Metacognition: Wrappers

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My focus

Assessed, extended writing tasks.

My question

How can I teach my students to become more independent learners?

Research base

Self-evaluation is vital for effective independent learning.

Metacognition = learning

Effective learning involves:

- Planning and goal-setting
- Monitoring one's progress
- Adapting as needed

Teaching students these skills improves students' learning.

Wrappers: what are they?

A wrapper is a self-evaluation technique that wraps around an assessed task.

What did I do to prepare?

What do I need to improve?

How am I going to do this?

In practice:

Ask students to discuss the strategies that they used to prepare for the task. Sharing round and listening to how other students do it is very powerful.
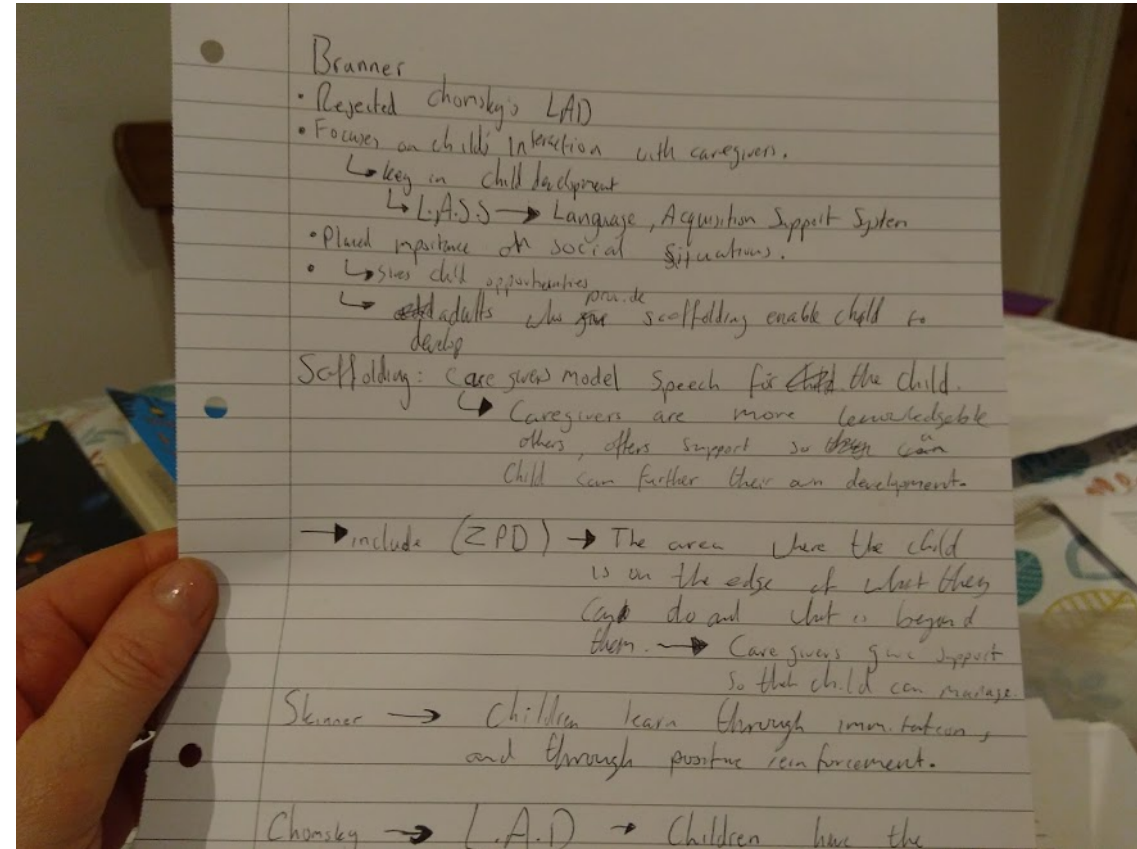
This is about much more than just improving / redrafting sections of the work.

It gives students the tools to develop their learning strategies – what works, what doesn't.

