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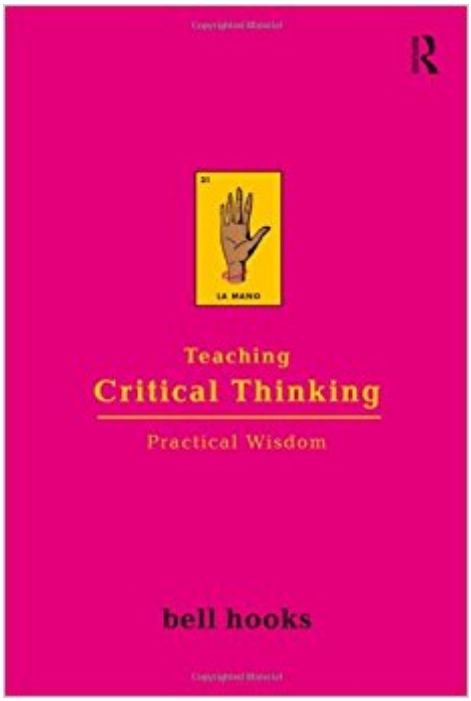
Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom



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Synopsis

In Teaching Critical Thinking, renowned cultural critic and progressive educator bell hooks addresses some of the most compelling issues facing teachers in and out of the classroom today. In a series of short, accessible, and enlightening essays, hooks explores the confounding and sometimes controversial topics that teachers and students have urged her to address since the publication of the previous best-selling volumes in her Teaching series, Teaching to Transgress and Teaching Community. The issues are varied and broad, from whether meaningful teaching can take place in a large classroom setting to confronting issues of self-esteem. One professor, for example, asked how black female professors can maintain positive authority in a classroom without being seen through the lens of negative racist, sexist stereotypes. One teacher asked how to handle tears in the classroom, while another wanted to know how to use humor as a tool for learning. Addressing questions of race, gender, and class in this work, hooks discusses the complex balance that allows us to teach, value, and learn from works written by racist and sexist authors. Highlighting the importance of reading, she insists on the primacy of free speech, a democratic education of literacy. Throughout these essays, she celebrates the transformative power of critical thinking. This is provocative, powerful, and joyful intellectual work. It is a must read for anyone who is at all interested in education today.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Any classroom teacher interested in improving their pedagogy and empowering students' to think critically will want to read this book. Chapter 12, To Lecture or Not, is worth the price of the book.

hooks insightfully examines the contradictions between monologue and a more participatory methods. And the entire book explores a variety of pedagogical issues through race and gender lenses, all the while using her own experiences -- which will resonate with teachers and students of all races and genders -- to put flesh on a theoretical framework. If you care about transformative education then read "Teaching Critical Thinking."

hooks just keeps on writing more inciteful books, one after another. In this book she shares teaching beyond that first generation of black students in white classrooms where both students (white) and teachers (also white) did not want us. I call us the "First-and-Only-Generation" because we often werre the first intelligent, articulate, and "human" blacks that these white folks had ever met. Thank you for integrating spirituality with critical thinking.

bell is a profound and provocative thinker. She causes us to think about what education can accomplish. Her cornerstone is that of critical thinking, a concept that is not taught often enough or from a child’s early years. She clearly demonstrates the value of critical thinking in every person’s life, not just those who are intellectual or academic. Peace, freedom, and democracy rest on the idea of critical thinking. To excel and feel alive and free we must all learn to think critically. Clearly the masses do not know how to think critically, for they were never taught how and they don’t recognize the value in it. bell hooks is passionate about her teaching and it this comes through so very loud and clear in the way she writes. Every educator should read this book. Every student should read this book. It addresses democracy, social change, feminism, critical thinking, racism, and freedom. Her book is a true pleasure to read.

Very interesting book. I read it for a WGS class along with Paulo Freire’s Pedagogy of the Oppressed. Great combination as they both dig into teaching critical thinking -- not just the how to’s but also a huge reflection on the part of the educator.

In bell hooks’ "Teaching" series, this book felt like more of the same. It isn’t bad, but after reading the first two â “ "Teaching to Transgress" and "Teaching Community" â “ this third book just didn’t feel like it contributed anything more. It felt to me like more discussion of the same things.

Encouraging discussion for critical thinking as well as many other insights makes this book a must. It’s not a list of "do this, not that"--it’s more of a "challenge your previous ways of thinking" approach

which I think is excellent (if you're going to teach critical thinking, start with yourself!).

I found myself disappointed with this book. There is nothing new offered here in the commentaries and they are so brief as to lack the capacity to trigger deep thinking. There are some nuggets throughout the book but largely the book does not come close to this author's early works.

this is a great, quick read on topics we should all consider -whether we are a student or a teacher. I would recommend this to all my colleagues and my students, but especially my black women students. hear bell hooks' voice, then find your own!

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