

THE SKILLS AND QUALITIES THAT INFLUENCE THE DEVELOPMENT OF CRITICAL THINKING IN EDUCATION

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(Calvin Reid, 2021)

INTRODUCTION

Let us begin by considering what is Critical thinking, it is actively engaging in techniques and strategies whilst analysing and evaluating the knowledge that has been acquired during obtaining information, ideas or theories of others. Academically this is explored by visiting a range of sources including lectures, textbooks and engaging in debates.

Firstly, critical thinking is a skill that may not come natural to everyone, people have different beliefs and has experienced life differently. Christopher Hitchens states the nature of the mind has the ability to explore many depths of thought and therefore to think critically many different cognitive processes such as the ability to think, problem solve and to make judgement are required (Dwyer, 2017).

Secondly, Individuals who put aside their own opinions, who are willing to understand other point of views inevitably initiates the process of eliminating, rationalising and finding probable cause which provides the student to make a formal judgement. According to Maslow, it is important to remember without basic needs being met such as the ability to be kept warm, fed, safe and to experience meaningful relationships the ability to think critically becomes difficult (Cadiat, Probert and Pichere, 2015).

Finally, critical thinking is a skill that is needed more than ever, large volumes of information are either non-factual or based on fake news, decision making is becoming based on emotions rather than reason. Techniques and strategies that are applied from a young age, allow individuals to become better at decision making and problem solving which will only help build a more equal and better society (Haber, 2020).

TIME MANAGEMENT

It is a well-known fact that time management is an important skill that involves achieving an adequate balance of work and home life. When studying is added to the equation a plan is beneficial to keep everything on track. Firstly, to effectively manage time techniques such as using a diary, files or a to do list can help to organise and prioritise workload. Study strategies may include a weekly or monthly planner which can help when organising time to complete objectives such as essays and presentation's (Forsyth, 2013).

Secondly, being realistic from the start and understanding the demands of the course is beneficial to the student. Studying can be stressful and mentally demanding, individuals soon realise and discover how important time is. Students that take a holistic approach to their studies by using strategies and techniques can make studying a more enjoyable experience (Cottrell, 2019).

Additionally, being mindful to remember life does not always go to plan and having a flexible approach towards planning and study is equally considered. Furthermore, the student considers when to take time away from studying to protect their well-being and health. The balance of work, home and study is essential otherwise the individual becomes fatigued and unlikely will produce higher quality work. According to (Savitsky, 2019) to fight procrastination and to maintain endurance is key, whilst identifying any distractions from the start.

Finally, to be effective in managing time the essence of having good planning from the start, being honest and understanding what is expected can help students achieve good quality work and stop burnt-out. (Bedford and Wilson, 2009)

REFLECTION

Let us begin by considering what the term reflection is and what it consists of. Individuals reflect every day, the need to self-reflect is essential to grow and evolve. Firstly, the process of reflection consists of assessing how the events of the day went, in addition to this it is also the process to look back and evaluate. Bodner suggests that students need to question everything, by openly asking how and why in order to learn and to do things different next time (Cottrell, 2017).

Secondly, students who self-reflect can acknowledge what they excel in and what they struggle with. This makes room for the individual to grow in the areas that need more development. Strategies such as using a diary or using a brainstorming technique can help remind the student of the information they have learnt or help with evaluation (Burroughs, 2019). Furthermore, when setbacks and challenges occur reaching out to the lecturer can prevent further problems occurring.

(Fenwick, 2017) believes adapting a reflective mindset and following three steps known as bonding, forming and serving helps the individual to become resilient which inevitably provides a more meaningful experience and outcome.

Finally, (Bassot, 2020) points out to self-reflect provides the opportunity to look within and find out what motivates the individual. Studying is a big commitment, to explore the reason of motivation from early onset will help keep focus to complete the course.

READING AND NOTE TAKING

It is often said reading and note taking combined is the most time-consuming undertaking a student will do during their time at university. Firstly, many essays are assigned to the individual throughout the course. Most of the time is devoted to reading and following a process of obtaining relevant text, note taking, paraphrasing then summarising. To the individual who is new to learning the process can seem a big commitment with this in mind to combine the two skills together will take practice and perseverance (Cottrell, 2019).

Secondly, acknowledging strategies and implementing different reading methods such as, scanning, skimming, detailed and critical reading can become a shortcut when researching. Furthermore, to save time the abstract within the book can offer the student a wealth of information which they can determine if the book is useful.

Notably, reading academic text is complex and adapting note taking alongside will offer a way to save what has been learnt. (Wagner, 2017) claims that the method mind mapping is good for learning, storing and retrieving information especially for those students who find it hard to obtain knowledge. At times the brain can get overloaded students who are visual and kinaesthetic learners can benefit from applying this methodology. Additionally, other methods consist of photocopying articles with the use of highlighters and the outlining method which includes headings and bullet points. Consequently, during any storing of relevant information, it is advised the student notes the sources down ready for referencing to avoid plagiarism (McMillan and Weyers, 2012).

As a final point the student can avoid unnecessary stress by making sure the retrieved information is reliable from academic and scholarly sources which has been peer reviewed by academic professionals. Non-academic sources such as newspapers, Wikipedia, tv channels and blogs are not considered reliable to be used for essays. Students that take the time to engage in reading and writing notes have a richer understanding of the topic with a broader range of vocabulary and this effort is identified with the work the student produces (Godfrey, 2018).

CONCLUSION

To conclude, the skills and qualities which influence critical thinking are a combination of many capabilities. It's a process that takes time to learn and the longer the person engages within this practice allows their thought process to change from 'what they think' to 'how they think'. Critical thinking allows a strong base for creative and strategic thinking it also allows scope for better decision and judgement making.



(Small businessfy, 2021)

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