Wrappers : examples
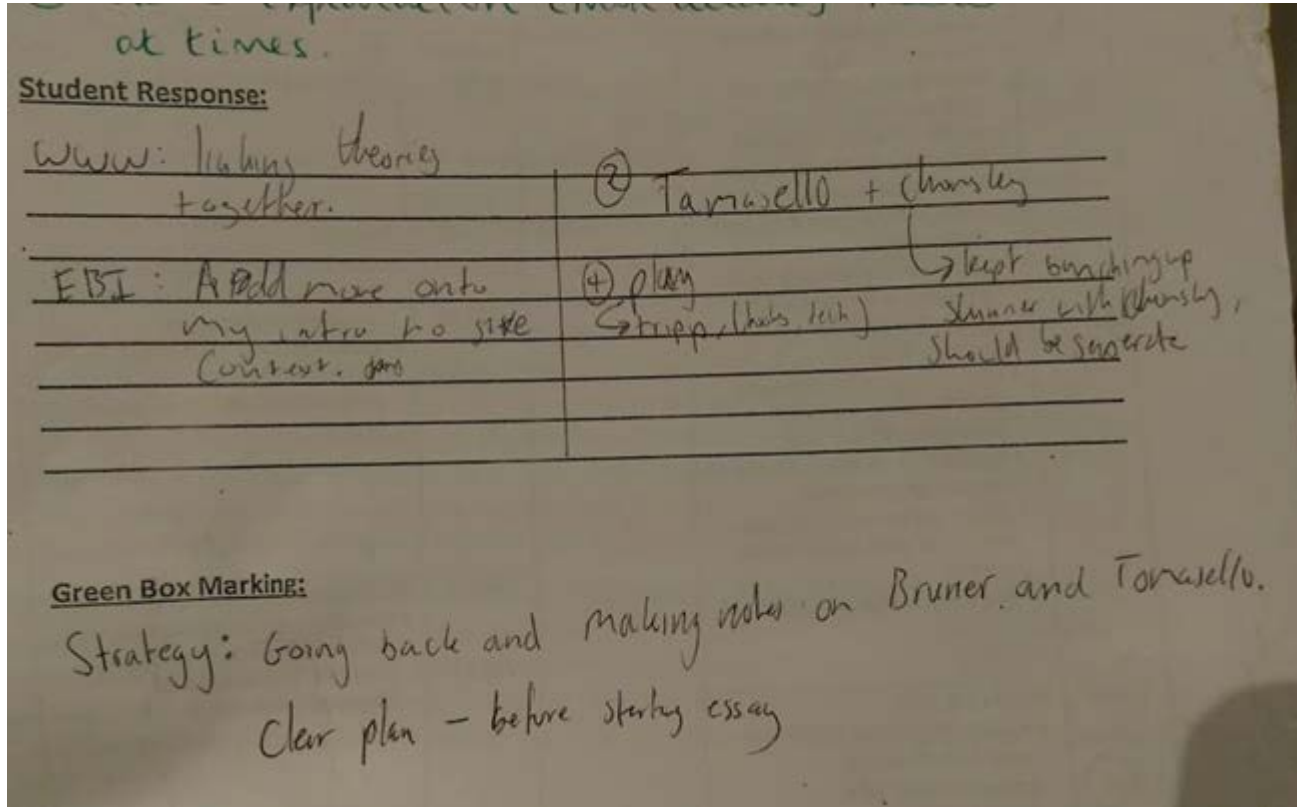
