Your thought process plays an important role in your ability to synthesize information.

The next time you read something online, **stop and think** before you put the information to use. You might be surprised by what you discover.

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**Critical Thinking Tips**

For gaining insight to stories, blogs, articles, and other written content

- **Think about the message**
  - What is the underlying message of the piece?
  - If you’re not sure, see what you can infer from the text (or the author’s tone).

- **Make mental images**
  - Try to picture the text in your mind, as if it were a movie or TV show.
  - What does your mental image look like?

- **Ask questions**
  - Is there anything you don’t understand (for example, an unfamiliar word or concept)?
  - If so, you may need to conduct more research.

- **Connect to existing knowledge**
  - Do you have any background knowledge on the subject?
  - How does it connect to what you’ve just read?

- **Reflect on your reaction**
  - What is your opinion on the text?
  - Has it changed your mind about the topic? Why or why not?

- **Determine key points**
  - Summarize the piece by listing the main ideas.
  - Do some ideas seem more important than others?
  - If so, that might give you a clue about the message of the piece.