

## Study skills that contribute to the development of academic studies and writing

### Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the ability to view information from various points of view, Eales-Reynolds, L. et al., (2013, p 2), suggests that 'Critical thinking requires us to question everything... By taking a challenging approach to knowledge ..., you develop your own understanding and enhance your own personal knowledge of the world' this is further enhanced by Harber, J. (2020, p, 2) who says '...researchers and educators agree critical thinkers should possess and practice the ability to look a problem from a different perspective...' Cottrell, S. (2017, p. 3) states that 'Critical thinking usually involves considering other people's reasoning. This requires the skill of grasping the overall argument, but also skills in analysing and evaluating it in detail.', as we develop this skill, we are obtaining the ability to not take everything at face value and provides us with the motivation to not only look at various points of views and arguments but also research the subject at hand independently to enable us to see the information as a whole. as we develop this skill, we are obtaining the ability to not take everything at face value and provides us with the motivation to not only look at various points of views and arguments but also research the subject at hand independently to enable us to see the information as a whole.

### Referencing and Plagiarism

Whilst we are researching for our academic studies, it is important that we are able to reference and paraphrase correctly what we are researching. Day, T. (2018a, Page 158) mentions that 'In essence, plagiarism involves passing off someone else's idea as if they are your own.' as Moore, S. et al., (2010), supports this by saying that 'Plagiarism is a term to describe a practice that involves knowingly taking and using another person's work and claiming it directly or indirectly as your own work' Plagiarism can be difficult for us as students as we may not be familiar with referencing and paraphrasing our work, as according to Kettel R, and DeFauw D, (2018, p 245) 'Avoiding plagiarism is a challenge because students do not know how to paraphrase appropriately...'. Through developing paraphrasing skills, we are able to show that we are understanding what we are researching and also through appropriate referencing we are giving credit and recognition to those whose work we are using during our research and studying,

### Effective Reading and Note Taking

Effective reading and note taking will help engage students with what they are studying and help them to retain important information. Pritchard A, (2008 p. 33) suggests that 'To be effective you have to read with a purpose, with a plan and with concentration. Effective readers are organised; they do not just look at words; they search for their meaning. They assimilate what is being read with what they already know ...'. We can ensure that our reading becomes effective by developing effective note taking skills alongside our reading. Cottrell, S. (2019 p 213) mentions that '...if they don't make their own notes using effective strategies, they waste time, can't find the materials they have covered, and don't understand and remember well the material covered on the course'. Day, T. (2018b, p 81) suggests that 'Effective notes contain keywords, short phrases, abbreviations, and many visual elements, rather than sentences and paragraphs. Notes can be broadly classified into linear or patterned or a combination of the two.'. As students it is vital that we are able to find our preferred format of reading and note taking as this will enable us to get the best out of ourselves and our academic studies.



### Conclusion

Through my research of these academic skills, I feel that they are important to help further develop my understanding of early education and care and will enable me to ensure that I am getting the best out of myself as well as getting the best out of my studies. I feel that I could improve my critical thinking skills over the course of this degree as I feel that this is an area I lack in and need to develop in confidence to attain this skill. I have developed an awareness of referencing and plagiarism from previous studies in childcare and am looking forward to honing in to these skills and developing them more effectively over the course of the degree. Again I am familiar with note taking and am eager to develop these skills more effectively in the future, during my research I have discovered that I lean towards a linear note taking preference whilst using post it notes and highlighters to make it more visual and retainable. As I am an avid reader, I am hoping that by developing my note taking skills I will become a more effective academic reader. I feel that these skills are interlinked with each other and that through effective reading and good note taking we are able to avoid plagiarism, reference correctly and develop proficient skills in critical thinking.

## References

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