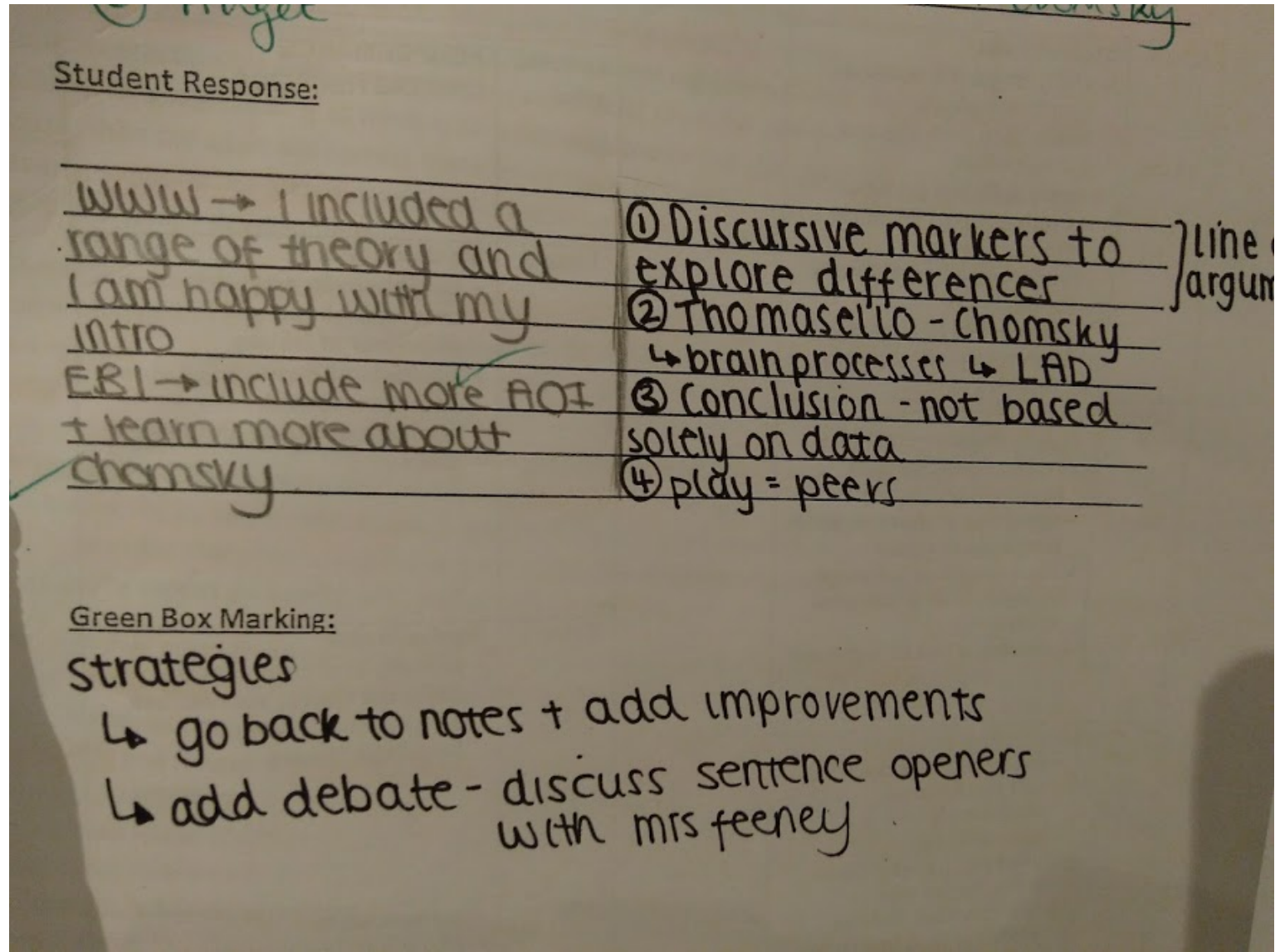Self-Monitoring Strategy

