

Univerzita Hradec Králové  
Pedagogická fakulta  
Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury

**The Development of Critical Thinking in English Language  
Teaching**

Diplomová práce

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## **Prohlášení**

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala pod vedením vedoucího diplomové práce samostatně a uvedla jsem všechny použité prameny a literaturu.

V Hradci Králové dne 30.5.2021



## Zadání diplomové práce

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<b>Název diplomové práce:</b>	<b>Rozvoj kritického myšlení ve výuce anglického jazyka</b>
Název diplomové práce AJ:	The Development of Critical Thinking in English Language Teaching

### **Cíl, metody, literatura, předpoklady:**

The diploma thesis deals with critical thinking skills and the methods of their implementation in English language practice aimed at ESL audience/learners. Critical thinking is designed to promote deeper understanding by teaching methods of analysis, evaluation, reasoning and communication as a universally applicable set of skills helping its user to deal with the current nature of our society. The thesis presents various strategies used to promote deeper engagement with the learning materials and applies them to the English language teaching. The thesis is divided into 3 parts. The first, theoretical part, explores the current methods and approaches to critical thinking in education and establishes its importance for the current age. Furthermore, the thesis explores several e-learning tools in the context of developing the High School students' critical thinking abilities. The aim of the second part is to design and develop a set of materials and techniques to use during a seminar/course, which would use the critical thinking methods as an organic part of the English language teaching. The third and final part then presents results of a testing period, in which the developed sets of materials were tested during a special seminar/course/workshop/lesson to see their effectiveness and potential

BEAN, John C. WEIMER, Maryellen. Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom. Jossey-Bass, 2011. BROWNE, M. Neil. KEELEY, Stuart, M. Asking the Right Questions. Pearson, 2014 FISHER, Robert. Učíme děti myslet a učit se. Praha: Portál, 1997 MATTHEWS, Ruth, LALLY, Jo. The thinking teacher's toolkit: critical thinking, thinking skills and global perspectives. London: Continuum, 2010 MOORE, Brooke, Noel. PARKER, Richard. Critical Thinking. McGraw-Hill Education; 12th edition, 2016 PAUL, Richard, ELDER, Linda. Critical Thinking Competency Standards (For Educators). Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2007. RITCHHART, Ron. CHURCH, Mark. MORISSON, Karin. Making Thinking Visible: How to Promote Engagement, Understanding, and Independence for All learners. Jossey-Bass, 2011

Garantující pracoviště: **Katedra anglického jazyka a literatury, Pedagogická fakulta**

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Datum zadání závěrečné práce: **20.1.2017**

## **Anotace**

Černíková, Andrea. Rozvoj kritického myšlení ve výuce anglického jazyka. Hradec Králové: Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Hradec Králové, 2021. 103 s. Diplomová práce.

Diplomová práce se zabývá kritickým myšlením a metodami jeho zavedení do výuky anglického jazyka. Kritické myšlení je jedním ze způsobů jak ve studentech podpořit hlubší porozumění skrz metody obsahující prvky analýzy, hodnocení, úvahy a komunikace a je univerzálně aplikovatelnou schopností, která studentům pomáhá vypořádat se s požadavky života v dnešní společnosti. Diplomová práce představuje několik strategií podporujících hlubší zapojení se do výuky a do práce s konkrétním materiálem, které testuje v rámci hodin výuky anglického jazyka. Práce je rozdělena do tří částí. První část, která je teoretická, se zabývá vybranými současnými metodami a celkovými přístupy ke kritickému myšlení jako součásti výuky a reflektuje jeho nezbytnost pro život v moderní společnosti. Druhá část se zabývá konkrétními možnostmi vytvoření specifických aktivit a cvičení, která obohatí hodiny výuky jazyka o element kritického myšlení ze zvláštním ohledem na zapojení Bloomovy taxonomie vzdělávacích cílů. Třetí část obsahuje projektové aktivity a výsledky jejich aplikace v průběhu hodin anglického jazyka na ZŠ Sever a hodnotí jejich efektivitu a potenciál při naplňování cílů projektu.

## **Annotation**

Černíková, Andrea. *The Development of Critical Thinking in English Language Teaching*. Hradec Králové: Pedagogická fakulta Univerzity Hradec Králové, 2021. 103 pp. Diploma thesis.

The diploma thesis deals with critical thinking skills and the methods of their implementation during English language lessons aimed at young learners. Critical thinking is designed to promote deeper understanding by teaching methods of analysis, evaluation, reasoning and communication as a universally applicable set of skills helping its user to deal with the current nature of our society. The thesis presents various strategies used to promote deeper engagement with the learning materials and applies them to the English language teaching. The thesis is divided into three parts. The first, theoretical part, explores a selection of current methods and approaches to critical thinking in education and establishes its importance for the current age. The aim of the second part is to design and develop a set of materials and techniques, which would use the critical thinking methods and Bloom's taxonomy as an organic part of the English language teaching. The third and final part then presents results of a testing period, in which the developed sets of materials were tested during a regular English lesson at ZŠ Sever, to see their effectiveness and potential in enhancing young learner's critical thinking skills.

## Abstrakt

Diplomová práce pojednává o možnostech rozvoje kritického myšlení během výuky anglického jazyka u žáků prvního stupně základní školy. Kritické myšlení je pojem, který je velmi často skloňovaný v diskuzích o budoucnosti nejen vzdělávání ale i následného profesionálního uplatnění studentů. S přechodem na ekonomiku vědění se stává stále více nezbytné pěstovat a podporovat v žácích schopnosti, které se v odborné literatuře označují jako tzv. 4C - critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication (v češtině kritické myšlení, kreativita, spolupráce a komunikace). Často uváděná definice kritického myšlení Roberta Ennise ho charakterizuje jako “rozumné a uvážlivé rozhodování o tom, co dělat a čemu věřit.”<sup>1</sup> Tato zdánlivě jednoduchá definice v sobě však skrývá nesmírnou škálu filozofických přístupů, metodologických postupů, technik a výzev. Výuka kritického myšlení je zdlouhavý a v zásadě nikdy nekončící proces, kdy se jednotlivec vlivem celé škály různých výukových strategií, doporučení a v nemalé míře i díky vlastní sebereflexi stává schopnějším pracovat s informacemi, zaujímat stanoviska a činit rozhodnutí.

Kritické myšlení je nedílnou součástí vzdělávacího procesu prakticky od antiky, v moderní podobě pak jeho aktivní znovuzачlenění přičítáme vlivu amerického reformátora a pedagoga Johna Deweyho. Nezbytnost rozvoje kritického myšlení v dnešních žácích je součástí oficiální kampaně OECD i jednotlivých členských států, jeho větším začleněním se zabývají mezinárodní testy PISA i Světové ekonomické fórum v Davosu. Zatímco sekundární i terciární vzdělávání může využívat k začlenění prvků kritického myšlení do přípravy svých studentů celou řadu příruček, technik a metodologií, primární vzdělávání má v tomto ohledu poměrně užší škálu dostupných materiálů, vhodných pro tuto věkovou kategorii. Mnoho knih, vedoucích pedagogy i samouky k rozvoji kritického myšlení, prezentuje kritické myšlení ve smyslu Aristotelovské logiky a skrze individuální příklady pomáhají trénovat analýzu, indukci a

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<sup>1</sup> ENNIS, Robert H., *A taxonomy of critical thinking dispositions and abilities*. In: BARON, J. B. & STERNBERG, R. J. (Eds.), *Teaching thinking skills: Theory and practice*. W H Freeman & Co., 1986. p. 9–26.

dedukci. Tyto materiály jsou však nevhodné pro žáky prvního stupně a mohou odradit velkou část učitelů od aktivní snahy obohatit své hodiny o prvky kritického myšlení i přesto, že by tento prvek měl přítomný ve výuce být měl.

Primární vzdělávání v České republice se od roku 2006 řídí Rámcovým vzdělávacím plánem, který udává priority českého školství a nastavuje parametry výuky, které si jednotlivé školy posléze upravují. Kritické myšlení je v upravené verzi RVP z roku 2013 zahrnuto v oblasti tzv. klíčových kompetencí, kde má škola žáky rozvíjet nejen po stránce nejen rozumové ale i schopnostně-dovednostní. Mezi schopnosti se také řadí kritické myšlení, které má ve své podstatě multidisciplinární přesah a je okrajově zmíněno u většiny vzdělávacích oblastí RVP. Dokument ministerstva školství s názvem Strategie 2030+, který byl zveřejněn v roce 2020, již zmiňuje kritické myšlení častěji. Tento přelom souvisí s několika problémy moderní společnosti - jednak s vysokou mírou dezinformací ve veřejném prostoru a s již výše zmíněnými požadavky budoucích zaměstnavatelů, ale také s dlouhodobější debatou nad obsahem a formou výuky na českých školách, kde se v dlouhodobějším trendu opouští od důrazu na memorování fakt a začíná se preferovat hloubka vhledu, schopnost pracovat s informací, analyzovat ji a interpretovat vlastním způsobem. Vyučující na základní škole je i přes tento požadavek často ponechán vlastnímu osudu při přípravě materiálů, které by vědomě vedly žáky k trénování myšlenkových operací vyšší úrovně (podle Bloomovy taxonomie) a tím pádem aktivně přispívaly k rozvoji kritického myšlení, které se podle Johna Hughese nachází právě v této skupině vyšší úrovně.

Další část teoretická část práce se posouvá ke kritickému myšlení v kontextu vzdělávání prvostupňových žáků v cizím jazyce - konkrétně v angličtině. Výuka cizího jazyka na českých školách začíná často od první třídy, nejpozději se pak žáci seznamují s cizím jazykem ve třetí třídě. Výuka prvostupňových dětí má svá specifika, mezi pozitivní aspekty, které může učitel využít patří například přirozená zvědavost a zájem o předmět. Mezi nástrahy často spoléhání na osobu vyučujícího s tím související motivace, která je často odvislá od snahy potěšit konkrétní osobu a je tudíž do velké

míry externí. Zaujetí pro výuku angličtiny je podle Ennise dobré využít již od počátků výuky cizího jazyka a vhodným zapojením aktivit, které žáky překvapují a které se nedají zvládnout mechanickým doplněním nebo spojováním je možné zaujmout i žáky, kteří cizí jazyk zatím ještě neovládají.

Kromě obecného benefitu pěstování zájmu o zjišťování, pokládání otázek a hledání odpovědí, je zapojení prvků kritického myšlení do výuky také naplněním současné vzdělávací politiky České republiky. Absenci výše zmíněných prvků v některých učebnicích částečně nahrazují projekty zaměřující se na jeho přiblížení vyučujícím ZŠ - například projekt Čtením a psaním ke kritickému myšlení, a nebo dnes již nevydávaný časopis Kritické listy. Tato práce hledá přesahy těchto několika projektů a aktivit, které se dají využít při výuce cizího jazyka s dětmi, které neovládají jazyk na úrovni, která by jim umožňovala zapojit se do analyticko-komunikačních aktivit, které často většina příruček prezentuje jako začátečnické, nicméně pro výuku 6-12 letých dětí nejsou příliš vhodné nebo je nelze úspěšně převést do cizího jazyka tak, aby zůstaly srozumitelné i pro děti s velmi omezenou slovní zásobou.

Projekt vychází z materiálů, které byly vytvořeny za účelem vyzkoušení možností propojení výuky anglického jazyka s aktivitami, které jsou běžně asociovány s prvky kritického myšlení. Cílem projektu je otestovat 2 sady materiálů - jednu pro 3. třídu základní školy druhou pro 5. třídu a zjistit, zda je revidovaná Bloomova taxonomie vzdělávacích cílů vhodným pomocníkem při implementaci prvků kritického myšlení do výuky cizího jazyka a zda ji dostatečně o tyto prvky obohacuje. S ohledem na klíčový nedostatek vhodných a běžně dostupných materiálů k procvičení kritického myšlení pro žáky prvního stupně je cílené využití výše zmíněné taxonomie jedním ze způsobů, jak efektivně obohatit již existující materiály. Starší aktivity a cvičení lze buď upravit tak, aby splňovaly požadavky zapojení prvků kritického myšlení, nebo lze případně s pomocí taxonomie efektivně stanovit vlastní nové cíle a vytvořit originální sety materiálů. Vytvořené materiály byly zapojeny do hodin anglického jazyka průběžně, jak už ve fázi představení nové látky, tak i ve fázi procvičovací a opakovací. Následná



reflexe probíhala jednak ve vztahu ke konkrétnímu materiálu a jeho působení a efektivitě a jednak ve vztahu k projektu jako takovému. Ve výsledku je obohacení výuky anglického jazyka o prvky kritického myšlení možné i na prvním stupni, žáci třetí i páté třídy byly veskrze úspěšní v práci s upravenými aktivitami. Největším problémem nadále zůstává systematické zapojení takových prvků pro dlouhodobou efektivitu a také jazyková bariéra žáků, zejména ve 3. třídě, kdy instruktáž i vedení žáků téměř pokaždé probíhala v českém jazyce, což do jisté míry podryvá původní cíl lepšího zapojení žáků a efektivnější výuky cizího jazyka. Je otázkou, zda by se dlouhodobější práci se skupinou nepodařilo dosáhnout podstatnější eliminace českého jazyka z hodin angličtiny avšak výrazná fixace žáků mladšího školního věku na osobu učitele a neochota riskovat a případně udělat chybu. Práce pomohla rozšířit škálu nástrojů používaných při výuce anglického jazyka o práci s prvkem kritického myšlení ale rovněž poukázala na nutnost strategičtějšího budování sebevědomí v aktivitách které jsou pro žáky neznámé nebo obsahují nějaký neočekávaný prvek.

## Prohlášení

Prohlašuji, že diplomová práce vypracována v souladu s rozhodnutím děkana č. 35/2020 (Pravidla zadání závěrečné práce a jejího vypracování PdF UHK) a uložena v souladu s rektorským výnosem č. 13/2017 (Řád pro nakládání s bakalářskými, diplomovými, rigorózními, dizertačními a habilitačními pracemi na UHK)

Datum:

Podpis studenta:

Poděkování

Děkuji vedoucímu své diplomové práce Mgr. Janu Sukovi, Ph.D. za cenné rady a podporu.

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# Introduction

The issue of development of critical thinking in students ranks consistently among the top of the list of priorities of the countries in the developed world according to the OECD-CERI institute data.<sup>2</sup> Critical thinking skills together with creativity, collaboration and communication are often represent a push to infuse school curricula with an additional element of practical competence.

The current era of globalization and the transformation of industrial society into knowledge society have accelerated the need for state educators to keep up with this demand and develop student's skills and abilities so that they are able to blend the 21st century skills into their traditional education. When we consider that one of the simpler definitions describes critical thinking as "Reasonable and reflective thinking focused on what to believe or do."<sup>3</sup> it would seem almost redundant to pay special attention to critical thinking and its inclusion within the school curricula. However the opposite is currently true and the need for pro-active autonomous thinkers is now perhaps greater than ever. This need is even more highlighted by the OECD's series of conferences and reports on fostering student's creative and critical thinking skills<sup>4</sup> or the previously mentioned World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs report. These series of campaigns both show an overwhelming need for a particularly skilled future workforce.

This thesis by no means supports the idea that education's only objective is to fulfill the very specific needs of future employers and the jobs market. While the future

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<sup>2</sup> WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM, *The Future of Jobs Report 2020*. [online]. WEFForum, 2020. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-future-of-jobs-report-2020>

<sup>3</sup> ENNIS, Robert H., *A taxonomy of critical thinking dispositions and abilities*. In: BARON, J. B. & STERNBERG, R. J. (Eds.), *Teaching thinking skills: Theory and practice*. W H Freeman & Co., 1986. p. 9–26.

<sup>4</sup> OECD-CERI, *Fostering and assessing students' creative and critical thinking skills in higher education* [online], 2016 [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: [https://www.oecd.org/education/ceri/EDU-CERI-CD\(2016\)8-ENG.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/education/ceri/EDU-CERI-CD(2016)8-ENG.pdf)

employability is an important factor, the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and critical thinking especially are also valuable elements of personal development in their own right.<sup>5</sup>

While the inclusion of critical thinking is currently viewed as a necessary element to modern education, some teachers may feel ill-equipped in tackling such challenge when the majority of methodology handbooks and teacher guides for specific subjects cover this topic in a very limited fashion, if at all. Teachers attempting to enhance their primary school lessons with some critical thinking activities would undoubtedly find out that the majority of available literature on critical thinking in education focus on the development of critical thinking of adult learners and start with introduction to formal logic and reasoning and often use college-level philosophical problems for model exercises. A limited amount of literature is available to primary educators and to EFL teachers. To turn often almost impenetrable instruction to a lesson for students aged from 6 to 12 requires a herculean effort and not a small amount of confidence and courage.

The diploma thesis sees as its main issue the practical ways of bringing instruction, enhanced with critical thinking elements into the English language lessons. After establishing the importance of critical thinking and its place in modern education, its concern is on the lack of common understanding among the teachers on how to enhance their pre-existing lesson plans with some elements of critical thinking in a manner that is direct, time-saving and appropriate for younger learners with limited vocabulary and English language skills. Bloom's taxonomy serves as a guiding framework may serve as a tool that presents primary ELT teachers with a practical guide as to what skills support certain educational objectives and how are those interconnected with the larger issue of critical thinking. The present diploma thesis originally intended to create a set of activities for high school students but due to the nature of my current employment, the

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<sup>5</sup>GEORGIADOU, E., RAHANU, H. et al. *Fake News and Critical Thinking in Information Evaluation*. [online] Western Balkan Information Literacy Conference. 2018 [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325930497\\_Fake\\_News\\_and\\_Critical\\_Thinking\\_in\\_Information\\_Evaluation](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/325930497_Fake_News_and_Critical_Thinking_in_Information_Evaluation)

focus was shifted to young EFL learners and their development as English learners and thinkers. The project's activities were tested during the COVID-19 pandemic and therefore a large part of the materials was adjusted to a remote learning situation. The lessons were also affected by timetable adjustments which affected the number of weekly lessons we had. During most of the school year, he had 2 lessons instead of 3 per week.



## 1. Critical thinking

Our current society is often presented as a knowledge based society and characterized by its focus on thinking. According to Grecmanová and Urbanovská, it is necessary that students gain not only specific content knowledge but also a set of key competencies, needed for life. It is no longer crucial to memorize huge amounts of information but it is becoming necessary to be able to search for the data and handle it efficiently and skillfully.<sup>6</sup> Critical thinking is a cognitive ability, allowing an individual to use a particular set of skills to gain one such competency.

### 1. 1. What is critical thinking

Numerous interpretations of the phrase critical thinking have been put forward. Most of them discuss an idea that a skilled critical thinker makes their decision by independent analysis and evaluation of multiple sources, has the ability to distinguish falsehoods and semi-truths from reality and is therefore generally predisposed to make choices supported by facts. One of the oldest definitions, that is still being cited comes from an American educator, philosopher and psychologist John Dewey, who started writing about the importance of training students to think independently at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Dewey was often characterized as a “father of critical thinking” and described critical thinking as “An active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends, constitutes reflective thought.”<sup>7</sup> Dewey’s focus on the specific thought processes that support a deeper inquiry is reflected in literature to this day. Dewey focused on the promotion of *reflective thinking* and believed that students learn not only from practice but that they should also spend time on reflecting on that practice. Almost 100 years later - a belief that a subject-specific knowledge is not enough to create a well rounded and adequately prepared individual who is able to

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<sup>6</sup> GRECMANOVÁ, H., URBANOVSKÁ, E., NOVOTNÝ, P. *Podporujeme aktivní myšlení a samostatné učení žáků*. Olomouc: Hanex, 2000. p 7.

<sup>7</sup> DEWEY, J. *How We Think: A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Educative Process*. Boston: Heath and company, 1933. p.6

navigate the modern world but that critical thinking should become a fixed part of education is currently widely accepted among teachers and education experts.

