What is Metacognition?

**Metacognition can be described as...**

- Studying smart
- Thinking about your thinking
- “A big brain outside of brain looking at what your brain is doing.”
- How to become a learning expert

**Definition**

Webster’s dictionary defines **metacognition** as the awareness or analysis of one’s own thinking processes. In other words, metacognition is more than just the learning process, but it is also the thoughts surrounding learning process. Metacognition requires you to actively take part in how you learn, rather than passively sit on the sidelines.

**Why it matters**

Metacognition may seem awfully repetitive. But if you stop to think about the ways in which you are learning you might find that you aren’t learning as much as you suspected. Metacognition allows you to slow down and assess your strengths and weakness. You can improve your performance in school by monitoring your thinking. Not to mention, by employing more effective strategies that don’t require hours in the library you can become more time conscious.

Studying is NOT the same thing as metacognition. Studying is the process of practicing the input of new information through reading, taking notes, practice tests etc. Metacognition is the process in which one becomes aware of the effectiveness of their studying habits and becomes a self-regulated learner. Metacognition allows the student to take control of their minds in order to improve their learning habits.

Imagine if you were able to always be in control of your learning during the time you dedicated to studying. You would probably cut the amount of time you spent in front of your textbook in half! Understanding how we learn helps us to learn what we need to know quickly and efficiently.