

## Annotation & Evaluation

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**Barto, Denise**  
**AP4 - Critical Thinking**

**Status: Evaluated**

EVALUATION				
	Emergent	Bridging	Fulfilled	Proficiency Level
<input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient  <input type="checkbox"/> Inappropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> 4.E.1 Demonstrate knowledge of critical thinking and problem solving skills  <input type="checkbox"/> 4.E.2 Identify strategies for developing higher order thinking skills for students (P-12) across contexts	<input type="checkbox"/> 4.B.1 Construct a repertoire of realistic projects or problem solving tasks for measuring students' (P-12) critical thinking  <input type="checkbox"/> 4.B.2 Plan for strategies that promote development of critical thinking skills and problem-solving capabilities in students (P-12)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.F.1 Use performance activities, such as realistic projects and problem solving activities that measure students' (P-12) higher order thinking skills, as appropriate  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 4.F.2 Implement techniques and strategies that promote students' (P-12) development of critical and creative thinking and independent problem-solving skills, as appropriate	<input type="checkbox"/> Preliminary  <input type="checkbox"/> Emergent  <input type="checkbox"/> Bridging  <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fulfilled

**Comments from Evaluator:** Your last two artifacts are good examples of critical thinking, and measuring how you find out if kids can do that or not. Congratulations on FEAP 4.

**ANNOTATION**

1. Type and description of evidence(s) (e.g. assignments, activity)

Contents:

1. Lesson Plan: Citizenship (Grade Level 4/5)
2. Lesson Plan: Constitution (Grade Level 4)
3. Lesson Plan: Florida's Native American Tribes (Grade Level: 4)
4. Modified Mainstream Lesson Plan for ESOL (Kindergarten)

Updated 3/8/09

5. The Human Body – The Brain –lesson from teacher work sample Level III  
The Heart  
Rubric for the Scientist Notebook

Three of the articles that I have included for the critical thinking AP are lesson plans. These are lesson plans that I wrote for SSE 4313 Teaching Elementary Social Studies. The lessons are for grades 4/5. I choose to include these lessons here because my professor gave very high standards for writing the lesson plans and all plans had to include a questioning strategy designed to get students to think at all levels of Blooms Taxonomy. The first lesson is on Citizenship. The purpose of the lesson is to teach students the importance of appreciating and helping others, model civic and public responsibility. The lesson included set induction activities, holding a bottle of clean water and one containing dirty water and asking the students which one the student would rather swim, bathe, or drink in order to involve the students in the topic. From these activities I will brainstorm with the students what makes a person a good citizen. The students will also complete a What Would You Do worksheet to get the student thinking about citizenship and what they would do in various scenarios. Then I read, "A River Ran Wild," by Lynne Cherry. The lesson has the students creating a plan for a community service project. Throughout the lesson I have incorporated activities and questioning strategies to elicit critical thinking on the part of the students to think about and be able to participate in the discussion regarding what makes a good citizen.

The second lesson is on the Constitution. The lesson is to be taught over several days and end on Constitution Day. The

purpose of the lesson is designed to acquaint students with the Constitution, importance of knowing about America's founding fathers, documents and inspirational figures who have helped our nation. The lesson starts with a set induction activity where the students will start playing a game. The lesson incorporates the student conducting research on the Internet in order to develop three questions they will role play to interview three of the signers of the Constitution. Then the student's are to compare how it applies to the student's present day life. Lastly, the students view a copy of the Constitution and have the opportunity to sign the Constitution themselves.

The third evidence is a lesson on Florida's Indian Tribes. The lesson has a set induction activity to think about how Florida's first people lived and asking if they know a Native American. The lesson uses a KWL chart to find out what the students know and want to learn about Native Americans. The students will make a tool that the Tocobaga Indians would have used. There will be discussion about the tool and how they think the tool is used or how they would use the tool today. This lesson has the students doing their own research to find information on different Native American tribes of Florida in order to make a historical fact book.

