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## 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

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#### *Unit 4 - Snippet 86*

### **Analysis of information – think critically!**

Welcome to the next learning unit; you will continue to strengthen your critical thinking skills while analysing information. Whenever we hear or read an argument, we should be alert to what the person who makes a claim wants to persuade us to accept or to do. This kind of alertness makes us less vulnerable to manipulation, and more reassured that what we accept has been filtered through our own best thinking. Our modern times are characterised by an abundance of information and we face the big challenge how to judge the quality of available information we deal with, as student, as responsible citizen, in any job or in our private life. Remember: critical thinking is reasoned and it involves making evaluative judgments about claims and arguments.

In unit 4, you will learn how to

- Distinguish between facts and opinions
- Recognise cause–effect relations
- Avoid mistaking correlations or simple coincidences for causality
- Understand what you can or cannot conclude from conditional statements
- Spot some of the more common fallacies

This unit provides the basic tools to avoid common pitfalls in reasoning. It includes several activities for you to practise analysing statements and texts, and also encourages you to reflect on how your new knowledge and skills can help you to handle information like a critical thinker does.