

Agora

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Skills-focused learning - workshop for parents

Skills are the greatest asset of progressive learning. Families who support skills development and encourage children and young people to apply their skills or “figure out” the world on their own usually face less fuss around school life in general. Moreover, in a world where billions of dollars are being invested in marketing that hacks our thinking into buying and consuming, thinking skills serve as a protection and keepers of integrity and autonomy of a person. This workshop gives parents simple tools and scenarios to support students’ thinking skills.

Workshop objectives

- To understand the **role of skills** in progressive curriculum and life
- To explore how skills development can be supported in a home setting
- To understand **simple processes** for developing curious and skilled learners

Resources and supplies

- Transdisciplinary skills puzzle cutouts
- Take-away inquiry question prompts (handout)
- Take away inquiry vocab prompt (handout)
- Creativity handout

- Big classroom
- Projector
- Papers and pens

Skills

In this workshop session, parents will have the opportunity to:

- Communicate
- Analyze
- Identify
- Reflect
- Classify
- Make connections

Assessment

- Involvement in discussions
- Sharing answers and questions
- Puzzle sort



Flow of activities and learning engagements

Welcome and introduction to the workshop – 3 min.

Getting to know each other through the question “What’s a skill?” – 5 min.

Quick review of the role of skills across the progressive curriculum – 3 min.

Activity 1: Parents will complete the puzzle with skills clusters and specific transferrable skills - 10 min.

Debrief – 3 min.

Parents’ sharing: What field related (technical) skills do you need at your work daily? Comparing field specific skills requirements to the trans-disciplinary skills list – 10 min.

A mini lecture about the importance of skills for thinking and life in general (extract from David Perkins’ conference); comments - 15 min.

Activity 2: Short discussion about triggers for thinking + inquiry vocabulary handout – 10 min.

Activity 3: Effective vocabulary for triggering thinking, the “20/80” rule – parents will consider hypothetical scenarios to understand and find out the effective communication approach to stimulate an active mind – 15 min.

Mini presentation about creative thinking skills - 5 min.

Parents questions and exchange – 10 min.

Thanks and closing the workshop – 3 min.

Sneak peek into the resources

Communication and collaboration, critical thinking

- Give and receive meaningful feedback

The building

Your child: « Mom/Dad, I visited the Colosseum. »

You: « Oh, honey, it's impressive! »

What has the child learned?

How does the child feel?

Communication and collaboration, critical thinking

- Give and receive meaningful feedback

The building

Your child: « Mom/Dad, I visited the Colosseum. »

You: « Wow! What do you think it takes to build it? »

« Wow! How would you feel if there were still gladiators fights there? »

What has the child learned?

How does the child feel?

Sneak peek into the resources

Creative thinking

- How do children develop creativity? (**Multidisciplinary** Vs. arts limited) → We need to disassociate creative thinking and arts as the only space for creativity!
- Perseverance – **mistake** friendly environment
- Vocabulary: 1. Words are not descriptive, but **generative**;
2. Literacy: the skill of forming the **symbolic brain**,
that enables us to merge with the very first virtual
reality
3. **Visible thinking** (What do you already know about this topic?
What makes you think so?
What questions do you have at this point?
How might you explore this topic?)
- **Directed** activities – problem solving activities as opportunities for creative thinking
(handout)

Sneak peek into the resources

Problem solving, reflection, self-management, using resources

- Mistake friendly environment – mistakes are opportunities to learn

The backpack

Child: « Oh, no, mom, I forgot my backpack in school... And I have a workbook homework due tomorrow... »

Mom: « Again?! How many times have I told you to be responsible and take care of your things?... There, now you will not complete your homework. There's the consequence.»

What has the child learned?

How does the child feel?

Problem solving, reflection, self-management, using resources

- Mistake friendly environment – mistakes are opportunities to learn

The backpack

Child: « Oh, no, mom, I forgot my backpack in school... »

Mom: « Oh... » (with empathetic expression)

Child: « And I have this workbook homework that I need to do by tomorrow... What should I do?! »

Mom: « Oh, what should you do, honey? »

Child: « Hmm...I can call Anna, she can read the questions from her workbook and I can write the questions and the answers in my notebook... »

Mom: « Sounds like a plan. »

What has the child learned?

How does the child feel?