Faccione comes close to Dewey's original theory and additionally highlights the need for constant self-improvement when he considers critical thinking to be "purposeful, self-regulatory judgment which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, criteriological, or contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based. CT is essential as a tool of inquiry."<sup>8</sup>

Many modern definitions moved away from describing critical thinking as a set of actions towards presenting an idea of who a critical thinker is as a person. These later definitions describe them to be relentless in the pursuit of facts but also mindful of others. One of these definitions is provided by Paul and Elder, who write that "Critical thinkers are clear as to the purpose at hand and the question at issue. They question information, conclusions and point of view. They strive to be clear, accurate, precise, and relevant. They seek to think beneath the surface, to be logical and fair."<sup>9</sup>

What only a few of the definitions use as a key trait and one that is perhaps the hardest to achieve is the openness and the ability to see one issue from multiple sides and that is the flexibility to change their stance if their original belief is not supported by the results of a careful evaluation. For example Willingham states that one of the most important traits of a critical thinker is the ability to see "... both sides of an issue, being open to new evidence that disconfirms young ideas."<sup>10</sup> Willingham's characterization reminds us that the critical thinker might often come to a point of a strong cognitive dissonance while making their inquiries and they need to be able to process this feeling of mental discomfort without losing the sight of the true goal of a critical thinker.

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<sup>8</sup> FACCIONE, P. *Critical Thinking: A Statement of Expert Consensus for Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction*. American Philosophical association, University of California, 1990.

<sup>9</sup> PAUL, R., ELDER, L. *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts & Tools*. California: Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2003.

<sup>10</sup> WILLINGHAM, D.T. *Critical Thinking: Why Is It So Hard to Teach?*, Arts Education Policy Review, 109:4, 2008.

Very few critical thinking interpretations also present a mindful consideration of the fact that it is impossible to achieve a complete perfection. Somewhat closer to this notion come Paul and Elder who write that critical thinking is “The art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it.”<sup>11</sup>

## 1. 2. The value of critical thinking in current society

The idea of critical thinking goes back to the antiquity and some of the current course books and research papers still refer to the Socratic questioning as one of their core methods. For most of the human history, critical thinking was a subject studied and practiced mostly by philosophers with some occasional excursion into the realm of politics or enlightenment era science. The value of critical thinking in modern society has been highlighted partly due to the spread of democratic principles of governing throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> and the 21<sup>th</sup> century.

Living in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires different sets of skills and capabilities and provides a very particular set of challenges as well. To adult members of the society, critical thinking may seem more valuable because of the nature of their lives and responsibilities - both personal and professional. In past decade, a growing genre of popular literature is self-help books, currently hundreds of titles are attempting to teach their reader a way to success by using critical thinking. Some more popular titles are *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism and Progress* by Steven Pinker<sup>12</sup> or *Thinking, Fast and Slow* by Daniel Kahneman.<sup>13</sup> Their popularity and serve as a reminder that critical thinking is perceived as a valuable asset to still growing part of the world's population. Their widespread popularity may also suggest that their

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<sup>11</sup> PAUL, R., ELDER, L. *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts & Tools*. California: Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2003.

<sup>12</sup> PINKER, S. *Enlightenment Now: The Case for Reason, Science, Humanism, and Progress*. New York: Viking, 2018.

<sup>13</sup> KAHNEMAN, D. *Thinking, Fast and Slow*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. 2011.

readers do not feel confident in their critical thinking abilities they gained during their years of attending schools.

*Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning* (P21) is among the most prolific proponents of critical thinking's inclusion in education.<sup>14</sup> The non-profit's goal is to create a bridge between educators, policy experts and business leaders in order to integrate what is called the 4Cs into the education of future workforce. These 4 particular skills are being viewed as a major factor contributing to one's success as an adult individual in the current and more importantly in future economy and society. While success may be defined differently by different people and cultures, it seems inevitable to accept that our current students need to be able to cooperate on problem solving, take responsibility for their education, think independently and differentiate between facts and opinions. and evaluate sources of information.<sup>15</sup> An individual that is not able to think critically is put at a disadvantage economically, socially and politically.<sup>16</sup>

Since the past 20 years have already brought some significant changes into our everyday lives, the world's education systems should adequately prepare individual learners for the realities of the fast changing and increasingly globalized world that awaits them outside the schoolroom. The digital divide is slowly disappearing as the information technologies are becoming more accessible. Current students are often described as digital natives, because of their ability to function in an online sphere and their adaptability to this fast changing environment. The rapid spread of internet access brings a need to educate and train its users on how to safely navigate the vast ocean of information available at a single mouse click. In 1998 Halpern mentions that “Advances in technology and changes in necessary workplace skills have made the

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<sup>14</sup> *Partnership for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning*, 2021 [online]. 21P Network. [ cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <https://www.battelleforkids.org/networks/p21/frameworks-resources>

<sup>15</sup> PAUL, R., ELDER, L. *Critical thinking, the nuts and bolts of Education*. In: *Optometric education*, 33(3), 88-91, 2008.

<sup>16</sup> FACCIONE, P. *Critical thinking: What it is and why it counts*. [online]. In: *Insight assessment*, 2007 (1) 1-23. Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter-Facione/publication/251303244\\_Critical\\_Thinking\\_What\\_It\\_Is\\_and\\_Why\\_It\\_Counts/links/5849b49608aed5252bcbe531/Critical-Thinking-What-It-Is-and-Why-It-Counts.pdf](https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter-Facione/publication/251303244_Critical_Thinking_What_It_Is_and_Why_It_Counts/links/5849b49608aed5252bcbe531/Critical-Thinking-What-It-Is-and-Why-It-Counts.pdf)

ability to think critically more important than ever before.”<sup>17</sup> More than 20 years later, it seems that the issue of digital literacy have become more even more pressing.

The need to educate internet users to think critically and be more rigorous in evaluating the information available to them online has become even more pressing. The amount of information that is being shared and stored online increases every day and makes it difficult for companies, governments and adults to monitor and sort meaningfully. English, being a *lingua franca* of the internet, presents an additional reason for inclusion of critical thinking training into the EFL lesson. When incorporating meaningful activities and focusing on higher order thinking skills in the language classroom students will gain a more natural and organic understanding of the target language and its uses and functions in the current modern society.<sup>18</sup>

The era of information overload comes with a challenge in form of often manipulative news and advertisements. While the deceptive nature of a certain kind of information is not a new and groundbreaking concept, the current spread and reach of such information is unparalleled.

### 1. 3. Core characteristics of critical thinking

The extensive field of critical thinking welcomes a vast array of experts from numerous sciences such as psychology, education, medicine, statistics. This diversity is both beneficial, because it offers a significant range of approaches, but also somewhat damaging because the multitude of approaches, often diametrically opposed, impedes understanding and real life application of its findings.

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<sup>17</sup> HALPERN, D. F. *Teaching critical thinking for transfer across domains: Disposition, skills, structure training, and metacognitive monitoring*. In: *American Psychologist*, 53(4), 449–455, 1998. [cit. 2021-05-31] Available at: <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/1998-00766-023>

<sup>18</sup> PUCHTA, H., WILLIAMS, M. *Teaching Young Learners to Think*. Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Because there are no generally accepted characteristics that would describe the different aspects of critical thinking, this thesis considers the above mentioned definitions equally valuable and combines them with a slightly more constructive work of professor David Klooster of Michigan University, that has gained a significant popularity in the Czech Republic due to the RWCT project and the *Kritické listy* magazine.<sup>19</sup> In the opening issue, Klooster offers these 5 characteristics of critical thinking: Critical thinking is independent. Gaining information is the starting point, not the objective. Critical thinking begins with questions. Critical thinking seeks reasonable arguments. Critical Thinking is thinking in company.<sup>20</sup>

Klooster's axioms have gained much popularity and projects such as RWCT draw directly from him in creating their set of recommended and approaches. Klooster's set of objectives helps in thinking about the substance of critical thinking-based activities and guides them towards creating well balanced lessons. Drawing from Klooster and other definitions, this thesis chose following objectives as its main guiding elements.

1) Critical thinking is independent.

Learners must think for themselves. Educators or instructors should serve as a guides who lead the learner on a path of self-discovery and along the way introduce core strategies and methods that will eventually help the learner to advance further on their path. Because everyone starts at a different point and the line of thinking is highly personal, the guide must respect the learner's individuality and independence. By putting a carefully selected and crafted problems and question in the learner's way the teacher inspires and manages the use of acquired knowledge. Young learners will require more guidance and will

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<sup>19</sup> Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking. *Kritické myšlení. 2020* [online] RWCT. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <https://kritickemysleni.cz/>

<sup>20</sup> KLOOSTER, D. *Co je kritické myšlení?* In: *Kritické listy: občasník pro kritické myšlení*. Praha: Kritické myšlení, 2013

have a tendency to rely on the teacher and assume similar positions. The regard for authority is natural in this age group and must be carefully used.

2) Critical thinking is achievable.

Critical thinking is a skill and therefore one gets better at it with practice and quality instruction. Thinking about the world is a human predisposition but critical thinking in its full meaning of the phrase is a specific skill that must be curated and developed in order reach its full potential. It is necessary to nurture positive thinking environment where is is safe for everyone to practice their thinking skills and share their success as well as failures. Each mistake, when analyzed and corrected can serve as an invaluable lesson. The selection of methods and activities should be appropriate for the learner's age level of development. Research and good practice show that young learners benefit from varied thinking exercises that naturally mirror critical thinking objectives.

3) Subject-specific knowledge is necessary.

Daniel Willingham writes that among other factors “the ability to think critically (to actually do what the metacognitive strategies call for) depends on domain knowledge and practice.”<sup>21</sup> Scientific studies show that students with in-depth subject knowledge were better equipped to solve problems requiring critical thinking largely because their confidence in their subject-specific knowledge allowed them to consider problem from a wider perspective and integrate their knowledge more firmly into the search for a solution.

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<sup>21</sup> WILLINGHAM, D. T. *Critical Thinking: Why Is It So Hard to Teach?*, In: Arts Education Policy Review, 109:4, 2008.

## 1.4. Critical thinking in the context of the system of Education in the Czech Republic

Numerous efforts of incorporating critical thinking then continued to elaborate on Dewey's main thesis and numerous academic texts and teacher's handbooks were created in the 1990s and early 2000s. The main problem of these efforts are that they largely focus on university students and professionals and the subject of critical thinking is often presented as a need to study traditional Aristotelian logic with its complete terminology and sets of cases. Another significant barrier to a wider practice of teaching critical thinking in a cross-curricular manner since the early days of the student's mandatory education is the notion that critical thinking is developed mainly as a part of STEM subject.

As previously established, the general discourse has moved beyond the question of “Is critical thinking valuable?” towards “How do we think more critically?” This realization has not been fully integrated to the daily realities of primary and secondary schooling in the Czech Republic yet. The *The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports* and *Národní pedagogický institut*, which is the institute for further professional education of teachers and school administrators, promote critical thinking in a very broad, general sense and mainly as a part of a larger focus on media and information in ICT education. The main policy document - *The Framework Education Programme for Basic Education* promotes critical thinking only sporadically throughout the document. It for example sets a goal where students are able to “Compare information and knowledge from a greater number of alternative information sources, and thus achieving higher credibility of the information found.”<sup>22</sup> The document does not specifically mention the term *critical thinking* in the part concerning English language education. It mentions the issue briefly in the section concerning Czech language education and in a part dedicated to focus on cross-curricular teaching, where it states a general goal of promoting “The pupils’ awareness of and respect for traditional European values such as humanism, free

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<sup>22</sup> *Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education*. NÚV. [online]. 2021, p. 32. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/195>



will, morals, rule of law and personal responsibility, as well as rational consideration, critical thinking and creativity.”<sup>23</sup> The lukewarm approach to critical thinking (and other 21<sup>st</sup> century skills) partly reflects the document’s age and partly the difficulty of imposing modern priorities upon a body of active educators that are often unprepared for such a change.

*The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports* has finished a new strategic policy concerning the modernization of the aforementioned *Framework Education Programme*. The document titled *Strategie 2030+*, which was introduced in 2020, mentions the term critical thinking several times and ties it to competencies that any modern education system must develop in students. This document also does not mention specific subjects but since it is an addition to the existing *Education Programme*, it presents an overall change of approach to education and policy-making in the era of digital technologies and fast globalization.<sup>24</sup> This new policy paper aims to modernize education so it reflects the dynamic needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and states that the development of critical thinking, focus on information literacy, collaboration and the support student’s lifelong learning is among its primary goals.<sup>25</sup> This was also highlighted during the recent COVID-19 pandemic, where educators and students were met with a new set of challenges. During the mid-pandemic reflections on the state and shape of our education, the minister of education Robert Plaga has made a comments, that educators need to promote the development of skills (such as critical thinking) over content knowledge and that the amount of content knowledge should be cut back reasonably.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education*. NÚV. [online]. 2021. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <http://www.nuv.cz/file/195>

<sup>24</sup> *Strategie vzdělávací politiky ČR do roku 2030*. MŠMT. [online]. 2021, p. 18. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <https://www.msmt.cz/vzdelavani/skolstvi-v-cr/strategie-2030>

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid*, p. 89.

<sup>26</sup> *Pandemie ukázala, že učiva je moc, míní Plaga. Chce rozvíjet kritické myšlení*. iDNES. [online]. 2021. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: [https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/univerzita-karlova-konference-rok-s-covid-19-a-jak-dal.A210324\\_083226\\_domaci\\_knn](https://www.idnes.cz/zpravy/domaci/univerzita-karlova-konference-rok-s-covid-19-a-jak-dal.A210324_083226_domaci_knn)

The fact that the development of critical thinking is gaining a significant traction even during the COVID-19 pandemic signals the issue's current place at the top of the policymaker's priorities. While *The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports* has modernized the state education's intended outcomes, the challenge of enacting the policies in everyday life is still largely on the shoulders of individual educators who are not professionally trained to include critical thinking into their core subjects. The lack of support and available materials hinders the progression of the topic on all level of Czech school system but it is perhaps the most noticeable at a primary level.

## 2. Critical Thinking and its Place in Primary Education

As previously stated, critical thinking is not natural for humans but it is an ability gained through conscious practice of certain skills. Since *The Framework Education Programme* and some additional policy documents, especially *Strategie 2030+* support a greater advancement of critical thinking in primary education, primary teachers play an irreplaceable role in the developments of student's attitude to knowledge and thinking and consequently to critical thinking as well.

### 2.1. The Value of Critical Thinking in Primary Education

Teaching critical thinking at a primary level is important for many reasons. It is necessary that the children would gain not only knowledge of facts but also key competences for life. Motivating educators to pass onto students a huge amount of information is becoming a slightly lesser priority of public education. Nowadays, students need to be able to also efficiently locate information online, critically evaluate its validity and use it in a meaningful way.<sup>27</sup> Previous emphasis on reproducing information did not usually stress critical thinking enough. Individual attempts at training students to think critically were mostly isolated. The wide adoption of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives played a significant role in transforming the attitude of educators and policy maker who are then beginning to move slowly towards an emphasis on thinking skills.<sup>28</sup> The adoption of frameworks like the of *Common Core Standards* in the US and the *Framework Educational Programme for Elementary Education* in the Czech Republic brought these issues to the attention of educators, but according to Thompson's report, this alone does not guarantee the desired learning outcomes because of the large focus of the theory and implementation rather than results.

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<sup>27</sup> GRECMANOVÁ, H., URBANOVSKÁ, E., NOVOTNÝ, P. *Podporujeme aktivní myšlení a samostatné učení žáků*. Olomouc: Hanex, 2000. p 7.

<sup>28</sup> THOMPSON, CH. *Critical Thinking across the Curriculum: Process over Output* [online] In: *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 1 (9). 2011. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.463.5095&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

The necessity of including critical thinking emphasis and other 21<sup>st</sup> century skills in modern teacher training has reached a nearly universal consensus, Willingham warns that critical thinking training cannot be effective without student's acquiring subject specific knowledge first and that we should not forego traditional methods and the value of knowledge completely.<sup>29</sup> Liessmann agrees and states that it is wrong to consider teaching knowledge as obsolete and that having a proper background in a specific subject opens up the door to a deeper understanding and application of higher order thinking skills in that particular area.<sup>30</sup> To enhance primary level teaching with some elements of critical thinking should not come at a cost of gaining particular subject specific knowledge. It should rather improve the handling of information in a more efficient way and create lasting connections in the volume of content knowledge.

## 2.2. Metacognition

Metacognition is an important part of the learning process. It is the knowledge and understanding of one's own mental and cognitive processes and is important in choosing an appropriate learning strategy as well as during thinking and problem-solving tasks when the learner has to engage several parts of their brain to be able to successfully solve with a particular problem or task.

Self-examination and auto-regulation are important parts of the critical thinking process because they help the learner to identify bad thinking and learn their own strengths and weaknesses.<sup>31</sup> Being mindful about their own metacognitive strategies also helps learners to them improve their cognitive skills and abilities.<sup>32</sup> When students recognize

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<sup>29</sup> WILLINGHAM, D. T. *Critical Thinking: Why Is It So Hard to Teach?*, In: Arts Education Policy Review, 109:4, 2008.

<sup>30</sup> LIESSMAN, P.K. *Teorie nevzdělanosti*. Praha: Academia, 2011.

<sup>31</sup> HALPERN, Diane F. *Teaching critical thinking for transfer across domains: Dispositions, skills, structure training, and metacognitive monitoring*. In: American Psychologist, 53, 449–455, 1998.

<sup>32</sup> PINTRICH, P. *The Role of Metacognitive Knowledge in Learning*, In: Teaching, and Assessing, Theory Into Practice, 41:4, 2002.

that learning is a process in which we are able to identify some clear steps on which the students move upwards while being guided and supported by a skilled educator, the learning process gains a new dimension.

## 2.3 Bloom's taxonomy and Revised Bloom's taxonomy

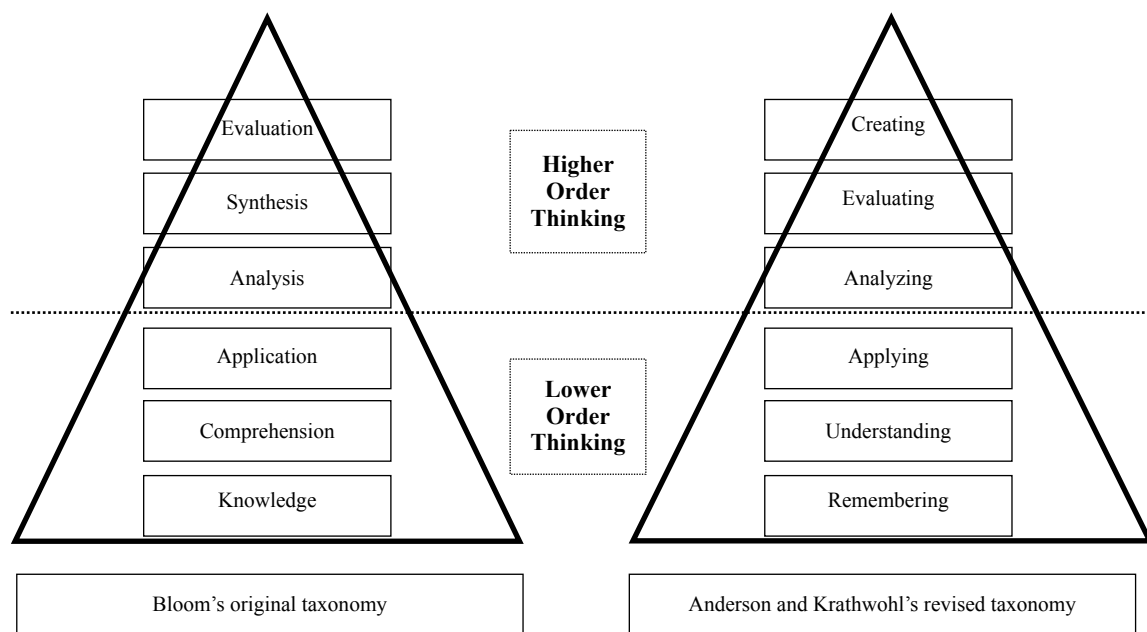
Bloom's taxonomy has been introduced for the first time in 1956 by psychologist and educator Benjamin Bloom and his team of collaborators. The original idea was to help educators in their work in promoting learner's progress by creating a taxonomy of educational objectives which would include these domains - cognitive, affective, psychomotor. The first part of Bloom and his team's work have been concerned with creating the taxonomy for the cognitive educational objectives. Bloom's primary concern have been to create a universally understandable and applicable system, that would be easy to comprehend and use by the educators. The primary role would be to guide educators when planing and mapping out the learning process taking place in the classroom but the taxonomy's potential could have also been utilized in creating educational frameworks and curricular documents.

