

11 Good thinkers identify relevant issues, ask important questions, search for evidence, manage information effectively, think logically, challenge assumptions, consider multiple perspectives, and understand the importance of context. They don't look for simple answers. Critical thinking is not intuitive, but we can learn to think better. Analyzing case studies, debating complex issues, and writing research papers, especially when working cooperatively, improve critical thinking⁴. That is why teachers assign these types of activities. They want to develop students' ability to think critically about our complex world.

Comprehension Check

A. Supporting Opinions and Claims

1. What three examples in the introduction paragraph illustrate that we are facing complex problems in the world today?
2. Paragraph 3 contains three claims about immigrants and employment in Canada. What sources are cited to support these claims? Are the sources reliable?
3. In the concluding paragraph, the writer claims that teachers want to develop students' abilities to think critically. What technique does she use to support this claim?

B. Clarifying Meaning

The writer has identified eight critical thinking behaviours. In order to ensure that the reader understands the precise meaning of these behaviours, she paraphrases, explains or gives an example of each behaviour.

1. For each behaviour, identify whether its meaning is clarified through paraphrasing, by example, or both. Use your notes or read the section again to help you.

- ¹ Lyman, P. and Varian, H.R. How much information? (2003). Retrieved April 6 2004 from <http://www.sims.berkeley.edu/how-much-info-2003>.
- ² Citizenship and Immigration Canada. (2006). Facts and figures 2005: Immigration overview: Permanent and temporary residents. Retrieved on March 3 2007 from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/pub/facts2005/index.html>
- ³ Sankey, D. (2006, October 21). Dispelling immigrant labour myths: Employers often make wrong assumptions (Final Edition). *Calgary Herald*, H1.
Schofield, H. (2006, August 21). Amid jobs boom, hundreds of thousands left behind. *The Globe and Mail*, B5.
Statistics Canada. (2007). Study: Low-income rates among immigrants entering Canada. *The Daily*. Retrieved on March 4 2007 from <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/070130/d070130b.htm>
- ⁴ Grossman, R. (1994). Encouraging critical thinking using the case study method and cooperative learning techniques, *Journal on Excellence in College Teaching*, 5(1), 7-20.
Green, C.S. and Klug, H.G. (1990). Teaching critical thinking and writing through debates: An experimental evaluation, *Teaching Sociology* v. 18, no. 4, 462-471.

One Step Beyond

Work from your notes. Review the behaviours of critical thinking. Take turns explaining each behaviour to your partner in your own words.

Speaking



In North American classrooms, teachers often ask students their opinions about important issues. Not all opinions are good ones, however. A good opinion is one that is supported by reasons that demonstrate critical thinking. In small groups, review the language of opinions and reasons. Then, share your opinions on the following topics.

- Should people allow their emotions to influence how they think about complex problems?
- Are parents better judges of what their children should study after high school than the children themselves?
- What is the key to success?