

# EDUCATION 383-4: TEACHING FOR THINKING I

Fort St. John, Fall 1990

Instructor: Pat Holborn  
3421 Bedwell Bay Road  
Belcarra, B. C. V3H 4S2

Telephone: 291-4770 (S.F.U.)  
291-3395 (messages)  
931-7282 (home)

## COURSE OVERVIEW

### PURPOSES

This course will introduce you to the theory, principles and classroom practices of teaching for thinking. The goals of teaching for thinking are:

- o to develop students' higher-level thinking skills across all curriculum areas;
- o to increase students' competence and confidence as self-directed learners;
- o to improve students' abilities to solve problems and make decisions effectively;
- o to decrease behaviours which are counterproductive to learning (e.g., overdependence, impulsiveness, rigidity, dogmatism, faulty reasoning).

### OBJECTIVES

This course will help you:

- o become familiar with the theory and principles of teaching for thinking;
- o clarify the relationship between the principles of teaching for thinking and the B.C. Ministry of Education's curriculum framework documents;
- o examine the implications of teaching for thinking for the role of the teacher, the teaching-learning context, the curriculum, instructional strategies and evaluation;
- o understand the role of cooperative learning strategies and "play-debrief-replay" activities in teaching for thinking;
- o design classroom activities which teach important curriculum concepts using the thinking operations, cooperative learning, and play-debrief-replay sequences;
- o develop classroom interactions (questioning and responding) which sustain and extend students' thinking.

### COURSE DATES AND TIMES

Class sessions have been planned for the following Friday evenings and Saturdays:  
September 7-8; October 5-6; October 26-27; November 16-17; December 7-8.  
Class times are 4:30 - 8:30 Friday evenings, and 8:30 - 3:30 Saturdays.

### READINGS

By the end of this course, you should complete the reading of at least two of the following books:

Costa, A. (1985). *Developing Minds*. Alexandria, Va.: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Raths, L. E., Wassermann, S., Jonas, A., and Rothstein, A. (1986). *Teaching for Thinking: Theory, Strategies, and Activities for the Classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Wassermann, S. (1990). *Serious Players: Empowering Primary Children in the Classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Wassermann, S. *Put Some Thinking in your Classroom*. Reprinted at S.F.U. (for primary teachers only).

Wassermann, S., & Ivany, G. (1988). *Teaching Elementary Science: Who's Afraid of Spiders?* New York: Harper & Row.

You are expected to become familiar with the revised version of the Year 2000 document and the current program document for your level (Primary, Intermediate, Graduation), and to consider the relationship between these documents and the theory and principles of teaching for thinking. Journal articles for background reading will also be provided by the instructor during the course.

## **COURSE ACTIVITIES**

This course demands a high level of participation from each student. Many of the activities involve discussion and cooperative learning. During each class session, some of the time will be spent working on individual and small-group tasks, and the rest in large-group workshop and seminar activities. You will be expected to pace yourself during the semester so that you complete the tasks in time to get feedback from the instructor before the end of the course.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

You will be expected to:

- o attend and participate in all class activities;
- o complete all required readings ;
- o maintain a reflective journal throughout the course;
- o complete all practice tasks and give them to the instructor for feedback on a regular basis;
- o compile a portfolio containing samples of your work in teaching for thinking, and submit it to the instructor with an explanatory letter;
- o complete a final self-evaluation and hand in to the instructor at the end of the course.

## **EVALUATION**

If you participate fully in this course, your growth should be cumulative. That is, the readings, assignments, journal writing and class activities will each contribute something to your overall development in teaching for thinking. Assignments will not be graded individually, but written feedback will be provided in the form of comments, questions and suggestions to help you extend your understanding and skills. Final grades will be determined by your overall growth and performance in the course, as reflected by your practice tasks, portfolio and self-evaluation. You will be evaluated on each of the following areas:

- o growth in understanding of the theory and principles of teaching for thinking and their application in classroom practice, as demonstrated through course activities, practice tasks and the portfolio;
- o thoughtful examination of professional issues arising from required readings and course activities, as demonstrated through the portfolio and self-evaluation;
- o commitment to the professional growth of self and others, as demonstrated through participation in class activities and collegial interactions.

## **GUIDELINES FOR GRADING**

A = excellence demonstrated in completion of all course requirements.

B = satisfactory completion of all basic course requirements, demonstrating understanding of the theory and principles of teaching for thinking and commitment to professional growth.

C = completion of less than all basic course requirements, and /or less than adequate understanding of theory and principles of teaching for thinking or commitment to professional growth.