Questioning as we learn: An introduction to critical thinking

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

Assuring Quality Higher Education in Sierra Leone (AQHEd-SL)

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Unit 3 - Snippet 67

Have you found the same arguments in the 'Indigenous knowledge' text as noted in the table? We have written the premise and conclusion indicators in bold. Have you highlighted these indicators in the text too?

In the following reading, you will learn about two types of argumentation:

Deductive and inductive reasoning

An argument is either deductive or inductive; so the two basic types of arguments are deductive arguments and inductive arguments.

While deductive arguments are useful when you want to prove your point in a matter of logic or mathematical reasoning (such as when you write a proof), they are not so helpful in supporting humans to broaden their horizons. Inductive arguments, on the other hand, are very important in science because they help us come up with something new in our search for more regularities. They help us make predictions, generalization and educated guesses about the future based on our observation of past events, thus enriching our knowledge. While sound deductive arguments provide us with certainty, they do not help us enrich our knowledge. On the other hand, good inductive arguments, although merely indicating probability, help us broaden our horizons.