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# Six Thinking Hats- How relevant is it in a Geography Classroom

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**Abstract**: De Bono's Six Thinking Hats is based on the various types of thinking like convergent and divergent, reflective and parallel, and each of his six thinking hats facilitate a certain type of thinking skill. Not just in the education sector, the six thinking hats have been a strategy in management as well. This article explores the possibilities of using different hats to trigger various thinking processes.

## Introduction

Edward De Bono is the proponent of lateral thinking, a term he coined for a thinking type that involved reasoning and finding solutions creatively. He was the proponent of the Six Thinking Hats Strategy which is used in various scenarios in the student's life as well as the adult life. Lateral thinking enables people to detect problems, even before they have arisen and thereby keep a plan of action ready to solve it. Conversely, lateral thinking also enables the skill of finding solutions that may not have existed and are completely out of the box.

## Knowing the Six Thinking Hats Method

The Six Thinking Hats structure is divided into six sections, each section dealing with a colour of hat and each colour triggering a certain type of thinking. The diverse thinking roles represented by each hat enable students to examine a subject or issue from several angles. The six hats consist of:

1. White Hat that emphasizes information and facts that are impartial. It seeks for only real information that is not an opinion or a belief. The teacher asks students to read a specific section of the chapter and enlist the different pieces of information given in the section. When the teacher instructs students to analyze and state the information that is needed or can be inferred, they develop deductive skills.
2. Red Hat triggers the ability to examine feelings, instincts, and individual reactions. In today's world, the skill of being able to judge a situation, talk of emotions and respect other people's feelings are so important. It fosters an open-mindedness in the team members with the ability to judge the situation from the heart.
3. Black Hat assesses possible dangers, difficulties, and critical evaluation. It helps to develop the skill of determining the dangers and weak points in the planning even before they have arrived. This helps the team with risk assessment.
4. Yellow Hat stresses the advantages and positive thinking. Quietly contrary to the black hat, the yellow hat points out the advantages of the decision that the team has taken. The yellow hat fosters optimism in students and trains them to look at the brighter side of things.
5. Green Hat promotes innovation, creativity, and the generation of fresh ideas. It is looking into the problem in a new way and coming up with unforeseen solutions.
6. Blue Hat promotes critical thinking, establishes goals, and controls discussions. The aspect of this hat is that it gives the team member a direction for the discussion and does not let the discussion go astray. It also is associated with metacognition, which is the ability to think about the thinking process of students.

## Impact of Six Thinking Hats Strategy

The benefit of using the Six Thinking Hats method in a geography classroom is that it develops all the 21st-century skills.

1. Improved ability for Thinking Critically: The Six Thinking Hats approach helps

students to examine geographic topics from various aspects, which develops their critical thinking abilities and broadens their viewpoints like examining which evidences prove the concept of continental drift.

2. Improved Problem-Solving Skills: Students may approach complicated geographic problems with effectiveness, identify solutions, and assess their viability by investigating various thinking roles for example the dwindling groundwater in India and its solution.
3. The participatory aspect of the "six thinking hats" strategy encourages students to actively participate, collaborate, and discuss the material, which increases their interest in the subject and their level of engagement. This facilitates active learning.
4. Communication skills are developed when the students work in teams and share their thoughts with each other, They engage in meaningful conversations that facilitate meaningful learning.
5. The Six Thinking Hats method can help children develop empathy and enhance global awareness. Students can analyze the human side of geographic phenomena, such as the effects of natural catastrophes on people or the cultural value of a particular terrain, by using the Red Hat thinking position, which places an emphasis on emotions and personal responses. The method fosters a greater comprehension and appreciation of various geographic situations by helping students to empathize with various views and cultures.
6. Through reflective thinking, which the Six Thinking Hats method promotes, students can examine their own cognitive processes and decision-making techniques. Students can consider their unique biases, presumptions, and limits after trying each thinking hat. By increasing self-awareness and developing metacognitive abilities, this reflective practice enables students to grow more aware of their thought processes and make better decisions while analyzing geographic data.

**Applications in the Teaching of Geography:** Focusing on how to utilize the Six Thinking Hats method in geography classroom practices, we can use it to do case studies like climate action projects where students can analyze the various reasons for global warming and offer solutions to solve the problem. Students can utilize the Six Thinking Hats model and consider the subject of from multiple angles by being given practical problems like case studies on the weathering of marble monuments. The students can undertake virtual student exchange programs and collaborate with students of other states to share each other's cultural nuances. Students can examine other points of view, confront presumptions, and create well-rounded arguments by setting up group conversations or debates in which each participant adopts a different cognitive role. By incorporating the Six Thinking Hats technique into project-based learning activities, instructors can help students develop their innovative thinking, critical thinking, and ability to solve problems while encouraging them to approach geography tasks from a variety of angles. The six thinking hats strategy can be used during field trips. Students can use various thinking caps on field trips or hands-on activities to help them observe, understand, and analyze the geographical phenomena they come across.

In the geography classroom, the Six Thinking Hats method enables students to investigate various angles and facets of geographical challenges. Students can explore the numerous components, such as ecological, financial, social, and political considerations, that contribute to a certain geographic occurrence by adopting different thinking hats. Students can obtain a comprehensive grasp of complicated geographic problems and take into account the interconnection of various elements thanks to this multidimensional thinking.

One of the most important aspects of geography is spatial analysis, which involves the analysis and inference from geographic information to comprehend trends, connections, and processes. The Six Thinking Hats method can help pupils strengthen their spatial analytical abilities in a big way. The many hats allow students to approach spatial challenges from a variety of perspectives. Students might concentrate on acquiring and analyzing spatial data, for instance, while using the Red Hat to explore their emotional and intuitive reactions to spatial patterns or events. Students can improve their spatial analysis skills by adopting diverse points of

view and discovering new insights and interpretations.

The Six Thinking Hats approach encourages group work and discussion in geography classes. During group exercises, conversations, or debates, giving students different hats stimulates active participation and a range of opinions. Students can criticize and encourage each other's views through this collaborative approach, which promotes a deeper examination and comprehension of geographic topics. Additionally, the approach encourages students to communicate effectively by teaching them to do so in a respectful manner while taking into account opposing viewpoints.

**More about Six Thinking Hats**

A strategy for incorporating different styles of reasoning into the learning process is called Six Thinking Hats. Individuals frequently feel pressured to continuously adopt a particular perspective (optimistic, pessimistic, objective, etc.) in social settings. This restricts how and how far each person—and hence the team as a whole—can research a problem. One's ability to think from multiple perspectives is now possible thanks to the Six Thinking Hats. The hats represent categories of cognitive behaviors rather than actual persons. The caps' function is to guide thinking rather than to categorize. Putting on a hat entails choosing a viewpoint that is not always one's own. It's critical that each group member understands. The order of the various colors is not always consistent. According to the situation and the mix of participants, it may be preferable to let people express their negative thoughts or intuition feelings first before using yellow or green to advance. The blue hat critiques the methodology being utilized and requests conclusions, decisions, etc. The blue hat can be a chairman or it may shift from person to person.

In conclusion, including the "6 Thinking Hats" technique in geography lessons provides students with a useful framework for honing their communicative, analytical, and critical thinking abilities. Students develop a deeper knowledge of geographic ideas and become better prepared to handle challenging situations by engaging with different points of view. This approach can be used by educators to develop an engaging, interactive learning environment that fosters students' analytical skills and gets them ready for both academic and practical endeavors in the discipline of geography.

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