

HOW TO



THE MULTI MODAL ISSUE



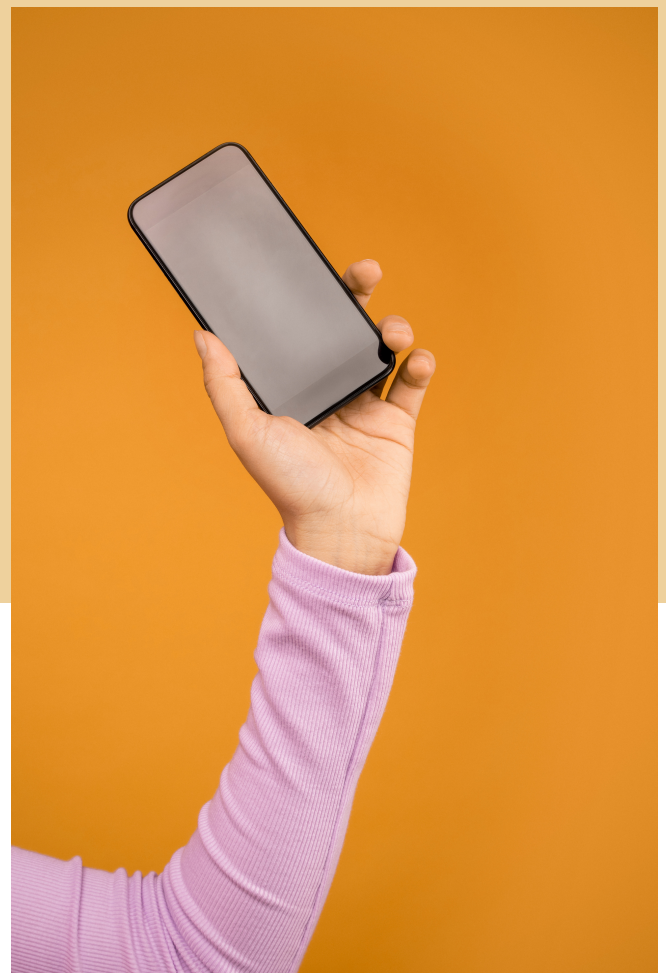
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CRITICAL AND REFLECTIVE THINKING WITHIN MULTIMODALITY



There are three core competencies under BC's new curriculum: *communication, thinking, and personal and social*. According to the BC Curriculum website, these core competencies are "sets of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies that all students need in order to engage in deep, lifelong learning." Incorporated in the thinking competency are two sub-competencies: *creative thinking* and *critical and reflective thinking*. Critical and reflective thinkers are "analytical and investigative, willing to question and challenge their own thoughts, ideas, and assumptions and challenge those of others. They reflect on the information they receive through observation, experience, and other forms of communication to solve problems, design products, understand events, and address issues."

As we all know, the world is becoming more technologically inclined to say the least. The concept of critical and reflective thinking as a precursor for incorporating technology into the classroom is an effective strategy - as long as it is done successfully. In this issue we are taking a look at how multimedia works in conjunction with these critical and reflective thinking skills.



"**Critical** and **Reflective** Thinking encompasses a set of abilities that students use to examine their own thinking and that of others. This involves making judgments based on reasoning, where students consider options, analyze options using specific criteria, and draw conclusions."

Critical thinking and **reflective thinking** should be used *synonymously*.

People who think critically and reflectively use cognitive skills and problem solving skills to analyze and make judgments.

So how do you implement this in the Social Studies classroom, you ask? Well we're here to let you know.

In the context of classroom practice the following key features of critical and reflective thinking are widely accepted:

- Prompt students' reflection by asking questions that seek reasons and evidence
- Provide some explanations to guide students' thought processes during explorations



CRITICAL & REFLECTIVE THINKING - IN THE SOCIAL STUDIES CLASSROOM?

WHERE DOES MULTIMEDIA COME IN?



Critical and reflective thinking are complex cognitive skills that are crucial for student success. These skills support students' ability to gather, assess, analyze, and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources.

Because students are rarely able to develop their own critical literacy skills, educators need to prepare them by asking questions, encouraging expression of opinions, and allowing students to be involved in their learning (Critical Literacy).

