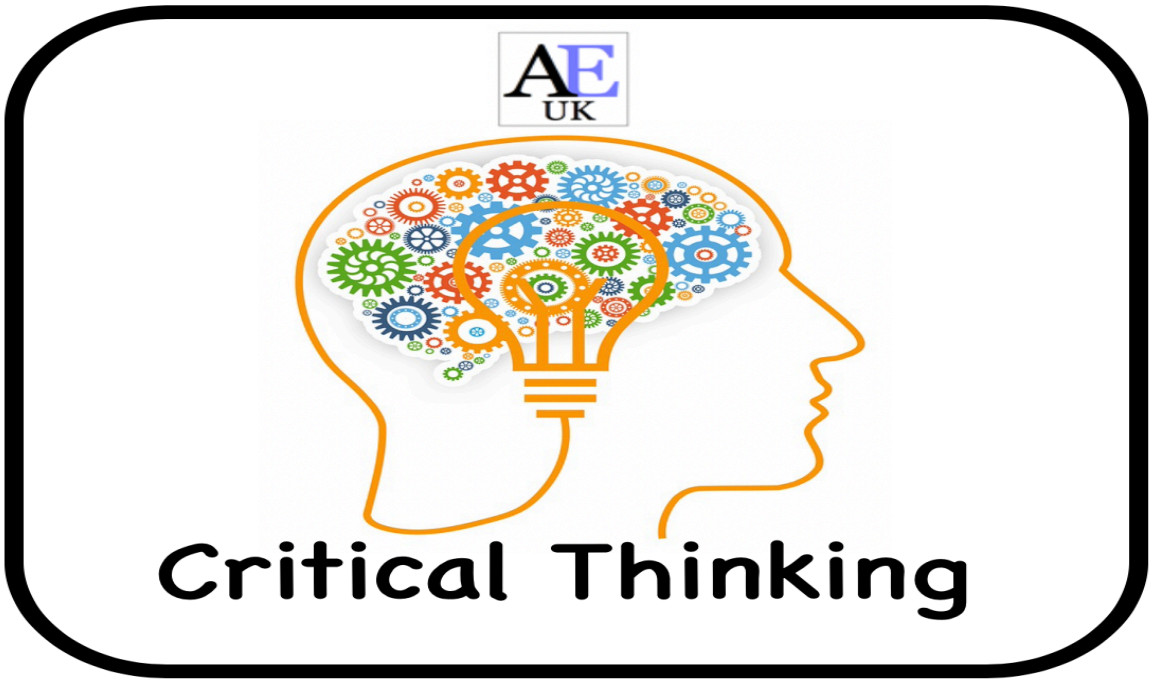
Academic English UK

Critical Thinking



Reading Text Analysis

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Critical Thinking – Reading Text Analysis

Lesson Plan

Aim: to provide quality practice in developing analytical critical thinking skills.

1. Preparation

- Photocopy the reading text 'Critical thinking – going to university' for each student. Page 3
- Photocopy the Answer sheet (one sheet between two). Page 4-5

2. Introduction

- Ask students to discuss: 'What is critical thinking?'
- Try to elicit key terms and ideas: *questioning / cognitive / synthesis / analysis / evaluation / merit / validity / bias / self- reflection / clarification / open-minded*

- *EXTRA IDEAS! go here: Critical thinking Dictogloss / Critical thinking videos / Blooms Higher-level thinking skills* *https://www.academic-englishuk.com/critical-thinking*

3. Set up

- Hand out the reading text 'critical thinking – going to university'.
- Explain that you want the students to apply the critical thinking skills of analysing and evaluating to the text.
- Give examples of the two terms:
  Analysis is to draw connections among ideas: to examine / to question / to compare.
  Evaluation is to justify a stand or decision: to judge / to identify support and credibility / to appraise / to critique. [Blooms higher-thinking taxonomy is on the back page]

4. The lesson

- As a whole group do the first paragraph together. Explain there are 4 possible problems.
- Give the students 5 minutes to read the paragraph and try to identify what in the paragraph can be questioned or critiqued.
- Feedback individually or as a group using the answer sheet for guidance.

