



# Supporting executive functioning skills in KS3 pupils

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## Executive functioning and Key Stage 3

As children move into secondary school, the demands on their executive functioning skills begin to increase. There will be less teacher oversight, and an increased expectation that children in Key Stage 3 will be able to plan and organise their time successfully, work more independently, and be able to monitor their own progress as they work.

There are many activities that we can do, with children in Key Stage 3, to help them to develop the executive functioning skills that they will need to succeed.



Executive functioning skills are those elements of how we think, that allow for the self-regulation and self-direction of our day to day and longer-term functioning. They determine how we manage our thinking and behaviour, to achieve a desired outcome.



### Bullet journaling

Equal parts day planner, diary, and written meditation, bullet journaling makes coordinating your life into a streamlined system with sections to log your daily to-do's, monthly calendar, notes, long-term wants and more!

### Homework Checklist

Children in Key Stage 3 may be faced with a lot more homework than in primary school – in different subjects and with different days when the homework is to be handed in. Keep on top of this and help with time management skills by using a clearly outlined 'Homework Checklist' that could go up on a wall or on the fridge to be regularly reviewed.



### Keep a reading log

Key Stage 3 will involve much more reading every day than in Primary School. This reading can be in several different subjects, on the same day, and will include subject specific vocabulary that is important to remember. It can help to use a reading log to remember the range of texts that have been read, and where the reader is up to when they return to reading.

Some questions that might be worth answering in short sentences,

whenever a piece of reading has been completed, to aid memory and recall are:

1. This connects to my life because...
2. I wonder...
3. This made me think about...
4. I didn't understand...because...
5. I really liked...because...

## Play card recall

A simple game to play in pairs anywhere, to help develop working memory. All you need is a deck of cards. Partner 1 flips five cards face up and gives Partner 2 a few seconds to look at them. Partner 2 then closes their eyes as Partner 1 removes one of the five cards. Finally Partner 2 opens their eyes and tries to recall which card is missing. To develop the level of difficulty, try increasing the number of cards shown and/or removed at a time.

