

# **Key Stage 3**

*National Strategy*

## **The Learning Challenge**

### **Handbook for School Organisers**

**Acknowledgement**

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*Part* **1**

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Introduction





# Section 1 What is the Learning Challenge?

The Learning Challenge is part of a 'toolkit' provided to schools under the Key Stage 3 Strategy to help them provide catch-up intervention for pupils performing below expectations for their age. As well as the Learning Challenge the toolkit includes the Reading Challenge, the Writing Challenge and the Mathematics Challenge. The main aim of the Learning Challenge is to help pupils improve their organisation of themselves and of their learning. Through this they will be better equipped to take advantage of what is offered to them in lessons.

The Learning Challenge is a flexible 'little and often' intervention which will fit with the other aspects of intervention programmes to help support learning and raise achievement.

## Rationale

The Learning Challenge is designed to help schools intervene to support the learning and raise the attainment of those pupils who have limited skills in organising themselves for learning.

- Some pupils need additional support to help them to improve their organisational skills and to help them organise their learning more effectively.
- Some pupils respond well to individual coaching as it increases motivation.
- Coaching is most effective when based on the diagnosis of a pupil's strengths and weaknesses.
- Coaching can be focused effectively by an appropriate short-term target, which is followed up.
- Non-specialist volunteer coaches can be effective when trained in clear and simple processes.
- The key processes in coaching are motivating through praise, giving clear feedback on current performance, setting appropriate tasks for practice and filling identified gaps in knowledge and understanding.

## Outline

There are seven challenges in the Learning Challenge, each of which deals with a different aspect of personal organisation or of the organisation of learning. These challenges are to be found in Part 2 of this handbook. Each challenge has more than one session to enable coaches to meet pupils frequently to check and reinforce their progress, in order to help pupils to embed what they are learning into their routine practice. The challenges are written to be self-contained and can be used in any combination to best meet pupils' identified needs.

## Who can benefit from the Learning Challenge?

The Learning Challenge is designed for a targeted group of pupils who may be disorganised in their preparation for schoolwork or homework, or who have poorly developed learning strategies. The targeted group should be those pupils who have the capacity to improve if they are given extra support. They are likely to be pupils whose attainment in one or more of the core subjects is up to two years below expectations for their age.

## How does the scheme work?

The scheme works by identifying learning targets for each pupil and by providing coaching towards these targets. The support may be arranged on a one-to-one basis or with a coach supporting two or three pupils in a small group. Parents need to be informed and may be able to support their children with some of the work.

The scheme is organised by a teacher who has been trained in the process.

The school organiser should:

- identify which pupils will be supported through the Learning Challenge;
- know their areas of difficulty and their targets for improvement;
- allocate pupils to coaches;
- decide the extent and duration of support for each pupil;
- provide advice and support for coaches;
- monitor the progress made by pupils;
- liaise with pupils' tutors and subject teachers.

The school Strategy manager should coordinate and establish the Learning Challenge, along with the other Challenges, as part of the school's intervention programme. The Strategy manager should have an overview of which pupils are being supported by each of the Challenges to ensure that individual pupils are not over-burdened. This manager, in consultation with staff, should identify a teacher to be the school organiser for the Learning Challenge (e.g. a SENCO, a head of year or head of house, the Key Stage 3 coordinator or a member of the senior management team with responsibility for teaching and learning).

It would be helpful if form tutors and subject teachers were aware of pupils' Learning Challenge targets so that they can reinforce and develop pupils' improved organisational skills within subject-specific contexts.





# Section 2 Implementing the Learning Challenge

## 2.1 Implementing the Learning Challenge

### a Establish the Learning Challenge

The school Strategy manager seeks the agreement of the school's senior management team to include the Learning Challenge in the school's suite of provision for underachievers, and then establishes it as part of the school's intervention programme. The Learning Challenge organiser is identified; this could be the SENCO or a pastoral head.

### b Identify the pupil group

A target group of pupils who will benefit from the scheme is identified using the diagnostic tools provided in section 4 (page 14). The teacher who is organising the scheme analyses the pupils' difficulties in organising their learning by means of an interview and information from subject teachers and form tutors. The agreement of these pupils and their parents to take part in the scheme is sought. This teacher then sets up a programme of support to match their most pressing needs and set targets for the pupils.

### c Recruit coaches

A number of volunteer coaches is recruited. For example, these could be teaching assistants, parent volunteers, governors, form tutors, learning mentors, librarians, or students. The organising teacher will need to fix a time to take coaches through the coaching challenges and to provide guidance in their role as coaches. This should take no more than half a day.

### d Pupils receive coaching which is matched to their needs

Pupils and their coaches meet at agreed times over a set period. The process and the number of sessions is governed by the nature of the pupils' needs.

### e Review of progress against target

This is the end of the process when the organising teacher assesses pupils' progress against the target, rewards success and possibly sets a further challenge.

## 2.2 Key roles in the Learning Challenge

There are three key roles in the Learning Challenge:

- the school Strategy manager;
- the Learning Challenge organiser;
- the Learning Challenge coaches.

**The school Strategy manager** has overall responsibility for establishing the Learning Challenge within the whole-school package of interventions with underperforming pupils. The school Strategy manager will need to identify the person to be responsible for organising the Learning Challenge and work with them to identify the group of pupils who will gain most from the Learning Challenge. As he or she is likely to be overseeing the other Challenge aspects of the 'intervention toolkit' they will be best placed to recruit coaches for the Learning Challenge as this will be part of the overall provision. The school Strategy manager will also be involved in reviewing the impact of the Learning Challenge on the pupils who have taken part.

**The Learning Challenge organiser** could be the SENCO or a pastoral head in the school. The Learning Challenge organiser will have the main responsibility for training, managing and supporting coaches, arranging a workable schedule and reviewing the progress of individual pupils. They will need to:

- work with tutors, subject teachers and the pupils themselves to collect the information to help identify the pupils who could benefit from the support;
- work with the school Strategy manager to identify the actual pupils who will receive coaching in the Learning Challenge;
- brief and support coaches in the purpose, structure and use of the Learning Challenge;
- ensure that all coaches have a copy of the document 'Advice to coaches' (Part 3 of this handbook);
- coordinate the coaching programme. This will be a minimum of one session per week for each pupil. Some challenges will require a meeting each day between the pupil and the coach to review progress. This is to help pupils to get into the habit of being more organised. Other challenges have a requirement for review over a slightly longer period;
- introduce pupils to their coaches;
- arrange times and places for meetings and make sure that both pupils and coaches know the place and times of the sessions. Coaching sessions should take place in areas where the coach and the pupil are visible to other adults – for example the library or the learning support centre;
- make arrangements for coaches to give feedback on how the challenges are working and what progress pupils are making;
- make sure that subject teachers of the pupils involved have information about the challenges they are following so that they can reinforce the main messages in their lessons and help pupils to improve their organisation.

**The Learning Challenge coaches** are volunteers. They will come from a wide range of backgrounds and have a variety of experience. They will need to be trained in the purpose and use of the material and be supported in the work they will do. They will be a valuable resource for the school because teachers' time is a precious resource and cannot usually be used for one-to-one coaching.

The coaching model used in the Learning Challenge fits well with schemes such as paired reading and academic mentoring that schools may already have established. Coaching in the Learning Challenge is sufficiently flexible to be organised around secondary school timetables and is economical with teacher time. One-to-one meetings between coaches and pupils will take between 10 and 20 minutes. Meetings can be flexibly organised within and around the school day to suit the individuals concerned and to cause the minimum amount of disruption to other learning. They could be organised before school starts, during tutor periods, during the lunch hour, or after school, or during cover sessions.



# Section 3 Outline of the Learning Challenges

The seven constituent challenges of the Learning Challenge each focus on a different aspect of pupils' personal organisation and the organisation of their learning. The challenges are listed in outline below and can be found in full in Part 2 of this handbook. Once pupils' needs have been identified the school can select the most appropriate set of challenges for them.

## Challenge 1: The organisation challenge

	Focus	Target
1.1 Organising yourself	Organisation of self and equipment (1 main session and checking sessions as necessary)	The pupil routinely brings all books and equipment needed for the day in school.
1.2 Organising your homework	Organisation of homework (4 main sessions and checking sessions as necessary)	The pupil routinely records homework in enough detail to ensure they know what they must do.  The pupil completes and hands in homework on time.

## Challenge 2: The memory challenge

	Focus	Target
2.1 Remembering things (a)	Making lists and writing things down	The pupil routinely records things they need to remember.
2.2 Remembering things (b)	Breaking things down	The pupil is able to break big things down into smaller chunks to learn.
2.3 Remembering things (c)	Mnemonics	The pupil is beginning to use mnemonics to help with remembering things.

## Challenge 3: The revision challenge

	Focus	Target
3.1 How to prepare for tests (a)	Helping pupils plan for revision and improve their study skills	Pupils understand the kinds of things they should do when revising.
3.2 How to prepare for tests (b)	Helping pupils develop note-making skills	Pupils understand the principles of note making for revision. Pupils are able to apply some of these principles to their own note-making.

## Challenge 4: The working challenge

	Focus	Target
4.1 Working on your own	Helping pupils to develop the strategies necessary for working independently (1 main session and checking sessions)	The pupil is using strategies to help them clarify what needs to be done. The pupil is breaking down work into smaller chunks. The pupil is prepared to ask the teacher for help after they have tried to do the work themselves.
4.2 Working with other people	Helping pupils to develop the strategies necessary for working collaboratively (2 main sessions and checking sessions)	The pupil understands how groups work. The pupil is able to modify their behaviour to improve their contribution to collaborative work.

## Challenge 5: The subject challenge

	Focus	Target
5.1 Subject conventions (a)	Helping pupils to understand the similarities and differences between lessons in different subjects	Pupils are able to anticipate differences in conventions in subjects and develop strategies to help them manage them effectively.
5.2 Subject conventions (b)	Helping pupils to understand the use of technical language in subjects	Pupils are able to use the same word in different contexts in different subjects. Pupils are beginning to understand the importance of using technical language correctly.

## Challenge 6: The thinking challenge

	Focus	Target
6.1 Thinking about thinking	Classification and evaluation	Pupils understand what is meant by classification. Pupils understand what is meant by evaluation. They are able to classify and evaluate more confidently.
6.2 Comparing things	Developing independent thinking (1): comparing things	Pupils are able to use a Venn diagram as a tool for comparing things and identifying similarities and differences.

6.3 Visual thinking in action	Developing independent thinking (2): organising information	Pupils are able to construct more complex Venn diagrams and understand the value of using these and spider diagrams to help them to organise and classify information.
6.4 Seeing the 'big picture'	Making links between ideas and information	Pupils understand how to use a Mind Map for organising information and organising their thinking. Pupils are able to construct and use a Mind Map.
6.5 Big picture thinking in action	Understanding the 'big picture' – the context in which the learning takes place	Pupils are able to transfer skills and knowledge between different aspects of a subject. Pupils are able to transfer skills and knowledge between subjects.

## Challenge 7: The reflection challenge

	Focus	Target
7.1 Reflecting on learning outside school	How pupils learn things outside school	The pupil is able to talk about how they have learned something they do outside school.
7.2 Reflecting on learning in school	How pupils learn things in school (1 main session and checking sessions as necessary)	The pupil is able to reflect on how they have learned something in school.



# Section 4 Identifying pupils

## 4.1 Identifying pupils

The identification of the appropriate target group of pupils is key to the success of the Learning Challenge.

For Year 7 pupils, the target group will be identified initially from their achievement in primary school, and by their tutors and subject teachers in secondary school. The pupils engaging with the Learning Challenge will be characterised by being disorganised in their preparation for schoolwork or homework, or as having poorly developed learning strategies.

They are also likely to be pupils whose attainment in one or more of the core subjects is up to two years below expectations for their age. This means that they might be Year 7 pupils who have been assessed at level 3 in one or more subjects in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2, or Year 8 pupils whose reading and numeracy skills were shown to be at level 3/4 by the progress test at the end of Year 7.

The initial group of pupils will be Year 7 and Year 8 pupils who have an attainment on entry of level 3 or an insecure level 4 in one or more of the core subjects. In addition the pupils identified for support in this way will have underdeveloped organisational skills. They are likely to exhibit some of the following characteristics:

- are poorly prepared for lessons – forgetting books and equipment;
- are unreliable with homework – failing to record and complete homework;
- show lack of engagement with schoolwork in general;
- have difficulty retaining information;
- make slower progress than might be expected;
- respond well to individual attention;
- are likely to receive support in other areas – e.g. *Springboard 7* and *Literacy Progress Units*;
- have difficulty working on their own;
- find collaboration in a group difficult;
- have limited support for schoolwork outside lessons;
- have erratic attendance.

Tutors and subject teachers will be asked to comment on aspects of each pupil's organisational skills. Organisers will need to remember that the scheme is not intended for pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs. It is a scheme designed primarily to give a boost to pupils who are underperforming and below expectations in their achievement.

The following diagnostic checklist (section 4.2) will help to identify the pupils who would benefit from taking part in the Learning Challenge. This will provide a broad indication but it is not an exact science. Subject teachers and tutors will have information about pupils that the organiser can draw on. (A photocopiable version of this checklist is included as appendix 1.)

Subject teachers and tutors should complete the checklist as this will contribute to the overall picture of the pupil as a learner. This should then be supplemented by a short interview with each identified pupil to allow them to talk about how they see themselves as a learner and what areas of difficulty they can identify. An interview record sheet is included to help with this (section 4.5). Schools can adjust this according to the

circumstances that apply in the school. (A photocopiable version is included as appendix 2.)

Many of the identified pupils will have poor organisational skills and experience difficulties with learning over quite a broad canvas, but the Learning Challenge works by prioritising one key factor and focusing the coaching directly on this. The organising teacher should use the available information to identify one priority and set a target against which the pupil can be coached to make progress. Other priorities can be addressed later.

The process of identification can be broken down into these stages.

- Consider the relevant information on the pupil already at hand.
- Carry out the Learning Challenge interview with the pupil and complete the 'Learning Challenge interview record sheet'.
- Identify the pupil's key area for development.
- Set an appropriate target.
- Identify the appropriate coaching strategy.

## 4.2 Checklist for identifying pupils' needs

Name of pupil:

Year group:

Tutor set:

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Usually</b>	<b>Sometimes</b>	<b>Rarely</b>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Pupil interview</b>
Forgets books					
Forgets pens etc.					
Forgets games kit					
Forgets homework					
Doesn't finish homework					
Doesn't record homework in enough detail					
Doesn't finish class work					
Lacks motivation					
Forgets information or vocabulary					
Makes limited progress in three or more subjects					
Has difficulty in building on his or her learning					
Has limited support outside lessons					
Gives up quickly when working on his or her own					
Finds working in a group difficult					
Has erratic attendance					
Works well in a one-to-one situation					
Lacks confidence					
Has significant weaknesses in literacy and numeracy					



## 4.3 The Learning Challenge interview

The main aim of the Learning Challenge interview is to assess the pupil's organisational skills and their attitude to learning. It is not designed to measure a pupil's ability.

The Learning Challenge interview focuses on:

- talking with the pupils about the things they find easy and difficult about organising themselves and their learning;
- talking with the pupils about their views of themselves as learners.

During the interview, the teacher can make notes on the record sheet provided in these materials (section 4.5). After the interview, these notes can be used to add to the checklist completed by teachers (section 4.2). This information should then be used by the organising teacher to identify the most appropriate challenge – or sequence of challenges – for each pupil.

## 4.4 Conducting the interview

Settle the pupil down and try to get them relaxed. This may take longer if the pupils are not already known to the teacher and may mean that the interview takes longer than 15 minutes. Say you want to find out about them as a learner so you can set them the best Learning Challenge. Use the key questions and any supplementary questions you need in order to complete the relevant part of the record sheet. The sheet can be completed while you talk with the pupil by underlining responses as appropriate in the centre column and making brief notes in the right-hand column if necessary. (A photocopyable version of this sheet is available as appendix 2.)

The aim of the interview is to collect evidence about the pupils' attitudes to learning and their views about how they learn best.

You will need to ask the questions on the record sheet and will often need to persuade the pupils to say a bit more. You could say things like: *'Could you tell me a bit more about that?'* or *'Why do you think this is?'* Collecting this evidence can be difficult and it is important to be patient and encourage the pupils to talk about their feelings concerning their work.

## 4.5 Learning Challenge interview record sheet

Name of pupil:

Year group:

Tutor set:

	Key questions	Possible response	Other responses
1	Do you always remember your books and pens for school?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
2	Do you always remember your games kit?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
3	Do you always remember money or ingredients for food technology?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
4	If they sometimes or always forget things, ask what they forget most often		
5	Try to get them to talk about why they tend to forget these things	I can't remember what lessons I've got I keep losing things I don't like PE or food technology (or another lesson)	
6	Do you do your homework?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
7	If they don't always do their homework ask them why	I haven't written it into my diary or planner I don't like doing homework Sometimes it's too hard	
8	Do you always finish it?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
9	If they say they don't always finish their homework, ask if they can say why they don't	It's too hard I don't know what I have to do I don't like working on my own	
10	Where do you do your homework?	In my bedroom In the kitchen Another place in the house At my friend's house On the bus on the way to school In school before school starts	

## 4.5 Learning Challenge interview record sheet (cont'd)

11	Is it quiet where you do your homework?		
12	When do you do your homework?	As soon as I get home After tea Just before I go to bed No particular time	
13	Do you like working in groups with other people?	Yes Sometimes Not much No	
14	What do you like about it?	I like listening to other people I'm good at discussing things It gives me new ideas I can do harder work with other people	
15	What don't you like about it?	I'm not good at discussing things I never get to say what I think I don't always know what I have to do	
16	Do you get stuck with your work?	Always Often Sometimes Not usually	
17	What do you do when you get stuck?	I ask for help from my friend I copy from my friend I ask the teacher for help I keep trying I give up	
18	Do you find learning at school easy?	Always Often Sometimes Not usually	
19	What things do you find difficult?	I don't always know what to do I don't always understand the words I can't always remember things we have to learn I'm not very good at tests I don't like having to solve problems	
20	How do you feel when you are given new work to do?		

## 4.6 After identifying pupils

When the target group has been identified in this way, it may be that the number of pupils identified exceeds your capacity to provide the Learning Challenge, depending on the number of coaches, their availability and the logistics of the meeting.

Each Learning Challenge will take between 10 and 20 minutes. Some sets of challenges will need to be revisited daily over a period of time, others will have longer intervals between sessions. The suggested pattern and frequency of coaching sessions is indicated with each challenge.

A rough guide would be that to run Learning Challenge for a group of 20 pupils over a term would require ten hours of teachers' time and about ten coaches prepared to spend about one hour a week, which is likely to be distributed through the week as a series of short coaching sessions.

If a selection has to be made within the target group because of insufficient coaches, it is best to choose those pupils who will benefit most. For example, pupils who attend school regularly will benefit more than those with erratic attendance. Once the scheme is up and running and the coaches have gained experience, it may be possible to draw a wider range of pupils in.

It is likely that some pupils will be identified for support from more than one of the Challenges or other intervention areas. If this happens then the pupils' capacity for involvement will need to be considered. The school will need to ensure that pupils are not overloaded and that their involvement in different intervention programmes is staggered throughout the year.

Once the pupils have been identified, it will be necessary to inform them and their parents. The support of parents will be essential to the success of the scheme. A model letter to parents that can be used for this purpose is included as appendix 7 at the back of this handbook.



# Section 5 Matching coaching to identified needs

## 5.1 Beginning the Learning Challenge

Once the analysis of the pupil's organisational difficulties has been completed, the school organising teacher should decide which of the Learning Challenge constituent challenges would be the best place to start and set a target related to that challenge. The next step is to allocate a coach and set up the process of coaching the pupil to make progress against the target set. It is worth taking account of gender and personality factors when matching coaches to pupils. Arrange a brief meeting to introduce the coach and the pupil to each other. At this meeting, the following matters are organised and agreed.

- The pupil is given his or her challenge and this is recorded in their diary or planner together with the date when the challenge is to be completed and reviewed by the teacher.
- The organising teacher records the pupil's target and the challenge to be followed on the 'Information for the coach' sheet and gives a copy to the coach. See appendix 4.
- The expectations of what the pupil will do are explained clearly.
- The coach and the pupil agree the time and place of their first meeting and note this in their diary or planner.
- The pupil notes what he or she needs to do before this meeting and what, if anything, they need to bring.

It may be most efficient to manage this process by bringing all the pupils and coaches together at one time. In this case, the pupils' challenges will need to be written into their books in advance.

## 5.2 The monitoring role of the organising teacher

At the start of the challenge, the organising teacher must be satisfied that:

- the coach and the pupil understand how the coaching will proceed;
- an appropriate place has been identified for the coaching activity to take place.

During the challenge, the organising teacher should:

- be ready to intervene if the coaches or the pupils report problems;
- check informally with coaches and pupils that all is going well when the opportunity arises;
- monitor a sample of coaches' record forms after two weeks to check for problems. An example of a record form is included as appendix 5.

The coaching period can be flexible but should be at least six weeks and could be for a whole term. Organising teachers may want to stagger the finishing date for the challenges so that all the reviews do not come at once.

## 5.3 Review of progress against target

At the end of each challenge, the organising teacher arranges to meet the pupils to review their progress against their targets. The aim of the review is to establish the most appropriate outcome and next steps.

The organising teacher could decide:

- that good progress towards the target has been made. In this case the challenge has been successfully completed and the pupil will receive a reward (e.g. the first certificate as shown in appendix 6). Using the pupil's 'Learning Challenge profile form' in appendix 3, the organising teacher can then decide whether to set the pupil a new challenge or suggest they exit from the scheme;
- that some progress has been made. In this case the pupil will receive a reward (e.g. the second certificate as shown in appendix 6), but the challenge will be extended for a further period of time and coaching will continue. This option is only suitable where there is evidence that the process of coaching has been working satisfactorily. It is not worth extending the coaching period where the reason for limited progress seems to be related to problems such as lack of reliability or effort;
- that little progress has been made. Ideally, no pupils will reach the end of the challenge period in this position as problems will have been picked up and dealt with earlier. Decisions will need to be made about pupils in this category, based on whether they are suitable to continue in this scheme with extra pastoral support or whether they might benefit more from another form of intervention.

## 5.4 Assessing pupils' progress

The review seeks to establish:

- how well the pupil has participated in the scheme;
- the extent to which there are positive signs of a change in organisational or learning behaviour in the area targeted by the challenge;
- the pupil's own estimation of what they have gained.

To make a judgement against the first criterion of **participation**, the organising teacher will need to see the coach's record form and final comment and look at the pupil's diary or planner. The pupil can be judged to have **participated well** if there is evidence from the record form that:

- the pupil has attended all or most of the coaching sessions;
- the pupil has undertaken the tasks set in each session and for completion between sessions;
- there are clear signs of improvement in organisation and growing confidence with learning;
- the coach always or nearly always comments positively on the pupil's engagement during the coaching sessions.

The pupil can be judged to have **participated satisfactorily** if there is evidence from the record form that:

- the pupil has attended 90% of the coaching sessions;
- the pupil has undertaken most of the tasks set;
- the coach comments positively on the pupil's engagement during most of the coaching sessions;
- there are some initial signs of improvement in organisation and growing confidence with learning.

The organising teacher will have to work with the coaches to make a judgement about how much progress the pupil has made in each challenge. The following criteria should be applied to each challenge:

**Good progress:** The targets for improvement in the challenge under consideration have been achieved and the pupil is routinely better organised and prepared for lessons and learning.

**Satisfactory progress:** The pupil is becoming more organised and prepared for learning but there are still areas that need developing.

All pupils should be expected to make some progress, even if this is very small. It is important that the pupils complete their Learning Challenge on a positive note and that they are rewarded for their effort and progress both through praise and through some kind of tangible reward which can include:

- certificates such as those shown in appendix 6;
- tokens or vouchers — possibly from a local business sponsor;
- communication to parents or guardians.

The organising teacher should record the outcome of the review and, where appropriate, set up the next stage of the process by setting a new challenge.



# Section 6 Recruiting and training coaches

## 6.1 Recruiting coaches

A range of people may take on the coaching role.

- Teaching assistants
- Mentors
- Adult volunteers
- Student teachers
- Senior students – e.g. from Years 11,12 or 13
- School librarians
- Governors

Coaches should be able to relate well to pupils of this age group and be able to motivate them. It is likely that over half of the target pupils will be boys, so ideally there should be a balance of male and female coaches.

Individual schools will be best placed to see from where they can best seek to recruit their coaches. It may be that work with the Learning Challenge would fit well into the programme of teaching assistants and mentors that the school already employs. Schools may already have good community links with a tradition of adult volunteers helping in school. Many schools already use senior students to read with younger pupils and, in these cases, the Learning Challenge could be introduced as a further development to arrangements already in place.

Important considerations for coaches are:

- All coaches will need to be trained in the scheme. This will take about half a day.
- Schools will need to satisfy themselves of the suitability of all coaches. This will include the necessary checks on adults and an assessment of the ability and aptitude of student coaches.
- Coaches need to be clear about the level of commitment they are making and should be in a position to fulfil their commitment reliably. This is enormously important as the kind of pupils being coached need to be able to trust their coach to support them.

The school will need to ensure that coaches understand what they will gain by being part of the programme. Adults will learn from the training and will have the satisfaction of helping a young person to improve in an important skill for life. Older students involved in coaching will also learn much from the experience and will be able to have their participation accredited, perhaps through their Record of Achievement, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme or simply as part of their CV when applying for higher education or employment. Students considering a career in teaching or youth work would find this opportunity particularly useful.

It is only when the coaches have been recruited and have committed themselves to a given amount of time per week that the organiser can finally decide how many pupils to take into the scheme. As a rough guide it can be said that one hour of coaching per week will provide for two pupils.



## 6.2 Preparing the coaches

The constituent challenges of the Learning Challenge have been written to be self-contained and self-explanatory. They should require the minimum of training for coaches. Each challenge recommends what coaches should say and do, written in great detail. As coaches become more experienced and confident they will be able to tailor the challenges more closely to the actual pupils they are working with. Each challenge focuses on a clear target for pupils to aim for to help them to improve their personal organisation and the organisation of their learning. Some experienced coaches will be able to use the challenges after reading the 'Advice to coaches' (Part 3 of this handbook).

The school Learning Challenge organiser will need to brief the coaches on the purpose and use of the challenges. The documents 'Advice to coaches', 'Information for the coach', 'Coach's record form' and the challenges themselves will be useful for briefing coaches and are all included in the main part of the handbook or in the appendix section at the back of this handbook. This briefing might involve:

- introducing the Learning Challenge;
- taking coaches through the 'Advice to coaches' (Part 3) and providing them with a copy;
- introducing the challenges, focusing on the ones which have been identified as the most appropriate initial challenges for the pupils who are to participate in the Learning Challenge;
- ensuring that coaches are clear about the purpose of the challenges they will be using;
- ensuring that they know how to use the challenges;
- discussion of coaching strategies involved in using the challenges with pupils;
- explaining the cycle: identifying pupils, coaching pupils in the challenges, pupils attaining targets, identifying further support;
- ensuring that coaches know how to use the record forms (see appendix 5);
- ensuring that coaches know what to do if there are problems.

Coaches could be briefed on all Learning Challenges, or they could be briefed only on the ones they will be working with in the first instance. If coaches are briefed on only some challenges, they may need to have further briefing sessions when pupils are ready to move on to further challenges.

The school organiser needs to provide the following for coaches:

- the challenges they are going to use and any other materials they will need;
- targets for the pupils they will be coaching;
- information on the place where they will be coaching the pupils and the timetable for support;
- information about giving feedback to the Learning Challenge organiser;
- information about school expectations and routines.



# *Part* **2**

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The Learning  
Challenges



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# Challenge 1: The organisation challenge

## 1.1 Organising yourself

## 1.2–1.5 Organising your homework

### Rationale

The overall aim of these sessions is to help pupils to develop better habits in recording and organising their homework, to be better prepared for school and bring the right things they need for their lessons.

Some pupils have problems organising themselves and their work. This can cause them problems in preparing themselves for lessons, and in recording and organising their homework. Many might not be achieving their best because they do not have the organisational skills necessary to prepare for their lessons. This might be at quite a basic level; for example, pupils might not bring the right equipment to lessons. They may not write their homework down properly, and so may have forgotten what they have to do when they are at home. They may have difficulty in organising their time when doing homework, which can lead to their using time badly and not finishing what they have to do.

### Organisation of the sessions

The sessions can be run with individual pupils or a small group of not more than three.

The interactive sessions require pupils to talk with you and with each other about what they are doing and the decisions they are making.

Make sure you have checked the resources needed section of the challenge to ensure you have the correct equipment.

Each challenge includes more than one session to allow pupils to try out and begin to embed the new skills they have learned. These follow-up sessions are important as they help pupils and you to check and reinforce their learning. Remind pupils of the date, time and place of the follow-up session before they leave you.



# Challenge 1.1: Organising yourself

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to make sure they are well prepared for lessons and have everything they need for the day.

**Resources needed: A bag with basic equipment and a diary  
Card sort (Resource 1) with cards cut up  
Checklist (Resource 2) for each pupil  
Pupils' timetables**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)	Explain the objective for the session: <i>We are going to look at how you organise yourself and what you need for the day so that you can be better organised and better prepared for your lessons.</i> Ask pupils: <i>How will this help you?</i> You might expect responses like: 'I won't get into trouble for forgetting things' and 'I will be able to do my work better'. Focus on the second type of response and ask pupils to explain how being better organised will help them do their work better.
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)	Ask pupils: <i>What did you do to get ready for today?</i> Expect responses like: 'I got my bag ready last night' or 'I was late, so I just grabbed my things as I left the house'. Ask them: <i>Show me what you've got with you today.</i> Make positive comments if they have pens, pencils, a ruler, eraser, pencil sharpener, an assortment of exercise books or folders.
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	Say: <i>I've had to prepare for talking to you today and this is how I organised myself for today. I've brought this pen because I knew I was going to have to write something down. I've brought my diary because it will help me sort out when I can meet you all again, and it would have been difficult to do that without it. I've brought this timetable – why have I brought this? What would have happened if I hadn't?</i> Give pupils time to talk about why having a timetable helps you know where you have to be when, and what you have to do.
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	Use the cards (see Resource 1) and get pupils to sort them into things they need every day, things they only need sometimes and things they need but can't pack – such as breakfast. There will be some things left that they don't need in school. Ask them: <i>Have you all got the things you need every day?</i>



	<p><i>Which of the things that you only need sometimes have you brought today? How did you know which things to bring?</i></p> <p>Focus them on the need to look at their timetable the night before so that they can sort out what they need for a specific day.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Talk about how you will plan for tomorrow. Say: <i>Every night I check what I will need for the next day. I look at my timetable to see what I'll need for tomorrow.</i> Introduce the checklist of things they need. Say: <i>This list lets you tick off each night what you will need next day.</i> Show how it might be used by ticking items as they are needed for a day in the school timetable. Say: <i>You can tick the list as you put things in your bag. Remember you will need to check your timetable.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Agree a target with pupils by asking pupils when might be the best time for them to use the checklist. Say: <i>Your target is to be more organised and better prepared for your lessons. I want you to use this for the next two weeks to see if it helps you to be more organised and better prepared for your lessons. We will meet again at the same time tomorrow and for the next two weeks so we can see how it's going.</i></p>

## Review sessions

**You will need to meet the pupils each day at the same time to check that they have used the checklist and that they have what they need for the day. Give them lots of praise.**

**Each day go through their timetable with them to help them to identify what they need for the next day. Encourage them to use the checklist.**

**When you are happy that they have got into a routine of checking what they need and are coming equipped you can stop meeting so regularly. You may want to meet them periodically to check they are still coming to school properly equipped.**



# Challenges 1.2–1.5: Organising your homework

## Aims

The aim of these sessions on organising homework is to enable pupils to develop the organisational skills necessary to complete their homework to the best of their ability. Too often it is the difficulties encountered in organising themselves that prevent pupils from doing well with homework. These sessions aim to help pupils overcome some of these difficulties.

## Organisation

There are four sessions on organising homework. Sessions 1.2 and 1.3 need to be done close to each other in order to reinforce the messages. Session 1.4 could be done after an interval of one or two weeks to give pupils a chance to practise the skills they have learned. Session 1.5 is a review session. It would be useful to revisit this periodically to help the pupils to build up good habits.

Session 1.2: Understanding your homework

Session 1.3: Overcoming common problems

Session 1.4: Planning your homework

(This session to be held one or two weeks after the first two sessions.)

Session 1.5: How much have we improved?



# Challenge 1.2: Understanding your homework

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils focus on the purposes of doing homework and help them begin to organise themselves better.

**Resources needed:** A copy of your diary/planner for tomorrow. (It could be made up rather than real.) It needs to be completed with a fairly high level of detail. See the sample homework planners in Resource 3.

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>Today we are going to look at how you can improve the organisation of your homework to help you do it better. Why is homework important?</i> Don't spend a lot of time doing this. Discuss with them answers such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the need to be able to learn things on their own;</li> <li>• the need to reinforce and pull together what they have done in lessons;</li> <li>• the need to carry out research that cannot be done in normal lessons;</li> <li>• the need to sometimes revise for tests;</li> <li>• the need to prepare for future lessons.</li> </ul>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Now say: <i>Tell me what you do when you get your homework?</i> Look for responses like: 'Write it into my planner'. Say: <i>I know this is what you should do, but do you really do it?</i></p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>When I have something important to remember I write it in my diary. Look, here is my diary and here is what I have to do tomorrow. Why do I need to write it down like this?</i> Look for responses like: 'You would forget it if you didn't write it down' or 'If you don't put in details you'll miss them out and it won't be right'.</p>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	<p>Show the pupils the homework planner that has been well done and the planner that is not well completed (Resource 3). Say: <i>What makes a good homework planner?</i> Look for responses which stress the importance of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• including the full details (you will have forgotten it by the time you get home);</li> <li>• writing clearly, so you can understand it later;</li> <li>• writing the date when the homework must be handed in;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adding any notes that might help you, for example, 'This homework builds on the work done in class last week'.</li> </ul>
<b>Review</b> (2 minutes)	<p><i>Say: We've talked about some of the things you find difficult when you're doing homework and what you could do to make it better. Remind me of one important reason we do homework? Look for responses that suggest that it increases what they learn and improves how they learn it.</i></p>
<b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)	<p><i>Say: We've talked about how important it is to fill in your planner properly. Before the next session you are going to try hard to fill in your homework planner every day. What can you do if you miss what you have to do? Look for answers like: 'Ask the teacher to go over it again'. Say: We'll look at how you've got on next time we meet.</i></p>



# Challenge 1.3: Overcoming common problems

This session will help pupils to recognise common problems that they have when doing their homework and offer them some ways of overcoming these.

**Resources needed: Homework review sheet (Resource 4)  
Homework problem cards, cut up for use (Resource 5)  
Flipchart and marker pen**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Remind pupils that they were going to try to fill in their planners properly. Say: <i>Did you try to fill in your planners properly? Did this help you?</i> Ask to see the planners and give pupils a few minutes to talk about how they helped. In particular focus on ways in which the planners helped them to remember what they had to do and contained enough detail so they knew exactly what to do. Then say: <i>In the last session we talked about some of the things you find hard when you are doing your homework. We are going to take this a bit further and find some ways to help you to solve the problems.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Now say: <i>We are going to look at the kinds of things you find hard now when you are doing your homework.</i> Ask the pupils to complete the homework review sheet on their own (Resource 4).</p> <p>When they have done this give them time to compare their answers with those of other pupils sitting near them. Say: <i>What things do you all find hard?</i> Draw out common problems such as:</p> <p><b>Organisational problems:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• forgetting to do it;</li> <li>• too much to do on some nights;</li> <li>• finding a suitable place to do the homework;</li> <li>• establishing routines;</li> <li>• recording what to do so they do not forget.</li> </ul> <p><b>Academic problems:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• some homework is difficult and they may find difficulties in completing the task;</li> <li>• finding information when not at school;</li> <li>• what to do if they do not understand the task or get stuck.</li> </ul> <p>Collect the homework review sheets. They will be needed again for challenge 1.5.</p>

<p><b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>When I have a problem about something I'm finding difficult I talk to somebody else about it. So I might talk to a friend. For example, I might ask them for help if I didn't know how to send a text message on my new mobile phone and they had the same one. What would you do?</i> Look for responses in broad agreement with this position.</p>
<p><b>Activity session</b> (8 minutes)</p>	<p>Now say: <i>We are now going to look at some problems that pupils often say they have with homework. Then we'll talk about ways they could solve their problems.</i> Give pupils the cards from Resource 5. Pupils should choose three problems to discuss. For each problem they should agree what advice they would give to the pupil concerned. Give them time to talk about their solutions and give the reasons why they would give this advice.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Now we are going to use your suggestions to make a list of the golden rules for homework for Year 7 pupils.</i> Take their suggestions and list them on a flipchart. After the session is over have these suggestions typed up and, perhaps, laminated and give a copy to each member of the group to keep in a safe place.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask each pupil to describe at least one thing they are going to do differently in future to help them improve the organisation of their homework. Say: <i>Try to do the thing that you have identified and we will come back to this next time.</i></p>

## Review session

This session may need following up on a daily basis to check how well planners are being completed. This is to help pupils get into the habit of completing them routinely. All you need to do is arrange a regular time to look at their planners and talk about what they have done well and what they have done less well. Remember to give them lots of praise and reinforce the message that they need to write their homework down with as much detail and accuracy as possible.

**When you are happy that they have got into a routine of recording their homework properly you can stop meeting so regularly. You may want to meet them periodically to check they are still completing their planners properly.**



# Challenge 1.4: Planning your homework

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will build on the two previous sessions and help pupils to plan their homework better.

**Resources needed: Jason's homework diary (Resource 6)  
Homework diary (Resource 7)**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)	<p><i>Say: In this session we are going to look at what you are doing now that's better than it was before. We will also look at things you can do to help you plan your homework better.</i></p> <p>Remind the pupils that they were going to try out one thing that they could do differently to help them with the things they find hard when doing homework. <i>Say: Tell me what you tried and how it helped you.</i> Give them a few minutes to talk about this.</p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p><i>Say: Do you always manage to do all your homework?</i> Look for responses like: 'I don't always have enough time' or 'Some nights I go to a club' or 'I manage to do it if I plan time for it'. Focus on the last kind of answer. If they don't raise this, then raise it yourself.</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p><i>Say: I really like watching Eastenders (or an alternative activity) but I usually have things to prepare. So what do you think I do?</i> Look for answers like: 'Do your preparation before the programme starts'. Now say: <i>Because I have things I want to do after school I have to think ahead and plan my work time so that I can do my preparation and still have time to do other things.</i></p>
<b>Activity</b> (12 minutes)	<p><i>Say: Now we are going to look at a way to help you fit all your homework in and still have time for other things. Why does this matter?</i> Look for answers like: 'I need to do my homework because I want to learn better. But I also want to have time to play football/ watch TV/ play computer games'.</p> <p><i>Say: So you really need to get organised and plan what you will do each night. Look at Jason's homework diary (Resource 6). What does he do apart from homework? Pause for answers. Does he manage to do his homework as well? Pause for answers. How does he do this?</i> Look for responses like: 'He plans out his time'. Then say: <i>Here is an outline</i></p>

	<p><i>weekly homework diary for you to fill in. We are only going to do it for Monday and Tuesday at the moment.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Fill in what homework you will be given for each night.</i></li> <li>• <i>Estimate how long this is likely to take you.</i></li> <li>• <i>Write in what other activities you have already planned for these evenings.</i></li> <li>• <i>Complete the Homework diary (Resource 7).</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Are there any evenings that you have more time for homework than others? Which days do you have the least time? Is it easier to do your homework as soon as you come in from school? Give time for a short response and probe for reasons.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p><i>Say: Before we meet again you are going to fill in the sheet for the whole week. Don't forget to think about how you will organise your time at the weekend to make sure you get your weekend homework done.</i></p>





# Challenge 1.5: How much have we improved?

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will build on the previous sessions. It will provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on how their organisation has improved and what else they can do to improve this further.

**Resources needed: Homework review sheets from challenge 1.3  
Homework diaries**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' response.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>At the end of the last session you took away a homework diary to fill in. Let me see it. Was this easy or hard to do? Tell us what made it easy (or hard).</i></p> <p><b>Give pupils a few minutes to talk about this, and then move on to talking about today's session.</b></p> <p>Say: <i>What we are going to do today is to pull together what we've been doing in the last few weeks to see how it has helped you to organise yourself better.</i></p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)	<p>Now say: <i>In the last two sessions we looked at helping you to organise your homework. Say: Tell me about one thing you have changed in how you organise your homework.</i></p> <p>Look for answers that show that pupils are planning better and are asking for help more often.</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>If I want to see how much I have improved I go back and look at what I was like before. How could we check how much you have really improved?</i> Look for responses that take you back to the homework review sheet (Resource 4) completed in challenge 1.3.</p>
<b>Activity</b> (10 minutes)	<p>Give the pupils the homework review sheet they completed in challenge 1.3 (Resource 4). Say: <i>Well done. You are going to go back to your homework review sheets and give yourself a score against each box to say whether you think your organisation has improved. You can use the following scoring system:</i></p> <p><i>1 = I have improved this a lot.</i>  <i>2 = I have improved this a bit.</i>  <i>3 = I have not improved this.</i></p> <p>Now say: <i>What aspect of homework organisation has improved the most?</i> Give pupils a few minutes to talk about this.</p>

	<p><i>What has been the most difficult thing to improve? Give pupils a few minutes to talk about this.</i></p> <p><i>What else can you do to improve the way you organise your homework? Give pupils a few minutes to talk about this.</i></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Using the responses they have made reinforce the messages from the three sessions. Say: <i>So we now know that we need to use a homework planner properly, we need to plan for the time needed to do homework and we shouldn't be afraid to ask for help.</i></p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Praise the pupils for the progress they have made in organising their homework. Do this even if the improvement has been slight in some cases. Say: <i>Well done. What you have to do now is keep on doing the things you have been trying over the past few weeks. You know they've helped you to organise your homework better. The more you do these things the better organised you will become.</i></p>

## Review session

**Some pupils will have made little improvement in their organisation of homework. You should revisit this session with them so that you can reinforce how important planning homework is. Give them lots of praise every time they do improve.**

## Resource 1: Card sort

Strong bag	Languages book	Pencil case	Reply letter for outing
Pen	Languages homework	Music book	ICT book
Pencil	History book	Music homework	ICT homework
Coloured pencils	History homework	PSHE/citizenship book	Breakfast
Eraser	Geography book	PSHE/citizenship homework	Plenty to drink
Ruler	Geography homework	English book	A good night's sleep
Pencil sharpener	RE book	English homework	A walkman
Pair of compasses	RE homework	Mathematics book	Glasses
Angle indicator	Art sketch book	Mathematics homework	A mobile phone
PE kit	Art homework	Science book	Sweets
Swimming kit	DT book	Science homework	Dinner money
My planner	DT homework	Absence note	Fizzy drink

## Resource 2: Checklist – What do I need to bring?



Tick what you need to bring on each day. When you have ticked each thing, put it in your bag.

Things I need	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
Planner										
Timetable										
Pens										
Pencil										
Coloured pencils										
Eraser										
Ruler										
Pencil sharpener										
Pair of compasses										
Angle indicator										
Pencil case										
PE kit										
Swimming kit										
A strong bag										
Glasses										
English book										
English homework										
Mathematics book										
Mathematics homework										
Science book										
Science homework										
ICT book										
ICT homework										
Languages book										
Languages homework										
History book										
History homework										
Geography book										
Geography homework										
RE book										
RE homework										
DT book										
DT homework										
Art sketch book										
Art homework										
Music book										
Music homework										
PSHE/citizenship book										
PSHE/citizenship homework										



# Resource 3: Homework planners

These are planners for two pupils in the same class. Can you spot five reasons why Robert's planner is better than Maggie's?

## Robert's planner

Day	Subject	Homework	Date Due
<b>Monday</b>	English	Draft the first paragraph of my story	Fri
	Geography	Research the San Francisco earthquake	Next Tue
<b>Tuesday</b>	Mathematics	Complete sheet 1.3 Fractions, questions 1 – 10	Thu
	DT	Advertising poster	Next Tue
<b>Wednesday</b>	Science	Answer questions 1 – 5 on page 10 of the textbook	Monday
	RE	Complete report	Wed
<b>Thursday</b>	French	Learn verbs for test	Mon
	English	Read chapter 7 Goodnight Mr Tom	Mon
<b>Friday</b>	History	Write a newspaper report about the fire of London	Thu
	Mathematics	Revise for test	Tue

## Maggie's planner

Day	Subject	Homework	Date Due
<b>Monday</b>	Eng	Write bit of story	Fri
	Geog	Find out about San Francisco	
<b>Tuesday</b>	Mathematics	Complete sheet	Thu
	DT	Poster	
<b>Wednesday</b>	Science	Answer questions	
	RE	Complete report	Next lesson
<b>Thursday</b>	French	Learn words	
	English	Read the book	
<b>Friday</b>	History	Write about the fire of London	
	Mathematics	Revise	Next week



# Resource 4:

## Homework review sheet

Question	Always	Sometimes	Not often	Score for improvement
Over the last week have you finished your homework and handed it in on time?				
Is your homework normally as good as your classwork?				
Do you always have the things you need to do your homework? For example, a dictionary, pens, ruler, eraser.				
Is your homework diary kept up to date?				
Do you write down all your homework fully in your diary?				
Have you got a quiet, warm, comfortable place to do your homework?				
Do you do your homework while watching TV?				
Do you plan when to do your homework?				
Do you ask for help with your homework from friends or family or your teacher?				
Do you sometimes do your homework in a rush before school or just before the lesson?				
When you are doing your homework do you get interrupted by members of your family or by friends?				



# Resource 4: Homework review sheet: follow-up scores

Score for improvement: 1 = I have improved this a lot.  
2 = I have improved this a bit.  
3 = I have not improved this.



## Resource 5: Homework problems

<p>John does his homework but he keeps forgetting to bring it to the lesson on time. He often leaves it at home. What should he do to prevent this?</p>	<p>Abdul sometimes gets cross when he does his homework because he cannot remember what the teacher said when setting the task. What could he do to help him overcome this problem?</p>	<p>Julie finds that her writing is not very good when she does her homework because she does it while lying on her bed. What should she do to make her writing neater?</p>	<p>Esther sometimes gets stuck with her mathematics homework. She worries that the teacher will tell her off if she gets it wrong. She sometimes tells the teacher she has forgotten to do it rather than admit she found it hard. What advice would you give her?</p>
<p>Robert is asked by Joe to go round to his house after school to do the RE homework together. Robert refuses because he feels this would be copying. Is he right?</p>	<p>Eve knows she has a French test on Friday. On Monday she was told to revise as her homework. Her friends ask her to go to the youth club on Thursday night. Should she go or stay in and revise?</p>	<p>Susan is given three lots of homework on one day. All the teachers want the homework completed for the next day. Susan is going out to football practice that night. She is captain of the team. What should she do?</p>	<p>Edward shares a bedroom with his younger brother who is always interfering with his things. He doesn't like doing his homework in his bedroom because of this so he does it downstairs in front of the TV. Is this okay? If not, what should he do?</p>





# Resource 6: Jason's homework diary

	<b>Homework subjects</b>	<b>4.00-5.00</b>	<b>5.00-6.00</b>	<b>6.00-7.00</b>	<b>7.00-8.00</b>	<b>8.00-9.00</b>
<b>Monday</b>	English Geography	Computer Club	Dinner	Homework	Watch TV	
<b>Tuesday</b>	Maths DT	Homework	Dinner	Football practice	Football practice	
<b>Wednesday</b>	Science RE	Homework	Dinner	Watch TV		
<b>Thursday</b>	French English	Homework	Dinner	Watch TV		
<b>Friday</b>	History Maths	Play football	Watch TV	Dinner	Youth Club	Youth Club
<b>Saturday and Sunday</b>	Weekend homework to be done on Sunday afternoon 2.00 – 4.00					



# Resource 7: Homework diary

**Name**

	<b>Homework subjects</b>	<b>4.00-5.00</b>	<b>5.00-6.00</b>	<b>6.00-7.00</b>	<b>7.00-8.00</b>	<b>8.00-9.00</b>
<b>Monday</b>						
<b>Tuesday</b>						
<b>Wednesday</b>						
<b>Thursday</b>						
<b>Friday</b>						
<b>Saturday and Sunday</b>	Weekend homework to be done on Sunday afternoon 2.00 – 4.00					



## Challenge 2: The memory challenge

### Aims

These sessions are intended to increase the range of strategies pupils use to help themselves remember information and how to do things. The strategies suggested here are only a few of the possible strategies that pupils might use to help them remember. The thinking challenge will supplement this by introducing the idea of Mind Mapping as a way of organising and recording information. The thinking challenge should be done after pupils have done the memory challenge rather than before.

### Organisation

The sessions should be done fairly close to each other, but not so close that pupils have no opportunity to practise the strategies. One every week would be an appropriate interval. There may also be a need to reinforce the learning for some pupils. It will become apparent which pupils will need further reinforcement of the strategies if these are to become a routine part of their approach to learning. Some pupils will need to repeat a session to aid this process. If this is necessary, coaches must be sensitive and try to respond to a pupil's actual difficulties. It's important that pupils are not made to feel that they have failed.



# Challenge 2.1: Remembering things (a)

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to remember things by helping them to make lists or writing things down when they have to remember something.

**Resources needed: Pupils' daily planners**  
**Remembering things (Resource 1)**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Explain the objective for the session: <i>We are going to look at what things you need to remember and find things you can do to help you remember.</i>  Ask pupils: <i>How will this help you?</i> You might expect responses like: 'It will help me get higher marks in tests' or 'It will stop me from getting into trouble for forgetting my homework'.
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	Ask pupils: <i>What kinds of thing do you have to remember?</i> Expect answers like: 'Lists of words in French', 'Equipment I will need', 'How to do some parts of maths'. Ask them: <i>Which things are hard to remember?</i> Expect a range of answers, including things like words in modern foreign languages, mathematics formulae. <i>Which things are easy to remember?</i> Expect a range of answers. Focus them on remembering words of songs or names of football players. Ask them: <i>What makes these things easy to remember?</i> There are likely to be a range of answers like: 'Hearing the same thing over and over' or 'Needing to know this because...'. Ask pupils: <i>What do you do when you have something you have to remember?</i> Expect responses like: 'Repeating' or 'Writing it down'.
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	Say: <i>When I have something that I need to remember to do I write it down. Look, I wrote down the time and place we are meeting today to make sure I didn't forget. What things do you need to write down?</i> Look for answers like 'Homework' or 'Timetables'. Then say: <i>We're now going to think about other things you might write down to help you to remember.</i>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	Ask pupils to get out their daily planners. Say: <i>Now we are going to make lists of all the things you will have to remember for tomorrow and all the things you will have to remember for the next week. Use your homework planner to help with things</i>

	<p><i>like homework and PE kit, but there are also lots of things you are going to have to remember for things you do outside school. Hand out Resource 1: 'Remembering things', and get pupils to write a few things in each column. Ask them how they think this might help them.</i></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Talk about what you have done. Say: Making lists helps you remember what you have to do and where you have to be. It is also useful to write down other kinds of things you have to remember. You might also think about writing things on sticky notes and sticking them where you can see them easily – like on your mirror at home or next to the place where you do your homework.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Use your planner or a notebook to write things down that you really need to remember. These could be anything at all, from remembering your PE kit to new words in French or an important date in history. When we meet next we will look at how this has helped you and try out another thing you can do to help you remember things.</i></p>



# Challenge 2.2: Remembering things (b)

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to break down big things to make them easier to remember.

**Resources needed: Remembering things (Resource 2)**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>At the end of the last session you were going to try writing down things that you had to remember. Did you do this? Did it help you to remember things?</i> Give pupils a few minutes to talk about this and give them lots of praise for trying it out.</p> <p>Explain the objective for the session: <i>We are going to look at a different way of remembering things. We are going to look at how you can break big things down into smaller pieces.</i></p> <p>Ask pupils: <i>How will this help you?</i> You might expect responses like: 'I forget things when I have too much to remember' or 'Little things are easier to remember'. Focus on the second type of response and explain that it is easier to hold smaller pieces of information in your memory at one time.</p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask pupils: <i>What do you do if you are trying to remember a poem?</i> Look for responses like: 'I just keep going over it'. Ask pupils: <i>Describe what you would do if you wanted to eat a pineapple.</i> Let them talk about this for a short while. Then ask them for the steps they would take. This should include the need to cut it up into smaller pieces because it is too big to eat.</p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>That is what I do when I have something to learn. Sometimes things are just too big to learn all at once and you have to break them down. If I have to learn a poem I break it down into little bits and say one little bit over and over until I think I can remember it. Then I go onto the next bit.</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Now we are going to give this a try. Here is a list of numbers.</i> Give out the list of numbers (see Resource 2). Say: <i>You are going to have to remember these numbers in the right order. How will you do it?</i> Look for answers like: 'Break the list down into smaller bits and learn each bit'. Encourage the</p>

	<p>pupils to group the digits into threes. Then they should learn the groups of three and try to repeat them. Say: <i>'Go over and over each bit until you think you know it. Then cover it up and see if you are right.</i> When they have repeated each group of three successfully more than once let them try to remember the first two groups together. When they have done this move on to all three groups. If they have trouble with this, stop at two groups so that they finish with a feeling of success.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>What we have done today is something you could try whenever you have anything you have to remember. Did you think you would remember the numbers when we first started? Were you surprised?</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Tell pupils: <i>Try this with one thing you have to learn next week. It could be anything – a poem, some maths, science, history – in fact anything you have to learn. Next time we meet, I'll see if you can remember it.</i></p>



# Challenge 2.3: Remembering things (c): mnemonics

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will increase the number of different things pupils can do to help themselves remember things.

