

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 75

What was your answer to the questions in snippet 74 about the 'healthy diet' argument? Compare your answer with this sample answer below:

Premise 1 is believable. There are quite a few research studies which indicate that fruits and vegetables can help reduce the risk of certain diseases. So a diet which avoids the consumption of fruit and vegetables wouldn't be considered as a healthy diet, based on the current evidence of research. However, premise 2 is wrong. Ovo-lacto vegetarians don't avoid the consumption of fruit and vegetables; they don't eat meat. Therefore, the conclusion cannot be deduced from the premises.



Q&A activity – Inductive argument

Now read this argument about the size of dinosaurs compared to animals living today:

Premise 1: The size of the Tyrannosaurus rex is described to be about 12 metres long.

Premise 2: Argentinosaurus is known from just a few bones, but its size has been estimated at 30 metres in length.

Premise 3: The Giraffatitan's size has been estimated between 21.8–22.5 metres in length and about 12 meters tall.

Premise 4: An African giraffe, the tallest land animal in the world, can grow to about six metres tall.

Conclusion: Therefore, most dinosaurs were likely to be huge compared to the land animals living today.

Do you think the conclusion of this argument is convincing? Why or why not? Note your answer down.