

What it looks like in practice

Nine routines teachers described on social media.

ROUTINE, AS TEACHERS DESCRIBE IT	WHAT YOU WOULD NOTICE	WHAT THE EVIDENCE SAYS
Think-aloud in the I do Self-reflective questions during explicit modelling, so the class hears the decision, not only the method. “This morning’s T&L practice focused on self reflective questions during the I do phase to support metacognition and make learning visible.” @MissBarstow_KS2	An I do slide that pairs modelling with metacognitive language, in a Year 5 class.	The EEF Toolkit, last updated May 2025, says teachers can promote metacognition by modelling their thinking aloud. This row is one teacher’s account of doing that.
Scripted maths think-aloud, then the next item Script the thinking for a percentage-discount question, check with a second method, then hand the next question to the class. “How to Plan a Think Aloud in Maths: Worked Examples Two examples to support teacher modelling and explanation” @BradResearchSch	I language at the board. A second method used as a check. “Can you now apply this approach to the next question?” on the Bradford page.	EEF: model thinking aloud on a curriculum task, not in a thinking-skills lesson. The Bradford page is a worked script teachers can adapt. Bradford Research School, 20 Mar 2025.

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PCR outdoors, in the task Plan, check, review used on a den construction, not as a plenary chant. "Today they took their 'PCR' strategy outdoors when planning, checking and reviewing their den constructions!" @Sandfields_Pri	The plan, check and review steps go outside with the den build. Learners check a construction, not a feeling, in a Welsh primary school.	EEF: teach plan, monitor and evaluate inside the usual curriculum. PCR is this school's own name for that cycle.
Board-to-paper encoding Think-aloud at the board, while learners write the steps down on paper. "Teacher think-aloud. Board-to-paper modeling. Students encoding steps" @Alaina_Boaz	Elementary maths books showing steps, not a copied final line.	EEF: in effective studies, teachers often model the explicit use of a strategy during a task.
Close: what still needs revision After retrieval and a how/why, learners rank the part of the concept that still needs time. Not a new-content lecture. "Metacognition: Prioritize parts of concept still needing more revision time" @SoLInTheWild	A ranked gap on a mini-whiteboard, not a smiley face on a slip.	EEF: provide opportunities to reflect, monitor strengths and plan how to overcome current difficulties.

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Unpack an I can, then self-assess US elementary: unpack the learning target with the class, then self-assess on a proficiency scale. UK rooms keep the command word; they do not need the US scale. “Ms. Vargo unpacked the learning target WITH kindergarten students and had them self assess using proficiency scale language” @ltylerkc	Kindergarten learners rating themselves against a target they helped to unpack.	EEF Toolkit: impact is similar across age groups, including the early years.
Cheap imitation: posters, tickets, learning-to-learn CPD ● objection A school implements the lookalike: laminated plan-monitor-evaluate posters, exit tickets, and a learning-to-learn INSET. “Nobody implements "metacognition". They implement something they take on trust to be metacognition, usually the cheapest and most superficially looking version” @C_Hendrick	The poster on the wall. The slip at the door. No think-aloud in the subject. Few teachers in the replies disagreed.	EEF’s own caveat: the +8 months figure is a Toolkit mean across 355 studies, and “it can be difficult to realise this impact in practice.” Hendrick’s reading matches the page. Donker et al. (2014) found strategy instruction can raise attainment; that is not a finding about posters.

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Exit tickets as admin theatre ● objection A written ticket at the end that does not change instruction. Mini-whiteboards used for teaching instead. "I find that I don't adjust my instruction based on exit tickets and only use them for dog & pony shows for admin." @thsuburbanmommy	A fourth-grade teacher replying in a consultant's thread. A slip collected for a walkthrough, not read in the room.	Replies disagree on tickets: @mrshowell24 still wants one sharp check; @MrMetacognition has fallen out of love with them. Veenman, Van Hout-Wolters and Afflerbach (2006) review methods of measuring metacognition and their limits. A ticket marked after the lesson sits in that gap.
One clear question, not vague reflection End with one question that can change tomorrow, not a feeling slip. "The key: Ask one clear question, not vague reflection." @mrshowell24	A strategy judgement everyone shows at once, suggested by a school leader.	The EEF Toolkit, last updated May 2025, says teachers might use reflection questions, knowledge organisers, worked examples or success criteria. That is closer to this than a vague ticket.

The EEF +8 months figure is the Toolkit mean (355 studies, last updated May 2025), and carries the EEF's own caveat. These routines are teachers' own accounts, not trial evidence.