In attendance: Siskanna Naynaha, Kate Sullivan, Heather Ryan, Jeremy Simmons, Donald Brasted-Maki, David Bockoven, Gail Stevenson, Will Fleming, Sarah Lushia

Half-time attendance (.50): Arwen Spicer; Joshua Daniels; Ce Rosenow (attended only one of our two FIG meetings)

The focus of this FIG was classroom methodology, tools, and resources including lecture topics, assignments, and assessment techniques that will help us improve the instruction of critical thinking in our writing classrooms, with some discussion centering on how the material covered could/would help faculty who may at one point in the future teach within the WR 121/ENG 199 learning community think about critical thinking.

For this FIG, faculty split the readings out across the members as follows, with the included instructions:

> The following 6 folks will read John Bean's *Engaging Ideas* and excerpts from bell hooks's *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*:
>
> - Jeremy (present on Ch 1-2 in Bean)
> - Arwen (present on Ch 3-4 in Bean)
> - Heather (present on Ch 5-6 in Bean)
> - David (present on Ch 7-9 in Bean)
> - Donald (present on Ch 10-12 in Bean)
> - Will (present on Ch 13-15 in Bean)
>
> The following 2 people will read Richard Paul and Linda Elder's *Critical Thinking: Learn the Tools the Best Thinkers Use:*
>
> - Sarah Lushia (present on 1st half)
> - Ce Rosenow (present on 2nd half)
>
> And the following 2 people will read Gerald M. Nosich's *Learning to Think Things Through: A Guide to Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum*:
>
> - Gail Stevenson (present on 1st half)
> - Josh Daniels (present on 2nd half)
>
> Finally, Kate and Siskanna will present on hooks.
>
> Just to clarify, I'd like everyone to take a look at all of the texts prior to our meetings together; however, each FIG member should read her/his specified text in its entirety and will be presenting on the particular section of that text noted above.

(By presentation I'm imagining a short synopsis, most useful ideas/points, and critical questions raised by the text. Feel free to get creative in your approach.)

Most participants produced a handout or presentation guide for the FIG. Included below are those documents that were submitted to me electronically after the FIG. A few participants did not forward documents to me, but all those present did participate fully in the FIG. We all gained an immense amount of new knowledge and insight into teaching critical thinking as pertains to writing, grammar, research, inquiry/problem posing, designing assignments, and commenting on/grading student texts. The summer FIG was well worth the time and effort spent reading these texts and engaging with our colleagues on these important issues. It was a real pleasure too!

Thank you once again to the FPD committee for supporting us in our ongoing efforts to broaden our department's engagement with current thinking and scholarship on critical thinking. We'll definitely be turning it around and taking it back into the classroom with us this fall.

Notes from the FIG:

J.S. Simmons

FIG – 2013 – Critical Thinking

Chapter 1 describes, in broad strokes, the concepts to be discussed, demonstrated, and modeled in the rest of the book.

I'm not certain this is a necessary chapter, rather than an annotation, integrated into table of contents. Many college composition readers have such annotated tables of contents, in which the set of ideas to be discussed in each section or unit are described. Such elaborated tables of contents are useful in that they expedite the process of designing a course, a syllabus, etc. To devote an entire chapter to this endeavor, however, seems more time consuming than is warranted (for the busy reader).

Chapter 2 marks the beginning of the book.

Knowledge, perceptions of what it is, how to manifest and use it (21-24).

Useful distinctions (of which there are several throughout the book): Understanding concepts—understanding *how* to understand concepts—rather than "Knowing" information.

"And Then (24)," "All About (26-27)," and "Data Dump (27)" writing are useful terms I did not possess before reading this chapter.

Would it be productive to use these terms in class discussions, explaining what is *not* desirable?

Explicit causal explanation of Immature writing strategies/Organizational problems (27-29).

These seem useful, not only for me, but to discuss with students while describing a writing course to them. How might I productively discuss these ideas in class?

Strategies Promoting Critical Thinking.

Asking students to "…set aside their own visions of the truth…" (29) sounds both useful and necessary, and I believe we all attempt to do that, at least when we teach argumentative writing. However, I personally have very spotty success. Successful strategies?

