

# WHAT IS CRITICAL THINKING?

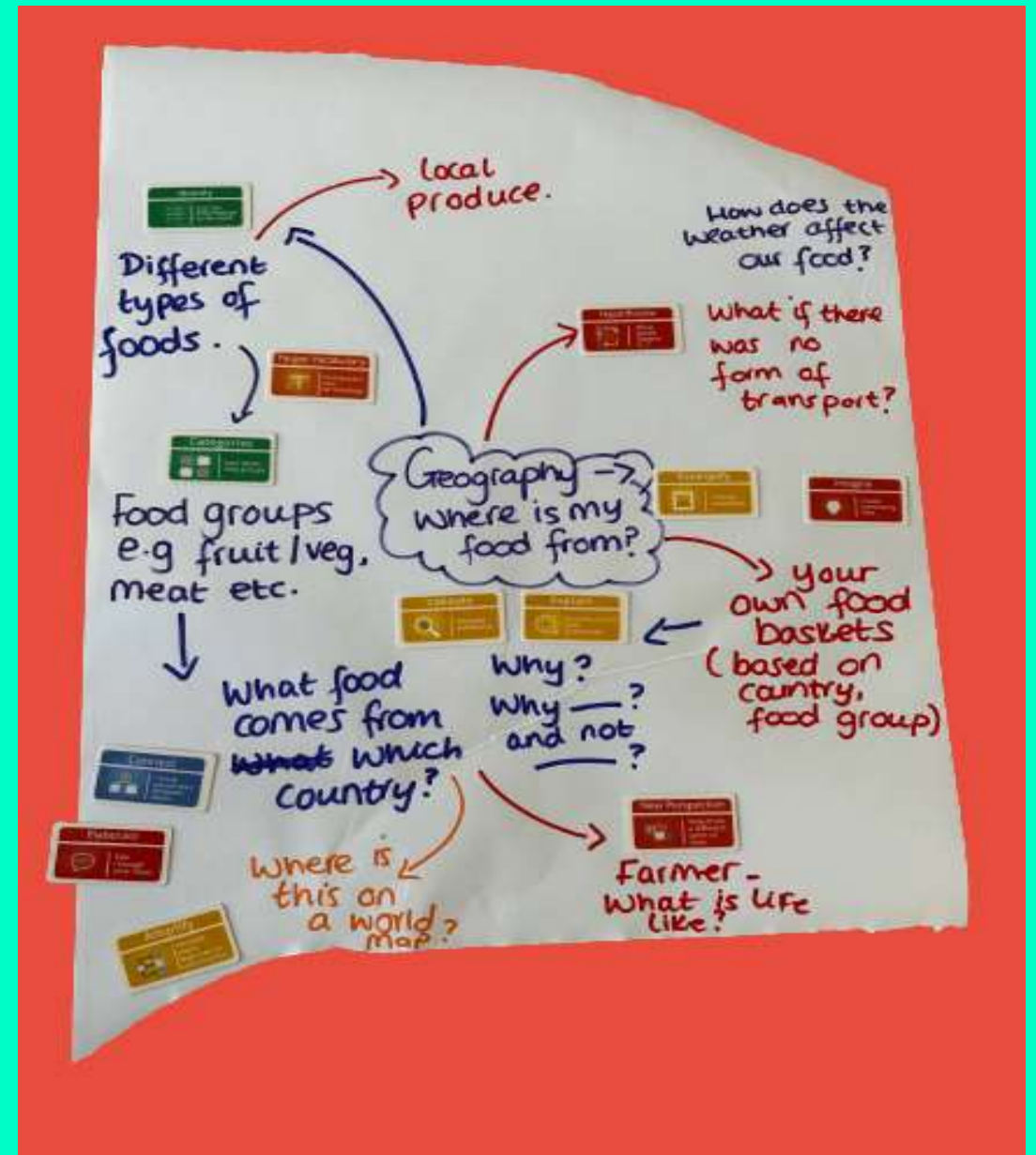
Critical thinking is important in every aspect of our lives. It helps us make decisions, solve problems, and learn new information. But how and why do we develop these skills in school?



