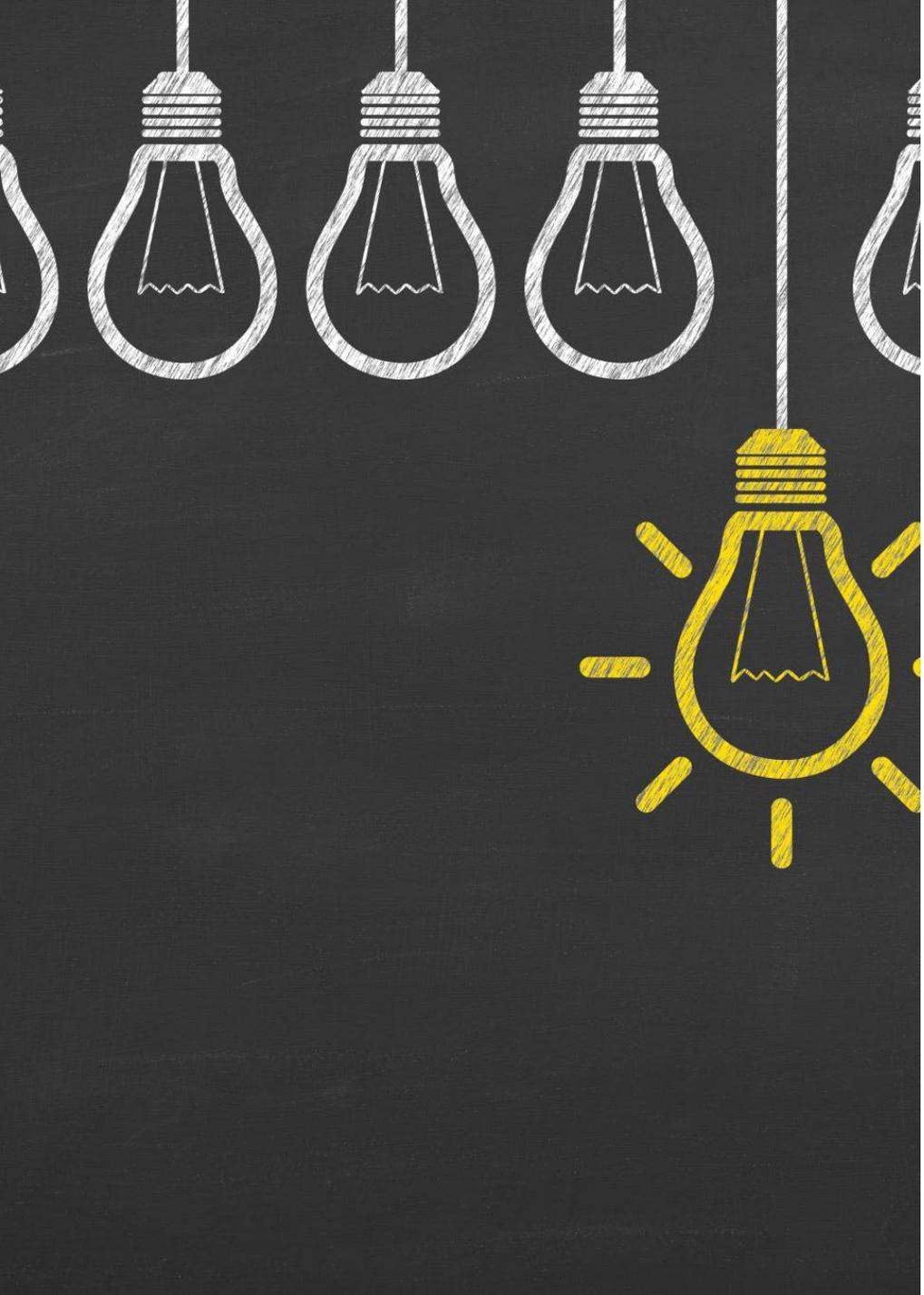


Incorporating Critical Thinking into Your Classrooms

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US Embassy Tokyo
October 2, 2020



By the end of this webinar, you will have:

- 1) reflected upon **your own critical thinking** as an educator
- 2) learned strategies for how to **add critical thinking to your classes**



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“Individuals must ask questions, invent new ways of solving problems, connect new knowledge to the information they already have and apply their knowledge to new situations.”

(Ghaemi, 2011)



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a critically thinking educator

- is flexible / adapts plans to fit students' needs
- avoids teacher-centered lessons / facilitate learning
- collaborates with other teachers
- embraces ambiguity
- realizes that there is no one way to do something
- fosters student independence

critical thinking & culture

Why students don't ask questions:

"I don't want to look stupid."

