

## ***Cultures of Thinking Seminar***

### ***Creating Schools Where Student Thinking is Visible, has Value, and Shapes the Story of Learning in All Classrooms***

Date: May 14/15, 2016

Location: American International School of Budapest

Cost: \$200

[Registration](#)

Every classroom and school communicates to students a story of *what learning actually is* -- what it feels like, what it looks like, and how it works to develop lasting understanding. All too often though, with mandates and pressures dominating the attention of many teachers and school leaders, schools often become settings of “just getting through the work” and fail to provide a rich story of learning for students. Sadly, classrooms become places of work-compliance rather than places where students become better thinkers and learners to serve them well beyond their years in school. For a number of years, the Harvard University Project Zero *Making Thinking Visible* team have questioned: Just how can classrooms and schools become rich cultures of thinking for learners, both students and teachers, and what difference does it make for their learning?

This question of creating a culture of thinking is not an easy one to answer. Thinking, by its very nature, is invisible – it happens inside one’s mind. The idea of making thinking visible then helps make explicit what a thoughtful classroom culture might look like through the use of routines, paying attention to language, creating opportunities for thinking, etc. In schools where teachers are striving to shift towards a more thoughtfully engaged culture, educators ask of themselves: *What kinds of thinking are students making use of in order to deepen understanding? Are there opportunities for my students to develop and explain their theories with one another? What kind of creative solutions do my students construct? How do I invite students to debate the complexities of a plan or issue?*

When teachers focus on questions such as these about the learning environments they create, students are more likely to show commitment to their learning, find more meaningful connections between school and outside life and display the attitudes we most want to see in our learners– open-mindedness, curiosity, appropriate skepticism, and a thirst for wanting to understand.

This two-day seminar is designed to bring classroom teachers and school leaders into this *Making Thinking Visible* conversation. Educators attending this event will have opportunities for collaboration and reflection with other colleagues striving to enact powerful stories of learning in their own classrooms and schools. Participants will consider concrete strategies, tools, and pictures of practice to broaden their own vision of what a new story of learning might be and how it might be achieved through creating a culture of thinking.

## **About Mark Church**

Mark Church works with educators throughout the world striving to create cultures of thinking in their classrooms and schools. Mark challenges teachers to foster thinking dispositions in students in service of deep understanding, invites teachers to develop and use a language of thinking that communicates value for student sense-making, and encourages teachers to make their classroom environment rich with the documents of thinking processes.

Mark is currently a consultant with Harvard Project Zero's *Making Thinking Visible* and *Cultures of Thinking* initiatives worldwide, drawing upon his own classroom teaching experience and from the perspectives he has gained working with educators throughout North America, Australia, Asia, and Europe. Mark enjoys helping teachers examine opportunities for student thoughtfulness, use thinking routines as supports and scaffolds, interact with students in ways that demonstrate interest in and respect for students' thinking, and send clear expectations about the importance and value of thinking in learning. Together with Ron Ritchhart and Karin Morrison, Mark is co-author of the book *Making Thinking Visible: How to Promote Engagement, Understanding, and Independence for All Learners* (Jossey-Bass, 2011).