




# SET Strategy 2020-2021

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# Part 1: Goals

# Goals

- Enhance critical thinking through analysis and self-reflection in my English composition classes in both English 101 and English 102

# Reasoning

- Challenges that influenced the goals I set:
  - Living in the Information Age
  - The emphasis in education on “getting the correct answer/being correct”
- My modifications attempted to:
  - emphasize importance of self-knowledge gained through self-reflection, which serves as a starting point for critical-thinking
  - Develop critical thinking as a mindset that is transferable beyond the classroom

The background features a complex geometric design. It includes several overlapping shapes: a large white diamond on the left, a large yellow arrow pointing right in the center, and various blue and grey geometric shapes (triangles, rectangles, and lines) scattered across the page. The colors are muted and professional.

## Part 2: Scholarship

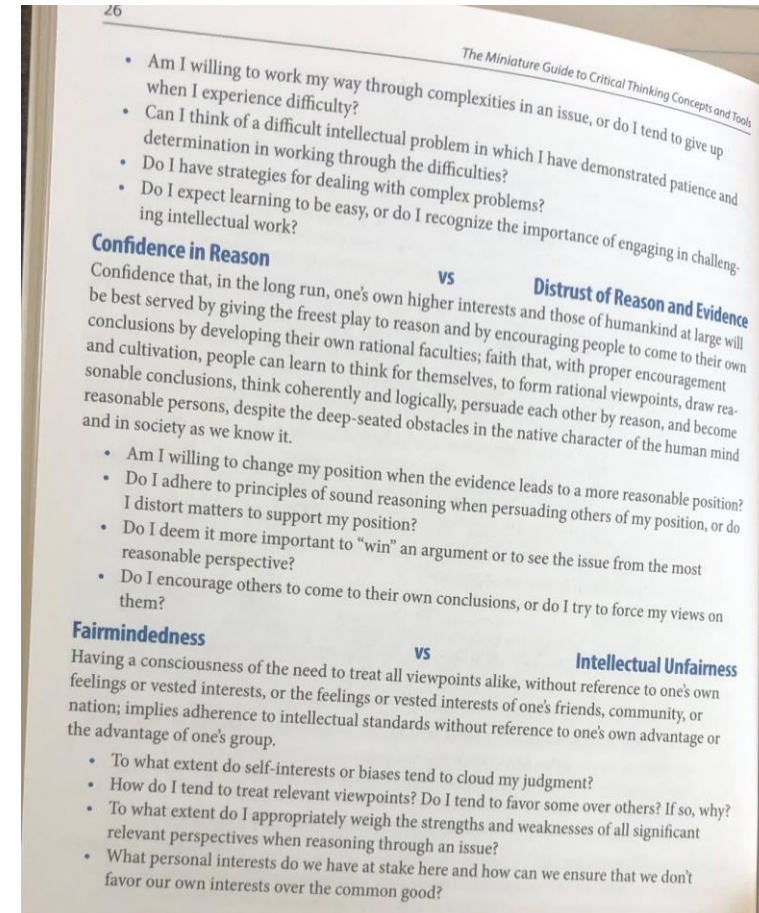
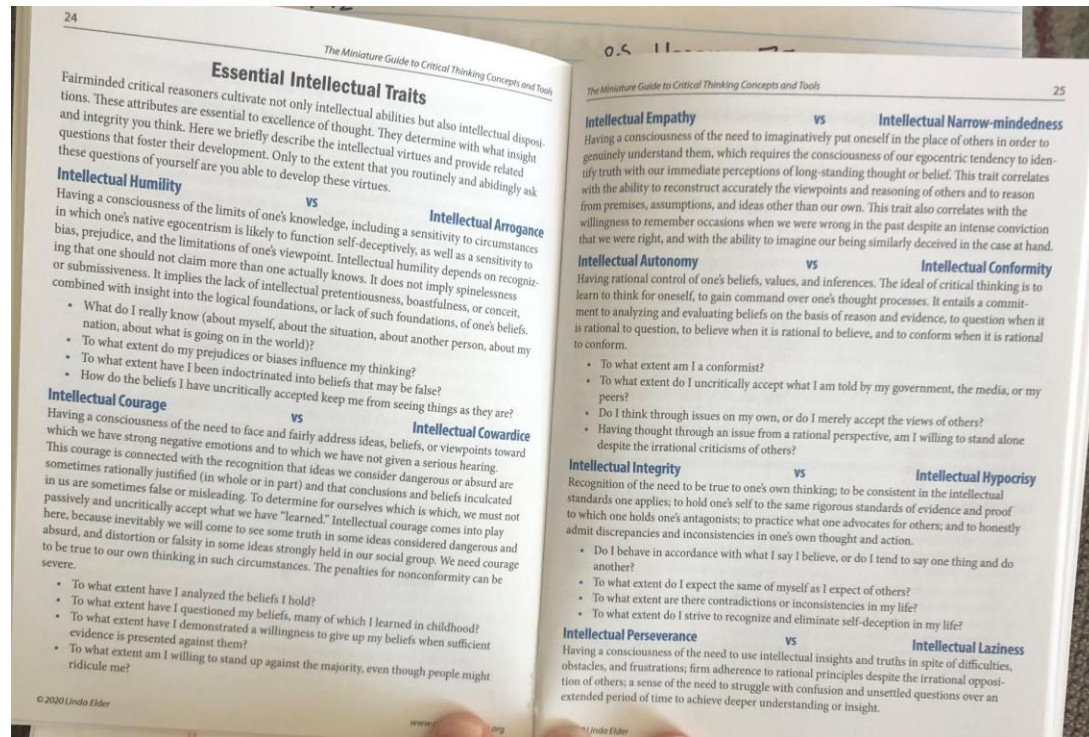
# Quotes: Self-Reflection

