

# Training Critical Thinking in High School English Post-Reading Writing

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**Abstract:** This study aims to explore the theoretical foundations and practical pathways for critical thinking training in high school English post-reading writing instruction. Through literature review and theoretical analysis, the paper first clarifies the importance of critical thinking in language learning by reviewing related studies domestically and internationally. It then examines the specific applications of critical thinking in post-reading writing from the perspectives of educational psychology, cognitive science, and linguistics, proposing a theoretical framework for cultivating critical thinking skills through guided questioning, situational settings, and diverse teaching activities. Emphasizing the importance of critical thinking in the context of contemporary education, particularly under the influences of informatization and globalization, the paper highlights the necessity of fostering students' independent thinking and problem-solving abilities. The conclusion drawn is that well-designed teaching activities and proper guidance can effectively enhance students' critical thinking skills in high school English post-reading writing, thereby promoting their overall development. This study not only provides theoretical support for high school English teaching but also offers practical references for educational reform and innovation.

**Keywords:** High School English; Post-Reading Writing; Critical Thinking; Educational Reform; Theoretical Study

## 1. Preface

### 1.1 Research Background

In today's rapidly developing globalized and information-based world, the goal of education is not only to impart knowledge but, more

importantly, to cultivate students' comprehensive qualities and abilities. Globalization has made connections between countries closer, while informatization has made access to knowledge more convenient and diverse. Against this backdrop, the goals and tasks of education have undergone profound changes. Traditional educational models mainly focused on the transmission and memorization of knowledge, whereas modern education places greater emphasis on the overall development of students, particularly the cultivation of comprehensive qualities and abilities.

Critical thinking, as an important higher-order thinking skill, has become one of the key goals of modern education. Critical thinking includes not only logical reasoning and analytical abilities but also open-minded thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills. Critical thinking can help students better understand and master knowledge, improve their learning abilities and autonomous learning capabilities, and cultivate their innovation and problem-solving skills. In the context of informatization and globalization, critical thinking is particularly important. While informatization has made access to knowledge more convenient, it has also led to an overload of information with varying quality. Students need to possess critical thinking skills to discern the truth from the vast amount of information and make correct judgments and decisions. Globalization has intensified competition between countries, making innovation and problem-solving abilities fundamental requirements for talent in modern society. As a crucial component of innovation and problem-solving skills, critical thinking has become a key goal of modern education.

High school English teaching, as an essential part of basic education, not only undertakes the task of imparting language knowledge but also bears the responsibility of cultivating students'

thinking abilities. English, as an international lingua franca, is of undeniable importance. High school English teaching should not only impart language knowledge and improve students' language expression abilities but also cultivate their thinking skills, especially critical thinking abilities. Through learning English, students can be exposed to different cultures and ideas, broaden their horizons, and develop open-minded thinking and cross-cultural communication skills. Additionally, through learning English, students can engage in logical reasoning and analysis, fostering their logical thinking and critical thinking abilities.

Post-reading continuation, as a comprehensive teaching activity, can effectively promote the development of students' language expression and thinking abilities. Post-reading continuation requires students to continue writing based on the content and plot of a read article. It not only assesses students' language expression abilities but also their comprehension, thinking, and creativity. The characteristics of post-reading continuation include: firstly, it requires students to deeply understand and analyze the article, effectively promoting their reading comprehension abilities. Students need to fully understand and analyze the article's theme, plot, characters, etc., to write a reasonable continuation. Secondly, post-reading continuation requires students to engage in creative expression, effectively cultivating their creativity. Students need to continue writing based on the article's content and plot, using creative thinking to design new plots and endings. Lastly, post-reading continuation requires students to engage in logical reasoning and plot design, effectively cultivating their logical thinking abilities. Students need to reason and design logically based on the article's content and plot, ensuring the continuation is coherent and logical.

Exploring how to effectively conduct critical thinking training in high school English post-reading continuation has significant theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, critical thinking training is a key goal of modern education. Exploring how to conduct critical thinking training in post-reading continuation can provide theoretical support for critical thinking education. Practically, post-reading continuation, as a comprehensive

teaching activity, can effectively promote the development of students' language expression and thinking abilities. Exploring how to conduct critical thinking training in post-reading continuation can provide practical guidance for high school English teaching, enhancing the overall quality of high school English education.

