



Thinking is thinking when it answers to what is most thought-provoking.

Martin Heidegger (1968, 28)



(image source:

<http://www.britannica.com/biography/Martin-Heidegger-German-philosopher>)

As we try to make sense of the world around us, the arguments which we encounter (or attempt to construct) are based on a certain number of quite specific moves in our thinking processes. Therefore, the term 'critical thinking' is often associated with other terms such as 'analysis', 'explanation', 'critique', 'argument', 'reflection', and so on. In the next section, it will be useful to clarify the meanings of some of these terms before proceeding.

And this can be practiced in the **exercises** which follows this section, where we look at 'forms of thinking' in relation to 'styles of writing':

### Background to these short exercises

Michael Peters (2008) distinguishes between 'kinds of thinking' and 'styles of reasoning'.

The following set of exercises is designed to stimulate thought about various aspects of critical thinking.

Each of the exercises indicate thinking processes which we all use on a daily basis.

By 'unpacking' such processes, through concrete examples, we draw attention to the kinds of thinking which we need to apply in our academic discussion, reading and writing.

When doing these exercises, it is important to keep in mind that there are no absolutely 'correct' answers.

If you disagree with any of the suggested descriptors, don't see this as a failure.

Remember, the basis of effective critical thinking is being able to support your claims with reasons and evidence, and defend them using valid arguments. So, if you have been able to do this - even in quite general terms - you have engaged in thinking which goes well beyond merely looking for 'correct' answers.

Think before you speak. Read before you think.

Fran Lebowitz (1994)

(image source:

[http://www.hannaharendtcenter.org/?page\\_id=3085](http://www.hannaharendtcenter.org/?page_id=3085))



**Activity:** Have a go at Activities One, Two, three, Four and Five on the right-hand side of the screen.



Now do an example of reflective writing by completing the following activity.



**Activity:** Have a go at Activity Six on the right-hand side of the screen.

The following link will open a useful resource to help you with your reflective writing:



[Reflective Writing \(pdf document\) - University of Canberra](#)