

Top Ten Thinking Tactics

Mike Lake and Marjorie Needham - Questions Publishing Co.

This is an easy to follow, concisely structured programme of lessons which have been compiled by the above authors.

The lessons are part of a complete package in an A4 ring binder presentation which incorporates theory and practice of Thinking Skills development for children. The authors have condensed the skills down to the 10 most important for pupils of upper primary school (about 8-12 years). Lesson plans, all starting from cartoon drawing worksheets which are intended as the springboard for discussion among pupils. It is this discussion which is the important aspect of the lesson because it is through this that teachers can guide and encourage children to develop these important skills. Skills which will be used in other areas of curriculum and as an integral part of learning and decision making for future learning.

The package is well presented - starting with the background and theories of this area of the curriculum, now being recognised and adopted in many schools. The progression is clear with each stage/lesson having useful background notes and suggestions for teachers. Some of the cartoon outlines I found rather obscure and would question relevance to today's pupils, ie, ideas used may need explanation.

However, there are suggestions about applying the tactics in other areas of the curriculum. It is accepted and stated that teachers having used the material may wish to adapt and change it to suit their particular circumstances.

I would suggest this as a good and useful resource in schools. For teachers coming to Thinking Skills development for the first time or others who have been doing so before but not wish to have a clearer structure and coherent progression to their teaching this is an answer.