## **1.2 Research Purpose and Significance**

This study aims to explore effective pathways for conducting critical thinking training in high school English post-reading continuation teaching through theoretical analysis and literature review. Specifically, the purposes of this study include the following aspects:

Clarifying the definition and connotation of critical thinking. As a higher-order thinking skill, the definition and connotation of critical thinking are multifaceted. Different scholars have different understandings and interpretations of critical thinking. This study aims to clarify the definition and connotation of critical thinking by reviewing and summarizing existing research, providing a theoretical foundation for subsequent research. Analyzing the importance of critical thinking in education. The importance of critical thinking in education is self-evident. Critical thinking can help students better understand and master knowledge, improve their learning abilities and autonomous learning capabilities, and cultivate their innovation and problem-solving skills. This study emphasizes the importance of critical thinking training in high school English teaching by analyzing its significance in education, providing theoretical support for subsequent research.

Reviewing relevant research on critical thinking and post-reading continuation both domestically and internationally. Scholars both domestically and internationally have been studying critical thinking and post-reading continuation for a long time. Domestically, Shi Xuetao (2024) pointed out that high school English post-reading continuation not only assesses students' language abilities but also comprehensively tests their thinking abilities. Zhang Shuo (2022) explored methods for cultivating students' thinking qualities in post-reading continuation, proposing ways to stimulate students' thinking potential through question guidance, situational settings, etc. Yuan Danchun (2022) verified the

effectiveness of post-reading continuation teaching based on thinking quality cultivation through empirical research. Internationally, Paul and Elder (2006) suggested that critical thinking is an essential skill students must have in the learning process. Through post-reading continuation, students can engage in deep thinking and creative expression based on understanding the text, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities. Brookfield (2012) proposed that setting open-ended questions to guide students in deep thinking can effectively enhance their critical thinking abilities. This study aims to review and summarize relevant research on critical thinking and post-reading continuation domestically and internationally, understanding existing research achievements and deficiencies, providing references and insights for subsequent research. Proposing specific methods and strategies for cultivating students' critical thinking abilities in post-reading continuation teaching. Critical thinking training is a complex process that requires scientifically designed teaching activities and reasonable guidance for students' thinking. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers can cultivate students' critical thinking abilities through question guidance, situational settings, and diverse teaching activities. This study aims to propose specific methods and strategies for cultivating students' critical thinking abilities in post-reading continuation teaching through theoretical analysis and literature review, providing theoretical support and practical guidance for high school English teachers.

Through this study, it is hoped to provide theoretical support and practical guidance for high school English teachers, promoting the development of students' critical thinking abilities and enhancing the overall quality of high school English teaching. Critical thinking, as an important higher-order thinking skill, has become one of the key goals of modern education. Conducting critical thinking training in post-reading continuation teaching can effectively enhance students' critical thinking abilities and promote their overall development. High school English teachers can cultivate students' critical thinking abilities by scientifically designing teaching activities and reasonably guiding students' thinking, improving their language expression and thinking abilities, and enhancing the overall quality of high school English teaching.

### **1.3 Review of Domestic and International Research Status**

In recent years, with the continuous deepening of educational reforms, the importance of critical thinking in high school English teaching has become increasingly prominent. Specifically, in the teaching segment of post-reading continuation, how to effectively cultivate students' critical thinking abilities has become a focal point for many scholars. Shi Xuetao (2024) pointed out in her research that high school English post-reading continuation not only assesses students' language abilities but also comprehensively tests their thinking abilities. She emphasized that through post-reading continuation, students can engage in deep thinking and creative expression based on understanding the text, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities [1]. Zhang Shuo (2022) further explored methods for cultivating students' thinking qualities in post-reading continuation, proposing ways to stimulate students' thinking potential through question guidance and situational settings [2]. Yuan Danchun (2022) suggested that post-reading continuation teaching based on thinking quality cultivation can not only improve students' language expression abilities but also promote the development of their critical thinking. She verified the effectiveness of this teaching model through empirical research [3]. Hu Xintong (2023) designed a series of post-reading continuation teaching schemes aimed at cultivating thinking qualities, emphasizing the cultivation of students' critical thinking abilities through diverse teaching activities [4]. Sun Lei (2023) explored strategies for integrating critical thinking and post-reading continuation into new textbooks, using the People's Education Press high school English textbooks as an example. He pointed out that by deeply exploring the content of the textbooks, students' critical thinking abilities can be effectively enhanced [5]. Wang Xueqin (2023) discussed methods for cultivating students' critical thinking abilities in post-reading continuation from a teaching practice perspective, proposing ways to stimulate students' thinking potential through diverse teaching activities [6]. Sun Shuxuan (2021) investigated how to cultivate students' critical thinking abilities in high school English post-reading continuation teaching. She suggested

