

Three Mental Modes

5

Main Goal

Students will recognize character traits frequently evident in free and independent thinkers.

Affective: Nurture students’ appreciation that a different drummer’s actions or views may be, in the long run, of benefit.

Subgoal

To have students practice and demonstrate three types of thinking likely to yield ideas which depart from standard notions.

Lesson Context

Knowledge and Cultural Understanding		Skills Attainment and Social Participation	
	<i>Historical Literacy</i>		<i>Basic Study Skills</i>
X	<i>Ethical Literacy</i>	X	<i>Critical Thinking Skills</i>
	<i>Cultural Literacy</i>	X	<i>Participation Skills</i>
	<i>Geographic Literacy</i>	Democratic Understanding and Civic Values	
	<i>Economic Literacy</i>	X	<i>National Identity</i>
	<i>Sociopolitical Literacy</i>		<i>Constitutional Heritage</i>
Check the Table on page 4. This lesson relies on prerequisite concepts in Row 1.			<i>Civic Values, Rights, and Responsibilities</i>

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Concept Building Objective

Given an everyday topic to pursue, students illustrate their *understanding of a “thinking style”* (skepticism, inquisitiveness, or divergent thinking) by inventing an imaginary conversation between two speakers—one a person who is “thinking that way” (even inordinately), and someone else who does *not* use that thinking mode during the dialogue.

[*Note:* Student preference for the contrasting speaker may be a *typical* person, or perhaps someone who thinks *not at all* that way, and in fact, spectacularly the *opposite!*]



Materials

1. *Per student pair:* Duplication Sheet 1—“**Two-Person Dialogue**” (a fold-into-a-booklet page)
2. An everyday situation—it may be invented by the student co-authors or spun off of examples offered by teacher, similar to the following:
 - a youngster explaining a situation to a parent (or teacher or principal or neighbor, etc.)
 - someone purchasing a new bicycle (or shoes or umbrella or videotape, etc.) from a sales clerk
 - two people meeting each other for the first time (or after a long absence or vacation trip, etc.)
 - one person inviting someone else to a party (or play or dance or athletic event, etc.)
 - a client and her hair dresser (or dentist or optometrist or physician, etc.)
 - two people observing a zoo animal (or fireworks or pet or rose garden, etc.)
 - someone ordering something in person, as from a waiter (or by telephone or via computer)

Strategies: *Advance Note:* Lesson 4, or equivalent in student readiness, is pre-requisite to this activity. You may wish to revamp procedures to better match your own teaching style. The following instructions are provided for instructing pairs of students to write a dialogue.

1. Explain that students will soon be paired to perform a writing task. They will construct a conversation between two people. One of the people in the conversation will have to exhibit a “pattern of thinking.” Specify for them some sample situations from everyday life around which they might build such a conversation. Encourage brainstorming of additional situations.
2. Review with students three types of thinking. (If possible, stimulate them via role play of your own or volunteers to get creative authoring juices flowing!) You may let students choose which type of thinking they wish to demonstrate as they write, or you may assign it. [*Please note: Divergent thinking is likely to be difficult for students whatever the context. So, you may wish to simply omit this one or alert students that it may prove more frustrating than other choices.*] Outline for students the nature of

the forthcoming task, which will be to co-author and then role play a conversation. One person in the conversation will have the role of “thinking”—and therefore speaking—in a specific fashion, as if it were a habit for them. (For example, if a skeptic, the conversationalist will have on a “doubting hat” throughout the dialogue.) The other speaker will be “trying to be natural” or (if preferred) “trying to think/speak as someone who clearly is *without* this habit of thinking.” Students are to be creative and try to capture the flavor of a real conversation in which one person is using a specific thinking pattern.

Note: Before students get “carried away” in *overemphasis*, help them understand that they must use caution to *accurately* impart the thinking style. A good example is *inquisitiveness*. Students may feel that being inquisitive is merely asking an abundance of questions. Not so. (Such interrogation would be more akin to conducting an *inquisition*.) Rather, the task requires them to show someone who has a genuinely curious habit of mind.

3. CREATIVE WRITING TASK: For the dialogue booklet, students put the name of the “thinker” on the right-hand side of the panel, and the name of the other speaker on the left. They then fold the booklet and turn it over to take turns writing the script. (Although not necessary, students may enjoy trying to position their wording so the conversation alternates left to right and back again, and each speaker’s words are entirely on a side. Caution them to notice which side matches the booklet labels on the reverse.)

Appraisal of Understanding

1. Evidence: As class work each student pair has completed a booklet for teacher examination.
2. Transfer: Student pairs could exchange booklets. Each reader would, after reading the complete conversation, try to locate a statement in the booklet to read aloud that in their opinion best illustrates of the “type of thinking” the author is trying to illustrate.
3. Assessment. Student pairs can be asked to write a summary “cover sheet” for their dialogue. (You may suggest the situation in which they are planning to cast their dialogue for a film, and they will want to provide an overview for the actors who will be trying out for roles in performing the conversation between two people.)

Continuation Activity

1. Students practice and then conduct their dialogues before the class (tape recording or videotaping is suggested). Audience tries to identify the thinking style being portrayed.
2. Students post their dialogue booklets on a bulletin board by number (author identification concealed on the reverse side). Viewers read the various conversations and try to identify the thinking style in evidence and judge the clarity or other factors, putting down their decisions on a teacher-constructed “ballot” of some kind. Perhaps teams may garner honorable mention for ease of interpretation (correct ID of thinking style by viewers) or win rave reviews for the conversational creativity shown in the products.

**Open this side to
read the views of
speaker 2**



Fold along this line, then write the views of speaker 2 on reverse side (right).

This dialogue is the work of:

**A two-person
dialogue**

Fold along this line, then write the views of speaker 1 on reverse side (left)

**Open this side to
read the views of
speaker 1**

