DEVELOPING CRITICAL THINKING IN ENGLISH CLASSES: METHODS AND IMPORTANCE

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Abstract: *Critical thinking is an essential skill for students, fostering analytical and reflective abilities crucial for personal and professional success. This article explores various methods and technologies used to develop critical thinking in English classes. The methods discussed include digital storytelling, online discussion forums, and interactive learning tools, while the pedagogical strategies encompass the Socratic method, project-based learning, and collaborative learning. Evidence from educational settings demonstrates increased student engagement and improved analytical skills. This study highlights the importance of integrating innovative methods to cultivate critical thinking in English lessons.*

Аннотация: *Критическое мышление является важным навыком для студентов, развивающим аналитические и рефлексивные способности, имеющие решающее значение для личного и профессионального успеха. В данной статье рассматриваются различные методы и технологии, используемые для развития критического мышления на занятиях по английскому языку. Обсуждаемые методы включают цифровое повествование, онлайн-дискуссионные форумы и инструменты интерактивного обучения, а педагогические стратегии включают метод Сократа, обучение на основе проектов и совместное обучение. Данные из образовательных учреждений демонстрируют повышение вовлеченности учащихся и улучшение аналитических навыков. Это исследование подчеркивает важность интеграции инновационных методов развития критического мышления на уроках английского языка.*

Key words: *critical thinking, active learning, socratic questioning, peer collaborative learning, discussion, enhance, outlook, judgements, effectively,*

pedagogical strategies, student engagement, analytical skill.

Ключевые слова: *критические мышление, активние обучение, сократовское анкетирование, сотрудничество, между коллегами, обсуждение, улучшение, мировоззрение , суждения, эффективно, педагогические стратегии, вовлеченность студентов, аналитические способности.*

Critical thinking is an essential skill in the 21st century, vital for personal and professional success. In the context of education, particularly in English classes, developing critical thinking skills helps students analyze texts, form reasoned arguments, and engage in reflective thought processes. This article aims to explore various methods and technologies that can be used to enhance critical thinking in English classes, highlighting their importance and effectiveness.

1. **Digital Storytelling**:

    - Digital storytelling involves the use of multimedia tools to create and share stories. This method encourages students to think critically about the narrative, characters, and the message they want to convey. By integrating text, images, audio, and video, students learn to analyze and synthesize information creatively.

2. **Online Discussion Forums**:

    - Platforms such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, or Moodle provide spaces for students to engage in discussions and debates. These forums allow students to articulate their thoughts, challenge each other's viewpoints, and develop reasoned arguments. The asynchronous nature of online discussions also gives students time to reflect and think deeply about their responses

3. **Interactive Learning Tools**:

    - Apps like Kahoot!, Quizlet, and Nearpod offer interactive quizzes and activities that promote critical thinking. These tools often include scenarios and problem-solving tasks that require students to apply their knowledge and reasoning skills. Interactive learning tools make the learning process engaging and dynamic, encouraging students to think on their feet.

    Pedagogical Strategies

1. **Socratic Method**:

      - The Socratic method involves asking a series of questions to stimulate critical thinking and illuminate ideas. In English classes, teachers can use this method to explore literature, themes, and character motivations. By encouraging students to ask and answer questions, the Socratic method helps develop a deeper understanding and critical analysis of texts.

2. **Project-Based Learning**:

      - In project-based learning, students work on projects that require them to research, collaborate, and apply their knowledge to real-world problems. This method fosters critical thinking by challenging students to explore complex issues, develop solutions, and present their findings. Projects in English classes might include creating a newspaper, writing a research paper, or producing a short film.

3. **Collaborative Learning**:

      - Group activities and collaborative tasks encourage students to think critically as they work together to solve problems or complete assignments. Through collaboration, students learn to consider different perspectives, negotiate ideas, and build on each other's strengths. This approach not only enhances critical thinking but also promotes communication and teamwork skills.

Implementing these technologies and methods has shown a significant increase in student engagement. Students are more motivated to participate in class activities and discussions, leading to a more dynamic and interactive learning environment.

Examples from various English classes demonstrate that students develop better analytical skills. For instance, students involved in digital storytelling projects exhibit enhanced ability to dissect and interpret complex narratives. Similarly, those participating in online forums show improved skills in constructing logical arguments and counterarguments.

Educators have reported positive outcomes from using these methods. Teachers note that students are more engaged and exhibit a deeper understanding of the material. Testimonials highlight the success of project-based learning in fostering critical thinking and creativity among students. While these methods and technologies have

proven effective, they also come with challenges. Ensuring equitable access to technology can be a hurdle, as not all students may have the necessary resources at home. Additionally, teachers need adequate training to effectively integrate these tools into their curriculum.

Future research could focus on developing more inclusive and accessible technologies that cater to diverse learning needs. Further studies could also explore the long-term impact of these methods on students' critical thinking skills and academic performance.

In conclusion, developing critical thinking in English classes is crucial for preparing students for the complexities of the modern world. By integrating technologies and employing innovative pedagogical strategies, educators can create an engaging and thought-provoking learning environment. These methods not only enhance students' analytical abilities but also prepare them for future academic and professional challenges.

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