

Critical Reading Exercise

Richard Paul, in his book *Critical Thinking*, defines critical reading in part as “A critical reader actively looks for assumptions, key concepts and ideas, reasons and justifications, supporting examples, parallel experiences, implications and consequences, and any other structural features of the written text, to interpret and assess it accurately and fairly.”

Classroom activity:

Get students in to groups of six. Give them a short editorial from a newspaper or magazine and have them read it as they normally would.

- a) Have them write a short paragraph stating the main point of the article.
- b) Then ask students to read it again using Richard Paul’s criteria (below):
- c) Ask three students to support the position of the article and the other three to take an opposing position.
 - assumptions
 - key concepts and ideas
 - reasons and justifications
 - supporting examples
 - parallel experiences
 - implications and consequences
 - other structural features
- d) Each team has 3-5 minutes to state their points of view using facts and inferences from the article.
- e) Have each group discuss the differences they noticed between the two methods of reading.

Applying Bloom’s Taxonomy:

Using the same article, have students get in 6 groups (one for each level) and to generate exam and essay questions based on the material.