

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS – TEACHERS

Study Skills

As teachers we understand the importance of getting our students to think critically. That is, the ability to think rationally, reflectively and clearly about a belief or action. It is advantageous to understand the logical connections between concepts and ideas. This can be what separates average students from independent and original thinkers.

Below are types of critical thinking and some ideas to exercise them in class:

- 1. Analyzing**
 - Separating or breaking a whole into parts to discover their nature, functional and relationships.
 - *"I studied it piece by piece"*

- 2. Applying Standards**
 - Judging according to established personal, professional, or social rules or criteria.
 - *"I judged it according to..."*

- 3. Discriminating**
 - Recognizing differences and similarities among things or situations and distinguishing carefully as to category or rank.
 - *"I rank ordered the various..."*
 - *"I grouped things together"*

- 4. Information Seeking**
 - Searching for evidence, facts, or knowledge by identifying relevant sources and gathering objective, subjective, historical, and current data from those sources
 - *"I knew I needed to lookup/study..."*
 - *"I kept searching for data."*

- 5. Logical Reasoning**
 - Drawing inferences or conclusions that are supported in or justified by evidence
 - *"I deduced from the information that..."*
 - *"My rationale for the conclusion was..."*

- 6. Predicting**
 - Envisioning a plan and its consequences
 - *"I envisioned the outcome would be..."*
 - *"I was prepared for..."*

7. Transforming Knowledge

- Changing or converting the condition, nature, form, or function of concepts among contexts
- *"I improved on the basics by..."*
- *"I wondered if that would fit the situation of..."*

Possible pedagogic ideas to use in class:

1. *Mini presentation to class*
2. *Role-play scenario from class/ letter/ debate*
3. *Write newspaper article with topical analysis. Next day's headline?*
4. *Vocab review activity, e.g. hot seat type activities*
5. *Students make a quiz and test each other.*
6. *Ranking exercise (diamond)*
7. *Negative/ positive, cause/ effect separation*
8. *Use of infographic*
9. *Action plan for business/ government etc*
10. *Discussion*