

# Critical Thinking Questions You Can Ask About Anything

Stumped for intelligent questions to provoke your writing glands? Feast your word processor on these, and generate some text, customizing them to your subject matter and topic as you go along. Then print out your responses, mix and match, and repeat. You'll be amazed at how fast you can generate better-quality raw materials this way.

1. What is the purpose, goal, or point?
2. What is the problem or issue being solved or described?
3. On what data or evidence is the decision / definition / problem based?
4. What inferences are being made from what kind of data, and are these inferences legitimate?
5. What is the solution, outcome, or resolution of the problem or issue?
6. What are the short-term and long-term implications of the solution / consequences of the outcome?
7. What are the biases or assumptions behind the inferences, selection or collection of data, or framing of the problem / experiment?
8. What are the basic concepts or terms being used? How do these definitions affect the framing / understanding of the problem?
9. What point of view is being expressed? What political / ideological / paradigmatic considerations inform or govern or limit point of view?
10. How would someone from a related but different discipline look at the problem / solution / issue, and could an interdisciplinary approach improve the analysis / discussion / evaluation?

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Once you reword these questions to fit the particular situation you are examining, they will encourage you to:

- brainstorm more effectively
- see beneath the surface
- understand alternative viewpoints
- avoid being unduly influenced by what others say
- decide what you think and why
- defend and adapt your positions intelligently.

For more information, contact the [Writing Across the Curriculum](#) program.