Regarding the dialogic nature of readings and class discussions (30), the same questions apply. But, for example, I have difficulty convincing students that though the authors I assign are admittedly "expert" in one way or another, students, too, have valid opinions and ideas, even those that oppose the assigned authors'.
Academic "Moves," per genre.
"They say/I say (31)" is familiar, and I'd bet we've all used it at least a bit, in addition to referring students to that series of books. To give you all some idea of my personal inexpertise, I'll just admit "Yes, no, OK, but" is a brand new package to me. Seems useful; have any of you used it, and if so how has it gone for you?
I'll mention as an aside that I've been resistant to modeling strategies from day one, and I now believe that has been an error.
The error—I'm hypothesizing, and invite input—is reflected in some of my students' failure to revise (rather than merely edit).

- Some ignore the parts of my feedback focused on eliciting more thorough argumentation (e.g.: asking for counterargument, asking for more thorough reasoning…).
- Some attempt to answer my questions, but do so as though it were possible to insert a sentence here or there (rather than looking at the entirety of their argument, prioritization of ideas…).

Revision.
I've been using the positivist model shown on page 33, essentially, hoping that copious discussions of and through the process of drafting an essay would make it work.
Not sure how to wean myself from this habit.
Why Don't Students Revise?
Well, this decentering idea sticks with me. In part it's because I'm almost always decentered, but not enough to help me remember what it was like *not* to know how to decenter. But it's also because I mainly use words and (attempted) discussions to encourage this decentering behavior (though, again, I've never used the term, and am not sure how or whether to do so in class).
I'm hoping to hear about some of the tools colleagues use.
Fifteen Strategies to Encourage Revision.

- Others' methods of developing *problem-driven* models of: writing process, assignments, discussions, etc.
- I would like to rely on (in fact to integrate into my writing assignment process) writing center/tutoring help. However, I believe my colleagues will agree, our writing center's staff are uneven (i.e.: I am not alone in my experience; students report that tutors' instructions contradict MLA guidelines, grammatical and stylistic standards, etc). How do my more experienced colleagues make the tutoring center work well for their students?

<u>Heather Ryan</u>

Chapter 5

- Five types of grammar:
    - Grammar 1: Internalized, preconscious knowledge of word arrangement—native speaker stuff.

    - Grammar 2: The scientific attempts to understand and describe grammar. What linguists do.
    - Grammar 3: Grammar of etiquette—stuff like ain't, brung, he don't, etc.
    - Grammar 4: Traditional grammar where one learns the parts of speech, and their functions. Often the way we teach grammar, but doesn't quite do the job well.
    - Grammar 5: Stylistic grammar. Language beyond the sentence level. Uses of rhetorical devices like anaphora, etc.
- The breakdown of the 5 different types of grammar was helpful because it clarified the ways in which various people (in and outside of academia) might use the term.
- Ideally, we should be teaching students to use language flexibly.
- At the same time, the rest of the institution has particular notions about grammar that our students cannot escape, and will be held accountable for, so some kind of instruction (however direct or indirect) is necessary.
- Some suggestions Bean makes for addressing grammar issues in a course:
    - Reading aloud
    - Making sure students proofread
    - Classifying errors
    - Use minimal marking and make comments revision-based
- Questions for group:
    - What does everyone do in their classes in terms of addressing/teaching grammar?
    - Do you do direct instruction or not?
    - What about some of Bean's tips: good and helpful? Or not realistic? In what ways?

Chapter 6

- Traditional method for formal assignments is the end-of-term paper. There may be some scaffolding in terms of a proposal. However, that's not sufficient, and it often doesn't happen.
- One downfall of this approach is that the professor assumes the student is fluent in the discipline in ways s/he is very likely not.
- Often, this also means that the major course outcomes are whittled into one assignment, making it difficult to:
    - Assess what students are learning (and if they are meeting course outcomes) over the term.
    - Assess which students need help/scaffolding and which don't.
    - Assess what has really been learned in a term by each student since the assignment is so high stakes and requires so many different skill sets to accomplish successfully.
- One strategy is to vary formal assignments based around what you want students to learn and take from them. Don't try to make one assignment be the end all, be all of the course.
- Some tips and suggestions:
    - Articulate learning goals/outcomes for yourself before designing an assignment. When I've done this, it has really helped me.
    - Plan backwards in a term. This is a great idea, and would be a much better way of structuring a class, especially if there is one large, high-stakes paper at

the end. In this way, you can think of the preceding formal assignments as scaffolding and practice runs at the various skills necessary to make the final big assignment. I do this well in tech writing, but less well in comp classes.
    - Utilize lots of interactive components like pre-writing, discussion, feedback on drafts, conferences, etc.
    - Provide clear explanations of writing expectations (rubrics). Make sure the rubric meets the tasks at hand.
- Questions for group:
    - How do you feel about using more open forms in formal writing assignments, particularly in the comp classroom?
    - Do you see any barriers to incorporating some of these ideas?
    - What aspects from this chapter do you use now? Are they successful? Could they be better?

