

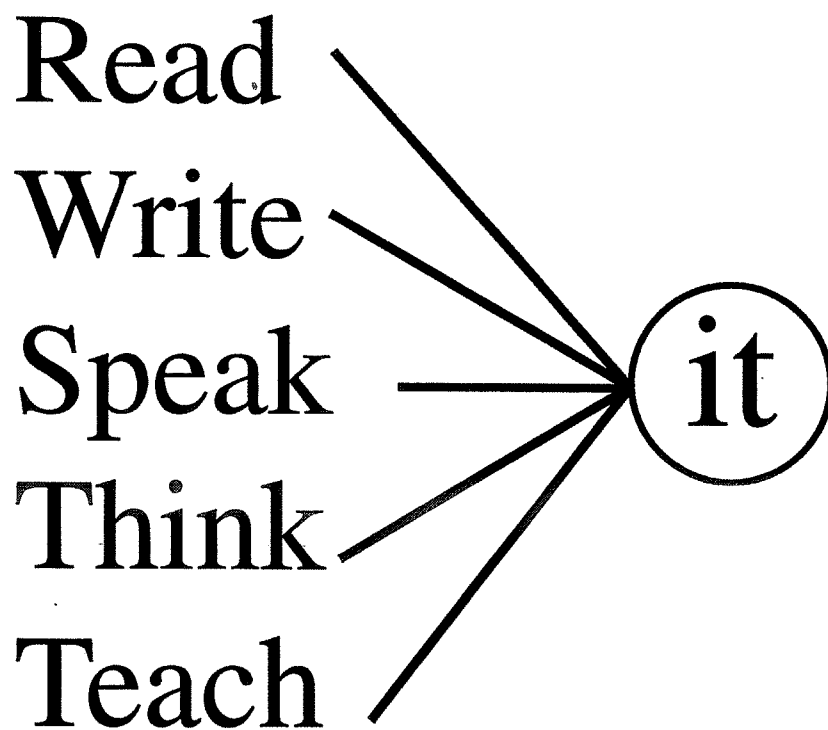
## 7) Content as Thinking

In this section we have placed transparencies that introduce content as thinking. If we are to design effective structures for student learning, the students must actively think through the “content” they are being taught.

# Central Organizer...

## Content as Mode of Thinking

To effectively teach  
critical thinking we  
must...



into our system.

# DIDACTIC TEACHING



Coverage that SMOTHERS thinking,  
a kind of death instinct in teaching



Students are taught content in a  
form that renders them unlikely to  
think it through



The mind retreats into  
ROTE MEMORIZATION.



Abandons any attempt to grasp the  
logic of the content.

What are the best methods for teaching your content?

What are the most significant barriers to learning that students bring to the classroom?

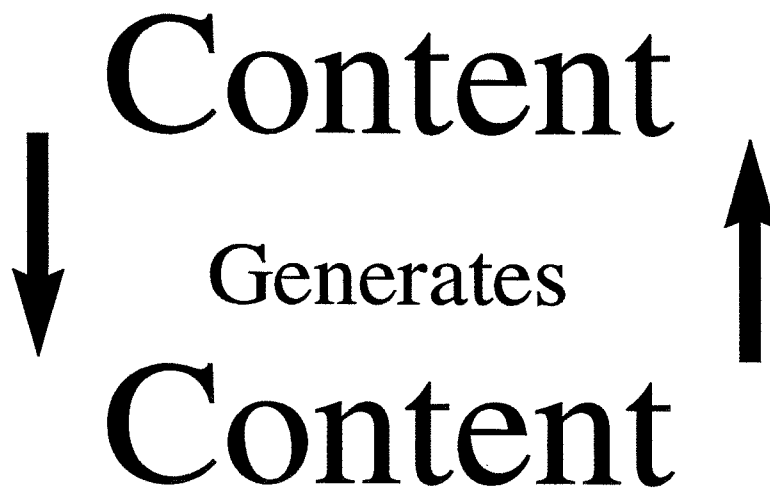
What can we do to break through those barriers?

