



An Exercise in Critical Thinking

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Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is a way of thinking, understanding and expressing yourself.

Critical thinking is about using your ability to reason. It's about being active in your learning and questioning ideas, arguments and findings.

Critical thinking is clear, rational, logical, and independent thinking. It's about improving thinking by analysing, assessing, and reconstructing how you think. It also means thinking in a self-regulated and self-corrective manner. It's thinking on purpose!

Critical thinking involves mindful communication, problem-solving, and a freedom from bias or egocentric tendency. Critical thinking can be applied to any kind of subject, problem, or situation you choose.

The questions below have been designed to test your critical thinking and to illustrate the two thinking systems – fast and slow.

The fast thinking system (System 1) may provide an immediate answer that is so obvious it is probably wrong or decide that there is no answer.

Engaging your slower thinking system (System 2), deliberately thinking about the question and using mental energy will give an answer – eventually. This answer will be based on logic and reasoning.

If you really can't deduce an answer, they are given in an answer booklet which you can download separately.

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1. A man buys a new car and goes home to tell his wife. He goes the wrong way up a one-way street, nearly runs into 7 people, goes onto the pavement and takes a shortcut through a park. A policeman observes all this and doesn't arrest him. Why not?
2. If you had a machine that could generate one million dollars a day, what would you be willing to pay for it?
3. Why is it against the law for a person living in Germany to be buried in California?
4. One house is made of red bricks, one of blue bricks, one of yellow bricks and one of purple bricks. What is a green house made of?
5. A little girl kicks a football. It goes 3 metres and comes back to her. How is this possible?
6. In South Africa you can't take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?
7. You drive past a bus stop and see 3 people waiting for the bus: an old lady who is about to die, an old friend who saved your life and your perfect partner. Knowing you can only have one passenger in your car, what would you do?
8. How much soil is there in a hole 1 metre deep, 2 metres long and 1.5 metres wide?
9. If it took 8 men 10 hours to build a wall, how long would it take 4 men to build the same wall?
10. How far can you walk into the woods?

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11. How many apples can you put in an empty backpack?

12. Your friend says he can predict the exact score of every football match before it begins. He's right every time. How is that possible?

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