

To the Teacher

Thinking Critically: World Issues for Reading, Writing, and Research provides students with a selection of articles on current issues that are being reported on and debated in the news around the world. Based on the theory of integrated skills, the book encourages students to practice reading, writing, listening, and speaking as they complete a variety of tasks. The emphasis is on a student-centered learning environment with the instructor acting as a facilitator. The goals of the text are to improve students' academic English skills, sharpen their knowledge of contemporary events, and strengthen their critical thinking skills through analysis of these global concerns. Internet research is woven into the text in the Thinking about It task and the research question.

Thinking Critically is fast-paced in style, international in scope, and thought-provoking in content. The readings touch on social, economic, political, and cultural policies. These often controversial topics lead to free and wide-ranging discussion, both oral and written, of the complex issues facing citizens of the 21st century. Although the articles were published in 2002 or 2003, the topics will remain relevant far into the future. The following provides an overview of the book and its activities.

Pre-reading Question. This question introduces the chapter's topic and is a good springboard to the readings. It allows students to draw on their previous knowledge of the issues.

Glossary. Since one of the important objectives of *Thinking Critically* is to help students enlarge their vocabulary, a glossary follows each article. The glossary contains key concept words, the words that students need to understand the reading. It also includes academic vocabulary that is essential to the meaning of each article and words that are unfamiliar because they are technical.

Readings. Several unadapted readings from many online and hard copy news sources are provided for each chapter. They vary in style, tone, and

purpose: some are straightforward factual reporting, and others are editorials that promote a point of view. These original readings range in level of difficulty from intermediate to advanced. They report on events in at least 12 different countries.

Discussion. The answers to these questions can be found in the articles for the most part, but some questions require inference and critical thinking. In addition, students are often asked to paraphrase the main idea of an article. Students can write the answers as homework as well as discuss the questions in class. While discussing the topic, students should consider recent developments that have taken place since the articles were published in 2002 and 2003.

Vocabulary. Several paragraphs elaborating on the topic in the chapter are presented, and students must fill in the blanks with the appropriate words. After completing the task, students are asked to give a short written response to the issues discussed in the paragraphs, thus reinforcing their active knowledge of the vocabulary. This activity also can serve as a quiz.

Research Question. Students are asked to answer a challenging research question by finding current information on the Internet or in the library in magazines, newspapers, or academic journals.

Writing Assignment. Each chapter contains one writing task that gives students practice in producing documents in the academic or business style, tone, and form. The academic tasks include an argument, a book review, critical review, essay, research paper, summary, and synthesis. The business writing tasks include an interview, a letter, memorandum, position paper, press release, public opinion poll, and report.

Oral Presentation. This task allows students to share the content of their writing assignment with their peers. Students may choose to do their presentation with the presentation graphics program Microsoft PowerPoint if they have the technical capability.

Debate. The controversial subjects of many chapters are natural for debates. Students not only strengthen their oral skills but also sharpen their negotiation and organization skills through these debates. The formality of the debate structure will vary depending on the nature of each class. Students can read some of the books listed under Suggested Readings in preparation for the debate.

Role Play. These realistic scenarios add to the liveliness of the classroom and stimulate the learning environment. Students who take part in role plays can improve their spoken English by being active and interactive learners.

Thinking about It. This task changes the focus of the chapter from looking in detail at the articles to evaluating a public policy or predicting a future trend. Students refine their critical thinking skills through analysis of questions that are related to the readings, and they can respond to the questions either by writing a short essay or having a class discussion. As they analyze and synthesize information, students draw logical inferences and evaluate advantages and disadvantages of policies. Useful websites and the books listed under Suggested Readings are provided for background research.

Web Surfing. These reliable websites offer data, statistics, and historical information on the topic of each chapter and also on the issues related to the Thinking about It task. They provide differing perspectives on the topic under discussion.

Suggested Readings. These recently published books on each chapter's topic expand students' knowledge of the issues under discussion. The books were selected for their relevant information, current perspective, and readability.

Instructor's Manual. The *Instructor's Manual* contains answer keys to most of the discussion questions and the vocabulary task. (Answers are not given on some of the more open-ended and time-sensitive questions.) The answers to the discussion questions are taken directly from the articles and are not paraphrased, but teachers may prefer to ask students to paraphrase their answers. The last section of the *Instructor's Manual* provides guidelines for written assignments and for communicative activities that supplement the main reading and writing assignments: the oral presentation, debate, and role play. A bibliography lists all the books in Suggested Readings.

A Note on Documentation Format

When writers incorporate another person's words, facts, or ideas into their own writing, they must cite the source of this information. The three most commonly used documentation formats in academic writing are the APA (American Psychological Association), the MLA (Modern Language Association), and the Turabian/*Chicago Manual of Style*.

Many of the writing assignments in this text require the use of outside sources and the documentation of these sources. The documentation style that is suggested is the MLA in-text citation format. This format gives the author's last name and the page number in parentheses in the text. It lists all sources as Works Cited at the end of the paper, arranged alphabetically by the author's last name, or by title if no author is identified. The recommended text is *The MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 5th ed. (New York: MLA, 1999).

The following websites provide information about the three major documentation formats:

American Psychological Association: www.apastyle.org (contains guidelines and examples)

Modern Language Association: www.mla.org (contains links but not guidelines and examples)

Turabian/*Chicago Manual of Style*: www.press.uchicago.edu (contains FAQs and links but not guidelines and examples)

Online Writing Resources

Models are provided for many of the writing assignments in the Appendix to this text. Students can consult the following online resources for more writing guidelines and examples:

Purdue University Online Writing Laboratory:
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

The University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign Writers' Workshop:
www.english.uiuc.edu/cws/workshop/