

Definition/Rationale:

Learning can be defined as an alteration in long-term memory. If nothing has altered in long-term memory, nothing has been learned. However, transfer to long-term memory depends on students experiencing rich learning experiences.

(Paraphrasing from Ofsted School Inspection Handbook 2019. Para 182.)

‘Memory is the residue of thought’ – (Daniel T Willingham (2009) Why Don’t Students Like School?)

‘Deep learning’ at Edgbarrow School refers to teaching practices that require students to **‘think hard’** about the content/skills to be learned. Tasks are designed to achieve more than a superficial understanding of unrelated facts or key terms but instead allow students to assimilate new skills and knowledge with their prior understanding. This, combined with the appropriate use of **‘spacing’**, **‘interleaving’**, **‘low stakes testing’** and **‘narrative’** will help to ensure subject content and skills successfully transfer into long-term memory. This whole process is thought to be much easier for students if we have designed tasks/resources in such a way that reduces **‘cognitive load’**.

Underpinning Pedagogy:

[Thinking Hard](#) [The Importance of Narrative](#) [Spacing, Interleaving, Low Stakes Assessment](#) [Reducing Cognitive Load](#)

Deep learning is:

- A focus on long term retention of key skills and knowledge.
- Helping students to develop and use specific techniques to memorise material.
- Designing tasks that require more than a superficial engagement with the material to be learned.
- Designing SOW/sequences of learning that facilitate and assess long term retention.

Deep learning is not:

- Simply rote-learning key terms (although this may be part of the process).
- Memorising disparate facts that the students are unable to apply to different contexts.
- Allowing tests to dominate the lesson leaving little time for teaching new material.

What evidence of ‘Deep learning’ might we see in a lesson or in student books?

- Students are actively engaged in their learning.
- Students are able to discuss prior learning in relation to their current learning.
- Evidence of systematic assessment (low and high stakes).
- Students can apply existing knowledge to new situations.
- High quality of student responses to questions (verbal and written).

How do we monitor this?

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students’ outcomes over time • Learning Dives • Work Sampling • Student interviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to student responses to questioning • Reviews of the scheme of work • Internal tracking data |
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Suggested classroom activities:

- Quick Fact tests on previous topics.
- Linking random topic words and explaining how they link together.
- Jeopardy- writing questions to the answers- trickier than you expect.
- Posing controversial questions- what might happen if?
- Quizzes that require students to recall previously taught skills/processes.
- Use of self-marking online quizzes as homework to refresh the previous year’s learning.
- Planning sequences of learning with a narrative thread.
- Using carefully considered stories to engage students and provide a common starting point for the topic.