



Critical Thinking Journal

(from a biblical worldview)

Name: _____

Date began: _____

Date completed: _____

by
Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk

Dear student,

In your journal I want you to chart your progress as you learn to rearrange your thinking. Pick one thing to ponder each week. Spend a minimum of an hour per day, 5 days per week minimum, on your course work. This will include studying the textbook, watching and studying the videos, if you are taking video classes, and working on your journal. The largest portion of time each week should be spent working on your journal.

You can pick any thing to ponder that you wish for each week. Some things may take more than one week but make that the exception. Use the RRA from pages 35-39 in the textbook to help you arrange your thinking. This is a very basic exercise to help you start learning to think critically instead of chaotically. It is designed to help you avoid the natural tendency toward egocentric or sociocentric or just plain lazy thinking and actually think about what you hear or read or see before you believe it, espouse it, or disagree with it.

In future Critical Thinking courses you will learn more in depth ways to arrange your thinking, such as FRISCO and SEBKUS. These are explained in the Critical Thinking I textbook but you will not utilize them in this current Journal. They are for future ones.

On pages 49 and following in the textbook are some questions for consideration. You may choose from them your thing to consider for your weekly Journal work or you may use others. It is your choice but I do want you to use at least half of them in that list. However, for the ones you choose that are not in that list, do not choose trite topics and then give them a nominal treatment in your Journal. Choose ones that you or your group may believe but you don't know, biblically, **why** you believe them nor could you defend them against dissenters nor teach the biblical basis for them to others. Give them a thorough treatment, not just a cursory one.

At the end of this course you will submit a copy of your Journal for assessment. Before you submit it you will need to go through it from beginning to end and write a **Summary** and then a **Self-Assessment** of your progress. Pages and instructions for those two can be found at the end of this Journal.

Preparation: Read pages 35-39 in the textbook before you begin your Journal.

Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk
Taylorsville, UT
June 24, 2017

Pick one thing to ponder per week. Go through the process of the RRA from pages 35-39 as you think about it. When finished, go through it at least 2 more times.

RRA - (3 Underlying strategies for Critical Thinking)

Date: _____

Thing to ponder: _____

Reflection



Reasons



Alternatives



- 1. Reflection** - Stop and think, instead of making snap judgments, or accepting the first idea that comes into your head, or automatically accepting whatever is presented to you.
- 2. Reasons** - Ask yourself such questions as “How do you know”, "What are the reasons?" and “Is that a good source of information?” thus prodding yourself to have good Reasons for your views and to seek Reasons for others' views.
- 3. Alternatives** - Be very alert for Alternative hypotheses, conclusions, explanations, sources of evidence, points of view, plans, etc.

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Summary and Self-Assessment

Summary:

Write a 1 page summary of what you have learned and its effect on you and others. Include some or all of the following: what processes have you learned for improving your thinking, how your thinking has changed, how your views and/or beliefs have changed, how the change in your thinking has impacted your scholastic life, how it has impacted your family life, how it has impacted the way you relate to others and how they relate to you, anything else that you see has changed in your way of thinking and how you view the Word of God and how you view other people and the world in general.

Self-Assessment:

Draw this from your Journal. Go through your Journal from beginning to end and assess what you see in the way of progress or improvement in your Critical Thinking skills as indicated by the notes in your Journal. Include any noticeable changes in what you wrote and how you expressed yourself and any comparisons between early entries and latter ones.

Use the Summary page for the Summary and the Self-Assessment page for the Self-Assessment. Do not use more than one page for each of those. If you have any additional comments, include them on the “Final Thoughts or Comments” page.

Dr. T.E. VanBuskirk - June 24, 2017 - Taylorsville, UT

Summary:

Self-Assessment:

Final Thoughts or Comments:

(If you choose to add them, you may do so; but they are not required.)

Student name: _____

Date: _____