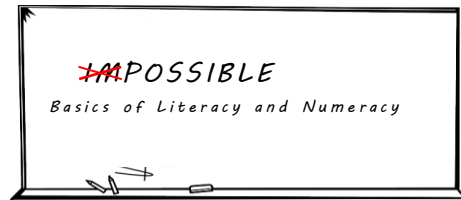




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The main steps of the content-based methods are:

- a. defining the goals of the teaching thinking skills
- b. identifying and defining the skills to be developed
- c. selecting the teaching materials to be used for the training
- d. analysing the subject matter knowledge and searching for places where specific exercises can be embedded
- e. designing the training exercises
- f. integrating the exercises into the teaching-learning processes

As it is a principle of the content-based method, **the subject matter is the concrete material for the training of thinking skills.**

Defining the goals of teaching thinking skills

To conceptualise the goals of the training, two related aspects must be examined:

- a. What do we consider to be the outcome of the training?
- b. Which group should be targeted?

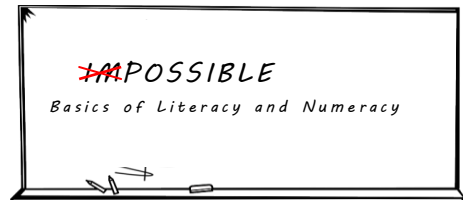
As a result of the modified ways of teaching, students can be expected to become more competent users of their knowledge in other contexts when it is appropriate, apply it to new situations, apply their abstract knowledge to everyday situations, and make decisions on the basis of their scientific knowledge instead of their naive theories or misconceptions.

In general, three groups can be targeted: those whose skills or abilities are below average, around average and above average. However, the methods are not equally beneficial for each of the three sub-populations.

- a. **Those who are below average may require remediation.** They may have learning difficulties or certain problems of understanding that must be corrected in order to catch up with the average students. If the aim of teaching the subject matter is to achieve a deeper insight and understanding, and the students – because of the lack of understanding – cannot do more than simply memorise the material, **the proposed content-based methods are typically for them.** The proposed method that stimulates thinking about the material to be mastered may be especially helpful for this group.
- b. For those students who are average, the training may enhance development beyond that which would be reached with regular instruction. **The average students may be the primary targets of the content-based methods.**



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- c. **Those who are above average** already excel in acquiring and understanding the learning materials and **these methods offer little extra benefit**. For them more challenging learning materials should be offered instead of the regular materials with more intensive thinking.

Selecting the skills to be trained

At least four attributes of skills should be considered before designing the teaching thinking skills:

- a. relevance
- b. development
- c. structure
- d. modifiability of the skills

As for relevance, only thinking skills of broad relevance should be considered. However, for designing training in certain domains, one must examine whether specific skills have relevant function in the reasoning within the given content domain.

In general, the more we know about a skill, the better our chances are of designing an efficient teaching thinking skills programme.