

## Introduction

In this unit, you will explore an important attribute of Critical Thinking, which we call Metacognition. Broadly speaking, this refers to "thinking about thinking" and entails developing an awareness and understanding of your thought processes, while monitoring and making changes to your learning (including, importantly, your reading and writing), in the process helping you to become increasingly independent and efficient.

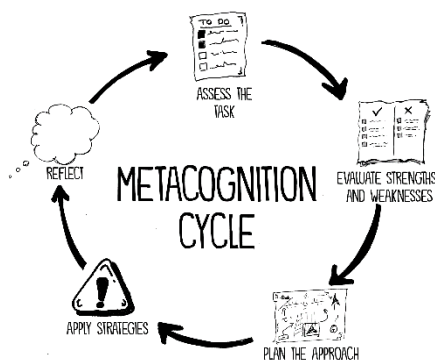
The common definition of metacognition states that it is:

"cognition about cognition", "thinking about thinking", "knowing about knowing", becoming "aware of one's awareness" and higher-order thinking skills. The term comes from the root word meta, meaning "beyond", or "on top of". Metacognition can take many forms; it includes knowledge about when and how to use particular strategies for learning or problem-solving. There are generally two components of metacognition: (1) knowledge about cognition and (2) regulation of cognition. (Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metacognition>).

In this unit we will expose you to resources on how to develop metacognition.

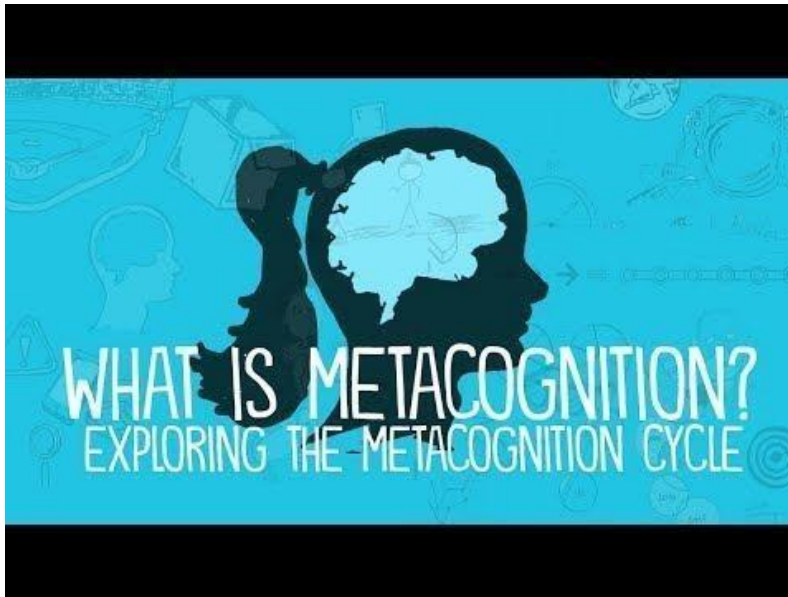
## Learning Content

The figure below shows that metacognition is a self-sustaining process that requires planning, adaptation and reflection to develop your ability to "know about your knowing." We know that this is quite an abstract topic, but if you stick with it you will see that it makes intuitive sense, because metacognition actually comes naturally to all of us. But developing it, requires some work. Read through the following presentation for more information: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BGXZlmeG3FrLp2eUvvaiA30vMjURhm8J/view?usp=sharing>

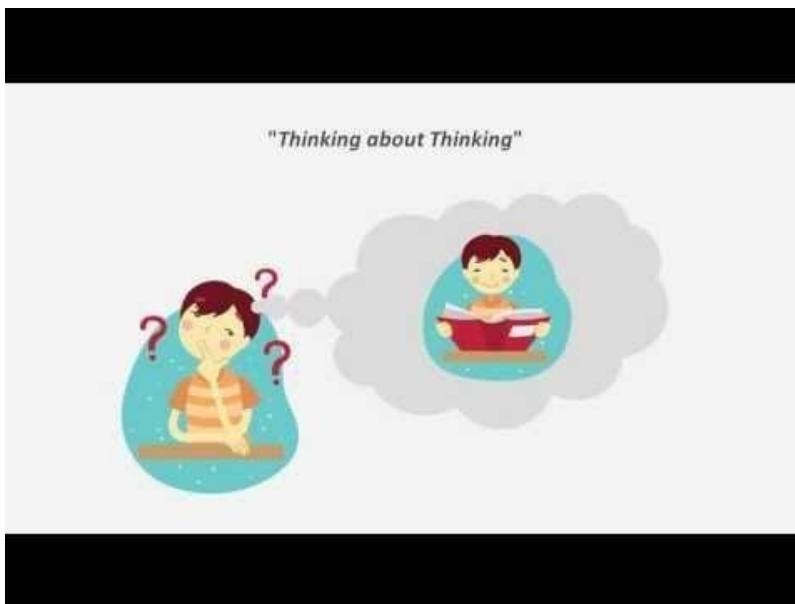


It is clear that metacognition is a process with clearly defined stages and activities. We recommend that you record every single stage by writing down (1) your impressions of the task at hand; (2) evaluate you strengths and weaknesses and explain how they will assist you, or prevent you from completing the task; (3) plan the approach you will take in completing the task; (4) apply strategies that will help you make the most of your strengths,

while overcoming your weaknesses; and (5) reflect in the process. This is discussed further in the following two videos:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HZrUWvfU6VU>



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HKFOhd5sMEc>

The following video explore the topic of cognition in more ideas and illustrate how we learn. This video is important as it show us how metacognition can be used to improve learning, thinking and writing:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R-sVnmmw6WY>

Because cognition is a value neutral activity that emphasises the process and not the product, miscognition or misconception can occur very easily. We can learn anything and acquire an infinite array of concepts regardless of whether or not they are useful or accurate. For this reason, we must guard against developing cognitive bias. The following video explores this further:



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEwGBlr\\_Rlw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wEwGBlr_Rlw)

## Summary

In this unit, you learned that metacognition is a process in which we learn about how we learn, or come to know about how we develop knowledge. The basic idea is that if you want to improve your thinking or your knowledge of knowing, it is important to gain a reflective perspective about how learning takes place.