

# Parent and Carer Support

A guide to help improve your child or dependant's learning skills

## Think and Go Higher



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### Important information

Some of the key information in this publication remains subject to change.  
Please check for the latest information using the websites and other  
resources referred to before making any decisions.

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# Welcome!

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Hello! You will find this guide packed full of information and activities to support your child or dependant in raising their attainment via developing metacognitive skills. But what is attainment raising, and why is it important?

Attainment raising means something that has been achieved or completed. In education, it often means improving your academic grades in school. Raising your child or dependent's attainment will help them progress and reach their full potential in education and life.

In this booklet you'll find attainment raising information and activities that can help learners achieve higher. There are also opportunities for you to do the activities with them.



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Some terms used in this guide may be unfamiliar to you. Find out what they mean here.

# Glossary

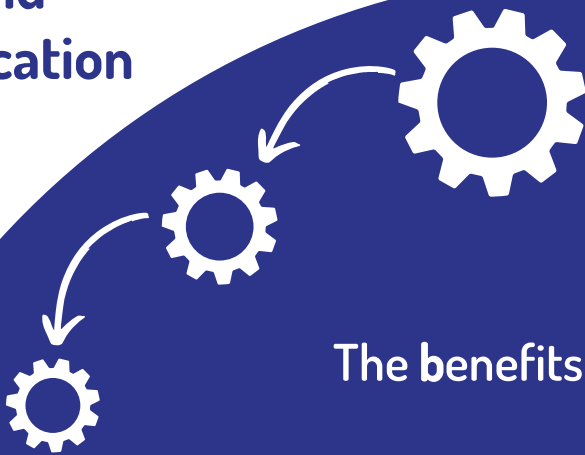
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Key term	Brief definition
Attainment	Something which has been achieved such as a grade, exam or target.
Metacognition	The process about thinking about your own thinking and learning, such as being able to evaluate.
Debate	A formal discussion where arguments are put forward e.g. when school councils debate an idea they may have for their school.
Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY)	A partnership of 13 Higher Education Providers in West Yorkshire. It works to support entry to Higher Education and success once there.
Learners	A person in formal education or training.
Oracy	The ability to express yourself fluently with speech e.g. when doing a presentation.
Public speaking	The act of delivering speeches or presenting to a large number of people.
Progression	Moving towards a more advanced state e.g. to the next academic year in school or on to another educational course

Useful information about metacognition, attainment focuses and communication

# Some useful information

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## The benefits of metacognition

Teaching learners metacognitive skills can help your child or dependant gain up to **seven** months additional progress in their education.

Demonstrating your own thought processes and applying this to challenging tasks or linking it to the national curriculum are a good way to teach these skills.

[Source: Education Endowment Fund, 2022]

## Did you know that...

...learners with good oracy skills are **four times** more likely to get five A\*-Cs at GCSE?

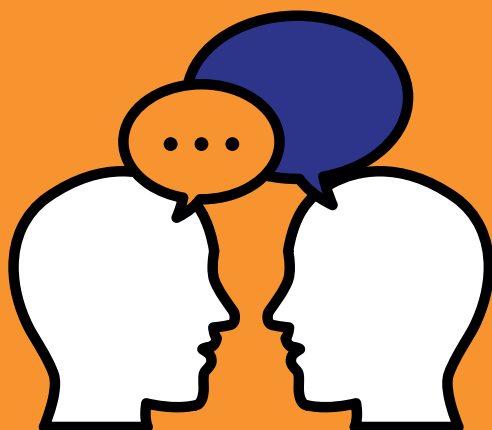
[Source: Better Communication Research Programme, 2012]

... 97% of teachers, 94% of employers, and 88% of young people believe that life skills such as confidence, motivation, resilience, and oracy are as **important** or more important than academic qualifications.?

[Source: Life Lessons, Sutton Trust, 2017]

GHWY's Think and Go Higher programme focuses on how to develop learning skills through metacognition. Metacognition is often described as learning to learn, so your child or dependant will learn skills and knowledge to support them through their education.

By supporting your child or dependant to develop these skills, they will be able to organise their knowledge, express ideas confidently using a range of techniques, think creatively, work with others and develop questioning and listening skills. This can help raise their attainment, which means they can go higher in education and achieve more.



# What is Think and Go Higher?

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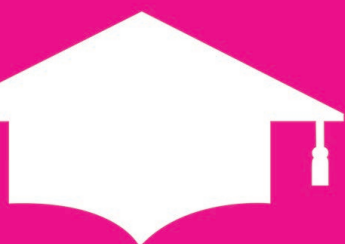
Don't just take our word for it!

