

Critical Thinking – Foundation of Critical Thinking

Directions for Students: After you have carefully read the assigned reading, complete the following sentences with whatever elaboration you think necessary to make your meaning clear. Do not write on the test. Use separate sheets of paper so that you have room for elaboration.

- 1) The main purpose of this editorial, article, or essay is _____.
- 2) The key question (whether stated or unstated) is _____.
- 3) The most important information in this editorial, article, or essay is _____.
- 4) The main conclusion(s) in this editorial, article, or essay is (are) _____.
- 5) The main idea(s) we need to understand in order to understand this editorial, article, or essay is (are) _____.
Here is a short explanation of what the author means by this/these concept(s):

- 6) The main assumption(s) underlying the author's thinking is (are) _____.
- 7) The main implications of this line of reasoning is (are) _____.
- 8) The main point(s) of view presented in this editorial, article, or essay is (are): _____.
(What is the author focused on and from what angle?)

Intellectual Standards and Criteria Used in the International Critical Thinking Essay Test

The test taker should be guided by the questions below in developing his/her assessment of the writing sample (Part II). In addition, the test taker is called upon to comment on the reasoning as appropriate in terms of its clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logicalness, significance, and fairness -- or lack thereof.

1. **Question:** Is the question at issue clear and unbiased? Does the expression of the question do justice to the complexity of the matter at issue?
2. **Purpose:** Is the purpose well-stated or implied? Is it clear and justifiable? Are the question and purpose directly relevant to each other?
3. **Information:** Is relevant evidence, experiences and/or information essential to the issue cited? Is the information accurate? Are the complexities of the issue addressed?
4. **Ideas (concepts):** Are key ideas clarified when necessary? Are the concepts used justifiably?
5. **Assumptions:** Is there sensitivity to what is being taken for granted or assumed? (Insofar as those assumptions might reasonably be questioned?) Are questionable assumptions being used without addressing problems which might be inherent in those assumptions?
6. **Conclusions:** Is a line of reasoning well developed explaining the main conclusions? Are alternative conclusions considered? Are there any apparent inconsistencies in the reasoning?
7. **Point of View:** Is a sensitivity to alternative relevant points of view or lines of reasoning shown? Is consideration given to objections framed from other relevant points of view? If so, were they responded to?
8. **Implications:** Is sensitivity shown to the implications and consequences of the position taken?