

Critical thinking

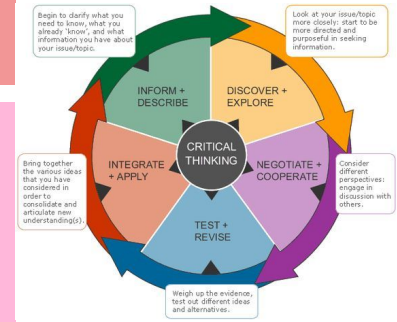
The range of skills and personal qualities that influence the development of critical thinking

What is critical thinking?

“Critical thinking is skilled and active interpretation and evaluation of observations and communications, information and argumentation” (Fisher and Sciven, 1997, p. 21).

Ennis and Norris (1989) suggest that a critical thinker would use reasonable, reflective thinking when deciding what to believe or do. A critical thinker would strive to be accurate, to question information and to be logical and fair in their reading, writing, speaking and listening.

A range of skills and personal qualities that influence the development of critical thinking in education would include clear note taking, good time management, and referencing.



Skills for the study of critical thinking

Note taking. Note taking is an important skill of a successful student? It is a record to help with memory and understanding. McPherson (2018) describes note taking as a tool to encode information effectively and enable this to be well remembered. McPherson (2018) goes on to explain how note taking allows the student to be selective in respect of the importance and relevance the information may be to their research. Once selected and recorded this is then connected with existing knowledge, this information becomes meaningful.

Referencing. Every academic institution requires its students to reference their work clearly and accurately. According to Pears and Shields (2019) when referencing, the student is acknowledging and giving credit to the original author when using information gained in their own work. Neville (2010) states that Accurate referencing avoids the accusation of plagiarism. Showing where information and ideas are sourced from and not claiming ownership gives respect and honours the work of others. Neville goes on to say referencing enables the reader to locate the original material used consequently spreading knowledge as the reader may want to further research what they have read.

Time management. Cottrell (2003) suggests a range of effective time management strategies to enhance the development of critical thinking in education. Breaking down tasks and having an organised routine, prioritising the tasks in accordance to importance and using a diary or planner to ensure deadlines are met and are all ideas discussed by Cottrell. (2003) along with the suggestion of personal rewards after reaching goals. According to Mackenzie and Nickerson (2009) Greater productivity and efficiency and less stress are some of the benefits of effective time management. Taking control when it comes to managing your own time builds the confidence to choose how best to use this time most effectively and efficiently

Conclusion. Good note taking, time management and referencing are some of the study skills that influence the development of critical thinking. Collaborating the three skills mentioned in the poster will benefit students studying higher education by helping them to organise themselves, and set goals whilst making clear purposeful notes when researching and showing that they are widely read, have good understanding of subjects without committing plagiarism. Essentially enabling the production of accurate, widely and thoroughly sourced, informative work.

Reference list

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