ASSESSING CRITICAL THINKING

While circulating around the classroom and observing group discussions, pose the following questions to assess students' critical-thinking abilities. Keep notes on individual students and use during conferences to provide feedback and to assess at the end of the project.

Examples of Questions	Notes
Questions of clarification: • Could you give me an example? • Is your basic point ____or____ ? • How does_____ relate to _____? • Could you explain that further? • Why do you say that?	
Questions that probe assumptions: • What is being assumed? Why would somebody say that? • How would you justify taking this view? • Is this always the case?	
Questions that probe reasons and evidence: • How could we go about finding out whether that is true? • Is there reason to doubt that evidence? • What would be an example? • What led you to that belief? • What criteria do you base that argument on? • Why do you think that is right? • How does that apply in this case? • By what reasoning did you come to that conclusion? • Who is in a position to know if that is the case?	
Questions about viewpoints or perspectives: • How would other groups or types of people respond? Why? What would influence them? • How would people who disagree with this viewpoint argue their case? • Did anyone see this another	

way? • What is an alternative? • What would be another way of saying that?	
Questions that probe implications and consequences: • What effect would that have? • If this and this are the case, then what else must also be true? • What are you implying by that? • How do you know you've considered the consequences?	
Questions about the question: • To answer this question, what questions would we have to answer first? • Is this the same issue as…? • How is that question going to help you? Can you think of any other questions that might be useful? • Is this question easy or hard to answer? Why?	