"The quality of feedback that the students were giving one another was always really considerate so they're aware that it's a bit nerve wracking speaking in front of so many people so they're more sensitive with what they say... it's helped build those skills of empathy."

(Source: The final interview with a teacher, Voice 21 Pilot Report, 2018)

"Oracy should be taught more in schools... At the end of the day communication skills help you get on in life. Exam results are important but you need good communication in everyday life because you're always communicating with others."

(Source: Pupil from Executive Summary, Oracy APPG Final Report, pg8 2021)



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There are several activities on the following pages that you can use to support your child or dependant to develop their learning skills.

When you ask your child or dependant what they have done at school today do you get a response something like 'good'? Well, that's kind of normal!

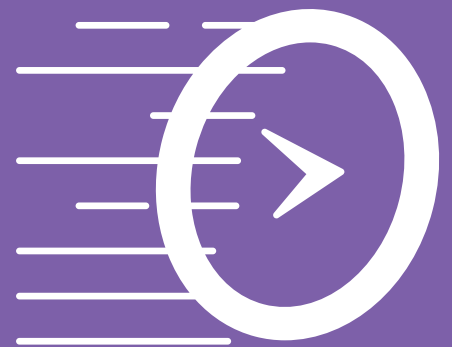
Activities like these are a great way of finding out more about what your child or dependant has done at school, what they know about, and encouraging them to get talking! All of this will help develop their communication skills and attainment raising.

## What's next?



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If you are short of time, you can complete some of the activities in about 10-15 minutes. Equally, you can spend longer on them if you so wish.



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## Quick tips for improving learning skills

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**Think about how you think; organise your knowledge to think deeper.**

**How can you connect? Link your existing knowledge on different subjects.**

**Have a debate - hold discussions to build on their knowledge and your ideas surrounding it.**

**Analyse your child/dependant's work. Ask them questions, check facts, and delve deeper into the impact of something they've discovered.**

**Be collaborative - discuss how you can support others, work with a team and share skills, ability and knowledge.**



# Thunks

## Activity 1

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Thunks are questions that make you think. There is no right or wrong answer and they create discussion. Below are some examples of thunks you can talk about with your child or dependant.

- 'If elephants ruled the world, what changes would be made?'
- 'Is black a colour?'
- 'Can I be accused of cheating if I don't know the rules?'
- 'How many bricks is a wall?'

Adapted from <https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/media/2097985/daily-thunks.pdf>

Aim: to discuss topics and think creatively

Give a thunk a go!



# If I ruled the world

## Activity 2

Work with your child or dependant and ask them to finish the sentence 'If I ruled the world....'

Once they have completed saying that sentence, ask them 'why?' Listen to their answer. Now swap. You can repeat as many times as you like!

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Some possible answers are...

- ...I would give everyone Fridays off!
- ... I would get rid of homework!
- ... I could go to bed whenever I wanted!
- ... everyone would be treated the same!

Adapted from <https://www.esu.org/resources/>

Aim: to extend discussions and back up opinions

What would you change?





# Debate:

Always, sometimes, never

Using one of the topics on the right hand side (or come up with your own), get your child or dependant to spend 5-10 minutes thinking and writing notes about the topic, and linking it to the ideas of always, sometimes or never.

Ask them to tell you their opinion on the topic.

You can then respond with your opinion. Will it be the same?

**Aim: to have a debate about a topic**

**Let's change someone's opinion**

## Activity 3

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### Topics:

- Giving is better than receiving
- Exams should be scrapped
- Chips are the best food

Here's an example to get you going:  
"Sometimes giving is better than receiving. However, it depends on the gift."



Thank you for reading this guide!  
We hope you found the  
information in it useful.

# More information

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Remember, you can speak with your child or dependant's teacher/s about attainment raising. If you want to explore more about how to support your child or dependant's attainment and educational progression, you can refer to the resources on the next page.



# Useful links

Noisy Classroom - Keep Kids Talking  
<https://noisyclassroom.com/category/keep-kids-talking/>



Noisy Classroom - Oracy Videos  
<https://noisyclassroom.com/category/oracy-videos/>



Oracy Cambridge - Talking About Talk  
<https://oracycambridge.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Talking-points-talking-about-talk.pdf>



Go Higher West Yorkshire:  
Parent and Carers Guide to Higher Education  
<https://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/resource/parent-and-carer-guide/>



Voice 21: Why Oracy Matters?  
<https://voice21.org/why-oracy-matter>



Edutopia - Oracy in the Classroom: Strategies for Effective Talk  
<https://www.edutopia.org/video/oracy-classroom-strategies-effective-talk/>



# Notes

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