**Critical Thinking**

**Step 1** Question things

- Don’t be afraid to challenge the arguments of an author.
- Consider who is presenting a piece of information. Could they have an agenda, or a particular bias?
- Put together a series of challenging questions that you can use in any situation, to help you adopt a more critical mindset.

**Step 2** Use what you already know

- Does this new information align with, or contradict your existing understanding of the subject?
- Are you aware of any studies or theories that might call this new information into question?
- Have you carried out any research of your own that could be taken into account?

**Step 3** Analyse the argument itself

- Identify the conclusion and the reasons that support this.
- Do you agree with the reasons that form the basis of the argument? What evidence is there to support them?
- Check the argument is logical. Does one reason lead to the next, and then to the conclusion? Are there any missing steps?

**Step 4** Be critical of your own work!

- Leave a finished essay for a couple of days if you can, then read it through again to get a different perspective.
- Make sure that all reasoning is supported by references to the literature.
- Check that your arguments are logical.

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