

Why is Boundary's Curriculum designed with spaced repetition? What is the research behind it?



Our curriculum is designed in order to support long term learning. We need to think of our curriculum as continuous, not just a sequence or chronology. Our curriculum is 'more like a narrative over time with multiple strands all spinning at once but constantly unifying and pulling things together' (Christine Counsell).

This relies on us being more aware of how the curriculum builds up over time and explicitly explaining this to students so they can see how new information links with things they already know. David Didau defines schema as 'an interconnected web of items and knowledge' that we hold in our **long term memory**. We need to therefore deliver the curriculum in order to support children to acquire increasingly robust, interconnected schema, and to enable them to retrieve this effortlessly and automatically in order to support them to become 'fluent' in the language of our subject.

Activating prior knowledge is essential as we cannot assume that pupils will be able to see links between topics therefore it's important that we make the links explicit. This also forces us as teachers to consider exactly what prior learning is relevant.

Recent and extensive study on pupils' learning, Dunlosky et al. analysed the techniques that prove most effective in helping children's learning (e.g. **spaced practice**) and those that are less effective but regularly undertaken by pupils such as rereading and highlighting.

The seven step model in the EEF's Metacognition and self-regulated learning Guidance Report shows a useful structure to develop schema by ensuring that we support students to activate relevant prior learning as a starting point for any learning activity/lesson/series of lessons. It states that we should think about the teacher and pupil role in detail.

Evidence suggests the use of **metacognitive strategies** – which get pupils to think about their own learning – can be worth the equivalent of an additional +7 months' progress when used well.