The longevity of the Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives and their relevance is a proof of not only the quality of presented frameworks but it also testifies to the needs of educators.<sup>33</sup> Since its formulation, the position and value of Bloom's work gets debates constantly and public opinion sometimes shifts from adoration to a complete rejection. Since Bloom's taxonomy works well with the recent trend on focusing on the development of student's thinking skills, the literature on concerning critical thinking and it role in primary and secondary education still uses Bloom's and later Anderson and Krathwohl's works often as a springboard but not without a significant re-thinking

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<sup>33</sup> FERLAZZO, L. *Response: Bloom's & SOLO 'Are Not Just Colorful Posters We Hang on the Wall.* [online]. EducationWeek. 2017. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/opinion-response-blooms-solo-are-not-just-colorful-posters-we-hang-on-the-wall/2017/03>

of its role and formulation.<sup>34</sup> The optimal lesson, according to this framework, begins with activating lower order thinking skills in order to establish factual baseline of knowledge and comprehension. Bloom and many others do not regard the education complete when the student remembers, understands and correctly applies. The activation of higher order thinking is for them the logical progression of the teacher's work within the classroom. Higher order thinking according to classroom translates into student's abilities to utilize their previous learning in a new way in order to analyze, synthesize and evaluate. Later, Anderson and Krathwohl made changes to the Bloom's original hierarchy and got rid of the synthesis plus awarded the top spot - the highest educational objective in the cognitive domain to the creation.<sup>35</sup>



<sup>34</sup> LEMOV, D. *Bloom's Taxonomy Pyramid Problem*. [online]. Teach Like a Champion. 2017. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: <https://teachlikeachampion.com/blog/blooms-taxonomy-pyramid-problem/>

<sup>35</sup> ANDERSON, L.W., KRATHWOHL, D. R. *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. New York: Longman, 2001.

## 2.4 The taxonomy's relevance for teaching critical thinking in the ELT context

Bloom's taxonomy as a tool helps educators to become aware of the type of thinking they are nurturing in their students. When analyzing both their past lessons and when preparing future lesson plans, having a ready-to-use language in which to describe the objectives achievable within a limited time frame of a school lesson is useful. The taxonomy provides a useful framework by which the lesson may be developed and evaluated.

STEM subjects are more commonly viewed as spaces where critical thinking and particularly problem solving occurs more naturally and more frequently and where it is therefore easier for teachers to push the class in such direction. But in ELT classes, students also benefit from the inclusion of CT as Hughes mentions "It can be used to achieve a greater understanding of individual words and sentences, of longer pieces of discourse, of ideas, and of different means of communication."<sup>36</sup> This thesis uses Bloom's taxonomy as it is not oriented towards a particular field of study and can be used to set educational objectives in many different types of lessons.

According to some, one of the taxonomy's great achievements is that it gave teachers, experts and policy makers their language to name the educational processes in a consistent manner and establish a universal language dividing the lower order and the higher order thinking skills. While Bloom's taxonomy helps educators in their work, there are also some dangers in applying the framework too rigorously to the process of language learning. The process in which a learner is learning a foreign language does not necessarily follow a six step scheme and in many cases, there are no clear boundaries between the skills needed to gain a particular ability or knowledge since language proficiency is measured by a multitude of different elements.

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<sup>36</sup> DUMMET, P., HUGHES, J., *Critical Thinking in ELT: A working model for the classroom*. Boston: NG Learning. 2019, p.1

To understand the nature of the taxonomy's higher order thinking skills in relation to critical thinking, we may look to Paul and Elders's description of the critical thinking as one of a higher quality "Critical thinking is that mode of thinking — about any subject, content, or problem — in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them."<sup>37</sup>

ELT teacher would typically start at the very bottom of Bloom's (or Anderson and Krathwohl's) taxonomy of objectives when teaching the basic comprehension. In the ELT context that means learning the alphabet, meaning of words, basic sentence structure and later being able to understand a sentence and form an idea of its context within the language system. The lower order thinking then supports the application of the higher order thinking skills in various tasks and activities. For ELT class that might mean discovering a pattern in a grammatical structure, being able to discern a meaning of a colloquial expression or thinking critically about an idea and coming up one's own interpretations. Higher order thinking skills are tied to a higher proficiency in the target language. To be able to successfully engage with these task, students need to build up their English proficiency and understanding alongside their critical thinking pursuits.

## 2.5 Lower order and higher order thinking skills in ELT

The cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy includes six categories, they together present gradually more intellectually demanding tasks ordered in a manner that would guide both the student and the educator towards their set goal. The tasks are arranged according to their difficulty in relation to the intellectual engagements required from the participants. Below is a brief summary of the six educational objectives in the cognitive domain as revised by Lorin Anderson and David R. Krathwohl in 2001.

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<sup>37</sup> PAUL, R., ELDER, L., *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking Concepts & Tools*. Dillon Beach, Calif: Foundation for Critical Thinking, 2003.



### **A. Remembering**

The lowest of the lower order thinking skills requires students to recognize and recall information previously mentioned. It asks students to reproduce the teacher's interpretation of a fact. Anderson and Krathwohl mention the need to recall the information repeatedly and from a long term memory. When students successfully localize the correct knowledge that is relevant to a task at hand or answers the given question, we may suspect this step met. This educational objective may be described by verbs like define, describe, fill in, list, write, repeat or name

Some examples of tasks that achieve this level of cognitive engagement in ELT

Vocabulary testing where a student is asked to recall a word equivalent to one in their first language.
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Word games like domino or a similar that requires a student to find a pair or connect a word to its picture or a second language word equivalent.
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Kim's game where the students need to remember a progression of words or pictures and then recall their exact placement while correctly naming them.
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Recalling the infinitive form, past tense and part participle of irregular verbs
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### **B. Understanding**

Understanding places above remembering and according to Hughes "Involves students constructing meaning by connecting new knowledge with existing knowledge."<sup>38</sup> It may also require students to explain or describe a task in an oral, written or graphic manner. The skill or ability to explain something may involve comparing, giving examples, being able to explain a process from a visual prop. Student is also able to see similarities or differences between two or more things or thoughts. The verbs connected to this level of cognitive process are for example: interpret, translate, summarize, conclude, compare or explain.

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<sup>38</sup> DUMMET, P., HUGHES, J., *Critical Thinking in ELT: A working model for the classroom*. Boston: NG Learning. 2019, p.7

Some examples of tasks that achieve this level of cognitive engagement in ELT

Asking students to compare the use of two verb forms (e.g. like, likes)
Students explain the use indefinite article when seeing two groups of nouns with indefinite articles “a” and “an”
Students are able find a verb in a given sentence.
When being presented with a short video, students are able to summarize the story while using presented vocabulary (or their own words).
Students categorize superordinate and subordinate words and give additional examples

### **C. Applying**

The category of applying utilizes previously gained thinking skills and directs students in using them in a novel way. The students should be able to use an appropriate method or take correct steps to solve a presented problem. The student may apply some already established procedure or find a fitting alternative, to reach the desired outcome. The learning process at this level begins to combine some higher order thinking with the lower order thinking skills. Hughes states “In many ways, applying stage represents the first step toward the use of language for real communication.”<sup>39</sup> Student is for example able to use an ability appropriately or even implement a novel way of solving a task. Corresponding verbs are for example: suggest, plan, solve, discuss, try or order.

Some examples of tasks that achieve this level of cognitive engagement in ELT

Students are able to order words in a sentence according to a pattern.
When being presented with a sentence that is missing a word, students suggest an appropriate expression to fill in the space.
Students order sentences or paragraphs to create a meaningful storyline.

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<sup>39</sup> DUMMET, P., HUGHES, J., *Critical Thinking in ELT: A working model for the classroom*. Boston: NG Learning. 2019, p.7

When presented with an answer in an indicative mood, students are able to rearrange the word order to create a question.

#### **D. Analysing**

The fourth level in the cognitive domain asks students to analyze a given information, find and separate its elements and describe how these elements function and come together to create a meaning. The students pay attention to the relationships between ideas or parts of a whole.<sup>40</sup> Younger students may differentiate the fiction from reality, older students may tell apart important information from unimportant. Language students are also able to analyze discourse elements and differentiate between appropriate reactions and inappropriate reactions to a situation. Appropriate verbs to describe these activities are: suggest, analyze, find or organize.

Some examples of tasks that achieve this level of cognitive engagement in ELT

After hearing an audio recording, student finds a main character or summarizes its main storyline or idea.

When being presented with similar paragraphs, students are able to locate the differences and analyze their effect on each paragraph's meaning .

Students analyze a visual material and suggest an appropriate text to accompany it.

Students are given a series of sentences with grammar or vocabulary based mistakes and are able to locate and correct them.

#### **E. Evaluating**

Anderson and Krathwohl's revised take on Bloom's taxonomy replaces step 5, which was originally *synthesis* with a step named *evaluating*, this change modernized the Bloom's approach which put *evaluation* on top of the educational objectives as the highest of the thinking skills. Anderson and Krathwohl support his need to include a

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<sup>40</sup> ANDERSON, L.W., KRATHWOHL, D. R. *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*. New York: Longman, 2001.p.79

step where students form their own opinions based on their previous knowledge while utilizing their cognitive abilities formed so far but they do not agree with putting evaluation on top. When evaluating, students assess an information and form their own opinion on the information's value, relevance or quality. This is the level where the general public usually places critical thinking skills but depending on the task and age level of the students, critical thinking elements are found in other levels as well. Typical verbs when training evaluation are: argue, assess, decide, defend, disprove, justify, judge, criticize or evaluate.

Some examples of tasks that achieve this level of cognitive engagement in ELT

When being presented with several translations and an English sentence to their first language or the other way around, students give their opinion on which translation is correct, or when there are more possibilities, which is better suited to a particular situation.

Students analyze a written paragraph and evaluate the quality of author's arguments.

Students are asked to give a presentation on particular custom appearing in different cultures from around the world and assess the differences and similarities.

Students are presented with a problem and discuss the various approaches and solutions among themselves. Students may also criticize other student's work.

Students recognize appropriate expressions which are typically used to give an opinion and then use them in a correct manner when evaluating a book for example.

### **F. Creating**

The last of the categories presents a new challenge in which students are asked to use their previous knowledge and create something new. Students arrange and re-arrange parts to create an original structure by thinking creatively while following the parameters set by the teacher. Creating with the aim of reaching a set goal is mentioned as a necessary element in order to creatively engage the students' cognitive abilities. Creating without boundaries and without a regard for the actual outcome does not fulfill

these requirements. Students may create alternate solutions to a problem or work on a project and follow individual steps in order to achieve the desired outcome of a finished project. Some verbs used to promote student's creation are: write, combine, arrange, produce, classify, modify or suggest.

Some examples of tasks that achieve this level of cognitive engagement in ELT

Students are tasked with writing and alternate ending to a fairy tale.
After lessons on family and life in their country, students create a mood board to show and describe their particular life situation.
When presented with an answer in an indicative mood, students are able to suggest the question that may have preceded it.
Students write a letter to their future self where they predict their future life events.
Students are given a model sentence using after studying the SVOMPT rule and have to produce their own sentences while following the rule.

## 2.6 Benefits and Challenges of Using Revised Bloom's taxonomy in the primary ELT classroom

Benefits to using Revised Bloom's taxonomy when teaching primary level EFL students may be found on many different levels.

1. Setting appropriate educational goals in the cognitive domain is one of the teacher's most important tasks. Educational goals inform teacher's longterm planning as well as the sequence of tasks happening within one lesson. Many different aspects of students's academic performance as well as their overall enjoyment often depends on the teacher's ability to set the right goals and translate them into actionable chunks. Primary level students are generally motivated extrinsically to learn a foreign language and a series of unachievable

goals or mistakes in lesson planning may have catastrophic effect on young learner's willingness to learn a foreign language.<sup>41</sup>

2. Using verbs to characterize the different aspects of thinking that is happening within the classroom helps teachers during the process of designing correct exercises and setting appropriate goals for the language classroom. Choosing from the same set of taxonomies supports the intentional aspect of lesson planning and helps teacher to plan more effectively.
3. Universal language of the taxonomy connects different types of exercises and materials to their placement within the Revised Bloom's framework and thus creates a comprehensive pool of knowledge for educators to draw from. The other indisputable benefit of having this universal language is the possibility of searching for a particular idea or an inspiration online and having the idea bank from teachers around the world available to us.
4. While Revised Bloom's taxonomy offers a framework which contains a sequence of categories that progress from engaging student's lower order thinking to higher order and creates a consistent and predictable outline for teacher's work, the consistency should not always translate to predictability for students. In order to challenge primary level student's thinking, it is beneficial to use Revised Bloom in a creative way and new types of tasks and activities. Especially because language classes at the primary level often have students that are ahead of the group mixed with students who require different types of support. These classes often benefit from mixed tasks and differentiation.

While there are significant benefits to follow Revised Bloom when teaching primary level EFL students, there are also significant challenges.

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<sup>41</sup> PUCHTA, H., WILLIAMS, M. *Teaching Young Learners to Think*. Cambridge University Press, 2012, p.7

1. Revised Bloom and many other taxonomies are often criticized as outdated a too confining. Since their structure tends to be a reduction and simplification of a larger topic, critics often point out that a blind reliance of the taxonomy would hardly produce the promised results and its application should be gentle.<sup>42</sup>
2. Bloom's taxonomy as well as the revised version are usually depicted as a pyramid which would suggest that some levels of understanding and some thinking skills are more valuable than others. However recent discussions tend to present the taxonomy as a pool of equal cognitive levels, each having its own merit and each being equally valuable, only used at different points in time. <sup>43</sup>
3. Young learners tend to benefit from changing the tasks more often and according to some research ideally every 5 or so minutes. These short bursts of different types of activities are often required in order to manage young learner's level of energy. On the other hand, thinking-based activities might often present a significant challenge when structuring the lesson because they tend to generally take up more time and require stronger focus.

Since critical thinking is currently among the education's topmost priorities, it is important to start developing the skill as early as possible during the learner's formal education. There is a significant value in developing critical thinking skills as early as possible during primary education - educators and learners benefit from the fact that the classroom is an artificial environment, where mistakes are not only allowed but expected. Practicing critical thinking as early as possible during the student's education, shows them the value of thinking though their decisions and having a basis for their

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<sup>42</sup> BERGER, R. *Here's What's Wrong With Bloom's Taxonomy: A Deeper Learning Perspective*. [online]. Education Week, 2008 [cit. 2021-05-30] Available at: <https://www.edweek.org/education/opinion-heres-whats-wrong-with-blooms-taxonomy-a-deeper-learning-perspective/2018/03>

<sup>43</sup> DUMMET, P., HUGHES, J., *Critical Thinking in ELT: A working model for the classroom*. Boston: NG Learning. 2019, p.7

beliefs, as well as helps them to strengthen their academic performance by practicing skills of metacognition, close reading and argumentation, among others. Bloom's taxonomy is a universally known framework by which to set and evaluate educational goals, by reviving the theory and combining in with the ELT, teachers may enhance their primary level English lessons with activities that preserve their original goal of a language practice but add a benefit of a critical thinking element.



### 3. Teaching English to Young Learners

Children in the Czech Republic start their compulsory education at the age of 6 or 7, after finishing at least one year of pre-school education. Some schools offer English language lessons since the 1<sup>st</sup> grade, some start a year or two years later. *The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports* does not force the school to start the second language lessons (usually English) in the student's 1<sup>st</sup> year but it mandates that the second language education has to start by the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Teaching primary level learners a second language requires a knowledge of their educational needs and challenges. Since many teachers in the Czech Republic who are teaching English from 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> grade are not academically trained to teach this particular age group, it is important to have in mind their characteristic in order to follow the natural progression of their learning.

#### 3.1. Characteristics of Young Learners

Literature defines very young learners as an age group between 2 and 7 years old and young learners as an age group between 7 and 12 years of age. Both groups have their specific characteristic and challenges when learning foreign languages.<sup>44</sup>

Early stages of ELT are comparable to the first language acquisition. Children generally acquire the ability to use their first language from their families and people that they are around in their early years. Children also learn to use their first language by repetition - by imitating the sounds they hear and use visual clues such as movement or pictures together with their imagination to discern the meaning of words and phrases. These general notions of first language acquisition are also to some extent applicable to young EFL learners and some rules can be adopted to inform the teaching of young EFL learners. A commonly shared approach stresses that particularly during the first two

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<sup>44</sup> SLATTERY, M., WILLIS, J. *English for Primary Teachers A handbook of activities & classroom language*. Oxford University Press, 2001, p.4

years, young EFL learners should not be exposed to a written form of the language too much. Some experts even present the idea of a complete immersion in the target language in order to maximize the transfer of sound patterns and support the learners by adopting some elements of the first language acquisition mechanics.<sup>45</sup>

Current EFL learners enter the primary school usually at 6 or 7 years old and thus begin to fall into the category of young EFL learners. One of the most important changes is the development of literacy.<sup>46</sup> While the learners begin to read and write in their first language and begin to develop an understanding of a language as a system, it is not beneficial to utilize those new skills during the first years of their English studies. Another distinguishing feature is also their developing ability to think independently and discriminate between reality and fiction. Their EFL acquisition in the current era is also highly influenced by the abundance of technology in their upbringing, that means that the children have likely encountered English language (or some other foreign language) before they were formally introduced to the concept of a foreign language.<sup>47</sup> These children are often familiar with basic vocabulary from either their pre-school courses or from other sources but they are not generally able to successfully use the language themselves.

Any EFL teaching should include the target language as the main form of communication from the position of the teacher. Teaching young learners is no different. Frequent change in methods and activities help young learners to stay motivated and interested. Teachers of young learners are also encouraged to gradually move from repetition, which is necessary and welcome in early stages of learning, to independent creation. Many teachers struggle with removing the barrier between the student's ability to understand an utterance in target language when directed at them and their

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<sup>45</sup> KERSTEN, K. ROHDE, A., *Immersion teaching in English with young learners*. In: Teaching English Language to Young Learners: Critical Issues in Language Teaching, Bloomsbury. 2012. pp.71-89

<sup>46</sup> NICOLAS, H., LIGHBOW, P. M. *Defining child second language acquisition, defining roles for L2 instruction*. In: Second language acquisition and the younger learner: Child's play? 2008, pp. 27–51.

<sup>47</sup> TERANTINO, J. *Youtube for Foreign Languages: You Have to See This Video*. In: Language, Learning and Technology. 15, 2011. p. 10

willingness to produce such utterance themselves. Positive classroom environment, planning for success and scaffolding are among the necessary prerequisites to a long-term success in engaging young learners minds and developing their thinking abilities in accordance with the Revised Bloom's taxonomy.

### 3.2 Motivating young learners

Motivation is a driving force for our learner's success as it is one of the key aspects of the learning process. It is very important to understand what motivates young learners to take active part in their learning. Theory of motivation as applied to the learning process tell us that humans are in the most basic sense motivated by two types of motivation, extrinsic and intrinsic.

A learner with an extrinsic motivation takes cues for their learning from the environment. Young EFL learner makes an effort in order to gain a benefit. Among the benefits may be a gift, positive feeling when pleasing an adult they respect, a good mark or win in a game. These achievements are very important to them and are usually what drives most of their learning at this stage. Young learners are very often motivated in this way because this way, the feeling of satisfaction and reward comes relatively fast and the result of their successful effort is something tangible and pleasing. Young learners like to see an immediate result of their activity and when successful, getting an instant pay-off that signals it to them and to others. Young EFL learners often feel motivated to work when they share their learning with someone or when they work in pairs of small groups.<sup>48</sup>

Intrinsic motivation is generally regarded as more valuable and a key component to the success of a learning process. It is a type of motivation that comes from within a person and informs his learning process - it is a desire to learn for their own sake. Learners

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<sup>48</sup> KOPINSKA, M, AZKARAI, A. *Exploring young EFL learners' motivation: Individual versus pair work on dictogloss tasks*. In: English language learning in primary schools: Variables at play, 10 (3), 2020

with high level of intrinsic motivation can often stay more focused on a task because they are able to overcome the short term discomforts in order to achieve a long-term goal. They are also generally able to find more pleasure in a task itself and do not therefore rely on external motivators. The levels of intrinsic motivation in young learners are very individual. Helping students build up their intrinsic motivation is a task that requires much larger level of cooperation and planning.

### 3.3. Targeting CT enhanced ELT activities to young learners

Robert H. Ennis presents a set of strategies and tactics to help teachers teach critical thinking.<sup>49</sup> Although he describes these strategies and techniques as general ideas, that would help teachers to set out on a right path, he also warns that is crucial to tailor them to the actual students and specific educational objectives.