Knowing when to adapt

Wrappers : examples

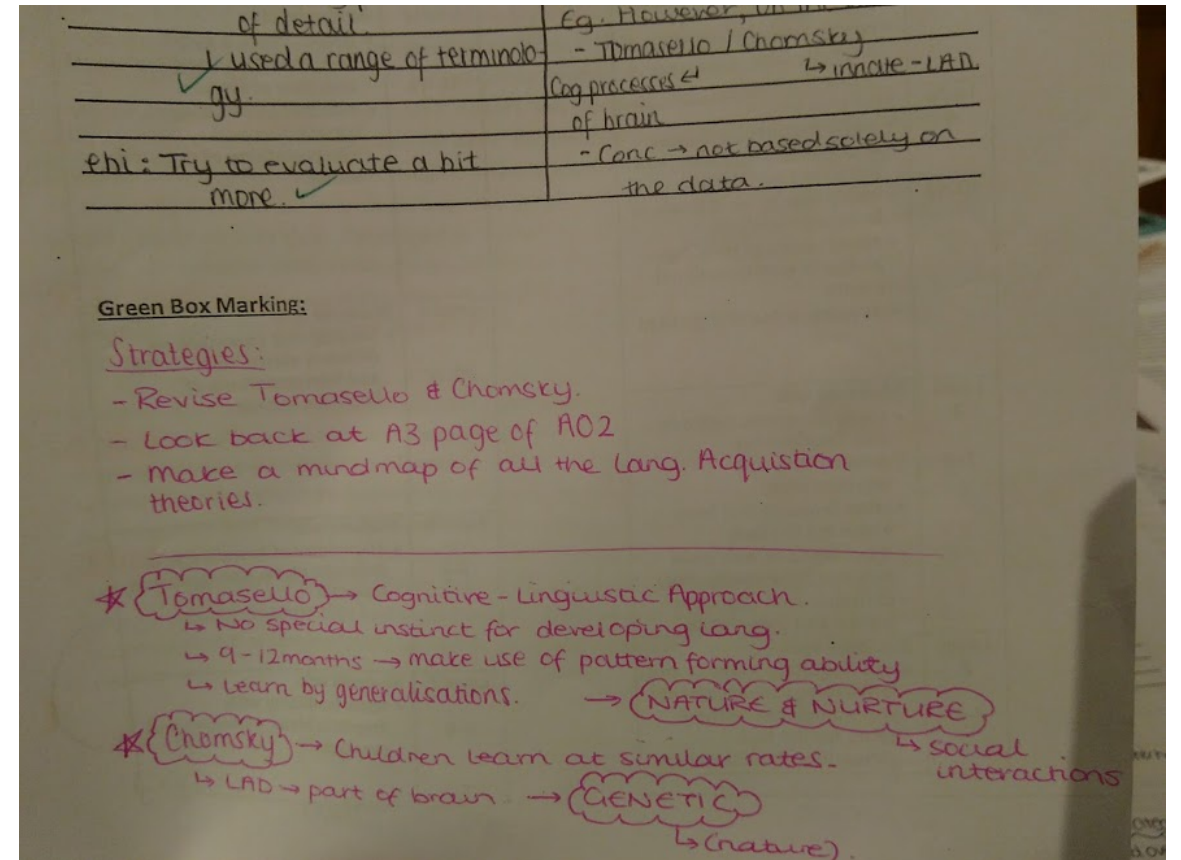**Time efficient**
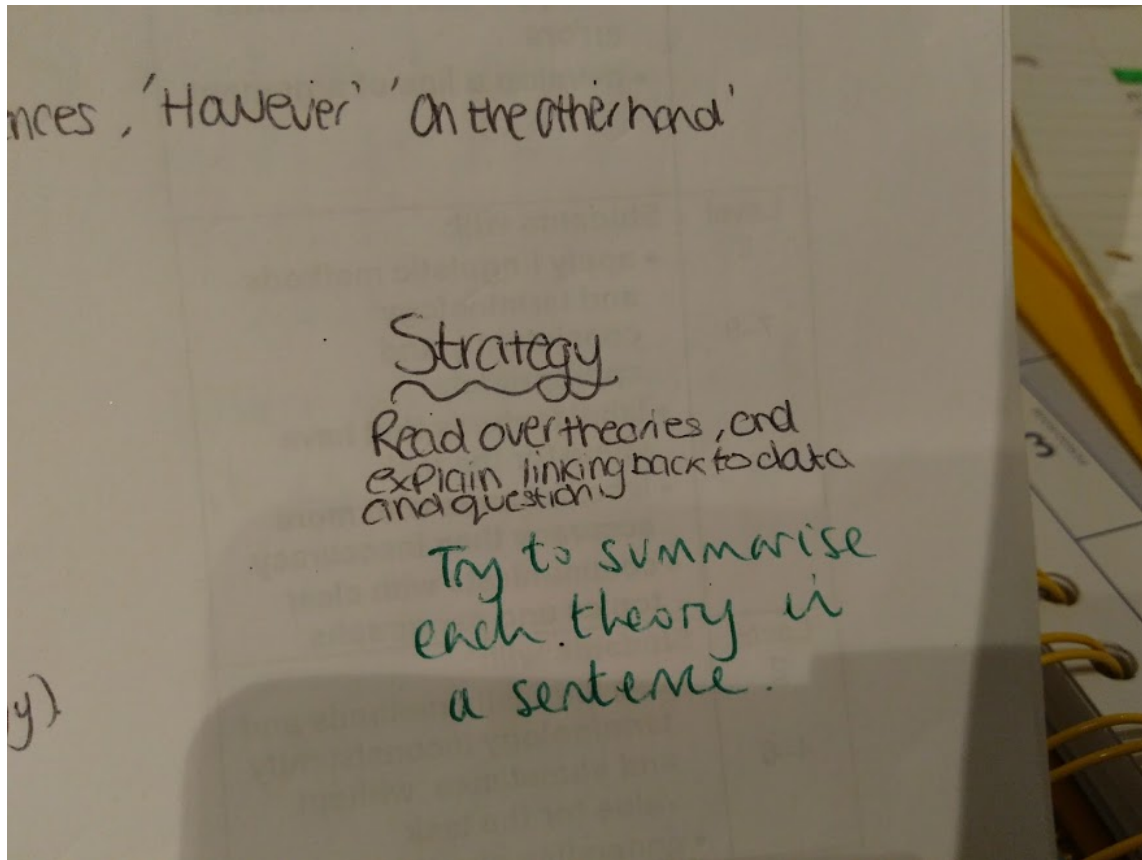- quick to add on and complete

