

# **CRITICAL THINKING, REASONING, AND READING STRATEGIES**

SEMINAR SERIES ON ACADEMIC SUCCESS



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# CRITICAL THINKING

- What is it? Simply, it means asking and answering questions – especially what, why, how, and what if?
- Why bother? To develop personal passion and seek rationale for learning.
- How to develop skills? Seek alternative viewpoints and challenge personal assumptions.

# Do you think?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-85-j7Nr9i4&feature=related>

# Ma and Pa Kettle Learn Math

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bfq5kju627c>

Becoming a  
Master  
Student  
Athlete by  
David Ellis

# Attitudes of a college-level critical thinker

## Attitude

Truth-seeking

Open-minded

Analytical

Systematic

Self-confident

Inquisitive

Mature

## Sample statement

"Let's follow this idea and see where it leads."

"I have a point of view on this subject, and I'm anxious to hear yours as well."

"Taking a stand on the issue commits me to take some action."

"The speaker made some interesting points, and I'd like to hear some more evidence to support each one."

"After reading the book for the first time, I was confused. I'll be able to understand it after studying the book some more."

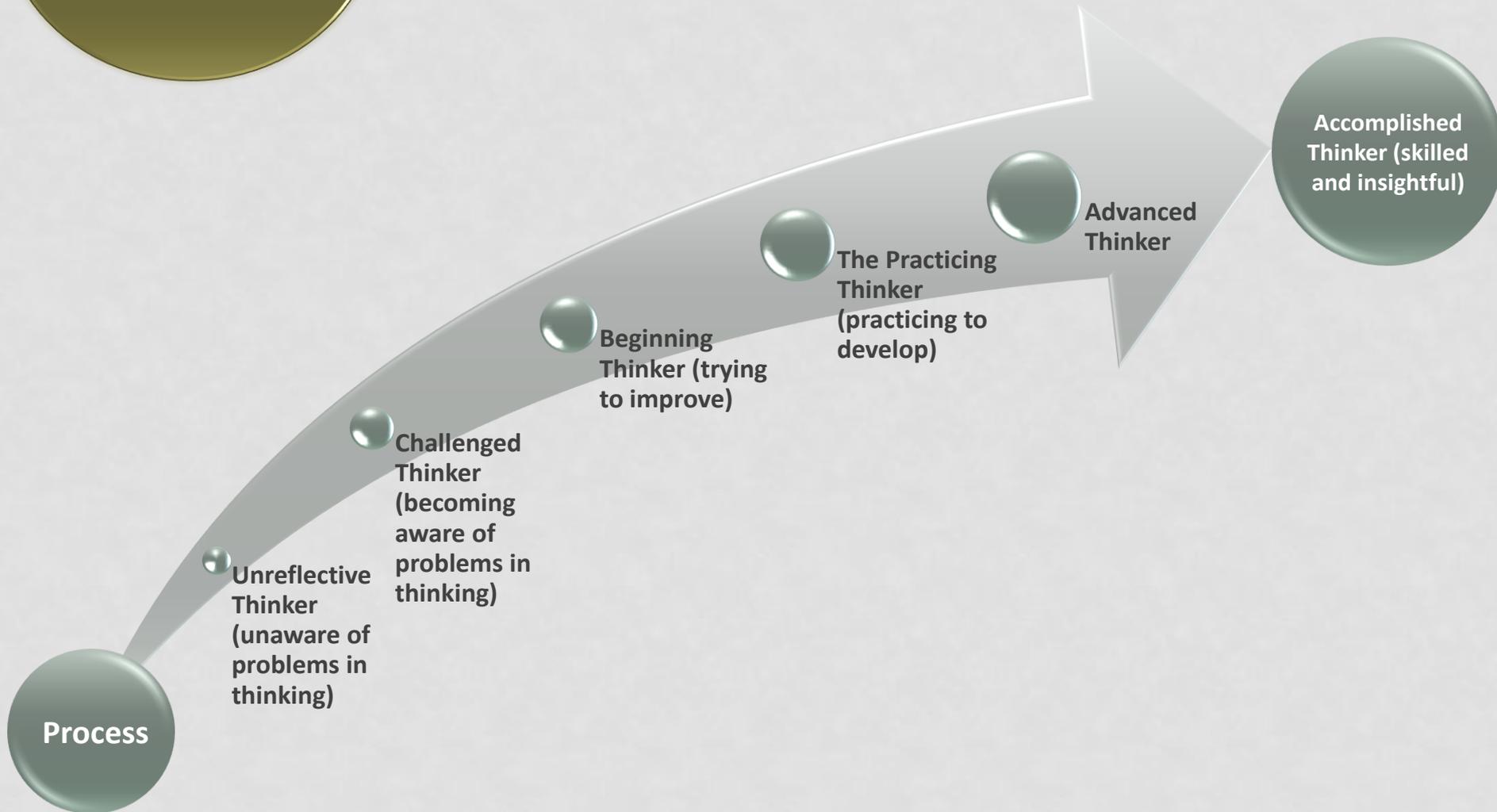
"When I first saw that painting, I wanted to know what was going on in the artist's life when she painted it."

"I'll wait until I gather more facts before reaching a conclusion on this issue."

Criticalthinking.org

Linda Elder and  
Richard Paul

# STAGE THEORY IN CRITICAL THINKING DEVELOPMENT



# CRITICAL READING

- What is it? Analyzing a piece of writing in fine detail.
- Why bother? It is the building block for larger analysis
- How to develop skills? Practice, practice, practice, read, read, read!