# THE CRITICAL THINKING PROCESS

involves the use of the mind to incorporate **prior experience** and basic knowledge about a **subject** matter in order to reach conclusions.

**Logical reasoning** is one of the three main components of critical thinking. This component requires students to think critically about a problem and then apply logic to solve it. Students must **understand the difference** between logical and illogical arguments and recognize when someone is using logical fallacies.



# WHY CRITICAL THINKING IS IMPORTANT?



FIVE TIPS FOR IMPROVING  
CRITICAL THINKING IN  
YOUR CLASSROOM



# 1. TEACH STUDENTS HOW TO THINK CRITICALLY

Teaching students how to think critically involves helping them understand the difference between **facts** and **opinions**. Facts are true statements that can be proven using evidence. Opinions are beliefs based on personal experiences, feelings, values, and preferences.

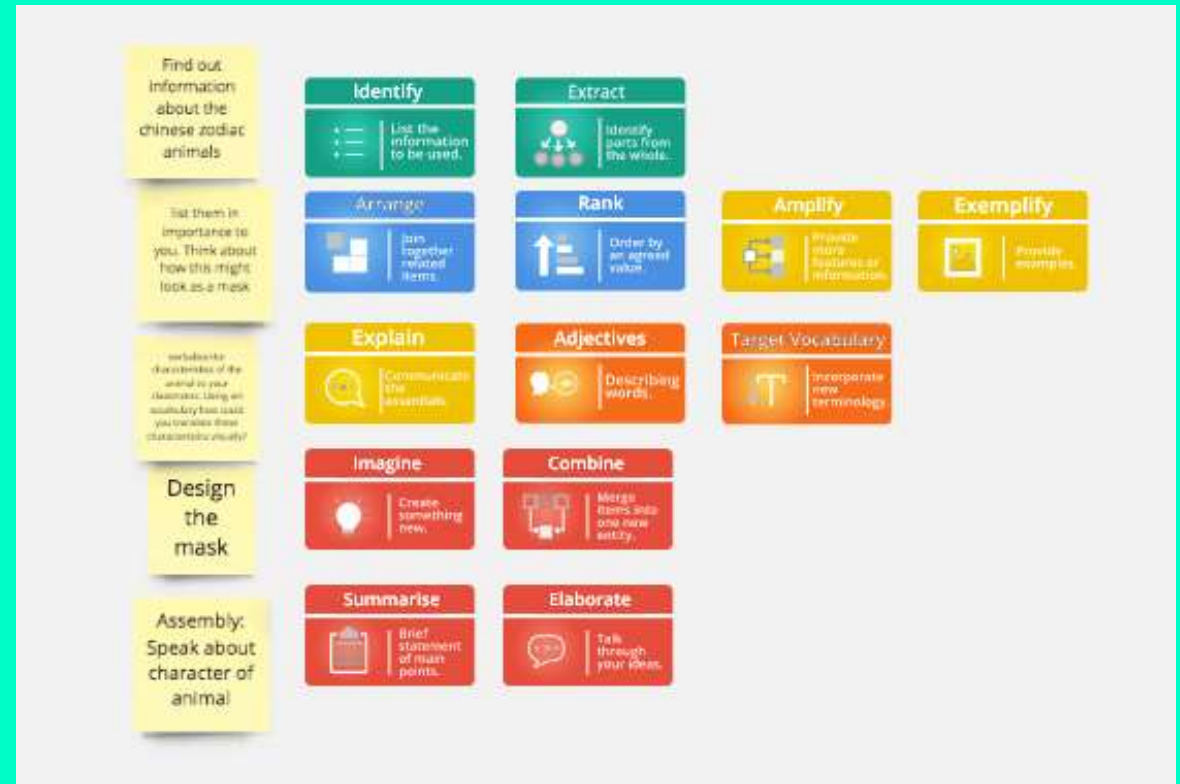
When teaching students how to think critically, focus on helping them **distinguish** between facts and opinions. Helping students learn how to think critically will improve their ability to analyze information and solve problems.