Overview of Chapters 7-9 of *Engaging Ideas* by John Bean (compiled by David Bockoven)

Chapter Seven: Informal, Exploratory Writing Activities (120-145)

At the heart of this chapter (131-142) is a list of 22 different kinds of assignments that can be used as alternatives to more formal ones (such as essays). I'm sure we've tried some version of many of these activities before, but the list is worth a look for a potentially new activity or a tweak on a familiar one. Included in the chapter is a discussion (142-144) of how to evaluate such assignments, how to weight them against other assignments, and how much time to spend. The main idea for this chapter is that "messy" writing can be helpful not only for its own sake but also how it can improve formal writing [because deterritorialization leads to reterritorialization?]. Such assignments try to interfere with some students' "closure-oriented" mindset . See similar points on pages 18 (*brouillon* writing), 139, 156, 166. Writing is not an inert packaging of ideas. [See what Lakoff and Johnson reference as the Conduit Metaphor ("When you *have* a good idea, try to *capture* it immediately *in* words.") in *Metaphors We Live By*.] You don't really know what you think until you can formulate it in words.

Chapter Eight: Designing Tasks to Promote Active Thinking and Learning (149-160)

Purpose of Chap. 8 relates to features 2, 4, and 5 from Kurfiss's summary of course features that characterize successful instruction in critical thinking (see p. 5 for full list): problems, questions, or issues are point of entry into a subject and source of motivation for sustained inquiry; courses are assignment centered rather than text or lecture centered—use course content rather than just acquiring it; students required to formulate ideas in writing (150). Bean outlines 10 strategies for designing critical thinking tasks for such courses that are helpfully summarized on p. 160

Chapter Nine: Helping Students Read Difficult Texts (161-182)

Bean first lays out 11 potential obstacles students face in getting beyond surface-level, basic, functional literacy to become powerful, deep readers (161-166). The rest of the chapter (166-180) offers some potential solutions. Of the three chapters, I found this the most helpful because I use *Ways of Reading* for WR122, which contains some challenging reading.

Potentially Helpful Stuff I Plan on Incorporating to Some Degree in My Classes

- p. 140 Eight Exploration Tasks for an Argument Addressing an Issue. Helps students work through the material to get to a thesis (rather than starting with what they think is their thesis).
- P. 157 Four sentence summaries of readings: *Introduction* deals with question at issue, *Methods* tells how question was answered, *Results* shows outcome, *Discussion* analyzes results and suggests impact of new knowledge.
- pp. 162-166. Have students read a summarized list of obstacles to critical literacy (as opposed to functional literacy) and engage in a class discussion about which factors are most pernicious
- pp. 167-168 Course Preparation Assignments. Rather than say "Read Chap. 4," provide clearer objectives for the assignment and provide a more immersive activity linked to the reading to make material more assimilatable by students
- pp. 174-175. Create "Reading Guides" that incorporate questions students are supposed to answer as they progress through a reading.

Lingering Questions/Issues

- Do students need to first have functional literacy before they can develop critical literacy?
- In Chapter Seven, Bean writes, "[M]y single most valuable teaching strategy for promoting critical thinking is to require regular exploratory writing in response to disciplinary problems that I provide" (121). The question I have about this is **whose** disciplinary problems? Are there disciplinary problems that are held in common by all students? Which "disciplinary problems" should be the focus of WR121?
- Bean says that exploratory writing is good because expert writers do it. Isn't that sort of assuming that students want to become expert writers? Many just want to meet the basic requirement and move on. It seems to me that you can't force someone to engage in inquiry if they don't want to because mental inquiry has freedom as a central component.

Donald Brasted-Maki -- Summary of the Material:

CHAPTER 10: USING SMALL GROUPS TO CAOACH THINKING AND TEACH DISCIPLINARY ARGUMENT

My problems in the past with small groups:

They are time consuming, especially if you intend to conclude with a whole class (plenary) discussion of the results of each group.

If I require students to produce a written product, how do I evaluate it and give credit? What is the value of doing so? If there is no written product, there is a general feeling that they just have to come up with a vague response.

The learning value seems uneven and depends on the degree of seriousness with which the students take the project. Some are perfunctory and some are more elaborate.

