

PLUS, MINUS, INTERESTING AND EDWARD DE BONO THINKING TOOL, JILL SWALE, KENDRICK SCHOOL, READING

This is one of the Direct Attention Thinking Tools from Edward de Bono. It is a quicker approach than the Hats technique described above, though its stages closely resemble the yellow, black and green hats. It can be used for a quick fun activity.

INSTRUCTIONS

In a few spare minutes, perhaps at the end of term, offer the class hypothetical situations to discuss in groups. As in the hats activity above, the group has only a few minutes to think of and list all the pluses of the proposed scheme, with no discussion on the other side. They then concentrate exclusively on all the minuses. Finally they raise as many interesting questions as they can about the proposal. Encourage them to be as imaginative and quirky as they can, for example by thinking about what the children's prison might be like inside, what sort of people would be guards and how they would dress. Finally ask different groups to feed back their ideas to the class.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: IMPROVING EVALUATION SKILLS, JILL SWALE, KENDRICK SCHOOL, READING

This scheme of work enables students to understand how examiners will assess their work, by making explicit the precise skills needed for good marks. The second step encourages the students control their own learning by practising the skills in a new piece of work, hopefully with improved results. The product could be assessed in class by peers for further reinforcement. The focus here is on evaluation in essays, but the model could be adapted for other techniques such as effective use of an Item.

INSTRUCTIONS

- ☐ Find an example of a good student essay with a strong element of evaluation, one in which the candidate is invited to assess a view. Cover up your annotations, and photocopy one per student and the Evaluation Skills Checklist.
- ☐ Give the students about ten minutes to read the checklist and to highlight sentences in the essay that perform the same functions, as instructed.
- ☐ Draw attention to any other worthy types of evaluation not mentioned on the checklist. Discuss the grade the examiner would be likely to award for the essay, and ensure that the students fully understand the nature of evaluation and the proportion of marks it carries in this part of the course.
- ☐ Soon afterwards set the students an evaluation essay or skeleton essay. A few variations are suggested, but the basic idea is to use the list as a writing

frame, including a wide variety of evaluation points in a well-structured essay.

- ☐ Feedback should focus clearly and explicitly on the marks awarded for evaluation points. This can possibly be carried out again as a class marking exercise, with students nominating friends to assess their essays or working in a small committee of their own choice. Alternatively ask students to create a skeleton essay in pairs for another pair of chosen classmates to mark. All essays should then be passed to you so you can confirm that they have fully understood the assessment objectives.

WEB-SITE GUIDE: FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS AND FINDING YOUR WAY ROUND THE FAMILIES AND HOUSEHOLDS WEB-SITES: STUDENT ACTIVITY, DAVID MORTON AND MICHAEL HARRINGTON, KING EDWARD VI COLLEGE, STOURBRIDGE

This activity allows choice over how to deliver or present the issues. By dividing the class into small groups each member can take one issue to research and feed-back to the other members of the group, or one group can look at one issue.

- ☐ Provide students with a copy of the worksheet and a copy of the web-site guide.
- ☐ Encourage the students to share their findings with other members of the group through the preparation and word processing of study cards for the topic investigated.
- ☐ The activity could be used as an introduction to the topic, or as a revision session at the end of the module.
- ☐ A plenary is necessary to ensure all students have gained an understanding of the issues and major concepts. A discussion of the methodologies used in the research will also assist in linking Methods with other topics.

EXPLORING THE BRITISH CRIME SURVEY: AN INTERNET ACTIVITY, ROB POVEY, BABINGTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE, LEICESTER

- ☐ This activity is designed to encourage students to look 'behind the headlines' and to examine the government's published crime figures for themselves.
- ☐ Since 2000 the British Crime Survey has been carried out each year. It was also decided that the reporting date would be changed to the end of the financial year, in April, to coincide with the publication of the figures for crime recorded by the police. This makes direct comparison between the BCS and the Home Office Recorded Crime Statistics possible.
- ☐ The Government also publishes quarterly reports for June, September and January. All of these are made available on the web as pdf files from www.home-office.gov.uk/rds.



Plus Minus Interesting an Edward De Bono Thinking Tool

Jill Swale

SITUATION	PLUS	MINUS	INTERESTING
If all imprisonment was banned			
If juries had to reach a verdict without knowing a defendant's sex			
If very young children were sent to prison for minor misdemeanours			
If offenders had to walk around with a billboard saying what they had done			
If the parents of offenders were imprisoned as well as their children			
If drinking alcohol became illegal in Britain			
If there was Saturday prison for children not working hard enough at school			
If identity cards to be produced on the spot became compulsory for all in the UK.			