The fourth evidence I have included for AP 4 Critical Thinking is a modified math lesson plan for my ESOL Practicum, FLE 5940/ESOL III. This lesson plan was for Kindergarten and was modified for the ESOL students in the Kindergarten class. The cooperating teacher asked me the day before to teach the math lesson using the Valentine candy hearts for Valentine's Day. During the lesson I read a book about the candy hearts, "I Love Words," by Barbara Barbieri McGrath, to engage the students in the lesson. The math lesson involved students categorizing their candy hearts by color. I had the students count how many hearts they had of one color and color in a graph to represent that number. The lesson had many math concepts that were taught (naming colors, counting, categorizing, graphing, and predicting). I included questioning strategies in the lesson to check for understanding. I also had questioning for advanced students so they were challenged by the activity. The questioning strategy involved higher level thinking, such as to have the students make predictions like, "which color will you have more of, less, or the same," and "was your prediction true or not and why do you think it was or wasn't?" I feel lessons can have students use higher thinking skills and ESOL students should be included so a teacher should higher order thinking questions or activities for all students in the classroom.

UPDATED 3/8/09

I have included two lessons from my teacher work sample on the human body from my Level III internship. The lessons are for the second grade classroom where I taught the lessons. I choose to include these lessons because the students were scientist and had to explore how the human body worked and what the function of the organ. I also included the lessons to display how I can develop questioning strategies designed to get students to think at higher level thinking. I had the students complete a KWL chart prior to implementing the unit to see what the students knew. I also had the students complete a body outline drawing and labeling as many body parts as they could. The first lesson is on the brain and the second is about the heart. The purpose of the lessons were to teach students the about the brain/hear and the main function of the body part. I utilized a children's literature book for the basis of the lesson for this unit. I then had the students explore how the body part worked by engaging in activities. During and after their exploration I had questions prepared for the students to answer in their scientist notebook. We then discussed the observations and findings with the whole class. The students' scientist notebooks were evaluated using a rubric I developed.

2. How did the evidence(s) address the Accomplished Practice? (Why are you using the evidence(s) to prove you met the practice and rubric criteria?)

These lesson plans address the AP for Critical Thinking because the activities and questioning strategies in the lessons are designed to promote and enhance student thinking at the knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation levels. I am using the Citizenship lesson plan to demonstrate my ability to plan lessons that meet the learning objective, are motivating, and encourage critical thinking from my students. I believe the lesson not only teaches a student about the subject content, but also has character objectives. The lesson has a questioning strategy to encourage the student to use higher order thinking skills which will help the student think more critically. I believe the set induction activity of having a bottle of clean water and a bottle of dirty water is engaging to the students and starts to engage the student to think critically from the start of the lesson. I believe this lesson also meets the AP critical thinking because as the teacher I am not telling the student what to think or how, but guiding the student to think critically for themselves in order to become responsible citizens.

The Constitution lesson plan meets the AP because of the thought and planning given to writing a plan with sequenced learning activities along with a questioning strategy that incorporates Blooms Taxonomy. The learning activities engage in the students in the topic, makes them take the perspective of a founding father and relate it to the present today. The student has to think about how the Constitution relates to their life today.

The Native American lesson plan meets the AP because of the set induction and learning activities which engage in the students in the topic, makes them take the perspective of a Native American and relate it to the present today.

I included this lesson because ESOL students are another population of individuals that teachers need to accommodate in the classroom. As a teacher you need to plan for how you will elicit higher order thinking and what activities you can have that will help ESOL students. Again, teachers need to make ESOL students feel welcome and comfortable in the classroom. Teachers need to be accepting of cultural differences of students and use the differences as a learning experience. Teachers also need to have high standards for ESOL students and assist them in improving academically as well as linguistically. I believe this lesson meets the criteria because of planning for all students including the modification for all levels of language proficiency. The class had ten English speaking students and eight ESOL students at all levels of English Language Proficiency. There was one student who had only been in the country for 3 weeks. This was a wonderful experience for me to see how to manage all the needs of the students, not just certain groups. This classroom is reflective of a classroom I could have and helped prepare me for the various learning backgrounds and culturally diverse backgrounds students have.

