**Guidance questions for critiquing a source text**

**You can ask yourself these questions when reading a source critically.**

**Some of these questions can be used to question the author’s overall argument and their line of argument.**

**Other questions will help you to critique specific claims, the methodology or pieces of evidence.**

**CLAIMS**: *what is the main line of argument?*

Critical questions:

1. Are the claims clear?
2. Does the author make any assumptions in their claims?
3. What are the consequences of the claims being correct?
   1. Who might benefit?
   2. Who might be disadvantaged?
4. Who opposes the claims? Why?

**REASONS:** *why does the author make these claims?*

Critical questions:

1. What reasons does the author give for making their claims?
2. Can you identify the author’s stance (their worldview/position that underlines their claims)? Does their stance influence why they might have made the claims?
3. Does the author use any subjective or emotional language? Is this language justified?

**EVIDENCE**: *information, ideas and findings used (or* ***not*** *used) to support the argument(s)*

Critical questions:

Secondary evidence *(the support of other research/ sources)*:

1. Is there enough secondary support given (citations) to support the claims?
2. Does the author synthesise a range of sources effectively?
3. Has any new research challenged the claims?
4. Have the original sources been used appropriately (the meaning not changed in any way, or misrepresented)?
5. Is the rationale supported by the literature review?

Primary evidence *(the author’s own research)*:

1. Is the sample representative (right people, ages, genders etc)? Does it need to be?
2. Are any groups missing from the sample?
3. Is the sample size big enough to support the author’s claims?
4. Has the author justified their methodological approach?
5. Could the research have been carried out with a different methodological approach?
6. Is it clear how the data have been collected?

**AUTHOR’S OWN EVALUATION:** *how the author assesses their own work/ results*

Critical questions:

1. Has the author identified any limitations of their research?
2. Does the author consider and evaluate different analytical approaches?
3. Has the author evaluated the consequences of their claims?

**CONCLUSIONS:** *paragraph/ section conclusions as well as overall research conclusions*

1. Has the author effectively linked their conclusions to the literature review?
2. Is the conclusion developed in a logical way?
3. Is it possible to reach different conclusions based on the data?