



Developing critical analysis

Here are a few constructive tips on how you can develop descriptive sentences into critical ones.



Question Assumptions

1. Instead of simply stating facts, ask "Why does this matter?", "Is there an alternative perspective?", or "What are the limitations of this idea?"
 - Descriptive: "Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is commonly used to treat anxiety disorders."
 - Critical: "Although CBT is widely used for anxiety disorders, its effectiveness varies across different populations, with some individuals experiencing only short-term benefits (Clark & Beck, 2019)."
-



Incorporate Evidence

1. Support arguments with academic sources, studies, or statistics, and contrast findings.
 - Descriptive: "Exercise is beneficial for mental health."
 - Critical: "Research suggests that while exercise can significantly reduce symptoms of depression, its impact is often dependent on individual motivation and accessibility to resources (Schuch et al., 2018)."



Use Comparative Phrases

1. Words like "however," "despite this," "on the other hand," and "nevertheless" help introduce different viewpoints.
 - Descriptive: "The NHS provides free mental health services in the UK."
 - Critical: "The NHS provides free mental health services in the UK; however, long waiting times and inconsistent regional access raise concerns about its effectiveness (NHS Digital, 2023)."

Analyse Cause and Effect

1. Explore the consequences of a statement rather than just stating it.
 - Descriptive: "Government policies influence mental health funding."
 - Critical: "Government policies play a crucial role in mental health funding, yet inconsistent political priorities have led to fluctuations in service quality and accessibility (House of Commons Report, 2022)."





Engage with Debates

1. Introduce opposing arguments or counterpoints to demonstrate deeper understanding.
 - Descriptive: "Medication is a primary treatment for schizophrenia."
 - Critical: "While medication remains the primary treatment for schizophrenia, some researchers argue that a holistic approach, including therapy and social support, leads to better long-term outcomes (Leucht et al., 2017)."

Developing critical analysis



By applying these strategies, students can move beyond summarizing information and start engaging critically with their subject matter.



Here are some examples.

Schizophrenia Treatment

Descriptive:

Antipsychotic medications, such as risperidone and olanzapine, are commonly prescribed to manage schizophrenia symptoms.



Critical:

While antipsychotic medications like risperidone and olanzapine are commonly prescribed for schizophrenia, concerns persist about their long-term efficacy and severe side effects, including metabolic syndrome and tardive dyskinesia (Leucht et al., 2017).

Schizophrenia Treatment

Descriptive:

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is used alongside medication in the treatment of schizophrenia.

Critical:

Although CBT is increasingly used as an adjunct to medication in schizophrenia treatment, its effectiveness remains limited in individuals with severe psychotic symptoms, raising questions about its universal applicability (Jauhar et al., 2014).

Autism Diagnosis (ICD-11)

Descriptive:

The ICD-11 classifies autism spectrum disorder (ASD) as a neurodevelopmental condition with persistent deficits in communication and behaviour.

Critical:

Despite the ICD-11's attempt to refine the classification of ASD, its broad criteria may lead to overdiagnosis or misdiagnosis, complicating access to tailored interventions (Lord et al., 2020).

Autism Diagnosis (ICD-11)

Descriptive:

The ICD-11 replaced the subcategories of autism with a single umbrella diagnosis of ASD.

Critical:

By eliminating subcategories in favour of a unified ASD diagnosis, the ICD-11 improves diagnostic consistency but risks oversimplifying the diverse support needs of autistic individuals (Happé & Frith, 2020).



Mental Health Support in the UK

Descriptive:

The UK government has increased funding for mental health services in recent years.

Critical:

Although government funding for mental health services has increased, resource allocation remains inadequate compared to demand, with significant regional disparities in service provision (House of Commons Health and Social Care Committee, 2022).

Mental Health Support in the UK

Descriptive:

The Mental Health Act 1983 governs the involuntary hospitalisation of individuals in the UK.

Critical:

The Mental Health Act 1983 has been criticised for disproportionately affecting ethnic minorities and lacking sufficient safeguards to protect patients' rights, necessitating urgent reform (Independent Review of the Mental Health Act, 2018).

Key points to remember

- **Question Assumptions** – Instead of simply stating facts, ask "Why does this matter?", "Is there an alternative perspective?", or "What are the limitations of this idea?"
- **Incorporate Evidence** – Support arguments with academic sources, studies, or statistics, and contrast findings.
- **Use Comparative Phrases** – Words like "however," "despite this," "on the other hand," and "nevertheless" help introduce different viewpoints.
- **Analyse Cause and Effect** – Explore the consequences of a statement rather than just stating it.
- **Engage with Debates** – Introduce opposing arguments or counterpoints to demonstrate deeper understanding.