

Roy the Rat and his *Six Thinking Hats*



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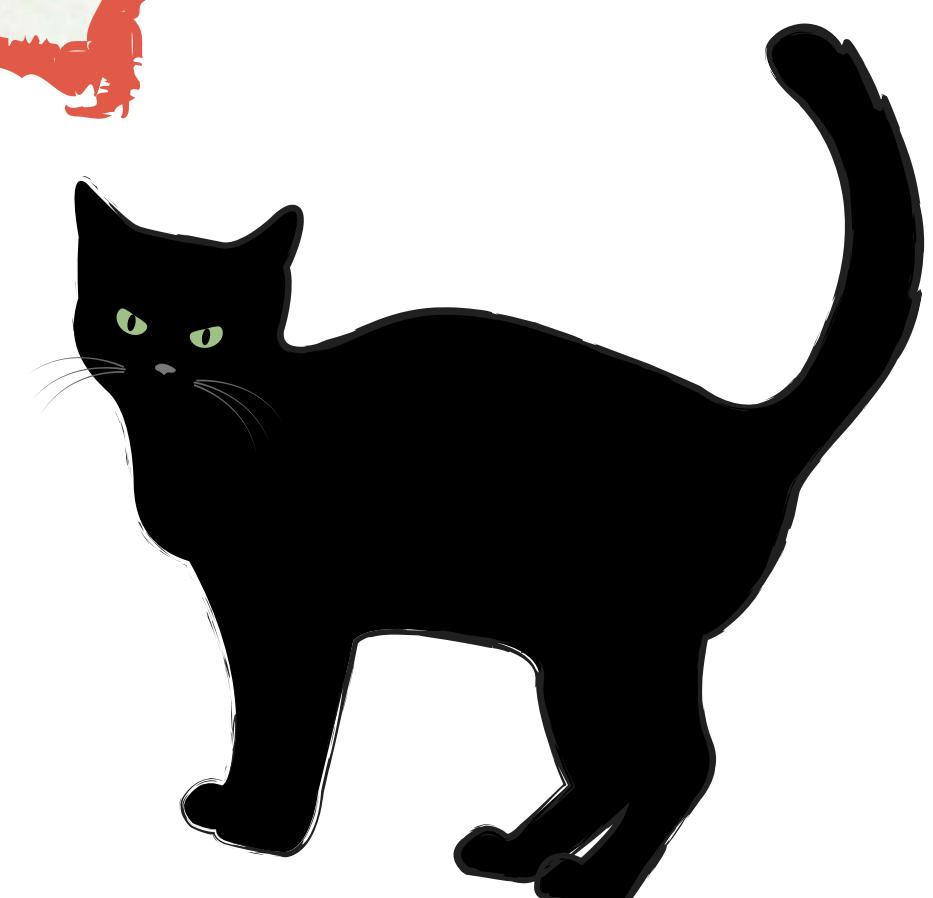
To my beloved students

Roy is a rat.

Not an ordinary rat but a clever one!

He has 6 different thinking hats to help him
solve all his problems.

You see life is dangerous where he lives
because there is Blackie the cat...

