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# Training students to think

**G**OOD teachers are those who are able to nurture a generation of high order thinkers.

However, developing thinking skills among students is one of the main challenges faced by today's teachers and educators, said the Prime Minister's wife Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

"Good teaching is not just about achieving specific curriculum objectives but also about developing general thinking skills and learning behaviour," she said in her keynote address at the opening ceremony of the International Conference on Habits of Mind (ICHOM) 2013.

She said teachers needed to be enthusiastic about developing skills in "teaching for thinking" and integrating them into their lessons to create "thinking classrooms", and developing policies to bring about "thinking schools".

"Thinking skills should also be continuously embedded into the education system from the foundation years until tertiary and beyond," she added.

She also said that the Government is determined to

develop a range of important higher-order thinking skills among students through the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 that was recently launched.

"The Blueprint focuses on upgrading the quality of teachers through continuous professional development and the development of a peer-led culture of excellence among teachers.

"Teachers will develop world-class capabilities, including thinking methodologies that are needed to facilitate the desired holistic student outcomes and they should gain more enjoyment and fulfilment from their jobs."

She added that the passive lecture format of teaching used now, would have to give way to more effective methods to prepare children for the 21st century.

Rosmah reiterated the importance of today's youth in being able to distil fact from fiction and good from bad, in a world where social media is widely used to dis-

seminate information.

This, she said, will enable them to make the right decisions for a better future.

"Thinking skills are essential because we need to foster a capable and efficient generation who can see beyond boundaries, limitations and self-interest, and to be able to take on the complexities of tomorrow's challenges," she said.

Rosmah also launched *Thinking That Changes Lives*, a book written by Marilee Adam from the Inquiry Institute, the United States (USA).

ICHOM 2013, was organised by Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) together with The Institute for Habits of Mind, USA and The Art Costa Institute of Thinking, Singapore.

It served as a platform for leading experts in the field of thinking to share their knowledge and for participants to develop good thinking skills.



**Hello!** Rosmah greeting SMK Puchong Utama students who attended the event. Looking on is UPM deputy vice-chancellor (Academic and International) Prof Datin Paduka Dr Aini Ideris.