

CRITICAL THINKING

This text is the product of four authors (three philosophy professors and an English professor), but it reflects a shared vision of what critical thinking is and how it can best taught and learned. At the core of that vision is the conviction that critical thinking must begin where students are, not where instruction and text book writers would like them to be.

Our students are diverse in their backgrounds and abilities, and many lack the relatively sophisticated reading and critical thinking skills presupposed by many other textbook in the field. For such students, we needed a wealth of challenging, thought-provoking exercises, and is written in a way that our students find clear and relevant to their daily lives. Because we could find no text that adequately these features, we decided to write our own.

To help reader not only develop the skills of critical thinking but apply them as well, we have included many traditional exercises and many others that ask students either to collaborate with one another or to work independently and compare with their answers. These exercises are designed to encourage students to see that their critical thinking skills, although useful to them as individuals facing an increasingly more commercial an often mercenary world, are best honed in communities, where students can guide and direct one another and test their abilities in practical setting.

Students today live in two worlds – an academic one that demands clarity, rigor, and thoughtful, well-substantiate conclusions and another world, one in which viewpoints fly like confetti on talk show, pop psychologies “solve” complicated problems in thirty second, and “evidence” for any claim is just an easy mouse click away. Students come to us struggling to find their way in and between these two worlds. This text will help them navigate the journey

