

## The Learning Strategies Associated With the ACGC for Secondary Cycle One

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“In education, interest in learning strategies increased with the idea of competencies; indeed, strategies are considered to be among the resources that learners must draw on in exercising their competencies.” (Peters and Viola, 2003; Tardif 2006).<sup>1</sup>

This document specifies, clarifies, and provides examples of the learning strategies used for the ACGC for Secondary Cycle One. These strategies are an integral part of the compulsory ACGC (theme, strategy, expected outcome). They make it possible for students to construct their knowledge by ensuring that they are active and cognitively engaged. The same strategies can also be reapplied in a variety of day-to-day contexts to facilitate learning and educational success. In the long term, they make it possible for students to more effectively use information as well as academic and occupational knowledge, and to better orient themselves. In short, these strategies are very useful in both learning and academic and career guidance.

The following definition facilitates a better understanding of what a learning strategy involves. “In the school setting, a learning strategy is a set of metacognitive or cognitive actions used in a learning situation in which students perform a task or learning activity for the purpose of carrying out operations on knowledge according to specific objectives.” (Translation, Bégin, 2008)

The learning strategies proposed by Bégin (2008) have the advantage of being generic and applicable to many different contexts. They are classified as follows: metacognitive strategies, cognitive processing strategies and cognitive executive strategies.

Three of the four strategies used for the ACGC for Secondary Cycle One are cognitive strategies fostering knowledge acquisition. Developing, comparing and selecting are cognitive processing strategies; in other words, they are used to process information for the purpose of memorizing it. Anticipating is a metacognitive strategy. It pertains to students’ awareness of their own cognitive processes, particularly how they view the cognitive activity elicited by the task.

To develop a strategy, teachers set tasks that require students to use that strategy. The strategy becomes a solution in the performance of the task. In this respect, it is important to avoid doing the students’ work for them. Active cognition requires each student to approach the task by starting with what he/she actually “knows.” Students can get together in a group afterward to enrich or improve their knowledge, and to add new knowledge as well. This approach allows students to familiarize themselves with a cognitive approach and enables the teacher to determine whether they are using the strategy and achieving the expected learning outcome associated with the ACGC.

The four strategies used in the ACGC for Secondary Cycle One are described on the following page.

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<sup>1</sup> Peters and Viola, 2003; Tardif, 2006, quoted in Bégin 2008. “Les stratégies d’apprentissage : un cadre de référence simplifié,” *Revue des sciences de l’éducation*, vol. 34, no 1, p. 47.

Anticipate	Develop
<p><b>Definition:</b> Try to predict or to envision knowledge, procedures, actions or situations that might come up or that would be useful in tasks or situations. To anticipate is also to foresee the resources required under certain conditions or in situations that may arise. Examples: Identify prior learning that may be useful in relation to future conditions or situations; consider requirements or needs in terms of future possibilities; imagine possible future situations or events; plan; hypothesize.</p> <p>Anticipating means projecting oneself into the future in order to imagine what it will be like and what options one may have. It involves taking a step forward to prepare for the future and requires a certain understanding of anticipated situations. A solid grounding in past experience is helpful when deciding on which prior learning could be useful in the future. For example, when students are asked to anticipate the choices they will make in Secondary Cycle Two, they begin by taking stock of the options open to them, referring to what they know of their interests and aptitudes and trying to imagine the choices that would be the most beneficial to them.</p> <p>Students find it easier to imagine what Secondary Cycle Two will be like, to plan for it and anticipate the decisions they will have to make when they are asked to picture themselves in real, concrete situations. For this to work, however, the knowledge involved must be clear, tangible and easy to understand. “Without the requisite knowledge, there are futures that I cannot anticipate” (Bégin, 2018).</p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> Reformulate or transform information so that its main characteristics or components are reflected or expressed in different ways. Examples: paraphrase, formulate examples and make analogies.</p> <p>In this context, developing does not mean the process of going into greater detail on, or saying more about, a particular subject—which would constitute a common-sense use of the term. This strategy is, rather, a cognitive operation that is useful for processing information, i.e. it enables students to develop their ideas by transforming information so that they can better understand it and make it their own. It gives meaning to new knowledge by allowing learners to reformulate it in their own terms and to make connections between it and what they already know.</p> <p>When students use their own words to explain what they understood from reading a text about a trade, or what they took from a classroom presentation on a trade given by a worker in the field, they are engaged in the process of developing as understood here. This can be observed through a reformulation of what the student understood.</p> <p>When students develop a profile of the studies and extracurricular activities that do and do not interest them, they begin by identifying those that interest them and only later turn to those that interest them less or not at all. The resulting profiles can take various forms.</p> <p>When students become aware of their academic and personal strengths by way of analogies and examples taken from daily life, and describe them in their own words, they are using the strategy “to develop.”</p>

Compare	Select
<p><b>Definition:</b> Look for elements or characteristics that establish connections or relationships between items of information. Examples: looking for differences, resemblances or similarities, relationships of size (larger, smaller, equal, etc.), importance, order or sequence, etc.</p> <p>Students must have concrete elements to compare and these elements must be at the same level of complexity (e.g. different types of diplomas and certificates can be compared). Students must also be guided by the criteria that they will use to make the comparison(s) in question. Such criteria include, for example, the duration of the various training paths and the conditions associated with them. Once students have found this information, they can make the relevant comparisons and thereby identify similarities and differences.</p> <p>Students who are called upon to explain the differences and similarities between various training paths available in the school system must first have sufficiently clear and accurate information on these paths to make a comparison. If students are given too much information to process, they may feel overwhelmed and have trouble making sense of it.</p>	<p><b>Definition:</b> Using different means and according to predetermined or spontaneous criteria, research and identify relevant or useful information. Examples: Note down, underline, highlight, frame, write, say, tell, etc.</p> <p>It is important to keep two points in mind when using the “select” strategy. First, selection is possible when students have a set of similar elements at their disposal (e.g. trades). Second, selection presupposes that the concept of criteria is taken into account (e.g. what matches their academic preferences).</p> <p><i>Selecting</i> has a very specific meaning: methodically choosing elements from a set, based on <b>precise criteria</b>. (e.g. Name the trades that meet the criterion of your academic preferences in science).</p> <p>To facilitate exploration, types of trades distributed by sector and associated with the various school subjects could be made available to the students. Having already determined their academic preferences, students will be able to select the trades or occupations that are likely to interest them.</p>

#### References

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