

Transcription: Four levels of metacognitive learners

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Now, Perkins has a very interesting model that we can use to describe many of the learners, the students in our classroom. He calls four levels of metacognitive learners. The first level he calls Tacit, and these are students who either accept, or they accept something or not whether they understand something. So, they would for example say, 'Ah, I'm not very good at maths, so I won't really bother in this particular class. I'll wait to PE comes and then I can engage.' And you know these students, and there are many of them. We'll come back to these people in a minute.

The next are students who, they've got some idea of the strategies they can use, but they don't think about them very strategically. Okay? And we'll talk about those students in a minute as well.

The next level are the Strategic kids, these are the smart kids in the class. These are the kids who open up their toolbox of learning strategies and they can pretty much do most of the tasks and activities that you give them as teachers. They get their As, probably their A*s, but the difference between the strategic and the reflective is that many of the strategic learners are not very good in unfamiliar situations and contexts, because they don't think about their learning. Okay?

The big difference here, strategic and reflective. The strategic kids come with their toolbox, they've picked up all the strategies that you've given them as teachers, but they don't think about it very much. They just accept it. And very often these are the students who say, 'Why are we doing this if it's not coming up on the exam?' 'Not interested otherwise.' Okay? But our reflective learners, they think really carefully about what's going on here. They will question you, they will ask questions such that they can say, 'Well, why is that the case?' 'I'm not sure.' 'And if we were to do it this way, does that help then if I'm in a different situation?' And you don't get many of these students.

Guy Claxton, in his book *Building Learning Power*, talks about ... one of the key things he talks about is reflective, looking for reflective learners. And he says, 'They are ready, willing and able to become more strategic about learning.' We've got to get our students to that point.