

Strategies to Promote the 5 Thinking Skills in Preschoolers



Curious Thinkers actively explore people and things, especially the new and novel, and eventually abstract ideas.



- Encourage children to observe each other’s work and ask each other questions about what they notice.
- Help children make sense of what happened by asking them to try to describe and then explain the outcome. Focus on describing what happened first, before moving on to explanations.

Persistent thinkers actively take risks and repeat their experiments over and over to verify results and look for new outcomes. They remain with an activity for a sustained period of time to try to solve the problem or understand the problem better.

- Provide children with metacognitive strategies—that is, strategies to help children think about their thinking and what they are learning.
- Encourage children’s individual learning needs through support and feedback to guide children in their learning. Provide hints, offering children choices to find the solution and guiding them to use additional resources.



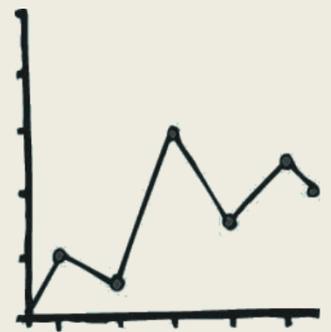
Flexible thinkers pause and decide what to do next rather than simply reacting immediately to something perceived in the environment.

- Look at existing everyday tools, such as kitchen utensils and sporting equipment, and talk about how the materials combine to make those tools and the role each material plays in helping the tool do its job.
- Turn an ill-structured problem into a well-structured one by showing a problem and giving solution options to choose from.



Reflective thinkers acknowledge what actions they have already taken and what data they have already gathered to make a decision. They evaluate those actions and data to determine whether or not they are a step closer to answering a question or designing a solution.

- Help develop remembering capabilities by being elaborate when reminiscing together about past events, such as a family birthday party.
- Encourage children to think in their heads before answering questions by asking, “How do you know that?” or “What makes you think that?”



Collaborative thinkers work together effectively, asking questions, pooling information, contributing to and critiquing concepts and ideas, and jointly testing solutions.

- Provide daily opportunities for small-group activities in which children can work together on a problem, a challenge, or a shared goal.
- Consistently develop respectful, responsive, and caring relationships with young children. These caring interactions build attachment, trust, and empathy and are the essential foundation for prosocial behavior.



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