Metacognition integrated
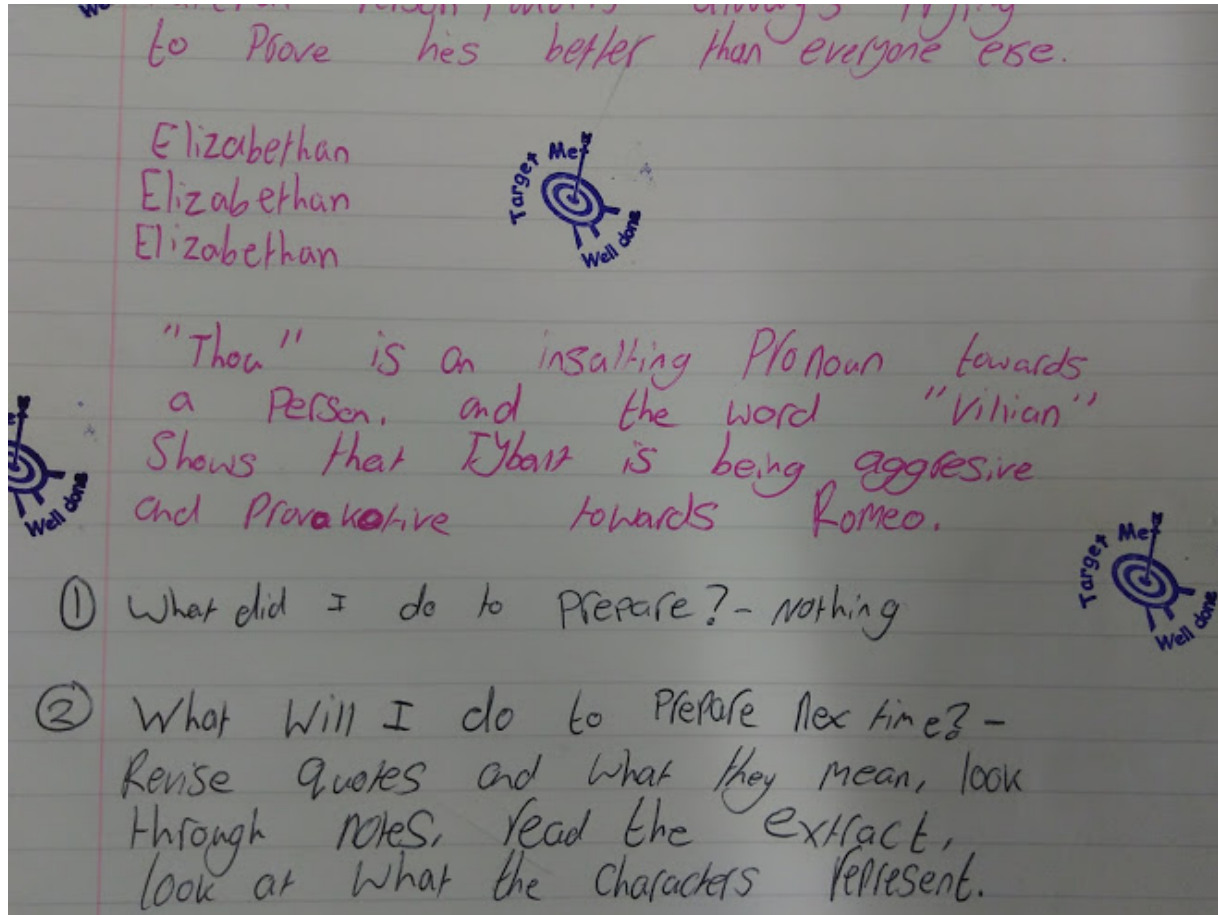- self-monitoring in the context where it is needed

Why wrappers work.

