

**SUMBER BELAJAR PENUNJANG PLPG 2016**

**BAHASA INGGRIS**

**CHAPTER 11:  
CRITICAL READING AND WRITING**



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2016**

# CHAPTER 11

## CRITICAL READING AND WRITING

### 11.1 Analisis Teks secara Kritis

**KI:** Menguasai materi, struktur, konsep, dan pola pikir keilmuan yang mendukung mata pelajaran yang diampu.

**KD:** Menguasai bahasa Inggris lisan dan tulisan, reseptif dan produktif dalam segala aspek komunikatifnya (linguistik, wacana, sosiolinguistik dan strategis).

#### A. Critical Reading

To make you understand the critical reading, read the differences between critical reading and non-critical reading as the following table.

Table 1 The different between critical reading and non-critical reading

Non-critical reading	Critical reading
To <b>non-critical</b> readers, texts provide facts. Readers gain knowledge by memorizing the statements within a text.	To the <b>critical</b> reader, any single text provides but one portrayal of the facts, one individual's "take" on the subject matter. Critical readers thus recognize not only <b>what</b> a text says, but also <b>how</b> that text portrays the subject matter. They recognize the various ways in which each and every text is the unique creation of a unique author.
A non-critical reader might read a history book to learn the facts of the situation or to discover an accepted	A critical reader might read the same work to appreciate how a particular perspective on the events and a particular selection of facts can lead to particular understanding.

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interpretation of those events.

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Non-critical reading is satisfied with recognizing what a text *says* and restating the key remarks. Critical reading goes two steps further. Having recognized what a text *says*, it reflects on what the text *does* by making such remarks. Is it offering examples? Arguing? Appealing for sympathy? Making a contrast to clarify a point? Finally, critical readers then infer what the text, as a whole, *means*, based on the earlier analysis.

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### Types of reading

These three steps or modes of analysis are reflected in three types of reading and discussion:

- What a text says – restatement – talks about the same topic as the original text
- What a text does – description – discusses aspects of the discussion itself
- What a text means – interpretation – analyzes the text and asserts a meaning for the text as a whole.

### Goals of Critical Reading

Textbooks on critical reading commonly ask students to accomplish certain goals:

- » recognizing purpose involves inferring a basis for choices of content and language
- » recognizing tone and persuasive elements involves classifying the nature of language choices
- » recognizing bias involves classifying the nature of patterns of choice of content and language

Critical reading is not simply close and careful reading. To read critically, one must actively recognize and analyze evidence upon the page.

## B. Critical Writing

What is Critical Writing? It is common for feedback on student writing to focus on the need to engage more critically with the source material. Typical comments from tutors are: 'too descriptive', or 'not enough critical analysis'. This study guide gives ideas for how to improve the level of critical analysis you demonstrate for your writing.

The most characteristic features of critical writing are:

- ▶ a clear and confident refusal to accept the conclusions of other writers without evaluating the arguments and evidence that they provide;
- ▶ a balanced presentation of reasons why the conclusions of other writers may be accepted or may need to be treated with caution;
- ▶ a clear presentation of your own evidence and argument, leading to your conclusion; and
- ▶ a recognition of the limitations in your own evidence, argument, and conclusion.

### The difference between descriptive writing and critical writing

With **descriptive writing** you are not developing argument; you are merely setting the background within which an argument can be developed. You are representing the situation as it stands, without presenting any analysis or discussion.

Descriptive writing is relatively simple. There is also the trap that it can be easy to use many, many words from your word limit, simply providing description. In providing only description, you are presenting but not transforming information; you are reporting ideas but not taking them forward in any way. **An assignment using only descriptive writing would therefore gain few marks.** By critical writing you are participating in the academic debate. This is more challenging and risky. You need to weigh up the evidence and arguments of others, and to contribute your own. You will need to:

- ▶ consider the quality of the evidence and argument you have read;
- ▶ identify key positive and negative aspects you can comment upon;
- ▶ assess their relevance and usefulness to the debate that you are engaging in for your assignment; and
- ▶ identify how best they can be woven into the argument that you are developing.

A much higher level of skill is clearly needed for critical writing than for descriptive writing, and this is reflected in the higher marks it is given.

Critical writing involves considering evidence to make reasoned conclusions. A mistake many beginning writers make is to use only one source to support their ideas (or, worse, no sources, making unsubstantiated statements). The main problem with using only one source is: what if your source says one thing, but most other writers say something completely different? In critical writing you therefore need to consider more than one viewpoint. This leads to the first part of the simple definition of critical writing, which is:

- Critical writing uses more than one source in developing an argument.

Another mistake beginning writers make is to use several sources but to string quotes together (e.g. A says this, B says that, C says something else), without really analysing what these writers say. In critical writing, you need to evaluate and analyse the information from sources, rather than just accepting it as being true. This leads to the second part of the simple definition, which is:

- Critical writing evaluates and analyses the information from different sources.

Putting this together, a simple definition of critical writing is as follows:

- Critical writing is writing which evaluates and analyses more than one source in order to develop an argument.

## References

Critical Reading ([http://www.criticalreading.com/critical\\_reading.htm](http://www.criticalreading.com/critical_reading.htm), accessed at July 25<sup>th</sup> 2016)

Critical Writing (<http://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/resources/writing/writing-resources/critical-writing>, accessed at July 25<sup>th</sup> 2016)

Exercise of Critical Reading ([www.khanacademy.org](http://www.khanacademy.org), accessed at July 25<sup>th</sup> 2016)

Exercise of Critical Writing (<http://www.mhhe.com/>, accessed at July 25<sup>th</sup> 2016)