Critical thinking is not an innate skill. However, it is a skill you can nurture. The unique Critical Thinking with Rationale method can help you with that.

Rationale™ is the name of the software programme that helps you organize information, visualize argumentation, and subsequently build a strong and well-founded argument. You will also learn how to identify, analyze and evaluate argumentation presented by others. This book focuses on the basic concepts of critical thinking, and provides insight into the theory behind the method. Software and book are therefore inseparable.

This method is suitable for students in higher education who want to develop a critical, inquisitive attitude. And it is also an ideal tool for professionals who are looking to improve their reasoning and arguing skills.

The Critical Thinking with Rationale method, developed at the University of Melbourne through years of research, was introduced in the Netherlands in 2007, and was awarded the Zilveren Innovatieprijs by the HBO-raad in 2008.

Students can download Rationale on www.surfspot.nl. Further information on the method and Rationale is available on www.kritischdenken.nl.
Contents

Preface V

Introduction IX

1 Critical Thinking 1
1.1 What is Critical Thinking? 1
   Knowledge, skills and attitude 1
1.2 How to Develop your Critical Thinking Skills? 2
   Basic principles 2
1.3 Argument Mapping 3
   What is argument mapping? 3
   History of argument mapping 3
1.4 Rationale 6

2 Topics Critical Thinking with Rationale 13
2.1 Grouping 14
   Topic 1: Grouping 14
   Topic 2: Hierarchical Grouping 16
2.2 Reasoning 19
   Topic 3: Critical Thinking 19
   Topic 4: Knowledge 20
   Topic 5: Argument 21
   Topic 6: Reason 23
   Topic 7: Objection 25
   Topic 8: Basis 27
2.3 Structuring 29
   Topic 9: Proposition 29
   Topic 10: Identifying Arguments in Prose 30
   Topic 11: Identifying Contentions 32
   Topic 12: Indicators 34
   Topic 13: Indicators – examples 36
   Topic 14: Refining Claims 38
2.4 Analyzing 44
   Topic 15: Assumption 44
   Topic 16: Rabbit Principle 46
   Topic 17: Holding Hands Principle 48
   Topic 18: Inference Objection 50
   Topic 19: Argument Pattern 53