

Critical Reading

- What is the author's **purpose**?
- What key **questions** or problems does the author raise?
- What **information**, data, and evidence does the author use in his or her reasoning?
- What key **concepts** does the author use to organize this information, this evidence?
- What key **conclusions** is the author coming to? Are those conclusions justified?
- What are the author's primary **assumptions**? Should any of these assumptions be questioned?
- What **viewpoint** is the author writing from? Should any other viewpoints be considered?
- What are some important **implications** of the author's reasoning?



The
Foundation
for
Critical Thinking

PO Box 196 • Tomales, CA 94971

800-833-3645 • www.criticalthinking.org

Applying Intellectual Standards to an Author's Reasoning

Clarity:

Are the author's purposes, questions, information, and conclusions clearly stated?

Accuracy:

Is the information from which the author draws his/her conclusions accurate? Should any other aspect of the reasoning be questioned?

Fairness:

Does the author consider, in good faith, the viewpoints of relevant others? Does the author seem to be biased in representing the issue from a certain perspective?

Relevance:

Is the information presented relevant to the key questions and to the author's primary purpose?

Depth:

Do the author's claims address the complexities in the questions at issue? Does the author's reasoning deal with the depth of the issue(s)?

Logical:

Does the author's reasoning make sense? For example, do the conclusions follow from the information given?

Breadth:

Does the author approach the issues from multiple viewpoints (where relevant)? Are opposing viewpoints considered?