

Six Thinking Hats: Parent Information

Early in the 1980s Dr. Edward de Bono invented the ***Six Thinking Hats*** method. The method is a framework for thinking. It requires students (and teachers), to extend their way of thinking about a topic by wearing a range of different 'thinking' hats

Organizations such as Prudential Insurance, IBM, Federal Express, British Airways, Polaroid, Pepsico, DuPont, and Nippon Telephone and Telegraph, possibly the world's largest company, use Six Thinking Hats.

The six hats represent six modes of thinking and are directions to think rather than labels for thinking. That is, the hats are used proactively rather than reactively.

Your students will use the Six Thinking Hats to:

- Discuss topics
- Solve problems
- Explore alternatives
- Reach decisions
- Research, organise and write reports
- Brainstorming

The Six Thinking Hats at a glance:

- **White** hat thinking identifies the facts and details of a topic
- **Black** hat thinking examines the problems associated with a topic
- **Yellow** hat thinking focuses on the positive aspects of a topic
- **Red** hat thinking looks at a topic from the point of view of emotions and feelings
- **Green** hat thinking requires creativeness, imagination and lateral thinking about a topic
- **Blue** hat thinking focuses on reflection, metacognition (thinking about the thinking that is required), and the need to understand the big picture

What is its purpose?

Students learn to reflect on their thinking and to recognise that different thinking is required in different learning situations.

Hat	Explanation	Think of...	Key Questions
White Hat	White hat thinking focuses directly on the available information.	Blank paper Computer printout	1. What information do we have?

	The white hat means neutral information. It is NOT a matter of argument or making suggestions.		2. What information is missing? 3. How do we get the information we need?
Red hat	The red hat is for emotions, feeling, hunches and intuition. The red hat is not interested in facts but only in people's feelings.	Fire and warmth	1. What do you like about the idea? 2. How do you feel about this? 3. What don't you like about this?
Black Hat	The most used of all the hats. The black hat is concerned with truth and reality. The black hat is the hat of critical thinking. It prevents us from making mistakes.	Stern judge	1. Is it true? 2. Does it fit? 3. Will it work? 4. What are the dangers and the problems?
Yellow Hat	The yellow hat is full of hope- but as it is a logical hat the reason behind the hope must be given. The yellow hat seeks to find and show the benefits.	Sunshine and optimism	1. What are the benefits? 2. Why should it work?
Green Hat	The green hat is the 'active' hat. It is used for creative thinking. The green hat is concerned with proposals, suggestions, new ideas, new alternatives, new solutions and inventions. The emphasis is on 'newness'.	Grass, trees, vegetation and growth	Key questions should focus on: 1. Exploration of the ideas 2. Proposals and suggestions 3. Alternatives 4. New ideas 5. Provocations
Blue Hat	The blue hat is the overview. It is the process control. With blue hat thinking you are above the thinking' looking down on the thinking. With the blue hat you are thinking about thinking!	Blue Sky (above everything) Conductor of an orchestra	Where are we now? What is the next step? Where have we been? What sort of thinking is needed?

A Summary from Edward de Bono's *Teach Your Child How to Think* (Viking, 1992)