What are Thinking Frames?

Thinking Frames are a particular type of '**visual tool**' based on distinctive visual patterns, which help organise thinking/ideas. In the same way that we use physical tools in everyday life to complete specific tasks, (e.g. spades, rakes and secateurs each carry out particular functions when gardening, likewise a spoon, knife and fork each have specific purposes when eating), similarly visual tools represent particular types of thinking.

Eight Thinking Frames are used to help raise student awareness of the types of thinking required to complete certain tasks. Use of the Thinking Frames can help students to plan and structure their thinking and can enable them to look into their own thinking and to see their thinking displayed.

The Thinking Frames are based on an understanding of how connections are made within the brain to aid understanding and memory, especially where words and visual images are combined.

Why Use Thinking Frames?

Thinking Frames:

- support learning through strengthening connections within the brain.

- make specific thinking processes explicit using a consistent visual pattern and associated language of thinking.

- provide a common visual language for all students and teachers and are flexible for use across all subject areas.

- can be used in combination for depth and complexity to support thinking at all levels, for example to:

    - deepen understanding and comprehension of written texts;
    - plan, monitor and evaluate assignments and projects; and to
    - enrich the planning, drafting and editing of extended pieces of writing.

The Reflective Lens

All Thinking Frames are 'framed' by a set of double lines which is known as a **Reflective Lens**. This is a questioning tool used by the teacher or student to ask questions about the thinking displayed in the Thinking Frame. It provides the 'LENS' through which the thinking is being viewed or constructed and the opportunity for 'REFLECTION', i.e. thinking again about what has been said or put within the Thinking Frame.
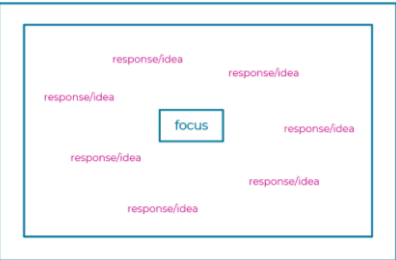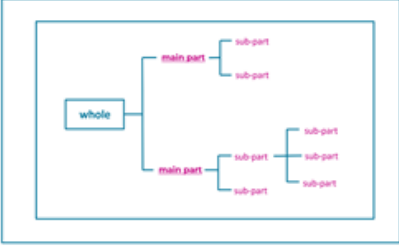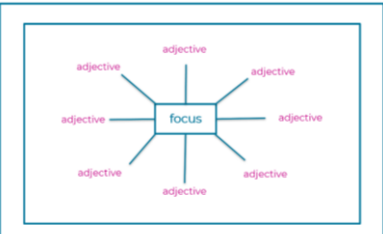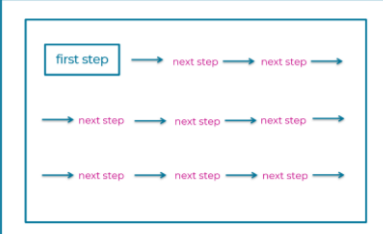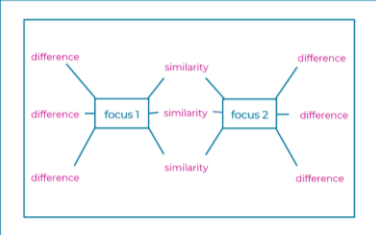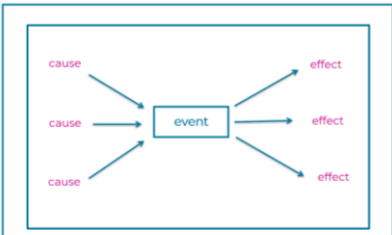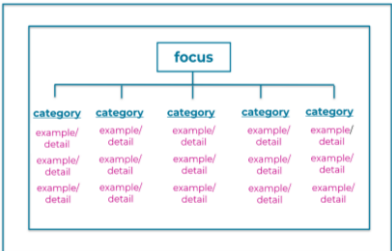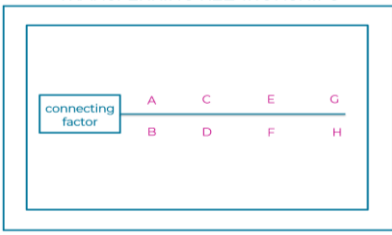
Thinking Frames
A Guide for Parents/Carers

www.thinkingmatters.com

Visual Tools for Thinking: Thinking Frames

Thinking Process and Frame	Purpose and Key Questions	Thinking Process and Frame	Purpose and Key Questions
Defining 	The **Defining Frame is** used for brainstorming or generating lots of ideas and thoughts. It is useful for recording prior knowledge, new knowledge and creative thoughts. *Tell me everything that you know about this?* *How are you defining it?* *What is your context?* *What is your frame of reference?*	**Whole Part** 	The **Whole Part Frame** is used for whole part thinking when de-constructing *concrete* objects. It is used most often in Science, Technology, Maths and Geography but can also be used to show the parts of large generic objects such as a building. *What are the parts that make up the whole object?* *Can the parts be broken down into sub-parts?*
Describing 	The **Describing Frame** is used to describe properties, elements and characteristics. It is a useful tool for enhancing students' descriptive language as it uses only adjectives or adjectival phrases. *How would you describe this object/idea/person?* *Which adjectives would you use?*	**Sequencing** 	The **Sequencing Frame** is used for any type of sequencing, such as timelines, life cycles, order, plots, story boards, processes and planning. The sequence generally moves in a left to right direction, but, where appropriate, it can be presented in a vertical or circular form, e.g. as for life cycles. *What is the sequence of events?* *What are the sub-stages?*
Compare Contrast 	The **Compare Contrast Frame** is used for comparing and contrasting any two objects, items, concepts or phenomena. *What are the similarities and differences?*	**Cause Effect** 	The **Cause Effect Frame** is used for exploring causal relationships, e.g. when asking for reasons why, causes, inputs, *or* outcomes, impact and implications. This frame can be used for *only* causes or *only* effects. *What are the causes and effects?*
Categorising 	The **Categorising Frame** is used for any type of categorising, classifying or grouping. *How might you group the main ideas, supporting ideas and details?*	**Connecting** 	The **Connecting Frame** is used for making connections and analogies or for transferring relationships. It is useful when encouraging creative thinking, linking facts and ideas, seeing relationships and similarities and drawing analogies. *What is the analogy being used?*