



Evidence-based resources for home-supported learning

# Metacognitive talk in an online environment

**Purposeful dialogue, not just conversation, can help develop self-regulation and metacognition in students.**

## Approach summary

Metacognitive talk provides students with the opportunity to learn and practice reasoning, discussion, arguing and explanation. As we rapidly adapt to forums where teachers and students can interact virtually, we should ensure that opportunities for rich dialogue continue to exist. While adjustments might be necessary, metacognitive talk may be easily supported virtually.

Metacognitive talk takes many forms, but no matter what the strategy is, it should be sufficiently challenging, realistic, build on student subject knowledge and be suitably guided by the teacher.

Through structured talk and dialogue, students will have the opportunity to listen actively and respond.

Teachers are encouraged to explicitly name what is occurring during these conversations to help students build their metacognitive knowledge.

## Tips

- Use the technology you have and prioritise discussion over instruction, when you have opportunities to virtually connect with your class.
- Make the most of functionality within virtual platforms to replicate high-quality teaching strategies, such as the use of virtual breakout rooms for ‘think, pair, share’ discussions.
- Ask challenging, open-ended questions.
- Use questions to elicit further thought from students.
- Guide students with oral feedback and provide scaffolds where students need them.
- Encourage dialogue between students, not just teacher-student dialogue.

## What should I consider?

- Have I established a dialogue that has purpose?
- What adjustments can I make that will enable me to continue using effective teaching strategies?
- Can I set some class discussion protocols that will support effective dialogue in an online environment?
- What is the most effective use of time when I am online with my class?
- Can I find ways to support students who have limited access to online channels? (such as a phone call)

This resource has been developed from our Guidance Report [\*Metacognition and self-regulated learning\*](#).