Devotion and Prayer

2 Peter 3:1 (NIV)
1 Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking.

“Peter's purpose was to remind the believers that their lives ought to be characterized by eilikrine dianoian, translated "wholesome thinking" (meaning sincerity or purity of understanding; "sincere intention" in NRSV).

Plato had used this phrase to refer to pure reason uncontaminated by the senses.

The Greek word eilikrines literally means "sun-judged." A piece of pottery was "sun-judged" when it was held up to the sunlight in order to see any flaws or cracks.

The thinking and intentions of God's people must be able to stand up under scrutiny and not be led astray by immoral desires (Philippians 4:8-9).”

(Life Application Bible Commentary – 1 & 2 Peter and Jude.)

1 Corinthians 14:20 (MSG)
20 To be perfectly frank, I'm getting exasperated with your infantile thinking. How long before you grow up and use your head—your adult head? It's all right to have a childlike unfamiliarity with evil; a simple no is all that's needed there. But there's far more to saying yes to something. Only mature and well-exercised intelligence can save you from falling into gullibility.

“It is all right to be as innocent as babies when it comes to evil, but there is no place for constant immaturity in the Christian life. Believers are to be growing and maturing so that they can understand these issues for themselves and make wise decisions concerning them.”

(Life Application Bible Commentary – 1 & 2 Corinthians)
The Art and Science of Critical Thinking

The Discussion Technique of World Café™

The World Café model (Brown & Isaacs, 2008) enhances knowledge by sharing and tapping into collective intelligence and wisdom. Unguided discussion about specific questions or issues stimulates hope, creativity and collective commitment to outcomes.

There are seven elements to a World Café discussion on the mental discipline of critical thinking:

1. **Set a context**
   Purpose – Generate specific ideas for modeling and assessing critical thinking in the classroom.
   Attendees will leave with skills and knowledge to:
   - Model and demonstrate critical thinking for students
   - Incorporate critical thinking skills into classroom teaching and learning
   - Develop ways to assess student engagement with and improvement of critical thinking skills.

2. **Create hospitable space**
   - Set up the room like a café with tables, décor and ambiance that is conducive to open and relaxed discussion.
   - Round tables work best, with 4-8 people at a table being optimum.
   - Larger table settings inhibit participation.
   - Background music and drinks are welcoming.

3. **Explore questions that matter**
   - Post one set of questions per table, according to the appropriate session.
   - Several tables may have the same set of questions, depending on the number of participants.
     - I recommend using different colors of paper for each set of questions, to facilitate movement among tables and collection of discussion points for synthesis.
     - Write the questions using large font, so everyone at the table can see and read the question easily
     - Provide colored markers or pens, and sheets of paper or a flipchart for each table. Participants will use them to doodle, map discussions, create reports, rubrics, etc.

4. **Encourage everyone’s contribution**
   - We are active contributors to something larger that ourselves.
   - Encourage feedback, authenticate each other’s contributions, and connect those contributions
   - Build community
   - Engage in conversations that matter.

5. **Cross-pollinate and connect diverse perspectives**
   a. Individuals contribute thoughts about the focus question
   b. Groups gain new understanding
   c. Spark new insights through synergy and synthesis
   d. Evolves into greater coherence
   e. Creation of collective intelligence

6. **Listen together for patterns, insights, and deeper questions**
   - Group coherence
   - Emergent reality that draws differences and similarities into a meaningful whole
7. **Harvest and share collective discoveries** –
   - Unless that meaningful whole results in
     - action plans and
     - reproducible ideas--
     - it contains potential value, but is not a useful too
   - Participants should leave with specific tools to use in their own environments.

Workshop Procedures

1. **Introduce the purpose and parameters of the workshop.**
   
   **Purpose:** Develop ideas for modeling and assessing critical thinking in the classroom.

2. **Describe and manage the flow of the sessions.**
   
   - Participants at each table will address the questions on that table.
   - Participants at each table should map the discussion using the flipchart paper provided. Write large enough to be visible throughout the room.
   - Groups will have about 15 minutes to discuss the questions at that table.
   - After 15 minutes, group members disperse to tables with other questions (as indicated by colors of the paper on which you put the questions).
     - One member of the group will remain at the table to provide a brief overview of the discussion to new participants moving to that table, after which he or she will move to a new table.
   - Groups will have about 15 minutes to continue the discussion previously started at the table they are joining. Once again, someone should map the discussion.
   - After time expires, ask the group to prepare a report using the discussion map, diagrams, etc. (10 minutes to prepare).
     - Have them tape their question sheets and responses on the wall.
     - Use a different wall for each question set.
   - Let participants move among the displays, read the findings, and share while mingling with others.
   - Take a 10 minute break before continuing the process.
   - Remind participants to complete their Workshop Evaluation, and Take-Home worksheet.
   - Ask participants to share their take-aways from the workshop.

