To develop higher order thinking skills in Year 5 mathematics lessons

What were your reasons for doing this type of development work?

Key areas to develop identified from Gifted & Talented Classroom Quality Standards (CQS) Audit include providing regular opportunities to use thinking and problem-solving skills and to increase opportunities for learner independence.

In Year 5 Maths Lessons, through observations, I noticed that many pupils were not equipped with the skills or hadn't been given enough opportunities to think at a higher level or work collaboratively.

From my reading, I was interested to learn that “Schools...need to ensure that young people develop skills and attitudes that employers value...” Gilbert (2006), such as how to work in a team, communicate effectively, persevere through a problem and find solutions.

As part of the Pilot for Gifted & Talented Education, I trialled Belle Wallace’s Thinking Actively in a Social Context (TASC) Model to develop independent learning and higher order thinking.
Who might find this case study useful?

- Headteacher
- Middle leader
- Pupil
- Senior leadership team (SLT)
- Subject leader
- Support staff
- Teacher

Key points

**Point 1**

Pupils taking ownership of their learning is key to developing positive attitudes to learning for all.

**Point 2**

Pupils need to explore their ideas through talking and working with others and to reflect on what they have learnt.

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- **What**

  The intention was to develop thinking skills and independence in maths by encouraging pupils to work in groups. Approaches included collaborative group work, independent learning and classroom enquiry.

- **Impact**

  It was found that pupils enjoyed taking on leadership roles and being given more choice in their learning. Teachers acted as facilitators rather than
telling the pupils what to do. Actions were added to the school improvement plan.

• **Summary**

The crucial thing that made a difference was the teacher acted as a facilitator and didn't solve the problems for the pupils, by questioning them to try alternative approaches.