If there is a task involved, students complete the task at very different rates. Those who complete it early (often in a perfunctory fashion) will shift to general socializing and become disruptive to those who are taking more time and probably taking the task more seriously (another reason to consider the issue of evaluation.

Some solutions offered by the book:

Place the group work in a progression of tasks: Lecture regarding a concept followed by application in small group followed by discussion in plenary session. Do a sampling of presentations if time does not allow all of them.
Class session should focus on a problem to be solved or question to be answered rather than a concept to be taught or information to be delivered. The group work can focus on the solution to the problem which the lecture would provide background to.
The purpose of the group work should be carefully considered: It could involve summary of material delivered to that point, but more likely something more analytical requiring critical thinking skills.
Summary of Material
Focus of Chapter 10: Goal-oriented use of small groups, aimed at giving students supervised practiced in disciplinary thinking under the tutelage of a teacher.
If a lecture transmits understanding of disciplinary subject matter, goal-oriented small groups can help students practice using this subject matter on problems requiring argument.
Good tasks present open-ended crticial thinking problems that require "best solutions" justified with supporting arguments. A good small group task promotes controversy, has a product, can be accomplished in the specified time limit, and is directed toward a learning goal for the course.
Tasks should specify the question or problem to be addressed, the required group product, and the time limit.
The reports are not suppose to be "summaries of what the group talked about" like minutes of a meeting—but actual persuasieve presentations of the groups required product.
Suggestions for Designing Productive Small Group Tasks (p. 190)
Making Small Groups Work (p. 196) (i.e. best size, student makeup, teaching students strategies for working together,
Objections and Responses to mall groups p. 198
CHAPTER 11: BRING MORE CRITICAL THINKING INTO LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS
Punctuate lectures with student-centered activities in which the instructor may give students a problem to solve at their seats or turn to their neighbor for "buzz group" discussions.
Exploratory writing in preparation for a lecture or as followup.
Stop mid lecture and give a "minute paper"; freewrite on a question or topic; ask a few students to read what they have written.
Narrative lectures which model the discipline appropriate thinking process. This should exemplify the thinking process of professionals within the discipline.
CHAPTER 12: ENHANCING LEARNING AND CRITICAL THINKING IN ESSAY EXAMS
Arguments for and against Essay Exams as a means of measuring student progress (p. 212)
Ideas on how to improve our use of essay exams (p. 215) Norming, beginning with a thesis, revealing exam questions in advance
Improving the focus and clarity of Exam questions (p. 219) Limit choice, keep each question short, call for thesis governed writing (examples 221)

Will Fleming: Bean's *Engaging Ideas*: Chapter 13 "Designing and Sequencing Assignments to Teach Undergraduate Writing"

Chapter 13 discusses **designing assignments that engage students** in the kinds of **critical thought and inquiry** we value as instructors. Bean states, "traditional research

assignments often leave students feeling voiceless and powerless" and "switching from topic-centered assignments to problem- or thesis-centered assignments" will result in greater "purpose and direction" in students' research (*Engaging*, 227).

Bean suggests **moving away from the "term research paper" in favor of shorter scaffolding-type assignments** that would focus on individual aspects of research and build upon those aspects toward a larger end-of-term work.

Bean examines "**seven subskills of research**:"

1. How to ask questions (getting to students to probe into subject matter through questioning)
2. How to establish rhetorical context (questioning audience, purpose, genre)
3. How to find sources (a library visit or a class lesson focused on database research, for example)
4. *Why* to find sources (discussing with students early on the various types and functions of research)
5. How to integrate sources (Bean suggests looking collectively at model assignments; *They Say/I Say*)
6. How to take thoughtful notes (critical and active reading exercises, reflection, summarizing, exploratory writing)
7. How to cite (often a major concern to students but a minor one to instructors).

Bean provides and evaluates several **assignment examples on pages 232-235** and discusses alternatives to the classic research paper in favor of assignments that promote more critical thought, inquiry, exploration, and discussion. He also suggests **distributing and reviewing assignment rubrics** *before* students begin assignments.

Bean promotes **asking research questions** and **explaining the function of sources** by examining Bizup's BEAM (page 239), as an example of the different types and functions of sources: (**B**ackground: uncontested facts or audience-shared ideas that provide context; **E**xhibits or evidence derived from exhibits: the actual data the researcher is puzzling over [texts, data, etc., which vary depending on discipline]; **A**rgument sources: researchers positioning themselves within the larger, already-existing conversation [using the *They Say/I Say* structure of academic writing, for example]; and **M**ethod or theory sources: using other scholars' research methodologies to examine the issue in a similar way, or through another scholar's lens, perhaps even by using a hypothetical approach ["What Foucault might say about this issue now is…"])
"Spending class time explaining Bizup's BEAM in the context of one's own research assignments helps students use sources more purposefully" (Bean, *Engaging*, 241).