3. **Conclude the Workshop**
   
   - Thank participants for their contributions and commitments to model, incorporate, and assess critical thinking in their classrooms.
   - Adjourn with prayer
Learn the Tools the Best Thinkers Use

The best thinkers know that learning is both an emotional and an intellectual task.

The best thinkers view education as a lifelong process.

We carefully analyze the content in our classes to determine what is the most important for us to learn.

Reasoning occurs whenever the mind draws conclusions on the basis of reasons. We draw conclusions whenever we make sense of things.

One can draw conclusions about everyday events, or really anything at all.

Have you heard these comments from your students? “Intellectual arrogance.”

“Why should I have to learn this? It is useless to me.”

“This is not my major. I will never use this information.”

“This is just theory and abstraction. I want practical and useful knowledge.”

“I know as much as I will need to know about this subject.”

“I am intelligent, so if I do not ‘get’ this subject it is the instructor’s fault.”

“I always make good grades. If I get a bad grade in this class, it is the professor’s fault.”

Egocentric and socio-centric thinking

Egocentric thinking emerges from our tendency to see the world from a self-serving perspective.

Socio-centric thinking involves identifying with and acting according to group norms.

Examples:

Intellectual Standards for reasoning (p. 56, Figure 3.13)
• Purpose
• Point of View
• Assumptions
• Implications and consequences
• Inferences and judgments
• Concepts
• Information
• Answer a question/solve a problem

Questioning

The best learners seek to enter the foundation of any subject they study and use that foundation to understand everything else within the subject. Their learning is question or problem based.

In asking questions, think about which kind of question you are asking:

• Questions of Fact—lead to knowledge
• Questions of Preference—lead to a subjective opinion
• Questions of Judgment—lead to the best possible of several possibilities

Focus your questions on:

• Elements of thought (“the wheel”)
• Prior questions
• Different disciplines or areas of knowledge

Improving your Learning (p. 104-105)
• Become an active learner
• Consider subjects to be different ways of thinking
• Ask questions
• Seek connections
• Think of your professor as coach
• Think of the textbook as the thinking of its authors
• Consider class time as “practice thinking” time
• Relate subject matter to life
• Determine which learning skills to develop
• Practice explaining ideas to others
• Identify the fundamental ideas of a course
• Use the intellectual standards when thinking
• Write to learn
• Evaluate listening skills
• Actively read course texts

Reading

✓ Reflective readers seek meaning and make connections between one’s own thinking and that of the author.
✓ Reading is a form of intellectual work.
✓ Get basic ideas about the textbook from its title, preface, first chapter, table of contents, side bar notes, diagrams, pictures, charts and graphs.
✓ What is the system of thinking for this subject?
✓ How does this chapter/idea/concept relate to the subject as a whole?
✓ Mark the texts! Make marginal notes.

Reasons for reading
• Sheer pleasure
• Finding a simple idea in a text
• Gain specific technical information
• Understand a new world view
• Learn a new subject

Writing
• Write for a purpose, analytically and creatively.
• Think about what significant things to say about the topic.
• Reflective writers think about how to improve their writing while they are writing.
• One learns to write well by writing!

Reading and Writing: How do close reading and substantive writing interrelate?

1. Close reading and writing support and reinforce one another.
2. Clarify purposes
3. Formulate questions
4. Distinguish accurate from inaccurate information
5. Distinguish between justifiable and unjustifiable assumptions
6. Identify significant and deep concepts
7. Trace logical implications
8. Identify multiple viewpoints
9. Reach logical inferences and conclusions

Take Home Worksheet

What will I do to model and demonstrate critical thinking in my classroom?
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What activities will I use to incorporate critical thinking skills into my classroom?
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How will I assess critical thinking in my classroom?
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With whom can I share some ideas and tips from this workshop?
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________________________________________________________________________
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Workshop Feedback Form

August, 2012

Your feedback regarding the effectiveness and usefulness of this workshop is important. Please circle the appropriate number for each question below. (1=low/disagree; 5=high/agree) Additional comments welcome!

1. The setting was appropriate for this faculty development session.
   1    2    3    4    5    NA

2. The amount of material covered was appropriate for the time allotted.
   1    2    3    4    5    NA

3. Enough practical/usable information was included.
   1    2    3    4    5    NA

4. This session included adequate opportunities for participant involvement.
   1    2    3    4    5    NA

5. The instructor for this session demonstrated effective presentation skills: made eye contact, spoke clearly, interacted with participants, well-organized.
   1    2    3    4    5    NA

6. The instructor made good use of the allotted time.
   1    2    3    4    5    NA

7. My questions were answered effectively.
   1    2    3    4    5    NA

Other comments and suggestions: