

## DEVELOPING YOUNG LEARNERS' CRITICAL THINKING CAPABILITIES

*by:*

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Critical thinking skills are necessary for students to assess, examine, and resolve issues. Promoting open-ended questions in the classroom is one of the finest strategies to help students acquire this ability. Instead of asking questions with a single correct answer or "What other options might be effective?," teachers can use questions like "Why do you think that?" This method enables pupils to examine many points of view and reflect on their own thinking. Giving kids the freedom to reflect deeply helps them develop their critical thinking skills by teaching them to approach situations from multiple perspectives.

Collaborative learning exercises are another powerful strategy. Students naturally exchange ideas, question one another's assumptions, and discuss various options when they collaborate to solve a problem or produce something. Research indicates that group work improves critical thinking because it forces students to consider their ideas more thoroughly and provide evidence for them (Johnson & Johnson, 1994). They become more flexible thinkers through collaboration, which not only enhances their reasoning skills but also pushes them to consider things from several angles.

Lessons should include problem-solving exercises in addition to group projects and discussions. Instructors might give pupils real-world problems to solve in which they must use what they have learned. For instance, kids may be challenged to devise a strategy to better their neighborhood or figure out how to cut down on waste at school. Since students must come up with original, workable ideas, these exercises not only help them build critical thinking skills but also foster creativity. Learners can practice

reasoning skills in meaningful and useful ways by working through real-world challenges.

Finally, cultivating critical thinkers requires encouraging autonomous thought. Instructors can let students choose how they approach their work and encourage them to investigate subjects that pique their interest. Children who are allowed to take charge of their education become more assured of their capacity for independent thought. According to research, children who have greater control over their education are better able to think critically because they learn to accept responsibility for their thoughts and choices (Sternberg, 2007).

#### *References:*

Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (1994). *Learning together and alone: Cooperative, competitive, and individualistic learning* (4th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Sternberg, R. J. (2007). Teaching for wisdom and intelligence. In *Handbook of research on educational leadership for equity and diversity* (pp. 245-259). Routledge.