Scaffolding assignments – assignments that address how to frame and display evidence, how to summarize and respond to an article or passage, and how to compare similarities and differences in claims, methods, use of evidence, language, etc. among two or more texts. Bean suggests assigning a 'review of the literature' assignment to examine the "current best thinking of experts on an issue or question"(*Engaging*, 243-244), while also searching for gaps in the knowledge and creating a controversy as part of a proposal- or solution-based assignment.

Bean discusses a **reverse engineering** approach to structuring an entire course by **designing fleshing out the final assignment first and working backward** to create shorter, sub-assignments that teach the skills needed to complete the final piece. Some assignment examples: **Thinking Pieces** (questioning, seed-planting, small group tasks),

Mini-Guided-Research Paper (summarizing an argument source and defending one's own view), **Prospectus** (emphasizes the problem/thesis structure of academic writing), and **Exploratory Essay** (first-person narrative account of the student's research and thinking process).

Intros and titles – Bean stresses the importance of **teaching effective intros and titles** and again suggests providing students with models to examine in small groups or as a class.

Finally, Bean suggests **inter-disciplinary collaboration** to establish effective research practices for specific disciplines to help students gain the skills and knowledge needed to move from **novice to expert writer**.

Discussion at the first meeting included the following topics: writing as rhetorical; workload and timing issues in portfolio-centered writing courses; how portfolios help to address different levels of student ability (delayed-grading, treating grammar and other technical/ mechanical issues in context; using reflection to help students evaluate their own thinking and writing); writing as a social activity, which is augmented by the participation and modeling of more experienced writers (like faculty members); different types of portfolios (e.g., showcase, working, bridge, electronic, etc); and what it means for portfolios to be keyed to choice.

At the second FIG meeting we began with Yancey's book, *Portfolios in the Writing Classroom: An Introduction*, which presents a variety of models for portfolio pedagogy in action as well as offering strategies to address common challenges that may arise with portfolio teaching in different institutional contexts. In this meeting our conversation focused primarily on different strategies for and levels of implementation in our local context. Siskanna Naynaha, the FIG leader, also provided materials on electronic portfolios (from Zubizaretta's *The Learning Portfolio* and Cambridge et al's *Electronic Portfolios 2.0*), and we looked at sections of Nedra Reynolds and Rich Rice's concise handbook titled *Portfolio Teaching: A Guide for Instructors*. Siskanna also distributed sample assignments that she has used in previous portfolio-centered classes both at Lane Community College and in other contexts as well, and she shared her own teaching portfolio (admittedly dated, but still a rather thoroughgoing example) with the group. The end of our meeting was used to address lingering questions and concerns around the implementation of portfolio pedagogies, and the group also made a plan to begin working on a formal teaching portfolio faculty group over the course of the next academic year.

All in all, the FIG was a very successful experience that enhanced professionalization and community building among committed educators. Many thanks to Lane's FPD committee for the opportunity.

Sarah Lushia: *Critical Thinking: Learn the Tools the Best Thinkers Use* (Concise Edition)
Richard Paul and Linda Elder

Overall Pros (as a textbook):

- Gives insight into critical thinking in a way that isn't discipline specific
- Breaks critical thinking down into manageable "bits"
- Provides activities at the end of each section in a chapter, rather than just at the end of the chapter. This allows/asks students to digest each "bit" and figure out how to use/apply/practice it before moving on to the next "bit."
- Provides some variety of activities to challenge various levels of thinkers in some sections
- Often offers the option of writing or speaking through answers to questions, providing access for multiple learning styles
- Contains a useful appendix which offers additional activities to help foster Close Reading and Substantive Writing
- Has activities that could be "lifted" from the book and used in courses across disciplines to help students really focus deeply on a specific idea/concept

Overall Cons (as a textbook):

