

**DIALOGUE
WORKS**

HomeTalk

thoughtful conversations for families and schools

Let's talk about...

Critical thinking

Compiled by Roger Sutcliffe



Image by [contagionpseudomonas](#) from Pixabay

Note to parents/carers and teachers

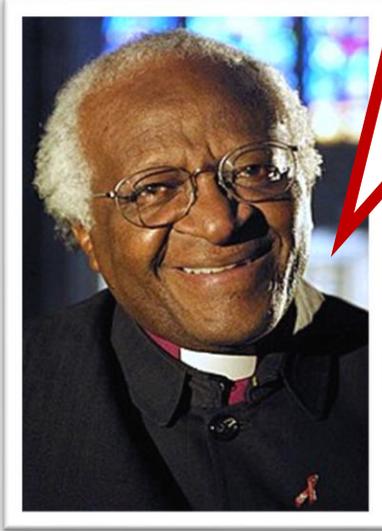
This pack contains links to external websites. Whilst we take every care to make sure these are suitable, you may want to check the content before showing them to children.



To get HomeTalk emailed every month, message <https://bit.ly/hometalk-sign-up>

Quotes about critical thinking

**Don't raise your voice,
improve your argument.**



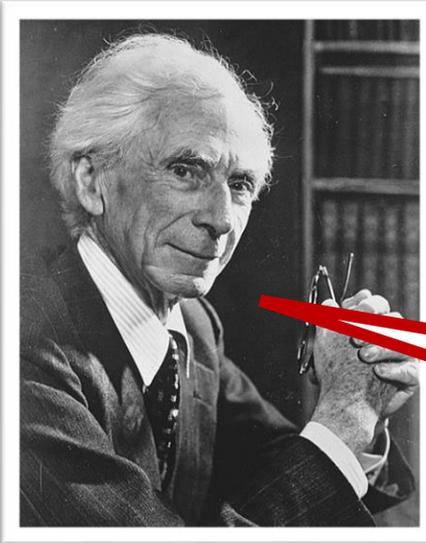
Desmond Tutu
bishop, South Africa

**Seeking unity does not
mean we abandon
critical thinking.**



Jennifer Beals
actress and photographer, USA

**Most people would
rather die than think,
and many of them do.**



Bertrand Russell
philosopher, UK

Jennifer Beals image – Eliška Vyhnanáková, CC BY 2.0, via Wikimedia Commons
Desmond Tutu image – Benny Gool, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons
Bertrand Russell image – Anefo, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons
Jennifer Beals quote from <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=jennifer+beals&commit=Search>
Desmond Tutu quote from <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=tutu&commit=Search>
Bertrand Russell quote from <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/search?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=russell+think&commit=Search>

Thinking about critical thinking

Caring thinking

Why should you care about whether you, and other people, make good decisions?

Collaborative thinking

Is it usually best to discuss with others before making a decision?



Creative thinking

Can realising you have made a bad decision lead you to a new way of thinking?

Critical thinking

How many reasons can you come up with for persuading someone to think more critically?

What might be the most important decisions in your life? Why?



Think **AHEAD**

When did you last reflect on something, and then change your mind?



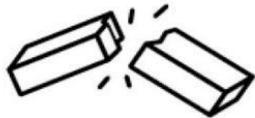
Think **BACK**

Can you explain the connection between decisions and reasons?



CONNECT

Why is the ability to make distinctions critical for a critical thinker?



DIVIDE

How quickly can you find an example of possible 'fake news'? And of a questionable opinion?



LISTEN/LOOK

How different would the world be if people were more critical in their thinking?



ZOOM (in/out)

In what sense is a critical situation critical? (Clue: 'critical' comes from the word 'crisis'.)

Discussion suggestions (age 3 – 5)

Stimulus



<https://youtu.be/c3zJr7II9yQ>

Would you rather?

by John Burningham

Some imaginative choices to be made – for fun (but worth asking ‘why?’)

