

Critical thinking is a process by which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them.

—Richard Paul and Linda Elder, 2004 The Foundation for Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is reflective and reasonable thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do.

—Robert Ennis, 1996 Critical Thinking



What is critical thinking?

Critical thinking is the disposition to provide evidence in support of one's conclusions and to request evidence from others before accepting their conclusions.

—Hudgins and Edelman, 1986
“Teaching Critical Thinking Skills to Fourth and Fifth Graders Through Teacher-Led Small-Group Discussions”

Critical thinking involves thinking through problematic situations about what to believe or how to act where the thinker makes reasoned judgments that embody the qualities of a competent thinker. A person is attempting to think critically when she thoughtfully seeks to assess what would be sensible or reasonable to believe or do in a given situation.

This occurs in situations where there is some doubt as to the most appropriate option.

—Case and Daniels. 2007. “Introduction to the TCE Concept of Critical Thinking”

Critical thinking is the process of determining the authenticity, accuracy, and worth of information or knowledge claims.

—Beyer, 1985 “Critical Thinking: What is it?”