
Questioning as we learn: An introduction to critical thinking

Material for Higher Education students in Sierra Leone by INASP, UK



Provided by the Critical Thinking Taskforce (CTTF)
within the project AQHEd-SL

Unit 6 - Snippet 137

Please see our sample answers to questions 4 to 6 of snippet 136 below. Compare how similar or different they are compared to your thoughts.

4. *What is the author's point of view? What may his/her biases be?*

The author seems to be looking at the issue from a student's perspective who values classroom interaction and preparing for the workplace. He/she probably does not have difficulty reaching the class and is likely to be interested in making friends.

Some of the assumptions he/she seems to make are:

- If the teacher answers a question promptly, this helps the student understand better than a delayed answer provided online.
- Friendship is important for students.
- Online courses do not necessitate online presence at a specified time, hence punctuality cannot be practised in online courses.
- One of the roles of attending class is to prepare learners for the workplace.

5. *What implications are likely if people do (not) follow the line of reasoning?*

If people follow the author's line of reasoning, then provided students want easy access to their teacher and real face-to-face connections with classmates, as well as aim to learn a sense of responsibility, they would attend face-to-face courses rather than online courses.

If people do not follow the author's line of reasoning, face-to-face courses would probably not be given preference over online courses.

6. *How relevant are the author's points? Does he/she stay focused on the purpose or the question being addressed? Is the information presented clearly connected to the purpose or question?*

Provided we accept that the author mainly argues in favour of face-to-face education as opposed to online education, the premises are relevant. The author stays focused on proving his/her point most of the time. However, in the last paragraph, he/she concludes something that has not been discussed: 'The most advanced way is not always the best, and students should choose the way which is the best for them to study'. These claims are not clearly connected to the major claim, and no premises are presented for them.