

WHAT IS CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking has not got an easy definition, Eales-Reynolds, *et al* (2013) states that critical thinking requires us to question everything. It is asking How do we know things? Who are the specialists? Why do we need to consider?, When did it happen? Where are the examples and verifications? Critical thinking is always asking more questions and not taking things at face value or because somebody said so. We must make decisions on the facts, evidence and arguments. At an early age, children will learn how to question. Can I? Any questions a child asks helps them to understand their surroundings and help them develop the skills of critical thinking. Here are four skills that can help with your critical thinking.

Time management

According to Cottrell (2019, p. 127) the 10 steps to good time management are,

- Be systematic in your time management.
 - Find out your time requirements.
 - Clarify how you use your time currently.
 - Decide how you want to spend your time.
 - Prioritise what is most important.
 - Plan what you will do.
 - Do it, keeping to your plan.
 - Apply time management techniques.
 - Manage distractions and procrastination.
 - Monitor keep checking it is all working.
- Your success as a student will be strongly affected by how much time you spend studying and how you use that time. Some good time management starting points are, Use time effectively. Recognise the difference between spare time and independent study time and to put time aside to enjoy yourself. Having a diary or weekly planner can help you to organise your activities and help you meet your deadlines

Objectivity

According to the Oxford English dictionary, to be objective is defined as: Not influenced by personal feelings or opinions (Lexico, 2019).. It is said that being objective can help you understand research, articles or arguments from an unbiased point of view. Being objective is an excellent skill to have, as it means you can learn, write and listen in an academic way, whilst being neutral and unbiased. We should never use our personal views or beliefs when researching and writing. We should always be open to other academic writings and arguments. Being open to other perspectives, ideas and being open to questioning your own beliefs are good critical thinking skills. Unintentional bias where a person or group has not researched the relevant topic enough, so they do not have all the information and facts to their argument. An example of this is when people thought that the earth was flat, with more reliable information and research from the sea and air it was discovered that in fact the earth was round.

Note Taking

Note taking is the ability to take down information from reading books, articles or web pages or listening to a lecturer, the radio or watching a video. Always make sure you can understand your notes whether you use drawings, symbols or your own shorthand. It is important to date your notes so you can look back easily to the ones you require from a certain lecture.

According to Day (2019, p. 81) Note taking and annotating can help you...

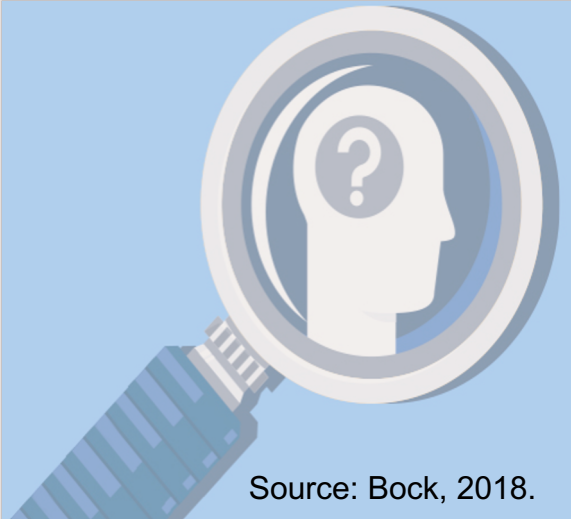
- Focus attention as you read.
- Create a record of what you have read.
- Link new information and ideas with what you already know.
- Organize and develop ideas.
- Research and plan assignments.
- Revise for exams.

Analysis

Cottrell (2019, p. 44) states that Analysis is to investigate details in depth.

Choose the information that is appropriate to read for your subject and absorb the information, making sure that you understand it and that you have taken notes correctly.

It is important to get as much information as possible from your research.



Source: Bock, 2018.

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