How do I assess critical thinking, anyway?

Paisley Worthington
Dale Lackeyram
John Dawson

– University of Guelph –
Welcome

• Undergrad student at the University of Guelph
  o Trying to find a universal definition of critical thinking (CT)

• Why do you think CT is important?
CT is a learning outcome

“[Learning outcomes should be] based on common assessment measures of higher-order thinking skills … such as critical thinking, communication and problem solving. Appropriate assessment tools currently subject to debate.”

(Herbert, 2015, page 56) emphasis added
Today’s outcomes

- Discuss challenges and potential solutions to teaching/assessing CT
- Understand rationale behind the Model of Integrated Thinking Skills (MITS)
- Consider how your specific needs could be addressed in tailored tools
What are some challenges around teaching/assessing CT?
The Search

- Wanted to find a definition that:
  1. Objectively describes CT as completely as possible
  2. Enables us to distinguish CT from other skills
  3. Can be interpreted in all disciplines
The Search

• Reviewed works of:
  o Richard Paul
  o Zechmeister and Johnson
  o Puccio, Mance and Murdoch

• Reviewed Liberal Academic and Critical Being views
The Search
MITS unites CT models

Model of Integrated Thinking Skills

- Requires a certain attitude
- Pursues objective knowledge
- Joins knowledge, self, and world
- United with creative thinking
  - Present in all of our mental activities
The Model of Integrated Thinking-Skills (2016)

Thought Mechanics
Thoughts are produced with an equal balance of Critical and Creative Thought

Skills
Skills are dominated by Critical or Creative Thought

Superskills
Superskills are collections of skills, and approach an equal balance between Critical and Creative Thought

Increasing Complexity of Thought-Skills