# Teaching the Logic of Content

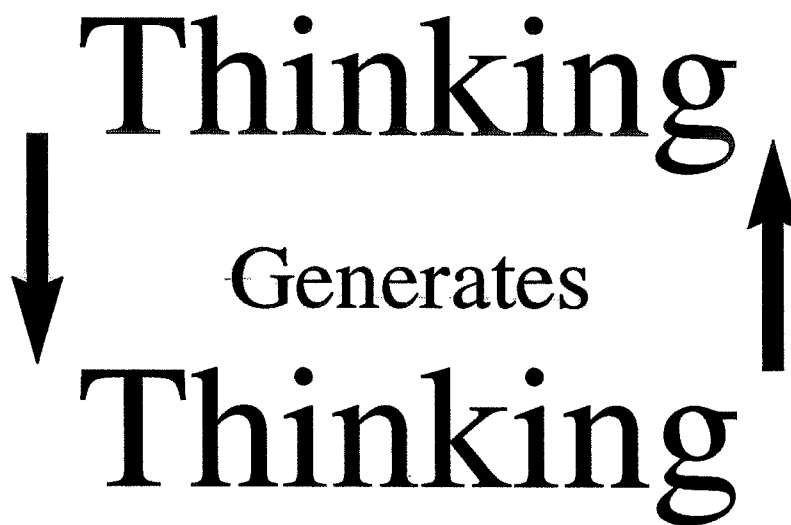
Before class:

- 1) Choose one basic concept you want students to learn.
  - 2) What is the purpose of this idea?
  - 3) If students understand it, what questions will they be able to answer?
  - 4) What other concepts or ideas is it connected to?
  - 5) How can you relate the concept with the logic of student thinking?
- Work individually
  - Then in pairs
  - Then you will be called on randomly to discuss

- All content “lives” in the form of thinking.
- Only those who can “think” through the content, have it.
- All content “dies” when one tries to learn it without thinking it through.
- Only through thinking can students “take possession” of content & make it theirs.
- Only to the extent that a student asks genuine questions & seeks answers to them, is a student taking content seriously & thinking it through!



