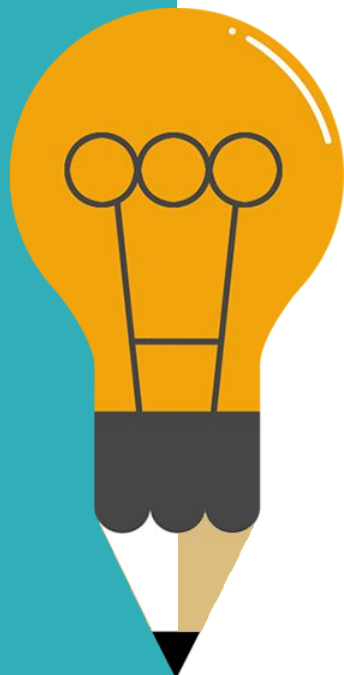


CRITICAL THINKING

A short guide for young minds

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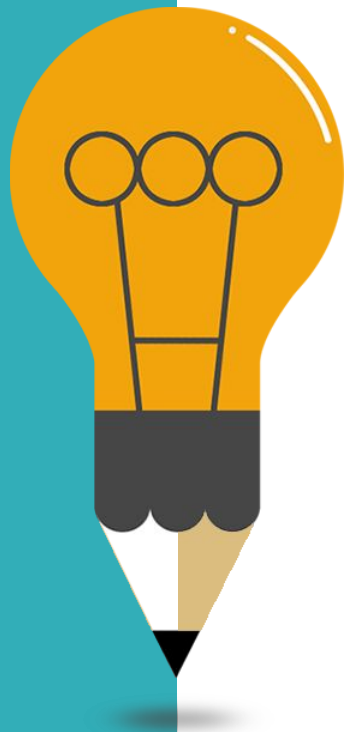
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Introduction

Critical thinking is a vital skill that enables individuals to **analyze, evaluate, and make decisions based on evidence and logic.**

It involves questioning assumptions, evaluating arguments, and considering multiple perspectives.

In today's complex world, critical thinking is essential for success in both personal and professional life.

It enables individuals to make informed decisions, solve problems, and identify opportunities.

Anyone with any understanding of the value of critical thinking cannot deny its superlative utility and importance. It is the most fundamental ability that allows individuals and groups to solve all manner of problems in their lives. They could be academic, work-related or even personal issues. Critical Thinking helps people to get through life in a way that is smarter and more constructive.

Why?



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The value of Critical Thinking



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In academics

At any level of education, fostering a strong ability in critical thinking is a clear precursor to greater academic success for students. Critical thinking forms the foundation of just about every important academic skill you would care to name.



In everyday life

Many issues in the world are exacerbated by some people's inability to be rational or think things through properly. People act rashly, impulsively and base too many decisions purely on emotion. We'll never remove that quality from ourselves completely but strengthening clarity and rationality from a young age is important.



In our career

Today, intellectual skills, creativity, analytical ability and other related skills are prized above anything else. The ability to absorb, understand and apply information at a fast pace is crucial, and that's something you gain from critical thinking.

Critical thinking is like one of those fundamental cooking ingredients that help to define a regional or national cuisine. It's the "staple" of our intellectual world. For example, when we hope to nurture a generation of creative minds who can innovate and develop the new technologies that will potentially save our planet and our species, we'll have to start with critical thinking.

Benefits

Developing critical thinking skills has numerous benefits for young people. For one, it helps them become better learners by enabling them to **understand and retain information** more effectively. It also helps them become **better communicators** by teaching them how to articulate their thoughts clearly and logically.

Furthermore, critical thinking skills are highly valued in the workplace, as they enable individuals to **solve complex problems, make informed decisions, and work collaboratively with others**. By developing these skills early on, young people can set themselves up for success in their future careers.



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Critical Thinking

How Critical Thinking can be developed?

Critical thinking skills can be developed through practice and exposure to diverse perspectives and ideas. **Reading, writing, and engaging in debates and discussions** can help individuals refine their critical thinking abilities. Additionally, seeking out feedback and constructive criticism can help individuals identify areas for improvement and strengthen their critical thinking skills.