Among the 21 techniques, several are transferable to primary classroom settings and may inform the production of CT enhances activities. Ennis acknowledges young learner's natural curiosity and considers it a great benefit but also instructs teachers in encouraging young children's restraints. Teachers should for example encourage young learner's to think before acting. This learned skill would help them avoid rushing to judgements and accept everything at its face value. When working on ELT tasks and exercises, some young learners often finish the assignments suspiciously quickly and realize later that they have misread the instructions and haven't met the goal of that particular exercise. Frequent questioning of young learner's assumptions and asking additional questions like "Why?" or "How did you figure this out?" would also be transferable into the ELT lesson. Even when the teacher does not mean to disagree with the student's conclusion, it is often beneficial to narrate the reasoning behind the outcome out loud. This strengthens learner's metacognition as well as benefits slower learners in the group. Another useful strategy is to connect critical thinking to learner's everyday life. When students experience different situations during their learning hours

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<sup>49</sup> ENNIS,R. *How to Teach Critical Thinking: Twenty One Strategies for Teaching Critical Thinking*. [online]. 2019. [cit. 2021-05-30] Available at: <http://criticalthinking.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/21-one-strategies-for-teachin-CT.pdf>

as well as outside of them, it is useful to built up a practice of using critical thinking in a controlled manner and in various aspects of their lives.

Another point that speaks for inclusion of CT in the ELT is that while critical thinking is dependent on a topic or a subject that is being critically considered, students do not need to become experts on the subject to start think about it in a critical manner.<sup>50</sup> The two competences can be developed alongside each other. Moreover by including critical thinking into the learning activities, students are led to a deeper subject understanding as well.

Because it is very difficult to measure young learner's critical thinking abilities at a point in time, we may not have a concrete proof of their development but it is still necessary to sustain the effort. The development and targeting of critical thinking activities can be informed by both the Anderson and Krathwohl's work on the Revised Bloom's taxonomy as well as on the general strategies and tactics presented by experts such as R. Ennis, who advises to support the learner's natural curiosity by directing them towards a more systematic inquiry and not shy away from including thinking tasks from an early age and even before students have gained sufficient knowledge.

Since most of the available methodology materials deal with critical thinking as a part of the larger subject of teaching logic, reasoning and argumentation, it is very difficult to find readily available materials that would help primary level ELT teachers to include appropriately scaffolded critical thinking activities into their regular language classes. The project of this diploma thesis was to present such activities and observe the students' reactions and their abilities to complete a critical thinking tasks included within their ELT lessons.

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<sup>50</sup> RYMANOWICZ, K. *The importance of critical thinking for young children*. [online] Michigan State Unoversity, 2016. [cit. 2021-05-30]. Available at: [https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the\\_importance\\_of\\_critical\\_thinking\\_for\\_young\\_children](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/the_importance_of_critical_thinking_for_young_children)

## 4. Project

The theoretical part of this diploma thesis explored the meaning of critical thinking and its value in the current society as well as its role in education. This part aims to establish a framework for the project of the diploma thesis. The project itself explores the possibilities of developing critical thinking skills in young EFL learners. The project's main objective is to develop and present a set of activities that would actively engage young learners' higher order thinking skills as they are being described in the Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives and especially Anderson and Krathwohl's revised version of Bloom.

### 4.1 Project's introduction

As it has been previously hinted, this project's origin comes from my long-term fascination in the mechanics of the lesson planning, targeting of specific activities to the individual classes and the overall interest in the optimization of educational activities included within the English language lesson.

The activities cover a range of aspects of teaching primary level English and are designed with the intent of being easy to use during a particular lesson and not requiring a great deal of planning on the part of the teacher. The CT enhanced activities are included with the aim of moving students towards greater comprehension and train and develop their thinking skills. The lack of available materials as well as high costs of some ready-to-use sets of materials have played a significant role in the formulation of this project as I have been unable to locate most of the materials I needed and therefore have decided to create and test my own.

Due to the nature of my current employment as an English teacher at a primary level at a public primary school in Hradec Králové, the main part of the project draws from my

own experiences and observations and was tailored to suit the reality of the my real-life lesson as well as during this year's remote teaching phases

## 4.2. The project's main objectives and questions

There are many reasons behind combining EFL teaching at the primary level with the development of higher order thinking skills and critical thinking in particular.

The first reason stems from the suggestion that learners of all ages require cognitively challenging tasks to maintain their interest in the subject they are studying. This is true for every subject but particularly for language studies. Due to the difficult and often repetitive nature of language learning, teachers are always on the hunt for a novel way of practicing the topic while keeping their students' engagements levels high.

The second reason is the current global demand an activism. Critical thinking skills are demanded in the world of business, promoted by non-profits such as 21P and measured by inter-governmental organizations such as the OECD, their current status is also supported by the nations' governments. In case of the Czech Republic, *The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports* in the Czech Republic presents the *Key Competencies* in their *Framework Educational Programme for Basic Education* - the competencies are framed in such a way that the teacher almost cannot teach pure factual knowledge and focus on memorizing and repetition if they want to abide by the current legislation and recommendations.

The third reason is that the students will inevitably encounter various situations at school and later in life, that are going to require the use of multiple higher order thinking processes and there is a value in training students' cognitive abilities as often and as rigorously as possible. Authors like Paul Dummet a John Hughes promote the

inclusion of tasks developing a range of decision making and problem solving skills in young EFL learners as soon as possible in order to promote effective learning habits.<sup>51</sup>

The final reason is that including thinking processes into the EFL teaching eventually leads to a deeper and more organic understanding of the language. The teacher however has to be consistent and rigorous in this pursuit. When students learn foreign language in a manner that is less uniform and more of a dynamic reflection of its real life aspects, they gain a deeper understanding of its functioning behind the classroom doors. Tasks enhanced with the element of critical thinking promote learner's autonomy and equips them for the eventual situation when they are on their own.

Basic principles used to design the CT enhanced activities and exercises

1. Use Revised Bloom's taxonomy for targeting the educational objective of the activity
2. Strengthen a familiar exercise with a CT element to promote deeper thinking
3. Differentiate an exercise in order to engage both high achieving and low performing students.

The set of questions used to assess the project

1. Did the Revised Bloom's taxonomy offer a useful framework for more effective and easier lesson planning?
2. Were the activities and exercises valuable as a tool to enhance students's CT skills and abilities?
3. Were the students' levels of engagement higher when working on the CT enhanced tasks?

The project was influenced by a wish to engage students, who may be bored by repetitive tasks, and give them an advantage by introducing them to activities that

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<sup>51</sup> DUMMET, P., HUGHES, J., *Critical Thinking in ELT: A working model for the classroom*. Boston: NG Learning. 2019, p.21



would engage their critical thinking abilities. The above mentioned principles and project questions were established in order to clearly evaluate its effect on several aspects of ELT.

### 4.3. ZŠ Sever and the profiles of the classes 3B and 5A

To establish the background for the activities designed to bring an element of critical thinking to ELT, it is important to consider the environment, the nature of the English language teaching at the particular school and characteristics of both classes, where the activities have been used.

#### 4.3.1 ZŠ Sever

The testing of the project took place at ZŠ Sever in Hradec Králové where the author currently teaches English at the primary level. ZŠ Sever focuses on sports and also on English language (secondary level Art classes are being taught in English). Regular English lessons start in grade 1 and continue throughout the whole duration of student's basic education. Students do not have any textbook in grades 1 and 2 and English lessons mostly taught by the respective class's teacher. In grades 3, 4 and 5 - they use Start with Click textbooks and the classes are generally taught by qualified teachers of the English language. When students transfer to grade 6, they begin to use Project textbooks and become divided into language groups according to their performance in a test. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the system and the organization of the classes have been changed many times in the past 12 months and the corresponding changes often interfered with learning. Students had to change their language groups and even their teachers because of the rule of homogeneity pushed by the Ministry of Health.

As previously mentioned, ZŠ Sever starts English lessons at grade 1, by the student's third year they are able to comprehend simple instructions, repeat and use a limited set of words in very simple structure with the verb BE in the present form. They are not able to use the language independently yet and tend to instinctively rely on the teacher to guide them in the comprehension as well as production of the language. Most of the children in grade 5 are capable of executing more complex tasks, their comprehension

starts to be more organic and less tied to a particular “model exercise.” These students also exhibit a stronger sense of the foreign language.

The project was integrated into both person a distance English lessons of classes 3B and 5A. Due to the nature of the school year 2019/20 and 2020/21, teaching of a foreign language to primary level learners encountered a whole new set of difficulties and the original Project was adjusted and rearranged accordingly. Some of the setbacks included the lack of synchronous lessons and the general challenge of getting students from disadvantaged backgrounds online in the year 2019/20. This, together with the elimination of some hours of language learning from the student’s weekly timetables during the months of remote learning and the constant shifting of students either between language groups and teachers or between their own homes and the school classrooms, have underlined a greater need for supporting student’s autonomous learning abilities. Building up the confidence in their own thinking skills and learning abilities gains a greater significance in situations such as these, where an unexpected barrier leaves younger learners in a situation where the teacher cannot offer in-person help and guidance.

#### 4.3.2 Class 3B

Class 3B is a challenging one to teach. It has 20 students and their learning abilities are sometimes dramatically different. Within the class there are 7 students requiring a significant level of support and various types of adjustments (combinations of ADD, ADHD, neurological issues, combined learning disabilities and difficult family situations). On the other hand there are 4 high performing students who tend to be discouraged by the slow progress of the class as a unit. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdown have caught these students in the 2nd grade and significantly affected the students who need special adjustments and have to overcome challenges when learning a language. The imaginary gap between these two opposites has deepened significantly during the months of remote learning. When they are physically present, a large number of students in this class would benefit from a presence of an assistant or a second teacher, but the current funding does not allow for such luxury.

I have chosen this class despite the above mentioned difficulties. To properly set their basic foundation in the English language, these students need to review a great deal and the nature of the Start with Click textbooks does not support these needs. The inadequate amounts of revision materials are a good opportunity to create an additional set of activities and test this project's propositions. It allows us to see whether students as young as 9 years old would be able to enjoy success when having to organically use their very limited English language abilities in a manner that is not typical and requires both creativity and thinking rather than mindless work. The CT enhanced activities are also designed in a manner that would ideally entertain the high achieving students in the class 3B and keep their interest in the topic while at the same time allowed the students with specific needs to revise in a meaningful manner.

#### 4.3.3 Class 5A

At the beginning of the school year 2020/21, the class was divided and only 14 students were in my group for the first months of in-person learning as well as during remote lessons in autumn. The class at the beginning of the year was relatively small and balanced, with only 1 student with learning disabilities (dyslexia, ADD) and 1 Vietnamese student that had transferred during the previous school year. This new student hadn't been able to understand the Czech language at all and was still in the process of settling into the class when the beginning of the pandemic in spring 2020 halted her learning significantly. The spring lockdown left her isolated and slowed her learning efforts in both Czech and English. Because learning Czech has been her primary responsibility, she renewed her efforts in English again at the beginning of this school year, after being able to comprehend basic Czech. This student's English is currently on the level of a 2nd grade student and is not yet able to follow the learning processes that are taking place in this group. She works separately during some parts of the lesson or observes her classmates, she is not forced to participate when she doesn't feel comfortable.

Around the mid-point of the 2020/21 school year, the group of 14 students have been expanded to the whole class 5A of 21 students, due to the Ministry's requirement to have all learning taking place in homogenous groups. Compared to some other groups,

this class is generally very lively and students are communicative, friendly and eager to work on atypical assignments. 5A is a class that gets bored very easily and is generally quite frank with their evaluations. In terms of personalities - this class has friendly atmosphere but is extremely competitive on a daily basis. The competitiveness, however motivating, can be a detriment to the educational goals of the lesson because the losing side usually takes the loss very personally and the winners are often less than graceful in their celebrations. CT enhanced activities could be a way to solve the issue of boredom and disinterest that is sometimes present there when working only with the Start with Click series and also move the students towards greater independence as they are moving to the 6th grade next year and will be using a new series of language textbooks.

To be able to successfully integrate CT elements into the topics covered during the 5th year, the class has been previously informed about the project. Because the class has a great number of high achieving students and only a small number of low performing ones, it was very important to create activities, that would be accessible and interesting to both ends of the spectrum. To control the class competitiveness and to present the class with a set of lessons that have an unexpected element and activities with an element of inquiry but that are not about winning or losing. Hopefully with a more openly friendly atmosphere, more students would have a chance to be involved. Additional hope of this project is to present the Vietnamese students with enough universally recognizable visual stimuli to overcome the language barrier and allow her to participate in the lesson on a higher level.

#### 4.4. Lesson planning for the inclusion of CT enhanced materials

Since the goal is to improve thinking abilities and practice real life English in a new way, the activities were created either as a self-contained lesson-sized dives into a topic or a single activity, included within the regular lesson with the aim to engage student's minds in a novel way. The materials were created to practice topics from the school's own education framework and loosely followed the current units that the students practiced using the Start with Click textbooks.

Since students in both classes are used to work with additional materials during both the evocation and the revision part of the lesson, they take the inclusion of various materials into their ELT well. Some familiar techniques and materials include flashcards, trimino, word pairs, visual organizers (mind mapping) and online-based activities from the web. Students are especially familiar with websites such as Liveworksheets, Wordwall and products like Google Forms. When at school, the lessons commonly include communication based activities such as the virus game or dialogues or interviews.

Lesson planning during the 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 school years have been significantly affected by the months of remote learning. During remote learning, it was better for the students's individual workflows when the handout included everything they had to do during the lesson so the structure and planning is usually accurately reflected in the individual handouts. In order to better manage time, the lesson focused less of the transitions between activities and more on a unit of content, that was being covered. The time-issue was particularly difficult to estimate due to the student's previous inexperience with such undertakings so in order to promote a relaxed atmosphere of inquiry, it was important not to dwell on the speed of the work since it would only stress the divisions in the particular class, primarily in 3B. Faster students could leave the online lesson after they have submitted the work and I checked it for mistakes. This motivated some students to work more efficiently but also frustrated some because I felt that they tended to compare their slower performance with their quicker classmates.

The handout itself was designed to be aesthetically pleasing and present a lesson in several shorter chunks. Usually the fist one or two tasks are a form of a targeted revision and without a significant element of CT - they review a topic or expand on a previous lesson or a theme. They are designed to set the mood and get my students into the right headspace. The middle part of the handout introduces the material designed for this specific thinking practice and usually involves a short text, a video or an exercise with an element of writing. The handout was then concluded with an activity specifically targeted to test various thinking skills, creativity or provide a space for introspection is.

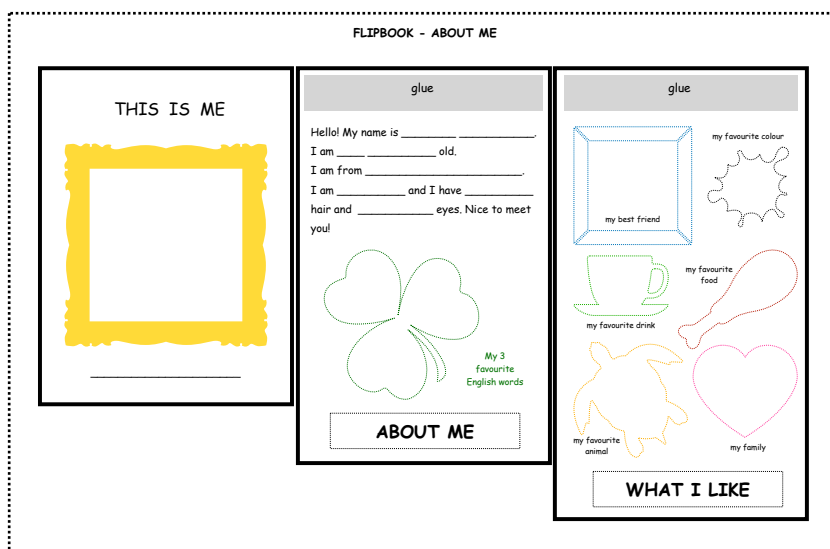
To provide an element of metacognition, the novel ways of practicing the target language were then transferred to a class portfolio of familiar exercises and activities and used throughout the school year.

## 4.5. Materials designed to bring the elements of CT to young learner's ELT

The core of the project consists of 16 worksheets with various types of exercises that were created in order to bring an element of critical thinking into the ELT. The materials were presented to students both during the remote learning part of the 2020/21 school year and later during in-person classes. Each material is briefly described with a particular focus on its educational objectives and the elements of critical thinking that have been included. This section also presents individual reflections of its value and effectiveness. Materials are divided into 2 groups according to the grade for which they were intended.

### 4.5.1 3<sup>rd</sup> grade materials

#### Material 1 - Flipbook



Use, duration, class: offline, 40 minutes, 3B

Description: This material combines an element of manual work with an exercise that is often recommended by the RWCT programme. It was used during an in-person teaching and took about 35 to 40 minutes to finish. The material was created as a part of “back to school” teaching with a hope of meaningfully engaging the students, review their EFL foundations and create something tangible.


Educational objectives: Student fills in missing words in exercise “About Me”. Student finishes typical introductory sentences. Student describes themselves in a creative manner by choosing words that describe their interest and preferences.


Element of CT: Critical thinking element in this exercise is tied mainly to the vocabulary selection that each student has to perform. Students are encouraged to use their limited vocabulary effectively and find words that would describe them or have a personal meaning. When students have limitations in their abilities to communicate their wish exactly, they have to be creative and think how to express themselves as best as they can. The flipbook’s lists test this ability.


Reflection: I prepared this flipbook activity for the second lesson after the return to school from lockdown because I wanted to see which students kept their EFL foundations and which were struggling. Because I did not want to stress my students or give other classmates a chance to pick up on slow learners, I chose to combine revision with crafting. I presented students with my own flipbook and explained how it is made and then encouraged them to work individually. The children were eager to start working but it was soon obvious that they forgot a lot of the vocabulary and weren’t used to writing in English. Some students wanted to include advanced vocabulary in the “What I like” section but I discouraged them since I wanted them to get creative with what they already know. Upon reviewing the flipbooks, I found little variation and realized that my template may have been too restrictive. I am not sure whether this particular material engaged higher order thinking skills since most of the students did not spend a lot of time on the problems when they encountered some but rather moved on. A clear benefit of this lesson was the renewal of their interest in English and an actual product they could take home.


## Material 2 - Pronouns

**PRONOUNS - JÁ, TY, ON, ONA, ONO**

1) **FIND PRONOUNS** 

2) **CIRCLE PRONOUNS** 

3) 

4) **LISTEN AND WRITE** 

I CAT  
PEN HE  
STAR  
BLUE MUM  
YOU  
LOVE SHE  
IT TEA

• I AM FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC.  
• YOU ARE VERY NICE.  
• HE IS NINE YEARS OLD  
• SHE IS TALL AND SLIM.  
• IT IS YELLOW.

NA JAKÉ MÍSTO VE VĚTĚ  
PATŘÍ PRONOUNS ?  
začátek - prostředek - konec  
NAŠEL JSEM TYTO  
PRONOUNS

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Use, duration, class: online, 20 minutes, 3B

Description: This is a worksheet option of an exercise we have done during an online lesson. During the transition to remote learning, students learned how to fill in Google Form and one of the exercises we have done online was a revision of pronouns and an activity teaching the students to use pronouns in sentences.

Educational objectives: Student identifies pronouns on the page. Student links the pronouns to their corresponding Czech equivalent. Student analyzes given sentences and notes the placement of the pronoun in each. Student summarizes the findings and is able to use it in a controlled manner.

Element of CT: I wanted my class to review pronouns and begin to form simple sentences with them. Since I prefer to introduce a new element of English practice by directing their investigations in a specific direction, I have decided to let the class analyze the placement of the pronouns in my sentences and form their own conclusions. All of the students were able to succeed which served as a big motivation for them.

Reflection: I was initially worried because I wasn't sure how to flip the activity into an online experience but since we practiced using Google form, I managed to create a form almost similar to the paper version. Students had to log in and worked individually which was a pity because this could have been done as a pair work activity as well. The



cloud part was a multiple choice question and I was surprised by how many students selected “tea” as a pronoun, only later have I realized that they probably mistook “tea” for “they” even though we haven’t learned to use “they” yet. After writing down the pronouns and identifying their place in the model sentences, students successfully finished the activity. After some initial technical difficulties, the class have been able to finish the task. I believe that their thinking was lightly engaged, The task was not difficult but since this class was particularly affected by the first lockdown in spring 2020, there are enormous differences between individual students' abilities. By having this exercise online, student who sent their answers faster could work on different extra tasks like online quizzes and students who needed my attention could get it.


