

Thinking for learning conference

The *Second National Thinking for Learning Conference*, organised by The Northumberland Thinking for Learning Unit, will take place on 29–30 April 2004 in Newcastle. This two-day conference offers delegates an opportunity to hear first hand from teachers in Northumberland and about their search for thinking strategies to make learning more effective.

The Unit's first conference in 2001 attracted colleagues from all over the country who share Northumberland LEA's commitment to understanding more about the learning process.

Our keynote speakers are both internationally recognised for their contributions to the development of thinking. John Abbott is President of The 21st Century Learning Initiative and has written several books including *The Unfinished Revolution*. Vivienne Baumfield is Director of the Thinking Skills Research Centre at the University of Newcastle and is well known for her extensive research into the impact of thinking skills approaches in the classroom.

The workshops will be led by teachers involved in action research who have used thinking strategies and are keen to pass on their findings.

For further information, please contact: The Conference and Training Support Team
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Philosophy for Children conferences

SAPERE, the society promoting Philosophy for children in Britain, is organising a series of conferences this summer.

Thinking citizens – thinking communities

Organised by SAPERE and Oxford Brookes University
 22 May, 2004, 9.00am – 3.45pm

A one day symposium for primary and secondary teachers

Key note speakers: Bill Laar – Encouraging Creative Thinking. Will Ord – Thinking for Citizenship.

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SAPERE Northern Conference

Philosophy for Children: Local to Global Thinking?

The Lantern House, Ulverston, Cumbria

Friday 25 June (evening) 2004, Sat 26th June (all day) 2004

Delegate cost is £75 - with a £10 reduction in cost for SAPERE members. Please note that this cost is inclusive of a buffet supper, lunch and other light refreshments

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DfES launch Thinking skills database

The DfES has launched a database of thinking skills resources on the Standards Site (www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/thinkingskills).

The resources in the database were reviewed by Steve Higgins and Jennifer Miller from the University of Newcastle. The authors state that: 'The identification process concentrated on materials currently available in the UK appropriate for use by teachers with primary age pupils (4-11 years). A range of methods to identify materials were used as one method did not reveal the range of programmes and resources available. Some are commercially published, some are published by Local

Education Authorities, others require training courses, or can be found through the internet.'

Though the website falls short of recommending any resources above the others, all materials had to fulfil several criteria to be included. For example, they had to have clear curriculum links, contain activities for pupils as well as professional development guidance for teachers, make the process of teaching thinking explicit (either for teachers or pupils) and have been evaluated or researched in classroom settings. All the selected materials can be used with a class or large group of pupils (not only for one-to-one teaching).