that by setting open-ended questions and guiding students to engage in deep thinking, their critical thinking abilities can be effectively enhanced [7]. You Yan (2022) explored the relationship between critical thinking and post-reading continuation from an interactive influence perspective, proposing that interactive teaching can promote the development of students' critical thinking abilities [8]. Li Yaling (2015) studied the effectiveness of post-reading continuation in cultivating the critical thinking abilities of English majors. She verified the effectiveness of post-reading continuation in enhancing students' critical thinking abilities through empirical research [9]. Liu Zhenzhu (2023) explored the backwash effect of critical reading on post-reading continuation, suggesting that critical reading can enhance students' critical thinking abilities [10]. Li Xiaohan (2023) designed a series of post-reading continuation teaching schemes aimed at cultivating thinking qualities, emphasizing the cultivation of students' critical thinking abilities through diverse teaching activities [11]. Liao Chengluan (2022) discussed methods for cultivating students' critical thinking abilities in post-reading continuation from a teaching practice perspective, proposing ways to stimulate students' thinking potential through diverse teaching activities [12].

Wu Guojun and Su Keyin (2022) explored post-reading continuation teaching practices aimed at enhancing critical thinking abilities, using Zhejiang exam questions as examples. They suggested that by deeply analyzing exam questions, students' critical thinking abilities can be effectively enhanced [13]. He Ling and Li Xiyin (2021) discussed post-reading continuation teaching focused on cultivating thinking qualities in the context of the new college entrance examination, proposing ways to promote the development of students' critical thinking abilities through diverse teaching activities [14]. Yuan Hanbang (2019) explored post-reading continuation teaching practices aimed at enhancing thinking qualities, proposing ways to stimulate students' thinking potential through diverse teaching activities [15].

Internationally, the cultivation of critical thinking has also received widespread attention. Foreign scholars generally believe that critical

thinking is an essential ability that students must possess in the learning process. In English teaching, post-reading continuation, as an important teaching method, is widely used to cultivate students' critical thinking abilities. Foreign scholars generally believe that post-reading continuation not only assesses students' language abilities but also comprehensively tests their thinking abilities. Through post-reading continuation, students can engage in deep thinking and creative expression based on understanding the text, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities.

For example, Paul and Elder (2006) proposed in their research that critical thinking is an essential ability that students must possess in the learning process. They believed that through post-reading continuation, students can engage in deep thinking and creative expression based on understanding the text, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities.

Additionally, foreign scholars have suggested that diverse teaching activities can effectively enhance students' critical thinking abilities. For example, Brookfield (2012) proposed in his research that by setting open-ended questions and guiding students to engage in deep thinking, their critical thinking abilities can be effectively enhanced.

In the current social context, cultivating students' critical thinking abilities is particularly important. Especially under the guidance of the Two Sessions spirit, the continuous deepening of educational reforms requires us to focus on cultivating students' thinking abilities in the teaching process. The Two Sessions spirit emphasizes the need to comprehensively improve the quality of education and cultivate socialist builders and successors with all-round development in moral, intellectual, physical, aesthetic, and labor aspects. In this context, cultivating students' critical thinking abilities is not only an assessment of their language abilities but also a comprehensive test of their thinking abilities. Additionally, current social hotspots and concerns, such as the development of artificial intelligence and the advent of an information society, place higher demands on students' critical thinking abilities. In this context, cultivating students' critical thinking abilities through post-reading continuation is

particularly important.

In summary, domestic and international scholars have made certain achievements in researching the cultivation of critical thinking abilities in high school English post-reading continuation. However, with the continuous deepening of educational reforms and the constant changes in social development, we still need to continuously explore and innovate to further enhance students' critical thinking abilities.

