Transcription: What is metacognition?

Lee Davis
Deputy Director,
Cambridge International Examinations

Pablo Torres
Researcher,
Faculty of Education, Cambridge

Matthew Somerville
Educational Psychologist

Lee Davis:	Metacognition is the process by which students plan, monitor and evaluate their thinking, around a particular learning objective, or a particular learning intention that they have. It is about very much understanding what success will look like in that learning intention, that learning outcome. And, as I say, identifying strategies that will help them reach their goal. So once students have those strategies, they plan the strategies that they are going to use in order to reach that learning objective, what they are then doing is they are saying okay, how well are those strategies working, what do I need to do to change any of those strategies if they are not working? And then ultimately it is an evaluation process. Have I obtained or have I achieved the learning outcomes that were initially set?
Pablo Torres:	Well first thing, when you look at the big picture, metacognition is one of the higher order thinking functions that differentiate us as humans from other types of animals. So this is very important to understand because it allows us to adapt our environment, and even transform ourselves to adapt to that environment. Now in practise it is the process of thinking through which you become aware of your own behaviours, and your own thoughts. And when you become aware of these thoughts you materialise them, you make them an object of your thinking, and therefore once this happens you can manipulate them.
Matthew Somerville:	I think of metacognition as being aware of and in control of your own thinking. I think it is helpful to break it into two parts, first metacognitive knowledge, which is knowledge of strategies, knowledge of a task, or knowledge of your own abilities. And the second part they refer to often as metacognitive regulation. And that is about monitoring what you are doing, and then they call it monitoring and control, so control is where you make adjustments or use strategies to change what you are doing. For example, if you are reading a text and you realise you haven't understood it properly, that would be the monitoring, and going back and re-reading it would be the control.

Learn more! For more information, please visit **www.cie.org.uk/events** or contact Customer Services on +44 1223 553554 or email **info@cie.org.uk**

A DIVISION OF CAMBRIDGE ASSESSMENT