

**Critical
Analysis
Tool**

**Educational
Organizing
Community
Gathering
(Continued!)**

**March 7
2021
4:00-6:00**

**Education
Justice
Coalition of
Vermont**

Hannah Miller, Celilo Bauman-Swain, V Pearson, Mugabo W'Ishema
Thierry Uwilingiyimana, Alyssa Chen, Christie Nold

Inspirations, Muses, Scholars, Activists, and Educators



Dr. Bettina Love

Co-founder of the Abolitionist Teaching Network, Endowed Professor of Education at the University of Georgia. [Read more.](#)



bell hooks

Founder of the bell hooks institute; intellectual, feminist, intersectional, radical scholar of culture and social change. [Read more.](#)



Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings

Former professor of education at University of Wisconsin Madison. Advocate for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. [Read more.](#)



Dr. Kevin Kumashiro

Former Dean at the University of San Francisco; founder of Center for Anti-Oppressive Education. [Read more.](#)



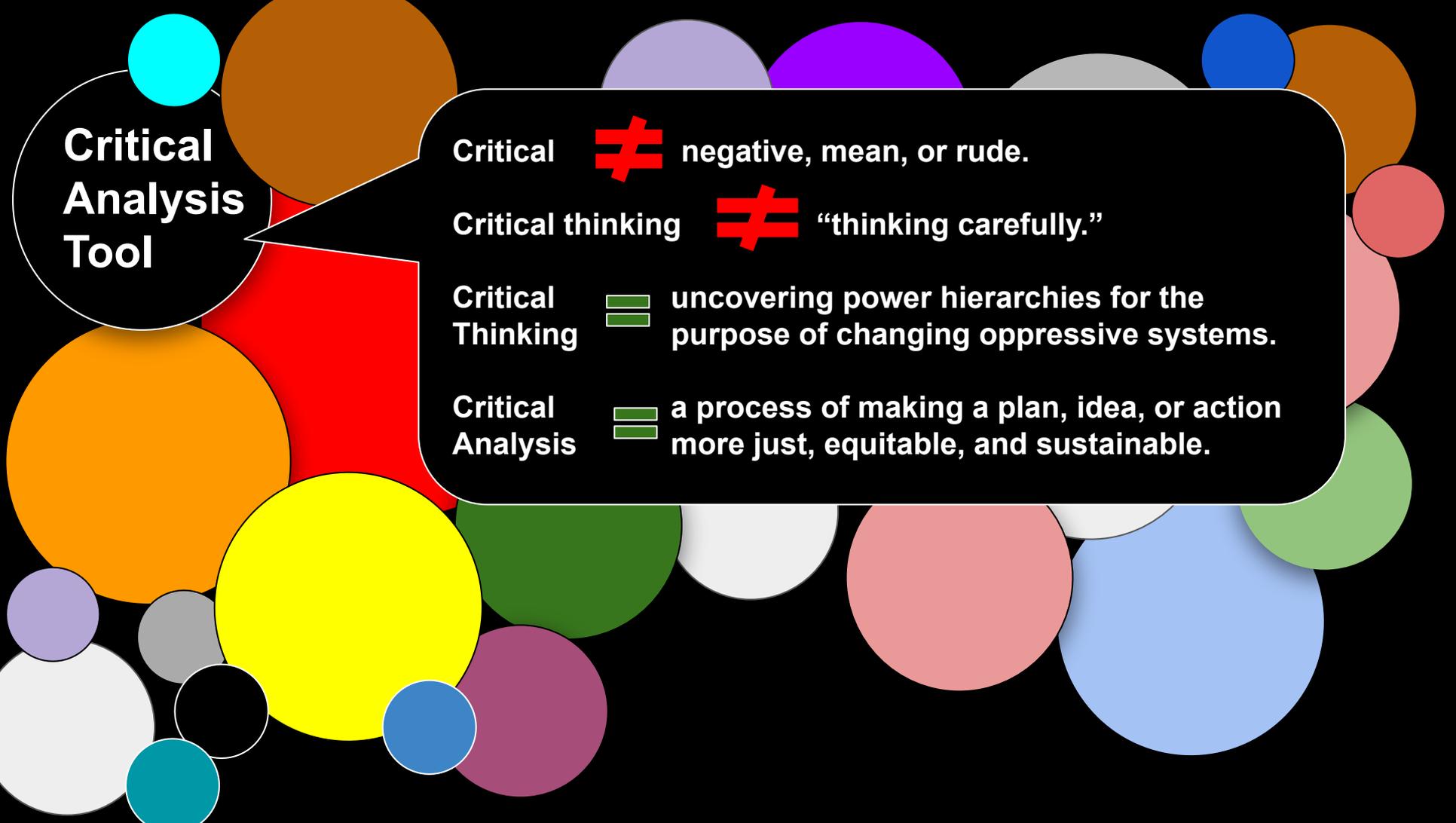
Dr. Django Paris

Professor of Multicultural Education, University of Washington. Creator of the Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy framework. [Read more.](#)



