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Information Literacy and Critical Thinking: The Power of Success

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Information Literacy & Critical Thinking: The Power of Success
Dr. Cheryl Clayton-Molina
Exercise in Self-Reflection

Answer these questions, then discuss with a neighbor and report back on your commonalities and differences to the larger group.

• What is “Information Literacy,” in your own words?

• How are you using information literacy in your own field (e.g. to locate data or find opinions)?

• At what stage in your departmental curriculum (or during which courses) do students encounter a need for information literacy?

• When you did research for the first time, what were the most challenging things or what things were most “foreign” to you?
Overview: Information Literacy in the Digital Age

• A person’s ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment

Digital: ___________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________

Literacy: _________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
_______________________________________________________________
Information Literacy: Definition

A mean to “empower people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social, occupational and educational goals” (Unesco)

A set of abilities requiring individuals to “recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (ACRL)
What Does it Mean to be Information Literate?

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Information Literacy Skills

- Need for information:
- Resources available:
- How to find information:
- Need to evaluate results
- How to work with or exploit results
- Ethics and responsibility of use
- How to communicate or share your findings
- How to manage your findings
Three Major Components

• Prospecting – relates to the discovery of relevant information

• Interpreting – being able to translate data and information into knowledge, insight, and understanding.

• Creating new ideas
Characteristics of information literacy for schools

- Invention
- Fluency
- Support
- Navigation
- Searching
- Selection
- Questioning
- Planning
- Interpretation
- Deep Thinking
- Commitment
Why is Information Literacy Important?

“Within today’s information society, the most important learning outcomes for all students is their being able to function as independent lifelong learners. The essential enabler to reaching that goal is information literacy.”

(Patricia Breivik, 2000)
Becoming Information Literate

- Cannot be taught in one class or an one shot effort
- Has to be a part of education
- It belongs in every class or tasks that requires us to think.
Critical Thinking

• Critical thinking requires distinguishing between assumption and facts, suspending personal opinions and bias in favor of objectivity, and considering issues from multiple perspectives.
Required Skills for Critical Thinking

- Analyzing
- Evaluating
- Interpreting
- Explaining
- Synthesizing
- Open minded
## 6 Critical Questions

When someone has something to say, think about:

1. **Who said it?**
   - Someone you know?
   - Someone famous?
   - Someone in authority?
   - Should it matter who said it?

2. **What did they say?**
   - Did they give facts or opinions?
   - Did they give all the facts?
   - Did they leave something out?

3. **Where did they say it?**
   - Was it in public or in private?
   - Did other people have a chance to talk about the other side?

4. **When did they say it?**
   - Before, after, or during an important event?

5. **Why did they say it?**
   - Did they explain their opinions?
   - Were they trying to make someone look good or bad?

6. **How did they say it?**
   - Were they happy, sad, angry, or didn’t care?
   - Did they write it or speak it?
   - Could you understand it?

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## Critical versus non-critical thinking

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th>Uncritical Thinking</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seek complete information to arrive at a decision</td>
<td>Make decisions based on partial or wrong information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a clear focus</td>
<td>Drift and easily get distracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Base judgement on evidence and facts</td>
<td>Base judgment on hearsay, preferences or self-interests</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control feelings and emotions</td>
<td>Get emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make decisions with the head</td>
<td>Make decisions with the heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open-minded</td>
<td>Close-minded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested in hearing alternative views and opinions</td>
<td>Unwilling to entertain views and opinions of others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Realistic about their ability</td>
<td>Overestimate their ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Validate assumptions</td>
<td>Make assumptions which may not necessarily be true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensitive to bias and distortions in decision-making</td>
<td>Fall prey to bias and other distortions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persevere</td>
<td>Easily give up</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Problem Solving: I.D.E.A.S.

- Identify Problems and Set Priorities
- Determine Relevant Information and Deepen Understanding
- Enumerate Options and Anticipate Consequences
- Assess the Situation and Make a Preliminary Decision
- Scrutinize the Process and Self-Correct as Needed.
Setting Realistic Goals: SMART

• **Be Specific** - To set a specific goal you must answer the six “W” questions:
  - *Who: Who is involved?
  - *What: What do I want to accomplish?
  - *Where: Identify a location.
  - *When: Establish a time frame.
  - *Which: Identify requirements and constraints.
  - *Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

• **Measureable** - When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to continued effort required to reach your goal.
  - To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as......
    - How much? How many?
    - How will I know when it is accomplished?

• **Attainable** - You can attain most any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry out those steps.

• **Realistic** - To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both willing and able to work.

• **Timely** - A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there’s no sense of urgency.
The best teachers are those who equip students to THINK for themselves.
Presentation: Wrap-up

- Information literacy is the new educational challenge of our generation.
Resources

Sample Exam of Information Literacy

• [https://windward.hawaii.edu/cil/information_literacy/exam.php](https://windward.hawaii.edu/cil/information_literacy/exam.php)

List of Skills for Information Literacy

• [https://windward.hawaii.edu/cil/information_literacy/skills.php](https://windward.hawaii.edu/cil/information_literacy/skills.php)

• Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP, 2012): Information Literacy Skills