

Critical Thinking and Rigor



What is it?

Rigor is shaping up to be the next big movement in education. Rigor refers to providing a challenging learning environment and “raising the bar” for all students. The rationale for rigor comes from the fact that students in the 21st century live in a world where they can’t begin to know everything there is to know. Employers today are asking that educators prepare students to “think” so that they’re always able to find what it is they don’t know. One way of providing rigor is to ensure that students today can think at higher levels – otherwise known as critical thinking skills. For most of us, this brings to mind Bloom’s Taxonomy and the six levels of cognitive thinking.

Why do I need to know this?

We all learned about Bloom’s Taxonomy when we were in college. The problem: we learned *what* it is, not how to use it in the classroom. This Teacher 2 Teacher training not only provides a clear descriptor of each of the levels of Bloom’s, we also give you specific strategies that will allow you to elicit the kind of critical thinking skills that your students need – and you’ll be able to use them in your classroom *the next day!*



Tell me more about what I’ll learn.



We’ll show you easy ways to get your students to analyze, synthesize and evaluate information. Along with the day-to-day activities, we’ll show you how to write higher level critical thinking questions that you can integrate into your own class work, formative assessments, or summative assessments. We’ll provide you with practice time to actually write these types of questions, and show you how to take the lower level questions you currently use in your classroom and/or on your assessments and change them so that they become higher level questions. We believe that by learning how to write higher level questions, you’ll learn how to ask higher level questions on a daily basis in your classroom. And since grading higher level questions is always a challenge, we’ll show you with very clear steps how to develop rubrics that will allow you to easily evaluate higher level thinking skills.

Critical Thinking and Rigor -continued-



Following this, we'll demonstrate how to provide regular assessment opportunities for your students by showing you how to develop a formative assessment process that will



actually give you the information you need to determine whether or not your students are *really* thinking at a higher level. A part of this is learning how to look at the data associated with formative assessments in general, and with critical thinking questions specifically.

You'll leave this seminar knowing . . .

- 1) what higher level critical thinking skills are, and how they relate to increasing rigor in your classroom;
- 2) how to provide easy-to-use strategies that will allow your students to think at the higher levels;
- 3) how to write higher level thinking questions and/or how to “tweak” the lower level questions you currently use so they assess critical thinking;
- 4) how to assess to know if your students are learning critical thinking skills;
- 5) how to grade higher level questions and analyze the data associated with that type of thinking; and
- 6) how to change your instructional time so that you can include higher level thinking activities into your curriculum – i.e., how to “review” using higher level thinking activities.



In addition, we'll help you to develop an Action Plan on how you'll take the information you learn in this session and apply it into your classroom, your school and/or your entire district.

Register for Critical Thinking and Rigor - <http://teacher2teacher.info/register.htm>