-because-

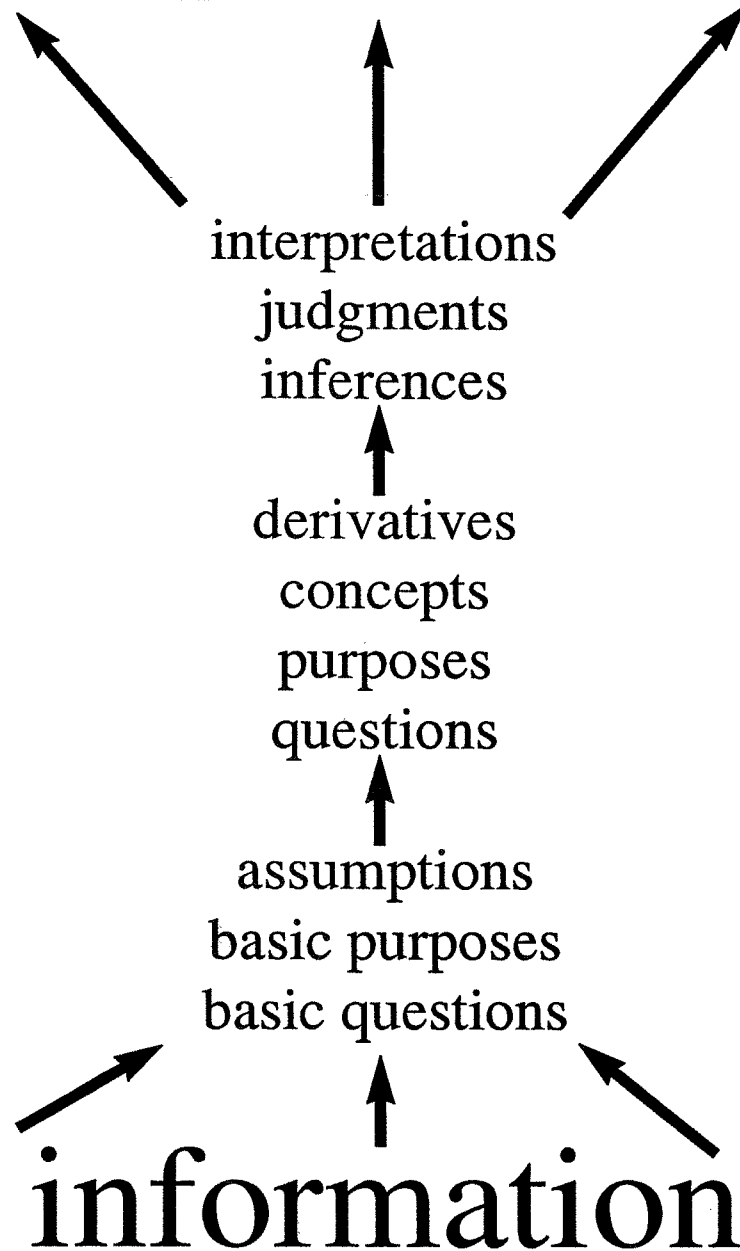




## **The Logic of...**

- the logic of disruptive behavior**
- the logic of student behavior (in general)**
- the logic of “gang” behavior**
- the logic of family relationships**
- the logic of male/female relationships**
- the logic of your relationship to your mate**
- the logic of the male ego**
- the logic of the female ego**
- the logic of domination**
- the logic of submissiveness**
- the logic of manipulation**
- the logic of romantic relationships**
- the logic of “reading”**
- the logic of “writing”**
- the logic of “speaking”**
- the logic of “listening”**
- the logic of economics (economic logic)**
- the logic of self-delusion**
- the logic of money in politics**
- the logic of “wellness”**

