



Critical Thinking with Business English students

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Critical Thinking in BE

- Critical thinking is regarded as one of the key 21st century skills that employers look for in a candidate when recruiting
- EFL teachers can provide students with language-practice tasks that require critical thinking to stimulate learning

The aim:

Combine a command of English with the ability to think critically.



The 5 Critical Thinking Skills

1. Critical questioning
2. Challenging assumptions
3. Identifying evidence
4. Identifying perspective
5. Creating solutions



Critical Thinking in BE through ...

1. **Critical questioning**, e.g. about texts dealt with in class:

Do you think the author supports his opinion with facts? Are you convinced by the author's argument? Why? Why not?



Critical Thinking in BE through ...

2. Challenging assumptions

e.g. through discussions and debates which require students to use the language for expressing opinions, agreeing, and disagreeing.



Critical Thinking in BE through ...

3. Identifying evidence

e.g. by asking students to underline factual information and circle the writer's opinions in a text.



Critical Thinking in BE through ...

4. Identifying perspective

i.e. seeing things from another point of view
e.g. using role plays where students take on a different character and have to view a business problem from their point of view is a useful way to develop this skill.



Critical Thinking in BE through ...

5. **Creating solutions**

e.g. presenting students with a case study in which they read about a real business problem and have to create the solution that they would follow.



Critical Thinking

Practical Task 1: Fact or opinion?

1. In autumn many people catch a cold.
2. Suffering from a cold makes people miserable.
3. A runny nose and sore throat are common symptoms of a cold.
4. Too many people take time off work because of a cold.
5. People who eat healthily are less likely to suffer from a cold.



Critical Thinking

Practical Task 2: Reading & discussion

1. What do you think is the author's main reason for writing this text?
2. Has he achieved his objective?
3. Is there any factual information in this text? If yes, identify it.
4. What do you think the author does when he has a cold?



Critical Thinking

Practical Task 3: Case study

Over the autumn term *Excel College* in London has had a high number of staff calling in sick due to them suffering from common colds. Staff has been absent from work for a total of 24 days combined costing the school an extra 1200 Euros and leading to problems with students who complained about cover teachers shortly before their exams.

What could be done to prevent this from happening again?





Summary

Task 4: Identifying what you have learnt

Step 1: Individually, reflect on what you have learnt in this session silently for 1 minute. You can take notes if you wish.

Step 2: In pairs, take turns to summarize your reflections. Share what you take away from this workshop and what you would like to try out with your own students.



Questions?



Sources:

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