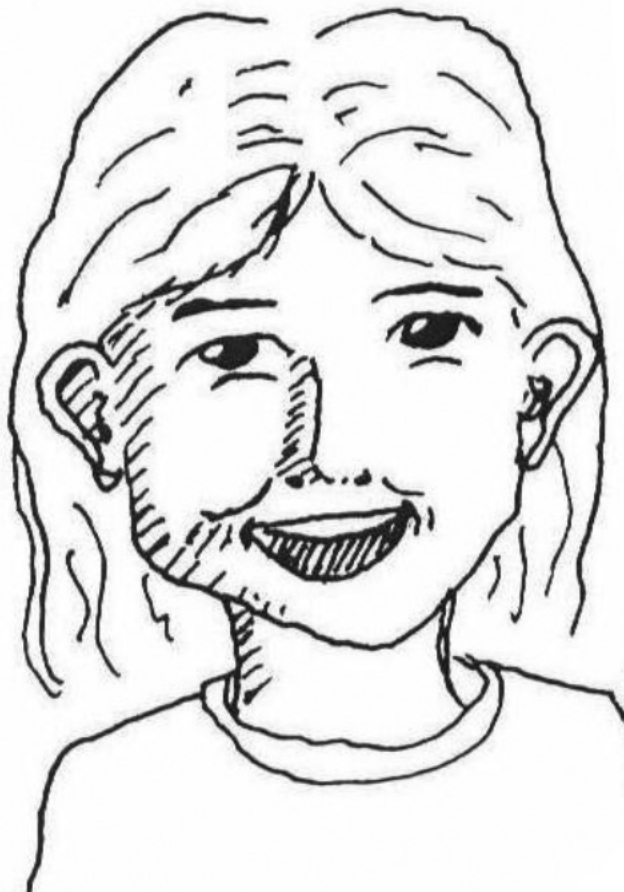


The Miniature Guide
to
Critical Thinking
for Children



(to help
you think
better and
better)

By Fairminded Fran (And Linda Elder)

Hi! I'm Fairminded Fran.

I am good at thinking. I am good because I practice. I will show you how!

When I am confused, I ask questions. I try to be clear.

When something doesn't make sense to me, I ask questions. I try to figure things out.

I think for myself. I don't ask anyone to think for me.

I wrote this little book to help you get better at thinking too.

I have put a powerful idea on every page to help you be a better thinker.

To be good at thinking you have to:

- 1) decide that you want to be good at thinking.
- 2) practice using the ideas in this book everyday.

Critical thinkers think about their thinking. They look for problems in their thinking. They practice thinking just like players practice basketball or baseball.

I hope you decide to be a critical thinker. If you do, you'll learn a lot, and enjoy it too.

Good luck!

Fairminded

Fran

P.S. By the way, you will probably need help learning some of the ideas in this mini-guide. Your teacher can help you learn them by giving you activities to do and examples of how to use them.

Contents

A Letter From Fairminded Fran	1
Meet Three Thinkers	2
Naïve Nancy	3
Selfish Sam	4
Fairminded Fran	5
The Spirit of Critical Thinking	6
Using Intellectual Standards In Thinking	8
Be Clear	9
Be Accurate	10
Be Relevant	11
Be Logical	12
Be Fair	13
The Parts of Thinking	14
Think about the Purpose	15
State the Question	16
Gather the Information	17
Watch Your Inferences	18
Check Your Assumptions	19
Clarify Your Concepts	20
Understand Your Point of View	21
Think Through the Implications	22
Develop Intellectual Virtues	23

There are three kinds of thinkers



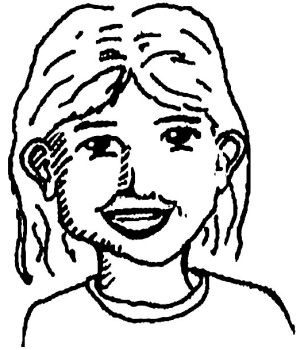
Naïve
Nancy

She
doesn't
care
about
her
thinking



Selfish
Sam

He's
good at
thinking.
But he's
not fair to
others.

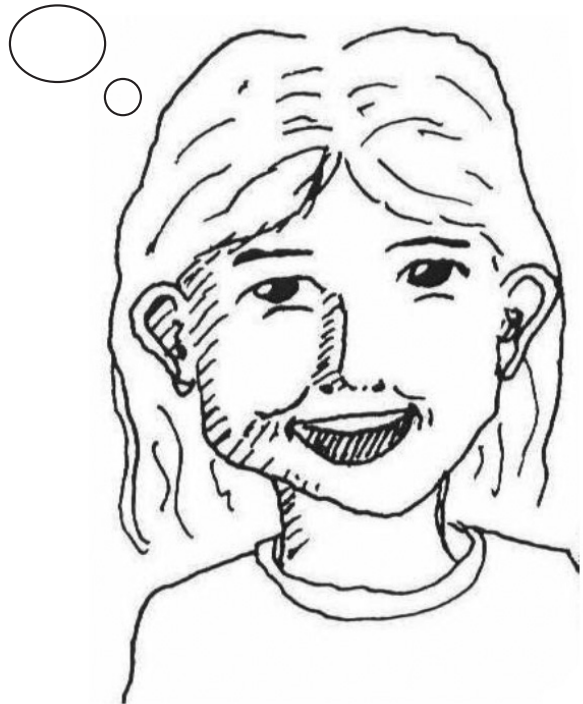


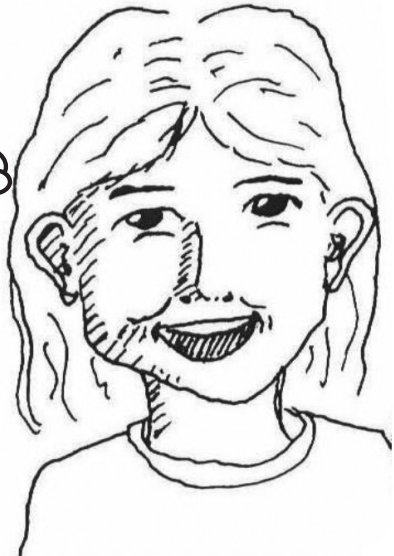
Fair
Minded
Fran

She's
good at
thinking.
And
she's fair
to others.

Critical Thinkers Believe in The Power of Their Minds

I can figure
out anything I
need to
figure out.





We are confused when we are not clear. We are clear when we understand:

- **what we are saying,**
- **what we are hearing, or**
- **what we are reading.**

Things you can say and questions you can ask when you want to be clear:

- **Let me tell you what I mean. Let me give you an example.**
- **Could you tell me what you mean?**
- **Could you say that in other words?**
- **I'm confused. Could you explain what you mean?**
- **Let me tell you what I think you said. Tell me if I'm right.**



Think Through the Implications

Implications are the things that *might* happen if you decide to do something.

Consequences are the things that *do* happen when you act.

Questions you can ask about implications:

- If I decide to do "X," what things might happen?
- If I decide not to do "X," what things might happen?
- When the main character in the story made an important decision, what happened as a result? What were the consequences?
- What are the possible implications of riding your bike too fast down the hill?
- What are the implications of touching that hot pot on the stove?