

## Teaching Clinical Reasoning

There is a rich ongoing debate about our understanding of the complex process of clinical diagnostic reasoning. At the risk of oversimplifying this process the following teaching approaches can be helpful.

Activity		Learning Outcome
Prompt the learner to <b>reason aloud</b> about the case		Provides the clinical teacher with insight into the learner's skill level
Ask <b>open ended questions</b> of the learner		As above
Prompt the learner to <b>create a one-sentence summary</b> of the case with the use of abstract terms		This will help the learner to organise information in a way that promotes clinical reasoning
Ask the learner to <b>describe key features</b> of case		Refer to the prototypical case to test the validity of the learner's reasoning
Force learners to <b>prioritise</b> the list of diagnostic possibilities and explain their justifications		This helps learners to create linkages between the clinical findings in the case and relevant diagnoses, bolstering their ability to develop pertinent "illness scripts".
Engage several <b>learners at different levels</b> (vertical integration) in a common discussion		This will help the novice to understand the complexity of the case
Teaching clinicians should reason aloud and <b>create their own case summary</b> highlighting the discriminating features		This forms a demonstration to learners of how to think about the case
Learners should <b>read at least 2 diagnostic hypotheses at the same time</b> , comparing and contrasting the similarities and discriminating features		<p>Encourage reading that promotes conceptualisation rather than memorisation</p> <p>Avoid lists of facts in favour of a journal article that discusses a range of cases around the one clinical problem</p>