

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

Someone who can critically think generally has the ability to take information, analyse it and make a judgement based on that analysis. This evaluation is based on a range of sources such as data, facts and research findings. To successfully critically think one must be able to draw conclusions from a set of information and determine what details are most significant and useful (Doyle, 2022).

Note taking

Being able to take notes effectively is deemed as a vital part of learning. Particularly in students, note taking during lectures is considered as active learning which ultimately enhances the ability to remember information. A study led by Professor Neal Cohen supports this statement. Participants were asked to complete a memory task. Some were active learners and some passive learners. The study found significant differences in brain activity in both participants, essentially supporting that note taking is beneficial for learning and remembering information as it is a way of actively learning (Yates, 2010). Mehta and Pitchers (2018), supports this idea by suggesting that note taking helps you remember concepts, develop meaningful learning skills, and gain a better understanding of the topic.

Critical thinking involves processing and applying information. Developing note taking skills allows you to do this effectively.

Despite being able to remember the information, note taking is good for multiple things like staying attentive during lectures and advancing organisation skills.

However, some may argue that taking notes can kill your memory. New research has suggested that the human brain is wired to recognize when information is being documented, and to "intentionally forget" that information in order to free up room for other things. The research argues that the brain assumes that since the information is written down, there's no need to remember it (Panopto, 2018).



Source: (SafetySkills, N.D)

Time management

Time management is the process of organising and planning how to divide your time between different activities (MindTools, N.D).

Having good time management skills allows students to prioritise tasks so they are able to complete assignments on time. Becoming better at managing time helps students to become more organised and learn more effectively (GradePower, 2018).

In spite of being beneficial for assignments, there are also other benefits for having good time management skills. Taking control of your time reduces stress levels as you are less overwhelmed and tired with attempting to complete multiple tasks in a short time frame. This usually means that tasks will not be completed or up to standard.

Managing your time also gives you a better work-life experience. If you achieve a better work-life balance, you can be more productive at work and have more time to spend on your most important relationships (Pettit, 2020).

There are a range of ways to improve your time management skills. Those include, Determining your priorities and Using Time management sources such as Diaries, Apps and Calendars.

It is consequential to determine your priorities when having effective time management. Within your tasks you should have a clear picture of your top priorities as some are more important than others. One effective method to prioritise your daily tasks is the Eisenhower Matrix, which allows you to categorise and separate your most critical tasks from those that you can delegate or eliminate entirely (Kurtuy, N.D).

Research

The development of critical thinking is highly dependent on having good research skills. Research skills build the foundation of critical thinking.

There are multiple ways to improve your research skills:

- Recognize reliable sources - One should analyse the website and determine if the website is open for all to edit, if the writer is an expert in the field and if the writer has a conflict of interest. The internet is fairly large and anyone with a device can create a website and publish unreliable information that is not factual and based on opinion.
- Be open-minded - One must acknowledge that they may be surprised with what they find. They may also disagree with what they find, however, keeping an open mind allows you to learn as deeply as possible.
- Use more than one resource - One should use other resources such as libraries in order to collect as much information as possible in order to critically think.
- Stay organised - staying organised during the collection of all information and data can prevent you from losing important information.

(Masterclass, 2021).

Conclusion

To conclude, there are a range of skills and qualities that people can develop to influence their critical thinking. Ultimately, one must be able to distinguish between fact and opinion and evaluate a range of data without bias (Fran, 2021). Enhancing skills such as note taking, time management and research all contribute to the development of critical thinking.

Reference list

Doyle, A. (2022) *Critical Thinking Definition, Skills, and Examples*. Available at: <https://www.thoughtco.com/critical-thinking-definition-with-examples-2063745> (Accessed: 21 September 2022).

GradePowerTools. (2018) *10 ways to improve time management for students*. Available at: <https://gradepowerlearning.com/10-time-management-tips-students/> (Accessed: 26 September 2022).

Fran. (2021) 'How to think critically' *Future Learn*. [Blog]. 9 July. Available at: <https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/how-to-think-critically> (Accessed: 27 September (2022)).

Jooheon. (2022) 'How to improve your research skills' *Typed*. [Blog]. 11 January. Available at: <https://typed.do/blog/productivity/how-to-improve-your-research-skills-2022/> (Accessed: 26 September 2022).

Kurtuy, A. (N,D) *How to improve time management*. Available at: <https://novoresume.com/career-blog/improve-time-management-skills> (Accessed: 25 September 2022).

MasterClass. (2021) *How to improve your research skills*. Available at: <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/how-to-improve-your-research-skills> (Accessed: 26 September 2022).

MindTools. (N,D) *What is Time Management?* Available at: https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newHTE_00.htm (Accessed: 22 September 2022).

Mehta, C.F. and Pitchers, R. (2018) 'The significance of effective note taking' *London school of science & technology*. [Blog]. 7 June.
Available at: <https://www.lsst.ac/blogs/the-significance-of-effective-note-taking/> (Accessed: 22 September 2022).

Panopto. (2018) *Put Down That Notebook! New studies Find Taking Notes Is Bad For Your Memory*. Available at:
<https://www.panopto.com/blog/put-down-that-notebook-new-studies-find-taking-notes-is-bad-for-your-memory/#~:text=Bloomberg%20Business%20summarizes%20the%20findings,up%20room%20for%20other%20things.> (Accessed: 22 September 2022).

Pettit, M. (2020) *Importance of time management*. Available at: <https://lucemiconsulting.co.uk/the-importance-of-time-management/> (Accessed: 24 September 2022).

Rupesh. (2020) *How to organize for research*. Available at: <https://researchersjob.com/how-to-organize-for-research-work/> (Accessed: 26 September 2022).

SafetySkills. (N,D) *Time management skills*. Available at: <https://safetyskills.com/time-management-skills/> (Accessed: 22 September 2022).

TeacherTraining. (N,D) *21 tips for teachers to master time management skills*. Available at:
<https://theteachertraining.com/time-management-skills/#~:text=With%20adequate%20time%20management%20skills,education%20and%20learning%20particular%20skills.> (Accessed: 22 September 2022).

Yates, D. (2010) *Study reveals how taking an active role in learning enhances memory*. Available at:
<https://news.illinois.edu/view/6367/205467> (Accessed: 22 September 2022).

