Critical Thinking and English Language Teaching

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Overview of the Presentation

Defining critical thinking

Levels of Thinking

Quality of Thinking

Characteristics of a Critical Thinker

Rationale for critical thinking in ELT

Developing the Critical Thinker

Critical Thinking

Is an **intellectually disciplined process** of **reasoning based on sound evidence, experience, observation**

Is focused on quality through use of universal intellectual standards: Clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.
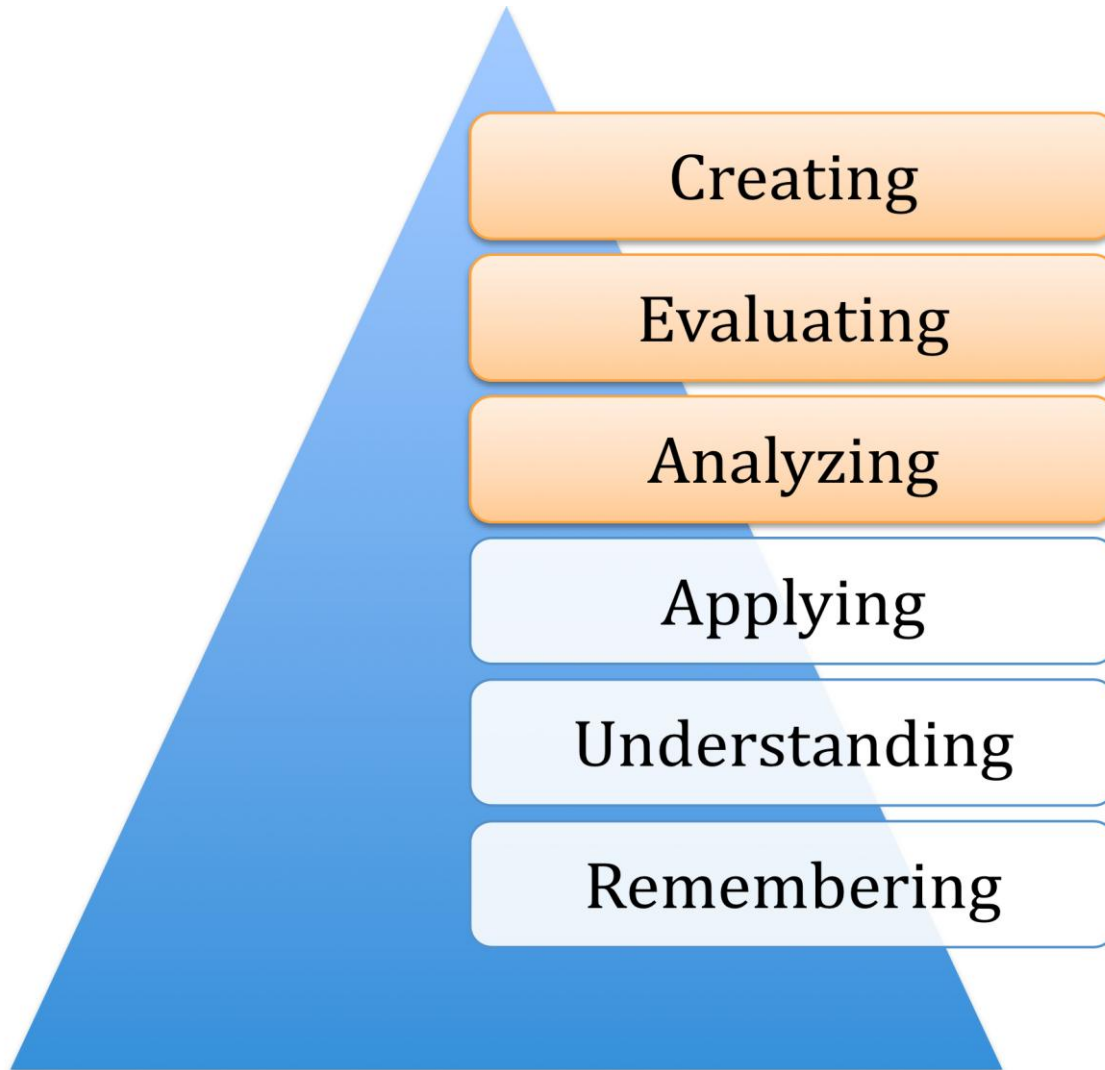
Is mindful, self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective

Guides belief and action

Bloom's Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain
Levels of Thinking

Creating

Evaluating

Analyzing

Applying

Understanding

Remembering

Questioning by level

Example: Reading an article

What other arguments might support the author's position?

Is the supporting evidence sufficient and adequate?

Can you identify four different arguments in the article?

How might you apply the information to your experience?

Can you explain the author's main point in this article?

Who? What? Where? When?

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

Questions	Levels of Thinking
1. What did Goldilocks do when she got to the bears' cottage?	A. Remembering
2. Can you tell the story in your own words?	B. Understanding
3. How might you use this story to teach children about safe behavior?	C. Applying
4. How might you compare this fairy tale to a fairy tale from your culture?	D. Analyzing
5. What is the value of teaching this story to young children?	E. Evaluating
6. What's another possible ending for this story?	F. Creating

Intellectual Standards – quality of thinking

clarity

accuracy

precision

consistency

relevance

sound evidence

good reasons

depth

breadth

fairness

Applying Intellectual Standards

Topic: Technology and the classroom

Student question: "How can technology be used?"

Revised question: "How can I use technology to help me complete my part of the group project?"

Intellectual Traits -- Characteristics

Positive Traits	Negative Traits
Humility	**Arrogance**
Integrity	**Hypocrisy**
Perseverance	**Laziness**
Courage	Cowardice
Empathy	Narrow-mindedness
Faith in Reason	Distrust of Reason
Fairmindedness	Unfairness

Valuable Intellectual Virtues (June 1996). Foundation For Critical Thinking,
Online at website: www.criticalthinking.org)

"I already wrote the paper. That's why it's so hard to get the right data."

Ethical Dilemmas

Problem #1: You are stumped on an important math test and you have the perfect opportunity to cheat without getting caught. What do you do, and how do you explain your decision?

Problem #2: A fifth grade boy is overcome with hurt and anger when a classmate spreads a lie about him.

http://www.goodcharacter.com/dilemma/archive.html

Why CT in ELT?

"To become proficient in a language, learners need to use creative and critical thinking through the target language."

Kabilan, Muhammad Kamarul. 2000. "Creative and Critical Thinking in Language Classrooms." Internet TEFL Journal Vol. VI, No. 6, June 2000
http://iteslj.org/

Developing Critical Thinking

Six Thinking Hats ©

Peer & Self Assessment

Substantive Writing: SEEI

TAPPS

Grammar (inductive/deductive)

Role Play

Mind Maps & Graphic Organizers

Thinking Logs

Minute Papers, Think-Pair-Share

Ethical Dilemmas

Routinely use language of thinking

Circle of Viewpoints

Vocabulary: word choice, tone, brevity

Problem-Based   , K-W-H-L-S strategy

Routinely summarize/paraphrase each other's ideas