



To the Point

From the South Carolina Department of Education
Office of Educator Effectiveness and Leadership Development
November 1, 2017

Thinking

Teaching students how to think and integrating activities and resources that require critical thinking skills is an essential component of the South Carolina Teaching Standards (SCTS). The SCTS 4.0 rubric includes descriptors for four types of thinking that deepen student learning and facilitate mastery. Analytical thinking, practical thinking, creative thinking and research-based thinking can and should be evident in daily instruction. Research highlights four methods a teacher can use to “teach” thinking.

- **Questioning** — Learners must be presented with problems and questions, the answers to which are not apparent.
- **Modeling** — Model what you expect. A brief demonstration of the thinking and behaviors you expect in an instructional moment sets the stage for student responses.
- **Responding** — The use of wait time, accepting student feedback without judgement, clarifying when students don’t understand, purposed academic feedback, and empathetic teacher responses further deepen student mastery.
- **Structuring** — Structuring occurs when there are clear expectations, thinking occurs across content areas and throughout the school day, there are multiple opportunities for interaction, and activities that address all learning styles.

As teachers move toward the proficient and exemplary descriptors of the *Thinking* indicator, the descriptors become more student-centered versus teacher-driven. For example, students need to know how to research to find information, but also how to review a variety of ideas and come to solutions that are well-supported and make sense. Research has shown that monitoring and thinking about one’s thinking leads to better academic performance, behavior and on-task engagement.

As you reflect on your own classroom, how do you plan instruction that teach students different types of thinking and problem solving? Do your lessons utilize analytical, practical and research-based thinking? How often do you integrate creative thinking into lessons and activities?

INSTRUCTION			
Exemplary (4)	Proficient (3)	Needs Improvement (2)	Unsatisfactory (1)



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Leading Learning
Trails

Thinking^{2.1}

<p>The teacher thoroughly teaches three types of thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analytical thinking where students analyze, compare and contrast, and evaluate and explain information. • practical thinking where students use, apply, and implement what they learn in real-life scenarios. • Creative thinking where students create, design, imagine and suppose. • research-based thinking where students explore and review a variety of ideas, models, and solutions to problems. <p>The teacher consistently provides opportunities where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate a variety of ideas and alternatives. • analyze problems from multiple perspectives and viewpoints. • monitor their thinking to insure that they understand what they are learning, are attending to critical information, and are aware of the learning strategies that they are using and why. 	<p>The teacher thoroughly teaches two types of thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analytical thinking where students analyze, compare and contrast, and evaluate and explain information. • practical thinking where students use, apply, and implement what they learn in real-life scenarios. • creative thinking where students create, design, imagine and suppose. • research-based thinking where students explore and review a variety of ideas, models, and solutions to problems. <p>The teacher regularly provides opportunities where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate a variety of ideas and alternatives. • analyze problems from multiple perspectives and viewpoints. 	<p>The teacher attempts to teach one of the following types of thinking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • analytical thinking where students analyze, compare and contrast, and evaluate and explain information. • practical thinking where students use, apply, and implement what they learn in real-life scenarios. • creative thinking where students create, design, imagine and suppose. • research-based thinking where students explore and review a variety of ideas, models, and solutions to problems. <p>The teacher sometimes provides opportunities where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate a variety of ideas and alternatives. • analyze problems from multiple perspectives and viewpoints. 	<p>The teacher implements no learning experiences that thoroughly teach any type of thinking.</p> <p>The teacher provides few opportunities where students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • generate a variety of ideas and alternatives. • analyze problems from multiple perspectives and viewpoints.
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Expanded ADEPT
Support and Evaluation System



Leading Learning. Growing Students.
Transforming Schools.

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