



Classroom as a critical community

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Theoretical background

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What is Critical Thinking?

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Bloom' s taxonomy



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Framework for engaging
Critical Thinking

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Possible scenarios

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Critical Thinking and
reasoning







Critical thinking can be defined as:

- "the mental process of **actively and skillfully** conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating information **to reach an answer** or conclusion"
- "**disciplined** thinking that is clear, rational, open-minded, and **informed by evidence**"
- "reasonable **reflective thinking** focused on deciding what to believe or do"
- "purposeful, **self-regulatory judgment** which results in interpretation, analysis, evaluation, and inference, as well as explanation of the evidential, conceptual, methodological, contextual considerations upon which that judgment is based"
- "includes a **commitment to using reason** in the formulation of our beliefs"
- commitment to the social and political practice of participatory **democracy**, willingness to imagine or remain open to considering alternative perspectives, willingness to foster **criticality** in others.
- disciplined, self-directed thinking which exemplifies **the perfection of thinking** appropriate to a particular mode of **domain of thinking**



Benjamin Bloom (1956)

**"competencies" in educational settings
based on skills of intelligence**

- Knowledge**
- Comprehension**
- Application**
- Analysis**
- Synthesis**
- Evaluation**

core critical thinking skills

**observation, interpretation, analysis, inference,
evaluation, explanation, and metacognition**

+

?



core critical thinking skills

**observation, interpretation, analysis, inference,
evaluation, explanation, and metacognition**

+

Disposition!





Part II
**General framework for building
a critical community (CT and CT
activities)**

Critical community means:

Open-minded process of:

- discovery and understanding
- analysis and application
- synthesis and evaluation

Environment

learner's "intelligence" (Howard Gardner)

object related: visual/spatial, body motion/kinesthetic, naturalist

symbol-related: verbal/linguistic, logical/mathematical, musical

person-related: interpersonal, intrapersonal, existential



What does the application of critical thinking look like in the classroom?

- **New learning + what is already known**
- **Goals and objectives - clear**
- **Generalization and conceptualization - frameworks**
- **Internalization of knowledge - goal**
- Learning: **teacher + fellow learners + media formats**
- **Inquiry and questioning - teaching tools**
- **Demonstration of learning**
- **Standards of evaluation - clear**

What does a typical class period look like?

- **Introductory phase.** Review previous day, homework assignments. Bridge new material with advanced organizers
- **Lecture or content presentation**
- **Small group discussions and tasks**
- **Period of reflection** or exercises in applying new material, or review
- Summaries/exercises/developmental/application/demonstration activities

Possible scenarios and activities (group work)

- **Example A. Questioning**
- **Example B. Problem-based learning**
- **Thinking aloud**
- **Example C. Active listening**
- **Cooperative conflict resolution**
- **Concept mapping**
- **Learning portfolios/records of progress**
- **Interaction at various levels**
- **“Seize the moment”**
- **Illustration of concepts**
- **Feedback to the learner**

Group work session



CT and reasoning: development an argument

Critical thinking = reasoning

What is an argument in your discipline?
(write down anything which might mean an argument)

Speaking and writing

Inform your students about your expectations –
give them a model, a pattern of **disciplinary thinking**



Writing: Developing a thesis

an argument = a case for a particular point of view that you want your reader to accept

Claim + reasons to support it

Thesis statement = signal

(main claim + focus)




Sample thesis statement:

In this chapter we will address the notion of ‘argument’ in student writing. *We will attempt to make the idea of ‘argument’ more accessible by analysing various ways it is seen in academic writing and we will relate it to the idea of a central ‘thesis statement’. To illustrate disciplinary difference we will look at what students on different courses have to say about argument. There are many ways of conceiving argument in student writing, depending on the discipline.*



Critical Reading activity

Task: Read the text and identify its elements



Developing an argument with the help of mind mapping

http://freeplane.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page - Freeplane

<https://bubbl.us/> - online mapping

Thank you

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