CRITICAL THINKING

SEE-I Method
The SEE-I Method

SEE-I is an acronym; it stands for the steps or concepts listed below.

State it
Elaborate
Example
Illustrate

SEE-I is an easy-to-use and methodical critical thinking technique that helps writers clarify their ideas.
Critical thinking is a self-directed process by which we take deliberate steps to think at the highest level of quality.

Critical thinking is skillful, responsible thinking that is conducive to good judgment because it is sensitive to context, relies on criteria, and is self-correcting.
In other words critical thinking is “thinking about thinking in order to make it better.”
**EXAMPLE: Critical Thinking is...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysis of thinking by focusing on the parts (&quot;the Elements&quot;)</th>
<th>Evaluation of thinking by focusing on the quality (&quot;the Standards&quot;)</th>
<th>Improvement of thinking by using what you have learned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

*Analysis* of thinking by focusing on the parts ("the Elements")

*Evaluation* of thinking by focusing on the quality ("the Standards")

*Improvement* of thinking by using what you have learned
ELEMENTS OF THOUGHT

- Points of View: frame of reference, perspective, orientation
- Purpose of the Thinking: goal, objective
- Implications & Consequences
- Question at Issue: problem, issue
- Assumptions: presupposition, taking for granted
- Information: data, facts, observations, experiences
- Concepts: theories, definitions, axioms, laws, principles, models
- Interpretation & Inference: conclusions, solutions
ILLUSTRATE: In other words….

Illustrate with a with a metaphor, analogy, or comparison

In other words all reasoning . . .
• has a purpose
• is an attempt to figure something out, to settle some question, solve some problem.
• is based on assumptions
• is done from some point of view
• is based on data, information & evidence
• is expressed through and shaped by concepts and ideas
• contains inferences or interpretations by which we draw conclusions and give meaning to data
• leads somewhere or has implications and consequences.
## INTELLECTUAL STANDARDS

| Clarity                      | Could you elaborate further?  
|------------------------------|-------------------------------
|                              | Could you give me an example? |
| Accuracy                     | How could we check on that?   
|                              | How could we find out if that is true? |
| Precision                    | Could you be more specific?   
|                              | Could you give me more details? |
| Relevance                    | How does that relate to the problem? |
|                              | How does that bear on the question? |
| Depth                        | What factors make this a difficult problem? |
|                              | What are some of the complexities of this question? |
| Breadth                      | Do we need to look at this from another perspective? |
|                              | Do we need to consider another point of view? |
| Logic                        | Does all this make sense together? |
|                              | Does what you say follow from the evidence? |
| Significance                  | Is this the most important problem to consider? |
|                              | Is this the central idea to focus on? |
| Fairness                     | Do I have any vested interest in this issue? |
The result is a well cultivated critical thinker who:

- Raises vital questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely;
- Gathers and assesses relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively
- Comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards;
- Thinks open mindedly within alternative systems of thought, recognizing and assessing, their assumptions, implications, and practical consequences
- Communicates effectively with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems
How to Apply the SEE-I Method

SEE-I is an acronym; it stands for the steps or concepts below.

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Elaborate
Example
Illustrate

SEE-I is an easy-to-use and methodical critical thinking technique that helps writers clarify their ideas.

In this guide, SEE-I is used to assist students in providing a strong skeleton for their papers beyond the usually weak outline.

Note the following example.
What is grammar?

• **State it**: Grammar is a set of agreed upon rules for language and punctuation with the goal of clear communication.

• **Elaborate**: In other words, grammar is a way of using words and punctuation so that as many readers as possible can agree upon the meaning.

• **Example**: For example, we use grammar not just in English papers but in all oral and written communication. When that grammar is correct, we have a better chance of accurate communication.

• **Illustration**: Grammar is like the rules of the road. When we all use the same rules, we have fewer accidents (breakdowns in communication) and we all get where we’re going safely (clear communication).
Now you are ready to apply the SEE-I method to your assignments.

- State it:

- Elaborate:

- Example:

- Illustration:
Resources: