



HOW TO TEACH CRITICAL THINKING

Methods and techniques

Why?

Harvey Siegel (1988: 55–61) has offered four considerations in support of adopting critical thinking as an educational ideal:

1. Respect for persons requires that schools and teachers honour students' demands for reasons and explanations, deal with students honestly, and recognize the need to confront students' independent judgment; these requirements concern the manner in which teachers treat students.
2. Education has the task of preparing children to be successful adults, a task that requires development of their self-sufficiency.
3. Education should initiate children into the rational traditions in such fields as history, science and mathematics.
4. Education should prepare children to become democratic citizens, which requires reasoned procedures and critical talents and attitudes.

Components of the process

- Mental acts and mental events that can occur in a critical thinking process:
 - Observing
 - Feeling
 - Imagining
 - Wondering
 - Inferring
 - Knowledge
 - Experimenting
 - Consulting
 - Identifying and analyzing arguments
 - Judging
 - Deciding

3-2-1

- students write about 3 things they learned in the lecture
- 2 things they found particularly interesting from the lecture
- and 1 question they still have about the lecture content

Jigsaw

- in a Jigsaw, students work in small groups
- to develop knowledge about a given topic before teaching
- what they have learned to another group

Active Reading Documents

Active Reading Documents (ARD) are carefully prepared forms that guide students through the process of critical and careful reading.

Active Reading Documents (ARDs) are carefully prepared forms that guide students through the process of critical and careful reading. In particular, ARDs walk students through knowledge retrieval and comprehension since students must access and make sense of the new information to complete the document. ARDs can scaffold reading assignments so that students read at more sophisticated levels of comprehension and critical analysis. They not only help students prepare for a given session, but they also help students develop careful reading skills that can be used in other contexts. ARDs also provide teachers with an artifact that can be evaluated and count toward the course grade, which can motivate students to do the preparatory work out-of-class and at an appropriate level.

Fact or Opinion

Fact or Opinion encourages students to critically evaluate information by questioning what they read.

This technique provides students with opportunities to critically question what they read or hear. Fact or Opinion helps students to become critical readers and to construct arguments when informed proponents or opposing points of view are not available. It also aids students in seeing how scholarly articles and other assigned readings are voices in a conversation rather than something that is set in stone and believed without question. It provides students with the opportunity to see their responsibility to actively participate as they read. This also allows

students to evaluate an author's thesis, reasons, and evidence, which helps them become better learners over time.

Update Your Classmate

- Update Your Classmate is a short writing activity where students explain what they learned in a previous class session to set the stage for new learning.
- This technique can help students achieve several important learning goals. It helps students recall foundational knowledge by activating their schemata on the topic as well as by rehearsing information. It also has students think critically about why the information will be important and asks them to make predictions and create connections between concepts in their schemata.
- Update your Classmate is a recall task with an authentic feel to the information, which students may find more interesting, and thus they tend to care more about it. If you explain the purpose of the activity, it can also help students with learning beyond your course.
- This technique can be a useful way to assess student learning from a previous course session as well as their ability to gauge what was most important and what will be most useful to them going forward. The template/handout you create serves as a learning artifact you can quickly scan to get a glimpse into student understanding.

Support a Statement

In Support a Statement, the instructor provides students with a provocative statement and prompts them to locate details, examples, or data in their lecture notes or a reading assignment to support the statement.

Support a Statement is a good tool for assessing student learning. Student responses provide you with a quick glimpse into whether they are understanding foundational content. It also provides you with information about how well they can analyze information and think critically.

Sources

- <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/critical-thinking/#Aca>
- Siegel, Harvey, 1988, *Educating Reason: Rationality, Critical Thinking, and Education*, New York: Routledge.
- Cross Academy: <https://kpcrossacademy.com>