Working with Thoughtful Dialogue as a Way to Promote Students’ Cognitive Development in Different Subject Matters

Workshop

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Major Goals of the Seminars

- Enhance society by preparing all citizens to participate in open, negotiating dialogues and assuming the responsibilities as citizens
- Personal education (making life worthwhile)
- *Education* and deeper understanding in subject matters
- Participation in “the Great Conversation” of mankind
"Relatives"

- P4C, Philosophy for Children (Matthew Lipman)
- PwC, Philosophy with children (Gareth B Mathews)
- Deliberative dialogue
- John Dewey’s “recitation”
Mortimer J. Adler’s cognitive columns

Acquisition of organized knowledge

Development of intellectual skills

Enlarged understanding of ideas and values, creating...

Teacher as didactic

Teacher as coach

Teacher as “the first among equals” / mid-wife

www.paideia.org

www.greatbooks.org
Learning to think in seminars

- Learning is interactive and contextual:
  - Habits of mind become intellectual/dialogical virtues and later intellectual and moral character/practical wisdom
- Intellectual virtues: critical inquiry and refutation
- Dialogical virtues: cooperating to do this
Socratic Seminar Rules

• Shared inquiry through thoughtful dialogue
• Listen attentively to what others say
• Many alternative answers
• Be prepared to reconsider and maybe change your opinion
Diabolo baby by Mariana Gartner
Portrait of Siriaco by da Rocha
Raptor Gallery at the Lindsay Museum
by Lillian Vallee
There they are
The ones whose eggshells held
The ones who got out of the nest alive
The ones not completely contaminated
The ones that avoided
The cars
The cats
The wires
The walls
The bullets
The BBs
The glass window panes
The one-eyed, one-winged, one-legged, nerve damaged, malnourished, imprinted, infected, electrocuted, and mutilated Animals
They sit like a jury of your peers
And the verdict is in:
Guilty
Suggested Seminar Plan

1. Reading/interpretation
2. Pre-seminar: personal and group goals set
3. Seminar:
   a) Opening question,
   b) “Textual” analysis
   c) Questions of evaluation
4. Post seminar: seminar and goals evaluated
Planning sequences

1. Puzzlement, perplexity and challenge by
   a) ‘Stand-up philosophy’
   b) Experiment

2. Analysis:
   a) What did we find out? What did we learn? What do I want to learn/understand?
   b) Thinking tools and strategies

3. New knowledge
   a) Lectures, films etc.
   b) Museums and facilities in society
   c) Search in books, on internet

4. Generalization and transfer
   a) Thoughtful dialogue
   b) ‘Create the opposite’

5. Evaluate the work
   a) What did we learn?
   b) How did we learn?
Positive Effects on:

- Critical thinking skills
- Language skills
- Self-esteem and higher awareness of self (character)
- Social climate
- Ability to solve conflicts
www.urplay.se

"Jakten på det demokratiska klassrummet"

Freinetskolan Mimer
The unexamined life is not worth living for man.