CRITICAL READING & THINKING

Reading III & IV
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What is it?

• Critical reading means testing the strength of an argument, proposal or explanation in a text.
• It means measuring the ideas in the text against your own ideas and against those of other writers.
• Critical thinking means not passively accepting what you hear or read, but instead actively questioning and assessing it. As you read you should ask yourself the following questions:
  a. What are the key ideas in this?
  b. Does the argument of the writer develop logically, step by step?
  c. Are the examples given helpful? Would other examples be better?
  d. Does the author have any bias?
  e. Does the evidence presented seem reliable, in my experience and using common sense?
  f. Is this argument similar to anything else I have read?
  g. Do I agree with the writer’s views?
Maximiser and minimiser

- Writers try to persuade not only by well-structured argument, but by well-chosen words. They may try to **maximise** the points in favour and to **minimise** the points against their opinion using words such as those highlighted.
- Writers may try to convince their readers by adding words to **emphasize** their message.
- Writers may also try to **distance** themselves from statements which they do not agree with or are not completely confident about.
Ways to emphasize message:

• Choice of modal verbs
Employers **must** ensure that the views of the workforce are represented in the boardroom.

• Using a maximiser
**Clearly** employers should ensure that the views of the workforce are represented in the boardroom.

• Changing the structure
**What employers should ensure is** that the views of the workforce are represented in the boardroom.

• Repition by rephrasing
Employers should ensure that the views of the workforce are represented in the boardroom. **In other words**, they should appoint worker directors.
• Facts can be verified by experiment or by reference to other facts. They are true statements supported by evidence.
• This does not mean every statement presented as a fact is true.
• Facts can also change when new evidence becomes available.
• Opinions are personal beliefs. They are subjective.