**Instructional Strategies for Thinking, Collaboration, and Motivation, R546**

**Indiana University – Bloomington**

**February 2010**

**Professor Curtis J. Bonk**

**![C:\Users\Husa\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\D9VC0X9P\MCj02996910000[1].wmf]()**

**Curriculum Brainstorm**

**Uses of critical and creative thinking and motivational and cooperative learning in my job setting:**

* Change how ESL is taught.
* Utilize the available resources in schools.
* Develop confidence in speaking.
* Develop sound writing skills.
* Find new ways for ESL learners to think about something.
* Acquire new skills in ESL.
* Motivate the weaker students.
* Motivate the teachers.
* Incorporate the new ideas into teaching ESL.
* Break the cultural barrier by broaching subjects never discusses in schools, but stay within the cultural/religious values.
* Find newer, **acceptable** teaching methods (by Saudi standards) such as using Breeze with audio only.
* Get students to stop thinking “I’ll never learn English”!
* Find new ways to make up for not being able to go to libraries or on field trips so students can still learn.
* Overcome any major obstacles to learning.

**Main Strategies to Use:**

* Graphic Organizers
* IQ Tests
* De-emphasizing grades
* Positive Reinforcement
* Brainstorming
* “Hitchhiking” ideas
* KWL
* Checker boarding

**Evolution**

**How my ideas evolved...** 

1. Change how ESL is taught Bring forth new ideas Logical thinking, information sharing activities, etc.
2. Utilize the available resources at school Get an extra period per class per week for using the computer lab Have electronic “field trips”, classes, assignments, etc.
3. Motivate the weaker students Mitsubishi Brainstorming and give them the role of the expert.
4. Overcome cultural obstacles to learning Find new ways to positively compare two countries Communicate with peers from other countries online Break the culture barrier (I hope!).
5. Motivate the teachers Train them in creativity...

**Reflection:**

 As a result of taking this course, I have realized that there are many creative ideas I can use in the ESL classroom. Simple ideas can evolve into fresher ones. The creative ideas will get the “mental juices” flowing. Students will no longer have to endure the traditional methods of memorization and reciting. They won’t have to feel forced to take ESL. Hopefully, they will graduate with more real-life skills.

**Questions to ponder…**

* Will they work? Probably.
* Are the materials (computers, TVs, etc.) available? Yes and no.
* Do we have the needed teachers? Yes.
* Will these ideas improve motivation? Highly probable.
* Is it timely? More like: it’s about time!
* Is it suitable? Can be made if it isn’t.
* Will others accept it? There will be resistance at first, but eventually most will.

**Conclusion:**

 Teaching is one of the greatest, yet most difficult, professions in the world. Previously, I had limited myself to certain ideas only out of fear of being too “liberal” in my society or violate cultural/religious boundaries. Now, I can see that one can be creative while not overstepping these boundaries. One should ask: Is the student learning? Am I getting the point across? Can ESL be exciting and inspirational? Will they benefit in the real world and in the workplace? These questions and more can be answered positively if the teacher can get through to the student. Since not all students think or learn alike, creative teaching skills will need to be implemented to keep up their motivation, expand their horizons, and create a more positive outlook.