- **Students work individually:** Allow the students 20-30 minutes to read and highlight possible areas of question, critique or appraisal. Explain there are 10 possible problems to find.

5. Feedback:

- Feedback in pairs - students share their ideas and justify their answers.
- Feedback as a whole class. Teacher highlights key answers and elicits other possible critiques.

Disclaimer: There are a variety of different answers to this activity.

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Critical Thinking – Going to university

by C.Wilson (2020)

The UK is the world leader in providing higher education with over 50,000 courses and 395 universities. Higher education has become increasingly popular over the last two decades with most young people choosing to go to university than work. In fact, 2018 saw a record level of 1,621,535 students attending university for their first year on a degree course. This trend is set to increase year on-year in the future.

One of the main reasons for this successful increase is due to the introduction of student loans back in [redacted] for all. This means that everyone in the UK can attend a university and especially for the students from [redacted] backgrounds, they can now get themselves out of [redacted] According to UCAS (2020) a record [redacted] people from disadvantaged backgrounds were accepted to university in 2018.

This inclusivity is a positive step forward for universities who are now offering equal opportunities for all. Examples of this are shown in increases in ethnicity [redacted] % of entrants being black, Asian [redacted]. In addition, the last ten years has seen also seen [redacted] in education and now there [redacted] nationally at university than men. However, there are still clear differences in subject choice with 74% of [redacted], construction and manufacturing compared to 78% of female students studying education [redacted] and welfare ([redacted]).

Interestingly, the most popular university courses are Business and Administration studies with [redacted] studying. This is closely followed by medicine with approximately 250,000 students, mid-range course are law with [redacted] of the range is agriculture and [redacted] science (T.H.E, 2019).

It is safe to say that a university degree is now a prerequisite for [redacted] and accessing a middle-class lifestyle. Many graduates walk straight into well-paid jobs after graduation and can [redacted] their student loans.

Overall, many graduates generally claim that going to university is [redacted] life. It can be a great [redacted] your knowledge, meet new people and experience independence. For many, it is a personal journey of [redacted] them for the real world and the global job market.

References

T.H.E (2020). *The least and most popular undergraduate courses in the UK*. [online] Times Higher Education (THE). Available at: https://www.timeshighereducation.com/student/news/least-and-most-popular-undergraduate-courses-uk [Accessed 26 Feb. 2020].

UCAS (2020). *Data and analysis*. [online] UCAS. Available at: https://www.ucas.com/data-and-analysis [Accessed 26 Feb. 2020].

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Possible critical evaluation ANSWERS

The UK is the world leader [1] in providing higher education with over 50,000 courses and 395 universities. Higher education has become increasingly popular over the last two decades with most young people [2] choosing to go to university than work. In fact, 2018 saw a record level of 1,621,535 students attending university [3] for their first year on a degree course. This trend is set to increase year on-year [4] in the future.

(1) Untrue. The U.K. is not the world leader because America is the world leader.
(2) Untrue. Most young people do not go to university according to statistics only 50.2% young people go to university (UCAS, 2020).
(3) Where has this data come from – no source.
(4) How do they know it will increase? In fact, 2019 figures are lower at 1,501,235 (UCAS, 2020).

One of the main reasons for this successful increase is due to the introduction of student loans back in [redacted] [5] for all. This means that everyone in the UK can attend a university and especially for the students from [redacted] backgrounds, they can now get themselves out of [redacted] [6]. According to UCAS (2020) a record [redacted] people from disadvantaged backgrounds were accepted to university in 2018[7].

(5) The introduction of student loans is true to create accessibility for all, but have loans really helped? …….

ALL ANSWERS IN PAID VERSION…

References [for critical analysis]

McGuinness, F., Booth, L. and Francis-Devine, B. (2019). *Poverty in the UK: statistics*. [online] Researchbriefings.parliament.uk. Available at: https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN07096 [Accessed 26 Feb. 2020].

