

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
EDUCATION 383-4
TEACHING FOR THINKING I

Spring Semester, 1991
(Jan 10, 24; Feb 7, 21; Mar 7, 21; Apr 11)
Thursday, 4:30 - 9:30
Location: Dawson Creek

Instructor: Pat Holborn
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PURPOSES

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

The goals of teaching for thinking are:

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

OBJECTIVES

This course will help you:

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

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 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.

READINGS

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

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. Put Some Thinking in Your Classroom. (for primary program teachers.)

Wassermann, S. Serious Players. (for intermediate and graduation program teachers.)

Wassermann, S., and Ivany, G. Teaching Elementary Science: Who's Afraid of Spiders.

Course books can be obtained from the S.F.U. Bookstore, and will be available during the fall if you wish to begin your readings in advance of the course. Other readings will be recommended by the instructor during the course.

REQUIREMENTS

You will be expected to:

- attend and participate in all class activities;
- complete all required readings;
- maintain a thinking log throughout the course;
- complete course assignments and give them to the instructor for feedback on a regular basis;
- complete a portfolio and self-evaluation and hand in to the instructor at the end of the course.

These assignments will be explained in detail at the first class.

EVALUATION

If you participate fully in this course, your growth should be cumulative. That is, the readings, assignments, thinking log 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. Your final grade will be determined by your overall growth and performance in the course. You will be evaluated on each of the following areas:

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