



# Thinking Maps® Launches a Landmark Resource for Building Schoolwide Thinking Cultures

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*Thinking Maps® Foundations: A Visual Language for Critical Thinking*

CARY, NC, UNITED STATES, August 25, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Thinking Maps®, a pioneer in visual language for critical thinking, today announced the publication of *Foundations: A Visual Language for Critical Thinking* — a comprehensive new resource designed to help educators build a lasting, schoolwide culture of critical thinking from the ground up.

The release of *Foundations* marks a significant evolution in Thinking Maps' nearly four decades of work in K–12 education. Where the company's foundational text, *A Language for Learning*, introduced educators to the eight Thinking Maps and their cognitive underpinnings, *Foundations* goes further — equipping teachers, coaches, and instructional leaders with the practical tools, frameworks, and language needed to sustain deep thinking across every grade level, subject area, and school community.

## Addressing the Cognition Gap

Today's educators face what Thinking Maps calls the Cognition Gap — the space between the thinking our standards require and the thinking we explicitly teach. Every standard has two parts: content, which teachers teach directly, and thinking, which is too often assumed rather than taught. *Foundations* was developed in direct response to this challenge, offering a structured Plan of Action to close that gap across an entire school.

"This book is the culmination of decades of work alongside teachers and students, seeing firsthand how Thinking Maps transform the way students think and learn. These two new books are the evolution of all of those years, and they come at a moment when the challenges facing our students make critical thinking more essential than ever."

— Sarah McNeil, Co-Author of the Teacher's Guide and Author of the Coach's Guide, *Foundations: A Visual Language for Critical Thinking*

## What's Inside Foundations

*Foundations* includes two volumes designed to be used together:

- Teacher's Guide — Gives every teacher a clear, structured path from initial Map introduction through student fluency and independent application. Organized around the same steps as the Plan of Action, the Teacher's Guide supports teachers in explicitly teaching each Map, the cognitive process it represents, and the academic language — cognitive vocabulary and signal words — that names that thinking.
- Coach's Guide — Equips whoever is leading implementation in a school — whether a dedicated instructional coach, a teacher leader, a department head, or an administrator — with the tools to support consistent, schoolwide practice. The Coaching Toolkit includes Staff Starters, Pocket PDs, the Analyzing Student Work Protocol, Classroom Practices Guides, Readiness Checklists, and a Coaching Conversation Framework. Coaches also receive virtual check-ins through the Thinking Maps Learning Cloud at each stage of the Plan of Action.

Together, these resources give teachers and coaches everything they need to build a schoolwide culture of critical thinking — but as a shared language that grows with students from kindergarten through graduation.

### A New Model: Training of Coaches

Foundations anchors Thinking Maps' expanded Professional Learning offering, including the newly launched Training of Coaches (TOC) model. Building on the company's long-established Training of Trainers model, TOC focuses on sustained, embedded coaching support — helping teachers move from initial training to consistent daily practice. The goal is sustained, embedded support that helps teachers move from initial learning to consistent daily practice.

### Available in Digital and Print

Foundations is available in print and as an e-book, with companion digital resources accessible through the Thinking Maps Learning Cloud — Thinking Maps' online platform for professional learning, classroom tools, and implementation support.

### Availability

Foundations: A Visual Language for Critical Thinking is available now for district and school adoption. Implementation begins with an initial training day for all educators led by a Thinking Maps consultant — the essential first step in the Plan of Action. For information on scheduling, Professional Learning partnerships, or the Training of Coaches model, visit [thinkingmaps.com](http://thinkingmaps.com).

### About Thinking Maps®

Thinking Maps® is a visual language for critical thinking used in thousands of schools across the United States and internationally. For more than 35 years, Thinking Maps has helped educators make student thinking visible and transferable across every grade level and subject area —

building schoolwide cultures of critical thinking that give every student the tools to reason, analyze, and communicate with depth. Thinking Maps offers Professional Learning, the Training of Coaches model, and digital resources through the Thinking Maps Learning Cloud.

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