



Needs of Critical Thinking

GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATORS

PROJECT NUMBER: 2020-1-SK01-KA204-078371



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

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What is Needs of Critical Thinking project?



The project 'Needs of Critical Thinking' was created to improve the critical thinking skills of adult and senior learners. In a world where technology is developing rapidly and the flow of information is lightning-fast, critical thinking is a key skill that enables one to function in the world of technology in a safe, cautious manner.

The project began in 2020 and is led by The University of Ss Cyril and Methodius (UCM) from Trnava, Slovakia, in collaboration with partners from the organisations Fundacja Pro Scientia Publica from Poland, NazHayat from Turkey, Právě teď! o.p.s. from the Czech Republic, and EduVita from Italy. Each of these organisations has years of experience in adult education projects.

The partners developed materials for the target groups of the project. During the project, a questionnaire was developed to analyse the critical thinking needs of adult learners and an open-access course on the Canvas e-learning platform was developed to teach and develop critical thinking skills. The course materials were created by analysing the results of questionnaires collected from 1,288 respondents across Europe. The course modules are based on the CRAAP model of critical thinking proposed by Sarah Blakeslee (2004) of California State University. The model consists of five elements - currency, relevance, authority, accuracy and purpose.

In these guidelines, you will find information on how to implement the course into your daily educator practice, what tools you will need and what skills your students should have in order to successfully complete the course.

Blakeslee, Sarah (2004). The CRAAP Test. *LOEX Quarterly*, 31(3). Article 4. <https://commons.emich.edu/loexquarterly/vol31/iss3/4>



Course Content



The CriticAI Thinking course is a free access e-learning course designed for adult learners, adult educators and adult education organizations. The course will provide learners with the knowledge crucial to applying critical thinking competencies into everyday life. Users will gain skills in the area of:

- Identifying problems;
- Research;
- Analyzing data;
- Determining data relevance;
- Identifying biases, prejudices, fake news;
- Drawing conclusions.

The course consists of 5 modules that address critical thinking issues:

- Currency - timeliness of information
- Relevance - the importance of the information for your needs.
- Authority - the source of the information.
- Accuracy - the reliability, truthfulness and correctness of the content.
- Purpose - the reason the information exists.

Each module includes short theoretical content that presents the basics of critical thinking issues in an accessible way, interactive exercises in the form of assignments or tests and quizzes, videos and reflections. Each module concludes with a case study to test the newly acquired skills in practice.

A maximum of 90 minutes is allocated to each module, but users typically complete the entire course in around four hours. The student can either complete it individually or in a group.



How to integrate the course into your teaching practice



When incorporating coursework into teaching practice, the first step is to diagnose competencies related to critical thinking in your adults and senior learners. For this purpose, it is useful to use the questionnaire created at the first stage of the project. The course covers all the aspects included in the questionnaire, but it can give you a good indication of what areas to pay special attention to in your audience. The content of the course has been standardized on the basis of 1,288 responses from respondents across Europe, but it is worth bearing in mind, the individual needs of your students. The test can be found here: [Critical Thinking Questionnaire \(CthQ\)](#).

While each module of the Critical Thinking course begins with a brief theoretical introduction, we encourage you to explore the theoretical foundations on which the course is based for yourself. The course is based on the CRAAP test developed by Sarah Blakeslee, which you can find here: [Evaluating Information - Applying the CRAAP Test](#).

To add variety to your course usage during face-to-face classes, you can use the following suggested approaches:

- **Group discussions or debates:** organize debates or discussions around controversial topics covered in the Critical Thinking Course that may encourage learners to critically analyze various perspectives on the topics.
- **Student Reflections:** encourage students to reflect on their learning experiences with the course and share their insights during classroom discussions.
- **Blended Learning:** combine usual face-to-face teaching and learning with online learning components. Use the Critical Thinking e-learning course as a supplementary resource to reinforce concepts covered during the classes.
- **Peer teaching** - can be used two-dimensionally - as an incentive to present selected topics to the rest of the learners, allowing learners to add their own unique perspectives and also as an element of teaching each other how to use the necessary technology, especially in a group of seniors.



Skills required in adult and senior learners



The course is designed in a clear and user-friendly way, but using the e-learning platform may require some specific skills. Here is what learners are expected to be familiar with before starting the CritiCal Thinking course:

- **Basic computer skills:** understanding and performing basic computer operations, such as using a mouse, keyboard, and touch screen (if available), and navigating through different elements on the screen.
- **Internet browsing:** being familiar with basic Internet browsing functions, such as entering URLs, using search engines, opening and closing tabs, and navigating through web pages.
- **Using e-mail:** the ability to receive emails to complete registration for the CriticAL Thinking course on the Canvas platform.
- **Using multimedia:** being able to play multimedia content, such as videos included in course materials.

For those who may find using some elements of the e-learning platform difficult, we have prepared a short illustrated guide. However, please note that it is not intended to teach learners to use a computer from the ground up, but only to support them in the process of completing the course: [Course Guide for users](#)



Project partners



FMK

Fakulta masmediálnej komunikácie
Faculty of Mass Media Communication

The University of Ss Cyril and Methodius (UCM) is one of two public universities with its seat in the city of Trnava. The educational and research is aimed at the area of social, economic, health, natural sciences, humanities, pedagogical and historical sciences

PSP

PROSCIENTIAPUBLICA

NGO from Poland. Foundation works from 2010. Its main aim is to support the development of young academics and to foster all educational initiatives in the field of adult education. Undertakes its own scientific and educational projects that build bridges of understanding between generations



NGO from Turkey. A local group with the mission to unite people of various generations and positively impact their lives. One of the nearest places where we can catch up on what you have missed throughout formal education.

**PRÁVĚ
TED!** o.p.s.

Nonprofit organization from Czechia. The organization is dedicated to active seniors, those who apparently do not need anything. Team is specialised in organizing courses for adult learners aged 50+ mainly in cooperation with municipalities or municipal districts.

EduVita

NGO dedicated to the promotion of lifelong learning and the development of intergenerational and intercultural relationships. It is an open space for different generations meeting, a cultural and educational centre in Lecce



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Do you want to take a part in our course?

Join here: <https://k12.instructure.com/register>

Code: XLFXG4

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Faculty of Mass Media Communication



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