In which area are you strongest?

After considering each of the six areas from the Higher Order Thinking and Problem-solving Checklist, I feel I am strongest in the Application of Knowledge area.

Describe a specific example in this area that demonstrates what students do to achieve one (or more) of the outcomes.

As a special education teacher of young deaf children, I am constantly focused on providing students with opportunities to build their knowledge base and helping them to generalize and transfer that knowledge to other settings and tasks.   Examples of this are:

- We complete KWHL charts. This provides students with opportunities to search their memory for what they already know about a topic or problem. It also requires them to list what they learned at the end of a project or unit.
- Vocabulary is a daily quest in the lives of deaf children. We spend a lot of time discussing vocabulary words in multiple contexts and I have students create word maps that have the definition, synonyms, antonyms, two sentences using the word, and a picture (when appropriate).   We also try to add a description of the ASL sign for the word (sometimes there is not an ASL sign for an English word).
- We consult a variety of knowledge sources in our quest for signs for vocabulary. We use online dictionaries, a variety of hard copy dictionaries, and experts in the field (local certified interpreters and deaf adults). We also use a variety of sources weekly to engage in discussion on topics of study. These discussions fill in gaps in the students' knowledge base to help students understand the reading selection or topic of study.
- We create Venn Diagrams to compare similarities and differences of vocabulary, characters in our stories, etc.
- We create concept maps/graphic organizers showing understanding of a topic.

Evaluate the areas and select one you would like to strengthen.

An area that I would like to strengthen is Evaluation/Metacognition.

Describe a specific example of how you could revise your curriculum to ensure that students meet the outcomes in that area.

Deaf students have difficulty with English grammar because they do not hear it. Two outcomes in the evaluation/metacognition area would help students with this problem:

- Make appropriate revisions on basis of feedback.
- Evaluate and revise what is written.

When my students have written assignments, I guide, prompt, and model as an effort to get them to correct their grammar to the extent of their ability. I feel I am doing too much and should find a way to make them more independent in their proofreading/revising abilities. They are young and do have extreme language difficulties. I think what I should do is work with each individual student to create a list of the types of grammatical errors that they can reasonably expect themselves to self-monitor in their writing. They could use this individualized checklist to check their own work before bringing it to me. I would then prompt them to use the checklist and gradually reduce the prompt. This additional step before I provide feedback would hopefully result in my students being better at self-correction.

How can technology be used by you and/or students to enable effective assessment of learning in that area?

Our school only has 2 computers per classroom of 25 children. Most of the writing assignments are paper/pencil due to lack of computer access. For my students, if I could overcome time issues, I could let the children type their drafts in a word processor and teach them to use the spelling and grammar check feature. The students would become more aware of their errors with the use of this tool. In order to assess their learning, I could teach them to make a table at the end of their writing. They would use the table to list the error and explain how they corrected it. The table would show me how many errors they had found versus how many are still left when I check it.