



PEOPLE'S  
EDUCATION  
PRESS

人民教育出版社

# Reading Critically with Chinese Learners

November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018

Joe MacDonald  
Trainer  
National Geographic Learning

# Goals - Questions

What are 'critical thinking' skills?

How can we apply these skills to reading?

Is this possible in China? How?

## A view on Chinese students in Western Education

*A major problem that teachers and students face in an internationalized university is that the Confucian ideals on which Chinese society is founded, leads to Confucianist students and a dynamic between them and the teaching staff, which is diametrically opposed to the teacher/student dynamic prevalent in western countries.*

-A random Masters student in China

思

Think

## Quick Activity



Can you put these in the original order?

Will the next number be higher or lower?

A large white number '1' is centered on a solid orange square background. The orange square is positioned in the center of the black slide and has a slight drop shadow effect, making it appear to float above the background.

# What do these activities tell us about thinking?

- Thinking is much more than just one thing.
- Thinking requires the understanding of different concepts.
- Cognitive skills are not knowledge based, but mechanisms.
- We use a range of thinking skills to learn, remember and solve problems.
- Critical thinking is a range of higher order cognitive skills.

思

Thinking

Understanding

Predicting

Analyzing

Evaluating

Synthesizing

Reflecting

Making Inferences

Forming Judgments

Drawing Analogies

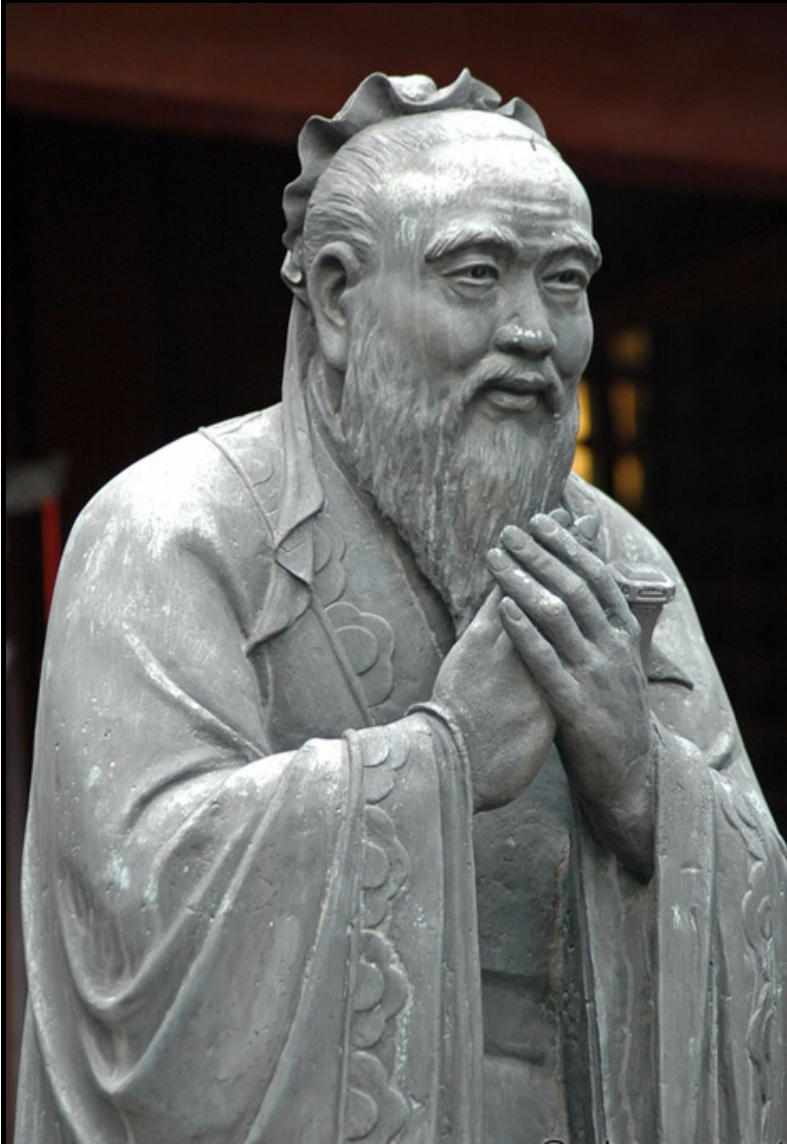


學

学 不

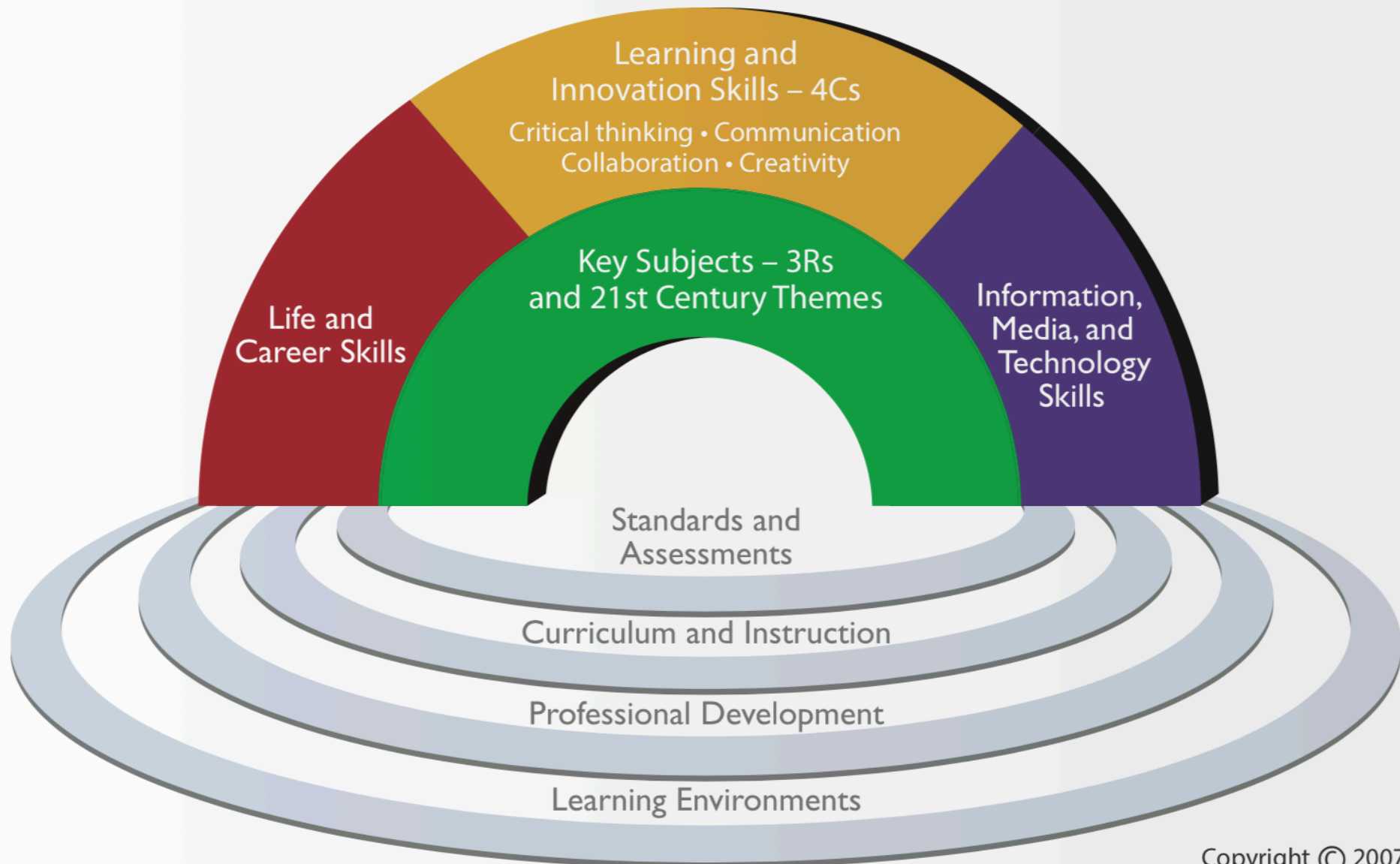
思而不学则殆

Chinese wisdom... 中国智慧



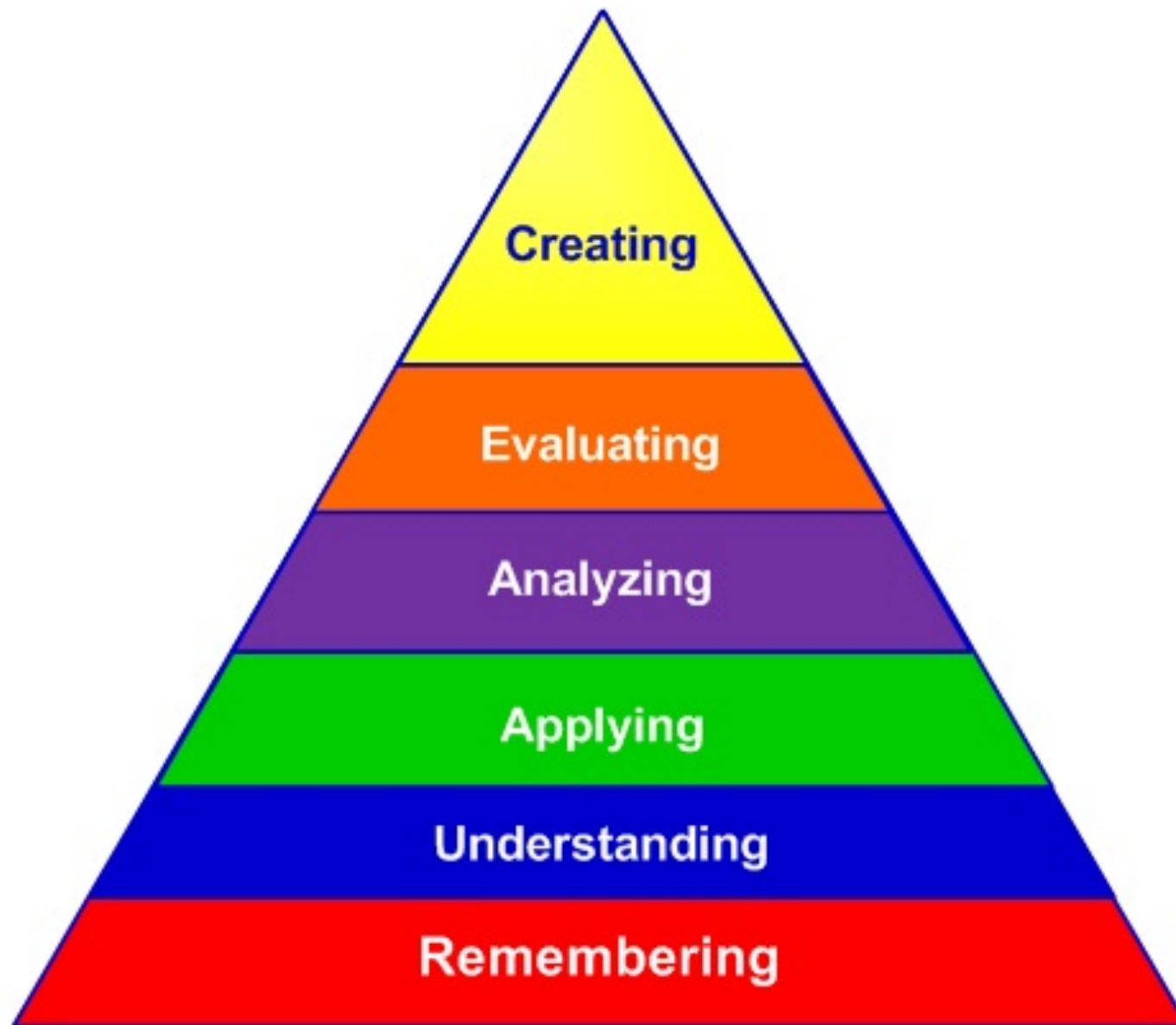
学而不思则罔

思而不学则殆



Copyright © 2007

## Blooms Taxonomy - Revised



Confucius: Philosopher of twenty-first  
century skills

LEONARD TAN

Educational Philosophy and Theory, Vol. 48, No. 12, 2016

Critical Thinking, Learning and Confucius: A  
Positive Assessment

HYE-KYUNG KIM

Journal of Philosophy of Education, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2003

# Core Competencies for English education in China 英语学科核心素养

## Language Competence

### 语言能力

- Knowledge 知识
- Understanding 理解
- Communicate Effectively 有效沟通

## Cultural Awareness

### 文化意识

- Learn about cultures 学习文化
- Confidence 自信
- Communicate 沟通

## Thinking Capacity

### 思维品质

- Analyzing 分析
- Reasoning 论证
- Evaluating 评价

## Learning Ability

### 学习能力

- Proactive 主动
- Enjoy learning 怀着喜悦学习

Listen to the story and answer the question



Why did the father feel this way?  
What questions could he have asked?



## What does this story tell us about Questions?

- The Questions we ask matter.
- If we want students to use higher order thinking skills(HOTS) we need to ask higher order questions.
- Sometimes questions need to be asked in a series of questions to get somewhere.
- If we stop asking questions, students will think less.

# Critical Thinking and Reading

How can we apply these points to reading?

We need to consider the tasks we are setting and the questions we are asking before and after a reading text.

Thinking is a **SKILL** and needs to be practiced.

We need to give students time BEFORE and AFTER reading to actively think.

Let's practice thinking of questions we could ask our students for different tasks.

Look at these pictures and talk  
with a partner

Who do you think has healthier habits?

What time do they get up?

What time do they go to school?

What do they eat for lunch?

What do they do after school?