#### **1.4 Research Methods**

This study adopts the methods of literature review and theoretical analysis. By reviewing domestic and international literature related to critical thinking and post-reading continuation, summarizing existing research achievements, and analyzing the specific application of critical thinking in post-reading continuation, this study proposes specific methods and strategies for cultivating students' critical thinking abilities in high school English post-reading continuation teaching.

### **2. The Theoretical Foundation of Critical Thinking**

#### **2.1 Definition and Connotation of Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is a higher-order thinking ability that involves various skills such as analysis, evaluation, and creative thinking. Ennis (1985) defines critical thinking as "reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or do." This definition emphasizes the reflective and decision-making nature of critical thinking. Paul and Elder (2006) argue that critical thinking is a self-guided, self-disciplined way of thinking that enables individuals to effectively analyze, evaluate, and improve their thought processes. Critical thinking includes not only logical reasoning and analytical abilities but also open-minded thinking, creative thinking, and problem-solving skills.

#### **2.2 Importance of Critical Thinking in Education**

The importance of critical thinking in education is self-evident. First, critical thinking helps students better understand and master knowledge. Through critical thinking, students

can conduct in-depth analysis and evaluation of the knowledge they learn, thereby deepening their understanding. Second, critical thinking can improve students' learning abilities and autonomous learning capabilities. Critical thinking requires students to actively think and reflect, which can effectively promote autonomous learning. Finally, critical thinking cultivates students' innovation and problem-solving abilities. In the context of informatization and globalization, innovation and problem-solving skills have become fundamental requirements for talent in modern society.

#### **2.3 Review of Research on Critical Thinking Education Domestically and Internationally**

Scholars both domestically and internationally have been studying critical thinking education for a long time. Domestically, Shi Xuetao (2024) pointed out that through post-reading continuation, students can engage in deep thinking and creative expression based on understanding the text, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities. Zhang Shuo (2022) proposed stimulating students' thinking potential through question guidance and situational settings. Yuan Danchun (2022) verified the effectiveness of post-reading continuation teaching based on thinking quality cultivation through empirical research. Internationally, Paul and Elder (2006) suggested that critical thinking is an essential ability that students must possess in the learning process. Through post-reading continuation, students can engage in deep thinking and creative expression based on understanding the text, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities. Brookfield (2012) proposed that setting open-ended questions to guide students in deep thinking can effectively enhance their critical thinking abilities.

### **3. The Educational Function of Post-Reading Continuation**

#### **3.1 Definition and Characteristics of Post-Reading Continuation**

Post-reading continuation is a comprehensive teaching activity that requires students to continue writing based on the content and plot of a read article. It assesses not only students' language expression abilities but also their comprehension, thinking, and creativity. The

characteristics of post-reading continuation include: first, it requires students to deeply understand and analyze the article, effectively promoting their reading comprehension abilities. Second, it requires students to engage in creative expression, effectively cultivating their creativity. Finally, it requires students to engage in logical reasoning and plot design, effectively cultivating their logical thinking abilities.

### **3.2 Role of Post-Reading Continuation in Language Learning**

Post-reading continuation plays an important role in language learning. First, it can effectively improve students' language expression abilities. Through post-reading continuation, students can engage in creative expression based on understanding the article, thereby improving their language expression abilities. Second, it can effectively improve students' reading comprehension abilities. Post-reading continuation requires students to deeply understand and analyze the article, effectively promoting their reading comprehension abilities. Finally, it can effectively improve students' thinking abilities. Post-reading continuation requires students to engage in logical reasoning and plot design, effectively cultivating their logical thinking and creativity.

### **3.3 Theoretical Foundation of Post-Reading Continuation Teaching**

The theoretical foundation of post-reading continuation teaching includes theories from educational psychology, cognitive science, and linguistics. Educational psychology suggests that learning is an active constructive process, requiring students to actively think and reflect. Cognitive science views thinking as a complex cognitive process involving the acquisition, processing, and application of information. Linguistics considers language as a tool for thinking, and learning and using language can effectively promote the development of thinking. Based on these theories, post-reading continuation teaching can cultivate students' critical thinking abilities through question guidance, situational settings, and diverse teaching activities.

## **4. Pathways for Critical Thinking Training in High School English Post-Reading**

## **Continuation**

### **4.1 Question-Guided Method**

The question-guided method is an effective way to train critical thinking. By setting open-ended questions and guiding students to engage in deep thinking, their critical thinking abilities can be effectively enhanced. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers can set open-ended questions related to the article's content to guide students in deep analysis and evaluation. For example, teachers can ask questions like "What is the theme of the article?", "What is the author's viewpoint?", and "Do you agree with the author's viewpoint? Why?" to guide students in thinking and discussing. In answering these questions, students need to deeply understand and analyze the article, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities.

