

Hallmarks for creating an environment for thoughtful content literacy instruction

The learning opportunities we create

- focus on comprehension and understanding rather than memorization
- connect us with real-world, real-life issues
- center around content-related big ideas, essential questions, and key concepts
- engage students' interest and enthusiasm
- encourage student choice and independent thinking
- provide time for thinking to take place
- set expectations that push students towards higher levels of thinking.

When we demonstrate our thinking, we

- illustrate what good thinking looks like
- focus on topics and ideas worth thinking about
- reveal our curiosity, interests, and passions.
- explicitly show how we understand what we read through questioning, drawing inferences, synthesizing information and ideas, etc.

We support attitudes and interactions that...

- emphasize a common language for talking about thinking and learning
- encourage and respect different viewpoints and perspectives
- ensure that students experience positive ways of thinking about and engaging with content
- spark thoughtful discussion and debate
- support students' enthusiasm for discovery and their readiness to investigate what's new or unusual.

Student artifacts and work products...

- are the result of thoughtful work and send the message that thinking matters
- make thinking visible
- involve sharing knowledge and teaching others
- illustrate the process of thinking and learning.

Materials/ texts/ the literature that students read...

- encourage a variety of perspectives, opinions and interpretations
- require students to solve or discover problems
- provoke discussion and raise significant issues
- focus on content-related themes, issues and/or essential questions.

Adapted from Intellectual Character: What it is, why it matters and how to get it. By Ron Ritchart Jossey-Bass 2002