"I don't have questions."

"I am not confident in my English."

→ the power dynamic favors the teacher

→ critical thinking is process-oriented (traditional education is goal-oriented)

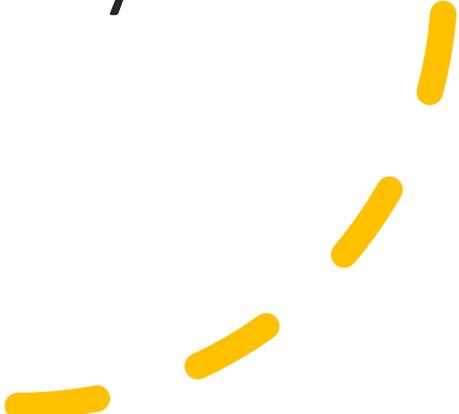
(Smith, 2017)

Getting your students to become critical thinkers **will take time.**

WHERE TO BEGIN...



To start...

1. supplement what you already have
 2. make questioning a regular practice
 3. consider Bloom's Taxonomy
- 



supplement your textbook



- add **open-ended questions** to the readings
- design a **project** to go along with the unit
- **find connections** between the content and your students' lives
- find **real-world applications**

“Malala”

Questions:

- **What would you have done if** you were Malala and knew people were against her?
- **Why** do you think the Taliban wanted to harm her?

Project/Real-world Applications:

- Write a letter of encouragement to the girls of Pakistan who want to go to school safely.
- **Imagine** you're Malala. What would you say to Japanese students?
- Malala was 16 when she was shot. **Compare/contrast** your life with hers.
- What is one contribution **you** could make to your community?

