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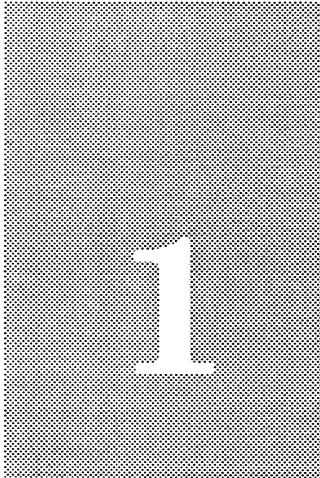
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Introduction

The Design of the Book

This Handbook has one basic objective: to demonstrate that it is possible and practical to integrate instruction for critical thinking into the teaching of all subjects. We focus on language arts, social studies, and science, but we believe that the range of sample *before* and *after* lessons we provide will prove to any open-minded person that teaching so as to cultivate the critical thinking of students is eminently *practical*. We also believe that it should be given the highest priority, for it is *necessary* if we genuinely want our students to be prepared for the real world which awaits them personally, politically, and vocationally.

Of course, to say that it is practical is not to say that it is simple and easy. To teach for critical thinking requires that teachers themselves think critically, and very often teachers have not been encouraged to do so. Furthermore, sometimes they do not feel competent to do so. Every teacher interested in fostering critical thinking must be prepared to undergo an evolutionary process over an extended period of time. Mistakes will be made along the way. Many didactic teaching habits have to be broken down, to be replaced by ones more in line with coaching than lecturing. In any case, there are many dimensions of critical thinking, and one needs to be patient to come to terms with them. Of course, since critical thinking is essential in the life of adults as well as children, teachers will find many uses for their emerging critical thinking abilities in their everyday life outside the classroom: as a consumer, citizen, lover, and person.

We have divided this handbook into two parts: "Putting Critical Thinking into Instruction," and "Achieving the Deeper Understandings." We have put a good deal of the theory of critical thinking instruction in Part Two because most teachers like to get a good look at application before they spend much time on theory. In a way this makes good sense. Why learn a theory if you're not happy with what the theory makes possible? On the other hand, it is sometimes hard to understand and appreciate the application if one is not clear about the theory that underlies it. How