

# Critical Thinking

Critical thinking involves looking beyond the surface of information by analyzing, evaluating and judging information, ideas and perspectives. Critical Thinkers *think* before accepting a viewpoint and ponder why they should favour one option over another.



## Techniques include

1. **Categorising** structure ideas and information in hierarchical structures and consider how this translates into an essay structure.
2. **Fallacy fun** identify fallacy patterns and search the media for examples
3. **Reasoning with argument mapping** visualise thoughts and record and evaluate arguments with argument maps.
4. **Evidence considerations** working out what makes evidence useful and how not to be duped.
5. **Questions**, heaps of them, keep going until you hit the bedrock of knowledge!

## Essential ingredients (perseverance, depth, time)

- Encourage thinking before accepting an opinion (delay response time)
- Encourage preparation in giving justification or evidence for views
- Keep the debate impersonal (a central map is a good way to assist this)
- Time to think and ponder (sometimes sleeping on it is a useful strategy)
- Persevere to get to the heart or depth of a matter... *but why?!*

## Useful links

<http://www.austhink.org/critical/> Tim van Gelder's critical thinking on the Web, resources and links

[http://www.corvobooks.com/authors/jamie\\_whyte.php](http://www.corvobooks.com/authors/jamie_whyte.php) Jamie Whyte books and links

<http://www.fallacyfiles.org/> Fallacy files for fallacy examples and explanations

<http://www.onegoodmove.org/fallacy/> Stephen's Guide to the Logical Fallacies

<http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/itl/graphics/main.html> Mission critical for critical thinking resources at higher education levels.