

UNIT 3: CRITICAL THINKING AND QUESTIONING

At the end of this unit, you will be able to:

1. Explain the purpose of critical thinking
2. Define and explain the term critical thinking³
3. Describe how to improve your critical thinking skills

WHAT DOES “CRITICAL THINKING” MEAN?

- Critical thinking is a way of thinking where you don't just believe what you hear. To think critically means that you ask questions and find out more before you believe something.
- To think critically you need to :
 - **1. Open to new ideas**
 - **2. Curious and always want to know more**
 - **3. Asking questions to learn more**

HOW TO ASK QUESTIONS

- To think critically you need to be able to ask questions that will help you find out more about the topic. There are two types of questions you can ask: **closed questions and open questions**
- .A **closed question** can be answered with “**yes**” or “**no**”, a single word or a short phrase. For example: Are you happy? Are you 18 years old? Does this book belong to you?
- An **open question** will have a longer answer and will help you get the information you want. Open questions start with WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN, WHY and HOW. For example: What did you do during the holiday? Why is that so important to you?

3.2 THE KWHL CHART

- Critical thinking is a skill that takes time to learn. To start you off, you are going to learn how to use a KWHL Chart.
- **K** stands for what you already **KNOW** about the subject.
- **W** stands for what you **WANT** to learn.
- **H** stands for **HOW** you can learn more about the topic.
- **L** stands for what you **LEARN** as you read.

KWHL CHART ILLUSTRATION

What I know	What I want to find out	How I can learn more	What I have learnt
Sharks eat meat	Which sharks eat people?	Search the internet	Tiger sharks are dangerous
Whale shark is the largest	What sharks are the fastest?	Books from the library	Blue sharks are the fastest
Sharks eat animals	What sharks are the smallest?	Go to the museum	Pigmy sharks are only 15 centimetres long
Sharks are fish	What animals eat sharks?	Shark video	Killer whales eat sharks

What I KNOW	What I WANT to Know	What I Learned
<p>Students use this space to discuss their background knowledge about the day's lesson, e.g. improper fractions.</p>	<p>Students look at what they already know and note some of the questions sparked by their background knowledge.</p>	<p>Students summarize their learning here and note whether the lesson answered the questions they had at the beginning.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know that fractions are parts of a whole. • I know fractions look like one number over the line and one number under the line. • I know that improper means not proper. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to know how numbers can be not proper. • I want to know if we have to flip these fractions to divide like we practiced last week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned that they're called improper fractions because the top # is bigger than the bottom #. • They aren't reduced like we were taught to do. • When you reduce an improper fraction you get a mixed number.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know that my parents voted for the President in January. • I know they vote inside a school gym. • I know they had to answer a lot of questions on the sheet. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I want to know why some people don't get to vote. • I want to know why there weren't any women on the list to be president. • I want to know how they count all of those papers so fast. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I learned that they have machines which count the votes and people check them. • I learned that women have tried to be president but haven't won. • I learned that only citizens can vote.