

The Good Thinker's Tool Kit

WRAITEC

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Good Thinker's Letter	What is it used for?	Question Stems & Claim Starters
W What do you mean by...?	<i>Seeking clarity</i> - "W" is essentially meant to capture the aspect of thinking that involves sensitivity to complexity, possible ambiguity, and multiplicity of meanings. "W" questions are clarifying questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you mean by...? • What does the author mean by? • What is the...? • What have I forgotten to ask? • What else do I need to know?
R Reasons	<i>Thinking about why</i> - "R" reflects that for a philosophical thinker it is not enough to simply offer an opinion. Opinions need to be supported by reasons. Are some reasons better than others? When we want to know WHY we ask reason questions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are reasons being offered to support claims? • What are the reasons...? • One of the reasons...
A Assumptions	<i>Acknowledging/making clear what we take for granted</i> - "A" recognizes that an important part of philosophical thinking is becoming aware of and making explicit assumptions that underlie a discussion, position, argument or presentation. Identify assumptions, recognize how those assumptions are influencing what we are seeing and judging, and identify other assumptions that can be made.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it reasonable to assume...? • Are we aware of and identifying key assumptions being made? • An assumption embedded in this argument/claim is... • The author is assuming...
I Inferences	<i>Thinking about "if...then"</i> - "I" represents "If ... then's...", inferences, and implications. IF, for example, we do, or don't pursue a particular line of action, THEN what follows? What are the consequences? Inferences have a starting point (something seen, heard, smelled tasted or touched) and an ending point (a "place" the mind "moves" to that is beyond what was presented at the starting point). I may see a person frown (STARTING POINT) and infer they are sad (ENDING POINT).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is it reasonable to infer _____ from _____? • If _____ then is it reasonable to infer _____? • From _____ I infer _____.
T Truth	<i>Thinking about what is true, and the implications of what we think is true</i> - "T" concerns is what's being asserted in fact true? How can we find out? What we take for granted as true must meet certain standards? What are those standards? How do we measure what's true? Even if we aren't sure if something is true can we imagine what might be the implications if it is true?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is what's being said true, and what are the implications if it is true? • If _____ is true, then what does that imply? • If _____ is true does that imply _____? • When _____ is true it implies _____.
E Examples Evidence	<i>Offering evidence to prove a claim is true</i> - "E" is one way in which clarification of a position or assertion can be accomplished. It is a way of making a general claim specific or testing a claim by presenting an illustrative example. Equally important is the offering of evidence to support assertions. What is the evidence? Evidence looks different depending on the discipline you are in. What does evidence look like in science? Social studies? Math? Language Arts?	<p>What are some examples of _____?</p> <p>Are EXAMPLES being given or is EVIDENCE being offered to support or illustrate claims?</p> <p>_____ is an example of _____.</p>
C Counter – Examples	<i>Offering counter-evidence to prove a claim is not true</i> - "C" reflects the important task of testing the limits of a claim or position by searching for a way to prove it false or at least to test the limits of the claim.	<p>What are some counter-examples to _____?</p> <p>Are there any COUNTER – EXAMPLES to the claim being made?</p> <p>_____ is a counter-example to _____.</p>

