THE CRITICAL THINKING WORKBOOK

Games and Activities for Developing CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Wabisabi
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What is Critical Thinking?

Critical thinking is clear, rational, logical, and independent thinking. It's about improving thinking by analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing *how* we think. It also means thinking in a self-regulated and self-corrective manner. It's thinking on purpose!

Critical thinking involves mindful communication, problem-solving, and a freedom from bias or egocentric tendency. You can apply critical thinking to any kind of subject, problem, or situation you choose.

About This Workbook

The activity pages in the Critical Thinking Workbook are meant to be shared and explored. Use it as an electronic document or as worksheets.

You can either print off the pages and use them as activity sheets, or you can edit them directly right in the document on your computer.

Enjoy these fun and challenging critical thinking activities that will get every student thinking critically!

FACT or OPINION?

This exercise is about differentiating between fact and opinion. A **fact** can be *proven either true or false*. An **opinion** is an *expression of feeling or point-of-view* and *cannot be proven* true or false.

The teacher will create some statements that are either fact or opinion. If it's a fact, check on **F** and then briefly explain how it can be proven. If it's an opinion, check on **O** and briefly explain why you feel it can't be proven. Compare answers with your friends and share your views with each other.

Statement:			Reasoning:
1. _____	☐	☐	_____
2. _____	☐	☐	_____
3. _____	☐	☐	
4. _____	☐	☐	_____
5. _____	☐	☐	_____
6. _____	☐	☐	_____
7. _____	☐	☐	_____
8. _____	☐	☐	_____

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TALK IT OUT

Time for some great debates! In this exercise, students will learn the importance of being able to take a stance on an issue and defending that stance with logic, reasoning, knowledge, and common sense.

Below is a list of scenarios to present for students to discuss and debate. They are based primarily on ethics and morality. They will encourage students to take a stand and defend their viewpoint. These can be done in pairs, but are much more compelling in larger class debates where views are divided. They can also be used as individual worksheets—students can circle an answer and then explain their choice in writing.

1. Richard finds an expensive looking ring in the school hallway one day. It has no name on it, and it's not near anyone's locker.
   Should he: **A)** Give it to lost and found **B)** Ask if it belongs to anyone there **C)** Keep it and not say anything

2. Judy's friend is stressed about an upcoming test. Judy already took the test and got 100%, so she knows all the answers already.
   Should she: **A)** Just give the answers to her friend **B)** Use her knowledge to coach her friend **C)** Not get involved at all

3. Coach Nelson has caught two of his star basketball players vandalizing school property. The rule is that they must be suspended. If that happens their team loses the upcoming semi-finals. If the coach keeps quiet they'll surely win, but he could lose his job.
   Should the coach: **A)** Suspend the two players and obey the rules **B)** Pretend he never saw them

4. Nick overhears two students bragging about having posted some inappropriate images of a female student online for a joke.
   Should he: **A)** Mind his own business **B)** Report the incident to the school principal **C)** Confront the boys and defend the student

5. You witness a bank robbery, and follow the perpetrator down an alleyway. He stops at an orphanage and gives them all the money.
   Would you: **A)** Report the man to police since he committed a crime **B)** Leave him alone because you saw him do a good deed

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ELEVATOR PITCH

This is an exercise used in business to help you think fast and get your point across. It's all about choosing and using words carefully and persuasively to achieve your goals in any conversation.

You must convincingly "pitch" an idea, concept, product/service or proposal in the time it takes to ride an elevator (about 30 to 60 seconds) so this is a *timed exercise*. Make some notes about what you want to say; some topic ideas and note space are provided below. Enjoy the ride!

Ideas for EP Topics

- A product or service you are offering
- An idea for a website/social network
- A special project you need to fund
- A favour you need from someone
- An organization or business plan
- An invention you want to get patented
- A party plan for a birthday/wedding
- A campaign for a political position
- An advertisement for a local event

My Topic: _____

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TOTAL RECALL

Look at the objects and words on the page for 1 minute. Next, try to write down everything you remember seeing and reading on the page. If you're doing this one as a colour print-off, try recalling the specific colour of each word and shape too, if you can.

EAST

SUMMER

LUNCH

VACATION

RIGHT

RAINBOW

WINTER

SUNGLASSES

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MEANINGS IN MIND

Write *one sentence* to explain what each common image or symbol means to you. The idea here is to move away from conventional meanings and relate to the images personally.

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YOU NAME IT

Answer each question for each list below. To make it more challenging, try answering as quickly as you can against another person.

Name 3 people that:

1. Talk more than you

_____

2. Talk less than you

_____

3. Work hard

_____

4. You think are smart

_____

5. Wear costumes

_____

6. Are teachers

_____

7. Travel a lot

_____

8. Are always nice to you

_____

Name 3 places that:

1. Have good food

_____

2. You would like to visit

_____

3. Have lots of mountains

_____

4. Are always warm

_____

5. You don't want to visit ever

_____

6. Are not on Earth

_____

7. Have a lot of technology

_____

8. People haven't fought in wars

_____

Name 3 things that:

1. Are square

_____

2. Are orange

_____

3. Smell good

_____

4. Live in the water

_____

5. Taste terrible

_____

6. You enjoy doing

_____

7. You don't enjoy doing

_____

8. People read

_____

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WHAT WOULD HAPPEN?

This exercise is designed to help you think laterally and discover new ways of looking at the world. Answer these questions using creative and constructive thinking. You can use as much detail as you like. For fun, try to think of your own "What Would Happen?" questions!

