



What is necessary for successful thinking?

Background Knowledge – information about the topic that is required for thoughtful reflection

Critical Concepts or Vocabulary – concepts that facilitate thinking and judgement in particular areas. Some common concepts are cause and effect; premise and conclusion; inference and assumption; necessary and sufficient condition; bias; point of view.

Criteria for Judgement – knowledge of the principles that govern quality thinking and judgement. These include argumentation and logic; criteria for practical deliberation; criteria governing inquiry and justification eg accuracy, coherence, clarity, feasibility, fairness, plausibility, originality.

Strategies – organising devices that may be useful for guiding performance in certain tasks.

Habits of mind – attitudes or values important for thinking. Includes open-mindedness, independent open-mindedness, inquiring and critical attitude, respect for high quality performances and intellectual work ethic.

In order to foster thinking:

Modify the curriculum to provide challenges

Teach the tools for thinking

Build a community of thinkers

Incorporate thinking into classroom routines

Teacher models attributes

Use questioning techniques which invite reasoned judgements

Reward thinking in evaluation of student work