

1. WORKING WITH *CRITICAL CURIOSITY*

Hello and welcome ... you are now going to turn '*Detective*' to explore, experiment with, and begin to build your *Critical Curiosity*.

There are 4 sections in which you can build your 'Case' for improvement in your score ...

1. **INVESTIGATE:** finding out more about the actual meaning of *Critical Curiosity* and how it impacts you and the way you behave.
2. **ASSEMBLE THE EVIDENCE:** picking out which of *Critical Curiosity's* aspects you personally need to strengthen.
3. **INTERROGATE THE EVIDENCE:** 'powering up' your *Critical Curiosity* is the objective here and these are some ideas.
4. **BUILD THE CASE:** planning the actions you will take in order to watch yourself improving day by day.

1. INVESTIGATION ... Finding out more about *Critical Curiosity*

Critical Curiosity is about whether or not you tend to find out about things for yourself. Being critically curious is made up of all sorts of behaviors which work together to make you who you are now. They include how you use questions, how you reason things through, how you use your imagination and what you notice about what is going on around you. Look at the list of habits that critically curious learners tend to have and spot those habits you recognize as '*just like me*'.....

Who are you? ... spot your *critical curiosity tendencies*

Mark yourself: 10 for 'just like me'; 1 for 'not at all like me'

and 5 if there is something you would like to get better at

Am I a critically curious learner?:

	I enjoy a challenge and getting to grips with complexity
	I learn mainly by working things out for myself
	I am a natural problem-solver, seeking out more information but always needing to fully understand it
	I tend not to accept anything at face value
	I drill down into information I am given and look for further clues and meanings
	I often question anything I am told, read or come across as a truth
	I'm not afraid to ask questions and raise my doubts and uncertainties in public
	I like come to my own conclusion and am inclined to see new knowledge as an opportunity for further investigation
	I use my logic and ability to rationalize to work things out for myself
	I can construct good arguments and spot the flaws in other people's arguments
	I take responsibility for my own learning and enjoy the challenge

Now investigate further ...

- Make a list of those descriptions that are most like you?
- Make a list of those which are less like you?
- In which of your lessons are you most critically curious?
- Why do you think that is?
- What are you critically curious about in life outside school?
- Now make a note of behaviours from the list above that you would like to get better at.

2. ASSEMBLING THE EVIDENCE ... Picking out those aspects of *Critical Curiosity* I need to strengthen.

Have a quick think about how you react to opportunities to exercise your *Critical Curiosity*. What sorts of things get in the way? Do you behave differently in different subjects?

Do as you did during your Investigation ...

Mark yourself: 10 for 'just like me'; 1 for 'not at all like me' and 5 if there is something you would like to get better at

	I tend to be afraid to ask questions in lessons
	I think that asking questions in class can make me look stupid
	I tend to believe everything that I am told
	I think that being able to answer a question correctly is more important than asking questions
	I am not really aware of the type of questions I ask (whether they are closed or open)
	I need to improve my internet search skills
	I'm not that good at finding my way round a non-fiction book to dig out the information that I need
	I should be a lot more sceptical so as not to take so much for granted
	I don't keep asking the questions until 'I get it'
	I don't ask questions of myself or of anyone else to make sure that I have fully understood something
	I don't really enjoy solving my own problems and would much prefer someone else to do it for me
	I don't have the patience to look for evidence to support my views or to take part in an argument
	I'm not sure that I would know where to start to look for flaws in an argument

I don't know how to ask people awkward questions without upsetting them

Now let the evidence speak for itself ...

- In which subject do you tend to be most critically curious?
- Would your best friend see you in the same way?
- Would your teachers agree with you?
- How might you find out?

Make a note of ...

1. Your strengths as a critically curious learner
2. Your areas for development
3. Behaviors you would like to change or skills that you would like to improve upon to improve your ability to be critically curious

3. INTERROGATING THE EVIDENCE ... a few ideas to 'power up' your *Critical Curiosity*

Here are some ideas for activities that you might like to try either at school or in your life more generally.

- Developing your search skills
- Creating a 'learning' routine
- Talking yourself into being more positive
- How to check out how you are getting along with making changes

DEVELOPING YOUR SEARCH SKILLS

TRY THIS WITH A FRIEND



Pick a subject you want to find out more about and use the search engine on your computer to help you. Try not to be precise about what you want the outcome to be. Note down the key words that have been most helpful in getting you to useful information. Use these words to generate questions that you can feed into the search engine to find out more. Remember that different questions will be needed for different audiences.

CREATING A 'LEARNING' ROUTINE

A good way to start is to ask yourself 2 questions ...

1. What am I seeing here? OR What's happening here?
2. What is making me say what I have just said?

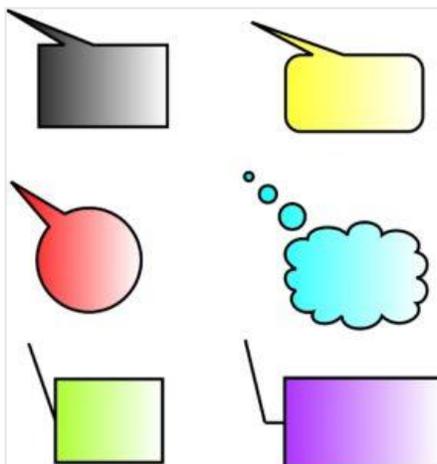
When you look at objects such as works of art or historical artefacts, explore a poem, make scientific or geographical observations and investigate concepts such as ageism or democracy **Ask yourself what you notice, see or know?**

When you have exhausted those thoughts ... **Ask yourself what is making you say what you have just said?** This second question is requiring you to explain yourself. It develops evidence-based reasoning and when you share the interpretations you are making it encourages you to recognise alternatives and multiple perspectives.

