



## **Pre-K: Concept Development**

### **Title: Asking Questions about Dinosaurs**

In this pre-kindergarten classroom, the teacher asks students a variety of questions about dinosaurs to promote higher-order thinking skills.

#### **Analysis and Reasoning**

- The teacher asks open-ended questions designed to facilitate the students' use of reasoning. She asks, "How do you know that's an Ankylosaurus? It has a swinging tail, but don't all dinosaurs have swinging tails? How do you know just that one has a swinging tail?"
- The teacher continues to ask "why" questions that encourage students to use analysis and reasoning, "Why do you think the dinosaurs are always roaring?" and "Why doesn't every dinosaur eat meat?"
- The teacher allows ample wait time for the students to answer the questions. She asks questions in a sustained effort to develop the higher-order thinking skills of her students. The teacher sometimes repeats the questions for the students to gain a better understanding or to continue the discussion.
- The teacher invites the students to explain their thinking, "What does that mean?" and "How do you know that?"

Concept Development measures the teacher's use of instructional discussions and activities that promote higher-order thinking skills and cognition. The teacher's focus is on understanding rather than on rote instruction. Teachers who promote higher-order thinking skills give students frequent opportunities to generate their own ideas and connect classroom activities to students' lives outside of school.