Resources needed: Remembering things (Resources 3 and 4)

Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Recap last session. Say: <i>Last session we looked at how you could break things down into smaller chunks to help remember them. Did you try this?</i> Give pupils time to talk about what they did and whether it helped. Encourage them to keep trying.</p> <p>Explain the objective for this session: <i>We are going to look at how you can use little hooks to help you remember things. These hooks might be things like rhymes, or initials, or linking words, or little clues to help you compare one thing with another.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask pupils: <i>Can you think of any rhymes or little clues that help you to remember things?</i> They may not be able to come up with anything. If they don't, say: <i>OK, let me tell you some things I use to help me remember.</i> If they do come up with things praise them and say: <i>That's great. Now let me tell you about some of the things I use to help me remember.</i></p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>I can't ever remember which way I go first when I'm reading grid references on maps. So I say: 'Along the corridor and up the stairs', which helps me know that the first number is along the bottom of the map and the second number is up the side. Do you do anything like this?</i> (You could also repeat the 'thirty days hath September' rhyme, or do this as an alternative.) Spend a few minutes talking about the responses.</p> <p>Say: <i>Another thing I do is to find words that sound like another word. This is really useful when I'm trying to remember French words. For example the word for room in French is <b>chambre</b>. Now this is a bit like the word chamber in English and that is another word for a room.</i></p> <p>Sometimes I might imagine pictures to help me remember. For example, if I wanted to remember that Henry the Eighth had six wives I might think of a picture of Henry the Eighth surrounded by six wedding rings.</p>



<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Now we're going to try some of these out. You have to remember that Cardiff and Swansea are the two biggest cities in Wales. How could you do that? Look for drawings or descriptions that would create a visual image to trigger memory. (These could be a card floating and a swan swimming in the sea where there are whales.)</i></p> <p>Say: <i>Now we're going to try remembering some words from another language. (Use Resource 3.) Try and find ways of remembering what the words in another language mean – the first one has been done for you. Get pupils to complete the chart. Possible ways of doing the task are listed on the sheet, Resource 4.</i></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>We've looked at a few things you might do to help you remember things. You might come up with other things that you do to help you to remember.</i></p>
<p><b>What next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Tell pupils: <i>Try one of the things we've talked about sometime during the next week and see if you remember that thing more easily. Next time we meet you can tell me about the things you have tried and how you got on with them.</i></p>

## Review session

**This session will need to be followed up with a short review session to check whether they have tried to use hooks to help them remember. Talk to them about what they have tried and what has helped. Remember to praise them for their efforts.**



# Resource 1: Remembering things

Remembering things 1	
Tomorrow	The next week



# Resource 2: Remembering things

Remembering things 2

Numbers to remember: 729640138



## Resource 3: Remembering things

Word from another language	Language	Means	Clues from English – link words
L'herbe	French	Grass	Sounds like herb Herbs are green Grass is green
Tor	German	Gate	
Pichet	French	Jug	
Senf	German	Mustard	
Robe	French	Dress	



# Resource 4: Remembering things

Word from another language	Language	Means	Clues from English – link words
L'herbe	French	Grass	Sounds like herb Herbs are green Grass is green
Tor	German	Gate	Sounds like door – you go through it like a gate
Pichet	French	Jug	Pitcher is another name for jug in English
Senf	German	Mustard	Sounds like a sneeze. Mustard makes you sneeze
Robe	French	Dress	Something you'd put in a wardrobe





# Challenge 3:

## The revision challenge

### Aims

This challenge is aimed at improving the strategies that pupils use when preparing for tests and doing revision. It links to the memory challenge and the thinking challenge. The strategies it suggests are only some of the revision strategies pupils will need, and deal only with very basic preparation. It is likely that this topic is reinforced and amplified by subject teachers and in PSHE and tutorial lessons.

### Organisation

The two sessions should be done close together with a follow-up session about a week after the second session.



# Challenge 3.1:

## How to prepare for tests (a)

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to do better in tests by teaching revision techniques that improve the way pupils prepare for tests.

**Resources needed:** Resource 1: The water cycle  
Resource 3: Example of revision notes

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Ask pupils whether they find it easy or hard to revise for tests. Give them a short while to talk about this, expecting them to say they find it hard. Say: <i>In this session we are going to look at how you can best revise for tests.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)	Ask the group to discuss what is wrong with the following answer that Julie gave to the question, how did she revise for her French test?  'I got up early on the morning of the test and read through my notes.'  Ask pupils what is wrong with only reading notes as a revision activity. Look for answers like: 'You won't remember what's in them' or 'They might not be very good in the first place'. Ask them to talk about the problems of leaving it to the last minute. Look for responses like 'You could run out of time'; 'You might find something you don't understand and it'll be too late to find out about it'.  Ask the group to think about the last three tests they have done in school. Ask them: <i>How well did you do?</i> <i>Could you have done better?</i> <i>How did you prepare for the test?</i> <i>Did the revision help you?</i> <i>Have you ever been taught how to revise for tests?</i>
<b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)	Show the group the example of revision notes (Resource 3). Point out how few words there are, how clearly it is set out and how it is important to make the notes visually appealing.
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	Ask the group to read out the two pieces of text about the water cycle (Resource 1). Ask them: <i>What is better about version 2 compared to version 1?</i> <i>Why is version 2 easier to remember?</i>



	<p>Point out that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Few words often make things clearer.</li> <li>• Diagrams help understanding.</li> <li>• Arrows, boxes, flow charts, etc. make the information visual.</li> <li>• Colours can be helpful and so can highlighter pens. Pupils could highlight key words in version 1 of the water cycle to illustrate this.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Stress the following key points. Write them on the board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Just reading your book is not the best way to revise.</li> <li>• Make notes to help you revise.</li> <li>• Make your revision notes as clear and simple as possible.</li> <li>• Use diagrams, pictures and colours to help you.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p><i>Say: Take extra care when doing classwork to set out your notes clearly. This will help you to revise important things later. Can you think of one thing we have looked at today to try out before next time? Write it in your planner or diary. Try this out and tell me how you got on.</i></p>



# Challenge 3.2:

## How to prepare for tests (b)

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to make the best use of their revision time by making good, clear notes.

**Resources needed:** Resource 1: The water cycle  
 Resource 2: Weathering  
 Access to whiteboard or flipchart

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Tell the group that they will be building on the work they did in the last session on preparing for tests. Say: <i>You chose one thing from the last session to try out. How did you get on?</i> Give them a short time to talk about what they did. Praise them for trying.</p> <p>Remind them of the features of good revision notes and diagrams. Say: <i>Make notes short and clear. Use diagrams or pictures. Colour can be helpful when trying to remember things – highlight key words or phrases.</i></p> <p><i>In this session we will practise making revision notes. You will be able to try this out after the session.</i></p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (1 minute)	<p>Talk to the group about the limitations of just reading through class notes as a revision activity. Remind them about what they said in the last session. Point out this is often not the best way to remember things.</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Show the group the water cycle sheet (Resource 1) from the last session and point out that a diagram with few words is easier to remember and learn than a piece of text.</p>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	<p>Ask the group to read the notes on 'Weathering' (Resource 2). Tell them to highlight the key words in the text and then use these to turn this information into a simple revision diagram.</p> <p>After they have done this compare the different versions. Praise those that have made clear the three types of weathering and those who have drawn diagrams, spider diagrams, etc. Point out that what is helpful to one person may not appeal to another. We all have different learning styles. It is important for them to begin to know what is the best style of notemaking for them.</p>

<p><b>Review</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Make copies of this diagram to give out but draw it on the board first to sum up the revision process:</p> <p><b>The Revision Process</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px; text-align: center;">Plan to learn one topic at any one time.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px; text-align: center;">Revise in short bursts. 20 minutes is fine.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px; text-align: center;">Don't just read your notes. Make diagrams or highlight or write down key facts.</div> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px; text-align: center;">Try to remember the information. Get someone to test you.</div> <p>Give out the copies you have made for pupils to stick in their planners or diaries to remind them what they have learned.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Tell the group to prepare for their next test by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• planning their time to revise;</li> <li>• making revision notes and diagrams;</li> <li>• testing themselves the day before the test.</li> </ul> <p>If they have no test coming up ask them to do this with any piece of work they are busy with. Say: <i>You could practise by:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>making revision notes and diagrams;</i></li> <li>• <i>testing yourself.</i></li> </ul> <p><i>We will meet in a week's time to see how you have got on with this. Bring along what you have done so I can see the notes you have made and how you have made them.</i></p>

## Review session

**You will need to plan a review session about a week after this session to check how they have got on with this. Remember to give pupils lots of praise for trying.**

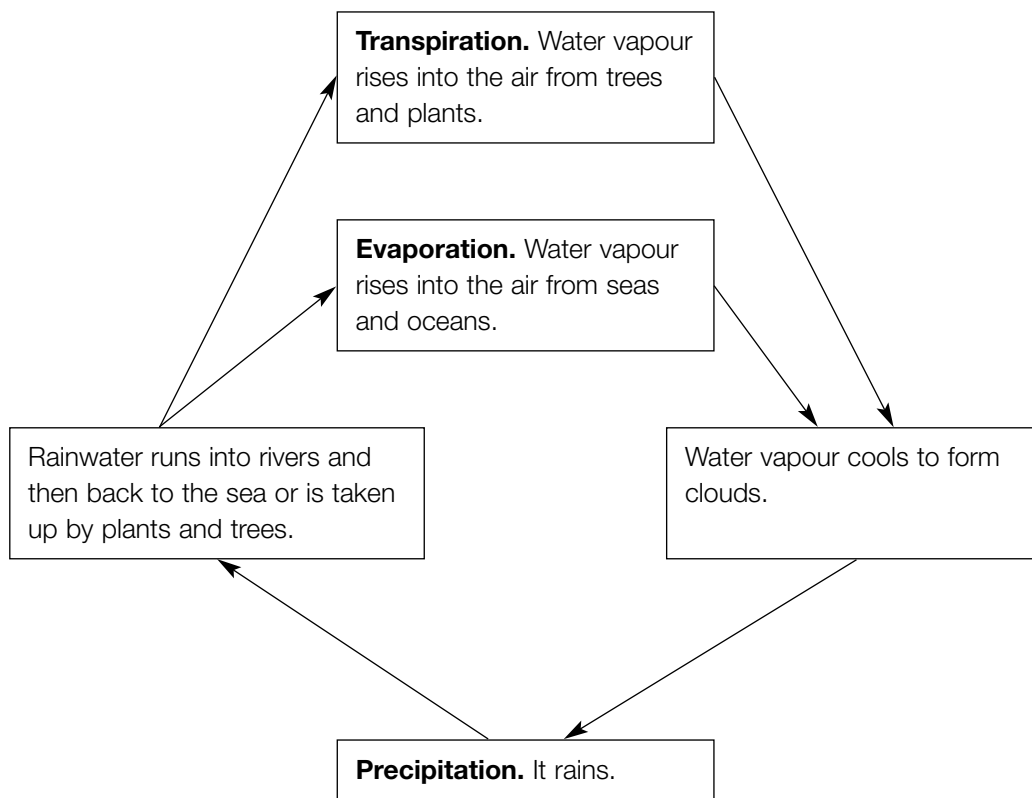


# Resource 1: The water cycle

## Version 1

The sun warms up the seas and oceans causing the water to turn to water vapour and rise up into the sky. This is called evaporation. Trees and plants give out water vapour as well. This also rises into the sky. This is called transpiration. It gets colder the higher in the sky you go. The water vapour in the air forms droplets as it gets colder and they join together to make clouds. When the clouds get too heavy with water droplets rain comes down. This is called precipitation. Some of the rainwater runs into rivers and streams and eventually flows back into the seas and oceans. Some of the rainwater gets drawn up by the roots of plants and trees. The whole process then starts again.

## Version 2





# Resource 2: Weathering

## Activity

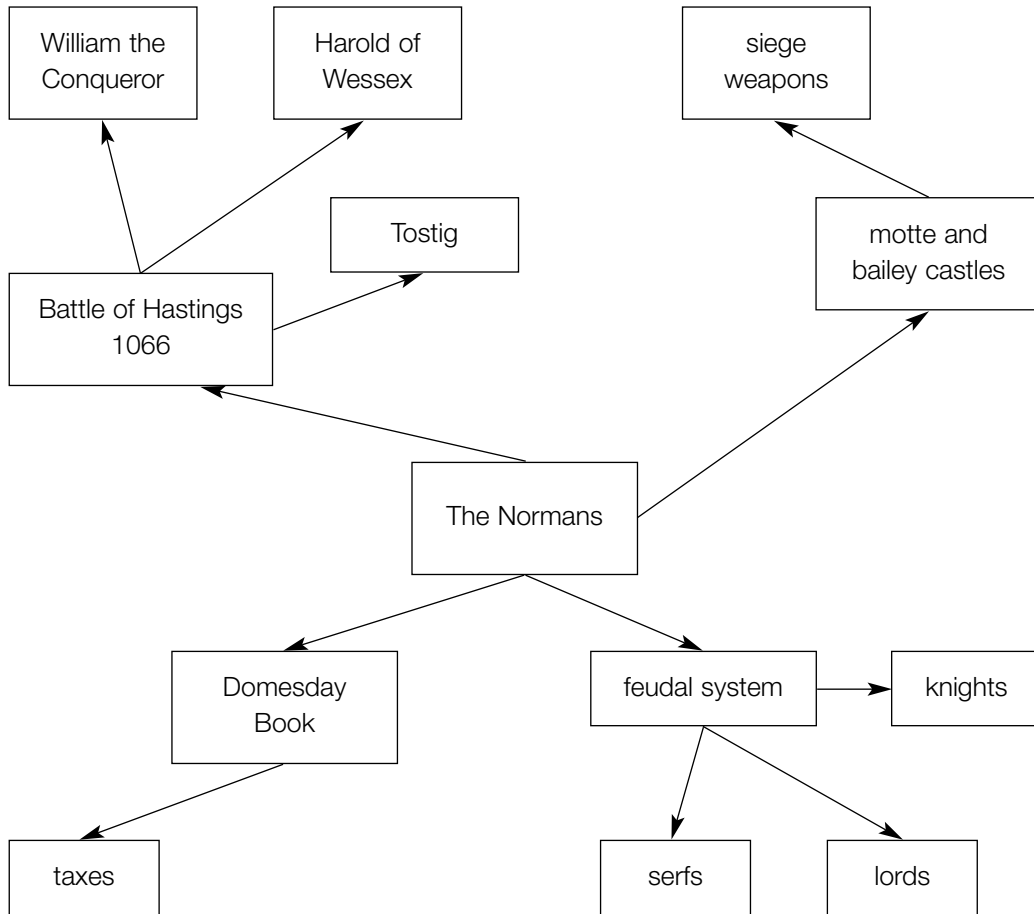
Imagine you are going to have a science or geography test on the topic of weathering. You have studied this recently in your lessons. Weathering is a term used to describe the way rocks are broken down by nature through such things as heat, ice and plants. You want to revise by learning and remembering the most important facts. Turn the paragraph below into revision notes. Begin by highlighting the most important information in the passage. Then use this to create your own notes – you might like to draw a diagram, a chart or a series of pictures if you like. Use as few words as possible.

## Weathering

Weathering is the process whereby rocks are worn away naturally. There are three types of weathering: physical, chemical and biological. Physical weathering is where the rock is broken up by ice, cold and heat. For example, if water gets into a crack in a rock it might freeze, expand and cause the crack to get bigger and split the rock. In other places rock heats up during the day and expands and then at night it contracts when it is cold. This process can cause the rock to crack and crumble. Biological weathering is where plants grow in the cracks in rocks and eventually cause the cracks to widen and split. Chemical weathering is the third form of weathering. This happens where chemicals in the air such as carbon dioxide join with rainwater and form carbonic acid. This can wear rocks away.



# Resource 3: Example of revision notes





# Challenge 4:

## The working challenge

### Aims

The aim of this challenge is to improve pupils' confidence and perseverance when working alone and also to improve their skills in group work.

### Organisation

There may be a need to follow up the sessions fairly frequently with some pupils to ensure that they are improving the organisation of their work, whether this is on their own or in groups. The impact of the challenges will be greatly enhanced if subject teachers are aware of what pupils have been doing in the Learning Challenge and are able to reinforce the skills in lessons.



# Challenge 4.1:

## Working on your own

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to work better on their own in lessons.

**Resources needed: Working on your own: chart (Resource 1)**  
**Cards cut for sorting (Resource 2)**  
**Preferred solutions (Resource 3)**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	Explain the objective for the session: <i>We are going to look at what you do when you have to work on your own so that you will get better at doing it.</i>  Ask pupils: <i>How will this help you?</i> You might expect responses like: 'I will be able to finish the work I start'.
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (1 minute)	Ask pupils: <i>What do you do when you have to work on your own?</i> Expect responses like: 'I just answer the questions' or 'I ask my friend what to do'. Some might say: 'I just can't seem to get started' or 'I don't always know what I have to do'.
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	Say: <i>When I was thinking about what we were going to do today I had to do it on my own. So the first thing I did was check what I had to do and what I needed to help me do the work. I made sure I was clear about this. What would have happened if I hadn't? Give pupils time to talk about why being clear about what you have to do helps you to work on your own. Look for responses that show that if you aren't clear about the work you won't be able to do it.</i> Say: <i>That's good. So once I was clear about what I had to do, I broke it down into smaller bits. Why do you think I did that?</i> Look for answers that suggest that it's easier to work through little bits of work than to try to do the whole thing at once. It's easier to get started and you're more likely to get it finished.
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	Say: <i>Now we're going to think about what you might do to help you when you work on your own. We're going to look at things that might stop you doing the work and see if we can find ways round it. Look at the chart (Resource 1). These are some of the things that sometimes stop people from working well on their own. There are also some cards (Resource 2).</i>



	<p><i>We are going to choose the cards that would give the best solution to each of the problems and talk about why you've chosen that card. Now spend a few minutes to allow the pupils to choose solutions and talk briefly about why each of the solutions they have chosen is the best. Resource 3 indicates which problem the cards might solve.</i></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Talk about what they will do next time they have to work on their own. Emphasise the need to be really clear about what they have to do, and whom to ask if they don't know. Go back to the cards they have arranged and talk about what they have done.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Tell pupils: <i>Next time you have to work on your own try some of the things we've talked about here. In particular, make sure you are clear about what you have to do before you start. We'll meet again at the same time next week and we'll come back to this to see how you have got on.</i></p> <p><i>When you come next week bring some work with you that you had to do on your own and we'll talk about how you did it.</i></p>

## Review session

**You will need to plan a review session about a week after this one. Pupils will bring along some work that they had to do on their own and talk about which of the strategies in today's session they were able to use and whether they found this helpful. You may like to revisit and reinforce this over a period of time to ensure that pupils are becoming more confident at working on their own.**



# Challenge 4.2:

## Working with other people (a)

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to understand how people work best in groups.

