

Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving Rubric

Criteria	Advanced	Proficient	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Identifies, understands, summarizes (and appropriately reformulates) the problem, question, or issue	Evaluates and selects the most effective approaches to define the problem	Identifies the challenge and alternate, embedded, or implicit aspects of the problem	Some aspects are incorrect or confusing; nuances and key details are missing or glossed over Understands the issue or problem at its basic cognitive level	Does not attempt to understand the basic elements of the problem, question, or issue at hand
Identifies and considers the influence of context* and assumptions	Most efficiently identifies influence of context and questions assumptions toward addressing ethical dimensions that underlie the issue	Analysis acknowledges complexity and bias of vantage and values, although may elect to hold to bias in context	Explores relevant contexts and assumptions regarding the issue, though in a limited way; analysis includes some outside verification, but primarily relies on established authorities	Approach to the issue is in egocentric or socio-centric terms; does not include connections to other contexts; analysis is grounded in absolutes with little evidence of knowledge of own bias
Develops OWN perspective, hypothesis, or position	Most effectively justifies own view, or hypothesis, or position while qualifying or integrating related counter-positions or counter-perspectives	Position demonstrates ownership for constructing knowledge or framing original hypotheses/questions, integrating objective analyses Appropriately identifies own position on the issue, drawing support from experience and information not available from assigned sources	Position includes some original thinking though some aspects may have been adopted with limited thought Identifies own position or hypothesis, though inconsistently; justifies own position with sufficient awareness of others' views	Position or hypothesis is clearly inherited or adopted with little original consideration Fails to justify own opinion or forward hypothesis; position or hypothesis is unclear, or simplistic
Presents, assesses, and analyzes appropriate supporting data/evidence	Information is most clearly defined and well integrated to exceed assignment, course, or personal interests	Correlations are clearly distinct from causal relationships between and among ideas; sequence of presentation reflects clearly the relationship or organization of ideas, subordinating appropriately for importance and impact	Distinguishes causality from correlation, though presentation may be flawed appropriate data/evidence or sources provided to meet the information need, though little evidence of more than routine exploration	Conflates cause and correlation; presents evidence and ideas in confused or confusing sequence; data/evidence or sources are simplistic, not on topic or are inappropriate
Integrates issue using OTHER (disciplinary) perspectives and positions	Most efficiently integrates own and others' ideas through a complex process of judgment and justification	Analysis of other positions is accurate and nuanced, empathetic even when countered	Engages challenging ideas tentatively or perhaps in ways that overstate conflict; may dismiss alternative views too hastily; analysis of other positions is thoughtful and mostly accurate	Adopts a single idea or limited ideas with little question; engages ideas that are obvious or agreeable; avoids difficult, challenging, and discomfoting ideas; treats other positions superficially or misrepresents them

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Identifies and assesses conclusions, implications, and consequences	<p>Most cogently identifies, discusses, and extends conclusions, implications, and consequences considering context, assumptions, data, and evidence; superiorly qualifies own assertions with balance</p> <p>Most cogently explains the relationship between approaches and solutions the problem or question</p>	<p>Conclusions are qualified as the best available evidence within the given context; clear ties to and consideration of consequences</p> <p>Implications are clearly developed, including consideration of uncertainty and ambiguity</p>	<p>Conclusions consider or provide evidence of consequences that extend beyond the borders of single discipline or single issue; presents implications that may impact other people or issues</p> <p>Presents conclusions as relative and only loosely related to consequences; implications may follow with vague reference to conclusions</p>	<p>Fails to identify conclusions, implications, and consequences or conclusion is simplistic summary</p> <p>Conclusions presented as absolute and may attribute conclusion to external authority</p>
Communicates effectively	<p>Organization is most cogent; transitions between ideas most adequately enhance presentation; most consistent use of appropriate format</p> <p>Relatively no writing and documentation problems with any component of presentation</p>	<p>Language clearly and cogently communicates ideas; may at times be nuanced and eloquent; errors are minimal; style is appropriate for audience</p> <p>Organization is clear; transitions between ideas enhance presentation; consistent use of appropriate format; few problems with other components of presentation; all sources are cited and used correctly, demonstrating understanding of economic, legal and social issues involved with the use of information</p>	<p>In general, language does not interfere with communication; errors are infrequent and not distracting, although there may be some problems with more difficult aspects of style and voice</p> <p>Basic organization is apparent; transitions connect ideas, although they may be mechanical; format is appropriate although at times inconsistent; most sources are cited and used correctly</p>	<p>In many places, language obscures meaning; grammar, syntax, or other errors are distracting or repeated; little evidence of proofreading; style is inconsistent or inappropriate</p> <p>Work is unfocused and poorly organized; lacks logical connection of ideas; format is absent, inconsistent or distracting; few sources are cited or used correctly</p>

***Cultural/Social:** Group, national, ethnic behavior/attitude

***Educational:** Schooling, formal training

***Technological:** Applied Science, engineering

***Political:** Organizational or governmental

***Scientific:** Conceptual, basic science, scientific method

***Humanistic:** Cognitive, heuristic, personal experience

***Economic:** trade, business concerns costs

***Ethical:** Values

Adapted from Bowling Green University and Washington State University Rubrics