Talking Points

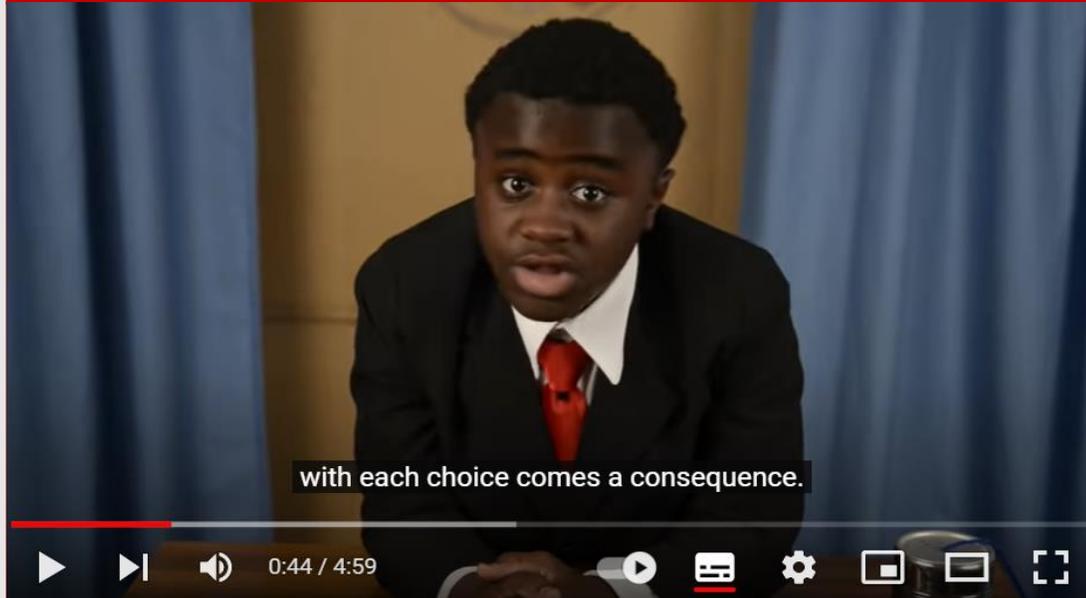
- Is being hungry a good reason for eating breakfast? Is it a good reason for eating someone else’s breakfast?
- When did you last have a good reason for doing something? What was it?
- Do you sometimes do things for bad reasons?

Activities

- Make up a ‘Would you rather?’ choice for your family or friends, and see if they can give reasons for their choice.
- Make up a story about making a bad choice.

Discussion suggestions (age 6 - 9)

Stimulus



<https://youtu.be/gdsCUEXLE-Y>

Kid President on making choices

Be prepared for a mixture of serious stuff and silly stuff!

Talking Points

- Do you agree you make thousands of decisions a day?
How many decisions do you make 'without thinking'?
How many do you think hard about?
- Are there some decisions that you *ought* to think critically about (weighing up reasons for / against)?
- Do you find Kid President irritating or interesting?
Why?

Activity

- Suppose you were 'Home President'. Make up five rules for your family, making sure you have reasons for them. Then discuss them with your family.
- If, after careful thought about pros and cons, everyone is in agreement, write the rules in an attractive way and publish them in the kitchen.

Discussion suggestions (age 10+)

Stimulus



<https://youtu.be/GzV1pNQUX5s>

Critical Thinking Explained

Produced by www.procon.org, which is a branch of Encyclopaedia Britannica.

Talking Points

- What are the pros and cons of this explanation of critical thinking?
- Did it help you understand what critical thinking is? Did it help you become more critical (in a good way)?
- Can you give good reasons for promoting each of 'critical thinking, education and involved citizenship'?

Activities

- Check out the procon.org website, and decide whether you want to recommend it to your family and friends.
- Choose an issue from the website and ask to discuss it at a family meal.

More on critical thinking...

The root of the word 'critical'

There is a common root to the different uses of 'critical' in English, namely 'crisis' – originally an Ancient Greek word meaning 'turning point'. A critical situation or condition can *turn* into a better or worse outcome, and the same is true of decisions, all of which are 'critical' in this sense.

Thinking skills games

Another way of thinking about critical thinking is that it is the thinking necessary to end in good decisions or judgements. In that sense, it covers a wide range of thinking 'skills'. Here is a website with games for children that develop a good range of such skills:
<https://empoweredparents.co/how-to-develop-your-childs-thinking-skills-during-storytime/>



Image by Anemone123 from Pixabay

Thinking Moves A – Z: Metacognition Made Simple

Richard Paul, one of the most influential teachers of critical thinking, said *“Critical thinking is thinking about your thinking while you're thinking in order to make your thinking better.”* This points to a strong relationship between critical thinking, metacognition and self-regulation (the management of one's thinking, feelings and actions). The Thinking Moves A – Z covers *all* sorts of thinking, and teaching your child the full scheme is a very good way of improving their thinking about thinking. The Moves that are particularly relevant to improving their ability to reason and argue are: INFER, JUSTIFY, MAINTAIN, NEGATE, QUESTION, TEST, WEIGH UP and YIELD.

➤ More about HomeTalk, including previous editions

➤ Parent Talk Moves – tips for great conversations with your children

To get HomeTalk emailed every month,
message <https://bit.ly/hometalk-sign-up>



[@dialoguewks](#)
#P4C and #thinkingmoves



[@dialoguewks](#)
#P4C and #ThinkingMoves

Training opportunities for teachers, support staff and parents

P4C Plus Foundation course (12hrs)

Teaching that puts more thinking into learning

- Introduces you to **P4C Plus** and builds your skills over the first year of practice
- Equips you with a range of skills to use in P4C inquiries and throughout the curriculum
- Includes premium resources and teacher guide

Thinking Moves A – Z course (6hrs)

Making metacognition simple across the curriculum

- Shows you how **Thinking Moves** can enhance thinking in any subject, as well as in P4C inquiries
- Gives you practical guidance on how to embed Thinking Moves into learning
- Includes premium resources and handbook

Both courses available online or face-to-face, for individuals or whole-school teams

See <https://dialogueworks.co.uk/training/> for upcoming courses

Contact enquiries@dialogueworks.co.uk for bookings or more information