DIMENSION 5: Productive Habits of Mind

Developing students’ competency in mental habits (self-regulation, critical and creative thinking) required for effective and efficient self-directed learning.

Self-regulated thinking is to:
- Be aware of their own thinking.
- Plan.
- Be aware of necessary resources.
- Be sensitive to feedback.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of their own actions.

Critical thinking is to:
- Be accurate and seek accuracy.
- Be clear and seek clarity.
- Be open-minded.
- Restrain impulsivity.
- Take a position when the situation warrants.
- Be sensitive to the feelings and level of knowledge of others.

Creative thinking is to:
- Engage intensely in tasks even when answers or solutions are not immediately apparent.
- Push the limits of their knowledge and abilities.
- Generate, trust, and maintain their own standards of evaluation.
- Generate new ways of viewing a situation outside the boundaries of standard conventions.

Teachers teach and reinforce productive habits of mind by:
- **Modeling** self-regulated, critical, and creative thinking.
- **Identifying essential mental habits** for success in a subject or discipline.
- Having students identify situations in which specific mental habits would be useful.
- **Referring to** self-regulation, critical, or creative thinking at appropriate points in any lesson.
- Having students identify strategies and techniques to help them use these mental habits.
- Having students identify and pursue long-term goals related to these mental habits.
- **Requiring student use** of the habit.
- **Assessing student use** of the habit.
- **Serving as or appointing process observers** to identify examples of specific mental habits used during classroom activities.
- **Providing feedback** on student use of the habit.

Students use and develop their ability to be self-regulated by:
- Engaging in metacognitive processes (journals, thinking logs, think-alouds, mental rehearsals).
- Describing the steps of thinking when engaged in a task.
- Using self-talk or other behavior modification strategies.
- Using “think time” to consolidate learning.
Requiring students to develop a plan including necessary resources.
*Developing and following a schedule.
Identifying needed or available resources.
*Accepting and giving feedback constructively.
Using feedback to improve performance.
*Using own personal strengths to complete tasks.
*Adapting approach to task when conditions change or warrant.
Setting personal goals and assessing progress.
*Requiring students to assess own or others’ performance against criteria.
Finding own errors and correction strategies.
Identifying ways to learn from mistakes.
*Exhibiting a healthy self-concept--affirmations of own self.
Allowing student choice in the way to show learning.
Identifying lesson-related self-regulation behaviors.

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**Students use and develop their ability to think critically by:**

- Practicing effective communication skills.
- Clearly articulating a position *or logical argument* (Providing accurate & detailed support from a variety of sources.)
- Listening intently as others are speaking.
- *Paying close attention to details.*
- Asking for clarification when not fully understanding.
- Engaging actively in discussions and debates.
- Acknowledging and showing respect for the opinions and feelings of others.
- Carefully weighing (*evaluating the adequacy of*) the ideas or opinions of others (before rejecting or accepting them).
- Engaging in benefits and negatives analysis.
- Restraining (*suspends judgment*) impulsiveness by thinking before acting or speaking.
- Using behavior modification strategies to increase thoughtful, responsive behavior.
- Showing sensitivity to the feelings and level of knowledge of others.
- Dealing with sensitive issues tactfully.
- Identifying critical thinking behaviors necessary before beginning a task.
- Identifying critical thinking behaviors evident in lessons.
- *Using principles of logic and reasoning.*

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**Students use and develop their ability to think creatively by:**

- Showing persistence and ability to persevere through difficult or ambiguous tasks.
- *Maintaining a high level of energy for a task.*
- Doing more than is required.
- *Asking for more challenging work.*
- *Attempting tasks that are unfamiliar and different.* *Expanding the limits of comfort zone.*
- Developing criteria for evaluation.
- Practicing self-assessment against identified standards or criteria.
*Generating new ways of viewing a situation outside the boundaries of standard conventions.
*Inventing ways to improve products or processes.
Using a “different” way to achieve the correct results or end product.
Identifying lesson-related creative thinking behaviors.
Participating in Synectics lessons.
Using imagination and engaging in fantasy excursions, inventions, “blue sky” brainstorming.