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I ntroduction

The Costa Collection begins with his seminal piece, “The School As A Home For The Mind.” His opening statement, “A quiet revolution is taking place across America in corporate offices, industrial factories, government offices—and in schools as well. It is a revolution of the intellect, placing a premium on our greatest natural resource, the human mind,” sets the stage for his elaboration on the school as a home for the mind. Throughout this collection, Costa spells out this “revolution of the intellect” that is reshaping our schools.

The articles, ranging from visionary images to point-specific procedures for attaining that vision, cluster into several arenas. The groupings contain original articles that reveal Costa’s best thinking on key questions evoked by the idea of a “revolution of the intellect”:

What is the vision of this “intellectual revolution”?

How do we teach to the intellect?

What are the roles of the key players?

How do we assess what we’re doing?

How do we restructure the school as a home for the mind?

School As A Home For The Mind: The Vision

The opening group of articles presents Costa’s visionary portrait of the future school. The notion of “Aesthetics: Where Thinking Originates” suggests that cognition (with the addition of aesthetics) shifts from mere passive comprehension to a tenacious quest in which “children...reflect on the...beauty in a sunset, intrigue in the geometrics of a spider web, and exhilaration in the iridescence of a hummingbird’s wings.” In these beginning pieces, Costa also outlines his well-known and often-quoted list of intelligent behaviors: persistence, decreased impulsivity, empathic listening, cooperative thinking, flexible thinking, metacognition, checking for accuracy, drawing on past knowledge and applying it to new situations, question and problem posing, risk taking, a sense of humor, precision of language, use of all senses, ingenuity, and a sense of efficacy as a thinker.

The Thoughtful Curriculum

Supporting the vision presented in Section I, the second cluster of articles delineates how to teach to the intellect. Costa defines Brandt’s framework of teaching for, of and about thinking as a universal organizer for the thoughtful classroom. In his exquisite elaboration

on setting the climate for thinking, Costa develops the notion of questioning strategies that elicit student thinking and learning. He uses the “Three-Story Intellect” model in which the language of the classroom is designed to gather information, make sense of that information, and apply it in novel situations.

The companion piece to “Teacher-Initiated Questions And Directions That Elicit Thinking And Learning” is Costa’s article on response behaviors, “Teacher Response Behaviors That Support And Extend Thinking And Learning.” To further set the climate and conditions for thoughtfulness in the classroom, Costa discusses six responses that include terminal or closed teacher response strategies and open and extending response techniques.

In developing the second component of the thoughtful classroom, teaching the skills of thinking, Costa suggests that thinking skills are neither an add-on nor a quick fix, but rather a total rededication of the basic value system of the school as an intellectually stimulating place. In addition to recognizing the value of teaching the skills of thinking, a description of how to teach thinking skills explicitly is directly related to the Three-Story Intellect model of thoughtful classroom instruction.

Finally, to complete this cluster of articles on how to teach the skills of thoughtfulness, “Mediating The

Metacognitive” highlights a dozen mediation strategies to help teach about thinking.

Costa explains, “If you [have an] ‘inner’ dialogue inside your brain, and if you...stop to evaluate your own decision-making/problem-solving processes, you [are] experiencing metacognition.” It is in this “thinking about thinking” mode that students learn about their own thinking.

This section of articles presents myriad practical ideas and instructional strategies. It is a synthesis of “how-tos” for the thoughtful classroom.

The Key Players

Beyond the curricular focus of teaching for, of, and about thinking, Costa’s third cluster of articles focuses on the key players in this “revolution of the intellect” in creating the school as a home for the mind. He examines the question of “What goes on in your head when you teach?” from the supervisory perspective, or as a planning stage to the teaching act.

In addition, he asks, “Do you speak Cogitare?” and proceeds with a plea to teachers to monitor their teaching for use of specific cognitive terminology. By asking questions, selecting terms, clarifying ideas and processes, providing data, and withholding value judgments, we can stimulate and enhance the intelligence of others to complete the teaching cycle. Section III also includes an article on cognitive

coaching as a reflective strategy for teachers to look back and evaluate their own teaching.

The final article in this section presents a discussion of an often-asked question: what is the administrator's role in enhancing thinking skills? This article offers suggestions on how principals can exert influence in enhancing students' full intellect. Ideas presented for administrators to consider include ways to create conditions, use available resources, and model practices.

The Evaluation Dilemma

Addressing the critical issue of assessment of the intellectual functions promoted in the thoughtful classroom, this fourth cluster of articles contains two distinct pieces. The first piece addresses the dilemma created by trying to test "thinking [that] is in a dynamic state of flux...[with] norm-referenced, standardized test scores...[which] provide us with a more static number reflecting the achievement and performance of isolated skills." His classic question, "Is testing thinking an oxymoron?" signals the assessment dilemma caused by this revolution of the intellect.

In another article in this section, Costa again delineates the dispositions of intelligent behavior that seem to be worthy indicators for assessing the growing intelligence of our students. Along with the questions posed in the assessment piece, Costa asks the more

encompassing evaluation question: "Has thinking been infused into the entire school culture?" Here he develops a list of global indicators for school-wide evaluation. Included among the indicators are evidence of collegiality, experimentation and action research, appreciation and recognition, high expectations, priority protection, tangible support, celebration, communication, trust, and modeling.

The School As A Home For The Mind: The Re-vision

Costa summarizes his vision in a concluding statement:

The school will become a home for the mind only when the total school is an intellectually stimulating environment for all participants; when all the school's inhabitants realize that freeing human intellectual potential is the goal of education; when they strive to get better at it themselves; and when they use their energies to enhance the intelligent behavior of others.

To re-visit that belief, the school as a home for the mind, his final article describes the orchestration necessary to realize the vision.

In the restructuring process that results from the "revolution of the intellect," Costa suggests seven phases: definition, integration, application,