Reading to see what a text says may suffice when the goal is to learn specific information or to understand someone else's ideas. But we usually read with other purposes. Students need to solve problems and make meaningful connections.

Critical *reading* is a technique for **discovering** information and ideas within a text. Critical *thinking* is a technique for **evaluating** information and ideas, for deciding what to accept and believe.

Critical reading refers to a careful, active, reflective, analytic reading. In actual practice, critical reading and critical thinking work together. Critical thinking allows us to monitor our understanding as we read.

# SQ3R Reading Strategy

## SQ3R

Survey

Question

Read

Recite

Review/Reflect

## Strategy

**Survey** your reading assignment by skimming and observing titles, charts, table, bold words, etc.

Develop **Questions** about each section of the reading. This will help you identify what information you want to “look for” while reading.

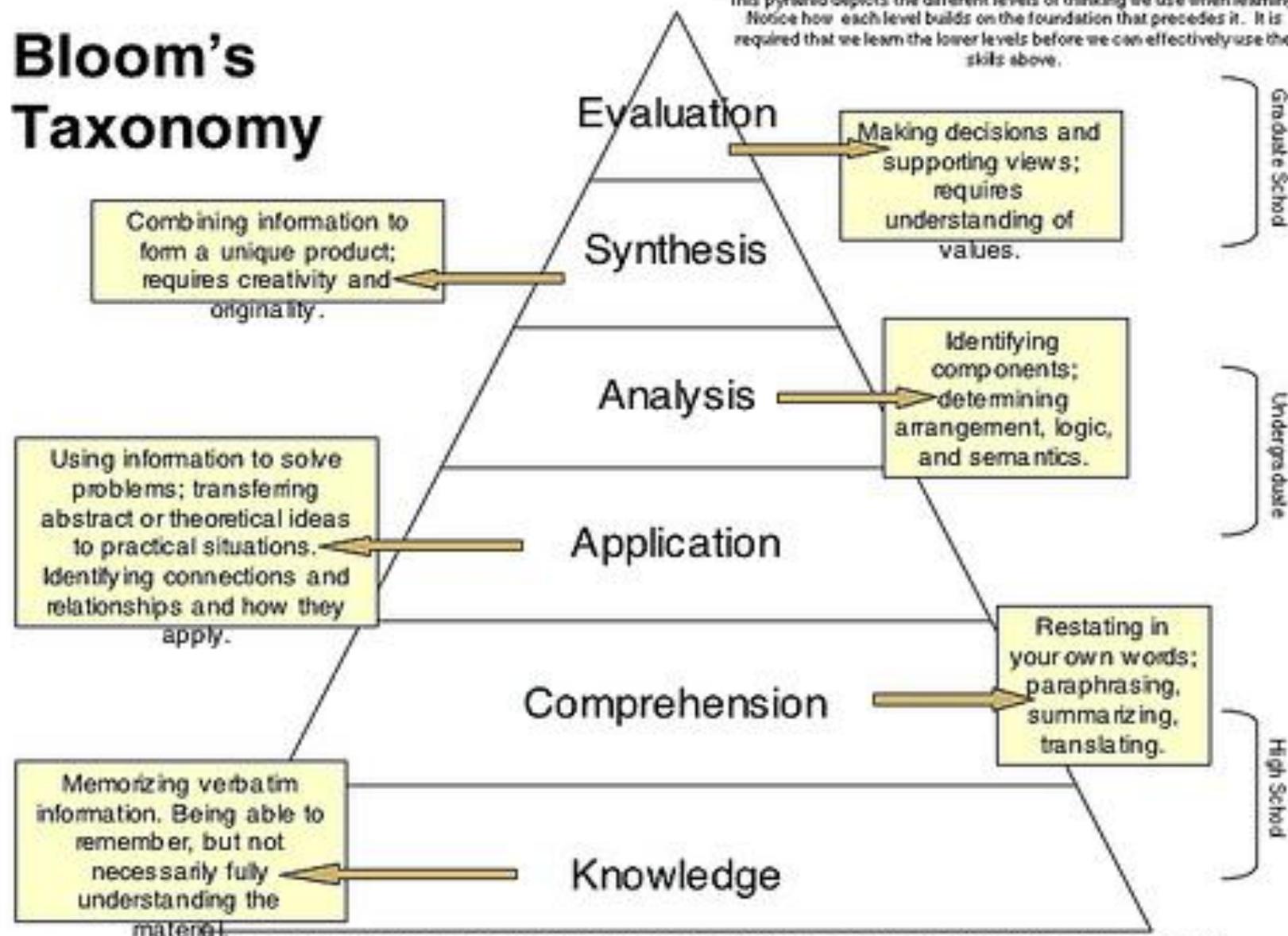
**Read** the assignment as thoroughly as possible. Read one section at a time and don't get too bogged down with details. Look for main ideas and supporting details.

**Recite** and recall the information by paraphrasing and summarizing.

**Review** and reflect over time.

# Bloom's Taxonomy

This pyramid depicts the different levels of thinking we use when learning. Notice how each level builds on the foundation that precedes it. It is required that we learn the lower levels before we can effectively use the skills above.



## **A test to repeat in every subject**

**Every academic field has its own logic or system of meanings.  
To learn the discipline is to learn within the system.**

- Can I explain the underlying system of ideas that define this subject?  
(like writing the encyclopedia entry for it, maybe an abstract)
- Can I explain its most basic ideas to someone who doesn't understand it?
- Could I write a glossary of its most basic vocabulary?
- Do I know what the basic logic or key goal of the subject?
- Can I compare and contrast this subject with others I have learned?
- To what extent can I relate this subject to significant world issues?