

Transdisciplinary Thinking

Lesson Focus: What does critical thinking look like?

Learning Objectives	Vocabulary	Links with Approaches to Learning (ATL)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Understand different types of critical thinking skills and apply them within a discussionConstruct logical, coherent arguments, supported by specific examples and evidenceCritically evaluate arguments	knowledge critical thinking analyze evaluate justify synthesize perspective claim source evidence	Thinking Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">Critically evaluate arguments, examples, and evidence. Communication Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none">Give and receive meaningful feedback through evaluating a discussion.
Preparation Tasks	Differentiation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Print a copy of the skills cards for each group.Choose a suitable discussion question for the main activity from the Kialo Topic Library or create your own discussion. Example discussion topics are included below.Clone the discussion and share it with each group.Assign Tasks when setting up the discussion to set expectations for the discussion.Give students time to conduct preliminary research to familiarize themselves with the discussion topic.	Support: Allow students extra preparation time to research the topic in advance. Add additional starter claims to the discussion to prompt ideas. Provide students with a list of suggested sources to justify their claims. Extend: Encourage students to make links to other AOK.	
Example discussion topics		
Individuals and Societies (Digital Society) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should kids be able to have social media?Is social media making us less social?Is social media a threat or benefit to democracy? Individuals and Societies (History) <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should we remove statues of problematic historical figures?Should we see the suffragettes as heroes?	Language and Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none">Should schools be able to ban books?Should Shakespeare still be taught in schools? Sciences <ul style="list-style-type: none">Can AI replace teachers?Should AI tools be allowed in school assessments? TOK	



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- [What was the main cause of World War I?](#)
- [Can we ever truly know history?](#)
- [Does language determine knowledge?](#)

Introduction

- Ask students to work in small groups to sort the skills cards into critical thinking and non-critical thinking skills.
- When students have sorted the cards, examine each critical thinking skill in turn and ask:
 - What does this skill involve?
 - What would effective use of this skill look like in a discussion or debate?
 - Why is this skill important in a discussion or debate?
- Use the discussion to create an evaluation framework that Partner B can use in the main activity.

- Example evaluation points:

Analysis

- Are their claims clear and coherent?
- Are their claims based on fact or opinion?
- Is there a logical progression in reasoning?
- Are there any logical fallacies that need correcting?

Synthesis of different perspectives

- Is there a clear awareness and evaluation of different perspectives?

Evaluation

- Are their arguments well researched?
- Are their claims supported with specific examples and evidence?
- Have they identified and addressed counterarguments??

Reflection

- Have they reflected critically on their own biases and assumptions?
- Are they adjusting their own perspectives based on new information?

Main Activity

Fishbowl discussion

- Split the class in half. Label one half group A and one half Group B.
- Group A will participate in the Kialo discussion while Group B observe and evaluate.
- Each student from Group A, should partner with a student from Group B.
- All parts of the main activity can be conducted synchronously or asynchronously, as all communication is online through the Kialo platform.

Partner A

- Working in the same Kialo discussion to maximise their exposure to different perspectives, Partner As should:
 - Add clear and coherent claims representing their perspective. These should include both pro and con claims.
 - Support claims with specific examples and evidence. (Students could add links to relevant sources.)

Partner B

- Partner Bs will need access to the same Kialo discussion as Partner As.
- They will observe and evaluate their partner's contributions, using the framework from the lesson introduction.
- They should take notes that will allow them to give feedback to their partner after the discussion.
- To communicate their evaluations, students can use:



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- Evaluate different perspectives by reading and responding to each other's claims.

- [Comments](#) for feeding back on specific claims.
- The [Discussion Chat](#) for giving general feedback to their partner.
- [Voting](#) to give their partner an immediate visual indication of the strength of a claim.

- If time allows, either in the same session or a subsequent session, pupils should switch roles, so they experience both contributing and evaluating.

Reflection Activity

- For the reflection activity, partner B should share their feedback with Partner A.
- Focusing on critical thinking skills, they should agree on two strengths and two areas for development for Partner A.
- Close the session with the following reflection questions:
 - What did you learn about your own thinking by receiving feedback from your partner?
 - How did hearing or reading different perspectives influence your position or reasoning during the discussion?
 - What assumptions or biases did you become aware of during this activity, and how might they influence your future argumentation?

