STRATEGIES TO ENGAGE FOR CRITICAL THINKING
WHAT’S THE PROBLEM?

1. (UN) USED BOOKS
2. REMOTE LEARNERS
Interactive Text
Frequent Questions
Immediate Feedback
New Media
Auto Grading
Activity Analytics
What Is Critical Thinking?

Imagine these scenarios: Your brother-in-law forwards you an email about a government conspiracy that sounds unlikely. You’re torn between keeping your well-paying current job or going back to school. You're researching the juvenile justice system for a sociology paper and need to figure out if the website you’re reading is reliable.

Whenever you recognize a situation that calls for careful, intentional thinking and start asking the right questions in order to clarify confusing issues, make a decision, or justify an action, you’re thinking critically.

People use the term “critical thinking” to refer to a variety of types of intelligent thinking, including but not limited to:

- A shorthand way of saying “don’t be stupid”
- Evaluating arguments to find the truth
- Analyzing something you read in order to discuss it intelligently
- Making good life decisions
- Doing your job well
- Engaging in metacognition, or “thinking about your thinking”

For the purposes of this webtext, we’re going to use the term **critical thinking** to refer to a variety of techniques used to structure complex situations and think critically about them.
Welcome To Your Webtext

WELCOME TO YOUR WEBTEXT

soomo
LEARNING

YouTube video. https://youtu.be/TRsXjvJLfgA. Uploaded August 10, 2016, by AboutSoomo. To activate captions, first click the play button and then click the CC button in the embedded player. For a text transcript, follow the link below.

Read Text Version

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION

Where is the Table of Contents button located in your webtext?
Polls

Poll questions allow you to respond to an opinion question and then compare your response to those of your classmates. This is a good way to consider other perspectives, a necessary skill when writing for diverse audiences. If you are one of the first to answer a poll question, be sure to revisit the page later to see all responses. Note that once you have submitted your response to a poll question, it cannot be reset.

![Poll Question]

**Poll Question**

When do you think critical thinking comes in handy the most?

- When deciding how to vote: 4
- When choosing a career path: 5
- When making large financial decisions: 5
- When resolving ethical dilemmas: 14
- When making choices about health care: 2

Total responses: 30

[View question]

Open-Ended Questions

There are two types of open-ended questions in this webtext. Both question types...
democracy, those seeking power will attempt to persuade voters in whatever way is most effective. A well-informed, conscientious electorate is the strongest firewall against tyranny and oppression.

Activities That Demand Critical Thinking

- Deciphering convoluted and misleading arguments
- Detecting and avoiding manipulation
- Comprehending your own thinking
- Understanding the world around you
- Communicating your ideas more clearly
- Sorting out controversial issues with smart people on both sides
- Making decisions with implications for your life, society, etc.

More Than Just Criticism

When we describe someone as “critical” we usually mean that they are overly negative, that they put others down. Detecting problems is one aspect of critical thinking, but if you stop there, your thinking is unproductive.

To receive any benefit from critical thinking, you need to go beyond merely listing problems. You have to find the truth by selecting the best available evidence and building the strongest possible argument. Effective critical thinking is constructive in that it seeks to clarify the issue at hand, reach the most reasonable conclusion, and articulate the best possible reasons for this conclusion.
Read the following article, and then answer the questions below.

Schools, Businesses Focus on Critical Thinking
By Marisa Taylor

September 12, 2010

While the ability to think critically is, well, critical in the workplace, employers have long complained that many of the young college graduates they hire seem to lack this skill. Now, universities are trying to fix the problem before their grads ever meet a recruiter.

When asked which skills new college graduates needed to improve most, more than half of the respondents to the question on The Wall Street Journal’s survey of 479 college recruiters named some combination of critical thinking, problem solving skills, and the ability to think independently.

These results echo what the Business Roundtable, a network of company chief executives, found in a 2009 survey of 600 employers. Despite the recession and high jobless rate, 61% of respondents said it was difficult to find qualified employees. Susan Traiman, the Roundtable’s director of public policy, says the skills companies felt were most lacking were work ethic, communication skills, and
Critical Thinking on the Job: Decisions

YouTube video. https://youtu.be/f5a2FNKfo04. Uploaded August 10, 2011, by Soomo Publishing. To activate captions, first click the play button and then click the CC button in the embedded player. For a text transcript, follow the link below.

Read Text Version

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION

In the first video, what does the mechanic say about how his thought process has changed?
When you hear the word "Eskimo," what springs to mind? How about the phrase "Southern belle"? Or "Goth teen"? No matter how open-minded we consider ourselves, it's hard to completely escape the influence of stereotypes on our perception of other groups. But is there any harm in hanging onto a stereotype that isn't necessarily inaccurate? In the following TED talk from 2009, Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explores how these "single stories" develop in all of us, and presents a compelling argument for the danger of having a single story.