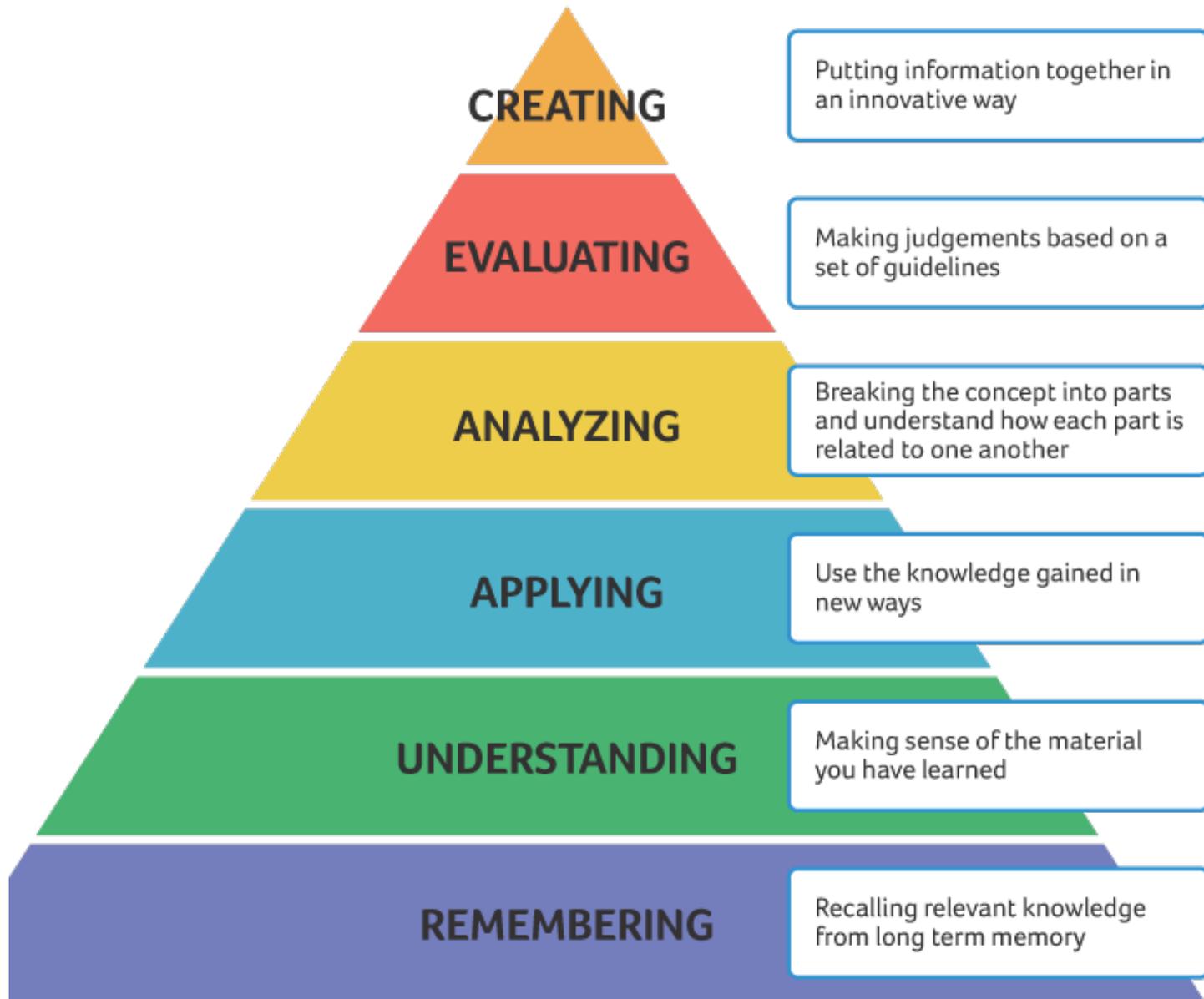
Takeaways

- **open-ended questions** make students process information instead of just remember it
- “putting yourself in another person’s shoes” – this **change in perspective** increases the thinking challenge
- **comparing and contrasting** causes students to analyze information
- **connect** / empathize with a peer’s situation **that is different** from your own



Make Questions a Daily Practice

- Ask a “**Question of the Day**”
- Allow for silent questions
 - **Question Box** – students put questions in at the end of class / teacher responded in the next class
 - **Question Wall** – write questions on a post-it note and stick it on the wall
- Use **partners/groups** to reduce anxiety
- Make participation **part of their grade**



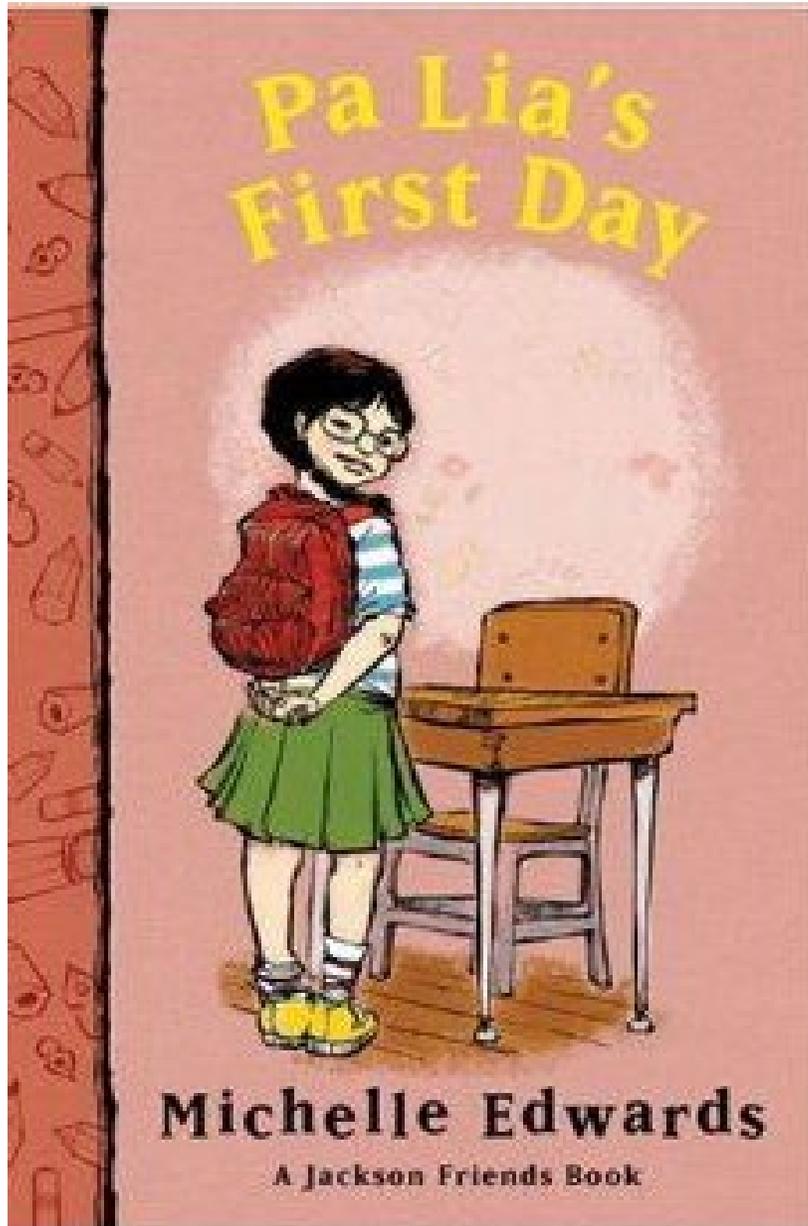
Bloom's Taxonomy



Questions and Bloom's Taxonomy

- start slow and small; then go from there
- adapt to your students' abilities
- scaffold with the harder levels
(use simpler English; use the L1)





Elementary Reading Example

Adapted from Judie Haynes' "Bloom's Taxonomy and English Language Learners"

Remember

Questions are more **straightforward**. Answers can be found in the reading.

