

Table 9. Critical Thinking Performance Level Descriptors

<b>Advanced</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Developing</b>
<i>A typical student at the advanced level has demonstrated the ability to:</i>	<i>A typical student at the proficient level has demonstrated the ability to:</i>	<i>A typical student at the developing level may sometimes:</i>
extrapolate implications from multiple pieces of information and argumentation	make inferential connections between points whose relationship is not explicitly given	make inferential connections between two explicitly related points
accurately recognize descriptions of the logic of complexly structured arguments	follow the logic of an argument whose structure is not fully explicit	follow the logic of an explicitly structured argument
employ multi-step reasoning to identify hidden assumptions	identify implicit assumptions	identify explicit assumptions
employ multi-step reasoning to identify evidence that directly or indirectly supports or undermines a claim, or specify additional information needed in order to resolve a point	identify evidence that directly or indirectly supports or undermines a claim or specify additional information needed in order to resolve a point	identify evidence that directly supports or undermines a claim
identify subtle appeals to emotion and revisions to an argument that would reduce such appeals	identify appeals to emotion and revisions to an argument that would reduce such appeals	identify clear appeals to emotion
distinguish information that may be peripherally or generally relevant to assertions/arguments from information that is directly on-point	distinguish information that is relevant to assertions or arguments from irrelevant information	mistake evidence that is broadly related to a topic for evidence that is relevant to a specific assertion about the topic
employ multi-step reasoning to distinguish causation from correlation, and identify possible alternative causes or explanations	distinguish causation from correlation, and identify possible alternative causes or explanations	have difficulty distinguishing causation from correlation or identifying alternative explanations
engage in reasoning that involves complex interactions among multiple claims, arguments or pieces of information	engage in reasoning that involves interactions among multiple claims, arguments or pieces of information	have difficulty understanding or evaluating interactions among multiple claims, arguments or pieces of evidence
identify abstract concepts or principles that are implicitly instantiated in an argument	identify abstract concepts or principles that are instantiated in an argument	have difficulty reasoning about abstract concepts or principles
identify the most accurate among competing descriptions of the logical relationships between assertions/arguments and supporting (or irrelevant or undermining) information, even when the required distinctions are subtle or complex	identify the most accurate among competing descriptions of the logical relationships between assertions/arguments and supporting (or irrelevant or undermining) information	have difficulty identifying the most accurate among competing descriptions of the logical relationships between assertions/arguments and supporting (or irrelevant or undermining) information