

# Case study: developmental reading



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BUSTER**

The article attempted to explain how creative activities for third year high school students affect their critical thinking skills. Comparing two groups, the Instruction with Creative Activities (ICA) and the Instruction with No Creative Activities (INCA), the study expected the ICA group to have higher mean scores and mean gains in their Chemistry Test for Higher Order Thinking Skills (ChemTHOTS) and in their pretest to posttest respectively. Although, findings suggest that there are no significant differences between both groups' mean test scores, it made a distinguishing suggestion that activities given to each group should have been more varied.

## **Creative Thinking**

### **Critical Thinking**

There have been studies that tried to link creativity with critical thinking, however most findings do not show direct evidence to support this theory. Recommendations range from conducting more investigations on the subject as well as lengthening study period for which the research will be conducted.

On the other hand, studies also show that use of varied creative techniques do help students train their imagination. Imagination being a clear use of mental processes way beyond the usual stretching of the brain. Imagination here can then be linked to perspective taking and reflective thinking which are considered high order thinking skills. As children put themselves in different scenarios, find ways to solve problems and visualize certain concepts, they do tap on this very rich brain activity that actually provides basis for better understanding and critical thinking.

We can say that as creative thinking explores various evaluative actions, critical thinking, in turn, plays with taking different scenarios. The blending of these processes (as shown from the image I shared on the earlier page) are manifested when we try to see a problem and come up with several ways to solve it or when we try to understand a person, a story or a situation, and put ourselves in different perspectives. This is most evident during play when children try to explore limitless boundaries and when children come up with a creation that they are proud to call their own.

In a classroom setting, an important goal is to achieve literacy, a solid understanding of concepts, as well as to sustain learning, its different forms and levels. However, this is a very delicate and complicated feat that entails an interactive approach from the teacher and a response from the learner. Thus making the learning process, a responsibility of all the key players. And aside from the traditional rigid methods, there are various ways to achieve these goals. For the purpose of this study, methods that promote creative thinking like art, play and games are proposed. Concretely, a lesson on Shakespearean plays can be made more colorful if instead of asking students to memorize and discuss lines, they would come up with their own rendition of a particular scene. A lesson on the Solar System can be made more meaningful if instead of just asking students to memorize the different planets and come up with a model, they could pretend to be traveling from one planet to another and from each planet they are to send a postcard describing about their location and their stay there. And a lesson on the different countries of Africa can be made more indelible if instead of just being able to locate them on the map, they would learn a particular dance

move and associate that with a country, and then probably come up with their own Countries of Africa dance.

The study is most relevant as it is the era when learners want to be more involved with the learning process. They want hands-on, application and practice. It is also the time when it is highly encouraged for the educators to tailor-fit their lessons to varied learners with equally diverse learning styles. It is now a call to educators to sustain their learning and to respond with methods that are perfect match to their learning needs. And in the search for these methods, we find ways to tap on higher levels of thinking skills, providing our students with immeasurable education.

As educators, we ourselves are front liners in pursuing this path for our learners. We must engage them in the learning process by providing them with instructional strategies and methods that let them actually grasp what they are trying to understand. We should not limit their minds but rather let them explore the world. And as they go about this exploration, we ourselves should be with them and continuously open our minds and make our world even richer, paving the way for our students.

We can never be the architects of the workings of our student's minds. I learned this the hard way while insisting to my then two-year old boy that he should learn about and articulate back the life cycle of a butterfly. The only things I got out of that episode were painful tears and disappointment with myself. I should have waited for him to be ready and it would have been best had I tried to look for ways to pique his interest and imaginative skills first.

All we can do really is not to design their minds but design lessons they can gradually assimilate with much enthusiasm and through various experiences.

As a parent and a future pre-school educator, I should also keep in mind that my children will be growing up pretty fast. Each day is a learning day and there really is no turning back. I should make the most out of the time I am given with them. I should always be able to come up with a great lesson, always enticing their interest and always making sure that they leave the class feeling proud of themselves for creating something. I should help them use their minds in many different ways, always with the goal for them to learn something new. And that, they arrive at such learning not only through reason, but more importantly, with a great deal of sentiment and imagination.