

**The Harriet W. Sheridan Center for Teaching and Learning  
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**Question Stems to Provoke Critical Thinking**

from Alison King, "Inquiring Minds Really Do Want to Know: Using Questioning to Teach Critical Thinking," *Teaching of Psychology* 22 (1995): 14.

Question	Specific Thinking Skills Induced
What are the strengths and weaknesses of . . . ?	Analysis/inferencing
What is the difference between . . . and . . . ?	Comparison/contrast
Explain why/Explain how . . . .	Analysis
What would happen if . . . ?	Prediction/hypothesizing
What is the nature of . . . ?	Analysis
Why is . . . happening?	Analysis/inferencing
What is a new example of . . . ?	Application
How could . . . be used to . . . ?	Application
What are the implications of . . . ?	Analysis/inferencing
What is . . . analogous to?	Identification and creation of analogies and metaphors
What do we already know about . . . ?	Activation of prior knowledge
How does . . . affect . . . ?	Analysis of relationship (cause/effect)
How does . . . tie in with what we learned before?	Activation of prior knowledge
What does . . . mean?	Analysis
Why is . . . important?	Analysis of Significance
How are . . . and . . . similar?	Comparison/contrast
How does . . . apply to everyday life?	Application to the real world
What is the counterargument for . . . ?	Rebuttal to argument
What is the best . . . and why?	Evaluation and provision of evidence
What is the solution to the problem of . . . ?	Synthesis of ideas
Compare . . . and . . . with regard to . . . ?	Comparison/contrast
What do you think causes . . . ? Why?	Analysis of relationship (cause/effect)
Do you agree or disagree with the statement . . . ? What evidence is there to support your answer?	Evaluation and provision of evidence
What is another way to look at . . . ?	Taking other perspectives