

What lessons on learning how to learn can adult students draw on?

Independent evidence

'Thinking skills' approaches to learning require students to plan, describe and evaluate their thinking and learning. They become aware of their thinking and reasoning, developing knowledge and control of their own approach to learning (metacognition) i.

Your evidence and reflections

Your adult learners will have a wealth of experience of what makes for good and bad teaching and learning. Why not arrange a short session where you explain you would like to review your approach to teaching by drawing on their experience from schooldays to the present. You could organize them in pairs to tell each other about:

- their best experience of learning
- their worst experience of learning
- what they have got the most out of doing on your course
- what they have got the least out of doing on your course.

After the discussion in pairs you could ask them to feed back what they have said to the whole group.

Putting the evidence to work

Having collected students' views on what they found to be useful and not so useful you could refer back to your own lessons to see how much your approach aligns with their experience. Where there are differences you could probe what the educational benefits are of each approach to assess whether there is value in trying out new practice. The exercise may leave you with a range of interesting ideas. Bringing in a colleague's perspective may help you decide which one to focus on.

i Find out more about thinking skill frameworks for post-16 learners at:

<https://www.lsneducation.org.uk/user/order.aspx?code=041830&src=xoweb>

and

<https://www.lsneducation.org.uk/user/order.aspx?code=031541&src=xoweb>

The Teaching and Learning Research Programme (TLRP) Further Education Commentary is available at: <http://www.tlrp.org/pub/documents/FEcommentary.pdf>