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Critical Thinking and the ACRL Framework: Fake News and Fallacies

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Critical Thinking and the ACRL Framework: Combating Fake News and Fallacies

Mandi Goodsett | Performing Arts & Humanities Librarian | Cleveland State University
Think of a person who you consider to be a critical thinker. What are/were some of the characteristics or behaviors of that person?
From the Experts: Skills and Dispositions

Skills

- Interpretation
- Analysis
- Evaluation
- Inference
- Explanation
- Self-Regulation

Dispositions

- Inquisitive
- Concerned about becoming well-informed
- Open-minded
- Honest in facing own biases
From the Experts: Skills and Dispositions

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Defining Critical Thinking
Critical Thinking Is ...

“The art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it.”

-Richard Paul & Linda Elder
Critical Thinking Is ...

“Judging in a reflective way what to do or what to believe.”

-Peter Facione
Critical Thinking Is ...

“Reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do.”

-Robert Ennis
“Critical Thinking Is …

“Reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do.”

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Logical, evidence-based judgment
Critical Thinking Is ...

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Logical, evidence-based judgment

Self-reflection and metacognitive skills
Critical Thinking Is ...

“Reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do.”

- Robert Ennis

Logical, evidence-based judgment
Self-reflection and metacognitive skills
Problem-solving, decision-making
Critical thinking is …

Critical pedagogy is “the use of higher education to overcome and unlearn the social conditions that restrict and limit human freedom” (Davies & Barnett, 2015, p. 18).
Critical thinking is ...

Critical thinking → criticism vs. critique
Major Issues from the Scholarship of Critical Thinking
General vs. Subject-Specific Critical Thinking

“All thinking is about X. But, critical thinking is a kind of thinking. Therefore, critical thinking is about X.”

-John McPeck
Transferability
Skills and Dispositions
Critical Thinking and Information Literacy
ACRL Framework vs. Critical Thinking
Critical Thinking and the Framework Activity, Part 1

- Choose one of the Frames.
- What critical thinking skills or dispositions might correspond with the knowledge practices and dispositions of that Frame?
Teaching Critical Thinking: Application to Information Literacy Instruction
Inquiry-Based Learning
Problem-Based Learning / Ill-Structured Problems

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Problem-Based Learning / Ill-Structured Problems

- What are ill-structured problems in the realm of information? (E.g., digital divide, information has value, access to information)
- What evidence is necessary to address the problem? Where would you look for that kind of evidence?
- What are the threads of discourse in this scholarly conversation?
Debate / Argumentation

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Debate / Argumentation

- Have students practice searching skills by gathering evidence about one side or another of an issue.
  - Can they justify their choice of evidence?
  - Can they evaluate the claims and evidence of their own and the other side?
  - Can they revisit the issue after hearing the other side?
Debate / Argumentation

- Work with faculty to facilitate an online or in-person debate for students.
- Have students identify logical fallacies and flaws in arguments they encounter during searches.
Real-World Examples / Authentic Learning
Real-World Examples / Authentic Learning

- Fake news!
  - Ask students to evaluate recent news articles.
  - Have students compare multiple news outlets covering the same story.
  - Compare a news story with the scholarly article on which it was based.
Real-World Examples / Authentic Learning

- Use real-life issues for searches.
  - What are good sources for researching the candidates for a local election?
  - What are unbiased sources of information about what new car to purchase?
Reflection

“Writing in the journal” by Erin Kohlenberg is licensed under a [CC BY 4.0 license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).
Reflection

- Ask students to complete a research journal.
- Can students retrace their steps? Which search strategies worked and which didn’t?
- Ask students: did you change your mind about a source you evaluated? Why or why not?
- Ask students: after looking at the scholarly conversation, where do you think you would fit?
An Example from the Classroom
Authority is Constructed and Contextual + Inquiry-Based Learning

- Students put their evidence on trial and brainstorm questions
- Students choose a source and decide what questions to ask
- Then, students answer the question by investigating the source
Try it Yourself!
Critical Thinking and the Framework Activity, Part 2

- Look back at your chosen Frame.
- What critical thinking teaching methods could be used to help students master this Frame?
Let’s share!

What critical thinking teaching methods did you choose for your Frame?
Questions or Comments?

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References


References


