Critical Reading Practice TASKS

Academic Reading – Critical Reading

Reading texts critically is an important skill which can also be applied to your own chosen texts. This document takes you through the process of critical reading on your chosen document. You should share your results with an ASK Tutor.

Task 1: Note-taking

a) What problems do you have when note-taking from books/articles?
b) How might note-taking be different when using written texts compared to when listening to lectures/talks?
c) What tips do you have for effective note-taking?

Note-taking tips I like:

Get into the habit of making notes – they are a record of what you've learnt

Task 2 Critical Reading – Finding the argument and questioning the text

Take the text you would like to work on. Skim the text to get a general idea then re-read using the questions below. Jump forwards and backwards as necessary and fill in the table below.

My text title:…………………………………………………………………………………..

1. What does the title, author's name and date of publication tell me about the text?
2   What is the writer's main argument (what does the writer want me to believe)?
3. What supporting reasons does he/she give? Do the reasons seem credible?
4. Does anything the writer say agree/disagree with something you have already read? How?
5. What does the language, tone and approach of the text tell me about the writer?

6. What biases or values can you notice in the writer's argument?
7. What words and ideas are valued in the text or represented by the author in a positive way? What are the opposites of these words and ideas?
8. Are alternative viewpoints (counterarguments) presented? How are they dealt with?

Critical Reading and Writing in three steps:

Task 4. Look at the information below. Review the text you have just read and analysed and provide an evaluation and a point of view based on these texts. Use the prompts below to help you.

ANALYSIS	EVALUATION	PRESENTING YOUR POINT OF VIEW

  Here you are examining information and breaking it down into parts, *identifying* what it is:	Here you are *making judgements* about the value of information	Here you are giving *your opinion / your argument / your conclusion*
e.g. • identifying conclusions or arguments • identifying causes and effects / comparisons and contrasts • distinguishing between facts and opinions • identifying evidence and examples as support	e.g. • investigating to what extent something is true • investigating how important something is – a main or minor cause / a main or minor argument • assessing the reliability of information • interpreting and justifying	e.g. • presenting your conclusion, providing reasoned evidence to *support* your viewpoint • dealing with others' viewpoints

PROMPTS

ANALYSIS

Once you have identified **the main points** from your reading of the article and note-taking, consider:

- What support is offered for each point; how much of it is fact, and how much opinion?
- What is the overall conclusion of the author of the article?

EVALUATION

- Do you agree or disagree with the author's argument? Is your judgement influenced by your own country / cultural background? Do you have your own examples / evidence?

PRESENTING YOUR POINT OF VIEW

This follows naturally from your evaluation. Make sure you share your ideas with your ASK Tutor.

- Do you agree with the conclusion of the article?
- What would your conclusion be?
- Is your answer influenced by your own country / cultural background? This will give your writing a particular perspective.
- Do you have some additional arguments / evidence not mentioned in the article?