- “Far from being a sign of intellectual inferiority, the capacity to err is crucial to human cognition. Far from being a moral flaw, it is inextricable from some of our most human and honorable qualities: empathy, optimism, imagination, conviction and courage. And far from being a mark of indifference or intolerance, wrongness is part of how we learn and change. Thanks to error, we can revise our understanding of ourselves and amend our ideas about the world.” (Kathryn Schulz, qtd in Joshua Eyler’s *How Humans Learn* 171).

# Quotes: Metacognition and Engagement

- “When students employ metacognition, they become consciously aware of themselves as problem solvers, which enables them to actively seek solutions to problems they may encounter rather than relying on others to tell them what to do or to answer their questions. As they make the transition from being passive learners to proactive learners, students gain the ability to monitor, plan, and control their mental processing. ... When students use metacognition, they become empowered as learners.” (Saundra Yancy McGuire *Teach Students How to Learn* 16).

# Quotes: Critical Thinking from *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking*







# Part 3: Strategy

# ENGL 101 Essay Self-Reflection Assignments

- Required students to write a formal Cover Letter reflecting on the thinking and writing process they undertook in completing their narrative essay
- The self-reflection for the next essay required students to create a presentation reflecting on their writing process for the comparison/contrast essay

# ENGL 101 Self-Reflection Student Work



Reflection Presentation.pdf



Self Reflection Letter (Portfolio) .pdf

# ENGL 102 two-pronged approach

- Revised essay self-reflection prompts
- encouraged students to consider their research, arguments and writing through the lens of *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking's* “Essential Intellectual Traits”

**Essential Intellectual Traits**

Fairminded critical reasoners cultivate not only intellectual abilities but also intellectual dispositions. These attributes are essential to excellence of thought. They determine with what insight and integrity you think. Here we briefly describe the intellectual virtues and provide related questions that foster their development. Only to the extent that you routinely and abidingly ask these questions of yourself are you able to develop these virtues.

**Intellectual Humility** vs **Intellectual Arrogance**

Having a consciousness of the limits of one's knowledge, including a sensitivity to circumstances in which one's native egocentrism is likely to function self-deceptively, as well as a sensitivity to bias, prejudice, and the limitations of one's viewpoint. Intellectual humility depends on recognizing that one should not claim more than one actually knows. It does not imply spinelessness or submissiveness. It implies the lack of intellectual pretentiousness, boastfulness, or conceit, combined with insight into the logical foundations, or lack of such foundations, of one's beliefs.

- What do I really know (about myself, about the situation, about another person, about my nation, about what is going on in the world)?
- To what extent do my prejudices or biases influence my thinking?
- To what extent have I been indoctrinated into beliefs that may be false?
- How do the beliefs I have uncritically accepted keep me from seeing things as they are?

\*\*Egocentrism results from egocentric thinking because “humans do not naturally consider the point of view of others or the limitations in our own point of view” (Paul and Elder: 39).