## 2. ENCOURAGE CRITICAL THINKING

Encouraging students to think critically means encouraging them to **question** everything. If you ask students questions such as “Why did you write that?,” “What makes you say that?,” or “How would you prove that?,” you encourage them to think critically.

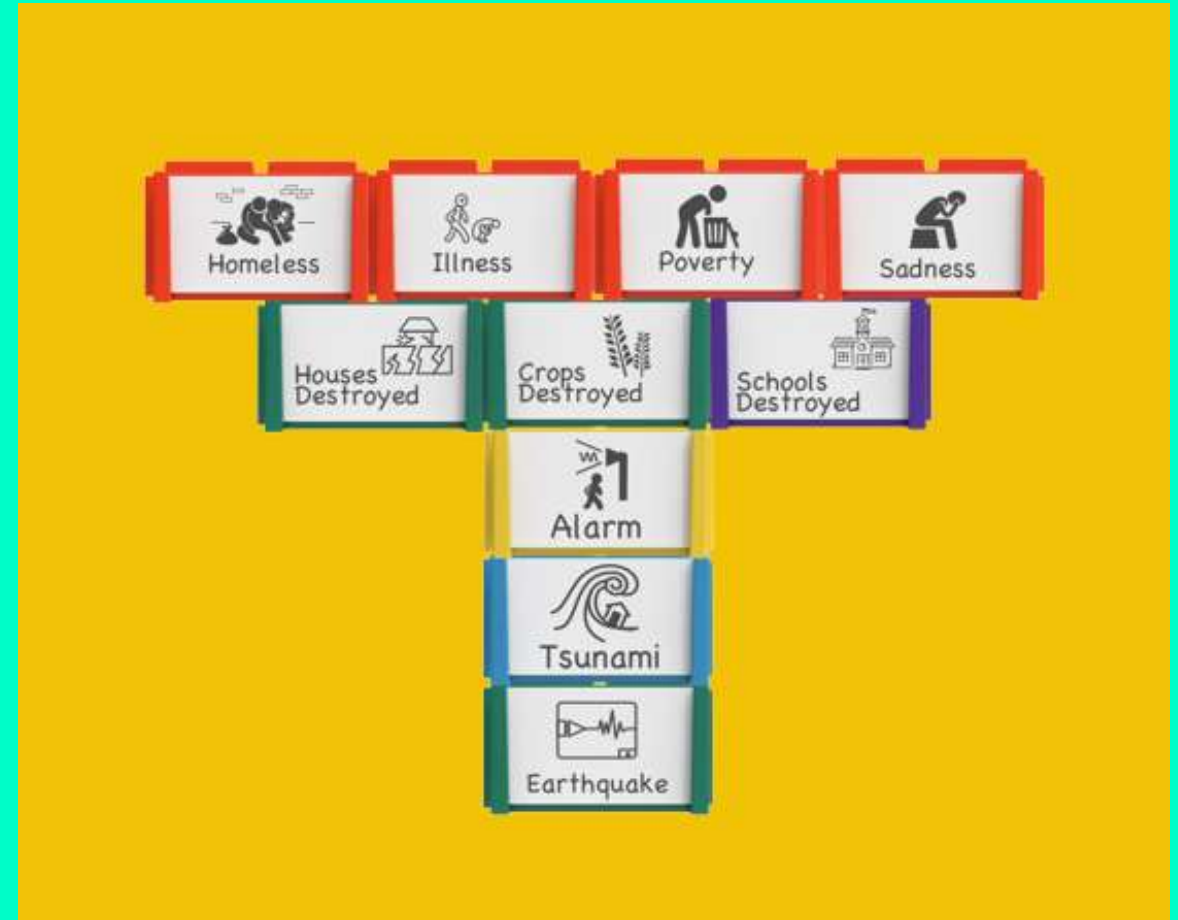
Asking questions helps students become **better thinkers**. Questions allow students to explore issues and come up with answers themselves. Asking questions encourages students to **think deeply** and analytically.