### Material 3 - Uncle Ben’s family

A3 - reading + vocabulary (CT)

1) Přečti si text

Look at uncle Ben and his family. They live in England, in a village named Mousehead. This is their house in the village.  
 Woof, woof! Oh, this is his dog Bud. Where is he? Is he in the garage? Oh no, he is in the living room!  
 My cousin Cindy isn't at school. She is at home. She is tired and she is in her bedroom.  
 Uncle Ben isn't at work. He is at home. He is in the dining room. He is eating a sandwich.  
 Where are aunt Lily and Tim? Oh, my aunt is in the garden and my cousin is the kitchen.

2) Napiš jména



3) Spoj člena rodiny se správným místem

BEN	BUD
CINDY	
LILY	TIM

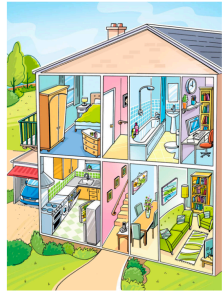
4) V textu najdi slovíčka

strýc = \_\_\_\_\_  
 vesnice = \_\_\_\_\_  
 sestřenice/bratranec = \_\_\_\_\_  
 unavený = \_\_\_\_\_  
 sendvič = \_\_\_\_\_  
 teta = \_\_\_\_\_

5) V textu zakroužkuj

- místa a místnosti BLUE
- členy rodiny ORANGE
- přivlastňovací zájmena RED

*příklad:*  
 My brother John is in the garage



Use, duration, class: offline, 30 minutes, 3B

Description: This worksheet combines a reading activity adapted from the Start with Click textbook. The text is slightly expanded to include more information. The rest of the worksheet has a combination of typical after-reading activities where students confirm their understanding of the text, translate and search for particular expressions and elements.

Educational objectives: Student reads a short text and confirms their understanding by naming the main characters and placing them in the correct room. Student interprets the meaning of new words from their placement within the text. Student analyzes the text and searches for particular expressions.


Element of CT: Critical thinking element in this activity connects to the text about uncle Ben. Students in my 3<sup>rd</sup> grade tend to rush through reading longer texts but since they have to go back to the text a few times in order to complete the follow-up tasks and since the text is phrased in a way that deliberately confuses beginner reader, it actively engages thinking skills. To finish exercise three, they have to interpret the difference between affirmative and negative sentence in order to place the person at a correct spot.

Reflection: This is a variation of an exercise that we have done before about Pikachu so most of the students knew how to look for the exact information they needed and how to fill in the mini vocabulary for example. I planned this activity as an individual work originally but since at that time the students have only just returned to school, I have decided to assign it as pairwork. I was glad to have done that because this exercise requires more focus and most of my students with special learning disabilities would probably be unable to finish the activity on their own. Three students in particular visibly struggles during this lesson. One female learner always has difficulties during a Monday lesson since her family situation prevents her from getting enough rest, on Monday I have to offer her even more support because she is visibly tired and sleepy. Pairing her with a more active classmate offered her a chance to participate. Two male students from this class struggle with attention and are quite hard to motivate in a positive manner. Through observation I have noticed many times that they search for clues in the work of people around them and do not like to rely on their own abilities. Since most of the pairs seemed to be able to work independently, I created a mini trio with these two students and read the text often and out loud with a strong intonation to help them work out the answer. This helped and I managed to catch their attention for most of the lesson, which is a rare event.

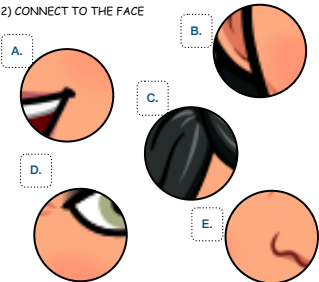
## Material 4 - My face

**MY FACE + OPPOSITES**


1) DESCRIBE THE FACE



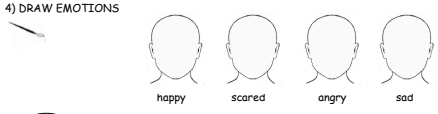
2) CONNECT TO THE FACE




3) DRAW HAIR




4) DRAW EMOTIONS



5) (CIRCLE) THE OPPOSITE



6) DRAW THE OPPOSITE OF  
SHORT HAIR      SAD FACE



Use, duration, class: offline, 20 minutes, 3B

Description: The worksheet reviews vocabulary used in the Start with Click textbook and engages student's interest in the topic by reflecting back on themes we have already covered like emotions and opposites.

Educational objectives: Student recalls vocabulary from the previous lessons. Student draws features according to the prompts. Student creates their own versions of avatars to represent the target vocabulary.

Element of CT: Students were asked to describe the face before they started working on the worksheet, after making sure that everyone had their basic vocabulary

Reflection: This worksheets wasn't very intricate and it was notable in some students' approach to it. The lesson started well and students were able to understand the instructions that I have put in English this time, I usually use Czech instructions when writing a worksheet because it supports a better workflow of the whole group since I am not bombarded with the same questions over and over. The overall mood during the lesson was good, students were able to artistically express when drawing the emotions and hair but I felt that there was something lacking and that the cohesion between particular tasks was not very strong. Had this worksheet not exist, I think there would be

no change in student's abilities and engagement during this particular lesson. I could have students competing in drawing faces on a blackboard for a few minutes and the effect would be the same.

### Material 5 - Venn diagrams

A3 - comparing (different x same - CT)

1) Porovnej zvířata

DIFFERENT SAME DIFFERENT

jumping 2 eyes running

Zkus doplnit věty:

The kangaroo is \_\_\_\_\_ The polar bear is \_\_\_\_\_

The kangaroo and the polar bear are \_\_\_\_\_

2) Porovnej sebe a paní učitelku

ME TEACHER

Use, duration, class: offline, 25-30 minutes, 3B

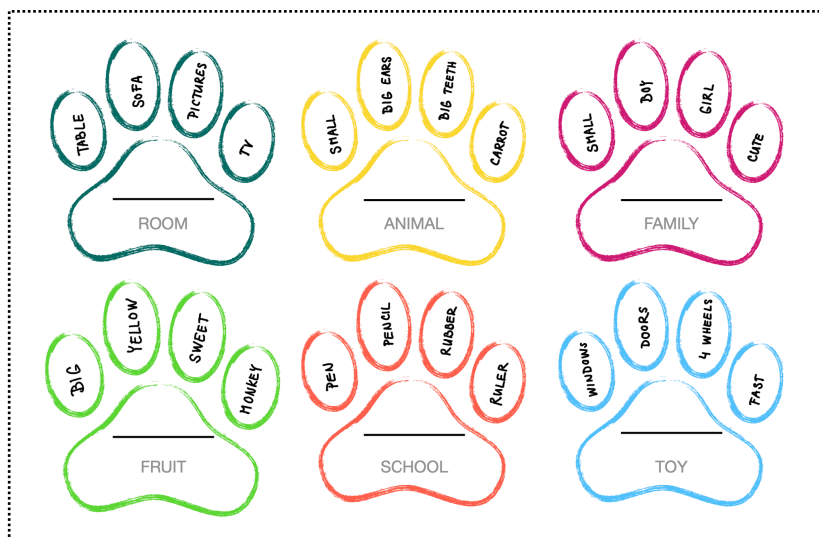
Description: Activity presents a visual organizer called Venn diagram that helps students list characteristic aspects in a transparent manner. The first Venn diagram introduces the concept and asks students to compare 2 animals based on their looks and lifestyle. The second diagram asks students to compare themselves to the teacher.

Educational objectives: Students compares animals using a Venn diagram. Student organizes their findings in a presented visual organizer. Student analyzes differences and similarities between 2 animals or 2 people. Students compare their work with classmates.

Element of CT: When students search for characteristic visual or personality traits. Students are becoming aware of the differences between people and they are confronted with the idea of diversity. Venn diagram also forces students to name similarities, otherwise the work would remain incomplete. Because they consider both sides, students think about themselves as an individual and as a part of some larger group (for example people with red hair). Because 3<sup>rd</sup> grade vocabulary is not very extensive, students are encouraged to ask around for help and get inspiration from the works of others. Students also practice what are some appropriate expressions to use when talking about someone and what are inappropriate.

Reflection: I introduced this activity by reviewing the meaning of words “the same” and “different.” I wanted to prevent my students from choosing a classmate that they could possibly hurt by using unkind words in their comparison so I selected the other person (me). It was perhaps too restricting because the students would probably be more eager to compare themselves to their peers and not to an adult.

#### Material 6 - Guess the word



Use, duration, class: online, 10 minutes, 3B

Description: This worksheet is a paper version of a warm-up that we have done during a remote lesson in winter. The original digital activity was created in Google Forms but

for later use, I flipped the activity and included an offline version. Individual paws guide students to name a word they have already learned and that could be described by 4 clues written at the top of the paw. After finishing the exercise, students were assigned to create 2 more additional paws as a homework.

Educational objectives: Student assess the clues given to them. Student decides on a


Element of CT: Students engage their thinking skills when they have to find a common word based only on four clues. When creating their own paws, students had to decide on the optimal and effective clues that let other participants guess the target expression without giving it away too fast.

Reflection: My students like guessing activities. They enjoy games and they are eager to take any opportunity in which they do not have to practice grammar or read. I struggled a little bit because I wanted to create clues that are more ambiguous and I think was successful only partially. The enjoyment was very high and most of the students were able to finish the task without any additional help. When they did not remember the correct spelling of the word, they could consult the textbook. The word “baby” in the purple paw was perhaps the most difficult since only some students are familiar with the word “cute.” I believe it was mostly those, who watch YouTube videos frequently.

### Material 7 - Pronunciation and Rhymes (A3)

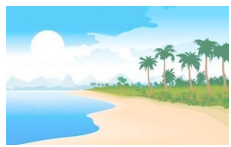
A3 - Pronunciation and rhymes (CT)

A BIG FAT \_\_\_\_\_ SAT ON A RAT




Co se rýmuje s fat? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SNAKES SIT BY THE SEA



Najdi číslo, které začíná na "s" a dokresli obrázek.

LOOK! ZERO \_\_\_\_\_ IN THE \_\_\_\_\_



Rýmuj se slova "zoo" a "look"? - ANO x NE

PRACUJ S UČEBNÍČÍ A NAJDI SLOVA, KTERÁ SE RÝMUJÍ

HALL - \_\_\_\_\_

TWO - \_\_\_\_\_

TOY - \_\_\_\_\_

FUN - \_\_\_\_\_

Use, duration, class: offline, 15-20 minutes, A3

Description: Students are presented with 3 fun rhymes and they have to finish the sentences and keep the rhythm going. Czech instructions guide them towards the goal of the activity, and in-class repetition of the sentences exercise their pronunciation skills. This also allows the teacher to take note on the individual progress of each of the students.

Educational objectives: Student evaluate the sentences and find the principle that makes them rhyme. Student finds a missing word by following the clue. Student produces their own pairs by searching for words which rhyme with the expressions given to them.





Element of CT: Students do not get to work on pronunciation very often, it is implied that the teachers themselves decide on the appropriate activities. The Start With Click series of textbooks also does not include any exercises that would focus solely on this aspect of learning English.





Reflection: I was motivated to include this type of activity after attending an online seminar where the instructor focused on songs, raps and rhymes to convey the feeling for English. I find including songs and rhymes into my English lessons quite difficult. Since most of the textbook material seems outdated and awkward by today's standards, students after the first two years of learning English are often reluctant to continue participating in something that may make them look silly. I have searched for appropriate tongue twisters that would be easy to understand and allowed me to erase some parts. I found three and decided to try to engage my students in a pronunciation activity. I was surprised by how well they worked. It was a quick activity because they worked in pairs and were able to find the missing words fairly quickly. The second part, where they searched inside the textbook for the rhyming pairs, highlighted some individual students' natural affinity for the language because they could fill in the words without opening the textbook. As a reward, we looked up some famous tongue twisters to try out and finished the activity on a high note because all students wanted to participate. I was very happy with this lesson because it grabbed student's attention and directed it towards English in a different but meaningful way.



## Material 8 - Find mistakes in the test

*najdi a oprav chyby*  
A3 - CORRECT THE TEST (CT)

**1) Rozhovor**  
Kim: Hello Leon! Where are you?  
Leon: Hi Kim, I am fine. I am at school. And you?  
Kim: I am good. I am at home. How are you?  
Leon: I am 7 old old.  
Kim: Where are you from?  
Leon: I am from Liberec. And he?  
Kim: I am hate Plzeň. What is your favourite food?  
Leon: My favourite food is pineapple ice-cream.  
Kim: That sounds great, I love pizza with pineapple. *5 ch.*

**2) Doplň větu - doplňuj IS /AM /ARE + spoj s obrázkem**  
My sister is young.   
I is very tall.   
Millie am hungry.   
I am from Hradec Králové.   
*2 ch.*

**3) Doplň větu - doplňuj HIS /HER**  
This is her school bag.   
Her name is Olaf.   
His t-shirt is green.   
Her cat is black.   
*2 ch.*

**3) Přečti si dopis od Pikachu a doplň minislovníček**  
Hello. My name is Pikachu. I am a yellow Pokémon.  
I am 9 years old. I am small and fat. I have big ears and a big tail.  
My best friend is Mitch. I am from Japan. My favourite food is ketchup. Look! I am in a movie - its name is Detective Pikachu.   
  
yellow = jméno  
ears = ocas  
friend = kamarád  
favourite = jídlo  
food = podívej  
ketchup = film *4r'*

**4) Odpověz na otázky**  
What is his name? His ' is Mitch.  
How old is Pikachu? He 14 years old.  
Is he tall? Yes, he is.  
Where is he from? He is from Italy.  
What is his favourite food? His favourite food is pizza. *5 ch.*

**5) Zakroužkuj slovo, které se nehodí k ostatním**  
tall - short - fat - old - favourite - young - slim  
bedroom - garden - kitchen - hall - living room - bathroom  
pizza - hamburger - salad - cake - ice-cream - water *3 ch.*

Use, duration, class: offline, 30 minutes, 3B

Description: The material consists of different types of exercises testing student's comprehension, grammar and vocabulary. To practice critical thinking, students were not asked to complete the test but were given a test already filled in and with a clues as to how many mistakes each section contains. They had to locate the mistakes and correct them appropriately. They could also mark this imaginary student's performance.

Educational objectives: Student applies their knowledge of English grammar, syntax and vocabulary to locate mistakes in the test. Student suggests a correct option to each mistake. Student evaluates the imaginary student's performance in the test and marks it.

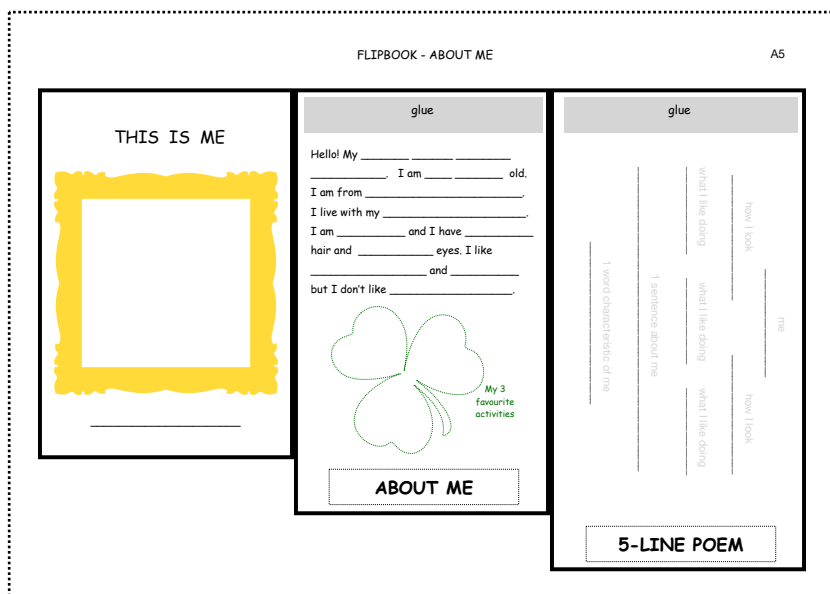
Element of CT: 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students had to critically evaluate each section of the test and decide whether it is correct or wrong. They had to use their analytical skills to find the correct number of mistakes. The number was indicated to give them some support. Students also had to suggest a correction that would make the sentence or the exercise right. This type of exercise trains critical thinking skills such as analyzing and evaluating. This type of exercise also practices problem-solving when it asks to suggest a better option to replace the mistake in the test.



Reflection: The class has an experience with looking for mistakes and marking them, It is a manner of testing dyslectic students who struggle with writing. I often present them with pre-written option and only make them choose the correct one. This gives them support they need to feel confident and keep up with the rest of the class. This time I have decided to broaden the task and create a whole fake test for the class. Younger learners like to imitate adults and the idea of playing a teacher while practicing their English appealed to them. I was happy with this exercise and would continue using this method as a training before some bigger tests or as a homework. I believe that it would offer some more active parents a glimpse into the requirements that are placed on the students at the particular level and allow them to study more effectively at home.

#### 4.5.2 5<sup>th</sup> grade materials

##### Material 1 - Flipbook



Use, duration, class: offline, 35-40 minutes, 5A

Description: The students have to cut out the parts and assemble a flipbook, with 2 types of exercises practicing their English language. Students get to keep the flipbook as a reward.

Educational objectives: Student fills in missing words in exercise “About Me”. Student uses clues in the text to finish the typical sentences. Student describes themselves in a creative manner by following the framework of a 5-line poem. Student uses appropriate vocabulary to describe their appearance and personality.

Element of CT: The critical thinking element of this particular material can be found both in the part where students have to fill in appropriate words to finish the short “letter” about themselves and also in the second part called a “5-line poem.” The 5-line poem is a popular method, which requires students to creatively use their vocabulary in a very limited manner. Placing limitations as to the scope of the work required, helps them to focus on the practice.

Reflection: Since this class has unusual number of high achieving students, I wasn’t sure whether the activity would be demanding enough for them while also remaining accessible to students who have difficulties with learning. At the beginning of the lesson, I’ve shown them a flipbook made by 3rd graders to raise their interest and then demonstrated the most difficult part of their work by making up a 5-line poem about our school and keeping the poem written on the blackboard. Some students needed help because they did not understand and I had to explain the instructions in Czech. The exercise “About Me” was significantly easier than the “5-line poem,” which gained some sighs and comments of the “já nevím, co mám ale psát” type. An additional element of this particular exercise is that some students asked to use dictionaries while other did not need them and worked within their English abilities. I view this division positively, since it respects students preferences and allows for a smart use of supporting materials. Since the students never made a flipbook during their English lessons, their energy levels remained unusually high during the duration of the lesson. I was very pleased when student’s who finished early took initiative in helping their classmates to glue the pages together and helped with cleaning. This element collaboration was an added bonus.

## Material 2 - KWL chart

VOCABULARY - KWL chart + using a dictionary (CT)

Animals topic			topic		
KNOW	WANT	LEARNED	KNOW	WANT	LEARNED
snake spider lion	morcha mramene →	squirrel →			
		use a dictionary =>			

Use, duration, class: online, 20 minutes, 5A

Description: KWL charts are a popular tool to get learners to think about their own learning. In this metacognitive exercise, students take an active part in looking for the gaps in their knowledge while also gaining a benefit of including their own preferences in the output. KWL chart is partly a brainstorming activity where students fill in the information they know about a certain topic into the first two columns (this chart focuses on vocabulary but the type of information may vary) and use dictionary in the third. The first column is listing the English words the student knows, similar brainstorming takes part in the second column too, here the students fill in words in Czech, when they simply forgot the English equivalent or words they never encountered but would like to know. In the third part, students look up those new words in a Czech-English dictionary and write them down.

Educational objectives: Students remember words from a category. Students categorize superordinate and subordinate words. Students decide, what additional words would be useful to learn. Students locate words in a dictionary

Element of CT: KWL chart is a well known method for organizing information in a simple manner. Students will benefit from learning about the existence of the chart since there is a strong possibility that they are going to encounter it during their lives. This

particular activity develops students' vocabulary beyond the textbook and allows them to add their personality and interests into the mix. They use analysis and evaluation when working to fill in the second and third column of the KWL chart and during their work with the dictionary. By creating their own personal charts, students took charge of their own learning.

