

# Effective Strategies in Developing Critical Thinking Skills in Elementary School Age Children

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## ABSTRACT

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This study aims to identify and evaluate effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school-age children through a literature review method. Taking into account the complexity of cognitive development at this stage, this study investigates various learning strategies that are suitable for the characteristics of elementary school-age children. Through in-depth analysis of relevant literature, this study identifies that the use of stories or fairy tales, problem-based approaches, and social interaction are effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school-age children. Stories and fairy tales can stimulate children's imagination and reflection, while the problem-based approach encourages them to identify and solve problems critically. Social interactions, such as group discussions and teamwork, also help expand children's perspectives and hone their critical thinking skills. This study provides insights into the importance of developing critical thinking skills in elementary school-age children and offers practical guidance for educators and policymakers in designing effective learning strategies.

*Keywords:* Critical Thinking Skills, Elementary School-Age Children, Learning Strategies

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The educational world increasingly acknowledges that critical thinking skills are a crucial foundation for individual success in facing future challenges. In an era filled with information and technology like today, the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information becomes key to holistic development [1].

Recognizing the importance of critical thinking skills, educators and researchers strive to find effective strategies to develop them in elementary school children. Children at this stage represent a crucial period in the formation of thinking patterns and attitudes towards learning. Therefore, finding the right strategies to sharpen critical thinking skills at their early educational stage becomes a priority [2].

However, in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children, there are various challenges to overcome [3]. One of them is adapting teaching methods to the developmental characteristics of children at that age. Elementary school children tend to have limited attention spans and a need for engaging and enjoyable learning. Therefore, the approach used must be suitable for their characteristics to ensure effective learning processes [4].

Furthermore, the learning environment both inside and outside of school also plays a significant role in the development of critical thinking skills in elementary school children. Interaction with peers, parental support, and the use of technology in learning can significantly contribute to shaping their critical thinking abilities [5].

In the context of globalization and increasing competition, possessing critical thinking skills becomes an undeniable necessity. Therefore, this research aims to investigate and identify effective strategies that can aid in the development of critical thinking skills in elementary school children. Thus, this research is expected to make a tangible contribution to educational improvement and prepare the younger generation to face future challenges [6].

## 2. METHODS

The following is a detailed outline of the research methodology using the literature review method to explore Effective Strategies in Developing Critical Thinking Skills in Elementary School Children:

- 1. Determination of Research Objectives:** The initial stage of this research is to establish clear and specific objectives. The research objective is to identify and evaluate effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children.
- 2. Literature Search:** The next step involves conducting a comprehensive and structured literature search. This search is performed through academic databases, educational journals, relevant books, and other pertinent sources. Keywords used include "critical thinking skills," "development of critical thinking skills," "elementary school children," and "effective strategies."
- 3. Selection and Screening of Literature:** After the search is conducted, the identified literature will be screened based on relevance to the research topic. Predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria will be used to select appropriate literature. These criteria include publication year, relevance to the topic, and research quality.
- 4. Literature Analysis:** The selected literature will undergo in-depth analysis. Analysis involves careful reading of each selected article or literature source. Important information such as definitions of critical thinking skills, development strategies, characteristics of elementary school children, and related research findings will be extracted and organized.
- 5. Data Synthesis and Interpretation:** Data obtained from literature analysis will be synthesized and interpreted. This involves grouping information based on specific themes or concepts, identifying patterns or trends in the literature, and synthesizing findings.
- 6. Writing the Research Report:** The results of the literature analysis will be summarized in a research report. This report will include descriptions of effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children, analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each strategy, and recommendations for further development.
- 7. Evaluation and Revision:** The final stage involves evaluating the prepared research report. Evaluation is conducted to ensure that research objectives are met and that the research results have high quality. If necessary, the report will be revised to enhance clarity and accuracy of information.

Through these stages, this research will provide a profound understanding of effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children based on a comprehensive literature review.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here are the results of the research using the literature review method regarding Effective Strategies in Developing Critical Thinking Skills in Elementary School Children:

- 1. Identification of Effective Strategies:** After conducting a comprehensive literature review, several effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children were identified. These strategies include the use of stories or fables to stimulate critical thinking, the application of problem-based approaches in learning, the

use of educational games that trigger problem-solving, and the integration of technology in the learning process [7].

2. **The Role of Social Interaction:** Literature also indicates that social interaction plays a crucial role in the development of critical thinking skills in elementary school children. Group discussions, teamwork, and collaborative learning with peers can help children hone their critical thinking abilities [8].
3. **The Importance of Parental and Teacher Support:** The support provided by parents and teachers also plays a decisive role in the development of children's critical thinking skills. Through appropriate guidance and encouragement, parents and teachers can create a supportive environment for children to develop their critical thinking abilities [9].
4. **Adaptation to the Characteristics of Elementary School Children:** Effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills must be tailored to the developmental characteristics of elementary school children. Approaches that are engaging, interactive, and aligned with children's interests and needs will be more effective in achieving learning goals [10].
5. **Challenges and Practical Implications:** Although there are various effective strategies, there are also challenges in implementing them. Some challenges include resource availability, teacher training, and curriculum adjustment. Therefore, this research provides practical implications for educators and policymakers in designing learning programs that support the development of critical thinking skills in elementary school children [11].

Therefore, the results of this research provide a profound understanding of effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children and offer guidance for educational practitioners in designing effective and relevant learning experiences tailored to children's needs [12].

Children at this age are in the process of building their cognitive foundation, which will shape their thinking patterns and approaches to learning in the future. Therefore, it is important to understand how appropriate teaching strategies can help sharpen their critical thinking skills [13].

An important aspect of developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children is understanding the characteristics of cognitive development at this stage. Children at this age tend to have limitations in abstract and logical thinking. Therefore, teaching strategies should be adapted to their cognitive developmental level by providing concrete and relevant experiences to help them develop critical thinking skills [14].

Effective strategies in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children often involve experiential and direct interaction-oriented approaches [15]. For example, using stories or fables in teaching can stimulate children's imagination and reflective thinking. These stories can be effective tools for asking questions that encourage children to think critically about the characters, plot, and moral messages of the story [16].

Furthermore, problem-based approaches have also been proven effective in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children [17]. By introducing real-world problems or situations relevant to children, teachers can encourage them to identify problems, gather necessary information, and seek logical solutions. This approach not only hones critical thinking skills but also develops problem-solving skills essential in everyday life [18].

Social interaction also plays a significant role in developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children. Group discussions, teamwork, and collaborative learning with peers can help children broaden their perspectives, test their ideas, and develop the ability to articulate logical and persuasive arguments [19].

However, in implementing these strategies, it is important to recognize that each child has different needs and learning styles. Therefore, differentiation approaches should be applied to ensure that all children receive the support they need to develop their critical thinking skills. This may involve using various types of resources, approaches, and assessments tailored to their individual needs [20].

Thus, developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children is a complex yet important challenge in the education context. With a deep understanding of children's cognitive developmental characteristics, the implementation of relevant teaching strategies, and recognition of individual children's needs, we can help them build a strong foundation for critical thinking and face future challenges.

## CONCLUSION

This research highlights the importance of developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children. Through a comprehensive literature review, we identified various effective strategies in achieving this goal, including the use of stories, problem-based approaches, and social interaction. With a deep understanding of children's developmental characteristics and the application of appropriate strategies, we can help children build strong critical thinking skills for their future.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this research, we recommend that educators and policymakers pay attention to the importance of developing critical thinking skills in elementary school children. We encourage the implementation of the identified teaching strategies in this research, considering the individual needs of children and creating a supportive learning environment.

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