



Sharon Bailin

Teaching Thinking Events

Remaining conference and seminar places reserved for subscribers

A few places remain for the both the *Teaching Thinking* conference and the seminar on *Creativity and Gifted and Able Children*. Those places have been reserved for magazine subscribers only and late booking will be accepted.

Extra conference workshops

Two further workshops for the conference have been arranged. **Andrew Sutton**, one of this country's leading experts on **Vygotskii** and the Director of the Foundation for Conductive Education, will speculate about what the respected Russian psychologist would say to us if he were alive today. Andrew says: 'Eighty years or so, Vygotskii proposed an enormously fruitful theoretical system that brought together the social and the personal, the physical and the psychological and, above all, teaching and learning. His work can help us tackle contemporary problems of providing a just and effective education.'

The other additional workshop will be given by **Roy van den Brink-Budgen**, Chief Examiner in AS level Critical Thinking for the OCR examination board. He teaches Critical Thinking to juvenile offenders and on Excellence in Cities programmes. He has written student texts on Critical Thinking that are widely used in schools and colleges. Roy will present a wide range of materials and suggest how Critical Thinking could be taught both in and out of the formal timetable in secondary schools and for examination at Key Stage 5

Other conference workshops will deal with the full range of Key Stages and many curriculum areas including PSHE and citizenship, literacy, science, maths, geography and history. Whole school planning, the use of special 'thinking days' in primary schools and the promotion of 'thinking for learning' at LEA level will also be covered.

Creativity and Gifted and Able Children

The *Teaching Thinking* seminar on Creativity and Gifted and Able children will feature three internationally respected

speakers who, between them, have an enormous amount of experience including theoretical writing, research, and practical guidance for schools and teachers. **Sharon Bailin** is one of the world's leading authorities on creativity and critical thinking. She will be speaking on the nature of creativity and the best ways to foster it in schools.

Joan Freeman is a distinguished psychologist, internationally respected for her research and considerable publications in the area of gifted development. She will report from her research about the effects of different approaches to education for gifted and able children and young people.

Belle Wallace is President of the National Association for Able Children in Education (NACE). She has worked as an advisor, developing school and LEA programmes for more able learners across all school phases. Belle will provide guidance on whole-school policies for identifying and teaching able pupils.

Teaching Thinking Network

The Teaching Thinking Network will be launched at the conference. An important feature of the Network will be an online discussion forum where subscribers can get advice about the teaching of thinking and share projects and points of view. The forum will be added to the website of *Teaching Thinking* in time for the conference. The Teaching Thinking Network will also provide subscribers, on request, with details of consultants who could assist them with in-service training and the development of school policies.

Essential Information

Details of the conference and seminar, including a booking form, are on the Teaching Thinking website (www.teachthinking.com). To request a booking form, use the details on the back page of this magazine.

International Thinking Conference speakers confirmed

An impressive list of world-class speakers have been confirmed for the tenth International Conference on Thinking which will be held in Harrogate this year between June 15 and 19. Speakers will include, Howard Gardner, Edward de Bono, Robert Sternberg, Robert Swartz, David Perkins, Michael Scriven, Carol McGuinness, Philip Adey and Frans van Eemeren.

The conference speakers and the presenters of supporting workshops will focus on: the ways human beings think, the teaching of thinking and the best ways to create 'learning and thinking organisations'.

The main conference will run from the afternoon of Saturday 15 June until lunch-time on Wednesday 19 June. The organisers anticipate sessions on Cognitive Acceleration, Critical Thinking, Philosophy for Children, Instrumental Enrichment, Multiple Intelligences, Creative Thinking, and many other topics within the focus of the conference.

A spokesperson for the conference said: 'The whole programme will provide many opportunities for practitioners to learn about different approaches for developing children's thinking and reasoning skills. Researchers will also explore the main theories about thinking.'

The event is the latest in a series of conferences that began in 1982. It is the first one to be held in Europe.

Essential information

Details and an order form for the conference are available from the official conference website (www.changing-minds.org.uk) or from RS Live, Centre Court, 1301 Stratford Road, Hall Green, Birmingham B28 9HH. Telephone: 0121 777 1001.

NUT renews commitment to Thinking Skills

The National Union of Teachers has confirmed that it will be continuing its support for thinking skills as part of its innovative professional development programme.

Speaking to a one day conference on thinking skills at NUT headquarters, John Bangs, Assistant Secretary for Education and Equal Opportunities said: 'This is not just a one-off initiative. The NUT professional development programme in thinking skills has been a fantastic success.'

