

# Seven Myths about Critical Thinking



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## ***Myth One:***

Critical thinking is just one  
thing with one definition...



## General Education Outcomes

### I. Skills:

Students should be able to:

#### **A. think critically, reason soundly, and argue effectively,**

as demonstrated by the ability to:

1. analyze arguments according to standard criteria
2. assume and defend a position on a given topic
3. use systematic processes, including the collection and analysis of evidence, to form and support conclusions
4. read and analyze complex texts, including the analysis of rhetorical devices and modes of inference



Actually, CT is partly discipline specific.

- Informal Logic
- Compelling Rhetoric
- Scientific Method
- Qualitative Inquiry
- Art Criticism



***Myth Two:***

Critical thinking can only be taught in those disciplines with explicit problem-solving methodologies.

Defining CT



***Myth Three:***

Teaching the skills of critical thinking is all we are called upon to do...

The spirit of CT



## Gen Ed Skills Set

1. analyze arguments according to standard criteria
2. assume and defend a position on a given topic
3. use systematic processes, including the collection and analysis of evidence, to form and support conclusions
4. read and analyze complex texts, including the analysis of rhetorical devices and modes of inference



### ***Myth Four:***

Critical thinking can be taught sufficiently as a single set of lessons.

Ubiquitous university commitment  
Childhood base



***Myth Five:***

Critical thinking is about solving future problems, problems that present themselves to the student once he or she is “out in the world.”

Richard Paul: strong vs. weak CT



***Myth Six:***

Critical thinking is always “perspectival” – there is no such thing as “objectivity” when it comes to CT.

Harvey Siegel: reason neutrality



***Myth Seven:***

Critical thinking is always perfectly “objective” – context should not matter. At least the adjudication of evidence is always perfectly “objective.”