Teaching Thinking to Develop Autonomous Learners

Level up your students’ thinking with “The Funnel”

An Sneyers
Have you ever had students who ....?

- find it difficult to develop a paragraph with examples and explanations
- find it difficult to pinpoint what specifically they should focus on next to improve their skills development?
- find it difficult to distinguish main idea from detail, so they just had a random guess instead?
- Respond to your questions in one-word answers only?
The problem

Different levels of abstraction

- Abstract Big chunks
- Medium sized chunks
- Concrete Small chunks / details

What is this an example of?
Why do we do that?

(Chunking laterally)

What is an example of that?

What else?

Chunking up

Chunking down

The funnel

Image 1: http://nordurkorea313.weebly.com/almennt.html
Image 2: http://images.clipartpanda.com/sad-girl-stick-figure-thumbs-up.jpg
Source: The Coaching Institute (2016). Advanced Skills Face to Face Training
How could you use this in your class?

How I’ve used it:

- Constantly (!) referring to it
- Essay planning: introduction – body paragraphs
- Identifying main ideas and details in reading/listening
- Structuring presentations
- Getting sts to be more specific with learning strategies and asking for help in their journals
- Getting students to elaborate on one-word answers
How could you now help students who....?

- find it difficult to develop a paragraph with examples and explanations

- find it difficult to pinpoint what specifically they should focus on next to improve their skills development?

- find it difficult to distinguish main idea from detail, so they just had a random guess instead?

- Respond to your questions in one-word answers only?
Need more support? Got questions?

an.sneyers@monashcollege.edu.au

For a 15 minute audio class on “Empowerment Questions”:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HFtsFS8O5KQ

Any questions? Drop me a line or come and speak to me. Happy to share!