Dr. Z. Nicolazzo

Assistant professor of Trans* Studies in Education, Center for the Study of Higher Education, University of Arizona. [Read more.](#)



Critical Analysis Tool

Critical \neq negative, mean, or rude.

Critical thinking \neq “thinking carefully.”

Critical Thinking \equiv uncovering power hierarchies for the purpose of changing oppressive systems.

Critical Analysis \equiv a process of making a plan, idea, or action more just, equitable, and sustainable.

**Critical
Analysis
Tool (CAT)**

You showed up today because you want to make change. We want to analyze for equity and justice: why, how, when, and for whom.

Something you want to change.

An ongoing project.

**First:
Envision your
action plan
Or problem**

**Second:
Join your
affinity group.**

**Third:
Choose one
person's
action plan.**

**Fourth:
Use 1 or more
"lenses" from the
CAT to
dig into their
action plan.**

**Be Critical:
Analyze your plan
using equity and
justice as a lens,
with change in
mind.**

Go for it!



Based on the School Reform Initiative's
Consultancy Protocol.

Space

Your classroom?
Your school?
Your state?

Time

6 emails?
6 years?

Equity

Whose voices,
experiences, and
ideas are
centered?

People

Who are your
co-conspirators?
Who are the
barriers?

Power

Who makes
decisions?
Who is at the
table?

Impact

How will you
identify
change?

Purpose

Who is this for?
What are the
desired
outcomes?

Policies

Which policies
can change?

You

When will you
rest?
How will you
sustain?

Research

What have
others already
done?

Place

What will work
HERE?

Barriers

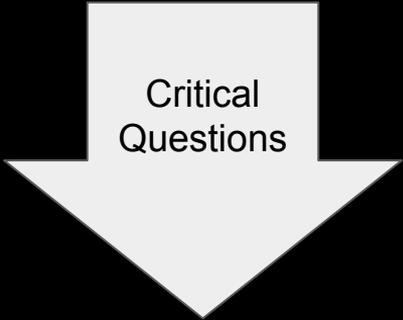
How can you
work around
walls?

Culture

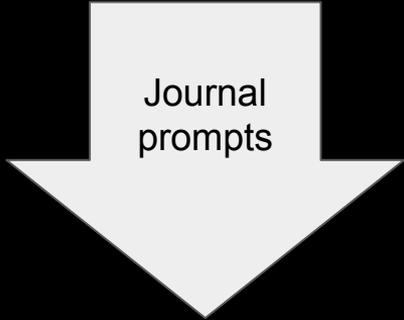
What are our
shared norms
and values?



You



Critical
Questions



Journal
prompts

- What is my plan to sustain this work over time?
- Am I being asked to do work to sustain or defend my own rights, identity, culture, self, or family?
- Do I prefer working with “the choir” or “changing minds?”
- I will know that I need a break when _____.
- When I feel discouraged, _____ gives me energy to keep going.
- This work is important to me because _____.
- I am doing this work for _____.

Time

Critical Questions

- What is the timeline for this work?
- How will I know when it is time to end the project?
- Is there a sense of urgency for this work in my community?
- How will I take the time to think about equity and justice?

Journal prompts

- One thing I have time to do tomorrow to get this started is _____.
- I can plan to spend _____ hours per week/month.
- One commitment I can remove from my list to make room for equity work is _____.

Space

Critical Questions

- What is the change I want to see in myself?
- What is the change I want to see in my classroom?
- What is the change I want to see in my school or district?
- What are barriers to change at a local scale?

Journal prompts

- My project will have the greatest impact on _____.
- If I wanted to impact more people, one thing I could do is _____.
- If I wanted this work to be more meaningful locally, I might _____.

Equity

Critical Questions

- Whose experiences are being centered?
- Is lived experience affirmed, and validated?
- Is the lived experience of those with marginalized identities driving the direction for the work?

Journal prompts

- I can avoid burdening those with marginalized identities with this work by _____.
- In my school/community, someone whose voice I haven't heard yet is _____.
- One way I can decolonize my school is _____.

