letsthinkinenglish.org

Wider reading on the next slide

Research Evidence and Wider Reading

1. Adey & Shayer – Really Raising Standards (Routledge 1994, reprinted 1997 and 2001)
2. Shayer & Adey (eds) – Learning intelligence: cognitive acceleration across the curriculum 5 – 15 years (Open University Press 2002)
3. Thinking Ahead! developing thinking through drama / music / the visual arts (GL Assessment 2006)
4. Adey and Shayer – The Effects of Cognitive Acceleration:
<https://www.letsthinkinenglish.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/TheEffectsofCognitiveAcceleration.pdf>
5. Robert Coe – Improving Education: a triumph of hope over experience:
www.cem.org/attachments/publications/ImprovingEducation2013.pdf
6. John Hattie – Visible Learning for Teachers (Routledge 2012)