Developing Independence
Sutton Courtenay Primary School
Early Years Team

Strategies used:

- **'co-operative groupwork'** (Forman and Cazden, 1985): a range of techniques involving children in collaborative activities which oblige them to articulate their own understandings, evaluate their own performance and be reflective about their own learning.

- **'reciprocal teaching'** (Palincsar & Brown, 1984): a structured procedure which involves teachers modelling the teaching of a task to children who are then asked to teach the activity to their peers.

- **'self-explanations'** (Siegler, 2002): an instructional practice which requires children to give 'how' and 'why' explanations about, for example, scientific phenomena or the events in a story, and then asks children to give explanations of their own and an adult’s reasoning.

- **'self-assessment'** (Black and Wiliam, 1998) a range of pedagogical ideas involving children’s self-assessment of their own learning, including, for example, children making their own choices about the level of difficulty of tasks to be undertaken, and selecting their best work for reflective portfolios.

- **'debriefing'** (Leat & Lin, 2003): a range of techniques for reflecting upon an activity or piece of learning including ‘encouraging pupils to ask questions’, ‘making pupils explain themselves’ and ‘communicating the purpose of lessons’.

What you might see provided:

- Pace is all important in children’s learning. If you observe young children, you will see how important repetition is. Scientific research confirms the need to repeat experiences to strengthen connections in the brain.

- Children need permission and the opportunity to explore, observe, take part in and recreate experiences; adding, changing or combining resources as they want.

- Activities which can be explored over a period of time.

- Experiences and activities offer focus on process over product. The thought processes in an activity are far more important than an end product that is attractive to adults.

- Heuristic play, with interesting objects to explore in their own way without adult interruption.

- Resources reflect equality and diversity.

- Opportunities to revisit and return to activities – ‘back in a minute cards’

What you might hear from a supportive adult:

- Can you describe what happened?
- Can you think of a new way to do it?
- Can you help me think this through?
- Do you have any other ideas?
- How are they alike, different?
- How could we make it work?
- How could we work together to solve this?
- How did that happen?
- How did you feel when you finished it?
- How did you get that to work?
- How did you know that?
- How did you work it out?
- How do you explain it?
- How might you do it differently?
- Tell me about how you worked together.
- Tell me about it.
- Tell me about the character (books).
- Tell me about what you built, made, created
- Tell me about what you saw.
- Tell me about what you did.
- What can we do to get it to work?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What did you see happening?
- What do you like best about it?
- What do you notice about _____?
- What do you think caused it to change?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What do you think would happen if you ______?
- What happened at the beginning, middle or end of the story (books)?
- What did you learn?
- What makes it work?
- What did you notice happening?
- What problems did you have?
- What was easy?
- What was hard for you to do?
- What would you do different next time?
- What do you think is the right answer?
- Why do you think _____?
- Why did you choose _____ over ______?