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ENHANCING LOGICAL REASONING AND CRITICAL THINKING USING THE UZBEK FAIRY TALE “GOLDEN WATERMELON” AND “SUSAMBIL”

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Abstract. This article explores effective approaches to enhancing the logical reasoning and critical thinking abilities of elementary school students. It examines the significance of developing higher-order thinking skills during the early stages of education and emphasizes the role of carefully designed learning activities in fostering these essential competencies. The study analyzes a variety of instructional strategies and classroom practices that encourage learners to think analytically, evaluate information critically, solve problems systematically, and make reasoned decisions. Based on the findings, the article proposes a range of engaging and age-appropriate activities that support the development of logical reasoning and critical thinking among elementary school students. These activities are intended to promote active participation, independent thinking, creativity, and reflective learning, thereby contributing to students’ overall cognitive and academic development.

Key words: logical reasoning, critical thinking, folk tales, project works.

Introduction. Many scientists, psychologists, and educators have studied logical and critical thinking, and thinking in general. Professor Arthur L. Costa describes the skillful and careful use of "habits of mind" related to thinking. Costa defines habits of mind as "thinking skills that we use when we are faced with problems whose solutions are not immediately obvious." Costa and Kallik identified the following habits of mind:

- communicating with determination, reflection, and clarity - not giving up when faced with a problem and saying "I won't do it";
- managing impulsivity - effective problem solvers think and plan before they act;
- understanding and empathetic listening to others - some psychologists believe that listening to other people, empathizing with them, and understanding them are among the highest forms of developing thinking;
- flexible thinking - flexible people change their minds as they receive new information and look for new approaches to solving a problem;
- thinking about thinking (i.e. metacognition) - this is the ability to know what we know and what we do not know. It is the ability to plan strategies for producing information, to be aware of our own steps and strategies in the process of solving a problem, and to reflect on and evaluate the effectiveness of our thinking.
- striving for accuracy - people who value accuracy and mastery take the time to check their work;
- finding questions and answers and problems - effective problem solvers know how to ask questions to fill the gaps between what they know and what they do not know;
- applying acquired knowledge to new situations - smart people learn from experience. They rely on their knowledge and experience as sources of information to explain and support processes and theories to solve each new problem;

- clarity, reasoning and communication - improving language plays an important role in improving a person's cognitive maps and their ability to think logically and critically, which are the knowledge base for effective action. Enriching the complexity and uniqueness of language simultaneously creates effective thinking;

- gathering information through all the senses - many scientists say that we have nine senses. The external senses, which operate from external sources, include sight, sound, taste, touch, and smell. They provide information about the outside world. Pain, balance, thirst, and hunger are our internal senses. They provide information about the body and its needs. For example, the feeling of hunger indicates that the body needs food. Smart people know that all information enters the brain through sensory pathways;

- creating, imagining, and innovating - all humans have the ability to create new, original, clever, or ingenious products, solutions, and techniques. Creative people try to imagine solutions to problems differently by exploring alternative possibilities from many angles. Students often hear the words "I can't draw," "I can't sing a note," and "I'm not creative";

- responding with surprise - effective people seek out problems for themselves. They enjoy coming up with problems to solve themselves and asking others for puzzles. They continue to learn throughout their lives;

- finding humor. People who are good at humor have the ability to perceive situations from original and often interesting points of view. They tend to imitate humor more often, attach greater importance to their sense of humor, appreciate and understand the humor of others, and communicate with others.

- thinking in a connected way - one of the most cruel types of punishment that can be applied to a person is solitary confinement, and a person achieves more results when he communicates and thinks in a connected way.

- continuous learning. Intelligent people are in a continuous learning process. Their self-confidence, combined with their inquisitiveness, allows them to constantly look for new and better ways.[1]

Teaching thinking skills is not a new idea. There have been many attempts to teach thinking skills in education. We know that Socrates, for example, used specific questions to deliberately provoke his students to draw interesting conclusions and to move them away from the conventional. More recently, we have movements such as Philosophy for Children (P4C) and Critical Thinking (CT). What these have in common is that different types of thinking skills can be taught or developed in all age groups, and that open-ended work on thinking improves learning outcomes, academic achievement, and student engagement.

Teaching Method: Creating an Environment for Thinking

The overall tone and mood of the classroom are crucial in creating an environment for thinking. If students block each other's ideas and initiatives, and if the teacher's routines are sometimes mechanical, the environment for students to think is not created. In contrast, both the teacher and the students feel alive, arouse interest, have a lot to say, and enjoy each other's ideas. Being warm and encouraging, setting high expectations for students, and giving students the freedom to express their opinions, explore, and take risks are very important in developing thinking.

Tips on how to achieve this warm and stimulating classroom environment that promotes thinking:

-define/agree on ground rules with students in advance and display them on the classroom wall;

[1] Costa Habits of mind

-provide well-planned, interesting activities and content;

- find out the goals and reasons for learning the subject and share the goals with them so that they see the work the teacher is doing as meaningful;

- give students tasks that are slightly above their current level of competence;

- reassure students that they can complete any complex tasks;

- show respect for each student and accept their individual differences;

- be flexible and positive;

- allow students to be active participants;

- acknowledge every answer;

- create success-oriented experiences that every student can implement, even partially;

- help students connect new knowledge to old, other subjects, and real life;

- constantly change methods.

Teaching methods: Answering students' questions

One way to get students to be active is to ask questions. The teacher can encourage students to ask questions in various ways. Students can add a space called “Student Questions” and give students working in pairs time to discuss and write questions. All of these questions are then collected and reviewed. They are discussed openly with the students and the types of questions and how to answer them are thought through together.

In fact, if students ask good questions, it is very likely that they will not be able to answer all of them. In such cases, students can be encouraged to take responsibility for their own questions.

Teaching method: Being productive

Teachers should first encourage students to do a variety of tasks. For example, taking time to speak or write fluently is one way for students to improve these skills.

Teaching method: Rotating students

Students often get into the habit of sitting in the same place next to the same students every lesson. They are used to working with the same students around them, hearing their voices and ideas, so it is sometimes useful to switch places. This can be done in different ways:

- Determine where students will sit, like at a fancy dinner party, by placing name cards at the appropriate tables.

- Determine who you want them to sit with. Then provide materials for matching activities, such as the first half and second half of sentences, and matching halves. Students then work to find the second half. Students whose halves match sit together and start the sentence over again.

- Choose the appropriate aspect of clothing or behavior. Quickly check if you can give the required pairs of numbers for the pairs, trios or quartets you want and say, for example, “On this side are those wearing brown shoes, those wearing black shoes, those with a squeeze tube and a roller, cat lovers and dog lovers, etc.”

- Ask students to sit with the student who did not sit down before, that is, the student who did not work hard.

Teaching method: When the teacher is busy

There are times when the teacher is, for example, writing on the board, checking the computer or checking something in the literature. Students can get frustrated or act stupidly at these moments. There are tasks that the teacher can ask students to do while they are working:

- Ask students to guess which word you are going to write by looking at the first letter;

-every few words and whenever you can, tell students what word they plan to write and ask them to say it out loud before writing or to pronounce it correctly after writing;

-when they have a problem with a piece of equipment, ask students to think of a test question they would like to ask their classmates in one minute.

Conclusion. Organizing English lessons using the above technologies based on the folktales "Golden Watermelon" and "Susambil" allowed students to develop not only their language skills, but also their logical and critical thinking.

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