# USING AUTHENTIC MATERIALS AND TASKS TO DEVELOP CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYTICAL SKILLS IN ENGLISH LESSONS

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**Abstract**
In this article, we will look at how to effectively develop critical thinking in students in English lessons using authentic materials and specially designed tasks. The article aims to provide English teachers with practical recommendations and strategies that will help them develop students' critical thinking skills, which are essential for a successful life and career in modern society.

**Keywords**: Authentic materials, critical thinking, vocabulary, grammar, English lessons, environment, teaching methods.

**Introduction**

In today's information-saturated world, critical thinking is becoming one of the most demanded skills. It allows not only to passively consume information, but also to analyze, evaluate it and make rational decisions. Therefore, the development of critical thinking is one of the main tasks of modern education. A foreign language, in particular, English, as a language of international communication, provides ample opportunities for the development of these skills. Authentic materials, such as articles from foreign newspapers and magazines, videos and other authentic sources, are an indispensable tool for the development of language skills. However, their potential goes far beyond language learning. Authentic materials create a natural language environment that allows students not only to master vocabulary and grammar, but also to develop critical thinking skills [1]. The purpose of this article is to study methods and approaches to developing critical thinking in English lessons using authentic materials and tasks. In a rapidly changing world where there is an abundance of information, the ability to analyze, evaluate and interpret information becomes an important skill for students.[2] We discuss how authentic materials, such as articles, videos, podcasts, and other

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1 Adbrafikova A.R. Some consequences of applying strategies for developing critical thinking in English lessons. 2016.
2 Batyrkhanova B.G. Developing critical thinking in English lessons 2019.

resources, can be effectively integrated into the classroom to encourage critical thinking skills. Specific examples of activities and lessons designed to develop critical thinking are also provided to help teachers create more active and engaging learning environments. Critical thinking is a cognitive process that involves analyzing information, evaluating evidence, forming opinions, and making decisions. It goes beyond simply memorizing facts and involves deeply understanding, interpreting, and evaluating information. In today's information-saturated world, critical thinking skills are increasingly in demand3.

Why is it important to develop critical thinking in English lessons?

*Understanding context: Authentic materials reflect real life in English-speaking countries, which helps students better understand culture, traditions, and values.

* Language skills development: Analyzing authentic texts, listening to audio recordings, and watching videos can help you expand your vocabulary, improve your grammatical structures, and develop your speaking skills.

* Real-life preparation: In everyday life, we are constantly exposed to information in English. Developed critical thinking skills will allow you to effectively interact with this information, make informed decisions, and successfully adapt to an English-speaking environment.

Authentic materials: The key to developing critical thinking, authentic materials: are texts, audio, and video recordings created by native speakers for native speakers. They reflect the real language environment and allow students to be interested in it4. Advantages of using authentic materials:

* Realism: Authentic materials allow students to experience the language in a natural way, which helps them understand and retain it more deeply.

* Motivation: Working with interesting and relevant materials increases students' motivation to learn the language.

* Variety: A wide range of authentic materials allows for the learning to be tailored to the interests and level of each student.

The teacher plays a key role in developing critical thinking in students. He or she should:

* Create a safe environment: Students should be able to express their thoughts and ideas freely.

* Ask provocative questions: Questions that encourage deep analysis and critical thinking.

* Model the critical thinking process: Show students how to analyze information, evaluate evidence, and make decisions.

* Teach argumentation and rebuttal skills: Help students express their 5opinions clearly and convincingly and criticize the opinions of others intelligently6.

Developing critical thinking in English lessons is an important task. The use of authentic materials, combined with a competent approach from the teacher, allows not only to improve students' language skills, but also to develop their ability to analyze information, make rational decisions, and successfully adapt to the modern world.

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3 Amirova O.G. Applying technologies for developing critical thinking in English lessons. 2020.

4 Pushkareva M.P. Using technology to develop critical thinking in future English teachers 2023.

5. Sh.A.Mardiyeva. Социально-психологические факторы формирования лидерских способностей в студенческом коллективе. 2023й.Бухоро-Ярославль

Practical part: Using effective methods to develop critical thinking in English lessons. To develop critical thinking in English lessons, you can use a wide range of tasks and exercises based on real materials. Let's look at some of them. Let's take a look at the following:

• Analyzing the news:
• Comparing several articles about the same event.
• Identifying facts and opinions.
• Assessing the reliability of information sources.
• Uncovering hidden meanings and subtexts.
• Assessing the influence of social media on public opinion.
• Listening to podcasts: • Identifying main ideas and arguments.
• Comparing different points of view on the same problem.
• Creating your own podcast on a given topic.
• Reading fiction:
• Analyzing the personalities of characters and their motivations.
• Interpreting symbols and metaphors.
• Debating:, • Preparing arguments for and against a particular idea.
• Participating in a debate, defending your point of view.
• Evaluating the arguments of opponents.

Strategies for Teaching Critical Thinking

• Create a Safe Environment: It is important to create an environment where students can freely express their thoughts and ideas, even if they differ from the majority opinion.
• Ask open-ended questions: Ask questions that require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information rather than questions with clear answers.
• Model the critical thinking process: Show students how to analyze information, make decisions, and justify your point of view.
• Teach argumentation skills: Help students learn to create logical arguments, support them with evidence, and effectively refute the claims of others.
• Use a variety of work formats: Alternate between individual assignments, pair work, and group projects to add variety to the learning experience and give students the opportunity to interact with each other. Developing critical thinking is a long process and requires systematic work. Using authentic materials and a variety of tasks makes this process more interesting and effective. Remember that the teacher plays a key role in developing critical thinking in students. By creating a positive classroom environment and using effective teaching methods, you can help your students become independent, critical thinkers, and successful.

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