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Metacognition takeaways

In reading the material on metacognition, I am struck by how absent this pedagogy was from my k-12 public education. Standardized tests and times tables are inhuman. They do not introduce students to their own cognition and may well actively suppress metacognition. I'm reminded of Alexander Pope's poem *An Essay on Man: Epistle II* which begins:

Know then thyself, presume not God to scan;
The proper study of mankind is man.

I am also reminded that a focus on one's own cognition is critical in working with other learners and learning from other learners. That is, once you focus on cognition as cognition, it is easier to recognize biased or fallacious thinking in others and then ask yourself "where am I doing this?" A very trivial example from my own life: I have always had a pet peeve about people saying "I just am not a math person" or "I am just not good with numbers." I always saw this as a defense mechanism and a self-fulfilling prophecy. With this in mind, one day I caught myself doing the exact same thing with names. I have since become much (MUCH) better with names through nothing more than a metacognitive reframing of how and why I am bad with names.

As it pertains to this specific TA position, I have seen success helping students with their research projects by simply walking through, aloud, how I would research their topic. Without out being able to provide answers to their questions about esoteric bulk metallic glass characterization papers, for example, my students nevertheless seemed to find benefit in watching me dissect the papers outloud.