**Reflection:** Since I wanted to introduce the KWL chart for the first time in a complete manner, I chose to engage students with 2 exercises. First chart had a topic that I have selected based on a topic from the Start with Click textbook. I filled in some examples for better comprehension and let students work on their own. Since animals are comparatively easy, they started immediately. The second topic was left to the students - we brainstormed some possibilities in the chat and children came up with topics that I have expected like *food* and *jobs* and one I did not expect - *countries*. Each student started working on the first column of the second chart but since I did not want to spend whole lesson on the KWL chart, I assigned columns 2 and 3 as a homework, I encouraged students who had a regular dictionary at home to try using it but most of the class used online dictionary since the lesson happened during the remote learning part of the pandemic. I would like to try the activity with only paper dictionaries next time, since I think that it would benefit the students more.





### Material 3 - Tigers

**TIGERS**

1) Write 5 words that you think of when you hear the word "tiger"

( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( )

2) Look at the types of tigers and answer the questions

SIBERIAN TIGER	BENGAL TIGER	SOUTH CHINA TIGER	SUMATRAN TIGER
			
Size: 250-330 cm	Size: 240-280 cm	Size: 210-240 cm	Size: 210-240 cm
Weights: 200-600 pounds	Weights: 300-480 pounds	Weights: 240-330 pounds	Weights: 198-264 pounds
Lives in: Russia	Lives in: India	Lives in: China	Lives in: Indonesia
Population: 300-406 free; 490 in zoos	Population: 3176-4550 free; 333 in zoos	Population: 20-30 free; 47 in zoos	Population: 400-500 free; 210 in zoos
Czech Republic: Zoo Praha, Zoo Tábors	Czech Republic: Zoo Liberec	Czech Republic: No	Czech Republic: Zoo Brno, Zoo Jihlava

weight = váha; 1 pound = zhruba 0,5 kilogramu  
population = populace (počty tygrů); free = volně žijící

Where is the Siberian tiger from?	
How many Bengal tigers live in zoos?	
How much weights the Sumatran tiger?	
Which tiger lives in India?	
How many South China tigers live free?	

3) Read the information and answer

**TRUE or FALSE or NO INFORMATION**

- A. Siberian tigers live in China. →
- B. South China tigers can't swim. →
- C. 210 Sumatran tigers live in zoos. →
- D. Siberian tiger is white. →
- E. ZOO Brno has Bengal tigers. →
- F. 20-30 South China tigers live free. →
- G. ZOO Praha has 4 Siberian tigers. →
- H. Bengal tigers are 260-280 cm long. →

Use, duration, class: online, 45 minutes, 5A

Description: The worksheets includes different types of exercises. The overall theme is comprehension. This worksheet is inspired by a Youtube video *Meet the Animals 13 - Siberian Tiger*. Meet the animals series on Youtube presents EFL learners with short animated videos about different animals, the video are popular with children because they have English subtitles that indicate the word that is currently being spoken. This helps EFL learners with comprehension. The worksheet then follows up on the topic of tigers by introducing a chart with different tigers and connecting all exercises to it.

Educational objectives: Student summarizes information from a video. Student recalls words may be used to describe a tiger. Student creates their own sentences about tigers. Student understands how a chart is organized and is able to locate a particular information. Student analyzes clarity of a sentence and evaluates it.

Element of CT: Every aspect of the worksheets requires the use higher level of thinking skills. The first exercise asks students to imagine a tiger and their environment and think of a 5 words that would be direct associations with their mental image. Students had to work within their limited vocabulary to finish this exercise. Next, the chart presented the students with a challenge since they are not used to handle this amount of new information at once. The question following the chart tests their ability to shake the feeling of being overwhelmed by information and work efficiently. Students had to locate only the type of information they needed in order to answer and not be distracted by the rest. The third exercise add a new element to an already familiar task. The “no information” option created a new challenge for students and tested their comprehension in a deeper manner.

Reflection: I wanted to exhaust one topic as much as I could and combine different types of activities and exercised into one lesson. A particular goal of this lesson was also to show the students that even though they may not know the dictionary meaning of every single word, their ability to fulfill the task may not be hampered. The students worked very well, I relied on the video to introduce the topic and establish basic

vocabulary. When we created some sentences in the chat while using our vocabulary from the first exercise, students worked independently until the end of the lesson.

#### Material 4 - Venn diagrams

Compare 2 animals + treasure hunt

North = \_\_\_\_\_ South = \_\_\_\_\_  
West = západ East = \_\_\_\_\_

GO ... 3 dots East, 2 dots South, 2 dots West, 1 dot South, 4 dots EAST, 1 dot South, 1 dot West, 1 dot South and 3 dots East

Use, duration, class: offline, 30 minutes, 5A


Description: Activity introduces a visual organizer called Venn diagram which helps students define differences and similarities between two things. This particular type of graphic is often used in business setting and in media so students may have already seen it being used. The activity will help them connect in-class English language with the outside world. An additional exercise teaches students cardinal points in a way that combines reading comprehension with a maze-like exercise.


Educational objectives: Student compares animals using a Venn diagram. Student analyzes differences and similarities between 2 animals. Student pairs English words for cardinal points with Czech expressions based on their knowledge of compass. Students compare their work with classmates.

Element of CT: This particular exercise enhances student's thinking abilities - particularly analysis. Students have to select 2 animals that are different enough in order to be compared but similar in some nature. Students are encouraged to think before putting pen to the paper and sketch their diagrams in their mind. Students who are able to evaluate their EFL abilities correctly are more successful than those who rushed ahead without much thinking. The ability to judge and evaluate items based on their characteristics is a valuable mental exercise that often leads to deeper insight into a matter.

Reflection: Because the class was quite talkative after they came back to school, I wanted to briefly review some distant vocabulary and have students work in pairs. At the beginning of the lesson, I drew Venn diagram on the blackboard and together with students created a diagram comparing a pizza and a salad. After showing them how we fill in the diagram. Students had to choose a partner and get to work. Because the class missed talking to each other, some pairs were more talkative than usual but eventually they began. There was a big difference between pairs who felt more comfortable with their English and chose to compare animals like ladybug and bee and children who played it safe with cat and dog. The work on the diagram did not take long but due to the conversations happening around, we were running a bit late that I anticipated. I chose 2 pairs to present their diagrams, I took a photo and quickly displayed it on the interactive board for everyone to see and judge. When I invited other students to suggest more options for the 2 diagrams that were displayed, I was surprised by how many we could find. The map to practice the cardinal points was added as a bonus but unfortunately some students who were fast started on the map right after they have finished the Venn diagrams and others did not, so the final minutes of the lesson were a quite chaotic. Next time, I would separate these 2 exercises and leave out the map, which I would use to fill in some spare minutes during a different lesson.

## Material 5 - Emma's trip to London





2) FINISH the vocabulary

\_\_\_\_\_ = tetička  
 \_\_\_\_\_ = blízko  
 \_\_\_\_\_ = hlavní město  
 \_\_\_\_\_ = slavná místa  
 \_\_\_\_\_ = kostra  
 \_\_\_\_\_ = úžasné  
 \_\_\_\_\_ = oblíbený  
 \_\_\_\_\_ = příští rok


1) READ about Emma's trip to London

I visited England last summer and it was great. My aunt and uncle live there. They live in a big house in Oxford, it is a city near London. London is the capital city of the United Kingdom. London is very big, 9 million people live there. We were in London for 2 days. On the first day, we visited some famous places - the London Eye, Tower Bridge and Big Ben. Queen Elizabeth II. lives in London too. She is very old and she lives in Buckingham Palace but we did not visit the palace. There were many red buses - they are called "double deckers." On the second day, we visited a restaurant, 4 shops and a big museum. They had dinosaur skeletons there, it was amazing! My favourite dinosaurs are triceratops and stegosaurus. I loved this trip. I want to visit Paris next year.


3) DECIDE whether the sentence is a **FACT** or an **OPINION**

1. London is the capital city of the United Kingdom.
2. 9 million people live in London.
3. The trip to London was great.
4. Queen Elizabeth lives in London.
5. Double decker is a stupid name for a bus.
6. The food in London is very good.
7. London has a museum with dinosaur skeletons.


4) CONNECT the name with the picture




double decker bus




Buckingham Palace



The London Eye



Big Ben



Tower Bridge

Use, duration, class: offline, 35-40 minutes, 5A

Description: This worksheet combines a reading activity with several after-reading tasks. The core point of this exercise is to practice close reading and correctly interpreting sentences as facts or opinions, additional tasks engage students interest in the text and the city of London. The worksheet was distributed after watching a short Youtube video about famous places in London.

Educational objectives: Student reads a short text and confirms their understanding by answering a few comprehension questions. Student interprets the meaning of new words from their placement within the text. Student analyzes given sentences and decides whether they give a personal opinion or state a fact.

Element of CT: The element of critical thinking is found mainly in the third exercise. It is very important for student to recognize facts from opinions in any language. By practicing the skill in English, we widen their experience. Students may additionally create their own sentences which alternate stating a fact and giving an opinion. When we present students with a longer text, we may include a mini vocabulary for them. I like to include a type of a vocabulary where they have to find the expression. Students are often able to locate the required word and provide the other half of the vocabulary themselves or with a help of a partner.



Reflection: I was fairly confident in this worksheet because this class likes to engage with real-life topics and is usually interested when we start a lesson with a video. I selected a simple video from Youtube called *English - London sightseeing (A1-A2 - with subtitles)* and presented it to raise students' interest since this was the first time where we learned about London. The worksheet took us less time than I had anticipated, this class has accomplished students and both reading and translating went swiftly. I wasn't sure how to introduce the critical thinking exercise so I presented the class with 2 sentences: "ZŠ Sever is in Hradec Králové." and "ZŠ Sever is the best school in Hradec Králové." and I asked them whether the sentences mean the same thing and if not, where is a difference? After translating the word *opinion*, we decided which one was considered an opinion. Students were asked to state some fact and some personal opinions and then they worked individually. I consider this lesson to be a particular success because all of them analyzed the sentences correctly.

## Material 6 - Past simple

**PAST SIMPLE - pořadí slov**


1) **STUDY these sentences:** Marianne baked a chocolate cake last weekend  
 Lucy visited her grandmother on Sunday.  
 My dog loved his new toy  
 She closed the door

2) **CIRCLE similar to:**

Tom

liked

my new dress.



3) **Ověřili jsme: že pořadí slov v anglické větě je:** A) úplně náhodné B) celkem pevně dané  
 že informace KDY se to stalo se často objevuje \_\_\_\_\_

4) **CIRCLE sentences with CORRECT structure.**

Vanessa played a computer game.	My father a window closed.
Lilly last weekend watched Spiderman 2.	My sister danced with her boyfriend.
The lesson started a teacher 1 hour ago.	His brother worked in a TV company
My grandparents their garden liked .	The Queen visited her castle last Christmas.

5) **WRITE your own sentences**

Use, duration, class: offline, 15-20 minutes, 5A

Description: The worksheet attempts to introduce the SVO rule that students learn to follow when creating declarative sentences. Students are led to follow the rule without

being aware of its existence, just being guided toward following the correct word order. This handout anchors their learning and asks them to follow it more consciously.

Educational objectives: Student analyzes sentences in the past simple and finds the elements of the SVO word order. Student selects sentences which follow the same pattern. Student produces their own sentences.

Element of CT: When student searches for a pattern, they engage their analytical thinking skills because they have to deconstruct the matter before they begin to see similarities. Students were presented with declarative sentences in past simple and asked to circle the S-V-O parts according to the model sentence. Students then realized that English language follows a more fixed word order than Czech language and were able to produce sentences correctly and with a conscious awareness of the rule.

Reflection: This worksheet was created as a reaction to one of my private tutoring lessons, where I found out that a 3rd year high school student never learned about the proper word order in English and kept making mistakes because they have never heard about the SVOMPT acronym. Because the past simple is a topic that 5th grade students study for a few months, I wanted to include a lesson on SVO. We have never consciously studied this and I realized that I may have been mistaken in my assumptions that they simply “got it” from our practices. I created this worksheet as an attempt to explain the pattern and visually separate the past of the sentence. Most of the class did not seem to enjoy this activity, because the task wasn’t challenging enough, I had to keep asking for their attention. Similarly the types of exercises were not very interesting for a large part of the class. Since this group is quite frank in their evaluations, I have seen a lot of bored faces and disinterested children. Because this worksheet has failed to draw students’ attention, it is quite safe to assume that their thinking hasn’t been engaged in a significant manner. When I compare the genesis of this material with some others, I think that I have made three mistakes. I introduced the topic after some weeks of studying past simple and it would have been better to include it more towards the beginning. The second mistake was that the model sentences were too easy and their wording too boring. I should have created sentences about just one

topic like computer games or Pokemon. The third mistake may have been the absence of pictures and graphics. When asked directly whether they have enjoyed it, the most generous answer was “Jo, šlo to.” I think my students were disappointed after having been given a task which I took quite seriously but did not show the why it was important when mastering the English language. The dissonance between our mindsets did not create an enjoyable experience.

### Material 7 - Find a sentence

**PAST SIMPLE**

1) Find 1 correct sentence in each table

Mary	wasn't	didn't	in the hospital	dinner.
Yesterday	were	working	cooked	last year.

Were	how	in the supermarket	her friend	in Prague ?
She	they	called	two hours	ago ?

I	watched	my sister's	singing	bedroom.
The ball	couldn't	under	her	competition.

Sue and Mike	were	yesterday	and	and her brother.
It	couldn't	dance	from	sing.

Were	didn't	cooked	in my car	from London.
She	dance	have	a birthday	last week.

Visited	she	his grandma	yesterday	evening?
Was	his 2 brothers	in the garden	tomorrow	last week?

From	my mom	was	baked	one month ago.
His	teacher	a cake	in France	tomorrow.

2) Create your own sentence

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Use, duration, class: online, 10 minutes, 5A

Description: A simple activity to practice students' comprehension and analytical reasoning. Students have to choose between 2 option in each column to create a meaningful sentence in the last simple. They have to consider grammar rules as well as the overall meaning in order to succeed.

Educational objectives: Student finds a meaningful sentence in the options presented to them. Students use analysis to make their choice. Student articulates why the second word from the selection would be wrong in the context of the sentence.

Element of CT: This short exercise engages student on two levels. During their individual work, they have to use their knowledge of past simple to find out what is the correct sentence hiding in each task. After completing the task, students are asked to explain their reasoning out loud and explain why the alternate word would be wrong because it would interfere with a meaning or a rule such as proper word order.

Reflection: This activity was a paper version of an exercise we tried on a learning app. The idea was not mine but I was inspired when I saw that students have enjoyed simply selecting words and investigating the possibilities. Class 5A enjoys mazes and problems and I thought that it would engage their interest as well as helping them review some rules in an indirect manner. The exercise was brief and student enjoyed it. Next time, I think it would be enough to project the task on the wall and just orally talk through the options. Highlighting the words was unnecessary and it would work as a digital only task just as well for most of them.

## Material 8 - Find mistakes in the test

A5 - CORRECT THE TEST (CT)

1) Write the past form of the verb

PLAY -> played      BE -> are, were  
 LIKE -> liked      HAVE -> had      3 ch.

2) Rewrite the sentence in the past simple

NOW: Tim and Mary are not in the garden.  
 PAST: Tim and Mary wasn't in the garden.  
 NOW: Is Mr. Black in Slovakia?  
 PAST: Did Mr. Black in Slovakia?  
 NOW: She has long blond hair.  
 PAST: She did have long blond hair.      3 ch.

3) Write the sentence in the negative form

My father was a good student when he was young.  
My father wasn't a good student when he was young.  
 She had 12 hamsters and 8 guinea pigs.  
She didn't had 12 hamsters and 8 guinea pigs.      2 ch.

4) Translate the sentences

Lily nesnášela ping pong ale milovala tenis.  
Lily hated table tennis and she loved tennis.  
 Moje babička uměla hrát na housle když jí bylo 12.  
My grandma couldn't play the violin when she was 12.      3 ch.

5) Finish the dialogues

Missing words:

did	were	like	do	am
was (3x)	play	good	are	played

1 Mom: Mike! Did you play your homework today?  
 Mike: Yes, I did.

2 Jim: Hello Lucy, was you at Mary's birthday party?  
 Lucy: No, I wasn't. I was in Prague with my parents.  
 Jim: Really? Did you good Prague?  
 Lucy: Yes, I did. I liked it very much.

3 Lisa: Hi Marianne! How are you today?  
 Marianne: I am like and you?  
 Lisa: I am tired. I was at the music school concert yesterday.  
 Marianne: Did you do the piano?  
 Lisa: Yes, I did. I played for 30 minutes.  
 It were amazing.      6 ch.

6) Write your own dialogues

1 A: Did you visit your grandmother yesterday?  
 B: Yes, I did. I was there for 2 hours.

2 A: Was you at the cinema tomorrow?  
 B: No, I wasn't. I was at home.      2 ch.

Use, duration, class: offline, 40 minutes, 5A

Description: This is a model test that I have created and then filled in with some intentional mistakes related to topics we have been reviewing with the students. I indicated the number of mistakes in each exercise but did not mark them in the sentences. Students had to imitate the work of the teacher and look for the mistakes that the imaginary student have made. They had to highlight the mistake and correct it as well.

Educational objectives: Student applies their knowledge of English grammar and syntax to correct the test. Student suggests a correct option to each mistake. Student evaluates the imaginary student's performance in the test and marks it.

Element of CT: The students in the class had to critically evaluate each sentence in the test and decide whether it is correct or wrong. They had to use their analytical skills to find the correct number of mistakes. The number was indicated. Students also had to suggest a correction that would make the sentence or the exercise right. Critical thinking also means the ability to locate problems as fast as possible and suggest better options. This type of exercise practices problem-solving and evaluation, both very important components of critical thinking.

Reflection: Because I announced a more extensive test that would cover different aspects of past simple, I wanted to prepare students for the test. The class was generally able to work with a single aspect of English grammar at a time but I wanted to test more aspect at once. Students were definitely glad to see the type of exercises beforehand and worked diligently during the whole lesson because they were aware that the test would be similar in its structure, only the words would be different. By seeing some else's finished product, they gained an insight into the type of work, they would be asked to produce. I was happy that we had enough time to discuss the mistakes that they have found, this exercise would not work had I ran out of time. I was relieved that we had a chance to compare our findings and explain which were correct and which were not. As I had anticipated - low performing students and students with learning difficulties faced a significant hurdle when having to organically apply many different types of rules in a

quick succession and on their own. During our regular lessons, they work well as a part of a group or during frontal teaching or cold calls because they are guided by their classmates' previous answers, when having to rely only on their abilities, these students need a help otherwise they often feel lost and get discouraged. I did not allow the class to take the test home with them but upon reflection I think I should have. The real test was still a bit too difficult and the class and since I my job is not to be sinister and wait to catch their mistakes but give them as much support as they need to be successful, I should have let them take the "model test" home.

#### 4.6 Evaluation of the materials and reflection on the project's questions

The materials created in order to support this project's thesis were tested throughout this past school year. I took notes after every lesson that used these materials and since during this school year, my students switched between remote learning and in-person learning more than once, it was interesting to see how they performed.

For my 3<sup>rd</sup> graders, the overall theme of this school year was catching up. As I mentioned in a previous sections, this group has students performing well above average and students who struggle to write even the simplest words like brother or six. I knew beforehand that we would be reviewing a lot during this year and focusing on drills so the materials were often created to suit the abilities of the low performing students and was therefore comparatively easy for some other students. It would have been beneficial to create two versions for some worksheets. The work ethic and enjoyment of the students seemed fairly good. I had to pay special attention to student's with learning disabilities and so I have decided to write the instruction in Czech so I spend less time answering the same questions and more time helping my students. I know we are generally discouraged to speak Czech during ELT but I do explain tasks a lot when they are new and unfamiliar.

My 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were more capable to deal with the pressure and loneliness of the remote learning period and the situation did not leave such a devastating impact on their English skills and abilities as it left on their younger schoolmates. I noticed two main themes when we were using the CT enhanced materials with this class. I have 3 students in this class who are very unique in their way of thinking. They are all different personalities but what they have in common, is that their brains freeze when they encounter a hurdle. This hurdle may be an unknown word or a new type of exercise and are incapable of moving on, even when the solution to their problem may be found in the next sentence. These students do not believe me when I encourage them to ignore the hurdle and move on; that the answer will become obvious if they unstuck themselves. After some initial trials, I was able to observe these students gaining some confidence. Maybe it was because I encouraged pair work as often as I could but when reflecting on these lessons and I was again reminded how capable my 5<sup>th</sup> grade students often are when I step up and create a meaningful task since they really dislike the outdated textbook we currently have.