**Resources needed: Cards for sorting, already cut up (Resource 4)**  
**Working with others: sorting sheet (Resource 5)**  
**Homework planner or diary**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: This session will help you to understand how group work can be successful.</i></p> <p>Ask pupils: <i>Why is it important that people work together?</i></p> <p>You are looking for answers which show understanding that for much of the time in school and in later life they will be working with other people.</p> <p>Also look for comments such as: 'It helps to share ideas' or 'Harder tasks can be done with other people than can be done on your own'.</p> <p><i>Say: Working together can mean working with your friends, with people you do not know well, with a teacher or with a group of adults – in a pair or larger group.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Do you like working in groups?</i></p> <p><i>What is good about working in a group?</i></p> <p>Answers might include:            'Sharing ideas helps me to learn better.'            'I like to talk about what I am doing.'            'It helps me to hear the ideas of other people.'</p> <p><i>What is not so good about working in a group?</i></p> <p>Answers might include:            'Sometimes I find it hard to join in.'            'Some people take it over.'            'People sometimes do not listen to each other.'</p> <p>Don't dwell on the negatives but explain that this session is designed to help pupils think about why it often does not work and what to do about it.</p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: We are going to do an activity now working as a group. We are going to sort these cards into two groups. Before we do this let's think about how we will do this task. What might be a bad way? Well, if I did it without asking you to help at all it would be very poor group work. On the other</i></p>

<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p><i>hand if we talked about each card and made a joint decision each time then we would be working well as a group.</i></p> <p>(If you have more than one pupil, you can do this as a group. If you have only one pupil then you should do the activity with them as a pair.)</p> <p>Use the cards and the sorting sheet to get pupils to think carefully about helpful and unhelpful behaviours or attitudes or skills when learning with other people.</p> <p><i>Say: We are going to use these cards to decide what things are helpful and what things are not helpful when we work with other people. Some of the cards can be sorted easily but some will be hard and will need careful thought. When you are sorting the cards, tell me why you are putting them in the places you have chosen.</i></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask each pupil to suggest three important rules for helping people to work together in groups.</p> <p>Ask them to write these rules in their homework planner or diary. These rules will come from the cards that have just been sorted. Ask them to look for rules such as: 'Only one person should talk at the same time' or 'You should always listen to each other'.</p> <p>Ask the pupil to give reasons for their choices.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Before the next session I want you to think about a group you are working in and think about these three rules. Do people in your group do these things? We will talk about this next time we meet.</i></p>



# Challenge 4.3: Working with other people (b)

## Objective/Target for session:

To help pupils work better in a group.

**Resources needed: Homework planner or diary  
Making group work better (Resource 6)**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>Last time we came up with important rules for group work and you were going to think about a group you are working in. Remind me what your rules were. Did people in your group do these things?</i></p> <p>Give the pupils an opportunity to talk about this and praise them for having done this.</p> <p>Say: <i>Today we are going to look at ways in which you can work better in a group.</i></p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (1 minute)	<p>Say: <i>Think about the last time you worked in a group. How might you have improved on your contribution to the group?</i></p> <p>Answers might include: 'Join in more', 'Listen better' or 'Make sure I added to what others have said.'</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>It is sometimes helpful to review how well you do something by checking against a set list of statements – like a quiz. You might have seen one of these in a magazine. When I fill in one of these checklists I have to think carefully about what I really do. They can help me to understand what I need to do to improve.</i></p>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	<p>Now say: <i>Now we are going to think about what you can do to help the group work more effectively. Look at the sheet 'Making group work better' (Resource 6). Put a tick in the box that best matches what you do when working in groups. (Make sure you stress that this is not a test and is just to help the pupils.)</i></p> <p>Discuss with them the ticks they have put under 'sometimes' or 'rarely'.</p>
<b>Review</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>In this session we have tried to help you to know what else you can do to improve the way you work in a group. Ask pupils: Choose one thing from each of the two tables that you could do to improve your participation in group work.</i></p>

<p><b>Where next?</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Now you have chosen from your own list which ideas you are going to put into practice every time you work in groups in the next few days or next week. Write these in your planners and make sure you try them out. At the beginning of the next session we will talk about how you got on.</i></p> <p>Arrange to meet the pupils again about a week after this for session 4.4 to discuss how they have tried to improve their group work. This type of review activity needs to be done on a regular basis.</p>
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# Challenge 4.4: Working with other people (c)

## Objective/Target for session:

This is a short review session which will help pupils to see how they have improved with regard to working in groups.

**Resources needed:** Homework planner or diary

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<i>Say: In this session we will look at ways you have improved how you work with others in groups.</i>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (10 minutes)	Ask the pupils to read what they wrote in their planners about what they were going to try to do differently in group work. Ask them to talk about something that worked well for them. Ask one pupil to explain briefly what she or he did and how it helped them. Remember to praise pupils who have tried something new.
<b>What next?</b> (2 minutes)	<i>Say: You have all been working in groups to help each other think of things which might help when you work with other people. Choose a new thing from your list that you want to improve. Try it over the next few days and we shall talk about how you got on when we meet next week.</i>

## Review session

This review session will need to be repeated at least once more and could be worth repeating over a period of a few weeks with some pupils until they are clearly more confident about working in groups.



# Resource 1: Working on your own: chart

Problem	Solution – choose from the cards and put the ones you think would be most helpful in the box
A I don't know what to do.	
B I haven't got what I need to do the work.	
C I can't get started.	
D I don't know what to do next or I'm stuck.	



## Resource 2: Cards for sorting

1 Ask the teacher.	2 Ask my friend.	3 Pretend I know what to do and do nothing.	4 Copy from the person next to me.
5 Check what I need before I start and make sure it's there.	6 Borrow from a friend.	7 Go and get what I need from the classroom or the library.	8 Read through what I have done to see if that helps.
9 Work out what has to be done first and do it.	10 Do what I think, even if it isn't right, and then go back and go over it again. Make changes.	11 Make a start but work very slowly to look as though I am busy.	12 Read the task again to make sure I'm clear about it all.
13 Pretend I know what to do and do something.	14 Look back at my earlier work to see if that helps.	15 Break the work up into little bits and do them one at a time.	16 Ask the teacher for a starter sentence.





# Resource 3: Preferred solutions

Problem	Solution – choose from the cards and put the ones you think would be most helpful in the box
A I don't know what to do.	1
B I haven't got what I need to do the work.	5; 7
C I can't get started.	9; 15; 16
D I don't know what to do next or I'm stuck.	8; 10; 12; 14



# Resource 4: Cards for sorting

A person interrupts you while you are talking.	People ask you what you think.
People listen to each other.	Someone doesn't speak or contribute ideas of their own.
Someone only listens to their friends.	Everyone takes the trouble to understand exactly what the group needs to do.
Everyone shares their ideas.	People ask questions about what you have said so that you think more deeply when you explain it.
One person does all of the talking.	A person in the group sums up where we all got to so that we can plan what else to do.



# Resource 5: Working with others: sorting sheet

In group work we find it *helpful* when ...

In group work we find it *unhelpful* when ...

We can't make up our minds about these yet ...



# Resource 6: Making group work better

When I work in a group I ...	always	sometimes	rarely
Listen carefully to other people			
Contribute my own ideas			
Do some of the talking			
Work to get everyone to agree			
Act as chairperson			
Sum up what we have decided			
Don't interrupt other people when they are talking			
Make sure I understand exactly what the group needs to do			
Change my mind if people give good reasons for their opinions			
Get upset if people disagree with me			
Other suggestions:			

When I work in a group I ask other people to ...	always	sometimes	rarely
Explain things again if I don't understand			
Tell me what they think			
Keep to the point			
Answer questions about what they've just said			
Give reasons for their opinions			
Join in if they have not said anything			
Say if they don't agree with what I am saying and not worry about it			
Other suggestions:			



# Challenge 5: The subject challenge

## Aims

This challenge is aimed at helping pupils to understand some of the basic conventions in subjects. It aims to help them understand the similarities and differences between subjects and has a focus on subject-specific vocabulary.

## Organisation

Pupils following the subject challenge will be greatly helped if their subject teachers are able to reinforce the work in lessons.

The sessions would be best done a few days or a week apart. The skills involved in the challenge should be revisited periodically.



# Challenge 5.1:

## Subject conventions (a)

### Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils appreciate that in different subjects there are differing conventions of:

- writing styles;
- use of language;
- modes of working;
- equipment required;
- classroom organisation.

It will also help pupils anticipate these things and develop strategies to manage them effectively.

**Resources needed: How are subjects the same? (Resource 1)**

**Equipment list taken from the school prospectus or brochure for Year 7 pupils or parents.**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Explain that the objective of the session is to help pupils to appreciate differences between subjects. They will look at this in a variety of ways such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• subject-specific equipment for each lesson;</li> <li>• subject-specific rules of behaviour;</li> <li>• subject-specific language;</li> <li>• subject-specific ways of working.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask the group to explain the main ways lessons are different. <i>Say: How is a science lesson different from an English lesson? How is DT different to history?</i> Give pupils a short time to make suggestions. Explain why there are differences... some to do with health and safety but others to do with ways of teaching and learning. For example, in a science lesson it is necessary to carry out experiments and this may mean they have to work in groups moving about the room. In English they may be asked to discuss a poem or story before writing one themselves or with a partner. In design and technology they design and make things using different materials, such as food, wood, metal and textiles.</p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: When I go to play tennis the clothes I wear are different from those I would wear if I were going to play football. Ask the group to say what they might wear for each sport. Say: We know what to wear because it's what people do in those sports. It's a sort of funny rule. Some of these 'rules' are not really rules and are not usually written down anywhere. The</i></p>

	<p>word we usually use to describe these sort of not-quite-rules is <b>conventions</b>. Lots of subjects have <b>conventions</b> about what you should do when you are learning the subject and special words you should use when you are working in the subject. You may have seen some of these special words – key words – in your classrooms on word walls.</p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Give out Resource 1, 'How are subjects the same?' Ask the pupils to work in pairs to complete the sheet. If you are working with only one pupil work with them to complete the sheet. When they have finished try to draw out the following key points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some conventions are common across the school such as putting titles and dates at the start of a piece of written work.</li> <li>• Some lessons are different because of health and safety considerations.</li> <li>• Some subjects are more heavily dependent on writing activities.</li> <li>• It is good to ask questions (as well as answer them!).</li> <li>• Sometimes the same-sounding task (such as drawing a diagram) might be done in very different ways.</li> <li>• It may be clear in English lessons when written work is done in draft or best copy, but this may not be the case in all subjects.</li> <li>• Just printing off pages from the computer is not a good idea as selecting and using information is far more useful.</li> <li>• Finally, stress that all subjects can be creative in their own way.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Just as there are rules about what you wear for different sports, or how you make sentences in different languages, other subjects have their own <b>conventions</b> in terms of language, the way it is taught and rules of behaviour. There are some things that are common across the school but others which are different and unique to particular subjects. In the next session we will look at how language is used in different subjects and talk about why this is important.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Before the next session you are going to see if you can spot any of these subject conventions. See if you can:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>work out the classroom rules of behaviour and codes of conduct for three different subjects. Write one for each subject down in your diaries or planners;</i></li> <li>• <i>try to see where subject conventions in one subject are similar to those in another.</i></li> </ul>



# Challenge 5.2:

## Subject conventions (b)

### Objective/Target for session:

This session focuses specifically on language conventions in order to help pupils understand the importance of the use of specific vocabulary and technical language in subjects.

**Resources needed: Slippery words (Resource 2)**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>At the end of the last session you were going to try to spot subject conventions in three different subjects. How did you get on?</i> Give pupils a few minutes to talk about what they've done. Then say: <i>You were also going to spot when subject conventions in one subject are similar to those in another. What did you come up with?</i> Give them a few minutes to talk about this.</p> <p>Explain that the objective of this session is to help pupils to appreciate that subjects sometimes use the same words but that they mean different things.</p> <p>Say: <i>In this session you will see that the same word used in two subjects can mean different things.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask pupils: <i>What lesson do you think you would be in if the teacher used these words?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>monarch, revolution, civil war</i> <b>(History)</b></li> <li>• <i>lathe, material, modelling</i> <b>(Design and technology)</b></li> <li>• <i>erosion, landform, settlement</i> <b>(Geography)</b></li> <li>• <i>mosaic, form, shade</i> <b>(Art and design)</b></li> </ul> <p>Point out that subjects have <b>language conventions</b> that help understanding in that subject.</p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask the pupils to tell you what the word <b>faint</b> means. Expect answers such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Someone falls over because they have <b>fainted</b>.</li> <li>• The pencil line is <b>faint</b> because I can hardly see it on the page.</li> <li>• In rugby, the winger <b>fainted</b> to pass the ball.</li> </ul> <p>Discuss how a word with the same sound might be used in a PE lesson, a mathematics lesson and a health education lesson in very different ways, and be spelled differently.</p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>If you are working with more than one pupil, they can do this exercise together. If there is only one pupil, you should do it with him or her. Get pupils to complete the activity sheet</p>



	<p>'Slippery words' (Resource 2). They should make up one sentence for each word to show how it might be used appropriately in that particular subject.</p> <p>Highlight at the end of this activity how pupils should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• learn subject-specific vocabulary by compiling their own list of subject words;</li> <li>• make sure they understand what the teacher means by these command words or key words.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Stress the importance of pupils knowing that each subject has its own <b>conventions</b> in terms of language.</p> <p><i>Say: There are some words that are used in the same way across the school but others are different and unique to particular subjects. It is important for you to take note of these similarities and differences.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Pupils should learn subject-specific vocabulary by writing down key subject words with their definitions in the back of their exercise books. If they are unsure of the particular meaning of the word in any lesson they should ask the teacher to explain its meaning.</p>

## Review sessions

**You will need to set up review sessions from time to time to check whether they are doing what they have been taught, and to reinforce what has been done in these subject convention sessions.**



# Resource 1:

## How are subjects the same?

Question	Answer
1 When you start a piece of written work do you always put the date and the title in the same way in all subjects?	
2 In which subjects are there particularly important safety rules?	
3 In which three lessons do you do the most written work?	
4 In which three lessons do you do the most talking about your work?	
5 In which two lessons do pupils ask your teacher the most questions and in which two do pupils ask the least?	
6 Is there a difference between drawing a diagram in design and drawing a diagram in geography?	
7 Do you always know when to write in draft and when to write your best copy?	
8 Is printing a page from <i>Encarta</i> a good research activity?	
9 In which three lessons would you say you can be the most creative? Why?	
10 Do you draw graphs in mathematics in the same way as you draw them in geography?	



# Resource 2: Slippery words

Write a sentence using the key word in a way that is appropriate for that particular subject.

Key word	Subject	Sentence
Pattern	Art	
Pattern	Geography	
Ground	DT	
Ground	PE	
Symbol	RE	
Cymbal	Music	
Symbol	Mathematics	
Scale	Music	
Scale	Mathematics	
Pitch	PE	
Pitch	Music	





# Challenge 6: The thinking challenge

## Aims

The aims of these sessions are:

- to encourage pupils to recognise the different types of thinking they are asked to do in lessons;
- to help them to organise their own thinking using a range of different visual tools.

The trouble with thinking is that it is an invisible process – pupils can't see it or hear it happening and therefore they don't know what different types of thinking 'look' like. Put simply, visual tools are diagrams that show the structure of specific types of thinking such as comparison, classification, sequencing, and cause and effect. If pupils are taught to recognise the types of thinking they are asked to do, and then to select the right visual tool for this type of thinking, they can become more independent learners.

## Organisation

There are five sessions in total:

Session 1: Thinking about thinking

Session 2: Comparing things

Session 3: Visual thinking in action

Session 4: Seeing the 'big picture'

Session 5: Big picture thinking in action

These sessions would be best done a few days or a week apart to give pupils time to practise the strategies and begin to internalise them.

These five sessions have focused on the use of Venn diagrams (for teaching *comparison*) and spider diagrams and Mind Maps (for teaching *classification*, *whole/part relationships* and *creativity*). There are many different visual tools that can be used to support and develop independent thinking in pupils.



