

Education

Education Is Power

By THOMAS E. WILSON, PH.D



From Maine to San Francisco, administrators, school teachers, parents, and others concerned with youth constantly bombard children with the idea that they cannot or will not think.

In today's society where children are confronted with a knowledge explosion that is almost beyond most adults' comprehension, there is a definite need to re-examine thinking and the thinking process, and to utilize every opportunity there is to develop clear thinking abilities in children.

The individual child must be considered. The

many complexities of our present-day society force many children to grow up and emerge from their narrow world at an early age. Even before children enter school life, they are forced to actively engage in thinking. They must explore the world about them; in their cribs and playpens they begin to look around and puzzle. They soon select their favorite toy by comparing and analyzing. They begin to think! As children continue to grow and mature, they perceive their world through their sensory experiences. They continue to search and to struggle with ideas. They perceive what is going on around them—at home, in school, in the community, and in the world. They begin to be critical of the ideas and the attitudes of others. They start to analyze problems, uncover many different types of solutions, and see relationships in their proper perspective.

The exposure to the trial and error of experience in living, seeing, doing, and trying leads to early formation of the ability to think. The child who comes into contact with parents, teachers and peers who permit open-minded thought is able to develop into a person who can think for himself/herself. Encouragement, opportunity, and experience can provide the key to the process in which a learner discovers that there are many paths to the correct answer.

Basically, there are two kinds of children which the teacher comes in contact with during his or her day in the typical classroom. They are the verbal children who talk a lot, and the nonverbal children who rarely say a word. However, teachers have discovered that the nonverbal child can think. The essential stimulants have been teachers who encourage, provide opportunities, and believe in the child's ability to succeed.

To think effectively, children must be taught those skills necessary to develop their thinking abilities. For centuries, man has taught man the basic skills for everything. However, we must go even further. We must include other factors, and we must guide children so that they will understand the how and the why of problems so that they can increase their thinking abilities. We must encourage children to find their own ways of doing things, to think for themselves. There are many situations that occur in everyone's life in which decisions have to be made, and there is not, and never will be, one solution that will work in each and every one of these situations.

There are factors other than the basic skills that affect the thinking process and grow out of a child's experiences. These factors, namely, emotions, needs, attitudes, and habits may be termed as "the motives for thinking." They are motives that help to "initiate and determine the direction of thinking."

Basically, the thinking process includes five basic components: observing, classifying, comparing, analyzing, and problem solving or critical thinking. By observing, we mean that we see, hear, taste, feel, or smell; by classifying, we mean putting things in order for more efficient use; by comparing, we mean developing the ability to notice resemblances and differences; analyzing has to do with examining material that is presented with an eye to figuring out its components, etc.; and problem solving is the development of the ability to solve problems or to think critically about a problem.

One big question recurs time and time again in the minds of educators and others involved with the training of youth. This question is, can we teach children to think? The answer is no. No one can teach another human being how to think. Our aim should be to help children to learn to think, to learn the thinking process, not to teach them how to think. We must focus our attention as parents and teachers on aiding individual children to make use of the

Rancho To Hold Registration Aug. 23

Students attending Rancho High School this fall who have already pre-registered, should report to the school cafeteria for registration on Thursday, Aug. 23.

Students will register according to the following schedule based on grade level and beginning alphabet of last name:

- 7:30 a.m. Pre-registered Seniors A-K
- 8:15 a.m. Pre-registered Seniors L-Z
- 9:15 a.m. Pre-registered Juniors A-K
- 10:00 a.m. Pre-registered Juniors L-Z
- 11:00 a.m. Pre-registered Sophomores A-K
- 11:45 a.m. Pre-registered Sophomores L-Z
- 12:30 p.m. Pre-registered Freshmen A-K
- 1:15 p.m. Pre-registered Freshmen L-Z

In order to avoid delays in enrollment and also to have a wider selection of courses from which to select, students are advised to register at their designated time. A separate late registration for students who miss their assigned time to register will be held on Aug. 27, noon to 2 p.m. in the school cafeteria.

Students who have not pre-registered, including students zoned for Rancho, who did not pre-register in junior high during the spring, as well as new students to the Clark County School District, should pre-register Aug. 15-21.

Any student in this category should report to the assistant principal responsible for zoning, to verify address and clear

for registration. Students will be required to provide proof that they live in the Rancho zone (power bill, rent receipt, etc.) in order to enroll. Following clearance for zoning, students will be directed to the registrar to complete needed paperwork, and will then be assigned to a counselor to complete their class schedule.

Anyone needing additional information is encouraged to call Rancho High School at 649-4270.

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natural abilities they have within them. We must teach the skills and mechanics of the thinking process. We must cultivate that which a child uses naturally and will continue to use in his/her everyday life.

What does all of this mean to the average Black parent of a child who is in the midst of our educative process? Essentially, it means that we, as parents, must provide opportunities, experiences, etc., for the child to develop his/her natural abilities. Read to him/her. See to it that the child has a quiet place to study; provide proper materials for study; provide an environment, both physical and mental, that will be conducive to study; and take the child on trips (short or long), and explain to him/her some of the things seen along the way.

The more we work at developing the processes involved in thinking, the greater will be the child's chances of success in his/her educative endeavors.



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