What would happen if …

… there were suddenly no computers, tablets, or phones of any kind anywhere on Earth?

… we had to live in a world without electricity?

… you woke up one morning to discover you had changed into a cartoon character?

… all the animals in the world could suddenly communicate with us in our own language?

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YOU KNOW THE RULES

The rules and laws we have in life are meant to guide us and protect us, and to keep order in our society. Imagine that you get to make 2 rules that *everyone in the world must follow*. What rules would you make and why?

Rule No. 1 _____

I chose this rule because:

Rule No. 2 _____

I chose this rule because:

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MAKING CHOICES

Part of life is being able to strike a healthy balance between our needs and our wants. It's also about focusing on what we consider to be truly important. Imagine you can have *any 3 things that you want*. In return you must *give away three things that you already have*. What do you want and what will you give away, and why?

What I Choose to Have

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I would want these things because:

_____

What I Would Give Away

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I would give up these things because:

_____

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WORST CASE SCENARIO

In a crisis situation, teamwork is crucial to handling challenges effectively. Fabricate a scenario in which students need to work together and solve problems to succeed (ex: stranded on a deserted island, being lost at sea, etc.). The rule is that every team member must contribute an idea for a possible solution.

For example, they may want to come up with a list of 10 must-have items that would help them most, or find a passage to safety. Arrange for them to vote so that everyone agrees to the final solution.

TRAIN of TALL TALES

Form into a circle and give everyone a unique picture of a person, place, object, or animal. Pick one person to begin a story that incorporates whatever happens to be on their photo. The next person continues the story adding something related to their photo, and so on.

PAPER TOWER

This fun collaborative team-building exercise develops aspects of Solution, Creativity, and Collaboration Fluency. Each group constructs a free-standing tower out of newspaper and tape. There isn't a time limit for this exercise, unless you want to establish one.

It encourages critical thinking and problem-solving. Which team can build the tallest, structurally sound free-standing tower? Throughout the process, students will start to realize there are questions they have that they didn't ask. This is a perfect time to get them to explore how to answer these questions for themselves.

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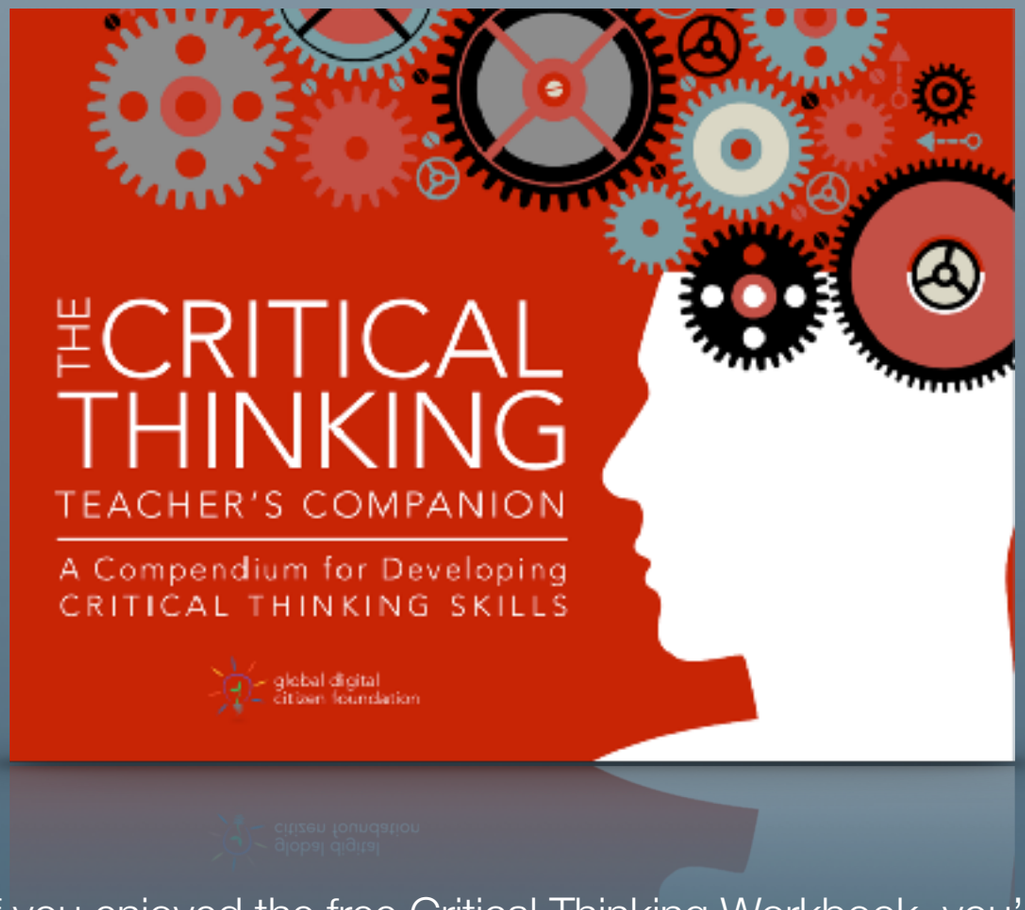

Let's get CRITICAL.

Get This Premium Guide

If you enjoyed the free Critical Thinking Workbook, you're going to *love* this ultimate critical thinking teacher's resource, the all-new ***Critical Thinking Teacher's Companion***. Here's what's in this premium guide:

- ★ *Even MORE challenging games and activities*
- ★ *6 exciting project-based learning scenarios*
- ★ *A rubric for assessing critical thinking skills*
- ★ *Resources for understanding and instruction*

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