

Note – *This is part of a Booklet on Global Education with a Research and Writing assignment on global issues,*

[Global Education: Research & Writing on Global Issues](#)

This includes a student assignment for researching and writing about a global issue, though any particular issue can be chosen. It includes assignment guidelines, learning objectives, class ideas, question and note-taking worksheets, critical thinking questions, writing guidelines and rubric, general objectives and themes in global education, and an extensive outline of global issues for research and study.

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Glossary of critical thinking terms *

accurate: Expressing facts or truths, free from errors or distortion.

ambiguous: A sentence having two or more possible meanings.

analyze: To break up a whole question, argument, or issue into its parts, in order to examine its parts or aspects.

argue: In a simplistic sense, it is to disagree or verbally fight about something. In critical thinking, it is to give reasons for or against a proposal, position, or conclusion.

argument: A reason or reasons offered for or against something, or it is the offering of such reasons. In a rational debate, one's argument needs to be supported by logic, facts and real experience.

assumption/assuming: An unexamined belief or premise; an idea that is *believed* as true but without bothering to evaluate whether it is, in fact, true. It could be true or not true. Often, arguments have premises that are assumptions, unproven and unstated. Critical thinkers make assumptions explicit, assess their truth, and correct them when wrong.

- **cultural assumption** – a culturally adopted and unexamined belief, standard, or practice, which is then *presupposed* as true, right or best.

bias: A favoring or preference or inclination for selecting (or choosing) one thing over other alternatives. Biases are based on fixed beliefs, generalizations, or prejudices. Bias can be *neutral* or *negative*. One is often unconscious of bias/prejudice, or often resistant to admitting it.

- **neutral bias**– selective thinking & choice within a point of view is unavoidable, whereby one notices some things rather than others, and emphasizes some points as more important than others.

- **negative bias** – prejudice or prejudgment about a person, group, or idea, which is based on a narrow point of view or a generalization that is unsubstantiated, untrue, and usually unfair. Negative bias is often resistant to counter-evidence and to other views.

* Abridged & edited from criticalthinking.org with some additions

group bias: Prejudice in favor of one's nation, ethnicity, culture, or religion; favoring its beliefs, traditions, practices, and world view. People are inclined to favor or prefer the ways and beliefs of their upbringing or their social-cultural education, sometimes even assuming that these are superior or better than anything different. Group bias distorts one's view of others, as well as one's interactions with others.

clarify: Making ideas and one's reasoning easier to understand by explaining the main points while avoiding ambiguities and confusions.

concept: An idea, a generalization, a class of objects, the meaning or definition of a word.

conclude/conclusion: A judgment, decision, or belief formed after investigation and reasoning. To infer or decide by reasoning.

consistency: To reason or express an argument without contradicting previous reasoning or argument. The multiple parts of one's reasoning are all in agreement and adhering to the same principles. Logical consistency is to conform with the accepted rules of logic.

contradict/contradiction: An argument or line of reasoning that is contrary to, inconsistent with, or negates other parts of the argument.

criteria: The standards, rules, or tests by which an idea or action is judged or measured as being true, successful, or right.

critical reading: An intellectually engaged process in which the reader looks for assumptions, key concepts, ideas, reasons, justifications, supporting examples, implications, and consequences.

critique: An objective analysis and evaluation of an idea or belief.

data: Facts, statistics, or information from which conclusions can be inferred, or upon which interpretations or theories can be based.

dialectical thinking: Considering opposing points of view; testing or debating their strengths and weaknesses.

dialogical thinking: Thinking that involves a dialogue or exchange between different points of view.

empirical: Based on experiment, observation, or experience; rather than on theory or the meanings of a words.

empirical implication: That which follows from a situation or fact, not due to the logic of language, but from experience or scientific law. The redness of the coil on the stove empirically implies dangerous heat.

ethical/moral: Believed principles or premises pertaining to what is right and wrong, in relation to the decisions, actions or conduct of individuals or a society. An ethical theory/(perspective) can be based on either: rules of right action, consequences of action, or character virtues. Ethical beliefs can evolve (progress) as a result of moral inquiry, critical thinking, and pragmatic evaluation.

evaluation: To determine the value of an idea or thing, or the relevance of a fact. Objective and fair evaluation is being impartial and unbiased, and not based on personal feelings, preference or interests.

evidence: Data, facts, observations, or examples that give support to an inference or conclusion, or by which proof or probability can be established. Evidence (fact) is distinct from reasoning and conclusions.

explicit: Clearly, precisely and accurately stated, and without intentionally hiding information or purposes.

facts: The specific events, circumstances, cases, examples, data, or evidence, which supports inferences and conclusions. Facts can come from scientific data, but also from personal experience or observations; however, it's important to distinguish actual facts from how these facts are *interpreted* or what they *mean*. Facts and even scientific data can be incorrectly interpreted and/or used in faulty reasoning. Truth-claims may appear to be factual statements yet might not actually be true. Therefore, assessing the truth of a stated fact requires questioning how the fact was derived, its accuracy, relevance, and correct interpretation.

generalizing/generalization: Attempts to identify probable patterns, average behavior, or general rules from particular cases (facts). Ideas or skills used well in one setting can then be reapplied in multiple settings.

fallacy: An error in reasoning or in argument, which is misleading and deceptive, whether intentional or not.

idea: A thought, or an object of knowledge. A proposed truth or a possibility to consider.

implication: A claim or a truth that follows from other claims or truths. An effect that is reasonably inferred.