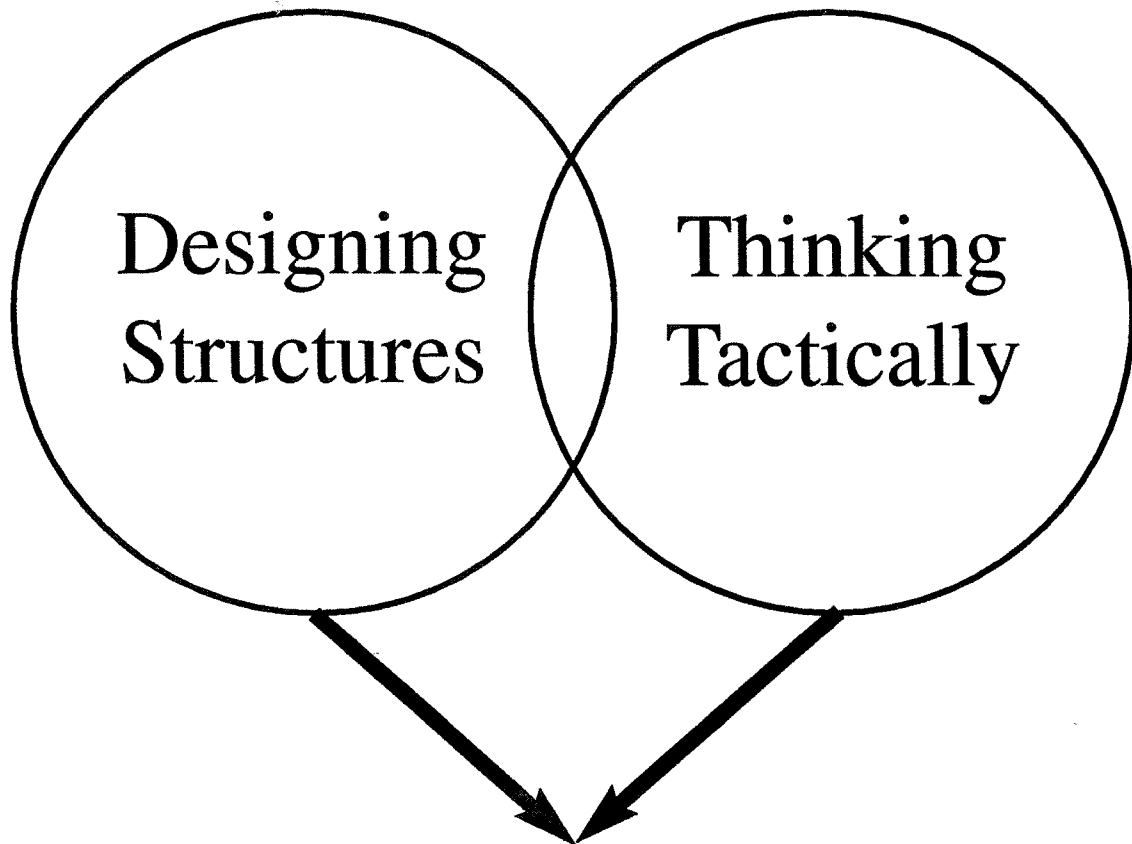
# Implications



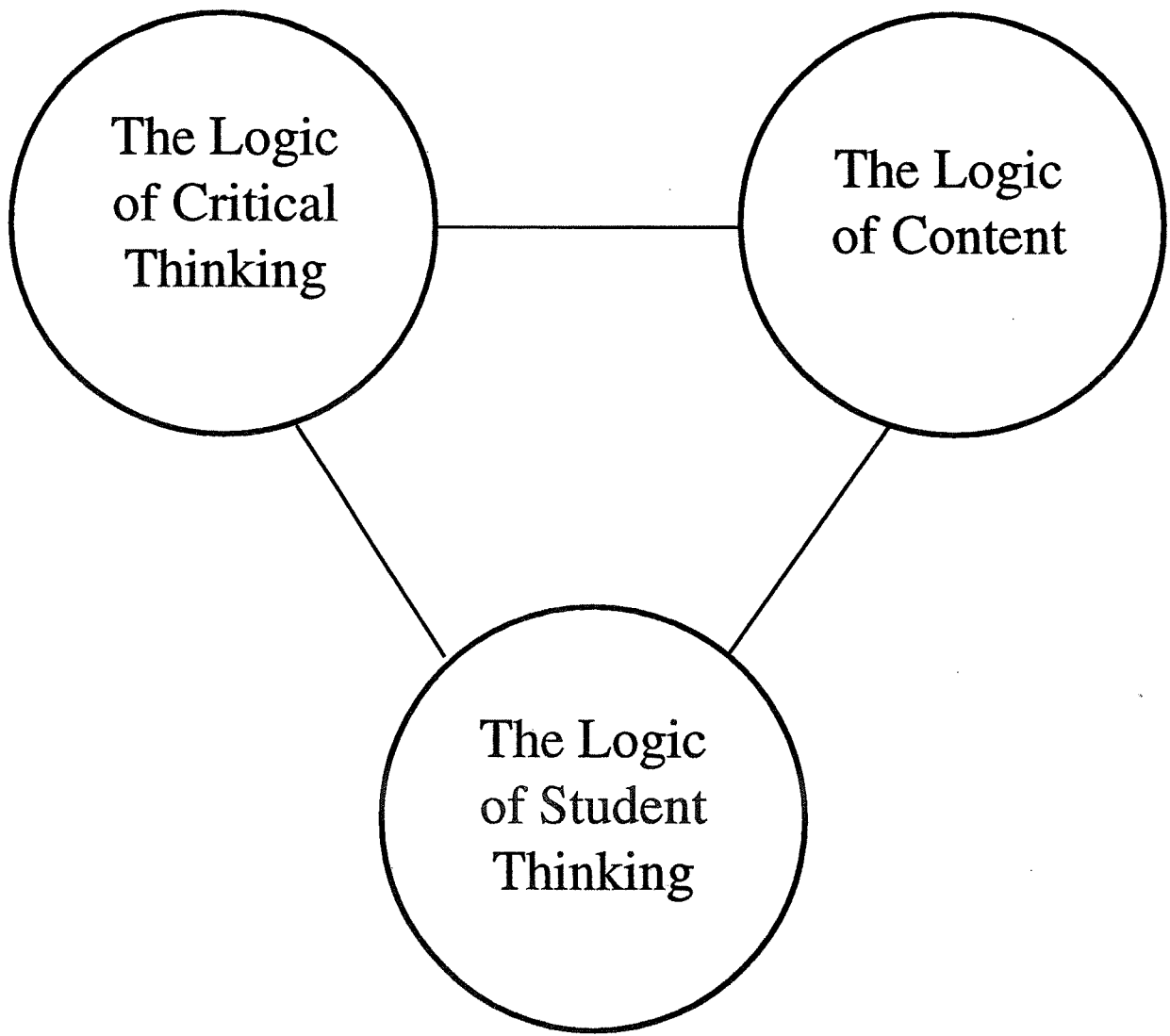
What is one way you can  
“connect” your content with  
student thinking?