### **4.2 Situational Setting Method**

The situational setting method involves setting specific situations to guide students in thinking and expressing. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers can set situations related to the article's content to guide students in creative expression. For example, teachers can set situations like "If you were the protagonist in the article, what would you do?" and "If the ending of the article changed, what would be the impact?" to guide students in continuation writing. In these situations, students need to engage in logical reasoning and plot design, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities.

### **4.3 Diverse Teaching Activities**

Diverse teaching activities are a method of stimulating students' thinking potential through various teaching activities. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers can cultivate students' critical thinking abilities through diverse teaching activities. For example, teachers can organize group discussions, role-playing, debates, and other activities to stimulate students' thinking potential. In these activities, students need to engage in deep thinking and expression, thereby enhancing their critical thinking abilities.

### **4.4 Teacher Guidance and Feedback Mechanism**

Teacher guidance and feedback are crucial in

critical thinking training. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers' guidance and feedback significantly impact students' thinking development. Teachers can help students discover and improve their thinking processes through timely guidance and feedback. For example, during the continuation writing process, teachers can provide timely guidance and suggestions to help students adjust and improve their thinking. After students complete the continuation writing, teachers can provide feedback and evaluation through comments, interviews, and other means to help students reflect and improve their thinking processes.

## **5. Evaluation System for Critical Thinking Training**

### **5.1 Evaluation Criteria and Indicator System**

The evaluation criteria and indicator system for critical thinking training are crucial for assessing students' critical thinking abilities. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers can evaluate students' critical thinking abilities by setting scientifically reasonable evaluation criteria and indicator systems. For example, teachers can set evaluation indicators such as "depth and breadth of thinking, " "logical reasoning ability, " and "creative thinking ability" to comprehensively assess students' critical thinking abilities.

### **5.2 Evaluation Methods and Tools**

The evaluation methods and tools for critical thinking training are essential for assessing students' critical thinking abilities. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers can use various evaluation methods and tools to assess students' critical thinking abilities. For example, teachers can use questionnaires, interviews, and observations to understand students' thinking processes and abilities. Teachers can also use tools such as mind maps and thinking journals to record and analyze students' thinking processes, thereby comprehensively evaluating their critical thinking abilities.

### **5.3 Interpretation and Feedback of Evaluation Results**

The interpretation and feedback of evaluation results are critical components of the

evaluation process. In post-reading continuation teaching, teachers can help students discover and improve their thinking processes through the interpretation and feedback of evaluation results. For example, teachers can provide feedback through comments and interviews, helping students reflect on and improve their thinking processes. Teachers can also organize group discussions, role-playing, and other activities to help students improve and enhance their critical thinking abilities in practice.

## **6. Conclusion**

### **6.1 Research Conclusions**

Through theoretical analysis and literature review, this study explores effective pathways for conducting critical thinking training in high school English post-reading continuation teaching. the research indicates that scientifically designed teaching activities and reasonable guidance can effectively enhance students' critical thinking abilities, thereby promoting their overall development. Specifically, methods such as question guidance, situational settings, and diverse teaching activities can effectively cultivate students' critical thinking abilities. Teachers' guidance and feedback play a crucial role in critical thinking training, helping students discover and improve their thinking processes through timely guidance and feedback.

### **6.2 Limitations of the Study**

This study primarily adopts literature review and theoretical analysis methods, lacking empirical research and case analysis support. Future research can further validate and refine the conclusions of this study through empirical research and case analysis. Additionally, this study mainly explores effective pathways for conducting critical thinking training in high school English post-reading continuation teaching. Future research can further explore methods and strategies for conducting critical thinking training in other subjects and teaching segments.

### **6.3 Future Research Directions**

Future research can explore the following aspects: First, further validate and refine the conclusions of this study through empirical research and case analysis. Second, explore

methods and strategies for conducting critical thinking training in other subjects and teaching segments. Finally, investigate the long-term mechanisms and evaluation systems for critical thinking training, providing theoretical support and practical guidance for educational reform and innovation.

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