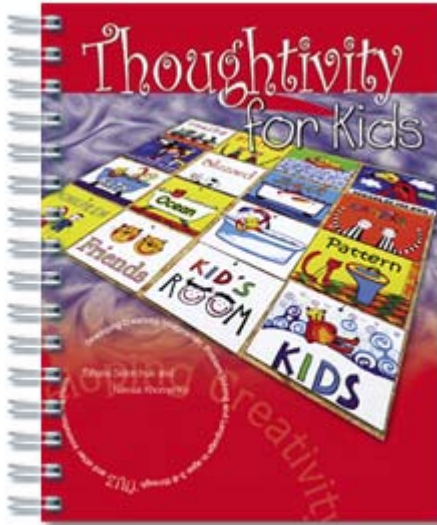


***Thoughtivity for Kids*** by Tatiana Sidorchuk and Nikolai Khomenko  
reviewed by Cal Halliburton and Sue McCarthy



**Title:** *Thoughtivity for Kids*: Developing Creativity, Imagination, Problem Solving and Language in ages 3-8; Through TRIZ and Other Innovation Methods: A study manual for teachers of preschoolers and pre-service teachers.

**Authors:** Tatiana Sidorchuk and Nikolai Khomenko

Perfect or Spiral Bound, Soft Cover, 264 pages, US\$29.95, ISBN Not Registered Pre-publication edition

**Published by:** GOAL/QPC  
12B Manor Parkway  
Salem, NH 03079-2862 USA [Click here for ordering information](#)

***A Treasure Chest:*** Book Review by Cal Halliburton

It's always fun to compare the publisher's promotional comments with the content of a book to determine if the publisher uses slippery words or overstates the book's value.

Since there are many games described in this book, why not use a variation of the "Good-Bad" game, familiar to TRIZ practitioners, as a structure for the review.

**The good**

The publishers' review states that "Thoughtivity for Kids is a valuable resource for college education students, teachers, and parents. Each chapter is packed with activities designed for specific age groups. Covered topics include developing imagination in preschoolers, teaching children to analyze situations, teaching creative writing to preschoolers, and teaching imagination techniques."

Without a doubt, Thoughtivity is a valuable resource. Each chapter is packed with information and activities arranged in a thoughtful and useful manner. The book is in four parts, each divided into chapters and each chapter divided into sections. Each section has a description of the method, the purpose of the method, a system of steps in conducting a training session, recommendations on building a system of training sessions with children of various ages, and expected results. All of that is followed in each section with several games and creative assignments for children of different age groups. Each game and creative assignment includes a title, purpose statement, required materials, and/or recommendations to the teacher. This format provides unity and continuity for the text making it practical and useful for any teacher. Every teacher or parent will find activities to enhance the development of preschool children and many will find them adaptable for older children as well. People familiar with TRIZ will recognize how the basic principles of TRIZ are incorporated into the lessons, games, and activities.

**The Bad**

The publisher's review states that "The book concludes with a detailed description of the TRIZ method." This "detailed" description is two pages long. "Brief" might be a better choice of words.

**Suggestions for improvement**—after all, it is a pre-publication edition

It needs a reference to the research that supports the use of the methods.

Second, it needs a bibliography of sources.

George Prince, a co-founder of Synectics, Inc., said "In a word TRIZ is a treasure.<sup>1</sup>" If TRIZ is a treasure then in two words, Thoughtivity is a *treasure chest* of strategies, lessons, games, and learning activities to enhance the creative imagination and language skills of young children and to enhance the teaching repertoire of teachers and parents.

**Buy it**

*I'm ordering several copies of Thoughtivity to share with my friends and teaching colleagues.* It's well done, it's the only text of TRIZ pedagogy available in English, and it passes the teachers' "Tomorrow's Class Test." Teachers can read this book today and begin using it in their classroom tomorrow. With the suggested improvements and additional illustrations of the activities in both text and graphic form, Thoughtivity should be on every teacher's professional bookshelf. I'm looking forward to more such books for older students to help place TRIZ in the hands and minds of all young people.

**Thank you**

An enormous, almost lifetime of effort by the authors was required to develop the pedagogy and write the text. I'd be remiss if I didn't mention Genrich Altshuller's lifetime of work and the contribution of his many colleagues to TRIZ. The translation from the original Russian was itself a difficult process. GOAL/QPC, its CEO Bob King, and the authors must be commended for their commitment to bring this significant contribution of TRIZ to the English speaking community. It is almost impossible (Like all TRIZ practitioners, I hesitate to use that word) to overstate the value of this book.

**References**

1 Altshuller, Genrich, translated by Lev Shulyak. (1994). *And Suddenly the Inventor Appeared: TRIZ, the Theory of Inventive Problem Solving*. Worcester, MA: Technical Innovation Center, Inc.

*About the author: Cal Halliburton*

During thirty-four years as a classroom teacher Cal taught thousands of students, taught research based professional education courses to hundreds of practicing teachers and administrators, and consulted with numerous school districts and educational organizations. Cal worked with Ideation International to develop the "Entrepreneurs Grow on TRIZ" program for middle school youth.

Early Childhood Perspective on *Thoughtivity for Kids*. Review by Sue McCarthy.

I was impressed with this book. The use of higher-level thinking and creative solutions are key in an early childhood classroom. This book offers a very unique perspective on integrating creative thought into the curriculum.

The overview and the specific lessons are very important. Many times teachers are given training and great ideas without examples. For instance, under the section on Empathy, there was an activity titled, “A Story that is not in a Book”. It gave children the opportunity to take on and experience different emotions in a very creative way. Children enjoy taking on emotions. It also gave instructions on how to run the activity. Other activities gave examples of questions and answers that may be given by the teacher and student. Modeling is important for a lesson to be successful.

The use of empathy is very important in teaching because children have a difficult time with this concept. Giving them experience/games that bring in their imagination gives them a better connection and understanding to real world situations.

The book needed to include illustrations of materials used in activities. Lulio’s circle is a great tool. Pictures/instructions are needed for this tool to be effective. A picture of it being used in a classroom would also add to the explanation of this idea.

This book teaches children problem solving through games and imagination and in turn strengthens their reading, math and writing skills. If this kind of teaching is started with very young children they will be stronger students in the long run.

Children learn so much more when they step out of the “box”. *Thoughtivity for Kids* would be beneficial to elementary teachers to help their classes develop problem solving techniques that are so important for a child to be truly successful and grounded in school.

*About the author:* Sue McCarthy is a public school kindergarten teacher and the mother of 3 children in the 3-8 year old target audience for *Thoughtivity*.