Section 1: Read the above description of “Intellectual Humility vs. Intellectual Arrogance.” Now, reconsider your reactions and perceptions while reading Coates's *Between the World and Me*. As you reflect on your perspective of Coates's memoir, respond to the first two questions. (6-8 sentences)

Section 2: Process

What part of the writing process (close reading of the text, outlining, drafting, revising) did you spend the most time on? If you had the opportunity to do this assignment again, would you change your process? Why/why not? (3-4 sentences)

Section 3: Argument Analysis

What have you learned about rhetoric and argument from analyzing the arguments of others in this unit (you may discuss any of the readings we have covered in class or for homework). (6-8 sentences)

Section 4: Self-evaluation

What about this assignment challenged you? What do you think you did well? What do you think you could still improve upon? (3-4 sentences)

# ENGL 102 Student Work

- Essay Reflection:



ENGL 102 Self Reflection.pdf

# ENGL 102 two-pronged approach

- Incorporated 3 more in-class readings for discussion and analysis of the critical-thinking of the arguments advanced in these class readings based on a template I used from *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking*
  - Including: “Indian Mascots, You’re Out,” “So Sioux Me” and “The American Dream as Cultural Expression of North American Identity”
  - I don’t have student work for the in-class template assignment as we were sharing screens on Zoom and I forgot to document! 😞

## Template for Analyzing the Logic of an Article

1. The main purpose of the article is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\*is the purpose clearly stated? Is it justifiable?
  2. The key question that the author is addressing is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\* Is the question clear and unbiased?
  3. The most important information in the article is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Does the writer cite relevant facts, evidence, experiences and information? Is the information accurate? Does the writer distort any information to serve a given interest?
  4. The main inferences/conclusions in this article are: \_\_\_\_\_
  5. The key concepts we need to understand in this article are: \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Does the writer clarify key concepts when necessary? Are the concepts used justifiably?
  6. The main assumption(s) underlying the author’s thinking is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Does the writer develop a logical line of reasoning? What is the author taking for granted – that might be questioned by readers?
  7. If the audience follows the author’s line of reasoning, what conclusions/implications will follow? \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Does the writer show sensitivity to alternative relevant points of view or lines of reasoning? Does the writer consider and respond to objections from other relevant points of view?
  8. If the audience fails to follow the author’s line of reasoning, what conclusions/implications will follow? \_\_\_\_\_  
\*Does the writer show a sensitivity to the implications and consequences of the position that he or she has taken?
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# ENGL 102 Student Work: ENGL 102

## Reflections from the last essay assignment

- “I came to English 102 with the expectation of learning about writing and expressing points of view. I leave with not only the knowledge of effective communication, but also a new appreciation for differing opinions as well as the writings from different cultures within American and how the American experience can be shaped by reflecting on and expressing the history, feelings and hopes of American immigrants. This final paper was a self-reflection of my identity as an American with a Korean heritage.”
- “When I selected my topic, I felt as though I might have bitten off more than I could chew. I felt the need to challenge myself with writing about a topic, selecting a position on the argument, and clearly expressing my point of view. When I chose to write about colleges hosting controversial speakers on college campuses, I had a predisposed viewpoint already. Because I am left leaning with democratic friends and republican family members, I felt as though hearing both sides of all politics was very important and that when you research a topic that is political, most of the articles written will have predisposed biases as well, which are important to consider when analyzing the source.”



# Part 4: Assessment



# Assessment of Strategy: Self-Reflections

Compared Fall 2020 self-reflections in ENGL 101 and ENGL 102 to Spring 2020

- \* noted differences in depth and detail, use of specific examples
- \* students made more connections between assigned readings and their own writing
- \* noted that students discussed their process approach more in-depth (metacognition)

# Assessment of Strategy: Critical Thinking

Compared ENGL 102 final argument essays from Fall 2021 to Spring 2020

- \* many essay topics were complicated and unique
  - \* free speech issues on college campuses, the role of a free press in a democracy, the psychological effect of integration on African American students, Korean-American identity and the American dream
- \* discussions of opposing viewpoints/arguments in their essays were more nuanced and less defensive



# Part 5: Going forward

# What I'm Continuing

- The self-reflection prompts for both classes
- The critical thinking template for analyzing arguments

# What I'm changing

- I will include an assignment asking them to apply the critical thinking template to a reading that has not been assigned by me



# Part 6: Reflections

# What I learned about teaching and students

- Treating critical thinking as a process rather than a goal on a list of course outcomes led me to focus on the value of scaffolding low-stakes assignments into my class
- Engaging students in metacognition gives them more power and ownership in their own learning
- Growth, not perfection, is the goal
- Students respond positively to discussions of growth mindsets and evaluating their own opportunities for growth and development

# Final Thoughts on SET Fellowship

- It was a great opportunity for me to engage in my own metacognition!
- Thank you to Professor Naake and my cohort for the encouragement and many terrific discussions that enhanced my teaching!
- Thank you to the administration for supporting this professional development opportunity!