**What does “healthy” mean? (End of chapter / dessert)**

The goal of the Chapter 1 dessert is to interrogate the use of the word “healthy.” Engaging students in discussion on this topic is useful to engage students in critical thinking about definitions of health and wellness. Resources for teaching critical thinking are linked below. This activity can be accomplished individually or in groups, as a writing prompt or a discussion.

Students first work independently to define a “nutritionally-poor diet” and a “healthy” diet.

Consider prompting students to write this down (either in their own notes or for later submission, be clear on expectations).

Useful prompts for these two tasks include:

How are a “nutritionally-poor” and a “healthy” diet different?

What is an example of a “nutritionally-poor” diet? What about a “healthy” diet?

Students then reflect on their “way of knowing” this information

Challenge students to identify their biases (e.g. culture, from social media) in the ways they evaluate the quality of certain diets.

Useful prompts include:

How did I arrive at what I think about these two types of diets?

What are my assumptions? Are they valid?

What remaining questions do I have?

The instructor can guide students in contrasting their perspectives and definitions with established guidelines

e.g. World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/healthy-diet>

Again, challenge students to identify shortfalls in their definition, biases, influences

Ideally, these prompts provide proper warm up for the class to cooperatively devise an operationalization of a “healthy” or high-quality diet for use throughout the academic term.

Instructor should be sure to reinforce the perspective of psychology in composing this definition.

This enhances the groups collective critical thinking and serves as a buffer against opinions about personal nutrition that commonly emerge during this course.

**Resources to teach and promote critical thinking:**

* Scholarly references

Behar-Horenstein, L.S. & L. Niu (2011), ‘Teaching critical thinking skills in higher education: A review of the literature’, *Journal of College Teaching and Learning,* 8(2): 25-41.

Bensley, D.A. et al. (2010), ‘Teaching and assessing critical thinking skills for argument analysis in college’, *Teaching of Psychology,* 37: 91-96.

Holmes, N.G., C.E. Wieman, & D.A. Bonn (2015), ‘Teaching critical thinking’, *PNAS,* 112(36): 11199-11204.

Loes, C.N. & E.T. Pascarella (2017), ‘Collaborative learning and critical thinking: Testing the link’, *The Journal of Higher Education,* 88(5): 726-753.

* Websites

Promoting and assessing critical thinking: <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/developing-assignments/cross-discipline-skills/promoting-assessing-critical-thinking>

Haber, J. (March 2, 2020), ‘It’s time to get serious about teaching critical thinking’, *Inside Higher Ed,* available at <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2020/03/02/teaching-students-think-critically-opinion>

Willingham, D.T. (2020), ‘Ask a cognitive scientist: how can educators teach critical thinking?’, *American Educator,* available at <https://www.aft.org/ae/fall2020/willingham>