# 3. USE REAL WORLD EXAMPLES

Real world examples are helpful for teaching students how to think. Using real world examples allows students to apply concepts to situations outside of school.

For example, if you teach students how to identify logical fallacies, you can show them how to recognize these errors in arguments. Showing students how to identify logical fallacy gives them practice identifying common mistakes made by others.



# 4. PROVIDE FEEDBACK

Providing **feedback** is another effective method for teaching students how to improve their critical thinking skills. Giving students positive and constructive criticism improves their performance.

Giving students negative feedback does not improve their **performance**. Negative feedback may discourage students from trying again.

Positive feedback motivates students to continue working toward success.

**Choosing a Thinking Guide**  
Deciding how to organise your ideas

**Task-Specific Thinking Guides**

Promoting problem solving and critical thinking using task-specific thinking guides.  
Type of tasks: Independent enquiry, research tasks, group work, planning, reflection, advanced comprehension.

Develop Ideas	Solve Problems	Different Perspectives	Explore Issues	Analyse Situations
<b>Imagine</b> Main Purpose: To build and use knowledge creatively. For example:	<b>Inter</b> Main Purpose: To build and use knowledge for solving problems. For example:	<b>New Perspective</b> Main Purpose: To look at issues from other angles. For example:	<b>Investigate</b> Main Purpose: To methodically think through new ideas. For example:	<b>Judge</b> Main Purpose: To facilitate critical thinking. For example:
Using the Essence	Knowing Tree	Thinking Boxes	Impact Boxes	Scamper
Possible Futures	Coming Soon	From a Different Angle	Coming Soon	Coming Soon

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# 5. MODEL GOOD CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Modelling good critical thinking skills is one of the most effective methods for teaching students how to become better thinkers. Teaching students how to think critically requires modeling good critical thinking skills.

Good critical thinking skills include asking open-ended questions, analyzing data, evaluating sources, and recognizing logical fallacies.

What can I do with my new knowledge and understanding?  
Using knowledge purposefully

Higher Order Thinking

Imagine  
Create something new

**Imagine**  
Create something from your new knowledge.

**Related words**  
Create, devise, conceptualise, visualise, plan, think of.

**What does it look like?**


- Applying knowledge to make something new.
- Exploring hypothetical situations.
- Thinking through alternatives.
- Using creativity to solve problems.

**What processes are involved?**

- Producing meaning or ideas.
- Predicting new events or outcomes.
- Inferring meaning and going beyond available information.

**Question stems and prompts**

- If you were \_\_\_\_, how would you have reacted?
- How many ways can you think of to \_\_\_\_?
- Can you think of an alternative ending?
- If \_\_\_\_ had happened, what would have been the result?
- If we change \_\_\_\_, what would the effect have been?
- What would you predict/infer from \_\_\_\_?
- How can you explain \_\_\_\_?
- Think through the events leading up to \_\_\_\_, what would you change?



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In a world where artificial intelligence is on the rise and continuously developing, a humanized value such as **critical thinking** is increasingly important. Reliance on technology makes life simpler in many ways, but simultaneously makes the possession of certain skills and abilities **more attractive** to potential employers and more beneficial for individuals who possess them.



**CRITICAL THINKING** ALLOWS FOR CREATIVITY WHEN PROBLEM-SOLVING AND PROMOTES **INDEPENDENCE** AND **CONFIDENCE**. SHOULD TECHNOLOGY EVER FAIL, THOSE WHO ARE ABLE TO THINK CRITICALLY IN A VARIETY OF SITUATIONS WILL BE THE **ONES WHO ARE VALUED THE MOST**.