

CRITICAL THINKING

Activity 1: Is it fact or opinion?

Activities to promote adults' personal, social and learn to learn skills

Description of initiatives comprised in this handbook.

Title/name	Is it fact or opinion?
LifeComp Skill approached	<input type="checkbox"/> Self-regulation <input type="checkbox"/> Flexibility <input type="checkbox"/> Well-being <input type="checkbox"/> Empathy <input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Growth mindset <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Critical thinking <input type="checkbox"/> Managing learning
Duration¹	Approx. 1 hour
Type of activity	Self and group reflection and discussion
Short description	<p>This activity helps adults to facilitate key critical thinking principles, and enables the participants to analyse information received, to distinguish if the spoken or written message is a fact or opinion. The activity is built to start individually and then in a group, in a way to support creativity and collaboration.</p> <p>This activity will help participants to differentiate between fact and opinion. A fact can be proven either true or false. An opinion is an expression of feeling or point-of-view and cannot be proven true or false.</p>
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster critical thinking as a part of career and life skills • Improve assessment skills • improve argumentation skills • Supporting reflective and independent thinking
Setting²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Facilitator • Room with chairs • Worksheets for each participant printed or digital
Facilitators' Tips³	Different examples of statements are provided, but the facilitator can use different statements that should be adapted to the context and the group of participants.

¹ It can be continuously.

² Materials and resources needed to implement it, including financial, human resources and spaces. In case is needed a worksheet, please use the following document to prepare it.

³ What a person needs to know to implement the activity.

<p>Step by step</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The facilitator makes a short introduction explaining why critical thinking is important (please consult the Material for Facilitator worksheet) 2. The facilitator gives participants worksheets with statements (for examples of statements please consult the Material for facilitator worksheet) 3. For each statement, participants have to provide an answer if the statement is a Fact or Opinion. If the statement is a fact, the participants need to think about how it can be proven. If it's an opinion why the participants feel it can't be proven. 4. The participants work first individually and then compare answers and share views with each other.
<p>Debriefing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Was the activity easy, or not? Can you now distinguish what is an opinion and what is a fact or what is a rumour? • What insights or learnings do you have about what information is , what is based on knowledge, and what is based on one's own or someone's opinion?
<p>References</p>	<p>Games and Activities for Developing CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS Workbook, Global Digital Citizen Foundation</p>



“Is it fact or opinion”? – Material for Facilitator

Worksheet Critical thinking

We are constantly overwhelmed with messages seeking to persuade us, e.g. in media: internet, TV, newspaper etc. The quality of reasoning that supports these messages can vary significantly. We need to exercise our critical thinking skills if we want to avoid blindly accepting the beliefs that other people impose on us, and instead want to assert our own beliefs and conclusions.

Facts: Statements that can be verified. They can be proven true or false. Statements of fact are objective they contain information but do not tell what the writer thinks or believes about the topic.

Opinions: Statements that express a writer’s feelings, attitudes, or beliefs. They are neither true nor false. They are one person’s view about a topic or issue.

Types of Opinions:

1. Positions on controversial issues
2. Predictions about things in the future
3. Evaluations of people, places, and things.

Words to Identify Opinions:

4. Biased Words (bad, worse, worst, good, better, best, worthwhile, worthless, etc.)
5. Qualifiers (all, always, likely, never, might, seem, possibly, probably, should, etc.)

Examples of statements

6. Last year there was a horrible outbreak of flu. F
7. Babies generally start to talk between 18 and 24 months of age. F
8. More people stopped smoking last year than two years ago. F
9. Thousands of people die each year from the interaction of their prescription drugs F
10. Children should not be allowed to watch more than five hours of television per week. O
11. It's a fact that soccer and rugby are violent sports. O
12. Female doctors are more caring than male doctors. O
13. We must bear greater responsibility for the environment than our ancestors did. O
14. Nuclear power is the only viable solution to our dwindling natural resources. O
15. Cycling is a truly enjoyable form of exercise. O
16. The number of people who have high credit card debt is astonishing. O
17. "Spam" is the e-mail equivalent of junk mail. F

