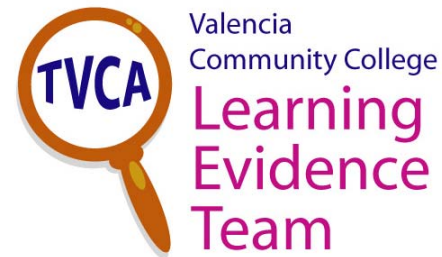


# Building Powerful Critical Thinking Assignments

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Sponsored by Valencia's Learning Evidence Team



# The T<sup>3</sup> Process

1. Workshop: *Understanding the THINK Rubric*
2. Workshop: *Building Powerful CT Assignments*
3. Score and submit student work
4. Focus group on THINK assessment

# Preview of Today's Session

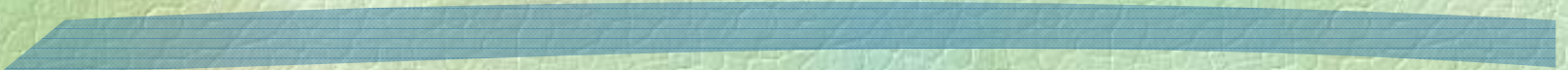
- Thoughts about the THINK Rubric
- Teaching for Critical Thinking
- Assessing for THINK

# Your thoughts about THINK

Refer to the  
holistic and  
analytic  
rubrics

- Analyze
- Apply
- Multiple perspectives
- Draw conclusions
- Synthesize

# Getting Started



# Identify an assignment

- Identify a major assignment or activity in your course or student experience.
- Ask yourself: How would this be a good test of how well students **THINK?**

# Clarify the learning outcome

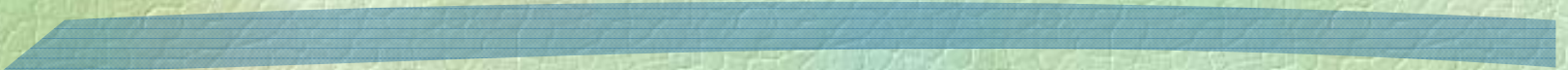
- Clarify what student learning you hope to observe and assess in this assignment or task.
- Refer to your course outcomes, if applicable.

# Enhance its THINK-ability

Revise the assignment to engage students in the dimensions of THINK

- Analyze
- Apply
- Multiple perspectives
- Draw conclusions
- Synthesize

# Enhancing Think-ability



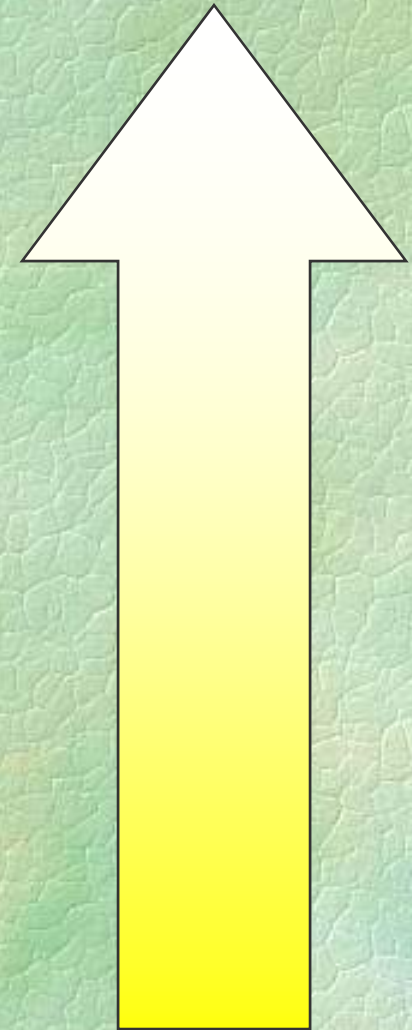


# #1 Go higher order

- Create higher order tasks for students
- Ask them to apply, analyze, evaluate, and create

# #1 Go higher order

Creating  
Evaluating  
Analysing  
Applying  
Understanding  
Remembering



# BLOOM'S REVISED TAXONOMY

Higher-order thinking

## **Creating**

Generating new ideas, products, or ways of viewing things  
Designing, constructing, planning, producing, inventing.

## **Evaluating**

Justifying a decision or course of action  
Checking, hypothesising, critiquing, experimenting, judging

## **Analysing**

Breaking information into parts to explore understandings and relationships  
Comparing, organising, deconstructing, interrogating, finding

## **Applying**

Using information in another familiar situation  
Implementing, carrying out, using, executing

## **Understanding**

Explaining ideas or concepts  
Interpreting, summarising, paraphrasing, classifying, explaining

## **Remembering**

Recalling information  
Recognising, listing, describing, retrieving, naming, finding



# #1 Go higher order

In your assignment or activity:

How could you ask students to do more...

Application? Analysis? Evaluation?  
Creative synthesis or invention?



# #1 Go higher order

Share and compare your responses

## #2 Create debate-ability and dialogue

- Pose questions or problems with multiple solutions or perspectives
- Engage students with each others' multiple perspectives and alternate solutions



## #2 Create debate-ability and dialogue

In your assignment or activity:

How could you build in debatable questions or problems?

How could you build in student-to-student interaction and collaboration?



## #2 Debate-ability and dialogue

Share and compare your responses



## #3 Get real

- Highlight the assignment's relevance or resemblance to real-world tasks (authenticity)
- Connect to career, marriage and family, religious and civic life, consumer interests, etc.

# Authentic assessment

- involves students with issues they regard as vital concerns
- help students to see big ideas and general principles
- involve students in real-life experiences



## #3 Get real

In your assignment or activity:

How could you highlight the assignment's connection to real life?

How could you embed the assessment task in a real-life problem or situation?



# #3 Get real

Share and compare your responses

# Enhancing Think-ability

1. Go higher-order
2. Build in debate-ability and dialogue
3. Get real

# Assessing for THINK



# Criteria for a good THINK assignment

- Engages at least 3 of the THINK dimensions
- Is challenging enough to produce a range of student achievement

# THINK criteria (cont.)

- Is intelligible to and assessable by non-experts in the discipline
- Short enough to assess quickly (no more than 1,000 words)

# Create a custom rubric

- Use at least three of the THINK dimensions
- Add custom “rows”—i.e., other “traits” or features of student performance
- Tie rubric to the assessment task (see worksheet)



# Create a rubric

Using the rubric worksheet, jot ideas for the THINK rubric to use with your assignment or assessment task



# Create a rubric

Share and compare your progress so far

# [Get feedback]

[Between today and the date you administer your assignment:

- Share your draft assignment and THINK rubric with colleagues and fellow THINKsters]

# Administer the assignment

- Direct students to identify their work with VID
- If possible, ask students to submit two copies of their work
- Make no grading marks or comments on the student work to be submitted to LET

# Score the assignment for THINK

- Grade the assignment as you normally would for your course.
- Score the clean set for students' demonstrated mastery of THINK (see Think Quick Score)
- Attach your THINK Score Sheet to the assignment

# Score the assignment (cont.)

➤ Score enough student assignments to accumulate 3 or 4 examples of different achievement levels:

Low-medium-high OR

Beginning – Developing –

Competent - Accomplished

# Score the assignment (cont.)

- Submit your scored samples to the Learning Evidence Team
- Complete a self-assessment reflection about your application of the THINK rubric

# THINK Focus Group

- Join members of the LET and Valencia colleagues in collegial dialogue about assessment of THINK (April/May 2006)