identifying assumptions

evaluating arguments

recognizing biases

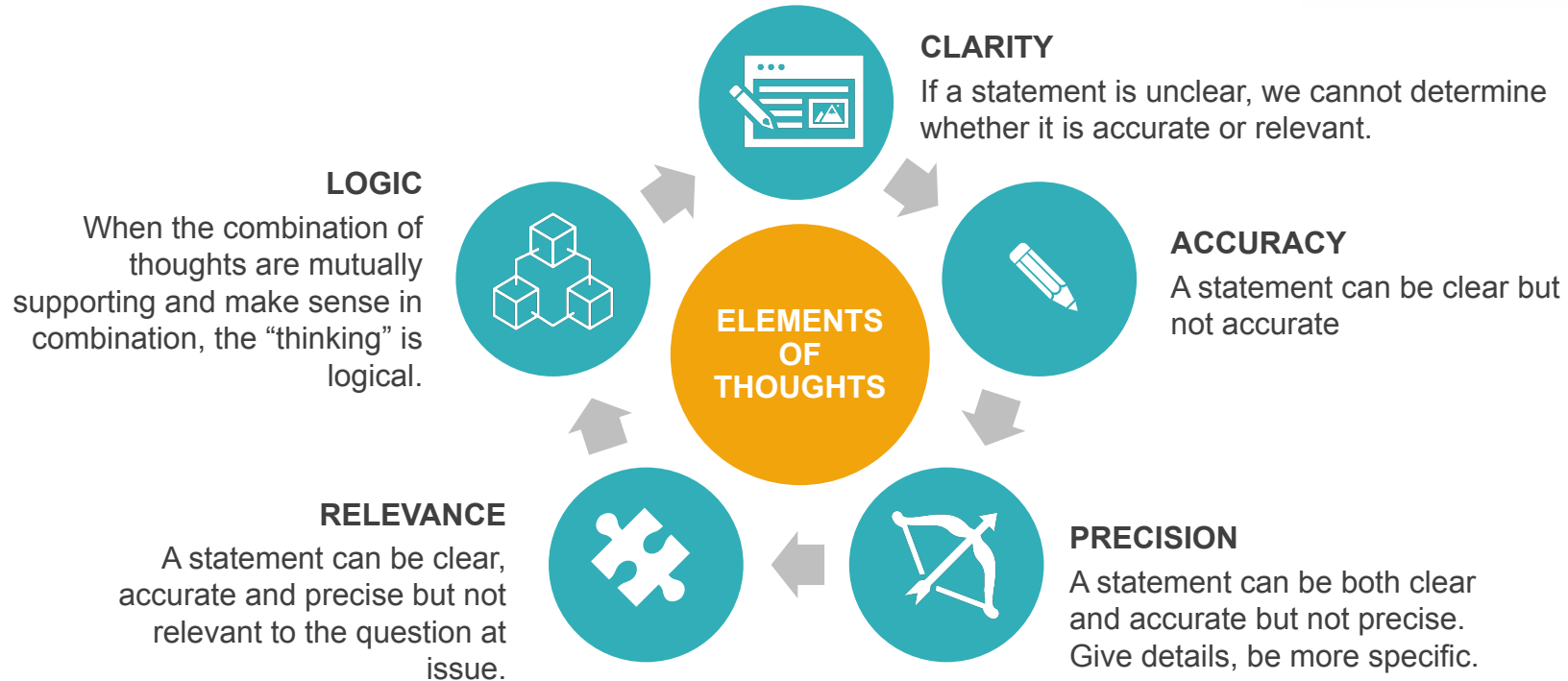
considering multiple perspectives



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Universal intellectual standards



How to develop your Critical Thinking ability



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01

Online games

02

Books

03

Internships at fact-checking
initiatives

04

Generating your own content

05

Conferences and webinars

1. Online games

There are lots of games helping you in training your Critical Thinking capacity. Of the most popular, we can recommend the following:

- (In)corruptibility – how to fight corruption and how critical thinking skills are needed for that;
- Mission Media Literacy – helps adults check whether they are able to resist fake news and prejudices;
- The Adventures of Literatus – demonstrates how to search for information and distinguish fake news from real news;
- NABU Investigating – how to fight corruption and uncover real facts.

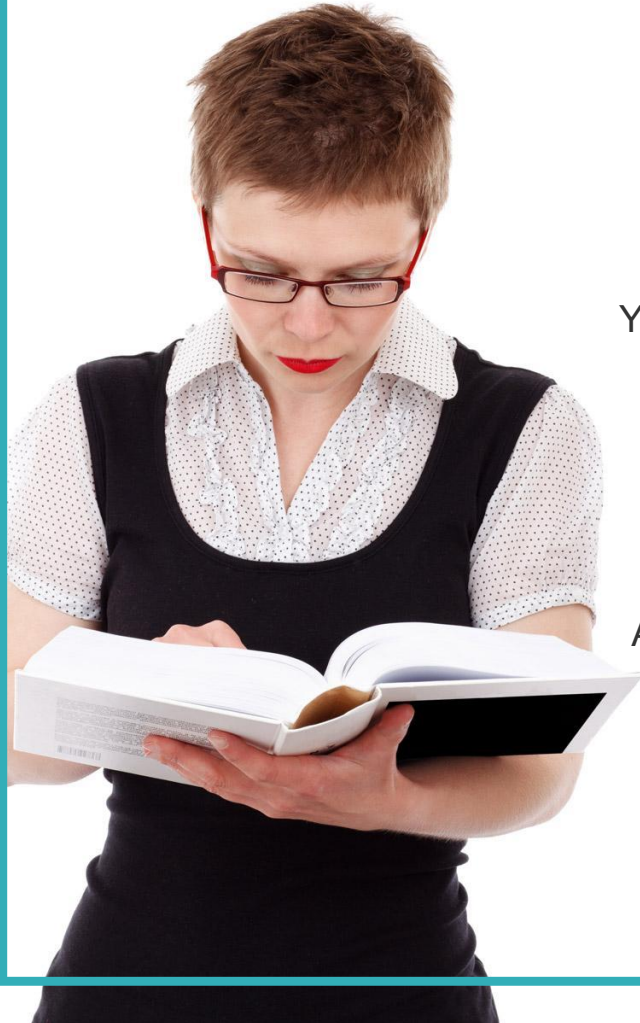


2. Books

There are a lot of books about critical thinking, and you can decide whether to read them all.

