

Critical Thinking Mentor Moments

The resources are meant to be downloaded and edited as necessary to meet the specific needs and/or experience level of your Participant group and/or be incorporated into other existing materials in use by your organization.

These activities help to foster the culture of each of the competencies by applying them to everyday situations. The Mentor Moments are quick and easy. These can be used as icebreakers for introductions to each skill. In addition, they can serve as interventions that provide unique ways to reinforce one of the performance indicators. They also provide a common reference point for learners which can be brought up as examples or reminders as part of the ongoing skills progression. They are not meant to be full lessons, but rather just-in-time supports to foster skills.

MM 1 – Cryptic Clues

Ask learners to locate an object in the room or that is easily seen outside of a window. Learners are to write three descriptive clues that would assist someone in identifying the object. Clues cannot contain the exact purpose of the object but could hint at it. Learners are to read clues one at a time to another person to see if they can guess the object. Scoring:

Guesser:

- Correct after one clue scores 3 points.
- Correct after two clues scores 2 points.
- Correct after three clues scores 1 point.
- No correct guess scores 0 points.

Example:

- Made of plastic.
- Has two settings.
- Found on the wall.
- Answer: light switch.

MM 2 – What the Heck?

Print off and give each learner the What the Heck? activity sheet. You will also need a timer. Assign one word to each learner. If you have a very small group, assign at least three words to each learner and increase the time segments. Give the learners about two minutes to come up with a definition for their assigned word. Learners must be able to prove the definition with two different sources. After the two minutes, explain that learners will now have 15 minutes to get as many of the other definitions filled in as possible by talking to other members of the whole group. The person with the most definitions is declared the champion.

MM 3 – Minute Mysteries

The following website gives you free and unrestricted access to an e-book of minute mysteries:

<https://www.gutenberg.org/files/50603/50603-h/50603-h.htm>. Luckily, the answers are also provided. This resource provides 70 short mysteries. Select several to give to learners and ask them to solve the mystery. If you print these and make handouts, learners could highlight the clues in the story that helped them solve the mystery. Optional: Challenge learners to create some of their own minute mysteries.

MM 4 – Concept Crossover Puzzles

This activity helps learners realize that they use various essential skills in many aspects of their lives. Give learners one or more of the Concept Crossover Puzzles (attached).

Rules

Fill in a word or short phrase that identifies a career, task, or situation when the skill listed is used. Each entry must start with the letter given. There are no clear right or wrong answers. Have learners work in pairs or small groups to explain why they have selected the choices they listed.

Coordinates with others to achieve identified outcomes and objectives.

M	Musician
F	Football game
R	Researching disease cure

MM 5 – Chain of Command

In this activity, learners research the chain of command for various military groups, sports teams, production teams, building crews, first responders, or business companies. Have learners create a diagram of the chain of command for a group of their choosing. This diagram should contain arrows that point to whom each person should communicate conclusions, problems, or new ideas. Have learners write some scenario cards that could be answered by understanding the diagram. For example:

- A sergeant is having problems obtaining supplies for his squad. Who can he approach?
- An assembly line worker has thought of a way to increase production. Who should he talk to?
- Have learners explain their diagrams and help the group discuss the scenarios.

Crosswalk of Mentor Moment Activities and Performance Indicators for Critical Thinking

Performance Indicator	Cryptic Clues	What the Heck	Minute Mysteries	Concept Crossover Puzzles	Chain of Command
Reviews, summarizes, and interprets existing information	X				
Makes comparisons across content areas and identifies inconsistent or missing information				X	
Seeks opportunities to learn new information		X			
Analyzes new and old information collectively in order to draw conclusions, solve problems, or form a hypothesis			X		
Communicates conclusions and new ideas to appropriate individuals or team members					X