

Critical thinking - Putting it all together

Identify the assertion of the argument.

- Does the author use any emotive or biased language?
- What is the author asking you to accept or do?
- Is this belief or action reasonable?

Identify the evidence used in support.

- Is the evidence relevant to the assertion made?
- Is the evidence from a credible source?
- Is there additional evidence that would weaken the assertion?

Look for missing links between the assertion and the evidence provided.

- If there is a missing link, is it reasonable?

Look for ambiguous words that require more precise definitions.

- Do any words lack definitions?
- Are those words used consistently?

Does the author compare one situation to another?

- Are the items alike in the relevant respects?

Does the author apply a general principle to a specific case?

- Is the principle applicable?

Does the argument recommend a particular action?

- Would this action have any undesirable effects?