

IACESA NEWS UPDATE

International Association for Cognitive Education in Southern Africa



This newsletter carries news of local and international events of interest to our members.

2011 (2) November

Page 1

IN THIS ISSUE	Pages
• Message from the President: Elsefie Wranz	1, 2
• IACESA contact details	3
• 2011 Cog Ed Seminars: Estelle Brettenny	4
• Letter by Ann Morton – Pinelands North Primary School	5
• Feuerstein's IE in the Western Cape: Lilian Lomofsky	6
• News from TSSA	7,8,9

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT ELSEFIE WRANZ

Dear IACESA Member

All professionals who are in any way involved with teaching and learning have opportunities and obligations to pave the academic path with stepping stones of critical and creative thinking for their students.

The stepping stones represent the thinking blocks infused in the learning content – the pathway, is the directional guide in the form of the curriculum and the learners are the travellers on the path that we have constructed. To fulfil this teaching role effectively constitutes a tremendous responsibility as well as an opportunity to be creative and individual. It requires an inspirational and motivational attitude of every teacher.

One of the most important end goals for students and learners in life is to qualify themselves in a direction, to obtain an earning position and to be a valuable member of society by contributing towards supporting one's own family as well as to the economy.

An editorial by Wilhelm Jordaan titled "Die pad na sukses", prompted me to re-assign teachers with the responsibility of teaching specific skills to learners to ensure that learners are adequately prepared for a profession in the future. I challenge the teaching role of every teacher; irrespective of the age or phase of the students they are educating. Jordaan's editorial debated the significant lack of bridging the transition between school and entering the labour market. The core requirements as set by the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) for every person to be successful in a career were discussed in detail. According to the HSRC the absence of these core requirements contributes significantly to the gap that exists between school and the labour market, but does not constitute the only reason for failure to produce a hard working, successful worker.

(continued...)

Many influential companies use their own advanced assessment tools to select suitable candidates for advertised positions. Employers, according to the HSRC are favouring mainly four descriptions; creative thinking, emotional intelligence, ability to deal effectively with complexities and ability to be precise and accurate with every little task allocated. I can assign to each of these qualities a corresponding Building Block of Thinking or Tool of Learning (Greenberg 2005) and/or Habit of Mind (Costa & Kallick, http://www.i-learnt.com/Thinking_Habits_Mind.html) Through this pairing task, I hope to illustrate the immense importance of teaching the principles of thinking and how they are integrated in the critical requirements that are demanded by the workplace. At the same time, we should be reminded that teaching these thinking skills, should prompt us to integrate these automatically and continuously into our own teaching and learning.

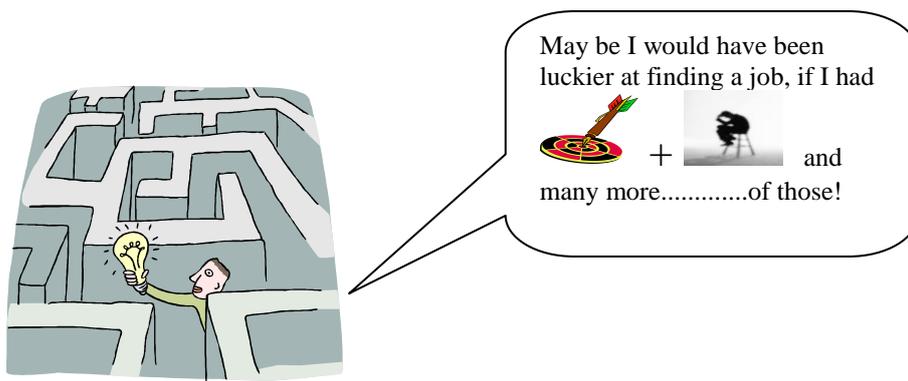
Firstly, the labour market favours employees who possess creative thinking; individuals who can think flexibly. These employees are able to apply past knowledge to new situations and are able to make comparisons automatically and approach the learning experience with creativity, imagination and innovation. These workers remain open to continuous learning.

Secondly, employees should listen with understanding and empathy to clients and fellow workers and at the same time communicate thoughts and actions carefully. They must be goal orientated and persistent in reaching their goals.

Thirdly, employers seek applicants who embrace learning in new and complex situations, who are comfortable with and welcome change and development. They should, in addition, be capable of seeing the connection among related events and recognising the basic thought that holds related ideas together. They need to be able to identify and rectify confounding factors in a company automatically and to communicate to management and fellow workers.

Lastly, enterprises search for candidates who strive for precision and accuracy in everything they undertake, who possess skills to identify and manage mistakes automatically. They should also be capable of combining pieces of information into a complete thought and of viewing the whole picture while they are devising strategies to solve problems within the working environment.

Currently, employees are no longer merely viewed as human resources, but rather as a human investment. Our role as teachers, who prepare learners for the labour market, makes us partners in building a very precious investment.



On behalf of IACESA we wish you a wonderful festive season and a prosperous 2012.

