

## 1. Avoid a Tick-Box Version of Planning for TS&PCs

When planning, it is not enough to refer to a strand of the TS&PCs framework: focus on the specific skill that you want the pupils to develop. For example, you should set out the specific details of your approach to Managing Information so that it is clear what you expect pupils to do.

The plan should specify exactly what you want the pupils to develop in how they obtain, record and store information, and what they need to do to skilfully manage that kind of information.

Your plan might refer to the bullet points associated with the various strands of the TS&PCs framework. In the case of Managing Information, for example, you could use the following subheadings:

- select, classify, compare and evaluate information; and
- use a range of methods for collating, recording and representing information.

You could then specify activities from these such as:

- comparing and contrasting contradictory information;
- focusing on which sources of information were the most useful, accurate, up-to-date or relevant;
- examining why those particular pieces of information were the most useful;
- evaluating information for accuracy, appropriateness, or audience expectations; and
- recording information in a particular format.

When deciding on a focus for TS&PCs, remember that there are likely to be many opportunities to focus on skills in a planned lesson or sequence. There may be several TS&PCs relevant to the work, but it is best to concentrate on a single aspect of one of those skills to make sure pupils are secure in their understanding of what it means to apply it skilfully.

Overambitious attempts to include several elements of the TS&PCs framework at once seldom work well.

## 2. TS&PCs are Subject-Specific

You can plan for TS&PCs by identifying the most fruitful occasions when you can use the emphasis within a curricular context. Once pupils have grasped the principles that you have modelled for them, they will then need to practice applying the skill in a slightly different, but related context. TS&PCs cannot be developed in a vacuum: they can only be developed through a subject context. This is what is meant by the term infusion as the way to address TS&PCs: they are infused into subject contexts and not taught separately.

This also relates to how thinking verbs apply within subject disciplines: all are different but all use investigation and explanation. Skilful performance in analysis will mean using rather different knowledge and skills in each case, and the outcomes will also be different.

To address analysis in the context of teaching pupils, you need to identify the characteristics of skilful performance: that is, what you want pupils to be able to do as a result of learning something new. This can involve specifying success criteria or structuring the range of performance in a rubric.

By using criteria or a rubric, it becomes possible to look back over the work and determine to what extent individual performances have succeeded in making the analysis skilful, or remain in need of improvements.

Without also considering quality, much of pupils' classroom experience of thinking might well remain sloppy or confused. It is only when the thinking is being performed with skill that it can be labelled as a thinking skill. Otherwise, it may be of negligible worth in improving outcomes.

In this sense thinking skills are subject-specific and not generic. For example, the identified skill might match with Thinking, Problem-Solving, and Decision-Making but the type of problem-solving that the pupil must do and the established ways of applying a problem-solving method will probably be highly subject-specific.