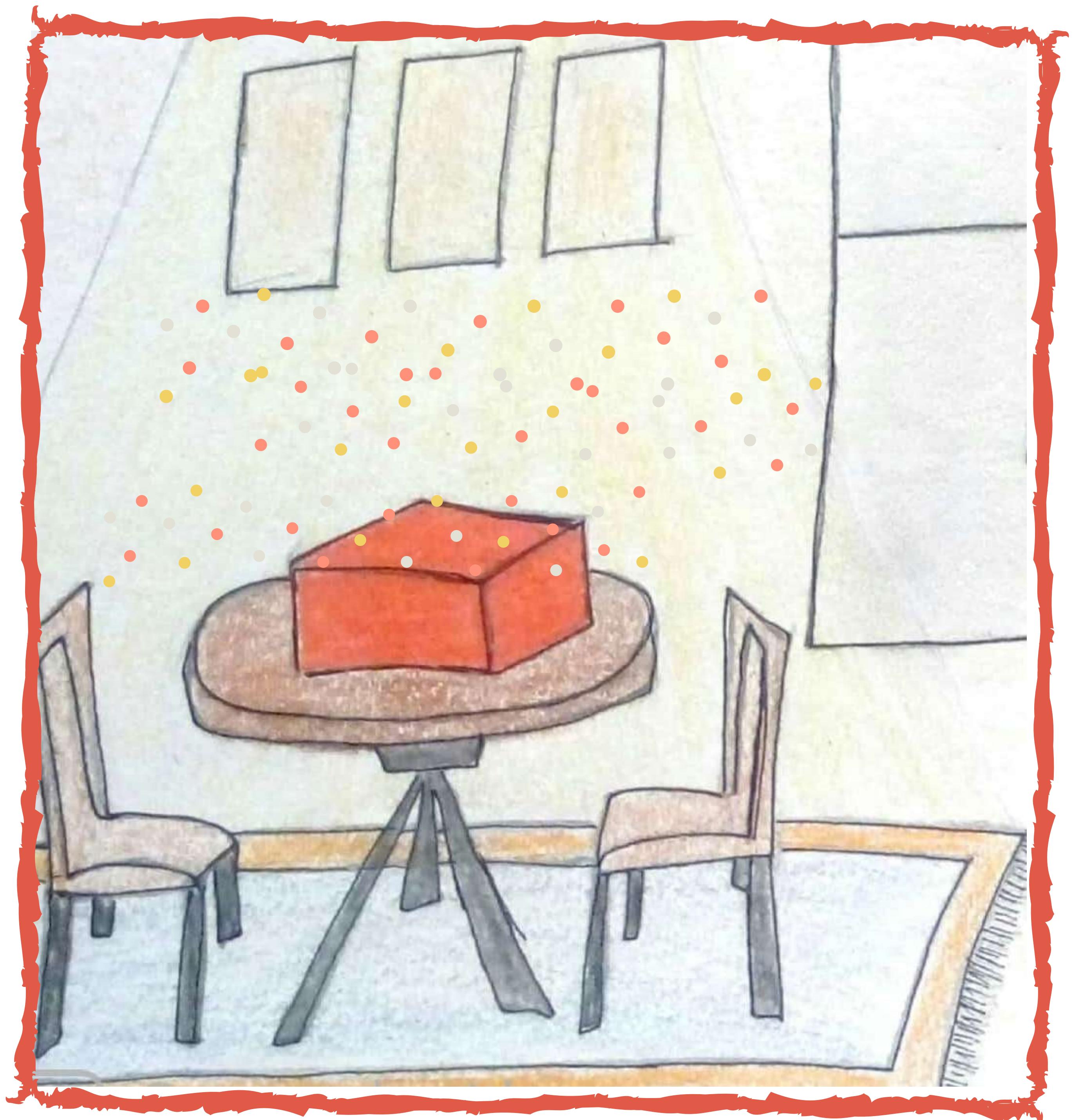


Hi!

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



One day while he was wandering in the
kitchen, he saw a box on the kitchen table.
It was a beautiful big red box.



Roy's eyes sparkled with excitement!
‘I want that box’ he thought and then
he said:

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



Roy put on his WHITE HAT

and started thinking.

‘What do I know about the box? Well
not much... So I need to collect
information about it.



I could ask Tina the canary or Fenia the fly.

Blackie could know something about it
because he is always around here but I'd
better not go near him’.

Unfortunately neither Tina nor
Fenia knew anything about the box.
Tina was busy singing in her cage
and Fenia was busy flying in the
garden when the box appeared in
the kitchen.

Roy wasn't discouraged and said:

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



So he put on his RED HAT.

'I don't care what's in that box but I want it!' he said to himself ' I love its colour and everything that is inside it. I am not afraid. I will climb the table and I will open it.



The box is mine!' he shouted out loud.

At that moment, Blackie the cat appeared just round the corner.

Roy didn't lose his temper and said:

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



Roy put on his BLACK HAT.

‘Well maybe I shouldn’t try to open that box. It’s risky’ he thought. ‘Blackie is coming and I don’t want troubles with him. He might see me climbing the table.



Maybe there is something dangerous inside the box, like a super high-tech mouse trap or a poisonous snake!’

So while Roy was having second thoughts he said:

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



...and he put on his YELLOW HAT.

‘Come on Roy, think positive!’ he said to himself. ‘Such a lovely box can’t hide anything dangerous inside it.



There is most probably a fresh cream cake with strawberries or a great selection of Swiss chocolates or... even better cheddar cheese!

Feeling overly optimistic and full of positive energy he said:

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



....and he put on his BLUE HAT. 'Now let's get organized' he said to himself



and started thinking about the best ways to reach the big red box.

Deep in his thoughts he felt he needed
some help, so he said:

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



At that moment, he put on his favourite GREEN HAT!

Roy was happy and cheerful again because he was able to think ‘out of the box’ and lots of creative ideas flashed into his mind.

He started writing down everything. It was a long list and within a few minutes he had made a plan on how to reach the red box.



He waited for a while until Blackie was out of sight. Then he ran as fast as he could and sneaked under the kitchen carpet. He crawled and crawled until he reached the leg of the table. He opened a hole to the carpet with his sharp teeth and he climbed up the table.

His plan was perfect!

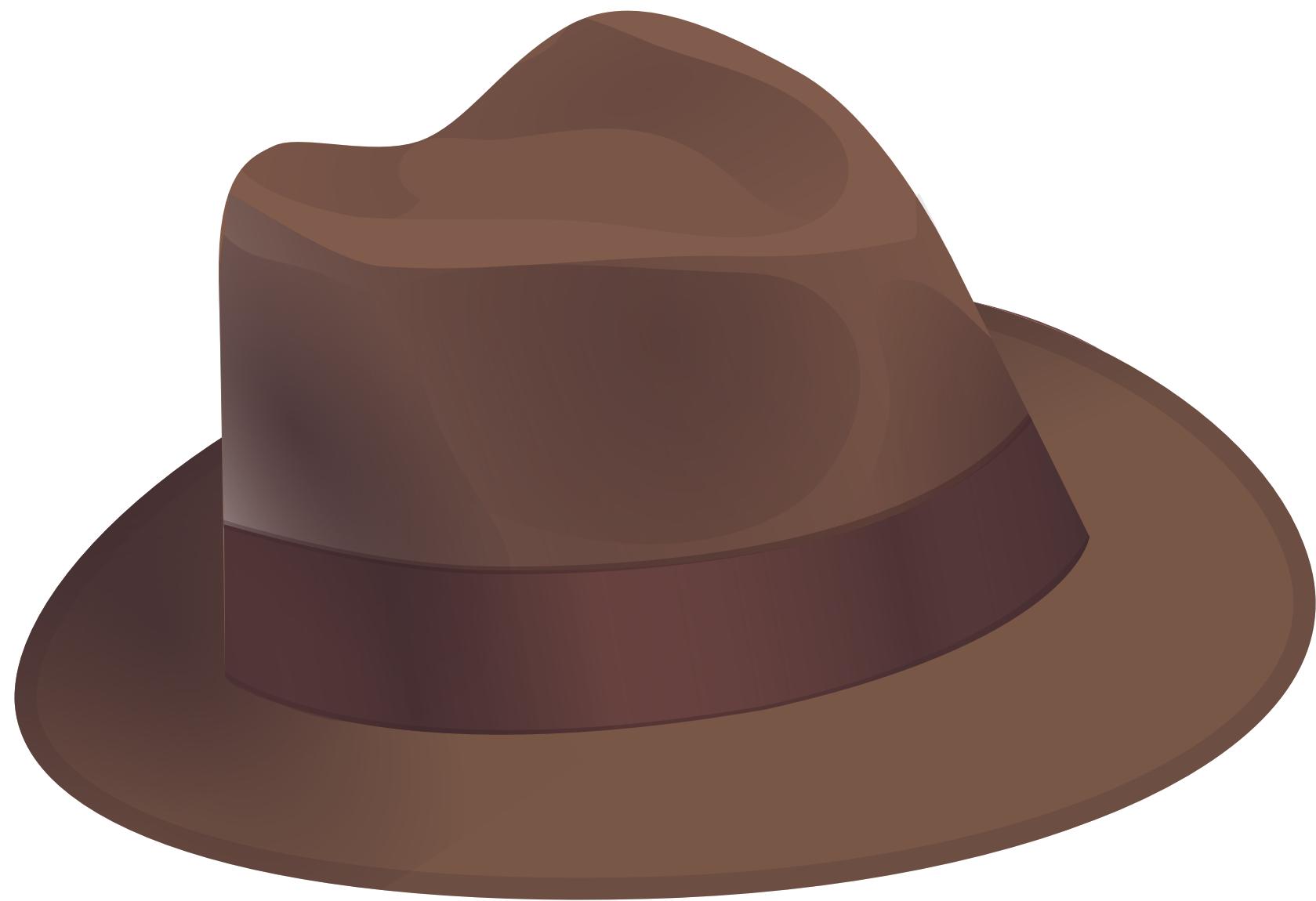
He was over the moon when he opened
the box!