Elsefie Wranz

IACESA: President 2011 - 2013



**Reminder:
Our new
contact details**

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Twitter: @iacesa

<http://www.twitter.com/#!/iacesa>



**Also find
us on:**

2011 IACESA COG ED SEMINARS

Only two Cog Ed Seminars were organized during 2011 as IACESA hosted a very successful conference in February 2011. Bishops Preparatory School provided the venue and teas for both seminars and IACESA appreciates the assistance of Mr Chris Groom in this regard.

Seminar 1, on 17 August 2011, was presented by Mrs Genevieve Koopman, Director of General Education and Training from the Office of the Directorate of the Curriculum. The presentation *'Thinking about CAPS'* focused on the Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement that will replace all previous curriculum documents. Mrs Koopman managed to highlight the main changes that CAPS will bring about in the next few years in a very lively manner. She emphasized that it has been a long process to get to CAPS and that the voice of teachers has been incorporated in the changes. CAPS will bring about a more structured and streamlined curriculum, but it has many implications that teachers will have to think about.

Peter de Lisle, was the presenter at Seminar 2, on 17 October 2011. Peter is currently responsible for curriculum development and innovation at Hilton College and in 2010 he was awarded second runner up prize in the content category of the Worldwide Innovative Education Forum. Peter's presentation, *'Thinking with Computers'*, focussed on an exploration and practical demonstration of a constructivist approach to using ICT tools, some offline and some online/web 2.0 based, to integrate Habits of Mind and other thinking skills into the curriculum to create academically relevant and engaging learning experiences. Many seminar participants realized how little they knew about ICT tools, and the potential value of using these tools, to develop thinking skills, was highlighted.

IACESA would like to thank all Cog Ed Seminar participants for their interest and attendance during 2011.

Estelle Brettenny

The importance of older family like parents, older siblings and grandparents in the development of thinking (metacognition) in a child:

After reading an article written by Carl Haywood, entitled *A Mediatlional Teaching Style*, and completing a Reuven Feuerstein Instrumental Enrichment course, I felt the need to write this article.

In our school community, our culture dictates that 'it takes a village to raise a child'. This implies that we all see it as our duty to raise our collective children and help them make sense of their world and help them understand that their world can become more predictable.

If our children have inadequate interactions with the adults in their world, because of poverty, emotional issues in children or parents or a lack of education in adults, we understand that this will result in deprivation.

Children learn either directly through experience or through purposeful learning at school, or indirectly by someone taking the time to ask the correct questions at an appropriate time - someone like YOU.

This learning allows for an intergenerational transfer of information about the family's culture too. If early interactions between the family are not adequate for the child's learning, then the right school needs to be found that will hopefully 'fill the gaps' not yet filled.

The best ways to 'teach' children in your home and within the family are to

- ask questions rather than give information.
- supply information that you think will be needed to find solutions.
- guide your children through sequential experiences so that they can come to correct conclusions.
- guide children to look for general rules that apply in many circumstances.
- build your children's confidence in their ability to think clearly.
- focus attention on thinking processes and encourage your children to use the different processes.

Interactions between children and their adult family members should

- be intentional to produce learning.
- teach so that the child can use the information in other circumstances.
- communicate the reasons why the learning is important and how this learning fits into everyday life.
- be rewarded positively if children show that they have been thinking and using prior learning.
- change the child's behaviour so that they think through their responses before giving them in the future.
- result in thinking and learning that is shared.

If every family at Pinelands North decided to do this today, imagine the extra learning every single one of our children will be exposed to.....and imagine the learning that will have developed in a few years' time as new learning is scaffolded on top? Decide today to meet as a family to improve all our thinking - all it takes is a concerted effort to consciously think about the thinking we do and how we reach conclusions. I challenge you!

Ann Morton

(Principal, Pinelands North Primary)

(FIE) Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment in the Western Cape

Two FIE workshops were held in September 2011, facilitated by Lilian Lomofsky and Sandra Young. Instrumental Enrichment Standard (Level One) is suitable for ages 8 years up to adults and is designed specifically to enhance the learning potential of children and adults. It is a tool to promote a mediational teaching style for more effective thinking and learning. Mediated Learning aims to develop cognitive functions and higher order thinking which is then bridged or transferred to the school or college subjects and everyday life in home or social contexts.

The first five day FIE workshop from 5 – 9 September was held at St Georges Grammar School for teachers from different primary schools, one high school and one from IMSTUS, Institute for Maths and Science Teaching, University of Stellenbosch. The workshop was very interactive and “hands on” experience was gained with the instruments. The feedback from participants was very positive and they are eager to apply it in their teaching (and parenting with their own children). The applications from this group will be very varied to accommodate talented creative groups, learning support, special school, primary schools classrooms, a high school and teacher training at IMSTUS. One school Principal was inspired to write an editorial to the parents about the importance of mediation within their families. You may read it on another page.