- 
- 1) Write down your idea.
  - 2) Stand up when finished, find a partner, and discuss your ideas.
  - 3) Remember the code of silence at the tables so people still working can concentrate.

# Teaching as Engagement in thinking



- Model the thinking we want
- To engage students in the thinking we want
- Hold students responsible for the thinking they do



# Assumptions about Thinking & Content

- 1) That thinking is integral to the nature of content and that it is thinking that gives life to content.
- 2) That there are universal features and principles of thinking.
- 3) That these principles and features provide an entree into understanding and teaching of content — and are integral to it.
- 4) That these principles, taught explicitly, provide a bridge to other subjects and everyday life.

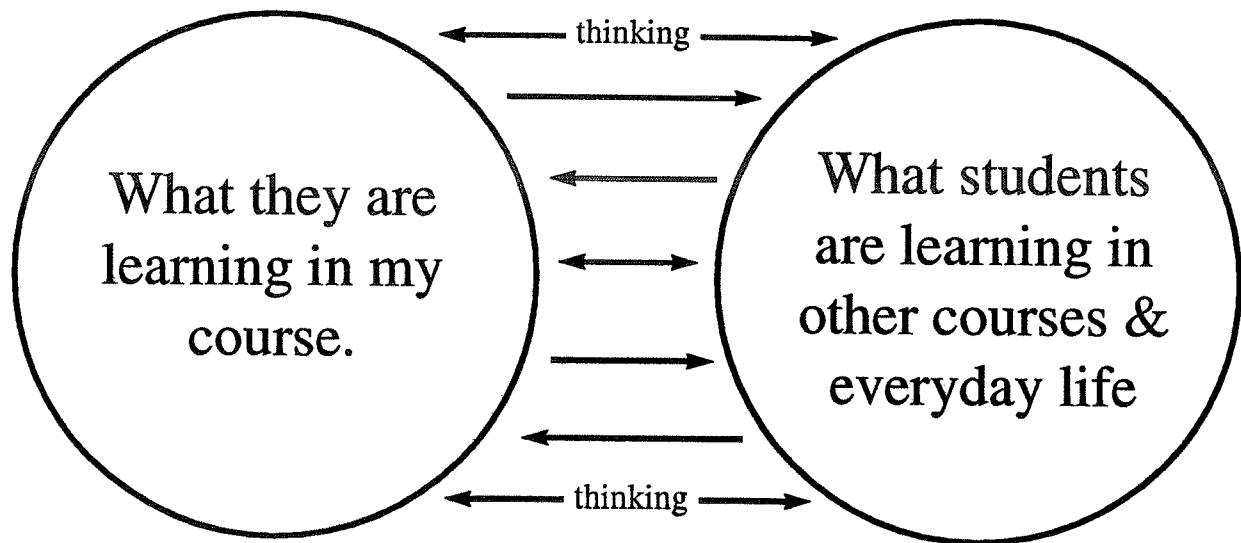
## Making Connections to Student Thinking:

- Show them how gossiping is a form of historical thinking, that they engage in historical thinking every time they tell a story.
  
- Sociological Thinking:
  - Have students identify a group they belong to. What is taboo in the group? What is required? What is allowed?
  - Have them study elevator behavior.
  
- Algebraic Thinking:

Teach them the most basic concept of algebra, that it is simply arithmetic with unknowns.
  
- Thinking about Literature:

Have students tell the story of their life to someone, to discuss the setting, the major events, to explain the “characters” of their life who have significantly influenced them.

We want students to develop 2-way access between what they are learning in other courses & in daily life and what they are learning in our course.





If content “lives” in thinking, how can I begin to help my students to give life to the content I am teaching?

How can I begin to re-think my content so that I can better grasp it as thinking?

Refer to “3 Insights Into Content as a Mode of Thinking” on page 7

Working in groups of three:

- Each person take one major point.
- Spend five minutes studying your point.
- Then each person should spend three minutes teaching the content of your point to the other two people.
- The “students” should ask questions of clarification during the teaching process.

**Critical  
Teaching**

# **Content**→

as something  
that is alive only  
in minds

as a mode of thinking  
driven by questions



the content is regenerated in the mind  
of the student through thinking



the content is understood as moments  
or dimensions of a thinking process



the content cannot be completed  
because it "lives" in thinking



the thinking that underlies content  
continually generates further content



its purposes	→	further purposes
its questions	→	further questions
its concepts	→	further concepts

## Educators who think critically,

- Want their “content” to take root in the thinking of the students.
- To “live” in the minds of students.
- To transform the way they think.
- To put them into possession of a new mode of thinking.
- To become a perpetual generator of new thoughts, understandings, & beliefs.
- To become an instrument of insight.



And therefore they design instruction with these ends continually in view



So that students take charge of their thinking & continually upgrade it.

**Content**

**=**

**Thinking**

# Make Intelligible, Elaborate, Give Examples

- 1) If you would master the world as an object,  
master your thinking as a subject.
- 2) The content of my life is given in the content of  
my thinking.
- 3) The content of my childhood is given in the  
content of my thinking during my childhood.
- 4) The quality of my life is given in the quality of  
my thinking in my life.
- 5) The world exists (for me) only in so far as I think  
it.
- 6) I think, therefore I suffer.
- 7) I think, therefore I can be fulfilled.

## 2 Phases in Teaching Content:

Initial  
Internalization



```
graph TD; A[Initial Internalization] --> B[Application]
```

Application

# MAKING CONNECTIONS TO STUDENT THINKING

## HISTORICAL THINKING:

Show them how gossiping is a form of historical thinking, that they engage in historical thinking every time they tell a story.

## SOCIOLOGICAL THINKING:

Have students identify a group they belong to. What is taboo in the group? What is required? What is allowed?  
Have them study elevator behavior.

## ALGEBRAIC THINKING:

Teach them the most basic concept of algebra, that it is simply arithmetic with unknowns.

