

Top Ten Tips – Cognition and Learning

1. Have topic words, possibly with visual support, on displays and working walls. Don't allow them to become wallpaper – encourage the children to use them.
2. Provide all children with the words they need at table level as well such as topic or word mats. This would be best if supported with visual clues. Ensure that supporting adults model their use as many children will not use them unless reminded.
3. Ensure displays do not add to possible misconceptions, e.g. a place value display should reflect the value of digits and not go from smallest to biggest, left to right.
4. Children learn best at the beginning and ends of lessons, and instructions and information should be chunked into smaller, digestible pieces. Try to give lots of beginnings and endings in a lesson.
5. Make small adjustments to information being presented to children electronically –
 - a. Use a dyslexia friendly font such as Calibri, Century Gothic or Arial.
 - b. Change the colour of interactive whiteboard backgrounds.
 - c. Reduce the amount of bold or underlined text used.
 - d. Add 0.5 to line spacing.
 - e. Don't justify a text – leave ragged edges.
 - f. Expand the text slightly.
6. The above could also be used for worksheets or information sheets.
7. Ensure children have access to appropriate maths manipulatives. Again, appropriate direction may be required.
8. Alternative recording methods can sometimes be appropriate. Allowing children to film or record their work rather than writing may be a way of giving them opportunities to express their ideas without having to think about how to hold a writing implement, formulate letters and spell words. Equipment which could be used:
 - a. Talking tins.
 - b. iPads.
 - c. Variety of different apps.
9. Learning should be as multi-sensory as activities allow. The children should have opportunities to learn through as many senses as possible so that opportunities to remember are enhanced.
10. Give children processing time. The 10-second rule often works well. If they are not forthcoming with a response, explain that you will come back to them in a minute.