- For me the page design was difficult to navigate/follow throughout the text.
- As a visual learner, I found the visuals/charts/graphs confusing and ineffective. The structure of many of the visuals doesn't offer an effective framework for the information they are trying to convey. I could see this text causing real frustration for visual learners who rely on visuals to help them comprehend ideas. I see this being compounded by the sheer number of graphs and charts that seem to appear everywhere but seem to lack visual logic.
- While the 10 chapter structure makes it appear that this book could be covered in a single term, I think it would be difficult to do so well. The very structure of the text makes it apparent that it is important for the student/learner to do each of the activities within a chapter, and in many chapters the amount of writing necessary to complete these activities in the space of a week seems overwhelming, and the same is certainly true for reading/assessment on the instructor end, even if the instructor follows Bean's advice and only reads some of the this writing.
- The visuals at the beginning of the chapters often present the key ideas/points of the chapter in a different order from which those ideas/points are presented within the chapter. Since many readers expect ideas in academic writing to be discussed in the order in which they are introduced, this could be a significant source of frustration/confusion for readers.

Some Key Points, Introduction-Chapter 6

Introduction

- "Critical thinking is the disciplined art of ensuring that you use the best thinking you are capable of in any set of circumstances" (xiv)
- Critical thinking isn't something you "add on," it's part of the way you live your life (xviii)

Chapter One

- Mind's Three Basic Functions
    - Thinking (creating meaning) (1)
    - Feeling (evaluate meaning) (1)
    - Wanting (meaning into action) (3)

Chapter Two

- Elements of Thinking
    - Purpose (21)
    - Key Questions
    - Concepts (23)
    - Information (25)
    - Inferences (31)
    - Assumptions (31)
    - Implications (37)
    - Points of View (39)

Chapter Three

- Universal Standards for Thinking
    - Clarity (44)
    - Accuracy (45)
    - Precision (47)
    - Relevance (48)
    - Depth (48)
    - Breadth (49)
    - Logic (50)
    - Significance (51)
    - Fairness (52)
- Authors include a "Brief Guide to Using Intellectual Standards," beginning on page 62 that students may find especially helpful when trying to bring together the Elements of Thinking and the Universal Standards of Thinking

Chapter Four

- This chapter is intended to encourage students to "convert" letter grades into meaningful representations of learning and thinking. A set of questions is presented on pg 75 that serve to structure the criteria for the learning that occurs at each level/letter grade. There are profiles for each level Exemplary Students/A (75), High-Performing Students/B (76), Mixed-Quality Students/C (76-77), and Low-Performing Students/D or F (77). The end of the chapter also provides examples of some student profiles for specific disciplines

Chapter Five

- Three Kinds of Questions
    - Questions of Fact (88)
        - A correct answer
        - Lead to knowledge
    - Questions of Preference (88)
        - A subjective opinion
        - Cannot be assessed
    - Questions of Judgment (88-90)
        - Answers of varying qualities
        - Require reasoned judgment
- Second half of the chapter focuses on formulating and asking "Socratic" or systematic questions. Five paths to being a Socratic Questioner/Thinker are discussed

- Focus on Type of Question (94)
- Focus on Universal Standards for Thought (94)
- Focus on Elements of Thought (96)
- Focus on Prior Questions Asked (98)
- Focus on Domains of Thinking (99)

Chapter Six

- This chapter focuses on presenting ideas about how the "best thinkers" go about learning. The chapter opens with a list of "18 Ideas for Improving Your Learning" (104-5), then it offers more detailed sections on various aspects of learning that students can consider to become better learners. These aspects include:
  - Considering the design of a college class (108)
  - Working to discover the Underlying Concept(s) of specific courses (110)
  - Working to discover the Form of Thinking that is at the root of a specific course or major subject (112)
  - Thinking within the Logic of a subject (114)
  - Making the Design of a Course work for your own learning needs/style (118)
  - Deciphering the Logic of an assigned article/essay (127)
  - Deciphering the Logic of a Textbook (128)
  - Evaluating an author's reasoning (129)

Notes Chapters 7-10
Chapter 7

- "Core Reading Tools" for Close Reading
  - Consider author's purpose (136)
  - Avoid impressionistic reading (137)
  - Read reflectively (137)
  - Think about reading while reading (137)
  - Engage the text while reading (138)
  - Think of books as teachers (138)
- Structural Reading—useful because it provides reader with a tool to decide whether or not they want to invest themselves in closely reading the entire text and, if they decide to read the entire text closely, it provides the reader with a structure to following that helps them navigate the text
  - There are useful guides for structural reading of a sentence (140), paragraph (140), textbook (141), and editorial (142) provided
- "Basics" to Substantive Writing—writing that says something significant about at topic worth writing about
  - Write for a purpose (145)
  - Write reflectively (146)
  - Write to learn (147)
- Part III of the chapter, beginning on page 152, offers a variety of exercises and activities to help students better understand and practice Close Reading and Substantive Writing