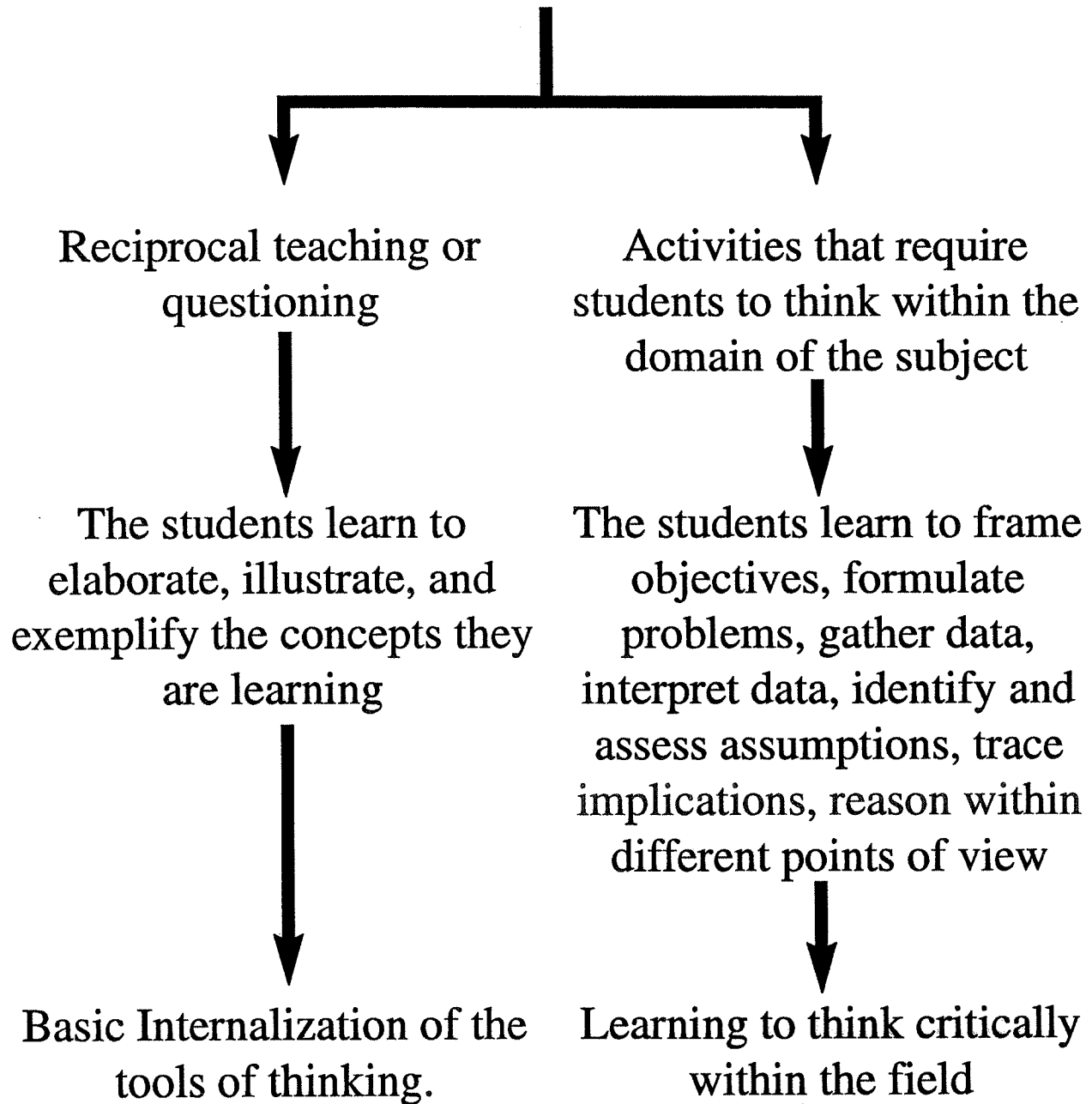
## THINKING ABOUT LITERATURE:

Have students tell the story of their lives to someone, to discuss the setting(s) of events, to explain the “characters” of their life who have significantly influenced them.



# 2 OPTIONS

(for excellence in learning)



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