Research shows that even minor interventions that frame a task in a new way can significantly change behaviour.

Wrappers at KS4
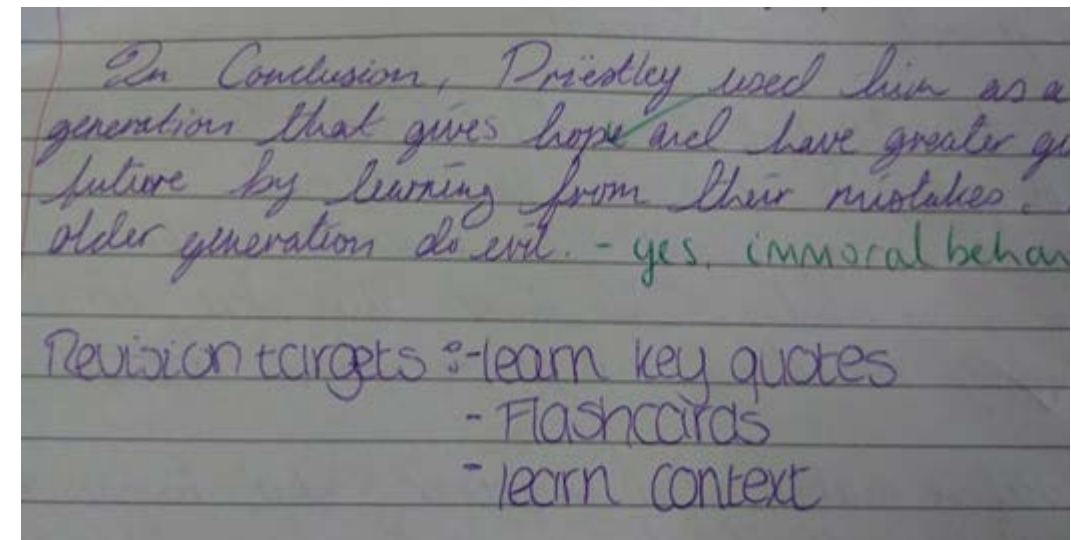
Talking with students about their strategies is crucial. Revisit good revision practices.

Exam Wrappers
- report study strategies used
- analyse errors
- identify new approaches needed

Before next exam: review revision targets

Why wrappers work.

Time efficient

Students are doing the task anyway.

Wrapper is quick to add on and complete.

Metacognition is integrated with the task

Students are self-monitoring in the context where it is needed.

Feedback on accuracy can be built in.

Wrapper support can be gradually faded.

What is the impact?

- My students could see that the way they go about a task affects the outcome (so, planning strategies are important).

- They became more willing to act on feedback and they liked the choice element of how to go about improving their work.

'After all, typical feedback tells learners *what* they need to improve ('include more X', for example), but rarely focuses on the *how.* And lower attainers especially need this help the most.' Feeney (2018).

And for me?

Main take-aways:

1. Using wrappers gave me insight into the challenges that individual students face.

2. It also taught me a lot about my own teaching; how well was I helping my students to organise and monitor their thinking?

Metacognition = learning

Lovett's (2008) case study at Carnegie Mellon University, USA.

Aims
- To 'teach monitoring and adapting as a habit of mind'
- To help students *identify poor learning strategies*, *combat over-confidence* and *challenge the belief that effort is more important that strategy*

Method
- Use wrappers to teach students how to do this.

Outcome
- Majority of learners reported using new strategies, and understood why they worked.

Metacognition = learning

EEF guidance on Metacognition and Self-Regulation (2018) endorses the use of exam wrappers.
They allow teachers and pupils to 'evaluate and analyse errors, and revision patterns for a given exam.'
They recognise that, 'This can help improve pupils' accuracy of judgement.'

Further reading

1. Lovett presents her case study and provides examples of wrappers used in different subject areas.

Lovett, M., 2008. 'Teaching Metacognition'. Available from:
https://events.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI08104.pdf

2. Further examples of wrappers used in Science and Maths, and guidance for teachers.

Carnegie Mellon University. Available from:
https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/teach/examwrappers/

3. EEF report.

Education Endowment Foundation, 2018. 'Metacognition and Self-Regulated Learning'. Available from:
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/metacognition-and-self-regulated-learning/

4. TES article.

Feeney, C., 2018. 'Metacognitive Learning: have you got it all wrapped up?'. TES, October 5th, 2018.