Chapter Eight

- Traits of the Disciplined Mind

- Intellectual Integrity (201)
- Intellectual Humility (195)
- Intellectual Sense of Justice
- Intellectual Perseverance (203)
- Intellectual Fair-mindedness (194)
- Intellectual Confidence in Reason (205)
- Intellectual Courage (198)
- Intellectual Empathy (200)
- Intellectual Autonomy (207)

Chapter Nine

- Human Egocentrism: a natural inclination for humans to "see" the world with themselves at the center, thus seeing/viewing thoughts and ideas as they relate to the self/ego (213)
  - Two Tendencies
    - Self-Serving (213)
    - Rigidity of Thought (213)
  - Egocentric thinking can lead either to attempts to try to control others or in the submission of oneself to the will of others
    - Domination—employing your power to make others subservient to your desires (229)
    - Submission—choosing to be subservient to others when it serves to allow you to get what you desire (229)
- Human Socialcentrism or Group Egocentrism: the inclination of humans to "see" the world through the lens of the group(s) to which they belong, thus seeing/viewing thoughts and ideas as they relate to the group and group mentality (213)
  - Two Tendencies
    - Seeking desires of group without regard to needs/wants of others (214)
    - Justifying the mores and ideas of a group without considering their rationality
- Pathological Tendencies of the Human Mind (237-8)
  - Egocentric Memory
  - Egocentric Myopia
  - Egocentric Righteousness
  - Egocentric Hypocrisy
  - Egocentric Oversimplification
  - Egocentric Blindness
  - Egocentric Immediacy
  - Egocentric Absurdity
- The same set of Egocentric Tendencies above can be applied to groups as well to define the problematic nature of Sociocentrism

Chapter Ten

- Six Stages of Critical Thinking
  - Stage One: Unreflective Thinker—not aware of issues in our thinking (259)

    - Stage Two: Challenged Thinker—aware of issues in our thinking (260)
    - Stage Three: Beginning Thinker—aware of issues in our thinking and attempt to improve, but don't make attempts regularly (263)
    - Stage Four: Practicing Thinker—aware of issues in our thinking and attempt to improve with some regularity to our attempts, a regularity which we now recognize as important (267)
    - Stage Five: Advanced Thinker—stage in which our ability to think critically increases because of the regularity of our attempts to practice it
    - Stage Six: Master Thinker—deep critical thinking comes naturally—more of an ideal than a reachable goal for most people
- Practices that might help improve our ability to think critically
    - Use "wasted" time (268)
    - Handle one problem at a time (269)
    - Internalize intellectual standards (269)
    - Keep an intellectual journal (269)
    - Reshape your character (269)
    - Deal with your ego (270)
    - Redefine the way you see things (270)
    - Get in touch with your emotions (271)
    - Analyze group influences on your life (271)

Kate Sullivan: Hooks, bell*. Teaching Critical Thinking; Practical Wisdom* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

Audience: feminist, engaged pedagogues. Anti-racist, anti-colonialist, critiquers of dominator culture. Primary audience: women of color who teach. Folks who've been reading and thinking about radical, student-centered, and feminist pedagogies and are interested in improving their practice. Specifically, female teachers who are p.o.c. and have encountered a number of struggles in the classroom.

Kate's overview:

- Critical thinking is a radical way of being; critical thinking always involves interrogating systems of domination; critical thinking is disruptive and radical and often exacts a cost on the critical thinkers, esp. those who lack access to privilege;
- The classroom/educational system has functioned as a tool of colonization/socialization into white supremacist hetero-patriarchal consciousness, and ethical teachers work to disrupt this process;
- Teachers who are invested in critical thinking must be self reflexive and critique their own privilege/biases. These teachers must also understand the profound and radical nature of teaching, which is a sacred profession and requires that we love ourselves and our students.

Opens with a quotation from Freire: "There is a radical element to existence, which is the radical act of asking questions"

Intro: focuses on how teaching well requires teachers to be humane. Intellect and ethics should go hand in hand. She points out that the teachers of segregated schools embraced

the spirit of DuBois and saw education as a powerful tool of empowerment, hooks was surprised when she got to college (Stanford) and found faculty who seemed more invested in hierarchy and power than their students' advancement. Confronting the racism (covert) and sexism (overt) of some of the faculty at Stanford made hooks "schizophrenic": she loved learning but feared many of her teachers.

