

Enriching learning through BETTER THINKING

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A well-balanced thinking process provides a solid foundation to the complete learning process. It is a well-established fact that thinking can't be developed by learning instructions; it is a step-by-step process to polish our brains. Thinking tools and mind games are the best options to enhance analytical reasoning and logical abilities of a child. But ironically, it has not become a part of curriculum in our education system and lakhs of students suffer academically and later in life also as rote learning methods stifle their imagination and creative instincts. However, of late some innovative instructional systems have been developed and have been incorporated in the traditional teaching environment to improve learning among students.

My Thinking Programme is an innovative in-school programme which was conceptualised and created by husband-wife duo Ashutosh Khurana, CEO, Mind Edutainment Pvt. Ltd and Sangeeta Khurana, Co-Founder, Mind Edutainment Pvt. Ltd., which

directly develops high-level thinking skills without using academic subjects as an intermediary. It has been clubbed with the existing academic curriculum of schools and is delivered as a regular 'Thinking' subject based on the fundamentals of child development, human development, psychology and the educational frameworks of Bloom's Anderson and Krathwohl's taxonomy. The programme is currently being used in schools in Pune, Dehradun, Delhi, Chandigarh, Jaipur, Hyderabad, Chennai, Cochin and Bengaluru. Through this programme a mode has been set to lay emphasis on providing an appropriate experience to a child at the initial stages of the formation of belief and thinking process. Ashutosh Khurana, CEO, Mind Edutainment Pvt. Ltd tells more about the programme. Excerpts from an interview:

How did this concept evolve?

The birth of our first son in late 2002 made me and my wife dwell deep on the existing vacuum in the current education system with regard to training a young mind on thinking. With this

realisation, we decided that we should conceptualise and formalise our life's learning into a programme and take it to the schools where the early and the most important development of an individual happens.

We then spent four years studying not only the school education system but also the minds of school authorities, teachers, parents and students. Based on this research and analysis, we started working on structuring the programme. We designed the programme curriculum and content for classroom delivery around the following four pillars:

- Thinking skills
- Thinking concepts (Thinkabulary™)
- Thinking processes and
- Thinking models

As a pilot product, the programme was introduced in DPS Mathura Road, Ahlcon Public School and DAV School, Sector 14, Gurgaon in 2008, students expressed the need to strengthen their way of thinking, both cognitive and emotional, within the first quarter of the implementation of the programme.

How does this programme



help students?

This programme lays emphasis on the development of thinking skills and processes in a learner-centric, learner-induced environment, thereby focusing on an optimal functioning of the mind. The programme draws forth the latent capabilities and sensitivities of the mind rather than filling it with pre-designed information. The core foundation of the programme envelops the findings of various brain researches, including the finding that learning is most effective when it involves the brain's natural function of creating meaning from an experience. Hence, learning is natural, active and meaningful as it happens in the context of the experience that one goes through.

This active learning is invoked by the motivation triggered by conscious and subconscious mind for

intrinsic rewards of knowledge, understanding and experience. The teachers in this programme function as facilitators of learning by providing an environment where students search for meaning, appreciate uncertainty, inquire responsibly and draw inferences for their higher growth.

This, in turn, helps students to take responsibility for their own learning, to be independent thinkers, to develop integrated understanding of concepts, and to pose and seek questions rather than being rote learners. This involves learning by understanding rather than mere memorisation.

Such a learning process makes students not only stress-free, but also enables them to excel in academics and be competent to handle real-life situations responsibly.