

How to Analyze the Logic of an Article, Essay, or Chapter

The [Foundation for Critical Thinking](#) suggests the following points to keep in mind when analyzing the logic of a written work. You may find these useful when leading discussion, reading an article or chapter, or thinking through the logic of an argument presented in class.

- 1) Be able to explain the purpose of the article. What was the author trying to accomplish?
- 2) Be able to summarize the key question that the author addresses. What question was on the mind of the author when writing?
- 3) Be able to summarize the important information discussed in the article. What facts, experiences, and data does the author use to support his/her argument? (This is important and often quite controversial.)
- 4) What are the main inferences/conclusions of the article?
- 5) Be able to explain the line of reasoning employed by the author to support his/her claims. (A critical thinker does not simply critique an argument- it is also important to get inside that argument and see how it has been developed.)
- 6) What is the author taking for granted? Are there particular assumptions that the author does not feel needs to be defended? (These are often unstated but highly important.)
- 7) What are the consequences of following the line of reasoning that the author makes in his/her argument? Are there logical implications that follow from adherence to the position being put forth?