Watch the video below, and then answer the following questions.
Practice: Culture and Stereotypes

One People, One Story?

When you hear the word “Eskimo,” what springs to mind? How about the phrase “Southern belle”? Or “Goth” term? No matter how open-minded we consider ourselves, it’s hard to completely escape the influence of stereotypes on our perception of other groups. But is there any harm in hanging onto a stereotype that isn’t necessarily inaccurate? In the following TED talk from 2009, Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie explores how these “single stories” develop in all of us, and presents a compelling argument for the danger of having a single story.

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YouTube video. https://youtu.be/DE8he141zeg. Uploaded October 7, 2009, by TED. To activate captions, first click the play button and then click the CC button in the embedded player. For a text transcript, follow the link below.

Read Text Version

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTION

When Adichie tells the anecdote about visiting Fide’s family, why was she so startled by the sight of a beautifully patterned basket Fide’s brother had made?

- Until that point, Adichie had only thought of Fide’s family in the context of their poverty and didn’t consider that they might have other facets to their lives.
- The basket was clearly expensive to make, and Adichie realized that.
- She was not expecting to see a beautifully patterned basket at all.
Frequent Questions

Practice: Culture and Stereotypes

One People, One Story?

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Choose the correct answer.
Frequent Questions

Enable credit for using the content.
Increase participation.
Create a need-to-know
Teach reading for comprehension.
Offer immediate feedback.
Address common misconceptions.
Increase focus.
Enable application.
Encourage reflection.
Increase study time.
Develop good habits of mind.
Build confidence, when appropriate.
Provide data on student progress
Provide data on course design.
Frequent Questions

- 300 Questions Total
- 162 Multiple Choice
- 60 Short Answer
- 7 Polls
- 71 Response Boards
TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Critical Thinking / Barriers
  1. Thinking
  2. Barriers

- Good & Bad Arguments
  3. Arguments
  4. Fallacies

- Real Life Applications
  5. Sources
  6. Explanations
  7. Problem Solving
  8. Language
  9. Ethics

- Putting it all together
  10. Case Study
Honestly the best online book I’ve used so far.

I cannot express how much better reading this was than reading a normal old-fashioned textbook. It's truly just infinitely better.

I also like how it tells you if you got the right answer so you don't have to wait for grades to come back to see how you're doing in the course.

I wish all my other online classes had the webtext with them.
ACTIVITY ANALYTICS
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Give an example of a time when you had to use critical thinking skills to make a decision in a job you had or used to have.

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<td>Kip Thorne</td>
<td>I work as a Nurse Aid in a Rehabilitation Hospital. I have to use critical thinking to form an opinion on what I think is the best and most efficient path for each of my patients recovery.</td>
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<td>Barry Barish</td>
<td>Creating a schedule of tasks that needed to be completed around the same time, give or take a day. I had to understand how much time had to be dedicated to completing each task and prioritize based on when needed to be completed in order to be able to advance to the next.</td>
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<td>Rainer Weiss</td>
<td>I work at the hospital so I use critical thinking skills all the time. One example would be if a patient's O2 stats are dropping, I use these skills to set them up in the bed, breathe deeply, and possibly turn up how many liters they are on.</td>
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<td>John Kosterlitz</td>
<td>I have to do this every day at my workplace - I'm a lifeguard at the YWCA in Asheville. When a patron breaks the rules, you cannot enforce it the same no matter what. Conditions, rules and wants are all different, and</td>
<td>Posted</td>
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Solves all of our issues. For students...they participate with the course material, spend time doing homework, enjoy answering the web text questions. It fits the millennial learning styles, and it's cheaper than any other Critical Thinking text we've looked at.

We teachers can show these great videos and links to articles and without worrying about copyright or accessibility. Also, the web text is good for traditional face-to-face, hybrid, and online classes.
Over my 35 years of teaching, I’ve seen educational fads come and go. After using an interactive text for 8–9 years now, I know this style of text is here to stay. I’m so grateful.

I can’t imagine going back to an old-fashioned hard-back text.
STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING STUDENTS

- Interactive Text
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- Frequent Questions
- Auto Grading
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- Activity Analytics
FOCUS ON GEN ED

ENGAGING • INTERACTIVE • ANALYTICS
HUMANITIES: THE SEARCH FOR MEANING AND VALUE

HUM220

- Topics in HUM 220 match our TOC
- Interdisciplinary, multi-cultural, interactive
- Course/text can help with general education assessment