# Challenge 6.1: Thinking about thinking

## Objective/Target for session:

**This session will introduce pupils to thinking about thinking. They will explore the different types of thinking they need to be able to do in order to 'do well' in lessons and in life.**

**Resources needed: Thinking words (these should have been copied and cut up into 'cards' ahead of this session) from Resource 1**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<p><i>Say: We're going to look at ways of helping you to organise your thinking about different things. You know when you're faced with a blank page and don't know how to get started? Well, the ideas we're going to practise using should help you deal with that.</i></p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)	<p><i>Now say: Before we can begin to organise our thinking we need to agree on some of the types of thinking we often have to do. I think some important types of thinking we need to do in lessons and in everyday life are comparing, classifying and sequencing. Do you know what any of these involve?</i></p> <p>Discuss with them answers such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comparing is about identifying the similarities and differences between things, for example, in English, comparing two characters in a book.</li> <li>• Classifying involves grouping things together where they share some of the same characteristics, for example, in the Yellow Pages telephone directory. This helps you to find things you need quickly.</li> <li>• Sequencing involves putting things into the correct order: in food technology, for example, following a recipe.</li> </ul> <p>If they don't know what any of these types of thinking involves ask them to suggest another example for each type of thinking after you have provided each one.</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p><i>Say: To make it easier for you to think about different types of thinking we use, I've put them onto cards. We're going to have a go at classifying (sorting) the cards into:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>types of thinking you know you've done;</i></li> <li>• <i>those you've heard of but can't remember doing;</i></li> <li>• <i>those which are new to you.</i></li> </ul>

	<p><b>N.B. Putting the words onto cards actually helps their brains to think because the cards help the working memory to handle all the bits of information while they are being processed.</b></p> <p>Next, model what you are asking them to do by saying: <i>I'm going to start with the word 'classify' because we've already talked about that one and I know that we're classifying these cards by putting them into groups (put the card on the table to the left). Next I'm going to pick 'evaluate'... I know I've heard the word in DT and history but I'm not sure what it means (place the card in the middle of the table)... OK... now it's your turn.</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>While the pupils are classifying the cards encourage them to talk about their understanding of any words they know or recognise by asking questions like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>So where or when have you ... sequenced ... something?</i></li> <li>• <i>In which lesson have you been asked to ...? Tell me about what you did.</i></li> </ul> <p>In this way you can check whether they have understood or not.</p> <p>Continue to classify and discuss the cards for as long as time allows. See whether, by describing some of the types of thinking, the pupils can move them from one group to another.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Cover up the cards and say: <i>Remind me of as many different types of thinking as you can.</i> Offer prompts if necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>it's where we put similar things into the same groups; <b>(classification)</b></i></li> <li>• <i>it's where we judge how good we think something is and how it could be improved. <b>(evaluation)</b></i></li> </ul> <p>Be positive about what the pupil has remembered.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>It's helpful to think of a 'thought' as a real object because then we can start to describe it, picture it (visualise it) and label it. That way it becomes much easier to talk about what different types of thinking actually 'look' like. Next time we're going to start drawing pictures of some types of thinking so that you can use them in your work. Before the next session try to spot how many different types of thinking you do either in lessons or at home. Write these down in your diary or planner so we can look at them next session.</i></p>



# Challenge 6.2: Comparing things

## Objective/Target for session:

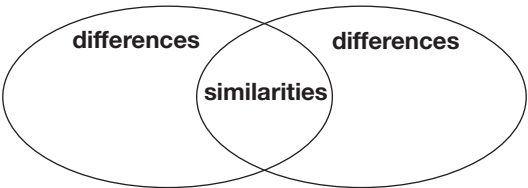
This session will help pupils to organise the way they think about different things in order to encourage independent thinking. The particular focus here will be on *comparing*, though many different types of thinking, such as those listed in Resource 1 (see session 6.1) could be substituted. Pupils will be introduced to a visual tool for comparing so that they can ‘see’ it in action.

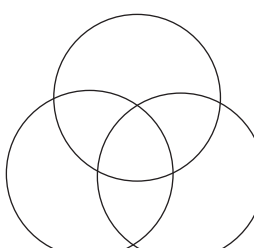
**Resources needed: Two textbooks that have similarities and differences  
A comparison of two football teams (Resource 2)  
A4 paper**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils’ responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Remind the pupils of what you covered in the last session by saying: <i>Remember last time... we looked at lots of different types of thinking because we wanted to look at ways of helping you to organise your thinking about the different things you do. You know when you’re faced with a blank page and don’t know how to get started? ... Well, the ideas we’re going to practise using should help with that.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Begin by saying: <i>What types of thinking have you managed to spot since the last session?</i></p> <p>Don’t spend a long time on this but encourage the pupils to name some of the types of thinking in Resource 1, e.g. <i>classify, sequence, compare, evaluate</i>, and ask them where or when they used them.</p> <p>Now say: <i>Today we’re going to look at how you can use diagrams (or pictures) to help you to think. We’re going to look at comparing things. Can you remember what comparing involves?</i></p> <p>Encourage the pupils to recognise that comparing involves looking for similarities and differences between things.</p> <p>It may be helpful to offer a very quick ‘concrete’ comparison of two things the pupil can actually see, for example, two books. You might say: <i>If I compare these two books I’d say they are similar in that they are both geography books, but they have lots of differences such as, this one is a Year 7 book and this one is for Year 9.</i></p> <p>Continue by saying: <i>It’s quite easy to compare two things you can see, but it’s more difficult for our brains to cope with</i></p>



	<p><i>comparing things we can't see or when we compare more than two things.</i></p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: I'm going to show you exactly what I mean by drawing a picture which shows comparison and then talking through a comparison of two things.</i></p> <p>Start by drawing and labelling a large Venn diagram on a piece of paper.</p>  <p><b>N.B. It's important that the pupils see you draw the Venn diagram so that they understand that they don't need to have a photocopied handout.</b></p> <p>Then say: <i>When you compare two or more things what you are doing is identifying what is similar or the same about them (point to where the circles overlap), and what is different (point to the areas where the two circles don't overlap).</i></p> <p>Choose any two things that you can use to model <i>comparing</i> – but try to choose an example that both you and the pupils know something about so that you have the appropriate knowledge and the pupils will remain interested. Some suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two characters from a TV soap;</li> <li>• two pop stars, bands, actors or footballers;</li> <li>• two sports or teams;</li> <li>• two types of food.</li> </ul> <p>Try to avoid people you both know so it doesn't get personal. Label each of the two circles with the names of what you will be comparing (the football team example in Resource 2 is provided as a prompt for the teacher but should not be shown to the pupil).</p> <p>Now 'model' (think aloud) your <b>comparison</b>, writing the similarities and differences into the appropriate parts of the Venn diagram. Say things like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think both teams are in the Premier division so I'll write 'Premier division' in the overlapping part;</i></li> <li>• <i>Arsenal have won the Premiership so I'll write 'have won the Premiership' in the 'differences' part because Liverpool have never won it;</i></li> <li>• <i>Arsenal have 'won the FA cup' before so I'll write that into the differences... No, I think I'm wrong there, because now I think about it, Liverpool won it in 2001. I need to cross that out and put it in the overlapping part.</i></li> </ul> <p><b>N.B It's important to change your mind about what you will write because when you're thinking something</b></p>

	<p><b>through, it's normal to make mistakes or to change your mind.</b></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>After writing in a couple of similarities and differences invite the pupils to join in so that the <b>comparison</b> becomes a shared and interactive process.</p> <p>Encourage the pupils to talk through their thinking and make them aware of exactly what they are doing. Say things like: <i>Why did you put XXXX in that area?</i> (Point to either the overlapping or non-overlapping area).</p> <p><b>N.B. Encourage them to be aware of how they think. It will help them to be more independent when they try it for themselves.</b></p>
<p><b>Review</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>OK, now we've had a go at comparing two football teams (or whatever you have compared) what else could you compare?</i></p> <p>Encourage the pupils to suggest things they might have been asked to compare in lessons such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• two characters in a play or novel in English;</li> <li>• two countries or volcanic eruptions in geography;</li> <li>• two kings or battles in history;</li> <li>• the rules for two different sports in PE;</li> <li>• two religions in RE;</li> <li>• the work of two artists in art and design;</li> <li>• the properties of two materials in design and technology;</li> <li>• two contrasting recordings of the same piece of music (e.g. the theme from Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with the gospel version from 'Sister Act 2').</li> </ul> <p>It might be necessary to suggest ideas to the pupils if they struggle to come up with their own.</p> <p>If you think they can cope with it and time allows, you could ask them what a Venn diagram for comparing three things would look like. It should look like this:</p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>After a range of comparisons have been discussed say: <i>You see, it's important to be able to compare things in most subjects.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Finish by saying: <i>Between now and the next time we meet, I want you to write down as many different things you could compare as possible. It can be things from lessons or from outside school. Bring your list with you to the next session. Write it down in your planner so you don't forget.</i></p>



# Challenge 6.3:

## Visual thinking in action

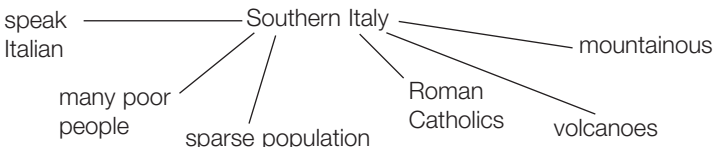
### Objective/Target for session:

In this session pupils will be encouraged to be more independent in applying what they have already learned about *comparing things* using a Venn diagram as a visual tool.

**Resources needed: A4 paper**  
**Highlighter pens or coloured pencils**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)	<p>Say: <i>You remember that we've been thinking about different thinking skills and that in the last session we had a go at comparing two football teams (substitute for this as appropriate)... Well, today you're going to teach me about the similarities and differences between two things you've been learning about.</i></p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Referring to the homework task, say: <i>Can you show me your list of things that could be compared? ... Tell me about one of your ideas.</i></p> <p>Prompt the pupils to tell you something about the idea, such as where they got it from. It might be a lesson. Use it as an opportunity to check whether they've understood what <i>comparing</i> involves. Don't spend a lot of time on this.</p> <p>Next, say: <i>Can you choose an example from your list that you think you could compare for me? It'll be easier if you choose something that you have some information about to use as a starting point. For example, a textbook, exercise book or worksheet.</i></p>
<b>Modelling and Interactive sessions</b> (15 minutes)	<p>Say: <i>It's sometimes difficult for the brain to cope with thinking about comparing before it's had a chance to identify the different features of the two individual things... so before we begin the comparison we're going to use a spider diagram to help with this.</i></p>
	<p>Begin by writing the name of one of the things the pupil is going to compare in the middle of a piece of paper. Say: <i>Tell me as many things as you can about X</i> (for example Southern Italy). Write down each feature on the end of a line radiating out from the title. For example:</p>

	 <p>The teacher should take the lead during this stage by demonstrating how to draw the diagram.</p> <p>Say: <i>Now we're going to draw another spider diagram for Y (for example Northern Italy). Go through the same process for Y, so that you end up with two spider diagrams. Encourage the pupils to increasingly take over the drawing and labelling.</i></p> <p>Next say: <i>I'm going to highlight in one colour those features that both X and Y have in common. Now ask the pupils to highlight the features that only X has in a second colour, and finally, the features that only Y has, in a third colour.</i></p> <p>Now draw a Venn diagram with two overlapping circles. Ask the pupils to label the two circles correctly. Then say: <i>Have a go at writing in the similarities and differences for yourself.</i> Try to encourage them to do it for themselves by providing prompts or asking questions, if they're stuck, rather than giving answers.</p>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>We've now drawn two different Venn diagrams together and you've identified other things that can be compared so now it's time for you to have a go on your own. Is there anything about using spider or Venn diagrams to help you to compare things that you're still confused about?</i></p> <p>Allow the pupils time to reflect on what they've learned and try to answer any questions they might have. If you've noticed any previous areas of confusion, check to see whether they now fully understand.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Between now and the next time we meet, I'd like you to have a go at comparing two things, by drawing two spider diagrams and then a Venn diagram. It can be things from lessons or from outside school. Next time we meet I'd like to see what you've managed to do.</i></p> <p>Finish by saying: <i>Write it down in your planner so you don't forget.</i></p>



# Challenge 6.4: Seeing the ‘big picture’

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to see the links between things they’re learning about. It should help them to see more clearly the point of what they are learning.

**Resources needed: A4 paper**

**Mind Map of school subjects (Resource 3)**

**Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils’ responses.**

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>Last time you were going to draw some diagrams to show me how you could compare things. Let me see them. Allow a few minutes to talk about these, and ask them how they decided what to put in each place on their diagram.</i></p> <p>Now say: <i>Sometimes it can be difficult to understand how everything you’ve learned in a lesson links together; and it’s even more tricky to connect learning from one lesson to another in the same subject. The next two sessions are designed to help you find ways of ‘getting a big picture’ – in other words, seeing how the different things you learn fit together so that you have an overview of a topic.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (3 minutes)</p>	<p>Ask: <i>How might ‘having a big picture’ in your head be helpful to you?</i></p> <p>This might be too difficult to answer, but pupils might say things like: ‘I’ll understand my work better’, ‘I’ll be able to remember things better’ or ‘I’ll be able to see the point of what I’m doing’. These are all good answers.</p> <p>Follow this up by saying: <i>When you have a ‘big picture’ for something it often makes that work more interesting. So, you might enjoy lessons more because you can make more sense of what you’re learning about.</i></p> <p>Ask if they already use ways of working out the ‘big picture’ for themselves. Answers might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• flicking through a new book to get a feel for the content, structure and layout;</li> <li>• making revision notes about a topic on sticky notes and organising them on a wall;</li> <li>• scan-reading a piece of text that they’re going to answer questions about.</li> </ul>

**Modelling**  
(5 minutes)

Say: *I'm going to show you one way of creating a 'big picture' by Mind Mapping. I'm going to choose a topic we both know something about so that you will understand how the things I'm mapping link together.*

**N.B. Because seeing the big picture is about having an overall view of what is to be learned, it's important to show the pupils an example of a 'Mind Map' before you start. You can use Resource 3, which shows a completed Mind Map of one person's favourite school subjects. It doesn't matter, at this point, that the pupils may not understand how it is constructed. It would be a good idea for you to 'Mind Map' your own favourite school subjects because then the pupils can see how Mind Maps for the same topic can differ from person to person.**

When you *model* drawing a Mind Map you should talk through what you are doing. This is important because it will show the pupils how to *think* when drawing their own Mind Map. It's also important that you construct the map in the correct order. Below is the example shown in Resource 3, which should be customised.

**Stage 1:** Say: *The topic I'm going to Mind Map is 'my favourite subjects', then write the name of the topic in the middle of the page.*

**Stage 2:** Quickly draw a simple picture or symbol that illustrates the topic. Say: *I'm drawing a picture of a smiley face to help me remember the title of my Mind Map.*

My favourite  
subjects 

**Stage 3:** Next, say: *I have three favourite subjects, geography, PE and music, so I'm going to draw three branches radiating out from the title. (Of course, you could do this with any three subjects you choose.)*

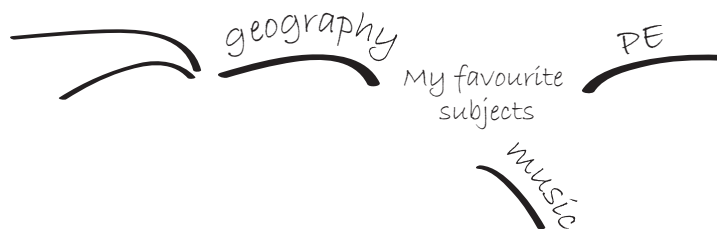
  
My favourite  
subjects 

**Stage 4:** Then say: *I'm going to write the names of the subjects along each of the branches – these form the main organising ideas for the topic.*

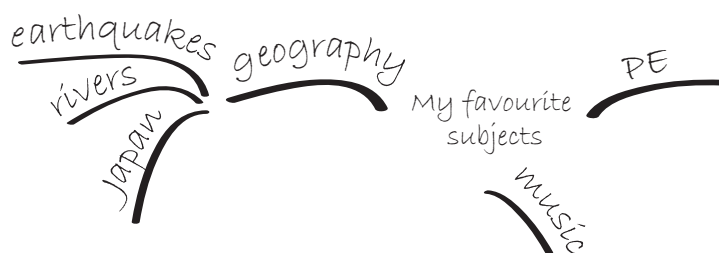


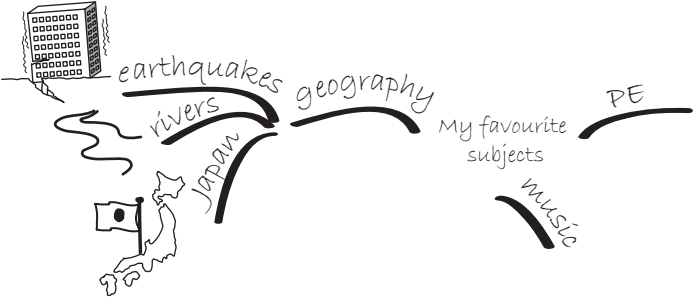
**Stage 5:** Pointing to the geography branch (or your own favourite subject), talk through the things about the subject that you really enjoy. You might say something like: *My favourite topics in geography are earthquakes, because they're really exciting, and Japan, because I think the people are really interesting.* (If you have chosen another subject then you'll have to adjust the examples.)

**Stage 6:** Then say: *So that's two things I really like about geography,* and draw two smaller branches from the end of the main 'geography' branch.



**Stage 7:** Follow this by saying: *I'm going to write a 'key word' on each of the smaller branches. So I think I'll choose 'earthquakes' and 'Japan'.* It's a good idea to deliberately think of a 'branch' you've missed out, so that you can demonstrate that it's OK to think of extra things and add them later. For example: *Oh, I've just remembered about rivers... we went on a brilliant field trip to one in Year 7 so I'll add in a branch.*



	<p><b>Stage 8:</b> Then say: <i>Now I'm going to add symbols or simple pictures to each of the key words. They will help me to fix this information in my brain and I'll be able to remember it more easily.</i></p>  <p>If you were to complete your Mind Map you would first repeat this sub-branching until you'd given as much detail as you could and then you would repeat stages 5 – 8 for the PE and music branches. Instead say: <i>I'm not going to finish this now because I want you to have a go.</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>I want you to begin to draw your own Mind Map for your favourite subjects.</i></p> <p>If you're working in a one-to-one situation with a pupil, then the next section can be done collaboratively. If you're working with larger numbers of pupils, you can either create a collaborative Mind Map on the board or an OHT or, alternatively, ask pupils to work in pairs to help each other. They could each label one branch by showing the details for their favourite subject. At this point the pupils should be taking a greater responsibility for drawing and labelling their Mind Maps.</p> <p>You will need to guide the pupil(s) in the construction of their Mind Maps by talking them through stages 1 – 4. Don't do beyond stage 4 in this session. Encourage the pupil(s) to talk about what they're doing by asking prompt questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why have you chosen that?</i></li> <li>• <i>What does that drawing or symbol mean? How will it help you to remember this information?</i></li> <li>• <i>Can you add any more subject branches?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>What has drawing your own Mind Map encouraged you to do?</i></p> <p>Get the pupils to reflect on the process. They might suggest:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'It made me think about my own views and opinions or likes and dislikes.'</li> <li>• 'It made me think about ideas that were linked together.'</li> </ul> <p>Say: <i>One important thing about Mind Mapping is that it helps you to organise what you already know about a topic.</i></p> <p>Then ask: <i>Can you suggest what types of thinking you use to Mind Map? Think back to the 'Thinking words card sort' you did a few sessions ago.</i></p>



	<p>Offer prompts such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>You needed to organise the information into groups or categories on each branch of the 'Mind Map'... what type of thinking is that? <b>(classification)</b></i></li> <li>• <i>What do we call it when information on each sub-branch relates to the main branch? (point at the relevant parts of your Mind Map) <b>(connections or links)</b></i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p>Say: <i>In the next session we'll be completing our Mind Maps so it's important that we keep them safe until then. We'll also be thinking about how to use Mind Mapping to help with schoolwork. Between now and then, think about one topic you are studying at the moment. For that topic, have a go at writing down the key words for three or four main branches on a Mind Map. Bring it with you next time.</i></p>



# Challenge 6.5: Big picture thinking

## Objective/Target for session:

In this session pupils will be encouraged to develop their Mind Mapping skills. They will also think about how to apply these skills to help them to learn more effectively.

