



CRITICAL SKILLS PROGRAMME Newsletter

Welcome to Issue 3 of the CSP Newsletter



Happy New Year to all our Readers!

I've wanted to write that ever since I became a young disciple of "The Beano". Another ambition fulfilled!

Since 1954, Class 2B of Bash Street School, Beanotown have been solving problems, making decisions, thinking creatively and critically, communicating with each other (verbally and non-verbally), organizing and managing themselves...and Danny has been developing leadership skills. They are still causing collaborative chaos for poor Teacher who just wants them to sit at their desks, listen and learn all that content he has to get through. I think its high time Teacher did his Level 1. Better still, make It a whole school event and send Head, Janitor and Mrs Teacher! Just think of it...a class of eleven and the Critical Skills Programme. What possibilities! Plug, Wilfrid, 'Erbert, Spotty and Smiffy using the Fox Tool. Hmm.. but who needs such frivolous thoughts when the reality of what CSP is achieving is so much more exciting! So c'mon readers! Share your success stories with the community and continue to transform education in the UK.

Andrew Pearce, Programme Manager (Wales)

Quote of the Week

The Critical Skills Programme is the most powerful strategy for teaching and learning that I've experienced in all my years of teaching and training.

**Malcolm Hartley, Furness College
Barrow-in-Furness**

PHOTO OPPORTUNITY AND FEEDBACK



We would love you to send us any stories or photos (with permissions) you have of Critical Skills in action at your school, so that we could use them for future newsletters or the website.

Please send stories and photos to

marie@criticalskills.co.uk

NEW WEBSITE AND TRAINING EVENTS

Our new website will be launched very soon and will be an exciting development for the Community, with a number of advanced features, allowing a substantial amount of interaction. In the meantime we will keep our existing website updated with future training events until the new website is ready.

For more information on Open Training Events for 2009, please refer to Page 2 of this newsletter.



HOW CRITICAL SKILLS WORKED FOR ME AND MY STUDENTS!

Since starting teaching in 1999, I thought I had things cracked; I knew how to teach Shakespeare and subjunctive clauses and my classroom was like a Broadway stage with me as the star performer every day, so when the Headteacher asked if I'd like to go on a 3 day course about Critical Skills I wasn't remotely interested. Then the "3 day" part of the conversation hit me like a thunderbolt and I enthusiastically agreed - 3 days without bottom set year 11 and my horrible mixed ability group in year 8; where do I sign?

I remember the first day of the course vividly. As I entered the room, a far too bubbly lady thrust a piece of card in my hand and asked me to design a badge with my name on it. Initial thoughts: what in the Blue Peter is going on?? It was clear I had unwittingly joined some strange cult. Where was the exit? By 10.30 I wanted to cry. Who were all these bright, enthusiastic individuals-these bright enthusiastic teachers! Why weren't they scanning the pages of the TES every Friday, desperate for an escape route? Come back bottom set year 11; all is forgiven!

And then something strange happened.

It was about 3.18 that first day, after hearing countless success stories and plastered in glue and feathers that I

really began to listen. My bottom set year 11 would soon be leaving me for the big wide world. What were my students actually learning apart from to rely on me? What skills did I want my students to leave school with? Something had to change. If I carried on teaching the way I was teaching, I would continue to get the results I was getting.

The following Monday, I got to school early and became an expert in furniture removal. I ripped up my lesson plan for "Tess of the D'Urbervilles" and designed a skills based challenge lesson. Yes, it is true, most of my colleagues thought I'd finally lost it and hit the bottle, but I persevered. And something strange began to happen; not immediately and not in a matter of days, but slowly and certainly the way my students learned in my classroom changed. It was no longer all about me. It was all about them and their learning. It was no longer all my responsibility; it was theirs. I stopped getting the compulsory 10,000 inane questions a day and instead, the students tried to find the answer for themselves first.

To say that Critical Skills changed my life is perhaps going a bit far, but to say it changed my teaching life is certainly true. For the first time since my NQT year, I actually enjoyed going to work, but more than that, and the best thing by far, is that my students thrived.