People

Critical Questions

- Which co-conspirators do I trust and want to work most closely with?
- Whose voices are heard, and whose are silenced? Why?
- Who are the “insiders” and who are the “outsiders?” Why?

Journal prompts

- When I work with _____, I feel inspired and energized.
- Someone who has been doing a lot of this work and might need help is _____.
- Someone I want to work with but haven't yet is _____.

Power

Critical Questions

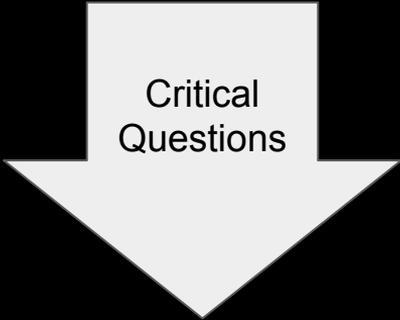
- Which people make decisions that have a large impact in my school community?
- What steps have I taken to decolonize my action plan?
- Whose cultural norms decide how we communicate?

Journal prompts

- When I think about justice in school, something that makes me feel powerless is _____.
- Something that makes me feel powerful is _____.
- People who have been historically silenced in this work include _____.

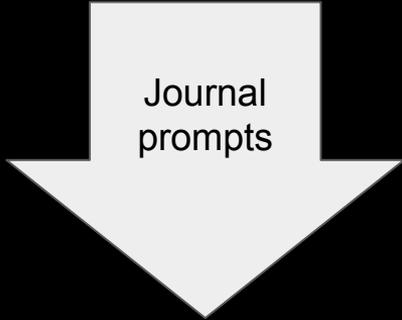


Impact



Critical Questions

- How will I know that my plan is resulting in change?
- How can I center the impact of my work (instead of my own intent)?
- How can I make the impact of this work lasting and sustained over time?

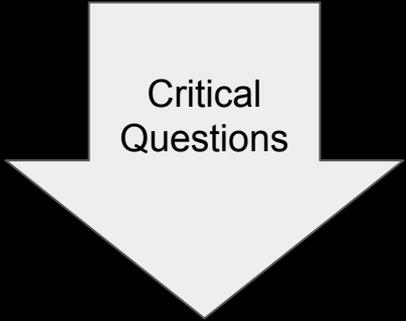


Journal prompts

- I will know my action plan has been successful when I see _____.
- If I realize my plan is not making change, I will _____.
- During this work, I plan to check in regularly with _____.

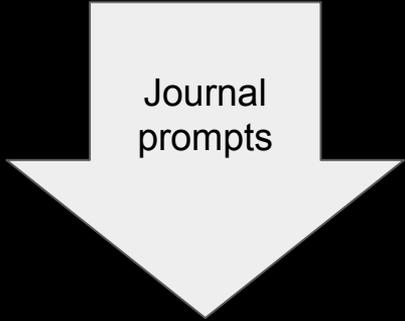


Purpose



Critical Questions

- How would I explain my problem or action plan to someone else?
- Who is this work for?
- What are the desired outcomes?
- Have I thought critically about intent vs. outcome?

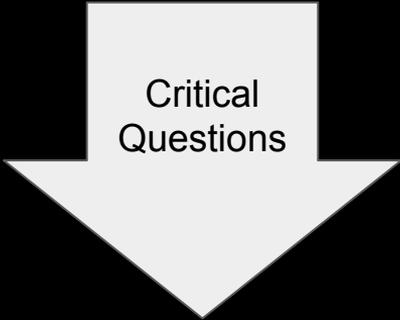


Journal prompts

- One change I hope to see in my own practices or ideas is _____.
- One change I hope to see in my school or community is _____.
- One change I hope to see in Vermont is _____.

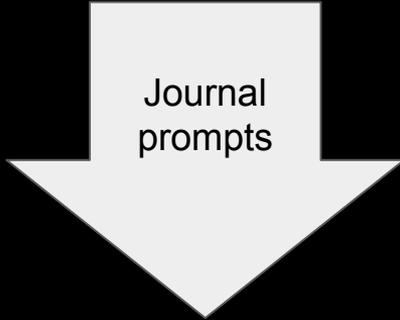


Policy



Critical Questions

- Which policies don't exist yet but need to?
- If we make a new policy, how can we be sure it will have the impact we want?
- Who are the “gatekeepers” of policy in my school?

