

## Step 10

# Use the Cards when Assessing Progress

Thinking Cards can assist you when you come to assess your pupils' progress in the acquisition and development of the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities. In early experiences, you will be leading your pupils in their use of the cards. Later, as they become more experienced and confident, you will be able to observe them as they apply their skills more independently.

The cards can help you to describe what you would expect to see pupils doing at each stage of an activity. You can use them in two ways:

- **Before starting an activity**, use one or more cards to plan what you will assess.
- **During an activity**, use the prompts on the card(s) that pupils are using as a focus for assessment.

As a starting point when you are assessing pupils' competence in the skills, you can simply:

- select a card which you will get all of the pupils to use; and
- observe, in general terms, how the pupils approach the task with the aid of the card.

Then, when you are ready, you can use the cards in a more specific way, allowing the points on a card to inform what you look for as your pupils carry out an activity. For example, as each suggestion on the card is applied to the activity, you may consider:

- What will this look like?
- What should the pupils be able to do as they put it into practice?

Assessing **what the pupils do** when they use a card or cards within an infusion activity

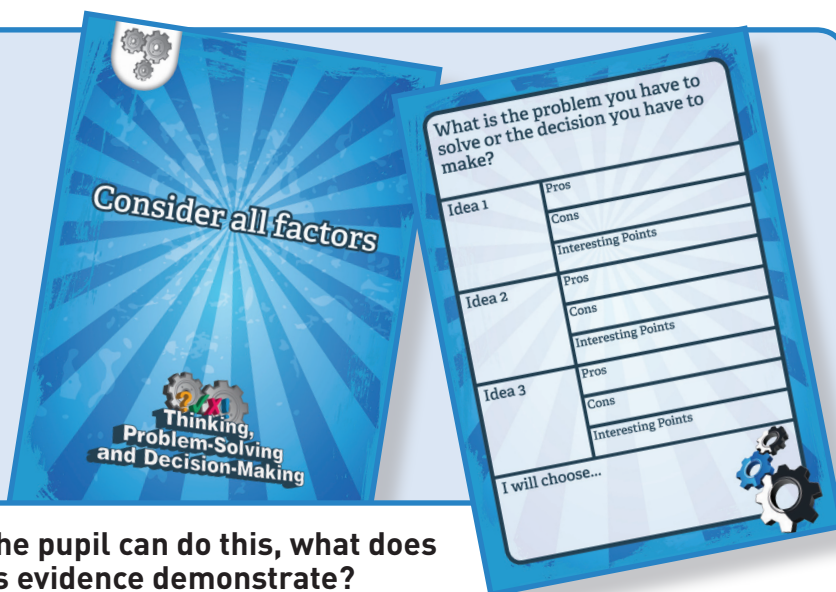
When the pupils are using a card, observe/question things such as the following:

**Can/Does the pupil:**

- select a specific card in a purposeful way;
- identify the specific strand or skills that they are aiming to develop;
- think through the scaffold provided by the card with a degree of independence;
- have a good grasp of 'thinking vocabulary' that they can call upon when talking about what they are doing;
- display a degree of mastery in following the suggestions on the card; and/or
- select some of the suggestions that are most useful to them and confidently disregard the suggestions that are not appropriate?

When you become more familiar with this process of using the cards to inform both your **planning for assessment** and your **assessment of the pupils**, you can start to build up a greater knowledge of what you would expect to see a pupil demonstrating. *(See the example on the next page.)*

## Card 2.11: Consider all factors



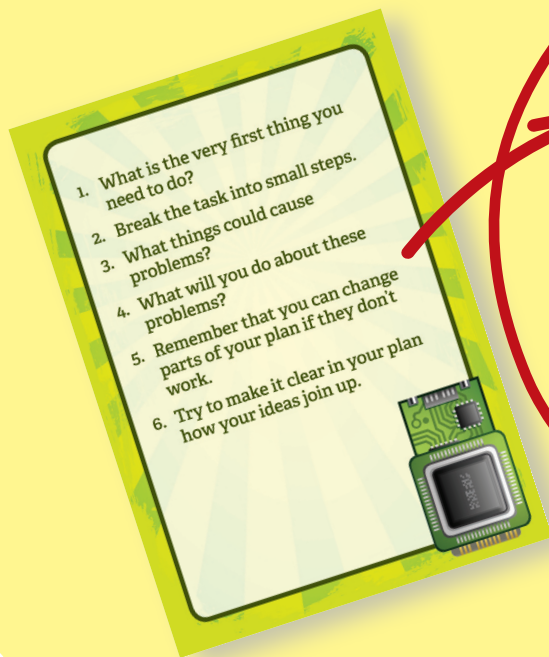
Assessment focus	If the pupil can do this, what does this evidence demonstrate?
Did the pupil select this card independently?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil is demonstrating a good degree of understanding of the skill that they need to develop, need help with, or need to focus on.</li> </ul>
Can they explain or justify their choice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil has developed a 'thinking vocabulary'.</li> <li>They can match a card to the task.</li> </ul>
Is the pupil having difficulty selecting a specific card, but can they identify which strand to select a card from? Can they explain their thinking in this choice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil understands which strand of the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities framework to focus on to help them complete their task. They can identify the relevance of a particular skill to their activity and/or thinking.</li> </ul>
Does the pupil have a good mastery of the specifics highlighted on the cards? For example, can they identify pros and cons of different ideas, and can they do so objectively?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The pupil is beginning to develop a bank of strategies that they can apply to various situations.</li> </ul>

For more ideas about what to look for specifically when assessing the skills, refer to the progression grid within the Thinking Skills and Personal Capabilities framework, available online at [www.nicurriculum.org.uk](http://www.nicurriculum.org.uk)

We're now into week 5 of our 'Exploration' topic, and the pupils have generally managed to complete most of their independent tasks. I've been recording my observations about how each pupil has been working throughout the topic. I've noticed that, whether I've selected cards or the pupils have chosen their own, the cards have been helping me to focus on what to look for in their work.

Some groups have worked in a very methodical and structured way. Others, however, have bits and pieces that they still need to complete, and I can see that some of them have lost track of what they need to do.

I've selected a card from Managing Information in Set 2: 2.06 'Getting organised and making a plan'. The pupils have used this card before, at the beginning of the topic. The prompts on the back of the card, which the pupils will follow, will also guide me in what to focus on in my observations.



### My assessment focus:

- Do the pupils make a plan of some sort or do they work more haphazardly?
- Do they divide the tasks left between them in a logical way?
- Do they communicate well with each other?
- Who is emerging as a leader? A time-keeper? A planner?