

PMI

What is it?

PMI, Plus/Minus/Interesting, is a lateral and creative thinking strategy used in de Bono's CoRT Thinking program.

What is its purpose?

PMI helps students learn to:

- see both sides of an argument
- view things from a different point of view
- think broadly about an issue
- suspend judgement
- make informed decisions
- work as individuals, in pairs or as members of a group

How can I do it?

This strategy can be used within a range of classroom activities such as analysing texts or examining issues. Students are provided with a format for recording:

Plus	Minus	Interesting

Individually, in pairs or small groups, they apply three questions to a statement /task provided by the teacher:

- What are the positive ideas about this?
- What are the negative ideas about this?
- What is interesting about this?

Within a specified time limit, students brainstorm their responses, having appointed a recorder and a reporter. At the end of the designated time, students report back on their most original/creative ideas from each of the categories.

It is useful to model the activity first, using a statement such as: "In the future, everyone will carry around personal mobile phones like wristwatches" or a recently shared text or experience as the topic.

How can I adapt it?

In *Developing Thinking Skills Using Children's Literature*, Ann and Johnny Baker use the example of the text *Terrible Tuesday* as it uses PMI as a structural feature. The ideas presented are defined in terms of negative, positive and interesting elements. Teachers could have students apply a PMI process as they read the text to promote understanding and analysis.

How can it be used to evaluate students' language learning?

There is a range of possible assessment outcomes in using PMI including:

- Understands and interprets the task
- Uses strategies to assist or facilitate brain storming
- Contributes to discussion
- Comprehends and explains opinions and information
- Evaluates range of viewpoints and can distinguish from own
- Applies process of PMI to a range of situations

Where can I find out more?

Cort Thinking Program Guide, (1994), Edward de Bono, Hawker Brownlow.