Resources needed: A4 paper

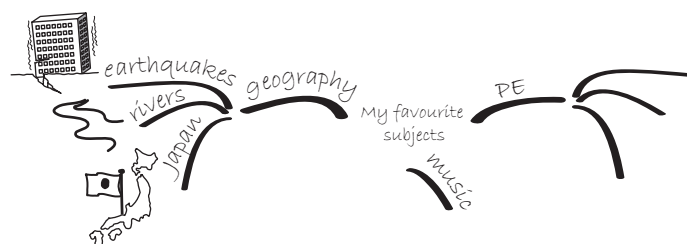
The teacher's and pupils' Mind Maps drawn during the last session

Mind Map of school subjects (Resource 3)

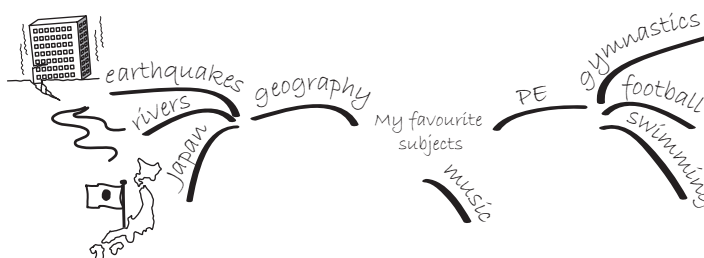
Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>In the last session we began Mind Mapping our favourite subjects. Today we're going add to our Mind Maps and then think about how Mind Mapping can help us to learn better. Let's have a look at the ones you've done after the last session. Give pupils a short while to talk about what they've done and why.</i></p>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Show Resource 3 and then say: <i>Here's a completed mind-map. Can you remember why Mind Mapping can help us to learn better?</i></p> <p>Good answers might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'It provides us with a 'big picture' for a topic or subject'</li> <li>• 'But it gives the detail as well'.</li> <li>• 'It helps us to <b>organise</b> what we already know or think about something'.</li> <li>• 'The pictures and symbols help us to remember information'.</li> <li>• 'It helps when we are talking to others about what we know or think'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>I'm going to complete another branch of the Mind Map I started to draw last week. Remember that I'd already finished the branch about geography. Now I'm going to do the one for PE.</i></p> <p>Begin at <b>Stage 5</b>. (see p.103)</p> <p>Point to the PE branch and talk through the things about PE that you really enjoy. You might say something like: <i>My favourite activities in PE are gymnastics because I like vaulting and being upside down, football because I like playing on a team and swimming because I've really improved my time in front crawl.</i></p>

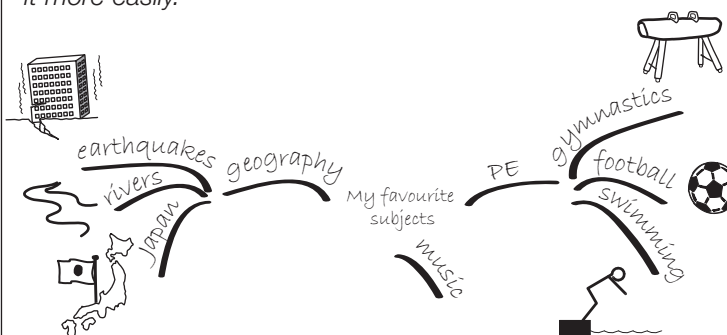
**Stage 6:** Say: *That's three things I really like about PE so I'm going to draw three smaller branches from the end of the main PE branch.*



**Stage 7:** Continue by saying: *Now I need to choose a 'key word' for each of these branches... that's easy... gymnastics, football and swimming. Write these along the three branches.*



**Stage 8:** Say: *Now I'm going to add symbols or simple pictures to each of the key words so that it will help me to fix the information in my brain and I should be able to remember it more easily.*



If time allows, you can add further sub-branches for each of the activities. These can state the specific things you enjoy about each sport. For example, from the 'football' branch, add the sub-branches 'being in goal' and 'playing matches' (see Resource 3 for further ideas). Remember to think aloud while you do this.

**Interactive session**  
(5 minutes)

Say: *Now it's over to you again. I want you to add information to the main branches of the Mind Map you began in the last session.*

If, as before, you're working one-to-one with a pupil, the next section can be done collaboratively. If you're working with larger numbers of pupils you can either create a collaborative Mind Map on the board or an OHT or, alternatively, ask pupils to work in pairs to help each other. They could each label one branch by showing the details for their favourite subject. Pupils should be taking the responsibility for drawing and labelling their Mind Maps.

	<p>To guide their work, talk them through stages 5 – 8 above. Encourage them to talk about what they're doing by asking prompt questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Why have you written that there?</i></li> <li>• <i>Can you add any more branches for this key word?</i></li> <li>• <i>What does that drawing or symbol represent... how does that help you to remember this information?</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (5 minutes)</p>	<p><i>Say: Last time, I asked you to think about a topic you're studying at the moment that you could Mind Map. Can you suggest something?</i></p> <p>Take feedback, and follow this up by asking for suggestions as to what the key words on main branches of the Mind Map might be.</p> <p><i>Then say: OK, now we've thought about Mind Mapping different topics so that we understand how they're organised. In what other ways can Mind Mapping help us to learn better?</i></p> <p>Suggestions might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to help with revision;</li> <li>• to plan a piece of writing;</li> <li>• to take notes during a lesson;</li> <li>• to help when you have to explain a topic to someone else;</li> <li>• to summarise what has been learned at the end of a lesson so you can remember it for the next lesson;</li> <li>• to help you remember different things you need to do (like a planner);</li> <li>• to identify and remember the main points in a piece of text;</li> <li>• to organise your thoughts when you're not sure what your own point of view is.</li> </ul> <p>Ask prompting questions or suggest ideas if any important uses of Mind Mapping are missed.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (1 minute)</p>	<p><i>Say: If you think Mind Mapping can help you with your work it's important that you practise it regularly so that you improve and get quicker. Before the next session, I'd like you to try to 'Mind Map' one of your lessons. While you're still learning to Mind Map it's probably best to do it for a subject you find fairly easy. Bring your Mind Map with you to the next session. Write it down in your planner so you don't forget.</i></p>

## Review session

**You will need to organise a review session to check what the pupils have done and give them lots of praise. It would be a good idea to involve the teacher who teaches the subject for which the pupils has chosen to create a Mind Map. That teacher can then reinforce the learning of this new skill.**

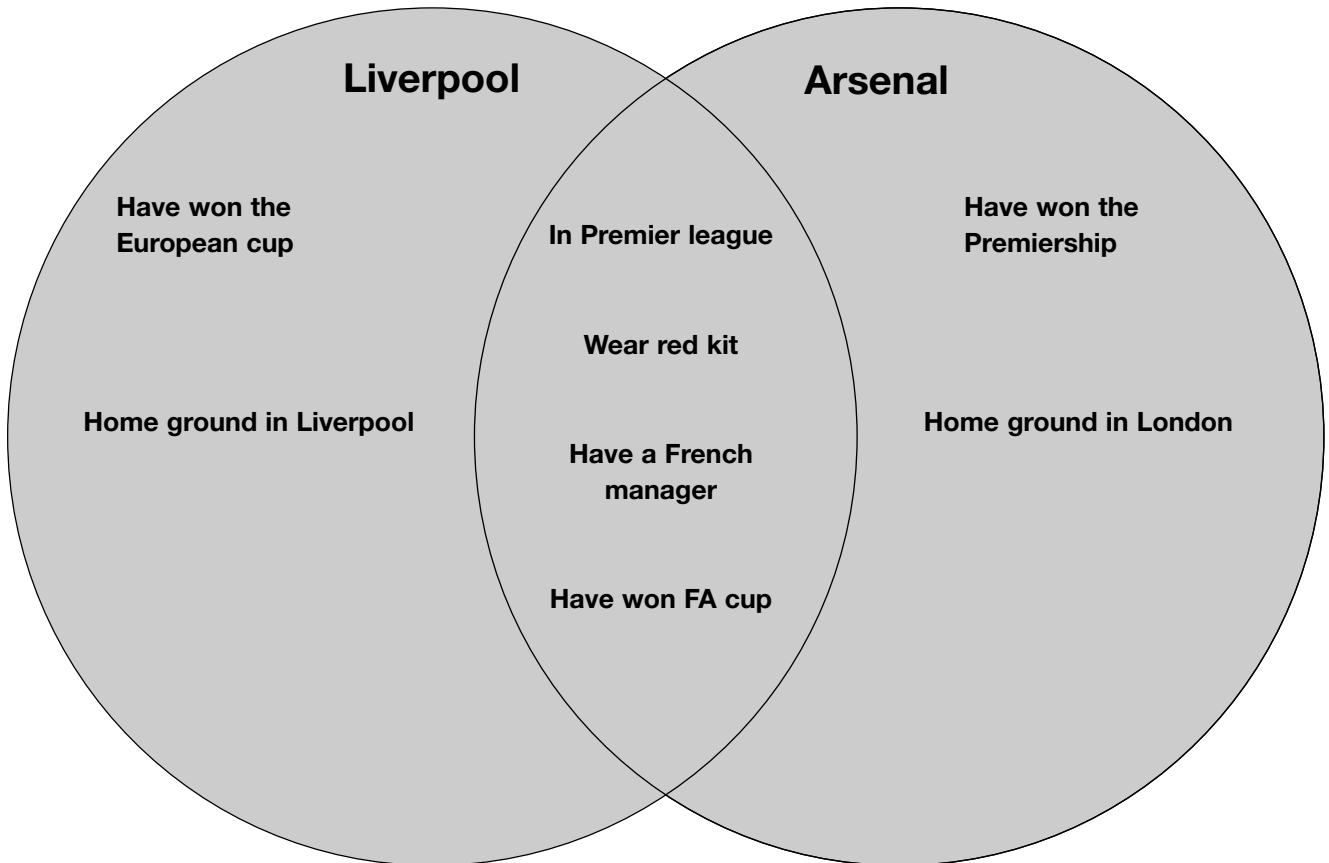


# Resource 1: Thinking words

<b>classify</b>	<b>link (or connect)</b>	<b>adapt</b>
<b>sequence</b>	<b>imagine</b>	<b>apply</b>
<b>compare</b>	<b>predict</b>	<b>combine</b>
<b>evaluate</b>	<b>ask a question</b>	<b>compose</b>
<b>explain</b>	<b>hypothesise</b>	<b>define</b>
<b>describe</b>	<b>contrast</b>	<b>summarise</b>
<b>develop</b>	<b>interpret</b>	<b>prioritise</b>
<b>choose (or select)</b>	<b>solve (problems)</b>	<b>match</b>
<b>recognise</b>	<b>remember</b>	<b>search</b>
<b>visualise</b>	<b>plan</b>	<b>estimate</b>
<b>translate</b>	<b>justify</b>	<b>organise</b>

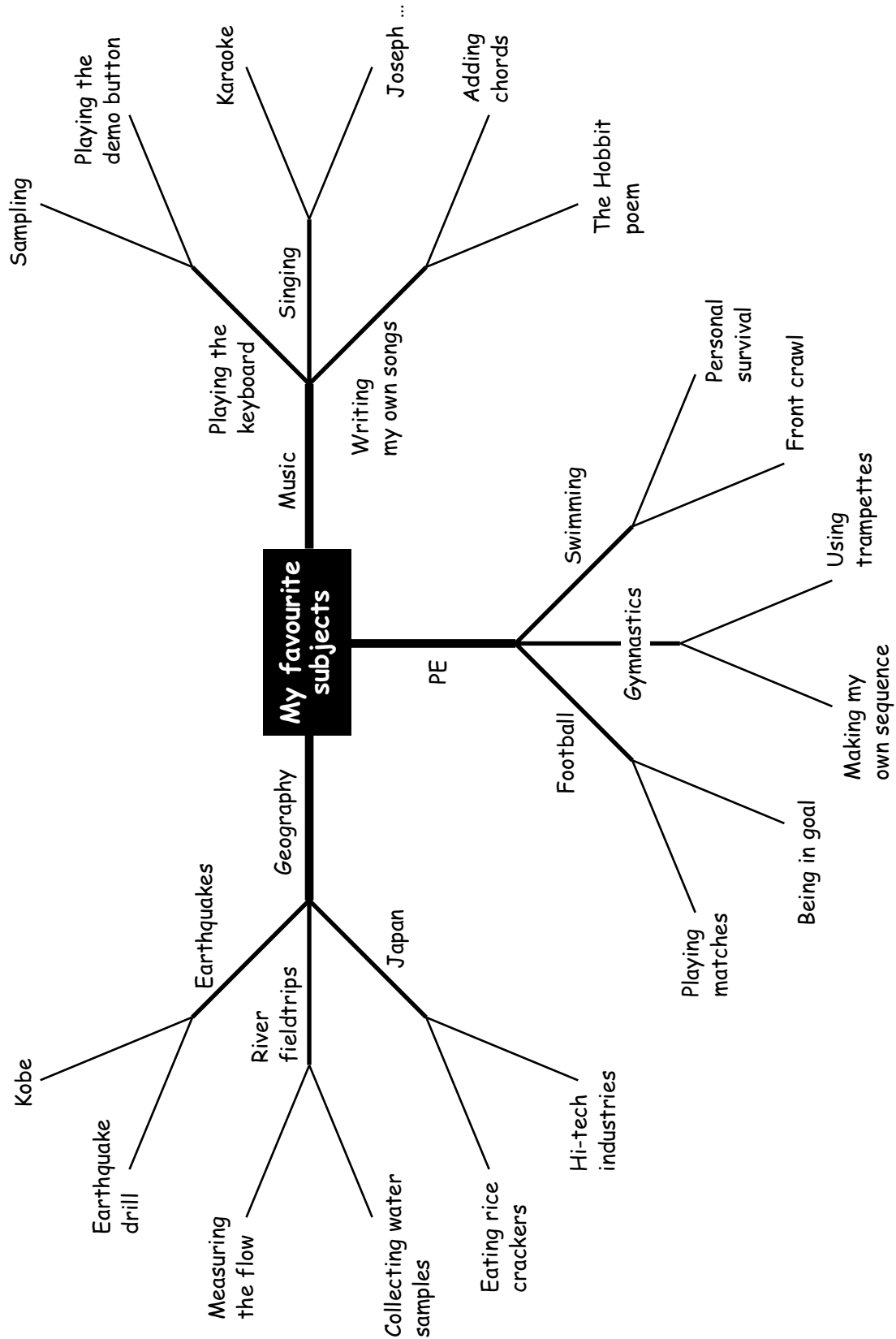


## Resource 2: A comparison of two football teams





# Resource 3: Mind Map<sup>®</sup> of school subjects









# Challenge 7: The reflection challenge

## Aims

These two sessions are aimed at providing pupils with an introduction to reflection and at helping them to reflect on their learning.

## Organisation

These challenges are just a starting point. Their effect will be magnified if you go on to get pupils to reflect on particular tasks in particular lessons, so that they begin to apply the process. This would be strengthened if subject teachers were able to get pupils to reflect on their learning.

These two sessions should be done very close together – the second one the day after the first would be best.



# Challenge 7.1: Reflecting on learning outside school

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to think about how they learn things outside school.

Resources needed: No additional resources needed

Please note: all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Say: We are going to think about <b>how</b> we learn things rather than <b>what</b> we learn. If we know how we learn then it can help us to learn better and much more effectively. When we think about how we learn something we say we are <b>reflecting</b> on our learning.</p>
<b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Ask the group how often they think about what they have done when they have been playing a game. Say: <i>Do you think about the way you have played the football or netball game after it is over?</i></p> <p><i>Do you reflect on how you learned to play computer games, mend your bicycle, do a new dance, etc.?</i></p> <p>Give them 2 – 3 minutes for discussion. Remind them to take it in turns.</p>
<b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)	<p>Talk them through something you have learned and how you learned to do it. For example, describe how you learned to drive – you had an idea by watching people, then the driving instructor took you step by step through doing it. Then you practised and the instructor told you how you could improve. You can talk about how you learned to do a new dance, or use a new computer game in the same way.</p>
<b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)	<p>Then say: <i>Can you think of something that you like doing – it has to be something that does involve ‘doing’ rather than just sitting still?</i></p> <p>Suggest things like sports, cooking, hobbies, computer games, looking after a pet. Give them thirty seconds to a minute and then ask what they have thought of. Thank them but at this point don't encourage them to talk about their choice.</p> <p>Say: <i>How did you learn to do it?</i></p> <p>Emphasise that you want to know <b>how</b> they learned, not <b>what</b>. Listen to them talking about something they have learned. It is likely that some will still talk about <b>what</b> they</p>

	<p>learned rather than <b>how</b> they learned. Try to intervene in any pairs that you can hear are missing the point. Ask them: <i>But <b>how</b> did you learn it?</i></p> <p>Challenge them if necessary. You are looking for such insights as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘someone showed me’ – press them by asking whether the person explained as well as showed;</li> <li>• ‘watched other people’ – ask them how that helped;</li> <li>• ‘trial and error’ – you might have to explain this, but it fits with pupils who might say ‘I just did it’;</li> <li>• ‘coaching, lessons, teaching’ – but press them for how it was done;</li> <li>• ‘read a book or followed a manual’ – less likely with level 3 pupils but it could have been done with a friend or relative.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>What we have done today is talked about how you have learned something outside school. Had you thought about the way you learn things before? Were you surprised that you were doing something so complicated?</i></p> <p>Give them a couple of minutes to respond to this.</p> <p>Point out that by thinking about the process of learning – <b>reflecting</b> on their learning – they can improve the way they learn.</p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Close by thanking them and saying: <i>That was really interesting. We have started to talk about how we have learned things out of school. It will be interesting next time to talk about <b>how</b> we do things and learn things at school. If we know ways of learning that work for us then we can use them like a toolkit.</i></p>



# Challenge 7.2: Reflecting on learning in school

## Objective/Target for session:

This session will help pupils to think about how they learn in school so that they can learn better.