The second workshop, in the last week of September, took place at Northlink College (FET) for the Student Support Services managers and staff from their eight campuses. This also evoked very active discussion and was well received. The staff aims to use the programme to address the students' problems in learning and how to study for exams and tests as well as social emotional and motivational issues. In both groups the thinking skills that were covered were organization and planning, orientation in space, analyzing, systematic comparisons, categorization and illustrations. The instrument of Instructions was included for Northlink College. The modalities addressed in the instruments are verbal, figural graphic and pictorial. Both groups are looking forward to proceeding with FIE Standard Level 2 Instruments next year.

In June this year in Cape Town I was a participant in an FIE-Basic Level 1 workshop conducted by Prof David Martin (USA). These instruments have been developed more recently by the Feuerstein Institute for the younger child, approximately three to seven years of age. It is an early intervention to develop the prerequisite cognitive functions and as a preparation for FIE Standard to take learners to higher levels of mental processing and thinking skills and habits. The instruments are very colourful and designed to deal with understanding emotions in young children, visual motor and perceptual skills and early number concepts. Being a student was a new learning experience for me and I am now doing a practical application with Grade R children.

Lilian Lomofsky



News from TSSA...

Habits of Mind:

(16 essential characteristics for successful people)

In September, Thinking Schools South Africa (TSSA) invited James Anderson, Australia's leading authority of Habits of Mind to South Africa, to present in Cape Town and Johannesburg to introduce Habits of Mind to teachers and school leaders. This was attended by 59 people at Herschel Girls' School in Cape Town and 69 people at St Peters School in Johannesburg. He also held a very successful workshop with the teacher training division of the University of the Northwest, where they focused on infusing Habits of Mind into the curriculum. This was attended by 30 staff members and all the fourth year B-Ed students. While James was in South Africa he also addressed the SA Heads of Independent Schools Conference held in Cape Town.

The Habits of Mind are a repertoire of behaviours that help students and teachers successfully navigate the various challenges and problems they encounter in the classroom and in their everyday life. They are dispositions that are skillfully and mindfully employed by characteristically intelligent, successful people when they are confronted with problems, the solutions to which are not immediately apparent.

Over the two-day workshops held in Johannesburg and Cape Town delegates were orientated to the Habits of Mind, their power and their value. The Habits were explored through a wide range of practical classroom examples, while at the same time this exploration was bedded in a pedagogical framework that ensures meaningful and lasting improvement to teacher practice. To ensure success back at school, a number of common misunderstandings and common misdirections were addressed. The workshops were very successful and those who attended all seemed to be committed and eager to start working on changing the formulation of the learning outcomes, which they teach, to reflect the Habits of Mind as well as the attainment of content. Follow up workshops are being set up in 2012 to provide insights into curriculum and instruction intended to enhance the Habits of Mind development. Teachers will be guided through a curriculum infusion process that has the dual outcomes of developing students' Habits of Mind, while curriculum learning outcomes are also improved.

Mandy Kowarski

February / March 2012: David Hyerle in South Africa!

THINKING MAPS IN SOUTH AFRICAN CLASSROOMS:

**Dr. DAVID HYERLE,
Creator of Thinking Maps
together with
Local Practitioners Who Are Using the Maps**

What are Thinking Maps:

Thinking Maps is an easy to use way of representing thinking in a visual form, sometimes referred to as 'a visual language for thinking'. It is based on eight fundamental cognitive processes that all human beings use in various combinations to make sense of their experience. If learners are shown how to use the eight Thinking Maps they become better able to understand and organize learning input and more successful at displaying what they understand. The approach has also been found valuable as a tool for instructional and institutional planning. For more information about Thinking Maps click [HERE](#)

Who should attend:

Teachers, education leaders and learning support professionals who want to know more about Thinking Maps and their uses to support the curriculum.

Dr David Hyerle will locate Thinking Maps within the broader context of cognitive education and the Thinking Schools initiative and briefly explain the theory that supports the use of Thinking Maps to help individuals visualize their thinking. He will introduce each Map, and provide a range of examples from his experience in different settings. Local educators and trainers who currently use Thinking Maps will share their successes in primary, secondary and tertiary (teacher education) classrooms.

Registration:

Registration Fee: R550.00 per person (no refunds after January 16th)

Groups of 10 or more get a 20% reduction

[Click here to register online](#)

Kloof, KZN

Date: 27 February 2012

Time: Registration from 8h30 to 9h00 until 16h00

Venue: St Mary's DSG, Kloof, KZN

[Click here for Map:](#) GPS Co-ordinates: 29°29'32.21"S 30°18'6.15"E Time: Registration

Johannesburg

Date: 29 February 2012

Time: Registration from 8h30 to 9h00 until 16h00

Venue: St Peter's School For Boys, 105 Witkoppen Road, Paulshof, Gauteng

[Click here for Map](#): GPS Co-ordinates: East: 28.033567 South: 26.031296

Cape Town

Date: 1 March 2012

Time: Registration from 8h30 to 9h00 until 16h00

Venue: Herzlia High School, M H Goldsmidt Avenue, Highlands Estate, Cape Town

[Click here for Map](#):

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