To his amazement the contents of the
box had nothing to do with his
initial thoughts...

Neither fresh cream cake with
strawberries nor chocolates. Neither
a high-tech mouse trap nor
a poisonous snake.



It was simply... a hat!



‘Oh! Roy said disappointed.

I don’t need an extra hat. I already
have six of them, which help me
think’ and with a simple move he
climbed down the table.

On the way back Roy said:

I'm Roy the Rat,
I stand on a mat and
I change my hat
Just like that!



... and he put on his YELLOW HAT again.



‘Well there was nothing interesting for me in that box but at least I had a great time trying to open it! It was such fun!



Oh! This yellow hat is brilliant!
It always helps me look on
the bright side of life!' he said with
a big smile.

The Six Thinking Hats

De Bono's Six Thinking Hats is a powerful decision making technique both suitable for group discussions and individual thinking. A thinking hat is a metaphor for a specific way of thinking, which allows people to look at the effects of a decision from different perspectives.

The Six Thinking Hats technique can be easily used in education so as to help students approach situations from different angles and therefore avoid a one-sided way of thinking. It can also promote their creativity, problem solving and critical thinking while providing them with opportunities to sharpen their communication skills as they will have to share opinions, ideas and feelings.

Since each thinking style is represented with a different colour, learners can easily recognize the thinking skill they are using just by visualizing it. The different colour hats and the thinking style they represent along with some questions and useful language that might facilitate the thinking process are briefly presented on the table below:

Hat	Function of Hat	Questions to answer	Useful language
A cartoon character wearing a yellow baseball cap with a blue brim, looking thoughtful.	Objective Facts & Figures The information known or needed	What information / facts do we know? What information is missing? What information / facts would we like to have? How are we going to get the information?	We know that... Let's see what we have already learned... What information we have so far...
A cartoon character wearing a red baseball cap with a blue brim, looking thoughtful.	Express emotions & feelings. hunches, intuitions. Share fears, likes, dislikes, loves and hates.	How do I feel about this right now? How am I reacting to this?	I feel... For me...
A cartoon character wearing a black baseball cap with a blue brim, looking thoughtful.	Be the devil's advocate Cautious & Careful Focus on difficulties and dangers Identify the Worst-case scenarios	Is this true? Will it work? Why it won't work? What are the weaknesses? What is wrong with it?	I don't think that... I wouldn't do...
A cartoon character wearing a yellow baseball cap with a blue brim, looking thoughtful.	Be optimistic and maintain positive attitude Explore the benefits and best-case scenarios	What are the good points? What are the benefits? Why will this idea work? Why is this worth doing? How will it help us? Why can it be done?	We can... We should...
A cartoon character wearing a green baseball cap with a blue brim, looking thoughtful.	Creativity Generate new ideas / concepts / perceptions on how the case can be handled	What are some possible ways to work this out? What are some other ways to solve the problem?	I believe that... I think that... We could try...
A cartoon character wearing a blue baseball cap with a blue brim, looking thoughtful.	Control, Organisation and management of the thinking process	What do we want to achieve? Where do we want to end up?	We should continue by...

How to use the Six Thinking Hats technique with your students

Divide the class into groups. Each group will be given a hat.

Make sure that all students know what their hat represents.

At that point, learners will work with members of their own group with the same colour hat so as to brainstorm relevant vocabulary and develop their ideas to the maximum.

Regroup students so that multicoloured groups are created.

Reassure that each new group has representatives of all hats. They will have enough time to discuss the question(s) given to them.

Get feedback from each group and reach a decision.

10 Possible ideas for using the Six Thinking Hats

1. The school is organizing an excursion. Discuss about the best place(s).
2. There is a lot of noise during the lessons. How can the situation be improved?
3. New decoration is needed for the classroom. What can be done?
4. Organise activities for celebrating Sports Day at school.
5. Not all homework is assigned on time. What can be done?
6. Not everybody is recycling in our village / city. What can our school do about this?
7. What would happen if you got shipwrecked on a deserted island?
8. Choose a present for your friend's birthday.
9. The school library needs new books. Find possible solutions to the problem.
10. What would happen if there were only children in the world tomorrow?

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