



**Aim:** explain critical thinking and how it can be applied.

**Technique:** interactive game &/or applying the topic to a popular culture reference.

**Resources**

**Room facilities**

Computer with projection  
Whiteboard  
Whiteboard marker pens

**Take with you**

Descriptions for boats

**Online**

[Comprehensive guide to critical thinking](#)

Timings (minutes)	Activity
0 – 10	Begin by showing them the <a href="#">critical thinking animated video</a> from the Skills@Library website as a general introduction to the topic.
10 – 25	<p>Show them a clip of a programme where critical thinking is used and discuss how and why it is used. (Alternatively, there is a funny bit later (7:00-8:00) where ‘illegal immigration’ is discussed and this could be used as a starting point about critical thinking too).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>E.g. <a href="#">Lisa Simpson explains specious (and causal) reasoning to Homer</a> (play from 05:58-06:19 minutes)</li> <li>In this episode, a bear roams around Springfield and Homer convinces everyone something needs to be done about it, which leads to the implementation of the ‘bear patrol’, which he is convinced is working brilliantly as no more bears seems to appear. Lisa however explains why this reasoning is wrong. She’s not just making the obvious link but thinking about what other causes are possible and questioning her dad’s thinking.</li> </ul>



25 – 35	<p>You could spend some time thinking about different types of reasoning:</p> <p>This website features some brief <a href="#">definitions for common methods of reasoning</a> such as ‘circular’ and ‘non sequitur’ and could be used as a starting point to understand the difference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• You could relate this back to their studies by asking everyone to think of at least one example from their reading for a certain module, or maybe a journal article they might have read, and ask them to think about any flaws they may have noticed in the reasoning used there. Alternatively, you could ask them to use an example from some feedback they received that showed their reasoning could be improved and discuss the examples with the rest of the group. Can they identify flaws in their own reasoning?</li></ul>
35 - 45	<p>Critical Thinking Sinking Boat Game</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• (Prepare some short descriptions and additional ones to be used during game)</li><li>• Ask everyone which boat they would save if they were all sinking, from a selection of ones that have short descriptions attached with little information</li><li>• Then gradually hand out further descriptions that contain additional information that could change their mind (e.g. ‘this person adopted three disabled children’, ‘this person left their wife and three children’ etc.) The groups can pass the information to each other and they have to discuss why they’ve now chosen a different boat</li><li>• Afterwards discuss the following sorts of questions: Why has the information changed their mind? What factors matter? Do your ethics impact on your decisions? How does your thinking change as you build a bigger picture?</li></ul>
45 - 50	<p>Wrap up the session:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Link them to other resources available <a href="#">here</a>.</li><li>• Tell them about critical thinking workshops (about 3 run per Semester) and 1:1 support that Skills@Library provide</li><li>• Point them to a great series of <a href="#">critical thinking themed YouTube videos</a> (they’re quite science orientated but the concepts can be applied to any discipline).</li></ul>