
Examples of Critical Thinking

Children are naturals at reading body language and facial expressions.

Example: You are a student with a test in the morning. Your partner promised to get your child ready for bed and was called away by a friend who needed a ride home. You are bathing your child hurriedly when they ask, “Mommy, are you mad at me?” Surprised, you answer “Of course not! Why do you think that?” The child answers, “Well, you sure wash mad tonight.”

Example: You are working in an out patient clinic and greet a patient in the waiting room. On your way to the examining room, you ask, “How are you today?” The patient answers in a low tone of voice, “Fine.”

1. Do you take her at her word and report that she feels fine today?
2. Do you ask, “Why are you here, then?”
3. What other possible responses are appropriate in the situation?

You notice that the patient’s eyes are red and puffy and her nose is red.

1. What are the possible causes of her symptoms?
2. What additional information do you need?
3. What are your preliminary conclusions? How will you validate them?
4. Discuss examples from your own life that demonstrate when you used critical thinking skills.