Frequently Asked Questions

1. How can I incorporate the strategic spirit into a virtual environment?
   The Online Academy is by design full of challenges. Utilize the opportunities in the modules to prompt your student to develop strategies to meet those challenges and problems.

2. How can I encourage my student to use thinking strategies?
   Begin as in question one modeling for the student where and how to develop strategies until you are able to challenge your student to find the thinking opportunities in a particular part of the module.

3. How might I introduce the strategic building blocks to my student?
   You might send him a chart of the building blocks so that he has a reference from which to work from. Periodically you might ask your student what strategic building blocks would be important for the task at hand.

4. What is the difference between the ready made strategies that I have introduced to my students to help with reading comprehension, math equations, and spelling and the strategies you are talking about?
   The ready-made strategies are not the invention of the student. The strategic spirit involves developing the ability to develop orginal strategies, thus fostering independence in thought.

Favorite Quote

"[T]he inclination and ability not only to use strategies, but also to invent them—is important to learners.

A Culture of Thinking in Virtual Environments

Workshop 4: The Strategic Spirit

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**Definition**

**Strategic Spirit:** “A tendency to invent and use thinking strategies in response to challenging situations” (Tishman et al. 97)

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**Why is it Important?**

Fostering a strategic spirit in students helps them to focus and streamline the challenge they are faced with. It no longer seems insurmountable, but can be broken down step by step.

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**Recommendations**

Introduce the four strategic building blocks, state, search, evaluate, and elaborate.

Model the invention of thinking strategies. For instance, if a student is having trouble completing a certain part of the module, ask, him or her questions that might lead to a strategy to complete that part of the module. Ask him or her summarize the step-by-step strategy used.

Provide feedback when you notice a student using a strategy to complete a task. Praise him or her strategic spirit.

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**Supporting Evidence**

Students who use thinking strategies are often thought to be better thinkers and to do well in school. As a result a myriad of thinking strategies have been developed to aid students in a variety of tasks, such as reading, and problem solving. However, it is the student’s ability to develop original strategies tailored to his or her situation that shows a strategic spirit.

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**Supporting Evidence**

In developing thinking strategies the student is actively engaging in the learning. He or she is not passively waiting for knowledge, but seeking it out. In doing so, he or she may encounter divergent information that may be of interest.

In addition, the strategic spirit will prove to be an asset in other aspects of the learner’s life where decisions need to be made.