Critical Thinking
by R BEHARI - 13 Feb 2017 @ 15:40

Hi all,

Studying the humanities is supposed to help develop your critical thinking skills. I can see with many of you that this is not happening. I would like to spend some time looking at what critical thinking is, why it is important in a subject like English, and why the skill will make you a better essay writer.

Do not associate the word "critical" with something negative. It does not have a negative meaning in this instance. Critical thinking means to analyse and evaluate information to come to your own judgment or conclusion. It is a problem-solving skill.

When you are given an essay topic, you need to actively think about the question, engage with it and come up with an answer that is informed, well thought out and carefully constructed. You need to learn to think for yourself and back up your answers with intelligent information.

Here are a few links to read:

http://philosophy.hku.hk/think/critical/ct.php

http://www.criticalthinking.org/pages/our-concept-and-definition-of-critical-thinking/411

Watch these videos:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J0yEAE5owWw

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dItUGF8GdTw

Mark entire discussion as read

Essay writing tips
by R BEHARI - 13 Feb 2017 @ 15:38

The first thing to do when studying English is **read your prescribed texts**. This may seem obvious but lots of students try to get away with just reading notes or watching movie versions. **Read the text!**

Use a highlighter as a bookmark. When something seems important during your reading, highlight it. I highlight entire pages, entire paragraphs, sometimes just one word on an entire page.

Look up words you don't understand. Work with your text so that you get the most out of it.

When you look at your assignment topic for the first time, don't feel scared or overwhelmed.

The lecturers do not want you to fail – they want you to do well but they need to teach you to think critically. Always have the outcomes of the unit in your mind and try to fulfil them while answering your essay question. Thinking about this will narrow your focus and help.

So, you get your essay topic. This is what you do:

Read the question carefully and **break down what the question wants you to do**. Write down the question and start interrogating it. What does it want you to do? Agree or disagree? In this care there will be a statement that you need to analyse and decide, "Yes, I agree", or "No, I don't agree". Do you need to think creatively and come up with new ideas?

First write out the question. **It helps to look at things in your own handwriting**.

Writing an essay is about working with yourself and your own brain. Y**ou get to decide what goes on the paper based on the question**. Do not let yourself down but not reading and preparing and researching.

Writing an essay give you a chance to communicate your thoughts, and express your thoughts and personality. It showcases your observation skills. Everyone is different so books mean different things to each of us and we all see things that happen in books differently, or we learn from books and grow and our opinions sometimes are challenged by what we learn. This adds to your knowledge and in your essay, you get to show off your knowledge.

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Re: Essay writing tips
by M THAKERSEE - 14 Feb 2017 @ 17:36

good evening

I would like to know how long the essay should be, it does not state the word limit as well

thank you

Mamta

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Re: Essay writing tips
by R BEHARI - 15 Feb 2017 @ 19:11

Hi, I have sent an email to the lecturer regarding this but have not gotten a response. I will send here another and send out an announcement once I have an answer.

Re: Essay writing tips
by A STOFFBERG - 19 Feb 2017 @ 19:51

I emailed one of the lecturers a little while ago she said the following:

About 1200 words or 3-4 pages

Hope that helps!