I created my CT enhanced worksheet from scratch. To be able to do that, I had a set of principles in order to establish a level of cohesion between the project's materials. I have been focused on several elements during the planning period. Using Bloom's taxonomy to properly include activities that are not solely focused on the lower order thinking skills but combine them with higher order thinking skills as well. To achieve that I took inspiration from the verbs connected to each of the taxonomy's level, This was also the clearest part to fulfill this target since one of the other objectives of this project was to focus on doability. Language teachers and particularly those teaching primary level students often have to create a lot of materials and I did not want to present an option that would take half a day to plan and prepare. I also wanted to take familiar types of exercises and only strengthen them since the goals of the lesson were focused on English practice and not frontal teaching where the teacher spends valuable minutes explaining or correcting a task.

In the end, the revised Bloom's taxonomy was a helpful tool for me as a teacher. It is a useful and comprehensible framework for any creative teacher who aims to add more structure and reasoning to their work. It would be useful to have the basic structure always ready and visible on a wall during the lesson just as a reminder to include tasks that combine analyzing, evaluating and creating with skills that are practiced more often during ELT, like recalling and applying. Since there is no existing framework to reliably measure young learner's critical thinking abilities when using a foreign language, the project's evaluation focuses more on the lesson planning side than on the individual student's critical thinking ability. The development of students critical thinking skills is a lifelong process. With young EFL learners, that were the target audience for this project, it is impossible to measure and quantify their CT abilities since it would always depend more on the student's confidence in English and therefore hard to separate both. What could be observed was the student's engagement with the materials. As I have previously described in reflections on each material, the engagement varied greatly. Students generally liked more difficult tasks that presented a challenge to them, the workflow was better and the results as well. What hampered their active enjoyment was when the material was either too easy or too similar to their regular workbook exercises. In particular Students in the 3rd grade have enjoyed the *Pronouns* worksheet the least and the *Flipbook* activity and the *Pronunciation* worksheet the most, since it had an additional element of crafting. 5th grade students disliked the *Past simple - SVO* worksheet the most and their participation was really poor that day. The materials with the most active students were *Emma's trip to London* and *Find mistakes in the text*, although that may have been connected more to their fear of having to take the test next lesson. Students seemed to enjoy unusual activities but the project also showed a strong need to build up student's confidence in order to successfully engage all learners.



## Conclusion

The reasons to promote critical thinking among young learners are several. Among the most important is the activation of young learner's cognitive engagement. The levels of cognitive engagement can be assessed with the help of Bloom's taxonomy which provides a useful tool for educators who wish to strengthen their student's thinking skills with a more targeted and varied practice. By presenting EFL learners with a task that involves a cognitive challenge, we combine language practice with an intellectual challenge. Young learners enjoy being challenged since it presents a break from monotony and presents them with a more diverse content. Another reason for combining thinking skills with ELT is a linguistic and communicative. Learners spend many hours in the EFL classes with a goal to become proficient users of English. Proficiency means successfully using the target language in order to communicate a piece of information or comprehend a notion. By involving students in tasks that have a real purpose, include problems or promote deeper inquiry, we broaden the range of situations that they are able to confront in later life. Another significant reason to promote critical thinking is the current trend of globalization which necessitates a more complex EFL education and requires any future workforce to be able to think, communicate and evaluate information in English.

Young learners are often disillusioned with oversimplified tasks and this in turn can often sour their attitude towards the subject and be detrimental to their overall motivation to perform well. Critical thinking is mentioned in several official educational directives and frameworks put forward by *the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports* of the Czech Republic in the recent years. They follow an overall trend in education that seems to be moving from teaching specific subject knowledge to including more skills and abilities to the school's curricula. The teacher who wishes to include more thinking based activities into their EFL lessons often finds that a lot of available materials are either aimed at high school students or feel incredibly outdated by the current standards. This diploma thesis took this opportunity to present a set of materials that would serve

as an aid for teachers who wish to promote higher order thinking skills among their young EFL students.

To better infuse these materials with critical thinking, the lesson planning has been anchored by Anderson and Krathwohl's work on the revision of Bloom's taxonomy. The authors divide individual thinking skills to six levels and present educators with actionable advice on how to improve their teaching with the taxonomy. Since critical thinking can be traced mainly to skills described at level three - Applying, level four - Analyzing and level five - Evaluating, the materials, created as a part of this project, focused mainly on these three particular levels.

Two sets of presented materials focus on bringing the elements of critical thinking to the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 5<sup>th</sup> grade EFL teaching and were made to inspire other educators to include elements of critical thinking into the ELT. The development of these materials and their utilization were then described in order to map out their effectiveness on the learner's experience during the English language lesson and their relative simplicity. Since many educators often spend their personal free time and their own resources in order to bring the best educational opportunities possible to their students, it was of the utmost importance to provide EFL teachers with a set of instantly actionable materials that do not require additional time or resources to prepare. The observations made during the testing period were several but the most important conclusion of the whole project was that young learners are often underestimated in their ability to think critically and that inclusion of thinking-based activities into the ESL does not interfere with the language practice itself.

The diploma thesis explored a possibility of developing critical thinking skills in young EFL students. The field of study would benefit from further long term research into the development of individual critical thinking skills, not just the broad category. To successfully quantify possible data outcomes, a framework for testing would have to be

established to suit the this particular research and reflect the particular characteristics of young EFL learners.

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## Appendices

Appendix 1 - Flipbook (A3)

Appendix 2 - Pronouns (A3)

Appendix 3 - Uncle Ben's family (A3)

Appendix 4 - My face (A3)

Appendix 5 - Venn diagrams (A3)

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Appendix 7 - Pronunciation and rhymes (A3)

Appendix 8 - Find mistakes in the test (A3)

Appendix 9 - Flipbook (5A)

Appendix 10 - KWL Chart (5A)

Appendix 11 - Tigers (5A)

Appendix 12 - Venn Diagrams (5A)

Appendix 13 - Emma's trip to London (5A)

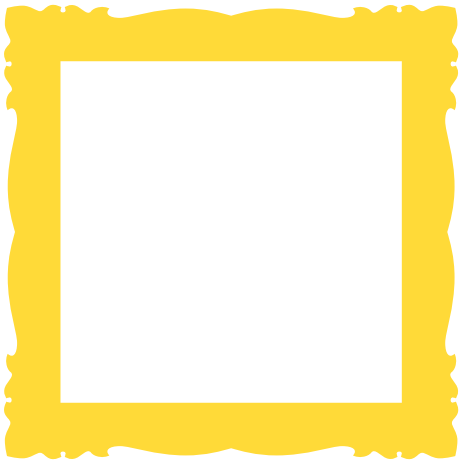
Appendix 14 - Past simple (5A)

Appendix 15 - Find a sentence (5A)

Appendix 16 - Find mistakes in the test (5A)

FLIPBOOK - ABOUT ME

THIS IS ME




---

glue

Hello! My name is \_\_\_\_\_.

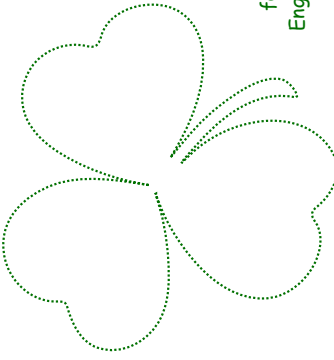
I am \_\_\_\_\_ old.

I am from \_\_\_\_\_.

I am \_\_\_\_\_ and I have \_\_\_\_\_

hair and \_\_\_\_\_ eyes. Nice to meet

you!

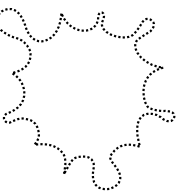


My 3  
favourite  
English words

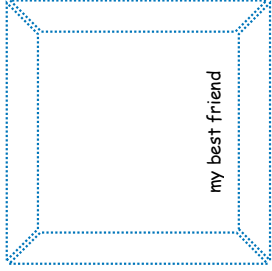
ABOUT ME

glue

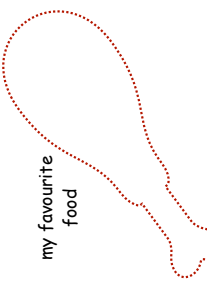
my favourite colour



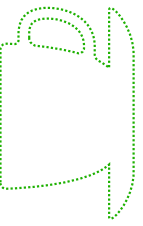
my best friend



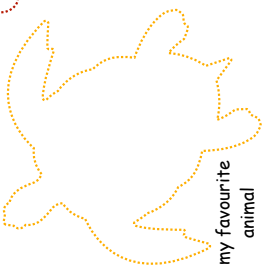
my favourite food



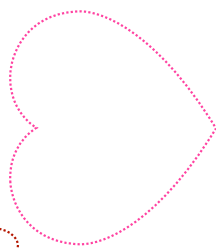
my favourite drink



my favourite animal



my family



WHAT I LIKE



**PRONOUNS - JÁ, TY, ON, ONA, ONO**

1) **FIND PRONOUNS**



Clouds containing words: I, CAT, PEN, HE, STAR, BLUE, MUM, YOU, SHE, LOVE, IT, TEA

2) **CIRCLE PRONOUNS**

- I AM FROM THE CZECH REPUBLIC.
- YOU ARE VERY NICE.
- HE IS NINE YEARS OLD
- SHE IS TALL AND SLIM.
- IT IS YELLOW.



3)

NA JAKÉ MÍSTO VE VĚTĚ PATŘÍ PRONOUNS?  
začátek - prostředek - konec  
NAŠEL JSEM TYTO PRONOUNS



4) **LISTEN AND WRITE**

Clouds with lines for writing: \_\_\_\_\_

A3 - reading + vocabulary (CT)

1) Přečti si text

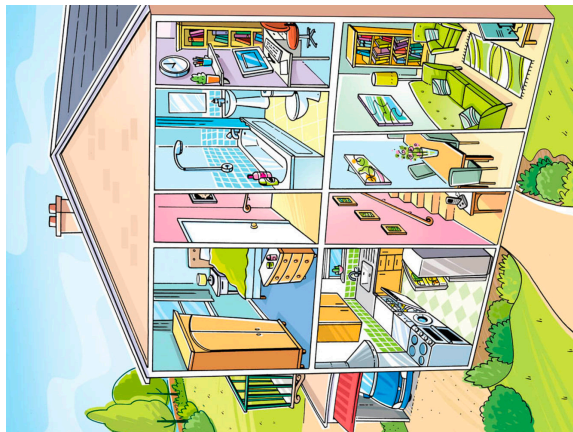
Look at uncle Ben and his family. They live in England, in a village named Mousehead. This is their house in the village.  
 Woof, woof! Oh, this is his dog Bud. Where is he? Is he in the garage? Oh no, he is in the living room!  
 My cousin Cindy isn't at school. She is at home. She is tired and she is in her bedroom.  
 Uncle Ben isn't at work. He is at home. He is in the dining room. He is eating a sandwich.  
 Where are aunt Lily and Tim? Oh, my aunt is in the garden and my cousin is the kitchen.

2) Napiš jména



BEN  
 LILY  
 CINDY  
 TIM  
 BUD

3) Spoj člena rodiny se správným místem



4) V textu najdi slovíčka

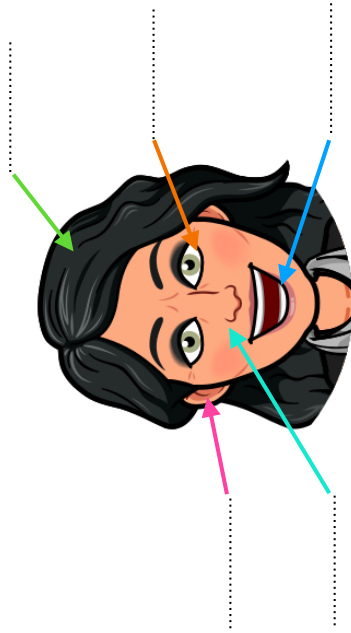
strýc = \_\_\_\_\_  
 vesnice = \_\_\_\_\_  
 sestřenice/bratranec = \_\_\_\_\_  
 unavený = \_\_\_\_\_  
 sendvič = \_\_\_\_\_  
 teta = \_\_\_\_\_

5) V textu zakroužkuj

- místa a místnosti BLUE
- členy rodiny ORANGE
- přívlastňovací zájmena RED

MY FACE + OPPOSITES

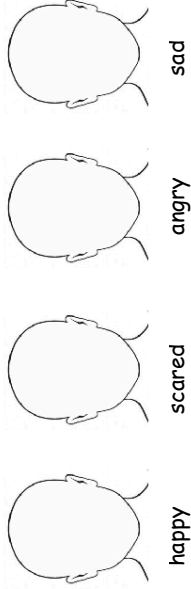
1) DESCRIBE THE FACE



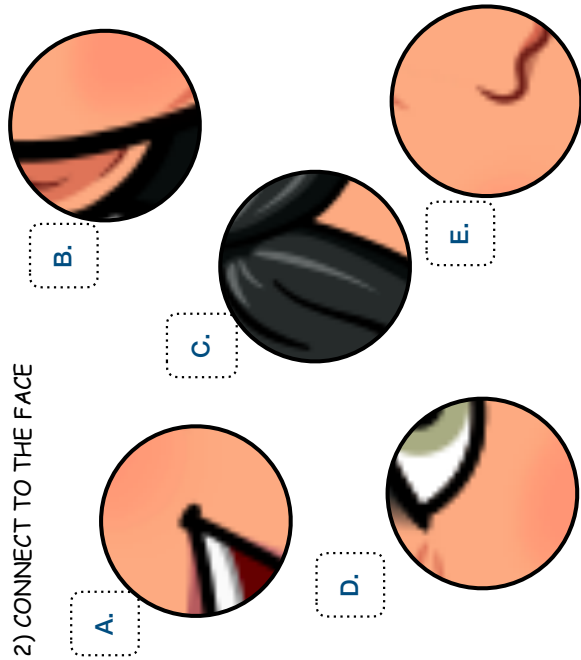
3) DRAW HAIR



4) DRAW EMOTIONS



2) CONNECT TO THE FACE



5) CIRCLE THE OPPOSITE



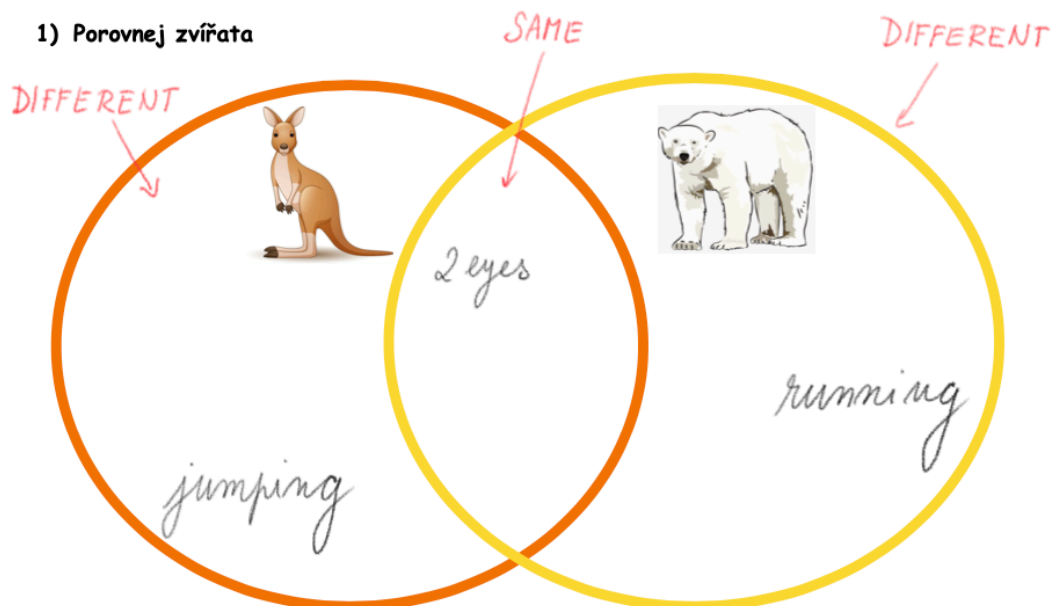
6) DRAW THE OPPOSITE OF **SHORT HAIR**



Appendix 5 - Venn diagrams (A3)

A3 - comparing ( different x same - CT)

1) Porovnej zvířata

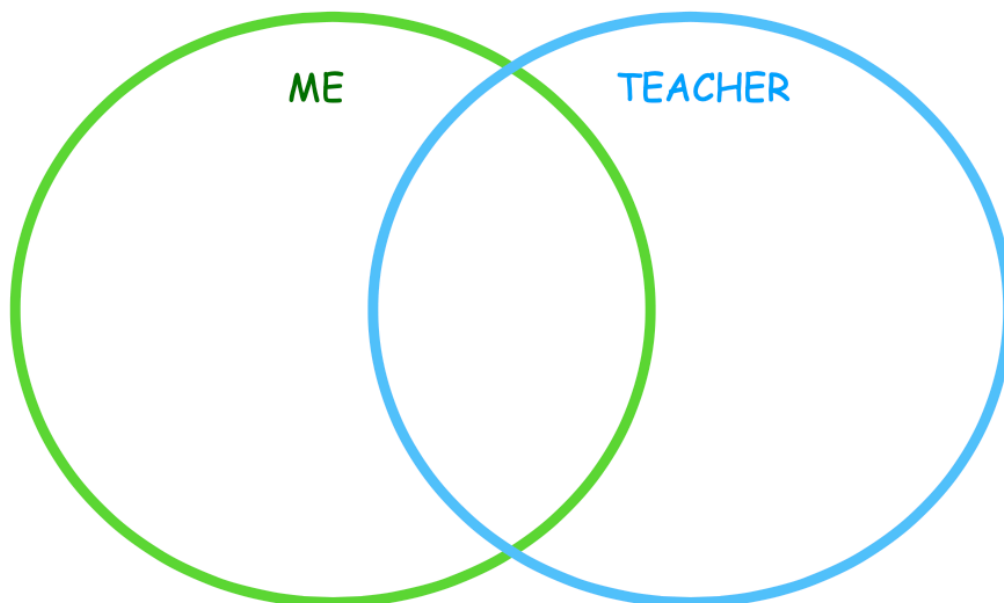


Zkus doplnit věty:

The kangaroo is \_\_\_\_\_. The polar bear is \_\_\_\_\_.