UPDATED 3/8/09

These lesson plans address the AP for Critical Thinking because the activities and questioning strategies in the lessons are designed to promote and enhance student thinking at the various levels of critical thinking. I believe the lesson displays my ability to teach the subject content but also have the students find the answers for themselves. I could tell them the function of the body part, but the students will remember if they discover the answer for themselves and think about it.

3. Answer the question below that best fits your evidence

a - If your evidence involved your direct work with (P-12) students, answer this question: How did the evidence/s impact students' (P-12) learning? (How would/did the evidence(s) help students learn?)

b - If your evidence did not involve your direct work with (P-12) student, answer this question: How could the evidence/s impact students' (P-12) learning? How could the evidence(s) help (P-12) students learn?)

I have not had the opportunity to teach these Social Studies lessons however, I was able to share some of the items and resources with students in my own child's classrooms and in my ESOL Internship. My third grader was also studying the Tocobaga Indians as part of a Pinellas County history unit. He shared the book as well as brought in the tool, an adz, to show his classmates an example since they also had to make a tool. I think that having the visual aides and activities for these lessons really helps student achievement. I also think that because of the questioning strategies and activities in these lessons, students will be challenged to achieve at a higher level.

I taught this lesson in my practicum, so I did have an opportunity to see its impact on student learning. Students enjoyed this lesson and they had many opportunities to learn different math skills. Students especially enjoyed graphing the candy hearts so they could eat them at the end of the lesson. I learned though, it is important to know the skill level of the students. I knew I had to write the lesson for the ESOL students, but I really was not aware of what math concepts had been taught to the students. I was ready to jump right in and start teaching without remembering to discuss with the cooperating teacher where the students were academically related to the skills she wanted me to teach. Having more experience in the classroom now, I would know what to ask a cooperating teacher about teaching a lesson rather than going in cold not knowing what a student knows or doesn't know. When you know what your students know and don't know you are able to plan better and write a lesson plan that meets their needs.

UPDATED 3/8/09

The lessons did impact the student's learning. I had the students complete a KWL chart prior to implementing the unit to see what the students knew. I also had the students complete a body outline drawing and labeling as many body parts as they could. I was surprised to see the students drawing a heart like a Valentine heart in the body outline. During the lesson on the heart I made sure to correct their thinking and showed pictures of the heart. The students did not know much about the brain prior to the unit. They were able to explore and learn a lot about the brain by the end of the unit. I also saw the student learning from the pre-assessment to the post assessment. The students were engaged in the learning activities which reinforced the main objective in the lessons which was to learn the basic function of certain body parts. I believe the various learning activities and various assessments allowed the students to display their knowledge and they learned the content and performed well on the final unit assessment.

4. Reflect on what you learned about this Accomplished Practice? (Write a reflection about what it means to you now that you've selected evidence(s) and have written this annotation about it)

When writing these lessons I learned preparation and thought needs to be given in order to evoke critical thinking from your students. I also learned it is not just developing questions using Blooms Taxonomy as a way to elicit higher order thinking, but also the learning activities a teacher uses will evoke critical thinking. I feel by creating a creative and motivating learning environment students will be challenged, in turn learning at a higher level.

I learned it is easy to write a lesson plan with objectives, materials, learning activities and an assessment. From writing these lessons I learned how important it is to incorporate critical thinking and to teach a student critical thinking skills. I think that critical thinking is an area that is extremely important in a child's education and often overlooked because of standardized curriculum and standardized testing. I think that teachers need to look for opportunities to ask questions that will evoke critical thinking skills and make sure that lessons and units include activities that make students think creatively and critically about topics. This especially becomes important as students get into the higher grades. Critical thinking is a skill that is invaluable as an adult and should be fostered in children.

UPDATED 3/8/09

When writing the lessons for the teacher work sample I saw how important planning and writing the objectives are to lesson planning. I had to think about what I wanted the students to learn and how to accomplish the objectives. I had to think about activities that would challenge the students to think at higher level thinking rather than low level thinking. I feel activities can support this type of thinking and are important especially in content areas like science. Students need time to explore and find answers for themselves rather than reading and being told by the teacher.

**Status:** Evaluated **Last Modified:** 03/10/2009