Tony

## Predicting


Mary





1. Who do you see?
2. How old do you think he is?
3. Who created him?
4. How do **you** know him?

What can we ask students AFTER they have picked the correct title?




\_\_\_\_\_ What Is an Elephant?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Come to Thailand  
\_\_\_\_\_ Let's Save the Elephants  
\_\_\_\_\_ Elephants Are Good Pets

Hello. We are students from Thailand, and we want to save the elephants. The elephant is one of Thailand's symbols. Our first flag had a white elephant on it. This is a symbol of good luck.

Elephants are smart animals. They can play soccer or music. They can also draw very well. People say that "an elephant never forgets". Elephants can walk for a long time and never get lost. They can also remember places with food and water. This helps them to live.

But elephants are in great danger. People cut down many trees so elephants are losing their homes. People also kill elephants for their ivory. Today there are only about 3,000 elephants (over 100,000 before). We must save the trees and not buy things made of ivory. Remember that March 13th is Thai Elephant Day.



How do you know that is the correct title?

What words did you use to make that decision?

Do you think this letter will work?

Does it make you want to save the elephants? Why?

Could you make it better?

# What can we ask students AFTER they identify linking language?

**2b**

Read the article below and underline the linking words and phrases. Do you think you have made correct matches in 2a?

## Stonehenge — Can Anyone Explain Why It Is There?

Stonehenge, a rock circle, is not only one of Britain's most famous historical places but also one of its greatest mysteries. Every year it receives more than 750,000 visitors. People like to go to this place especially in June as they want to see the sun rising on the longest day of the year. For many years, historians believed Stonehenge was a temple where ancient leaders tried to communicate with the gods. However, historian Paul Stoker thinks this can't be true because Stonehenge was built so many centuries ago. "The leaders arrived in England much later," he points out.

Another popular idea is that Stonehenge might be a kind of calendar. The large stones were put together in a certain way. On midsummer's morning, the sun shines directly into the center of the stones. Other people believe the stones have a medical purpose. They think the stones can prevent illness and keep people healthy. "As you walk there, you can feel the energy from your feet move up your body," said one visitor. No one is sure what Stonehenge was used for, but most agree that the position of the stones must be for a special purpose. Some think it might be a burial place or a place to honor ancestors. Others think it was built to celebrate a victory over an enemy.

Stonehenge was built slowly over a long period of time. Most historians believe it must be almost 5,000 years old. One of the greatest mysteries is how it was built

### IDENTIFYING LINKING LANGUAGE

Identifying conjunctions or phrases that link ideas together will help you understand what you read.



Are any of these words new to you?

Are there similar words in Chinese? What are they?

Are they used the same way?

Are you interested in the place?

Are there any similar places in China?

Do you think this mystery will be solved?

3a

Read the article and decide which might be the best title.

- A. A Small and Quiet Town
- B. Strange Happenings in My Town
- C. Animals in Our Neighborhood

We live in a small town and almost everyone knows each other. It used to be very quiet. Nothing much ever happened around here. However, these days, something unusual is happening in our town. Victor, a teacher at my school, is really nervous. When he was interviewed by the town newspaper, he said, "Every night we hear strange noises outside our window. My wife thinks that it could be an animal, but my friends and I think it must be teenagers having fun. My parents called the policemen, but they couldn't find anything strange. They think it might be the wind. I don't think so!"

Victor's next-door neighbor Helen is worried, too. "At first, I thought that it might be a dog, but I couldn't see a dog or anything else, either. So I guess it can't be a dog. But then, what could it be?" One woman in the area saw something running away, but it was dark so she is not sure. "I think it was too big to be a dog," she said. "Maybe it was a bear or a wolf."



Everyone in our town is feeling uneasy, and everyone has his or her own ideas. There must be something visiting the homes in our neighborhood, but what is it? We have no idea. Most people hope that this animal or person will simply go away, but I do not think that is going to happen. The noise-maker is having too much fun creating fear in the neighborhood.

How do you know that is the correct title?

What words did you use to make that decision?

Do you want to read more of this story?

How do you think the story will end?

What would you do if you lived here?

How do you think the story will end?

Remembering Questions

Who is in the story?

What's the problem with in the story?

Understanding Questions

Why do people feel 'uneasy'?

Why is Helen 'worried'?

Applying Questions

Have you been worried before?

Have you ever felt uneasy?



Discuss things that you read and get your learners opinions. This information can help you with other texts later on.



# How to build confidence in learners



NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

HEINLE  
CENGAGE Learning

## PATHWAYS

Do you like to spend time with animals? Why or why not?

# Thank You!

[joe.macdonald.teacher@gmail.com](mailto:joe.macdonald.teacher@gmail.com)