



Promoting thinking routines in Indian classrooms

IN THIS ARTICLE, **DIVYA KAPOOR** SHARES SOME EXAMPLES OF THINKING ROUTINES THAT PRACTITIONERS CAN INTRODUCE IN THEIR OWN CLASSROOMS.

The challenges of the pandemic remind us that we have to build a generation of learners who are capable of solving problems and thinking critically. Now more than ever, it is essential to reflect if our classrooms are providing students with enough opportunities to think and construct their knowledge. Are students being motivated to observe, analyse, and question? And more importantly, can the habit of thinking critically be taught to our students?

School leaders and teachers have often introduced practices that make learning more effective under changing circumstances. Whether online or physical classrooms, these practices have helped to promote the exchange of ideas, helped construct knowledge, make critical observations, and foster collaborations.

Thinking routines – what, why, and how?

Project Zero, an initiative by the Harvard Graduate School of Education, has developed thinking routines that can be used in different ways to support learning and enhance thinking among students across age groups and with different abilities and competencies.

What is a thinking routine?

Thinking routines are simple tools – a series of questions or a short sequence of activities – that can be used in a classroom while working with individuals and groups. These routines help students observe, organise their thoughts and ideas, and provide reasons to make sense of situations.

Why should an educator use thinking routines?

Thinking routines allow students to delve deeper into concepts and grasp complex ideas. They are designed to leverage the power of collaborative thinking for making detailed observations. Thus, these routines help trigger thinking and enhance the observation capacities of students. Students begin to view problems as opportunities,

understand different perspectives, and work together to develop clarity of thought.

How can we use thinking routines effectively?

For many educators, thinking routines might be an entirely new exercise while for others, this can be a well-practiced area of pedagogy. However, we should bear in mind that one does not need to be an expert to use thinking routines in classrooms and students can be co-opted to learn more about them. These routines can be used in several situations, such as in asking questions, making connections, eliciting explanations, challenging ideas, shifting perspectives, etc.

Some interesting thinking routines that teachers can follow in their classrooms are described below.

Word-phrase-sentence routine

This routine helps students capture the **essence of a text**, provide structure to a conversation, and generate a dialogue. You can ask learners to closely peruse a given text, talk about what appeals to them, the meaning of the text, and discuss different interpretations it may hold for different people. Remember that to make this routine work effectively, it is important to talk about why a certain word, phrase, or sentence acted as a stimulus for an individual or a group. Thus, essentially, an individual or a group is assigned to read a text and identify the exact word or phrase that has caught their attention and helped them understand the main idea of the text.

3-2-1 bridge routine

This routine is useful for exploring and introducing new ideas in the classroom. It helps uncover initial thoughts in a student's mind regarding a new topic – questions, problems, and ideas. Students are asked to highlight three points they know about the topic, two items that are confusing, and one analogy that comes to their mind before the lesson begins. They are then asked to undertake a similar exercise again after the

lesson has been delivered, with the teacher helping them see the difference between the two sets of responses.

The 4Cs routine

This is a highly effective routine based on the 4C's – connections, challenges, concepts, and changes. This routine motivates students to ask questions, helps in identifying key ideas related to a concept, promotes application, and assists in building robust connections. It encourages revisiting a text and seeking meaning beyond first reading impressions. Thus, students can be asked to read a given text and think how the idea in the text can be linked to their own lives – do they want to argue against any idea in the text? Is there a concept they feel is worth considering in their lives? Do they want to change their own attitude or of people around them after reading the text?

Give 3 routine

This routine helps to gather peer feedback. Students are encouraged to give and receive feedback from other students in the class. They can be probed to review a piece of work by a peer and then asked to describe one positive observation, engage in a positive dialogue about the work, and comment on one area that would require further explanation or improvement. After this exercise, students revise their work based on the feedback they receive from their peers.

