PRIMARY AND SECONDARY Ignorance

PRIMARY IGNORANCE
This is a Dynamic Condition in which an individual recognizes that she does not know something but also recognizes that, if she wanted to know it, she could find out. People who suffer from PRIMARY IGNORANCE have some self-awareness of their problem. Metacognitive thinking is within their reach. These people know that they don't know.

VS

SECONDARY IGNORANCE
This is a Static Condition caused when an individual not only doesn’t understand something, but also he doesn’t know that he doesn’t know it. People inflicted with SECONDARY IGNORANCE simply don’t realize that they’re lacking adequate information or insight. They are unable to be metacognitive. These people don't know that they don't know.

Elliot Eisner (The Kappan, “The Kind of Schools We Need,” April 2002)