Judy Sebba, a senior education adviser from the DfEE, congratulated the NUT and added: 'The teaching of thinking is not a gimmick. It is not going to go away.' She explained that much current research on teaching and learning was pointing in the same direction – highlighting the need to challenge the thinking of pupils and involve them in classroom dialogue.

The NUT is currently gathering reports from teachers who benefited from the Union's Thinking Skills Scholarship of £2000. The grant was given to 12 pairs of members who wished to investigate the teaching of thinking. In addition to the £2000 of direct funding, the scholarships included direct support through seminars and electronic communication. In 2002, the NUT will submit a co-ordinated bid for DfEE-funded Best

Practice Research Scholarships – focussing on thinking skills.

The Union will continue to include thinking skills in its Teacher2Teacher programme. This popular scheme is aimed at pairs of teachers from the same or neighbouring schools who are prepared to support each other. The teachers attend an initial two-day seminar at the NUT's training centre at Stoke Rochford Hall, near Grantham. Twelve weeks later, they attend a second seminar. In the twelve weeks between seminars, the colleagues are expected to try out strategies learned during the initial seminar, observe one another teaching, and give and take feedback following those observations. The scheme is open to all teachers, though NUT members receive a discount.

The NUT conference, *A whole lot of thinking going on*, was held at NUT headquarters on Friday 23 November 2001. The guest speakers were Viv Baumfield and Steve Higgins of Newcastle University, Carol McGuinness of Queen's University Belfast, Judy Sebba from the DfEE. John Bangs, Richard Stainton and Judy Moorhouse represented the NUT.

Further information about the Teacher2Teacher programme is available from cpdnut@nut.org.uk



Teaching thinking is here to stay

Dr. Carol McGuinness, author of the DfEE report *Thinking Skills to Thinking Classrooms*, believes that the teaching of thinking will be ‘around for the long-term’.

Speaking at a Thinking Skills conference organised by Birmingham Local Education Authority, she said: ‘The dominant view of good thinking has been that it comes from a fixed ability. That is changing. People now see that children can learn to improve their thinking. In doing so they become better at learning.’

Dr. McGuinness argued that the first step towards improving children’s thinking is through designing lessons that challenge them to think. She said: ‘Routine lesson tasks lead to routing

thinking. Good thinking demands effort. We should give pupils tasks that contain some uncertainty – that have more than one possible solution.’ Dr. McGuinness described other ways to improve pupils’ thinking; they include: using classroom discussion to encourage ‘thinking dispositions’; asking good questions and allowing pupils time to think; discussing the nature of good thinking with pupils; making connections between thinking strategies across the curriculum; and developing a ‘thinking vocabulary’.

Carol McGuinness holds a Chair in Psychology in the School of Psychology at Queen’s University Belfast. She directed the ACTS project (Activating Children’s Thinking Skills) in Northern Ireland.

Projects and events

Cognitive Acceleration

The organisers of Cognitive Acceleration in education have announced a series of new initiatives. There is a new project based in technology (CATE). Information can be obtained from Tony Hamaker (Tel: 0208 6409867)

The Wigan Arts Reasoning and Thinking Skills Project (ARTS) has produced Cognitive Acceleration lessons in music, drama and the visual arts. For information contact Ken Gouge (Tel: 01556 503739)

Details on all aspects of Cognitive Acceleration work and training, including the new *Let’s Think* project and forthcoming conferences can be obtained from the Centre for the Advancement of Thinking (Tel: 0207 8483134). Regular newsletters are published for teachers interested in CAME (contact Alan Edmiston: 0191 5367812) and CASE (Contact Eric Marshal: 01553 631279)

Philosophy for Children

SAPERE, the Philosophy for Children organisation in Britain, is having a conference in Sunderland on 8 March. Contact Sylvia Briggs at the University of Sunderland (Tel: 0191 5152399). Also see the SAPERE website: www.sapere.net.

Critical thinking and creative dialogue

Roy van den Brink Budgen, a leader in the field of critical thinking, has joined forces with Roger Sutcliffe and Karin Murriss of *Dialogueworks* to create a new course, aimed particularly at secondary teachers. The course is entitled *Critical thinking and creative dialogue*.

The course dates are Feb 23/4 (London), May 11/12 (Winchester) and July 13/14 (Birmingham). For further details see the flier enclosed in this magazine, or contact Roger Sutcliffe (Tel: 01962 853 516). Website: www.dialogueworks.co.uk