To create an environment that

engages students in these processes, educators must promote critical thinking and reflection by asking questions that seek analysis and reasoning. In this regard, multimedia provides the opportunity for students to create their own meanings, identities, and to shape and transform the material for further hands-on learning (Critical Literacy).

Educators should implement multimodal tools to aid students in developing both lower-level and higher-level critical and reflective thinking skills.

Multimedia encourages students to use cognitive and metacognitive strategies in order to become independent learners and to develop important skills, such as the ability to problem solve, self-monitor, evaluate, and to be autonomous (Critical Literacy). Multimedia in the classroom can foster students' learning, allowing opportunities for presenting material that's not possible with other methods. It is important that teachers advocate critical and reflective thinking a fundamental goal of education.

CHOOSING THE BEST MULTIMODAL TECHNIQUE

Multimedia applications empower and engage students by providing valuable learning opportunities. However, important considerations must be taken into account before introducing multimedia into the classroom. When properly supported by teachers, interactive multimedia learning materials can help students learn independently, work at their own pace, and enhance critical and reflective thinking skills. It is important to consider which media is relevant to your classroom - by using the right combination of multimedia, teachers can develop lessons that enhance students' skills and retention. Done right, it can provide the perfect forum for combining visual and audio in any classroom situation.

We spoke to a professional in the field and she mentioned that at her school, Claremont Secondary, multimedia is fundamental in every classroom, especially due to the current pandemic. Teachers use Google Classroom to display their assignments to students and as a drop box for those assignments. Students and teachers seem to navigate their way through this mode with ease, and it simplifies communication between them. During class time, teachers have been seen encouraging the use of technology in the classroom; the use of phones, laptops, and tablets for research is consistent throughout the classes.



The use of multimedia in the classroom could enhance students' learning about the world around them, such as world issues, or it could simply produce positive outlooks toward the instructional effectiveness. Integrating multimedia into the social studies learning environment may improve interaction between learners and educators, aid student retention, and motivate interest in the material. The use of media to enhance teaching and learning complements traditional approaches to learning. Effective instruction builds bridges between students' knowledge and the learning objectives of the course. Using media engages students, aids student retention of knowledge, motivates interest in the subject matter, and illustrates the relevance of many concepts. Interactive multimedia learning materials are valid, practical, and effective, than are typical in teacher-led lessons.

INTERVIEW WITH A FUTURE TEACHER

We met with a teacher-in-training to discuss how she has observed multimedia use in her classroom visits. We at How To Magazine got the honour to interview her regarding this subject.

During her classroom observations she is studying the usage and implementation of multimedia in social studies classroom, looking at why it did or didn't work. Is it effective? Is it engaging? She has explored the ways in which, as a social studies teacher, she is to select and assess which multimedia tools will be used in her classroom. Additionally, she compares this use of multimedia to her experience throughout university. She explained that the use of multimedia in classrooms have helped teachers engage their students while simultaneously allowing students to retain more information and be more engaged in the lesson. Whether we like it or not, today's society is switching to a more fast-paced and technological existence. Instead of denying this technology from entering the classroom, we should be collaborating with multimedia and prepare to educate the students in a way that they know how. I'm sure we all remember being told to put our phones away in class, hearing threats of having phones taken away if they were seen out. Now, what if they were encouraged? During our interview, she claimed that the classrooms she's observed have been encouraging the use of laptops and cellphones to research and

use during class time. If you don't have a laptop, tablet, or cell phone you would be provided with a 'Chromebook' - a digital device loaned to the school by the school district.

She related her multimedia observations to an EDCI 352 class she took at University of Victoria where she learned about the *Constructivist Approach*: where the students play an active role in the teaching and learning process. She claims multimedia teaching plays a major role in this, in that students can learn from home and/or students can progress at their own pace. The advantages of integrating multimedia in the classroom are many: it encourages students to express their knowledge in several ways, to solve problems, to revise their own work. Through multimedia, students are encouraged to actively make choices about how to obtain, generate, or think about information. Rather than being a passive recipient of information transmitted by a teacher or textbook, they are actively using it as a tool or support to apply their critical and reflective thinking. Because critical and reflective thinking helps students to become more aware of their learning process, time must be built into classroom instruction for both processes. Structuring lesson plans to support critical and reflective thinking improves the quality of students' mode of thinking by demanding higher-order thinking skills.