T.E.S (2018). *Privileged pupils 10 times more likely to attend elite universities*. [online] Times Education Supplement (TES). Available at: https://www.tes.com/news/privileged-pupils-10-times-more-likely-attend-elite-universities [Accessed 26 Feb. 2020].

UK Gov. (2019). *Ethnicity facts and figures*. [online] Ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk. Available at: https://www.ethnicity-facts-figures.service.gov.uk [Accessed 26 Feb. 2020].

UK Gov. (2018). *Graduate labour market statistics*. [online] Assets.publishing.service.gov.uk. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/797308/GLMS_2018_publication_main_text.pdf [Accessed 26 Feb. 2020].

UK Gov. (2020). *Student loan statistics*. [online] Researchbriefings.parliament.uk. Available at: https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN01079 [Accessed 26 Feb. 2020]

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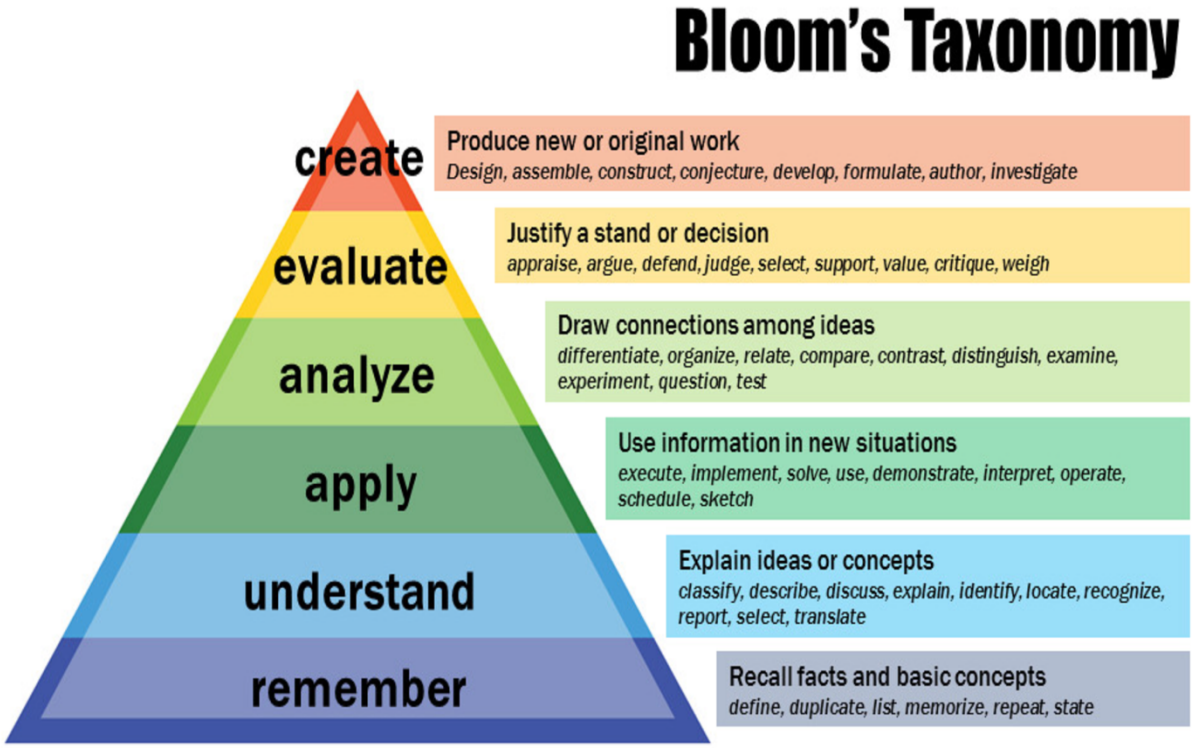
Blooms Taxonomy

The top three levels of Blooms Taxonomy are displayed in the form of a pyramid with ascending levels on top of the structure such as analyse, evaluate and create. These levels of taxonomy all involve critical or higher order thinking.



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