

The magic of thinking critically with picture books

About the expert



Dr Mary Roche is an experienced primary school teacher and currently teaches at Univerity College Cork.

We caught up with Mary to discuss how critical thinking can be taught to young students using picture books.

The Edspresso Series



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Mary has developed a structured approach for how primary teachers can use picture books to help develop students' critical thinking:

1. Set aside at least 45 minutes and seat the children in a circle.

Choose a story and read either at that point, or in advance. Teachers can beam the story onto the whiteboard so that every child can see the images.

2. Take a picture, or a line from the story, and begin to ask questions about it.
3. Give the children time to think and process silently, then see who would like to start the discussion.
4. When the first child is finished speaking, they tip the shoulder of the person next to them. That determines the direction around the circle and the knowledge that will be created.



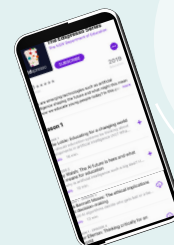
Giving children the skills to examine images enables critical thinking.



Young children can engage in critical thinking even before they develop content knowledge.



We must engage children in tough conversations so that they become critical analysts of the world.



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