



necessary for learners to employ prefixes and roots: they must be able to split new words into their component components, revealing the affixes and roots.

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IMPROVING CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH AUTHENTIC MATERIALS

Donishova Ma'suma Bahodir qizi
student

Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Abstract

Improving students' critical thinking skills requires an active and engaging learning process. This involves using effective teaching materials and methods to encourage students to think critically. The teaching and learning process goes beyond simply receiving information from instructors; it involves various activities aimed at achieving better learning outcomes. For instance, tasks that stimulate critical thinking and the use of diverse teaching methods and models play a crucial role in this process. Emphasizing experiential learning is essential for gaining valuable insights. The success or failure of a learning endeavor greatly depends on this approach. Educators play a vital role in developing students' critical thinking abilities, given the increasing importance of this skill in everyday life. Many aspects of daily life require critical analysis, making it particularly crucial for students, who represent the future generation of the society.

Key words: critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, creativity, metacognition, effective, communication, collaboration, innovation.

A nation's wealth is largely dependent on its human capital. For a country to progress and flourish, it needs strong support from its human resources in terms of both quality and quantity. Enhancing the quality of human resources is crucial, especially in the context of navigating the challenges of the 21st century.



In order to compete effectively on both national and global scales in the modern era, individuals must possess a range of essential skills. These include critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, creativity, metacognition, effective communication, collaboration, innovation, ICT literacy, contextual learning capabilities for personal growth, and proficiency in information and media literacy. These skills are essential for individuals to succeed in an interconnected world (Greenstein, 2012). Critical thinking can be taught by asking questions that make the students form their own beliefs on common topics. Promoting group discussions enable the students to listen to others and share their opinions. Imagination and creativity are the key to developing critical thinking skills in elementary classes.

The methods and models of learning employed significantly influence the critical thinking abilities of students who demonstrate low optimal critical thinking skills. The overall percentage of students falling below the critical thinking criteria stands at 80.9%. When examining specific indicators, the highest level of critical thinking, as seen in problem formulation, stands at 65.9%, while the lowest, observed in deductive reasoning, is at 54.6%. Students' deficiencies in critical thinking are evident in their arguments, which often lack appropriate reasoning, logical assumptions, and factual evaluation (Muhlisin et al., 2015). This suggests that the current learning approaches are insufficient in nurturing critical thinking skills. In science courses, students are expected to enhance their thinking abilities to meet educational objectives. Critical thinking skills are crucial for navigating the challenges of a globalized 21st-century world, aligning with the perspectives of Marin & Halpern (2010) and Fahim & Pezeshk (2012), who view critical thinking as active reasoning and deliberation essential for decision-making and evaluation in the face of modern life's complexities.

The primary approach to learning in basic science courses involves student presentations, Q&A sessions, and discussions, comprising 71.4% of the learning process. This method is consistently applied in each session, with specific activities assigned at different stages: the instructor assigns tasks to students for group



discussions, paper creation, and group presentations on predetermined topics outlined at the start of the course contract, along with Q&A sessions.

Improving critical thinking through authentic materials

Teaching takes various forms across disciplines, with English being particularly significant due to its role in knowledge acquisition and vocabulary development. Reading, a crucial aspect of language learning, not only enhances critical thinking but also involves a range of complex skills. This study aims to promote guided reading to foster critical thinking and explore teaching methods that enhance comprehension and writing skills, ultimately contributing to students' intellectual and social development. The research employed both quantitative and qualitative methods, including interviews and observations, gathering feedback from students and teachers across different schools. The study provides valuable insights into methods that support critical thinking, especially through guided reading, offering recommendations from successful teachers working with students facing challenges in reading. Encourage readers to actively engage with the text by asking questions, making predictions, and summarizing key points. This can help develop critical thinking skills by prompting readers to analyze and evaluate the content. Authentic articles often present different viewpoints and arguments. Encourage readers to critically evaluate the evidence, logic, and reasoning presented in the articles. This can help develop skills in identifying biases, logical fallacies, and evaluating the strength of an argument. Authentic articles provide real-world context that can help readers develop a deeper understanding of complex issues. Encourage readers to consider the broader social, cultural, and historical context of the topics discussed in the articles. Engage readers in discussions and debates based on the content of the articles. This can help them develop skills in articulating their own viewpoints, defending their arguments with evidence, and respectfully engaging with differing perspectives. Encourage readers to write responses to the articles, expressing their own opinions and supporting them with evidence from the text. This can help develop critical writing skills and the ability to construct well-reasoned arguments.



Provide multiple authentic articles on a similar topic to encourage readers to compare and contrast different perspectives. This can help develop skills in synthesizing information and recognizing nuances in different arguments. Additionally by using authentic articles as a basis for learning, educators and learners can foster critical thinking skills in a real-world context, making the learning experience more engaging and relevant. However, we have various activities to improve critical thinking through authentic materials. For instance: Pre-Reading Activities, debates and Feedback and Guidance. **Pre-Reading Activities:** Before reading the article, introduce key vocabulary and concepts. Encourage students to make predictions about the content based on the title and images. **Debates:** Organize debates where students can argue different sides of the issue presented in the article. This will help them develop their critical thinking and communication skills. **Comparative Analysis:** Provide students with multiple articles on the same topic but with different perspectives. Ask them to compare and contrast the viewpoints presented. **Feedback and Guidance:** Provide constructive feedback on students' critical thinking skills and guide them on how to improve their analysis and reasoning. **Fact-Checking:** Teach students how to fact-check information presented in the articles. Encourage them to verify claims, look for evidence, and distinguish between facts and opinions. **Cross-Referencing:** Have students cross-reference information from the article with other sources to see if the information is consistent or if there are different perspectives on the same topic. **Mind Mapping:** Have students create mind maps or concept maps based on the article's content. This visual representation can help them organize information and make connections between different ideas. **Problem-Solving Tasks:** Present real-world problems related to the article's topic and ask students to brainstorm solutions based on the information they have read. **Role-Playing:** Assign roles to students based on different perspectives presented in the article and have them engage in role-playing scenarios to understand various viewpoints. **Summarization:** Ask students to summarize the article in their own words, focusing on the main ideas and key arguments. This activity can help improve comprehension and analytical skills.



Incorporating authentic articles into teaching practices is an effective way to enhance students' critical thinking skills. By encouraging students to engage with real-world content, educators can empower them to think critically, question assumptions, and make informed decisions. This approach not only benefits students academically but also equips them with essential skills for success in the 21st century.

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ENHANCING READING SKILLS USING EFFECTIVE READING STRATEGIES

Duysenbekov Muzaffar
student

Uzbekistan State World Languages University
Scientific advisor: D. Kattaboyeva
teacher

Uzbekistan State World Languages University

Abstract

This article highlights the importance of strategic reading in enhancing reading comprehension and overall reading ability. It emphasizes the use of specific techniques, such as predicting, questioning, visualizing, making connections, summarizing, and inferring to actively engage with the text and extract meaning. By employing these strategies, readers can become more efficient and successful in their reading endeavors.

Keywords: Reading comprehension, reading skills, effective reading strategies, predicting, questioning, visualizing, making connections, summarizing, inferring.