Nonetheless, hooks committed herself to becoming a teacher and empowering her students (education as "a practice of freedom") to become self-directed learners.

Chapter One
"The heartbeat of critical thinking is the longing to know—to understand how life works" (6).

Hooks asserts that traditional schooling kills children's desire to learn and often shows them that "thinking is dangerous" (7).

Significant ideas:

- Learning to think critically takes time and requires active engagement.
- Richard Paul and Linda Elder's definition of critical thinking: "self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored and self corrective" (qtd. In hooks 9).
- Many (most?) students resist critical thinking and prefer passive learning
- Teachers who want to teach students to be active learners often get discouraged
- Teachers and students must practice radical openness (recognizing that one doesn't know everything and one might be wrong)—teachers must model this behavior

Chapter 2
Hooks observes that contemporary students often do not see education as a tool for democracy or understand that they must work to preserve democracy and their formal education does not help them understand the history of democracy in the US. Often, teachers may have espoused the idea that teachers are important conduits for learning about democracy but failed to embrace democratic ideals in the classroom (14-15); Further, the radical promise of public education and radical democracy, educational programs have become conservative and hierarchical (and democratic education continues to be undermined).

The thrust of this chapter is that teaching critical thinking is not just an intellectual endeavor but an overtly political act.

Chapter 4
Critical thinking that engages with feminism and social justice must, necessarily, focus on the interrogation of systems of domination and challenge dominator culture (and how such systems work together: e.g., how the educational system in the US has worked, largely, as a tool of colonization). Decolonization is an on-going process and requires interrogation of internalized oppression

Chapter 5

Students adopt and internalize the values of imperialist, white-supremacist, patriarchal capitalism. In particular, black children in a white-supremacist educational system, often learn self-hate/internalized racism.

When teachers teach with integrity, they focus on self-reflexivity and attempt to interrogate the ways that they transmit or benefit from the hierarchical educational system. Unless our work has integrity, we will enact a poisonous pedagogy (Alice Miller) that will produce unwell and repressed students (who are cruel).

Chapter 17
Notes the increasingly segregated educational system in the US and the challenges of both racism and sexism that face women academics who are poc.

Unlike the system hooks grew up in—classrooms led by respected black female teachers, education as a tool for advancement and meriting respect—today many black students regard teachers, esp, women, with "disdain" (98). (hooks points out that this disdain for black women teachers is, in part, a legacy of systems of colonization that relegated black women to positions as servants or caretakers—the problem is esp. pronounced among white students whose exercise of their privilege takes the form of attempting to subordinate black female authority figures and/or to read any critique of racism as the teacher being "angry"). The disdain for black female teachers is a form of white supremacist thinking, not necessarily overt racism (and is often unconscious).

Hooks calls upon teachers to recognize ways in which their embodiment/subjectivity in the classroom inflects how they are able to teach and how students respond to them.

Chapter 18
Hooks calls upon teachers not to abandon literary examples of dominator culture, but to examine racism, sexism, homophobia but also examine other facets of the work (Faulkner, Wendell Berry as examples), and to bring multiples perspectives into the discussion (what it's like to read *Huckleberry Finn* as a black woman in a racist culture). And while it's important to understand that authors are of their time, we should be vigilant to not select and use contemporary texts that present disturbing representations of groups and hide behind the rationalization, "that is just how it was back then" (and recognize that all fiction is a version of reality, not reality). Teacher should try to imagine how diverse groups of students will respond to a text.

Chapter 28
Importance of self love (one cannot be empowered without self love and acceptance)
Loving = self empowerment and the empowerment of others
(subtext for me is that teaching is a calling, a calling that requires we are as self-actualized as we can be, and that we love our students)

Chapter 29
"Re-member what is dark and ancient and divine within ourselves that it may aid our speaking, our dreaming, our way of life" (Audre Lorde, qtd. in hooks 154).

For hooks, we all must turn inward to understand our own creative potential, so we can resist and reimagine. Teaching, in particular, is spiritual work.

For black women, in particular, such re-imagining is a survival mechanism in the face of white supremacist, patriarchal capitalism (and their demonization, erasure, dismissal).

Hooks wants a critique of binaries, a focus not just on first-world issues, a discussion of feminism that is expansive enough to include men and boys. Also, though, this chapter seems to be a call to remember the importance of feminism is transforming black women's lives, and a mandate to remember important black women thinkers who are often ignored or elided.