imply: Sometimes people *imply* unspoken truths, claims, or inferences, by the words or phrases they use. Critical thinkers are careful of what is implied by their words. Yet, a listener/reader may infer that something is implied when it is not *intentionally* implied or meant.

inference/ to infer: Reasoning that something is true on the basis of known facts and other believed truths, which are its assumptions, its premises. An inference might be justified or not, might be true or not.

intellectual humility: Recognizing the limits of one's knowledge and viewpoint, and being cautiously introspective of one's possible egocentrism, bias, prejudice, or self-deception.

intellectual integrity: Being self-honest and consistent about one's beliefs, values, standards, and intellectual goals.

intellectual perseverance: Willingness, effort, and courage to pursue truth and insight, despite difficulties.

intellectual justice: Willingness to consider all viewpoints and to assess them fairly, impartially, without bias.

intellectual humility: Realizing that our present knowledge is limited and thus may be wrong; also, our beliefs may contain unconscious bias.

interpret/interpretation: A perception, inference, or understanding based on one's own experience, reasoning, perspective, or point of view; which may or may not be correct. It is often focused on what is intended, meant, or implied in a text, discourse, or argument.

irrational/irrationality: Contrary to reason or logic. Not attempting to use reasoning or to be reasonable.

justify/justification: Showing that a belief, opinion, action or policy is based on good reasoning and evidence.

logic: A system of principles or rules used in reasoning, rational explanation and justification.

logic of a discipline: Every discipline relies on its implicit rules of logic, which shapes its concepts, assumptions and theories.

logic of language: Key words have definitions which constitute the concept or the logic in the word, which also defines its appropriate use.

logic of questions: Different *kinds* of questions often require different ways of thinking and different ways to answer.

multi-dimensional problems: Problems that have multiple aspects and can be analyzed from multiple points of view. Also known as complex problems, which cannot be treated simplistically or one-dimensionally.

multilogical thinking: Thinking that considers multiple dimensions of a problem and reasons within multiple points of view.

opinion: A belief that is regarded as not necessarily objective because it's coming from a limited perspective, rather than assumed to be true.

perspective/viewpoint/point of view: In regards to any issue or topic, there may be multiple perspectives, views, or positions. Each argument or position is from the perspective (or viewpoint) of one's premises: one's beliefs, assumptions, experience, and values. Perspective can also be determined by the question or purpose of one's inquiry.

prejudice: A belief, judgment, opinion, or perspective that is favorable or unfavorable about something or someone. A prejudice is a fixed-minded generalization based on limited, selective facts, and which tends to ignore specific instances of counter evidence. These become implicit premises in reasoning, inferences, judgments and decisions. Prejudices are often subconscious, rationalized and group-validated.

philosophical argument: Argument for the purpose of understanding what is true, right, or good; instead of arguing just to win an argument, or to defend a fixed belief, or to convince another to choose your way.

philosophical empathy: Attempting to understand and reason from the perspective of someone else or a group, which includes their beliefs, values and main concerns, and other reasons for their viewpoint.

philosophical reasoning: The aim and direction of reasoning is towards truth rather than deception for self-serving aims or to appear smart.

premises: The assumptions, or starting points, which form the basis for inferences and conclusions. Premises can include: facts, experiences, beliefs, generalizations, theories, and values. Some premises are assumed to be objectively true (facts); other premises are assumed only to be probable or most likely true (generalizations).

presuppositions: The beliefs that are assumed to be true before-hand in an argument, in one's reasoning, or in a course of action. As with any belief, a presupposition could be true or maybe not. Presuppositions form the basis of our thinking and knowing, our ground of belief from which our thinking moves forward. Some presuppositions are based on solid evidence and theory, while others are not. Most presuppositions are unconscious and not stated, but critical thinkers seek to uncover and make them explicitly known for evaluation.

principle: A fundamental truth, law, value, or commitment, which then serves as a premise for reasoning about life, decisions and actions. Further principles or rules can then be build upon these fundamentals.

proof: When evidence and reasoning is so strong and certain, it shows the truth of a conclusion, or at least its reasonable acceptability.

propaganda: an organized effort (by a government, business, or group) to persuade large numbers of people to act in some way, support an idea, believe in something, adopt an attitude about another group, or buy a product; often it deliberately contains an emotional component.

rational/rationality: That which conforms to principles and rules of logical reasoning. Rational thinking is logical, consistent, and relevant.

reasoning: Logically building inferences, conclusions, or solutions based on premises/assumptions, such as facts, observations and experiments.

relevancy: What is important to, or at least relating to, the question or issue under consideration. Not all available information is relevant.

sociocentrism: Perceiving or understanding the world & others from just the perspective/viewpoint of one's own social group or social identity, and assuming that one's socially *inherited* beliefs, values, and norms are right, best, or superior. Sociocentrism is often subconscious but it can be transcended by a rational examination of one's beliefs. Sociocentrism can be ethnic (*ethnocentrism*) or cultural – believing that one's own race or culture is right, best, or superior to all others.

vague/vagueness: Not being clear and definite in one's statements or explanations, which results in the reader or listener being uncertain of one's intended meaning. Ideas can also be vague, and thus impractical.

values: Ideals or goals regarded as most important in life, in our decisions and actions. Values give direction for our decisions and actions, and motivate us. Values are the principles or standards for evaluating what is good/right/best, either from a moral or practical perspective. Our values are implicit in our reasoning of what is right or good. Our ultimate values cannot be derived just by reasoning, yet can be reasonable. Often, our values come from the social and cultural values of our upbringing, but our values can be revised or re-created by reasoning and critical thinking, along with intuition and sensitivity.