Hayley Pallatina
Curriculum Leader of Learning to Learn
Kingmead Technology College
Hednesford
Staffordshire



STOP PRESS!

CRITICAL SKILLS OPEN TRAINING EVENTS FOR 2009



If you would like further information or booking forms for the following institutes, please contact:

Marie Matty (England and Wales) on 01455 840066 or email marie@criticalskills.co.uk
Maria Hybszer (Scotland) on 07854 414512 or email maria@criticalskills.co.uk

LEVEL 1 TRAINING

Level 1A - 09-14A	18-20 May 2009
Level 1B - 09-14B	5-7 October 2009 Kings Manor, Edinburgh
Level 1A - 09-15A	30 March - 1 April 2009
Level 1B - 09-15B	1-3 June 2009 BVSC Centre, Birmingham
Level 1A - 09-16A	29 June - 1 July 2009
Level 1B - 09-16B	7-9 October 2009 Manchester

LEVEL 2 TRAINING

Level 2 - 09-L2.3	26-28 January 2009 Elgin, Moray
Level 2 - 09-L2.6	25-27 March 2009 The Malmaison Hotel Birmingham

If you would like any information on closed institutes, inset days, taster days or any other training which you feel would be beneficial to your school or organization, please do not hesitate to contact our Programme Managers, (contact details below).

POSTERS AND BOOKS FOR SALE!

Personal orders can be made online or by telephone with a credit or debit card via our distributors, Troubador Publishing Ltd, www.troubador.co.uk/shop, 0116 255 9312. Institutional orders should be made, with a purchase order, to Troubador Publishing Ltd, 9 De Montfort Mews, Leicester, LE1 7FW.

Title	Price
Level 1 Posters (full set of 15 up to date brand new posters)	£24.95 (inc VAT)
Towards Successful Learning (written by Di Pardoe)	£19.95
Critical Skills in the Early Years (written by Vicki Charlesworth)	£19.95
Leading the Learning School (written by Colin Weatherly)	£16.95
Transforming Teaching and Learning (written by Colin Weatherly with Bruce Bonney, John Kerr and Jo Morrison)	£16.95
Level 1 Coaching Kit (original USA version)	£19.95
Level 2 Coaching Kit (original USA Version)	£19.95
K-3 Coaching Kit (original USA version)	£15.95
Tools for CSP Classroom (original USA version)	£15.95
COMMUNITY BUILDER PACK (NEW) by John Baudains with Lynne Williams and Andrew Pearce	£12.95

Prices are exclusive of Postage and Packing



THE TEACHING AWARDS 2009



The Teaching Awards is an annual celebration of teaching and learning. You can nominate a school*, teachers, headteachers, teaching assistants and governors for a Teaching Award and anyone and everyone can nominate.

We all know that these are inspirational people who help change lives for the better. Help us to celebrate their achievements and their dedication by nominating the unsung heroes in our schools who help young people aim high and achieve their potential.

Make your nomination online at: www.teachingawards.com It is a quick and easy process which only takes a few minutes, but it's the best way to say thank you to someone who transforms young people's lives.

*schools can be nominated for DCSF Award for Sustainable Schools

"I would encourage everyone to nominate a teacher that they think is doing well. There aren't many opportunities for teachers to be publicly recognised, so it's a great way to say thank you."

Jonathan Lear, Teaching Award winner

"It was lovely and gave the whole school a real buzz. That's why I think it is really important that people get their nominations in now for the 2009 awards."

Eva Pearson, Teaching Award Winner

The deadline for nominations for the Teaching Awards in England and Wales 2009 is 1 March 2009
Nominate at www.teachingawards.com
For Scottish entries please visit www.scottisheducationawards.org.uk

CSP PROGRAMME MANAGERS - CONTACT INFORMATION

Pippa Leslie (England & Channel Islands) - pippa@criticalskills.co.uk
Andrew Pearce (Wales) - andrew@criticalskills.co.uk

Jo Morrison (England) - jo@criticalskills.co.uk
Maggie Clark (Scotland) - maggie@criticalskills.co.uk

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE: www.criticalskills.co.uk