

Reasoning Evaluation



The Characteristics of Good Reasoning & the Corresponding Evaluation Questions

What & Why?



- What is Evaluation?
 - Assessing the strength/weakness or an argument
 - Very High Level Thinking Skill
- Why Evaluate Reasoning?
 - Key to determining how persuaded you should be by an argument
 - Help you create stronger arguments

How: The Basics



- Good Reasoning Characteristics
 - 2 Characteristics for each type
- Application
 - Turn each characteristic into a question
 - Answer each question

Comparison Reasoning

Characteristics:

- Important/Insightful Issues (II)
- Detailed Descriptors (DD)

Questions:

- What are other important but unstated issues?
- What are important details missing from the descriptors?



Cause→Effect Reasoning

Characteristics:

- Multiple causes/effects (OC/OE)
- Clear Connections (CC)

Questions:

- What are unstated causes/effects?
- How clear are the connections between causes & effects?



Generalization Reasoning



Characteristics:

1. Large Sample (LS)
2. Representative Sample (RS)
 - Insightfully parted

Questions:

- How large is the sample?
- How representative is the sample?



Critical Evaluation Protocol

1. Identify Thesis & Predominant Type of Reasoning Used
 - a. Identify Elements of that type of reasoning
2. Diagram
3. Ask Contextualized Appropriate Critical Evaluation Questions
4. Answer Appropriate Critical Evaluation Questions
 - a. Briefly discuss what the argument does well
 - b. Identify weaknesses in the argument & provide additional information that would strengthen.



Applying Reasoning Skills to Research

1. Determine type(s) of reasoning implied in research question.
2. Consider characteristics of good reasoning for that/those types