**Resources needed:** A simple picture or diagram

**Please note:** all timings are approximate. How long each section takes will very much depend on pupils' responses.

Teaching intention	Details – work with pupils
<p><b>Introduction</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>You remember what you did in session 1 (challenge 7.2) – thinking about <b>how</b> you learn things out of school. Can someone remind me of any of the ways that we talked about?</i></p> <p>You are looking for responses such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'someone showed me';</li> <li>• 'watched other people';</li> <li>• 'trial and error';</li> <li>• 'coaching, lessons, teaching';</li> <li>• 'read a book or followed a manual or instructions'.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Learning check – what are they doing now?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>For one or two of these make connections with school subjects. Say: <i>You might learn by watching someone. For example: in PE the teacher might do a demonstration to give you an idea of how to do something; you then try it and you get feedback on how you can improve. Or: in some subjects you read the instructions with the teacher and do the work yourself.</i></p>
<p><b>Modelling</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>If I want to do something new it helps me to plan how to do it before I start. For example, if I am learning a poem off by heart I might learn one verse at a time or I might learn it by remembering the rhyme.</i></p>
<p><b>Interactive session</b> (10 minutes)</p>	<p>Say: <i>I want us to look at how we learn in more detail – the little things our brain does.</i></p> <p>Find or make a copy of a fairly simple drawing or diagram.</p> <p>Say: <i>I am going to show you a picture for 10 seconds. No pens or paper allowed – just try to memorise this. I want you to draw it, once I have put it away. Try and remember as much as you can.</i></p> <p>Show the picture for 10 – 15 seconds and then put it out of sight and make them wait 10 – 20 seconds; then allow them to draw. This is not a competition so allow them to cooperate.</p>

<p><b>Review</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Don't allow them to go on too long. Stop them and ask: <i>How did you remember? How did you learn the drawing?</i></p> <p>Answers might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'I recognised what it was and drew that'.</li> <li>• 'I got the outline and I could remember some of the detail'.</li> <li>• 'It (or part of it) looked like a ...'.</li> <li>• 'I pictured it in my head'.</li> <li>• 'I counted up the number of ...'.</li> <li>• 'It was twice as long as it was tall'.</li> <li>• 'It reminded me of ...'.</li> <li>• 'We worked together and reminded each other'.</li> </ul> <p>Praise their strategies and make the point that they are using good techniques or tools that can be used for learning and remembering anything.</p> <p>Say: <i>The more we talk about how we learn, the more we can learn from each other and realise how many ways we have of learning, which will help us when we are stuck.</i></p>
<p><b>Where next?</b> (2 minutes)</p>	<p>Close by thanking them and say: <i>We have started to talk about how we might learn things in school. When you are doing difficult things or learning new things you can think and plan how to do it and also check on how you are getting on.</i></p>



*Part* **3**

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Advice to  
coaches







# 1 Coaching in the Learning Challenge

## 1.1 What is the Learning Challenge?

The Learning Challenge is part of a programme of support designed to help pupils who are achieving just below what might be expected for their age. The Learning Challenge concentrates on trying to help pupils to be better prepared for lessons and learning by helping them to improve their personal organisation and the way they organise their learning. There are a number of challenges that are structured to help with different aspects of this.

## 1.2 Who is involved?

The school organiser for the Learning Challenge manages the programme. The organiser will provide you with the support and guidance you need to coach pupils with confidence. As a **coach** you will be supporting an individual pupil or a group of two or three pupils who are working on the same aspect of organisation and who are working towards the same target.

## 1.3 What support will I get?

The school organiser will arrange a briefing session in order to:

- explain how the support is organised and how you can help the pupils you will be coaching;
- go through the information about coaching to make sure you feel comfortable about how to approach the role;
- go through the challenges you will be using to make sure you are confident about the structure and purpose of the challenges and how to use them;
- go through the structure for setting targets and recording progress;
- make sure you have all the resources you need;
- make sure you know which pupils you will be coaching and arrange for you to meet them before the coaching sessions start;
- make arrangements about times and places to meet pupils and make sure that the pupils and their form tutors have this information. Places where you meet the pupils you are coaching should be where you and the pupils are clearly visible to other adults at all times, for instance, the library, learning resource centre or similar;
- explain what to do if there are any problems.

The school organiser will give you a completed copy of the 'Learning Challenge profile form' (appendix 3) and a copy of the 'Coach's record form' for each pupil (appendix 5).

## 1.4 How do I arrange meeting the pupils?

### Initial meeting

The first meeting should be fairly short – about ten minutes or so. You should:

- introduce yourself to the pupil and tell them a little bit about yourself;
- explain the Learning Challenge programme and what it entails;
- make sure that the pupil is aware of his or her targets and has agreed them with the organising teacher. Check that they have their school diary or homework planner and ask them to bring it next time;
- agree where you will meet your pupil for the first coaching session; it will be useful to have a copy of the pupil's timetable so that you know where she or he is coming from and in case the pupil forgets to come to the session;
- set dates for future coaching sessions and enter them in the pupil's diary or planner;
- set the agenda for the next meeting.

If the pupil does not turn up for this meeting, wait ten minutes after the agreed time and then contact the organising teacher immediately.

### Subsequent meetings

- Work through the agreed challenge with the pupil or pupils.
- Complete the 'Coach's record form' and give feedback to the organising teacher as required.
- Remind the pupil about the date and time of the next meeting and of any strategies to improve aspects of their organisation or learning that they will be practising before the next session.
- Report immediately any concerns you may have with regard to pupil behaviour, attendance, lack of progress, poor attitude or safety.

If the pupil does not turn up for any meeting, wait ten minutes after the agreed time and then contact the organising teacher immediately.

## 1.5 What should I do to prepare?

Before you start a session you should go through the challenge you will be using and make sure you understand it and how you will use it with the pupil or pupils. Think about possible questions you might ask, or those that pupils might ask. Some are included in the structure of each challenge, but you will be able to think of others. Ask the organiser if you are not sure what you should do with any challenge.

Make sure you have the resources you need and have cut up any cards that need to be prepared before the session.

Check the Learning Challenge target that the pupil or pupils are working towards so that you are confident in talking to them about success and areas of difficulty and can help them move towards the target.



## 2 Running a coaching session

This section contains some general ideas and principles that you should bear in mind when you are coaching. It is organised according to the different stages a coaching session might go through.

### 2.1 Establishing rapport

It is essential that you build up a good relationship with the pupil you are coaching, so spend a few minutes at the beginning of each session putting them at ease. This helps to put the session on an enjoyable footing and helps them to relax. Pupils who have difficulties with organisation are often tense and wary because they expect to fail and this can be a barrier to progress and achievement.

You might try to find out about hobbies and interests, their favourite computer game, favourite television programme and so on. Give them time to respond. This is particularly important in the first few sessions when they might be shy and reluctant to voice opinions. Don't be tempted to ask lots of questions at once, since this can be intimidating. Steer clear of questions about their family as this may appear intrusive. You might share your favourite television programme or suchlike, so that they can learn something about you too.

### 2.2 Establishing what's happened since the last coaching session and explaining the aims for this one

Remind the pupil of the target that was set at the previous coaching session. Ask how well they think they have met the target, and why do they think this? Gently probe for evidence to back up their claims. Discuss any issues that have stopped them reaching the target or not making progress towards it. If necessary, pass any significant issues on to the organising teacher. Outline the objective for this particular session. This is included in each of the challenges.

### 2.3 The coaching session

Take the pupil through the session – as you become more confident you will see ways of varying the session to fit the needs of individual pupils more closely. You will need to make a judgement about how much time each pupil needs, as you take them through each challenge. Explain any new ideas arising from the session.

Each challenge is broken down into smaller sessions that are structured to provide small steps of progress. Review the session with the pupil to check which learning is secure by the end of the session and what needs more work. Ask them what they thought went well and reinforce their achievement by saying things like: 'Yes, I thought you did that really well' or 'I liked the way you did that'. Talk to them about what they thought didn't go so well. Provide them with support so they don't feel a failure. Talk to them about what might have helped them to overcome the difficulty. They may need to go over the work they have done between sessions again. Persuade them to practise that aspect of the work before the next session. Reassure them that it won't matter if they can't do it or if they don't feel they have done it well. The important thing is that they tried and are prepared to talk about what they did when you meet again.

Before the end of the session set them a target for next time. Each session includes targets for pupils to work on before the next session. However, you could set a target linked to working on an area of difficulty or reinforcing an area of strength. As you become more confident in using the material you will be able to see how to adapt it for different pupils.

## 2.4 Making a record

It is very important to keep a record of your coaching sessions and you will need to build a few minutes into each session to complete them.

Records provide feedback for:

- the pupil you are coaching;
- the teacher who is coordinating the scheme;
- parents and carers;
- yourself.

Records must provide information about your coaching sessions that is easily accessible, but they should be brief and only take a few minutes to complete. Use the 'Coach's record form' (appendix 5) to set down what you and the pupil consider to be important about the session. It is important that this is done with the pupil so that they are involved in the process. Use this to keep a note of where you are and the next steps for the pupil.

As the coaching sessions progress you will be able to use your records to talk with the pupil you are coaching about:

- the progress they have made. Some pupils who have difficulties often believe they are making no progress. Good records can help to demonstrate to them that they are achieving and making progress;
- how they feel they are doing. This helps them to reflect on themselves as learners and to analyse their strengths and weaknesses together with the strategies they are using;
- any persistent difficulties they are experiencing ;
- the coaching strategies you are using and how helpful they are finding them.

It is not necessary to record everything that happens in a session. Record only what you consider to be significant.

The teacher coordinating the scheme will also find the records useful and will discuss them with you and with the pupils you are coaching on a regular basis.

Check back with the pupil's target to make a judgement about whether they have achieved it. The aim of the Learning Challenge is to improve organisation and preparedness for learning. The intention is that pupils will change their habits and behaviour and adopt more learning-centred routines in school. This is not a once and for all event, nor will it happen overnight. Because of this the targets are not one-off targets. Some targets have to be revisited daily and others over a long period of time. There is indication of this in each challenge.

## 2.5 Aiming for success

The pupils you are coaching will need a lot of positive reinforcement to give them a feeling of success and to make them think they can become more organised and more successful as learners. Praise pupils for their perseverance and the progress they are making, even if it is very small. Nothing works better than praise when it is deserved.

The following golden rules will help the Learning Challenge to be successful for pupils, and satisfying and enjoyable for you as a coach.

- Always be patient, positive and encouraging.
- Know the pupils' targets and the main coaching strategy you will be using. Keep it simple and stick to this. Remind the pupils of the target(s).
- Don't let the pupils down by not turning up for sessions.
- Act as a role model for the pupils.
- Believe that you can and will make a difference to the pupils you are coaching.
- Believe in your pupils and have a real wish to see them succeed.
- Be sensitive – know when to step in and when to be quiet.
- Remember to build on pupils' successes; never forget that even if pupils are struggling with their organisation or learning they will still have some success. Look for the positive.
- Remember that you are working with pupils to help them make progress towards a specific target – keep the focus on improvement in this area.
- Empower the pupils by sharing your skills and strategies – demonstrate how well-organised learners act.
- Be prepared to stand back and let the pupils take the credit.
- Keep a sense of humour and make the sessions fun.
- Build up a special relationship with each pupil by taking an interest in them and using 'we' and 'us' rather than 'you'.
- Encourage pupils to have a go before offering help – remind them of the strategies they might use.
- Allow the pupils time to use their skills in order to work out unknown words before offering help.
- Give the pupils thinking time when you ask them a question.



# *Part* **4**

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Appendices





## Appendix 1: Checklist for identifying pupils' needs

Name of pupil:		Year group:		Tutor set:	
Characteristic	Usually	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Pupil interview
Forgets books					
Forgets pens etc.					
Forgets games kit					
Forgets homework					
Doesn't finish homework					
Doesn't record homework in enough detail					
Doesn't finish class work					
Lacks motivation					
Forgets information or vocabulary					
Makes limited progress in three or more subjects					
Has difficulty in building on his or her learning					
Has limited support outside lessons					
Gives up quickly when working on his or her own					
Finds working in a group difficult					
Has erratic attendance					
Works well in a one-to-one situation					
Lacks confidence					
Has significant weaknesses in literacy and numeracy					

## Appendix 2: Learning Challenge interview record sheet

Name of pupil:		Year group:	Tutor set:
	Key Questions	Possible Response	Other responses
1	Do you always remember your books and pens for school?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
2	Do you always remember your games kit?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
3	Do you always remember money or ingredients for food technology?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
4	If they sometimes or always forget things, ask what they forget most often		
5	Try to get them to talk about why they tend to forget these things	I can't remember what lessons I've got I keep losing things I don't like PE or food technology or another lesson	
6	Do you do your homework?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
7	If they don't always do their homework ask them why	I haven't written it into my diary or planner I don't like doing homework Sometimes it's too hard	
8	Do you always finish it?	Always Usually Sometimes forget Usually forget	
9	If they say they don't always finish their homework, ask if they can say why they don't	It's too hard I don't know what I have to do I don't like working on my own	
10	Where do you do your homework?	In my bedroom In the kitchen Another place in the house At my friend's house On the bus on the way to school In school before school starts	
11	Is it quiet where you do your homework?		
12	When do you do your homework?	As soon as I get home After tea Just before I go to bed No particular time	
13	Do you like working in groups with other people?	Yes Sometimes Not much No	

14	What do you like about it?	I like listening to other people I'm good at discussing things It gives me new ideas I can do harder work with other people	
15	What don't you like about it?	I'm not good at discussing things I never get to say what I think I don't always know what I have to do	
16	Do you get stuck with your work?	Always Often Sometimes Not usually	
17	What do you do when you get stuck?	I ask for help from my friend I copy from my friend I ask the teacher for help I keep trying I give up	
18	Do you find learning at school easy?	Always Often Sometimes Not usually	
19	What things do you find difficult?	I don't always know what to do I don't always understand the words I can't always remember things we have to learn I'm not very good at tests I don't like having to solve problems	
20	How do you feel when you are given new work to do?		

## Appendix 3: Learning Challenge profile form

### Pupil's name:

Pupils' strengths and areas for development should be identified during the assessment process and should be entered next to the most appropriate challenges.

1 Personal organisation: the organisation challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

2 Remembering things: the memory challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

3 Preparing for tests: the revision challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

4 Working on your own and with others: the working challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

5 Understanding subject conventions: the subject challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

6 Clearer thinking: the thinking challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

7 Understanding how you learn: the reflection challenge	
Strengths in this area	Points for development in this area

<b>Pupil's name:</b>	
<b>Learning Challenge:</b>	
<b>Targets:</b>	<b>Successes:</b>

## Appendix 4: Information for the coach



School organiser: \_\_\_\_\_

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Year group and tutor set: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Challenge:**

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### **Target:**

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### **Timetable:**

Day and dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Place: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Notes**

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## Appendix 5: Coach's record form

Please complete this form and return it to:

Coach: \_\_\_\_\_

Pupil: \_\_\_\_\_

Year group and tutor set: \_\_\_\_\_

### Challenge:

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### Target:

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### Comment:

Comments should include information about the extent to which the pupil has hit the target; his or her perseverance; his or her attendance at sessions; his or her engagement with the work; whether he or she tried things out between sessions.

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### Indication of next Learning Challenge for the pupils

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**The Learning Challenge**

***Certificate of Achievement***

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**You have succeeded in your challenge**

**Excellent Progress**

Signed

**Challenge Leader**





**The Learning Challenge**

***Certificate of Achievement***

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**You have succeeded in your challenge**

**Good Progress**

Signed

**Challenge Leader**

## Appendix 7: Letter to parents or guardians

Dear (insert name of parent/guardian)

The Learning Challenge

I am pleased to inform you that (insert name of pupil) has been chosen to take part in a scheme called The Learning Challenge. The Learning Challenge is part of a programme of extra support to help pupils to improve their achievement in lessons. It will also help them to improve their results at the end of Year 9. There are three other Challenges to help with this. These are: the Reading Challenge, the Writing Challenge and the Mathematics Challenge. The Learning Challenge complements the other Challenges and is designed to boost (pupil name)'s organisational and learning skills through one-to-one or small group coaching.

At the start of the scheme, I will assess (insert pupil name)'s current organisational skills and set him/her a target. (Insert pupil name) will then meet regularly with his/her coach for coaching sessions that last up to twenty minutes. The coaching is focused by the target and will be provided by a teaching assistant/mentor/senior student who has been trained specially to undertake this role. Towards the end of term I shall assess progress towards the target and inform you of the results.

I hope you will agree to let (insert pupil name) take part in the scheme and that you will support the Learning Challenge by encouraging your son/daughter to complete any tasks that are set. Please contact me if you need further details or have any questions.

Please return the permission slip below as soon as possible.

Yours sincerely

Learning Challenge organiser

.....

I give permission for my son/daughter .....  
to take part in the Learning Challenge

Signed .....

Parent/guardian  
(insert date)

