

How to Teach Lawyers, Judges, and Law Students Critical Thinking.

By E. Scott Fruehwald. (2020), 194 pages, ISBN: 9798608999987. \$35

Subject: How to be a better teacher

Useful for: Useful for law teachers, as well as lawyers, judges, law students, and other legal professionals seeking to improve their critical thinking skills.

Format: Chapters, with exercises and problems throughout, and two appendices detailing sample Socratic dialogue.

Reviewer's Comments:

How to Teach Lawyers, Judges, and Law Students Critical Thinking is a helpful guide not only for law teachers but also lawyers, judges, law students, and other legal professionals seeking to improve their critical thinking skills. The author calls attention to a lack of focus on critical thinking skills in multiple areas of traditional legal education and provides suggestions for how to incorporate an increased focus on critical thinking skills and processes in the law school classroom. He provides exercises and problems throughout each chapter and additionally includes two appendices with sample Socratic dialogue to be used for such purposes.

While Chapter 1 details the need for critical thinking in legal education, Chapter 2 discusses the basics of critical thinking as a more generalized skillset. Chapter 3 discusses domain-specific characteristics of the law and asks the reader to reflect not only on what it means to "think like a lawyer" but also to delve deeper into specialized areas of law and thus "think like a criminal [or torts] lawyer." By way of multiple proposed methods, Chapter 4 discusses how to teach critical thinking in law schools, and Chapter 5 looks specifically at the use of the Socratic method and suggests a new approach to Socratic questioning. Chapter 6 discusses the connection between critical thinking and law teaching and provides suggestions for pedagogical growth. Chapter 7 discusses critical thinking in the context of the legal (research and) writing classroom, while Chapter 8 details the benefits of critical thinking for judges. Chapter 9 concludes with a reminder that the process of critical thinking is never complete and provides two lists of the most important aspects of critical thinking, the first more generalized and the second focused specifically on law students, lawyers, and judges.

How to Teach Lawyers, Judges, and Law Students Critical Thinking is an interesting read that will benefit legal professionals seeking to more effectively teach critical

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thinking skills and/or improve their own critical thinking skills. With a host of exercises and problems throughout, it serves as a reminder that, while too often neglected, critical thinking remains a crucial part of the study and practice of law, and thus further reminds us that we must seek to delve deeper and ask “why” as we continue to study and/or teach law ourselves.

Reviewed by: Ashley Arrington, University of Houston Law Center, in 2020.