- What did Pa Lia's brother do on the way to school?
- Who pushed Pa Lia on the steps?
- What name did Stinky call Pa Lia?
- When did Pa Lia meet Calliope?
- What did Pa Lia do during math class?



Understand

Students can *show* that they understand the information.

- Why did Pa Lia dawdle on the way to school?
- How will Pa Lia find her classroom?
- Why was Howie mean to Pa Lia?
- Why did Pa Lia get in trouble?



Apply

Students try to **solve problems** and **apply the information to a task**.

- How would you do if you needed to find your classroom on the first day of school?
- List the ways you could make a new student feel welcome.
- What questions would you ask Stinky if you could talk to him?



Analyze

Go deeper into the information. Students may not be able to respond in English even though they're processing the information.

- **How do we know** Pa La felt nervous? Find the sentences in the story.
- Look at the words in the word bank that describe people. Write the words that describe Pa Lia, Calliope, and Howie in the correct column
- **How do you know** that Pa Lia is the hero of the story?



Evaluate

Students **form opinions** and **make judgments** about the information. May require scaffolding.

- What do you think will happen if Pa Lia does not tell the truth?
- What didn't you like about the story? **Why?**
- Do you think Tou Ger was a good brother? **Why or Why not?**
- What part of this book did you like best? **Tell why you like it.**
- **Why** did the Pa Lia decide to tell the truth?



Create

Students use information to **create something new**. May require scaffolding.

- Pa Lia is a new student at school, and she has no friends. **Write** a booklet of advice for new students at your school.
- Can you **invent** another character for the story?
- **How could you change** the story? How else could Pa Lia make friends?
- **How would you change** the ending?



Remember	Understand	Apply	Analyze	Evaluate	Create
Cite	Add	Acquire	Analyze	Appraise	Abstract
Define	Approximate	Adapt	Audit	Assess	Animate
Describe	Articulate	Allocate	Blueprint	Compare	Arrange
Draw	Associate	Alphabetize	Breadboard	Conclude	Assemble
Enumerate	Characterize	Apply	Break down	Contrast	Budget
Identify	Clarify	Ascertain	Characterize	Counsel	Categorize
Index	Classify	Assign	Classify	Criticize	Code
Indicate	Compare	Attain	Compare	Critique	Combine
Label	Compute	Avoid	Confirm	Defend	Compile

(Shabatura)

Bloom's Verbs

Bloom's Question Stems

and recall of information	Where _____? When _____?	What is _____?
2 Comprehension Organization and selection of facts and ideas	convert describe explain interpret paraphrase put in order restate retell in your own words rewrite summarize trace translate Re-tell _____ in your own words. What is the main idea of _____?	What differences exist between _____? Can you write a brief outline?
3 Application Use of facts, rules, and principles	apply compute conclude construct demonstrate determine draw find out give an example illustrate make operate show solve state a rule or principle use How is _____ an example of _____? How is _____ related to _____? Why is _____ significant?	Do you know of another instance where _____? Could this have happened in _____?
4 Analysis Separating a whole into component parts	analyze categorize classify compare contrast debate deduct determine the factors diagram differentiate dissect distinguish examine infer specify What are the parts or features of _____? Classify _____ according to _____. Outline/diagram/web/map _____.	How does _____ compare/contrast with _____? What evidence can you present for _____?

(25 Questions)

Other Critical Thinking Strategies

- Project-Based Learning
- Utilizing the Habits of Mind
- Regular Reflection
- RAFT Assignments (Heick, 2012)
(Role, Audience, Format, Topic)



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Opinion Writing

Students **chose their topic** & used the same topic for four writing assignments:

1. Opinion Paragraph
2. Formal Proposal
3. OpEd (Opinion Editorial)
4. Formal Research Paper with Counterargument

The **struggle** is important and necessary. It's a natural **part of the process** toward greater critical thinking.

Students had to:

- **change the role, the audience, and the format**
- think **flexibly**

Students struggled to:

- form an opinion
- **change the audience** (tone, vocabulary, grammar)
- write a **counterargument**

Closing Advice

- don't expect too much too soon
- do something in every class, even if it's small
- give students and yourself time to adjust



Resources

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