

California State University, Fresno Critical Thinking Scoring Guide

	Interpretation Skills	Analysis, Evaluation Skills	Presentation Skills
4	Relevant/penetrating questions clarify facts, concepts, and relationships. Questions are insightful and go beyond the obvious. Detects sources of bias even subtle or well-disguised. Uses principles of logic to explain fallacies in “if/then” statements. Identifies inconsistencies in language, data, images, or symbols and discusses the possible intent and/or consequences in terms of how the information will be interpreted.	Accurately identifies the main conclusion of an argument; determines if the conclusion is supported with adequate reasons. Develops and uses criteria for making judgments that are reliable, relevant, and intellectually strong. Uses a variety of sources and weighs competing evidence carefully before drawing conclusions or forming judgments. Analysis/evaluation is intellectually careful and precise.	Presents argument clearly and succinctly, capturing the most important points related to the issue. Presents the audience with a thorough and relevant discussion of supporting reasons and evidence for conclusion(s). Exhibits intellectual honesty in recognizing their prejudices or biases and seeks to address them directly. Open-minded; strives to understand other viewpoints.
3	Asks relevant/penetrating questions to clarify facts, concepts, and relationships. Detects sources of bias such as use of leading questions designed to elicit a preferred response or slanted definitions or comparisons. Detects “if, then” statements based on false assumptions. Recognizes contradictions or inconsistencies in language, data, images, or symbols.	While minor errors in analysis may be made, identifies the main conclusion of an argument, determines if the conclusion is supported with reasons, and determines whether an argument makes sense. Evaluates the credibility, accuracy, and reliability of sources; seeks independent sources of evidence, rather than a single sources. Develops and uses relevant, reliable criteria for making judgments.	Presents an argument clearly, conveying important points related to the issue. Presents supporting reasons and evidence for conclusions which address the concerns of the audience. Fairly weighs opposing points of view; is open minded in considering the findings on an inquiry even when they may not support one’s own opinions. Makes revisions in arguments/findings when self-examination reveals inadequacies.
2	Questions raised about facts, concepts, or relationships are not thoughtful or are unlikely to provide significant information. Detects some sources of bias but neglects other significant elements. May recognize faulty “if/then” statements but form an incorrect conclusion about the source of error. Recognize some contradictions/inconsistencies in language, data, images, or symbols but misses others or fails to recognize inconsistencies within a particular category.	Significant errors are made in identifying the main conclusion of an argument, determining whether the conclusion is warranted, or determining whether the argument makes sense. Limited or inappropriate sources are used in gathering support for a conclusion or the “evidence” provided in the source(s) is misinterpreted. Evaluative criteria are poorly developed, lack relevance and/or are unreliable. Overall, analysis lacks intellectual precision.	Presentation is difficult to follow. While some understanding important points related to the issue is apparent, the argument is not developed logically in the presentation. Opposing points of view are mentioned but examination is “pro forma; arguments/findings which conflict with own interpretation are given little credence even when additional consideration is warranted. Fails to give adequate consideration to divergent points of view.
1	Questions are not used to clarify facts, concepts, or generalizations. Seems oblivious to obvious sources of bias and/or faulty “if/then” statements. Fails to detect contradictions/inconsistencies in language, data, images, or symbols.	Fails to identify the main conclusion of an argument; forms incorrect conclusions about the validity of the argument. Bases conclusions on a single source of evidence. Unclear what, if any, evaluative criteria are used in forming judgments.	Presentation of argument is unclear; fails to convey important points related to the issue. Presents little or no supporting evidence. Own biases/opinions are presented as “truth.” Lacks intellectual integrity/rigor.