

## ***The Essay: Critical Thinking***

Critical thinking is “an investigation whose purpose is to explore a situation, phenomenon, question, or problem to arrive at a hypothesis or conclusion about it that integrates all available information and that can be convincingly justified.”

*This definition was taken from a book by Joanne Ganine Kurfiss titled Critical Thinking: Theory, Research, Practice and Possibilities, 1998.*

Critical thinking is based on knowledge. Students can form their own hypothesis based on information they read, hear, or see in the media. When thinking critically, students challenge the information they have been given. Students need to question information, consult various works for answers and ultimately develop their own conclusions. Students need to question why things have occurred and what were the circumstances in which they did.

### **When thinking critically, students should do the following:**

- Identify bias and the reasons for particular viewpoints
- Identify purpose in what they read
- Make comparisons and understand differences
- Question
- Understand the concept of an issue
- Develop hypotheses
- Determine short term and long term consequences or results
- Appreciate the concept of causation and be able to rank causes
- Be able to categorize evidence and understand the relative weight of information
- Be able to judge or evaluate a statement in the light of available evidence