



# Fundamentals of Critical Thinking

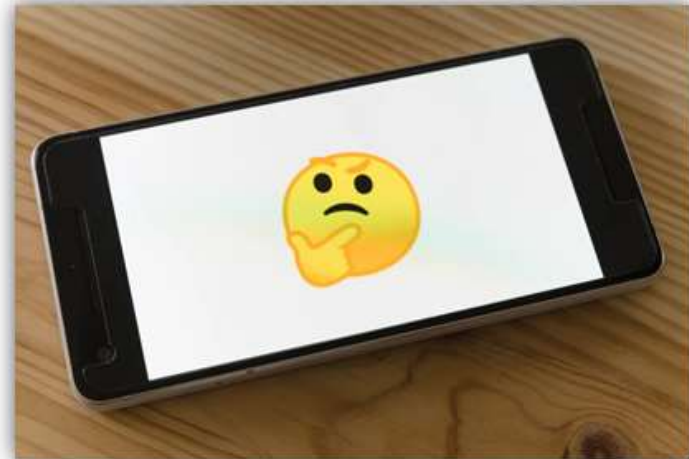
PRESENTED BY DAWN PRESTON

INDIVIDUALIZED LEARNING CENTER

# What is Critical Thinking

- ▶ Difficult to define
- ▶ 64,400 Google results
- ▶ "Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" (Scriven, 1996).

"The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing." ~Albert Einstein



# Critical Thinking Skills to Cultivate



- ▶ Thinking about thinking
- ▶ Asking good questions
- ▶ Flexible thinking
- ▶ Active learning

# Thinking About Thinking



## Poor Critical Thinker

- ▶ Jump to conclusions
- ▶ Make assumptions
- ▶ Ignore gaps in learning
- ▶ Accept inaccurate information
- ▶ Repeat problematic behaviors

## Good Critical Thinker

- ▶ Takes time to evaluate
- ▶ Questions their own thinking
- ▶ Recognizes problem areas and biases
- ▶ Examines information for accuracy
- ▶ Manage reactivity for persistence



# Asking Good Questions

## Lower Order Questions

- ▶ Beginning of learning
- ▶ Key words: recognize, list, describe, retrieve, name, find
- ▶ Examples
  - ▶ What is...?
  - ▶ Who was it that...?
  - ▶ Can you name...?

## Higher Order Questions

- ▶ Lead to analysis, evaluation, and creation
- ▶ Key words: analyze, contrast, evaluate, assess, formulate, elaborate
- ▶ Examples
  - ▶ How is... similar to...?
  - ▶ Do you think... is a good or bad thing?
  - ▶ Do you agree with the actions?...with the outcomes?

# Flexible Thinking

## Rigid Thinkers

- ▶ Unable to consider alternative situations and viewpoints
- ▶ Cling tightly to preconceptions and generalizations
- ▶ Struggle with change and challenges



## Flexible Thinkers

- ▶ Curious about alternatives
- ▶ Recognize and examine biases
- ▶ Adapt to changing circumstances and are up for challenges





# Active Learning

## Passive Learning

- ▶ Rote memorization
- ▶ Lack of engagement with content
- ▶ Accepting without questioning

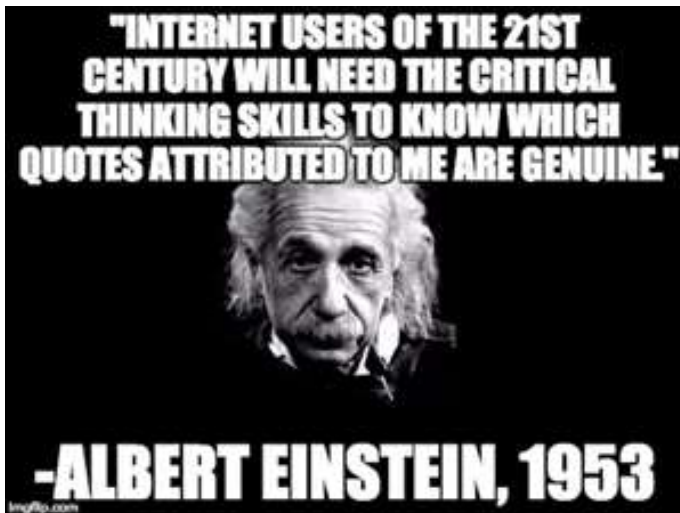


## Active Learning

- ▶ Applying what we know
- ▶ Engaging with content to make it ours
- ▶ Questioning information



# Why do we need it?



- ▶ Academic life
  - ▶ Choosing courses
  - ▶ Reading and analyzing texts
  - ▶ Solving complex problems
- ▶ Personal life
  - ▶ Adulting
  - ▶ Changing behaviors
  - ▶ Detecting misinformation
- ▶ Professional life
  - ▶ Decision making
  - ▶ Organization and planning
  - ▶ Innovation





How do you apply critical thinking in your own life?

Thank you!