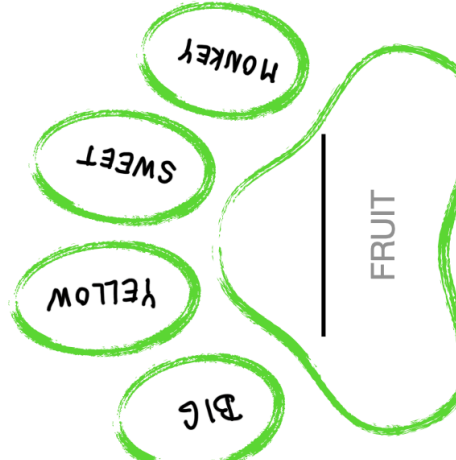
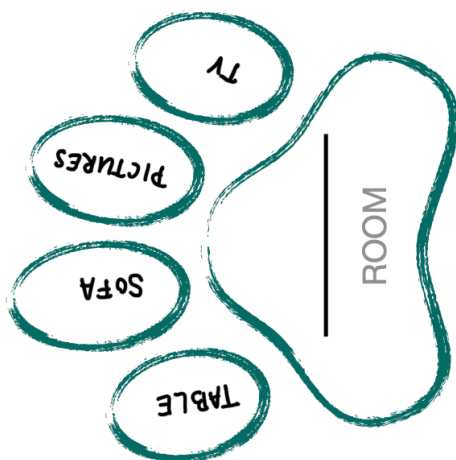
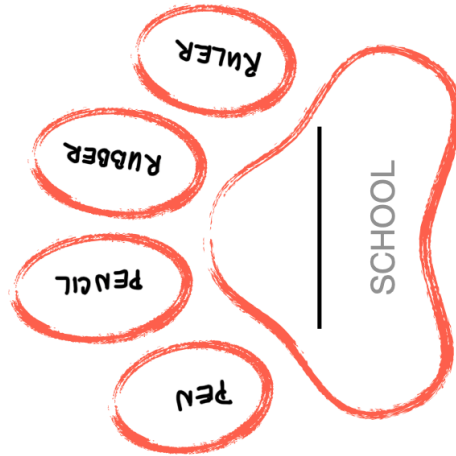
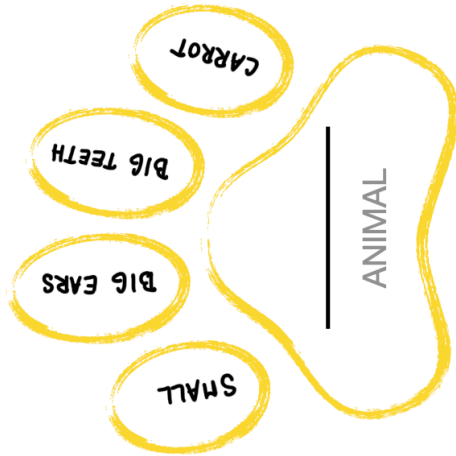
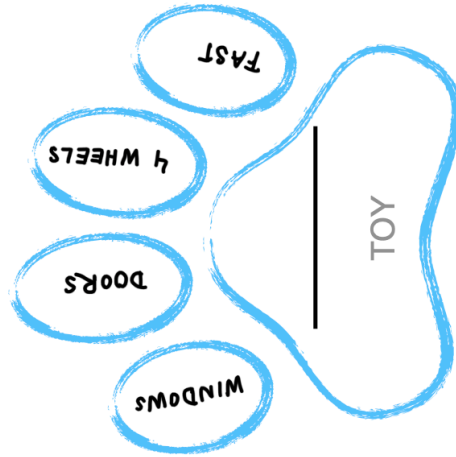
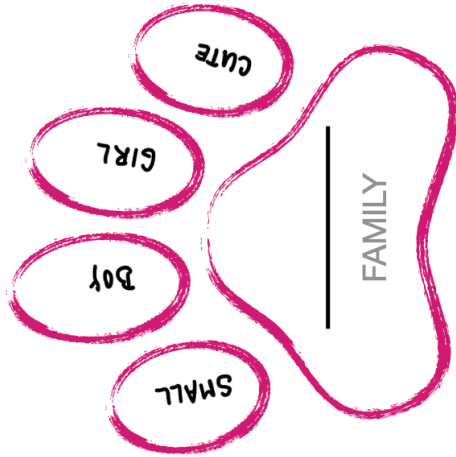
The kangaroo and the polar bear are \_\_\_\_\_.

2) Porovnej sebe a paní učitelku



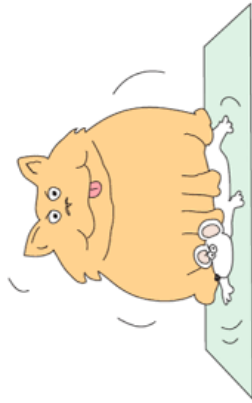
Appendix 6 - Guess the word (A3)

A3 - Guess the word (CT)



A3 - Pronunciation and rhymes (CT)

A BIG FAT \_\_\_\_\_ SAT ON THE RAT



Co se rýmuje s fat? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ SNAKES SIT BY THE SEA



Najdi číslo, které začíná na "s" a dokresli obrázek.

LOOK! ZERO \_\_\_\_\_ IN THE \_\_\_\_\_



Rýmuje se slova "zoo" a "look"? - ANO x NE

PRACUJ S UČEBNICÍ A NAJDI SLOVA, KTERÁ SE RÝMUJÍ

HALL - \_\_\_\_\_

TWO - \_\_\_\_\_

TOY - \_\_\_\_\_

FUN - \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix 8 - Find mistakes in the test (A3)

*majdi a oprav chyby*  
A3 - CORRECT THE TEST (CT)



3) Přečti si dopis od Pikachu a doplň minislovníček

Hello. My name is Pikachu. I am a yellow Pokémon. I am 9 years old. I am small and fat. I have big ears and a big tail. My best friend is Mitch. I am from Japan. My favourite food is ketchup. Look! I am in a movie - its name is Detective Pikachu.

<u>yellow</u>	= jméno
<u>ears</u>	= ocas.
<u>friend</u>	= kamarád
<u>favourite</u>	= jídlo
<u>look</u>	= podívej
<u>ketchup</u>	= film

*4!*



1) Rozhovor Where are you?

Leon: Hi Kim, I am fine. I am at school. And you?

Kim: I am good, I am at home. How are you?

Leon: I am 7 old old.

Kim: Where are you from?  
Leon: I am from Liberec. And he?

Kim: I am hate Pizeň. What is your favourite food?

Leon: My favourite food is pineapple ice-cream.

Kim: That sounds great, I love pizza with pineapple. *5 ch.*

2) Doplň větu - doplňuj IS /AM /ARE + spoj s obrázkem

My sister is young.

I is very tall.

Millie am hungry.

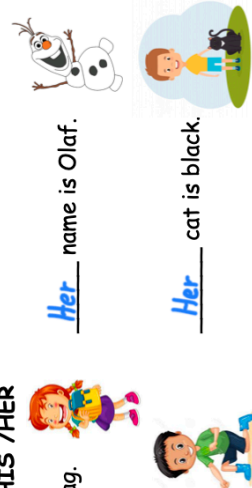
I am from Hradec Králové.



3) Doplň větu - doplňuj HIS /HER

This is her school bag.

His t-shirt is green.



4) Odpověz na otázky

What is his name? His ' is Mitch.

How old is Pikachu? He 19 years old.

Is he tall? Yes, he is.

Where is he from? He is from Italy.

What is his favourite food? His favourite food is pizza.

5) Zakroužkuj slovo, které se nehodí k ostatním

tall - short - fat - old - favourite - young - slim

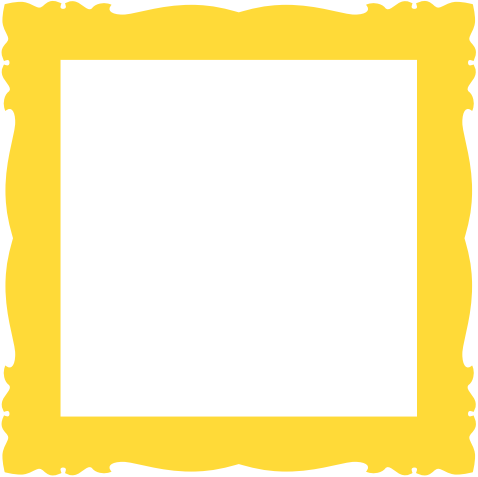
bedroom - garden - kitchen - hall - living room - bathroom

pizza - hamburger - salad - cake - ice-cream - water

A5

FLIPBOOK - ABOUT ME

**THIS IS ME**




---

glue

Hello! My \_\_\_\_\_ I am \_\_\_\_\_ old.

I am from \_\_\_\_\_

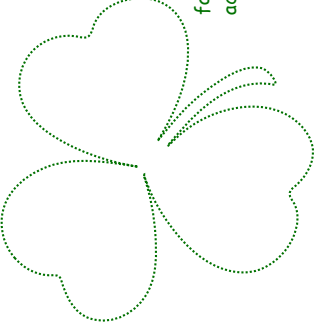
I live with my \_\_\_\_\_

I am \_\_\_\_\_ and I have \_\_\_\_\_

hair and \_\_\_\_\_ eyes. I like \_\_\_\_\_

and \_\_\_\_\_

but I don't like \_\_\_\_\_



My 3 favourite activities

**ABOUT ME**

glue

me

---

how I look

---

how I look

---

what I like doing

---

what I like doing

---

what I like doing

---

1 sentence about me

---

1 word characteristic of me

---

**5-LINE POEM**



Appendix 10 - KWL Chart (5A)

VOCABULARY - KWL chart + using a dictionary (CT)


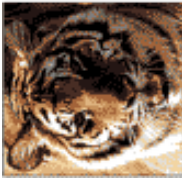

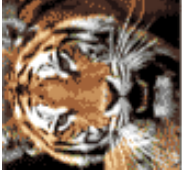
<p><i>Animals</i> topic</p>	<p>topic</p>
<p>KNOW</p>	<p>KNOW</p>
<p>WANT</p>	<p>WANT</p>
<p>LEARNED</p>	<p>LEARNED</p>
<p>snake spider lion</p>	
<p>→ meerkat → manatee</p>	
<p>squirrel</p> <p>use a dictionary =&gt;</p>	

# TIGERS

1) Write 5 words that you think of when you hear the word "tiger"

○ ○ ○ ○ ○

2) Look at the types of tigers and answer the questions

SIBERIAN TIGER	BENGAL TIGER	SOUTH CHINA TIGER	SUMATRAN TIGER
			
Size: 250-330 cm	Size: 240-280 cm	Size: 210-240 cm	Size: 210-240 cm
Weights: 200-600 pounds	Weights: 300-480 pounds	Weights: 240-330 pounds	Weights: 198-264 pounds
Lives in: Russia	Lives in: India	Lives in: China	Lives in: Indonesia
Population: 360-406 free; 490 in zoos	Population: 3176-4550 free; 333 in zoos	Population: 20-30 free; 47 in zoos	Population: 400-500 free; 210 in zoos
Czech Republic: Zoo Praha, Zoo Tábora	Czech Republic: Zoo Liberec	Czech Republic: No	Czech Republic: Zoo Brno, Zoo Jihlava

weight = váha; 1 pound = zhruba 0,5 kilogramu  
 population = populace (počty tygrů); free = volně žijící

Where is the Siberian tiger from?	
How many Bengal tigers live in zoos?	
How much weights the Sumatran tiger?	
Which tiger lives in India?	
How many South China tigers live free?	

3) Read the information and answer

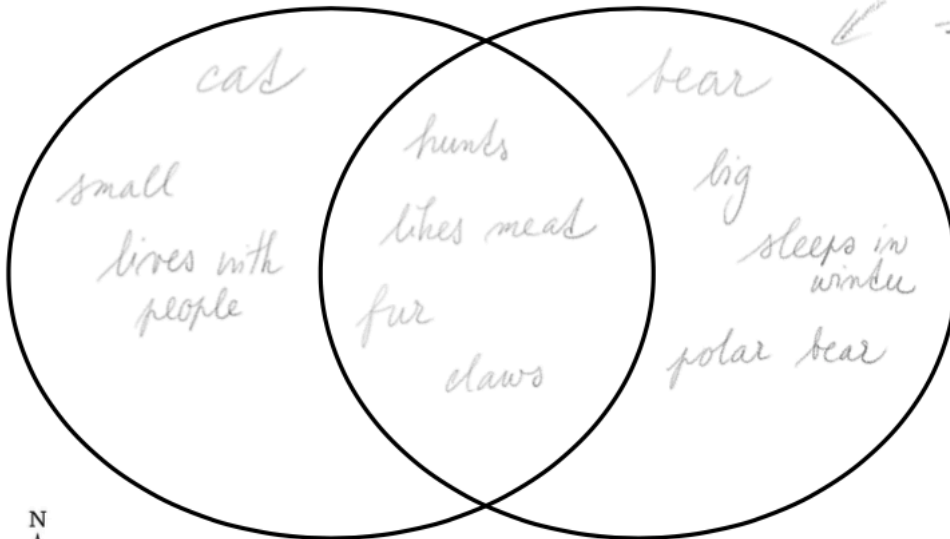
### TRUE or FALSE or NO INFORMATION

- A. Siberian tigers live in China. →
- B. South China tigers can't swim. →
- C. 210 Sumatran tigers live in zoos. →
- D. Siberian tiger is white. →
- E. ZOO Brno has Bengal tigers. →
- F. 20-30 South China tigers live free. →
- G. ZOO Praha has 4 Siberian tigers. →
- H. Bengal tigers are 260-280 cm long. →

Appendix 12 - Venn Diagrams (5A)

Compare 2 animals + treasure hunt

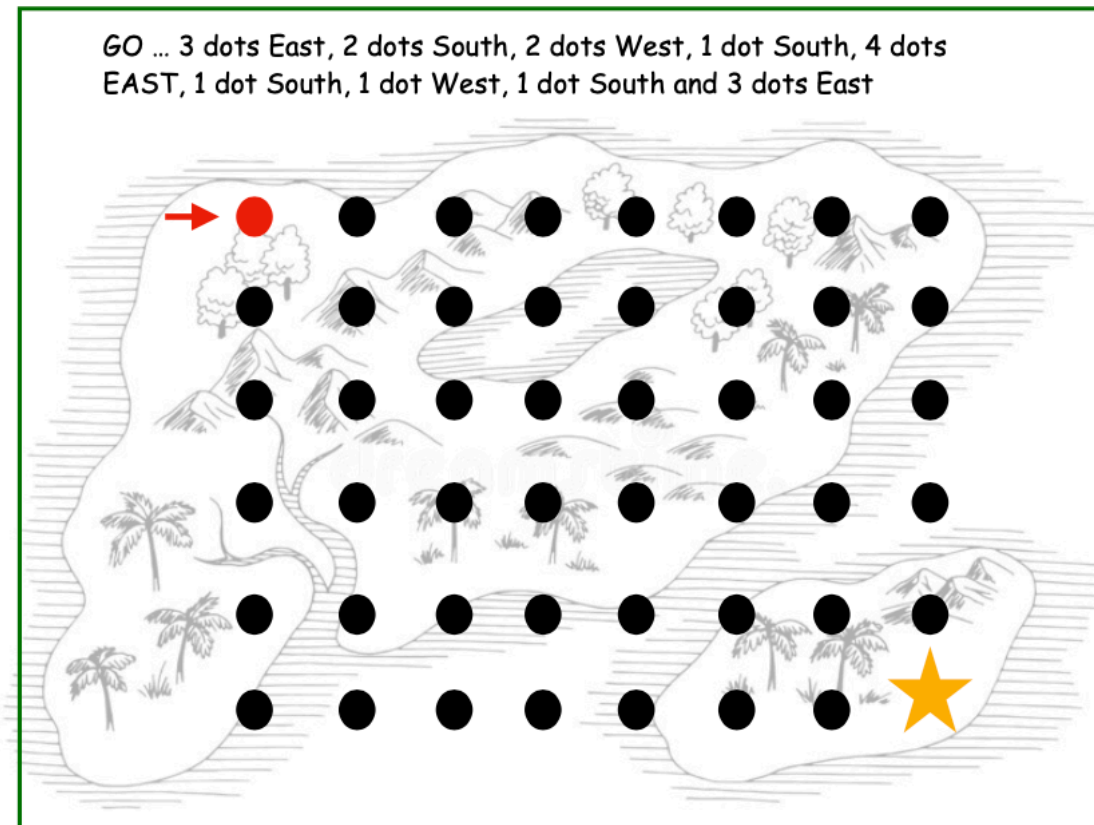
example

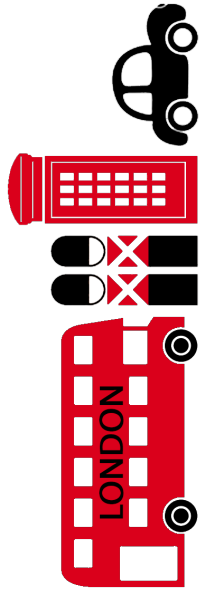


Translate the words into Czech language, look at the compass!

North = \_\_\_\_\_ South = \_\_\_\_\_  
 West = západ East = \_\_\_\_\_

GO ... 3 dots East, 2 dots South, 2 dots West, 1 dot South, 4 dots EAST, 1 dot South, 1 dot West, 1 dot South and 3 dots East





2) FINISH the vocabulary

- \_\_\_\_\_ = teta
- \_\_\_\_\_ = blízko
- \_\_\_\_\_ = hlavní město
- \_\_\_\_\_ = slavná místa
- \_\_\_\_\_ = kostra
- \_\_\_\_\_ = úžasné
- \_\_\_\_\_ = oblíbený
- \_\_\_\_\_ = příští rok

1) READ about Emma's trip to London

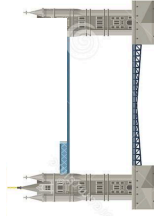
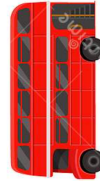
I visited England last summer and it was great. My aunt and uncle live there. They live in a big house in Oxford, it is a city near London. London is the capital city of the United Kingdom. London is very big, 9 million people live there. We were in London for 2 days. On the first day, we visited some famous places - the London Eye, Tower Bridge and Big Ben. Queen Elizabeth II. lives in London too. She is very old and she lives in Buckingham Palace but we did not visit the palace. There were many red buses - they are called "double deckers." On the second day, we visited a restaurant, 4 shops and a big museum. They had dinosaur skeletons there, it was amazing! My favourite dinosaurs are triceratops and stegosaurus. I loved this trip. I want to visit Paris next year.



3) DECIDE whether the sentence is a FACT or an OPINION

1. London is the capital city of the United Kingdom.
2. 9 million people live in London.
3. The trip to London was great.
4. Queen Elizabeth lives in London.
5. Double decker is a stupid name for a bus.
6. The food in London is very good.
7. London has a museum with dinosaur skeletons.

4) CONNECT the picture and the name



- Buckingham Palace      The London Eye
- double decker bus      Big Ben
- Tower Bridge

**PAST SIMPLE - pořadí slov**

1) **STUDY** these sentences:

- Marianne baked a chocolate cake last weekend
- Lucy visited her grandmother on Sunday.
- My dog loved his new toy
- She closed the door

2) **CIRCLE** similar to:

- Tom
- liked
- my new dress.

3) **Ověřili jsme: že pořadí slov v anglické větě je:** A) úplně náhodné B) celkem pevně dané  
že informace **KDY** se to stalo se často objevuje \_\_\_\_\_

4) **CIRCLE** sentences with **CORRECT** structure.

- Vanessa played a computer game. My father a window closed.
- Lilly last weekend watched Spiderman 2. My sister danced with her boyfriend.
- The lesson started a teacher 1 hour ago. His brother worked in a TV company
- My grandparents their garden liked. The Queen visited her castle last Christmas.

5) **WRITE** your own sentences

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



Appendix 15 - Find a sentence (5A)

PAST SIMPLE

1) Find 1 correct sentence in each table

Mary	wasn't	didn't	in the hospital	dinner.
Yesterday	were	working	cooked	last year.

Were	how	in the supermarket	her friend	in Prague ?
She	they	called	two hours	ago ?

I	watched	my sister's	singing	bedroom.
The ball	couldn't	under	her	competition.

Sue and Mike	were	yesterday	and	and her brother.
It	couldn't	dance	from	sing.

Were	didn't	cooked	in my car	from London.
She	dance	have	a birthday	last week.

Visited	she	his grandma	yesterday	evening?
Was	his 2 brothers	in the garden	tomorrow	last week?

From	my mom	was	baked	one month ago.
His	teacher	a cake	in France	tomorrow.

2) Create your own sentence

--	--	--	--	--

A5 - CORRECT THE TEST (CT)

1) Write the past form of the verb

PLAY -> played

BE -> are, were

LIKE -> liked

HAVE -> had

3 ch.

2) Rewrite the sentence in the past simple

NOW: Tim and Mary are not in the garden.

PAST: Tim and Mary wasn't in the garden.

NOW: Is Mr. Black in Slovakia?

PAST: Did Mr. Black in Slovakia?

NOW: She has long blond hair.

PAST: She did have long blond hair.

3 ch.

3) Write the sentence in the negative form

My father was a good student when he was young.

My father wasn't a good student when he was young.

She had 12 hamsters and 8 guinea pigs.

She didn't had 12 hamsters and 8 guinea pigs.

2 ch.

4) Translate the sentences

Lily nesnášela ping pong ale milovala tenis.

Lily hated table tennis and she loved tennis.

Moje babička uměla hrát na housle když jí bylo 12.

My grandpa couldn't play the violin when she was 12.

3 ch.

5) Finish the dialogues

Missing words:

did	were	like	do	am
was (3x)	play	good	are	played

1 Mom: Mikel Did you play your homework today?

Mike: Yes, I did.

2 Jim: Hello Lucy. was you at Mary's birthday party?

Lucy: No, I wasn't. I was in Prague with my parents.

Jim: Really? Did you good Prague?

Lucy: Yes, I did. I liked it very much.

3 Lisa: Hi Marianne! How are you today?

Marianne: I am like and you?

Lisa: I am tired. I was at the music school concert yesterday.

Marianne: Did you do the piano?

Lisa: Yes, I did. I played for 30 minutes.

It were amazing.

6 ch.

6) Write your own dialogues

1 A: Did you visit your grandmother yesterday?

B: Yes, I did. I was there for 2 hours.

2 A: Was you at the cinema tomorrow?

B: No, I wasn't. I was at home.

2 ch.