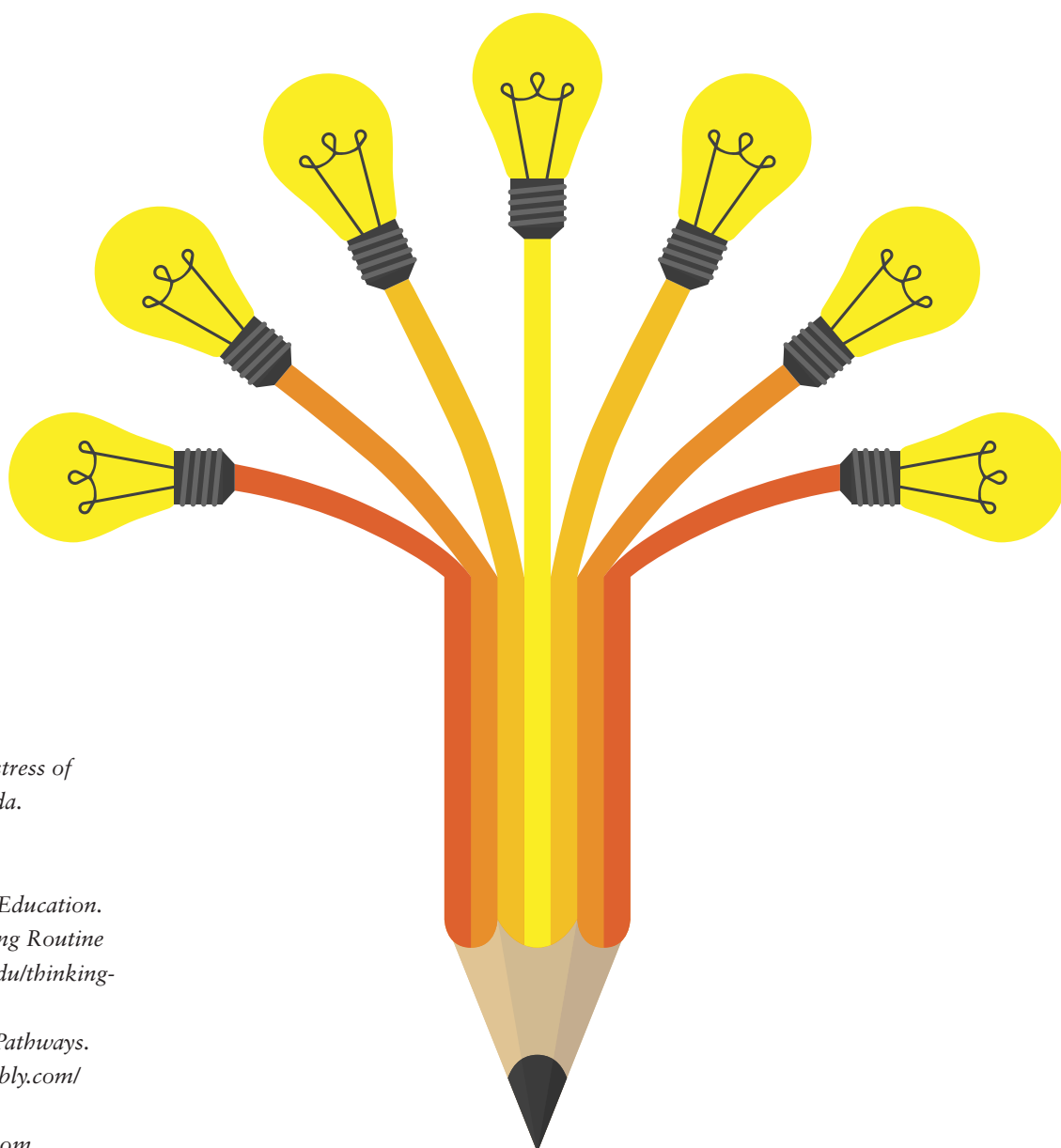
Peel the fruit routine

This routine encourages students to explore taught concepts in greater detail. They are given an opportunity to peel the different layers of complexity for profound understanding. This routine involves six simple steps. First, students share what they observe at the surface level or at first glance. Second, they look for issues that puzzle them. Third, they build an explanation of the topic or concept. Fourth, students look for elements that they can connect with their own life. Fifth, they are encouraged to think about other possible perspectives and viewpoints on the theme/topic. Lastly, students reflect upon the central idea and

share the gathered knowledge with their peers.

Conclusion

Thinking routines are a set of tactics that help engage and involve students effectively in classroom activities and strengthen their thinking processes. Students get opportunities to collaborate with peers in knowledge construction, elimination of misconceptions, and knowledge application. Thinking routines can be an ocean of possibilities for us to explore as teachers. **T**



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