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ECGE4003
P/C

Critical Thinking

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What is critical thinking?

There are many definitions of critical thinking depending on the book or web page you use for research. According to Eales-Reynolds et al (2013) Critical thinking is questioning everything, to help us evaluate and enhance our own understanding.

'Good critical thinking includes recognising good arguments even when we disagree with them, and poor arguments even when these support our own point of view'(Cottrell, 2005, p.47).

Its all about asking the right questions, *figure* 1 I put this together to remind me of the six questions I should be asking myself when researching.

Analyse

To analyse is studying information in detail and taking it apart, in order to discover more about its content and origins and to identify supporting evidence. (Open university, 1999-2020).

- Compare – Can It compare to other information?
- Linking – Where is the relationship?
- Organize – How can I categories?
- Outline – What is relevant?

(48 Questions to Help Students Develop Critical Thinking Skills, 2017)

In my studies I have used critical thinking a lot without realizing analysing information for assignments asking myself if its relevant to the piece I am writing.

Understand

To understand is to make sense of the information, in order to summaries and retell the main points in your own words. (open university, 1999-2020).

- Classifying – Why does it fit?
- Interpreting – What is the main point?
- Inferring – Where is the reasoning?
- Showing – How can I paraphrase this?

(48 Questions to Help Students Develop Critical Thinking Skills, 2017)

In school and further education we are exposed to a high amount of information and we must use our critical thinking skills to break it down and find what is relevant, what is the truth and what it means to us.

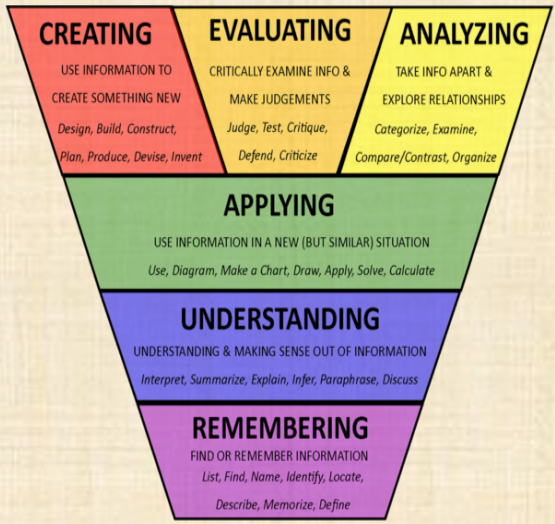
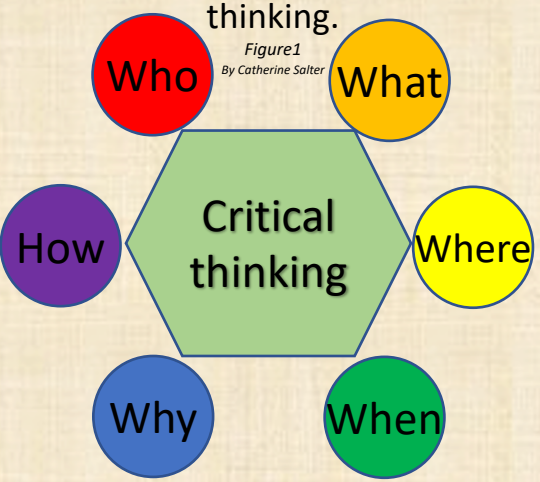


Figure 2, Bloom: Taxonomy 1956
https://bokcenter.harvard.edu/taxonomies-learning

Six questions of critical thinking.

Figure1
By Catherine Salter



Evaluate

To evaluate is use knowledge and understanding, to identify and evaluate sources of information, which is then used critically to support a conclusion (DfEE/QCA,1999).

- Checking – Where has it come from?
- Judge – What is more important?
- Argue – Why is this of value?
- Select – Can you defend?

(48 Questions to Help Students Develop Critical Thinking Skills, 2017)

With in work or my studies I am constantly evaluating my own and others discissions, analysing and understanding "why?", in our studies we will evaluate a lot of information.

Apply

To apply is to accurately implement the information found, to support a clear view of your own ideas, or to use it to enhance and broaden your knowledge.(Lovell. 2018)

- Demonstrate – How can I show this?
- Choosing – Why have I chosen this?
- Developing – Which approach would I use?
- Problem solving --What would happen if?

(48 Questions to Help Students Develop Critical Thinking Skills, 2017)

In my studies the application of information and ideas is the hardest part, turning the knowledge that I have learned and develop the information in to my own work,.

Summary

If we look at Bloom's Taxonomy diagram (1956) in *figure 2* we can see how the four skills featured on this poster fits to Bloom's pyramid, In doing research for this poster I have found the steps of critical thinking are not straight forward and you will dip in and out of each step when needed.

When researching in future I can see Understanding the information is key to working out how it fits and how to use the information. Appling the information I think I am going to find the hardest solving the problem of how to use the information in my own ideas and transforming it to my own words.

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