**Critical Thinking**

*Critical thinking requires you to examine and analyse information in an objective manner so that you can make a reasonable judgement on it.*

The most effective way to arrive at a reasonable judgement is to interrogate your sources using appropriate questions. Here are some **starter questions**:

**Who?**

… benefits from this?

… is the author?

… is being talked about and what language is being used?

**What?**

… is another perspective on the topic?

… is the context or situation that this is occurring?

… sources were used?

**Where?**

… would this be seen / used in the real world?

… can I get more information?

… would I find similar situations/ research?

**When?**

… does this research occur?

… will the results be released?

… will someone do something about it?

**Why?**

… did they get similar/ different results?

… is this an issue?

… why was this included / excluded?

**How?**

… would the study change if this piece of information was changed?

… does this benefit / harm others?

… do my opinions / experiences influence my understanding of this?

These questions will also help you to develop the key skills needed to be a critical thinker like the ability to:

* **Be sceptical** (e.g. ***What*** *sources does this journalist use to back up their statements about migrant workers?)*
* **Analyse other people’s reasoning** *(e.g.* ***Why*** *did they exclude children under the age of 6 in their study?)*
* **Be aware of your own biases** (e.g. ***How*** *does my professional experience as a teacher make me less likely to be sympathetic to characters like Huck Finn who refuse to go to school?*