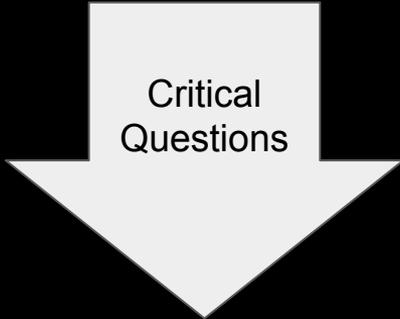


Journal prompts

- One policy I know needs to change is _____.
- One reason people might not want this policy to change is _____.
- If I change this policy, I also need to think about _____.

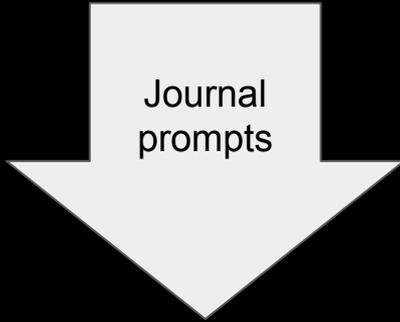


Culture



Critical Questions

- What values are central in my school?
- Which norms in my school are harmful?
- Which helpful policies already in place have been “swallowed” by culture?
- What are signs of colonialism in school?



Journal prompts

- One cultural norm I would like to change in my school is _____.
- One value we don't currently share that I would like us to share is _____.
- I think people are resistant to this work because _____.

Research

Critical Questions

- What have others learned from doing similar work?
- How can I acknowledge the ideas of BIPOC, PGM, Queer, and dis/abled educators & leaders?
- How will I make the time to examine existing resources?

Journal prompts

- Something I think I still need to learn is _____.
- One resource I haven't explored that I need to make time for is _____.
- Someone whose ideas have greatly influenced my work is _____.

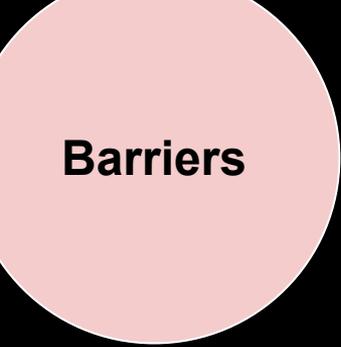
Place

Critical Questions

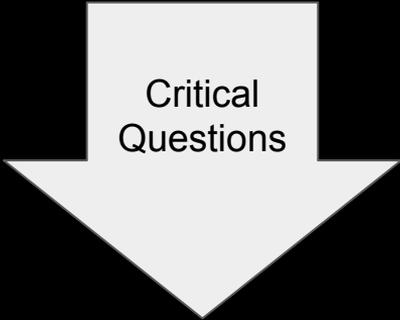
- What needs to happen in this specific time and place?
- What have we already tried here that has or hasn't worked?
- What are the unique challenges and barriers in this place?

Journal prompts

- I feel committed to making change **HERE** because _____.
- My school community prides itself on _____.
- Something I value about my local school is _____.

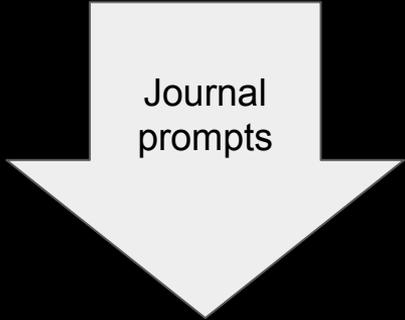


Barriers



Critical Questions

- What is my biggest battle right now?
- Who is telling me this can't work (and why)?
- Why are others being resistant to this change?
- What are people afraid of losing?



Journal prompts

- Something I haven't tried yet but would like to is _____.
- Someone who might have a way around this block is _____.
- When I feel "stuck," something I could try to get "unstuck" is _____.

References

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Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education?. *International journal of qualitative studies in education*, 11(1), 7-24. [Read the article here.](#)

Love, B. L. (2019). *We want to do more than survive: Abolitionist teaching and the pursuit of educational freedom*. Beacon Press. [Find the book here.](#)

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational researcher*, 41(3), 93-97. [Read the article here.](#)

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Resources

[Education Justice Coalition of Vermont](#)

Wayne Au's [Decolonizing the Classroom: Lessons in Multicultural Education](#) (published in Rethinking Schools).

Hannah's running list of anti-racist teaching resources ([see list here](#)).

School Reform Initiative's [Pocket Guide to Probing Questions](#) and [Consultancy Protocol](#).

Collaborative Development team

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Questions about this tool?

Please share this tool with others.

Hannah.Miller@NorthernVermont.edu