Nurturing Young Children as Active Thinkers

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Think about words you would use to describe life today.
What are executive brain functions?
Focus and Self Control

• Paying attention
• Remembering the rules
• Inhibiting initial response to achieve larger goal
Improving Focus and Control

When children's ability to pay attention improves, their reasoning and thinking skills also improve.
The key to success in the future is not just going to be how much we know, or what we know. The ability to think and act creatively will be the key distinguishing quality that will allow people to succeed.

Mitch Resnick, MIT
Build on Curiosity
Give Many Opportunities to Explore, Ask Questions & Make Connections
Thinking and Tinkering
Curiosity, imagination & creativity are like muscles – if you don’t use them you lose them.
I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand.

- Confucius
Participate in Children's Play
Promote Critical Thinking Skills
The Value of Messing About

- Explore ideas
- Make meaning
- Question
KNOWLEDGE IS NOT SOMETHING YOU CAN JUST MOVE ACROSS THE TABLE AND THE OTHER PERSON HAS IT. IT'S AN INVITATION TO EXPLORATION, TO THINK, TO IDEATE. AND THEN THERE'S THAT 'AHA.'

Arthur Jajonc
Help children think about thinking

• You are showing me...
• What were you thinking when you...
• Did you get stuck at any point? Then what did you do?
• What would be another way...

• Where do you go from here?
• What would happen if you made it smaller/larger/had more/less...
• Show me how...
• I noticed...
Play games that require children to pay attention.
Don’t make a sound challenge
Poetic Pathways

Bella had a new umbrella
Didn't want to lose it
So when she walked out
in the rain
She didn't ever use it.
Her nose went sniff,
Her shoes went squish,
Her socks grew soggy,
Her glasses got foggy,
Her pockets filled with water
And a little green froggy.
All she could speak was a
weak Kachoo!
But Bella's umbrella
Stayed nice and new.
Encourage children to pretend and make up pretend stories
Stop-Start- Continue

- Identify 1 thing you will **stop** – it’s not working
- Identify 1 thing you will **start** – something new you want to try
- Identify 1 thing you will **continue** – it’s already working for you