
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 3 - Snippet 56

Unit 3 Arguments and reasoning

We hope you have been enjoying reading and completing the activities in these snippets so far. Welcome to the next learning unit that will help you to strengthen your critical thinking skills even further. In unit 3, you will learn about arguments and develop your reasoning skills.

Argumentative texts are common across all higher education disciplines. Argumentative texts support propositions. For instance, texts you need to read for a course in science will most likely provide evidence to support theories; in social sciences, you will read about debates of the theoretical aspects of a variety of topics. Whatever you are studying, you will need to judge whether the text is an appropriate and reliable source of information. Some texts will be more factual than others, while others will attempt to influence your opinions.

By facilitating your learning about arguments, this unit will show you ways in which texts can influence your thinking. It will provide examples of deductive and inductive reasoning, and show you which arguments to accept as good (valid, sound, strong, cogent) and which to reject as bad (invalid, unsound, weak, uncogent).

At the end of this unit, you will have improved your skills in distinguishing good from bad arguments and in building convincing arguments that are informed by evidence.