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Summary

Textbook questions and tasks as stimulating elements to divergent thinking

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Determining creativity as an essential term of reference in contemporary teaching, and regarding the textbook as the commonest teaching medium, this paper deals with the problem of stimulating creative thinking by textbook questions and tasks in lower classes of the primary school. The survey has covered an analysis of more than 20 000 questions and tasks comprising 42 maths, literature, natural and social sciences textbooks. An adapted List of open-ended questions and tasks has been used in the analysis to encourage creative thinking following D. George, based on the contemporary studies of creativity in teaching.

The results of the analysis of textbook contents have been evaluated by non-parametric statistical methods and show that literature textbooks in each of the four classes encourage creative thinking, whereas the contents in the maths books almost in general stifle creativity despite the fact the creativity in this subject is addressed as a distinctive trait. In natural and social sciences do stand out the first class textbooks giving much wider scope for creativity than the second, third, and fourth classes.

The quality textbook investigation in terms of creative thinking stimulation is of great value for teachers to facilitate them the implementation of dynamic and creative teaching in order to meet the pupils' needs. It is also of importance for pupils because creative questions and tasks encourage their comprehensive learning, make educational problems familiar with their personal experience and make them more knowledgeable how to identify and find solution to the problem, and finally how to deal with the given problem in the most appropriate way possible.

Key words: creative thinking stimulation, questions and tasks for encouraging creative thinking, textbooks, mathematics, literature, social science.