

Introducing the Skills

It is recommended you introduce all six skills at the same time so children are at least familiar with the symbols they will come across throughout the year. Use the colour coded symbols and 'I can...' statements to help children recognise the different skills.

Go through each one in an assembly. Read the skill and ask children to think about what it might mean to them. Ask them to share these ideas. Then read the 'I can...' statements and ask children to think of examples of these skills. Some children might share examples from real life, others might have seen examples in film and on TV. Ask the teachers to share examples of when they have used the skills in their lives.

Show the children the symbols and ask how these illustrate each skill.

Display the six skills with the 'I can...' statements and symbols somewhere central in school (or in each class if possible).

Take some time at the end of each week to reflect on the skills children have used. Can any of them think of examples of when they have used a certain skill? (even if that skill is not the focus of the term). If you have a celebration assembly in school use this time to celebrate good use of the skills and share these with the children.

You will find that the children become confident in talking about the skills they are using very quickly. When they start looking for them they will find examples everywhere!

How does this book work?

This is not a curriculum in itself. It is however a guide to delivering thinking skills across the curriculum you are teaching.

The idea is that the 6 skills will be delivered across the school at the same time so all children become familiar with the language of the skills (See Thinking Skills school overview). One skill is taught each half term (depending on the way the school calendar works) and these six skills are repeated each year so the children get time to embed their skills.

The skills are broken down to show progression from Reception up to Year 6. The aspects of each skill will be taught at the same time so that the whole school will be working on Independent Enquirers at the same time but they will learn about different aspects of the skill.

The book is divided into four sections. The first is Reception, then Years 1 and 2, followed by Years 3 and 4 and finally Years 5 and 6. Within each section are the six thinking skills (colour coded on the CD Rom) and within these are a number of games and activities to teach the skills. We have organised the aspects across two year groups, for example, years 1 and 2 share the same aspect, to allow children to become confident in those areas before moving on.

Teachers will need to teach the skills explicitly and independently from other learning objectives to begin with (for example, in year 1) using the activities in this book. It is hoped that by the second year of the thinking skill (i.e. year 2) they should be able to use them along side their learning in other areas. There are suggestions within each activity about how you could develop the skill in other curriculum areas.

Each activity consists of a clear learning outcome, resources to support teaching (where appropriate) and guidance on assessing children's understanding and ability to use each skill within that age group.