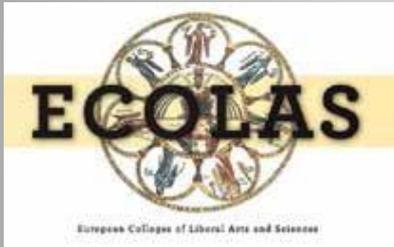




Erasmus+



Encouraging Critical Thinking

**Interactive and innovative learning
in Liberal Arts**

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The Best Liberal Arts and Science Teaching Expanded and Reinforced

- Define critical thinking
- Experience one learning activity to stimulate critical thinking
- Design, facilitate and evaluate the activity

Workshop outcomes

- Pre-activity: Make your own definition of critical thinking
- Discuss in pairs: 5 minutes
- Formulate a definition for your pair

What is critical thinking?

Beyer (1995)

- judging the quality of something (information, an assertion or an event) against some **criteria**
- *kriterion* (Greek)
= benchmark for judgements made
- critical thinking = criterial thinking

What is critical thinking? (continued)

Why should teachers foster students' critical thinking?

Purpose

- Where do your students manifest the biggest difficulty- in terms of critical thinking?

Purpose

Experience the show TODAY!

Learning activity:

Who wants to be the Millionaire

Your task (in pairs, 10 min): Design a question concerning critical thinking OR lib education + 4 possible answers A, B, C, D
Prepare a relatively simple question or a more challenging question

- You may include some funny answers
- Mark one answer that is correct
- Email it to pleschova@eurea.sk or hand it written on a paper

Learning activity: *Millionaire contest*

- Option 1: using paper cards
- Option 2: using software

Let us simulate the game show

- Connect to a wifi, password: bislaliberal
- Go to <https://respond.cc>

Insert session code:

Option 2: using free software

- What was the best question designed for the game show?

Reflection

- Which questions did you find problematic?

Reflection

- Assign homework and tie the activity to homework (reading)
- Give clear and detailed guidelines to students on how good questions should look like
- Instead designing questions testing factual knowledge questions should ask the respondents to use more complex thinking skills, including *making judgements against criteria*
- Teacher has to pre-prepare questions, too

Activity design

- Focus on key ideas/concepts from the reading

what is the central argument of the author?

what conclusion does the author make in the study?

- Ask to discriminate between similar definitions
- Ask to compare/contrast perspectives
where do the authors A and B differ/agree?

Types of good questions

- Do not explain answers, leave this to the end
- Preparation and follow up reflection is more important than conducting the activity itself
- Post-activity: Allow students enough time to reflect on the nature of Q&A:

What was the best question designed for the game show?

Judge questions against the previously given criteria: clarity, unambiguousness, completeness...

Designing a meaningful variety of answers is often more challenging than the questions

Facilitation of activity

Benefits

- Ability to pose questions is central for critical thinking
- Active learning, interactivity, reflection
- Enjoyable for students, as they contribute to creating the activity

Pitfalls

- Students may come up with questions that you do not know to answer or are uncertain
- Ask students to pre-submit the answers 😊

Benefits and pitfalls

- It is possible to develop all students to become critical thinkers in one semester?
- Is critical thinking is subject (discipline)-specific or not?

Other questions to think of

- A chapter on Critical Thinking in the Teacher Training Kit
- Beyer, Barry K. (1995). *Critical Thinking*. Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation.

Thank you very much for contributing to this workshop!

Further references