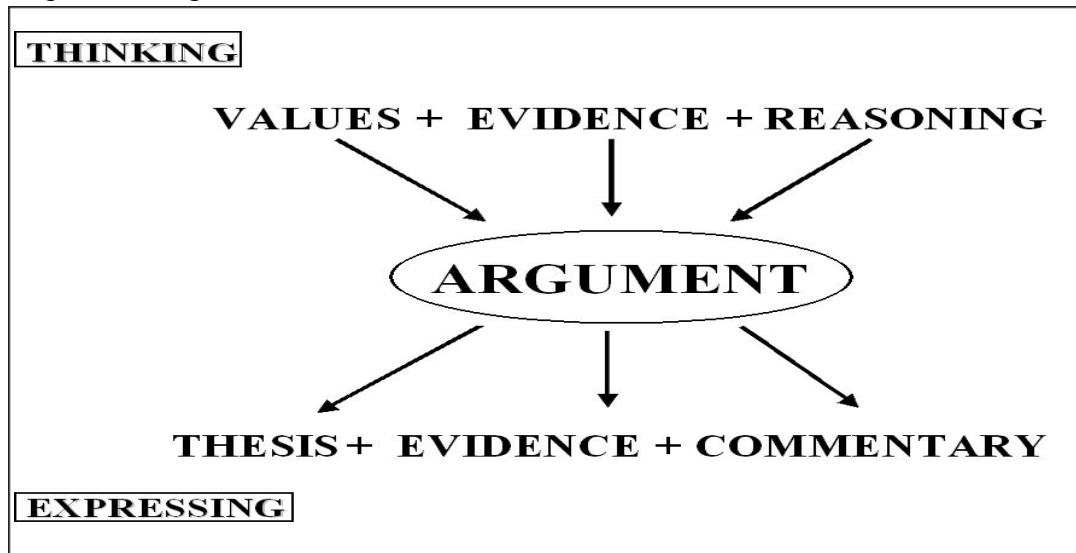


INTRODUCTION to CRITICAL THINKING

Summary

This unit is an introduction to what this course is really all about: critical thinking. Basically, critical thinking means thinking for yourself. It means evaluating (critiquing) the information you receive and coming to your own conclusions regarding that information. However, good critical thinking is much more than stubborn independence. Good critical thinking entails a complex of skills. A major goal of this course is to develop and strengthen those skills.



Sources

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ___ PPT: Critical Skills Diagram | ___ “Recognizing Types of Reasoning” |
| ___ Chart: Values Definitions | ___ PPT: URCAL Thesis Statements |
| ___ Eric Foner, “Introduction” to <i>The Story of American Freedom</i> | ___ Evaluating Sources |
| | ___ PPT: Effective Commentary |

Content Questions

1. What is “history” and why is “argument” at the center of the study of history?
2. What are the four core historical questions?
3. What is critical thinking and what is the difference between a weak opinion and a strong argument?
4. What are “values?” What values do we focus on in this course?
5. What is evidence? How do you evaluate the reliability of a source?
6. What is “reasoning?” What are the different categories of historical reasoning? What are the different elements of each category of historical reasoning?
7. What is a “thesis” and what are the characteristics of a good thesis?
8. What is “commentary” and what are the characteristics of effective commentary?

Terms, Concepts & People:

- | | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| 1. Critical Thinking | 14. Centralization | 27. Effect |
| 2. History | 15. Evidence | 28. Connector |
| 3. Argument | 16. Primary Source | 29. Generalization |
| 4. Values | 17. Secondary Source | 30. Whole |
| 5. Individualism | 18. Public Source | 31. Part |
| 6. Collectivism | 19. Private Source | 32. Sample |
| 7. Liberty | 20. Reasoning | 33. Thesis |
| 8. Order | 21. Comparison | 34. Unified |
| 9. Equality | 22. Subjects | 35. Restricted |
| 10. Hierarchy | 23. Issue | 36. Clear |
| 11. Democracy | 24. Descriptor | 37. Analytical |
| 12. Authority | 25. Cause & Effect | 38. Lionesque |
| 13. Capitalism | 26. Cause | 39. Commentary |