You can read Hans Rosling's *Factfulness*, which teaches you to read between the lines and discuss misconceptions about the world. Another good option is Daniel Kahneman's *Thinking Fast and Slow*, where you will learn how our irrationality affects our actions.

A good idea is to read the reviews before the book itself. Pay attention not to how many stars a book is given, but to the impression that it left on readers.



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3. Internships at fact-checking initiatives

Internships can make you look at the world in a new way. Initiatives, organisations and projects that are often looking for volunteers include VoxCheck, StopFake, On the Other Side of the News, Without Lies, Internews-Ukraine and Media Detector. And if there is no vacancy available, just email them – they will hear you. After all, there is much more fake news than people ready to unravel it.



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4. Generating your own content



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Another option is to create your own fact-checking platform or media literacy blog. In this way, you will realize several goals simultaneously:

01

join the process of change

02

independently investigate fake news and distinguish it much better

03

gain an opportunity for self-expression and new social contacts

Self-study really helps – you learn to read the texts that lie beyond the first page of the search engine, and you forget about prejudices and stereotypes. Of course, a big blog will need the help of at least one other person – for example, if you don't know how to design a webpage or if you have difficulty editing text. But, like this, you will also be able to find new friends, because there are more future change-makers nearby than you think.



5. Conferences and webinars

This is necessary if you are used to learning from someone and not on your own. Fortunately, there are so many webinars now that there are plenty to choose from, and most of them are available for free. In addition, at the end of some online courses, they open a set of internships at the organisations that created them, so you are able to master some practical skills later on. Not sure which webinars to start with? I helped to start YNGO PLUS, a youth organisation that runs informal educational projects for young people. Sometimes we hold webinars on media literacy and critical thinking, so feel free to join us on social media and stay tuned.



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Barriers to the Critical Thinking



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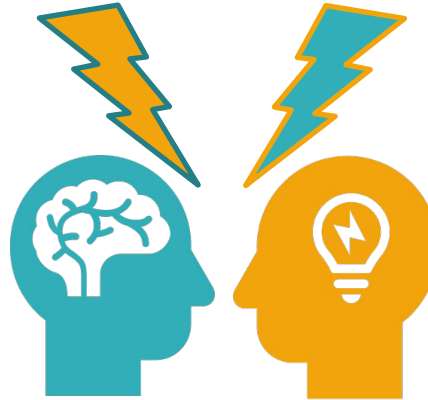


Egocentric Thinking

Egoism, or viewing everything in relation to yourself, is a natural human tendency and a common barrier to critical thinking. It often leads to an inability to question one's own beliefs, sympathize with others, or consider different perspectives.

Drone Mentality and Cognitive Fatigue

Monotony and boredom are bad for mental health. Cognitive fatigue caused by long-term mental activity without appropriate stimulation, like an unchanging daily routine full of repetitive tasks, negatively impairs cognitive functioning and critical thinking.



Groupthink and Social Conditioning

Groupthink is a serious threat to diversity in that it supports social conditioning, or the idea that we should all adhere to a particular society or culture's most "acceptable" behavior.

Allostatic Overload

When under pressure, your brain is forced to channel energy into the section responsible for processing necessary information at the expense of taking a rest.

Personal Biases and Preferences

Everyone internalizes certain beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that manifest as personal biases. The critical thinking process requires being aware of personal biases that affect your ability to rationally analyze a situation and make sound decisions.

Remember

Critical Thinking is a skill so fortunately
for us we can enhance it through
practice



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Conclusions

Characteristics of a Critical Thinker



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A Critical Thinker:

1. Base judgments on evidence rather than personal preferences
2. Is interested in other people ideas and so is willing to read and listen attentively
3. Practices fair mindedness and seek a balance view
4. Practices restraint, controlling their feelings rather than being controlled by them



Conslusions

“ Critical Thinking is an essential skill for young people to develop in order to thrive in today's complex and rapidly changing world. By mastering the elements of critical thinking, overcoming obstacles, and seeking out diverse perspectives, young people can become more informed, independent, and effective problem solvers. ”



List of useful materials

<https://globisinsights.com/career-skills/critical-thinking/barriers-to-critical-thinking/>

<https://ideas.ted.com/critical-thinking-is-a-21st-century-essential-heres-how-to-help-kids-learn-it/>

<https://criticalthinkeracademy.com/>

<https://www.criticalthinking.org/>

<https://www.ibe.unesco.org/en/glossary-curriculum-terminology/c/critical-thinking>

<https://www.bbc.com/storyworks/future/tech4all/thinking-digitally-thinking-critically>

References



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Thank you