TALKING YOURSELF INTO BEING MORE POSITIVE

What you say to yourself in your head is highly influential in governing how well you learn.

Here are just 10 positive *Critical Curiosity* statements that will help you engage and strengthen your *Critical Curiosity* energy. **Try using them and you'll be pleasantly surprised at just how interesting even the most dull things can become by asking questions like these!**



1. Do I really believe this?
2. Where is the actual evidence for this?
3. Why should I be convinced that what I am hearing is true?
4. Is there more to this than meets the eye?
5. What evidence is there to dispute what I am seeing or thinking?
6. Why might I be wrong?
7. What is odd, unusual or different about what I could be seeing or thinking?
8. Have I really got to the bottom of this?
9. Have I seen/heard/felt/tasted anything like this

HOW TO CHECK OUT HOW YOU ARE GETTING ALONG WITH MAKING CHANGES

Here's a little downloadable list to keep in your pocket, pencil case or somewhere easy to get hold of with a list of questions you can ask yourself at the end of any lesson. Using a list like this will help you to check whether or not the *Critical Curiosity* behaviors you are trying out are useful to you.

Which *Critical Curiosity* behaviors have I used today?

1. I wondered whether
2. I asked about
3. I really found it hard to believe that
4. I argued that
5. I explained my thinking to
6. I researched
7. I found out that
8. I made sure that I asked
9. I really got to grips with
10. I discovered that

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4. **BUILDING THE CASE ... Planning the actions you will now take to experience the changes in your habits and behaviours that you want to make.**

When you've started on your mission to change and tried a few ideas, look more closely at what you have changed about your way of working.

Look back at any impact notes you made. Think about:

- Things you **started** doing that you hadn't done previously;
- Things that you **stopped** doing in order to shift the skill;

- Things you did **more often and less often** in order to hone the skill;
- Things you were already doing and **kept on** doing because they were on the right track.

Now using the three baskets, offer an overall assessment of the changes you have made.



Identify:

- Things that worked really well. The ones you feel most satisfied with.
- Things that worked okay but need a bit of finessing.
- Things that didn't seem to work and you quietly stopped doing them.

THE RESOURCE CABINET

2. TACKLING IMPROVEMENT ACROSS THE DIMENSIONS

With the ELLI profiles to guide them, both students and teachers can use them as a road map, highlighting areas for improvement and directing change. The following ideas are just a few of those that have found favour with our ELLI teaching community.

Changing and Learning

- Describing how current situations require, and call for, skills and knowledge that have yet to be learned.
- Talking about one's self as a learner in the past, in the present and in the future.
- Exploring opportunities for learning by being alert to what is happening throughout daily life — perhaps keeping a notebook, log or blog to jot down each new learning experience and how/where it might be used

Critical Curiosity

- Encouraging the comparison of ideas or theories that highlight alternative views, opinions and perspectives.

- Working within a team to address a complex issue to which there is no simple answer but requiring a compromise solution.
- Getting used to asking one's self 'Why?' on at least four occasions when exploring an issue, theory or fact.
- Actively enquiring into received wisdom rather than accepting it as it is.

Meaning Making

- Encouraging the making of connections between what, on the face of it, appears to be unconnected.
- Making visual connections by drawing diagrams, creating mind-maps or flow charts, colour-coding similarities between concepts, contexts and ideas, etc.
- Asking, 'What else do I do, or know, that could be connected to my first thought, however randomly?'
- Connecting learning at work or at school with learning at home and with hobbies to engage personal values and stories that have a personal relevance.

Creativity

- Letting the mind and imagination run loose to explore possibilities beyond the apparently impossible.
- Taking an idea to its most extreme or ridiculous, unbundling it and then bringing that thought process back to reality.
- Thinking the unthinkable ... 'a goal is a dream taken seriously!'
- Purposefully capturing/collecting things that will trigger their imagination.
- Gathering abstract ideas through myths and stories that break the rules of reality.

Learning Relationships

- Drawing a 'network diagram' identifying those who help the learner to learn, and then adding those who could help the learner to learn and improve their performance.
- Practising undertaking a task alone if the learner naturally gravitates towards others to assist with their learning.
- Experimenting with different team roles to expand their repertoire.
- Setting up opportunities to manage conflict and build consensus in teams.

Strategic Awareness

- Understanding why the learner is doing something and keeping the goal in front of them as a constant reminder.
- Listing those particular approaches, actions and activities that enabled successful learning in the past and applying a similar process to a task in hand.

- Considering what motivates the learner, are they naturally competitive or collaborative or charitable or does their faith play an important role? Can any of these play a purposeful and meaningful part in future learning plans?
- Asking themselves 'What do I need to know? How am I going to come to know it?'
- Keeping an eye on how things are going and adjusting their actions to make it go even better.

Resilience

- Understanding how present activities may contribute to the achievement of an ultimate goal.
- Looking for successes even in the face of frustration.
- Accepting that mistakes are part of the learning process, and to make and remedy them quickly can enable the learner to focus on what he or she needs to do to succeed.
- Separating feelings or frustrations with a task from feelings about personal identity — the fact that not being able to do something does not mean that one is either unintelligent or a poor learner.
- Arranging to work with a mentor, 'buddy' or colleague when faced with a challenge that appears insurmountable or overwhelming.
- Asking a teacher or tutor to enter into a partnership where specified interventions are scheduled.
- Anticipating the challenges of trickier activities.
- Devising plans to help them through the hard slog of practice.